

The China-U.S. Strategic Competition and East Asian Security

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questions

- From 2009 to 2016 East Asia experienced an unprecedented regional tension after the Cold War.
- Why this could happen? What kind of changes have come to the regional security order?

Why we have a regional tension?

- As China is rising and more confident, the U.S. has used its diplomatic and military resources to restrain China, and then a strategic competition happened.
- Japan and some Southeast Asian countries have been trying to use this opportunity to promote their own interests.

China's changing policy and impacts

- more confident and active to reshape its neighboring regions
- “one belt one road” brings more economic cooperation
- “core interests” brings more confrontations

two assumptions of China's traditional diplomacy

- a moderate international situation is always better than an intense international.
- to maintain a stable and friendly relations with other countries is always more important than defending some national interests.

defending core interests: China's new diplomacy

- This new diplomacy, a so-called great power diplomacy with Chinese characteristics, expanded China's national interests, created a new image of China, and changed other countries expectations about China.

The definition of core interests

- “China is firm in upholding its core interests which include the following: state sovereignty, national security, territorial integrity and national reunification, China’s political system established by the Constitution and overall social stability, and the basic safeguards for ensuring sustainable economic and social development.”
—— China’s Peaceful Development. White Paper issued by the Information Office of the State Council, September 2011.
- The Diaoyu Island and the South Chinas Sea become China’s core interests.

The Diaoyu Island and South China Sea become a test for the new diplomacy's bottom line

- In January 2012 the People's Daily firstly declared that the Diaoyu Island is China's core interest.
- In April 2013 the spokeswoman Hua Chunying supported that claim.
- In August 2013, several Chinese scholars from the China International Institute for strategic Society, directed by Qi Jianguo, Deputy chief of staff of the people's Liberation Army, told some Japanese Congressmen that the Diaoyu Island is China's core interest.
- In July 2016, shortly after the South China Sea arbitration, Wu Shengli, Commander of the Chinese Navy, told the United States Naval Operations Secretary Richardson that South China Sea is China's core interest.

China's benefits from confrontation

- Strengthened control over the disputed maritime waters and territories.
- improved political and military cooperation with Russia.
- Developed cooperation with the ASEAN.

The Obama Administration achieved little

- As China's power and influence continued to rise, the U.S.' dominance has been undermined.
- The U.S. was not as tough as its allies expected.

The Risks and opportunities

- The competition between China and the U.S. is strategic and structural and will not disappear in the future. The next round of confrontation may come.
- China and the U.S. need to restrain and cooperate to build a new model of major power relations.
- Nobody knows what President Trump will do in the future.