



Power, Politics and Maritime Governance in the Indian Ocean

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The Indian Ocean is of tremendous geo-political and strategic relevance. More than eighty per cent of global seaborne trade in oil passes through the Ocean. Access to resources is under-regulated (fishing) or has yet to be conceived (deep sea bed mining) and security concerns such as piracy and the stability of strategically located states, are propelling countries to rethink naval capabilities and priorities. This applies to littoral countries as well as to extra-regional powers such as China, Japan, European countries and the United States, each of which is keenly interested in maintaining and securing open sea-lanes of communication. The revival in maritime concern is prompting new dynamics of competition and cooperation in a region that has historically been characterised by dense cultural, economic and political networks. The Indian Ocean is an extensive and expansive space where no one power has been able to hold sway. Hence, multilateralism and open regionalism are key contributors to stability, both in terms of military as well as commercial coordination. In this issue, scholars from Asia, Europe and the US examine institutions and examples of maritime governance within the Indian Ocean including security arrangements, evolving forms of alliance building and counter-balancing, policy planning and forecasting. This book was published as a special issue of the Journal of the Indian Ocean Region.

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