

Perceptions of an Assertive China

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During the past two years, and particularly since China's quick and strong recovery from the global recession, the long-discussed topic of China's rise has come to be dominated by a new theme among both Chinese and foreign observers: The image of the supposedly cautious, low-profile, responsibility-shirking, free-riding Beijing of the past giving way to one of a more confident, assertive (some say arrogant), anti-status quo power that is pushing back against the West, promoting its own alternative (i.e., restrictive or exclusionary) norms and policies in many areas, and generally seeking to test the leadership capacity of the United States. This new image has prompted many Western pundits to assert that the Chinese are finally "revealing their true colors." And some believe that the Chinese, in the face of an apparently faltering Western democratic-capitalist model, and with the confidence provided by continued high growth rates and massive foreign exchange reserves, are now challenging American leadership of the global system.

Such observations are causing some U.S. politicians, military officials, and members of the business community to question whether China remains committed to the two elements that have together stood for over three decades as the hallmarks of the reform era: maintenance of cooperative relations with the West and a basic reliance on the open, free-market system. If they conclude that China is transitioning to a less cooperative, more assertive, fundamentally revisionist, and in many ways anti-Western approach to vital global and bilateral issues, the repercussions for the international system, and Sino-U.S. relations in particular, could be enormous.

This essay examines the features of the discussion in the West, and among many Chinese, regarding the notion of a more assertive China. It attempts to answer several questions: How is assertiveness defined or understood among Western and Chinese observers? What are the main manifestations or expressions of Chinese assertiveness? What is driving such assertiveness, in the views of both Western and Chinese observers? What are the lines of debate over this issue in China and the West, if any? What are the perceived implications of Chinese assertiveness for the future of the international system and Sino-Western relations? The conclusion provides some general observations regarding the significance of this issue for the future.

In focusing on perceptions and beliefs about Chinese assertiveness, this essay does not attempt to provide a factual assessment of whether or to what degree Chinese behavior is now more assertive and more anti-Western than in the past. Such an empirical assessment would require time and resources beyond the scope of this research. Nonetheless, this essay provides a first essential step in that direction, if one believes that, as the old adage states, “perception is reality.”

The Western View: Describing and Evaluating an Assertive China

There is a large and growing number and variety of Western perspectives on Chinese assertiveness. Indeed, writing about it has become a kind of cottage industry among some Western pundits over the past year or so.

In defining Chinese assertiveness, Western observers emphasize a newly forceful, “triumphalist,” or brash tone in foreign policy pronouncements; the promulgation of (or threat to implement) more aggressive or confrontational policies in specific areas; or some combination of the two. And in virtually all cases, Western observers focus on the supposedly anti-Western aspects of Chinese statements and policies.¹

Such behavior is attributed to a variety of factors generally associated with growing Chinese confidence, pride, and (paradoxically) insecurity. For many observers, the first two attitudes derive in part from China’s growing economic success and expanding economic presence, particularly its emergence from the global recession with high growth rates.² In some cases, Western observers link such economic success with Chinese perceptions of a shift in the global balance of power from the West to East and the concomitant decline of the United States as a global superpower, as it is gradually replaced by a multipolar global system that accords China much greater influence.³ However, a larger number of Western analysts also emphasize a broader cultural force that is allegedly transforming mere confidence and influence into hubris and assertiveness: a strident brand of Chinese nationalism, and especially economic nationalism.⁴ For some observers, Chinese nationalism, combined with a belief in the shifting global power balance, cause Beijing to regard supposedly “conciliatory gestures” by the Obama administration as “signs of weakness rather than goodwill,” thus presumably leading to even greater assertiveness.⁵

The third attitude, insecurity, is most often associated with growing Chinese concerns over domestic instability deriving from recent social disturbances in Tibet and Xinjiang and a general growth in the number and intensity of citizen protests over a wide variety of issues. In some cases, it is also associated with Chinese suspicions of Western attempts to subvert regimes in Iran and elsewhere. Such unrest presumably induces the Chinese leadership to become more hostile toward foreign statements or actions that might incite further problems, such as a presidential meeting with the Dalai Lama.⁶

Finally, some Western observers attribute China's growing assertiveness at least partially to maneuvering within the senior Chinese elite associated with the upcoming leadership succession.⁷

We should add that the notion of a more assertive China is of little surprise to some knowledgeable analysts of China's international behavior. For example, as early as 2006, Evan Medeiros identified a "growing assertiveness" in various areas of Chinese foreign policy, and with regard to the United States in particular.⁸ However, unlike some current-day Western observers, Medeiros did not argue or even imply that China is engaged in deliberately seeking to confront the United States and possibly displace it as the global superpower.

Western observers largely date China's increased level of assertiveness from 2008, citing Wen Jiabao's criticism of the United States for its economic mismanagement and senior Chinese central bank officials' questioning of the dollar's continued role as the international reserve currency.⁹ Indeed, many of the examples of assertive or confrontational Chinese statements and actions relate to economic issues. These include greater constraints on foreign companies operating in China and systematic PRC discrimination in favor of so-called "national champions";¹⁰ increasing cyber-attacks on foreign firms in China (such as Google), and Beijing's strong response to Western hints that the PRC government is behind such attacks;¹¹ a more activist stance at international economic meetings such as the G-20;¹² strong resistance to U.S. pressure to significantly appreciate the RMB;¹³ and more recent reiterations of Chinese criticism of Washington's monetary policy.¹⁴

Many Western observers also point to Chinese assertiveness in several other foreign policy areas, including: An allegedly hard-line, obstructionist, and deliberately insulting stance at the UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen;¹⁵ persistent resistance to UNSC sanctions against Iran for its nuclear activities; the supposedly humiliating treatment accorded to President Obama during his visit to China in 2009;¹⁶ and unprecedented levels of testiness (including demands and threats) toward other nations.¹⁷

Finally, Western observers also cite what they regard as Beijing's unusually assertive and even confrontational stance toward Obama's late-2009 decisions to sell arms to Taiwan and to meet with the Dalai Lama. In the both cases, Chinese officials warned of strong retaliatory responses, including, in the former case, an unprecedented threat to sanction U.S. defense industry companies active in China, such as Boeing.¹⁸

In the eyes of most Western analysts, such an unprecedented level of Chinese assertiveness poses an array of implications for the future international order and U.S. policies. These include, perhaps first and foremost, a possible weakening of U.S. efforts to cooperate with China in many of the above critical policy areas, from climate change to management of the global economy and attempts to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons.¹⁹ For several observers, China's behavior is associated with a broader effort to remake the rules of the international system or perhaps free itself from their constraints.

The implication of such a development is that China is now showing that it will not become more liberalized in its outlook and policies, contrary to the hopes of many Western advocates of closer engagement with Beijing.²⁰ Indeed, some observers have linked assertive Chinese behavior with the promulgation of a “Beijing Consensus,” an essentially anti-Western model of political and economic development that combines authoritarianism with limited market incentives.²¹ Others simply assert that China is adopting the zero-sum mentality of a rising power in a thoroughly realist world, thus presaging growing rivalry and confrontation.²²

Not all observers offer such pessimistic views, however. A few China specialists argue that Beijing merely wants greater respect and recognition for its views and an acceptance of its more activist stance on some issues.²³ And a small number of Western analysts argue that many U.S. observers not only overestimate China’s capabilities and assertiveness, but also hype the threat posed by such factors in order to advance specific political agendas.²⁴ We should add that, according to discussions with some knowledgeable U.S. officials, the above Western media characterizations of Chinese behavior toward Obama at the Copenhagen Conference and during his trip to China as “insulting” and “humiliating” are entirely inaccurate, based on misunderstandings of those events.

A great many Western observers argue that China has overplayed its hand and will encounter (or is currently encountering) strong pushback from the United States and other Western powers. The observers say that this, in turn, could result in a destructive cycle of tit-for-tat retaliation that eventually could precipitate a fundamental readjustment of the China policies of such powers toward a less cooperative posture.²⁵ However, a few Western observers refute the notion that China is committed to such a potentially damaging policy approach by pointing to the apparent contrast between Beijing’s harsher rhetoric and its still-cautious behavior in many areas. The latter behavior is often viewed as deriving from China’s growing integration into the international economic system and its severe domestic social and economic limitations.²⁶

Overall, the vast majority of Western media commentators have depicted a China that is becoming dangerously more assertive, to a degree that poses significant implications for Washington’s China policy, U.S.-PRC relations, and the future stability of the international system.

