

**Architecture for ‘Other’.** China’s eclectic  
pragmatism in developing countries within  
the Belt and Road initiative.



**PhD Dissertation**

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Supervisor. Professor Michele Bonino

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**ScuDo**  
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WHAT YOU ARE, TAKES YOU FAR



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I hereby declare that, the contents and organisation of this dissertation constitute my own original work and does not compromise in any way the rights of third parties, including those relating to the security of personal data.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Sohrab Ahmed Marri', is written over a horizontal dotted line.

Sohrab Ahmed Marri  
Turin, 18, June,2021

## **Abstract**

This dissertation explores China's architectural aid in less developed countries as a form of development cooperation within the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The Beijing-backed BRI aims to enhance cross-border trade, infrastructure development and economic cooperation. It was initiated in the context of China striving to take up a new global leadership role and make its development models internationally competitive. China presents an architecture of austerity that is culture specific and environmentally efficient and is characterized by rapid hi-tech constructions, reduced investment and more beneficial prospects. BRI depicts an innovative, organized institutional framework for construction projects to enhance collaborative architecture in which different donors and their counterparts on the receiving side engage at various stages, cooperate, exchange knowledge and demonstrate an exciting mechanism through which architecture and knowledge flow.

In the present work, I critically examine the cross-cultural architecture exchanges under BRI as a development aid discourse: How architecture models from China appropriated, diffused and translated in the local context (receiving side) in a "contact zone" between two cultures or countries, and how Chinese Architects have negotiated their professional practice to follow the guidelines of the Chinese State Authorities (NDRC & MOFCOM) as well as the guidelines, expectations and suggestions of the local state authorities.

The Chinese architecture aid projects are detached from the dominant architecture ideologies, finding a path in architecture production that can integrate the local context with Chinese expertise and facilitate rational cross-cultural knowledge exchanges with native technical experts. The architecture projects are characterized by the teamwork of architects and the role of complex professionals or other actors at different levels, from project designing and decision making to execution. They exemplify a new, eclectic but pragmatic architectural approach not only to satisfy domestic requirements but also to

comply with the prerequisites of international architecture discipline.

The dissertation consists of two case studies one is Gwadar city of Pakistan located in South Asia and other is Djibouti city of Djibouti located at Horn of Africa both are positioned at critical node of BRI. The Gwadar city case study consists of four architecture projects while the Djibouti city case study consists of two architecture projects. In every case, a particular feature is explored to highlight cross-cultural issues and negotiations.

This study underlines the complex and intensely collaborative work mechanisms, architecture specificities and performative and pragmatic architecture projects in the context of national and international architecture debates. The research follows a peculiar scientific inquiry, intending to shed new light on the effects of globalization as well as the transcultural processes within specific sociocultural and political processes.

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**This thesis is dedicated to my late beloved mother**

She was always praying for my success. I still remember she said *“You’re going to Italy for 5 years, it’s such a long time and after that I don’t know who will be alive or dead.”*

**I really miss her**

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## Glossary of Acronyms

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| BRI               | Belt and Road Initiative  |
| CPEC              | China Pakistan Economic Corridor                                |
| NDRC China        | National Division of Reform Commission China                    |
| MOFCOM China      | Ministry Of Commerce, People’s Republic of China                |
| AIECO China       | Agency for International Economy China                          |
| PC Pakistan       | Planning Commission of Pakistan                                 |
| EAD Pakistan      | Economic Affair Division Pakistan                               |
| ECNEC Pakistan    | Executive Committee of National Economic Council Pakistan       |
| GDA Pakistan      | Gwadar Development Authority Pakistan                           |
| GPA Pakistan      | Gwadar Port Authority Pakistan                                  |
| CPEC Authority    | China Pakistan Economic Corridor Authority Pakistan             |
| BOI Pakistan      | Board of Investment Pakistan                                    |
| COPHC             | China Oversees Port Holding Company Ltd.                        |
| CCCC. Ltd.        | China Communications Construction Company Ltd.                  |
| IPPR. Ltd.        | China IPPR International Engineering Co., Ltd                   |
| Arcplus Group PLC | Originated from ECADI   |
| ECADI             | East China Architectural Design & Research Institute            |
| CCCC. FHDI. Ltd.  | CCCC.Fourth Harbor Engineering Investigation & Design Institute |
| CM port Group     | China Merchant Port Group                                       |
| Pakistan CAA      | Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority                               |
| CACC China        | China Civil Aviation Airport Construction Group Co., Ltd        |
| PCVTI Gwadar      | Pakistan China Friendship Vocational Training institute         |
| PCFH Gwadar       | Pakistan China Friendship Hospital Gwadar                       |
| PCFC Pakistan     | Pakistan China Friendship Center Islamabad, Pakistan            |
| NGIA Pakistan     | New Gwadar International Airport Pakistan                       |
| NESPAK Pakistan   | National Engineering Service Pakistan                           |
| ICAO              | International Civil Aviation Organization                       |

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| MOU            | A memorandum of understanding  |
| CHEC. Ltd.     | China Harbour Engineering Company  |
| NED university | National Engineering Department University Pakistan  |
| NAVTEC         | National Vocational & Technical Education Commission   |
| LOE            | Level of Effort  |
| DP World's     | Dubai Ports World  |
| DCT            | Doraleh Container Terminal   |
| DIFTZ.         | Djibouti International Free Trade Zone   |
| CSCEC          | China State Construction Engineering Corporation   |
| PPC            | Port City Model  |
| CIMC           | China International Marine Containers Company  |
| IZP            | Big Data Centre China company  |
| ITEDRI         | Internal Trade Engineering Design & Research Institute<br>Also known as Hua Shang International Engineering Co., Ltd |
| COSMEZZ .Ltd.  | Cosmezz Costruzioni Mezzedimi Sarl. Djibouti   |
| Qixin Group    | Shenzhen Qixin Group Co., Ltd  |
| YCIH           | Yunnan Construction Investment Holding Group Co., Ltd  |
| ENOC           | Emirates National Oil Company  |
| JCC            | Joint Cooperation Commitee   |
| TTG            | Technical Task Group   |
| COE-CPEC       | Centre of Excellence China Pakistan Economic Corridor  |

## **PART 1: CONTEXT**

## Chapter 1. Introduction

*Mr. Prince used local talents and products, when available, and appropriated it to augment his designs, which, in return, allowed local artists, gallery owners, merchants and vendors to view InterContinental hotel not as an invader but as a partner in creating a new source of commerce within the local economy[....]Mr. Prince has always credited his success not in terms of “I,” but “WE.”(Neal Prince.org)<sup>1</sup>*

*I had a great experience visiting the Gwadar business center, characterized by modern Islamic architecture. I have to say it of high standard and even better than the Karachi Intercontinental hotel.(Yasir, telecom manager)<sup>2</sup>*

Neil Prince is an American architect and interior designer who established the InterContinental Hotels and developed the Global Hospitality Industry Standards. In the 1960s, His team designed the InterContinental Hotel in Karachi, Pakistan. In the post-war context, Pakistan allied with the US against the Soviet Union and subsequently received much technical and economic cooperation from the US. Apart from Neil, quite a few architects have referred to the completion of their respective works by stating, “WE” did it, not “I.” What exactly do “I” and “WE” stand for here? It is likely that Mr. Neil thinks it is difficult for a foreign architect or interior designer to design for another

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1 ‘Karachi Inter-Continental Hotel, Karachi, Pakistan, Mr. Neal Prince, International Hotel Interior Designer’, Neal Prince, accessed 23 May 2019, <https://www.nealprince-asid.com/id646.html>.

2 Yasir Durrani, What is your experience in this new building? To know local perceptions about GBC., interview by Sohrab Ahmed Marri, 20 August 2019.

culture unknown to them before thus he believes working together with local talent and craftsmanship leads to better design. Further, why is there fear about the architecture of the InterContinental Hotel being an “invader”? Neil feared that exporting or imposing an architectural model from the US to Pakistan (a decolonized country) would imply neocolonialism. Thus, as indicated by his statement, he involved local artists, designers, merchants and other factors in enriching his design to diffuse it in local context.

On the other hand, the Gwadar Business Centre was recently developed by Chinese companies within the context of the BRI. The second phrase about Yasir reveals; he is fascinated with modern Islamic architecture of Gwadar Business Center. If Neil, in a post-war era, involved local experts and contexts to project their orientalist architecture or tropical architecture vocabularies to avoid being neocolonialist. What made Chinese architects incorporate local pastiches, i.e., domes, arches and local motifs, in designing the Free Zone Business Centre of Gwadar? In the second phrase, it is interesting to note that Yasir, a non-technical person, is not an architect; so, why did he compare the Gwadar Business Center to the Karachi Intercontinental Hotel? The latter is famous for its hospitable services in Pakistan but has apparently been replaced by the Gwadar Free Zone Business Centre. Even though both were built in different contexts, this shift clearly signifies that, with the BRI platform, China is emerging as a new global leader and is threatening or competing with the US hegemony. This leads to the following questions: With such competition, what kind of architecture is being disseminated through cooperation between China and developing countries within the framework of BRI? How is it unique or different?

BRI is China’s state-led globalization and interstate cooperation, which is mostly being realized in developing countries, and it is considered to represent the geopolitical and economic expansion of China. Many journalists have criticized that this BRI phenomenon is causing China to emerge as a neo-colonial power, with most of the projects being

in developing countries.<sup>3</sup><sup>4</sup>Shanghai-based Dutch architect Roggeveen and other Dutch journalists have been researching the 21st century Chinese urbanism in Africa. Accordingly, Roggeveen made the following critical statement:

*“ Many of the buildings that are being constructed by Chinese contractors are being designed in China, engineered in China and built with Chinese materials by Chinese construction workers. Also, the visualizations in the design process are being created by Chinese rendering companies. So that means that all the bigger and smaller design decisions are made in China without taking into account the local context or local environment.*

*That not only results in buildings that seem out of place, but sometimes entire urban districts that feel as if they’ve been transplanted.” [...] When we do lectures about this topic in the West [...] people react very nervously, sometimes aggressively, talking about neo-colonialism and these kinds of things,<sup>5</sup>*

It is worth noting that most of the architectural and urban projects presented by Roggeveen are prefabricated housing projects that were developed before the BRI. Moreover, until now, the BRI and its spatial implications have been based on mere specula-

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3 Jamil Anderlini, ‘China Is at Risk of Becoming a Colonialist Power’, *Financial Times*, 19 September 2018, <https://www.ft.com/content/186743b8-bb25-11e8-94b2-17176fbf93f5>.

4 Anthony Kleven, ‘Belt and Road: Colonialism with Chinese Characteristics’, *The Interpreter*, 6 May 2019, <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/belt-and-road-colonialism-chinese-characteristics>.

5 Tim Schwarz et al., ‘These Chinese Buildings Are Coming to a City near You’, *CNN Style*, 1 June 2018, <https://edition.cnn.com/style/article/chinese-buildings-abroad/index.html>; Daan Roggeveen and Michiel Hulshof, ‘Facing East : Chinese Urbanism in Africa | DAMN° Magazine’ (DAMNmagazine, 2015), <https://www.damnmagazine.net/calendar/facing-east-chinese-urbanism-in-africa/>.

tions, and no real investigation has been done; it is likely still in a premature state. In general, BRI involves cooperation between China and, for the most part, developing countries; thus, China and the developing countries can culturally influence each other. China's aid has facilitated significant development in the other countries, but this also provides the ideal platform for Chinese construction companies to gain profit and competency in the global arena.<sup>6</sup>

The Beijing-backed BRI, besides infrastructure development, includes several architectural aid projects with its participants. Since the Mao era, China has provided development aid to less developed countries to strengthen bilateral relations and cooperation in mutual economic development.<sup>7</sup> In the early 2000s, Beijing launched its "Going Global" strategy to encourage its most significant companies to invest abroad by supporting bilateral diplomatic ties and creating a favorable environment.<sup>8</sup> The policy of "Going Global" expanded the development aid approaches, including architectural exports as a diplomatic tool, taken in less developed countries to enhance its soft power and increase trade and mutual economic development.<sup>9</sup> This development cooperation was recently

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6 Sanjeev Miglani, 'Maldives Says China Is Building Projects at Inflated Prices', *Reuters*, 26 November 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-maldives-politics-china-idUSKCN1NV1YJ>.

7 Guanghui Ding and Charlie QL Xue, 'China's Architectural Aid: Exporting a Transformational Modernism', *Habitat International* 47 (2015): 136–47; Jianzhi Zhao and Yijia Jing, 'The Governance of China's Foreign Aid System: Evolution and Path Dependence', *Public Administration and Development* 39, no. 4–5 (2019): 182–92.

8 Ruben Gonzalez-Vicente, 'The Internationalization of the Chinese State', *Political Geography* 30, no. 7 (2011): 402–11.

9 Ding and Xue, 'China's Architectural Aid: Exporting a Transformational Modernism'; Zhao and Jing, 'The Governance of China's Foreign Aid System: Evolution and Path Dependence'; Kenneth King, 'China's Aid and Soft Power in Africa', *The Case of Education and Training*. Woodbridge: James Currey, 2013.



rebranded as the China Belt and Road Initiative, inspired by the old silk road.<sup>10</sup> The ancient silk road was a medium for cultural and knowledge exchanges and was beneficial for all. The Chinese scholar Liu Weidong stated that the new silk road follows the spirit of the old silk road idea. In his words, it is inclusive globalization: it promotes a vision of co-existence, win-win cooperation, people-to-people relations, boosting of trade, regional economic development and prosperity for humanity by ensuring poverty eradication.<sup>11</sup> BRI is greatly influenced by political ambitions as well; for instance, one of the clear statements made by President Xi on the culture cooperation forum was as follows:

*“It’s foolish and disastrous to reshape or replace ‘Other’ civilization”<sup>12</sup>*

BRI is full of abstract ideas, concepts, words, ambitions, slogans and ideologies. Beyond that, perhaps the most visible part of any development aid is the donation of architectural projects. It is exciting to decipher the production of architecture projects that are concrete objects and can represent different messages from these abstract ideas,<sup>13</sup> facilitating the exchange of knowledge and ideas from an established “contact zone”<sup>14</sup>

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10 Joe Williams, Caitlin Robinson, and Stefan Bouzarovski, ‘China’s Belt and Road Initiative and the Emerging Geographies of Global Urbanisation’, *The Geographical Journal* 186, no. 1 (2020): 128–40.

11 Weidong Liu and Michael Dunford, ‘Inclusive Globalization: Unpacking China’s Belt and Road Initiative’, *Area Development and Policy* 1, no. 3 (2016): 323–40.

12 Quotation from the president’s speech on culture cooperation, see:

BBC News, *Xi: It’s Foolish, Disastrous to Reshape or Replace Other Civilizations*, youtube, 2019, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wSBjiwa\\_V8Y&ab\\_channel=CGTNCGTN](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wSBjiwa_V8Y&ab_channel=CGTNCGTN).

13 The visible part of any development is architecture project, A statement inspired from PhD dissertation of Levin; see in Ayala Levin, ‘Exporting Zionism: Architectural Modernism in Israeli-African Technical Cooperation, 1958-1973’, 2015.

14 The concept of ‘contact zone’; see: Mary Louise Pratt, ‘Arts of the Contact Zone’, *Profession*, 1991, 33–40.

Mary Louise Pratt introduced the concept of a “contact zone.” She said: “This term refers to the social

between the different architectural cultures of two countries.

The dissertation bases its point of departure on cross-cultural exchanges, negotiations and translations of common architectural questions evolving due to global processes.<sup>15</sup> It is the cross-cultural condition in which different architects, urban planners, designers and construction laborers work abroad, far from their homeland. This transculturalism is not a new phenomenon; it existed in the pre-industrial era as well. Along with the trade of goods, knowledge and culture, building ideas also circulated,<sup>16</sup> similar to what once took place along the old silk road.<sup>17</sup> Today, the architectural expertise circulates across developed and developing countries due to new legal arrangements, international trade agreements, development aid cooperation and advanced communication technologies. The interest in global architecture is increasing because most of the architects find themselves unprepared for working on architecture for the ‘other’; due to a lack of theoretical sophistication and historical knowledge about architecture beyond European and North American countries, such projects tend to be different from known contexts.<sup>18</sup> When architects move beyond their national boundaries and work in another context, their identities entail encounters with specific locales and particular cultural dynamics that are different from their own. Each local government follows the specific legal framework. These are designed in such a way that they consider their social and economic condi-

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space in which cultures meet, collide, and work with each other, often in the context of very asymmetric power relations, such as colonialism, slavery, or its aftermath.” It has recently been further used by Prof. Tom Avermaete in explaining the phenomenon of transcultural architectural exchanges.

15 See architecture exchanges in: Jorge Mejía Hernández and Cathelijne Nuijsink, ‘Architecture as Exchange’, *FOOTPRINT* 14, no. 1 (2020): 1–6.

16 Tom Avermaete et al., ‘Crossing Boundaries’, *Oase: Tijdschrift Voor Architectuur* 95 (2015): 3–7.

17 Peter Frankopan, *The Silk Roads: A New History of the World* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2015).

18 Esra Akcan, ‘Postcolonial Theories in Architecture’, in *A Critical History of Contemporary Architecture* (Routledge, 2016), 143–64.

tions and influence the design accordingly, including the compositional, typological and material properties of the built environment. The common issues they face are balancing endogenous and exogenous aspects,<sup>19</sup> addressing the clash of cosmopolitanism vs localism,<sup>20</sup> and ensuring respect of otherness,<sup>21</sup> culture specificity,<sup>22</sup> economic viability and green building.<sup>23</sup> One of the main issues faced in cross-cultural architecture exchanges is an asymmetrical relationship, such as between the West and non-West from the colonial to postcolonial/ contemporary globalization period, which remains a debate in the scientific architecture community. For the past two decades, research on cross-cultural architecture exchanges has focused mainly on 20th-century architecture, but few have also linked it to and explored it in the context of contemporary globalization. The more specific studies on cross-cultural architecture exchanges explore the development aid cooperation from Western countries, either socialist or capitalist countries, provided to developing countries in addition to the topic of multi-dimensional globalization, all of which have generated several debates. For instance, the confrontation between the West and East, modernism vs traditionalism, high-tech construction approaches vs local construction techniques, numerous forms of collaboration between various actors from individual architects to the teamwork of architects or aggregate actors in large construction companies, government institutions and international aid agencies form the core of

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19 Avermaete et al., 'Crossing Boundaries'.

20 Michael Ignatieff, *Blood and Belonging: Journeys into the New Nationalism* (Macmillan, 1994).

21 The critique of post-colonial theories in architecture by Esra Ackan to react the denial of other see in: Ackan, 'Postcolonial Theories in Architecture'.

22 A word used by Lukasz Stanek to cover the specific architecture feature of locale see in his book: Lukasz Stanek, *Architecture in Global Socialism: Eastern Europe, West Africa, and the Middle East in the Cold War* (Princeton University Press, 2020).

23 Economic viability and green building aspects are the main target of any international aid agencies such as World bank, other non-government organizations (NGOs) and now in BRI the Guidelines of MOFCOM and also the Executive Committee of The National Economic Council (ECNEC) of Pakistan.

these debates.<sup>24</sup>

It is essential to mention the postcolonial critiques here in the context of cross-cultural architecture exchanges. Postcolonial theories expand the debate about the asymmetrical relationship between the Western and non-Western contexts from colonial to postcolonial contexts. These theories revolve around the philosophy of the “other,” i.e., the Western ideology that sees the “other” as weak and uncivilized and the “self” as powerful, and civilized. This duality has generated architecture with “othering” mechanisms (denial of “otherness” or working for “self”). One of the defining issues in postcolonial theories is how to deal with this debate of “respect of otherness.”<sup>25</sup>

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24 The architecture beyond Europe online Journal with score of articles mainly focused on 20th century’s cultural exchanges between west and global south. see in: Johan Lagae and Kim De Raedt, ‘Global Experts’ off Radar’, *ABE JOURNAL*, no. 4 (2014): 1–15; Avermaete et al., ‘Crossing Boundaries’; Stanek, *Architecture in Global Socialism: Eastern Europe, West Africa, and the Middle East in the Cold War*.

25 Other philosophy has different meanings under different subjects such as psychology, ethics, sociology, culture etc. But we are interested in its meaning which alters the identity within the artform praxis. In colonial settings, the subaltern native is a colonial constructed identity for the “other”, conceptually derived from the logic of cultural hegemony of Antonio Gramsci, an Italian neo-Marxist intellectual. The cultural hegemony he describes can be achieved with a certain ideology without violence; Read more in his prison notes on cultural hegemony. The other is a psychological phenomenon; the psychological meaning, For example, imperialism is a civilizing mission to equate "the other" with the "self". This means that the culture of the metropole, or more precisely the architecture of the metropole, can be exported to the colony in order to modernize it. The cultural representation ‘self’ has the authority to construct new identity in different places and at different times; particularly, colonial regimes have used their own architectural identity to symbolize their authority or, based on the Foucauldian principle of power/knowledge, they have appropriated indigenous architectural knowledge and structural and semiotic forms to construct new, hybridized forms of design, hoping, in this way, to domesticate or naturalize power in the interests of their own regimes. This process has been well documented, whether in relation to the British in India; see in Thomas R Metcalf, *An Imperial Vision: Indian Architecture and Britain’s Raj* (University of California Press Berkeley, 1989). The French in north Africa; see in Gwendolyn Wright, *The politics of design in French colonial urbanism* (University of Chicago Press, 1991). The Dutch in Indonesia; see in Abidin Kusno, *Behind the postcolonial: Architecture, urban space, and political cultures in Indonesia* (Psychology Press, 2000)., or, in different, non-colonial circumstances, for instance Americans in China; see in Anne-Marie Broudehoux, "Learning from Chinatown: The Search for a Modern Chinese Architectural Identity, 1911-1998," *Hybrid urbanism: On the identity discourse and the built environment* (2001). Similarly Said, Homi Bhabha and many others have contributed on postcolonial theories, especially

Post-colonial theories aim to find an architecture that is better equipped for a global future, so that globalization does not develop a new form of imperial imagination.<sup>26</sup> The present dissertation is positioned in this debate on cross-cultural negotiations and the translation of common transnational architectural questions in contemporary globalization within the context of the BRI.

## 1.1 How to Conduct a Scientific Inquiry

In recent decades, research has moved beyond the binary dichotomies of dominant vs dominated, West vs non-West, import vs export (unilateral influences), global vs local, traditional vs modern, etc. It has instead focused on constructing more comprehensive

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‘orientalism’ a cultural representation phenomenon. Zeynep Çelik Alexander is an architectural historian, she has well elaborated this binary philosophy in architecture discourses.

Besides the transnational study models by Said Edward, "Orientalism," *New York: Pantheon* 80 (1978). Nezar al sayyad compiled a book on form of dominance see: Nezar AlSayyad, *Hybrid Urbanism: On the Identity Discourse and the Built Environment* (Greenwood Publishing Group, 2001) and the subaltern studies a few years later, scholars such as Swati Chattopadhyay and Mark Crinson, for example, have criticized architectural histories' strong Euro-American bias by directing their focus toward architectures of the southern hemisphere. Swati Chattopadhyay, *Depicting Calcutta* (University of California, Berkeley, 1997). Mark Crinson, *Modern architecture and the end of empire* (Ashgate Aldershot, 2003). See also special issue on "othering" in journal of architecture education: Tanya Southcott and David Theodore, "Othering," (Taylor & Francis, 2020). Thomas R Metcalf, *An Imperial Vision: Indian Architecture and Britain's Raj* (University of California Press Berkeley, 1989); Gwendolyn Wright, *The Politics of Design in French Colonial Urbanism* (University of Chicago Press, 1991); Abidin Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space, and Political Cultures in Indonesia* (Psychology Press, 2000); Anne-Marie Broudehoux, 'Learning from Chinatown: The Search for a Modern Chinese Architectural Identity, 1911-1998', *Hybrid Urbanism: On the Identity Discourse and the Built Environment*, 2001, 156–80; Said Edward, 'Orientalism', *New York: Pantheon* 80 (1978); Swati Chattopadhyay, *Depicting Calcutta* (University of California, Berkeley, 1997); Mark Crinson, *Modern Architecture and the End of Empire* (Ashgate Aldershot, 2003); Nezar AlSayyad and Nezar al-Sayyad, *Hybrid Urbanism: On the Identity Discourse and the Built Environment* (Greenwood Publishing Group, 2001); Tanya Southcott and David Theodore, 'Othering', 2020.

26 Akcan, 'Postcolonial Theories in Architecture'.

transfer tools to understand complex cross-cultural phenomena using the concepts of “translation,” “exchanges,” “contact zones” and “reciprocal comparison.” This new way of understanding the ambiguities or complexities of the transfer of architecture models, specifically in the postcolonial register, involves the complex engagement of actors, aid agencies, political motivations, interests, construction companies, and legal systems.<sup>27</sup> The approach provides sophisticated theoretical reflections on not only the transnational modes of transfer from West to non-West but also multi-dimensional globalization. These theoretical reflections and methodological tools are more relevant for discussing the complex BRI architecture aid projects through which China provides technical and financial assistance to developing countries.

In the title of the dissertation, I have used the word “other”—this concept is not about only the variegated type of colonial vision or philosophy but also, as I argue, how to approach the “other” cultures within a specific BRI cooperation framework. In such condition the donor of architecture projects is a powerful actor, and the recipient actor is weaker. How does architecture develop in this interaction between the donor and receiving parties within the BRI cooperation framework? This theoretical reflection using methodological tools furthers the exploration of cross-cultural architecture exchanges

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27 A transnational novel mode of history writing, linked to global travel, collaboration and exchange, questions passive conceptual metaphors such as import/export, as well as the often-unidirectional notion of influence, and instead registers the complexities and ambiguities of cross-cultural interrelations using concepts such as translation, exchange and ‘reciprocal comparison’. In her PhD dissertation, Esra Akcan used the literary metaphor of translation as a way to understand the global circulation of culture. See: Esra Akcan, *Modernity in Translation: Early Twentieth-Century German-Turkish Exchanges in Land Settlement and Residential Culture* (Columbia University, 2005). She further developed the argument of the liberating and colonial effects see in: Esra Akcan, *Architecture in translation: Germany, Turkey, and the modern house* (Duke University Press, 2012). For studies that address the complexities of cross-cultural exchange, see, for example, Avermaete et al., ‘Crossing Boundaries’. The method of “reciprocal comparison” elucidates how developments in “peripheries” are no longer compared to Europe but to other previously colonized regions. See, for example, G Alex Bremner, *Imperial Gothic: Religious Architecture and High Anglican Culture in the British Empire, c. 1840-1870* (Yale University Press New Haven and London, 2013).

between China and developing countries under BRI in a critical manner.

## 1.2 Gwadar and Djibouti as Case Studies

Two cases are considered in this section: the first is Gwadar, located in Pakistan, South Asia, and the other is Djibouti, located in Africa. Gwadar is a city that's developing within the framework of BRI and considered vital due to its location. Gwadar is a port city with a notable history and heritage and unique city characteristics. There are several issues faced by the actors on both sides, regarding, for instance, how to take into consideration the existing old town's architecture characteristics and the new development's architecture. Another issue is regarding what construction technology is appropriate in Gwadar. Gwadar is considered to be BRI's flagship project. Therefore, how architects in the project can make it a role model for other architectural projects in BRI is another question.

The Chinese companies use a replication of the Shenzhen Shekou Port Industrial Park and City (PPC) model for industrial and logistic development in BRI nodes.<sup>28</sup> According to this model, three categories proportionally reinforce the development process. In the Gwadar case study, the Gwadar port, Gwadar Free Zone and other projects for city development such as Gwadar Master Plan, hospitals, vocational training centers, etc. are developing in parallel. The architecture projects besides the infrastructure development are either complete or in the construction phase. The Gwadar Free Zone Business Centre has been completed, and the Pakistan China Friendship Hospital, Pakistan China Friendship Vocational Training Institute and New Gwadar International Airport

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28 Julien Wagner and Olivier Caslin, "Investment Is Not Limited to Ports": Jingtao Bai, Director General of China Merchants Port Holdings', *The Africa Report.Com*, 20 March 2019, <https://www.theafricareport.com/10475/investment-is-not-limited-to-ports-jingtao-bai-director-general-of-china-merchants-port-holdings/>.

are in the construction phase. The project managers, designers and contractors are all from China; in some cases, they also collaborate with local partners such as National Engineering Services of Pakistan (NESPAK). Local (Pakistan) partners are mostly seen as assisting their Chinese counterparts in providing local building codes, legal data, departmental data, weather reports, etc. At the same time, other major work is done by Chinese companies. Nonetheless, there are different Pakistani technical experts for any projects to monitor or review it.

Gwadar was selected as the primary case for this study because it includes author's in-depth field survey that is interviews, onsite observations, acquisition of official documents and meetings with concerned stakeholders. The second case study, Djibouti, is located in one of the important nodes of BRI. It is China's gateway to Africa. The Djibouti case study includes research articles and information gathered from verified online sources, which are sufficient to gain insights. Both Gwadar and Djibouti are important BRI nodes that are developing parallelly and have the same geographical conditions, religion, economic conditions and climatic conditions.

### **1.3 Structure of the Dissertation**

The dissertation is divided into four parts. Part 1 consists of two chapters. Chapter 1 provides the introduction, while Chapter 2 details the context of China's architecture mobilities to developing countries as cooperation under the framework of BRI in the international debate. Part 2 discusses the issues arising from cross-cultural architecture exchanges. The theoretical reflections regarding cross-cultural architecture exchanges between the ideologies as well as their complexity and criticisms are explored. Part 3 is the detailed analysis of the two case studies, i.e., Gwadar and Djibouti. Part 4 contains discussion and conclusion, including the research findings, and opens up the discussion about cross-cultural architecture exchanges under the BRI framework.



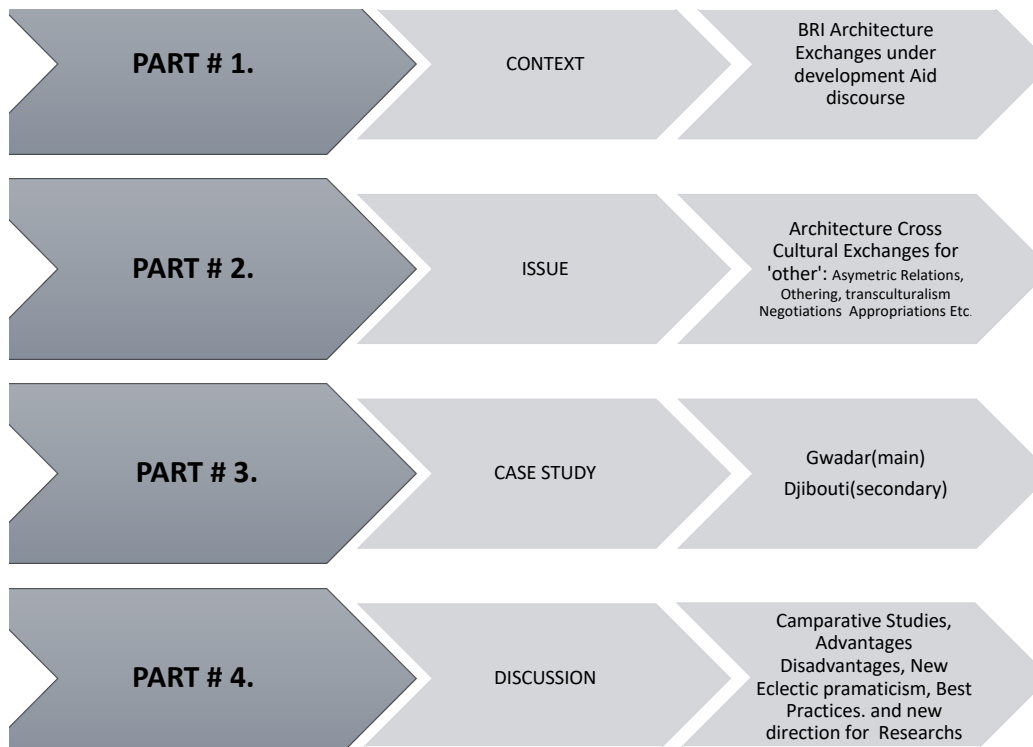


Figure 1:A general structure of dissertation

In Chapter 1, the introduction, research overview, research scope and methodology are presented. Chapter 2 presents the context of BRI and its framework, mechanism and actors involved in the architecture and urban projects. Chapter 3 contains the literature review which discusses the cross-cultural architecture exchanges for the “other,” which is influenced by ideologies such as cultural hegemony, soft power etc. as well as complex processes and actors and the critical architecture theories. It discusses the international debate on cross-cultural architecture exchanges under the heading of development aid cooperation and the theoretical and methodologies scholars used in their research. It includes the concept of “othering” in architecture (taken out from postcolonial theories), “transcultural,” “contact zone” and “third space” concepts. This chapter positions the research in this debate, and these theoretical considerations and methodological tools are then used in the case studies. The first part of Chapter 4 begins by describing China’s prior contexts of global policies with the example of the Pakistan China Friendship

Centre in Islamabad, which is a gift constructed and financed by the Government of China. This first part opened a new avenue for cultural exchange and closer cooperation between the two countries. Moreover, it acted as the starting point to open up a dialogue of cross-cultural architecture exchanges between Pakistan and China. Then, the main case study on Gwadar city is investigated thoroughly by focusing on its architecture projects. These are characterized as grant projects, such as the Pakistan China Friendship Hospital, Pakistan China Vocational Technical Training Institute, New Gwadar International Airport and economic cooperation models such as the Gwadar Free Zone that includes Gwadar Business Centers, residential areas, etc. In Chapter 5, the Djibouti case study is analyzed in detail using online interviews and materials. The architecture projects which have been completed under BRI include the Djibouti grant project, i.e., the National Library and Archive of Djibouti, and economic cooperation models such as the Djibouti International Free Trade Zone with its landmark building, the High-Rise Office and Hotel Complex. In several ways, these case studies of Gwadar and Djibouti coincide with each other and expose the BRI architecture projects that follow a similar trajectory of being new, eclectic but also pragmatic. Chapter 6 is the core of the dissertation, which includes the key findings of the research. It opens up the discussion about BRI development aid and sheds light on what is a novelty in architecture transfers under BRI when compared to the recent history of the Cold War era and contemporary globalization within the discourse of cooperation and development aid. It discusses why the BRI architecture models are more practical or pragmatic in developing countries. Further, it discusses the unique BRI process which ends up with creative, new eclectic architecture that is culture-specific, and it presents a pragmatic approach in the overall process. It also presents criticisms related to mishaps in the BRI mechanisms involving Chinese actors and negligence from the Pakistani side. The final part suggests how this BRI mode of transnational practice could become better by following some internationally best practice. Finally, the chapter underlines certain new directions for future research on this topic.

## 1.4 Research Questions

- In the process of cross-cultural architecture exchanges, how is the model from China diffused, translated, appropriated and modified in local contexts?
- How are the architecture exchanges under the framework of BRI different or unique, and how does architectural knowledge flow in varying levels of collaboration between two countries?
- What kind of design strategies are adopted by Chinese architects with the local technical experts' assistance to mediate between endogenous and exogenous conditions?
- To what extent can transnational architecture practice, under the framework of BRI, promote diversity, respect of otherness and inclusion in architectural spaces?

## 1.5 Scope of Research

The focus area of the present research is the cross-cultural architecture exchanges between China and developing countries within the BRI framework. The analysis identifies the cross-cultural negotiation process of modifications, appropriation, diffusions and translations of architecture models occurring in the local context. It exposes the ideologies and critical stances behind this transcultural architecture. Further, it uncovers the consequences of the intense collaboration mechanism involved within BRI. It evaluates how much it promotes diversity and respects local culture, socio-economic conditions, society, geography and other contextual factors. The research focuses on transcultural architectural spaces, issue of representations, negotiations and creativity. The study is enriched with the literature review of complex post-war cross-cultural architecture exchanges in the Global South after their decolonization, mostly under “development aid.” The post-war context is different from the contemporary globalization context.

This research is not a detailed study on this topic from a post-war context to that of modern globalization. However, it uses some of the critical points and processes regarding transcultural architecture and briefly elaborates its main differences with BRI in the discussion part. This research could be useful for future architecture exchanges under BRI for BRI participants as it brings out new challenges and opportunities in contemporary transnational architecture practices.

## 1.6 Research Methodology

As I have mentioned in the section “How to Conduct a Scientific Inquiry,” much of the research on transcultural architecture exchanges in the context of the “other,” specifically in relation to the Global South, through global travelling, collaboration and exchanges is moving beyond the previous paradigm of the export vs import (unidirectional influences), center vs periphery, West vs non-West, dominant vs dominated, etc. Further, the concept of the single-authored building has been criticized by several voices, agencies and actors involved in architecture. Researchers are formulating particular methodologies to study complex cross-cultural phenomena using translation, exchanges, collaboration and competitions, reflexive concepts, contact zones, reciprocal transfers and transculturalism.<sup>29</sup> The present research particularly considers elaborates upon Mary

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<sup>29</sup> Moving beyond import-export; see in: Mercedes Volait and Joe Nasr, *Urbanism: Imported or Exported? Native Aspirations and Foreign Plans* (Wiley-Academy, 2003).

For transcultural phenomenon see: Hernández and Nuijsink, ‘Architecture as Exchange’

For translation see: Esra Akcan, *Architecture in Translation: Germany, Turkey, and the Modern House* (Duke University Press, 2012)

For Reciprocal perspectives, collaborations see: Łukasz Stanek, ‘Introduction: The “Second World’s” Architecture and Planning in the “Third World”’, *The Journal of Architecture* 17, no. 3 (2012): 299–307; Stanek, *Architecture in Global Socialism: Eastern Europe, West Africa, and the Middle East in the Cold War*; Avermaete et al., ‘Crossing Boundaries’

Louise Pratt's concept of "contact zone," adding the Homi Bhabha concept of "third space," which is similar to the "contact zone," to further understand transcultural. Further, it also expands on another version of "third space" introduced by Henri Lefebvre and Edward Soja for further understanding. Besides this, additional contributions from other domains of studies are also included. For instance, in geography, anthropology, sociology, art and history, scholars have developed new methods that position human cultures in new relations with those excluded or subordinated as the "other." This study also criticizes the "othering" factors that result in other identities, cultural values, etc. being ignored. In terms of cross-cultural architecture exchanges, it means you are doing something for yourself; in other words, the architecture work is being done for the self while denying the "other". We can term this as "architectural othering."<sup>30</sup>

This dissertation has adopted a particular methodology that goes across the normative research limits on cross-cultural architecture exchanges. It includes a theoretical reflection on the literary studies that consider the global asymmetry of powers, definitions of psycho-philosophical theories, critical culture and architecture theories as well as their contributions to architecture.

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For Inter disciplinary research see: Model House Research Group, *De La Source Transcultural Modernisms* (distributeur Sternberg Press, 2017).

For reflexivity of architectural modernism in cold war context, see: Tom Avermaete, 'Coda: The Reflexivity of Cold War Architectural Modernism', *The Journal of Architecture* 17, no. 3 (2012): 475–77.

Architectural aid as competition see: Elke Beyer, 'Competitive Coexistence: Soviet Town Planning and Housing Projects in Kabul in the 1960s', *The Journal of Architecture* 17, no. 3 (2012): 309–32.

For Transculturation with perspective of what is critical or not; Thorsten Botz-Bornstein, *Transcultural Architecture: The Limits and Opportunities of Critical Regionalism* (Routledge, 2016).

30 'Othering' a new set of inquiry in discipline of architecture, see Southcott and Theodore, 'Othering'. See also other research articles in this issue.

This particular methodology is designed to address the dissertation's research questions and critically review the transcultural architecture processes. In a cross-cultural phenomenon, a "contact zone"<sup>31</sup> between two cultures. It facilitates encounters involving exogenous and endogenous factors, building codes, cultures, social spaces, climate, materials, bureaucratic levels, complex actors, and more. Similarly, the "third space"<sup>32</sup> concept can play a crucial role in case studies to understand complex information about cross-cultural negotiation in addressing architecture questions. Currently, the world is facing multi-dimensional globalization with shifting dynamics of economy and power from the West to East. In BRI, new East-South relations are arising. Thus, the concept of architectural "othering" could be useful in our epistemological understanding of BRI's case and the other points of multi-dimensional globalization. This, as well as other issues related to cross-cultural architecture exchanges within the framework of development aid cooperation, is explored with a healthy perspective on the recipients' side compared to most previous scholarships, which have only propagated the donor side's considerations and motivations due to most researchers belonging to the West or donor side and there being only a few from the receiving side.

In the case study of Gwadar, the architecture projects such as Gwadar Business Center have been constructed, and some other projects are either in the designing phase or in the construction phase. I selected only the projects which are in the construction phase because their architecture drawings are complete and they have enough materials about the encounters between Chinese architects, companies, MOFCOM, Chinese ambassa-

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31 Pratt, 'Arts of the Contact Zone'.

32 Thirdspace concept by Homi Bhabha; Edward Soja; Henri Lefebvre see: Homi K Bhabha and Jonathan Rutherford, 'Third Space', *Multitudes*, no. 3 (2006): 95-107; Edward W Soja and Vera Chouinard, 'Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles & Other Real & Imagined Places', *Canadian Geographer* 43, no. 2 (1999): 209; Henri Lefebvre, 'The Social Production of Space, Translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith', *Malden MA: Blackwell*, 1991.

dors to Pakistan within Pakistani departments, the Pakistani technical experts for each project, CPEC authority and many other actors in the designing phase. These engagements are not only between Chinese actors with Pakistan but also among each other. These encounters are essential to know about how architecture models from China get modified, appropriated, diffused and translated in Gwadar. I have used the word “models” to mean a complete set of knowledge-building codes, standards, technology, culture, etc. Additionally, the construction site’s field survey provides information about site contestations.

The research data in the case of the Pakistan China Friendship Hospital Gwadar, and the Pakistan China Friendship Vocational Institute includes official documents of feasibility reports (including the design brief, project details, design scheme and presentation drawing, etc.). Gwadar Business Centre’s research data consists of official presentation files, renderings, the documentary of construction, Chinese research articles about the first design scheme proposal, interviews with Pakistani stakeholders, etc. However, the data lacks feasibility reports and detailed architecture drawings. The Gwadar airport designer Tian Ren has written a detailed article in Chinese on how he faced problems in designing the airport. It is beneficial for understanding a designer’s confrontation with the many bureaucratic levels of China and Pakistan. I have made this material more meaningful by conducting several interviews with local Pakistani partners. It also has many presentation files, renderings and design concept briefs that are sufficient to answer the research questions. Apart from this, I have also asked local people queries and tried to know their perception about the Business Centre of Gwadar. This is typically a subjective inquiry; for such tasks, a generally structured questionnaire was prepared with around 50 questions, and 50 Gwadar university students (mainly architecture students) were selected to get their feedback. Besides this, there are some interviews with local historians and other Gwadar local culture or art intellectuals.

There are a few Chinese research articles on these cases. However, they were difficult

to understand, even with Google Translation. Thus, sometimes, I had to ask my Chinese colleagues for help. These Chinese research articles are essential to document and to analyze the donor side's perceptions and contributions. However, in some cases, I was unable to obtain the necessary documents, such as the feasibility report and detailed architectural drawings of the new Gwadar International Airport and Gwadar Free Zone Business Center, because the Pakistani officials or Chinese companies refused to share them; they that these are highly confidential documents and constitute security threats. I attempted to compensate for this by gathering data from Chinese websites, promotional documents, renderings, and presentation files. Being a Pakistani scholar, I managed to get enough materials for the Gwadar case study. However, in Djibouti's case, I could only obtain promotional documents, renderings, project details from Chinese websites, pictures, and a few interviews with the Djibouti local architecture community through Twitter. I mainly depended on these online resources for knowledge about the site's construction and design. I have never travelled to Djibouti; however, its socio-economic conditions and even the religion Islam are similar to that of Gwadar. Therefore, I used this case study to construct a critical comparative statement in the conclusion and discussion part of this dissertation to support a common finding statement that is the eclectic and pragmatic architecture is developing for the "other" within the context of BRI.



## Chapter 2. BRI, Architecture Cooperation and Development

### 2.1 Overview of BRI

The contemporary world is experiencing a change in the global system, a shift of power from the West to the East, creating new dynamics of globalization.<sup>33</sup> The unipolar model is no longer sustainable; the U.S. hegemony is getting weaker, and new emerging economies play their role in shaping the global order. The relations between the North and South have been dominant for 200 years (1800–2000), and the current trend sees the onset of relations between the East and the South. The BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) members participate in the existing order as responsible stakeholders by seeking reform of international institutions to ensure better representation of developing countries.<sup>34</sup> This multipolar globalization calls the previous hegemonic unipolar globalization into question and looks for an alternative institution for global governance.<sup>35</sup> Since the economic crisis of 2008, China along with other countries criticized the failure of neoliberalism.<sup>36</sup>

After neoliberalism failed in 2008, many economists are looking for an improvement

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33 Mushtaq Ahmed Abbasi, Ghulam Qumber, and Ahmed Saeed Minhas, 'Shift of Power from West to East and Rise of China', *Journal of Political Studies* 24, no. 2 (2017).

34 Jan Nederveen Pieterse, *Multipolar Globalization: Emerging Economies and Development* (Routledge, 2017).Chapter 1

35 Ibid. Chapter 1.

36 Victor Carneiro Corrêa Vieira, 'From Third World Theory to Belt and Road Initiative: International Aid as a Chinese Foreign Policy Tool', *Contexto Internacional* 41, no. 3 (2019): 529–51.

or a new model to solve the potential upcoming challenges.<sup>37</sup> In such a context, the BRI was proposed by President Xi. The Beijing-backed BRI is the Chinese 21st-century globalization project inspired by the ancient Chinese silk road. It claims to promote inclusive globalization. The proposed route for the new silk road connects cities in both mainland and maritime locations from China to Asia, Africa and Europe, with infrastructure, logistics, culture/knowledge exchange centers and other supporting developments.<sup>38</sup> The trillion dollar BRI program promotes economic growth at the last frontiers of globalization in Asia and Africa. The world's second-largest economy, using the platform of BRI, aims to play an active role in international affairs with the prospect of creating a multipolar global power structure. Many developing countries perhaps welcome this initiative.<sup>39</sup> The development model of BRI, if successful, will be the most transformational project of the world.<sup>40</sup>

There are several indicators which have contextualized the BRI. Some of the leading indicators include the inclusion of China into the World Trade Organization in 2001, as part of its "Going Out Policy." It triggered China's overseas investments. However, the economic crisis of 2008 badly impacted the performance of the Chinese economy.<sup>41</sup> The

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37 Will Martin, 'Nobel Prize-Winning Economist Stiglitz Tells Us Why'neoliberalism Is Dead', *Business Insider UK* 19, no. 08 (2016).

38 'Action Plan on the Belt and Road Initiative', THE STATE COUNCIL THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA, 30 March 2015, [http://english.www.gov.cn/archive/publications/2015/03/30/content\\_281475080249035.htm](http://english.www.gov.cn/archive/publications/2015/03/30/content_281475080249035.htm).

39 Wade Shepard, 'How China's Belt And Road Became A "Global Trail Of Trouble"', *Forbes*, 29 January 2020, sec. Asia, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/wadeshepard/2020/01/29/how-chinas-belt-and-road-became-a-global-trail-of-trouble/>.

40 'When Industry Meets the City: The Belt and Road Initiative' (UNIDO International, September 2017), [https://www.unido.org/sites/default/files/2017-09/makingit\\_24\\_full\\_web\\_0.pdf](https://www.unido.org/sites/default/files/2017-09/makingit_24_full_web_0.pdf).

41 Vieira, 'From Third World Theory to Belt and Road Initiative: International Aid as a Chinese Foreign Policy Tool'.

geopolitics of oil and economic trade are relevant in this context. The uncertain future of geopolitically crucial regions such as the strait of Malacca, which is the main artery of China's global trade, is a major concern here. It necessitates China to seek an alternative route to lessen the burden of the Malacca region.<sup>42</sup> China's "Go West" policy was introduced to develop the western regions of China to cope with its political upheavals.<sup>43</sup> The saturation of infrastructure development at home persuaded its giant state-owned companies to go abroad and seek new market opportunities.<sup>44</sup> Thus, China has put forward the comprehensive strategy of BRI to address such challenges.

In general, BRI is a transcontinental long-term policy and investment program aimed at developing infrastructure and accelerating the economic integration of countries along the route of the historic Silk Road. The Belt and Road Initiative is combination of two initiatives, the first one is the land based New Silk Road Economic Belt which is comprised of six Economic corridors and the second one is the Maritime Silk Road.<sup>45</sup> Among these six economic corridors is the China Pakistan Economic Corridor. The China Pakistan Economic Corridor will connect Kashgar, in northwest China Xinjiang Autonomous Region in the southern port of Pakistan Gwadar in Balochistan by a crossed railway network, Highways, airports, digital infrastructure and energy pipelines for trade and tourism Purposes. It consists of industrial zones, health projects and other

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42 Veysel Tekdal, 'China's Belt and Road Initiative: At the Crossroads of Challenges and Ambitions', *The Pacific Review* 31, no. 3 (2018): 373–90.

43 Subhranil Ghosh and Sreemoyee Majumder, 'China and Xinjiang: The Fate of BRI', *The Geopolitics* (blog), 8 May 2019, <https://thegeopolitics.com/china-and-xinjiang-the-fate-of-bri/>.

44 Daan Roggeveen, *Progress & Prosperity: The Chinese City as a Global Urban Model* (Nai010 uitgevers/publishers, 2017).

45 'Belt and Road Initiative', *Belt and Road Initiative* (blog), accessed 23 May 2021, <https://www.belt-and-road-initiative.com/belt-and-road/>.

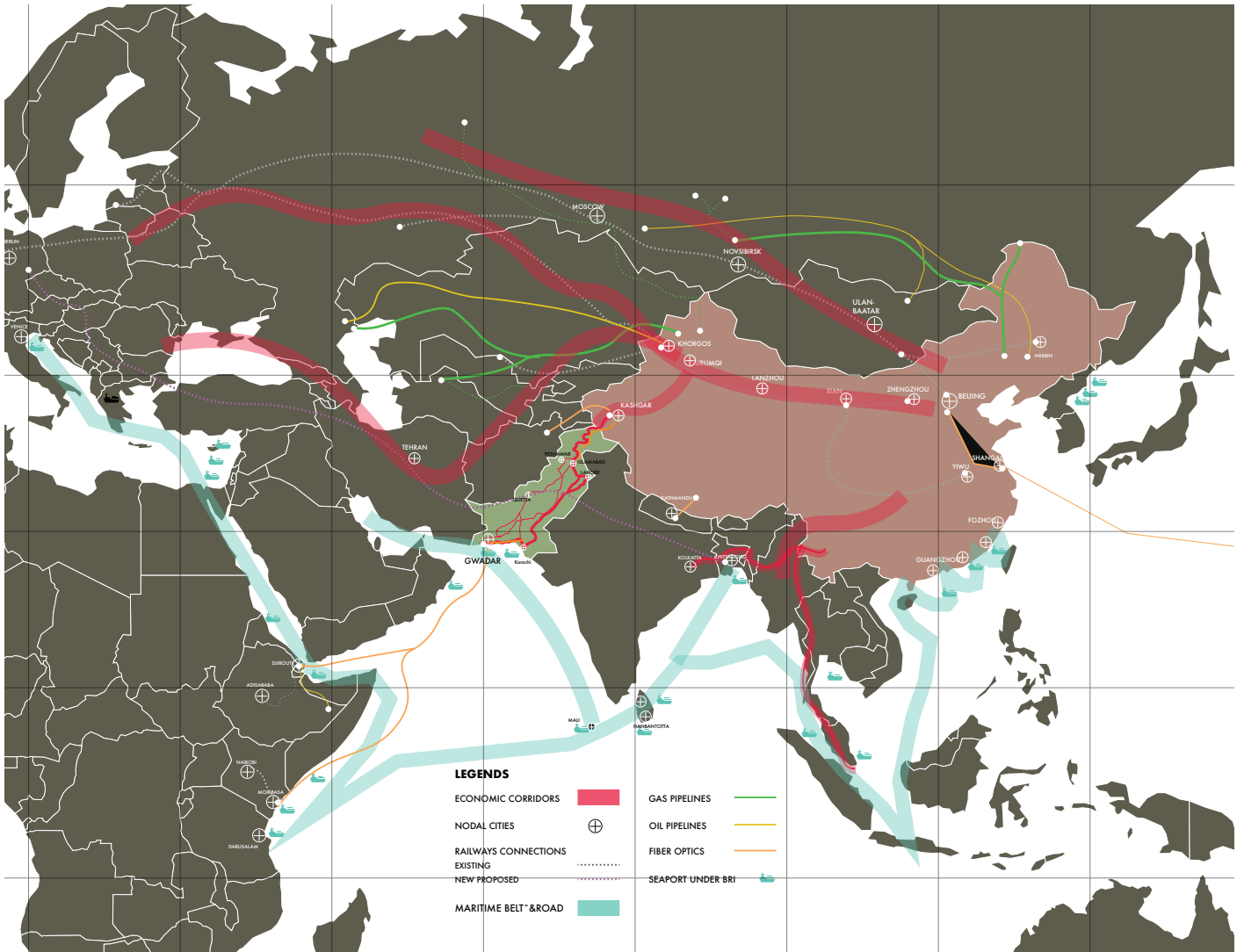


Figure 2: China Pakistan Economic Corridor, Network of infrastructure spaces. Source: drawn by author and data extracted from [www.merics.org](http://www.merics.org)

socio-economic development projects. It consists of around \$62 billions of investment.<sup>46</sup>

The Chinese officials stated the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) as one of BRI's pilot projects. CPEC is a BRI flagship project because Pakistan positions a unique role in addressing some of the above challenges. Via CPEC, China can connect to the Arabian sea, providing a contingency trade route to the risk-prone Malacca Strait in Southeast Asia. Access to the Arabian sea can give China a geopolitical influence in the Arabian sea. The stability of Pakistan can also ensure the stability of the western regions of China. Since 2001, Pakistan has been playing a vital role in fighting against terrorism. In recent times, Pakistan's middle class continues to grow at a rapid pace, posing a rising demand for consumer durables<sup>47</sup> and thus creating a vast market for Chinese industries. The main part of CPEC is the development of the Gwadar port and the network of transport infrastructure to link the Arabian sea to western China. Some Pakistani scholars argued that BRI was conceived due to CPEC and CPEC in turn is

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46 This general information is available in many online or publications; for instance, see: Khalid Manzoor Butt and Anam Abid Butt, 'Impact of CPEC on Regional and Extra-Regional Actors', *The Journal of Political Science* 33 (2015): 23.

47 Salman Siddique, 'Pakistan's Middle Class Continues to Grow at Rapid Pace', 2 May 2017, <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1398602/pakistans-middle-class-continues-grow-rapid-pace>.

due to the Gwadar port<sup>4849</sup>. In Gwadar, next to the port, several infrastructure projects are developing in parallel, such as the Gwadar Free Zone, International Airport and city development projects such as hospitals, technical institutes, etc. All are undertaken by a network of Chinese state-owned design and construction companies. The pivotal role of Gwadar in BRI makes it an exciting case study to explore its architecture projects. Besides its geopolitical importance, Gwadar has a unique history, culture, heritage and other contextual factors. Thus, Gwadar was selected as the main case study to uncover its architecture within the specific context of BRI. The other secondary case study of the dissertation is Djibouti. It is an important seaport city on the map of BRI because it is China's gateway to Africa. <sup>50</sup>

Western critics view BRI as a threat to the established global order and point it out as neo-colonialism and criticize it as China's debt-trap diplomacy.<sup>51</sup> simultaneously, the

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48 CPEC quarterly research magazines in which many authors attribute the primordial character of the CPEC to the BRI, See: 'CPEC Quarterly' (CPEC centre of Ministry of Planning Development & Special Initiatives, 31 May 2018), <https://cpec-centre.pk/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Magazine2-2.pdf>.

Also see the events: The year 2013 marked the announcement of three major projects that would reshape China's international co-operation. The first took place in May in Islamabad, Pakistan, when Premier Li Keqiang announced the intention to build a "China-Pakistan Economic Corridor" (CPEC); the second in September in Astana, Kazakhstan, where Xi Jinping introduced the "Silk Road Economic Belt" (SREB); and the third in October in Jakarta, Indonesia, when the "Maritime Silk Road of the 21st Century" (MSR) was made public by Xi. No project of the PRC has been so ambitious so far, and together, these three projects would give rise to the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), 一带一路 or **yi dai yi lu** (One Belt One Road in Chinese).

49 Adnan Khan, Gwadar Port, interview by Sohrab Ahmed Marri, audio recorder, 27 August 2019. Adnan Khan is researcher at CPEC centre his main area of research is development of Gwadar under CPEC.

50 Von Dietmar Pieper, 'Djibouti Is Becoming Gateway to Africa for China', News, *DER SPIEGEL International* (blog), 8 February 2018, <https://www.spiegel.de/international/world/djibouti-is-becoming-gateway-to-africa-for-china-a-1191441.html>.

51 See some examples: Suzanne Blumsom et al., 'China's BRI - a New Colonialism?', *Financial Times*, 7 May 2019, <https://www.ft.com/content/5da3a9e2-2967-473f-a66a-d703d0e18f2d>; Kleven, 'Belt and

Chinese scholars call it inclusive globalization that promotes a vision of co-existence, win-win cooperation, people-to-people relations, boosting of trade, regional economic development and prosperity for humankind by ensuring poverty eradication<sup>52</sup>. Further, Liu argued that in BRI, it is useless to think about the unipolar or bipolar globalization that existed between the Soviet Union and US in cold war geopolitics and cultural politics. Historical trends divided the world between us (self) and them (other), which generated several conflicts. Today, the existing global trend is to develop toward a multilateral world and to overcome the limitation of neoliberalism; in this context, BRI can be one such direction and reform.<sup>53</sup>

Chinese authorities have gradually accepted help and support from world-leading countries to make BRI a multilateral project so that China can be an actor instead of a leader.<sup>54</sup> Several other articles have suggested that BRI does not constitute neo-colonialism but needs an active role to be played by the receiving side to counterbalance the negative impacts.<sup>55</sup> The BRI developmental aid is slightly different from the traditional aids. It is an inter-state-controlled program in an organized BRI institutional framework where both parties can have equal weightage in the decision-making process.<sup>56</sup>

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Road’; Rohan Shah, ‘A Western Delusion: Narratives Surrounding Neocolonialism in Africa’, *Oxford Political Review* (blog), 23 April 2020, <http://oxfordpoliticalreview.com/amp/2020/04/23/a-western-delusion-narratives-surrounding-neocolonialism-in-africa/>.

52 Liu and Dunford, ‘Inclusive Globalization: Unpacking China’s Belt and Road Initiative’.

53 Ibid.

54 Alice Ekman, Natacha Crance, and Dimitri Von Büren, ‘China’s Belt & Road and the World: Competing Forms of Globalization’ (Etudes de Ifri (French Institute of International), April 2019), <https://www.ifri.org/en/publications/etudes-de-lifri/chinas-belt-road-and-world-competing-forms-globalization>.

55 TL Deych, ‘China in Africa: Neo-Colonial Power or a Win-Win Strategy?’, *Outlines of Global Transformations: Politics, Economics, Law*, 2018.

56 Adnan Khan, Saleem Janjua, and Ahmad Khan, CPEC mechanism, interview by Sohrab Ahmed Mar-

David Harvey discussed neoliberalism as a political project carried out by the corporate capitalist class. They felt intensely threatened both politically and economically towards the end of the 1960s into the 1970s. They desperately wanted to launch a political project that would curb the power of labor.<sup>57</sup> Correspondingly, some argued that the main reason for setting up BRI by the Chinese government is to fetch new international markets for Chinese companies and insure its investment security on the governmental level. It is the strategy to invest heavily in infrastructure globally. It is fueled by slower economic development at home and by the ambition to actively increase the Chinese sphere of influence. By the belief that infrastructure is the driver of growth, the Chinese leadership has been funneling billions into projects that supported the 21<sup>st</sup> century version of the silk road.<sup>58</sup> In an interview with Dadullah Baloch (China Overseas Port Holding Company (COPHC) management officer in Gwadar), he stated the following:

*“Our company begin a negotiation with Pakistan before BRI. People link us with BRI; they consider as we take hold of Gwadar port due to BRI. But of course, BRI helped us so much in negotiation with the Pakistani government and indeed it raised local public support.”*<sup>59</sup>

Neoliberalism provided a platform of opportunities for Western architects or urban planners to engage in transnational practices. Similarly, BRI provides a platform for Chinese

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ri, audio recorder, 27 August 2019. Dr. Saleem Bajwa is doing research on sustainable urban development under CPEC, Dr. Ahmad Khan is researching on Gwadar Master Plan and Adnan Khan is researching on Gwadar urban development under CPEC.

57 David Harvey, *Neoliberalism Is a Political Project*, interview by Bjarke Skærlund Risager, 2008, <https://jacobinmag.com/2016/07/david-harvey-neoliberalism-capitalism-labor-crisis-resistance/>.

