

China's image in the Belt and Road Initiative: case study of Pakistan and India

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Abstract

National image as one important source of soft power has been paid close attention in China. This thesis examines China's new national image shaping in the framework of ambitious Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), in the same time, how other countries like Pakistan and India respond to China's self-image are discussed. By using Fairclough and Foucault's critical discourse analysis, the thesis argues that the Belt and Road Initiative project China as a powerful, responsible contributor with great taking. However, in the case of Pakistan, although mainly positive in media's reports, suspicion and supervision maintains. As for India's perception, China acts as an aggressive threat and revisionist power. It concludes that China consciously exercise soft power to improve its image in BRI, however China's lack of political credibility constrains its image.

Key words: *the Belt and Road Initiative, national image, soft power, Pakistan, India*

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Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 Problem and research question

China as the world's second largest economy, has huge influence in international relations. In recent years observers have witnessed China's increasing global presence and "charm offensive" in many parts of the world. Simultaneously, China has invested amounts of money in boosting its soft power influence and reshaping its national image (Shambaugh, 2015).

Recently, China has proposed a project of huge extent, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) also known as One Belt One Road (OBOR) or New Silk Road. The Initiative has the ambition to promote connectivity and development between China, Eurasia, and Africa. Although the project is mainly based on economic cooperation, some analysts argue that BRI is a soft power strategy, with great potential to enhance China's influence in the global society (cpianalysis, 2017; Kurlantzick, 2007; Ming, 2017).

This paper shows that under the New Silk Road framework, China consciously shape a positive and responsible international image to construct a favorable global environment for China's development. Especially in an information-flooding and increasingly globalized society, countries who can tell a good story are able to win the hearts and minds of others. At the same time, research on China's manipulation of soft power and national image so far is either too general or lacks concise analysis and strong argument.

Drawing on Joseph Nye's (1990) definition of soft power, this thesis focuses on China's national image as one important resource for soft power to investigate what kind of image China is trying to construct in the Belt and Road Initiative. Moreover, the paper also investigates other countries' perception of China's image; Pakistan and India serve as cases to do so. By applying critical discourse analysis, the thesis aims to understand the degree of correspondence between China's image in its propaganda and China's image of other BRI participants. Therefore, my main research question is

as follows:

What kind of national image does China try to establish in the Belt and Road Initiative? How is this image reflected in other countries' media response?

To answer this research question, the thesis raises sub-question: How consistent is China's self-image and other countries' re-interpretation of this image?

1.2 Background

Belt and Road Initiative

The Belt and Road Initiative(BRI) was first proposed by President Xi Jinping in his address to Kazakhstan's Nazarbayev University in September and October 2013. It refers to two routes: the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. The Silk Road Economic Belt follows a land route and connects China, Central Asia and Europe. The 21st Century Maritime Silk Road passes through the South China Sea, the Indian Ocean, and the South Pacific. As China's most ambitious economic and foreign policy to promote the connectivity of Asia, Europe and Africa, involving 65 countries, this massive proposal aims to strengthen cooperation in five aspects: policy coordination, facilities connectivity, unimpeded trade, financial integration, and people-to-people bonds (Xu, 2015).

All in all, China's stated intention is to create a regional comprehensive cooperation framework of market, policy and culture to enhance communication and mutual benefit. Obviously, economic cooperation is the core of this project, mainly dealing with infrastructure, energy and transport. Most discussions focus on BRI's economic implications, however, BRI's cultural cooperation has been paid less attention to so far. One of the five main aims of BRI is to promote "people-to-people bound" or put it in another way, providing public support for the initiative, thus could be viewed as "soft power" part of BRI, including cultural and education exchange, media cooperation, cultural activities and tourism (Xu, 2015). this project indicates that the New Silk Road is not merely about economy, in fact, cultural connection

plays a significant role.

According to the Ministry of Culture and Tourism's (2017) "One Belt One Road Cultural Development Plan of Action document", the Confucius Institutes and China Cultural Centers act as platforms and institutions for China to enhance Chinese language study and promote the popularity of China's culture by holding a series of cultural events like film festival, museum exhibition, arts communication. Furthermore, the cultural project intends to create cultural exchange brand like "Happy Chinese New Year", "New Silk Road Cultural Tour". Increasingly, tourism is designed along the Belt and Road countries. It seems that BRI's cultural development strategy combines culture and economy together with the ambitions to build a more advanced cultural network along the road. Although there are also numerous cultural events about foreign countries and cultural exhibition in China, the document shows that the focus is more on China's cultural dissemination. From this vantage point, it can be argued that a significant intention of BRI is to promote China's soft power by cultural diplomacy, and positive image shaping.

1.3 Aim and Scope

The purpose of this study is to explore to what extent China's soft power can leverage on its national image. It is well known that China wants to expand its global influence and raise its international position accordingly. In this sense, a positive national image would be China's interest for the pursuit of being attractive to other countries. Especially in a world towards a multipolar system, countries would rather combine soft power (e.g. culture) with hard power (e.g. economy, military) and construct a positive national image to legitimate its rise. As for China, Beijing is investing much financial resources to promote the Belt and Road Initiative, a new cooperation mechanism under China's leadership, hence it is necessary to investigate into China's image shaping in this grand strategy. In order to have a more comprehensive understanding of this image, the study does not only look at China's self-representation, but more significantly, inquires into how other countries respond

to this image, and whether or not China achieves the desired outcomes. For the purpose of this study, I only focus on two countries and thus investigate only Pakistan and India's response and perceptions about the BRI and China's image. Newspapers in Pakistan and India will be the center of study. By analyzing newspaper articles in regard to the project, this study aims to get a clear vision on China's potential soft power influence in the New Silk Road.

1.4 Contribution

The significance of this study is to contribute to research concerning the soft power aspect of BRI project. It is very important to recognize that BRI is still an ongoing project, and that there are many parts that are still conceptually developed, therefore the resources for research are quite limited. However, it is meaningful to examine China's image in BRI's initial stage, as I argue that it will bring insight to the future development of relevant research. This project shows further that the concept of soft power and national image remains vague in the analysis. Therefore, the research on China's image shaping not only contributes to an interpretation of China's discourse, it also preserves the possibility to enrich the soft power theory.

1.5 Disposition

The thesis proceeds as follows. The next chapter will provide an overview of existing literature on China's soft power discussion and national image construction. Based on the literature review, chapter 3 gives critical analysis of soft power and national image theory. Chapter 4 outlines the methodological framework and research design of this thesis, which consists of critical discourse analysis. Chapter 5 to Chapter 7 present the analysis of China's national image in three main sections: in Chapter 5 China's self-presentation in President Xi's BRI speech is examined through Fairclough's three-dimensional framework; Chapter 6 and 7 respectively investigate on Pakistan's response in *Dawn* newspaper and India's response in *the Times of India* newspaper based on Foucault's critical discourse analysis method. Lastly, a conclusion is given

in chapter 8.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

2.1 Soft power in China

In recent years, China's emerging soft power has attracted attention by many scholars and policymakers as China has become a global economic power. Its efforts in shaping a positive image of itself and wielding an attracting influence worldwide have triggered numerous critical discussions. To better understand the discourse on China's soft power construction, the following section provides a brief examination of the literature concerning different perspectives about China's rising soft power, Chinese officials' endeavor to enhance its international influence, as well as Chinese academic explanation of soft power.

Offensive or defensive? China's soft power arguments

Since Joseph Nye coined the term 'soft power', the Chinese government expresses its great interest in developing soft power as tools of foreign policy, like establishing Confucius Institutes, hosting the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, or expanding its overseas news agency. Some scholars point out Beijing's soft power strategy is a measure to ease concerns of other countries that perceived as 'China threat' (Kurlantzick, 2007; Shambaugh, 2015).

On one hand, leading offensive realists like Mearsheimer (2006) believe that China attempts to be the regional hegemony, thus China's rising power is going to be a threat to the stability of the existing international order. This concern is widely acknowledged by other states, especially China's neighboring countries like Japan, Thailand, and India. Therefore, it seems that a reasonable accumulation of soft power would be set into Beijing's agenda to persuade other countries that China's peaceful development is sincerely possible. Similarly, Glaser and Murphy (2009) state that China's soft power strategy is primarily reactive and lagging dramatically behind, and

it's mainly a defensive response to the China threat thought. On the other hand, China's foreign policy is gradually abandoning the passive response mechanism "keep a low profile" (*taoguang yanghui* 韬光养晦), and turning to a new approach of "actively achieve something" (*yousuo zuowei* 有所作为) under President Xi's leadership (Shambaugh, 2001).

China is becoming more confident and ambitious on the world stage, with appeal to shaping a positive nation image. In this regard, China actually has achieved some success in advancing its attractiveness globally (Cho and Jeong, 2008; Joesh, 2005; Paruk, 2014). Kurlantzick (2007) describes China's increasing global presence and soft power influence in the world as "charm offensive". He surprisingly finds out that in Southeast Asia, Africa, Central Asia and Latin America, China's influence in the local communities is spreading out. Even in Australia, a country perceived as US's close ally, nearly 70 percent of Australians held positive views on China. Kurlantzick investigates that China increasingly grows engagement in these areas by using cultural tools and business tools to woo these states.

According to Kurlantzick, China's soft power strategy proves to be quite successful as China can get what it wants and drastically changes its image from a dangerous country to a constructive player in many parts of the world (Kurlantzick, 2007). Moreover, although those developing countries like Thailand, South African countries are still in a honeymoon relationship with China, it is likely that in the future China's charm offensive will show its defects due to China's domestic issues (*ibid*, p.12). The concern is widely addressed by many Western scholars in that they regard China's soft power policy as aggressive and do not see it as soft at all.

The Confucius Institute is the most disputed issue in China's many soft power projects. Since 2004, China has established many Confucius Institutes globally to promote Chinese language and culture learning. The rapid expansion of Confucius Institutes has triggered criticism on how China undermines academic freedom through these institutes, and how China use Confucius Institutes as propaganda tool (Shambaugh, 2015; Zhou and Luk, 2016). In addition, China's other foreign policies

regarding soft power promotion are under critical suspicion as well. Shambaugh (2015) argues that China has invested a great amount of money into propaganda work, using financial support to buy other states' favors. However soft power cannot be bought but only earned by the attractiveness of policies and culture.