The Chinese View: An Unsurprising Reaction to U.S. Provocations

The Chinese perspective on this issue is quite different from Western views in some significant ways, and considerably more diverse. As the above overview of Western observations indicates, there is little doubt that at least some senior Chinese officials have become more direct and emphatic in expressing Beijing’s views on many foreign policy issues, from U.S. arms sales to Taiwan to international sanctions against the Iranian government and RMB revaluation.²⁷

This more assertive tone in recent Chinese statements apparently received significant impetus from remarks delivered by Hu Jintao to a meeting of Chinese ambassadors in July 2009. According to a Xinhua source, Hu emphasized that China needed not only to increase its level of “dealing with the international situation and international affairs,” but also “to have more influential power in politics.” (*nuli shi woguo zai zhengzhishang geng you yingxiangli* 努力使我国在政治上更有影响力).²⁸ Such language was absent from reporting at the last meeting of Chinese ambassadors in 2006.²⁹

However, Chinese officials, including Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi, reject the notion that China’s more assertive tone is “tough” (*qiangying* 强硬) or confrontational. In widely publicized remarks, Yang stated in a press conference on the sidelines of the annual NPC meeting in March 2010 that China is merely sticking to its principles and defending its “core interests and dignity” (*weihu benguo de hexin liyi he zunyan* 维护本国的核心利益和尊严) regarding sovereignty, security, and development issues, while promoting world peace and development. He also suggested that critics were being hypocritical in characterizing such behavior as “tough” while “taking for granted” (*li suo dang ran* 理所当然) actions that infringe on the interests of others, an apparent reference to U.S. arms sales to Taiwan and presidential meetings with the Dalai Lama (both viewed by Beijing as clear violations of Chinese sovereignty).³⁰

Moreover, in an apparent effort to refute charges that China is pursuing a deliberately aggressive or confrontational foreign policy line, such other leading officials as Premier Wen Jiabao repeat the oft-heard statement that: a) China’s status as a developing country faced with a wide array of daunting domestic problems precludes such behavior; and b) whether strong or weak, China is a responsible country that is firmly committed to peace and development and will never “seek hegemony” (*yong bu cheng ba* 永不称霸).³¹

Despite such official disclaimers, however, a variety of unofficial Chinese media outlets suggest that many Chinese observers not only recognize that the Chinese government is becoming more influential and assertive on many foreign policy issues, but regard such a development as entirely unsurprising. Indeed, such a viewpoint underlies much of the Chinese commentary on the subject. For example, many Chinese analysts calmly assert that China has “marched to the center of the world stage” (*cong shijie wutai de bianyuan xiang zhongxin maijin* 从世界舞台的边缘向中心迈进) and is more publicly emphasizing the defense of its “core interests” (*hexin liyi* 核心利益) as part of a long-term process of development involving the gradual expansion of Beijing’s global power and influence.³² As one analyst observed: “Amid the unpredictable changes in the international situation, one can see that China will be more active (*jiji* 积极) in international affairs. In particular, it will seek influence and diplomatic interests in proportion to its national strength, in accordance with the rules of the international “game.”³³

Equally important, many Chinese observers associate China’s more assertive foreign policy stance with an overall long-term shift in the global balance between major regions, eras, and systems. In particular, they observe a shift from the West to the East, from the

Atlantic to the Pacific, from the era of the Cold War to a new period of peace and development, and from the hegemonic, U.S.-led international system to a more equal and balanced global structure. Moreover, recent events such as China's apparent success in weathering the global financial crisis and the image of a declining America resulting from its continued economic problems and the debilitating impact of the ongoing wars in Iraq and Afghanistan provide a major impetus to such observations.³⁴ This global shift is clearly viewed as benefiting China.³⁵

It is also viewed as detrimental to the interests of the U.S. power elite. Indeed, many Chinese observers argue that Western criticism of China's supposedly more activist, assertive foreign policy stance reflects intense anxiety over the gradual loss of American political, military, and economic power and influence globally, as well as an effort to make China into a scapegoat for the failings of the West.³⁶

Paradoxically, at least one Chinese analyst asserts that U.S. efforts to press China to take on greater global responsibilities are motivated by a desire to maintain a dominant international role, presumably by forcing Beijing to become over-committed.³⁷

Closely related to such views is the notion, expressed by many Chinese observers, that Western criticism of China as an aggressive proponent of "deviant" (*linglei* 另类) views in the international community derives from a fundamental hostility toward China in general, or as a communist nation in particular.³⁸

Such criticism of the West, and especially of the United States, has led a great many Chinese observers to defend the more assertive behavior of the Chinese government as a necessary way of counterbalancing the incorrect assertions and actions of the United States and other Western nations on many issues, such as climate change, RMB revaluation, unfair trade practices, and arms sales to Taiwan. In fact, many Chinese observers argue that recent U.S. provocations in all of these areas—most of which they allege are designed to check China's rising influence—have essentially compelled a more vigorous response from Beijing, as a form of pushback.³⁹

Looking to the Future: Should China Become More Assertive?

As one might expect, Western observations and Chinese responses regarding the notion of a more assertive PRC foreign policy have included a lively discussion among Chinese commentators over the extent and type of future role that China should play in the international community and vis-à-vis the United States in particular. This discussion has been going on for more than a year now. The journal of the China Institute of Contemporary International Relations—*Xiandai Guoji Guanxi*, a think tank affiliated with the Ministry of State Security—devoted much of its September 2008 issue to a series of articles on the role China should play in the world.⁴⁰ And in 2009, China's official media carried a series of similar articles by prominent Chinese foreign policy experts.⁴¹ The appearance of such discussions in state-sponsored media suggests at least some level of leadership support.

As suggested above, virtually all Chinese observers accept that China enjoys an increasing capacity to play a more prominent role in the international system. And most, if not all, Chinese commentators believe that China should certainly play an active role. The debate is over the extent and character of that role and its implications for the long-standing guiding principle of China's foreign policies first articulated by Deng Xiaoping: *tao guang yang hui you suo zuo wei* (韬光养晦, 有所作为 “hide our capacities and bide our time, but also get some things done,” hereinafter abbreviated as TGHY).

This concept is often misinterpreted in the West to mean that China should keep a low profile and bide its time until it is ready to challenge U.S. global predominance. In truth, the concept is most closely associated with diplomatic (not military) strategy and is usually viewed by Chinese analysts as an admonition for China to remain modest and low-key while building a positive image internationally and achieving specific (albeit limited) gains, in order to avoid suspicions, challenges, or commitments that might undermine Beijing's long-standing emphasis on domestic development.

Some Chinese observers argue that China should remain low-key and avoid taking a strong leadership position on most issues, in conformity with the presumed original intention behind the TGHY concept. Others insist that China should pursue a more activist foreign policy in specific policy areas (and especially regarding the United States), while still avoiding a leadership role, thereby modifying (deliberately or not) the TGHY concept. Still others argue for a highly activist and even confrontational foreign policy in various areas that inevitably will involve some leadership positions (or even outright dominance in some areas), thus explicitly or indirectly rejecting the concept.

