

China and the Middle East

There are currently few sources of reference from a Middle Eastern standpoint on the role that the People's Republic of China is currently playing in the Middle East and North Africa region. In this book, Dr Muhamad Olimat aims to analyse different perspectives in order to deepen the understanding of scholars and strategic planners alike, in order to offer a complete economic and political overview of the situation. China and Middle Eastern relations date back from the Silk Road and stretch to the current 'Arab Spring'. China's relations with the Middle East are highlighted in terms of energy, trade, arms sales, culture and political ties with key countries in the region: Saudi Arabia, Iran, Israel, Algeria and the United Arab Emirates. China's bilateral relations with each of these countries are based on a particularly critical aspect that determines its interest in the region. The core of China's relations with Israel, for instance, is weapons sales and advanced technology, while relations with Saudi Arabia are based on oil. Iran and China are tied with deep historical, civilizational, cultural and political bonds, although oil is also the primary focus of China's current interest in Iran. China's national interests in and relations and strategic partnerships with the Middle East are only increasing; this book aims to analyze and interpret these relations in this time of major change in the Middle East.

The book includes discussion of and comment on:

- China's deep involvement in the Middle East since the Silk Road
- The new Silk Road of trade, oil, arms sales, political and cultural relations
- China's oil investments in the Middle East
- China's reaction to the Arab Spring

Muhamad S. Olimat, is an Assistant Professor of international relations at Khalifa University of Science, Technology and Research (KUSTAR) in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. Prior to joining KUSTAR, Dr Olimat taught and conducted research at the University of South Florida in St Petersburg, Missouri State University and several other US higher educational institutions. His area of expertise is Middle East politics, and his research focuses on China and the Middle East, socio-political and economic development in the Middle East, and US foreign policy towards the region. He has published several articles and book chapters on China and the Middle East, the Arab Spring, transition to democracy, women and politics in the Middle East, and the role of Islam in the politics of the Middle East.

China and the Middle East

From Silk Road to Arab Spring

Muhamad S. Olimat

 **Routledge**
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

First edition published 2013
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

Simultaneously published in the USA and Canada
by Routledge
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

© 2013 Muhamad S. Olimat

The right of Muhamad S. Olimat to be identified as editor of this work has been asserted by him in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

Trademark notice: Product or corporate names may be trademarks or registered trademarks, and are used only for identification and explanation without intent to infringe.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Olimat, Muhamad.

China and the Middle East : from Silk Road to Arab Spring / Muhamad Olimat. – First edition.

pages cm

Includes bibliographical references and index.

1. China–Foreign economic relations–Middle East. 2. Middle East–Foreign economic relations–China. 3. Silk Road. 4. Arab Spring, 2010– I. Title.

HF1604.Z4M628 2012

382.0951'056–dc23

2012028085

ISBN: 978-1-85743-631-0 (hbk)

ISBN: 978-0-203-07312-4 (ebk)

Typeset in Times New Roman
by Taylor & Francis Books

Europa Commissioning Editor: Cathy Hartley

Printed and bound in the United States of America
by Edwards Brothers Malloy

Contents

| | |
|---|------|
| <i>List of illustrations</i> | viii |
| <i>Acknowledgements</i> | x |
| <i>Abbreviation</i> | xi |
| | |
| Introduction | 1 |
| 1 Sino–Middle East relations: an overview | 6 |
| 2 A five-dimensional paradigm: energy, trade, arms sales, cultural relations and political co-operation | 34 |
| 3 Walking on thin ropes: a tridimensional perspective | 66 |
| 4 China's reaction to the Arab Spring | 89 |
| 5 China and Israel: the Jewish presence in China | 116 |
| 6 China and Saudi Arabia | 131 |
| 7 China and Iran | 149 |
| 8 China and the United Arab Emirates | 163 |
| 9 China–Algeria Relations | 176 |
| Conclusion | 190 |
| | |
| <i>Notes</i> | 200 |
| <i>Index</i> | 215 |

Illustrations

Figures

| | | |
|-----|--|-----|
| 2.1 | Increasing oil consumption in China from 1965 to 2020 in mbd | 37 |
| 2.2 | Top ten oil importers in 2012 | 39 |
| 2.3 | China's oil production and consumption from 1990 to 2012 | 41 |
| 2.4 | China's oil imports from the Middle East as a percentage of its total imports for the period from 1993 to 2012 | 43 |
| 2.5 | Crude oil prices from 1869 to 2010 | 46 |
| 2.6 | China's crude oil imports by source in bd (000) in 2010 | 48 |
| 2.7 | China's arms exports to the Middle East and North Africa in millions of US dollars from 1987 to 2011 | 61 |
| 6.1 | China's crude oil imports in 2010 (000 bd) | 143 |
| 9.1 | Algeria's total oil production and consumption from 1992 to 2011 | 185 |
| 9.2 | Production and consumption of natural gas in Algeria | 186 |