Due to Chinese government's manipulation on free speech, human rights infringement and the authoritarian governance, it is hard for Beijing to remain attractive to the rest of the world (Shambaugh, 2015). This opinion is echoed by other Western media and intellectuals. Sørensen questions the possibility for authoritarian countries like China to effectively wield soft power. he finds that there is a dilemma for undemocratic states dealing with the contradiction between regime security and positive image shaping. Because the significant agenda for such countries is to ensure the legitimacy of their regime, in this regard, it is unavoidable to negatively portray other states which would contradict the genuine soft power (Sørensen, 2017).

Furthermore, a foundation and thinktank in Washington DC, the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), recently published a report warning about the danger of growing authoritarian influence in democratic countries. By highlighting Russia's interference in 2016 Presidential Election and China's influence over Australian opinion leaders, they coined the term "sharp power" to describe China's and Russia's soft power policies; sharp power "pierces, penetrates, or perforates the political and information environments in the targeted countries" (Walker and Ludwig, 2017, p.6). In the context, China and Russia's soft power is being criticized not "soft" at all. By way of manipulation and distraction, these autocratic regimes take advantage of the openness of democratic countries, silencing unfavorable voices in the world (Walker and Ludwig, 2017). This study has caused widespread criticism of China and Russia, putting them in a more challenging position. Unlike many voices opposing China and Russia's sharp power presence, Nye holds a different opinion, "it would be a mistake to prohibit Chinese soft power efforts simply because they sometimes shade into sharp power, it is important to monitor the dividing line carefully" (Nye Jr., 2018).

In sum, academic debate about China's soft power lies in the offensive or

defensive nature of China's propaganda. Research findings have shown that China's soft power practice could be either proactive or reactive depending on the different cases, which is a complex of both elements. It is true that China wants to have greater influence in the world by manipulation of public diplomacy and at the same time China has achieved some successes. However, the argument in the same time reflects on the ambiguity of soft power and inevitable subjective judgement of China's intention.

Soft power with Chinese characteristics

Nye's soft power concept provides the theoretical and intellectual base for the government and Chinese academics to discuss and cultivate soft power. But their interpretation is not limited to the original definition that is confined to cultural and political values as well as foreign policies as three main resources for soft power. Instead, Chinese analysts expand the scope of soft power, including education, diplomacy, economy, human resources, political system, international political participation and so on (Lai and Lu, 2012, p.77).

The most distinctive argument is about the role economy plays in the soft power construction. Economic tools are perceived as hard power according to Nye and most Western scholars, yet in some Chinese academics' position, as well as the Chinese government's foreign policies, business tools like foreign assistance can also be understood as soft power (Hu et al., 2017). China's aid has helped China to gain a favorable impression and more alliances in Africa and other developing areas. Chinese academic articles criticize the dichotomy of hard power and soft power, and argue that these two dynamics can switch in some circumstances, i.e. sometimes soft power can also be hard, while hard power such as economy tools, if employed properly, can turn into soft power (Li, 2008).

Another argument lies in China's soft power source. Or put it in another way, what kind of Chinese values can be attractive? To counter or change the Western domination on soft power discourse, China attempts to sketch its own values system. Thus an enthusiastic exploration on traditional Chinese philosophy and modern

China's core socialist value system is widely addressed in many articles. Concepts like harmonious world, Confucianism, harmonious society, Beijing consensus, China dream, all reflect China's desire to create a new international order and popularize China's discourse (Callahan and Barabantseva, 2011). These concepts emphasize the importance for Chinese government to develop Chinese traditional culture and build a Chinese culture industry, which as yet lags far behind other major world powers (Wei and Zhang, 2009).

2.2 China's image shaping

National image building has been put into Chinese government's agenda for a long time. Beijing government has explicitly developed overseas propaganda and arranging cultural events to polish China's image. Wang (2003, p.50-52) examined China's image from the Maoist period (1949-1976) to present times (2002). Using quantitative content analysis, Wang reviewed Beijing's Government Work Reports and found that China portrays itself as "a peace-loving country, victim of foreign aggression, socialist country, bastion of revolution, anti-hegemonic force, developing country, major power, international cooperator, and autonomous actor" (ibid, p.52). Among these images, he noticed that some image like "peace-loving country", and "developing country" are constant, other image like "bastion of revolution", and "socialist country" have changed and de-emphasized over time. It is true that a country's image is a changing discourse according to different periods, meanwhile it is also stable in the short times in which Anholt argues that national image is fixed asset that its change usually takes over decades and generations, not months or years (Anholt, 2008). Other scholars like Sterling (2018, p.109) describes China as a 'dependable regional leader with the required economic efficiency'. It is suggested that there is no definite version of a state's image, the exploration of image largely depends on different perspectives and different resources. Image shaping and international reputation establishment targets on international audience, in the meantime, Michael Barr (2012) argues that one aim of Beijing's nation branding is to

legitimate its regime and establish a national pride and confidence of their citizens.

Then how does China shape its national image? The investigation centers on public diplomacy, cultural diplomacy and propaganda system. In one way, Beijing organizes many cultural activities such as mega-sports event, the 2008 Olympic Games, and cultural-economic events like the 2010 Shanghai Expo to attract others. The advantage of authoritarian countries, as Ding (2011, p.298) argues, it has collective ability to mobilize national resources and organize grand events to project favorable national image. In the other way, Beijing attaches importance to foreign affairs and has adopted foreign publicity with Chinese characteristics policy to manage its national image, through the strengthen of foreign affairs government agencies and personnel (ibid, p.297). Moreover, Beijing develops government-owned media and state-subsidized media organizations like Xinhua News agency to promote overseas advertising (Chang and Lin). Additionally, educational exchange, Confucius Institutes expansion, and tourism industry development are also broadly explored in pursue of positive image as well as soft power enhancement. It seems that there is an overlapping practice and agenda between national image and soft power construction. Indeed, the literature review of both topics shows that national image building and soft power endeavor are consistent in many aspects that a positive image is the aim of soft power and also an important resource of a country's soft power.

While international broadcasting becomes the domain of advertising to sell China's story, there are other forces of international image management. Ding (2011, p.300-301) observes that 38 million overseas Chinese are a strong force for promoting Chinese culture and values in their adopted countries. Indeed, most of them still retain Chinese identities in that they follow the Chinese culture, customs, festivals, traditional values like Confucianism. And it is indicated that the Chinese government tries to incorporate overseas Chinese as a part of image shaping strategy.

However, China' image is limited by a few drawbacks. As Ding (2011, p.302-304) analyzes, China is weak in "problematic political credibility, reviving popular nationalism, and some missteps in its foreign policies". More specifically, political credibility refers to "efficient governance, respect for democracy and human rights,

and responsible international behavior”. Clearly, China as authoritarian country lacks democratic governance and has been criticized of violation of human rights. What’s more, China’s domestic issues like social injustice, environmental degradation, and so forth seriously undermine its credibility. Even in Africa or Latin America countries, where China has a good reputation, there are still disputed problems challenging China’s image. For instance, local environment pollution caused by China’s enterprises there. These factors deemed important for investigation on China’s image (ibid). After all, image shaping is complicated procedure, discourse as well as actions need to be further explored.

Chapter 3. Theoretical Framework

3.1 Soft power

As Joseph Nye (Nye, 2004, p.5) defined, soft power “is the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments.” He points out that instead of using military threats or economic sanctions (hard power), the art of soft power rests in communicative strategies, where listening and talking is both significant for states to establish shared values and ideals with other states. In particular, soft power is the ability to shape the preference of others, co-opting them by constructing or finding common language and values to seduce them and persuade them that the objectives are also what they want. Nye argued that if soft power is employed properly, it should be more efficient than hard power. Because in a world where interdependence is gradually deepening, the cost and difficulties of exploiting hard power grows. Whereas soft power costs less for the reputation and attraction a state possesses to influence others without violence and compulsory.

Then what makes a country appear attractive? Nye (2004, p.11) illustrates three important sources of soft power: culture, political values and foreign policies. First, culture includes high culture like art and education, and pop culture like film. For example, the US’s Hollywood movies is quite popular in the world, which in turn

contribute to a positive image and impression of the US. Second, if a country's political values are broadly recognized by the international society and they are consistent internally and externally, it is attractive. Third, when a government's foreign policies are "legitimate and having moral authority", it produces soft power (Nye, 2004, p.11-15). However, as explored above, economic tools like foreign assistance is also regarded as soft power in Chinese scholars' discourse. There is a flexible and ambiguous scope of soft power sources.

Public diplomacy is the usual means and instrument for a country to leverage soft power, through broadcasting, cultural communication, education exchange and so forth, to achieve the aim of attracting the other countries' governments and publics. In this context, Nye emphasizes the importance of credibility. A government with credibility is more reliable so people believe in it. In other words, in an information flooding age, audience's attention is more important than information. Indeed, it is now far more crucial to win the audience's trust and attention than ever before. Meanwhile, due to the publics' natural distrust of authoritarian governments, states also require self-criticism to construct credibility (Joseph S. Nye, 2008, p.99-101).

Soft power as a political buzzword has been widely studied and integrated as part of government's foreign policies to enhance its national influence (Kearn, 2011). Despite its popularity, some scholars criticize soft power concept has become "a catch-all term that has lost explanatory power" (Roselle et al., 2014). Another deficit of soft power, is the analytical framework of mechanism of attraction, which is perceived as problematic (Hall, 2010). In Nye's argument, country's soft power ability lies in the channel of attraction to get desired outcomes. However, Hall (2010, p.2008) takes stance that the explanation of "what constitute attraction, how attraction can be translated into political assets" is missing in the context, thus perceived as an ambiguous framework. Soft power is good as category of practice, but in terms of analytical tools, other scholars proposed their alternative suggestions.