In the open-source literature, a clear minority of observers advocate variations of the third, highly activist approach, without explicitly urging a rejection of the TGHY concept per se. (In most cases, Chinese writers don't mention the concept.) Many of these individuals focus primarily on China's relations with the United States, arguing that Beijing must “expose and criticize” (*qingsuan* 清算) U.S. misconduct, show Chinese anger, and stop being “meek” (*ni lai shun shou* 逆来顺受) in the face of U.S. harassment and pressure.⁴² One senior Chinese military officer, Liu Mengfu, in a recently published and widely noted book, goes so far as to argue that China should build the world's strongest military and displace the United States as the predominant global power.⁴³

A similarly small number of Chinese commentators explicitly call for an end to the TGHY concept, or observe that China's growing power and international presence will inevitably force Beijing to gradually downplay its importance, as China comes to take a more activist leadership role on many issues. But these individuals do not necessarily advocate confronting the United States or the West.⁴⁴

A larger number of analysts argue for the abandonment of China's past “passive onlooking” (*xiaoji guanwang* 消极观望) on specific international issues, without assessing the implications of such a shift for the TGHY concept. This viewpoint is apparently the most numerous among regional or international relations specialists.⁴⁵ However, many commentators argue for a continuation of the TGHY concept to varying degrees, either

explicitly or by implication. Some, such as former Chinese ambassador Wu Jianmin, explicitly rebut the arguments of those apparent few who call for its abandonment.⁴⁶ And some authoritative military officers directly or indirectly refute the provocative views of Liu Mingfu, summarized above.⁴⁷

But most observers see the TGYH concept remaining a valid one for the foreseeable future, or assert simply (without referring explicitly to TGYH) that China needs to avoid being arrogant, impatient, or overly aggressive in the foreign policy arena.⁴⁸ Many holding this viewpoint defend their stance by arguing (as some Western observers have also argued) that, as a developing nation, China will continue to confront major domestic challenges that will prevent its adopting a more activist (and especially a leadership) stance in the foreign policy arena.⁴⁹ Others assert that China should never take a leadership role, regardless of its level of development or the number of problems it faces.⁵⁰ However, an apparent majority of proponents of this view argue that China must become more activist in those areas relating to its core interests, while enhancing cooperation with other nations, avoiding a broad-based leadership role, and generally adhering to the basic intention of the TGYH concept.⁵¹

Many Chinese advocates of this standpoint focus their attention on China's relations with the United States, but take a much less confrontational stance than those observers of the Sino-U.S. relationship cited earlier, such as Luo Yuan. While arguing that Beijing should clearly spell out its differences with Washington and advocate policies that serve China, they also emphasize that the increasingly interlocking interests of the two countries require cooperation and compromise. This viewpoint is perhaps the most common among unofficial and non-specialist Chinese commentators.⁵² And that is perhaps because it also best approximates the official (and long-standing) position on China's role in the international system, as stated by Wen Jiabao on March 14, 2010, and cited above.⁵³

Conclusion

That China is becoming more assertive on many foreign policy issues is widely recognized by both Western and Chinese observers. But the two sides offer significantly different descriptions and assessments of the phenomenon. In the West, most media pundits tend to define such assertiveness as brash and even insulting in tone and demeanor, anti-Western (or specifically anti-American) in direction, and largely driven by a combination of recent economic successes and a perceived broader shift in the global balance of power that together spur the forces of a chauvinistic and strident form of Chinese nationalism. And many Western observers cite the potential threat that Beijing's challenging words and actions pose to future cooperation with the United States and the overall smooth functioning of the international system. Specifically, many warn of a strong reaction from the West that could lead to a damaging cycle of retaliation. Relatively few observers counterbalance such pessimism with references to China's general support for international norms and internal economic and social limitations.

In contrast, many official Chinese sources strive to depict China's assertiveness as merely the defense of "core interests" and national dignity, highlighting both Beijing's limited capabilities and its continued adherence to a policy of peace and development free from any "hegemonic" or otherwise conflict-producing activities. In addition, many unofficial Chinese observers see such assertiveness as the natural result of a broader shift in power balances and relationships benefiting China. Perhaps most notably, many characterize what Westerners regard as potentially dangerous efforts to confront and challenge the U.S. and Western norms as a less threatening but totally justified response to Western (and especially U.S.) provocations.

Chinese analysts offer a wide variety of perspectives on how China should act in the future, from a militant minority view advocating the rejection of the TGYH concept in favor of an outright search for predominance, to a conservative defense of a minimally activist PRC foreign policy. Nonetheless, virtually all observers believe that China can and should pursue some type of more activist foreign policy. Moreover, an apparent majority of such observers apparently believe that such activism must be: focused on relatively few policy areas, non-aggressive and non-arrogant in tone, in line with the TGYH admonition to avoid a broad-based leadership role, and supportive of deepening cooperation with the West. For these individuals, such an approach derives from a strong awareness of China's limitations and of the dangers that accompany both hubris and the search for predominance.

What does all this mean? First, both American and Chinese commentators appear to believe that China will almost certainly become more assertive as its interests and capabilities grow, perhaps partly in response to a growing Chinese perception of a larger shift in the global balance. Second, there is a potential basis for serious misperceptions emerging in the future between China and the West concerning the nature of, causes of, and likely dangers presented by greater Chinese assertiveness. In particular, both sides tend to accuse the other of engaging in provocative behavior. This could make it more difficult to defuse incidents created by a more assertive China. Third, and closely related to the previous point, the Chinese leadership's official endorsement of greater PRC influence in global affairs has apparently created doubts for some Chinese observers about the continued relevance of the TGYH concept. Although most reaffirm its continued applicability, the line between activism and leadership, and distinctions among different types of activism, are now arguably blurred as a result of the leadership's expressed desire for greater influence in foreign policy. In the absence of clearer guidance from above, such ambiguities might be clarified through policy trial and error.

In recent weeks, Beijing seems to have stepped back from the most strident and activist words and actions of winter 2009–2010. For example, threatened retaliation for U.S. arms sales to Taiwan and presidential meetings with the Dalai Lama has, for the most part, not materialized, and Hu Jintao has decided to attend the nuclear summit held in Washington in April. Some observers conclude from such behavior that Beijing indeed "overplayed" its hand in recent months and has retreated, in part as a result of a persistent application of U.S. firmness and a continued enunciation of existing U.S. policies.⁵⁴ Even if such a conclusion is accurate at present, it should not lead to the

assumption that Chinese assertiveness is all show and no substance, or that a mere continuation of tried and true U.S. policies will necessarily suffice to sustain a stable status quo long into the future. As the views of the vast majority of both Chinese and Western observers suggest, there is little doubt that a more assertive China will reemerge, and continue to challenge both sides of the U.S.-PRC relationship.

Notes

¹ In a typical example, John Pomfret alleges that China's "growing assertiveness" is reflected in both its rhetoric (or tone) and its policies, and centers on a criticism of Western values and systems. See John Pomfret, "Newly powerful China defies Western nations with remarks, policies," *Washington Post*, March 15, 2010; John Pomfret, "China's strident tone raises concerns among Western governments, analysts," *Washington Post*, January 31, 2010. Andrew Small argues that "what has startled China's interlocutors is the brashness with which Beijing now asserts its interests—and its willingness to prevail, even at the expense of appearing the villain." See Andrew Small, "Dealing with a More Assertive China," *Forbes*, February 18, 2010, http://www.forbes.com/2010/02/18/china-iran-google-foreign-policy-opinions-contributors-andrew-small_print.html. James Mann refers to Beijing's "edgy obstreperousness," in James Mann, "Behold China," *New Republic*, March 17, 2010; while the *Economist* asserts that China "has been throwing its weight around. . . . At gatherings of all sorts, Chinese officials now want to have their say, and expect to be heeded." ("Facing up to China," *Economist*, February 4, 2010.) Also see Joseph S. Nye, "China's Bad Bet Against America," Project Syndicate, March 10, 2010, available at <http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/nye80/English>; and David Shambaugh, "The Chinese tiger shows its claws," *Financial Times*, February 17, 2010.

² Pomfret, "Newly powerful China"; Nye, "China's Bad Bet"; Small, "More Assertive China"; Alan Wheatley, "A China that says 'no' casts economic shadows," Reuters, January 18, 2010; Rana Foroohar and Melinda Liu, "It's China's World. We're Just Living in It," *Newsweek*, March 12, 2010; Shambaugh, "Chinese tiger." Michael Wines and Edward Wong, in "At G-20, China Takes Stage as Global Economic Power" (*New York Times*, April 2, 2009) write: "Evidence of China's ascension is everywhere. Three years ago, China did not have a single bank among the world's top 20, measured by market capitalization. Today the top three are Chinese. (In 2006, the United States had 7 of the top 20 banks, including the top 2; today it has 3, and the biggest, Morgan Stanley, is rated fifth.) China's government-owned enterprises are buying companies, technology and resources worldwide. . . . China holds \$1 trillion in United States government debt, and that is but half the foreign reserves generated by its huge trade surplus and investment inflows. The rest of the West owes China money, too."

³ Small, "More Assertive China"; Nye, "China's Bad Bet"; Wheatley, "China that says 'no'"; and Charlie Rose, "The New Assertiveness of the Chinese, According to Kissinger," PBS: The *Charlie Rose Show*, November 16, 2009.

