



Call for papers:

Convergence or Competition? Assessing BRI Transnational Legal Impact in the MENA Region

China has been working with Middle East and North Africa (MENA) nations to ensure its growing strategic interests in the region. The Chinese approach to the Arab world has gained further importance by establishing the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Through the BRI, China is seeking to establish long term cooperation with most MENA nations while looking to shape its image as a responsible global power through shared governance values. In 2004, a China-Arab States Cooperation Forum (CASCF) was created for ensuring multilateral cooperation. Since then, plenty of joint conferences and meetings were held between the parties to consolidate a “Sino-Arab future-oriented strategic partnership of comprehensive cooperation and common development”. China recently issued its Arab Policy Paper in which Beijing clearly stated the pillars of cooperation between China and the Arab nations. This Policy Paper provides a concrete overview of policy priorities of the Chinese government in its engagement with MENA nations.

At the same time, China’s impact in the MENA region has been constantly growing together with BRI where investments in various fields (trade, environment, as well as others) are being made. As U.S. influence dwindles in the Middle East, China’s deepening MENA engagement may also present new contentious fronts between the world’s two largest economic powers. While China’s economic and diplomatic presence in the region has become noticeable, the legal relevance and influence of such presence remains less examined. To that end, this Special Issue is seeking to address China’s role through its BRI in the MENA region from a transnational legal perspective, by considering its interplay with the existing legal institutions, structures and culture co-shaped by various Western legal systems over the last century. Such analysis will pave the road towards understanding the advantages and challenges of having the Chinese legal impact in the region, as well as long-term consequences on the normative order. In this context, the list of topics that can be examined by the potential contributors includes *inter alia*:

- BRI in the context of international and comparative law.
- Comparative approach between Arabic and Chinese trade law, investment law, and legal culture
- Current impact of Chinese legal culture on the MENA region
- Legal/Institutional impact of BRI on MENA region
- Clashes between various legal cultures taking place in the MENA region
- Contests of liberal/authoritarian legal orders in the MENA region
- The future of Chinese global legal influence...

Deadline

December 30th, 2021

Venue and Dates

A conference will take place online the following months.

Applications

Applications must be submitted via email to the attention Dr. Imad Antoine Ibrahim and Dr. Carrie Shang at the following address: imad.ibrahim@qu.edu.qa / carrie.shang@shangadr.site. Please include the following information:

- The author's name and affiliation.
- A 300-word abstract [Wordfile or PDF].
- The author's CV, including a list of relevant publications, if applicable.
- The author's contact details, including e-mail address and phone number;

Publication Opportunities

The organizers have publication plans for the presented papers. The precise format of publication will be discussed during the conference. Among the options already available at the time of the call for papers, the organizers envisage to publish a book with renowned publishers such as Routledge and Edward Elgar.

Sponsoring Organization

American Society of International Law (ASIL)

Qatar University