Mattern (2005) criticizes the logic of attraction and argues that attraction is socio-linguistically constructed through representational force. She denies the possibility of attraction as a naturally existing thing, but defines it as consciously

organized by way of communicative exchange. Representational force, as Mattern (2005, p.586) explains, “is a form of power that operates through the structure of a speaker’s narrative representation of ‘reality’.” Verbal fighting as a form of representational force is the most effective way for an actor to “bully the audience into agreement with his interpretation” (ibid). In particular, representational force aims to highlight the contradictions and inconsistencies of narratives concerning self-identity by victims of catastrophes or accidents or other violent incidents. For instance, after 9/11 attack, the US published a speech launching a “war on terrorism”, in which then president Bush (2001) said that “America and our friends and allies join with all those who want peace and security in the world, and we stand together to win the war against terrorism.” This narrative demands other countries to stand with US against enemy, and strategically legitimate US’s terrorism war. Thus, in Mattern’s (2005) debate, the exercise of representational force is using language to “rhetorically trap others”, linguistically force others to make a concession to maintain consistency of its own image and values.

Besides the representational force as one tool of soft power, Roselle, Miskimmon and Loughlin (2014) propose strategic narrative as a new means to understand soft power. In their argumentation, a compelling narrative can be soft power resource, and narrative communication is the channel for actors to practice soft power. States often use strategic narrative to persuade targeted audiences. According to them, there are three levels of narratives. “First, international system narratives refers to how the world is structured, how it works, who the players are; Second, national narrative tells a nation’s story, as well as its values and goals; Third, issue narratives explains the rational of policy, how to implement and accomplish” (Roselle et al., 2014, p.76). Strategic narratives explain the process of communication, persuasion and influence in the international affairs. Moreover, it is important to acknowledge that strategic narrative provides one aspect of soft power, there are other sources that need to be further explored.

In sum, academics like Mattern, Roselle and Hall recognize the implications of soft power and try to establish a more credible framework for soft power explanation.

There are no agreements on which model is more effective, but these discussions enrich the dynamics of soft power concept, and providing more reflection on future studies. This thesis is based on the notion of soft power as a social construction, and language here is put into the center of analysis. Roselle's strategic narratives provides insight for analyzing China's soft power sources in connection with China's story and China's understanding of international system.

3.2 National image

Constructing and presenting a national image is a part of soft power practice as well as the aim of a country's public diplomacy and a source for states to generate an advantageous or disadvantageous international environment. It is believed that a country with a good reputation could get more benefits in foreign policies. Therefore, states are attentive to build a positive national image externally. This thesis adopts Boulding's (1959, p.120-121) view of national image, which is a complex of a "total cognitive, affective, and evaluative structure of the behavior unit, or its internal view of itself and its universe". Put it in another way, there are two dimensions of a national image. One is self-presentation, in which a state constructs its own image or tells its own story within the context of foreign policies. It strategically develops its image and presents it to the world.

Another dimension of the national image is embedded in the international society which implies that a state's image is the synthesis of all other members' representations and perceptions of it. Thus, a state has many different images in international communities, because different countries react differently to each other. Li and Chitty (2009, p.6) illustrate that a given country's image contains two frames: "public frames that are displayed in media, related to projected media national images", in which mass media's perception and reports about foreign countries are valued; and private frames that "are held in the minds of the public, referring to perceived national images", which denote individuals' opinion of other nations. Similarly, Jonathan Mercer (1996, p.227) takes stance that national image is not a

universally recognized property that a state owns, but a collection of others' perceptions. Moreover, even for the same behavior, different countries interpret differently.

Besides the macro view of national image, Amitai Etzioni (1962) suggests national image include the nature of a state's political structure, economy, culture, military potential, etc. It seems that similar to soft power, national image becomes a catch-all item. This inclusiveness discourages the valid analysis of image and can easily lead to ambiguity and confusion. Therefore, instead of detailed category of different dimensions of national image, this thesis arguably combined image shaping with the practice of soft power and borrows theory from that.

Additional research finds that media plays a key role in shaping ordinary people's perceptions of other states, in that most people depend heavily on the press to learn about international affairs (Brewer et al., 2003). Moreover, from the perspective of social psychology, it is recognized that people's way of knowing things is define first and then see (Lippmann 1922 cited in Li and Chitty, 2009), in this regard, stereotypes and personal experience constitute people's understanding of the image. What is related is the historical context of national image. To be clear, a state's image not only lies in present narratives, its historical image continuously influenced audience's perceptions of it, because people already formed a stereotype of one state's image, it is hard to change that in a short run. Therefore, this thesis focuses on mass media' presentation of China's image, based on the idea that the media not only represents to some extent the point of view of the public, but also shapes their image of other states; in the case here, I understand a nation's image from Nye's soft power perceptives, a positive national image is soft power and better serves a country's foreign policies.

Chapter 4. Methodology and Data Collection

4.1 Research design

This thesis applies a mainly qualitative approach in the analysis of the image that Chinese government is trying to construct about themselves in their presentations of OBOR. Based on an in-depth analysis of official documents and leader's speech, it aims to answer what kind of role does China present in BRI? Moreover, in order to understand how other actors deal with China's discourse this paper chose two countries as case studies. More specifically, relevant online newspaper articles are selected to convey a valid representation of how these countries' media construct the discourse about OBOR and thus also China.

Due to differences in their economic, cultural, and political systems, as well as geopolitics, and diplomatic relations and other factors, different countries have distinctive response to OBOR. This paper focuses on two of China's neighboring countries that have closer connections with China than European or African countries. Among those, Pakistan and India were chosen to be the case study. According to Pew Research Center's 2017 opinion poll, India only has 26% favorable view to China (Pew Research Center, 2017). Conversely, 63% Pakistan people holds positive attitude to China as 2017 BBC global opinion survey reveals (BBC 2017, p.36). Based on the statistics, India and Pakistan are selected as typical cases for their different favorability towards China. Moreover, their significance in OBOR decides their special analytical values and representative effect. The following parts will respectively give a brief introduction of India and Pakistan's participation in OBOR and their bilateral relationships with China to explain why these two cases are suitable for analysis.

Sino-Pakistan Relationship and BRI

The Islamic Republic of Pakistan is a multi-ethnic and multicultural society. Its official language is English and Urdu. Pakistan got independence from colonial India in 1947, but there are still territorial disputes with India in the Kashmir district, that

the two sides are in hostile relations (Pakistan Embassy, 2018).

China and Pakistan established friendly relationship and mutual cooperation in diplomatic, defense, economics and culture domains. Economically, China is Pakistan's largest trading partner and a major investor, especially in infrastructure and energy sector. The official discourse describes their relationship as "all weather strategic cooperative partnership" or "iron brothers" (Pakistan Embassy, 2018). Considering China's non-alignment foreign policy, their close relationship is quite unique that there are none countries' friendship with China could compare with Pakistan's. Nonetheless, there are some challenges impeding their relationships like imbalance of trade and terrorism threat of regional security (Hameed, 2017, p.15).

Pakistan's Prime Minister emphasizes that Pakistan fully supports China's vision of the Belt and Road Forum (Pakistan Embassy, n.d.). The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is the flagship project of BRI. As China's largest investment in Pakistan CPEC plans to promote trade and energy supply as well as regional security improvement. The CPEC is a 3,000-kilometer network of roads, railways and pipelines, transporting oil and gas from Gwadar Port to Kashgar city, linking China's western undeveloped region with Pakistan, with the ambition to boost the two countries' economy (Government of Pakistan, 2018). According to the authorities, the priority for CPEC includes four aspects: (i) developing and operationalizing Gwadar Port on modern lines (ii) building infrastructure, (iii) creating energy and trade corridor for China through Pakistan and (iv) enhancing Chinese investment in Pakistan through construction of Industrial Parks and Special Economic Zones (Pakistan Embassy, 2018).

The vision of CPEC not only involves infrastructure and energy investment, it also includes human resources development, people-to-people connection, and tourism cooperation. For instance, China offers education exchange scholarship for Pakistan students to study in China. Year 2015 is remarked as China-Pakistan Year of Friendly Exchange (Pakistan Embassy, 2018). China and Pakistan's cooperation extends to multiple spheres including cultural aspect.

In sum, CPEC as the core project of BRI can be a demonstrative case for

studying the response and perceptions of Pakistan. It is estimated that countries like Pakistan will keep positive feedbacks on OBOR and furthermore improving China's national image in Pakistan society.

Sino-India Relationship and BRI

India and China are two major regional powers, both economies develop at rapid pace. Due to their geopolitical position, the two sides are in competitive environment suffering from security dilemma. India treats China as its adversary and concerns China's rise as a threat (Panda, 2013). Moreover, their bilateral relationships are deeply impeded by the long-term territorial disputes and the Tibetan issue. Despite their existing conflicts, India's and China's economic ties have been tighten since more trading and investment flooding in (Keshava, 2012). Sino-India foreign relations coexist competition, cooperation and conflicts. Nowadays, both sides seek to build a stronger relationship, solve the disputes and push the two countries' cooperation into a new height.

Although India is on the list of BRI cooperating countries, India officially objects to BRI and refuse to join the project. According to India's government, Sino-Pakistan CPEC project leads through Pakistan and India's disputed territorial, the Kashmir district, which is perceived as a violation of India's sovereignty (New Delhi, 2017). The India government's spokesman declared, "no country can accept a project that ignores its core concerns on sovereignty and territorial integrity" (ibid). It is the same situation in terms of India's media, most reports show negative comments on BRI, therefore, the research on India media's response can help to get an overview of the criticism on BRI and explores to what extent China's image is affected.

This thesis does not claim that the case of India and Pakistan can be generalized to other countries. However, the paper assumes that these two special countries can be a reference to other states, as they include both favorable and unfavorable conditions towards China, so a more critical and neutral impression about China's soft influence can be concluded.

Overall, the study of Pakistan and India's media aims to answer how does

Pakistan and India respond to China's image shaping in the media. all these documents, reports and Pakistan, India's newspaper articles can be found on the Internet. Language or discourse is at the center of studying to interpret the underlying meaning and rhetoric of the material, and here I apply critical discourse analysis.

