



**The *Dao* in China's Growing Presence in The South Pacific**

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Demikian pernyataan ini saya buat dengan sebenarnya, untuk dapat dipergunakan bilamana diperlukan.

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*“what’s meant for you will reach you even  
if it’s between to mountains,  
and what isn’t meant for you, won’t reach you,  
even if it’s between your two lips.”*

## FOREWORDS

I remember somewhere in the middle of a class, one of my lectures told us that thesis-writing is more than pouring out words from our brain, putting together theories and realities. More than ever, it requires not only brain, but also mental strength. Specifically, he brought up the term 'Grit'. He reiterated how undergraduate thesis is not only a test for the knowledge we learn from uni, but also a test for our perseverance. Back at that time, I did not really know what he meant by that, until it was my turn. Along the process, I learn that undergraduate thesis is a long, continuous, and unpredictable process and only with persistence that we can reach the finish line. It was not easy to be able to make it up to this point, and it was with the help of the people around me that I am finally here.

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

AIIB : Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank

APEC : Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation

BRI : Belt and Road Initiative

BRICS: Brazil Russia India China South Africa

CCP : Chinese Communist Party

CCTV : China Central Television

CDB : China Development Bank

CGTN : China Global Television Network

CI : Confucius Institute

FDI : Foreign Direct Investment

FSM : Federated States of Micronesia

GDP : Gross Domestic Product

IMF : International Monetary Fund

IRT : International Relations Theory

KMT : Kuomintang

OBOR : One Belt One Road

MoFA : Ministry of Foreign Affairs

MSRI : Maritime Silk Road Initiatives

PIC : Pacific Island Countries

PIF : Pacific Island Forum

PNG : Papua New Guinea

PRC : People's Republic of China

ROC : Republic of China

SERB : Silk Road Economic Belt

SPTO : South Pacific Tourism Organization

TPP : Trans Pacific Partnership

UN : United Nations

USP : University of The South Pacific

WTO : World Trade Organizations

WW : World War

## ABSTRACT

*The rise of China as one of the great power in the international politic has been the hottest topic in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Following the economic reform led by Deng Xiaoping in 1978, China re-emerges stronger than ever with its influences covering major part of the world. One region particularly stands out since the prior dominance of United States therein, the South Pacific. The study of this research will be limited to the 14 members of the Pacific Island Forum consisting of, Cook Islands, Nauru, Nieuwe, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu. Under the Western International Relations Theory (IRT) however, the rise of China is always seen in a rather malign manner. This research therefore, contends that in order to fully understand China's behavior in the international community, we need to know how China perceives itself. By applying one of the most famous Chinese traditional school, Daoism, this research aims to examine the strategy used in the expansion of China's influence in the South Pacific. Daoism is symbolized with yin and yang, where the two elements are contradictory, yet they complement each other. Under the Dao dialectics, this research argues that China has been utilizing a combination of two contradictory elements of power – soft and hard power – in expanding its prominence in the South Pacific region.*

**Keywords:** *The rise of China, South Pacific, Constructivism, Daoism, Culture in Foreign Policy*