⁴ For example, Foroohar and Liu, "It's China's World" states: "The dizzying pace of change is having a particularly dramatic effect on younger Chinese, turning them inward and making them more nationalistic—a trend that experts like Hudson Institute fellow John Lee believe to be a factor in China's new and more aggressive policies on security, trade, and foreign affairs." Also see Nye, "China's Bad Bet"; Shambaugh, "Chinese tiger"; Mann, "Behold China"; and Andrew Browne and Jason Dean, "Business Sours on China; Beijing Is Making It Harder for Foreign Companies to Prosper, Executives Say," *Wall Street Journal*, March 17, 2010.

⁵ Small, "More Assertive China."

⁶ Pomfret, "Newly powerful China"; Pomfret, "China's strident tone"; Shambaugh, "Chinese tiger"; Mann, "Behold China."

⁷ See Shambaugh, "Chinese tiger." Shambaugh states, "during [leadership succession] periods China becomes more caustic while candidate leaders try to prove their nationalist credentials." Also see Geoff Dyer, "Sabre-rattling at Washington risks opening Pandora's box," *Financial Times*, February 9, 2010.

⁸ See Evan Medeiros, *China's International Behavior: Activism, Opportunism, and Diversification* (RAND Corporation, Santa Monica, CA: 2006), p. 201. Medeiros concludes, "Over time, Beijing will become less

willing to accommodate U.S. preferences and more able to resist pressure from Washington, or even generate countervailing forces.”

⁹ Pomfret, “China’s strident tone”; Michael Wines, “Chinese Leader Firmly Defends Currency and Trade Policies,” *New York Times*, March 14, 2010; Geoff Dyer, “The Dragon Stirs,” *Financial Times*, September 25, 2009; Jing-dong Yuan, “China gets assertive as US ties grow,” *Asia Times*, April 7, 2009.

¹⁰ For example, Pomfret writes that Western companies are being forced “to turn over their most sensitive technology and patents to Chinese competitors in exchange for access to the country’s markets.” Pomfret, “Newly powerful China.” Also see Robert J. Samuelson, “The danger behind China’s ‘me first’ worldview,” *Washington Post*, February 15, 2010; as well as Wheatley, “China that says ‘no’”; Small, “More Assertive China”; Shambaugh, “Chinese Tiger”; Foroohar and Liu, “It’s China’s World”; and Browne and Dean, “Business Sours on China.”

¹¹ Michael Wines, “China Issues Sharp Rebuke to U.S. Calls for an Investigation on Google Attacks,” *New York Times*, January 26, 2010. The author refers to “a broadside in China’s state-run news media on Monday that cast the United States as a cyberhegemonist, trying to dominate the global information flow by meddling in Chinese Internet policies.”

¹² For example see Stephen Fidler and Andrew Batson, “Beijing Exercises Its Global Leverage,” *Wall Street Journal*, April 6, 2009. The authors state, “After years of staying largely on the sidelines at international economic forums, Beijing took on a more assertive role at the summit, pushing trade and anti-protectionism up the agenda and working to play down other issues such as the environment. . . . China’s actions show a new eagerness to be treated as a major global player, even as it insists that it remains a developing country whose relatively poor population shouldn’t be expected to fund large amounts of international aid.”

¹³ See Dyer, “Sabre-rattling”; and Wines, “Chinese Leader Firmly Defends Currency.” Wines writes: “Premier Wen Jiabao sharply defended China’s currency and trade policies on Sunday against what he called foreign ‘finger-pointing,’ charging instead that the developed world seeks to force unfair changes in those policies ‘just for the purposes of increasing their own exports.’” Also see Keith Bradsher, “China Uses Rules on Global Trade to Its Advantage,” *New York Times*, March 14, 2010. Bradsher asserts that “evidence is mounting that Beijing is skillfully using inconsistencies in international trade rules to spur its own economy at the expense of others, including the United States. Seeking to maintain its export dominance, China is engaged in a two-pronged effort: fighting protectionism among its trade partners and holding down the value of its currency.”

¹⁴ See Wines, “Chinese Leader Firmly Defends Currency.” Wines states: “[Wen Jiabao] repeated the concerns he voiced a year ago, at China’s last legislative session, that the United States is failing to rebuild its own economy and maintain the value of the dollar. Protecting the dollar, which dropped sharply since the global crisis began in late 2008, is a matter of ‘national credibility’ for the United States, he said.” Also see Geoff Dyer and Kevin Brown, “China says Fed policy threatens global recovery,” *Financial Times*, November 15, 2009. The authors cite Liu Mingkang, China’s chief banking regulator, as asserting that the combination of a weak dollar and low interest rates had encouraged a “huge carry trade” that was having a “massive impact on global asset prices”. They add: “Mr Liu’s unusually blunt remarks underscore how China—the largest US creditor because of its massive holdings of Treasury bonds—has become a trenchant critic of monetary and fiscal policy in the US.”

¹⁵ This alleged behavior is perhaps most often cited by Western analysts of Chinese assertiveness. And the incident most often repeated in Western sources is a meeting in which the head of China’s climate change negotiations allegedly insulted President Obama by wagging his finger at him. Other observers cite a supposed slight in which the Chinese deliberately sent a mere vice-minister to meet with Obama. See Nye, “China’s Bad Bet”; Small, “More Assertive China”; and Dyer, “Sabre-rattling.” As Dyer asserts, “More than anything else, [China’s behavior] has symbolized what many see as a newly aggressive Chinese approach to diplomacy.” Also see, for example, Pomfret, “China’s strident tone”; Jane Macartney, “Analysis: Liu Xiaobo case reveals a more assertive China,” *Times Online*, December 25, 2009, available at <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/asia/article6967752.ece>; and Jonathan Pearlman, “China Flexes its Muscles,” *The Age*, December 23, 2009. Pearlman states: “Across the developed world, China’s brazen stonewalling of attempts to reach a legally binding treaty on climate change was greeted by a stunned, angry and almost visceral response.”

¹⁶ Small, “More Assertive China.”

¹⁷ As examples, Small, in “More Assertive China,” states that “European officials have recounted private Chinese demands that the EU’s next China strategy paper should be written ‘together’ and Chinese statements that a failure to lift the EU arms embargo would mean that in the future Europe ‘will not be able to buy its arms from China.’” Also see Dyer, “Sabre-rattling,” and Shambaugh, “Chinese tiger.” Shambaugh lists several countries and regions that are apparently experiencing problems with an unusually assertive China, including Southeast Asia, India, several Latin American countries, Australia, and “even Russia—China’s vaunted strategic partner.”

¹⁸ Geoff Dyer, “China flexes its diplomatic muscles,” *Financial Times*, January 31, 2010. Dyer states: “While China has reacted angrily to US arms sales to Taiwan before—by cutting off military-to-military ties—and has in effect blacklisted some companies, this is the first time it has threatened sanctions publicly.” Also see Pomfret, “China’s strident tone.” Pomfret asserts, with regard to Chinese threats over U.S. arms sales to Taiwan, “What happens next will be crucial. China quietly sanctioned several U.S. companies for participating in such weapons sales in the past. However, it would mark a major change if China makes the list public and includes, for example, Boeing, which sells billions of dollars worth of airplanes to China each year.” Bonnie Glaser, a senior fellow at CSIS, was quoted as saying, “The message that the Chinese are giving us is ‘We’ve had enough; we’re fed up. We’ve been living with this issue of U.S. arms sales for too long and it’s time to solve it.’” See Josh Rogin, “What U.S. officials heard in Beijing,” posting on The Cable blog, *Foreign Policy*, March 9, 2010, available at http://thecable.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2010/03/09/what_us_officials_heard_in_beijing.

¹⁹ Wheatley, “China that says ‘no’”; Daniel Dombey, “Obama faces test of ties with Beijing,” *Financial Times*, March 15, 2010.