4.2 Data collection

In order to investigate how China shapes its image, official documents and leaders' speeches are studied. The material is downloaded from the Chinese government's official websites. Two websites especially deal with the Belt and Road Initiative: yidaiyilu.gov.cn and beltandroadforum.org. They have comprehensive and all-round information of OBOR, and are representative of government's standpoint as they are issued by the government. Another website (scio.gov.cn) from a government's organization, the State Council Information Office, which is the agency of Foreign Ministry spokesperson, is also an important source.

The newspaper *Dawn* is one of the leading newspapers in Pakistan, with a large circulation and popularity, therefore I choose it as the source to search for articles in order to evaluate Pakistan's opinion about OBOR and its impression on China. *Dawn* is Pakistan's oldest English newspaper, it is also called "elite newspaper" because English is Pakistan's international language, and an English paper is believed to have a greater reliability and quality (Rasheed, 2014). Moreover, most audience of English newspaper in Pakistan are well-educated middle class, with more social influence. In India, *Times of India* is the most popular English newspaper according to a survey (Sabade, 2013). And it is the similar situation in India that English newspaper has more authority and influence in terms of policy influence. Texts for analysis were collected from these two online newspapers websites, dawn.com and timesofindia.indiatimes.com.

For the purpose of study, I select recent one year's newspaper articles, setting the time frame from April 2017 to April 2018, to get the newest data for analysis. The unit of analysis collects each 10 online newspaper articles containing the keyword One

Belt One Road (or the Belt and Road Initiative, OBOR, Obor, new silk road, which is the same term) in the headlines. In Dawn, the headline with term CPEC can also work because CPEC is the core project of OBOR in Pakistan.

4.3 Critical discourse analysis: Methodological and theoretical approach

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) shall be adopted as a methodology and as a theory for this thesis. First, I explain the definition and main arguments of critical discourse analysis. Then I introduce Fairclough's three-dimensional model and Foucauldian critical discourse as a method for data analysis. In addition, the application of these two methods to the data in this thesis analysis is briefly explained.

Critical discourse analysis has many schools and different understandings. It is applied and studied in different disciplines and is characterized as having transdisciplinary or interdisciplinary features. Generally, CDA links discourse with social practice, and focuses on language use in a social constructionism perspective. Concerned with social problems, especially those in the social inequalities domain, CDA seeks to study power relations, and explains the relationship between social structure, discourse and social practice (Richardson, 2006, p.26). In Fairclough's view, CDA is critical because it elaborates the social inequalities or "social wrongs" of the day (2009, p.163). CDA requires the analysis of sources and causes and one of its main aims is to promote social reform.

Fairclough's model of CDA, three-dimensional method provides a straightforward methodology for analysing relationship between language use and social structure. It consists of three analytic dimensions: text, discursive practice and social practice. First, textual analysis can be divided into linguistic analysis and content analysis. In linguistic analysis, vocabulary, grammar, semantics, sound system and writing system should be explored. Besides, the structure and organization of a text need to be analysed. It is also necessary to indicate that the meaning of text can be hidden under the superficial rhetoric. To be clear, the fragments of text, vocabulary,

grammar and others are intentionally selected in the articles. The author decides which word to use and which word not use, as the choice of words or the way a text is constructed shows the attitudes of the discourse. In this sense the direct and indirect meaning of text shall be both explored. For instance, the choice of vocabulary between terrorist and freedom fighter indicates the producer's opinions. Moreover, sometimes the content that is not present in the text is possibly crucial to analysis.

Second, discursive practice involves various aspects of the processes of text production and text consumption (Fairclough 1995 cited in Richardson, 2006, p.39). In addition, Mautner (2016, p.123) argues that corpus linguistics method provides potential for textual analysis. With the support of computer software "concordance programs", absolute and relative word or phrase frequencies are calculated, which offers both quantitative and qualitative analysis of texts. Another advantage of this specific approach is to help reduce the bias on research. I use this method to analyze my textual sources. Discursive practice is the bridge connecting text and social practice. In this dimension, discursive practice draws on the critical examination of "how authors of texts draw on already existing discourses and genres to create a text and how receivers of texts in turn apply available discourses and genres in the consumption and interpretation of the texts" (Phillips and Jørgensen, 2006 cited in Richardson, 2006, p.75). Intertextuality is the primary concept in this part, it means that all texts, are not isolated but connected, and that in order to understand a text the researcher needs the reference of other text. Intertextuality can be interpreted from two aspects. Externally one single text is not the creation of its own, but relates to previous texts and may further influence future texts. Internally, a text usually quotes other texts in the body. This is for example very common in Chinese leadership's speech, as they often quote from historical philosophical texts. The notion of intertextuality helps to gain a better understanding of the context of discourse (Richardson, 2006, p.100-106).

Third, in the social practice dimension, CDA raises questions concerning how a discourse is situated in the social relations. More specifically, it asks about what kind of society a text describes and presents. What implications has a certain text in society?

This part of the analysis stresses the social significance of a text, which distinguishes CDA from text analysis (Richardson, 2006, p.41-44).

This thesis adopts Fairclough's three-dimensional analysis to analyse President Xi's opening address in 2017 the Belt and Road Forum. As mentioned before, this mega-event is the core forum for BRI, so China's top leader's speech at this event is highly significant and most representative of all other proposals about BRI. A three-dimensional method guides description, interpretation and explanation of this speech, that offers insights into what image China presents to the world, and what kind of future China proposes.

After that the thesis applies Foucauldian CDA to analyse Pakistan's *Dawn* and India's *the Times of India* press articles. According to this approach, each discourse has a discourse plane, that is, social locations from which the discourse takes place. In this thesis, the discourse plane is China's Belt and Road Initiative, as the abstract sphere and the discourse sector consists of Indian and Pakistan newspapers. I analyse this perception from an international relations' standpoint, or more specifically, from a soft power position.

There are two stages for analysing this discourse strand, first I undertake a structural analysis of discourse strand and identify the sub-topics of discourse, or in Foucault's word, 'typical discourse fragments'. For instance, in analysing Pakistan's *Dawn*, my discourse strand is BRI; after browsing through 10 selected articles and reviewing relevant background literature, I identified four typical discourse fragments that appear frequently in *Dawn*: 1) geo-political perspective, 2) national security perspective, 3) economic perspective, and 4) social-cultural perspective.

India's *the Times of India* features sub-topics that are different from *Dawn*, its focus lies on: 1) geo-strategic perspective, 2) India's perspective of CPEC: economic colony, 3) economic perspective, and 4) cultural perspective. Based on these sub-topics a detailed analysis of typical discourse fragments follows. A final assessment of each newspaper's discourse position is summarized in a synoptic analysis (Jäger and Maier, 2009, p.52-56). Through detailed examination of these four dimensions, a general analysis of China's image in the reports is provided.

4.4 Reliability and validity

External validity refers to the generalization of research result. The aim of the study is to explore India's and Pakistan's perception of OBOR, because China's reputation shall be established by how other countries acknowledge it. I argue that despite the difference of each countries' views on China, they share some commonalities. For example, if one state finds that China is dishonest, there is a great possibility that others share the same opinion. So this thesis suggests that the result of the study to some extent can be extended to other states. The research design follows Lincoln and Guba's (1985 cited in Bryman, 2016, p.44) criterion of qualitative study, "credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability". In the other hand, the data for analysis contains official documents and newspapers, which sticks to J. Scott's (1990 cited in Bryman, 2016, p.546) four criteria for quality of documents. The quality of data assures the internal validity of research, and such research can be also applied to other countries by investigating their media discourse.

4.5 Limitations

Discourse analysis has great advantages in interpreting language and social context. However, qualitative research can lack the ability of generalization. And in some degree it is too subjective. The newspapers I studied are English language newspapers, its audience are elites, which neglect minorities, or perhaps, the voice of the majority of the population. In Pakistan, Urdu is the national language, and Hindi in India. The reason for the focus on English newspaper instead of Urdu newspaper or Hindi newspaper has been demonstrated before, nonetheless, my lack of mastery of neither Urdu nor Hindi restricts the representativeness of results. Besides, the limited selection of 10 articles each may not represent the whole picture of China's image in the eyes of India and Pakistan.

4.6 Ethical Consideration

The thesis followed the Swedish Research Council's guidelines Good Research Practice (2017). Although my research is concerned about national image, which can be politically sensitive, it is not sensitive to individual people. All the data for analysis is based on online documents and newspapers and is accessible to anyone.

Chapter 5. China's image in BRI

In this part I study President Xi Jinping's speech "*Work Together to Build the Silk Road Economic Belt and The 21st Century Maritime Silk Road*" (携手推进“一带一路”建设) at the opening ceremony of the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation (XI, 2017). It is available at the official website: "<http://www.beltandroadforum.org/english/n100/2018/0306/c25-1038.html>". There are 2534 words in total, the text is in English. Fairclough's three-dimensional approach is employed to conduct a critical discourse analysis of the speech. The aim of this part is to answer the question: what kind of image does China try to establish in BRI? In other words, what kind of an actor does China want to play in the international relations? The analysis draws upon language resources like words, phrases, modality and voice to investigate on the implied ideology of China's image.

5.1 Text analysis

1. Words

Following Mautner's corpus linguistics guide I use concordance software (link: <https://www.online-utility.org/text/analyzer.jsp>) calculating word frequency of Xi's speech "*Work Together to Build the Silk Road Economic Belt and The 21st Century Maritime Silk Road*". Hereby I list the top-ten words of speech to find out what is of most concern. Function words like "an, is, and" are not considered in the count.