58 Roggeveen, *Progress & Prosperity: The Chinese City as a Global Urban Model*.

59 Dadullah Baloch, *Gwadar Port and Free Zone Development Process*, interview by Sohrab Ahmed Marri, audio recorder, 2 January 2019. Dadullah Baloch is the management officer in COPHC office at Gwadar



state-owned companies' architects or planners to work in developing countries and at the same time compete with its Western counterparts.

Although BRI as an international development aid comprises several architecture projects and other infrastructure development, there is a lack of literature that deals with this part either because it is in its initial phase or due to it not attracting the international architecture research community. One interesting aspect of BRI is the growing number of architecture projects in the Global South. It is managed by the network of Chinese state companies from feasibility studies to designing to the construction of the projects, and the recipient country is only assisting them. However, there is a significant amount of literature that highlights the North–South relations in architecture and urban planning from the colonial time to the post-war period and then the current contemporary period of globalization. The context of BRI regarding the geopolitics, economic trade and international politics presents new global relationships that are occurring, that is, East–South relations. This incites new curiosity about how, in BRI, the architecture exchanges and cooperation are unique and different? This is a considerably difficult question to answer; however, it derives the dissertation from focusing at least on some aspects of architecture such as “transcultural architecture,” “respect of otherness” and “clash of cosmopolitanism vs localism” and answering these questions using comprehensive theoretical reflection and insights from the case studies. The North–South relations were comprised of center and periphery relations; for instance, modern architecture that flourished in the Global North was exported to the Global South with varying degrees of modification, appropriation and translation into the Global South’s context.

In the context of the East–South relations, what are Chinese architects exporting? China has received modern Western architecture models which are translated into Chinese context, and now it is exporting architecture in the Global South under the platform of BRI. The center-periphery theory does not work here. The center-periphery model, or architecture exportation, is very strong in the colonialism context. In the BRI context,

this can be said to comprise architecture exchanges and collaborations. The case study part discusses this architecture cooperation mechanism and presents an influential impact from the recipient side.

In the next section, the mechanism of architecture cooperation under BRI through the development discourse is discussed.

## **2.2 Architecture Cooperation under BRI through the Lens of Development Aid Discourse**

The modern concept of development aid discourse dates back to the colonial era.<sup>60</sup> The apparent legitimization of development aid is based on the idea that it is the moral responsibility of Western colonizers to civilize their colonies.<sup>61</sup> Particularly in the case of the British, it initiated the Colonial Development Act in 1929, which galvanized infrastructure development for improving transport, research, electric power and water supplies and land surveys, excluding education in colonies to promote the imperial trade based on the principle of “tied aid.” The tied aid concept was aimed at promoting donor industries and job creations. After the decolonization in the Cold War geopolitical arena, the colonial development aids were diffused into modern development aids.<sup>62</sup> After gaining independence, the former colonies recognized that they were far from the developed countries, and it became their national plan to modernize their countries.<sup>63</sup> Tom Aver-

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60 Ravi Kanbur, ‘The Economics of International Aid’, *Handbook of the Economics of Giving, Altruism and Reciprocity* 2 (2006): 1559–88.

61 Harald Fischer-Tiné, Harald Fischer-Tiné, and Michael Mann, *Colonialism as Civilizing Mission: Cultural Ideology in British India* (Anthem Press, 2004).

62 Kanbur, ‘The Economics of International Aid’.

63 Duanfang Lu, ‘Third World Modernism: Utopia, Modernity, and the People’s Commune in China’, *Journal of Architectural Education* 60, no. 3 (2007): 40–48.

maete discussed the architecture development aid, which was initiated in postcolonial conditions. After colonialism, the newly independent countries needed financial and technical assistance from developed countries, which created new-fangled relations between the North and South. It worked as a significant catalyst for expanding urban and architecture activities in the transnational realm. The newly independent nations were able to freely select who to approach for financial, technical and planning support for their modernization process and to choose patrons best suited to their needs.<sup>64</sup> The construction aid models and its mechanisms need a critical investigation because it unfolds different actors and processes shaping the architecture projects.

The main criticism of this development aid is that the donor provides it to achieve different political and economic goals and enhance its own soft power.<sup>65</sup> In the post-war era, the US-associated aid agencies and partners offered technical and financial aid to the developing countries to restrain them from soviet socialist influences; on the other side, the Soviet Union also provided several development aids to propagate the socialist ideology.<sup>66</sup> In this Cold War cultural politics, modern architecture was used as the primary vehicle for the manifestation of different ideologies.<sup>67</sup> China also played a vital role in the post-war era in providing technical and financial aid to developing countries in which architecture as an aid became the main driver in its nonaligned diplomatic

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64 Avermaete, 'Coda: The Reflexivity of Cold War Architectural Modernism'.

65 A casual relation between aid and politics and soft powers, see: Michael Faye and Paul Niehaus, 'Political Aid Cycles', *American Economic Review* 102, no. 7 (2012): 3516–30; Colin Alexander, 'The Soft Power of Development: Aid and Assistance as Public Diplomacy Activities', *Handbook of Communication for Development and Social Change*, 2020, 407–20.

66 Kanbur, 'The Economics of International Aid'.

67 Duanfang Lu, *Third World Modernism: Architecture, Development and Identity* (Routledge, 2010); Stanek, 'Introduction: The "Second World's" Architecture and Planning in the "Third World"'.

mission.<sup>68</sup>

The BRI is China's latest form of development aid, and it seeks to internationalize its infrastructure development model, create conditions for profitable overseas investment and strengthen China's presence as a political and economic superpower.<sup>69</sup> The top-selling quality of China's infrastructure or urban models, as proposed by Chinese state construction companies, is its rapid and efficient development and high returns. It is highly suitable in developing countries as it has already brought millions of Chinese people out of poverty.<sup>70</sup> Second, China has long-standing experience in providing development or, more specifically, construction aid to developing countries. The BRI is not the only development aid program ever proposed or conceived by China. China has disseminated several important architecture projects under the flag of development aid schemes. In the Mao era, the development aids in China followed the "three world theory" (first world is USA and Soviet, second is in between countries such as Europe, Japan etc. and third world is developing countries such as Africa and Asian and Latin American countries) to gain political support from developing countries to work together against dominating powers.<sup>71</sup> In Deng Xiaoping's time, these aids were gradually converted from benevolent aids to mutual economic aids, directly related to the financial growth objectives established by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and proclaimed economically beneficial for both parties. In this period, China's architecture gifts to developing

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68 Cole Roskam, 'Non-Aligned Architecture: China's Designs on and in Ghana and Guinea, 1955-92', *Architectural History* 58 (2015): 261-91; Vieira, 'From Third World Theory to Belt and Road Initiative: International Aid as a Chinese Foreign Policy Tool'.

69 Williams, Robinson, and Bouzarovski, 'China's Belt and Road Initiative and the Emerging Geographies of Global Urbanisation'.

70 Roggeveen, *Progress & Prosperity: The Chinese City as a Global Urban Model*.

71 Zhao and Jing, 'The Governance of China's Foreign Aid System: Evolution and Path Dependence'.

countries were meant to present a better image of China and enhance its soft power.<sup>72</sup>

Similarly, in the early 2000s, Beijing launched its “Going Global” strategy to encourage its biggest companies to invest abroad in widespread areas by supporting it with bilateral diplomatic ties and creating a favorable environment.<sup>73</sup> This strategy involved expanding the development aids, including architectural export in less developed countries to enhance its soft power and increase trade and mutual economic development.<sup>74</sup> The term soft power originated in the West and is aligned with the ideology of cultural imperialism<sup>75</sup>. China’s soft power differs slightly from the Western concept. Soft domination, along with development aid, in Chinese interventions is based on equal South–South transactions. These are merely cultural exchanges and not meant as political influences.<sup>76</sup> Architecture gifts are meant to increase cultural exchanges between two countries. The motivation to boost trade and economic investments perhaps requires a friendly business environment that could be achieved through people-to-people relations, culture exchanges and other familiar activities. In the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, several projects emerged, for example, the National Opera House of Algiers, Bangladesh China Friendship Centre and Senegal National Grand Theatre signifying China’s “Go Out” policy and new role in the global order.

Recently, this complex cooperation was rebranded as the BRI, with a comprehensive

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72 Vieira, ‘From Third World Theory to Belt and Road Initiative: International Aid as a Chinese Foreign Policy Tool’.

73 Gonzalez-Vicente, ‘The Internationalization of the Chinese State’.

74 Zhao and Jing, ‘The Governance of China’s Foreign Aid System: Evolution and Path Dependence’.

75 Mădălina Virginia Antonescu, ‘Imperialismul Cultural Sau „puterea Imperială Soft” În Ordinea Globală a Secolului XXI’, *Polis. Journal of Political Science* 2, no. 05 (2014): 194–219.

76 King, ‘China’s Aid and Soft Power in Africa’.

framework. The BRI differs slightly from previous Chinese aid and cooperation initiatives; besides geopolitical aims, it proffers free trade, culture exchanges, development projects and mutually beneficial cooperation in an organized institutional framework. The institutional framework of BRI involves several stakeholders in different stages as compared to previous collaborations. This framework and the actors of BRI are explained later.

Before BRI, much of China's architectural exports as development aid were influenced by the Soviet construction aid model. In the 1950s, China received substantial architecture and urban models from the Soviet Union, which influenced its architecture culture for decades and became an example of its architectural exports.<sup>77</sup> Moreover, Japan's development aid cooperation has had a significant influence on China's own aids.<sup>78</sup> Most of these aid architecture projects are exported with few influences from the receivers' side. These projects are mostly named as architecture gifts or friendship centers.<sup>79</sup> I use the term export here because it mainly entails "complete packages." The complete package involves executing the architecture project from the design to the construction completely by the donor's state-owned design institutes; even the construction material, interior decoration and construction equipment are imported from the donor's country.<sup>80</sup> I have interpreted this phenomenon as the exportation of a "complete package" or a

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77 Yan Li, 'In Search of a Socialist Modernity: The Chinese Introduction of Soviet Culture.', 2012; Roskam, 'Non-Aligned Architecture: China's Designs on and in Ghana and Guinea, 1955-92'.

78 Vieira, 'From Third World Theory to Belt and Road Initiative: International Aid as a Chinese Foreign Policy Tool'.

79 Roskam, 'Non-Aligned Architecture: China's Designs on and in Ghana and Guinea, 1955-92'.

80 See the Soviet model examples of palace of culture in Poland and Kabul university in Afghanistan which is precisely described in the research paper by: Beyer, 'Competitive Coexistence: Soviet Town Planning and Housing Projects in Kabul in the 1960s'.

See also China's examples of the Pak-China Friendship Center in Islamabad Pakistan

sort of architecture “othering” that excludes particular local norms. Any definition of colonialism could criticize it, and it could considerably impact the local identity, economy and so on. In the organized collaborative framework of BRI, the impact of this “complete package” phenomenon is mitigated to a reasonable extent. For instance, BRI ensures the involvement of local construction materials, workers and local technical experts such as architects in the decision-making process. It has created a “contact zone”<sup>81</sup> between different actors and interests with the prime motive of making the project sustainable and imbuing it in the local context.

In the contemporary period, China’s BRI development model works quite well in developing countries as compared to Western construction aids, because in developing countries there is a lack of technical expertise and high-tech construction materials, and there is a high rate of corruption. This is evident in the case of the US aid, in which the main US contractors subcontracted the construction project to several locals and international construction firms that frequently failed or got delayed in Afghanistan, Iraq and Pakistan. This occurred either because of security problems or faults in the construction tasks due to a lack of local technical expertise or changes in the original design because of improper management.<sup>82</sup>

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81 Pratt, ‘Arts of the Contact Zone’.

82 See many articles on construction delays and improper management: ‘Military Construction Delayed in Afghanistan by Push to Award Contracts to Afghan Firms’, *Fox News*, 27 March 2015, <https://www.foxnews.com/world/military-construction-delayed-in-afghanistan-by-push-to-award-contracts-to-afghan-firms>; David Gall and Carlotta Rohde, ‘Delays Hurting U.S. Rebuilding in Afghanistan.’, *The New York Times*, 11 July 2005, <https://www.nytimes.com/2005/11/07/world/asia/delays-hurting-us-rebuilding-in-afghanistan.html>.; ‘Contract Delays Led to Cost Overruns for the Kabul Power Plant and Sustainability Remains a Key Challenge.’ (SIGAR, 20 January 2010), <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/audits/2010-01-20audit-10-06.pdf>.

## **2.3 BRI Framework, Mechanism and Actors**

The institutional framework of BRI under which the architecture projects are realized is quite different from the normative transnational process. It can be illustrated with the example of Pakistan as a partner country of China in BRI. As mentioned earlier, The CPEC is a form of collaboration between the two countries within the framework of the BRI. There are six major economic corridors which refer to the new Eurasian land bridge.<sup>83</sup> CPEC is the flagship and an exemplary project of BRI.<sup>84</sup> The institutional framework of CPEC comprises of the Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC), which is the apex body of CPEC. Both parties of Pakistan and China co-chair the JCC. The representative of Pakistan is the Pakistan Government Ministry of Planning Commission and that of China is the National Development and Reform Commission of the People Republic of China. The CPEC portfolio consists of one plus five components where one represents the CPEC part of BRI, and the other five components are as follows:

### **1. Gwadar Port**

### **2. Energy Development**

### **3. Infrastructure Development**

### **4. Trade & Industrial Development**

### **5. Socio-Economic Development.**

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83 'Six Major Economic Corridors under Belt & Road Initiative .', Beltandroadnews, 16 April 2010, <https://www.beltandroad.news/2020/04/16/six-major-economic-corridors-under-belt-road-initiative/#:~:text=The%20Six%20Major%20Economic%20Corridors,China%2DIndochina%20Peninsula%20Economic%20Corridor.>

84 Shulin Lu, 'China-Pakistan Economic Corridor: A Flagship and Exemplary Project of "One Belt and One Road"', *Strategic Studies* 34, no. 4/1 (2014).



Each of these components has their respective joint working groups (JWG). The JWGs comprise of stakeholders from both China and Pakistan. Since the dissertation focuses on the case study of Gwadar, the JWG of Gwadar is highlighted. In this JWG, for example, the Pakistani stakeholders are the Pakistan Ministry of Commerce, Board of Investment Agency of Government Pakistan, Provincial Government of Balochistan, Gwadar Development Authority, Gwadar Port Authority, etc. Similarly, China has its own representatives. Under the JWG of Gwadar, there are several technical expert groups who research each project; for example, there is the technical group which looks after the Gwadar Free Zone, and there is another technical group which works for Gwadar city development etc. Likewise, China has its own technical group members. In the Gwadar port city, any project begins with technical groups. They work on an early feasibility study which is discussed in the co-chaired JWG meeting of the Gwadar port in the presence of both Pakistani and Chinese representatives. After the approval in the JWG stage, the feasibility study is matured for discussion in JCC meetings. The JCC meetings are held twice a year. The final project's acceptance takes place in this stage where both parties check its economic viability, social impacts, environmental impacts and financial mechanism. This is a complex but exciting transnational cooperative process.<sup>85</sup>

The focus of the present research is the architecture scale projects. After approval from the JCC, the project proceeds to the Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China (MOFCOM). They hire a Chinese state-owned design institute or construction company to do a feasibility study that comprises site inspection, local condition inspection and the assessment of factors such as culture, the environment, the weather or the construction market. This report also consists of financial costs. Subsequently, the MOFCOM announces a competition for the management and design of the construction

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85 Discussion with CPEC centre members and reading the shared documents of CPEC centre office. A significant amount of other information is also available in their official website. <https://cpec-centre.pk/#>

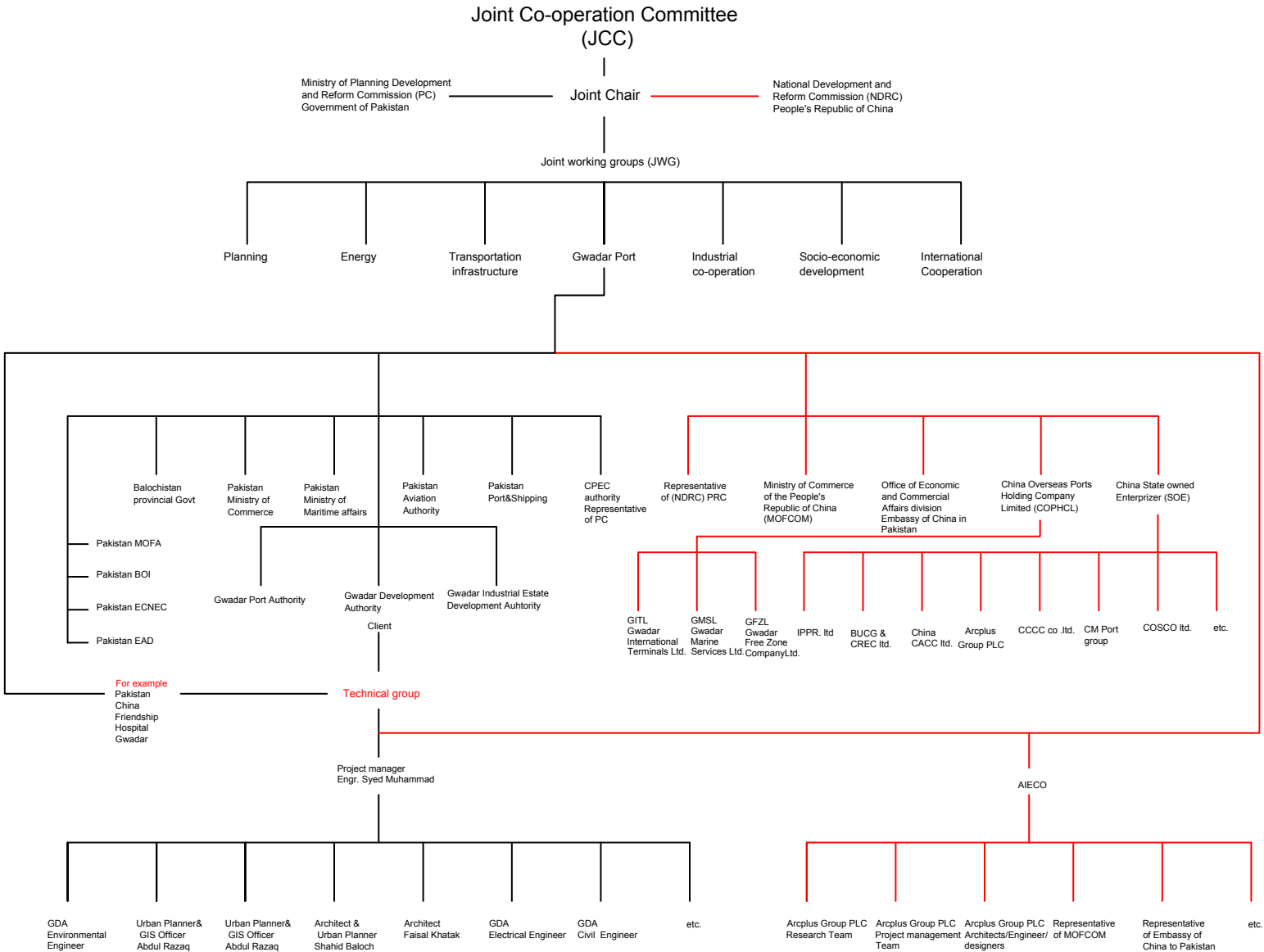


Figure 3: This is general example of coordination of different actors with in BRI institutional frame work.  
 Source: Figure by author information collected during field survey

project. The winner of the project could be any Chinese state-owned design institute. This institute again conducts an in-depth field survey that includes detail site inspection, local contexts, etc. Based on this, it designs the project with details of estimated costs, materials and other details. This design brief document is submitted to the MOFCOM, which hires a third party to discuss it. After negotiation and improvement, the design team is allowed to go again to Pakistan and present it to the technical group and other JWG members there. In this process, there is an intensive discussion held between both sides. The project, in this stage, is sometimes modified or improved, which varies from case to case. In the discussion, if the project is approved from the Pakistani side, then it proceeds for final approval from the MOFCOM. After approval from both Chinese and Pakistani parties, the construction tenders' bidding process commences. Then, MOFCOM hires any China state-owned construction company or group of Chinese companies to do the construction tasks via a competition<sup>86</sup>. Meanwhile, the design institute supervises the architectural design of the project on a timely basis, with a MOFCOM representative as the technical project manager.<sup>87</sup>

As mentioned above, the intensive collaboration negates the speculations of BRI enabling China as a solitary actor in architectural productions; within the institutional framework of BRI, the receiving side also has considerable influence. BRI gained its

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86 Note. This happens only in grant aid project which is completely financed by China. While in other cases where China government is providing loan then Pakistan's relevant department do a hiring process but with a condition to select a Chinese company. In some cases Pakistani side urged China to provide loan where Pakistani national construction company could work.

87 The architecture scale project was analyzed from the field survey which gave enough information. From the Chinese side, the article of Tian Ren is high influential as well as other online documents. Ren Tian, 'Analysis of Key Points in the Design of Foreign Aid Airport Construction Projects and Countermeasures: Taking Pakistan's New Gwadar International Airport Project Design as an Example(援外机场建设项目设计要点分析及对策研究——以巴基斯坦新瓜达尔国际机场项目设计为例)', *建筑与装饰 (Architecture and Decoration)*, Jianzhu Yu Zhuangshi, no. 15 (2018): 16-19.

inspiration from the cultural meaning of the old silk road.<sup>88</sup> The ancient silk road, a trade route from the East to the West, provided knowledge exchanges, cultural exchanges, and prosperity.<sup>89</sup> This inspiration is somehow concretized in the BRI framework. I interpret that the BRI is not a one-way show as it is mostly exaggerated in several geopolitical research articles that speculate on the idea of neocolonialism and imperialism. Instead, it is an exchange of ideas where both parties play significant roles. In case of the architecture transfers from China to developing countries, they are considerably modified, appropriated or diffused in the local contexts by cross-cultural architecture negotiations between the two sides. For instance, the receiving side in the case of Pakistan has established CPEC research centers and different technical expert groups that aim to double-check every project to make a construction project sustainable, providing the cultural specificity and making it liable to other local conditions. The construction projects also pass through the Pakistani bureaucrat system, causing several delays in each project. In public media, it was generally presented that CPEC is halted by Imran Khan, the new Prime Minister of Pakistan. In such a situation of international or domestic pressure, the Prime Minister of Pakistan approved the CPEC authority and appointed a retired Pakistani general called Asim Saleem Bajwa as the chairman of CPEC to expedite the CPEC project with a purpose to by-pass the many bureaucratic levels.<sup>90</sup>

The BRI institutional framework demonstrates multi-disciplinary research work under every JWG, which consists of economists, geographers, urban planners, security officers, chemical engineers, geological engineers, civil engineers, etc. Both sides (Pakistan

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88 Jonathan Clements, *A History of the Silk Road* (Haus Publishing, 2014).

89 Ibid.

90 'NA Passes Constitutional Amendment Granting Sovereignty to CPEC.', *Archive Pakistan Today*, 16 July 2020, <https://archive.pakistantoday.com.pk/2020/07/18/na-passes-constitutional-amendment-granting-sovereignty-to-cpec/>; 'NA Panel Clears CPEC Authority Bill with Majority Vote', *DAWN.COM*, 18 November 2020, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1590937>.

and China) expertise collaborates in the research as well as from the inception to the execution of the projects. It is deemed to provide equal weightage in the decision-making process from both sides. The aim is to make their research contribution in making these projects sustainable.<sup>91</sup>

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91 Discussion with CPEC center members and fetching documents. CPEC center is a research group working under the Pakistan Planning Commission whose task is to do research on CPEC projects and make their contribution in the sustainability of the projects. The author visited several times to their office in Islamabad several times.

## **PART 2. ISSUE**

### Chapter 3. Architecture for the “Other”: Between Ideology, Complexity and Criticism

*“Our interdisciplinary, collaborative ethos naturally extends to embrace the aspirations of our clients and the users of the buildings and spaces we design. This outward-looking and inclusive attitude equip us well to respond to new cultures and contexts with curiosity and enthusiasm to work in partnership rather than impose. Moreover, when we engage in projects overseas, our vast multi-sector experience provides our clients with cutting edge expertise informed by an international, not parochial, outlook.”<sup>92</sup> (Bruce Kennedy)*

When architects move abroad to create a design scheme for a particular project in regions other than their own, they are certainly exposed to a conflict of differences in building practices, culture, heritage, history, geography, views, interests and socio-economic conditions. The intensity of differences rises when moving from one continent to another; for instance, a Western architect in Asia or Africa or vice versa. The more different the variables are, the more conflicts they face. Besides these differences, we witness more and more architecture expertise circulating across the globe in contemporary times due to new legal arrangements and international trade agreements under the banner of development aid cooperation and advanced communication technologies. However, these cross-cultural conditions in which architects work is not a new phenomenon. Throughout history, building practices and knowledge have flowed from one place to another along with the circulation of goods in trades and people’s travels.<sup>93</sup> We can

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92 Bruce Kennedy, ‘Cross Border Design’, BDP, accessed 23 May 2021, <https://www.bdp.com/en/latest-thought-pieces/cross-border-design/>.

93 Circulation of architecture models due to new legal systems; see in: Akcan, ‘Postcolonial Theories in Architecture’; Avermaete et al., ‘Crossing Boundaries’.

see the same phenomenon in the old silk road. The ancient silk road is full of exciting stories, trades, harmonious cultural exchanges, knowledge exchanges and of course, the flow of building practices.<sup>94</sup> Perhaps, this old silk road concept became the inspiration for the 21st-century silk road that President Xi Jinping proposed. This forward-looking attitude is a reasonably fresh start to seek a harmonious flow of cross-culture architecture knowledge exchanges.

In recent decades, this issue of differences have incited several architecture scholars and historians to study such cases from the colonial to postcolonial contexts to contemporary globalization. The point of departure of this chapter is to deal with such an affair of differences in the cross-cultural condition where the mobilities of architecture occur under the banner of development aid cooperation. There is a vast history of architecture and its productions where we can see exhilarating cases of transcultural and trans-disciplinary exchanges among architects; however, the focus of this study is on mobilities under the development aid cooperation. Development aid cooperation comprises the government-to-government cooperation, aid agency-to-government cooperation and non-governmental organization (NGO) aid agencies, where the architecture expertise circulates within the set of goals defined by these institutions. BRI involves government-to-government cooperation, and architecture knowledge flows under their mutual institutions' guidelines and surveillance, as discussed in the previous chapter. These cross-cultural architecture exchanges differ from individual mobilities such as architectural firms of OMA, Skidmore Owings & Merrill, etc. where individuals move across borders and offer them embodied experiences without the involvement of so many complex processes and actors.

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Under development aid, see: Avermaete, 'Coda: the reflexivity of Cold war architectural modernism'

94 Frankopan, *The Silk Roads: A New History of the World*.



### 3.1 Architecture Exchanges and Complexities

In the last two decades, a significant amount of research has come up that comprises a range of cases from the late colonial network and its extension to the postcolonial period and the post-war era, in the context of the network of Western-based development aid and financial institutions. The scientific research approach was shifted from focusing on the issues of style and form to studies discussing the Cold War politics of postcolonial architecture or addressing complex actors shaping the urban landscapes. Some other scholars drew attention to a number of new actors including patrons, technical consultants, construction managers, anthropologist, financial experts, etc. New issues emerged from the cooperation under development aid organizations, including not only exchanges from West to non-West countries but also from socialist countries to the Global South. The scholars presented how modern architecture was translated, appropriated or adapted to local climatic or socio-economic conditions, negotiations between modern and indigenous architecture vocabularies, experimentations, local laborers and vernacular construction method contributions and the complex interactions among actors and agencies as well as their interests and political ambitions. These encounters created an creative architecture that was no more said to be an imitation of Global North models but the innovation of its logics.<sup>95</sup> In today's globalization scenario, we can take these 20<sup>th</sup> century experiments of architecture exchanges as a reference point from a critical

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95 See: Paulo Moreira, 'Colonial Modern. Aesthetics of the Past—Rebellions for the Future, by Tom Avermaete, Serhat Karakayali and Marion Von Osten', *Estudo Prévio-Revista Do Centro de Estudos de Arquitectura, Cidade e Território* 15 (2019); Crinson, *Modern Architecture and the End of Empire*; Volait and Nasr, *Urbanism: Imported or Exported? Native Aspirations and Foreign Plans*; Jeffrey W Cody, *Exporting American Architecture, 1870-2000* (Psychology Press, 2003); Avermaete et al., 'Crossing Boundaries'; Model House Research Group, *De La Source Transcultural Modernisms*; Stanek, 'Introduction: The "Second World's" Architecture and Planning in the "Third World"'; Stanek, *Architecture in Global Socialism: Eastern Europe, West Africa, and the Middle East in the Cold War*; Akcan, *Architecture in Translation: Germany, Turkey, and the Modern House*; Levin, 'Exporting Zionism: Architectural Modernism in Israeli-African Technical Cooperation, 1958-1973'.

distance and reflect on the roles, approaches and tools that the leading architects and urban planners in both individual or aggregate forms of that particular period employed and what they have produced.<sup>96</sup>

As mentioned before, the general methodologies of these studies moving beyond the previous ones that were mostly based on the West/non-West, import/export model (unilateral influences), center/periphery, dominator/dominated, global/local, modern/traditional, etc. This new researches includes comprehensive research methods for the development of the complex mobility process in transcultural phenomena using the concepts of “translation”, “exchange”, “mutual comparison” and “contact zones”. These new academic research perspectives are better prepared to understand the ambiguities or complexities of cross-cultural exchanges of specific architectural models in the postcolonial context. It can record the complex engagement of actors, patrons, aid agencies, political motivations, interests and construction companies, the legal system, etc.<sup>97</sup> It

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96 The online journal *Architecture Beyond Europe* has scores of articles, focused on 20th century; see in Lagae and De Raedt, ‘Global Experts’ off Radar”;

The cross-cultural architecture exchanges from socialist countries to the Global South; see :Stanek, *Architecture in Global Socialism: Eastern Europe, West Africa, and the Middle East in the Cold War*;

Recent issue about the the transcultural experts practicing in global south; examples from post-war to contemporary “global” period; see in: Avermaete et al., ‘Crossing Boundaries’.

97 A transnational novel mode of history writing, linked to global travel, collaboration and exchange, questions passive conceptual metaphors such as import/export, as well as the often-unidirectional notion of influence, and instead registers the complexities and ambiguities of cross-cultural interrelations using concepts such as translation, exchange and ‘reciprocal comparison. In her PhD dissertation, Esra Akcan used the literary metaphor of translation as a way to understand the global circulation of culture. See: Esra Akcan, *Modernity in Translation: Early Twentieth-Century German-Turkish Exchanges in Land Settlement and Residential Culture* (Columbia University, 2005). She further developed the argument of the liberating and colonial effects see in: Esra Akcan, *Architecture in translation: Germany, Turkey, and the modern house* (Duke University Press, 2012). For studies that address the complexities of cross-cultural exchange, see, for example, Avermaete et al., ‘Crossing Boundaries’. The method of “reciprocal comparison” elucidates how developments in “peripheries” are no longer compared to Europe but to other

provides a sophisticated theoretical reflection to understand transnational modes of transfer from West to Non-West and but also the multipolar globalization. These theoretical reflections and methodologies are beneficial in researching the complex process of this cross-cultural architecture exchanges within the framework of BRI in developing countries. It will make this research possible to uncover new geographies of transculturalism, new actors, new institutional mechanisms, agencies, construction companies, designing institutes and contemporary issues.

In the next section, I explain the concept of “othering” in architecture, which is critical for understanding cross-cultural architecture exchanges.

### **3.2 “Othering” in Architecture**

Postcolonial theories, besides other aspects, involve a sound reflection on the differences in cross-cultural architecture exchanges. They emphasize the asymmetrical relation between the West and non-Western contexts from colonial to postcolonial contexts. It centers around the philosophy of the “other,” that is, the Western ideology which sees the “other” as weak and uncivilized and the “self” as powerful, civilized, etc. Othering is a phenomenon in which certain cultures, arts of individuals or groups in a particular place are defined and marked as not complying with their (self) norms. This has generated “othering” mechanisms (denial of “otherness,” excluding the “other” or working for the “self”).<sup>98</sup> have extracted this concept of “othering” mechanisms in architecture

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previously colonized regions. See, for example, G Alex Bremner, *Imperial Gothic: Religious Architecture and High Anglican Culture in the British Empire, c. 1840-1870* (Yale University Press New Haven and London, 2013).

98 Other philosophy has different meanings under different subjects such as psychology, ethics, sociology, culture etc. But we are interested in its meaning which alters the identity within the artform praxis. In colonial settings, the subaltern native is a colonial constructed identity for the “other”, conceptually derived from the logic of cultural hegemony of Antonio Gramsci, an Italian neo-Marxist intellectual. The

from the postcolonial theories in architecture to see it in new relations that are not West-East but East-South, or that which characterizes multi-dimensional globalization, where one country is a developed or powerful state and the other is not. Under such conditions, how does the donor side perceive the culture, realities, conditions and contexts of

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cultural hegemony he describes can be achieved with a certain ideology without violence; Read more in his prison notes on cultural hegemony. The other is a psychological phenomenon; the psychological meaning, For example, imperialism is a civilizing mission to equate "the other" with the "self". This means that the culture of the metropole, or more precisely the architecture of the metropole, can be exported to the colony in order to modernize it. The cultural representation 'self' has the authority to construct new identity in different places and at different times; particularly, colonial regimes have used their own architectural identity to symbolize their authority or, based on the Foucauldian principle of power/knowledge, they have appropriated indigenous architectural knowledge and structural and semiotic forms to construct new, hybridized forms of design, hoping, in this way, to domesticate or naturalize power in the interests of their own regimes. This process has been well documented, whether in relation to the British in India; see in Thomas R Metcalf, *An Imperial Vision: Indian Architecture and Britain's Raj* (University of California Press Berkeley, 1989). The French in north Africa; see in Wright, *The politics of design in French colonial urbanism*. The Dutch in Indonesia; see in Kusno, *Behind the postcolonial: Architecture, urban space, and political cultures in Indonesia.*, or, in different, non-colonial circumstances, for instance Americans in China; see in Broudehoux, "Learning from Chinatown: The Search for a Modern Chinese Architectural Identity, 1911-1998." Similarly Said, Homi Bhabha and many others have contributed on postcolonial theories, especially 'orientalism' a cultural representation phenomenon. Zeynep Çelik Alexander is an architectural historian, she has well elaborated this binary philosophy in architecture discourses.

Besides the transnational study models by Edward, "Orientalism." Nezar al sayyad compiled a book on form of dominance see: Nezar AlSayyad, *Hybrid Urbanism: On the Identity Discourse and the Built Environment* (Greenwood Publishing Group, 2001) and the subaltern studies a few years later, scholars such as Swati Chattopadhyay and Mark Crinson, for example, have criticized architectural histories' strong Euro-American bias by directing their focus toward architectures of the southern hemisphere. Chattopadhyay, *Depicting Calcutta*. Crinson, *Modern architecture and the end of empire*. See also special issue on "othering" in journal of architecture education: Southcott and Theodore, "Othering." Metcalf, *An Imperial Vision: Indian Architecture and Britain's Raj*; Wright, *The Politics of Design in French Colonial Urbanism*; Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space, and Political Cultures in Indonesia*; Broudehoux, 'Learning from Chinatown: The Search for a Modern Chinese Architectural Identity, 1911-1998'; Edward, 'Orientalism'; Chattopadhyay, *Depicting Calcutta*; Crinson, *Modern Architecture and the End of Empire*; AlSayyad and al-Sayyad, *Hybrid Urbanism: On the Identity Discourse and the Built Environment*; Southcott and Theodore, 'Othering'.

the receiving side and include the participation of its actors? The main purpose of the introduction is to ensure architectural best practices for the global future so that globalization does not evolve into a new form of imperial imagination.<sup>99</sup> Many of the recent studies on architecture exchanges under development cooperation, as discussed before, passively used postcolonial theories.<sup>100</sup> It is a weak critical stance about the issues related to specific regional architecture's characteristics or style, culture values, aesthetic preferences and social spaces as well as standards and representations in architecture, particularly with a healthy point of view from the receiving side. Indeed, the architecture exchanges in the cooperation mechanism differ from the ideology of imperialism. Nevertheless, adding the concept of "othering" to a cooperation mechanism, in which complex mutual negotiations in architecture act as evaluating tools, could lead to a better understanding.

"Othering" in architecture is an ideological critique of cultural imperialism to examine if and how it connects architecture and neocolonialism. Along with other philosophers, Levinas criticized or acknowledged that the Western philosophies took the aspect of "self" for all understanding and perceptions. These understandings led to thinking of the "other" as a reflection of the "self" or to understanding the relationship with "other," which has created a negative tendency to dominate the "other" due to its otherness.<sup>101</sup> The subaltern natives is a colonially constructed identity for the "other,"

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99 Akcan, 'Postcolonial Theories in Architecture'.

100 See: Avermaete et al., 'Crossing Boundaries'; Model House Research Group, *De La Source Transcultural Modernisms*; Stanek, 'Introduction: The "Second World's" Architecture and Planning in the "Third World"'; Stanek, *Architecture in Global Socialism: Eastern Europe, West Africa, and the Middle East in the Cold War*; Levin, 'Exporting Zionism: Architectural Modernism in Israeli-African Technical Cooperation, 1958-1973'.

101 See: Ted Honderich, *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy* (OUP Oxford, 2005); Paul Edwards, 'The Encyclopedia of Philosophy', *New York 2* (1967): 176; John Rieder, *Colonialism and the Emergence of Science Fiction* (Wesleyan University Press, 2012).

which is conceptually derived from the cultural hegemony logic of Antonio Gramsci, an Italian Neo-Marxist intellectual.<sup>102</sup> Cultural hegemony or the ideological supremacy of imperialism has served much of the discourses on colonialism and is still making its claim in neocolonialism in contemporary globalization. This production of abstraction concretizes in a physical object, and that could be a form of art and architecture. In the colonialism discourse, the architecture “othering” was realized to serve a colonial mission.<sup>103</sup> Said revealed that the oriental Western expression, whether academic or artistic, forms a fictional border between the East and the West and the orientalist and the orient, with exotic, fantastic, irrational fears and Western rational progressives.<sup>104</sup> In the civilizing mission or universalizing by erasing differences,<sup>105</sup> as Lefebvre argues, ideology is designed to conceal the intrinsic conflicts, thus creating an abstraction that controls the proletariat<sup>106</sup> or the “others.” Recent history of architecture also exemplifies that the “other” is used as a platform for modern Western architecture experimentations.<sup>107</sup>

In the postcolonial era, according to Anthony D. King, there existed:

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102 The cultural hegemony a concept introduced by Antonio Gramsci.

103 See Metcalf, *An Imperial Vision: Indian Architecture and Britain's Raj*; Wright, *The Politics of Design in French Colonial Urbanism*; Paul Rabinow, *French Modern: Norms and Forms of the Social Environment* (University of Chicago Press, 1995).

104 Edward, ‘Orientalism’.

105 See in: Fischer-Tiné, Fischer-Tiné, and Mann, *Colonialism as Civilizing Mission: Cultural Ideology in British India*; Metcalf, *An Imperial Vision: Indian Architecture and Britain's Raj*; Wright, *The Politics of Design in French Colonial Urbanism*.

106 Lefebvre, ‘The Social Production of Space, Translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith’.

107 See: D Soltsz, ‘Casablanca: Colonial Myths and Architectural Ventures.’, 2003; Tom Avermaete et al., *De La Source Casablanca Chandigarh: A Report on Modernization* (distributeur Canadian Centre for Architecture; Park Books, 2017); Esra Akcan, ‘Global Conict and Global Glitter: Architecture of West Asia (1960–2010)’, in *A Critical History of Contemporary Architecture* (Routledge, 2016), 339–66; Lu, ‘Third World Modernism: Utopia, Modernity, and the People's Commune in China’.

*“the persistence of cultural imperialism in an arguably post-colonial world.”*<sup>108</sup>

While some other scholars have criticized the exportation of modern architecture and its variants such as tropical architecture through contemporary globalization, the exported architecture continues as an ideology of indirect Western cultural and technological supremacy and the imperialism on the “other.”<sup>109</sup> King further argued that we need a framework to understand these transnational economic and political processes; the states of several nations have exercised hegemonic influences on other states at different historical times: for example, the hegemony of Dutch in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the British in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the United States or the Soviet Union in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and probably the United States today.<sup>110</sup> Two grand projects in the post-war context, i.e., the US Marshall Plan and the Soviet Union’s Molotov Plan, aided development in war-torn and developing countries. In this Cold War era, these superpowers initiated their political economic and cultural agenda to influence the “others.”<sup>111</sup> Several geopolitical scholars have compared the Beijing-backed BRI with the US Marshall Plan and the Soviet Union’s Molotov plan. These scholars considered that BRI could follow few of the same hegemonic roles as previous US and Soviet models did; however, both are in different

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108 See post-colonial challenges: Mittal Institute, *Transnational Urbanism and Post-Colonial Challenges*, 2015, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jv2b715gf8o&ab\\_channel=MittalInstitute](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jv2b715gf8o&ab_channel=MittalInstitute); Wei Chang, Charlie Xue, and Guanghui Ding, ‘Architecture of Diplomacy: Chinese Construction Aid in Asia, 1950–1976’, *ARENA Journal of Architectural Research* 4, no. 1 (2019); Stanek, ‘Introduction: The “Second World’s” Architecture and Planning in the “Third World”’; Avermaete, ‘Coda: The Reflexivity of Cold War Architectural Modernism’.

109 See: Nezar AlSayyad, *Forms of Dominance on the Architecture and Urbanism of the Colonial Enterprise* (Avebury, 1992); Anthony King, *Spaces of Global Cultures: Architecture, Urbanism, Identity* (Routledge, 2004); Crinson, *Modern Architecture and the End of Empire*.

110 King, *Spaces of Global Cultures: Architecture, Urbanism, Identity*.

111 Liu and Dunford, ‘Inclusive Globalization: Unpacking China’s Belt and Road Initiative’.

contexts, making it too early to suggest that BRI could have some similarities with the Marshall Plan<sup>112</sup> as it stood forward to challenge the US monopoly, and China claims the BRI as facilitating open and inclusive globalization.<sup>113</sup>

In the next chapter, I present the case studies in which the architecture projects under BRI depicts no intention of imposing China's architecture. Instead, Gwadar, for instance, demonstrates a conducive environment where Chinese architects research local pastiches and understand local culture with the help of Pakistani collaborators. Both parties engage in detailed discussions on architectural projects and debate its compatibility with regard to local conditions, sustainability factors, etc. and that results into an eclectic but pragmatic architecture. I argue in this dissertation that it is a two-way process; both China and Pakistan's architecture cultures are influenced by each other in this case. I support my argument by putting forward detailed reflections on transcultural architecture negotiations, mutual learning and knowledge exchanges with examples in the case study section. There is some "othering" in the architecture on which I provide some reflections in the conclusion and discussion part. In the case of Gwadar, as I discuss in the conclusion, these few instances of architecture "othering" are not drawbacks from only Chinese technical experts but also stakeholders from Pakistan. Further, I share some reflections on how to rectify these architectural projects under the BRI model to refrain from some of these "othering process" in architecture.

### **3.3 Transcultural Architecture as a "Contact Zone" or "Third Space"**

China and its partner countries under BRI's institutional framework demonstrate an

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112 Simon Shen and Wilson Chan, 'A Comparative Study of the Belt and Road Initiative and the Marshall Plan', *Palgrave Communications* 4, no. 1 (2018): 1–11.

113 Wang Wen, 'Belt and Road Initiative Is Not "Marshall Plan"', *CGTN*, 21 April 2019, <https://news.cgtn.com/news/3d3d514d7a59544d34457a6333566d54/index.html>.



exchange of goods, culture, views, ideas and knowledge. The architecture projects under BRI are not merely architectural exports from China but an intense transcultural phenomenon. I explain this transcultural phenomenon as “contact zone” or “third space” where both cultures are manifested in the architecture. Sometimes, the donor culture supersedes the receiving culture or vice versa. This transcultural architecture is an exciting product of this unique process of BRI.

### 3.3.1. Transculturalism

Transculturalism can be defined as “*seeing yourself in others.*”<sup>114</sup> It is intended to negotiate our global realities as every locale has its own peculiar culture. Therefore, we must think of others by seeing everyone as if they were us and engage common sense, rationality and empathy in treating the “other.”<sup>115</sup> The term transculturalism was first coined in 1940 by South American scholar Fernando Ortiz:

*“I am of the opinion that the word transculturation better expresses the different phases of the process of transition from one culture to another because this does not consist merely in acquiring another culture, which is what the English word acculturation really implies, but the process also necessarily involves the loss or uprooting of a previous culture, which can be defined as a deculturation. In addition, it carries the idea of the consequent creation of new cultural phenomena, which could be*

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114 Donald Cuccioletta, ‘Multiculturalism or Transculturalism: Towards a Cosmopolitan Citizenship’, *London Journal of Canadian Studies* 17, no. 1 (2001): 1–11.

115 ‘Definition of Transculturalism’, accessed 8 August 2020, Definition of transculturalism; see <http://www.transculturalfoundation.org/what-is-transculturalism/>.

*called neoculturation.*"<sup>116</sup>

Ortiz introduced transculturalism to replace the various misleading expressions such as cultural exchanges, acculturation, diffusion, migration, osmosis of culture and similar ones that he considered inadequate.<sup>117</sup> Bronisław Malinowski discusses the Fernando Ortiz ideas; In scientific research, there is probably nothing more misleading than the problem of finding the right concepts or phrases that correspond to the facts. Therefore, choosing an appropriate term for a process or fact can be a useful tool in acquiring the knowledge. He approved with Ortiz and criticized the term acculturation which monopolized the field of studies, specifically sociology or anthropology.<sup>118</sup> He further elaborated on transculturalism as follows:

*“Every change of culture, or, as I shall say from now on, every transculturation, is a process in which something is always given in return for what one receives, a system of giving and take. It is processed in which both parts of the equation are modified, a process from which a new reality emerges, transformed and complex, a reality that is not a mechanical agglomeration of traits, nor even a mosaic, but a new phenomenon, original and independent. To describe this the word trans-culturation, stemming from Latin roots, the process provides us with a term that does not contain the implication of one certain culture toward which the other must tend, but an exchange between two cultures, both of them active, both contributing their share and both co-operating to bring about*

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116 Fernando Coronil, Fernando Ortiz, and Harriet de Onís, ‘Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar’, 1995.

117 Ibid.

118 Ibid, Introduction by Bronisław Malinowski, x.

*a new reality of civilization.*"<sup>119</sup>

Transculturalism is a two-way process that influences, displaces and reconstructs each other.

Transculturalism is not a new concept; however, this technical term is getting significant attention in scientific studies on the topics of cross-cultural architecture dialogue and productions and, more specifically, architecture exchanges between the Global North and Global South. There was a recent issue on "Crossing Boundaries. Transcultural Practices in Architecture and Urbanism" in OASE journal. It attracted several authors to reflect on the transcultural reading of architecture in the post-war context and urban projects from the Global North to Global South, including Constantinos Doxiadis, Michel Écochard, Jacqueline Tyrh Witt, Otto Koenigsberger, Maxwell Fry and Jane Drew. It also presented recent projects by some notable architecture studios working as transcultural experts in the Global South.<sup>120</sup> In an influential book by Thorsten Botz-Bornstein titled "Transcultural Architecture: The Limits and Opportunities of Critical Regionalism," the author has abundantly used the term transculturalism. He accentuated the term to explain his cross-cultural architecture concepts and urge a critical stance required in transculturalism. For a critical part of transculturalism, it highlighted both opportunities and limits on the theories of critical regionalism.<sup>121</sup> These two crucial works were published in the same year, 2015. The literal meaning of the term transculturalism is utilized in the OASE journal issue mentioned previously. The issue demonstrates the reflections on the production of architecture and urbanism in the context of multidirectional encounters, negotiations and collaborations without minimizing asymmetric relationships.

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119 Ibid, x-xi.

120 Avermaete et al., 'Crossing Boundaries'.

121 Botz-Bornstein, *Transcultural Architecture: The Limits and Opportunities of Critical Regionalism*.

The articles discussed the architect and planner as transcultural experts negotiating the modern architecture or its variants in the Global South. It include: the Doxiadis' transcultural concepts of a Science of Human Settlements, i.e., "Ekistics," Michel Écochard's interdisciplinary methods for transcultural issues and Otto's institutionalizing of tropical architecture for transcultural experiments. However, the articles illustrated little or few elaborations on the term transculturalism. Nevertheless, the Botz-Bornstein book presents several critical insights on transculturalism as a metaphor or as an architectural concept with relevant examples of architecture projects.

According to Botz-Bornstein, transculturalism is not just a random blend of several cultures but a critical process and activity. He then stated the general definition of transculturalism as follows:

*"Transculturalism transcends all particular cultures and invents a new common culture that is not meant to be a new universalism."*<sup>122</sup>

He argues that although transculturalism can function without any critical input, in some cases, critical thinking is required to balance both the central and peripheral elements. Thus, a critical philosophy and intellectual justification are mandatory to establish creative equilibrium. The primary critical approach in transcultural architecture is the ability to adapt to the local context.<sup>123</sup>

The two similar words, transculturalism and multiculturalism, may create confusion. Botz-Bornstein stated that it is necessary to differentiate these two terms to avoid any misinterpretation. Transculturalism transcends all particular cultures and invents a new shared culture, but multiculturalism leads to the ghettoization. In transculturalism, the

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122 Ibid, 2-3.

123 Ibid.

contact of the self with the “other” should lead to the construction of multiple identities.<sup>124</sup> Meanwhile, the critics of multiculturalism state that in multiculturalism, different cultures meet, interact and learn from each other without comprising their identities. It is sustainable and desirable.<sup>125</sup> In his defense of transculturalism, Botz-Bornstein argues that transculturalism adopts the different regional cultures and rearticulates it in such a way that each cultural element reinforces each other’s values. Transculturalism does not lead to clichés but a creative synthesis of cultural elements that can make sense in their own logic. In another sense, in transculturalism, each culture manages to survive but works best to locate itself in a newly established transcultural context. It is not a compromise, but a juxtaposition embedded in an overarching structure to produce logical lines of communication between diverse elements. He then presented some examples of a Hindu temple from the late 17th century in Goa to expose the European influences which are transcultural. A glass tower with an Islamic arch as the entrance is not a critical approach to contextualize it and is not transcultural. In another example, he described the Asiatic style residence in Dubai, which is very similar to a Japanese temple. He argued that it is not transcultural but a commodity that is in the worst case driven by commercialization. He elaborated that the building’s semiotic significance is still essential in some cases and makes it an interesting subject to study, just as Jencks had highlighted about Las Vegas. In such cases, from the beginning to the end of the transformation process, the perception of these elements have never reached below the surface of the images. Consequently, it could not lead to the power of memory identities that are naturally present in that culture. Botz-Bornstein then related this phenomenon to postmodernism that no matter how much it is justified with intellectual breadth, it is the

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124 Ibid.

125 John Nagle, *Multiculturalism’s Double-Bind: Creating Inclusivity, Cosmopolitanism and Difference* (Routledge, 2016).

same.<sup>126</sup> He pointed out that when the lengthy process of cross-cultural negotiation leads to a new culture within which the old survives, this is positive transculturalism; however, the short process of cross-cultural exchanges need a critical approach.

Botz-Bornstein argued that mosaic is the best model to express transculturalism because it repudiates the idea of multicultural juxtaposition. In mosaic, the elements remain distinct but are creatively combined such that they are not universal but dependent on the parts. He further argued that it should not be confused with some cases where the elements do not coordinate with each other, which he called the multicultural mosaic; however, he discussed that the transcultural mosaic combines the individual under the general in a paradoxical manner, simply subsuming the individual under the general. He further related this mosaic model with Deleuze and Felix Guattari's rhizome model, which illustrates how different cultures can maintain their separate identities. However, they exist in permanent relation with each other. He discussed that the intermixing of different regional cultures as well as the modern corresponds to rhizomatic structures much more than the structure of the rational organism. However, he argued that this intermixing, hybridization and fusion will probably require a critical consciousness.

To explain the critical part of transculturalism, Bornstein used the service of critical regionalism. According to Bornstein, critical regionalism is part of transcultural architecture:

*“There is one problem is that the regional (no matter how critical it is) can easily be opposed to the transcultural because the latter clearly emanates from or is a consequence of globalization. Transculturalism is a form of internationalism and regionalism is opposed to any form of the latter for obvious reasons. Despite this, I define Critical Regionalism as*

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126 Botz-Bornstein, *Transcultural Architecture: The Limits and Opportunities of Critical Regionalism.*: 37-43.

*a subcategory of transculturalism. This means that Critical Regionalism is a part of Transcultural Architecture but does not represent the latter in its whole breadth.”*

The term critical regionalism was introduced by Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre in 1981 and in 1983 by Kenneth Frampton. According to these authors, critical regionalism emphasizes the placeness by considering contextual elements such as scenery, historical references, topography, climate, light and tectonic forms without falling into imitation and traditionalism or scenography. It does not aim to reinstall vernacular architecture but attempts to vernacularize modern architecture.<sup>127</sup> Critical regionalism is a complex and broad concept that requires dozens of articles and books to explain it; however, generally it opposes regionalism and historicism. Critical regionalism is essential to mention here because, in contemporary globalization, it is a powerful reference mostly utilized in discussions on North–South architecture mobilities.

There is a constant tension between what is critical and what is not. Bornstein believed that some of the present day’s critical inputs are more important than ever in any architecture, because the multicultural world we live in continuously challenges our critical and self-critical analytical capacities. The Western understanding of the critical architectural approach requires a particular philosophical interpretation of the relationship between history and the present that has developed in Western intellectual history. The problem is that such historical understanding does not necessarily apply equally in all cultures. Although the aim of critical regionalism is to help establish a local identity that counters Westernized globalization, critical regionalism itself is a Western concept that no Western culture will necessarily interpret in the same way.<sup>128</sup> In the postcolo-

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127 Ibid.

128 Ibid, 1-2.

nial situation, developing countries' modernizing ambitions and their political concerns behind the search for national cultural identity in architecture<sup>129</sup> obscure the Western concept of critical regionalism.<sup>130</sup> Keith Eggener discussed that critical regionalism is optimistically designed for colonialism or a modified version of imperialist nostalgia. Further, he explained that the construct is one that came from the outside and from positions of authority. On the one hand, it promises to protect the local identity from Western globalization; on the other, it comes from the same source.<sup>131</sup> Further, Bornstein agrees with Eggener but not wholly, and he argues that critical regionalism is beneficial in some cases. However, in some cases, it is problematic in the non-West context.<sup>132</sup> Thus, he brought our attention to transcultural architecture, and critical regionalism is a subcategory of the former to soften and negotiate according to the premise provided by local circumstances. This premise offers ample room for experimenting with transcultural architecture in the global south; however, it could be interesting to analyze it in the context of BRI where there is a new East–South relation.

The Bornstein notion of critical stance in transculturalism opens up several potential controversies and debates. In transculturalism, he stated that there is no fixed rule about how much it follows an endogenous or exogenous culture. His interpretation of transculturalism is about new culturalism, which is different from particular culture, but what about architecture eclecticism in transculturalism, which is the mixing of different historical architecture styles, both native and exotic? The term eclecticism is always

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129 Lawrence Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity* (Routledge, 2014).

130 Lawrence Vale's discussion hints that the Western concept of critical regionalism is ambivalent in the non-Western context.

131 Keith L Eggener, 'Placing Resistance: A Critique of Critical Regionalism', *Journal of Architectural Education* 55, no. 4 (2002): 228–37.

132 Botz-Bornstein, *Transcultural Architecture: The Limits and Opportunities of Critical Regionalism*: 1-5.



linked with the revival of the historical architecture style or historicism. However, if we analyze the literal meaning of eclecticism, for instance, in the Cambridge dictionary, we find the following:

*“Methods, beliefs, ideas, etc. that are eclectic combine whatever seem the best or most useful things from many different areas or systems, rather than following a single system.”*<sup>133</sup>

This term fits better in the context of transculturalism because according to its core idea, it implies getting inspiration from various sources that best fit the overarching structure rather than following rigid rules of critical regionalism or flexible rules of transcultural architecture as explained by Botz-Bornstein. According to the French historian Epron, eclecticism in architecture is original, progressive and pragmatic, in that it conforms to the general definition of modern architecture.<sup>134</sup> It invites us to rethink what is modern architecture; however, this is an extensive, separate discussion. Thus, to avoid it and return to the question of Bornstein in transcultural architecture, how much should culture be endogenous or exogenous? Therefore, I argue that transculturalism is not confined to critical regionalism, which Bornstein admitted as well. Thus, I propose a new term, that is, “new eclecticism” or “transcultural eclecticism.” The old eclecticism in architecture was a movement that began in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It is an architectural style where a single work incorporates a mixture of elements from earlier historical styles to create something new and original. This movement took place in different regions such as in France, as Epron explained. In such cases there are no cross-cultural architecture exchanges between two countries. The “new eclecticism in architecture” which I proposed is the by-product of the cross-cultural architectur-

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133 See definition of eclectic in Cambridge dictionary: ‘Eclectic’, accessed 25 May 2021, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/eclectic>.

134 Jean-Pierre Épron, *Comprendre l’éclectisme* (Éditions Norma, 1997).

al exchanges between two countries in a certain context, for example in architectural projects within the framework of the BRI. It is quite different than traditional eclectic architectural practices in their home countries. However, this new eclecticism does not mean adhering to the definition of multiculturalism. It fuses both endogenous and exogenous historical elements with no relation between the two, as explained by Bornstein. Definitely, this leads to banal architecture. Thus, I argue that the concept of “new eclecticism” can use the best suitable inspiration from different regional culture sources of both receiving and donor side countries and find a balance between the modern and traditional in a pragmatic manner. In another sense, the native traditional and modern architecture vocabularies can be emphasized to be recognizable, although Bornstein said that the historical pastiche is fake or bogus; however, I argue that it can make sense to the ordinary observer.

In my opinion, the cross-cultural architecture transactions in asymmetric relations leads to the urge for a critical attitude in order to defend oneself against the criticism of “othering” in architecture; otherwise, it would be entrapped within the dominating ideologies. In transculturalism, there must be a critical stance that balances regional culture and self-culture both objectively and subjectively. By subjective part, I am referring to architectural vocabularies which must satisfy the nostalgia for local subjects. The objective part concerns the articulation of architectural spaces which take into account the habits and customs of the residents. This is crucial as the end-users in the transnational architecture are mostly from the partner country rather than the donor country. My views are in agreement with Botz-Bornstein, who stated that the locals do possess power. In his case study of Pietila’s Kuwaiti Foreign Ministry, he concluded that ordinary Kuwaitis could not understand Pietila’s critical concepts, which is why he failed in his critical cross-cultural architecture or “non-style architecture” experimentation in a non-Western context. As discussed earlier, Bornstein believes that critical approaches are not the same in the West and non-West. The critical input from the West does not al-

ways work in the same way in the non-Western context.<sup>135</sup> From this point, I justify my argument that the non-West regions must be treated based on their own contexts. Thus, the word critical does not seem suitable in the context of transculturalism—the term pragmatic gives a more practical and realistic sense.

It is important to note that transculturalism is not enough to reveal all the potential aspects of cross-cultural architecture negotiations, articulations, syntheses, dialogues, etc. It is necessary to push the boundaries of transculturalism by deconstructing and decoding it into more effective terms for transcultural negotiations and literal meanings for architecture concepts. Other relevant or specific terms, such as contact zone and third space, can be utilized to deconstruct the phenomenon of transculturalism and reinforce our epistemological understanding of these architecture exchanges. As Ortiz discussed, the right terminology leads to the right required knowledge.<sup>136</sup> In the following section, I discuss the two similar but unique terms: contact zone and third space.

### **3.3.2. Contact Zone**

The contact zone is a fascinating concept introduced by Mary Louise Pratt.<sup>137</sup> This concept has gained popularity in several disciplines, such as the humanities, to interpret cross-cultural processes.<sup>138</sup> Recently, the notion of contact zone has also penetrated

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135 See case study of Kuwaiti Foreign Ministry designed by Pietila in: Botz-Bornstein, *Transcultural Architecture: The Limits and Opportunities of Critical Regionalism*.

136 Coronil, Ortiz, and de Onís, 'Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar'.102-3

137 Pratt, 'Arts of the Contact Zone'.

138 See museum as 'contact zones': James Clifford, *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century* (Harvard University Press, 1997).

into transcultural architecture research. Cross-cultural conditions create controversies, encounters, negotiations and dialogues, each of which are contact zones. According to Pratt, the contact zones are social spaces where transculturalism takes place, where cultures meet, clash and grapple with each other often in highly asymmetrical relations of power, in which power is negotiated and a struggle is occurs. The contact zone transcends cultural boundaries<sup>139</sup> and is a concept that enriches our epistemological understanding of transculturalism in architecture. The contact zone is used by scholars to search for dynamic, inclusive and global architecture histories. Researchers have been fascinated by certain moments and places in which trans-cultural and transdisciplinary exchanges of architectural knowledge develop.<sup>140</sup> The architecture projects of BRI aim for cooperation between China and its partner country. In this cooperation, there are several potential contact zones that are significant in the critical reading of cross-cultural architecture production.

