

Dancing Between Beijing and Taipei: Vietnam in the Shadow of the Belt and Road Initiative

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Abstract

China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has brought opportunities to its neighboring countries in terms of foreign investment and economic development, while at the same time arousing suspicion in the region regarding Beijing's intentions. This article analyzes Vietnam's responses to Beijing's BRI, with a special focus on the psychological mechanism leading to Hanoi's subtle confrontation of China and mild resistance of the BRI project. The concept of peace efficacy, which is initiated by the theory of the Balance of Relationships (BoR), is proposed in this article to explain the abovementioned case. Meanwhile, Hanoi's manipulation of two-handed strategies and seeking a balance between Beijing and Taipei are the other focuses of this article. Vietnam's deeds, once again, reveal its relational confrontation of China. This article further investigates how Vietnam has sophisticatedly redefined and categorized the BRI and utilized Taipei's New Southbound Policy (NSP) to suit its own interests; through unofficially strengthening its ties with Taipei, Hanoi is able to ease the pressure arising from Beijing's assertive policy, display its autonomy and prove its equal, independent status in the international arena.

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