Word	Occurrences
------	-------------

road	78
belt	54
cooperation	47
countries	44
should	44
initiative	43
development	41
china	40
silk	27
people	24

Table 1. Top-10 words in President Xi's speech at opening of Belt and Road forum

As seen in table 1, the words *road* and *belt* appear most as they constitute the phrase *the belt and road initiative*. The following high frequency words *cooperation*, *countries*, *development* show that the core value of BRI is cooperation of countries and developmental of all. First, BRI is an initiative working to promote all-round cooperation including policy, infrastructure, trade, finance, even science, education, culture and people. Second, in China's view, "development holds the master key to solving all problems" (Xi, 2017). This is also the purpose of BRI, to achieve global development in all dimensions, with economy first. China proposes the idea of a mutual win-situation, to persuade other countries that this cooperation mechanism is a benefit for all. In addition, the modalities word *should* conveys a sense of urgency accompanied with the appealing to ask audience to take actions, as Halliaday (1994,p.362) examines, *should* implies a suggestion to fulfil certain missions. Therefore, the speech also aims at encouragement of participating.

In sum, the speech shapes China as a reliable, responsible and cooperative friend, with great ambition to unit countries together. It describes China's blueprint for the future international society. It seems that China is taking proactive foreign policy to become a significant regional leader.

2. Phrases

As the topic is BRI, and my research aims to explore China's narratives about BRI, the term *the belt and road* is used to build a collocational profile of Xi's speech, to examine the typical discourse phrases on BRI. Sentences are organized in Appendix I.

According to the Appendix I, the investigation on the subjects, nouns, and verbs of the sentence structure provides an in-depth interpretation of China's real intention and motivation behind the speech. The following part will analyse the sentences from these three dimensions to examine China's image.

First, the subject of lines 1 to lines 7 is 'we', it means that the bright future of this initiative should be constructed by 'us'. So who are 'we'? The audience of speech are heads of governments, over 100 states, and international organizations. Moreover, As the Forum captures the attention of the world, its potential audience could be all the countries interested in this project. Xi's speech mentions that "BRI focuses on the Asian, European and African continents, but is also open to all other countries." Therefore, the speech mainly targets on international audience, the potential intention of projecting China's image is vivid in its agenda, thus provide a favourable international environment for China (Barr. 2011).

Second, line 1 to line 8 show the promise of BRI: *a road for peace, a road of prosperity, a road of opening up, a road of innovation, a road connecting different civilizations, a project of century, a road with high ethical standards, and a great taking*. It seems that BRI is an assembly of various fields of development, including economy, politics, culture and social dimensions. Despite diversity of roles, a common feature for the undertaking future of road is connection. As the function of road lies in smooth connection, and the creators desire an opening-up of all the countries along the route, the BRI's overall function is seen as a network that breaks the barriers between countries.

Third, the use of verbs after the phrase "*the belt and road initiative*" from line 9 to line 13 indicate positive orientation of the Initiative. For instance, verbs like "*respond (mutuality, dialogue), conform (cooperation), meet (dialogue, cooperation)*"

are all active voice. It reflects on China's willingness to do something, to achieve common goals.

Expressions in line 14 and line 15 is China's attitude of what BRI is not. A frequent picture of BRI might trigger the concern in the international community about BRI's ambition of changing current international system and build a different one. Thus Xi stresses on China's good intention and responds to the negative assumption.

3. Motivations and history

In this speech, it is very interesting to spell out how China legitimizes its motivation for BRI, and how China connects these countries together. I argue that history plays an important role in BRI's narratives. With the fabrication of 'the ancient Silk Road' as a quasi-historical cooperation or connection of many countries China uses an ideology to unit countries together.

The beginning of the speech backtracks to the history of 'the ancient silk road', describing a glorious prosperous image of 'ancient' (not further specified) times, some adjectives like "splendid, exciting, great" are used. Then Xi points out "the Silk Road spirit has become a great heritage of human civilization", which refers to the spirit of "peace and cooperation, openness and inclusiveness, mutual learning and mutual benefit". The logic of discourse is that these spirits contribute to peace and prosperity of the past. After that, a saying of "history is our best teacher" indicates that countries should follow this spirit, and thus we can re-build prosperity. Moreover, to justify the necessity of BRI, Xi explains that the world today is filled with challenge and turmoil, which forms an appeal to a new setting of global society. A similar view is held by Sterling (2018, p.104), he states that China's Old Silk Road resulted in the exchange of commodities and various aspects of culture. The newly Silk Road marks the revival of shared historical cultural heritage. In this view, China persuades other states to join BRI by using soft power, in which Silk Road spirit works as a motivation towards BRI. From this analysis, China presents a strong standpoint in acting as a leader, a responsible regional power, a constructive power and a major power caring all human

being's well.

5.2 Discursive practice and social practice

Discursive practice focuses on how texts are produced and consumed, and perceives a text not in an isolated position, but connected to other texts. That is, any discourse is situated in a specific socio-cultural sphere (Richardson, 2006). In this part, I adopt Fairclough's concept of intertextuality to associate this speech with other texts in order to better understand the context of China's discourse. Other government document and popular ideology raised by President Xi will be addressed here. Furthermore, I draw on an international relations context to explain China's vision of international institutions in a social practice dimension.

1. Building bridges through proverbs

First, I examine the direct quotation in the speech. The quotation is listed as follows.

1. As a Chinese saying goes, "Peaches and plums do not speak, but they are so attractive that a path is formed below the trees."
2. "The beginning is the most difficult part."
3. An ancient Chinese saying goes, "A long journey can be covered only by taking one step at a time". Arab proverb which says that the Pyramid was built by piling one stone on another. In Europe, there is also the saying that "Rome wasn't built in a day."

(Xi, 2017)

China's leaders often quote ancient Chinese sayings in their speeches. It has been discussed that Chinese ancient culture is highlighted as important resources of soft power with Chinese characteristics (Wei and Zhang, 2009). Chinese ancient philosophy contributes to the China's image and the wisdom of BRI. In this speech, Xi quotes proverb from China, Europe and Arab world. It shows inclusiveness of BRI. The first excerpt, according to the context, means that China's initiative has been

echoed by many countries since it was proposed four years ago, that it is China's influence attracting others, not through threaten or coercion.

Influence is a kind of power, which can derive from military, political and economic power. Here I suggest it is China's economic success making it so attractive (Kurlantzick, 2007). Furthermore, being the world's second largest economy provides China credibility to launch this huge project. Through such an economic power influence, China initiates to further expand her influence over other spheres, the plan of BRI proves that. However, another question needs to be asked: how reliable is this credibility? China may want to shape itself as a more responsible and active contributor to international society. But for now, many voices of suspicion and criticism exist as China is weak in its political credibility (Ding, 2011). This question will be further discussed in the next part by analysing Pakistan and India's opinion.

2. External intertextuality and international relations

Second, according strategic narrative proposed by Roselle and etc. (2014), I pay particular attention to China's assumptions about international relations in BRI and soft power elements and thus capture an image of China. External intertextuality will be examined here. Specifically, related discourse is borrowed to further explain Xi's speech, In his text, Xi states that:

1. China will enhance friendship and cooperation with all countries involved in the Belt and Road Initiative on the basis of the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence. We are ready to share practices of development with other countries, but we have no intention to interfere in other countries' internal affairs, export our own social system and model of development, or impose our own will on others.
2. What we hope to achieve is a new model of win-win cooperation. We have no intention to form a small group detrimental to stability, what we hope to create is a big family of harmonious co-existence.
3. We should foster a new type of international relations featuring win-win cooperation; and we should forge partnerships of dialogue with no confrontation and of friendship

rather than alliance.

(Xi, 2017)

The first excerpt is a typical discourse of China's foreign policy. The "Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence" was first put forth in 1954 when premier Zhou Enlai visited India. It refers to "mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty; Mutual non-aggression; Mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs; Equality and cooperation for mutual benefit; Peaceful co-existence" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs P.R.C., n.d.). In this view, the Five Principles is a way of shelving difference, a response to conflicts, and specially created to deal with countries with different social systems and ideologies. China's promise of non-interference is especially popular in the Third World, for their history of colonialization. However, different countries interpret same behaviours differently (Mercer,1996). In Africa, China's investment in authoritarian countries has been criticized as damage to democracy (Shambaugh,2015).

The phrases "a new model of win-win cooperation", and "a new type of international relations featuring win-win cooperation" mentioned in the second and third excerpt indicates China's vision of international relations. It is a guiding philosophy for China's diplomacy, and also China's answer to "where are the international relations of the 21st Century heading" (Wang, 2016). In contrast, the old school realism theorist like Mearsheimer (2001) perceives that the international game is more like a zero-sum game, and China's rise is a threat to the world. Therefore, China's vision of international relations, reflects China's endeavour to soft China's offensive image.

A new type of international relations highlights cooperation, common interests and win-win outcome. It also proposes to build "a community of shared future". The concept of "shared future" has been emphasized by President Xi in many important occasions. It is deeply connected and corresponds with other foreign policy thoughts issued by Beijing, such as the Five Principles, a new type of international relations. They all share the common feature of highlighting cooperation of all, benefit for all,

development of all, peaceful of all. It is consistent with BRI's objective, can be interpreted as an ultimate goal of BRI. Therefore, China constructs her own unique vision of international relations, and actively publicizes these ideas in the world. All this points out that implicitly, China is dissatisfied with existing international system and desires a new model of international relations, with possibilities of well-being of all.

In conclusion, a comprehensive characterization of China's image is an ambitious project and seems impossible to carry out in this thesis. Here I only try to explain one part of it in relation to BRI. Through the critical discourse analysis of Xi's speech, I argue that China presents itself as a peace-loving, non-offensive, friendly, responsible country with kindness to achieve shared and win-win development.

Chapter 6. Pakistan newspaper opinion

In this part, I examine 10 newspaper articles (seen Appendix II) selected from *Dawn* press in Pakistan, the criteria for the text choice is elaborated in the methodology part. Foucauldian critical discourse analysis provides the method as well as the theory for analysis. First, I briefly browse nearly 80 *Dawn* articles published in the setting time, then through deep reading and structural analysis of these 10 articles, I extract main themes of discussions on BRI, which include economy, politics, culture and society. Then I divide the main argumentations into four general themes that are discussed in most articles: geo-political perspective, security perspective, economic perspective, and social-cultural perspective.