Before advancing this concept of contact zones as a metaphor for understanding transculturalism, a profound reflection on its potential and perils are required. Marie Louise Pratt first introduced the concept of contact zones in the article “Arts of the Contact Zone” published in 1991.<sup>141</sup> In 1992, she further reflected on this idea in the book “Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation.”<sup>142</sup> These two works reflect the num-

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See also about museum and contact zones in Philipp Schorch, ‘Contact Zones, Third Spaces, and the Act of Interpretation’, *Museum & Society*, no. 1 (2013): 68–81; Christiane Brosius and Roland Wenzlhuemer, ‘Introduction–Transcultural Turbulences: Towards a Multi-Sited Reading of Image Flows’, in *Transcultural Turbulences* (Springer, 2012), 3–24.

139 Pratt, ‘Arts of the Contact Zone’.

140 Hernández and Nuijsink, ‘Architecture as Exchange’.

141 Pratt, ‘Arts of the Contact Zone’.

142 Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (routledge, 2007).

ber of contact zones' with several of examples.

One notable example is Guaman Poma's letter to King Philip III of Spain. In this example, she presented how Guaman Poma constructed his letter:

*"Guaman Poma constructs his text by appropriating and adapting pieces of the symbolic repertoire of the invaders. He does not simply imitate or reproduce it; he selects and adapts it along Andean lines to express (bilingually, mind you) Andean interests and aspirations."*<sup>143</sup>

Thus, by Pratt's account, interpreting Poma's letter requires understanding both Andean and Spanish cultures because of the bilingual usage of linguistic characters.

Further, Pratt related her concept of the contact zone concept with that of transculturation. She argued that the term was originally coined by Cuban sociologist Fernando Ortiz in 1940 to challenge overly reductive concepts of acculturation and assimilation used to characterize a culture under conquest. The subordinates usually have no control over what comes from the dominant culture; however, they can determine, to varying degrees, what gets absorbed by their own culture and what can be used for enhancing it. Thus, what she considered as transculturation is the "contact zone" phenomenon.<sup>144</sup> She further elaborated it as follows:

*"'Contact Zones' attempt to invoke the spatial and temporal copresence of subjects previously separated by geographic and historical disjunctions, and whose trajectories now intersect. By using the term "contact," I aim to foreground the interactive, improvisational dimensions of colonial encounters so easily ignored or suppressed by diffusionist*

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143 Pratt, 'Arts of the Contact Zone'.

144 Ibid.

*accounts of conquest and domination. A “contact” perspective emphasizes how subjects are constituted in and by their relations to each other. It treats the relations among colonizers and colonized, or travelers and “travelees,” not in terms of separateness or apartheid, but in terms of interaction, interlocking understandings and practices, often of copresence, within radically asymmetrical relations of power.”<sup>145</sup>*

With this, Pratt stated that Guamon Poma’s letter is product of contact zone and it is more decipherable to those who once ignored them in defense of a stable, centered sense of knowledge and reality. Because of this, Pratt stated that contact zones include the aspects of transculturation, collaboration, bilingualism, mediation, parody, denunciation, imaginary dialogue and vernacular expression.<sup>146</sup> Pratt’s concept of the contact zone is not limited to colonial encounters but widely applicable to every situation and time period. This particular concept is also critical and applicable in the reading of architectural production in cross-cultural architecture exchanges.

The concept of contact zone has been readily used by some architecture historians and intellectuals such as Tom Avermeate, who referred to it in the context of Cold War architecture knowledge transfers or exchanges under development programs. Avermeate discussed the mechanism of Cold War architecture transfers as contact zones or meeting points between different professional cultures, architectural practices and multiple design traditions. Inspired by Mary Pratt, he discussed the concept further as follows:

*“Contact zones allow you to interact with people from different cultures. When a contact zone is established, people are able to gain new perspectives because they are able to interact with people of foreign*

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145 Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*.

146 Pratt, ‘Arts of the Contact Zone’.

*cultures.*"<sup>147</sup>

He further argued that these architectural projects play an important role in facilitating encounters between cultures of different knowledge and interests, contributing to architectural design and planning. It is a unique and creative articulation that reconstructs the very characteristics of the Global Southern architecture and urban practices rather than inadequate copies and distortions of the Global Northern architectural model. It turns out that they are not just imitations of Western architectural models but innovations of their own logic. Many projects have sought to incorporate Northern technology and discourse. It shows that institutions are selectively included to create a relatively autonomous form of modernism that differs from the corresponding one in the north.<sup>148</sup>

The concept of contact zone is beneficial in understanding the multiple interactions in cross cultural exchanges and their complexities. One particularly relevant aspect that Marie Pratt discussed is that establishing contact zones does not necessarily lead to harmony or resolution between cultures; sometimes, it creates conflicts and contestations.<sup>149</sup> The conflicts in these contact zones, specifically in architecture, are pragmatic because they provide a platform for knowledge exchanges and conflict with a creative or critical architecture approach. In one of the lectures on "Transnational Urbanism and Postcolonial Challenges" in Chandigarh, India, given by historian Maristella Casciato, she stated the following:

*"There is nothing peaceful in transnational architectural exchanges.  
The use of the concept of contact zone allows us to better elaborate the  
zones of conflicts which are most of the time fruitful in exchanges of*

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147 Avermaete, 'Coda: The Reflexivity of Cold War Architectural Modernism'.

148 Ibid.

149 Pratt, 'Arts of the Contact Zone'.

*ideas.*"<sup>150</sup>

Contact zones can be used as a new methodological tool to better understand the globality of architecture production.<sup>151</sup> Avermeate stated the following:

*"Old view of modernism followed the import-export model of a certain dogmatic modernism which is spreading all over the world and let's start to think in an alternative model that "conflict zones", which presents where various actors, theologies, cultures, movements of ideas they encounter one another and indeed create very specific and one could say even situated occurrences."*<sup>152</sup>

This concept of a contact zone is serviceable to expose the conflicts and fruitful negotiations in the BRI architecture exchanges at different levels of interest and movement of ideas, technology, etc.

### **3.3.3. Third Space**

Third space is a critical concept that originated in literary studies and is similar to contact zones. It is a beneficial aspect in comprehending the transcultural architecture process. There are two perspectives of third space; the first one was introduced by Homi Bhabha, an influential postcolonial theorist. The second perspective was elucidated by

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150 Mittal Institute, *Transnational Urbanism and Post-Colonial Challenges*.

151 See: The 'contact zone' used as a methodology in summer school by Prof Avermeate. Summer Institute Visualizing the Architecture Competition as "Contact Zone" Organizer: Chair of Prof. Avermaete Date: Wednesday, 4 September 2019 to Tuesday, 10 September 2019 Location: ETH Zurich, Höggerberg, gta Exhibitions

152 Tom `Avermaete, *12: Global Modernism with Tom Avermaete*, 2017, <https://www.architecturetalk.org/home/12>.



critical geographer Edward Soja. This latter concept was inspired by studies of ‘the production of space’ by Henri Lefebvre.

Homi Bhabha propounded his concept of the third space from a postcolonial point of view. Before interpreting this concept, it is necessary to briefly outline what is the first space and second space. According to Bhabha, the first space is one that belongs to native or indigenous people. In this space, they have their own culture, way of life and identity facilitated by the built environment to constantly interact with each other and perform their cultural expressions at a particular place and time in a hierarchical structure. The second space is imported by settlers, foreigners who impose their structures on the subjects. It is a space of colonizers, the settlers or foreigners and their culture, way of life and identity, and particular spatial practices are introduced to that particular place. The people in the first space will not function in the second space, and vice versa; therefore, any inter-contact produces a hybrid “third space.” First space may adopt some of the elements and characteristics of second space that can be subsume in their space but contrary to the notion of homogenizing. This constitutes hybridity and ambivalence. The third space was also called “hybridity” by Bhabha. He elaborated that hybridity is liminal or in-between spaces, where the “translation and negotiation” takes place.<sup>153</sup> He stated that the following:

*“The theoretical recognition of the split-space of enunciation may open the way to conceptualising an international culture, based not on the exoticism of multiculturalism or the diversity of cultures, but on the inscription and articulations of culture’s hybridity. To that end, we should remember that it is the ‘inter’-the cutting edge of translation and negotiation; the in-between space-that carries the burden of the meaning of culture. It makes it possible to begin envisaging national, anti-national-*

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153 Homi K Bhabha, ‘Introduction: Locations of Culture’, *The Location of Culture 2* (1994): 1–27.

*ist histories of the 'people'. And by exploring this third space, we may elude the politics of polarity and emerge as the others of ourselves.*"<sup>154</sup>

Bhabha elaborated the hybrid third space from two descriptions: the genealogy of cultural difference, and the idea of translation. A translation is always an imitation; a depiction of the original cannot be achieved in a totalizing way. Accordingly, the act of cultural translation, both as representation and as reproduction, negates the essentialism of a given earlier original culture; therefore, we see that all forms of culture are continually in the process of hybridity.<sup>155</sup>

*"But for me, the importance of hybridity is not to be able to trace two original moments from which the third emerges, rather hybridity to me is the 'third space' which enables other positions to emerge. This third space displaces the histories that constitute it, and sets up new structures of authority, new political initiatives, which are inadequately understood through received wisdom."*<sup>156</sup>

The process of cultural hybridity gives rise to something different, something new and unrecognizable, a new area of negotiation of meaning, contestation and representation.<sup>157</sup> Further, Bhabha argued that although the third space is exposed to contradictions and ambiguities, it is an inclusive process that initiates new identity signs and innovative collaboration and competition venues.<sup>158</sup> Bhabha pushed toward transcending the essen-

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154 Homi K Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (routledge, 2012),56

155 Jonathan Rutherford, 'The Third Space: Interview with Homi Bhabha', *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference* 1990 (1990): 207–21.

156 Ibid.

157 Ibid.

158 Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*. 34-40

tialist pandora box of binaries and deepening the third space thinking.

Homi Bhabha's concept of third space where hybridization occurs is not about the synthesis of different cultural elements both physical or abstract but about the space where encounters and transformations occur and which is the zone of resistance and negotiations. It is the space that carries the burden of all cultural meanings.<sup>159</sup> The third space provides a space of cultural hybridity. In this research for example in case of Gwadar, the Pakistani culture can be considered as occupying the first space, i.e., the inherent features and, more specifically, the architecture culture, trends, legal requirements and other contextual factors. The second space is held by the Chinese culture, particularly the architecture technical expertise that they are exporting. When these two spaces interact, a third Space is created, much similar to a contact zone.<sup>160</sup> The hybridization of meanings, ideas, concepts, culture and negotiations all occur in this third space.

Now, let us proceed to the second premise of third space. It is another way of understanding this concept in the production of architecture spaces within cross-cultural conditions. It was introduced by the critical geographer Edward Soja, who was inspired by the studies given on the topic of "space" in "Production of Space" a book by Henri Lefebvre. According to Soja, the first space is the configuration of material forms, mappable "things in space." The second space is a more subjective alternative that emphasizes "thoughts about space," which are mental or conceptual representations of those material and mappable forms. The third space falls in between of these spaces—a "lived space" which is the result of the first and second spaces.<sup>161</sup> Edward Soja developed the

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159 Ibid. 56

160 Bogdan ATHANASSOV, 'Conceptualizing Contact Zones and Contact Spaces: An Archaeological Perspective', *Archaeology across Frontiers and Borderlands. Fragmentation and Connectivity in the North Aegean and the Central Balkans from the Bronze Age to the Iron Age. OREA 9* (2014): 93–112.

161 Lefebvre, 'The Social Production of Space, Translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith'; Soja and

third space concept from the same arguments of Henri Lefebvre and Michel Foucault.

*“Foucault also noted these two dominant modes of thinking about space and suggested that they were insufficient to understand the simultaneously real and imagined “other spaces” in which we live, in which our individual biographies are played out, in which social relations develop and change, in which history is made. Lefebvre called it lived space (l’espace vécu), an all-embracing and never fully knowable spatiality that was directly comparable to our lived time, Foucault called ‘des espaces autres’, not just simply translatable as “other” but as “significantly different” spaces and invented a new term to describe how to look at space in this new and different way: hetero- topology.”<sup>162</sup>*

He argued that both Lefebvre and Foucault direct us to think beyond the binaries that limit our epistemological spatial understanding in order to discern meaningful wisdom from real living spaces. The discussion returns to Lefebvre here because it is one of his concepts that substantially inspired the third space concept of Edward Soja. Lefebvre, who put forward his concern about space, stated the following:

*“The field we are concerned with are, first, the physical- nature, the Cosmos; secondly, the mental including logical and formal abstractions; and, thirdly, the social. In other words, we are concerned with logico epistemological space. The space of social practice. The space occupied by the sensory phenomenon, including product of imagination such as projects and projections symbols and utopias.”<sup>163</sup>*

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Chouinard, ‘Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles & Other Real & Imagined Places’.

162 Christian Borch, ‘Interview with Edward W. Soja: Thirdspace, Postmetropolis, and Social Theory’, *Distinktion: Scandinavian Journal of Social Theory* 3, no. 1 (2002): 113–20.

163 Lefebvre, ‘The Social Production of Space, Translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith’. 12

Lefebvre stated that in transcending the binary spatiality, three aspects must be considered: the physical characteristics of the space, the abstract positions or mental characteristics of the space, and the in-between or hybrid version of these two spaces. Further, he explained his triad space concept as follows:

*“1. Spatial practice. The spatial practice of a society secretes that society space; it propounds and presupposes it, in a dialectical interaction; it produces it slowly and surely as it masters and appropriates it. From the analytic standpoint, the spatial practice of a society is revealed through the deciphering of space[.....]”*

*2. Representations of space: conceptualised space, the space of scientists, planners, urbanists, technocratic subdividers and social engineers, as of a certain type of artist with a scientific bent- all of whom identify what is lived and what is perceived with what is conceived. This dominant space in any society (or mode of production)*

*3. Representational spaces: space as directly lived through its associated images and symbols, and hence the space of ‘inhabitants’ and ‘users’, but also of some artists and perhaps of those, such as a few writers and philosophers, who describe and aspire to do no more than describe. This is the dominated - and hence passively experienced - space which the imagination seeks to change and appropriate. It overlays physical space, making symbolic use of its objects. Thus representational spaces may be said, though again with certain exceptions, to tend towards more or less coherent systems of non-verbal symbols and signs.”<sup>164</sup>*

Lefebvre attempted to demonstrate a limitation of each space that is perceived and conceived space or spatial practice and representation space, thus bringing our attention to

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164 Ibid, 38-39.

the representational space or lived space, which is a third way out. In other words, Soja and Lefebvre's concepts are identical concepts but when we put the two together, then the first space is a perceived space or spatial practice, the second space is a conceived space or representation of space, and the third space is a lived space or the other space.

In terms of the third space as an architectural concept,<sup>165</sup> these trialectics of spatiality elicit a new understanding of transcultural architecture production. The perceived space or first space, as termed by Soja, is the space of the native people. The spatial practices carried out within their unique way. Production, reproduction and appropriation occur slowly and naturally at a specific place and time. It is a valuable space for architects to get the first-hand source of information by learning and mapping about what are the things in that particular space. Or, in another way, they are merely concrete objects. The second space or representation space as termed by Lefebvre, is the space of scientists, urban planners, social engineers, scientific artists or we can also say architects who code the space regarding how to live. That is why Lefebvre called it to dominant space. In terms of transnational architecture, the architects includes the interpretation of the perceived space and impose their set of expertise, knowledge and ideas that could work in this second space. The third space or also the representational space or lived space. In terms of architectural spaces that propel our attention, how do the users embody them? Regarding the lived space and considering the role of the natives in architecture design, it is a hybrid space of perceived and conceived spaces that demonstrate their presence in these lived spaces. This is the dominated space as called by Lefebvre. However, in another sense, this is an ambivalent space as Homi Bhabha stated because the user disturbs, displaces and disorders the space but ultimately reconstructs it to make it a

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165 Lefebvre uses many examples of architecture spaces like see: Lefebvre.41. "This representation, which had been in the making for centuries, now became enshrined in architectural and urbanistic practice as the code of linear perspective". I am only focusing on this 'linear perspective' to analyse only the architectural scale of space.

lived space. Although the user follows the conceived codes or is restricted by it, they also disturbs or reconstruct it. For this reason, the research in the case study section for the inquiry of the lived space uses ethnographical tools and questionnaires, as Lefebvre himself stated that:

*“Ethnologists, anthropologists and psychoanalysts are students of such representational spaces”<sup>166</sup>*

to understand the laminal or hybrid or in-between space characters of it. How do local elements appropriate this space? How is their identity negotiated in this space? In other words, how do architects imagine it and how is it actually? It is essential to dig out the uniqueness of the lived space or third space.

The research mainly adopts Homi Bhabha’s third space theory to construe the transcultural exchanges of architecture knowledge during the design and construction phase, while Lefebvre and Soja’s third space concepts are mainly applied to the constructed projects to decode the representational space or lived space. The liminal or in-between spaces as described by Bhabha, Lefebvre and Soja are inevitable in transculturation. Thus, this research explores these new modes of third space production, specifically in the context of BRI, where there is a new East-South relation. The new way of understanding culture from a new perspective of both countries where whose modern architecture is? What is Chineseness in architecture or in what sense is architecture of Pakistan Islamic , or how do they negotiate to create new in-between spaces? What is the coding of this architecture as a representation space? How does the user make it a lived space or third space? The BRI institutional work mechanism provides an interesting exchange of knowledge expertise. It is a contact zone which enables a dialogue in the third space.

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166 Ibid, 41.

The concluding remarks for this chapter are that these theoretical reflections and methodologies are ingredients to help understand and know what should be architecture for the others. Architecture for the others is full of complexities under development cooperation discourses. Architecture for the other involves negotiations, contestations, collaborations and transculturalism. Architecture for the other is influenced by dominating ideologies. What are the criteria of critical architecture in architecture for the others? Architecture for the other is also debated to include the marginalized ones. Architecture for the others is the way of thinking forward beyond their own architecture experience.

Moreover, in the title of the dissertation, I used the word “other.”. The concept of the other is not only restricted to only the colonialism concept. The phrase “architecture for others” which I have mentioned can be a question, that is, how to approach “other” cultures in a specific context? It can also be a statement, that it is, architecture for the other (It is for them; as for what they need, which is better for them, it is a gift for them, etc.). At the same time, why ‘others’ in architecture?



## **PART 3. CASE STUDIES**

## **Chapter 4. Gwadar, Pakistan: The Main Case Study**

The Gwadar Port is a pivotal point along the new silk road. It is located in the coastal region of Pakistan and is one of the underdeveloped cities in Pakistan. After its inclusion in the BRI, the port gained national and international attention due to its strategic position and China's geopolitical influences. Besides the geopolitics of the port and its supporting infrastructure development, it also comprises several architecture projects that have either been completed or are under construction within the framework of BRI. These projects are financially and technically assisted by the Chinese government.

Before commencing a detailed case study on the architecture projects taking shape under BRI in Gwadar, I would like to begin a case study on the Pak-China Friendship Center, Islamabad, an architecture gift donated by the Chinese government. This project is considerable because it has brought the countries even closer. It was realized in a context where three years later, the BRI was proposed by President Xi in 2013. This project is important to mention because most architects working under the BRI travel to Islamabad, and it becomes a reference point for them. This case study is also the starting point to discuss the meeting of two cultures in terms of the cross-cultural contacts, dialogues and negotiation. In conclusion, this study compares the other architecture projects under BRI and discusses how BRI architecture projects are different from previous architecture exchanges of China. Moreover, it is the starting point to open up a dialogue of architecture exchanges between Pakistan and China.

## 4.1 Making Ground for BRI: Experimenting a Common Architecture and Dialogue in the “Third Space” (Pak-China Friendship Center)

### 4.1.1. Context

In December 2004, Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz of Pakistan made an important visit to China. The delegation from Pakistan discussed with Chinese delegation the bilateral trade, defense cooperation, technical assistance in some projects and several economic developments between the two countries.<sup>167</sup> During his visit, the decision was also made that China would provide aid to construct the Sino-Pakistan Friendship Centre, a gift from China to the people of Pakistan.<sup>168</sup> In 2005, China Premier Wen Jiabao visited Pakistan for the first time. He signed many major agreements, the most prominent one being the initiation of the free trade agreement between the two countries. In this visit, he laid the foundation of the Pakistan-China Friendship Cultural Center. Perhaps, a friendly business environment needs people-to-people-relations through cultural exchanges and other familiar activities. The motivation behind the construction of the center was to expand the people-to-people cultural exchanges and set up the China Culture Center to promote Chinese culture in Pakistan. The project was financially and technically assisted by China.<sup>169</sup> Pakistan’s government was asked to provide the land for the project. Ac-

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167 D.S. RAJAN, ‘Visit of Pakistan Prime Minister to China - An Assessment | ORF’, *Observer Research Foundation* (blog), 27 December 2017, <https://www.orfonline.org/research/visit-of-pakistan-prime-minister-to-china-an-assessment/>.

168 Information from Local newspaper ‘ISLAMABAD | Progress News & Updates (Old)’, Skyscraper-City, 2009, <https://www.skyscrapercity.com/threads/islamabad-progress-news-updates-old.183996/>.

169 ‘Pakistan China friendship centres become new landmark of Pakistan China friendship’, *news sina*, 18 December 2010, 2010. Pakistan-China Friendship Centre becomes new landmark of Pakistan-China <http://news.sina.com.cn/c/p/2010-12-18/154621666254.shtml>.

cordingly, Capital Development Authority (CDA ) Islamabad provided 12 acres of land. The friendship center was planned to be built with an approximate cost of PKR 3.128 billion, out of which the Chinese government provided 2.12 billion, and the construction took two years.<sup>170</sup> The responsible public department from Pakistan was the Ministry of Culture, Government of Pakistan. Meanwhile, the planning commission of Pakistan dealt with the government-to-government agreements and facilitated the smooth execution of the project with the Chinese companies. All other necessary matters regarding the complete execution of the project were decided to be carried out by the Ministry for Commerce, China, and Chinese state-owned design and construction companies.<sup>171</sup>

In a bid organized by the Ministry of Commerce, China, the Zhongyuan International Design Co., Ltd. (IPPR) was nominated to design the Pakistan China Friendship Center. It was constructed by Shanghai construction group and completed in 2010. Both are Chinese state-owned enterprises .<sup>172</sup>

The Pakistan China Friendship Center is located in one of the prime locations of Islamabad city. The site is surrounded by a green landscape, museums, a previously China-aided sports complex and several notable monumental buildings. The prime location of the building exerts a monumental character.

In the site selection process, Lei Xiaoming the chief architect said,

*“The Pakistani delegates proffered us three potential sites. We were immediately fascinated by the second option, which is facing the moon and stars sculpture. The star and moon sculpture are based on the tra-*

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170 *Information from Local newspaper: ‘ISLAMABAD | Progress News & Updates (Old)’.*

171 Resident Engineer and Management Officer, Discussion about their Experiences, interview by Sohrab Ahmed Marri, 15 January 2019.

172 ‘Pakistan China friendship centres become new landmark of Pakistan China friendship’.

*ditional Islamic symbols of star and moon. It is simple and powerful. It is also a famous iconic sculpture in the forest park area. We think it will definitely add a lot to our building.”*<sup>173</sup>

The site selection by IPPR architects enabled them to donate a monument to symbolize the friendship between the two countries. On the other side, it entailed an opportunity to harmoniously link the friendship center with the surrounding green natural landscape which complies with China’s traditional nature philosophy.<sup>174</sup>

#### **4.1.2. Experimenting a Common Architecture**

The main design concept adopted by the architects of IPPR was to experiment with the architecture that represents both cultures harmoniously. There are several possible architecture trajectories to follow within such a context. One of these trajectories is to find a “common space” between two different cultures, i.e., to stress the similar features of both historical architecture elements and contemporary ones while tending to exclude antithetical architecture features in this transculturalism. They sought two peculiar common features of Islamic and traditional Chinese architecture; for instance, it included inward courtyards with gardens and the ornamental lattice features of windows and walls, which is called “jali” in local Pakistani language. The deputy chief architect of the project stated the following:

*“China has supported Pakistan with many projects for decades, but*

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173 Zhao Zhongqing and Jiang Yu, ‘献给中巴友谊的特别纪念 伊斯兰堡新地标的中国元素 本刊记者·赵忠青 姜宇 (A Special Commemoration for the Friendship between China and Pakistan Chinese Elements in Islamabad’s New Landmark).’, *Dialogue 焦点工程* (blog), 2011, <http://www.cnki.net>.

174 Sohrab Ahmed Marri, ‘Investigating the Role of Nature in Contemporary Architecture of China’, 2017.

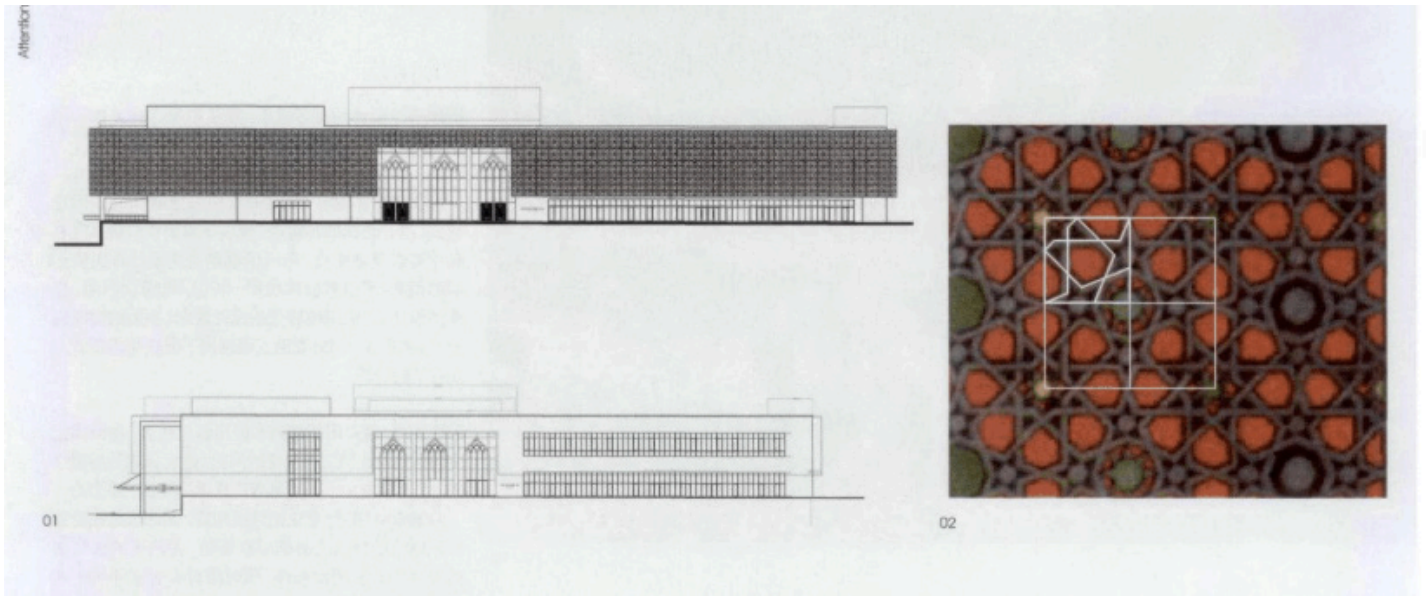


Figure 4: The lattice inspiration Source.archcreation an IPPR article.



Figure 6: Fountains inspired from Islamic architecture. Source. An article by IPPR architects in ccbuid.com



Figure 5: Main entrance point arches Source. A picture by Author

*not with buildings that reflect their shared architectural features. So we proposed a concept to integrate their common architectural features in a critically modernist way to symbolize friendship between two countries”.*<sup>175</sup>

The architect’s quest to hybridize the common architectural features of two different cultures was an adroit choice because it connoted the idea of representing the friendship between two countries, promoting the Chinese architectural features abroad and simplifying the difference between the two cultures.

The center consists of three buildings which include conference rooms, an exhibition center, a banquet hall, an art and dance center, a hall for various ceremonies and service rooms. The three buildings are encased in a rectangular perforated shell and eclectically employs architecture elements that range from contemporary vocabularies to Islamic architecture features and abstract Chinese architectural concepts. In the construction of the entrance gate with three Islamic architecture point arches, probably the IPPR architects were inspired from the three arches of the Bangladesh China Conference Center which was constructed earlier. These arches are a notable feature of the culture center, popping up from a modern rectangular shell to welcome the visitors. The center’s outer rectangular shell is inspired from Mashrabiya or “jali,” the prominent lattice ornament feature of Islamic architecture<sup>176</sup>. The design pattern also resembles the Chinese plum blossom, a typical traditional architectural element used in windows. The deputy designer stated the following:

*“The façade is to highlight common features of both Chinese and Islamic architecture. The façade is composed of aluminium plates; each plate*

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175 ‘Pakistan China friendship centres become new landmark of Pakistan China friendship’.

176 “Jali” is local language word mentioned to perforated wall specifically that comes from traditional Mughal architecture.



*is one-meter square, a successful moulding and high-pressure water cutting. It is the art style of Chinese paper-cut, and it is a deformation of Chinese plum blossoms”.*<sup>177</sup>

The designers then prescribed it as brise soleil which is a functional element to be used as a shade from Islamabad’s burning sun in the summertime.<sup>178</sup> This creativity is apparently an Islamic architectural feature but has a spirit of Chinese art with the input of modern technologies.

At backside of the ballroom is the courtyard influenced by Islamic architectural features, comprised of a fountain and planters surrounded by colonnades of Islamic style—the chief architect Lei Xiaoming got the inspiration from Alhambra Moorish architecture. He stated the following:

*“When I took over the bidding for the Pakistan-China Friendship Center project in early 2006, what struck my mind was a trip to the Alhambra Palace in southern Spain. The exquisite and complex carvings on the stone surface, the labyrinth of intricate courtyards, the geometric shapes...I was deeply impressed by the garden design, vine climbing plants, and the fountain in the courtyard with many gestures. Although the Alhambra is only derived from Islamic architecture, it may not be considered a typical Islamic architecture, but these deep impressions constitute the basic idea for the Pakistan-China Friendship Center. The architectural landscape of it, is particularly suitable for the Pakistan climate and has a special charm. Although it has undergone many revi-*

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177 ‘Pakistan China friendship centres become new landmark of Pakistan China friendship’.

178 Wang Huang, Zhang Ri, and Lei Xiaoming, ‘Pak-China FriendshipCenter in Pakistan’, *Architectural Creation* 雅昌艺术网, 2008, <http://ebook.artron.net/book.php?bookid=113442>. Translated from google translator.



Figure 7: Islamic courtyard reminiscent of Alhambra Granada courtyard source: image from ippr.cn



Figure 8: Islamic courtyard reminiscent of Alhambra Granada courtyard source: image from ippr.cn



Figure 9: President chamber for meeting. all decorated objects imported from China. Source: image from IPPR.cn

*sions and major adjustments in the middle, the courtyard is interspersed to separate different functions, and the geometric garden landscape and fountain reproduce the exquisite surface treatment..”<sup>179</sup>*

The moulding of arches is done in a modern way using frugal material. To balance this thematic Islamic garden, the architect deliberately injected Chinese traditional garden elements opposite it—the gardens themselves contrast each other’s articulation and display two cultures in parallel. In an interview, the resident engineer stated the following:

*“There is an Islamic garden, and the other side is a Chinese garden, but this space is not much in use, but with lightings, it displays a unique environment during the events.”<sup>180</sup>*

However, the Chinese garden is simple, and only a few direct Chinese garden elements were used. The purpose of choosing the color white for the front and red for the background was to expose the tripled volume, a metaphorical concept representing the ancient Chinese tripod.<sup>181</sup> Again, this superficial fabrication is the architect’s plan of dismantling and unifying the two cultures to corroborate a critical transculturalism with the juxtaposition of abstract and concrete concepts.

This complex articulation of design elements has sophisticated facilities as well, including office rooms, conference halls, guest rooms, banquet halls, exhibition halls, etc. The president’s chamber is designed and intended to accommodate a meeting room for the presidents of both countries. According to the management officer, it has never

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179 Zhongqing and Yu, ‘献给中巴友谊的特别纪念 伊斯兰堡新地标的中国元素 本刊记者·赵忠青姜宇 (A Special Commemoration for the Friendship between China and Pakistan Chinese Elements in Islamabad’s New Landmark).’

180 Discussion about their Experiences. Interview with resident engineer

181 Huang, Ri, and Xiaoming, ‘Pak-China FriendshipCenter in Pakistan’.



Figure 10: The different volumes of Pakistan China friendship centre, a Chinese traditional tripod metaphorical concept. source: image from baidu.com



Figure 11: A group photo of Pakistani and Chinese construction worker. Source: China academic journal electronic publishing house.

been used by the two state presidents to hold a meeting.<sup>182</sup> The interior design presents an amalgamation of both cultures. The appearance is of Islamic design, but the material essence is Chinese. The reporters Zhao Zhongqing and Jiang Yu stated the following:

*“Inside, all Chinese people can tell at a glance as if they are returned to China. Because all the materials used are shipped from China, there are more than 600 containers in total.”*<sup>183</sup>

In this architecture complex, the architect adopted a critical approach by using indirect or sensual Chinese architecture elements while exposing recognizable Islamic architectural features in a modern manner.

The high-quality decoration materials and almost all construction materials and machinery were exported from China. The Islamic decors are from the Xinjiang province of China. Officials with the culture ministry were pleased with the pace of the construction. The senior official said the following:

*“Prefabricated equipment was brought from China that hastened construction.”*<sup>184</sup>

Some locally available construction materials were used as well, such as cement bags and steel bars. Both Chinese and local construction laborers worked together and completed the project within the planned time.<sup>185</sup>

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182 Discussion about their Experiences. interviews

183 Zhongqing and Yu, ‘献给中巴友谊的特别纪念 伊斯兰堡新地标的中国元素 本刊记者·赵忠青姜宇 (A Special Commemoration for the Friendship between China and Pakistan Chinese Elements in Islamabad’s New Landmark).’

184 Iqbal Senior Officials of Culture Ministry Pakistan, The construction of Pak-China Friendship Centre., interview by Sohrab Ahmed Marri, 2 August 2010.

185 Discussion about their Experiences.

### 4.1.3. Transcultural Architecture: A dialogue in the “Third Space” between the Real and Abstract

In transcultural architecture, the main issue is to decide which architecture language is to be embraced. The architects' expertise is mostly limited to the national level; when crossing their national borders, the architects have little or no knowledge regarding the foreign culture.<sup>186</sup> When practicing architecture other than their own, they are proffered with two options—either to make a false interpretation of foreign architecture or to impose their architecture traits. Here, the “self” and the “other” architecture consists of both historical and modern architectural characteristics of their own versions.

However, in many cases, architects themselves have no full authority in the design decision making. They have to deal with many foreign and national requirements and other circumstances.<sup>187</sup> This is particularly relevant in the case of Chinese architects working outside China, especially in the China aid project. More specifically, as an employee of a Chinese state-owned design and construction company, the architect work with a group of architects in any architecture project. In the Pakistan–China Friendship Center, the chief architect Cai Henian, director Zhang Ri, main architect Lei Xiaoming, and assistant architect Jiang Qing all work together; this group further consists of three generations of architects from China, who are of different ages.<sup>188</sup> They face clients from two sides: the responsible agency from China's side and the stakeholders from the receiving side.

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186 Avermaete et al., ‘Crossing Boundaries’.

187 Ibid.

188 Zhongqing and Yu, ‘献给中巴友谊的特别纪念 伊斯兰堡新地标的中国元素 本刊记者·赵忠青 姜宇 (A Special Commemoration for the Friendship between China and Pakistan Chinese Elements in Islamabad's New Landmark).’

Nevertheless, the state-owned construction companies along with the Chinese government has set principles and guidelines for foreign construction projects, which involve respecting the local culture, environment and construction by-laws while also ensuring the best modern and up-to-date technology and expertise. In such a context, the China state-owned Design Institute architects mainly practice architecture that demonstrates their respect for the local art and culture, environmental laws, building codes, etc. They also have the ambition to promote Chinese culture abroad. Ding Jian, President of China International Engineering Corporation IPPR stated the following:

*“In the past, foreigners spread culture through missionaries, but how do we Chinese today spread Chinese culture? He believes that Chinese architects going abroad to do architectural design and building a house is ‘preaching’ and spreading Chinese culture. This is a great mission because it will make China better integrate into the world.”<sup>189</sup>*

The Pakistan–China Friendship Center demonstrates the hybridization of similar architecture features of both cultures. This sort of concept indeed initiates a dialogue in the context of the third space concept acquired from Homi Bhabha.<sup>190</sup> Here, the first space is the Pakistani architecture culture conceived by IPPR as Islamic architecture, and the second space is the space of their expertise in Chinese architecture. The Islamic architecture is itself a comprehensive concept that generalizes the architecture of all Muslim worlds.<sup>191</sup> Pakistan’s heritage consists of the Mughal Islamic and Indo-Islamic

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189 ‘过去外国人通过传教士去传播文化而今天我们中国人是如何传播中国文化呢》中国中元湖际工程 公司总裁丁建认为中国建筑師去国外做建筑设计，盖房子就是在“传教，就是在传播中国文化这是 非常伟大的因为这将使中国更好地赖入世界，巴中友消牛心是中国中元国际工程公司在世界传教 脚步中的一步” English: China Aid Pakistan China Friendship Centre.’, IPPR, n.d., <http://www.ippr.com.cn/>.

190 Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*.

191 See Oleg Grabar a distinguished scholar on Islamic art and architecture. In his writings he demonstrated what is Islamic art? The influence of Islam in art. The art of pre Islam and its influences in its for-



architecture that flourished in the Indian subcontinent from the 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> century and was developed by Mughals.<sup>192</sup> The second space is uncomplicated for IPPR architects, as it is a space of their own in which they can derive architectural concepts from Chinese culture, philosophy, art and architecture. However, the principle design strategy is adopted to showcase the recognizable Islamic architecture elements such as pointed arches in the entrance and the Alhambra courtyard scene. It is hybridized with indirect abstract concepts derived from traditional Chinese cultures such as the ancient Chinese tripod metaphor and the articulation of the courtyard folding and unfolding spaces in a poetic manner. These are defining features of the Chinese garden<sup>193</sup> without using direct elements of the Chinese garden. In this transcultural architecture, there is no first space or second space in a real sense; however, the third space is the amalgamation of both first and second spaces in a harmonious, rhythmical manner. Neither of these spaces degrading each other's values nor are both in pure form; instead, they are transformed into the third space.

The architects of IPPR faced the issue of whether to imitate the Islamic architecture or creatively represent it indirectly or in a modern way. This indirect fashion required much-sophisticated knowledge of Islamic architectural concepts, which is not possible for Chinese architects to grasp in such a limited duration as that of this project. The architects of IPPR transcended this theme of the direct or indirect representation of

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mation of Islamic art. Distinction between secular and religious art. Main features of Islamic architecture are Islamic calligraphy and geometric and interlace patterned ornament. The geometric floral patterns such as arabesque, minarets and muqarnas all are of its unique inventions. He documented widespread of Islamic art and architecture from Spain to Afghanistan. His main books:

Oleg Grabar, *The Formation of Islamic Art: Revised and Enlarged Edition* (Yale University Press, 1987);  
Oleg Grabar, *Islamic Art and Beyond*, vol. 3 (Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2006).

192 Ebba Koch, 'Mughal Architecture', *An Outline of Its History and Development (1526-1858)*, 1991.

193 Yi Wang, *A Cultural History of Classical Chinese Gardens* (World Scientific, 2015).

Islamic architecture by creatively venturing the rhythmic composition of both cultures in a form of hybridization or the third space. This leads to speculating and pondering about the third space. The direct or recognizable architectural elements of Islamic architecture work as a “mediator” in transculturalism to initiate a harmonious relationship in establishing a contact zone, a term which I quote from Mary Pratt<sup>194</sup>. That is why the local stakeholders reacted positively and began a fruitful dialogue in the third space. Abdul Sattar Khokar, the Deputy Secretary of Pakistani Ministry of Culture, appreciated the concept of representing common architectural features of both cultures to embark a friendly environment between the two cultures. He said:

*“If you can take a look at the architecture of this building; this is an amalgamation of the Pakistan Islamic architecture and the Chinese paper cut art. And these arches are symbolic of the Islamic tradition in the architecture, and there they have been exquisitely amalgamated in the architecture of this building. And the designs that you see they are the representation of both China and Pakistan.”*<sup>195</sup>

The question is, what did Abdul Sattar Khokar mean by the representation of both designs of China and Pakistan? Did he mean the representation of Pakistani culture through Islamic architecture elements and the representation of Chinese culture by their paper cut art technique? Clearly, he obtained this information of the architectural design concept from his Chinese counterparts. However, whether he really experienced the Chinese culture in this building is difficult to answer. In another sense, only the Chinese can sense their Chinese architectural concepts in this building, and the Pakistani can perceive their Islamic architectural identities.

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194 Pratt, ‘Arts of the Contact Zone’.

195 Abdul Satar, Abdul Satar Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Culture Pakistan views on Pakistan China Friendship Centre, interview by CGTN, December 2010, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MzdYI-JhnFdM&ab\\_channel=%E6%88%98%E6%96%97%E9%BE%99](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MzdYI-JhnFdM&ab_channel=%E6%88%98%E6%96%97%E9%BE%99),.

There is a reason for this logic of stressing the abstract ideas from Chinese culture. It is because the traditional Chinese philosophy and culture pay considerable attention to the abstract concepts, ideas, experience, emotions and sensual characters which are more important than the real physical space.<sup>196</sup> For example, the famous Chinese philosopher Lao Zi once said that all things are made of nothing. Therefore, for the Chinese, the intangible content of things is something real even if it does not materially appear.<sup>197</sup>

Mote discussed the same as follows:

*“Chinese civilization did not lodge its history in buildings. Even its most grandiose palace and city complexes stressed grand layout, the employment of space, and not buildings, which were added as a relatively impermanent superstructure. Chinese civilization seems not to have regarded its history as violated or abused when the historic monuments collapsed or burned, as long as those could be replaced or restored, and their functions regained. We can say that the real past of the mind; its imperishable elements are moments of human experience. The only truly enduring embodiments of the eternal human moments are the literary ones.”<sup>198</sup>*

Further, Mote argued that stone is not important in Chinese culture but the words—the long poems about the past—are. The main focus of these writings of the past is to present the real experience of spaces. For instance, all the psychological history associated with the maple bridge is of little importance; it is not important what material is used in

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196 Frederick W Mote, ‘A Millenium of Chinese Urban History: Form, Time, and Space Concepts in Soochow’, *Rice Institute Pamphlet-Rice University Studies* 59, no. 4 (1973).

197 Li Xiaodong, ‘The Aesthetic of the Absent The Chinese Conception of Space’, *The Journal of Architecture* 7, no. 1 (2002): 87–101.

198 Mote, ‘A Millenium of Chinese Urban History: Form, Time, and Space Concepts in Soochow’.

bridge, how big it is or what its design is, etc. The poems capture the real experiences or reflections related to the bridge.<sup>199</sup>

There are many other examples and books that present their arguments about the importance of experience and abstract ideas of space in Chinese culture, which is not the concern of the present research. The significance of the case study of the Pakistan China Friendship Center posits a pragmatic approach in transculturalism. Contrary to this approach, if IPPR architects use both the traditional Chinese roof or pagoda or all elements of Chinese garden as well as the Islamic architecture elements, then it would indeed lead to disarray and confusion.

To understand more of this third space, the liminal space between the two cultures where all the design conceptions, generation, discovery and negotiation occur, we need to use the concept of Edward Soja and Henri Lefebvre. According to their definitions, the first space is a “thing in space” representing a direct imitation of architectural elements or scenes, while the second space is a conceived space that plays in an abstract dimension. The first space is overloaded with direct imitation of Islamic architecture elements and scenes. In contrast, the second space mostly consists of the logical, abstract concepts derived from traditional Chinese culture, and the third space overlaps these two spaces. Thus, understanding Lefebvre’s concept of the third space, required an in depth sophisticated field research observations and questionnaires. The main concern was to know the native users’ lived space of the Pakistan China Friendship Center. Accordingly, the author visited the friendship center twice.

The following was entered in the diary of the author on the first visit in January, 2019:

*“The entrance gate of the Pakistan-China Friendship Center is perceived as welcoming pointed arches that embody an empathy of a sense*

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199 Ibid.

*of belonging, while at the same time, there are mixed feelings of ambivalence about the lattice wall which is probed out from the red brick wall as skin. Apparently, the latticework implies an inspiration from traditional Islamic architecture, but in essence, it is not so; therefore, it is ambivalent. The entrance atrium is a grand open space. In the atrium, the same design pattern of the latticework is repeated in the false ceiling and tile design of the floor to harmoniously blend the outside and inside spaces.”<sup>200</sup>*

The ambivalent feelings in the first observation acknowledge that the first and second spaces overlap and hold new experiences in a new space, contrary to its progenitor spaces.

The second approach to know this third space or the lived space is to observe the photographs of events. Photographs can imprint instant images of people’s experiences in places without costumes or fiction. In photography, you may see much more than the space explored, imagined and perceived.<sup>201</sup> Oleg Graber, the French art historian, stated the following:

*“I see people in buildings, how they go there, how they talk there, how they make dealing of life, I mean all kinds of things happen in buildings and this kind of transformation that the contemporary uses of the building made me try to understand better old buildings that people make buildings... Today’s world revolutionized by digital photographs which-*

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200 The first observation of author in field survey.

201 Özlem Demirkan and Halil Sevim, ‘the visualization of third space through Marcus Hartel’s street shoots in NYC’ (3rd International Conference on New Trends in Architecture and Interior Design, 2017).

*capture enormous information.*”<sup>202</sup>

The second space depicts the common cultural features of both cultures but in the Chinese way. However, the carpet and all other decorative elements such as the lattice pattern used in the lamp light are used in a Chinese way. These interior decoration components were brought from China. In the banquet hall, people use the space as their own homes; some are carrying their baby some are relaxing. As seen in Figure 13, the picture presents a lived space that is full of life.

The third approach is to know the subjective opinion of native users. The simple question I asked one of the visitors was what they felt about the Pakistan China Friendship Center. The answer was as follows:

*“It has a great venue to visit such as alluring fountains the elegant, intense colourful interior and lighting. A lot of people and having fun. It has all facilities, service areas, and has a nice location.”*<sup>203</sup>

The visitor was fascinated by the bright colors and fountains like many people. This is interesting because the Pakistani culture is full of bright colors; they have colorful traditional dresses. However, the visitor paid no attention to the pointed arches and other architectural elements which is certainly none of their business. This experience of common visitors finds harmony in the third space.

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202 ‘In Conversation with Oleg Grabar’, Archnet, 2011, [http://archnet.org/media\\_contents/89214](http://archnet.org/media_contents/89214).

203 Visitor, Public opinion: Pakistan China Friendship Center, interview by Sohrab Ahmed Marri, August 2019.



Figure 12: Event Pictures collected from administration office of Pakistan China Friendship Centre.



Figure 13: Event pictures collected from administration office of Pakistan China friendship centre.

## 4.2 Overview of Gwadar, History and BRI

Gwadar is the least developed city located in the southwest coast of Balochistan, Pakistan. It is a part of the Makran division of Balochistan. Gwadar is a hammerhead-shaped peninsula that protrudes into the tip of the Arabian Sea and the mouth of the Persian Gulf. It is approximately 290 miles from the city of Karachi and 47 miles from the Iranian border. It is naturally appropriate for a deep seaport and a strategic location. The existing population is 0.1 million, consisting of mainly Baloch ethnic groups. More than 70% of the population are dependent on fishing and boat building to make a living.<sup>204</sup>

Gwadar may be a small, less developed coastal city; however, it has a strategic location, history, diverse culture and unique city identity. The mention of Gwadar first appeared in the accounts of Arrian, the Greek historian who narrated the journey of Alexander's great army and his fleet along the coast of Gedrosia, which was the name for the coastline of Gwadar at that time. Arrian described the coastline as the country of *Ichthyophagoi*, i.e., fish eaters. The present name of Makran seems to be derived from the Persian word "Mahi koran," which means fish eaters. Alexander's army suffered a lot due to a lack of fresh water and the hot desert areas. From the accounts of Arrian, it is clear this area was extremely uninhabitable and, therefore, no ruler stayed here for a long duration.<sup>205</sup> There are few historical descriptions of Gwadar after this; however, later,

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204 See: M Ilyas Khan, 'China's Xi Jinping Agrees \$46bn Superhighway to Pakistan.', 20 April 2015, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-32377088>; Anil Kumar, 'The CPEC Challenge and the India-China Standoff: An Opportunity for War or Peace?', 9 August 2020, <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/blogs/rakshakindia/the-cpec-challenge-and-the-india-china-standoff-an-opportunity-for-war-or-peace>; Arif Rafiq, 'The China Pakistan Economic Corridor- Barriers and Impacts.', Research report (United States Institute of Peace, 2017), <https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/2017-10/pw135-the-china-pakistan-economic-corridor.pdf>.; 'Gwadar : Integrated Development Vision', Research report (Quetta: International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources(IUCN), 2007).

205 Azhar Ahmad, 'Gwadar: A Historical Kaleidoscope', *Policy Perspectives: The Journal of the Institute of Policy Studies* 13, no. 2 (2016): 149–66.



some reports revealed that Gwadar was a prosperous traditional port town. In 1624, according to the Italian traveler Pietro Della Valle, Gwadar was comprised of a local Baloch chief who ruled Makran and who was on friendly terms with Persians, which is the safest trade from the Hormoz route, and the natives derived much profits from the transit trade at Gwadar. According to a British gazetteer, from the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Gwadar town was a fortnightly port of call for ships of the British India steam navigation company, whose vessels anchored some four miles away from the East Gwadar bay. Gwadar town generated much of its revenue from the trade of spices, seafood and slaves.<sup>206</sup>

Gwadar was mainly ruled by the Khanate of Balochs from the 15<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> century, followed by the Oman sultanate for nearly two centuries.<sup>207</sup> In 1783, Saiad Said bin Ahmad succeeded the throne of Muscat. His brother, Prince Saiad Sultan bin Ahmad, fled to Makran and met Khan of Kalat Mir Naseer Khan for help. Naseer Khan refused to offer military assistance but offered Gwadar for his stay during his exile. In 1797, Saiad Sultan became the ruler of Muscat but failed to return Gwadar. Subsequent struggles between the Sultan's heirs and Mir Nasser's heirs over the possession of Gwadar allowed the British to step in and negotiate an agreement that declared Gwadar as part of Muscat. At that time, Gwadar applied not only to the city and port of Gwadar but to the entire area under the suzerainty of Muscat. According to the directory, this area covered approximately 307 square miles.<sup>208</sup> The economy in Gwadar prospered under the rule of Oman due to trade and fishing, and diverse cultures flourished. The Arabs of Oman,

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206 Sohrab Ahmed Marri, 'Transnational Global Infrastructure Spaces and Their Impact on Historical Places: Resistance, Negotiation and Alternatives in the Case of Gwadar', in *Cities' Vocabularies: The Influences and Formations* (Springer, 2021), 325–39.

207 John Gordon Lorimer, *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, 'Omān, and Central Arabia*, vol. 1 (Superintendent Government Print., India, 1915).

208 Ahmad, 'Gwadar: A Historical Kaleidoscope'.

who were rulers, built forts and other historical buildings in the old town of Gwadar. The Agha Khani, who immigrated from Persia, handled much of the fish trade. They also brought their Persian architecture and culture and built many houses and shops in “Shahi Bazar,” the old town of Gwadar. The Hindu merchants who migrated from Sindh (near present-day India) dominated the domestic business of Gwadar. The native people were Baloch, consisting mostly of fishermen. All these cultures coexisted and created the unique Gwadar culture and heritage.<sup>209</sup>

At the time of partition of the subcontinent into India and Pakistan, the Gwadar enclave was under the political control of the Sultan of Oman. In 1954, Pakistan engaged the United States geological surveyor to survey its coastline. Worth Condrick, the deputed surveyor, identified the hammerhead-shaped peninsula of Gwadar as a natural and suitable site for a new deep seaport. The residents of Gwadar were Balochs who also wished to be part of Balochistan. Thus, the Pakistan government realized it was a historical, geographical part of Balochistan and contained a critical, geopolitically strategic location. The Pakistan government approached the British to resolve this issue. The British government was well aware of Gwadar’s potential to become a critical future port city. At first, the British declined, but later on, they played an active role in this situation. After four years of intense negotiation, the Pakistan, British and Omani governments finally agreed on the terms that Pakistan could purchase this land from the Sultanate of Oman. On September 7, 1958, Pakistan purchased it from the Sultanate of Oman for £3 million. After its annexation to Pakistan, Gwadar became a part of the Makran district in the Balochistan province. Both Arabs and Hindus emigrated to their home countries and left a collection of historic buildings in the old town of Gwadar.<sup>210</sup>

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209 Sohrab Ahmed Marri, ‘Transnational Global Infrastructure Spaces and Their Impact on Historical Places: Resistance, Negotiation and Alternatives in the Case of Gwadar’

210 Ibid.

In 1974, President Zulifiquar Ali Bhutto offered the United States to build a port at Gwadar and use it as the naval base, but the latter declined it. For decades, the coastal town of Gwadar was neglected by the government of Pakistan because there was no infrastructure to connect Gwadar, and the construction of a port required huge investment. In 1991, the concept of a deepwater port at Gwadar was formally conceived by the government of Pakistan. In June 1994, the project was approved by Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) Pakistan. However, it was not started due to a lack of funds and the politicians' negligence.<sup>211</sup>

The dictator, General Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan, played an essential role in developing the seaport of Gwadar. In 2001, under his leadership, the Pakistani government requested China to aid in developing and constructing a seaport in Gwadar. The Chinese government agreed, and the two countries signed a financing agreement in August of the same year. The project's total cost was \$248 million, of which \$198 were provided by China. The rest was the responsibility of the Pakistani government. In March 2002, China Harbour Engineering Co., Ltd. commenced the first phase of the project, which was completed in March 2007 with three 20,000-ton berths.<sup>212</sup> China also invested another \$200 million for building the Makran coastal highway connecting Gwadar Port with Karachi city.<sup>213</sup>

In 2006, the Pakistani government invited offers from experienced port operators to manage the port of Gwadar. Six companies submitted bids, including Dubai World Ports, Hutchinson Hong Kong, PSA International Singapore, two Saudi companies and

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211 Ahmad, 'Gwadar: A Historical Kaleidoscope'.

212 'Construction of a Chinese-Funded Park in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor', 10 October 2018, [http://brgg.fudan.edu.cn/webeditor/uploadfile/file/20181107025355\\_48976.pdf](http://brgg.fudan.edu.cn/webeditor/uploadfile/file/20181107025355_48976.pdf).

213 Ahmad, 'Gwadar: A Historical Kaleidoscope'.

a Pakistani company. At the time, China was also interested in using the port of Gwadar as a strategic location. Due to security issues and other factors, a Chinese company withdrew from the official tender. The contract was ultimately awarded to PSA International. On February 05, 2007, the Government of Pakistan awarded the concession agreement (CA) of Gwadar Port to the Singapore Port Authority on a Build Operate Transfer (BOT) basis. The agreement was signed between Gwadar Port Authority (GPA) and PSA Gwadar Pvt. Ltd. a subsidiary of PSA International).<sup>214</sup> According to the agreement, PSA International was granted the right to operate the port for a 40-year lease; however, due to a lack of infrastructure such as surrounding roads and railways, annual freight volumes were severely inadequate, and there occurred security issues and difficulty in operation. Thus, it was not developed as planned by the Singapore Port Authority and Pakistani stakeholders, which resulted in the seizing of the operation. In January 2013, the Government of Pakistan approved the transfer of the port's operating rights to China Overseas Ports Holdings Limited. In February 2013, the handover agreement was formally signed with a 43-year lease.<sup>215</sup>

In May 2013, the Chinese Premier Li Keqiang Li arrived in Islamabad after a trip to New Delhi, where he had discussed the Silk Road Economic Belt, and both sides agreed to develop this new concept of economic cooperation known as the China–Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The Chinese government regarded CPEC as the flagship project of BRI.<sup>216</sup> Pakistan's Ministry of Planning, Development and Reform and Chi-

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214 Dostain Jamaldini, Gwadar Port development, interview by Sohrab Ahmed Marri, 29 November 2018. Dostain Jamaldini was former Chairman Gwadar Port Authority

see also; Captain K. Raffat Zaheer, 'Development and Operations of the Port of Gwadar', n.d., <http://www.ifsma.org/tempannounce/aga33/Gwadar.pdf>.

215 'Construction of a Chinese-Funded Park in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor'.

216 Rafiq, 'The China Pakistan Economic Corridor- Barriers and Impacts.'

na's National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) were assigned the task to move ahead of the various other projects and develop a long-term plan and strategy to implement this new concept. As part of the CPEC, a full package was designed that included the development and expansion of the Gwadar port and energy projects across Pakistan, including a road, rail and communication infrastructure project to connect Gwadar with the hinterland as well as the industrial development and modernization of the airport and other facilities and infrastructures in and around the city of Gwadar.<sup>217</sup>

In April 2015, the Chinese President Xi Jinping visited Islamabad. During his visit, the CPEC was formally launched with a signing of 51 MOUs related to diverse aspects of bilateral relations.<sup>218</sup> The main aim of developing a project such as CPEC was to link Gwadar in Pakistan to China's western Xinjiang region by building a network of roads, railway and pipelines between the long-time allies.<sup>219</sup> The projects approximated cost was \$45.649 billion which has now increased to \$62 billion and is planned to be completed by 2030.<sup>220</sup> Besides transport infrastructure projects, it includes special economic zones, energy projects, cross border optical fiber cable, socio-development projects, etc.<sup>221</sup>

Since the commencement of BRI, Gwadar Port became a hotspot for various projects, most of which were undertaken by Chinese state-owned construction companies. The Gwadar Port & Free zone has been leased for 40 years to China Overseas Ports Holding

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217 Ahmad, 'Gwadar: A Historical Kaleidoscope'.

218 Irfan Haider, 'Details of Agreements Signed during Xi's Visit to Pakistan', *Dawn News*, 20 April 2015, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1177129>.

219 Khan, 'China's Xi Jinping Agrees \$46bn Superhighway to Pakistan.'

220 Kumar, 'The CPEC Challenge and the India-China Standoff: An Opportunity for War or Peace?'

221 'CPEC Quarterly'.

Company Pakistan (Pvt.) Ltd. (COPHC). During this period, the COPHC will manage and upgrade the port, develop the Free Zone and retain almost 90% of revenues generated from it while the rest goes to the Pakistan government port authority.<sup>222</sup> The COPHC is derived from the collaboration of three companies, namely CCCC, COSCO and CM Port. According to an official from the China Merchants Group,

*“There are three companies from China working in Gwadar port and Free Zone: COPHC, COSCO and CM port. These three companies have a clear division of labor in the construction and operation of Gwadar Port and Free Zone. COPHC is responsible for the port’s infrastructure, China Merchants Group is responsible for the construction and subsequent operations of the park and urban area, and COSCO Group is responsible for the organization and transportation of goods.”*<sup>223</sup>

The Chinese companies are replicating the Shekou model of Shenzhen in Gwadar. It progresses by exchanging the experience of the Shekou model of Shenzhen with local stakeholders. The local experts consider only those concepts that are appropriate and feasible with local conditions.<sup>224</sup> In this model, the port supports the development of the industrial park, and the industrial park supports the development of the city, and all these three components are interlinked.<sup>225</sup>

The main components of the Gwadar port city project under CPEC are as follows:

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222 Bonino et al., ‘Fondazione Italia Cina’.

223 Song, ‘巴基斯坦瓜达尔港自由区启动三家中方公司共同运营 - 经济观察网 - 专业财经新闻网站, English:Gwadar Port Free Zone in Pakistan Launches Three Chinese Companies to Jointly Operate’, eeo.com.cn, 9 October 2016, <http://www.eeo.com.cn/2016/0910/291806.shtml>.

224 In 08 September 2020, The author attended CPEC meeting on the topic of economic models.

225 ‘巴基斯坦瓜达尔港自由区启动三家中方公司共同运营 - 经济观察网 - 专业财经新闻网站, English:Gwadar Port Free Zone in Pakistan Launches Three Chinese Companies to Jointly Operate’.

1. Development of Gwadar Port Phase 2
2. Development of Gwadar Free zone Phase 1&2
3. City development project.<sup>226</sup>

The details of the construction project in Gwadar, which is being developed within the framework of the BRI, are given in Figure 15. Some of the projects have been built, but most are under construction.

The success of the CPEC depends on the successful development of the port city of Gwadar and is accompanied by Chinese companies, agencies, officials and Pakistani officials, technical experts, etc. to make it an exemplary international model for port city development. There are several Chinese construction companies and design institutes working on the various projects under the CPEC. Gwadar is a crucial case to discuss.

