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## **China and the Persian Gulf: Economics and Diplomacy on the New Silk Road**

The rise of East Asia and China in particular has seen the region booming and economic integration deepening via growing trade and investment flows, rapid developments which have required a dramatically increased energy supply. These needs are largely being met by the Middle East oil states which now find themselves caught between their new customers and their old ally, the USA, just as relations between Beijing and Washington are cooling and a new era of competition and potential conflict looms.

Philip Gater-Smith analyses the Middle East's present dilemma in light of US strategy, China's Belt and Road Initiative and the role of other Asian competitors. Focusing on China's efforts to strengthen economic and diplomatic ties to the Gulf States, he asks whether China is on course to replace the US as the Gulf region's dominant external power. And, if so, when?

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