²⁰ Perhaps the most extreme expression of this viewpoint is offered in Samuelson, “China’s ‘me first’ worldview.” Samuelson writes: “China does not accept the legitimacy and desirability of the post-World War II global order, which involves collective responsibility among great powers (led by the United States) for world economic stability and peace. China’s policies reflect a different notion: China First . . . China accepts and supports the existing order when that serves its needs, as when it joined the World Trade Organization in 2001. Otherwise, it plays by its own rules and norms.” In this article, Samuelson is endorsing the views of Martin Jacques, author of *When China Rules the World* (Penguin, 2009). Also see Wheatley, “China that says ‘no’” and Small, “More Assertive China.” The latter asserts: “The West had hoped that Beijing would become a “responsible stakeholder” and use its stronger position to bolster the international system. Instead China seems intent on freeing itself from its constraints.” And Foroohar and Liu, in “It’s China’s World,” opine: “The idea that as China got rich it would simply become more like America, or at least more sympathetic to the U.S. agenda, is turning out to be wrong. China has never been transformed from without, and it’s unlikely to be now.” And perhaps the most widely noted critic of the supposed error made by Western governments (and most China scholars) in assuming that China would become more “like us” is James Mann. In “Behold China,” he states: “The idea of integrating China into a U.S.-led world order was a chimera from the start.”

²¹ “Facing up to China,” *Economist*, February 4, 2010; Ariana Eunjung Cha, “China Uses Global Crisis to Assert Its Influence; Along With Aid to Other Nations, Beijing Offers Up Criticism of the West,” *Washington Post*, April 23, 2009.

²² See Robert Kagan and Dan Blumenthal, “‘Strategic Reassurance’ that isn’t,” *Washington Post*, November 10, 2009. The authors write: “Contrary to optimistic predictions just a decade ago, China is behaving exactly as one would expect a great power to behave. . . . For the Chinese—true realists—the competition with the U.S. in East Asia is very much a zero-sum game. For that reason, ‘strategic reassurance’ is likely to fail.”

²³ Pomfret, “China’s strident tone raises concerns,” cites David Finkelstein, a former U.S. Army officer at the Defense Intelligence Agency who now runs the China program at the Center for Naval Analyses: “we will likely see a China that is more willing than in the past to proactively shape the external environment and international order rather than passively react to it.” Foroohar and Liu, “It’s China’s World” cites Cheng Li, director of research at the John L. Thornton China Center at the Brookings Institution: “China now wants a seat at the head of the table. Its leaders expect to be among the key architects of global institutions.”

²⁴ Steven Mufson and John Pomfret, “There’s a new Red Scare. But is China really so scary?” *Washington Post*, February 28, 2010. The authors state: “in large part, politicians, activists and commentators push the new Red Scare to advance particular agendas in Washington . . . In other areas, politicians and pundits also

have a tendency to overestimate China's strengths—in ways that leave China looking more ominous than it really is.”

²⁵ For example, Dyer, “Sabre-rattling” asserts that China is “playing with fire . . . if Beijing follows through on some of its sabre-rattling, it could lead to a cascade of tactical adjustments on how to deal with China.” Small, “More Assertive China” states that “Many Western officials believe . . . that China has miscalculated—and is shooting itself in the foot. Talk of giving Beijing more space on sensitive issues has evaporated. Support from business lobbies has weakened. Heads of government . . . have begun to review their strategies. Already, Beijing is feeling the effects of this pushback . . . The West hopes China will realize it has overplayed its hand and will make some conciliatory moves—such as a modest revaluation of the yuan and acquiescence to tougher sanctions on Iran—to reverse the political dynamic.” Paul Krugman advocates a tough pushback to Beijing's refusal to adequately appreciate the RMB. See Paul Krugman, “Taking on China,” *New York Times*, March 15, 2010. Barbara Wanner, “Election-Year Pressures, Foreign Policy Priorities Dominate Congressional Agenda For Asia Policy,” U.S. Asia Pacific Council Washington Report, February 2010, available at

<http://www.eastwestcenter.org/fileadmin/resources/washington/supplement0210.pdf>. Wanner sees the possibility of a strong pushback to China's “uncooperative behavior” from the U.S. Congress on currency, industrial policy, internet freedom, arms sales to Taiwan, and Iran. David Pilling cites cases of other countries calling China's “bluff.” See David Pilling, “Google is not alone in calling China's bluff,” *Financial Times*, January 13, 2010. Also see Nye, “China's Bad Bet.” Finally, Peter Foster, in “China stirs anti-US feeling ahead of expected Google shut down,” *Telegraph.co.uk*, March 22, 2010 states “A survey by the US Chamber of Commerce in China released on Monday showed a sharp deterioration of business sentiment towards China among US businesses, with 38 per cent now saying they feel “unwelcome” in the Chinese market place, compared with 23 per cent in 2008. Despite attempts to manipulate public opinion against Google, the departure of the world's leading search engine will come as a major embarrassment to China's government, highlighting to the Chinese public the extent to which it censors internet content.”

²⁶ See in particular Wheatley, “China that says ‘no’”; Wines and Wong, “China Takes Stage”; and Emma Graham-Harrison, “At 60, Communist China seeks greater global role,” Reuters, September 30, 2009. The last author conveys a very representative viewpoint among this group: “while a more assertive China is likely to be a permanent feature on the global stage, the government has little appetite for outright confrontation and there are limits to its overseas ambitions, which are outweighed by homegrown challenges. The domestic pressures that dog China's ruling Communist party include a yawning rich-poor gap, sluggish consumption, widespread corruption and massive environmental degradation. This unsteady combination of rising international standing and enduring domestic worries means that . . . a longstanding ambivalence about superpower status will not soon go away.” And Wines and Wong state: “economic importance does not automatically translate into geopolitical heft. In China's case, most of the other components of true global power—moral sway, military clout, cultural influence, to name a few—are in the assembly stage, or missing altogether. Even China's unquestioned economic clout comes with an asterisk. While Chinese megacities boom and the country's coast has become the world's factory, 800 million of the nation's 1.3 billion citizens remain farmers, many mired in poverty. China remains a developing nation, still vying for first-world status.”

²⁷ In addition to the above secondary Western sources, for some examples of “assertive” speech, see “Question and Answer Session With Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi At Munich Security Conference,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, Munich Security Conference, February 5, 2010, available at <http://www.china-un.org/eng/czthd/t656702.htm>.

²⁸ Qian Tong, “The 11th Meeting of Chinese Diplomatic Envoys Convened in Beijing; Hu Jintao Makes an Important Speech; Wu Bangguo, Jia Qinglin, Li Changchun, Xi Jinping, Li Keqiang, He Guoqiang, and Zhou Yongkang Attend; Wen Jiabao Makes a Speech,” Xinhua Domestic Service, July 20, 2009, Open Source Center (OSC) CPP20090720005007. Both phrases are apparently paraphrases of Hu's actual remarks. Also see Chen Xiangyang: “The Direction of China's Great Diplomacy in the New Period,” *Liaowang*, July 27, 2009, no. 30, p. 58, OSC CPP20090805710012; and Bonnie S. Glaser and Benjamin Dooley, “China's 11th Ambassadorial Conference Signals Continuity and Change in Foreign Policy,” *China Brief*, vol. 9, issue 22 (November 4, 2009), available at [http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=35691](http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=35691). The authors assert, based on confidential interviews with Chinese officials and scholars in Beijing and Washington, that the July 2009 meeting explicitly called for a more active diplomatic posture while avoiding a leadership role.

²⁹ See “Central Foreign Work Meeting Held in Beijing; Hu Jintao, Wen Jiabao Deliver Important Speeches; Wu Bangguo, Jia Qinglin, Zeng Qinghong, Huang Ju, Wu Guanzheng, Li Changchun, Luo Gan Attend Meeting,” Xinhua Domestic Service, August 23, 2006, OSC CPP20060824053001. It also seems clear from subsequent remarks by other Chinese officials that the July 2009 meeting set forth guidelines for a more activist approach to foreign policy. For example, see Rong Yan: “Chinese Permanent Representative to United Nations Zhang Yesui: Efforts Should Be Made To Open Up New Prospects for Multilateral Diplomacy,” Xinhua Domestic Service, July 23, 2009, OSC CPP20090723074004. This article presents an interview with Zhang Yesui, China’s former representative to the United Nations and now ambassador to the United States. Zhang states that China must “elevate multilateral diplomacy to a new level in a more scientific manner and a more active spirit of innovation and with a more pragmatic work style and a stronger sense of mission, responsibility, and urgency. . . . The just-concluded 11th meeting of diplomatic envoys put forward a series of important new ideas, and new requirements, thereby charting a path for us.” I am indebted to Alice Miller for bringing this source to my attention.