Tables

| | | |
|-----|--|----|
| 2.1 | China's oil consumption in thousand barrels per day (000 bd) from 1965 to 2015 | 40 |
| 2.2 | Growth rates, oil production, consumption, net imports and oil import percentages from the Middle East | 42 |
| 2.3 | China–Middle East trade volume in millions of dollars from 2001 to 2010 | 55 |
| 2.4 | World economic outlook projections | 56 |
| 2.5 | Confucius centres in the Middle East | 60 |
| 2.6 | China arms exports to the Middle East and North Africa for the years 1987–2011 in millions of dollars | 62 |
| 2.7 | China and the Middle East: country, date of diplomatic recognition, GDP, GNIP and GDP growth rate | 64 |
| 4.1 | Number of people killed in the Syrian Revolution from March 2011 to 5 July 2012 | 93 |

| | | |
|-----|---|-----|
| 4.2 | Number of prisoners of the Syrian Revolution from March 2011 to 5 July 2012 | 93 |
| 5.1 | National shares of arms sales for the SIPRI top 100 arms-producing companies in 2008 and 2009, in dollars (000 million) | 118 |
| 5.2 | China–Israel: value of bilateral trade in US dollars (000 million) | 122 |
| 6.1 | Saudi–Chinese volume of trade in millions of dollars from 2001 to 2010 | 144 |
| 6.2 | Saudi Arabia’s military expenditures from 2001 to 2010 in dollars (000 million) | 146 |
| 6.3 | Regional arms transfer agreements, by supplier, 2003–10 in millions of current US dollars | 147 |
| 7.1 | Iranian arms imports from China in millions of dollars from 1987 to 2011 | 155 |
| 7.2 | Bilateral trade relations in millions of dollars for the period from 2001 to 2010 | 160 |
| 8.1 | Value of bilateral trade between China and the UAE in millions of dollars | 165 |
| 8.2 | Bilateral trade in millions of dollars for the years 2008–10 | 165 |
| 8.3 | Arms transfer agreements with developing nations, 2003–10: agreements by the leading recipients in current US dollars (000 million) | 171 |
| 8.4 | UAE’s military spending and armaments from 2001 to 2011 in millions of current US dollars | 172 |
| 9.1 | Algeria’s real GDP and unemployment rates | 177 |
| 9.2 | Sino–Algerian bilateral trade in millions of dollars for the period from 2000 to 2010 | 182 |
| 9.3 | Algeria’s military expenditure in constant US millions of dollars for 2001–10 | 188 |

There are currently few sources of reference from a Middle Eastern standpoint on the role that the People's Republic of China is currently playing in the Middle East and North Africa region. In this book, Dr Muhamad Olimat aims to analyse different perspectives that may deepen the understanding of scholars and strategic planners alike, in order to offer a complete economic and political overview of the situation. China and Middle Eastern relations date back from the Silk Road and stretch to the current 'Arab Spring'. China's relations with the Middle East are highlighted in terms of energy, trade, arms sales, culture and political ties with key countries in the region: Saudi Arabia, Iran, Israel, Algeria and the United Arab Emirates. China's bilateral relations with each of these countries are based on a particularly critical aspect that determines its interest in the region. The core of China's relations with Israel, for instance, is weapons sales and advanced technology, while relations with Saudi Arabia are based on oil. Iran and China are tied with deep historical, civilizational, cultural and political bonds, although oil is also the primary focus of China's current interest in Iran. China's national interests in and relations and strategic partnerships with the Middle East are only increasing; this book aims to analyse and interpret these relations in this time of major change in the Middle East.

The book includes discussion of and comment on:

- China's deep involvement in the Middle East since the Silk Road
- The new Silk Road of trade, oil, arms sales, political and cultural relations
- China's oil investments in the Middle East
- China's reaction to the Arab Spring

The author, Muhamad S. Olimat, is an Assistant Professor of international relations at Khalifa University of Science, Technology and Research (KUSTAR) in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. Prior to joining KUSTAR, Dr Olimat taught and conducted research at the University of South Florida in St Petersburg, Missouri State University and several other US higher educational institutions. His area of expertise is Middle East politics, and his research focuses on China and the Middle East, socio-political and economic development in the Middle East, and US foreign policy towards the region. He has published several articles and book chapters on China and the Middle East, the Arab Spring, transition to democracy, women and politics in the Middle East, and the role of Islam in the politics of the Middle East.

Other books of interest:

The Hungry Dragon: How China's Resource Quest is Reshaping the World,
by *Sigfrido Burgos Cáceres and Sopal Ear*

Handbook of China's International Relations, Editor *Shaun Breslin*

Handbook of China's Governance and Domestic Politics, Editor *Chris Ogden*

Governance in the Middle East and North Africa, Editor *Abbas Kadhim*

REFERENCE / ASIAN STUDIES / MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES



X000JZM2SF

CHINA AND THE MIDDLE EAST: from Silk Road to
Used, Very Good

edge
Francis Group

com