It has unique contextual factors such as history, culture, strategic location, harsh climate, least development, geopolitical importance, etc. There are many architecture projects being built in Gwadar within the framework of CPEC, as shown in Figures 14 and 15.

Although Gwadar is least developed and has a very small population of 0.1 million, it has an interesting history and is an important geopolitical location. The old town of Gwadar has several historical places. How do Chinese incorporate the unique city's features into their architectural projects? Even famous Pakistani architects do not know much about Gwadar. How do Chinese architects collaborate with the local technical experts to address such issues?

In Gwadar, there is no stable construction industry and infrastructure that can assist in

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<sup>226</sup> Bonino et al., 'Fondazione Italia Cina'.

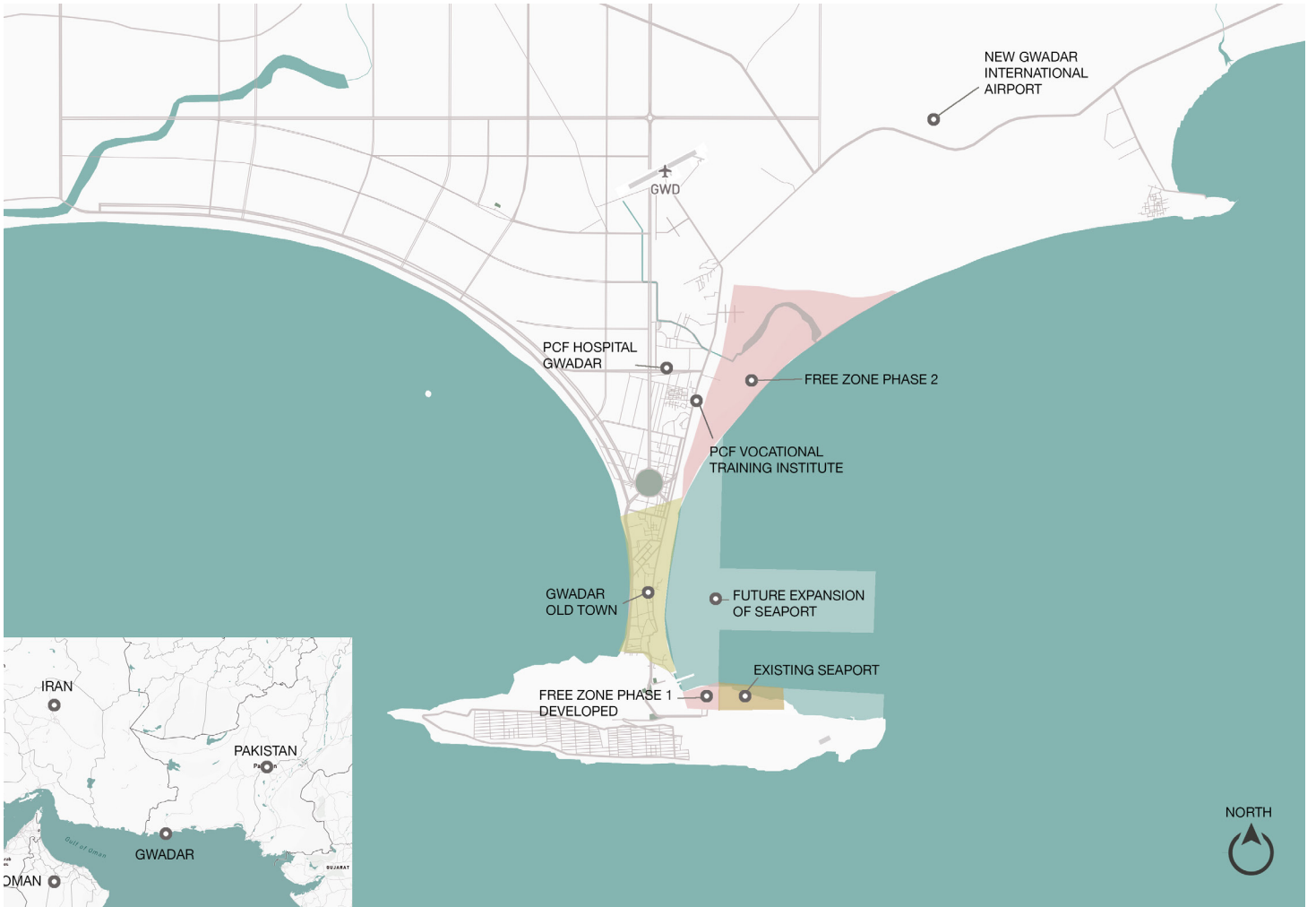


Figure 14: Gwadar Free Zone & Port and other architecture projects locations in Gwadar. Source: A figure drawn by Author



Figure 15: List of Construction Project developing under CPEC. Source: A table drawn by author and information collected from CPEC authority.

| S.No | Project name   | Objective   | Main Responsible agency   |  | Executing Construction / Design Company   | Project estimate cost / Financial type                                       |
|------|--|---|---|--|---|--|
|      |  |   | Pakistan  | China  |   |  |
| 1    | Gwadar East-Bay Expressway                             | 6-lane expressway along with a provision of 30 meters wide railway corridor proposed to Link Gwadar Port with the main artery of national highway network for smooth logistic transportation of import, export and transit goods.   | Gwadar Port Authority and Pakistan Ministry of Maritime Affairs                       | MOFCOM/ China embassy to Pakistan economic affair department COPHC. Ltd            | CCCC .Ltd is awarded for its execution with in period of 36 months  | 104 USD Million<br><br>/ Government Interest Free Loan                       |
| 2    | New Gwadar International Airport (NGIA) Project        | A catalyst to the overall development of Gwadar/ To cater the local, regional & international million) demand for travelling & transportation of cargo.   | Pakistan Civil Aviation Division  | MOFCOM/ AIECO /China embassy economic affair department                            | CACC is awarded for its design and management work. BCEGI. Ltd & CREC. Ltd. assigned for its construction with period 36 months                       | 180 USD Million<br><br>/ Chinese government grant                            |
| 3    | Construction of Breakwaters                            | To facilitate construction of additional terminals at Gwadar Port by its Operator.  | Pakistan Ministry of Maritime Affairs And Pakistan Gwadar port authority              | MOFCOM/ China embassy economic affair COPHC .Ltd / CM port group/ COSCO ltd.       | CCCC .Ltd is assigned for its construction.   | 123 USD Million<br><br>/ Mix of Chinese Government Concessional Loan & Grant |
| 4    | Dredging of Berthing Areas & Channels, Gwadar Port     | To facilitate construction of additional terminals at Gwadar Port by its Operator and for smooth shipments to and from the existing berthing facilities this project is proposed for carrying out capital and maintenance dredging. | Ministry of Ports & Shipping, Government of Pakistan / Pakistan Gwadar port authority | MOFCOM/ China embassy economic affair COPHC .Ltd / CCCC/ CM port group/ COSCO ltd. | CCCC .Ltd is assigned for its construction work.  | 27 USD Million<br>Chinese Government Concessional Loan                       |
| 5    | Development of Gwadar Free Zone                        | To create backup port industry for Gwadar Port.   | GPA, GIEDA<br><br>GPA & Pakistan Planning Commission                                  | MOFCOM/ China embassy economic affair COPHC .Ltd / CCCC/ CM port / COSCO ltd.      | CCCC .Ltd is assigned for its construction work.  | 32 USD Million<br>Financial Framework Agreement under CPEC                   |
| 6    | Pakistan China Friendship Hospital Gwadar              | This project will aim at creating state-of-the-art medical facility in the port city of Gwadar.   | GDA/ Government of Balochistan / Pakistan Planning Commission                         | MOFCOM/ AIECO /China embassy to Pakistan economic affair                           | Areplus group Plc look after designing and for management work<br><br>CGICOP assigned for construction task with in period of 24 months               | 100 USD Million<br>Chinese Government Grant                                  |
| 7    | Pak-China Technical and Vocational Institute at Gwadar | This project will aim at creating state-of-the-art vocational and technical training institute in the port city of Gwadar.  | GPA/ Ministry of Maritime Affairs, Government of Pakistan and Planning, Development   | MOFCOM/ AIECO /China embassy to Pakistan economic affair/ CCCC Ltd./COPHC Ltd.     | Designers were from ECADI, Arc plus group from Shanghai<br><br>CHEC .Ltd is awarded for its execution with in period of 24 months                     | 10 USD Million<br>Chinese Government Grant                                   |
| 8    | Gwadar Smart Port City Master Plan                     | With the development of port and industries a smart port city is needed. master needed for smooth future expansion  | GDA/ Balochistan government and planning department Islamabad /                       | MOFCOM/ AIECO /China embassy to Pakistan economic affair/ CCCC ./COPHC Ltd.        | CCCC FHDI .Ltd is awarded for its execution with in period of 30 months<br><br>NESPAC (local planners team which help in providing data to CCCC FHDI) | 4 USD Million<br>Chinese Government Grant                                    |

construction projects. The weather condition is hot and humid, and sandstorms occur regularly. This creates a challenging task for Chinese contractors and architects. On the other side, Gwadar has been declared by both Chinese and Pakistani officials as an exemplary case of BRI. This importance of Gwadar challenges the Chinese contractors and architects to come up with state-of-the-art buildings and a competitive global model. All these factors make Gwadar as an exciting case to conduct research on the architecture of the “other” and determine whether it is a good example of the same. Certainly, it is a challenging task for Chinese architects and their local collaborators for the successful execution of such architecture projects. It also opens up interesting cross-cultural dialogues between Chinese and Pakistani expertise. These engagements result in knowledge exchanges, new learnings, challenges and pragmatic solutions.

### **4.3 The Architecture of New Eclecticism: Architecture as a “Contact Zone” Gwadar Free Zone Business Center**

#### **4.3.1. Gwadar Free Zone Planning**

COPHC developed a master plan of the Free Zone in which the southern part was designated as the trade and logistics area while the north as an industrial zone.<sup>227</sup> The southern part of the zone in which the most prominent building is the Gwadar Business Center was recently invested in and constructed by CCCC, and it is currently operational. The northern part also includes the central business district which is in the planning and design phase. The COPHC is almost autonomous in planning and designing the free zone; however, according to the agreement, they have to get it reviewed by the Gwadar Port Authority (GPA) and Planning Commission of Pakistan before the execution of proj-

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227 Ibid.

ects.<sup>228</sup>

The first phase of the project comprises the initial investment and development. The main contractor of Gwadar Free Zone is China Communications Construction Co., Ltd. It has subcontracted the project to China Second Aviation Engineering Co., Ltd., and they have undertaken the responsibility for the entire design and construction work. It includes the construction of a trade and logistics development zone to merchandise exhibition and sales, transit, trade, fish products' processing as well as other allied facilities.<sup>229</sup> The site of the South Free Zone consists of some reclaimed land from the sea. The Gwadar Business Center is part of the initial phase of South Free Zone. Its main function involves developing industries such as merchandise exhibition, warehousing logistics, cold chain logistics, international transit/distribution, business/life services, etc. It is expected to be gradually developed into an important commercial logistics zone.<sup>230</sup>

The CCCC invested more than \$250 million. The park's specific construction projects include one-stop service, road works, water supply and drainage works, power stations, wireless communications, HVAC projects, waste disposal stations, parking lots, fire facilities, safety management, control greening and other supporting facilities. The site covers an area of nearly 100,000 square meters that includes guest houses, offices, libraries, sports centers, staff quarters, canteens, a basketball and football stadium, a security area, and more. The site has a capacity to accommodate 1000 people for ac-

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228 Daud Butt, construction of Gwadar Business Centre, interview by Sohrab Ahmed Marri, audio recorder, 28 August 2019; Bonino et al., 'Fondazione Italia Cina'.

229 'Construction of a Chinese-Funded Park in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor'.

230 Information from see: 'COPHC Profile', COPHC Pakistan, accessed 14 April 2020, [http://cophcgwadar.com/files/pdf/COPHC\\_Company\\_Profile.pdf](http://cophcgwadar.com/files/pdf/COPHC_Company_Profile.pdf); Wang 王倩 Qian, '瓜达尔自由区商务中心——巴基斯坦项目设计 (Gwadar Free Zone Business Center-Pakistan Project Design)', *建筑与文化 (Architecture and Culture)* 0, no. 4 (2016): 48–51.

commodation and work. The investors can access all facilities, i.e., the power, water, communications and a safe and comfortable working environment in the Free Zone start-up area.<sup>231</sup> Among them, China Communications Third Highway Engineering Co., Ltd. (a subsidiary of CCCC) constructed the landmark project of the Gwadar Free Zone Business Center.<sup>232</sup> It was completed within six months; the project's rapid construction and the quality amazed the Pakistani stakeholders. On January 29, 2018, the Gwadar Free Zone officially opened.<sup>233</sup>

#### **4.3.2. Architecture as “Contact Zone”**

The Gwadar Free Zone Business Center is a comprehensive service center integrating office, accommodation, catering, leisure and security. The target customer groups are Chinese customers going to Gwadar for business, but the center also facilitates Pakistani as well as other international customers.

Several architectural design proposals are made for Gwadar Business Center by the China Communication and Construction Company and reviewed, discussed and negotiated in a timely manner with the local (Pakistan) technical task group. This task group consists of project managers, politicians, CPEC officials, economists, engineers, planners and architects. Similarly, the technical working group of China mostly consists of representatives from MOFCOM and the Chinese embassy in Pakistan and the

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231 ‘Construction of a Chinese-Funded Park in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor’.

232 ‘中交第三公路工程局有限公司, English: The Gwadar Free Zone, a Landmark Project of the “Belt and Road” Construction with the Participation of the Three Public Administrations, Opens’, CCCC Third Highway Engineering co.ltd., 2 February 2018, <https://www.zjsgj.com.cn/content/?d=6713170531252915566>.

233 ‘Construction of a Chinese-Funded Park in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor’.

architects, engineers, economists and project managers from CCCC. Their interaction creates a contact zone<sup>234</sup> between the two cultures in which there is intense, transdisciplinary cross-cultural collaborations and negotiations between the technical task groups (TTG) from both countries. This contact zone initiates dialogue in the architectural exchanges of knowledge among the two cultures at different levels, regarding different interests, movement of ideas, technology, construction methodologies and variants in context. There are asymmetric relations between the Pakistan TTG and China TTG because China's architecture and technical knowledge is comparatively more advanced than the local participating country; however, in this contact zone, power is negotiated, and knowledge is exchanged. This is what Maria Pratt argued in saying that the contact zone transcends the cultural boundaries and brings both participants to the new normal situation.<sup>235</sup>

The architects of CCCC and their other relevant professionals are constantly challenged by local TTG and other side actors. In the design phase of the Gwadar Business Center, according to Deputy Director of CPEC authority:

*“The CCCC’s initial design proposal for Gwadar Business Centre Free Zone was a more or less modern box with Chinese characteristics. Pakistan’s technical committee members recommended to modify it to Gwadar local architectural style which has a great history and historical buildings that represent both Arabic and Persian influences.”<sup>49</sup>*

The details of the first design proposal were not available either on the Internet or at the local CPEC offices. However, the author found some credible sources for the other three design proposals prepared consecutively in 2016 and 2017. A Chinese research article

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234 Pratt, ‘Arts of the Contact Zone’.

235 Ibid.

authored by Wang Qian explained the 2016 design proposal for Gwadar Business Center. In this proposal, the main building and auxiliary buildings form a U-shaped layout. The main building is comprised of conference halls and tourism facilities for crews of ships stopping at the Port. The additional buildings include offices and apartments and service areas such as kitchens, catering and entertainment facilities. The proposed design of the Gwadar Business Center presents the bold Islamic architectural features, the Arabic lattice ornamentations and pointed arches integrated into the building. The lattice wall is used to provide a particular shading effect on sunlight, which is the main concept adopted by Chinese architects to design a whole building with bold Islamic architecture style.<sup>236</sup> In general, the architecture façade or exterior design is considered public property, and many local authorities have determined particular regulation to appraise it with peculiar regional characteristics. At the same time, the interior is mostly considered a private realm.<sup>237</sup> In Pakistan, there are no such particular codes to regulate the façade's design.

The central concept of the Gwadar Business Center is unequivocally to incorporate the building façade with its peculiar regional architectural characteristics, but the interior is to integrate the functional requirements of users who are mainly from China, for instance, the peculiar functional spaces such as Chinese restaurants, apartments and even basement security bunkers for Chinese guests to evacuate in case of emergency. Meanwhile other common functional areas such as halal restaurants and mosques are provided for local users.<sup>238</sup>

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236 王倩 Qian, ‘瓜达尔自由区商务中心——巴基斯坦项目设计 (Gwadar Free Zone Business Center-Pakistan Project Design)’.

237 The role of building facade in public sphere. See: Birgit Jürgehake, ‘The Façade—A Reflection on the Change of the Public Sphere’, *Cloud-Cuckoo-Land; International Journal of Architectural Theory*, 19 (32) 2014, 2014.

238 王倩 Qian, ‘瓜达尔自由区商务中心——巴基斯坦项目设计 (Gwadar Free Zone Business Cen-

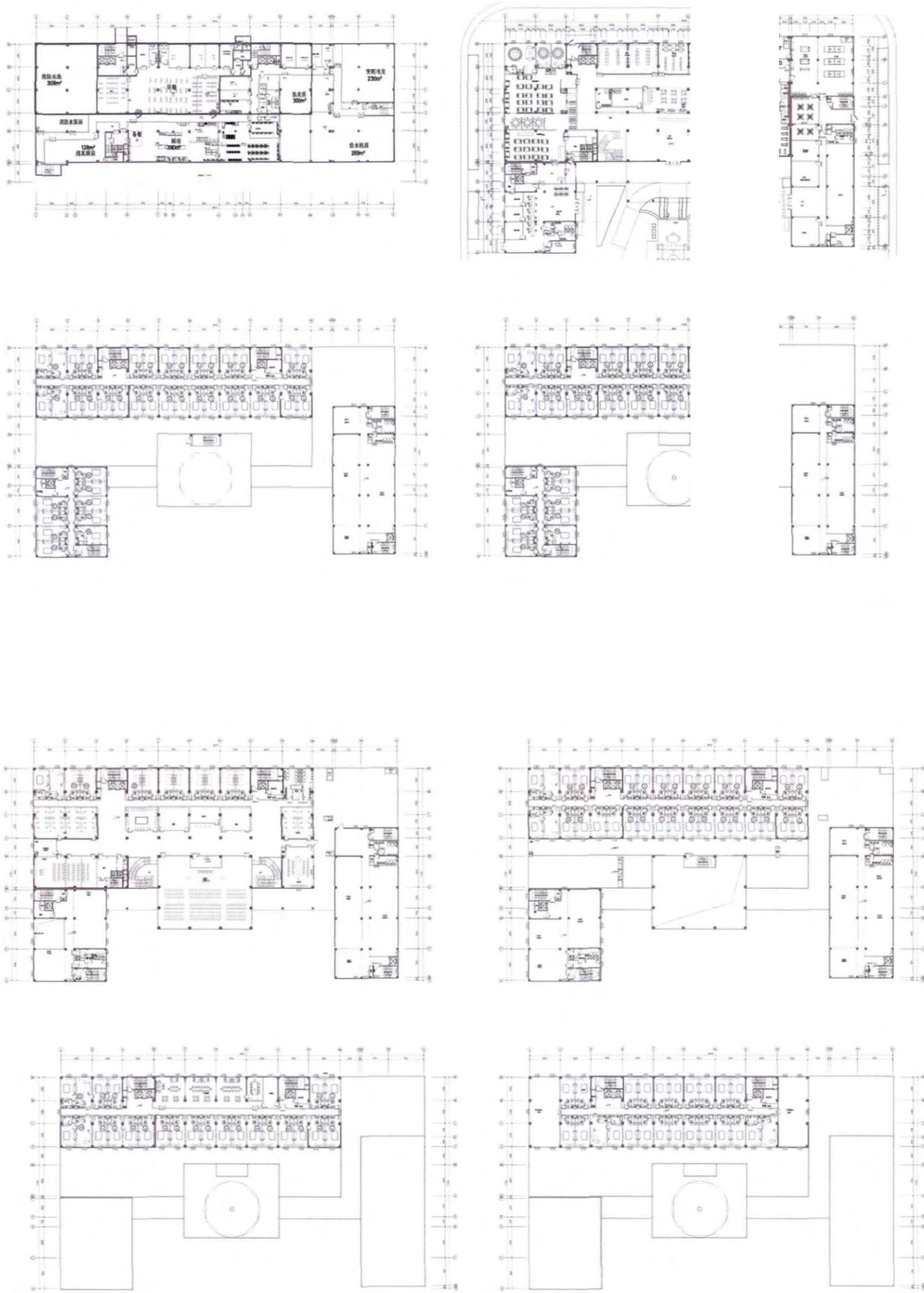


Figure 16: The initial proposed architecture floor plans out of scale Source: Wang Qiang



Figure 17: The first design proposal of Gwadar Free Zone Business Center Source:Image from Wang Qian document



Figure 18: Green Domes,series of arches, the second design proposal of Gwadar Free Zone Business Center Source:Image from COPHC office.





Figure 19: The modified and finalizing version of GBC models source: COPHC office Gwadar



Figure 20: Eclectic architecture of GBC source: A picture by author

However, this design proposal resembles that of orientalist fantasies.<sup>239</sup> The screen patterns “Mashrabiya” and pointed arches reflect a generalization of Islamic architecture.<sup>240</sup> These are ill practices of the past. Even though Pakistan is a Muslim country, every locale has its own particular architecture features. Thus, this Islamic design proposal for the Gwadar Business Centre was revised. In an interview, the coordinator and project director Hassan Daud Butt said,

*“Gwadar has unique Persian and Arabic culture and Pakistan has many Anglo-Asian architecture heritages. We (technical task group members from Pakistan) asked the China construction company to see such examples. In the next design proposal, they presented us the new design inspired by Xinjiang Islamic architecture and also Pakistan local Islamic architecture. This design proposal represents central Asian Islamic architecture and Anglo-Asian architecture, and the committee applauded it.”<sup>241</sup>*

In this contact zone, the final architecture design of Gwadar Business Centre was repeatedly improved by a discussion with local experts; for instance, one proposal consisted

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ter-Pakistan Project Design)’.

239 Historian Gwendolyn critical remarks on orientalist fantasies of western and non-western architect in middle east in 2<sup>nd</sup> half of twentieth century. See: Sandy Isenstadt and Kishwar Rizvi, *Modernism and the Middle East: Architecture and Politics in the Twentieth Century* (University of Washington press, 2011).

240 Oleg Grabar a distinguished scholar on Islamic art and architecture. In his writings he demonstrated what is Islamic art? The art of pre Islam and its influences in its formation of Islamic art. Distinction between secular and religious art. Main features of Islamic architecture are Islamic calligraphy and geometric and interlace patterned ornament. The geometric floral patterns such as arabesque, minarets and muqarnas all are of its unique inventions. He documented widespread of Islamic art and architecture from Spain to Afghanistan. He distinguished regional architecture of every locale. His main books:

Grabar, *The Formation of Islamic Art: Revised and Enlarged Edition*; Grabar, *Islamic Art and Beyond*.

241 Butt, construction of Gwadar Business Centre.

of more arches and domes, with the latter in the colored green. The designers probably considered gaining the local sentiment as it resembles the green flag of Pakistan. These green domes represent specific sects of Muslims in Pakistan and are mostly used in mosques, making the suggested approach an irrational one that was, subsequently, criticized. Thus, the green domes were omitted, and the number of arches was reduced in the final design proposal to give it a more contemporary outlook.

The final design of the Gwadar Business Center was, thus, significantly altered and included only four domes, incorporating a beige and brown color scheme that resembles the Gwadar vernacular mud architecture. This design proposal consisted of round arches, which were contrary to the pointed arches in the previous design proposal. It was a sensible design approach because the Gwadar vernacular mud architecture has mostly round arches. The domes are analogous to Indo-Gothic architecture. The other features are of contemporary Chinese architecture, which are blended in a harmonious manner. The grand lobby at the main entrance comprises mixed Xinjiang decorative components with Islamic pointed arches and Chinese paintings. The lobby's front wall displays the map of the Belt and Road Initiative made in marble to welcome the visitors. The ground floor is replete with restaurants (halal and Chinese), a mosque, offices and a supermarket. The first floor has a gym, shops, restrooms and a one-stop service . On the top floor, there are apartments for guests. The interior spaces apart from the grand entrance lobby are furnished almost similar to the style in China, and all the interior furniture decorations and design elements are imported from China.<sup>242</sup>

Gwadar city has a lack of modern construction industry and technology. Thus, the con-

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242 See two interviews: Dadullah Baloch, Execution process of the Gwadar Free Zone, interview by Sohrab Ahmed Marri, audio recorder, 28 November 2018; Baloch, Gwadar Port and Free Zone Development Process.

Dadullah is Management officer in COPHC.



Figure 21: Entrance grand lobby decorated with Islamic architecture features influenced from Xinjiang Islamic architecture. Source: Extracted from promotional video of CCCC

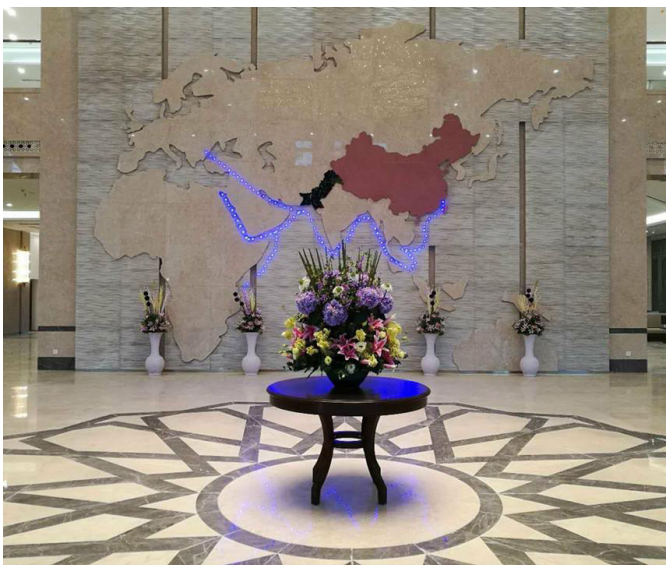


Figure 22: Grand entrance lobby welcoming visitors with marble relieve sculpture which is depicting BRI map. source: image from COPHC office



Figure 23: Hybridization of Islamic and Chinese traditional architecture decorations. source: image from promotional video of CCCC Ltd.

struction is entirely carried out using prefabricated material imported from China and assembled in Gwadar. All other decorative materials, appliances etc. are also imported from China.<sup>243</sup> It is similar to the case of the Pakistan–China Friendship Center discussed earlier regarding, for instance, the import of construction and decorative materials from China and the use of Chinese construction methods and standards. Approvals for the utilization of high-tech construction techniques, a structure design with Chinese standards and the center’s functional requirements were passed without any strict objections from the local technical task group except for the architectural design.<sup>244</sup> However, it is obligatory for the Chinese design standard to abstain from any contradiction with the local codes. For this reason, CCCC collected the Pakistan building codes and seismic zone data from local departments for general considerations. Adnan Khan (researcher in CPEC authority) stated the following:

*“The Pakistan government has leased the land to COPHC for developing the free zone, but the construction has to pass the basic local building codes, and usually the Chinese construction and designing company reviews local building codes before commencing a construction work.”<sup>245</sup>*

The CCCC thus faced multiple interactions with different departments of government of Pakistan. In the technical task group meetings, all these contradictions in codes were discussed, and Chinese codes were appropriated according to the prerequisites of Paki-

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243 Baloch, Execution process of the Gwadar Free Zone; Baloch, Gwadar Port and Free Zone Development Process; 王倩 Qian, ‘瓜达尔自由区商务中心——巴基斯坦项目设计 (Gwadar Free Zone Business Center-Pakistan Project Design)’.

244 Ibid.

245 Adnan Khan, local building codes and Chinese codes, interview by Sohrab Ahmed Marri, audio recorder, 14 January 2019.

stan codes.<sup>246</sup> Chinese engineers trained the local construction workers to assist them in the construction. This interaction provided positive learning outcomes for local workers, and they learned latest construction skills. The construction of the Gwadar Business Center was done by both Chinese and Pakistani laborers but the project managers and engineers were from CCCC. The local representative of the COPHC office stated the following:

*“All of the construction material is imported from China via Gwadar port. This is probably the first benefit we get out of this port. The construction materials comprised prefabricated modular components; the ready-made cement mortar was used, which just needed water. During construction time, the construction laborers were using the mobile app WeChat to scan the QR code of every building component to construct it in the right way. Thus, they did multiple tasks at a time without instruction. We have learned a lot of new things from these construction technologies. [...] Our (native) contribution is to guide them about the local weather and other related contextual factors. The local workforce is accustomed to working in hot weather compared to their Chinese counterparts. All of these factors resulted in rapid construction, which started in mid-2017 and was completed in Jan 2018 just in 6 months.”<sup>247</sup>*

This reflects that the locals learned new ways of understanding the technology and that these interactions were reciprocal. Thus, these meetings and similar moments of interactions facilitated a contact zone between the two cultures where the exchange of multi-disciplinary knowledge, negotiation of the differences, collaboration and learning

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246 Ibid.

247 Baloch, Execution process of the Gwadar Free Zone.

new wisdom all took place.

### 4.3.3. The Architecture of New Eclecticism and Local Perceptions

The Gwadar Business Center represents the architecture of new eclecticism which gathered inspiration from British colonial Indo-Gothic architecture, Xinjiang Islamic architecture and local architecture features within contemporary Chinese architecture. The domes resemble the middle eastern Xinjiang and the color scheme of Indo-Gothic<sup>248</sup> architecture with round arches of local mud architecture, all of which are adorned in the contemporary Chinese architecture box. The design of this building displays strong eclectic local architecture elements except for the basic architecture spaces which are derived from the modern architecture practices of China. Dostain Jamaldini, Chairman of the Gwadar Port Authority, stated the following:

*“The construction material and methods are primarily from China. It is a Chinese version of modern architecture with high standards but the outlook representing our traditional Islamic features. The exchange of design models GBC was a great experience. The building is an example for us to learn more from our Chinese counterpart.”*<sup>249</sup>

This complex structure is not easy to comprehend. It is probably true that venturing into new eclectic architecture is to attain monumental architecture, and it is derived from a transcultural exchange of knowledge.

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248 The color scheme and architecture basic layout is reminiscent of Secretariat Building, New Delhi. A building constructed in 1910s and designed by famous British architect Herbert Baker.

249 Dostain Jamaldini, Dostain Jamaldini Chairman of Gwadar Port Authority, GBC design idea exchanges, interview by CRI series, 29 November 2018, <http://www.iaion.com/js/102452.html>.



The Gwadar Business Center's monumental architecture metaphorically represents the success of CPEC. The designer of the first design proposal said as follows:

*“CPEC is a major node of BRI. The successful architecture design and construction of Gwadar Business Centre seem to be crucial.”*<sup>250</sup>

The other reason for this eclectic architecture is the constant criticism of Gwadar turning out to be China new colony,<sup>251</sup> emanating from international media. It has persuaded Chinese designers and Pakistani stakeholders to follow a soft trajectory that speaks of local architecture to contend such criticism. As the chairman of COPHC said:

*“We are here to develop Gwadar for locals (others) not us (self).”*<sup>252</sup>

The Gwadar Business Center strives to establish architecture for others and not for the self. Similarly, the same architecture principles and design strategies can be seen in other BRI free trade zones, such as the Djibouti international free trade zone. These are developed and coordinated by the same CCCC company and IPRR. The entrance gate arcade and the landmark consist of repetitive pointed arches symbolizing Islamic architecture in a modern way. However, this eclectic architecture of the Gwadar Business Center is held in regard by the local people as it will enhance the image of Gwadar and bring prosperity.

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250 王倩 Qian, ‘瓜达尔自由区商务中心——巴基斯坦项目设计 (Gwadar Free Zone Business Center-Pakistan Project Design)’.

251 For example see: Lal Khan, ‘Is Pakistan Turning into China’s Colony?’, 1 December 2015, <https://www.marxist.com/is-pakistan-turning-into-chinas-colony.htm> .; Logan Pauley and Hamza Shad, ‘Gwadar: Emerging Port City or Chinese Colony?’, 5 October 2018, <https://thediplomat.com/2018/10/gwadar-emerging-port-city-or-chinese-colony/>.

252 Yasir Habib Khan, ‘COPHC Makes a Difference’, 8 May 2019, <https://nation.com.pk/08-May-2019/gwadar-cophc-makes-a-difference?show=preview>.

In many events or interviews where chairman COPHC repeatedly said we are here for developing Gwadar for local peoples.

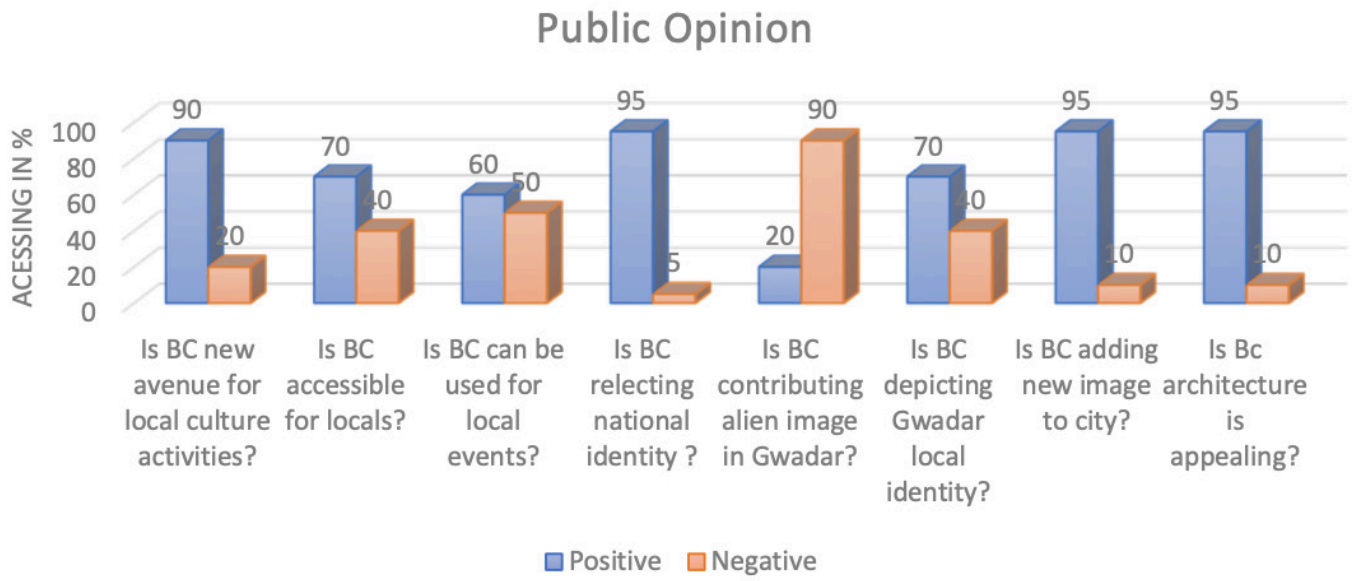


Figure 24: Questionnaires about GBC, conducted by author



Figure 25: The Power of Eclectic Architecture of Gwadar Business Center. Source: A picture from COPHC office Gwadar

This superficial eclectic Islamic architecture manifests or reinforces the local architecture character of Gwadar city. The Gwadar Business Center façade architecture complies with regional characteristics and is harmonically integrated with Gwadar city local identities. In a field survey, the author asked structured questions to Gwadar native art historians, intellectuals and architecture students. Almost 90% of the respondents agreed that it has the quality to represent the local identity as well as the national identity of Pakistan and that it will contribute to the city image of Gwadar.<sup>253</sup>

Three detailed interviews were conducted with native employees of the Gwadar Business Center to know their perceptions about it.

Accordingly, Yasir Durrani (telecom engineer) stated the following:

*“I had a great experience to visit Gwadar Business Centre, nice modern Islamic architecture. The entrance lobby is beautiful; everything is in harmony, and the construction standard is impressive. I must say of high standards even better than intercontinental hotel Karachi.”<sup>254</sup>*

Yasir is not an architect, but he was very interested in experiencing the monumentality of a building; the power of architecture inspires him. The symmetrical U-shaped layout of the building with domes at each corner balances the two central domes one above the other. The upper dome is substantially huge. The composition of the entire structure represents power and, at the same time, with the vocabulary of Islamic architecture, intensifies the sense of belonging among the locals. Historically, most monumental buildings were a singular, symmetrical gigantic structure, for instance, the tower of Babylon, the

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253 Marri, ‘Transnational Global Infrastructure Spaces and Their Impact on Historical Places: Resistance, Negotiation and Alternatives in the Case of Gwadar’.

254 Durrani, What is your experience in this new building? To know local perceptions about GBC.

towers of Stalin and even contemporary architecture such as the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban located in the capital of Bangladesh and designed by Louis Kahn.<sup>255</sup> Besides this, the monumental building practice always has some hidden messages. J Bretschneider stated the following:

*“The symbolism was especially carried by monumentality and enhanced by scale location, decoration, material and visual impact. By making particular use of natural landscape and the artificially created environment, the monumentality of building legitimated a particular societal system.”<sup>256</sup>*

Here, the Gwadar Business Center has demonstrated the power of China’s economic cooperation with Pakistan.

The second interview was with the Dadullah officer of COPHC, who stated the following:

*“Gwadar Business Centre is a unique building having all facilities. Even then, most of the local businessmen and Pakistan government officials mostly use the PC hotel of Gwadar because the hospitality services provided by Chinese are not appealing them.”<sup>257</sup>*

The Chinese people operate the Gwadar Business Center. In his view, the Chinese culture is weak in hospitality services such as food options, which is possibly because of cultural differences; however, the Chinese have established the halal restaurant to minimize this gap.

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255 Joachim Bretschneider, Jan Driessen, and Karel Van Lerberghe, *Power and Architecture: Monumental Public Architecture in the Bronze Age Near East and Aegean*, vol. 156 (Peeters Publishers, 2007).

256 Ibid, 1.

257 Baloch, Gwadar Port and Free Zone Development Process. *Experienee of Gwadar Business Center*;

The third interview was with Asif (urban planner at GDA office), a native of Gwadar, who stated the following:

*“There are restaurants, cafeteria and conference rooms. There is a nice sitting area near main lobby to have tea and enjoy. The tea culture is our similar common culture; we Pakistani and Chinese like tea.”*

Asif pointed out the similarities in both cultures, and he enjoys such spaces of harmony between the two cultures.<sup>258</sup>

These different interpretations of their perceptions about Gwadar Business Center’s architectural spaces reflect the productive participation in such contact zones, and they experience a new perspective about each other’s cultures.

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258 Asif Ali, Experience of Gwadar Business Center, interview by Sohrab Ahmed Marri, 12 September 2020.

## 4.4 Complexities and Opportunities: The Design Process of New Gwadar International Airport

### 4.4.1. Context

Since the first phase of the Gwadar Port in 2003, the old Gwadar airport was extended to accommodate wide-bodied aircrafts.<sup>259</sup> In July 2013, Pakistan's federal minister for science and technology Zahid Hamid said that the development of a new international airport on the Gwadar peninsula would provide a catalyst for the region's economic growth and development. Pakistan was interested in developing the Gwadar peninsula as a trading hub and boosting trade between China and Pakistan.<sup>260</sup> The success of Gwadar port city as a trading hub required state-of-the-art airport infrastructure to cater to the modern transportation needs. The airport project is a crucial investment due to its small investment and quick results and a defining impact on the local economy. The Pakistan government looked to the Chinese government for assistance in its construction. In 2015, under the CPEC, the flagship project of BRI, both countries signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to develop the New Gwadar International Airport (NGIA) as a leading transportation and infrastructure development project with financial and technical assistance from China.<sup>261</sup> In the same year, the negotiation process took place between both countries. The government of China converted Gwadar Airport's loan project with a planned cost of \$230 million for the grant. It was decided that, on the

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259 'Gwadar Airport to Be Ready by 2004', DAWN.COM, 21 May 2003, <http://beta.dawn.com/news/102764/gwadar-airport-to-be-ready-by-2004>.

260 'New Gwadar Airport NEW AIRPORT COMPLETION: IN A YEARv(30- JUN-2022).', CAPA, accessed 30 July 2020, <https://centreforaviation.com/data/profiles/newairports/new-gwadar-airport>.

261 Haider, 'Details of Agreements Signed during Xi's Visit to Pakistan'.

Chinese side, the MOFCOM would manage the construction of the airport. The Chinese companies were to take responsibility for its construction, and local construction companies and relevant government authorities would collaborate in the same. The Pakistani government would provide land for Gwadar Airport's construction.<sup>262</sup> In May 2017, the prime minister of Pakistan visited China, and a grant agreement on NGI airport was signed.<sup>263</sup> The responsibility of the airport design was handed over to China Civil Aviation Airport Construction Group Co., Ltd. (CACC) of the north China branch.<sup>264</sup> The site is located 16 miles away from Gwadar city, and its area is 7 square miles.

After Imran Khan became the new prime minister of Pakistan in 2018, it was essential to advance CPEC. Thus, soon, in April 2019, by the invitation of the prime minister and the Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa, the Chinese ambassador to Pakistan and other notables from the two countries attended the groundbreaking ceremony of NGI airport. The MoU on other China Grant projects of the vocational training center and the hospital project at Gwadar was also signed in this ceremony.<sup>265</sup> In May

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262 'China Converts \$230m Loan for Gwadar Airport into Grant', *The News*, 23 September 2015, <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/14833-china-converts-230m-%20loan-for-gwadar-airport-into-grant>.

263 'Belt & Road Forum; Pak China Sign CPEC Agreements and MoUs', China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Official Website, 13 May 2017, <http://cpec.gov.pk/news/51>.

264 China Civil Aviation Airport Construction Group Co., Ltd. ("CACC") was founded in 1954, focusing on serving civil aviation airport construction for more than 60 years. It is a state-owned high-tech enterprise with leading technology, outstanding talents and strong strength in the civil aviation industry. Adhering to the corporate mission of "advocating Chinese services and leading airport construction", the North China branch has undergone years of reform and development, and accompanied by the promotion and implementation of the national "One Belt, One Road" and "Interconnection" strategy, relying on this young and the energetic team, step by step, step by step, based on the airport design business in North China. For more information see: 'China Civil Aviation Airport Construction Group Corporation North China Branch (Translated to English)', CAAC NEWS, 2017, [http://www.caacnews.com.cn/special/3367/3371/mhgrxfh2/201704/t20170420\\_1212230.html](http://www.caacnews.com.cn/special/3367/3371/mhgrxfh2/201704/t20170420_1212230.html).

265 'Pakistan Breaks Ground for China-Funded New Gwadar Int'l Airport', Xinhua, English.news.cn, 30 March 2019, [http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-03/30/c\\_137935903.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-03/30/c_137935903.htm).

2019, the China Beijing Urban Construction Group and China Railway Beijing Engineering Group led a consortium and won a CNY 1424 million (\$206.8 million) tender to construct the New Gwadar Airport.<sup>266</sup> At the same time, CACC carried out the coordination, design, supervision, and project management on behalf of China's Ministry of Commerce. The project's total investment is about 1.7 billion yuan, which is the largest foreign aid project with 100% free aid since the founding of New China.<sup>267</sup> The project officially commenced in November 2019 with a construction period of 36 months. Ding Kan, Head of the Gwadar New International Airport Project Management Team of CACC stated the following:

*“There are many difficulties the project construction team faces, the geological condition of Gwadar is sand and deform, high temperature, dust storms, scarcity of water, weak internet and low power. Beside all these challenges, the ambition of a construction worker is decisive and optimistic for the timely execution of the project.”<sup>268</sup>*

#### **4.4.2. Description of NGIA**

The NGI airport is located about 26 km northeast of Gwadar City, on the north side of the N10 coastal road. The planned land area is about 18 square km. It includes the new airport flight area project (runway 3658 m x 60 m) and the terminal area project

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266 ‘【今日头条】重磅！集团中标中国援外史上最大项目！\_瓜达尔 English: The Group Won the Bid for the Largest Project in the History of China's Foreign Aid!’, Beijing Urban Construction group, 5 June 2019, [https://www.sohu.com/a/312138786\\_653579](https://www.sohu.com/a/312138786_653579).

267 ‘连线巴基斯坦 | 帮“巴铁”建机场，我参与了最大无偿援外工程 English: Connecting to Pakistan | Helping the “Pakistan Railway” to Build an Airport, I Participated in the Largest Free Foreign Aid Project.’, sina.cn, 8 May 2020, [https://k.sina.cn/article\\_1821797847\\_v6c966dd701900n3zk.html](https://k.sina.cn/article_1821797847_v6c966dd701900n3zk.html).

268 Ibid.



(including the terminal area: 14,000 square meters), which is equipped with necessary production auxiliary rooms (offices, garages, warehouses, etc.), public supporting facilities (including water supply, power supply, cooling, etc.), air traffic control engineering (including weather, communication, navigation, etc.), and corresponding civil aviation communities (including hospitals, schools, and residential areas).<sup>269</sup> The existing population of Gwadar is approximately 0.1 million, and the demand for airport transportation is significantly less. The existing old airport flights are mainly from Gwadar to Karachi and are mostly observed as empty. The potential of Gwadar under BRI is estimated to be far more significant than its existing situation; thus, the airport designer along with local collaborators decided to design a prototype airport which can multiply in the future with the increasing demand of passengers and cargo. The NGIA will improve tourism and trade between China and Pakistan and also with others in the region. It will support the development of the Gwadar Port and Free Zone.<sup>270</sup> In my field research, I faced many difficulties in meeting with Zhang Baozhong, the Chairman of COPHC. Finally, when I did get a chance to meet him and discuss my research questions, his office manager sent me a message that the chairman's flight to Karachi had been cancelled due to bad weather. This was the third time his flight to Karachi was being cancelled due to a small Atari aircraft at the old airport. In frustration, he also cancelled the meeting with me. The COPHC company, which manages Gwadar's port and free zone, desperately needs the latest airport with updated infrastructure to develop Gwadar into a trading hub.

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269 Tian, 'Analysis of Key Points in the Design of Foreign Aid Airport Construction Projects and Countermeasures: Taking Pakistan's New Gwadar International Airport Project Design as an Example(援外机场建设项目设计要点分析及对策研究——以巴基斯坦新瓜达尔国际机场项目设计为例).'

270 Ibid.

### 4.4.3. Complexity and Opportunities: The Design Process of NGIA

The implementation of the NGIA project is quite complex and many actors are involved in its execution. CACC of the north China branch undertakes the designing and proj-



Figure 26: Inauguration Ceremony of NGIA Source: A Picture from CAA office.

ect management of the airport, and the chief architect is Tian Ren. According to Tian Ren's experiences, the China foreign aid project is different and complex than doing a domestic airport project in terms of the design requirements and related factors such as approval procedures, funding limits, division of labor between China and recipient countries, etc., and the site conditions affect the project design as well. This project is critical for expressing a better image of China in the international arena. The foreign aid project is a state-led project and comprises of strict rules and complex procedures. The

designers of the implementation company have no individual decision-making power. The implementation is a complicated process. For the design stage itself, the team must complete a pre-departure plan for the site, perform an on-site design inspection, sign the work minutes between different stakeholders and complete the in-depth design after returning to the country. It is then submitted to the third party for consultation (internal review). After the third party reviews it, it is sent to the foreign party for review, and after the design is confirmed, it goes to the construction bidding and other stages.<sup>271</sup>

In a discussion about the designing and construction process, the project manager of NGI airport from the Pakistani Civil Aviation Authority CAA stated the following:

*“This is a big-scale project, and the decision-making process, design and technical requirements are all consulted through government to government level. The government of Pakistan has formed the NGLA project technical task group comprised of many technical professionals, airport managers, urban planners, politicians, security officers etc. to discuss it with the Chinese side representatives. The Chinese engineers and designers consulted with us many times. We shared our local requirements from our local departments such as FIA Pakistan (federal investigation agency), Custom of Pakistan Civil aviation etc. regarding their legal and technical requirements. The main idea is to follow international technical airport requirements but to keep an eye on its future development as it is a vital node of the Belt and Road Initiative. Our Pakistani consultants are NESPAK (National Engineering Service of Pakistan) who are on a timely basis assisting their Chinese counterparts about the technical requirements of construction such as building codes, seismic*

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271 Ibid.

*data and others.*”<sup>272</sup>

Similarly, in another interview with the urban planning section research officer, Dr. Ahmad Khan from the CPEC office stated the following:

*“It is the vision of Ahsan Iqbal, the planning minister of the government of Pakistan, who has set up this idea of the rigorous involvement of the Pakistan local department in every CPEC project. These engagements will improve each project. In technical task group meetings, Pakistan’s planning department usually invites professors from universities of Pakistan to give their feedback, because the technical task group’s main task is to highlight our specific requirements and to discuss which international models are suitable in Pakistani conditions, etc.”*<sup>273</sup>

A discussion with the NGIA Pakistani stakeholders made it clear that it is a complex process that’s unlike traditional international competitions where an architect or construction company hired by the local government (client) is involved. In such an approach, the client-side politician is sometimes seen as having a vital role, and sometimes the star architects play a decisive role. The negotiation of the design process happens only between the designers and the client. In contemporary globalization, the star architects who have the signature design have a strong influence in the design decision-making process.<sup>274</sup> According to Leslie Sklair, capitalists, multinational companies and developers prefer an architecture style that will generate more profits, while govern-

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272 PCAA Director, Design Process of New Gwadar International Airport project, interview by Sohrab Ahmed Marri, audio recorder, 6 September 2019.

273 Ahmad Khan, Planning and collaboration process of Gwadar Master plan, interview by Sohrab Ahmed Marri, audio recorder, 27 August 2019.

274 Robert Adam, *The Globalisation of Modern Architecture: The Impact of Politics, Economics and Social Change on Architecture and Urban Design since 1990* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012).

ments usually prefer their fake version of national identity.<sup>275</sup>

Contrary to this, in BRI, the landmark or iconic project has a complex execution process and establishes a contact zone between the different expertise of two countries. It facilitates ample room for negotiation, appropriation, modification, and diffusion of global construction technology, project management process and architecture models that ends up in something creative and exciting. These contact zones at different levels create an opportunity for architects and challenge their imported models.

#### **4.4.4. NGIA Project Pre-Construction: Challenges and Negotiations**

In the feasibility study and project approval stage, the Chinese and Pakistani governments roughly determined this project's content and funding scale through an exchange of letters. The Pakistani side shared some of their early feasibility reports prepared in the early 2000s that were not compatible with the new program. The MOFCOM appointed a consultant from China to prepare the project feasibility study and project approval report. The consultants produced the detailed scale, content and investment of the project through on-site investigation and signed the minutes of the on-site inspection meeting with Pakistani stakeholders. They completed the project feasibility study and project approval report and submitted it to MOFCOM. Accordingly, MOFCOM conducted a quota bidding for hiring project designing and engineering consultants or companies that would supervise the project from the designing to construction stage based on the survey determined in the feasibility study. Once the project amount specified in the feasibility study is agreed upon between two governments, it may no longer be readjusted. In the bid CACC, North China group won the project designing and

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275 Leslie Sklair, *The Icon Project: Architecture, Cities, and Capitalist Globalization* (Oxford University Press, 2017).

management. Consequently, they further adjusted and optimized the feasibility study plan based on the agreed total investment. MOFCOM organized a meeting consisting of a team of experts who reviewed and modified it accordingly.<sup>276</sup> The alternative strategies were formed. The design project team went to Pakistan for detailed site investigation, collected data, consulted the Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority (PCAA) and negotiated the alternative plan formulated before the trip. The two parties reached an agreement and signed the on-site inspection work summary and then sent it to the Chinese economic and commercial counsellor offices in Pakistan the project implementation agreement with the Pakistani government to be signed. The PCAA project director of NGIA stated the following:

*“The cost is determined by the Chinese government and Pakistani government and is a signed agreement. Thus, we cannot change anything; it is an aid project, so we only review if it is fulfilling our legal and technical requirements. Then it can proceed.”<sup>277</sup>*

According to the CACC team, the detailed drawing was formulated based on field inspection and met the eight guiding principles of the MOFCOM which are application of norms, overall planning, investment matching, function priority, technological innovation, green environment protection, convenient maintenance and sustainable development. The following local requirements were considered in the field survey: local design codes and technical standards, general construction practices and special needs, engineering construction-related laws, regulations and implementation procedures, environmental protection regulations, tax exemption policies, operation and management of civil aviation and airports and similar local projects’ construction and operation

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276 Tian, ‘Analysis of Key Points in the Design of Foreign Aid Airport Construction Projects and Countermeasures: Taking Pakistan’s New Gwadar International Airport Project Design as an Example(援外机场建设项目设计要点分析及对策研究——以巴基斯坦新瓜达尔国际机场项目设计为例).’

277 PCAA Director, Design Process of New Gwadar International Airport project.

conditions, local production and supply of bulk materials and equipment, local prices and workforce equipment prices, site construction conditions, etc. The detailed drawings and the specification of primary materials and equipment were finalized and prepared for bidding.<sup>278</sup>

Further, the CACC team adopted the Chinese standard codes but also integrated the real situation of local area of site which they encountered in the field survey and the meetings with Pakistani stakeholders. Thus, the Chinese standards were not directly copied. On the other hand, mandatory requirements were adopted related to local construction regulations, occupational safety and environmental protection. Under the Chinese government guidelines, the CACC team respected the wishes of the recipient country's stakeholders during the project design and prioritized common local norms or customary practices based on their comprehensive research. In addition to complying with ICAO, relevant Chinese standards, flight level and corresponding measures of the PCAA regulations were applied. According to their research, the local standards were found to be much lower than Chinese standards; however, for safety-related reasons, the design of infrastructure such as roads, building foundation, etc. adopted Chinese standards. Regarding the security, the main building includes a single check-in point. Accordingly, they included the provision of the local requirements for the separation of male and female security check-in points. The prayer hall was provided for religious activities. The local need for using more water for ablution or other activities was considered; thus, the Chinese water consumption standard was increased accordingly. The ablution area was given in washrooms.<sup>279</sup>

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278 Tian, 'Analysis of Key Points in the Design of Foreign Aid Airport Construction Projects and Countermeasures: Taking Pakistan's New Gwadar International Airport Project Design as an Example(援外机场建设项目设计要点分析及对策研究——以巴基斯坦新瓜达尔国际机场项目设计为例).'

279 Ibid.

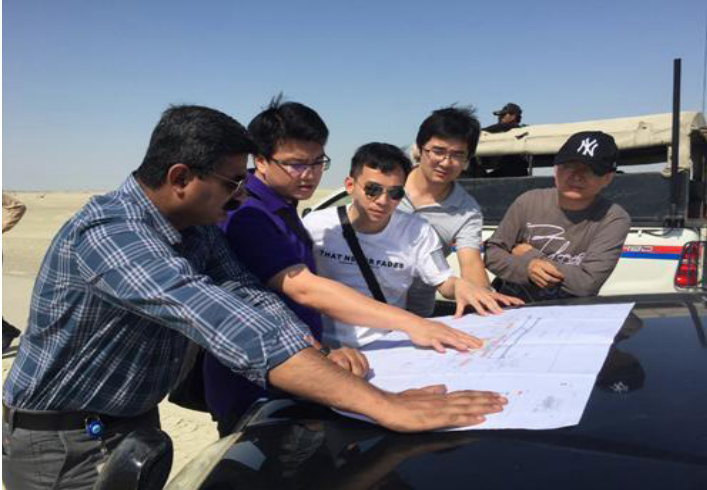


Figure 27: Project discussion on site by Tian Ren with Pakistani stakeholder in presence of other Chinese engineers and project construction manager of NGIA. Source: kknew.cc



Figure 28: Tian Ren presented the design plan of NGIA to director of Pakistan CAA. Source: kknew.cc



Figure 29: Tian Ren discussing the design plan with NESPAK design team including architect Imran. source: kknew.cc



Other small tasks were assigned to NESPAK, a consultant from the Pakistani side. In an interview, the NESPAK team leader and architect Imran said:

*“We have already designed a proposal for NGIA, but according to the agreement, the Chinese company will again design it while keeping in view the state-of-the-art airport; thus, in the negotiation of both Chinese and Pakistani technical task groups, we were assigned the task that is to design and construct the boundary walls of the airport and other similar work. But of course, we are assisting the Chinese company CACC in providing local technical data and other assistance in their design and construction work.”<sup>280</sup>*

The Pakistani side’s responsibilities include the following: the establishment of off-site roads and communications; design, construction and grid connection of the 132Kv/11KV substation; design and test of the flight program and school; land acquisition for sea desalination plants, temporary land acquisition for the construction of the power supply line from the desalination plant to the airport; handling of related expenses.

The Ministry of Commerce of China issued the “Recommended Catalogue of Major Equipment and Materials for Foreign Aid Complete Projects” for the designers of Chinese companies as a reference. The issues which were focused on by the CACC team in the design process of this project are listed below.

According to the site investigation, the local power supply line was poor and characterized by frequent power has outages. Therefore, two Rongyou generators were set up as a backup in the power distribution design to cope with the loss or failure of the mains.

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280 Architect Imran Ali, Design process and collaboration with Chinese counterpart in New Gwadar, interview by Sohrab Ahmed Marri, audio recorder, 5 September 2019.

In the selection of equipment and materials such as elevators, air conditioners, architectural coatings, etc., the local everyday life was thoroughly considered.

The sea breeze at the site has high salinity, leading to severe erosion of outdoor equipment.

The construction site is near the sea, and there is a threat of hurricanes. To enhance wind resistance for the terminal building, the CACC experts decided to adopt a continuous welding form of stainless steel.<sup>281</sup>

The condition of the soil as described in the pre-feasibility report was considerably different from the actual situation; this brought the cost to nearly \$1.5 million compared to the feasibility report. The approved feasibility report by the two parties required approval from both sides again, which posed a great challenge to the CACC team. The following considerations have been made by CACC to compensate for the extra cost.

The first one was by reducing the runaway cost; during the preliminary exchange of letters and project approval, the airport flight area level was determined to be 4F and the runway size to be 3658 m x 60 m. The project team was informed that in the 14th revision of ICAO Annex 14 Volume 1, the width of the 4F runway had been adjusted to 45 square meters. With repeated communications between the project team and the Pakistani civil aviation department, the other stakeholders finally agreed to implement this revision, significantly reducing the amount of engineering and investment required for the runway surface.

Regarding the second option, the project team readjusted the auxiliary buildings. In

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281 Tian, 'Analysis of Key Points in the Design of Foreign Aid Airport Construction Projects and Countermeasures: Taking Pakistan's New Gwadar International Airport Project Design as an Example(援外机场建设项目设计要点分析及对策研究——以巴基斯坦新瓜达尔国际机场项目设计为例).'

the feasibility study plan, concerning the management mode of Chinese airports, many additional supporting facilities with complete functions have been set up. The CACC team found in the field survey on Pakistan's Islamabad and Karachi airports that the local airport companies focus on centralized management in actual operations. Therefore, the project team suggested to Pakistani stakeholders to merge several single buildings, which was negotiated and agreed upon by both parties.

The combined construction of various supporting buildings helps improve the efficiency of operation and management and dramatically reduces the construction cost and investment in auxiliary facilities such as pipelines and roads. The project team optimized the airport planning layout and centrally arranged the additional buildings in the terminal area to reduce the space occupied. The civil aviation community in the original plan was located at the southeast corner of the site, at the lowest point of the site, with a height difference of about 5 m from the surrounding roads that have been built and covers a large area. The optimized plan adjusted the civil aviation community to be set adjacent to the terminal site's central area.<sup>282</sup>

This particular case demonstrates how the Chinese design team and project management team of CACC engaged the complex requirements from both countries. While, facing complex challenges at every stage of the construction project, they found the solution based on their field surveys and by encountering real local conditions and considering the peculiar features of local conditions provided by local experts. In the negotiation process with different actors, the CACC team followed a pragmatic approach to lead the successful execution of the project.

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282 Ibid.

#### 4.4.5. Comprehensive Architecture

The NGIA architectural design has been inspired from the arch outline of Pakistani monuments. This innovative design has a unique structural design to cover the vast surface area, but it also faces some specific contextual challenges. Gwadar is the coastal city, characterized by a lot of humidity, wind pressure and even dust storms. The steel structure design with a large glass façade was adopted and designed in such a way that it could mitigate these contextual challenges. To enhance wind resistance, the metal roof of the terminal building is planned to be continuously welded with stainless steel.<sup>283</sup> The steel louver frames were used as brise-soleils to minimize the overheating of the façade.

NESPAK was hired by the Government of Pakistan to design NGIA before the inclusion of NGIA in CPEC. NESPAK is the most prominent architecture and construction company at the national level in Pakistan. It is not a private, but a semi government architecture and engineering company. NESPAK proposed an architectural design of NGIA. This architectural design proposal for NGIA represents a simple, contemporary architecture with the incorporation of Mughal architectural features such as a courtyard and central star-shaped fountain. Such geometric patterns are common in Mughal architecture.<sup>284</sup> After NGIA's inclusion in the CPEC, it was decided in the MOU that the whole process of designing and construction would be carried out by Chinese construction companies and one local company would collaborate with them. NESPAK was already involved in the NGIA project; thus, NESPAK was contracted to collaborate as the local partner. The main task of NESPAK in the design process was to give suggestions to the Chinese companies regarding the specific design features and requirements of Pakistani

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283 Ibid.