³⁰ Yang stated: “For instance, some people think that China is becoming tougher on the external front. I would like to say that adhering to principles and being tough are two completely different matters. What is important in state to state dealings is whether one can hold his ground. It has always been the mission for China’s diplomacy to uphold national sovereignty, security, and development interests, and to promote world peace and development. This is the ground that China adheres to in conducting diplomacy and I believe that it is also the ground upheld in the normal conduct of international relations. If one should regard the act of a country to protect its core interests and dignity as being tough, but take violations of another country’s interests for granted, then where is the justice?” See “Comparison—Full Text of PRC FM Yang Jiechi’s News Conference 7 Mar,” Xinhua Domestic Service, March 7, 2010, OSC CPP20100307163008; “FM Rejects Accusations of China’s ‘Tough Stance’, Calls for Objective Views,” Xinhua ‘Roundup,’ March 7, 2010, OSC CPP20100307968164; Li Hongmei, “How to revamp China’s international image?” *Renmin Ribao*, March 8, 2010, OSC CPP20100309787028; “Sticking to Principles,” *China Daily* “Opinion” page, March 8, 2010, OSC CPP20100308968032.

³¹ For a recent concise statement of this view, see “Full Text of PRC Premier Wen Jiabao’s Live News Conference,” CCTV-1, March 14, 2010, OSC CPP20100314001001. Wen states: “To build a medium-developed country, we need to take till the middle of this century, or more. It will take 100 years, or even longer, to really become a modernized country. Second, China is firmly committed to peaceful development. China’s development will not affect any country. China did not seek hegemony when it was not developed. China will not seek hegemony even if it becomes a developed country. China will never seek hegemony. Third, even when China was very poor, China had been steadfast in upholding its sovereignty and territorial integrity. Fourth, China is a responsible country. China advocates and actively takes part in international cooperation, and addresses important current international and political problems. China’s aid to underdeveloped countries has no strings attached. These four points are our basic stand on China’s diplomatic policies.”

³² See Wu Jianmin, “China: Has Come to the Center of the World Stage,” *Renmin Ribao*, December 31, 2009, OSC CPP20091231710004. Wu writes: “China began to implement a reform and opening up policy in 1978 after the Third Plenary Session of the 11th CPC Central Committee. Since then, we have marched toward the center of the world stage from the edge. The financial crisis that broke out last year accelerated this march. We came to the center in 2009.” Also see Li Hongmei, “China’s ‘core interests’ diplomacy gains ground,” *Renmin Ribao*, November 20, 2009, OSC CPP20091123787002; and Li Hongmei, “New vista opened up for China’s diplomacy,” *Renmin Ribao*, March 5, 2009, OSC CPP20090306701003. In the former source, Li writes: “The recalibration of its strategic focus in diplomacy to ‘core interests’ seen evidently in recent months does not strike others as odd, as China is going global and its international influence is getting more visible and assertive.”

³³ Qi Bin, “China’s Diplomatic ‘Shiny Sword?’” *Zhongguo Xinwen She*, December 25, 2008, OSC CPP20081225704004.

³⁴ Some Chinese scholars also include the nuclear stand-offs with North Korea and Iran as further strains on the United States. Luo Yuan has dubbed this U.S. strategic quandary as the “one-two-two” predicament, meaning “one financial crisis, two wars (the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan) and two nuclear crises (of Iran and North Korea). Its strategic core interests are at stake in all these issues.” See: “Luo Yuan: Make the US Feel Some Pain Over Arms Sale to Taiwan,” *Guoji Xianqu Daobao* online, January 18, 2010, OSC CPP20100125671002.

³⁵ A typical example is provided by Wu Jianmin, a retired ambassador and professor at the major educational and training institution of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Wu writes that such developments might constitute “the biggest change since the establishment of the Westphalia system in 1648 . . . The influence and role of China in the international community are rising, and its say is growing; this itself is an important hallmark of the shift of the center of gravity in international relations.” See Wu Jianmin, “Major Events, Trends, Thoughts,” *Shijie Zhishi*, December 16, 2008, pp. 28–31, OSC CPP20090107671001. For a Western reference to this viewpoint, see Geoff Dyer, “The Dragon Stirs,” *Financial Times*, September 25, 2009.

³⁶ For example, see “Sticking to Principles,” *China Daily* “Opinion” page, March 8, 2010, OSC CPP20100308968032. The article states: “those who have accused China of taking a tough stance harbor ulterior motives. The Copenhagen climate change conference is a case in point. After the world initiative failed to reach a substantial internationally binding deal last December, some in the West have made China a scapegoat and shirked their own responsibilities.” Also see Han Shide, “Crisis boosts China’s international financial clout,” *Zhongguo Wang* (china.org.cn), October 21, 2009, OSC CPP20091022787002; and Liu Dong, “Web-Freedom Call Refuted,” *Global Times*, January 25, 2010, OSC CPP20100125722005. In this article, Yan Xuetong, the president of the Institute of International Studies at Tsinghua University, is quoted as saying: “The Google issue is essentially a U.S. government-initiated strategy with covert political intentions. As the global landscape is undergoing profound irreversible shifts, the calculated free-Internet scheme is just one step of a US tactic to preserve its hegemonic domination.”

³⁷ See Lin Limin, “Thoughts Regarding China’s ‘Post-Olympic’ International Strategy,” *Xiandai Guoji Guanxi*, September 20, 2008, pp. 33–34, OSC CPP20081110671003. John Pomfret also cites an unnamed Chinese “official” source as asserting that U.S. plans to cooperate with China “are generally viewed by the party leadership as a trap to overextend and weaken the country.” See Pomfret, “Newly powerful China.”

³⁸ See Meng Xiangqing, “The West Should Treat China as Deviant No More,” *Huanqiu Shibao*, October 2, 2009, OSC CPP20091005710010. Meng writes: “regardless of what China does or says, Western nations will mold China’s basic international image by painting it as ‘the biggest communist nation,’ creating a fundamental political framework where it is impossible for China to become anyone’s ally.” The word “deviant” carries a pejorative connotation in English. However, the Chinese term used in this article (*linglei* 另类) is actually closer to the English term “unconventional.”

³⁹ See, for example, Yao Shujie, “Love-Hate Affair Must Not Boil Over,” *China Daily* online, February 22, 2010, OSC CPP20100222968032. Yao writes: “Since the start of 2010, it has been riled by the Obama administration’s explicit support of Google, the \$6.4 billion arms deal with Taiwan, tariffs imposed on Chinese tires and steel pipes, heightened pressure to allow the renminbi to appreciate and, last week, the meeting between Obama and the Dalai Lama. Looking at each of Obama’s decisions at face value, his policies do not differ from those of his predecessors. But his timing—one blow quickly followed by another—has infuriated China’s leaders. The importance of saving face in Chinese culture is well known.” Also see Liu Dong, “Web-Freedom Call Refuted,” *Global Times*, January 25, 2010, OSC CPP20100125722005; Yang Jun, “Sidelight: China ‘Raises Its Voice’ at Climate Change Conference,” Xinhua Domestic Service, December 16, 2009, OSC CPP20091216066014; Lin Jian, “Luo Yuan: Make the US Feel Some Pain Over Arms Sale to Taiwan,” *Guoji Xianqu Daobao* online, January 18, 2010, OSC CPP20100125671002; Weng Yang, “China Will Not Launch All-Out Trade War Against US,” *Zhongguo Xinwen She*, September 13, 2009, OSC CPP20090914705002 (citing Mei Xinyu, an expert with the Research Institute of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation in the Ministry of Commerce); “US Treasury Secretary to Visit China to Discuss the True and False,” *Huanqiu Shibao*, May 14, 2009, OSC CPP20090520710008 (citing Zhou Shijian, a senior researcher at the Qinghua University’s Sino-U.S. Relations Studies Center and an expert on US-PRC trade issues). Zhou is quoted as stating: “in dealing now for the first time with the new treasury secretary [Geithner], we should ‘set the rules’ for him; China must justly and forcefully rebut certain selfish demands and ideas put forward by the United States in disregard of China’s interests.”

