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Abstract: The Belt and Road Initiative in Central Asia and South East Asia

The biggest infrastructure project since the Marshall Plan, One Belt One Road or the Belt and Road Initiative (official name since 2016) is part of China’s 3rd round of “opening up and going out” policy. With great ambition and ambiguity, this research aims to bring transparency in understanding the BRI through documenting and analysing the practices of BRI in Kyrgyzstan and Malaysia from a Chinese perspective. This research serves to guide readers to understand how BRI works, what contribute to the similarities and differences in practice between the two host countries and what it means in making sense of Chinese Foreign Policy in the 21st Century. Through examining the similarities and differences between Sino-Kyrgyz and Sino-Malay relations, this research looks to see what roles different aspects such as political stability, Sino-phobia and soft power play in BRI implementation. In doing so, this research offers insights into the various BRI policy and practical adaptations in project priority and decision-making. It will be argued that these adaptations act as indicators for a framework to understand Chinese Foreign Policy and China’s long-term strategy under Xi.