284 Koch, 'Mughal Architecture'.

airports, such as the requirement for the mosque, its design features and the ablution area in every functional area of the airport. It is required that the mosque and ablution area for males and females should be separate. In addition, the specific functioning structure of CAA of Pakistan and other similar specific local requirements were to be considered.

Suppose we compare the architectural design proposals of NGIA from both NESPAK and CACC. There are few similarities. This might be because CACC might have encountered NESPAK's design proposal in their field research survey. Imran, the chief architect from NESPAK, stated the following:

*“They reviewed our design proposal for NGIA, but they said it is not complying to the international standard of airports...I think it is normal they have their construction technology and equipment for the airport. The contractor, designers and project manager are all from China, so their airport architectural design follows their standards.”<sup>285</sup>*

In the design proposal by CACC, the star-shaped fountain from NESPAK's proposal is replaced with a crescent moon sculpture and fountain. There is reason to provide this crescent moon, because it represents Islam. The crescent moon and the star are believed to be an internationally recognized symbol of Islam. After all, the symbol is displayed on the flags of several Muslim countries.<sup>286</sup> Even in the Pakistani flag, there is a crescent moon and star. However, this factor has been debated on, in that several Islamic scholars argue that there is no such symbol in Islam and that this crescent moon and star came

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285 Ali, Design process and collaboration with Chinese counterpart in New Gwadar.

286 Huda, 'A History of the Crescent Moon in Islam.' Learn Religions., accessed 6 January 2021, <https://www.learnreligions.com/the-crescent-moon-a-symbol-of-islam-2004351>.



Figure 30: New Gwadar International Airport Design Proposed by NESPAK before its inclusion in CPEC.  
Source: A picture from NESPAK office Karachi



Figure 31: Rendering of NGIA with crecent moon monument. Source: Pakistan CAA office

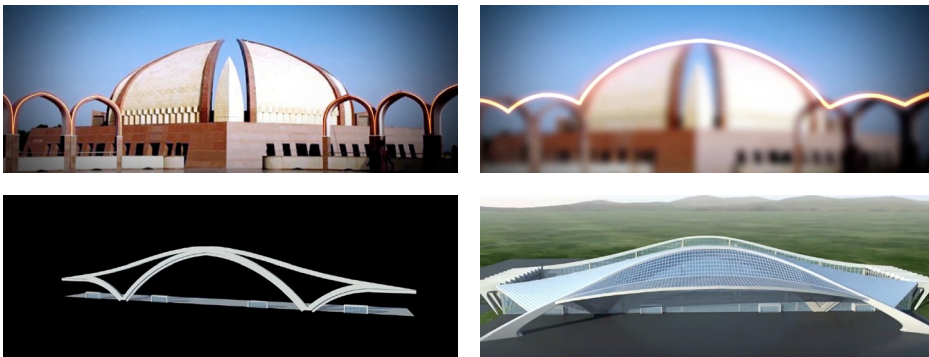


Figure 32: Design concept taken from Pakistan Monument arch. source: A video from Pakistan CAA office



Figure 33: The replication prototype of NGIA terminal building. Source: A document from Pakistan CAA Office



Figure 34: Interior rendering of NGIA. Source: Pakistan CAA office.



from the Ottoman empire.<sup>287</sup> Apart from that debate, the Chinese designers have simply provided it to get appreciation from the Pakistani side. According to the project director of PCAA,

*“The NGIA architecture design features are inspired from Pakistan monuments’ arches and other Islamic architecture influences. This is well appreciated from the Pakistani side’s technical task group of NGIA.”*<sup>288</sup>

The other similarity is that both are single rectangular planned terminal buildings. However, the building design proposed by NESPAK has a large central courtyard while that by CACC has a sculptural architectural design structure which is reminiscent of Calatrava’s architecture style<sup>289</sup>. The sculptural architectural design complements its monumental character. According to the CCCC FHDI team who prepared Gwadar smart port city master plan, the architecture design of NGIA is fundamental because it is the gateway to Gwadar city. Thus, they proposed that it should reflect the particular regional characters of Gwadar in a new way. Or, in another sense, it must be the iconic building of Gwadar.<sup>290</sup> Another reason for this type of structure is that it can be replicated harmoniously. It was planned by both parties that this prototype structure could quite possibly be reproduced in the future if the demand for airports increases.

This particular structure of the proposed design for NGIA has some advantages but also some drawbacks as well, more specifically in the context of Gwadar. The system could attain a large surface area due to its lightness, but this high-tech structure material needs

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287 Ibid.

288 PCAA Director, Design Process of New Gwadar International Airport project.

289 ‘Santiago Calatrava’, accessed 24 May 2020, <http://architectuul.com/architect/santiago-calatrava>.

290 ‘Gwadar Free Zone Smart Port City Master Plan’, Official Document (CCCC FHDI. Ltd., 2019).

to be completely imported from China. Secondly, Gwadar is a relatively hot and humid coastal city identical to most middle east coastal cities. Dust storms are common in Gwadar, making the maintenance of the large façade glass quite tricky. The large glass surface area can increase the interior spaces' temperature, but it also provides excellent views of the surrounding beaches. However, the steel louver frames have been added to the façade to provide shade from the scorching sun.

The other specific contextual features that have been added are a mosque, male–female separation areas where needed, and security checkpoints as well as provisions for particular departments' work at the airport. Thus, the architecture design is not entirely copied from China but appropriated according to the real contextual conditions of Gwadar and by learning from local partners. The conjecture regarding the NGIA architecture design is that it is a hybridization of international, Chinese and local architecture standards. The design proposal represents a comprehensive architecture, including Pakistani architecture's aesthetic values and Chinese and global values.

## **4.5 Transcultural Architecture Negotiation: Investigation, Interpretations and Appropriations of Local contexts**

1. Pakistan China Friendship Hospital, Gwadar
2. Pakistan China Technical Training Institute, Gwadar

### **4.5.1. Pakistan China Friendship Hospital, Gwadar**

#### **4.5.1.1. Context**

Since the development of the Gwadar Port, it was planned by the Government of Pakistan to build a state-of-the-art hospital to serve its future needs. The Gwadar hospital is designed on 68 acres of land. The phase 1 construction of the hospital project was completed by the Gwadar Development Authority, Government of Pakistan. In this phase, one out of six medical blocks (each with 50 beds) and almost 20% of the residential blocks were completed. The remaining phase II construction consists of medical blocks, nursing and paramedical institutes, medical college, central laboratory and other allied facilities with a supply of medical equipment and machinery. In April 2015, President Xi visited Pakistan to discuss the BRI with Nawaz Sharif, the then prime minister of Pakistan. In this crucial meeting, several MoUs on different projects were signed, in which the governments of both countries discussed the feasibility of Gwadar hospital phase II construction.<sup>291</sup> The Economic Affairs Division of Pakistan under CPEC China- requested the MOFCOM to consider this project as a grant project. It was then decided

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291 'List of Agreements/MoUs Signed during Visit of Chinese President' (Board of Investment Government of Pakistan, n.d.), [https://static1.squarespace.com/static/571d109b04426270152febe0/t/576c57aa6a-4963de8ddd5d72/1466718123649/Annex\\_F-CPEC-List\\_of\\_Agreements-MoUs.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/571d109b04426270152febe0/t/576c57aa6a-4963de8ddd5d72/1466718123649/Annex_F-CPEC-List_of_Agreements-MoUs.pdf).

that the phase II construction would be financially and technically assisted by the Government of China, and the name of the project was changed to Pakistan China Friendship Hospital. The Chinese team has completed the feasibility study to add 100 beds to the 50 existing ones and planned for a future extension to 300 beds. The relevant dates in this project are as follows: the LOE was signed on 10<sup>th</sup> April, 2018, the implementation minutes were signed on 29<sup>th</sup> March, 2019, and the groundbreaking ceremony was held recently on 16<sup>th</sup> December, 2020. It is planned to be completed within two years. It was decided that the Government of China would bear all construction expenses, even with the supply of medical equipment and machinery.<sup>292</sup> The Pakistani government's responsibility would be to provide land and assist the Chinese team of experts in completing the project. The project client is Gwadar Development Authority (GDA), and the project director from Pakistan side is chief engineer Mr. Syed Muhammad of GDA.

#### **4.5.1.2. Local Interpretation, Modern Ambitions and Appropriations**

The principal designers of the Pakistan China Friendship (PCF) hospital are Arcplus Group PLC and Shanghai Xian Dai Architecture, Engineering & Consulting Co. Ltd, also known as ECADI. The latter is one of oldest Shanghai state-owned design institutes and has long experience of working in foreign aid projects including Cottoned Sports Complex in Benin, constructed in the 1980s and one of their famous earliest works, and the International Conference Centre in Cairo.<sup>293</sup> The PCF hospital project mainly includes the outpatient department, the medical technology department, the general ward area, power center, allied facilities, outdoor engineering facilities and other infrastruc-

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<sup>292</sup> 'Pak China Friendship Hospital', China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Official Website, accessed 2 August 2020, <http://cpec.gov.pk/project-details/38>.

<sup>293</sup> 'Shanghai Xian Dai Architectural Design (Group) Co., Ltd', accessed 29 July 2020, <http://www.xd-ad.com.cn/e/5206680f4e00/>; 'Arcplus', accessed 24 May 2021, <http://www.arcplus.com.cn/en/belt-and-road.html>.

ture such as roads, landscape areas and outdoor parking lots in the general plan.<sup>294</sup>

In the initial stage of the project, the MOFCOM appointed the China International Engineering Company for preparing the feasibility and approval report.

The GDA project director of the PCF hospital from the Pakistani side said:

*“In 2015, the China international engineering company from Beijing initiated its feasibility work. They conducted detail site inspection and stayed in Gwadar for quite some time and completed all their research work; we have assisted them in their research. Finally, they didn’t share any of their document with us, and they directly reported their feasibility report to their relevant department in China.”<sup>295</sup>*

The feasibility report was completed and submitted to the MOFCOM. On the basis of this document, the two governments further discussed it in JCC meetings and approved it. Then, in a bid, the MOFCOM appointed the Arcplus Group PLC to the design and project management task of the PCF hospital. Accordingly, the company formed a team of researchers, and they visited Gwadar for comprehensive research work.

Syed Mohammad, the GDA project director of PCF hospital, said:

*“The Beijing Group prepared the PCF Hospital Feasibility Report and went back to China. Almost three years later, a full-fledged team of Arcplus Group researchers came to Gwadar for research. The research*

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294 ‘Design Brief of Pakistan China Friendship Hospital Gwadar.’, Official Document (Arcplus Group, 2019).

295 Syed Muhammad, Design Process of Pakistan China Friendship Hospital, interview by Sohrab Ahmed Marri, audio recorder, 10 September 2020. Interview with Project director of PCF hospital from GDA (Pakistan side). Three consecutive interviews, first in January 2019, second in August 2019 and third in September 2020.

*team consisted of two well-experienced PhD researchers, along with other researchers. In this research team, there was also the chief designer of the Arcplus design group. The research team stayed in Gwadar Business Centre for more than a month. In this period, they did extensive research on Gwadar context, and we have facilitated them. For example, they said we want to visit Gwadar Public Hospital and meet the hospital's head. So we've made it easier for them. They visited the historic buildings of Gwadar, did anthropological research; the geologists took samples of sand, water and so on. This means different disciplines experts researched in their particular areas of interest.*"<sup>296</sup>

The Arcplus group is a large design institution with several departments and specific groups for each task, such as research, designing, construction drawings, etc.<sup>297</sup> However, Syed Mohammad mentioned that the leading designer also accompanied them. This demonstrates teamwork, and credits are not given only to the prominent architect. This transcultural architecture practice introduced by the Chinese design institutes demonstrate a pragmatic approach by involving a different field of experts and their inputs in the final architecture production. Similarly, the Pakistani side also formed a technical group comprised of various disciplinary experts to assist their Chinese counterparts.

In 2018, the Arcplus designing group revisited Gwadar and presented their initial design to the technical group of the PCF hospital from the Pakistani side, including GDA members (key stakeholders), other members from Gwadar such as hospital directors, doctors and officials from Islamabad.<sup>298</sup> The technical group additionally comprised GDA mem-

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296 Ibid.

297 'Arcplus'.

298 Syad Muhammad, PCF hospital, interview by Sohrab Ahmed Marri, audio recorder, 3 January 2019.



Figure 35: Arcplus group designers presenting PCF hospital design proposal to GDA director. Source: A document extracted from GDA office



Figure 36: Arc plus group with a local expert discussing the implementation of design on site. Source: A document from GDA office

bers, planning commission members, architect, planners (both academicians or professionals), bureaucrats, economists, geologists, geographers, anthropologists, etc. The technical members reviewed the design proposal and raised several questions and objections: the first question about the overall design layout dealt with the hot and humid climate of Gwadar. They argued that the weather in Shanghai was usually moderate, so the initial design proposal had some similar features to Shanghai climatic conditions. They suggested modifying some finishing materials which are appropriate for the climate of Gwadar where the humidity is very high. The technical group also recommended to increase the width of corridors since in Pakistani culture, even with one patient the whole family accompanies him or her. In other words, it was recommended to make the entire hospital more spacious. The second objection of the technical group members was that there was no proper provision of privacy, even though, as Syed Mohammad said:

*“They are well aware of the local culture and privacy requirements.”*<sup>299</sup>

Nevertheless, there are some drawbacks in the design. The Pakistani technical group suggested replacing the glass walls with opaque walls, limiting the open labor ward design layout concept to a more closed and private one. The third suggestion the technical group put forward was that since this hospital was expected to be of international standards, its external view proposal could be improved. The proposed exterior design consisted of pointed arches and beige color similar to the indigenous mud houses, which did not convince the technical group who asked to modernize it. The fourth issue was to create a link with the existing hospital.<sup>300</sup>

The Arcplus group responded to the suggestions and modified the design accordingly. They prepared two more proposals for the exterior views of project: one with less Islam-

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299 Ibid.

300 Interview with the former Project director CPEC Hassan Daud: Daud Butt, CPEC architecture project mechanism, interview by Sohrab Ahmed Marri, audio recorder, 28 August 2019.





Figure 37: First design proposal for PCF hospital Gwadar, an official document with counter signs of both parties. Source: Design brief document extracted from GDA office.

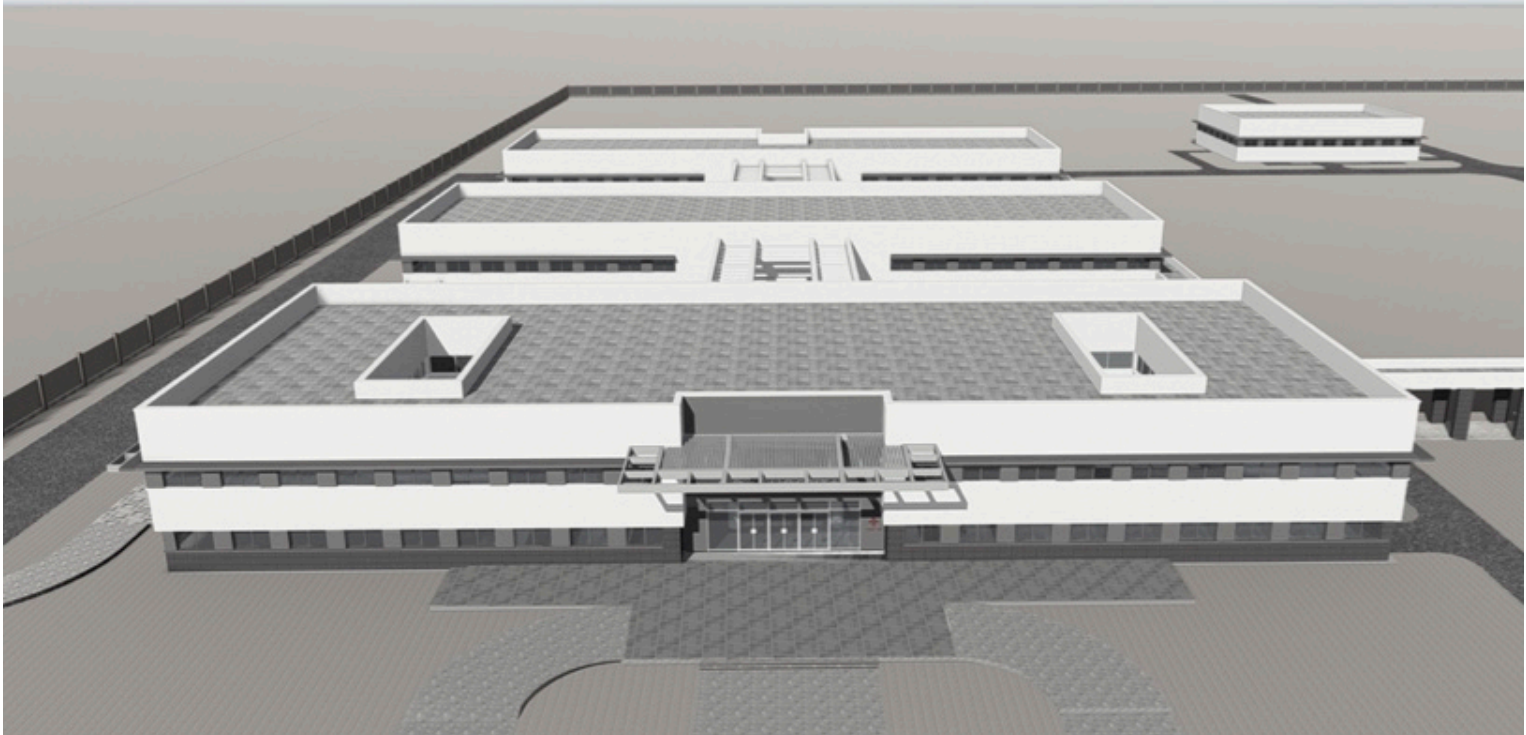


Figure 38: Bottom is second design proposal and top left is the third design proposal which was latter approved. Source: A presentation file extracted from GDA office.

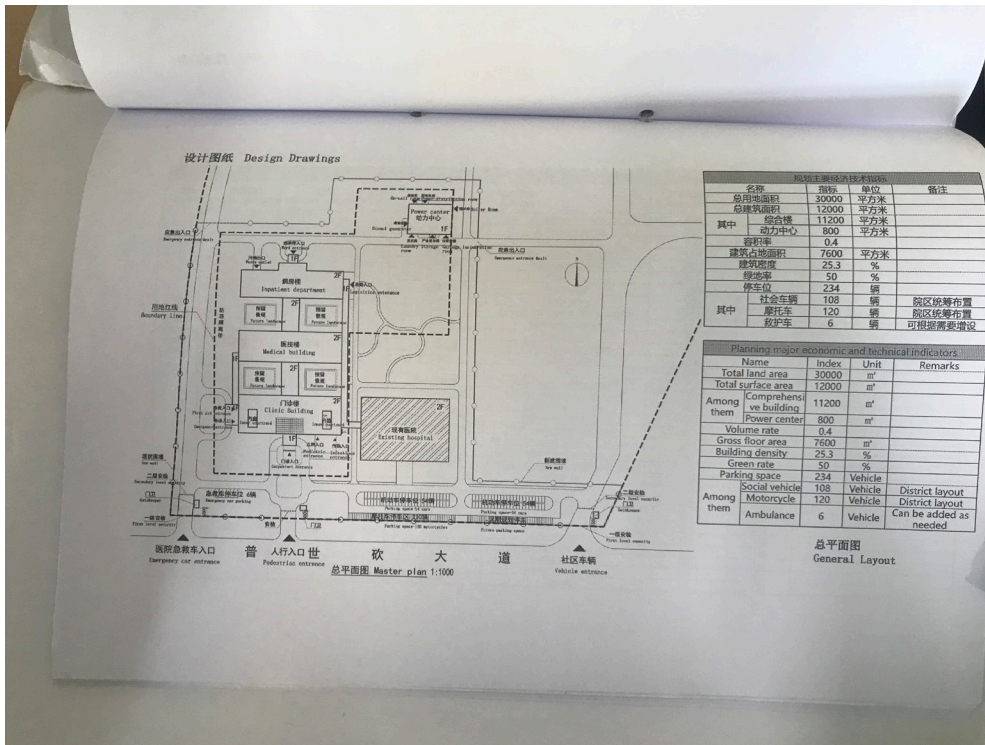


Figure 39: Master plan of PCF hospital. Source: A document from GDA office

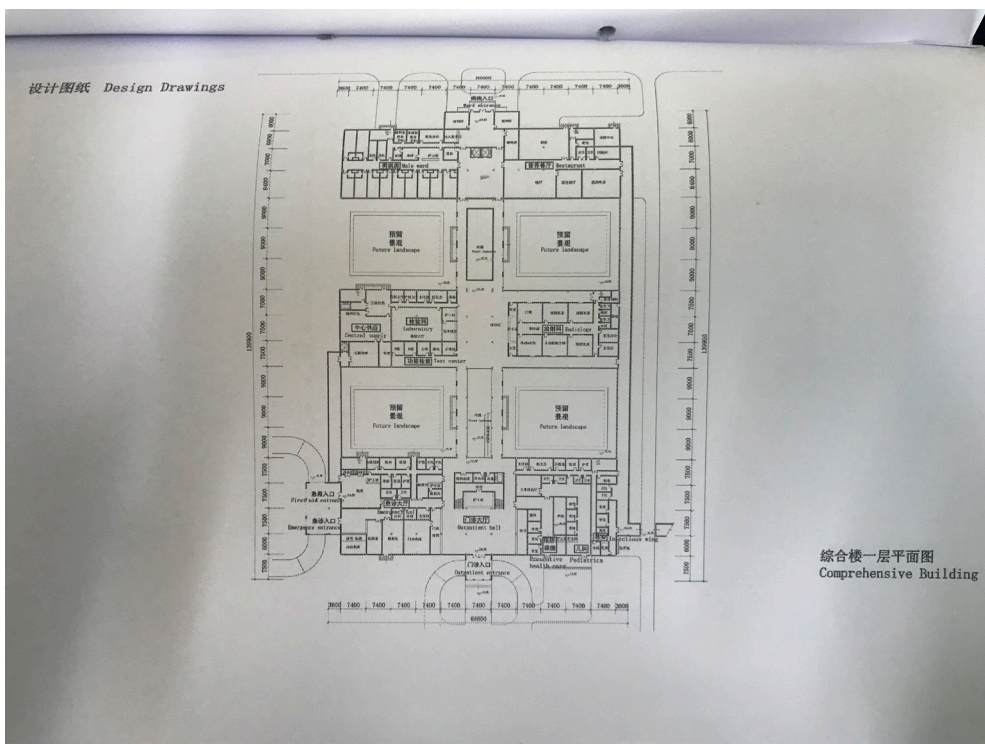


Figure 40: Floor plans of Gwadar hospital Source: A document from GDA office

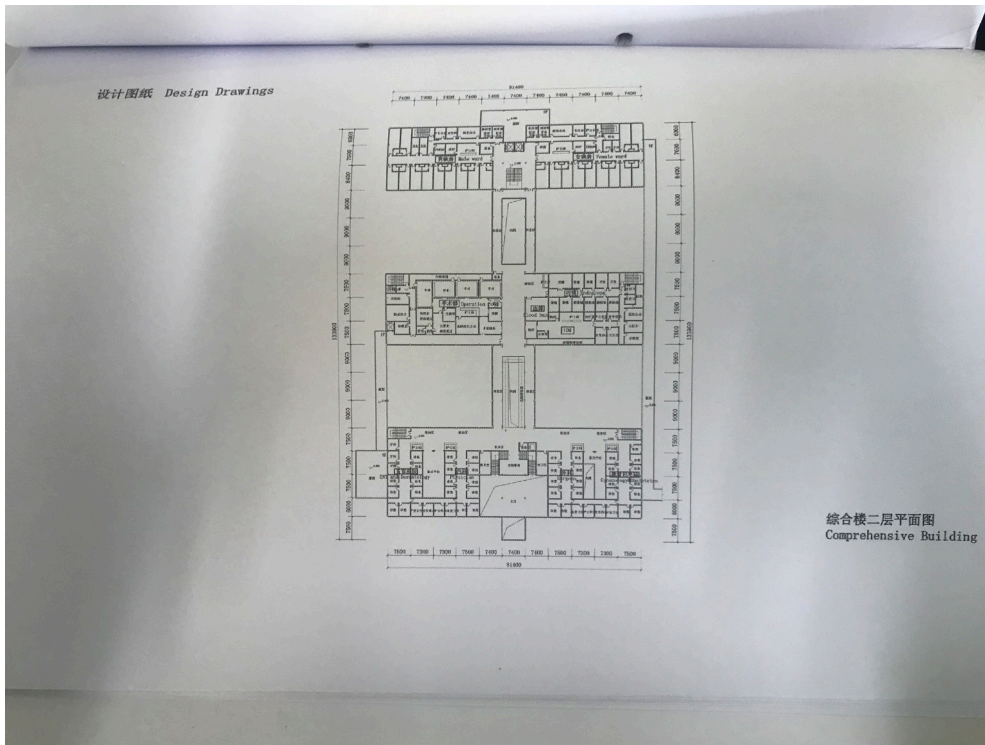


Figure 41: Floor plans of Gwadar hospital. Source: A document from GDA office

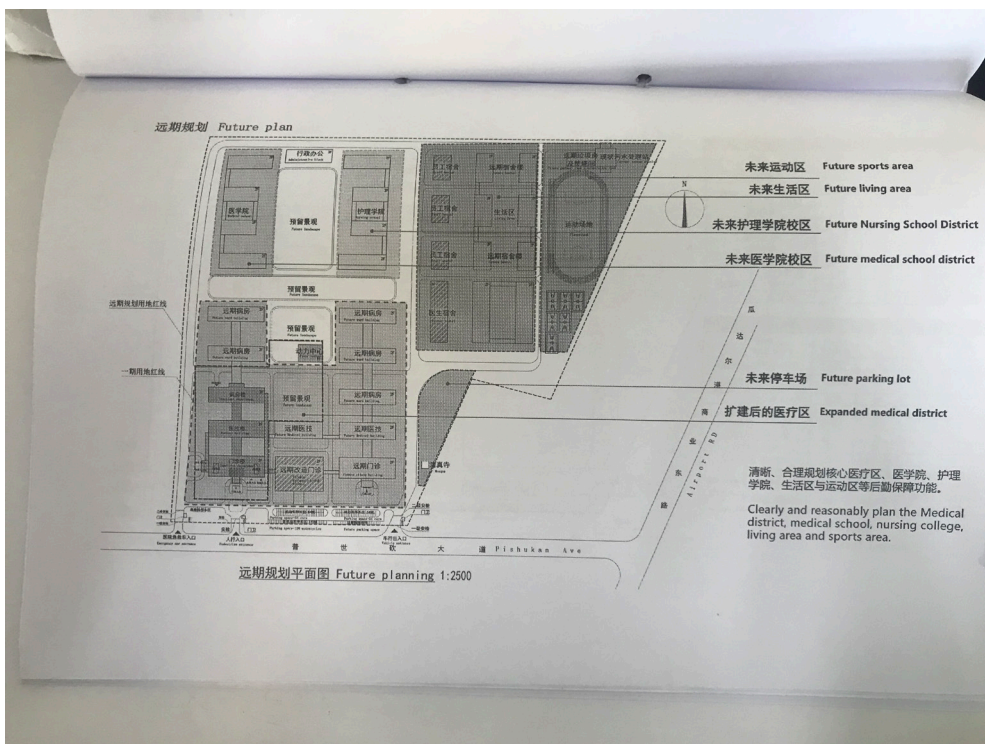


Figure 42: Future plan of Gwadar hospital Source: A document from GDA office

ic style arches and the second one a simply modernized design with Chinese characteristics.

As transcultural experts of Arcplus, their vision was to emphasize the precise regional architecture characteristics of Gwadar and incorporate the best practices of hospital design from China.

The initial design brief report by ARC plus stated the following:

*“It is an appropriate, economic, green and beautiful hospital. A hospital that is scientifically sound and moderately advanced; the architectural design meets Gwadar climate’s requirements and is rich in local characteristics. The modern hospital building has a simple design, convenient construction, functional spaces, durable materials, and easy maintenance design principles in accordance with local usage habits and culture and is practical, warm and orderly, respecting cultural habits and religious beliefs.”<sup>301</sup>*

In the field survey, the author researched the vernacular architecture of Gwadar. In comparison, it was found that the proposed architecture model by Arcplus indeed complies with vernacular architecture characteristic of Gwadar. The main regional architecture features are vernacular mud architecture, lattice design features for cross ventilation, arches that are mostly the round, pointed arches, niches, etc. This demonstrates that their research reasonably followed the local architecture identity.

The GDA project director of PCF hospital stated the following:

*“The Arcplus group recommended that the first proposal is much better than the two new ones as the first is the result of a thorough inspection*

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301 ‘Design Brief of Pakistan China Friendship Hospital Gwadar.’

*of the indigenous architecture and the proposal is a creative expression of the local architectural style. In response, I told them as a native of Gwadar, it is absolutely the best for me, but the technical committee members will make the final decision.* <sup>302</sup>

The first proposal represents the regional architecture characteristics. The Pakistani stakeholders were expecting a modern state-of-the-art hospital, but the Chinese designers' local imagination did not appeal to them. However, although this transcultural architecture of the first proposal represents regional architecture features on the outside, the inner layout more or less resembles a contemporary Shanghai hospital. The second exterior design proposal was modernized by the designer by removing all the pointed arches and placing three arches in the main entrance. This proposal was again challenged by the Pakistani technical group. In the third exterior design proposal, the ARC plus designers simplified it even further and removed all the arches. There is another issue here; even the experts from Islamabad other than the Gwadar technical group members do not know the ground realities of Gwadar. Gwadar is the least developed city in Pakistan, and it has never been the focus of Pakistani architects. Gwadar's new houses and public buildings have been mostly constructed in the last two decades, designed mainly by Karachi-based architects. Karachi is a big city with many facilities, and even the weather is much better than Gwadar. In my field survey, I realized that Gwadar's traditional hut architecture has outstanding features that maximize the cross ventilation. There is a shortage of electricity in Gwadar, due to which many houses rely on passive energy. The pragmatic architecture of Gwadar can be well-ventilated. The Chinese architects interpreted this local feature in designing the PCF hospital specifically when they designed shaded passages open from both sides and courtyards to have the

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302 Muhammad, Design Process of Pakistan China Friendship Hospital. Three consecutive interviews, first in January 2019, second in August 2019 and third in September 2020.

provision of ventilation. Undoubtedly, a fruitful conversation with Pakistani architects facilitated the understanding of many other things such as the local privacy customs, gender distribution spaces, corridor sizes, and use of space and suitable façade materials. The designers finally followed the principles of simple design, convenient construction, usable space, durable materials, easy maintenance and design according to the local culture and customs.

Some of the other queries from the Pakistani technical group were about the smart digital system of the hospital and other such modern equipment. To explain such smart digital systems and their related architectural spaces, the Arcplus Group invited the GDA members of PCF hospital along with other Pakistani stakeholders to Shanghai. They presented to the visitors their state-of-the-art hospitals in Shanghai. In this trip, the experts from Pakistan carefully observed several Chinese smart hospital models and appraised their work. Further, the Arcplus group discussed with the Pakistani stakeholders and explained how these models could work in Gwadar and how it could be appropriated in Gwadar's local conditions.<sup>303</sup>

The initial design proposals of PCF hospital Gwadar were modified, appropriated and translated according to Gwadar's local conditions, culture and environment with significant input from the Pakistani technical group members. These inter-cultural dialogues between both side experts resulted in, for instance, the utilization of sensible design features for Gwadar, the appropriation of Shanghai's hospital models in Gwadar and, more specifically, Arcplus group's understanding of the local context and the rectification of their interpretation of the local architecture by their Pakistani counterparts. In this 'contact zone',<sup>304</sup> where all negotiations take place, new wisdom was revealed, and

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303 Ibid.

304 Pratt, 'Arts of the Contact Zone'.

knowledge was exchanged.



## **4.5.2. Pakistan China Friendship Vocational Training Institute (PCFVTI)**

### **4.5.2.1. Context**

After the development of the port of Gwadar, as with the Gwadar Hospital, the Pakistani government also planned the establishment of the Institute of Vocational and Technical Training. The purpose of developing a state-of-the-art vocational training institution was to turn the local workers in Gwadar into a full-fledged skilled workforce to meet the port city's future employment needs.<sup>305</sup> In 2010, under the directives of Prime Minister Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani, the national vocational and technical education commission (NAVTEC) decided to construct a technical and vocational training institute in Gwadar. The prime minister's vision was to uplift the backward areas of Balochistan and make them able to compete for skillful jobs.<sup>306</sup> These dreams were never realized either because of a lack of funds, change of political governments or delays in a project progress. Under the agreement of CPEC, it was decided that not only the Gwadar Port would be developed but also its related supporting infrastructure. Accordingly, the PCVTI, under the framework of CPEC, was included to complete this long-pending project. The institute was to be sponsored by the Gwadar Port Authority while supervised by the Ministry of Port and Shipping, Government of Pakistan. The PC-I<sup>307</sup> of the project was completed

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305 GDA Planning Officer, PCF Hospital and PCF Vocational institute project goals, interview by Sohrab Ahmed Marri, 23 August 2019.

306 'GoldenPalms. 2010. "GoldenPalms (Residential Estate, Gwadar) GWADAR NEWS UPDATE 2010", GoldenPalms, 2010, <http://goldenpalms.com.pk/downloads/656499Gwadar%20News%20update%20for%202010.pdf>.

307 PC-1 means project cycle 1, it contains all basic information about project and rough estimation cost for construction. 'PC-1 Form Government Of Pakistan Planning Commission' (Pakistan Planning Com-

in 2016 by the Pakistani side and approved by the Central Development Working Party, and the Economic Affairs Division of Pakistan processed the Chinese grants' request.<sup>308</sup> In meetings held between Pakistan and Chinese governments, it was decided that the Chinese government will financially and technically support this project.<sup>309</sup> This project intends to give relief to Gwadar locals and secure their future in CPEC's development. According to the project description, the development of the port city of Gwadar must focus on the human development skills of the local population of Gwadar. The project aims to equip the locals with all the necessary modern technical skills because they will participate in the long-term development initiative of the Gwadar port city. After acquiring the skills, they can participate in the operation and management of the deep seaport as well as in industrial and commercial businesses.<sup>310</sup> The Chinese companies are actively participating in social welfare projects to help the local people improve their living standards<sup>311</sup> and portray a better image of China among them.

In January 2017, the project's onsite feasibility study was carried out by the China International Engineering Company (IPPR) along with the necessary research finalize the feasibility report. Subsequently, the approval report was formed. On 9th August 2017, the feasibility study between Pakistan and the Chinese side was signed. The LOE between EAD and MOFCOM was signed in April 2018. The implementation agreement

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mission, 2005), <https://www.pc.gov.pk/uploads/downloads/PC-Forms/PC-I-Infrastructure.pdf>.

308 Abrar Mian, 'Between the Devil and Deep Gwadar Waters', *Pakistan Today*, 5 December 2015, <https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2015/12/05/between-the-devil-and-deep-gwadar-waters/>.

309 Tariq Masood, Design Process of Pak-China Friendship Vocational Training Institute, interview by Sohrab Ahmed Marri, audio recorder, 3 January 2019.

310 'Pak-China Technical And Vocational Institute At Gwadar.', CPEC.gov.pk, accessed 8 July 2019, <http://cpec.gov.pk/project-details/39>.

311 'Social Welfare', 3 March 2016, [https://www.ndrc.gov.cn/fggz/gjhz/zyjz/201603/t20160315\\_1106932.html](https://www.ndrc.gov.cn/fggz/gjhz/zyjz/201603/t20160315_1106932.html).

was signed on 29th March 2019. This document was used by the joint working group at a JCC meeting or high official meeting, during which a final implementation agreement was formally signed between the government representatives of both Pakistan and China. MOFCOM awarded the designing and project management task to ECADI and Shanghai Xian Dai Architectural Design (Group) Co., Ltd, and the construction task was assigned to China Harbour Engineering Company Limited (CHEC, Co. Ltd.).<sup>312</sup>

#### **4.5.2.2. Designing for Locals, Contestations and the Necessity for Improvements**

The essential part of any international architecture project depends on in-depth onsite research. Soon after the PCVTI Gwadar approval agreement was signed between the two countries, the research team from China visited Gwadar for onsite research.

The project manager of PCVTI from the Pakistani side stated the following about onsite research activities:

*“The research team of ECADI Shanghai group arrived in Gwadar and stayed for three months and did a comprehensive study of local conditions of Gwadar. We assisted them in providing local data about climate data, local building codes, site topography data, soil laboratory test samples, local construction industry data, etc. They studied local people’s lifestyles, culture, and local architecture heritages. This represents their great dedication to work.”<sup>313</sup>*

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312 ‘Pak-China Technical And Vocational Institute At Gwadar.’

313 Sohail Asghar, Design Process of Pak-China Friendship Vocational Training Institute, interview by Sohrab Ahmed Marri, audio recorder, 9 September 2020.

This onsite research work of the Chinese team enables the designing team to develop the best design proposals.

The total construction area of PCVTI is more than 7500 square meters, including classrooms, offices, laboratories, library, canteen, storage rooms, power center and student and faculty dormitories. The planned construction period for the project is approximately 19 months.<sup>314</sup> The architecture design of PCTVI is inspired by common Islamic architectural elements and follows Pakistan's national Islamic identity. The standard Islamic architectural features include the arches and lattice. The entrance of the institution has a bold Islamic pointed arch and topped with a round dome, presenting an eclectic Islamic architecture in a modern form.<sup>315</sup>

This bold arch entrance is commonly known in Persian language as “Pishtaq” or “Iwan,” a prominent Islamic architectural feature. It is common in Mughal architecture as well. Mughal architecture is an important Indo-Islamic architectural style for inspiration, as Pakistan considers Mughal architecture as its heritage and identity.<sup>316</sup> The Chinese designers of ECADI simplified the classical Mughal architectural features and presented them such a way that they can be easily recognized as Islamic architecture. The in-between building blocks are designed with a courtyard, a common classical feature of both Chinese and Islamic architecture. The office area, teaching area, dormitory area and other main functional areas are connected by corridors. The arcade corridors each comprise of a round but slightly pointed arch. All of the institutions are unified with a mono-white colour. These inspirations taken from classic Islamic architecture

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314 ‘China’s Aid to Pakistan’s Livelihood Project Starts in Gwadar.’, *Seetao.Com* (blog), 17 December 2019, <https://www.seetao.com/details/11404/zh.html>.

315 ‘Design Brief of Pakistan China Friendship Vocational Training Institute Gwadar’, Official Document (Arcplus Group, 2019).

316 Kamil Khan Mumtaz, *Architecture in Pakistan*, 1985.



Figure 43: A picture taken during inauguration ceremony. Source: A picture from GPA office.



Figure 44: PCFVTI rendering representing an eclectic architecture. Source: Document from GPA office



Figure 45: PCFVTI conceptual renderings, courtyards, arcades, domes. Source: A presentation document from GPA office



Figure 46: PCFVTI conceptual renderings, courtyards, arcades, domes. Source: A presentation document from GPA office



Figure 47: PCFVTI conceptual renderings, courtyards, arcades, domes. Source: A presentation document from GPA office

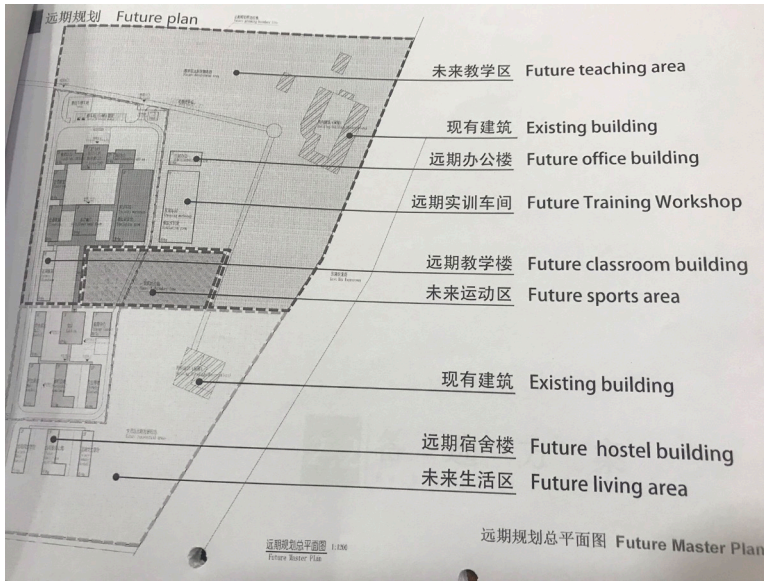


Figure 48: Master plan of PCVTI. Source: PCVTI Design Brief report from GPA

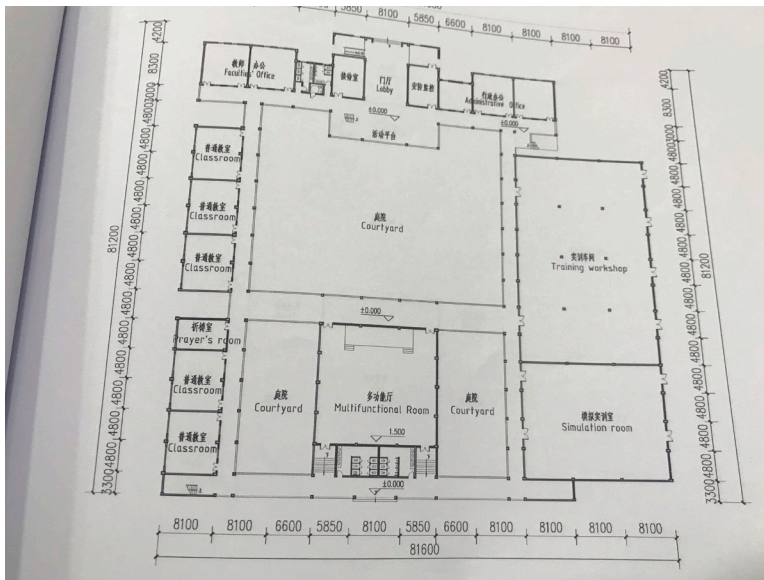


Figure 49: Ground floor plan of teaching block. Source: PCVTI Design Brief report from GPA

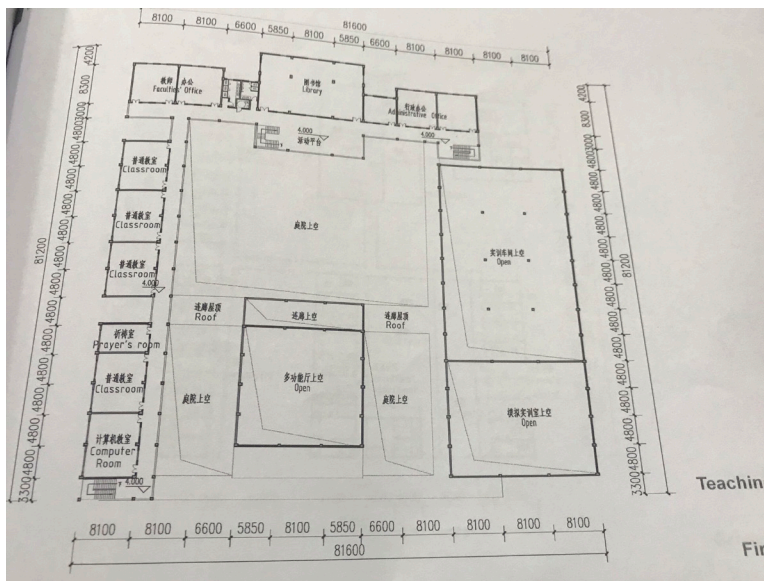


Figure 50: First floor teaching building. Source: PCVTI Design Brief report from GPA





are not merely for aesthetic reasons but also for practical uses. The lattices and covered arcades act as brise-soleils to protect from the extreme sun rays and provide ample space for cross ventilation. The single-loaded corridors for classrooms and dormitories represent the maximization of passive energy rather than relying on active energy. This is a pragmatic approach without compromising the local architecture identity and other typical local conditions.

In the previous case, it was seen that the eclectic architectural design proposal of the PCF hospital was disagreed upon by the technical committee of Pakistan; however, in the case of PCVTI Gwadar, it was approved by the Pakistani stakeholders. Hassan Daud Butt, the former project director of CPEC, stated the following:

*“We were expecting a modern state-of-the-art hospital; thus, the façade design should also be modern looking, means a creative design that must be culturally sound and yet modern in looking. Thus, we asked them to modify the façade design of PCF hospital. While, in case of PCVTI, it is an institutional building. It represents elegant Islamic architecture design features which is much relevant, and GPA and other members has approved it.”*<sup>317</sup>

Hassan Daud Butt distinguished the buildings' typology; for him, the hospital must be of high modern design, but the institutional structure can be inspired by Islamic architecture. In Pakistan, most of the famous institutional buildings have been designed in Islamic architectural styles, for example, Quaid e Azam University Islamabad, Peshawar University, Karachi University, Sindh University, Balochistan University, etc. In these universities, you can see the pointed arches, domes and other classic Islamic architectural elements. However, in hospital buildings, there are only few famous hospitals in

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317 Daud Butt, Design process and construction of PCFVTI, interview by Sohrab Ahmed Marri, audio recorder, 28 August 2019.



Figure 53: PCFVTI dormitory buildings for female and male are interlinked with corridors. Source: A presentation document from GPA office

Pakistan that are designed with the Islamic architectural style.

#### **4.5.2.3. Conflict in Dormitory Cultures Differences**

In the initial phase of the project, the Chinese team carried out comprehensive research on the local conditions of Gwadar, their daily life characteristics, culture, society etc. However, there is still a lack of understanding in the typology of dormitory requirements in Pakistan. The institutional buildings all over Pakistan are designed to have separate hostel buildings for boys and girls and residential houses for teachers. This is considered a general requirement in Pakistan because there are official records of PC-1 for institutional structures in which there are residential quarters for the teaching staff. The British officials first introduced this PC-1 standard for institutional buildings during the colonial period,<sup>318</sup> which later became the norm for other institutional structures. Gwadar is not a big city, and so highly qualified teaching staff are hired by the Balochistan government from different parts of Pakistan; accordingly, they need such residential facilities. In some cases, the boys' hostel is a separate block, and sometimes, the male faculty rooms are also accommodated in the same building; a similar approach is followed in the case of the girls' hostel.

Sohail Asghar, the project manager, said the following:

*“In the several meetings we held on the design proposal, I raised these questions about the staff dormitory. The design proposal demonstrates that the staff dormitory is like a bachelor dormitory; in Pakistan, the principal of a college needs a separate house and, similarly, so do professors with families. The second question relates to there being a staff dormitory, but the staff can be female or male so they cannot be*

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318 Iqbal Ahmed, Building codes and standards., interview by Sohrab Ahmed Marri, 28 August 2019.

*accommodated in the same dormitory. This is a serious cultural issue. We suggested the Chinese designers make separate buildings for male and female hostels and some single-family houses for staff members who have families. The designers responded that this would increase the project's cost, and in this later stage of the project, it is impossible to revise the project's cost. They said that this issue should have been addressed in the early phases of projects. If it is revised in this stage, then the additional cost should be borne by the receiving country. When we compared the cost per square meter demanded by a Chinese construction company with a local construction company, it was very high. Thus, my boss, the GPA chairman, decided to carry on this way; later, we will add a separate block for female hostel[.....] Interestingly, I have been selected for the next grant project from the Chinese government. In this project, I will look after all things very keenly from the early stages.”* <sup>319</sup>

This issue points out the conflict spaces that arise in transcultural architecture due to cultural differences. The Chinese research team had done comprehensive research, but it was not entirely successful. This is also because of a lack of discussion with the local architects in the technical meetings. The technical committee set up by the Pakistani side for discussion regarding the PCVTI design comprised no local architects. The project manager from himself was a Pakistani mechanical engineer. In contrast, in case of PCF hospital or Gwadar Business Center, local architects were present in the Pakistani technical groups from Pakistan, and the design relatively improved.

Dr. Ahmad Khan, the Director of Urban Area Research of the CPEC research center,

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319 Asghar, Design Process of Pak-China Friendship Vocational Training Institute.

stated the following:

*“The issues arise just because of our negligence. In a technical committee, we should focus on the right technical persons. But unfortunately, in most cases, we do not involve local technical persons in architectural projects; there is usually no architect or planner for city master plan projects. In a few cases, the steering committee invites professionals like in the Gwadar city master plan project, the master plan report proposed by the Chinese planners. It was sent to a famous professor in the urban planning department from The NED University of Engineering & Technology, Karachi, just 2 or 3 days before to meet. Do you know the report is more than 300 pages. So, how could they critically read it within their busiest lives in a short time? Thus, the problem arises in various design sectors of the project. It could be minimised on our part, not on the Chinese side.”<sup>320</sup>*

Besides these institutional problems, the local stakeholders and Chinese designers came up with a smart solution. The female hostel has been given separate access from the back with a staircase. This addition of the staircase has no impact on the project’s final cost, which could be adjusted by the project team in other construction work.

#### **4.5.2.4. Construction Problems and Solutions**

Gwadar is a remote area in Pakistan and lacks a modern construction industry. The construction materials and workers are mostly recruited from Karachi. The soil of Gwadar is sandy, and the place lies in a seismic zone with high concentration of sea humidity; all these problems necessitate the high quality of construction materials and technology. A

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320 Khan, Planning and collaboration process of Gwadar Master plan.

Chinese construction company has no choice but to bring construction materials either from China or from Karachi. In these conditions, China Harbour Engineering Company (CHEC, Ltd.), planned a small onsite industry to make building blocks and other construction materials. Raw materials such as crush and cement are obtained from the available local market, and others are imported from China to ensure high construction quality and timely completion of the building.

The soil condition of Gwadar is poor, whereas this is not the case in China. Thus, Chinese construction companies face a tough challenge. However, the engineers of CHEC, Ltd., came up with a cheap and efficient solution. They dug seven-meter deep holes of one-meter diameter and filled them with stones. This stone pile foundation was based on the PCVTI layout plan. The general construction was then applied by the CHEC team, and they used the stone pile foundations to ensure the seismic design requirements. They used the chemical admixture cement to prevent the rusty sea breeze. Further, CHEC, Ltd., built an onsite mini-industry to manufacture hollow building blocks which are otherwise difficult to procure in Gwadar.<sup>321</sup>

The temperature during the day is high. In some cases, to make up for the delay in the construction work during the day, work continues with a shift until midnight. All the construction machinery and some of the engineers were from China, but CHEC also hired local construction workers. Huang Jiehua, leader of the construction site, stated,

*“With the unique geographical location of Gwadar and the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak combined, the project schedule is facing multiple hindrances [.....]. But the project is continuously progressing. During the epidemic, the construction continued by harnessing local resources. Specifically, up to 450 training sessions were given to newly*

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321 Asghar, Design Process of Pak-China Friendship Vocational Training Institute.

*recruited local workers of all levels to guarantee employment and income in the area. Till now, there are 29 and 280 employees from China and Pakistan, respectively, in the project.*<sup>322</sup>

Besides the Chinese construction workers, local construction workers are involved in a significant part of the construction work and are learning new skills.

CHEC, Ltd., is the sole company to execute the PCVTI project, with some of the responsibilities delegated to the Pakistani authorities. In the implementation agreement, for example, it was decided by JWG that the Pakistani side would provide the utilities such as electricity and assist Chinese companies in handling immigration procedures for personnel, customs clearance, tax exemption, etc. Besides, the local partners monitor the construction work to ensure that it follows Pakistan's national building regulations.<sup>323</sup>

CHEC has one advantage in that the company is also working in other construction works in Gwadar. Syed Muhammad, the project director of PCF hospital from Pakistan side, stated the following:

*“The Gansu company delegations are facing delays in execution of construction work of PCF hospital project due to their imported construction materials and equipment are blocked in Karachi seaport. The blockage was due to security concerns; for example, one container contains the telecommunication devices, and the security officer blocked it. Finally, after a three-month blockade, it was released. But in case of the PCVTI, construction work is on the full swing because CHEC, Ltd., is already working on other Gwadar expressway construction projects.*

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322 Fu Bo, 'Teaching Building of Pak-China Technical & Vocational Institute Topped Out', 24 October 2020, [http://en.ce.cn/main/latest/202010/24/t20201024\\_35931058.shtml](http://en.ce.cn/main/latest/202010/24/t20201024_35931058.shtml).

323 Asghar, Design Process of Pak-China Friendship Vocational Training Institute.



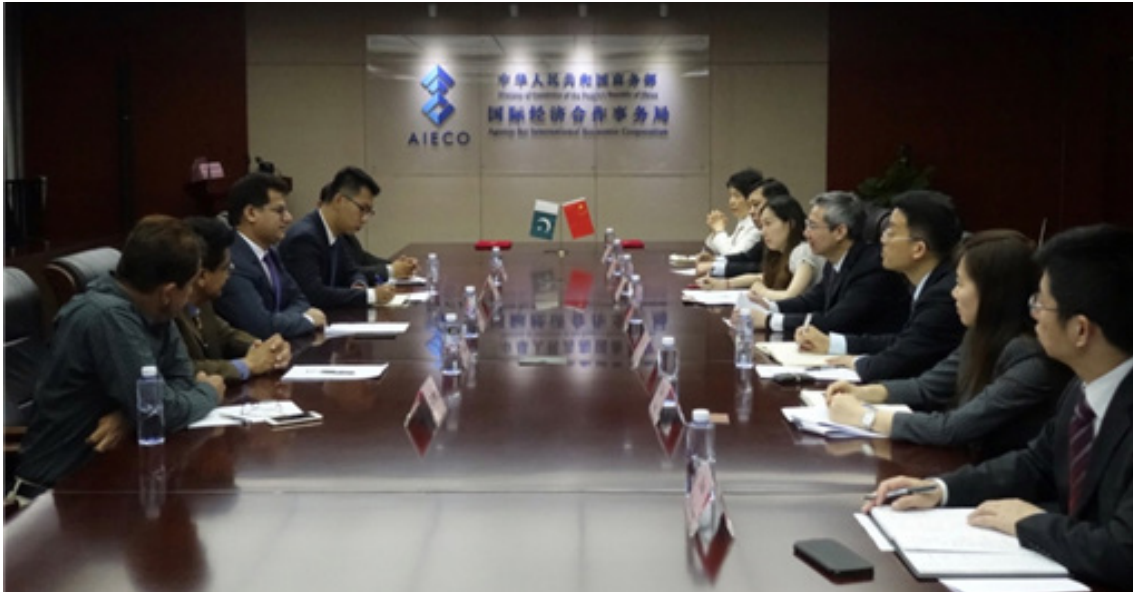


Figure 54: Implementaion plan meeting on PCVFTI. Source: MOFCOM News, 06 2019.

*construction work.*<sup>324</sup>

In a normal public works situation in Pakistan, construction works of over 7,500 square meters such as PCVFTI would take three to four years. In local constructions, there is no obligation to import building materials and comply with other legal tax requirements. But in the case of a Chinese company, due to agreements between the two countries, they have to follow all the legal codes of the host country. They need to deliver fast and provide quality construction work, and postponing the project could cost the Chinese companies more than local construction companies. Thus, construction must be fast and of high quality to receive the appreciation of the host country and compete with their construction models at the international level.

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324 Muhammad, Design Process of Pakistan China Friendship Hospital.

## Chapter 5. Djibouti, Africa: A Secondary Case Study

### 5.1 Overview of the Djibouti-China cooperation under BRI

Djibouti is a small country located in the Horn of East Africa and one of the least developed countries in the continent. In 1977, Djibouti gained its independence from France.<sup>325</sup> Djibouti is a multi-ethnic nation with a population of over 921,804 inhabitants (the smallest in mainland Africa). French and Arabic are the two official languages of the country. The Issa clan of Somali and Afar make up the two largest ethnic groups. About 94% of its residents practice Islam, which is the official religion and has been dominant in the region for over 1000 years.<sup>326</sup> Djibouti is located at the cross roads of Africa, the Middle East and the Indian Ocean. Since the Middle Ages, its traditional port has been an important commercial point between Africa and the Arabs. The specific trades consisted of slaves and spices. The city thus developed. The French colonized Djibouti; and as a result, it was called the “French Coast of the Somalis.”<sup>327</sup> The old city landscape of Djibouti is comprised of various architectural styles that show its different historical periods. It has influences of Arab as well as colonial architectures; it has bazaars and European-style plazas. The French constructed several public buildings, some of which followed the Moorish inspired arches. There is the famous Hamoudi mosque

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325 Smith Jason et al., ‘Economic Transformation in Djibouti’, Research report (WORLD BANK GROUP, 2018), <http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/437351549918326165/pdf/djibouti-scd-english-version-final-approved-vlo-go-02062019-636852600790519539.pdf>.

326 ‘The World Factbook’, CIA, accessed 7 April 2020, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/dj.html>.

327 ‘Le Paysage Urbain Historique de La Ville de Djibouti et Ses Bâtiments Spécifiques’, UNESCO World Heritage Centre, accessed 14 September 2020, <https://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5958/>.

built by Haji Hamoudi in 1902; it represents the typical African adobe architecture.<sup>328</sup>  
These historical structures are interesting reference points for architects.

Djibouti is a significantly less developed city. The poverty is extremely high and characterizes more than 40% of its population. Djibouti's government adopted the modernization of its country from the backdrop of the nomadic traditional pastoral economy.<sup>329</sup>  
The country is strategically located at the crossroads of shipping, the busiest shipping routes and a major connecting point between Africa, Asia and Europe. The main asset of Djibouti is the deep natural seaport, which is the center of transshipment. The country provides service for the trade of its fast-growing but landlocked neighbor, Ethiopia. Ethiopian trade service accounts for more than 80% of the Djiboutian port activities.

<sup>330</sup> Additionally, Djibouti hosts several foreign military bases that encounter pirates and other extremist threats from the neighboring countries, especially Somalia, such as the Al-Shabaab group.<sup>331</sup> These two are the primary sources for its GDP growth, and all port-related services account for 80% of its GDP.<sup>332</sup>

The Djibouti government uses its strategic location to seek foreign investments to modernize its logistic infrastructure development to become a leading port of Africa. Since the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, Djibouti commenced its operations of developing a world-class transport and logistic infrastructure. The Djibouti government sought many foreign investors to build a port extension and other supporting infrastructure in such efforts.

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328 Kevin Anglin, Becca Blond, and Jean-Bernard Carillet, *Lonely Planet Africa on a Shoestring*, 10th Revised edition (Footscray, Vic.: Lonely Planet, 2004).

329 Jason et al., 'Economic Transformation in Djibouti'.

330 Ibid.

331 'The World Factbook'.

332 Jason et al., 'Economic Transformation in Djibouti'.

One of the earliest investors was (Emirates National Oil Company) ENOC, a company owned by the Dubai government, which developed Horizon Terminals Limited to cater to the bulk liquid terminal business.<sup>333</sup> In 2009, the Dubai Port (DP) World company developed the Doraleh Container Terminal (DCT) and made a 30-year contract of partial ownership and operation. The Dubai government also financed the Djibouti Palace (Kempinski Hotel), which is owned by Nakheel Hotel & Resorts, Dubai, UAE.<sup>334335</sup> However, in February 2018, Djibouti's government unilaterally cancelled DP World's contract of DCT due to its poor performance, accusing it of protecting the Jebel Ali port trade. DP World challenged it in court, and the case is currently under negotiation. DCT is now operated by the Djibouti Ports & Free Zones Authority. It is Djibouti's government agency that manages the Port of Djibouti and several other facilities in the country which were founded in 2004.<sup>336337</sup> Besides this development, China has overtaken Dubai as the principal investor, partner and developer in pursuing Djibouti's aspiration to become an important economic, trading and marine logistics hub connecting three continents along the Red Sea.<sup>338</sup>

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333 Huaxia, 'Enoc, Djibouti in Joint Venture', *GulfNews*, 22 July 2002, <https://gulfnews.com/uae/enoc-djibouti-in-joint-venture-1.394544>.

334 David Styan, 'Djibouti: Small State Strategy at a Crossroads', *Third World Thematics: A TWQ Journal* 1, no. 1 (2016): 79–91.

335 'Building Djibouti Palace Djibouti.', KEMPINSKI HOTEL), accessed 7 April 2020, <https://www.siac.com.eg/?q=experience/building/djibouti-palace-kempinski-hotel>.

336 'DJIBOUTI Government Ends DP World's Contract of DORALEH Container Terminal', *Africa Logistics Network* (blog), 26 February 2018, <https://www.africalogisticsnetwork.com/notizia-reviews/djibouti-government-ends-dp-worlds-contract-of-doraleh-container-terminal/>.

337 For negotiation, see:

'Djibouti Disputes DCT Court Ruling', Port Strategy, 16 January 2020, <https://www.portstrategy.com/news101/world/africa/djibouti-rejects-dct-court-ruling>.