⁴⁰ See Zhu Feng, “Finding a Balance Between ‘Hiding Our Abilities And Biding Our Time’ And ‘Achieving’,” *Xiandai Guoji Guanxi*, September 20, 2008, pp. 27–28, OSC CPP20081110671001; Zhang Minqian, “Sustainable Influence and Big Power Mentality,” *Xiandai Guoji Guanxi*, September 20, 2008, pp. 30–31, OSC CPP20081110671002; Zhou Suyuan, “Adhere Strictly to the Policy of ‘Not Becoming a Leader’ and Promote the Establishment of a New International Order,” *Xiandai Guoji Guanxi*, September 20, 2008, pp. 32–33, OSC CPP20081112671004; Yuan Peng, “Some Thoughts on the Changing

International System,” *Xiandai Guoji Guanxi*, September 20, 2008, pp. 13–15, OSC CPP20081112671001; Chu Shulong, “The World and China, China and the World: The Past 30 Years, The Future 30 Years,” *Xiandai Guoji Guanxi*, September 20, 2008, pp. 15–17, OSC CPP20081112671002; Lin Limin, “Thoughts Regarding China’s ‘Post-Olympic’ International Strategy,” *Xiandai Guoji Guanxi*, September 20, 2008, pp. 33–34, OSC CPP20081110671003; Cai Tuo, “Contemporary China’s Positioning and Strategic Concepts,” *Xiandai Guoji Guanxi*, September 20, 2008, pp. 22–23, OSC CPP20081118671011; and Meng Qinglong, “The Changing Modes of Relationships Between China and the World,” *Xiandai Guoji Guanxi*, September 20, 2008, pp. 20–21, OSC CPP20081118671010.

⁴¹ See Wang Zaibang and Li Jun, “Searching for the Root of the DPRK’s Second Nuclear Experiment, and Diplomatic Thoughts,” *Xiandai Guoji Guanxi*, July 20, 2009, pp. 38–44, OSC CPP20090811671001; Wang Zaidong, “Historical Change Shows That Systematic Adjustment Is Urgent—Review of and Thoughts on the 2008 International Situation,” *Xiandai Guoji Guanxi*, January 20, 2009, pp. 1–6, 19, OSC CPP20090513702014; Yuan Peng, “China’s Strategic Options amid Transformation of the International System,” *Xiandai Guoji Guanxi*, April 20, 2009, pp. 39–40, OSC CPP20090812671009; and Li Yonghui, “Financial Crisis, New World Order and China’s Choice,” *Xiandai Guoji Guanxi*, April 20, 2009, OSC CPP20090812671008.

⁴² Lin Jian, “Luo Yuan: Make the U.S. Feel Some Pain Over Arms Sale to Taiwan,” *Guoji Xianqu Daobao* Online, January 18, 2010, OSC CPP20100125671002. Luo Yuan, a senior officer at the Academy of Military Sciences and a specialist on U.S.-China defense relations and the Taiwan issue, is a well-known advocate of a tougher line toward Washington regarding many security issues. In this interview, Luo asserts: “We must seize the moral high ground, the public opinion high ground and explain openly to the international community that because the United States interferes in China’s internal affairs, tramples upon China’s strategic core interests, attempts to perpetuate China’s civil war, incites Chinese to fight Chinese, and sides with one party against another in a conflict for which no peace treaty has yet been signed, China must accelerate its defense modernization, increase military inputs, and speed up the research, development, and importation of high-tech weapons. This is something that has been totally forced upon China by the United States.” Another frequently noted (in the West at least) advocate of a more confrontational stance toward Washington is Wang Xiaodong, the author of a book entitled *China is Unhappy*, published in March 2010. See Liu Ke, “Outside World Worries; Chinese Nationalism Raising Its Head,” *Guoji Xianqu Daobao*, March 23, 2009, OSC CPP20090402671001. In this interview, Wang states: “there is a fundamental change in China’s integrated national power compared to the West. China still needs to seek understanding and acceptance from the West, but will no longer please the West, curry favor with the West and align with the West as before. Western countries should also understand China’s point of view and sentiments, but should not lecture, bash or contain China constantly. . . . China should follow the course of doing business with a sword and staying away from financial wars, and utilize the financial crisis in the West to realize China’s industrial enhancement. China should have the ambition to reshape the world’s order and lead the world, and make definite the concept of ‘punishment diplomacy.’” For somewhat similar language, see Wang Te-chun, “Strategic Changes Are Currently Taking Place in China-US Relations,” *Ta Kung Pao*, November 10, 2009, OSC CPP20091110710002. Wang is a prominent expert on U.S. affairs in a State Council think tank. He insists that China will defend its national interests “with greater confidence” in the future instead of “humbly begging the Americans” and adds that the United States will need to show “greater respect” for China’s “core interests” in the future, such as bilateral trade, the exchange rate of China’s currency, human rights, Tibet, and arms sales to Taiwan.

⁴³ Senior Colonel Liu Mingfu is a professor at the PLA’s National Defense University and was the former director of the University’s Army Building Research Institute, which researches and teaches about modernization and force development issues. See: Liu Mingfu, *Zhongguo Meng: Hou Meiguo Shidai de DaGuo Siwei yu Zhanlüe Dingwei* [China’s Dream: Major Power Thinking and Strategic Posture in a Post-American Era], (Beijing: Zhongguo Youyi Chuban Gongsi [China Friendship Publishing Company], 2010). The foreword and 3700-character table of contents are available at http://www.amazon.cn/mn/detailApp/ref=sr_1_1?_encoding=UTF8&s=books&qid=1270207625&asin=B003554FE4&sr=8-1. Also see Chris Buckley, “China PLA officer urges challenging U.S. dominance,” Reuters, March 1, 2010.

⁴⁴ For a typical example, see Yuan Jirong, “Restore the Awe-inspiring Bearing of the Han and Tang” in “Does Chinese Diplomacy Require Strategic Adjustment?” *Huanqiu Shibao*, January 6, 2009, OSC CPP20090114671003. Yuan states: “Every move that China makes will touch the nerve of everywhere on

the globe, and this means that the responsibility and role that China undertakes regarding the world have become heavier. This will make China more self-confident, mature, and active in international affairs . . . [the strategy of] hiding our capabilities and biding our time will certainly fade from the stage of Chinese history, being replaced by a strategy based on self-confidence and power.” However, Yuan adds that this: “does not mean that China will rely on hard power to menace the world, that China will interfere with others in the international community, that China will pursue its selfish interests, and still less that China will challenge US hegemonic status or confront the west.”

⁴⁵ See Jin Canrong and Dong Chunling, “Current State, Development Strategy of Chinese Diplomacy,” *Dangdai Shijie*, September 5, 2009, pp. 7–12, OSC CPP20090923671009. While not specifically addressing the TGYH concept, Jin Canrong, a prominent specialist on international relations, demands that China play a greater international role and advocates an increased capacity for “nonmilitary intervention” overseas and the construction of a Chinese navy capable of operating outside Chinese waters. Wang Zaibang, the vice president of CICIR and Li Jun, an associate researcher, argue that China should abandon its “passive onlooking” and exhibit greater “initiative, firmness, and conviction in dealing with a range of international issues.” See Wang Zaibang and Li Jun, “Searching for the Root of the DPRK’s Second Nuclear Experiment, and Diplomatic Thoughts,” *Xiandai Guoji Guanxi*, July 20, 2009, pp. 38–44, OSC CPP20090811671001. Wang Jisi, dean of Beijing University’s School of International Studies, a leading Chinese expert on Sino-U.S. relations, and reportedly an advisor to Hu Jintao, calls for China to play a larger role in addressing proliferation issues. See Chen Yejun, “Wang Jisi Says International Rules and Order Are Undergoing Enormous Changes,” *Renmin Wang*, November 9, 2008, OSC CPP20081110710006. The director of the U.S. Studies Department at CICIR advocates a less passive, more activist Chinese foreign policy stance toward the Middle East, arguing that that Beijing’s approach to both the Iranian nuclear issue and the Middle East peace process lacks strategic focus. See Yuan Peng, “Pairs of Relationships that China’s Geostrategy Should Consider,” *Xiandai Guoji Guanxi*, May 20, 2008, pp. 24–26, OSC CPP20080722508002. Finally, the deputy editor of a major State Council think tank publication argues that China should exert its influence on “major hotspot issues” affecting China’s economic and geostrategic interests. See Zhang Jianjing, “China’s Diplomacy Enters an Era of Upsurge in Consciousness of the Right To Speak,” *Nanfeng Chuang*, March 12, 2008, pp. 26–27, CPP20080324530002.