6.1 Geo-political perspective

Kashmir's sovereignty issue in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is the most disputed topic and cause for concerned argumentation. CPEC is heavily criticized by India and the US as a challenge to sovereignty and territorial integrity of India, which is the total opposite of what Xi claims to want in his speech. They claim

that CPEC passes through disputed Kashmir district, and indeed, India takes this as the major reason to boycott BRI (Jacob 2017). On the contrary, Pakistan denies the violation of India's sovereignty. When US Secretary of Defence James Mattis says, "One Belt, One Road also goes through disputed territory", Dawn responds as follows:

Mattis's use of the term 'disputed territory', while technically correct, still speaks of a failure to understand the geopolitical, historical and legal context of the Kashmir issue. Firstly, the term 'disputed territory' is one which Pakistan maintains; India is content to identify the region as falling within its own sovereign territories. The 'Kashmir issue' is also a political one relating to the legitimate rights of self-determination and political sovereignty of the Kashmiri people ("One Belt, One Road", 2017).

The authors Shah and Rivzi are experts on international law. They criticize Mattis's statement from an international law and geopolitics perspective. Here authors state that the US's real intention is to maintain its influence in South Asia, in which the US ignores other sovereign states' rights of development. Moreover, the article argues that the project is not a political activity but only an economic cooperation, which is good for Kashmir's people. In this position, China's opinion is coherent with Pakistan, when Chinese foreign minister spokesperson Hua Chunying (2017) declares "CPEC has nothing to do with territorial sovereignty disputes", and China will not interfere into Kashmir dispute.

Despite China's and Pakistan's consensus on the Kashmir issue, there are implicit suspicions about China's 'real intentions'. The argument lies in whether BRI is a project only for China's benefit, or a real intention for win-win outcomes. One article, the title "OBOR is a global game-changer, but for who?" raises the question that almost every actor is asking. Discussion about this topic often turns into a negative portrayal of China. The criticism organized as follows:

Tom Miller, a senior analyst at economic research service Gavekal Research, said: 'Even if

China's intentions are primarily economic, its growing economic leverage will have geopolitical consequences".

Even countries that have welcomed the initiative as beneficiaries are asking for greater clarity on the part of China about its intentions ("Belt and Road plan wins praise, but some concerns remain | ePaper | DAWN.COM," n.d.).

The rhetoric of emotion here reflects the anxiety and uncertainty of participating countries as well as Pakistan. They are afraid that BRI may be China's interest to expand its political influence and strength control over South Asia, and they probably became the victim of it. China's claim that the aim of this project is to promote prosperity cannot comfort neighbouring states (MFA, 2017). Apparently, although China tries to distinguish OBOR from geopolitical ambition, it is very hard to persuade stakeholders by ambiguous attitude only. Even "iron brothers" like Pakistan show their resistance to China's prospected growing influence (Vandewalle, 2015).

In geopolitics view, in the first case when Pakistan faces the critique from India and US about CPEC crossing disputed territorial, China is perceived as ally and, a potential supporter, hence BRI is taken as positive contributor to the economic growth. Whereas in the second case, the suspicion and anxiety about BRI's real intention proves that in Pakistan media are some voices that do not trust China, and that warn that China's investment comes with price. Therefore, it shows Pakistan's contradictory feelings towards China.

6.2 Security perspective

In consideration of national security, there is not much concern about this issue, *Dawn's* articles only emphasize that BRI should be active in the economic domain only rather than in political sphere.

"OBOR is a non-political development initiative. But when President Xi declares that a peaceful and stable environment is essential for success, it brings strategic questions into the

debate” (“Connecting through CPEC | ePaper | DAWN.COM,” n.d.).

“The One Belt, One Road (OBOR) signifies that geo-economics must take precedence over geo-politics, and that the centre of gravity should shift from conflict to cooperation,’ Prime Minister Sharif said.”

“CPEC must not be politicised, says Sharif” (Agencies, 2017).

The modal verb use of “must” delivers Pakistan’s strong agreement that the BRI should not extend to the political sphere for Pakistan. It is its national interest to defend its own sovereignty. The text here directly quotes Pakistan’s Prime Minister’s word that BRI should not be politicized. Underlying concern about a political transition of BRI reflects the fear of China’s dominance on Pakistan society. Meanwhile, it is also believed that BRI can promote the peaceful environment for Pakistan, as it has long suffered from terrorism problem (Vandewalle, 2015). In sum, considering national security, so far the majority does not present it as a threat, and praises it as positive impact for peaceful development. However, the media here preserves its suspicion about that.

6.3 Economic perspective

Much attention and discussion is paid to BRI’s economic benefits and restrictions in *Dawn*. On one hand, the media praises the great economic potential and benefit the BRI will bring to Pakistan. On the other hand, the media also mentions the risks of investment and trade. Significant sentences from the report are structured as follows:

1. Government and business leaders attending the annual conference agreed that the Belt and Road Initiative was doing a key job in restructuring the global production value chain amid profound changes in the world (“Belt and Road Initiative to deepen Pak-China ties: ex-PM | ePaper | DAWN.COM,” n.d.).
2. If OBOR succeeds even to a small extent, it could draw the wider region into a virtuous cycle of trade and prosperity that could cause the spectre of conflict among the region’s

three major military powers to recede.

If engaged with sensibly and pragmatically, OBOR could help all of China's trading partners and regional neighbours, big and small, realise collective gains (Editorial, 2017).

3. German Economy Minister Brigitte Zypries called for transparency to ensure that the calls for investment bids are "non-discriminatory" ("Belt and Road plan wins praise, but some concerns remain | ePaper | DAWN.COM," 2017).
4. The plan envisages a deep and broad-based penetration of most sectors of Pakistan's economy as well as its society by Chinese enterprises and culture. Its scope has no precedent in Pakistan's history in terms of how far it opens up the domestic economy to participation by foreign enterprises (" Exclusive: CPEC master plan revealed", 2017)
5. But for many Pakistani businessmen living and working on the Chinese side of the border, the road is a one-way street.

There is no benefit for Pakistan. It's all about expanding China's growth ("One-way street: CPEC more about expanding China's growth than bene", 2017).

From the report, there are three main respective responses to OBOR. First, the official government stays rather positive and confident about Sino-Pakistan cooperation under BRI. If the main actors in articles are presented to be Pakistan's government personnel, there is usually a direct quotation or restatement of their words, and mostly with characteristics of using 'big' and vague words without details of explanation and critique. For instance, in the first excerpt, adjectives like *profound*, *global*, *key* are used to stress the significance of the project. It is believed that CPEC can be a game changer to Pakistan's industrial structure and economic development (CPEC, 2017). Words like *restructuring*, *changes*, *readjustment*, *rebooting* are frequently appearing in the former prime minister Shaukat Aziz's comment on CPEC.

Second, unlike the central governments' full support of CPEC, some analysts keep reserved attitudes as shown in *Dawn*. They did not deny the historical opportunities and prosperity OBOR could bring. Nevertheless, analysts suggest to calm down and think about the problems and potential risks of plan. They are critical

about China's investment in Pakistan, especially in the argument of fragile balance of trade, the government's preferential policies towards Chinese companies, and less interests for Pakistan (Hussain, 2017, p.22-24).

According to the line 4, the analyst raises the concern of overwhelming penetration of Chinese capital, similarly, line 5 echoes the suspicion of CPEC's benefit for Pakistan, but it is based on the interview of a local business man's opinion. In fact, due to the complicated political environment and conflicting interests of parties, there are continuous political rivalries in Pakistan. No matter how many more gains or more loss CPEC will bring, it is undeniable that CPEC has profound influence in the future development. Adnan and Fatima (2016, p.234) argue that "this pattern of shifting in circumstances is the reason of great tension for the adversary of Pakistan internally as well as externally".

In sum, media's response to BRI is not coherent, the overall discourse is positive representation, mainly reflects on government's power. However, vigilance and suspicion co-exist with discussion on details. The example of "*Exclusive: CPEC master plan revealed*" expose media's critique and the endeavor to impact the audience's anti-CPEC emotion.

6.4 Social-cultural perspective

Reporting also refers to local residents' situation, which is usually negative.

For CPEC the Gwadar port is being built fast, leaving local fisherfolk terrified about loss of homes and livelihood.

locals are not part of the input on how CPEC will be developed ("Gwadar fisherfolk worry about One Belt One Road", 2017).

There are two reports that focus on ordinary people's life, one is Xinjiang's Pakistan business man who I have mentioned before, the other one is the Gwadar's fisher folk. Government's agency declares that investment and construction can bring prosperity.

But for the local residents, there is always a crisis in changing traditional life and anxiety about the unknown future. The report of the fisher folk discusses their unprotected life that they are forced to leave their hometown due to the port development. It reveals an unbalanced relationship between central government and ordinary people and furthermore conveys a resistance to CPEC. For instance, in the text, it cites some statements from the fishermen: “We have been told several times by security agencies that we should leave the port and fish at Sur”, in this conversation, the phrase “*we have been told*”, “*should*”, “*several times*” proves there is a lack of communication and negotiation mechanism between government and the locals, where instead of mediation, it seems that the locals have been forced to change.

Strengthening people-to-people connection is one of the principles of the BRI, however the situation shows the opposite. In the CPEC Long-term-Plan, it sincerely pays attention to the public opinion communication and people’s livelihood improvement in order to build a good social environment for the project implementation. However, connectivity largely rests on elites group. For instance, to expand the scale of training programmes for Pakistan officials in China and to enhance higher education exchange for outstanding Pakistan students (CPEC, 2017, p.20). Apparently this high-level of cultural exchange may earn the favourability and support from elites, but it will undermine reputation in local communities.

China makes great efforts in enhancing cultural exchange and builds many cultural brands to tell the Chinese story. For instance, it organizes Chinese cultural years, cultural festivals and create a “Happy Chinese New Year” brand to promote Chinese cultural experience, these activities are proved to be quite successful in branding China (MOE, 2017). In one report by *Dawn*, it gives positive meaning to cultural festival.

Ambassador Yao said [...] cultural collaboration would strengthen ties between people for a lasting bilateral economic and political bond between China and Pakistan (“CPEC Cultural Caravan Festival celebrates music, art and culture of China, Pakistan“, 2018).