338 Mingmei, 'Chinese Engagement in Djibouti's Economic Transformation in a Nutshell.', 10 January

In June 2012, Djibouti signed a strategic agreement with China and became one of the first African countries to respond to the call after China's "One Belt One Road" initiative was put forward. As a vital node country of the BRI , Djibouti has continued to closely cooperate with China. Political mutual trust and bilateral relations as well as economic and trade cooperation have been continuously strengthened. The continuous advancement of the BRI is in both China and Djibouti's interests and provides opportunities for Djibouti's future development.<sup>339</sup>

Under the BRI, Chinese companies' investments in Djibouti have rapidly increased. These companies have successfully completed several notable projects with an expense of \$15 billion. The main driving force in these developments is China's BRI. The construction of the Chinese-built Doraleh Multi-Purpose Port officially started in August 2014 and was completed in May 2017. It was constructed by China State Construction Engineering Corporation (CSCEC), and it is the largest port project undertaken by a Chinese construction company in northeast Africa. The Doraleh Multi-Purpose Port construction was completed on time, even given the harsh weather conditions of Djibouti.<sup>340</sup> The other major project is the Chinese built Ethiopia–Djibouti railway line that stretches from Addis Ababa to Djibouti. It was constructed by two giant Chinese companies financed by the Export–Import Bank of China: China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation and China Railway Group Limited.

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2020, [http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2020-01/10/c\\_138694414.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2020-01/10/c_138694414.htm).

339 '奇信股份]积极参加“一带一路”建设 奇信股份海外援建项目再获认可 english: Qixin company actively participated in the "Belt and Road" construction. Qixin Co., Ltd. overseas aid project was recognized again.', Company News, Qixin Co., Ltd., 2019, <http://stock.jrj.com.cn/2019/07/04000027795913.shtml>.

340 'Djibouti's Doraleh Port Officially Opens', *Xinhua, English.News.Cn*, 24 May 2017, [http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-05/24/c\\_136312120.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-05/24/c_136312120.htm).



Figure 55: Master Plan rendering of DIFTZ. Source: DIFTZ.com

It is currently managed by a consortium of Chinese companies for a period of six years.<sup>341</sup> Further, a landmark project managed by Chinese firms, with a \$3.5 billion investment, is the Djibouti International Free-Trade Zone (DIFTZ), which is expected to be Africa's largest. Other Chinese-backed investment projects include a water pipeline supply from Ethiopia to Djibouti. A division of Chinese technology company Huawei, Huawei Marine, links Djibouti with Pakistan via an undersea fiber-optic cable that is part of its new 7,500-mile Asia–Africa–Europe line, financed by the China Construction Bank. China signed a defense agreement with Djibouti in 2014 and began to build “support facilities” there in 2016 as a base for naval rest and resupply. Djibouti's foreign minister announced that China had agreed to a 10-year, \$20 million-per-year contract to lease the site, with facilities that could house “a few thousand” personnel. The base could host up to 10,000 troops by some accounts; however, only an estimated 250 are currently stationed there.<sup>342</sup> Apart from the logistic trade infrastructure, China is also providing humanitarian aid to Djibouti. One example for the same is the China-aided national library and archive of Djibouti. It is wholly financed and built by the Chinese government within the Sino-Djibouti cooperation and is a gift to the people of Djibouti from the Chinese. Djibouti President Ismaïl Omar Guelleh kicked off its construction work in April 2017, and it was recently completed.<sup>343</sup>

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341 ‘Chinese Engagement in Djibouti's Economic Transformation in a Nutshell.’

342 Lauren Ploch Blanchard and Sarah R. Collins., ‘China's Engagement in Djibouti.’, Research report, 4 September 2019, <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/IF11304.pdf>.

343 Laura, *Djibouti Laying of the Foundation Stone of a National Library Financed by China.*, 2017, [http://french.china.org.cn/foreign/txt/2017-04/23/content\\_40676702.htm](http://french.china.org.cn/foreign/txt/2017-04/23/content_40676702.htm).

## 5.2 Office Complex and Hotel of DIFTZ

### 5.2.1. Context

The China Merchant (CM) Group is a key player in investing and developing the Djibouti port and its free-trade zone by replicating the Shekou development model of Shenzhen using its long-standing experience. According to this model, the Port Park City (PPC) of the CM group is developing the port in the front, the free-trade zone in the middle and the city at the back. In 2012, the CM group took a stake in the Port of Djibouti and acquired 23.5% of the shares for \$185 million and began its operation with other Chinese managers. After the BRI, the CM group played a vital role in developing a multipurpose terminal in Djibouti with an investment of \$600 million. It was constructed by CSCEC and completed in 2017. In such a context, the CM group and the Djibouti government also initiated the landmark project of the Djibouti International Free Trade Zone (DIFTZ) by a partnership with other Chinese companies. The CM group's main aim is to replicate the Shekou (PPC model) in Africa to meet the requirement of Djibouti's successful development as the main node of the BRI.<sup>344</sup> In this international free-trade zone, the Chinese firms plan to invest \$3.5 billion within different phases. The first phase was completed in 2018, with an overall investment of \$300 million, and is expected to create 200,000 new jobs and handle over \$7 billion in trade from 2018 to 2020.

The China Merchants Group and Djibouti signed a cooperation framework agreement

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344 see: Yan Wan et al., 'Djibouti: From a Colonial Fabrication to the Deviation of the "Shekou Model"', *Cities* 97 (2020); 'China Merchant Group investment in DIFTZ and replicating Shekou development model (translated to english)', accessed 8 November 2020, [http://www.chinainvestment.com.cn/type\\_qycy/22221.html](http://www.chinainvestment.com.cn/type_qycy/22221.html).



on March 24, 2015, and then an investment agreement on November 15, 2016, for the free-trade zone project. The groundbreaking ceremony was held on January 16, 2017, and the opening ceremony on July 5, 2018.<sup>345</sup> It was realized in a record time of just three years. It is the world's fastest foreign-developed free zone, and recently it was ranked as the top ten free-trade zones globally.<sup>346</sup> The main credit goes to the highly organized and comprehensive coordination between different Chinese companies that contributed in the negotiation tactics, economic policies, management skills, unique construction, architectural design, etc.

The free-trade zone is located near N1 highway and close to the main terminal of Djibouti. It is only half an hour away from the Djibouti NAGAD railway station (a Chinese-built railway line from Djibouti to Addis Ababa) and from Djibouti international airport. The company is jointly owned by CM Group, Djibouti Port and Free Trade Zone, Dalian Port Group, IZP Group (IZP Group makes extensive use of ICT stations for silk roads overseas to facilitate trade along new silk roads) and other Chinese companies. The organizational structure of the company is that of an asset company and an operating company. 60% of the asset company is owned by the DPFTZ authority; 60% of the operating company is owned by the CM Group and Dalian Port Group and 40% by the DPFTZ authority. Further, the asset company is fully entrusted to the operating company for the development, construction and management of the park.<sup>347</sup> With the Djibouti government's support, the CM and Dalian Port groups used their experience in managing ports, trade and related infrastructure development to transform Djibouti into

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345 Ibid.

346 Naomi Davies, 'FDi's Global Free Zones of the Year 2019 – the Winners.', 14 October 2019, <https://www.fdiintelligence.com/article/75879>.

347 'Djibouti International Free Trade Zone', China Council For The Promotion of International Trade., accessed 3 June 2020, <https://oip.ccpit.org/ent/parks-introduces/67>.

a financial shipping and trade center in East Africa.<sup>348</sup>

The total planned area of FTZ is 48.2 square kilometers, which has been divided into different phases of development. The first phase is 6 square kilometers, and its initial phase, which is of 2.4 square kilometers, has been constructed. The initial area of the first phase of development consists of the monumental gate of the park, customs building, a one-stop service center, 90,000 square meters of warehouse area, 75,000 square meters of storage yard area, 21,072 square meters of office building area, a 77-room hotel, a 78-room apartment and road area which have been built. Its opening ceremony was held in July 2018, and now it is completely functional.<sup>349</sup> The operators have experimented with Djibouti as a pilot station of the new silk road and copied their local experience in a foreign place. The success of this project will provide a basic template for other Chinese companies for going abroad. It also provides comprehensive support and service to Chinese SMEs for “going global.”<sup>350</sup>

### **5.2.2. Construction of a Marvel in the Desert: Djibouti Free Trade Zone**

The CM group, along with its partners, coordinated the construction work with several Chinese contractors. The general contractor is CCCC China First Highway Enginee-

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348 ‘Djibouti International Free Trade Zone.(Translated to English)’, All China Federal Industry and Commerce, 31 March 2020, [http://www.acfic.org.cn/zzjg\\_327/nsjg/llb/llbgzhdzt/2019zhinan/2019zhinan\\_3/202003/t20200331\\_231678.html](http://www.acfic.org.cn/zzjg_327/nsjg/llb/llbgzhdzt/2019zhinan/2019zhinan_3/202003/t20200331_231678.html).

349 ‘Djibouti International Free Trade Zone’.

350 Ibid, (Translated to English)?.



Figure 56: The Office complex of Djibouti International Free Trade Zone Source: Sohu.com

ing Company Ltd., which carried out the construction work.<sup>351</sup> They subcontracted the CCCC Water Transportation Planning and Design Institute Co., Ltd. for the consulting design services, the entire process of project control, detailed planning, engineering feasibility studies and construction drawings.<sup>352</sup> The CCCC Water Transportation Planning and Design Institute Co. Ltd. in turn coordinated with the China IPPR International Engineering Co. Ltd. to develop architectural drawings. Due to the harsh weather and unavailability of local skilled laborers and construction machinery, it was decided to use the modular technology to construct the hotel building within the scheduled time. The Chinese designers adopted modular prefabricated technology to shorten on-site operation time and improve the efficiency and quality of construction. The CCCC and IPPR architectural groups coordinated with the China International Marine Containers (CIMC) Modular Building Systems Holding Co., Ltd. to construct a free-trade zone, including hotels, catering, entertainment and offices, to help get the Djibouti International Free Trade Zone started. The CIMC Modular Building Systems Holding Co., Ltd. is one of the Chinese largest companies exporting modular technology to Europe, America and Australia; it was their first project in Africa. The project design, construction and management was highly appreciated by Hu Jianhua, the deputy general manager of the CM Group.<sup>353</sup>

In a bid, CIMC was selected to prepare modules for hotel building. The 108 modules were built by the CIMC modular building investment company under CIMC group for

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351 *Company News of China First Harbour Engineering Bureau Ltd.*, n.d., <http://www.fheb.cn/business/trade/2020/0403/5112.html>. translated to english

352 ‘The Djibouti International Free Trade Zone, which the company participated in, grandly opened(translated to english)’, *Company News*, Water Regulation Institute of the First Public Bureau CCCCLtd., 2018, [http://www.ccccltd.cn/news/gsyw/201807/t20180710\\_93406.html](http://www.ccccltd.cn/news/gsyw/201807/t20180710_93406.html).

353 ‘Djibouti International Free Trade Zone designed by the company opens’, *Company News*, *China IPPR international engineering co. Ltd.* (blog), 2018, [http://www.ippr.com.cn/xwzx\\_14568/gsxw/201812/t20181205\\_214119.html](http://www.ippr.com.cn/xwzx_14568/gsxw/201812/t20181205_214119.html).

the hotel project in the DIFTZ. This is the first project undertaken by this company in Africa, and CIMC is actively working within the framework of the BRI. CIMC Modular Building Systems Company is one of the largest modular exporters in the world. The hotel project is divided into two parts: the north building consists of apartments, and the south building comprises the guest rooms. Both are five-story buildings. The first and second floors include public areas such as the lobby, restaurant and meeting rooms. There are 78 apartments and 77 guest rooms, making up a total of 155 rooms in the two buildings. To better ensure the quality and speed of construction, the hotel was constructed using a combination of traditional and modular buildings. Floors 1–2 of the hotel were made on-site using conventional building methods, and floors 3–5 were modular buildings. Totally, there are 108 modules in the module section.

The hotel project contractor signed a contract with CIMC Modular Building Systems Company in September 2017. The CIMC Modular Building Systems Company prepared all required 108 modules by December 2017 and then transported them from China to Djibouti via ship. According to a CIMC representative, a 200-room hotel usually takes four to six years to construct, but this modular system reduced the time to 18 months. After the modules successfully arrived at the construction site, the module hoisting work was carried out immediately by Chinese workers, and each link was carried out in strict accordance with the hoisting plan and specifications. To ensure the construction progressed as expected, the construction staff carefully organized and rationally allocated the resources to improve work efficiency. CIMC has also previously exported modules to developed countries.<sup>354</sup>

The Shenzhen Sanxin Technology Development Co., Ltd. was assigned to prepare the curtain wall for project. This company is specialized in producing curtain wall technolo-

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354 ‘Crossing the ocean, CIMC modular houses landed in Africa for the first time (translated to english)’, *KKnews.cc*, 2018, <http://lf.cimc.com/index.php?m=content&c=index&a=show&catid=17&id=2411>.

gy and is one of the biggest companies in China. It has won the bid for the highest office building and hotel curtain wall project. The height of the office building is 75.3 meters, with a curtain wall area of about 13,400 square meters and a hotel of 21 meters height and 9541 square meters of areas.<sup>355</sup>

The general contractor's (CCCC CFHEC) project management department took multiple measures. The first was to encourage the laborers by composing competitions, signing construction responsibility certificates, preparing weekly schedule summaries etc. All the employees battled the heat and harsh natural conditions, lack of materials and labor shortage but overcame these hurdles and completed the project within the time schedule and maintained the quality of construction. The primary enthusiasm of CCCC workers was to become the leading construction company in the world and works hard to overcome any challenges they face.<sup>356</sup>

### **5.2.3. Culture-Specific but Efficient Architecture**

There are logistic trade zone, export processing zone, commercial display zone and supporting infrastructures such as office buildings, dormitories, hotel, retail center, powerhouse, etc. Besides the CM Group's PPC models, park planning models, investments and economic logics, there are indeed interesting architecture projects emerging from this process. There are several exciting goals for different companies working together to make this project successful. The CM Group as a client must share their interests,

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355 'High Rise Buildings.', SANXIN Facade, accessed 12 May 2020, <http://www.sanxineng.com/en/yeji.php?lm=51&page=9>.

356 Ge Zili, *The Five Heads of State Gathered in the Company to Participate in the Establishment of Djibouti International Free Trade Zone and Grand Opening*. China First High Way Engineering Company Ltd., accessed 10 May 2020, <http://www.fheb-overseas.com/indexdetail.aspx?newsID=31>.

such as highly efficient modern office buildings and hotels with minimum construction time and resources. The CCCC was then trying to overcome many hindrances in a construction site, for example, the unavailability of high-quality construction machinery, materials, skilled laborers, harsh and hot weather, sand storms and lack of utilities such as electricity, etc. Although these constraints affected the construction work, the CCCC then subcontracted the modular construction system, and curtain walls were imported from China which efficiently decreased the time and maintained the quality of construction. The high rise office buildings in China mostly use glass curtain walls and other modular technology to decrease the cost and time of construction. It could be an easy option for Chinese companies to export such an office building template in Africa but while considering Djibouti's regional architecture characteristics. The Chinese designers used both functional and aesthetic features of the region without compromising on the high-tech construction features. The Islamic Moorish pointed arches used in the main gate design with traditional ornamentation and the use of yellow colour to match Djibouti's native mud architecture are examples of this. One Chinese journalist shared his experience with DIFTZ as follows:

*“At a far-off distance, the free-trade zone seems to be a theme park, but once you enter, it transports you to another space where there are trucks, cargo, warehouses and offices full of business meetings.”*<sup>357</sup>

A local Djiboutian as well as famous blogger and activist Kidar Saleh stated his experience as follows:

*“Djibouti International Free Trade Zone's main gate facade arch is an Islamic-style flame voucher, which is in harmony with the local archi-*

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357 A promotional pamphlet of Djibouti International Free Trade Zone. A quote of Chinese news reporter accessed from baidu.com and translated in English



Figure 57: The Main Gate of DIFTZ. Source: csic.com.cn.



Figure 58: Series of point arches DIFTZ hotel. source: Skyscrapercity.com





Figure 59: DIFTZ office tower: Source: Skysrapercity.com

*tectural style.*”<sup>358</sup>

The respect of “otherness” and the harmonious inclusion of otherness in their architecture production norms define the architecture trajectory followed by Chinese architects, as revealed in an interview with Djiboutian architect and project manager Mohamad Wais:

*“Construction projects need to respect the existing local architectural patterns that define the country, and Chinese construction companies quietly understand that, and one of them is the Islamic characteristic which is strongly close to Moorish (from north of Africa) architecture widely seen in Djibouti, so it’s really delightful and appreciable to see at least such projects understand such important meanings.”*<sup>359</sup>

The use of a series of arches in the office and hotel buildings is to not only represent the local architecture vocabulary but also act as a brise soleil to protect from Djibouti from the heat and control the intense glare of sunlight in indoor spaces. The building of arches of similar shapes and sizes reduces the cost and construction time and simultaneously promotes the prefabricated technology. Apart from a functional device, it also resonates with the regional characteristics, i.e., topographical conditions etc. The arches are modernized without curves, but simple and straight, merely representing Islamic Moorish point arches. Simultaneously, it is something new that is in harmony with the local context and pragmatic in function. The essence of this transcultural architecture is Chinese or contemporary, and by virtue it is the local pastiche which creates a “third

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358 ‘A Local Djiboutian Famous Blogger and Activist Kidar Saleh Tweeted in 31 January 2019’, tweeter, n.d., <https://twitter.com/23Kidar/status/1090889285446918144>.

359 Mohamad Wais, Djiboutian architect Mohamad Wais sharing his experience about its Architectural design, interview by Sohrab Ahmed Marri, Via Tweeter, 27 August 2020.



Figure 60: Business delgetion discussions in 360 panaramic view box area, a VIP guest area. Source: Photo by Liu Xiang



Figure 61: A business delegation discussing about the DIFTZ master plan area. source: skyscrapercity.com



Figure 62: Render image of Hotel area of Djibouti office complex. Source. Sohu.com.cn



Figure 63: Hotel of DIFTZ Source: IPPR



Figure 64: Decors from China. source: image by Bouh Mohamad Wais (tweeter)

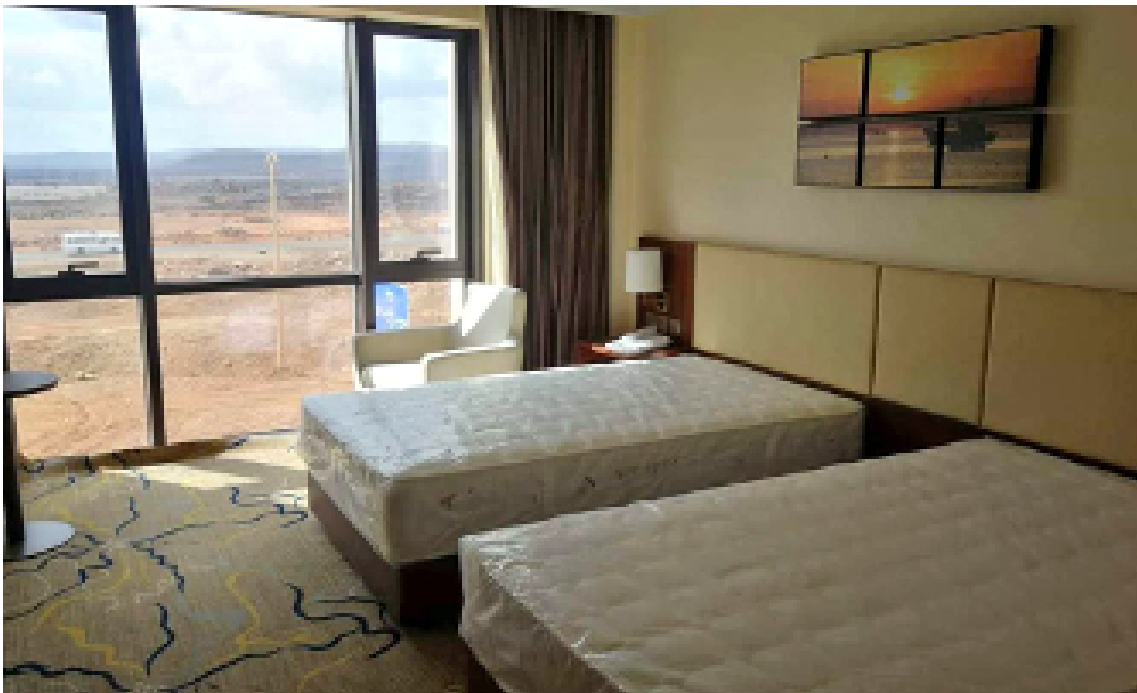


Figure 65: Decors from China. source: image by Bouh Mohamad Wais(tweeter)

space”<sup>360</sup> dilemma which is ambiguous but has a privileged character.

The office building’s interiors are articulated in a contemporary manner, there are modern art works with some Chinese artefacts such as a painting. It gives businessmen a relaxing shelter from the heatwaves of environment, and the head of the tower (the last three floors) is creatively designed to provide a 360-degree panoramic view of Djibouti. The head of the tower comprises the curtain wall, shaded by a concrete hat, and the rest of the bottom part is articulated with point arch louvers. This pragmatic architecture approach has indigenous architecture vocabularies and works as a brise soleil without compromising the 360-degree panoramic views.

The choice of a high-rise office in the desert area of DIFTZ has some important reasons. There is no problem of land availability in DIFTZ, but going for a high-rise office building shows the power of Chinese development in Africa. It is the highest building in Djibouti, representing a developing Djibouti with Chinese involvement. This powerful architectural representation, no doubt, has both a direct and indirect impact on its users. This is a typical marketing strategy as mostly seen in China.<sup>361</sup> However, this powerful structure standing in the middle of the desert is probably not solely the Chinese companies’ initiative. At the same time, Djibouti as stakeholders of DIFTZ also has the same ambitions to represent a better image of Djibouti for foreign investors. Djibouti President Ismaïl Omar Guelleh stated the following:

*“It is ... a zone of hope for thousands of young jobseekers”* <sup>362</sup>

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360 A concept borrowed from Homi Bhabha see: Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*.

361 financial strategy of free zone models in China see: Roggeveen, *Progress & Prosperity: The Chinese City as a Global Urban Model*.

362 Staff Reuters, ‘Djibouti Commissions \$3.5 Bln Chinese-Built Free Trade Zone’, *Reuters*, 5 July 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/djibouti-trade-idINL8N1U149S>.

### **5.3 A Case Study of MEZZ Group Office: A Western Model for Comparative Analysis with the DIFTZ Office Complex**

Another high-rise office building in Djibouti was invested in and built by the Italian construction company MEZZ group, which has been operating in architectural design, construction and real estate development in the Horn of Africa since 1941. Its construction branch COSMEZZ Sarl has been based in Djibouti since 1990 and performs infrastructural works for the United States Department of Defense and other high-profile institutional clients.<sup>363364</sup> The MEZZ group invested in an office tower complex to provide a global office services to businesses operating in Djibouti and throughout the Horn of Africa. The project is intended to be managed by the MEZZ group or, alternatively, the Djibouti International Business Centre S.A.S., which is an entity wholly owned by Horafia (a Swiss company); the latter acts as the exclusive agent of Mezz Afrique in providing global office services to businesses occupying the tower and is also be responsible for management. In 2017, the Horafia company was guaranteed by the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA; a member of the World Bank Group) up to US\$24.3 million to launch and maintain the Mezz Tower in Djibouti City, Djibouti.<sup>365</sup>

The proposed site for the MEZZ group tower is located along a prime waterfront site facing the gulf of Tadjourah in north-west Djibouti city in Rue de Venice. In 2011, land was reclaimed from an internal lake near the first island of an area encompassing five

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363 'MEZZ, LinkedIn', accessed 24 May 2021, <https://dj.linkedin.com/company/cosmezz>.

364 Company details in LinkedIn website: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/cosmezz>

365 Miga accepted for guaranteeing the project, see: 'Mezz Tower and Djibouti International Business Centre. First State-of-Art Office Tower in Djibouti.', Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (World Bank Group), accessed 24 November 2020, <https://www.miga.org/project/mezz-tower-and-djibouti-international-business-centre>; 'Mezz Tower and Djibouti International Business Centre. First State-of-Art Office Tower in Djibouti.'

reclaimed islands enclosed by a lagoon. After upgradation on a marshy area of 95,188 square meters adjacent to the presidency Djiboutian society, Mezz Africa was awarded the land outright by a decree signed by President Ismail Omar Guelleh. This field was to be the site of an ambitious international business center consisting of office towers, shopping areas and residential buildings. The price of land (\$911,000) and investment during the first island totaled \$16 million. Mezz Africa is a subsidiary of Holding Mezz group Djibouti, who also owns the building COSMEZZ Sarl has been active in the country for two decades.

### **5.3.1. Sustainability Measurements**

The construction began in 2015 and was completed in 2017. The project consists of a 17-story office tower constructed on an isolated parcel of land. The project is located near the main demand generators for office space in the capital, namely the city center, seaport, free-trade zone and fishing port. The tower itself is accessed via a 17-meter pedestrian bridge from the first land.<sup>366</sup> The project footprint includes a car parking area, maintenance areas, water tank for sanitary water distribution and firefighting, and another for irrigation, adjacent wastewater treatment plant, solid waste storage area, services building, HVAC area, enclosed storage area for hazardous materials and a backup generator. The tower is designed with a modern energy-efficient system to minimize resource consumption. The company applied for LEED certification for recognizing its energy/water consumption efficiency, which is being explored by the management company. The MIGA included it under category B based on its policy on environmental and social sustainability (2013). This is because the potential social and ecological impacts are

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<sup>366</sup> ‘Mezz Tower and Djibouti International Business Centre. First State-of-Art Office Tower in Djibouti.’



limited, site-specific, mostly reversible and can be readily addressed through mitigation measures. As the project has been completed now, the environmental and social effects depend on operations such as life and fire safety, resource conservation, general solid and liquid waste management and occupational and community health.

The construction company CosMeZZ S.a.r.l. is a locally registered company and an experienced contractor with an effective management system of international standards that have minimized the impacts due to construction. The tower was designed and constructed according to international standards, incorporating measures to cope with seismic activity. There is virtually no manufacturing capacity in the country; therefore, all materials used for construction were imported. During operation, the company sourced as many local supplies as possible. The energy efficiency measures used included reduction of thermal loads through the use of an external filtering aluminum skin and high-efficiency double glazing leading to reduced air conditioning needs; reduced operating loads with the help of lighting fixtures fitted throughout with LED lamps; installation of electromechanical components with inverters; energy-efficient cabling throughout the building; and provision of medium-voltage electrical power directly to the tower.

### **5.3.2. The MEZZ Group tower: A contemporary architecture**

The MEZZ group tower was designed by architects Andrea Amelio, Martha Mezzedimi and Alessio Altieri along with the MEZZ Design Bureau. The MEZZ group tower introduced a contemporary or high modern architecture in Djibouti. It is Djibouti's highest building, conceived to address the needs of a booming economic landscape. This landmark building redefines the city's waterfront skyline and introduces contemporary architecture in the country. Drawn by the pencil of architect Sergio Mezzedimi (famous architect in the Horn of Africa), the building is conceived to live in connection with the surrounding marine and sky elements and convey a sense of luminous transparency

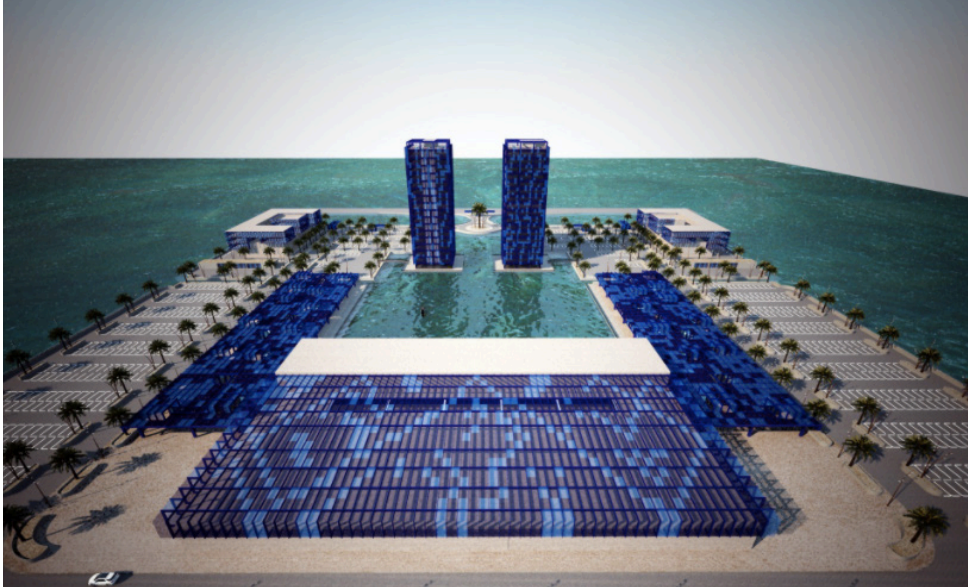


Figure 66: Mezz Tower Renderings by Andrea Amelio Source: Arch lovers



Figure 67: Mezz Group Tower Source: Mezzgroup.Net



Figure 68: Mezz Group Tower Terrace with surrounding city landscape. Source: Mezzgroup.Net

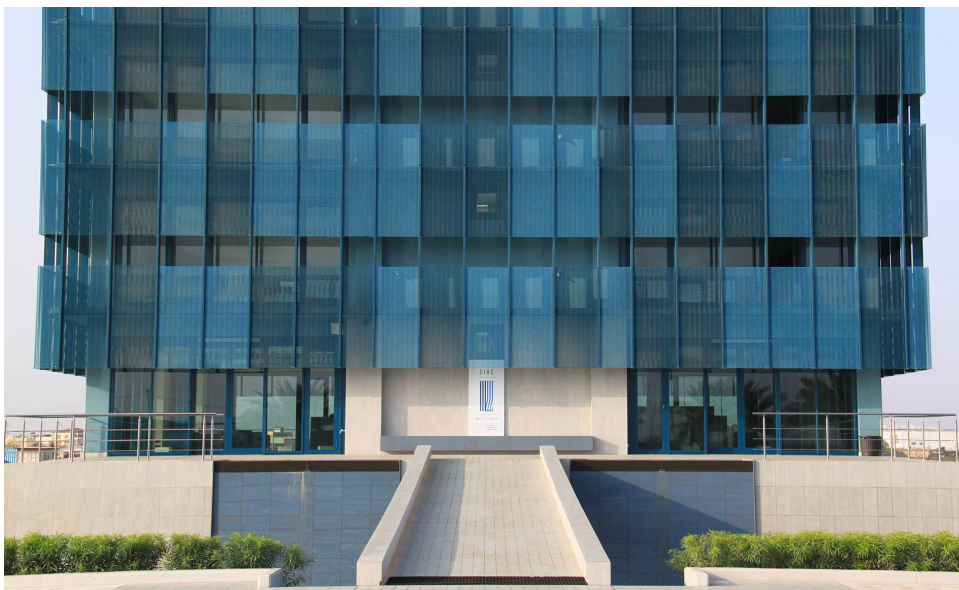


Figure 69: Mezz Group Tower, main entrance with double skin facade. Source: Mezzgroup.Net

with uninterrupted panoramic views from any point within its interior.<sup>367</sup> The building is finished with premium made-in-Italy materials, including high-end window frames and glasses, ceramic tiles, office furniture and internal partitions. Its open space areas, entirely surrounded by full-height glass windows, create a luminous ambience enhanced by panoramic views over the Gulf of Tadjourah and the Djibouti peninsula. The main color theme in the nuances of blue and gray characterizes the interior service areas.<sup>368</sup>

The Mezz group office tower's architecture is contemporary not only in its functions, construction, energy systems and interior elements but also the exterior outlook. It seems to be a global product that can be exported and is compatible with any place near the seashore. The architects' only interesting placeness character is the local site features such as sea and sky elements. The blue shades of these elements are resonated with the exterior of the tower. Another important part is its double-skin façade. The external part is dressed with a thin layer of reticular aluminum intended to filter the intense sunlight and increase the building's energy efficiency. According to MEZZ group experts, these features have contributed in the designation of it as a "green building." The upper terrace is proposed for 360-degree panoramic views for special guests. This terrace feature is not easy to comprehend. Djibouti is one of the hottest places on the earth, with an average temperature of 32 to 35 centigrade and the highest temperature could reach 41 centigrade with abundant bright daylight. It would be a courageous step to sit on the terrace and enjoy panoramic views in such a situation. The exterior screen is meant to protect the hot sun's rays, but it also obscures the vision. Additionally, the exterior screen and inner curtain wall's maintenance cost is too high due to the sand storms in Djibouti. Finally, there is no consideration about a sense of place either described by architects or

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367 'Architecture', Mezz Tower in Djibouti, accessed 24 November 2020, <https://www.mezztower.net/architecture/>.

368 Ibid.



Figure 70: Mezz Group Tower, The office area with 360 panoramic views with shades obscuring vision.  
Source: Mezzgroup.Net

the office tower itself speaks about. This symbolic manifestation of towers outmatches the local conditions and introduces an alien, high modern contemporary structure in Djibouti city.

### **5.3.3. DIFTZ Office Complex: A Competitive Architecture Model**

After presenting a short case study of the MEZZ group tower, it is clear that there are two different critical approaches between the office complexes of DIFTZ and the MEZZ group tower. Both of the architectural designs target the common functional requirement of global office services but approach it differently. The Chinese -designed office complex represents an eclectic and pragmatic approach in dealing with the harsh weather and other contextual features of Djibouti. It incorporates and harmoniously blends the specific Djiboutian architectural features. The DIFTZ office has less glass surface area that probably minimizes maintenance costs. The series of protruding louvers in a pointed arch shape works as brise-soleils. The MEZZ tower glass structure achieves 360-degree panoramic views and controls the heat by the double-skin façade, but the DIFTZ critically employed only the head of tower for a 360-degree panoramic view to minimize heat gains and maintenance cost. In general, the selection of concrete louvers or other elements is mostly denounced because it is time-consuming, involves higher cost value and difficult to construct; but the Chinese used prefabricated technology and several other measures to counter these challenges. Almost all the construction materials and technologies of both the MEZZ tower and DIFTZ office complex are imported from Italy and China, respectively. Still, they demonstrate different techniques in tackling the Djibouti contextual constraints. The MEZZ tower is a privately owned property; therefore, there is less involvement of Djiboutian stakeholders. While in the case of DIFTZ office complex, it is a cooperation between China and the Djibouti governments; thus, no doubt Djibouti stakeholders have considerable inputs in its architectural design pref-

erences and in addressing the specificity of Djibouti. The different approach represented by the DIFTZ office complex puts the Chinese architecture model as a competitive model in contemporary globalization.

## **5.4 Diversity, Collaborations and Complexity: Djibouti National Archive and Library**

### **5.4.1. Context**

Djibouti has a rich history and numerous archives and records of memories. They form a unique and irreplaceable heritage passed from generation to generation. UNESCO underlined the importance of archives and insisted that the government of Djibouti must safeguard their archives, which represent an irreversible heritage. In 2001, Djibouti's president passed a decree to the centralization and conservation of the archives of the nation.<sup>369</sup> In the following years, the Djibouti government asked China for its assistance in realizing the state-of-the-art national archive of Djibouti. The Chinese government pledged the Djibouti government to build a national library and archive center for Djibouti by provide complete financial and technical assistance. It would be a gift to the Djibouti government. On 24 October, 2016, the Ministry of Muslim Affairs and Culture of Djibouti signed the contract of execution of the project with the head of China's economic office to Djibouti (representing the International Economic Cooperation Office of the Ministry of Trade of the People's Republic of China).<sup>370</sup> On April 23, 2017, a grand

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369 'Presidence Djibouti' (OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE REPUBLIC OF DJIBOUTI, 2001), <https://www.presidence.dj/PresidenceOld/LES%20TEXTES/decr0209pr01.htm>.

370 'Ministère Des Affaires Musulmanes, de La Culture et Des Biens Waqfs. Signature Du Contrat d'exécution Du Projet de Construction Des Archives Nationales et de La Bibliothèque Nationale Financé

foundation stone-laying ceremony was held for the construction of a national library and archive center of Djibouti. The Djibouti president was the main guest along with the prime minister Abdoukader Kamil Mohamed, Minister of Muslim Affairs and Culture, Minister of Foreign Affairs and more than 250 people including the Ambassador of China to Djibouti as well as the construction workers. The ambassador said in his speech that the center was a gift to Djibouti from Chinese people, and the president appreciated the Chinese government's assistance to Djibouti.<sup>371</sup>

The project is located on a site nearby the military parade area in the Balbala suburb of Djibouti. The construction site of the National Archives & National Library is 30000 square meters, provided by the state of Djibouti. The relief of the terrain is relatively flat. The project costs were estimated at RMB 220 million. The Chinese government managed the project's overall execution from architectural design and construction to complete interior furnishing. The project included two years of construction. The general requirements set by Djiboutian and Chinese representatives regarding the project are administrative areas, a modular conference room with 300 seats, an exhibition hall, logistics, distribution and storage room and a water block. The area of construction is 16500 m<sup>2</sup>. The total area of occupancy is 9326 m<sup>2</sup>, the green space or reforestation area is 7700 m<sup>2</sup>, and the parking area is 13,000 m<sup>2</sup>, consisting of 115 spots. The National Archives include a reception area, mega-archives, archives consulting rooms, conference and exhibition rooms, technical rooms, administrative office area, equipment rooms, auxiliary area for public activities and the training center. The public area is common to

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Par Le Gouvernement Chinois', *The Nation News*, 20 March 2016, <https://www.facebook.com/Archive-sNationalesDjibouti/posts/1147729328650522>.

371 'A Grand Foundation Stone Laying Ceremony Was Held for the Construction of a National Library and Archive Centre of Djibouti.(Translated to English)', *MOFCOM News*, 4 November 2020, <http://www.mofcom.gov.cn/article/i/jyj/k/201704/20170402562786.shtml>.



both heritage institutions.<sup>372</sup>

In a bidding process, the Chinese government (MOFCOM) appointed the Hua Shang International Engineering (Beijing) Co., Ltd, for carrying out the architectural and engineering drawing work. It was also awarded with the project management task, and Yunnan Construction Investment Holding Group Co., Ltd, won a bid to complete all the construction work. These leading Chinese state-owned enterprises in collaboration with each other smoothly executed the project. The project's construction area is about 16,500 square meters, of which that of the library part is approximately 7,500 square meters. The books number 450,000 in total, and there are 450 reading seats. The entire library includes bookstores, reading rooms, archives, archives' reading rooms and related supporting facilities and provides the necessary office equipment and furniture.<sup>373</sup>

#### **5.4.2. Diversity and Complexity**

The project is an important overseas BRI aid project. It is located in the Balbala district of Djibouti. The Balbala area is planned to be a cultural district. In the future, some important cultural facilities will be built, such as religious buildings, cultural research centers, hospitals, clinics, etc. This necessitates the library to be one of the landmark buildings of this cultural district.<sup>374</sup> In these constraints, the Djibouti national library's

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372 Official documents extracted from facebook page of *Djibouti national library and archive*, see: 'Design Brief Official Document.', Facebook page of Djibouti national library and archive., n.d., <https://www.facebook.com/ArchivesNationalesDjibouti/photos/pcb.1579145565508894/1579144338842350/>

373 'Aid to Djibouti National Library and Archives Project: Student and teacher team work on BIM. School of Civil Engineering (translated to english)', Yunnan Agricultural University, accessed 4 November 2019, <http://bim.lubanu.com/works/show/439>.

374 '2021. "大国风范, 华商作品, English: Great Country Style, Works of Chinese Businessmen."', weixin.qq.com., 4 January 2021, <https://open.work.weixin.qq.com/wwopen/mpnews?mixuin=5Bq->



Figure 71: Rendering of China-Djibouti National Library. Source skyscrapercity.com



Figure 72: The use of various islamic arches, louvers etc. in China-Djibouti National Library. Source skyscrapercity.com



Figure 73: Entrance arches and lattice work. source: Skyscrapercity.com



Figure 74: The Entrance grand lobby of China-Djibouti National Library. Source skyscrapercity.com

architecture has turned out to be diverse and complex. The entire building is dominated by modern architectural styles that combine the design philosophy of ancient Chinese architecture, such as the relationship between spatial and axial symmetry that are similar to Islamic architectural features. The aim of the designers is to better integrate with the surrounding environment and have a progressive attitude.<sup>375</sup> This transcultural architecture scheme uses Chinese design philosophy such as symmetrical courtyards and then adorns it with recognizable Islamic architectural elements such as a series of pointed arches in the center, and the pointed arch and Moorish arch are juxtaposed on both corners in a modern style. The whole structure is a composition of diverse influences forming a complex structure. It also echoes with the tropical architectural features such as louvers, lattice works and arches used as brise soleil. The project introduced the courtyards and landscaping to contend with the hot weather. The structure is simply light and colored white to harmoniously balance the overall complex design. Similarly, the interior spaces are adorned with pseudo-Islamic arches and Chinese decor.

According to the concept of vernacular mysticism put forward by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, the human language is divided into four categories: vernacular language (here), referential language (there), vehicular language (everywhere) and mythical language (beyond).<sup>376</sup> According to this definition, the transcultural architecture scheme of the Djibouti national library can be interpreted such that the Chinese designers incorpo-

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vCwAABwDFqg5wAAAUA&mfid=WW0304- IKVi9QAABwBEUDrSrj-IjQJOyDX51&idx=0&-sn=9c2082eb1bfd8a03d24b162c5b4ac d7a&version=3.0.36.2008&platform=win.

375 ‘宏源经典工程】援吉布提国家图书档案馆项目 english: [Hongyuan Classic Project] Aid to Djibouti National Library and Archives Project.’’, Company News, September 2019, <https://xw.qq.com/cmsid/20190926A0JQ4T00>.

376 I used this concept to interpret transcultural architecture A concept described by Botz and borrowed from Deleuze, see: Thorsten Botz-Bornstein, *Transcultural Architecture: The Limits and Opportunities of Critical Regionalism* (Routledge, 2016); Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Kafka. Pour Une Littérature Mineure* (Minuit, 2013).

rated the vernacular language (here) of the local Djibouti architectural features, mostly in the Moorish arches. The referential language (there) is more specifically, for instance, the Chinese decors in the interior spaces or the courtyard landscaping. The vehicular language (everywhere) is the international style which speaks of everywhere. The mythical language (beyond) is the virtual language such as the philosophy of the Chinese language built into the Djibouti National Library's design. This is an abstract space that manifests itself in a way that the Chinese can see and experience. As I discussed before in the case study of the Pakistan China Friendship Center, the Chinese journalist stated that entering into the center feels like you entering into China; although it is hybridized Chinese and Islamic architecture, he felt like being in China because the articulation of interior spaces is similar to that in China, and all decorations imported from China contribute to the feeling.<sup>377</sup>

The idea of using the Moorish horseshoe arch in the right corner of the facade and the pointed arch in the left corner represents an inclusive design maneuver that ensures that nothing is missing in the manifestation of local architecture. Indeed, there is no criticality in this design approach. It is just to ignite the local population's sentimental perceptions to gain their appreciation and obtain practical results rather than relying on high modernity, which could be difficult for the Djiboutian natives to comprehend.

### **5.4.3. Teamwork, Enthusiasm and Competitive Strategies**

In January 2017, the project management team of Hua Shang International Engineering Management Co., Ltd., initiated the National Library and Archives of Djibouti. It faced

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<sup>377</sup> Drawing conclusion from BOTZ-Bornstein ideas about his reading of Chinese architecture from Wangshu examples. See: Thorsten Botz-Bornstein, ' *Transcultural Architecture: The Limits and Opportunities of Critical Regionalism* '

## 软件应用

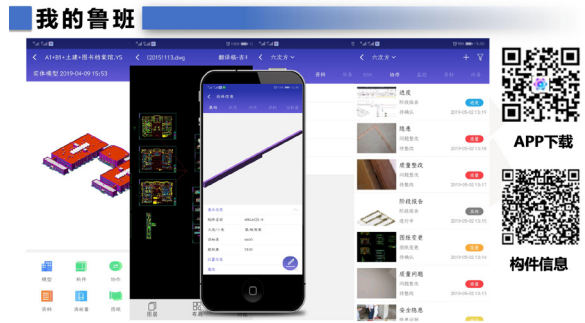


Figure 75: The use of different softwares, mobile apps to do multi tasking and smooth execution of project. Source: bim.lubanu.com



Figure 76: Construction site visit by Minister of Culture Djibouti. Source skyscrapercity.com

several difficulties due to the unavailability of facilities such as an onsite energy system, lack of construction materials, skilled laborers, harsh weather and transportation. The motivation words of every worker were “work steadily,” “work hard” and “work diligently.”. The paramount enthusiasm of the team was not only to win honors from the Chinese side (client) but also for the company to execute the best work to contribute in building a bridge of friendship between the two countries.<sup>378</sup> The core idea was to use up-to-date technology and expertise to counter Djibouti’s construction challenges. The main challenges were to execute the construction in a short time but without compromising on the quality. The reduced construction time would reduce lot of the costs involved. Therefore, the project management team incorporated the BIM technology integrated with prefab technology to improve the management, quality and smooth execution of construction. The construction plan was associated with the 3D and 4D models dedicated to assisting the project manager to quickly and effectively review the progress of construction. It included the review of seismic work, cost, materials, decorations work, real execution time, etc. in software to make it easier to compare them with the on-site construction. There are different construction components, and each is marked with a QR code which assists the construction worker to know where and how to assemble it as well as helps them to multitask.<sup>379</sup>

Shenzhen Qixin Group Co., Ltd., collaborated with Yunnan Construction Investment Holding Group Co., Ltd., and completed the overall interior furnishings and provided

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378 Yang Bo, ‘浓挚建交友谊，援筑梦之楼宇——华商国际工程建设公司援吉布提国家图书馆项目概况 English:Establishing a Strong Relationship and Friendship, Helping to Build a Dream Building——Overview of the Project of Huashang International Engineering and Construction Corporation Assisting Djibouti National L.’, 2019, <https://wemp.app/>. 30 July. Accessed Nov 2019. <https://wemp.app/posts/e247a27e-315f-4d18-8581-9bfaa133d795>.

379 The student project which give insight of how different software were used to do smooth execution of construction work. ‘Aid to Djibouti National Library and Archives Project: Student and teacher team work on BIM. School of Civil Engineering (translated to english)’.



Figure 77: Eclectic architecture with green colors scheme to represent Djibouti Flag color, Render image. Source: Skyscrapercity.com



Figure 78: Eclectic architecture with green colors scheme to represent Djibouti Flag color, real image. Source: Skyscrapercity.com



other supporting services. Qixin Group Co., Ltd, had been already actively participating in the “Belt and Road” construction of an overseas aid project. In April 2018, Qixin Co., Ltd. officially began the interior construction work. After 15 months of hard work, the installation work was completed on June 30, 2019, after overcoming many difficulties in the severe conditions of Djibouti. The Qixin Co., Ltd., project team repeatedly managed the construction schedule plan and organized professional technical forces on a timely basis onsite. The project team actively mobilized local laborers to increase the construction manpower and worked hard day and night to assist the construction of the project’s front line, ensuring that the project was delivered on schedule while ensuring the quality of construction.<sup>380</sup>

From the design to project management and construction, all the phases of the project are closely linked. The architectural choices are not made without considering the consequences of its construction problems, time and budget. Nonetheless, project designers and project management are from the same company. These are collaborative and complex projects where every architectural design element is closely linked to the context’s economic, social, and political conditions.

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380 Shenzhen Qixin Group Co., Ltd. (stock code: 002781) was established in 1995. It is a "healthy and smart residential" solution provider integrating architectural decoration design and construction, Internet of Things platform, new material development and application. The platform-based enterprise group is the only leading enterprise in the architectural decoration industry with two academicians. It has jointly prepared an academician workstation with Academician He Hong. It is a national-level high-tech enterprise and a national-level contract-abiding and trustworthy enterprise. Top 100 companies in the industry". ‘奇信股份]积极参加“一带一路”建设 奇信股份海外援建项目再获认可 english: Qixin company actively participated in the “Belt and Road” construction. Qixin Co., Ltd. overseas aid project was recognized again.’

## **PART 4. DISCUSSION**

## Chapter 6. Discussion and Conclusion

### 6.1 Architecture Projects under BRI as Development Aid

China's cooperation with developing countries is a form of international aid that differs from traditional donors and which offers host countries new opportunities.<sup>381</sup> There is a difference between the ideology of Cold War development aid politics and China's BRI. In the Cold War, the development aids were exported from the United States or Soviet Union to the developing countries. They have radically influenced them politically and culturally and have even been tied with some political conditions.<sup>382</sup> In contemporary globalization, China is not just the recipient, a player, but also the maker and shaper of globalization. In the 32nd Annual Camden Conference, Martin Jacques (British journalist and academician) expressed his views as follows:

*"It is our vision that we Western are universal in the world. There is one modernity that is our modernity, and everyone should follow it, but it will be no longer sustainable [...] now China is not like Western; it will not be like Western; there is a fundamental difference."*<sup>383</sup>

The BRI is primarily focused on the business and trade model. It is based on economic services that are not only similar to traditional aid, such as humanitarian aid for peaceful purposes, but also have a defined goal of mutual economic development. The architectural aid projects are designed to bring economic benefits to the local people,

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381 Vieira, 'From Third World Theory to Belt and Road Initiative: International Aid as a Chinese Foreign Policy Tool'.

382 Raymond F Mikesell, *The Economics of Foreign Aid* (Transaction Publishers, 1970).

383 Martin Jacques, 'What China Will Be Like As A Great Power', 24 February 2019, <https://www.camdenconference.org/2019-camden-conference/#Videos2019>.

create connections with them and gain their support in BRI's investment projects. Some Western critics have justified the Chinese investment as the country's grand strategy to access resources while another group has idealized it as it presents new opportunities to the receiving countries.<sup>384</sup> Architectural projects as aid, mainly composed of cultural centers, hospitals and schools, demonstrate China's positive image and enhance its soft power. The term soft power originates from the West and is attributed to an ideology of cultural imperialism.<sup>385</sup> China's soft power differs slightly from the Western equivalents. Soft power, along with development aid and other Chinese interventions, is based more on equal South-South transactions. According to Kenneth King,

*"These are culture exchanges, not political influences."*<sup>386</sup>

Architecture gifts are meant to increase cultural exchanges and mutual respect, between the two countries. I interpret that the primary concern of architecture projects as aid is to create a friendly environment for business and economic development in its partner country. Architecture projects do not aim to export Chinese architecture models to the recipient country to influence them culturally but are considered gift projects. They follow the motto of "what the locals need, we can deliver it to you" with no intention to impose the model but to execute architecture for the "other."<sup>387</sup> Ke Song, in a new research article on "China's Foreign Architecture," argued that China's foreign aid

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384 Vieira, 'From Third World Theory to Belt and Road Initiative: International Aid as a Chinese Foreign Policy Tool'.

385 Antonescu, 'Imperialismul Cultural Sau „puterea Imperială Soft” În Ordinea Globală a Secolului XXI'.

386 King, 'China's Aid and Soft Power in Africa'.

387 Tian Ren chief architect of New Gwadar International airport, in interview said in the project all the wishes of local people their demands are fully respected. Tian, 'Analysis of Key Points in the Design of Foreign Aid Airport Construction Projects and Countermeasures: Taking Pakistan's New Gwadar International Airport Project Design as an Example(援外机场建设项目设计要点分析及对策研究——以巴基斯坦新瓜达尔国际机场项目设计为例).'

was based on the pragmatic approach of its foreign policy that was formed between the 1960s and the end of the Mao era. It especially emphasizes economic development instead of political intervention, and the architecture is part of its development tools.<sup>388</sup>

The core idea is based on the ideology of establishing architecture that is sensitive to local cultures, emotions and feelings, working on the climatology of architecture and using economical construction methods; in other words, it is a pragmatic approach to architecture, and the concept of design is derived from what the local people want. On the other side, Western development aid architecture is based on significantly Western ideas of modernizing the local architecture with Western standards. When research regarding where modern architecture disseminated from the West to non-West is analyzed, most research demonstrates the flexibility of modern architecture models from the West in that they could be translated, appropriated, diffused, modified and hybridized in non-West contexts.<sup>389</sup> While in the case of architecture projects within the framework of BRI, besides the translation, appropriation, modification etc. by a Chinese architect, several other things distinguish their actions. They work as a team where different actors influence the architecture; for example, they follow the instructions of the Chinese government which include sustainable guidelines, respect local wishes, etc. and instructions from local Pakistani stakeholders including their sustainability goals, national codes, national identity, etc. They conduct exchanges of architectural knowledge with Pakistani technical experts, conduct extensive field research and lead the design with a motto of

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388 Ke Song, 'China's Foreign Aid Architecture in a Transitional Period, 1964–1976', *Journal of Asian Architecture and Building Engineering*, 2021, 1–15.

389 Moreira, 'Colonial Modern. Aesthetics of the Past–Rebellions for the Future, by Tom Avermaete, Serhat Karakayali and Marion Von Osten'; Crinson, *Modern Architecture and the End of Empire*; Volait and Nasr, *Urbanism: Imported or Exported? Native Aspirations and Foreign Plans*; Cody, *Exporting American Architecture, 1870-2000*; Avermaete et al., 'Crossing Boundaries'; Model House Research Group, *De La Source Transcultural Modernisms*; Stanek, *Architecture in Global Socialism: Eastern Europe, West Africa, and the Middle East in the Cold War*; Stanek, 'Introduction: The "Second World's" Architecture and Planning in the "Third World"'.

what the recipients need. In other words, they carry out eclectic but pragmatic architecture by imbuing it in the local context.

The architecture exchanges in the framework of BRI challenges other international development aid programs. China's BRI development model works quite well in developing countries as compared to Western construction aids, because in developing countries there is a lack of technical expertise, lack of high-tech construction materials and high rate of corruption. This can be seen in the case of US aid, where major US contractors were awarded construction projects in many local construction companies that have often been failed or delayed in Afghanistan, Iraq and Pakistan. This is because of safety problems or errors in the construction tasks due to a lack of technical expertise onsite or modification in original design due to mismanagement<sup>390</sup>. In the case of BRI, in facilitating government-to-government cooperation, the Chinese government provides favorable conditions for Chinese companies to operate in.

## **6.2 A Complex Collaborative Architecture under the Framework of BRI**

BRI provides an innovative, organized institutional framework to facilitate inclusive globalization. In the framework of BRI, China is not the solitary actor in architectural productions; the receiving side also has considerable influence. BRI gained its inspiration from the cultural meaning of the old silk road.<sup>391392</sup> The ancient silk road, a trade

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390 David Rohde Gall and Carlotta, 'Gall, David Rohde&Carlotta. 2005. Delays Hurting U.S. Rebuilding in Afghanistan. 07 Nov. Accessed 2019.', 7 November 2005, <https://www.nytimes.com/2005/11/07/world/asia/delays-hurting-us-rebuilding-in-afghanistan.html>.

391 Williams, Robinson, and Bouzarovski, 'China's Belt and Road Initiative and the Emerging Geographies of Global Urbanisation'.

392 BRI is next step to emerge new global leader see in article China's Belt and Road Initiative and the

route from the east to the west, provided the platform for knowledge exchanges, cultural exchanges, and the region's prosperity.<sup>393</sup> I believe that the BRI is not a one-way show, as it is exaggerated in many geopolitical research articles that speculate on the idea of neocolonialism and imperialism, but that it facilitates the transfer of architecture models that are considerably altered, modified or diffused by local actors to fit its context. For instance, in the case of Gwadar, the Pakistani government has established CPEC research centers and different technical expert committees that aim to double-check every project to make it sustainable and sensitive to local conditions.<sup>394395</sup> The construction projects also pass through Pakistan's strong bureaucratic system, which causes many delays in each project; accordingly, the CPEC was presented in the media as having been halted by Imran Khan, the new prime minister of Pakistan. Under such international and domestic pressure, the prime minister appointed a retired general, Asim Saleem Bajwa, as the chairman of the CPEC to expedite the projects by by-passing the many bureaucratic levels.<sup>396</sup> However, it is important to note that the by-passing of bureaucratic levels does not mean that the role of technical experts from Pakistan is diminished.

The design scheme of the Gwadar Free Zone Business Center was readily modified. The local demands of representing Pakistan's national Islamic identity and the Chinese local interpretation of the pastiche were points of "contact zone." The cross-cultural argu-

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emerging geographies of global urbanization. See in: Williams, Joe, Caitlin Robinson, and Stefan Bouzarovski. "China's Belt and Road Initiative and the emerging geographies of global urbanisation." *The Geographical Journal* 186, no. 1 (2020): 128-140.

393 Clements, *A History of the Silk Road*.

394 Butt, CPEC architecture project mechanism.

395 Adnan Khan, Architecture projects under CPEC, interview by Sohrab Ahmed Marri, audio recorder, 14 January 2019.

396 'NA Passes Constitutional Amendment Granting Sovereignty to CPEC.'

ments led to the refinement in design schemes. There was a fruitful discussion in between Chinese and Pakistani technical experts in the case of the Pakistan–China Friendship Hospital regarding the presentation of the design proposal. In these meetings, the Pakistani technical experts discussed the local population’s requirements, culture, climatic conditions, the economic and applicable construction methods etc., and even the military personnel discussed the safety measures and similar aspects. These intensive discussions slightly modified the design. The engineer Syed Muhammad stated the following:

*“The Chinese consultants did a good research on the context of Gwadar; we just asked for partial modifications.”<sup>397</sup>*

The relevant Chinese officials regarding the Pakistan–China Friendship Hospital Gwadar also invited Engineer Syed Muhammad of GDA along with other Pakistani stakeholders to Shanghai. They presented Shanghai hospital models in this presentation. There were discussions about how to appropriate it in the context of Gwadar and what the main requirements for the people of Gwadar were.

Nonetheless, these interactions become a carrier of knowledge exchanges. From the Pakistani side, the security officers discuss the security measurements, the economists discuss the economic viability, the architects exchange the typical local architecture spaces and their requirements and also the climatic factors, the construction engineers discuss the construction methods, electrical engineers discuss about the powerhouse design, local district health officers demonstrated the Gwadar district hospital and their problems and , etc. These interactions become possible only because of the BRI institution framework.

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397 Muhammad, Design Process of Pakistan China Friendship Hospital. Syed Muhammad Gwadar development authority is Project Director of PCF hospital from Pakistan side.



In the case of the Pakistan China Vocational Training Institute, the issue of separating the male and female dormitories was not fully resolved. However, within the allocated fund, the CCCC company designers fixed it by giving separate entrances through the staircase. Sohail Asghar, the project manager of Pakistan–China Vocational Training Institute from the Pakistani side, said the following:

*“I am also nominated for another architecture aid project from China to look after it. This time, I will thoroughly investigate every aspect of the project in the initial phase of design proposal so that the problems could be solved, and funds could be allocated accordingly.”<sup>398</sup>*

This was his experience, but this “othering” in architecture can be solved in the future. Here, by othering I mean the exclusion of the privacy factor of local people. This leads to restraining the girls from education. This is not a solo mishap from the Chinese designers, but the local actors are also equally responsible. In China, there are no such requirements for segregating male and female dormitories. Similarly, the funding allocation problem emerged in the case of New Gwadar International Airport, but the architect Tian Ren and his team persuaded the local stakeholders and Chinese stakeholders in the modification of the airport’s design. These are lessons for future architecture projects that are developing within the context of BRI.

BIM and modular building technology were tested in almost all of the case study projects. Chinese architects and engineers adopt the latest construction technology due to a lack of building materials, the unavailability of professional construction workers, construction machinery, safety concerns, power outages, bad weather, unavailability of a water source and the limited construction time. These latest construction technologies

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398 Asghar, Design Process of Pak-China Friendship Vocational Training Institute. Sohail Asghar is from Gwadar Port authority and he is the project manager of Pakistan China Vocational Training Institute Gwadar from Pakistan side.

relatively improve the budget for construction quality and ensure timely construction. The challenge for architects is to optimize their design according to the requirements of BIM, modular building technology and other intelligent building technologies. For example, identical hotel rooms with bathrooms are more convenient to prefabricate than customized rooms. The series of pointed arches could be more economical than a single arch. These mandatory requirements have a lasting impact on the architecture scale project. The case studies demonstrate that these architecture projects under BRI are different from traditional architecture work. The conventional projects comprised of the architecture design studio and construction company and simple client, but the BRI case studies in this dissertation revealed an intense inter collaboration work. MOFCOM hired the design company and the project management team to oversee the project. The team members from the Chinese embassy in Pakistan or Djibouti and the construction experts from the local department visited construction sites. The formation of technical working groups composed of many interdisciplinary experts. Local technical groups conducted face-to-face meetings with Chinese designers and contractors. Sometimes, local military personnel met with Chinese contractors to ensure security measures, and even government ministers also visited construction sites at times.<sup>399</sup> These reviews are designed to investigate what problems are encountered in the construction of the site and what urgent needs the site managers face to speed up construction without a break.