⁴⁶ Wu Jianmin, “Major Events, Trends, Thoughts,” *Shijie Zhishi*, December 16, 2008, pp. 28–31, OSC CPP20090107671001. Wu writes: “Some people in China are being very unwise in continually proposing that we abandon the guideline of ‘hiding our capacity and biding our time. . . . The central authorities have put it very clearly in the past, that is, do not take the lead, do not carry a banner, do not seek hegemony, and do not become allied.” Also see Guo Li, “Are We Prepared To Shoulder Our Responsibility As A Big Power?—Exclusive Interview with Wu Jianmin, Former Chinese Ambassador to France and Professor of China Foreign Affairs University,” *Nanfeng Zhoumo* online, December 31, 2008, OSC CPP20090102705009.

⁴⁷ See Yang Yi, “China will not engage in arms race with U.S. or become military superpower, pursues road of peaceful development,” *Guoji Xianqu Daobao*, June 9, 2006, OSC CPP20060629455001. Yang is a rear admiral and director of the Institute of Strategic Studies of China’s National Defense University. Also see “The Peaceful Foundation of the Grand Military Parade,” interview with Ministry of Defense spokesman Hu Changming, in *Liaowang*, no. 40–41, (October 5, 2009), pp. 30–32, OSC CPP20091016710011. For a detailed assessment of the Liu Mingfu book, see Phillip C. Saunders, “Will China’s Dream turn into America’s Nightmare?” *China Brief*, vol. 10, issue 7 (April 1, 2010), available at [http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=36217&tx_ttnews\[backPid\]=7&cHash=19fc1b4da3](http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=36217&tx_ttnews[backPid]=7&cHash=19fc1b4da3).

⁴⁸ “When Participating in Global Change, China Should Avoid Being Arrogant or Impatient,” *Huanqiu Shibao* editorial, April 8, 2009, OSC CPP20090408710010. The editorial states: “We should not let the fawning words in some foreign media go to our heads. In the long run, we should continue to firmly adhere to the strategy of hiding our capabilities and biding our time. We must be neither arrogant nor impatient, neither supercilious nor obsequious. This is the only way to revitalize China.” Also see Wang Yusheng, “New Tasks Confronting China’s Diplomacy,” *Jiefang Ribao*, December 21, 2009, OSC CPP20091227001001; and Wang Yusheng, “We Should Persevere With ‘Hiding our Capabilities and Biding our Time,’” in “Does Chinese Diplomacy Require Strategic Adjustment?” *Huanqiu Shibao*, January 6, 2009, OSC CPP20090114671002. In the latter source, Wang explicitly rejects the notion of joint U.S.-

China leadership of the international community (the so-called G-2 concept) as “unrealistic and harmful.” He adds: “the United States will certainly not truly want China to be on equal terms with itself and ‘jointly run the world.’ Furthermore, if we really do this, the whole world will strongly oppose it and rise to attack, and China will get into an extremely isolated predicament. Third, and still more important, this does not accord with the tide of the times and China’s foreign policy guidelines and policies, and will not help to promote China’s concept of building a harmonious world.”

⁴⁹ Wu Ming, “China Is Not a Fool; It Will Not Be ‘Burned From Roasting,’” *Huanqiu Shibao*, March 31, 2009, OSC CPP20090331710017. Wu states: “With so many things to do, how could China have the energy to become a ‘leader?’” Also see “A Great Mission under the Historical Coordinate—First Commentary on ‘Standing at the New Starting Point and Marching Towards New Brilliance,’” *Renmin Ribao*, October 19, 2009, OSC CPP20091019710001; and Wang Yusheng, “We Should Persevere With ‘Hiding our Capabilities and Biding our Time,’” in “Does Chinese Diplomacy Require Strategic Adjustment?” *Huanqiu Shibao*, January 6, 2009, OSC CPP20090114671002.

⁵⁰ “A Multipolar World Does Not Need a ‘Ruler,’” *Global Times* Editorial, November 17, 2009, OSC CPP20091117722007. The editorial states: “even should China’s GDP grow beyond its current size—6 percent of the total world GDP—or its per capita GDP rise above Luxembourg, currently No. 1 in that category, China would have no intention of ‘ruling the world.’ The mentality of ‘China as the world leader’ is indeed a dangerous line of thinking. . . . China is neither the savior nor the ‘ruler’ of the world.” Also see Zhang Weiran, “Tang Jiaxuan: China Must Keep a Low Profile and Bide Its Time in Diplomatic Work,” *Zhongguo Xinwen She*, December 4, 2009, OSC CPP20091204442001. This article quotes Tang Jiaxuan, a former State Councilor, as stating at a speech that “the strategic principle of China’s foreign policy of maintaining a low profile and biding our time and of achieving something in a positive manner is correct. . . . China must always maintain its head sober in carrying out diplomatic work and must avoid by all means indulging in any idea of divorcing from reality and emotions of impetuosity and conceitedness.”

⁵¹ Again, former ambassador Wu Jianmin is often cited in support of this view. In May 2009, Wu argued that China should use its growing influence to shape the rules of the international financial system. See Wu Jianmin, “China’s Diplomacy Has Gone Through Three Great Changes in Past 60 Years, Entered Primetime,” *Zhongguo Xinwen She*, May 31, 2009, OSC CPP20090612702014. Also see a remark Wu made in December 2008. See Guo Li, “Are We Prepared To Shoulder Our Responsibility As A Big Power?—Exclusive Interview with Wu Jianmin, Former Chinese Ambassador to France and Professor of China Foreign Affairs University,” *Nanfang Zhoumo* online, December 31, 2008, OSC CPP20090102705009. Wang stated: “Working for mutually-beneficial win-win results is the only way out in the era of globalization. In the course of playing its international role in future, China must exert to build and develop common interests”

⁵² See in particular two editorials in the *Global Times*. “China Not Defensive in Sino-US Tussle,” *Global Times* editorial, March 8, 2010, OSC CPP20100308722001 and “Time To Drop Illusions in Sino-US Ties,” *Global Times* editorial, February 22, 2010, OSC CPP20100222722003. The former editorial states: “Despite the clashes and conflicts over issues, the interests of the world’s sole superpower and the fastest-growing economy are so intertwined and globalized in their implications that neither of them can afford the heavy price that may be extracted by strained relations. . . . The cropping up of some thorny issues, brought about by old differences, should not detract from the irreversible trend of cooperation and compromise that has shaped ‘one of the most important bilateral relations in the 21st century.’” The latter editorial states: “The continuing growth of China has driven the evolution of bilateral relations. Its expanding interests require China to be more open and assertive in diplomatic affairs, further affecting Sino-US interactions and complicating other regional political dynamics. . . . Cooperation and competition will continue to shape Sino-US relations.” Also see Liu Dong, “US, China Flex Muscles as Rift Continues,” *Global Times*, February 5, 2010, OSC CPP20100205722001; Li Hongmei, “China’s ‘core interests’ diplomacy gains ground,” *Renmin Ribao*, November 20, 2009, OSC CPP20091123787002; Ye Hailin, “Xianqu Viewpoint: After No Containment, Then What?” *Guoji Xianqu Daobao*, November 16, 2009, OSC CPP20091123671003; Yao Shujie, “Love-Hate Affair Must Not Boil Over,” *China Daily* Online, February 22, 2010, OSC CPP20100222968032. Yao writes: “Over the next 10 to 20 years, China will need to show a degree of tolerance when it feels it is being unfairly lectured by the US, but also take certain measures to express its anger.”

⁵³ “Full Text of PRC Premier Wen Jiabao’s Live News Conference,” CCTV-1, March 14, 2010, OSC CPP20100314001001.

⁵⁴ Zhu Feng, “A return of Chinese Pragmatism,” Pacific Forum CSIS, PacNet #16, April 5, 2010; Douglas H. Paal, “Beijing’s Attitude Adjustment,” *National Interest*, April 5, 2010.