Chapter 7. India's response to BRI

In this part, I analyze Indian newspaper *the Times of India's* (TOI) discourse on BRI. The list of 10 articles I study is given in the Appendix III. Among them, 10 articles feature negative comments on Belt and Road Initiative. It appears that BRI is mostly unfavorable in the context of TOI through the initial review of nearly 90 articles I found related. Based on my review of these articles, four sub-topics or themes are extracted from the articles: geo-strategic perspective; India's perspective of CPEC: economic colony; economic perspective, and cultural perspective.

7.1 Geo-strategic perspective

In the sample, two out of ten articles focus on the geo-strategic aspect of BRI. In their position, the aim of BRI is to expand China's military presence and political influence in Indo-Pacific region.

All global chokepoints are currently under pressure from China's One Belt One Road (OBOR) initiative through which Beijing intends to displace the US and its allies from the Indo-Pacific region, a top American commander told lawmakers today ("All global chokepoints under OBOR pressure," n.d.).

China's plan to expand its presence further in the Indian Ocean region and the Central Asia, however, has caused discomfort in Delhi, which has already been wary of China's "string of pearls" assets encircling India, according to experts on the subject ("China wants India in one-belt-one-road meet, India remains wary - Times of India," n.d.).

In fact, such strategic security concern is the main debate that is taking place in Indian academics and policy makers' discussions of BRI, in which they mostly frame BRI in the context of strategic studies. The reason lies in the strategic rival relationships of India and China. In the excerpt, the actors of US's allies refer to India. On the

contrary, China here is put into the opposite position, a challenger to the status quo. Mearsheimer's (2001) argument in his book *the tragedy of great power politics* could explain the worry of India, and furthermore India's opposition to BRI, in which China's rise is perceived as a threat to India, and a competitor.

Second, it seems that there is a lack of mutual trust between the two countries, and India's strong suspicion about BRI is a reaction based in the countries' general security dilemma. As discussed before, due to the anarchic nature of international society, both sides find it hard to know each other's real intention, which causes security dilemma, as one country's effort of security defense can be regarded as offensive threat by the opponent (Mearsheimer, 2006). Moreover, what is hidden in the above-quoted texts is that India also has its own interest in the Indian Ocean. As Hornat (2016, p.432) argues, India seeks to be "regional maritime power and security provider". Thus the competition status of two sides forged.

7.2 CPEC: economic colony

Although India refuses to join BRI, it pays close attention to BRI's progress in other South Asian countries because of their strategic significance to India. Pakistan in particular is in the center of India's concern. By analyzing TOI's reports on Pakistan's CPEC project, I suggest that Indian media report about BRI selectively, as they are more likely to focus on the negative implications of BRI, which in turn indicates that Indian newspapers are biased towards China's image. In what follows I focus on the linguistic style of texts and connoted meaning of the discourse.

China's long-term plans for Pakistan would do the East India Company proud.

Pakistan will become an economic colony of China as CPEC will help Beijing tighten its strategic embrace of its ally and provide it connectivity from Xinjiang to the Arabian Sea at Gwadar in Balochistan ("Beijing plans to turn Pakistan into its economic colony - Times of India," n.d.).

(BRI) could make Pakistan politically and economically subservient to China, warn scholars within Pakistan (“China-Pakistan-Economic-Corridor fuels fears of social upheaval - Times of India,” n.d.).

The headline, which is also the argument of this text, “*Beijing plans to turn Pakistan into its economic colony*” uses active form of transitive action to construct the clause (Richardson, 2006, p.55). *Beijing* is the actor, the verb *plan* is the active form, and is followed by the object *Pakistan*. Then, the editor frames the argument by using passive transitivity of Pakistan’s action. Take, for example, “*thousands of acres of Pakistani agricultural land will be leased to Chinese enterprises*”, within this sentence, the agent *Pakistan* is missing, in which miss the fact that the agricultural project of BRI is out of Pakistan government’s will. Thus the article establishes a victimized Pakistan and colonial China.

Additionally, metaphors like “*East India Company*”, “*economic colony*”, “*neo-colonial power*” are employed here to shape a negative image of China. The phrase “*East India Company*” is the description of China and “*economic colony*” refers to Pakistan. East India Company (EIC) is a global trading company which had conquered and exploited India among other places during the 18th and 19th centuries (Dalrymple, 2015). It is worth noting that EIC has a negative connotation in India and that the metaphor of EIC is used to depict China as a predator, comparing it to the British Empire of the 16th to the 19th century. Other choices of loaded phrases deteriorate BRI’s reputation, showing the TOI’s opposing attitude of BRI and China. It seems that there is anti-China sentiment ideological color within the discourse.

7.3 Economic perspective

In this section, I analyze TOI’s discussion of BRI’s economic dimension of BRI. Three articles are highlighted here. One is about European Union’s criticism on BRI implementation, another one is a lack of institutional framework for BRI, and the other one is India’s collective action against BRI. My discussion focuses on how the

narratives of anti-BRI are constructed to justify India's alternative plan to BRI. The critique of BRI with regards to its economic sphere mostly lies in unsustainable debt, unfair competition, lack of transparency and lack of free trade, as well institutional framework ("EU envoys slam China's Belt and Road initiative, says it will hit free trade - Times of India," n.d.).

First, the text puts forth that "BRI runs counter to the EU agenda for liberalizing trade and pushes the balance of power in favor of subsidized Chinese companies" (ibid). Here the article raises the suspicion about China's "win-win cooperation", which is not unique with regard to the standpoint of EU as a lot of countries have similar questions (Albert, 2017).

The credibility of BRI largely depends on its success of the project, as well as the norms it obeys. Especially in dealing with different markets, it is important to notice that Chinese enterprise's behavior should be in accordance with the regular commonly recognized rules. Since the modern world economic system directed by western society, such as the WTO framework, China's modes of conduct is framed by these somewhat alien norms. EU stresses on BRI's basic principles is free trading and transparency rather than objecting BRI, and it admits that "Europe should not refuse to cooperate with China, it should state its terms" (ibid.). As for India, the text mentions, "EU's concern is in line with India's position". However, it didn't show up that India has any interest in the cooperation.

As CDA debates, discourse is action, and means to achieve something (Bryman, 2016). The reference of the EU's position in the text, as well as the allusions of other countries' disagreement in another text, I suggest, implies that the underlying meaning of the discourse is to tell the audience that India is not alone in discord with BRI, but shares its concerns with other major powers. Thus it makes sense of India's response and furthermore, it projects the aim that "New Delhi must build partnerships with countries that are also concerned about the strategic geo-political and economic implications of this venture. India needs to work with partner countries to provide an alternative model one that is based on mutually beneficial partnerships, respectful of sovereignty of countries" ("China's OBOR fails to get global traction, faces

opposition from big nations - Times of India,” n.d.).

According to the above analysis of Indian newspaper’s discourse the BRI has many deficits and China’s image is depicted in a rather negative way, that the project is more likely took a tool for serving China’s self-interests. a potential benefit of economic cooperation is ignored in those TOI reports.

7.4 Cultural perspective

Despite China’s invitation, India came out in open opposition to China’s initiative. In one report about India’s response to BRI, the journalist interprets OBOR as “colonial enterprise”, “appear attractive, sour quickly”, and Chinese President Xi as “world’s latest globalization guru” (“India slams China’s One Belt One Road initiative, says it violates sovereignty - Times of India,” n.d.). The scathing criticism appears China’s unpopular in India and deep political mistrust. Even so, TOI also pays close attention to China’s response to India’s objection. In two newspaper reports that I found very typical with regards to this, TOI cites Chinese consul general Ma Zhanwu’s friendly speech about Sino-India relationship.

we look at India as a very valuable partner in OBOR because the 2,000-year-old heritage that we are looking to bring back through the Belt and Road initiative will remain incomplete without the Indian partnership. After all, a large part of this heritage is shared between us, said Ma.

Since Beijing and New Delhi have wide-ranging common interests on regional and global affairs, the two should further strategic cooperation instead of adopting tactics that may worsen relations, the editorial said (“Can’t change India’s mentality on OBOR, but doors of cooperation open,” 2017).

In the first excerpt, Ma’s reference of ancient heritage provides a cultural meaning to Sino-India relations and moreover, employs the strategy of cultural diplomacy to

justify the deep friendship between the two countries; he also mentions Xuanzang, a 7th century Chinese monk coming to India to study Buddhism who promoted Buddhism in China, to further stimulate bilateral cultural communication. In this sense, Ma borrows the positive cultural exchange in an attempt to persuade India that cooperation is a privilege, and that the disagreements should not be in the way of their bilateral relationship. Considering the application of cultural diplomacy, or in Nye's word soft power, is very common in the case of Sino-India dialogue.

For instance, during Modi's informal visit to China in 27 April, 2018, Modi attended the cultural program and visited museums which is seen as China's cultural diplomacy. And in one instance President Xi states the he has seen some Bollywood movies and suggested to introduce more Bollywood movies into China and vice versa ("Modi-Xi's informal summit ends," 2018). Furthermore, Modi also suggests the promotion of people-to-people contact in spirituality, tradition, entertainment, games, tourism, and health ("PM Modi, Xi Jinping begin second day of informal summit in Wuhan - Times of India," 2018).

Moreover, one important consensus of the two sides is to establish some form of a high-level humanitarian exchange mechanism and to vigorously promote personnel exchanges to form a new wave of cultural exchanges between China and India (Xinhua net, 2018). Therefore, China (as well as India) seek(s) to use cultural diplomacy and soft power to solve the disagreements of two countries. It is important to recognize that soft power is an important means for China to promote its foreign policy and it is also one of the aims of BRI, to encourage people-to-people bound in cultural, education, tourism dimensions.

Chapter 8. Conclusion

This paper elaborated on China's strategic image shaping in the Belt and Road Initiative as well as Pakistan's and India's media response as case studies to examine the degree of correspondence between self-presentation and re-presentation. The preceding study aimed to address the research questions: What kind of national image

does China try to establish in the Belt and Road Initiative? How is this image perceived in other countries' media response? Within the framework of soft power theory and based on the theoretical and methodological approach of critical discourse analysis of Fairclough and Foucault, the paper structurally analyses President Xi's speech during the opening ceremony of the Belt and Road Forum and 10 newspaper articles each from Pakistan's *Dawn* and India's *Times of India*.