On the other hand, there is a complex division of work in the construction. The leading construction company sub-contracted different construction work components such as fabrication, interior design, modular construction, etc. to a network of Chinese companies. All of this works together to achieve a common goal for success.

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399 Ibid.

### 6.3 Where is the Critical Approach in this Architecture Cooperation?

In this transcultural architecture, deciding what is critical is very difficult. The difference lies in how some countries have developed a critical approach while some are still developing it. However, China has the expertise that could lead to a critical approach within their capacity. In China's case, architecture projects in Pakistan represent the pragmatic, eclectic architecture of both cultures. It is not necessarily called Islamic architecture or Chinese architecture or even a meta culture but something new.

Similarly, Tom Avermeate discussed the post-war architecture transfer under the header of developments, particularly that these transcultural architecture processes facilitate a contact zone between different cultural knowledge and interests. It rearticulates the very character of architectural design. As a result, architectural design models in the Global South are not inadequate copies or distortions of developments in the North but have their own logic and can be considered unique and creative articulations.<sup>400</sup>

The concept of center and periphery is useless to discuss in these case studies. China is not a Western country nor are its transnational architecture models purely Chinese. China itself has adopted and appropriated several modern Soviet and Euro-American architecture models in their context<sup>401</sup>. Thus, the exchanges between China and Pakistan occur in a highly saturated transnational environment. The transculturation process gives rise to a 'third space'<sup>402</sup> that not only speaks of Pakistani and Chinese architecture but also multiple international architecture influences. In the above case studies, however, the emphasis is placed on the direct representation of local vocabularies or is

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400 Avermeate, 'Coda: The Reflexivity of Cold War Architectural Modernism'.

401 Cody, *Exporting American Architecture, 1870-2000*.

402 A concept borrowed from Homi, see: Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*.

sometimes infused with Chinese architectural features that are harmonious, indirect and represent phenomenological spaces. In the case of Pakistan-China Friendship Hospital, the initial proposal depicts an eclectic Islamic architecture design which was repudiated by the Pakistani technical group of the CPEC committee. It was then simplified with modern architecture vocabularies. Nevertheless, it still contains Islamic architecture features; the arcade arches are substituted with straight lines and justified with functional tropical architecture. It can be considered a critical regionalist approach taken by Chinese architects within their capacity. This different approach complicates the Western definition of critical regionalism and represents an alternative critical regionalism in the Global South. It does not follow critical theory and is not, in the truest sense, critical regionalism; however, it can be argued as a kind of critical pragmatism.

In contemporary globalization, it is evident that many architecture projects mostly follow the theories of critical regionalism. Critical regionalism is a Western concept that seeks a universal architectural language and mostly takes into account the local climatology of the architecture. Francis Kéré's Gando primary school at Burkina Faso revolutionized critical regionalism primarily based on the idea of passive energy-efficient building, a symbol of ecological architecture and which includes the local community's participation.<sup>403</sup> It is no doubt a very innovative design addressing the social and climatic feature of the region. However, this unnecessarily surges in every locale of Africa, specifically a weird roof's structure to be sustainable architecture. Although it is viewed as critical regionalist architecture in the Western view, it is insensitive to the local culture or is not culture specific. Many school buildings as part of development aid

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403 See for instance: Adedoyin Teriba, 'Buildings Instead of Discourse. Empathy and Modern Architecture in West Africa', *REGIONALISM, NATIONALISM & MODERN ARCHITECTURE*, no. 1 (2018): 437–48; 'Gando Primary School', Kéré architecture, 2001, <https://www.kerearchitecture.com/work/building/gando-primary-school-3>; Rory Stott, 'Juhani Pallasmaa and Diébédo Francis Kéré Honored in 2014 Schelling Architecture Awards', ArchDaily, 13 November 2014, <https://www.archdaily.com/567444/juhani-pallasmaa-and-diebedo-francis-kere-honored-in-2014-schelling-architecture-awards>.

architecture have been inspired by this prototype architecture.

Contrary to that, the Chinese architects use bold local vocabularies in their architecture design while considering climatological factors as well. Some have criticized it as theme park architecture; the problem is that there is a difference between the Western and Eastern standards of aesthetic. It unfolds a new East–South relationship that is quite different from the North–South relationship, requiring a new understanding of the architecture discourse and to be judged in a different way.

Non-Western cultures interpret critical regionalism in their own way, contrary to what is practiced in the West. A famous architect in Pakistan, Nayyar Ali Dada, can be considered a critical Pakistani regionalist who has designed several notable buildings in his country. One of his masterpieces is the Alhambra Arts Council in Lahore, which was the recipient of the Aga Khan Award in 1998. In the building, the architect articulated modern geometrical architecture masses and spaces. It is dressed with red brick—the typical building material of many historical buildings in Lahore. Nayyar Ali Dada argued that there is no creativity if you directly imitate local traditional architecture, but the spirit of the past is important that it can be recreated in a modern way to make something exciting and creative.<sup>404</sup> However, in his other major work, for instance, the Lahore Expo and Convention Center, he deliberately used arches in a modern way to ensure the national identity and local brickwork to create an environment that possesses the spirit of the locality. According to Prakash (architecture historian and theorist), it is difficult for non-Western architects to escape from the national identity burden. At the same time, there is no such requirement for Western architects. Therefore, the latter without any restriction can follow a Western self-critical approach.<sup>405</sup> The Friendship Center at Is-

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404 Nayyar Ali Dada, Does tradition and modernity exist separately in architecture?, interview by Zameen.com, 24 November 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eAIAopnGIYU&t=623s>.

405 Vikramaditya Prakash, 'Identity Production in Postcolonial Indian Architecture: Re-Covering What

Islamabad followed a similar architecture approach to that of Nayyar Ali Dada's to inject the subtle meaning of both cultures. It involves modern architecture masses and spaces to harmoniously include some direct representative local architecture elements such as Islamic point arches in the main entrance. Can we say it follows a critical regionalist approach in expressing Chinese cultural features and a post-modernist approach in defining local cultural features? Whether it is Western or Eastern culture, translating the other's language is extremely difficult and requires expert knowledge and experience.

Therefore, local expert opinions are valuable; comparatively, the Gwadar Free Zone Business Center is much influenced by local actors. The Gwadar Business Center is a symbol of economic cooperation between two countries; it will be managed by CCCC and COPHC for 40 years as agreed, and then the local government will take charge of it. The target users of Gwadar Business Center are Chinese businessmen and other international ones. This is not like the Pakistan-China Friendship Center in Islamabad, which was a sort of gift from the Chinese government to enhance government-to-government relations. In this case, there was no technical expert committee from Pakistan and only a few stakeholders from Pakistan, and they followed the protocols and agreements. Meanwhile, BRI has a complex mechanism as discussed before. Therefore, the architecture projects developing in BRI is quite different from China's previous architecture aid projects.<sup>406</sup> In the case of Gwadar Business Center, the local technical members tried to persuade Chinese designers to put forward architecture that represents the local context and national identity of Pakistan but at the same time demanded it to be modern architecture. Thus, Gwadar Business Center ends up in the eclecticism of various local characters. Due to the flexible approach of Chinese architects, they demonstrate the team workmanship spirit that they have acquired through their work ethic of Chinese

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We Never Had', *Postcolonial Space (s)*, 1997, 39–52.

406 Butt, CPEC architecture project mechanism. Daud Hassan Butt was CPEC project director

state-owned design institutes. While Western architectural firms are primarily individual architects who mostly rigidly modify their design proposals. The Western-critical regionalist definitions of only critically including indirect regional architectural characters and avant-garde architecture examples could be unacceptable for local Pakistanis, as it is difficult for them to understand.

Suppose we take a look at the Western architects' involvement in case of Karachi, Pakistan. For example, the Aga Khan hospital, designed by Thomas M. Payette in the 1980s, is famous in the architectural arena of Pakistan for its innovative use of Islamic architectural concepts. It illustrates the use of elements such as the trellis but has modernized it with simple patterns and not used the direct local pastiches. The creative articulation of interior spaces, fountains and landscaping is inspired from Islamic architecture from a range of geographical references.<sup>407</sup> The purpose of both Western architects in the late 20th century and more recently Chinese architects' projects was to use indigenous architectural elements to focus on building passive-energy efficiency. Both architectural projects were realized in different context and time; so there is no comparison; however, I am interested in the architecture approaches. The approaches taken by Chinese and Western architects in manifesting Islamic architecture concepts are different.

The modernist architecture styles are not an invention of Chinese architects. Chinese designers have appropriated the modern Western or Soviet architecture models in China and are now exporting it to developing countries by diffusing it with the local pastiches in a modern way. Chinese designers are fascinated by apparent local pastiches without distorting it in an ambiguous modernist fashion. In the context of global architecture practice, this architecture approach of the case studies contradicts Kenneth Frampton's

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407 Thomas M Payette, 'Designing the Aga Khan Medical Complex', *Theories and Principles of Design in the Architecture of Islamic Societies*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture, 1988.

concept of critical regionalism, avant-garde architecture or other critical approaches but to some extent aligns with the concept of postmodernism. Botz Bornstein characterized this approach as regionalism in the following manner:

*“Critical Regionalism should not be used as an ideology declaring any “non-critical” regionalism to be sentimental, kitsch or even fascist. Regionalism does not have to be critical.”*<sup>408</sup>

Whether it is regionalism or critical regionalism is debatable, but what is critical in a non-Western context? It re-instigates a new prism to unfold the non-Western critical approach.

China is emerging as a new global power and exporting eclectic and pragmatic architecture that is specific to the local cultures. It promotes positive image of China outside the country. At the same time, Pakistan hopes to modernize its country without compromising its national identity. In such a context, the architects of both sides have distinguished their architecture approach from the West but also comply with the international architecture disciplinary demands. These cross-cultural architecture exchanges are not merely the business of Chinese and Pakistan architects but also involve many other professionals and actors and their interests and ambitions. The critical architecture offered here is economical, sustainable and culture-specific by enabling the inclusion of both physical and spiritual architectural features of both cultures rather than relying only on indirect expressions to refrain from confusion. This eclectic cross-cultural architecture could be said to be a non-Western critical regionalist approach set up by Chinese and Pakistani experts within a specific socio-political context.

There is a different understanding of critical architecture approaches from the Western or non-Western context. I agree with Botz Bornstein that the West has developed “criti-

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408 Botz-Bornstein, *Transcultural Architecture: The Limits and Opportunities of Critical Regionalism*.



cal thinking” for many years and this critical thinking is not dominant in a non-Western context.<sup>409</sup> However, the case studies of this dissertation demonstrate that it is not just according to Botz Bornstein’s word “regionalism” but that they are developed within their own logics, interests, ideas and represent intrinsically innovative and unique transcultural architecture. It possesses the character of being highly efficient, is integrated into the fabric of the city, retains national identity facilitates harmonious transculturation features and is extolled by natives.

I interpret that this is new eclectic and pragmatic architecture that is explained in the next section.

#### **6.4 New Eclecticism and Pragmaticism**

The case studies demonstrate that Chinese architects adopted the new eclectic and pragmatic approach due to several complexities and challenges. For instance, the fundamental challenges that they encountered are as follows: How can the Chinese culture be integrated with the local culture in a harmonious way? How can the cultural habits of the local population be incorporated in the architectural design? How can we tackle local identity issues? What are the main features of local architecture? What are the local stakeholders’ expectations and aesthetic preferences? What is local architecture culture? How can the local architect representatives of technical groups be negotiated with? How can architecture be tailored to specific social and economic conditions? Further, how can designs that consider the limited budget and period of projects be developed? How can easily executable designs be formed without compromising on the construction quality and high technology? What are the relevant guidelines and goals set by the Chinese government agencies? What materials should be adopted for sustainable

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409 Ibid, Introduction chapter.

construction? Moreover, in addressing the gap between research data and reality, what features of architectural design are adopted to intercept the harsh weather conditions such as heat, humidity, sand storms etc., and the poor soil condition? How can designs that provide safety from terrorist attacks be developed? .

Eclecticism and pragmatism are not new words; they can be found in history and architectural theory. However, I use these terms eclecticism and pragmatism in a new way. The architects of Chinese companies with the local architects' assistance represent new eclecticism and pragmatism to counter many challenges and problems without relying only on theories and architectural criticisms.

Eclecticism in architecture and pragmatism as a philosophy were both developed at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>410</sup> There are several interrelated aspects regarding these two words. The term eclecticism originated in ancient Greek philosophy, and its literal meaning is “choosing the best.”<sup>411</sup> The concept of eclecticism in architecture developed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century as resistance to dogmatic classic rational ideals.<sup>412</sup> Simultaneously, the pragmatism philosophy was developed by American philosophers<sup>413</sup> as a reaction to utopianism and was based on practicing what

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410 See Eclecticism in architecture developed in late 19<sup>th</sup> century and beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century as resistance to dogmatic classic style. While the pragmatism philosophy is introduced by John Dewey later it is well explored in last decades.

411 ἐκλεκτικός by: Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, *A Greek English Lexicon* (At the University Press, 1850).

See it on Perseus Digital Library.

412 See a detail review of eclecticism in architecture in book by French historian

: Épron, *Comprendre l'éclectisme*.

413 In 1870, Pragmatism philosophy developed in the United States. Its origins are often attributed to the philosophers Charles Sanders Peirce, William James and John Dewey Catherine Legg and Chri-

works best in its context, that is, by being concerned more with the real-world application of a theory or, in another sense, knowing that the world is inseparable from the agency within it. The philosophy should be tested through scientific experimentation, and its claim is valid only if it works in the real world. In other words, it contributes to social progress.<sup>414</sup>

First, the aspect of eclecticism is discussed.

Epron remarkably defined eclecticism in architecture as follows:

*“éclectisme est une démarche, une attitude de l’esprit, une aptitude à la discussion, un parti pris de ne soumettre son action à aucun dogme; c’est une recherche passionnée et patiente de la vérité à travers de multiples vérités possibles, une quête de la beauté sans autre guide que les arguments des uns et des autres à son propos, une exigence, enfin, de l’utilité pratique de toute action et de tout choix, «Le Beau, le Vrai, l’Utile», conçoit que Constant-Dufeux a proposé pour la Société centrale des architectes, reprend la formule que César Daly utilisait pour définir l’éclectisme en architecture. L’expérience est elle-même empruntée à Victor Cousin, l’inventeur de l’éclectisme en philosophie. L’éclectisme est pragmatique, concret, efficace, moderne. Il caractérise cette démarche des architectes du xIx siècle qui, depuis la monarchie de juillet jusqu’à la fin du siècle et pratiquement jusqu’à la veille de la guerre de 1914, poursuivent un vaste ébat sur la technique, l’histoire et la société. ”*

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stopher Hookway, ‘Pragmatism’, in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta, Summer 2021 (Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University, 2021), <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2021/entries/pragmatism/>.

414 Legg and Hookway.

*“Eclecticism is an approach, an attitude of the mind, an aptitude for discussion, a bias not to subject one’s action to any dogma; it is a passionate and patient search for truth through multiple possible truths, a quest for beauty with no other guide than the arguments of each other about it, a requirement, finally, of the practical utility of any action and of any choice, “The Beautiful, the True, the Useful,” conceived by Constant-Dufeux in a proposal to the Central Society of Architects, takes up the formula that César Daly used to define eclecticism in architecture. The experience itself is borrowed from Victor Cousin, the inventor of eclecticism in philosophy. Eclecticism is pragmatic, concrete, efficient, modern. It characterises this approach of the architects of the nineteenth century who, from the monarchy of July until the end of the century and practically until the eve of the war of 1914, pursued a vast debate on technique, history and the society.”<sup>415</sup>*

According to Epron, architects from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century reinvented professional architecture based on the new intellectual, political, social and economic realities of that time. As a result, eclectic architecture possesses the aspects of “the beautiful, the true and the useful.” He argued that eclecticism is pragmatic, efficient and modern. Later, he explained the same with several examples<sup>416</sup> “Eclecticism is pragmatic” is an influential statement or concept. However, while this concept of eclecticism was developed in a particular time and context, this dissertation has interpreted its literal meaning in a new way of understanding the architectural production within the framework of BRI. In

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415 Épron, *Comprendre l’éclectisme*. . introduction. Translated from French to English by using google translation

416 Ibid.

this transcultural condition of BRI, the Chinese architects intercepted the foreign architecture identity issue and formed an idea of harmoniously integrating it with Chinese architecture, considering the pressure of time and budget, site constraints, etc. pursued to act as pragmatic rather than critical in every step. They adopted some critical theories but mostly demonstrated eclecticism and pragmatism. The main challenge was how to present the local and national architectural identity, which led to eclecticism. It involves the use of multiple architecture languages and approaches to entail transcultural Chinese and Islamic architecture. The abstract design ideas were adopted from Chinese culture and integrated with recognizable or concrete design features of Islamic architecture such as arches, domes, Islamic gardens, arcades, etc. This transcultural design scheme endorses the idea of “the beautiful, the true, the useful.” For example, in the case studies of the Pakistan China Friendship Vocational Training Institute and Gwadar Hospital and others, the arcades were reinvented to take a new role not only for an aesthetic reason per se but also to act as brise soleil. This design approach does not constitute historicism; Epron differentiated historicism from eclecticism as follows:

*“The historicist abandoned the quest for new doctrine and deliberately inscribed old style in modern architecture while eclecticism takes note of this absence of doctrine but does not give up inventing an architecture to adapted to new times.”<sup>417</sup>*

The condition of “new times” makes this attitude progressive and modern. In the case of the Djibouti office complex, the series of simple arches of the same size and shape are relatively used as modular prefabricated building elements which then also go hand in hand with the double function of cost and time savings. It echoes with tropical architecture features and is also exquisitely situated harmoniously within Djibouti city’s landscape. Thus, it is eclectic but

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417 Ibid, introduction.

pragmatic.

Second, we can discuss the concept of pragmatism. David Macarthur, who viewed pragmatism as a philosophy, stated the following:

*while the pragmatism is an antipole to any dominant tendency—a form of empiricism, a movement that calls for a return to experience, which has repeatedly appeared in the history of philosophy as a dialectical and skeptical response to rationalism. [... ..] In general, pragmatism points out the intense and diverse human experiences as well as limits the reasons. Pragmatism is an anti-dogmatic concept which relies on varieties of particular methods, perspectives and attitudes to the world. The aim is to “let many flowers bloom” in philosophy by not adhering to a specific authority or a priori access to the truth over and above experience. [... ..] Pragmatism does not rely on any particular doctrine, and it is pluralistic and anti-absolutist in solving the problem. In a pragmatic approach, there is no single right answer but more than it. A pragmatic approach in problem-solving provides an orientation, direction, methods, and thumb rules to avoid some perennial, conceptual and explanatory pitfalls.<sup>418</sup>*

The core idea of pragmatism that we are interested in is almost similar to eclecticism. Similarly, the literal meaning of eclecticism is to “choose the best” option with an ambition to get practical results, which is that Epron described as “the beautiful, the true, the useful”<sup>419</sup> and better situate in its context. Pragmatism is like craftsmanship. A good craftsmanship is learning to do an excellent job to manifests intelligence, and it is the

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418 David Macarthur, ‘Reflections on Pragmatism as a Philosophy of Architecture’, *FOOTPRINT*, 2017, 105–20.

419 Translated from French to English by using google translation

skillful negotiation of many factors and conditions in creating something impressive, noble, or beautiful that didn't exist before.<sup>420</sup>

There is no theory or set of rules that will solve all the complex problems in transnational architecture practice more specifically in the context of architecture as development cooperation between developed or developing countries. In the case of the BRI, architectural projects are materialized through technical cooperation agreements between governments. This condition is even different from the individual “global experts” that were once invited by governments in the post-war context.<sup>421</sup> In BRI, the architects of Chinese companies faced several problems within the architecture exchanges, such as the issue of identity, native stakeholders' expectations, the Chinese agencies' goals, local constraints such as unavailability of a high-tech construction industry, lack of modern infrastructure, hot weather, sand storms, etc. In the case studies of this dissertation, it was presented how many Chinese architects had their first experience designing for such unknown conditions in Pakistan, specifically within the context of BRI; for instance, the unique experiences of chief architect Tian Ren.

On the other hand, the Chinese design institutes such as IPPR, CCCC, ECADI Arcplus group and Huashang International Engineering Co., Ltd., which carried out the task of designing architectural projects in the case studies, are giant companies and have already built several projects abroad; therefore, their previous experience was a reference for the new architects to work with. The case studies demonstrate the complex coordination with numerous professionals and the complex execution of construction work. It

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See: Épron, *Comprendre l'éclectisme*. Introduction chapter

420 Macarthur, 'Reflections on Pragmatism as a Philosophy of Architecture'.

421 For instance Le-Corbusier is invited by Indian prime minister to participate in planning and designing of Chandigarh India, Doxiadis for Islamabad city Pakistan and etc. where France government and Greece government are not involved. See: Lagae and De Raedt, 'Global Experts' off Radar'.

needs abrupt and adroit collaborative design decision making to address specific problems that arise in architectural projects in the context of BRI. For instance, while designing the airport in Gwadar, Tian Ren faced several complex problems (as mentioned before). He found solutions and negotiated them with stakeholders from Pakistani and Chinese sides and was quite successful in his pragmatic approach. In the case of Gwadar Business Center, the architecture has been established as a contact zone between two cultures. As part of a complex interactive process, the negotiation process relatively improved the architectural design and received positive feedback from the natives. This was done through a pragmatic architectural knowledge exchange. The Gwadar Business Center ends up an example of eclectic but pragmatic architecture which is contrary to critical regionalism or other related criticism. Moreover, the problems in any evaluatively rich domain, such as architecture, are not solved by only theories but by applying real-world circumstances of what Dewey called intelligence. It involves personal taste, choice and the capacity for sound judgment as well as taking responsibility for the actions that exhibit and realize this intelligence, which contests Robert Somol's claim "that criticism isn't necessary."<sup>422</sup> The eclectic here mainly implies choosing the best architecture vocabularies, i.e., either historic pastiches or modern ways that address the issue of identity, , facilitate fast and economical construction, meet functional requirements, are appealing and environmentally efficient and address other technical design issues. Here, pragmatism is about whether a design approach is effective in solving the above problems. The combination of these two concepts thus gives an overall picture of the conclusion of these case studies. The architecture of these case studies thus exemplifies a new eclecticism and pragmatism. A list of challenges faced and their solutions is provided below.

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422 Quoted from introduction chapter, see: William S Saunders, *The New Architectural Pragmatism: A Harvard Design Magazine Reader*, vol. 5 (U of Minnesota Press, 2007).



## **1. The challenge to integrate the Chinese culture with local culture in a harmonious manner**

The Chinese architects pragmatically solved this issue by using innovative abstract design ideas from Chinese culture and incorporating it with concrete Islamic architectural vocabularies such as pointed arches, domes, arcades, Islamic gardens etc. These features or other local architectural features were then appropriated via knowledge exchanges with local partners. It is a pragmatic approach because the Chinese architects are not experts in Islamic architecture or other local architecture features. Thus, they eclectically used the local architectural features directly without innovating them in an indirect way, which is otherwise unworkable in tackling the local identity issues.

## **2. The local stakeholders' expectations, aesthetic preferences and local identity issues**

The case studies show that the local technical experts brought up some interesting arguments and controversies in the architectural design due to cultural differences. The Chinese architects responded positively and negotiated these cultural differences and picked up the logical suggestions but not every other technical advice. For instance, in an interview about Gwadar City Master Plan (the Urban Planners of CCCC prepared it) with Senior Urban Planner Abdul Razzaque from Gwadar Development Authority, he states the following:

*“In technical group meetings, we had intense criss-cross questions, arguments with Chinese planners; they agreed on our specific local requirements except on some typical debate on urban theories and models in which they argued that in China we had planned dozen of cities, so we have more experience than you.”<sup>423</sup>*

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423 Abdul Razzaque, Gwadar Smart Port City Master Plan, interview by Sohrab Ahmed Marri, audio

The Chinese architects learned from local technical experts about their typical requirements, building codes, architectural identity and culture and negotiated their architectural models but did not compromise on the efficiency of the projects in aspects such as fast and uncomplicated construction, eco-friendly construction and design, use of fewer resources, frugal materials and flexible format. I interpret that these particular aspects characterize efficient and pragmatic architecture. Some of these efficient architectural aspects such as rapid and economic construction have been mastered by China over decades. China has rapidly urbanized millions of people in a brief period with fast construction and limited resources, which has become a role model for rapid urbanization. Regarding this, Daan Roggeveen stated the following:

*“The urban archetype, which saw hundreds of millions of people swap their life from farmland to factory, created economic growth for decades. In doing so, the Chinese urban model developed into one of the most successful in the world.[.....] appealing model, particularly for non-western countries. After all, China’s cities were efficient with well function infrastructure. Transport, proper housing for the majority of people with low crime rate an attractive climate for foreign investors. Could this metropolis be a model for cities globally like Italian cities once for north Europe?”<sup>424</sup>*

Chinese architects exported their efficient architectural skills, which they had learned in their home country, but pragmatically appropriated it in the developing countries in collaboration with local technical experts. Here, appropriation refers to cross-cultural negotiations, for example, using eclectic architecture that includes Islamic architectural features and abstract Chinese architectural spaces so that its rapid construction and low-

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recorder, 29 August 2019. In GDA Urban Planning section, Abdul Razzaque is GIS director.

424 Roggeveen, *Progress & Prosperity: The Chinese City as a Global Urban Model*.

cost construction efficiency are not impaired.

### **3. What architectural design features should be adopted to cope with harsh weather conditions such as hot and humid sandstorms and poor soil conditions?**

Several studies have been done on tropical architecture.<sup>425</sup> It is not a new architectural issue, and Chinese architects are well aware of it. Tropical architecture has also influenced the architectural practices and culture of several developing countries located in tropical regions including Pakistan.<sup>426</sup> The case studies reveal that the Chinese architects preferably used only those Islamic architectural features that have tropical architectural features. For instance, in the Pakistan China Friendship Vocational Training Institute, the walkway arcades (“Riwaq” in Arabic) with point arches were provided to connect the academic building with the dormitory and office buildings in order to give shelter from the hot sun’s rays. These arcades are surrounded by a courtyard and even cloisters which are the typical classical architectural features. In the Djibouti office complex, the series of arches were used as louvers to protect from the sun and sand storms by minimizing the glass surface area which is common in high-rise office buildings such as the MEZZ office tower in Djibouti. This portrayal of the historical elements of architecture which function at the same time as a modern intervention represents an approach of critical pragmatism.

### **4. How to incorporate the cultural habits of the local population into the**

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425 The contributions of Maxwell Fry and Jane Drew and also the Otto Koenigsberger, see: Maxwell Fry and Jane Drew, *Tropical Architecture* (Рипол Классик, 1964); Iain Jackson and Jessica Holland, *The Architecture of Edwin Maxwell Fry and Jane Drew: Twentieth Century Architecture, Pioneer Modernism and the Tropics* (Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2014); Rachel Lee, ‘Otto Koenigsberger: Transcultural Practice and the Tropical Third Space’, *Architecture* 8 (2003).

426 Edward Durrell Stone notable architecture projects in Pakistan which are famous due to his creative use of both Mughal and tropical architecture features. ‘Edward Durrell Stone’, accessed 25 May 2021, <http://www.edwarddurrellstone.org/>.

## **architectural design?**

In the case studies of Gwadar Hospital and the vocational training institute, the Chinese research team comprised of several professionals who stayed in Gwadar for many months. They researched different areas such as the local culture, people's way of life, studies regarding the existing hospitals or institutions and distinctive regional architecture spaces. They interviewed the hospital professionals, administrators and even patients, they observed the local climate, topography and landscape of the city, and they studied the historical architecture of Gwadar. However, although they conducted comprehensive research, they committed a common mistake in the architectural design. For instance, in the technical group meetings, the local technical experts suggested to make the architectural spaces more spacious and open to cater to the needs of local people who have a common habit of several family members accompanying one patient; further, this would make it more environmentally efficient. Similarly, the privacy factor of wards and the issues of separation and privacy regarding the dormitories and residential quarters in the case of the Pakistan China Friendship Vocational Training Institute were also brought up. The Chinese architects reacted positively and acted pragmatically. They modified the design in such a way so as not to affect the cost and efficiency of the project. The priority was to not compromise on the creativity of the architecture nor the effectiveness of the project. The Arcplus group invited Pakistani stakeholders to China and presented their hospital projects and discussed how the models in Shanghai could work in Gwadar as well. The Pakistani stakeholders were fascinated by the efficiency of the Shanghai hospital models. One of the famous quote by Christopher Bailey (fashion designer) is as follows:

*“I love the creative process of the research, development, but I also love when it comes to reality, it has to be an experience...”<sup>427</sup>*

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427 Christopher Bailey is famous British fashion designer.

## **5. How can an architectural design with a complex process and many stakeholders be established?**

The architecture projects under BRI are materialized from the interactions of several stakeholders. The Chinese architects have to respond to and convince all these actors with their intelligence. The case study of the New Gwadar International Airport discusses how the Chinese chief designer Tian Ren and his team and the project management team of CACC engaged with the complex requirements from both countries. They faced complex challenges at every stage of the construction project and found the solutions based on their field surveys, encountering real, local situations which provided local expert knowledge and dealt with negotiations in every step to lead to the successful execution of the project. The architectural design of the New Gwadar International Airport was also not imported from China but had many characteristics that addressed the real, local situations. It represents the inspiration from Pakistan in the form of the arches and the crescent moon monument as well as from other international architectural forms. This eclectic architecture touches the aesthetic preferences and sentimental admiration of local people. The successful execution of the project design was valued by both sides of the stakeholders, and Tian Ren and his design team were acknowledged for their pragmatic intelligence.

## **6. How can Chinese culture be integrated with the local culture in a harmonious way?**

When an architect moves abroad and practices, then they will definitely bring with them the experiences, culture and knowledge of home and practice these in a foreign country. The question then is as follows: how can an architect integrate their culture with a foreign culture? The case studies present that the Chinese architects' principle design strategy emphasizes the recognizable Islamic architecture elements such as point arches, domes, courtyards etc. and hybridizes them with indirect abstract concepts

derived from traditional Chinese culture. For example, in the case of Pakistan China Friendship Center Islamabad, the Chinese architects selected the ancient Chinese tripod as a metaphor and articulation of the courtyard folding and unfolding spaces in a poetic manner that defines features of the Chinese garden but without using direct elements of the garden. This transcultural architecture created an interesting dialogue in the “third space.”<sup>428</sup> The Chinese architects faced the issue of whether to imitate the Islamic architecture or creatively represent it indirectly or in a modern manner. The indirect method needs much-sophisticated knowledge of Islamic architectural concepts, which was apparently not possible for Chinese architects to grasp in such a limited duration of the project. Therefore, they transcended this particular issue by creatively combining both cultures’ rhythmical composition in a hybridization or in a third space. This leads to transcultural architecture in which neither is any one culture manifested to supersede the other nor is any culture degraded, but both are integrated in a harmonious way. In the case of Gwadar Free Zone Business Centre, it was constructed to target specifically the Chinese guests but also international businessmen and Pakistani guests. Here, the Chinese architects again followed the principle of hybridizing the direct distinctive Islamic architecture features with indirect architecture spaces from Chinese culture. In such a composition, the Chinese people can sense their native architectural spaces, and Pakistani people can feel their Islamic architectural identities. The central design concept of Gwadar Business Center is unequivocally to connect the building façade with its peculiar regional architectural characteristics, but the interior integrates the functional requirements of users who are mainly from China, for instance, by including the particular functional spaces such as Chinese restaurants and apartments while other common functional spaces are halal restaurants and a mosque which are provided for local users.

This tactic thus got appreciation from the local as well as the Chinese side. This ex-

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428 Third space concept borrowed from Bhabha see Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*.

emplifies an eclectic but pragmatic architecture. The Chinese architects pragmatically transcended the issue of how to integrate two cultures. They know that the traditional Chinese philosophy and culture pay considerable attention to abstract concepts, experiences, emotions and sensual characters, which are more important than the real physical space. Thus, they used indirect abstract concepts; while in Islamic culture, the architecture is embedded in modern society. There is a grand mosque in every neighborhood in Pakistan, mostly designed with Islamic architectural patterns.

These six points of eclecticism and pragmatism are a reaction to several problems of transnational architecture practice within the discourse of development aid cooperation between developed and developing countries.

Last, I quote David Macarthur, who suggested the following:

*“My suggestion is that, if we view philosophy as a guide rather than an ideology, there is no need to be skeptical about invoking pragmatic philosophy in an architectural context.”*<sup>429</sup>

## **6.5 Reflections on Architectural “othering”**

As explained in detail, what is the “othering” mechanism in architecture? These are mainly postcolonial critiques; the aim behind them is to know whether architecture projects under BRI respect the otherness, and include local actors, culture, identity, socio-economic conditions, local talent, construction material, etc. in the architecture. The case studies presented that the architecture projects under BRI are materialized by intense collaborations with local partners, i.e., through exchanging knowledge, views, ideas, cross-cultural negotiations, onsite intensive researches, etc. It represents that

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429 Macarthur, ‘Reflections on Pragmatism as a Philosophy of Architecture’.

architectural models are not wholly imported from China but are modified, appropriated and adapted according to the peculiarities of the local contexts and their preferences. The case studies demonstrate how the Chinese architects with the assistance of Pakistani stakeholders study the local historical architecture and identity and gain an understanding of the local culture. As a result, a culture-specific architecture develops, which is in accordance with the Pakistani national identity. At the same time, Chinese architects export their best architectural expertise that they acquired in their country of origin; it is called “efficient architecture.”<sup>430</sup> Further, they export their culture in a way that blends harmoniously with the local culture. The intense collaboration mechanism and guidelines of the Chinese government to Chinese architects about “respecting the local wishes” in the context of BRI negates dominating ideologies.

The case studies underline the contribution of local technical experts. For instance, in the Gwadar Free Zone Business Centre, the exterior design was relatively improved with two-way questions, knowledge exchanges and fruitful discussions. Similarly, in the case of the Pakistan–China Friendship Hospital and Vocational Training Institute, although the Chinese experts conducted intensive on-site research, problems emerged in the design phase; these were later improved through cross-cultural negotiations. These knowledge exchanges are one of the vital parts of the new silk road theme. This inclusive interaction is a strong reaction to the othering factors in architecture.

Generally, it can be seen that the engagement of Western architects in the Global South involves strong individual architects who follow the local context but mostly propagate their own signature architectural styles.<sup>431</sup> While in the case of the Chinese architects,

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430 I interpreted the definition of Efficient architecture in paragraph of Eclectic and pragmatism.

431 For example, in India the Chandigarh city planned and designed many monumental buildings by Le Corbusier with a Nehru vision of modernization of India. The paramount character of Le Corbusier exported his greater influential Corbusierian architecture with little modifications or appropriation in alien land.



they work as a team where there is no single dominating or star architect. Even the chief architect has an invisible character. Chinese architects have to deal with several clients such as MOFCOM, Pakistan Planning Commission, Chinese Merchant Group, COPHC, CCCC, etc Therefore, they face a complex network of clients. In the case studies, it can be seen that the end product represents highly eclectic and pragmatic architecture or we can say “Architecture of All.” The priority of either Pakistan or China is the efficiency of the project in that should be economically viable, sustainable and culturally sound.<sup>432</sup>

In some cases, we can see the negligence from receiving side, where some of the architecture spaces denounce local cultural values such as separate dormitory buildings for males and females and the culture of residential quarters. This architectural othering, i.e., not taking into consideration the cultural values, is not negligence but a misconception

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see critical notes in: Ravi Kalia, *Gandhinagar: Building National Identity in Postcolonial India* (Univ of South Carolina Press, 2004)

Kalia also argues in Chandigarh there is two culture one is culture of monuments and other is culture of people. There is no connection between these two cultures and building culture do not represent spirit of the people. see in: Ravi Kalia, *Chandigarh: The Making of an Indian City*, 1999.

Similarly in Pakistan which is the main case study of dissertation it has also a very interesting history in dealing with western architects for example in designing of Islamabad city, famous architects were invited. In the paper of Derek Lovejoy discuss it: “*Professor Jacobsen's parliament building was criticized on financial and aesthetic grounds and subsequently Professor Kahn took over the responsibility for this building. Professor Kahn produced three schemes over a period of 2.5 years for the presidential complex of buildings, comprising mainly the president's palace and the parliament building. As in the case of Professor Jacobsen, his designs were strongly criticized in that they did not reflect Pakistani character, and a few months ago he was superseded by Mr. Edward D. Stone of the United States of America*” see Derek Lovejoy, ‘THE DESIGN OF ISLAMABAD—NEW CAPITAL CITY OF PAKISTAN’, *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts* 114, no. 5123 (1966): 923–41.

The western star architects engaged in Pakistan as part of American aid. But now BRI is China Aid.

432 The priority of Pakistani stakeholders acknowledge through an interview with Daud Butt (Former Project director of CPEC authority).Daud Butt, General information about CPEC architecture project processes, interview by Sohrab Ahmed Marri, audio recorder, 27 August 2019.

tion of the Chinese architects. In an interview with the project director of Pakistan–China Friendship Vocational Training institute, he said the following:

*“In the agreement there were separate funds allocated for hiring local professional architecture and engineering consultants. Unfortunately, we didn’t hire them, and it could be one of the reasons that we have encountered minor issues in the project related to design, function and other requirements.”*<sup>433</sup>

This is an irresponsible attitude from the Pakistani side and not a mistake of the Chinese architects.

There are also some othering factors in the construction work. In the case studies, we have seen that most of the construction materials, equipment, machinery, modular components and interior decoration were imported from China by Chinese contractors. Doing this does not provide a benefit to local construction industries. This type of phenomenon of “complete importation” can be criticized by any definition of colonialism or that it is othering because it entails the exclusion of local talents and building materials, which has considerable impact on the local economy, etc. However, we also found that the Chinese construction companies had no choice but to import construction materials and machinery because they were not available locally, and there was the pressure of a tight schedule for the construction contracts. However, other common materials that were locally available, such as cement bags, coarse aggregates as well as some steel bars, were relatively used. Local workers were mobilized and trained. It created many jobs at the local level, and workers also learned new skills.

Another important critique of othering is that the “other” cannot fit in the standard of the “self.” For instance, it was well elaborated by Simone de Beauvoir in her work about

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433 Asghar, Design Process of Pak-China Friendship Vocational Training Institute.

gender. She describes how men are seen as the norm while women as the other. A man never introduces himself as a man because it is not needed. Man is considered as the positive, neutral and the absolute, but woman is the other. Women thus lack or deviate from the norms. This description makes it a reality. If some group of people are kept inferior, then they will think that they are inferior.<sup>434</sup> If we take this concept of othering in architecture, then we can find examples from the colonial period. The architectural historian James Fergusson wrote a detailed book on the architecture of India and the East.<sup>435</sup> Metcalf in his book (*An Imperial Vision*, 1989) criticized that Fergusson's report on Indian architecture depicted a colonial mission that marred the creativity of Hindu temples and argues that Fergusson's central idea was that it could not meet the standards of European architecture. However, Muslim architecture can conform to European standards to some extent, as he was very impressed with the Taj Mahal.<sup>436</sup> Nonetheless, this dissertation's case studies present that the Chinese architects adopted the Islamic architecture vocabularies in a modern way and integrated them harmoniously with Chinese traditional philosophies with abstract creative concepts or sometimes with modern Chinese architectural elements. The idea is to represent an architecture of friendship between two countries and to promote cultural exchanges without the intention of dominating over the other culture.

In the case studies, a certain theoretical reflection on the phenomenon of transculturalism was adopted to decipher more information from both sides (actors of China and Pakistan). It concludes that this two-way process leads to pragmatic architecture or, in

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434 See: Simone De Beauvoir, 'The Second Sex, Trans. and Ed. HM Parshley', *New York: Knopf* 1993 (1953): 44; Alex Hughes and Anne Witz, 'Feminism and the Matter of Bodies: From de Beauvoir to Butler', *Body & Society* 3, no. 1 (1997): 47–60.

435 Fergusson James, *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture* (Forgotten Books., 1901).

436 Metcalf, *An Imperial Vision: Indian Architecture and Britain's Raj*.

other words, an efficient, practical or workable architecture. However, there are still some shortcomings from the recipient's side due to less participation of technical experts. Pakistani stakeholders should encourage more famous professional or academic architects from their country to attend the technical group meetings. This will lead to significant achievements.

## 6.6 Comparative Findings of the Gwadar and Djibouti Case Studies

The Djibouti and Gwadar port cities are developing parallelly under BRI. Both have the same socio-economic and geographical conditions, and the majority of them practice same the Islamic religion. Even the same China state-owned companies are working in both cities such as China merchants, COSCO, CCCC, IPPR and etc. In Djibouti, the Chinese companies competing with other Western construction companies and security conditions are much better than in Gwadar. As mentioned earlier, the dissertation presents an in-depth case study of Gwadar city while the case study on Djibouti uses online resources and interviews and general reports from Chinese companies or researchers. The aim of studying the Djibouti case was to see how the Chinese companies approached architecture in the same conditions. The architectural styles of both Gwadar and Djibouti cases represent a respect for the local pastiche. The architectural strategy is to balance exogenous and endogenous architectural features in a modern manner but with a focus on native features. Syed Muhammad stated the following:

*“The research team of Arcplus group were interested in studying every local hospital, even a small dispensary health unit. Most of the local medical doctors[.....] and Of course, they studied typical local architecture styles.”<sup>437</sup>*

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437 Muhammad, Design Process of Pakistan China Friendship Hospital. Chief engineer Syed Muhammad Gwadar development authority (the project manager of PCF-Hospital Gwadar from Pakistan side)

These intentions were merely to seek an architecture that considers the real needs of the locals, in accordance with their cultural requirements, better suited to their local conditions, and so on. After conducting a detailed case study on Gwadar, it is much easier to speculate in the case of Djibouti. Although, in the case of the latter, there is no detailed research on how the two parties interacted, what was the architectural production process, etc. However, the architecture's apparent features resemble those of Gwadar's case study and point out that the general architecture approaches are the same.

The author deliberately did a brief case study on the MEZZ group office tower to initiate a comparison between the Chinese Djibouti office complex tower with a Western-designed office tower. This case shows why architecture projects under BRI sought an alternative architecture strategy compared to many of the contemporary global models. The MEZZ group office tower represents typical contemporary architecture construction techniques, materials and a general office building template. Its core idea is to seek green building techniques and those which are economical and easy to construct. Its design presents high modernistic architecture style. The only sense of place was the bluish color scheme of the façade to link it to the sea, but there is no innovative design technique to connect with Djibouti city's architectural identity and other specific local characteristics. While in the case of Djibouti office complex, as explained earlier in a section on of eclecticism and pragmatism, how did the Chinese approach the shared architecture questions? How did they innovatively balance both the issues of respecting otherness and universal modern architecture? How did they pragmatically solve the issue of construction cost, tropical architecture and other such issues? These reflections are intended to know the general question of the dissertation: what should architecture be for others?

## 6.7 Recommendations for Future Research Directions

There are many possible future research directions, some of which are detailed below.

This dissertation presented the case studies of different architecture projects of Gwadar developing within the framework of BRI. These are mostly in the construction phase, but some are in the designing phase such as Gwadar Free Zone phase 2. The focus of the study is on the design and construction processes. This architecture design and construction are a point of “contact zones”<sup>438</sup> between the two countries. It thus highlighted the intense transcultural negotiations on architecture not only in the exterior facades’ designs but also in the articulation of interior spaces and its relation to the city at large. The issues of tropical modernism, identity issues, “othering” critique, social processes, economic issues, construction technology, project development issues, etc. were discussed in detail. The missing part is that most projects are not constructed or inhabited. The most exciting part is the Gwadar Free Zone phase 2, in which there is an entire city developing, which follows the Shenzhen eco-city model. This city is planned to be inhabited by Chinese, international and Pakistani workers. What is Chinese city outside China? In the coming years, that is approximately three to eight years, many of these projects will be functional. Then, this opens up new research scope, which is to investigate how these spaces are modified and appropriated by the future users, how this model impacts on Gwadar city, whether it is an industrial or economic eco-city role model for the Global South, etc. Pursuing research in these directions will provide more insights.

This dissertation also comprehensively explored the research on architecture projects as development aid within the framework of BRI. Such a phenomenon once occurred in

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438 See contact zone in chapter no 3

the post-war era, i.e., in the context of US and Soviet architecture projects in the Global South as development aid. This time, new relations are embarked on not between West-East but East-East. This is the starting point for much comparative research between Western-led development aids and the Chinese BRI-led development aids under which architecture and new urban projects take place in the Global South. For example, the post-war context and contemporary context are quite different; thus, this comparative study can be based on contemporary architecture projects and small-scale projects such as schools, hospitals, etc. For instance, an architecture project is completed under humanitarian aid programs with several examples such as schools,<sup>439</sup> hospitals,<sup>440</sup> etc. These could be used as a reference point to investigate how both are engaging humanitarian aid projects and what cross-cultural approaches are adopted to respond to shared architectural questions. This research could add some points on the best practices and guidelines for transcultural experts' engagement in the Global South.

“Othering” and the issue of “respect for otherness” in architecture is a compelling topic in the context of cross-cultural architecture exchanges. This dissertation highlights the BRI's complex interactive mechanism that gives equal weightage for both parties in the

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439 For example see: ‘Maria Grazia Cutuli Primary School / 2A+P/A + IaN+ + MaO’, Architecture, ArchDaily, 4 June 2012, <https://www.archdaily.com/240184/aria-grazia-cutuli-primary-school-2a-p-a-ian-mao>; Manon Mollard, *Mollard, Manon. 2015. Gohar Khatoon Girl's School in Afghanistan by Robert Hull + University of Washington. 26 Sept. Accessed June 2019. Htps://Www.Architectural*, 2019, <https://www.architectural->; ‘Gohar Khatoon Girls’ School / Robert Hull + University of Washington’, ArchDaily, 7 May 2021, <https://www.archdaily.com/774074/gohar-khatoon-girls-school-robert-hull-plus-university-of-washington>; Paula Pintos, ‘Library of Muyinga / BC Architects’, ArchDaily, 17 January 2020, <https://www.archdaily.com/467129/library-of-muyinga-bc-architects>.

And etc.

440 Hospitals such as: Alison Furuto, ‘Woldya Maternity Center / Vilalta Architects’, ArchDaily, January 2013, <https://www.archdaily.com/353892/woldya-maternity-center-xavier-vilalta-architects>; Niall Patrick Walsh, ‘Manuel Herz to Design Curvilinear Expansion of Rural Senegal Hospital’, ArchDaily, 4 June 2018, <https://www.archdaily.com/895766/manuel-herz-to-design-curvilinear-expansion-of-rural-senegal-hospital>.

decision-making process. This mechanism enabled the Chinese state-owned design and construction companies to develop a new way of collaborative architecture by following the old silk road concept of knowledge and culture exchanges. This unique collaborative architecture, in other words, is significant here as the Chinese possess high technology and the latest knowledge in architecture and construction, and the locals know their specific local architecture. Therefore, it is a pragmatic approach to collaborate and work together to achieve the best architecture. The interactive mechanism of BRI can answer some issues regarding othering in architecture that have evolved in global processes. This idea of a new collaborative architecture is an exciting start to think about and discuss regarding how to make it more efficient in targeting the respect for otherness. Obviously, besides the consideration of otherness, there are several other issues in transnational architecture practice, but future research has the potential to compare different approaches and to know what they achieved.

4. The last recommendation regarding future research is about conducting interdisciplinary research. In the post-war context, there are several literatures that suggest that multidisciplinary actors are involved in architecture and urban projects. Similarly, in this dissertation, in the BRI context, we have also realized that the architecture projects are materializing with the significant input of multi-disciplinary actors from both sides, that is, Pakistan and China. To obtain more in-depth information, we need a sophisticated multi-disciplinary research approach to point out new issues, new actors and unknown consequences.

There are a few other potential research directions such as exploring new case studies—for instance, Belarus in Central Europe, Latin American cases, housing projects in Maldives, etc. In addition, there are other research possibilities that can be explored within the context of BRI. For instance, urban geographers may look into “transnational infrastructure-led urbanism,” and urban sociologists may consider “socio-spatial impacts of transportation hubs.”



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## 1. Appendix A: List of figures

### 1.1 Pakistan China Friendship Centre Islamabad Field survey



Figure 79: Prototype lattice pattern in ceiling and in tile in main entrance lobby of Pakistan China Friendship Centre. Source: A picture by Author



Figure 81: Depiction of Chinese Garden. Source: A Picture by Author



Figure 80: Courtyard with fountain. Source: A picture by Author

## 1.2 Gwadar Old Town Field survey

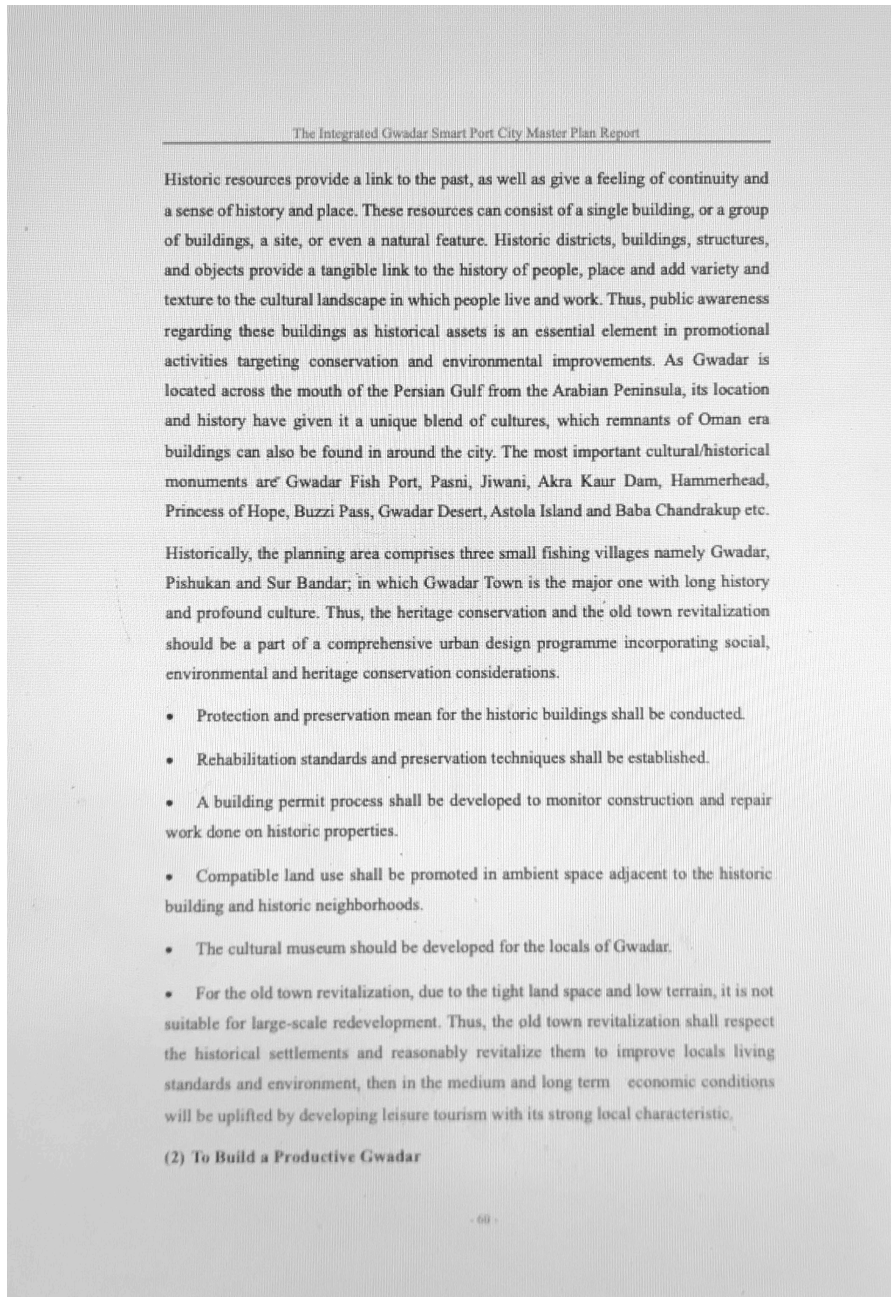


Figure 82: Some of relevant text on Gwadar Historical places and heritage extracted from Official document on Gwadar Smart Port City Master Plan Report.

Note: These recommendations of historical places conservation by CCCC FHDI planners also has direct influence on CCCC architects, who have designed the Gwadar Free

town and the Customs clerk at Peahkan was in 1939-40 Rs. 19,644.

Gwādur Town.

Gwādur town lies at the southern extremity of the narrowest part of a narrow sandy promontory which terminates in Gwādur Head. It is a fortnightly port of call for ships of the British India Steam Navigation Company whose vessels anchor some four miles off shore in East Gwādur Bay. The population of the town are with very few exceptions all engaged in the fish trade. Fish and crustaceans of various sizes and kinds from prawns to sharks are plentiful and are caught both in nets and on hand lines. The catch is sold morning and afternoon, after one tenth has been taken by the Customs officials as fish tax, to dealers from the town who dry and salt the fish and after grading and sizing export it to Ceylon and the Far East. The grades, kinds and sizes are too numerous to mention. Indian shopkeepers supply the needs of the fishermen and merchants alike both in the way of food and clothes but also by stocking and selling cotton fibre for lines and nets, sail cloth, nails and the hundred and one things essential to people earning their living by and on the sea. Of recent years trade in dried fish has been very dull and consequently Gwādur merchants have suffered financially, lately however things have looked a little better and there is a hope of a return of prosperity. Small quantities of cotton and wool are also exported and the figures for all exports and imports for the year 1939-40 are given in Appendix "B". The Post and Telegraph Sub Office is under the control of the Superintendent of Posts and Telegraphs at Hyderabad, Sind. The telegraph is a land line which is by no means reliable being often out of order.

British Representative.

There is a resident British Agent subordinate to the Political Agent and H.B.M's Consul at Muscat. The British Agent is a Magistrate of the 3rd Class and hears minor criminal cases. Civil cases and major criminal cases are dealt with by the Political Agent who visits Gwādur periodically. The British Agent generally looks after the interests of the British Indian community and makes any representations in their interests that may be necessary to the

/ Governor

Figure 83: Gwadar Archive. Source: Online British library



Figure 84: Omani Fort more than 300 year old in Gwadar old town. Source: A picture by Author



Figure 85: A house of Agha Khani approx. 200 year old. Source: A picture by Author



Figure 86: Omani Thana ward fort restored through Omani government financial support. Source: A picture by Author



Figure 87: Typical vernacular architecture of Makran Balochistan. Source: A picture from Makran local websites

### 1.3 Gwadar Free Zone

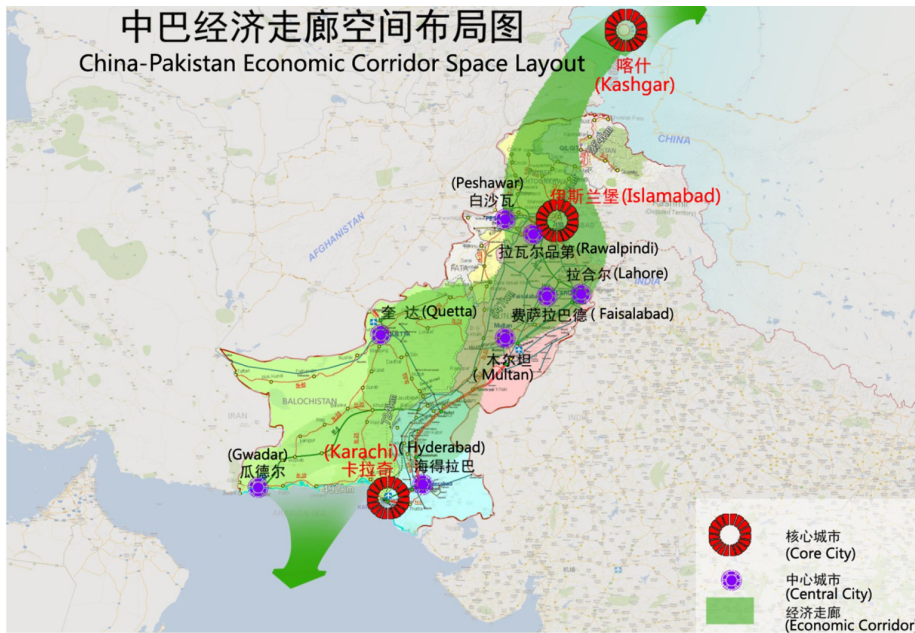


Figure 88: China Pakistan Economic Corridor layout. .Source: A picture from COPHC office Gwadar

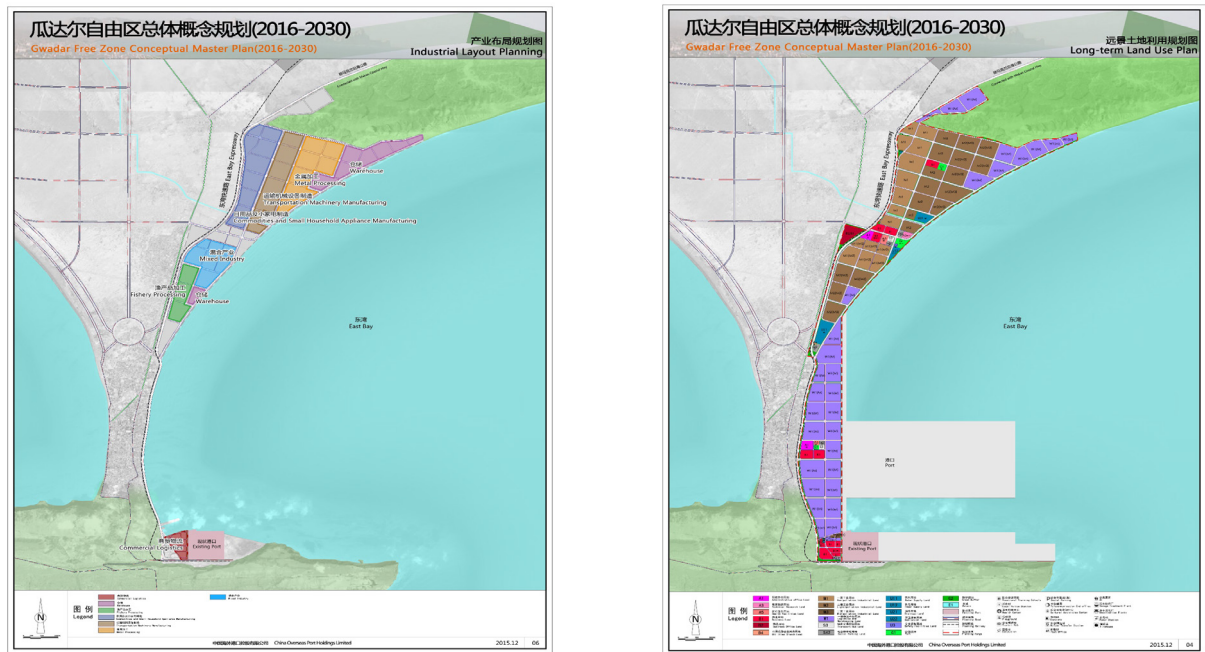


Figure 89: Gwadar Free Zone master plan.. Source: A picture from COPHC office Gwadar



### 1.3.1 Gwadar Free Zone Phase 1

## 瓜达尔自由区商务中心——巴基斯坦项目设计

The design of Gwadar F. Z. Business Center . Parkistan

中国电子工程设计院 建研院五所 王倩

瓜达尔位于具有重要战略意义的波斯湾咽喉附近，是繁忙欧亚海上重要航线的咽喉，是“一带一路”战略、中巴经济走廊的重要节点。2015年4月访问巴基斯坦期间，习近平主席提出：“以新建建设为中心，以瓜达尔港、能源、基础设施建设、产业合作为重点“1+4”合作布局，让发展成果惠及巴基斯坦全体人民。”商务中心的成功设计与建设显得尤为重要。

#### 1. 项目背景

##### 1.1 项目区位概况

本项目用地位于巴基斯坦瓜达尔自由区内，瓜达尔自由区分为两部分：自由区起步区一期25公顷，自由区二期呈四期896公顷，总面积923公顷。主导产业为商贸物流、资源加工产业、制造业、服务业等。项目位于自由起步区一期。

自由区起步区主要发展商品展销、仓储物流、冷链物流、国际中转/配送、商业/生活服务等产业，逐步将其发展成为成为重要的商贸物流区。自由区起步区将建设包含道路、交通、供水/电、给排水、通讯等基础设施工程建设，同时还建设自由区商务

中心、商品展销行、大型仓库、冷库等功能性设施。

##### 1.2 现状分析

瓜达尔自由区是有我国援建，吹沙填海而成。

商务中心用地在一期起步区南部，用地面积为10360m<sup>2</sup>。东部为瓜达尔自由港区，南侧拟建停车场，北侧拟建展览及展销结合的综合会展中心。地块具北侧海岸约为540m。

##### 1.3 设计定位

商务中心是一个集办公、住宿、餐饮、休闲及安全保障为一体的综合服务中心。目标客户群体为：赴瓜达尔经商、工程承包、商务考察及旅游的中国客户及停靠瓜港船上的海员。

建设规模：建设主楼一座，配楼两座，高峰时期能够满足200人食宿，100人同时办公；并能够接待中等规模的国际会议，其中主楼为中国客人提供住宿、会议、休闲的场所。配楼一为巴海关、税务、安保部门的办公场所，另外为非中国籍客人提供住宿。配楼二则全部为中国常驻公司的办公场所。

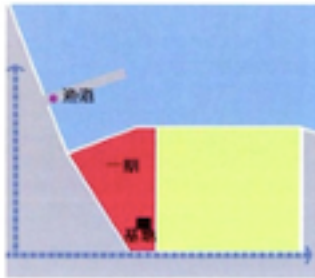
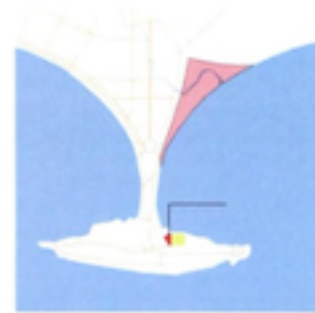


Figure 90: An article on Gwadar Business Center by research branch of Chinese state owned design institute. Source: An article downloaded from Chinese website by Prof Guanghui Ding.



