

CHINA CROSSROADS

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Belt and Road, Neither Boom Nor Bust: The Continuing Relevance of Politics and Economics

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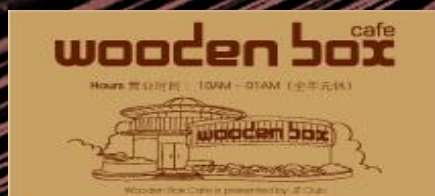
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The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has been touted by many as a grand success with potentially earthshaking implications. Such commentators point, among other things, to the infrastructure that has been built along the BRI, massive amounts of Chinese loans, and putatively increased trade and investment. The BRI's economic and political woes in Kenya, Malaysia, and Sri Lanka have led some to conclude the BRI will be recalibrated, has stalled, or will fail. This talk, however, shows that neither position is correct, and that more contextual analysis is needed. There are successes and disappointments due to political and economic realities which all Belt and Road analyses should contemplate.

[Jean-Marc Blanchard](#), Ph.D., is Executive Director of the [Mr. & Mrs. S.H. Wong Center for the Study of Multinational Corporations](#) (USA), Distinguished Professor, School of Advanced International and Area Studies, East China Normal University (China), and the Editor of the Palgrave Studies in Asia-Pacific Political Economy series. He is a co-author of *Economic Statecraft and Foreign Policy*, the editor or co-editor of and a contributor to fifteen edited volumes and journal issues and the author of nearly sixty refereed articles, book chapters and other scholarly publications. One of his major research streams focuses on China's Maritime Silk Road Initiative (MSRI). In this vein, he has published and contributed to China's Maritime Silk Road Initiative and South Asia and orchestrated and contributed to special journal issues on China's MSRI and South Asia for *Geopolitics* and China's MSRI and Southeast Asia for *The Journal of Contemporary China*. He also is working on edited books on China's MSRI and Southeast Asia, as well as China's MSRI, Africa, and the Middle East. Dr. Blanchard's other research include the politico-economy of Chinese outward foreign direct investment (FDI), the politico-economy of inward FDI into China, the politico-economy of China and foreign aid, multinational corporations, and the political economy of national security (Dr. Blanchard received his Ph.D. and M.A. degrees in Political Science from the University of Pennsylvania and his A.B. in Economics from the University of California, Berkeley. Prior to his career in academia, Dr. Blanchard worked for the U.S. Federal Savings & Loan Insurance Corporation and Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and the investment banking firm Kelling, Northcross, & Nobriga. He previously served as an Economics and Business Commentator for China Radio International and he frequently publishes Op-Ed pieces in leading online and print publications.

[China Crossroads](#) hosts talks on all topics related to China, including business, foreign policy, and other areas as they relate to China, the idea being that China is both already a "crossroads" of the world and itself at a "crossroads" in terms of its future global influence. For more information, contact Frank Tsai at editor@shanghai-review.org.