In consideration of China's image, the analysis shows that China along with the ambitious BRI, strategically puts forward her discourse of a new international system and promotes China's values and ideals to the world, in which publicize Chinese characteristics of political values as its soft power. On one hand, China expresses her concern about common existing challenges for the global community and suggests that "a community of shared future", "a new type of international relations featuring win-win cooperation" shall be promoted to deal with challenges together. On the other hand, China's "Silk Road spirit" is highlighted in the historical context of the ancient "Silk Road", and still perceived valuable nowadays. The "Silk Road Spirit" denotes the spirit of "peace and cooperation, openness and inclusiveness, mutual learning and mutual benefit" conveying a message to the world that China is a constructive power, a peace-loving country, and a responsible actor in the international society. In this respect, China's great ambition is wrapped by the soft ideals and positive construction of image to paving the way for development.

Boulding's definition of national image consists of an image that a nation harbors of itself and a collection of images about that nation in other countries' understanding. Therefore, only with an investigation of China's self-image and other countries' depiction can a comprehensive image be created. A CDA analysis of Pakistan and India media's response provided insight into the correspondence of the two dimensions of presentation and re-presentation.

Geopolitically China and Pakistan share connectivity and interdependence through Pakistan's particularly large security dependence on China. Therefore a contradictory feeling emerges that China is a constructive power but great suspicion co-exists with the fear of China taking advantages of Pakistan. Within the field of

security, China is doing positive contribution to Pakistan's development, however, that trust only exist when China's political or military influence limited to minimum. Economically there are three respective debates, active supporters see BRI as an opportunity and game changer, and they stay positive that that the bandwagon can bring prosperity to Pakistan. China's idea of a win-win cooperation is recognized here with a trust in China's active role in the international society. More cautious groups struggle between critics of financial risks of BRI and opportunities of development, hence advocating cautious cooperation with containment. Other groups of anti-CPEC, perceive China and BRI as a crisis for the existing power relations, and China is presented as a threat to Pakistan. In consideration of the social-cultural domain, it seems that there is a divergence between elites and working class. BRI gets support by policy-makers, whereas lower class feel distressed and misunderstood of BRI.

As China puts more effort in the high culture, the absence of local communication is becoming the major weakness of China's image. Fundamentally, the Pakistan's mainstream society appears supportive of BRI. China is constructed as a successful indispensable power with great influence in the global community. However, the opposing voice is also strong and should be taken into account, especially for an unstable society filled with anxiety. China's values of a win-win cooperation have been questioned and a large group of people is skeptical of China's real intentions. The logic of argumentation lies in that there is only one party that will reap most benefits and in this view Pakistan is the victim as China is more powerful.

Contrary to that, Indian media portrays an extremely negative image of the BRI, which fits into India's attitude as the strongest opponent of BRI. The greatest controversy rests on BRI as China's geostrategy to expand its global influence and military presence, posing a threat to India's national interest. China's military power is regarded as offensive, aggressive and should be contained. For India, the CPEC project is China's colonization plan with the purpose of changing Pakistan as its province or puppet. Economically, more emphasis is put on the criticism of unsustainability of debt, unfair competition, lack of transparency and absence of institutional framework. To India, BRI is doomed to be a failure or wish to a failure.

However, despite the refusal of participation in BRI for the reason of sovereignty violation, the negotiations between leaderships of both states is continuing. In this process, cultural diplomacy is utilized to open the gate for constructing mutual-trust of each other. Although they haven't achieved consensus on BRI cooperation, there is progress in the soft part of communication. Overall, China's image in India is historically negative and BRI further strengthens this impression or even media deliberately presents the unfavorable image. Media exhibits a stereotype of China as a bully country, a rising hegemon, a threat to India's national interest and a hypocritical state. It is in totally contrasting to China's self-presentation.

Analytically, with respect to the consistent of China's self-image and other countries' response, the analysis of this paper reveals that different countries have divergent interpretations of that, however there are some commonalities and conclusions derived from various perceptions. First, in the objective sense it is common acknowledged that China is an influential power, and her ambitious BRI project will change the future global order. Whereas in examination of more subjective position, China's soft image and soft diplomatic language works differently. For countries having more mutual political trust like Pakistan, China is perceived as a positive contributor and a friendly partner. For countries with more distrust and vigilance, China's self-presentation is suspicious in their eyes. Meanwhile, it is acknowledged that BRI as purely an economic project are beneficial to all, however the potential of BRI increase China's political presence in South Asia worries not only India but also Pakistan. It seems that China's political credibility is concerned in the eyes of others. More attachment need to be further explored. Correspondingly, China's self-image also has a representational force in its own behaviours, in which China normative its actions in the framework of self-presentation. Therefore, it continues to open dialogue with India to actively deal with disagreements.

In sum, China's image in BRI embedded with both attractiveness and vulnerabilities. It seems that China consciously employ soft power as the supplementation to its foreign policy, and project positive national image. BRI is a long-term plan, hence the image of China is a changing dynamic.

Appendix I

1. We should build the Belt and Road into **a road for peace**.
2. We should build the Belt and Road into **a road of prosperity**.
3. We should build the Belt and Road into **a road of opening up**.
4. We should build the Belt and Road into **a road of innovation**.
5. We should build the Belt and Road into **a road connecting different civilizations**.
6. We will contribute to **pursuing** the Belt and Road Initiative, **a project of the century, so that it will benefit people across the world**.
7. We should also **strengthen international counter-corruption cooperation** so that the Belt and Road will be **a road with high ethical standards**.
8. The Belt and Road Initiative is **a great undertaking** which requires dedicated efforts.
9. These fruitful outcomes show that the Belt and Road Initiative **responds to the trend of the times, conforms to the law of development, and meets the people's interests**.
10. The pursuit of the Belt and Road Initiative **requires a peaceful and stable environment**.
11. China **will endeavor to build a win-win business partnership** with other countries participating in the Belt and Road Initiative, enhance trade and investment facilitation with them, and build **a Belt and Road free trade network**.
12. China will **provide assistance** worth RMB 60 billion to developing countries and international organizations participating in the Belt and Road Initiative **to launch more projects to improve people's well-being**.
13. The Belt and Road Initiative **is rooted in the ancient Silk Road**.
14. I have said on many occasions that **the pursuit of** the Belt and Road Initiative is **not meant to reinvent the wheel**. Rather, it **aims to complement the development strategies of countries involved by leveraging their comparative strengths**.
15. In pursuing the Belt and Road Initiative, we **will not resort to outdated geopolitical maneuvering**.

(XI, 2017, “Work Together to Build the Silk Road Economic Belt and The 21st Century Maritime Silk Road”).

Appendix II

	10 articles in <i>DAWN</i> (Pakistan)
1	One Belt, One Road , October 29, 2017, Sikander Ahmed Shah and Abid Rizvi < https://www.dawn.com/news/1367015 >
2	Belt and Road plan wins praise, but some concerns remain , May 17, 2017, Goh Sui Noi < https://epaper.dawn.com/print-textview.php?StoryImage=17_05_2017_013_002 >
3	OBOR connectivity shunned , May 17, 2017, Editorial < https://www.dawn.com/news/1333573 >
4	Connecting through CPEC , May 21, 2017, Muhammad Amir Rana < https://www.dawn.com/news/1334436 >
5	CPEC must not be politicised, says Sharif May, 15, 2017, Agencies < https://www.dawn.com/news/1333247 >
6	Belt and Road Initiative to deepen Pak-China ties: ex-PM , March 27, 2017, Editorial < https://epaper.dawn.com/print-textview.php?StoryImage=27_03_2017_003_007 >
7	One-way street: CPEC more about expanding China's growth than benefit for Pakistan , August 02, 2017, AFP < https://www.dawn.com/news/1349148 >
8	Exclusive: CPEC master plan revealed , Jun 21, 2017, Khurram Husain < https://www.dawn.com/news/1333101 >
9	Gwadar fisherfolk worry about One Belt One Road , Dec 08, 2017, Zofeen T. Ebrahim < https://www.dawn.com/news/1334121 >
10	CPEC Cultural Caravan Festival celebrates music, art and culture of China, Pakistan , February 26, 2018, Jamal Shahid < https://www.dawn.com/news/1391802 >

Appendix III

10 articles in the Times of India (India)	
1	All global chokepoints under OBOR pressure: Admiral Harris , Feb 15, 2018, PTI < https://bit.ly/2MBZpow >
2	China wants India in one-belt-one-road meet, India remains wary , January 8, 2017, Dipanjan Roy Chaudhury < https://bit.ly/2L6nj6N >
3	Beijing plans to turn Pakistan into its economic colony , May 16, 2017, TNN < https://bit.ly/2PlzUGA >
4	China-Pakistan-Economic-Corridor fuels fears of social upheaval , May 9, 2017, Dipanjan Roy Chaudhury < https://bit.ly/2PnyZp1 >
5	EU envoys slam China's Belt and Road initiative, says it will hit free trade , Apr 20, 2018, ET Bureau < https://bit.ly/2wd5DBc >
6	China's OBOR fails to get global traction, faces opposition from big nations , May 20, 2017, Dipanjan Roy Chaudhury < https://bit.ly/2MXQmeB >
7	Belt Forum ends without creating system for joint implementation; Indian presence felt , May 16, 2017, Saibal Dasgupta < https://bit.ly/2nQd8dB >
8	China assures India on OBOR , May 19, 2017, KOLKATA < https://bit.ly/2vXFAYX >
9	Can't change India's mentality on OBOR, but doors of cooperation open: Chinese media , Dec 27, 2017, TOI < https://bit.ly/2CcFNj8 >
10	India slams China's One Belt One Road initiative, says it violates sovereignty , May 14, 2017, TNN < https://bit.ly/2A4q8U8 >

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