



Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments

STUDIES

Dragon Against the Sun: Chinese Views of Japanese Seapower

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Resources: Strategy & Policy

Over the past decade, the Chinese navy overtook Japan's maritime service in critical measures of power, including fleet size, aggregate tonnage, and firepower. China eclipsing Japan in naval power could introduce unwelcome strategic trends. It may well fuel an even more intense competition between Tokyo and Beijing, two seafaring rivals that already regard each other with deep suspicion. Japan's displacement at sea could increase the probability of deterrence failure in the next crisis. It threatens to undercut U.S. confidence in Japan's capacity to fulfill its allied responsibilities, sowing acrimony within the security partnership.

In *Dragon Against the Sun: Chinese Views of Japanese Seapower*, Senior Fellow Toshi Yoshihara assesses how Chinese strategists perceive the shift in the Sino-Japanese naval balance. The study finds that Beijing anticipates an intensifying naval rivalry with Tokyo in the coming years. The report further finds that the prospects of naval superiority will persuade Chinese statesmen and commanders to adopt an offensive strategy in a local maritime conflict against Japan. Yoshihara shows that the local naval imbalance, if left unaddressed, will strain the U.S.-Japan alliance and destabilize Asia. The study urges Washington and Tokyo to recognize the Chinese challenge, act swiftly, and restore the naval balance.