

*The Japanese “Free and Open Indo-Pacific” and Sino-Japanese Relations: A Chinese Perspective**

Zheng Chen and Guangtao Wang

Abstract

This article examines the Chinese assessment of and responses toward the Japanese “Free and Open Indo-Pacific” (FOIP) concept against the background of evolving Sino-Japanese relations. Addressing both its security and economic concerns, the FOIP is Tokyo’s top-level regional strategy design in the context of China’s rise. The development of the Japanese FOIP has been fluctuating with the evolution of Sino-Japanese relations and the emerging Sino-U.S. strategic contest over the past decade. The complexity and the fluid nature of the Japanese FOIP has prompted varying assessments and policy recommendations among Chinese analysts, which can be roughly divided into three categories: the hardline approach, the hedging approach, and the docking approach. Meanwhile, remarks of Chinese officials on the Japanese FOIP remain elusive, carefully differentiating between the Indo-Pacific

Zheng Chen is Associate Professor at the School of International Relations and Public Affairs, Fudan University.

Guangtao Wang is Associate Professor at the Institute of International Studies, Fudan University. Correspondence should be sent to wangguangtao@fudan.edu.cn.

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