Figure 91: Gwadar Business Center Source: A Picture from COPHC office.



Figure 92: Gwadar Business Center services Source: A picture by Author



Figure 93: Gwadar Business Center interior Chinese decorations: A picture by Author

| 3.4 Business Insight                                   |                                     |                         |
|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Registered Enterprises under Gwadar Free Zone Phase#1: |                                     |                         |
| Company  | Project                             | Construction area (sqm) |
| CCCC   | Business Center                     | 25000                   |
| Linyi Overseas Mall                                    | Products display and storage        | 22500                   |
| Yufei Marine Services & Technology                     | Cold storage and fishery processing | 32600                   |
| Pakistan Delight Food Co.                              | Edible oil pressing                 | 10000                   |
| Pakistan JOLTA Tech Co.                                | Electric bicycles and motorcycles   | 5000                    |
| Zhejiang Litchi Stainless Steel Tube Factory           | Steel Pipe factory                  | 10000                   |
| Tianjin Cereal & Oil Trade Co.                         | Palm oil, canola oil, soybean oil   | 22000                   |
| Ningbo Huilong Recycling Resources Tech Co.            | Metal recycling                     | 22000                   |
| Harmony Logistics (tianjin)Co.,Ltd                     | Furniture                           | 2000                    |

Figure 94: Gwadar Free Zone Phase 1 investments: A document from COPHC office Gwadar



Figure 95: Rendering of main Gate of Gwadar Free Zone Phase 1 Source: A Picture from COPHC office Gwadar



Figure 96: 3d model of Gwadar Free Zone Phase 1: A Picture from exhibition event in Gwadar

### 1.3.2 Gwadar Free Zone Phase 2



Figure 97:Gwadar Free Zone phase 2 business district rendering prepared by CCCC designers: A Picture from COPHC office Gwadar



Figure 98: Gwadar Free Zone phase 2 rendering prepared by CCCC designers: A Picture from COPHC office Gwadar



Figure 99: Gwadar Free Zone phase 2 residential area rendering prepared by CCCC designers: A Picture from COPHC office Gwadar



Figure 100: Gwadar Free Zone phase 2 master plan prepared by CCCC designers: A document from COPHC office Gwadar



Figure 101: Gwadar Free Zone phase 2 3d model prepared by CCCC designers: A picture from Gwadar exhibition event.

## 1.4 Design Brief of PCF Hospital Gwadar

Some of important pages of Design Brief document:

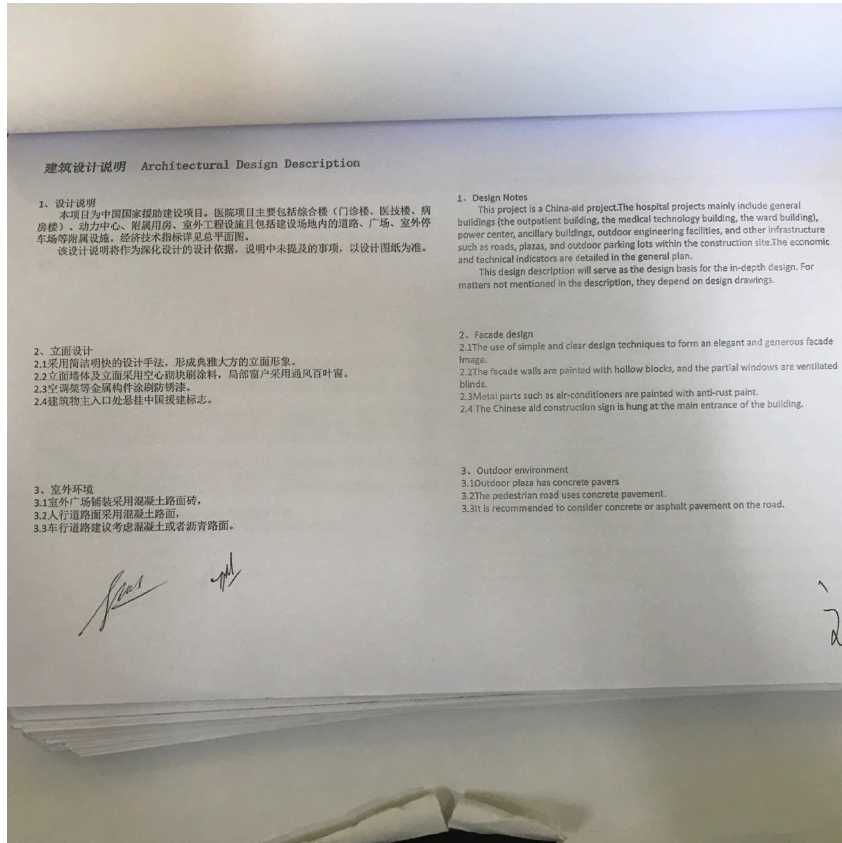


Figure 102: Design Brief of Pakistan China Friendship Hospital Gwadar, prepared by Arc Plus Group Shanghai. Source: A document from Gwadar Development Authority.



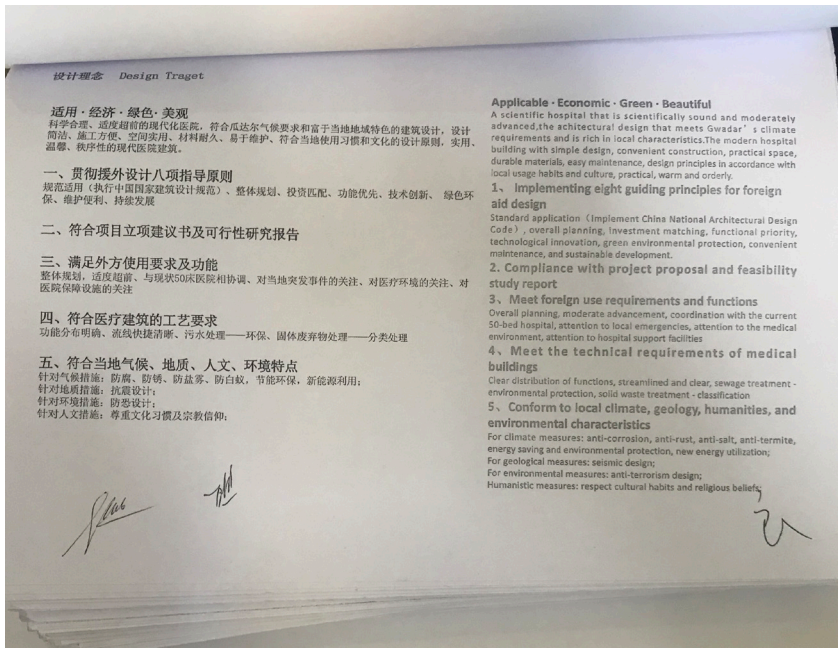


Figure 103: Design Brief of Pakistan China Friendship Hospital Gwadar, prepared by Arc Plus Group Shanghai. Source: A document from Gwadar Development Authority.

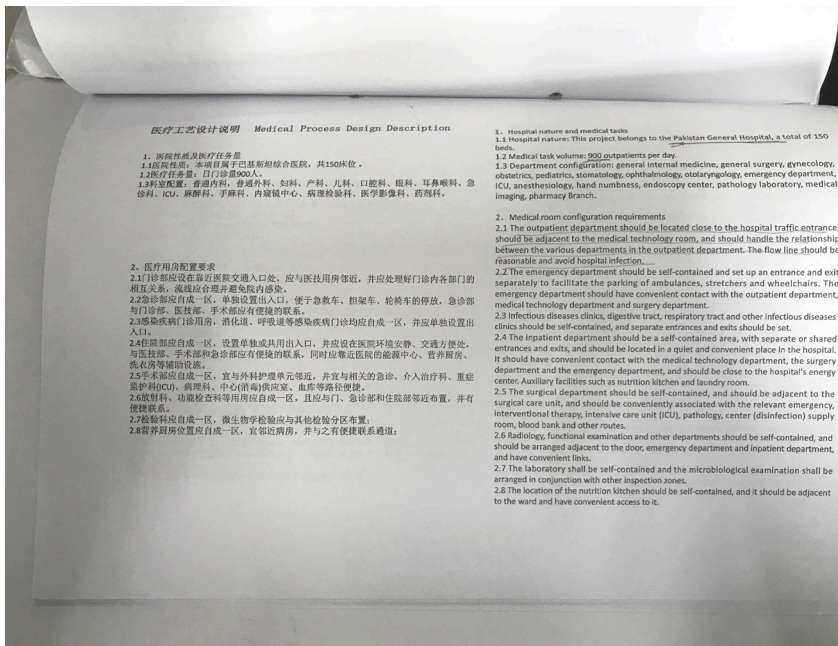


Figure 104: Design Brief of Pakistan China Friendship Hospital Gwadar, prepared by Arc Plus Group Shanghai. Source: A document from Gwadar Development Authority.

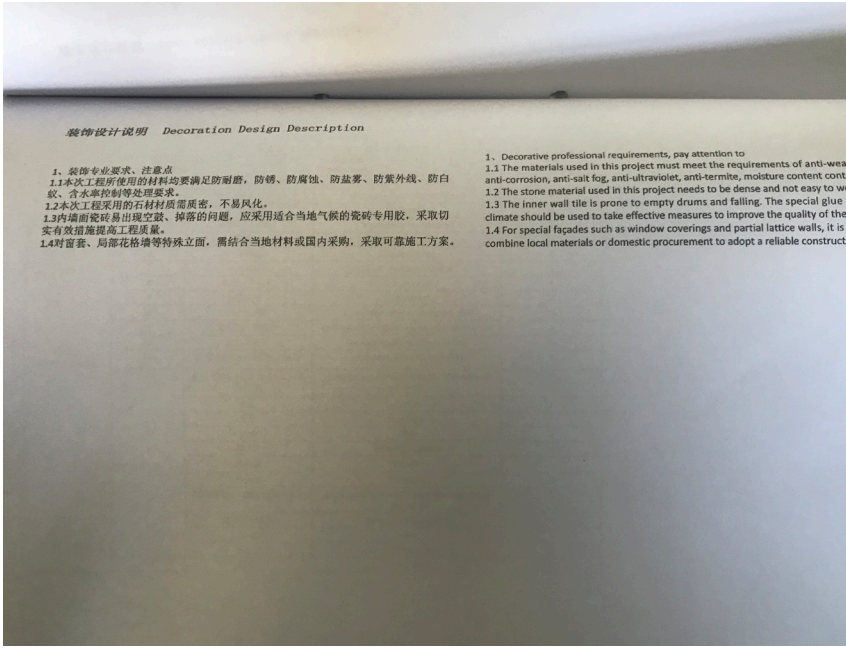


Figure 105: Design Brief of Pakistan China Friendship Hospital Gwadar, prepared by Arc Plus Group Shanghai. Source: A document from Gwadar Development Authority.

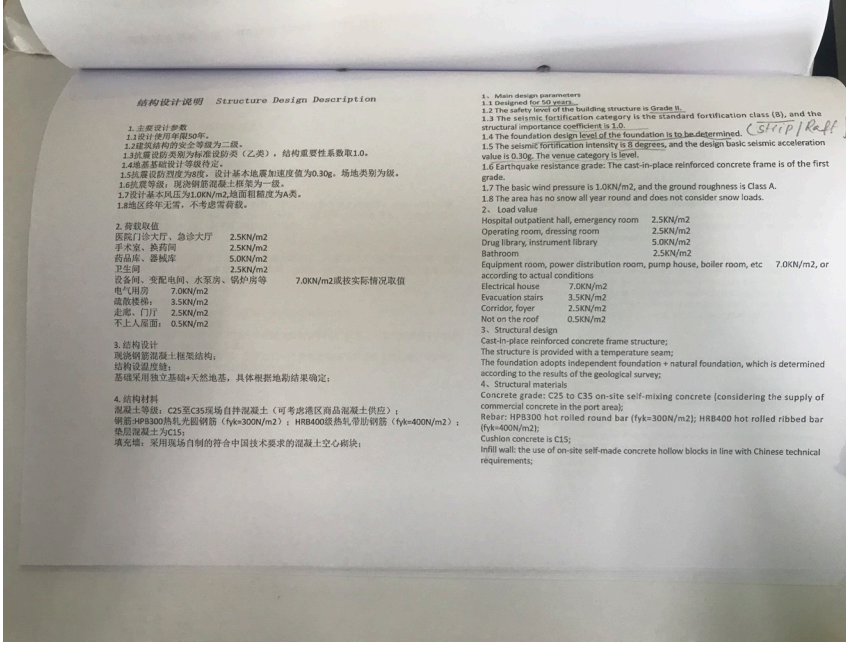


Figure 106: Design Brief of Pakistan China Friendship Hospital Gwadar, prepared by Arc Plus Group Shanghai. Source: A document from Gwadar Development Authority.

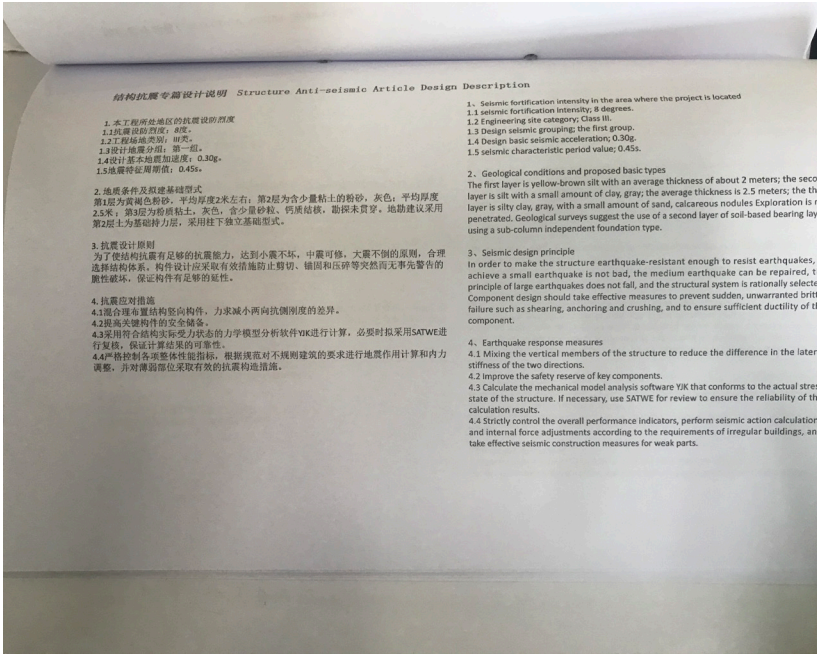


Figure 107: Design Brief of Pakistan China Friendship Hospital Gwadar, prepared by Arc Plus Group Shanghai. Source: A document from Gwadar Development Authority.

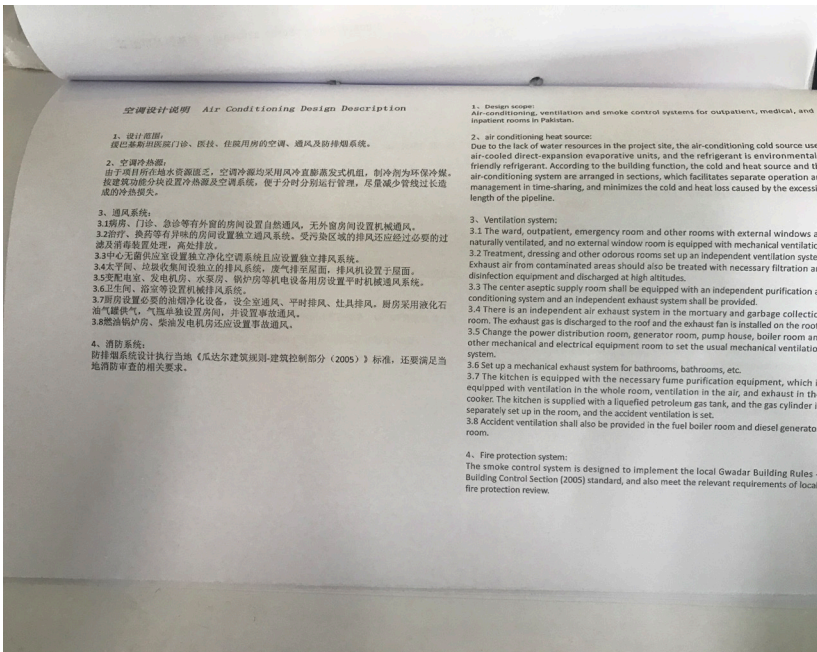


Figure 108: Design Brief of Pakistan China Friendship Hospital Gwadar, prepared by Arc Plus Group Shanghai. Source: A document from Gwadar Development Authority.

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Figure 109: Arc plus group main architect and project manager visiting cards.  
 Source: extracted from GDA office

## 1.5 Design Brief of Pakistan China Friendship Vocational Training Centre

Some of important pages of Design Brief document:

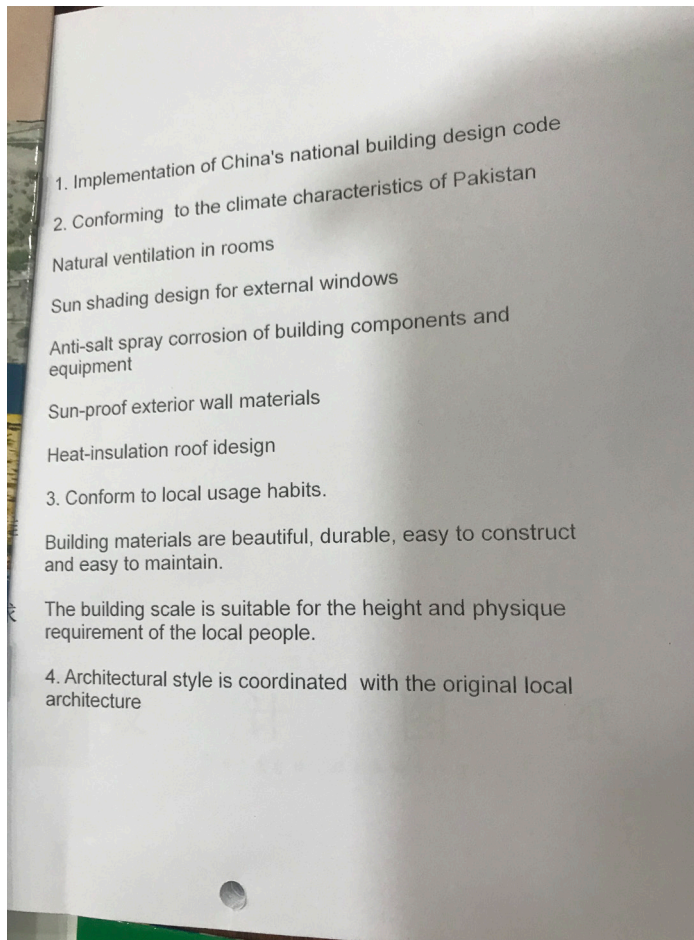


Figure 110: Design Brief of PCFVTI Gwadar, prepared by ECADI & Shanghai Xian Dai Architectural design. Source: A document from Gwadar Port Authority.

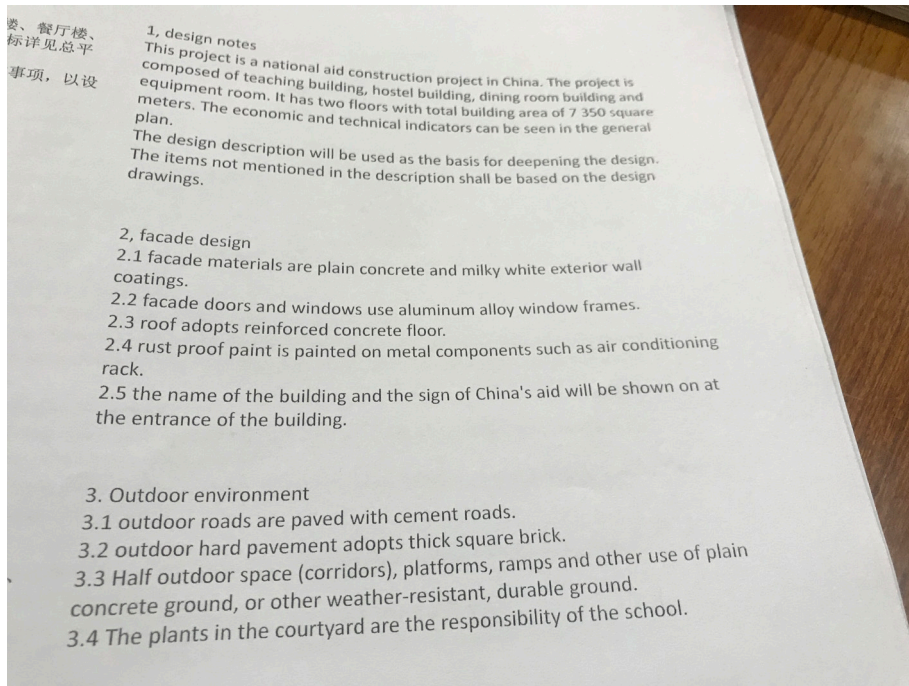


Figure 111: Design Brief of PCFVTI Gwadar, prepared by ECADI & Shanghai Xian Dai Architectural design. Source: A document from Gwadar Port Authority.

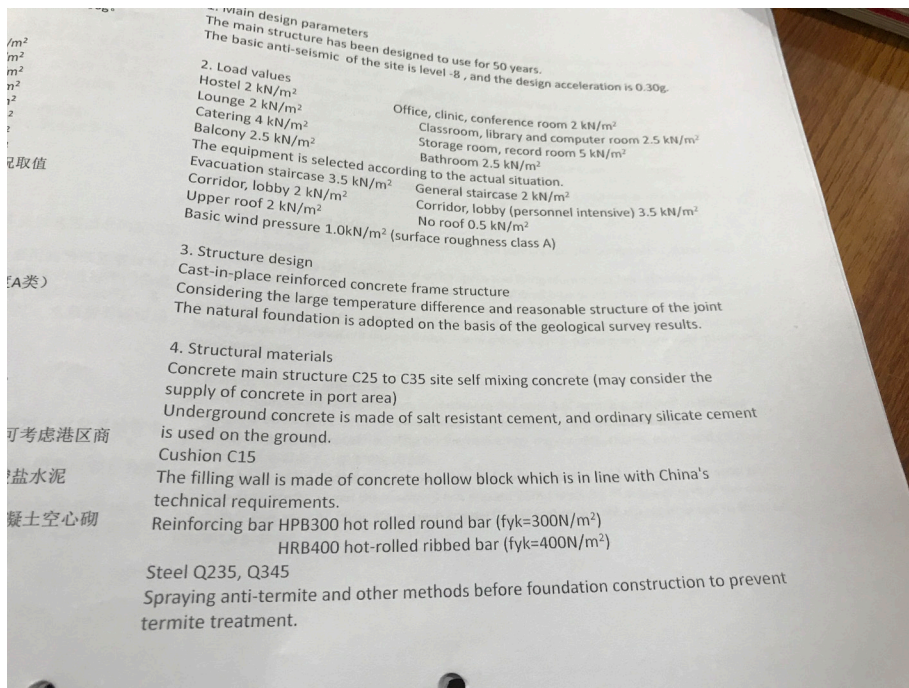


Figure 112: Design Brief of PCFVTI Gwadar, prepared by ECADI & Shanghai Xian Dai Architectural design. Source: A document from Gwadar Port Authority.

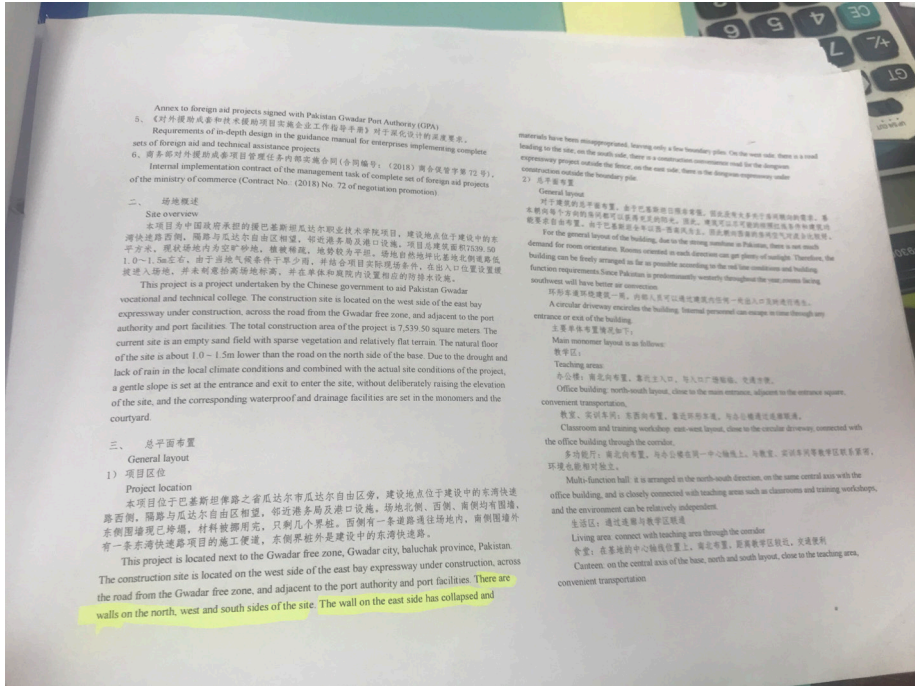


Figure 113: Design Brief of PCFVTI Gwadar, prepared by ECADI & Shanghai Xian Dai Architectural design. Source: A document from Gwadar Port Authority.

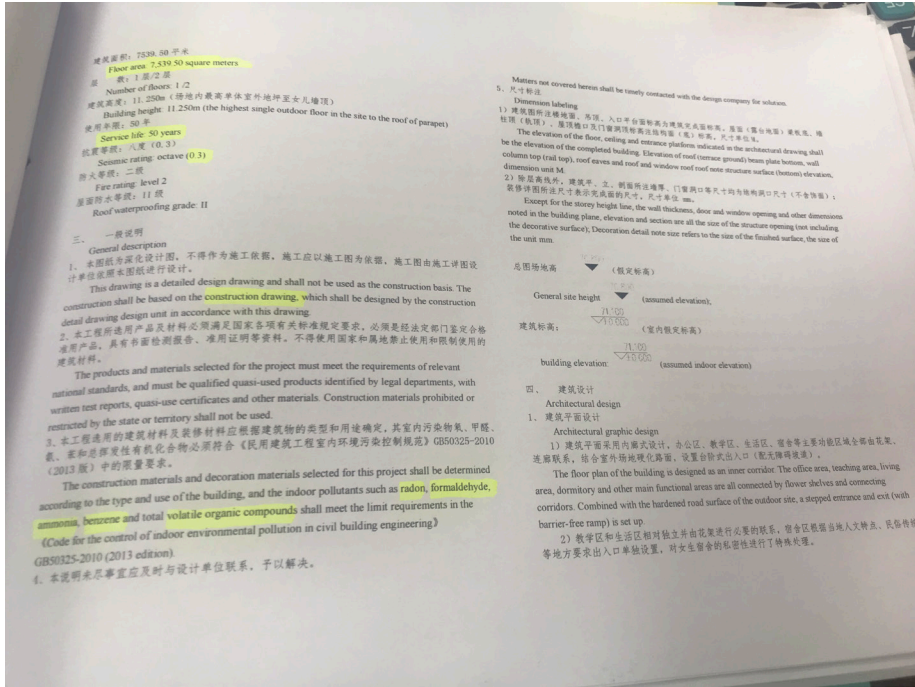


Figure 114: Design Brief of PCFVTI Gwadar, prepared by ECADI & Shanghai Xian Dai Architectural design. Source: A document from Gwadar Port Authority.

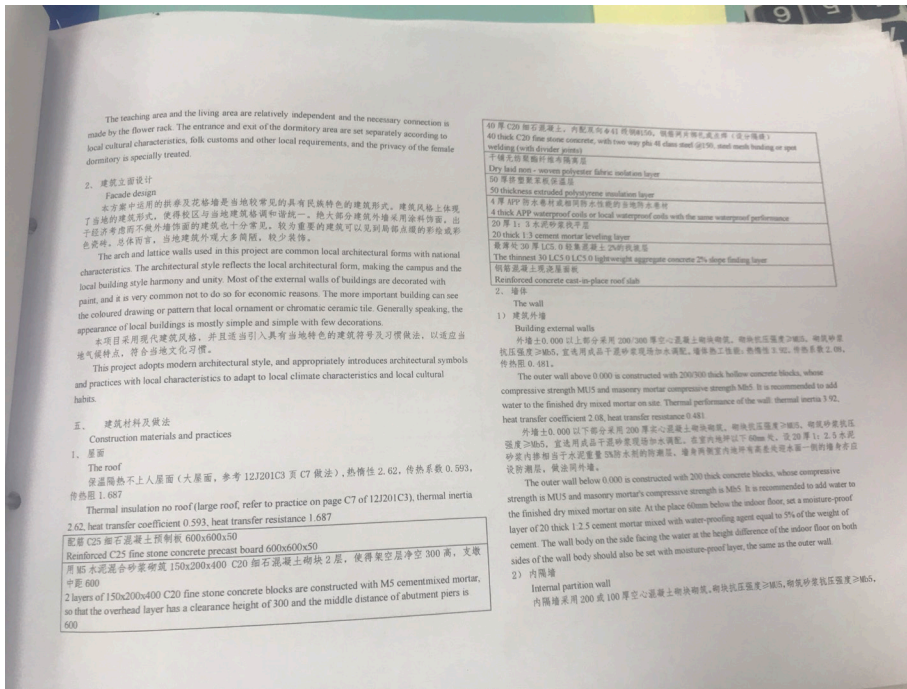


Figure 115: Design Brief of PCFVTI Gwadar, prepared by ECADI & Shanghai Xian Dai Architectural design. Source: A document from Gwadar Port Authority.

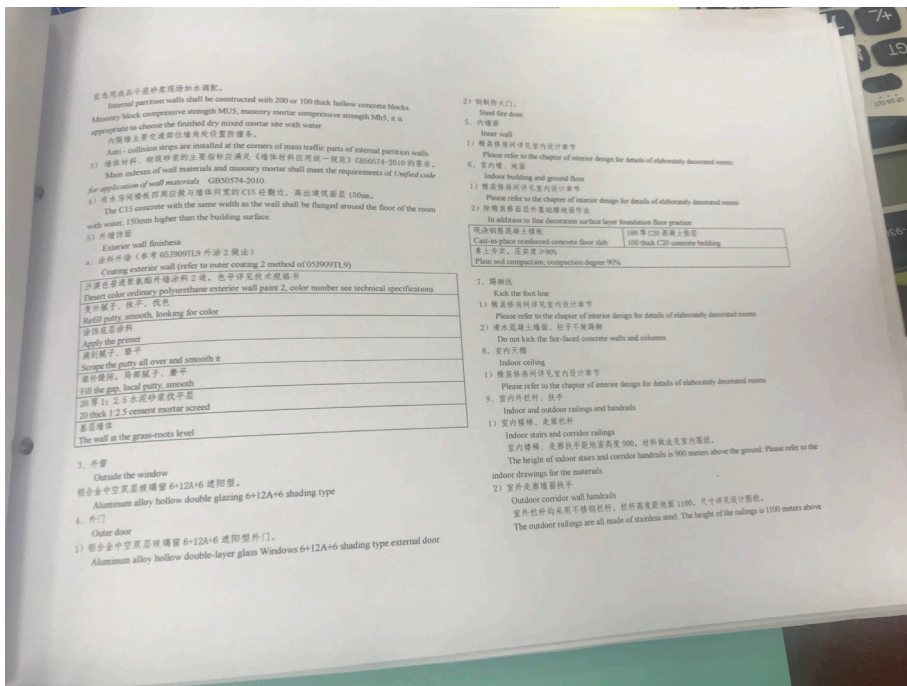


Figure 116: Design Brief of PCFVTI Gwadar, prepared by ECADI & Shanghai Xian Dai Architectural design. Source: A document from Gwadar Port Authority.



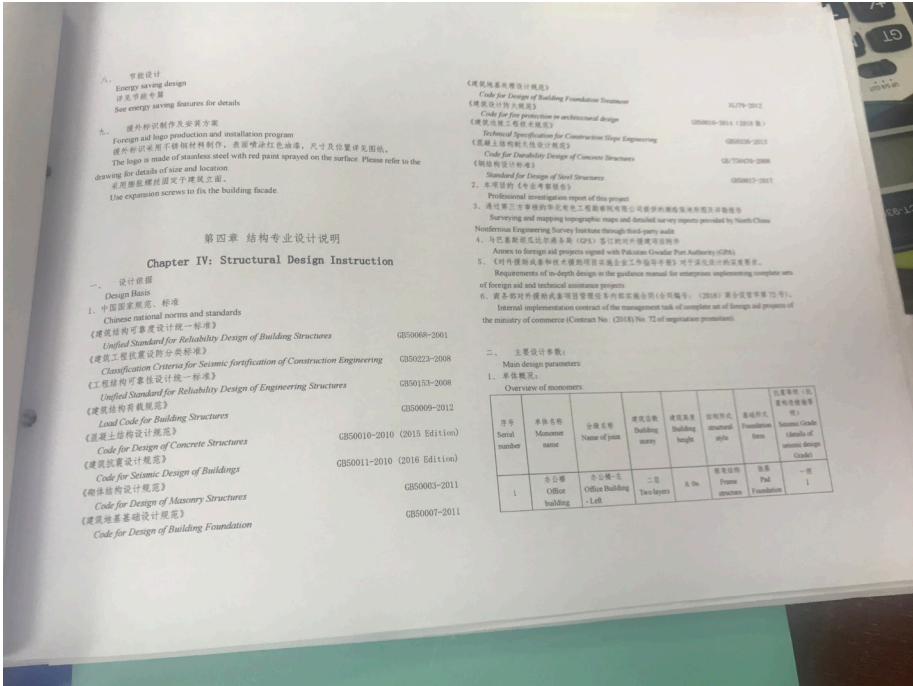


Figure 118: Design Brief of PCFVTI Gwadar, prepared by ECADI & Shanghai Xian Dai Architectural design. . Source: A document from Gwadar Port Authority.

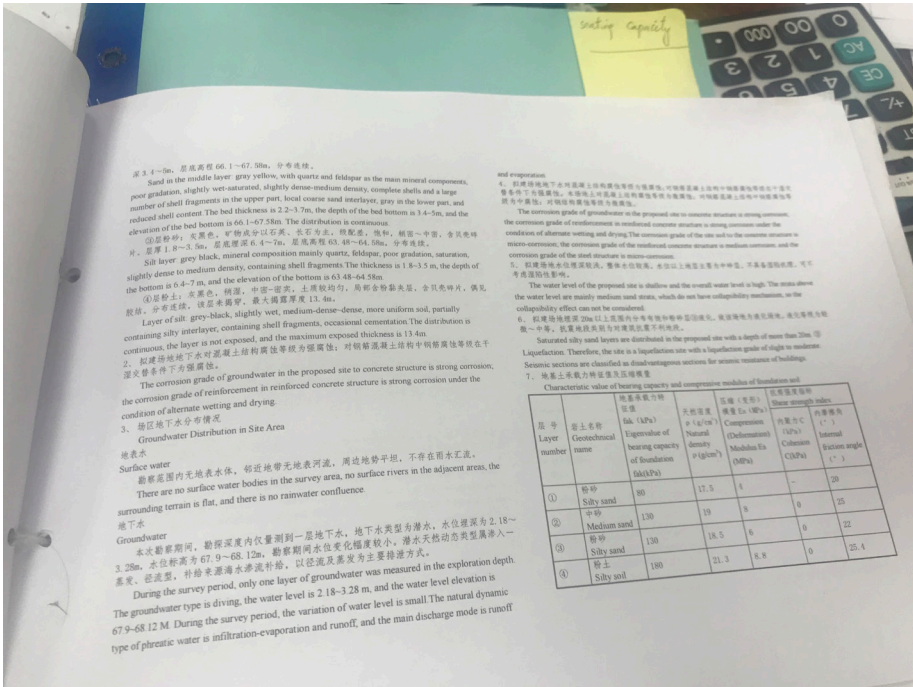


Figure 117: Design Brief of PCFVTI Gwadar, prepared by ECADI & Shanghai Xian Dai Architectural design. Source: A document from Gwadar Port Authority.

## 1.6 New Gwadar International Airport



Figure 119: New Gwadar International Airport Rendering. Source: A picture from Pakistan CAA.

# 援外机场建设项目设计要点分析及对策研究 ——以巴基斯坦新瓜达尔国际机场项目设计为例

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**摘要** 本文在分析援外机场建设项目特点的基础上,结合巴基斯坦新瓜达尔国际机场项目的设计案例,对项目工程设计的各个阶段实施过程中的重点、难点进行了逐一探讨,并对援外机场项目的设计要点、需要重点关注的事项,以及相应采取的对策进行了归纳和总结。

**关键词** 援外项目; 机场工程; 设计要点

## 引言

随着中国“互联互通”、“三网一化”、“一带一路”等对外合作计划和倡议的推进,以及对外产能输出的战略需求,中国政府资金支持下的海外工程项目逐年呈快速增长的态势,对外援助或合作项目(以下简称“援外项目”)作为其中的一个重要组成部分,历来都得到了中国及受援国政府的高度重视。作为一个国家和地区重要的交通基础设施,机场项目因其本身具有的投入小、见效快,对地方经济拉动效应明显等优势,已经成为广大处于发展阶段的受援国的重要需求。我国近年来对外援助的机场项目也越来越多。区别于使用中国资金的贷款项目及对外投资项目,援外项目在设计要求,以及所涉及的诸如审批流程、资金周期、中外分工、现场条件等影响项目设计的相关因素的方面都有较大的不同之处。

相对于其他类别的工程项目而言,机场项目又具备其自身的专业性和特殊性。同时,机场项目的社会影响明显,建设及运营的效果关系到中国的对外形象。因此,有必要结合援外项目的特点,对机场这一特殊类型的援外项目如何进行设计实施加以分析和研究。

本文结合巴基斯坦新瓜达尔国际机场项目(以下简称“本项目”)的案例,对项目从设计考察谈判到设计实施的全过程进行了分析,总结了援外机场项目的设计要点以及相应采取的对策,以期对今后类似项目以及国内相关项目提供借鉴和参考。

## 1 援外工程项目设计的特点

目前使用中国资金进行建设的国外工程项目大体上可分为投资、信贷和援助三种类型,相对于其他两种类型的项目,援外项目体现了中国对外承担的义务和国家声誉,具备较强的政策性。在项目的立项审批、建设规模和标准、资金额度等方面都受到严格控制。2018年3月,十三届全国人大一次会议决议组建中华人民共和国国家国际发展合作署,进一步加强了国家对援外项目的统筹管理,体现了国家对援外工程项目的高度重视<sup>[1]</sup>。

从工程设计的角度而言,相对于其他类型的海外工程建设项目,援外项目是比较特殊和复杂的。现结合本人对本项目及其他类似项目的实施经验,尝试将援外项目设计的特点总结如下。

(1) 意义重大: 援外项目关系到国家事权,是政府行为。项目实施过程中的任何一个环节的成功与否,都对政府的形象有重大的影响,是百分之百的政府主导项目,需要严格按照相关制度程序执行,实施企业无自主决定权。

(2) 执行流程复杂: 仅就设计阶段而言,设计单位要完成行前方案制定,现场设计考察并签署工作纪要,回国后完成深化设计,提交第三方咨询机构进行国内评审,评审完成后再送交外方审查,设计确认后协助施工招标等工作。整个设计流

程中参与方众多,这不仅要求设计方要综合考虑各方的意见,还要提前对后续可能出现的状况拥有及时的预判,并采取灵活的设计方案来进行应对。

(3) 资金紧张: 援外项目的资金是由受援国申请,通过中国政府根据各受援国对各项需求的紧迫程度统一调配,经由双方政府协商确定。资金额度一旦在前期立项阶段确定后,在后续的设计和施工中不允许突破。需要注意的是,根据国家对外项目的监管流程,不仅仅是要求设计阶段项目的总金额不能突破立项批复金额,在实施阶段的每个单项工程的全额也不允许突破该单项的设计概算,基本上不允许有变更。同时,为保证援助效果,要求不能为了控制项目金额而擅自降低设计和建设标准。这对设计单位提出的要求是非常严格的,必须要对投资、谈判、设计、确认各个阶段进行通盘的考虑和全面的把控,做到对每一个步骤、每一项内容的精细化处理。

(4) 中外分工及设计界面的划分: 在援外项目的立项阶段,对项目中外分工实施的内容一般仅作大致的描述,因此,在设计考察谈判阶段,一定要对中外双方各自承担的建设内容进行深入细致的讨论,尤其是关于机场场外的供水、供电、道路等配套设施,以及施工期间临水、临电等保障措施的落实。与外方的建设和设计界面必须清晰明确,并落实到文字上进行确认。同时,也要充分考虑外方实际的实施能力,确保分工的合理性,避免工程开工后因外方原因造成工程延误。

(5) 设计工作的综合性: 对于类似本项目这样规模大、设计复杂的援外项目,一般以“采购+施工”的模式执行。即项目管理企业承担项目的专业考察、勘察、设计、监理和全过程项目管理任务;再由工程总承包企业承担施工图设计和工程建设总承包任务。项目管理企业虽然一般以设计作为牵头,但不仅仅是只搞项目设计,还要承担类似于国内项目的“设计院+监理公司+项目指挥部”的综合职能,设计是否合理决定了后续项目管理及工程实施的成败,必须要从全方位、全过程的角度综合考虑设计相关的问题。

## 2 项目简介

瓜达尔市位于巴基斯坦西南部俾路支省,紧邻波斯湾和霍尔姆兹海峡,具备优越的地理位置条件,是“一带一路”倡议的“旗舰项目”——“中巴经济走廊”的起点。新机场选址位于瓜达尔市东北方向约26公里, N14滨海公路北侧。规划用地面积约18平方公里,新建机场飞行区工程(跑道3650m×40m),航站楼工程(含航站楼面积1.4万平方米),配备必需的生产辅助用房(办公、车库、仓库等)及公用配套设施(含供水、供电、供冷等),空管工程(含气象、通信、导航等),并建设相应民航小区(含医院、学校、住宅区等)

Figure 120: Tian Ren article about the design process of NGIA, it is translated from Chinese to English using translation software's.

Developing a better regional transportation network is not only a basic requirement for speeding up the development of Gwadar but also an important strategy for building a new national gateway. The abovementioned construction projects related to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, including the new airport, railways and the port, are information infrastructure to be relied on for the improvement of overall regional transportation of Gwadar. Their construction should be speeded up so as to enhance Gwadar's connectivity with the outside, and incorporate Gwadar in the regional transportation network, and expand its urban inland.

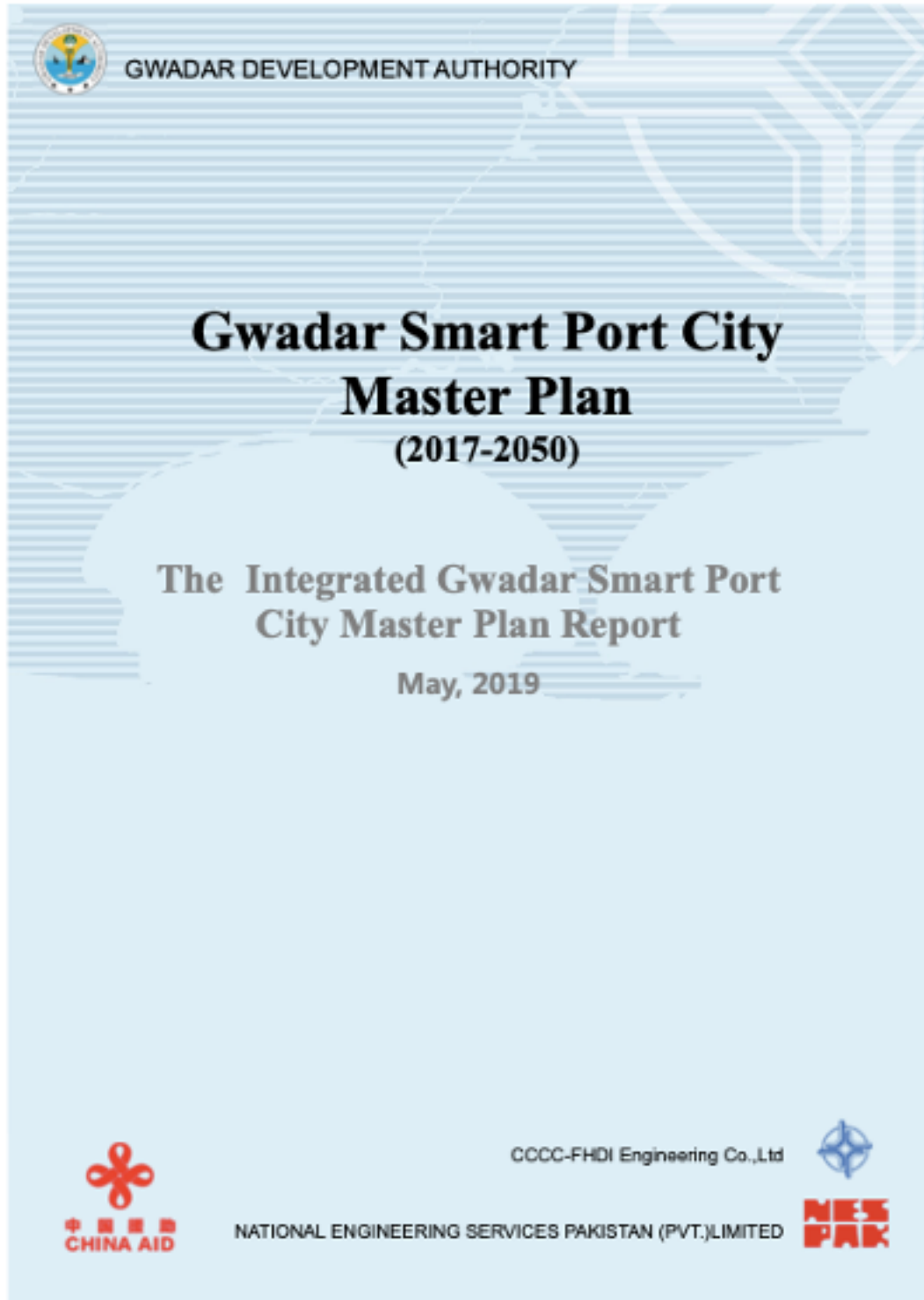
### 7.3.1 Air communication

The existing Gwadar airport is rather small. The planned new international airport will be located 26 km northeast of Gwadar city, covering an area of 4,300 acres (approximately 1,740 ha). Its airfield grade index is 4F (feeder airport). The planned passenger throughput by the year 2035 is 400,000 person times per year, with 280,000 domestic passengers and 120,000 foreign passengers. The planned passenger throughput by the year 2060 is 1 million person times, with 700,000 domestic passengers and 300,000 foreign passengers. In terms of cargo transport, the Master Plan forecasts that annual cargo throughput by the year 2035 will amount to 2,500 tons per year, and the figure will rise to be 30,000 tons per year by the year 2060. The groundbreaking ceremony for the new airport project was held on 29 March 2019.

The new airport will be a major gateway for Gwadar to connect with the outside world. On the one hand, a regional transportation hub with focus on the new airport will be developed, featuring diverse well-established transportation means including roads, railways, and medium-level bus transit. 1) The airport should emphasize on seamless connection with conventional bus transit and private cars to enable easy and comfortable transit for passengers. 2) A railway terminal and a medium-level bus transit terminal are planned at the new airport. 3) Balochistan Avenue is planned as a major artery linking the airport and the city and as the city's landscape gateway. A corridor for medium volume public transport will be reserved along Balochistan Avenue so as to strengthen public transport connectivity between the airport and the city. On the other hand, an airport is a center gathering capital, technology and labor. Along with economic growth and civil aviation development, large airports worldwide have launched construction plans for airport economic zones. In order to give full play to the

Figure 121: Gwadar Smart Port City Final report document extracted from GDA office.

**1.7 Gwadar Smart Port City Master Plan report A guideline by  
CCCC FHDI planners for architecture project**



*strength and weakness in the Diagnostic Report, 2 Existing Status & Analysis.*

## **2.2 Visions and Goals for Development**

In the future, Gwadar should start from the goal orientation, fully explore its own advantages, actively respond to overall demands of Pakistan's 2025 visions, learn from successful experience of emerging cities in the world, grasp various development opportunities, and contribute to national development and urban development practice for Pakistan. The future visions and goals of Gwadar are as follows:

### **(1) Visions**

With correct strategic guidance and unremitting endeavors and in line with the strategy of integrated development of "port, production and city", Gwadar will be built into:

A smart port city that is safe, prosperous, green and living-friendly;

An outstanding SED in Pakistan.

### **(2) Goals for urban development**

Based on urban development visions, Gwadar will build itself into a new national gateway, a new regional engine and a new smart port city.

#### **● A new national gateway**

To take full advantage of Gwadar's geographical location as a major gateway to the sea in southwest Pakistan and its port conditions, and leveraging the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor to accelerate the construction of transport infrastructure and develop functions for a comprehensive gateway so as to build Gwadar into a national gateway in southwest Pakistan and strive for more opportunities to engage in international division of labor.

The new national gateway will mean the following:

Establishing Gwadar SED to develop a policy gateway for innovative development;

Promote local characteristics and cultural inclusion to develop an image-projecting gateway that will be comparable to international cities;

Improve transport infrastructure to develop a transport gateway with global connectivity and a new gateway for international trade.

#### **● A new regional engine**

To leverage port conditions and grab new opportunities from international industrial transfer, grant sufficient policy incentives to attract foreign investors, gather production

Figure 122: Gwadar Smart Port City Master Plan, a future plan for Gwadar city prepared by CCCC FHDI.

## 2. Appendix B: Sample Questionnaires & Interviews

### 2.1 Sample Structure Questionnaires

#### **New Architectural projects: Transforming Gwadar from Fishing village to port city under CPEC.**

##### **Section A: Questionnaires**

Please tick one of the Multiple Choice Questions

Mark, only one circle.

1. Are you a student? If not, then specify your job?
  - Yes
  - No
  
2. What is your education level?
  - Matric or Intermediate
  - Bachelor degree
  - Master degree
  - PhDOther: \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. What is your period of residency in Gwadar?
  - Native
  - Less than two years
  - Five years
  - Ten yearsOther: \_\_\_\_\_
  
4. What is your field of study?
  - Architecture
  - Civil Engineering
  - Urban PlanningOther: \_\_\_\_\_
  
5. What is your gender?
  - Male
  - Female

6. What age group are you in?
- 15-25
  - 25-40
  - 40-55
  - 55-80
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
7. What is the primary language you speak at home?
- Balochi
  - Brahvi
  - Sindhi
  - Punjabi
  - Pashto
  - Urdu
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
8. Where are you from?
- Gwadar District
  - Makran Division
  - Karachi Quetta
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
9. If you are from other parts of Pakistan, then please mention it otherwise leave this question
- \_\_\_\_\_
10. What is your family business?
- Fishing
  - Construction work
  - Government servant
  - Port related job
  - Businessmen
  - land lord
  - Farming
  - Real estate
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
11. Which type of public space you have in Gwadar?



Mark only one oval per row.

|                   | Yes                   | No                    | Don't know            |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Street Bazaars    | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Bazaars or Market | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Mosque            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Restaurant        | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Hotel             | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Play Ground       | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Sea shore         | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Culture centre    | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Others            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

12. Which type of public space did you visit most in Gwadar city?

Mark only one oval per row.

|                   | very Frequently       | Frequently            | some times            |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Street Bazaars    | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Bazaars or Market | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Mosque            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Restaurant        | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Hotel             | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Play Ground       | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Sea shore         | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Culture centre    | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| others            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

16. What are the famous Cultural activities in Gwadar?

Mark only one oval per row.

|                                  | yes                   | may be                | no                    | out of context        |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Cultural Mela (celebration)      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Cultural Music and Dances events | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Stage shows                      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Culture exhibition               | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| others                           | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

17. Please mention, If some cultural activities are missing in the above statement  
Tell briefly about culture events like Mela, celebration, Dances, Stage shows, Music shows, etc.

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

18. How do you feel cultural changes in a current urban environment?

Mark only one oval per row.

|   | strongly agree        | agree                 | neutral               | dis agree             |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Due to influx of immigrant culture                          | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| multiple languages  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Urban space (new houses, schools, buildings etc.)           | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| New public spaces (Park, Playground, Shopping centre, etc.) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| change of life styles                                       | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

19. Do you think Gwadar Business Centre is providing a new platform for cultural activities for local?

- Strongly agree
- agree
- neutral
- disagree

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

20. Is Business Providing best hospitable services?

- Strongly agree
- agree
- neutral
- disagree

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

21. Is the Gwadar Business centre is accessible for local people?

*Mark only one oval per row.*

|   | strongly agree        | agree                 | neutral               | dis agree             |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| yes accessible                            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| no not accessible due to security reasons | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Only accessible with special permission   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Row 4                                     | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

22. Is locals can use the Gwadar Business Centre for any cultural, business or other events?

*Mark only one oval per row.*

|   | strongly agree        | agree                 | neutral               | dis agree             |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| yes accessible                            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| no not accessible due to security reasons | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Only accessible with special permission   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Only accessible for students              | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

23. What do you think about the Architecture significance of Gwadar Business Centre a national identity or local identity?

Mark only one oval per row.

|                               | strongly agree        | agree                 | neutral               | dis agree             |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| it reflects national identity | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| it reflects local identity    | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

24. Is Business Centre contributing alien image to Gwadar city identity?
- Strongly agree
  - agree
  - neutral
  - disagree
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
25. Is Business Centre is adding new identity to Gwadar city?
- Strongly agree
  - agree
  - neutral
  - disagree
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
26. Is Business Centre is appealing and supplementing new charm to the Gwadar city?
- Strongly agree
  - agree
  - neutral
  - disagree
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
27. The Architecture Gwadar Business Centre is better representing the local identity of Gwadar city than Pearl Continental hotel ?
- Strongly agree
  - agree
  - neutral
  - disagree
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
28. What hopes brought by the Gwadar Business Centre to Gwadar city?  
For example, hope for future development.
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Section B: Questionnaires**

**Economic Aspect & skill acquisition of architecture project**

1. The main occupation of Local people was before CPEC?

*Mark only one oval per row.*

|                               | Yes                   | No                    | may be                | Column 4              |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Fishing or fish related works | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Boat making                   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Labor services                | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Farming                       | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

2. Please write other occupations If any of them is missing from the above statement

|                         | rate                  | level                 | less                  | no                    | know                  |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Port labor work         | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Port skilled labor work | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Shoping center          | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Restaurant              | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Hotels                  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Transport jobs          | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Public sector jobs      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Water sport             | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Sport                   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Entertainment events    | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Education jobs          | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Construction work       | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| NGO                     | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

3. What do you think about new construction are they creating new jobs opportunities for locals?

- Yes
- No

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Do you agree Gwadar can provide upto date construction industry services?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

5. Are new contractors and construction-related labours from China affected the traditional constructions jobs?

- Yes
- No

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Are you satisfied with new technologies and construction work from China?

- Yes
- No

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

7. If yes why

\_\_\_\_\_

8. Do Gwadar locals learning new construction skills and technology from China contractors and workers?

- Yes
- No

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### High modernity vs localism

9. The vernacular architecture in the old city of Gwadar, which are mostly built according to the local environment and cultural conditions.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

10. Are you satisfied new architecture is following the local environment and cultural conditions?

- yes
  - no
  - Maybe
  - don't know
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

11. What is the reason if you are not satisfied?

\_\_\_\_\_

12. Do you think that the new architecture should follow the characteristics of vernacular architecture??

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

13. Do you like high modern architecture like Dubai ?

- yes
- No
- Maybe

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

14. Do you think placemaking is important ?

- yes
- No
- Maybe

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## **2.2 Some other interviews & discussions:**

### **1. Interview with Project Director Hassan Duad Butt**

**Author:** Why the construction projects are behind the time of its execution?

**Project Director of CPEC Hassan Duad Butt:**

*The media news are based on speculations. No projects is behind its define schedule. In government-to-government technical cooperation exchanges, many aspects are negotiated such as economic viability, social impact, etc., this process might slow down the project, but we are on our schedule.*

**Author:** What are the priorities of CPEC committee on each construction project?

**Project Director of CPEC Hassan Duad Butt:**

*The main priority is to make it sustainable project. It should follow the economical but highly efficient construction technologies. It should have an economic perspectives that is job creations, use of local construction materials etc. In M5 Multan to Sukkur the Chinese companies are using our local industry steel bars, cements etc. most of construction labours are from Pakistani side[.....] As far as you are architecture student, let me tell you one thing every nation has its own history, culture etc. and it must not be forgotten. Those nation are successful who remember its history. So, we mainly ask Chinese designers to see our architectural history which is references to Mughal architecture and to design modern architecture without ignoring features of national architecture. On*



*other hand it is also important to learn from Chinese culture[.....]<sup>1</sup>*

## **2. Discussion with Adnan Khan (Researcher at CPEC centre)**

**Author:** The Gwadar Business Centre is designed by CCCC Ltd. The client of Project is COPHC Ltd. As Gwadar Free Zone is leased to COPHC Ltd. for 40 years. In this context, Is it different than the other aid project? Where the main client is Pakistan government.

**Adnan Khan:**

*Yes, the Gwadar Free Zone is leased to COPHC Ltd. for 40 years, but according to the agreement for any construction project in the Gwadar Free Zone, they must follow the codes of the Gwadar Development Authority, Pakistan building codes and other specific requirements.*

*The Gwadar Free Zone Business Centre is part of CPEC project so it is reviewed under CPEC committee.<sup>2</sup>*

## **3. Informal discussion with Prof. Guanghui Ding**

**Author:** In my Field survey, I have found mostly the Chinese architects following the instruction of Pakistani stakeholders and China MOFCOM representatives, China embassy to Pakistan members etc. such as ‘respect the local culture’

**Prof. Guanghui Ding:**

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1 Butt, Daud. General information about CPEC architecture project processes. Interview by Sohrab Ahmed Marri. Audio recorder, 27 August 2019.

2 Khan, Adnan. local building codes and Chinese codes. Interview by Sohrab Ahmed Marri. Audio recorder, 14 January 2019.

*In China the architects of China state owned design institutes work in different way. As you said, 'The Representative of MOFCOM or other actors from China', they are their clients. They simply follow the client instruction in order to speed up the design process. They took this as a challenge and to do creative design. They work hard for their country to present better image of China in foreign projects [.....]*<sup>3</sup>

#### **4. Interview with Dr. Ahmad (Researcher at CPEC centre)**

**Author:** In my Field survey, I have found mostly there are many professionals involved from Pakistan side in technical group of any project. As I know you are Urban planner and researcher, what is your role in Gwadar Smart Port City Master Plan?

**Dr Ahmad:**

*This is a good question, people consider us the CPEC Centre of Excellence. that we have all the information about the on-going projects under CPEC. but in reality we have the same research data that you have. CPEC Centre of Excellence is research institute of Pakistan Government but all the decisions and policy are made in Pakistan Planning commissions. We are just researcher like you. Even in technical group Gwadar Smart Port City Master Plan, we were initially not considered as it part. But, luckily some months ago we were included in this technical group. However we are included but we are not giving our 100 percent efforts it is because we are getting less information, data. Last time we had a meeting and the planning commission of Pakistan sent us*

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<sup>3</sup> . Ding, Guanghui. informal discussion by Sohrab Ahmed Marri, April 2019. This discussion was conducted during his visit at Politecnico di Torino in April 2019.

*the Gwadar Smart Port City Master Plan report 2 days before meeting. In this less time how can we critically read it[.....] But with time the things are getting better and the government of Pakistan is involving more technical person in technical group meetings.<sup>4</sup>*

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4 Khan, Ahmad. Planning and collaboration process of Gwadar Master plan. Interview by Sohrab Ahmed Marri. Audio recorder, 27 August 2019.

**THE END**

