

Research Note



Perception of Reform: “China Model” as Affirmation?

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Abstract

In May 2004, Joshua Cooper Ramo’s paper “Beijing Consensus” aroused hot discussion in China and abroad regarding China’s development path. This paper analyzes the development of Western countries’ image of China. During the late Middle Age, people in Western nations spoke highly of China, but China’s image declined significantly in modern times. From the Cold War era’s ideological hostility to the remarkably rapid economic development of today’s China, the West’s impression of China has undergone further notable changes, while the way Chinese scholars react reflects a mix of cautiousness and confidence regarding their country.

Keywords: *Beijing Consensus, China Model, emerging China*

JEL classification: *N45, P26, Y30*

1. Introduction

In May 2004, Joshua Cooper Ramo, the senior editor of US’s *Time* magazine and senior adviser of the Goldman Investment Bank, published a paper, “Beijing Consensus”, at the British Foreign Policy Centre in London, which analyzed the experience of China’s reform and opening up since 1978. Following the publication of the paper, intense discussion on China’s development took place, and a considerable number of scholars have reacted to the paper. While initially only a few scholars in China reacted to the paper, “Beijing consensus” (北京共识) and “China model” (中国模式) once again became hot topics after China successfully hosted the Olympic Games and the subprime crisis in the US led to the global financial crisis. Faced with ongoing intense discussions, the scholars in China began to be involved in the discussion, each trying to have a say in the process. The participants not only try to summarize the basic contents and characteristics of the “China model”,

but also intend to redefine “China model” itself. In Section 2 of this paper, the author presents the evolvement of the Western impression of China, including both positive and negative images. Section 3, in turn, discusses Ramo’s “Beijing Consensus” and the rising China. Section 4 focuses on Chinese scholars’ attitudes and reaction to the issue. Section 5 concludes.

2. Origin of the West’s Impression of China

The West’s impression of China can be traced back to the Second Century BC, when the Silk Road (丝绸之路) was initiated after the ambassador Zhang Qian 张骞 of the Han Dynasty was sent on his diplomatic mission.¹ However, at that time no merchants from the Roman Empire had ever arrived in China. According to *Hou Hanshu – Xiyu Zhuan* 后汉书. 西域传 [“Documentary on western regions” in Book of the Later Han], Da Qin 大秦 “conducted trade with Anxi 安息 and Tianzhu 天竺 with great benefits” (Zhang, 2001). Apparently they conducted silk trade through intermediaries from Persia and India. *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* about Roman merchants’ impression of China appeared in the First Century AD. The book describes a city “Thinae” which is located in “Thin” (秦) country, which specially provided raw silk, raw silk thread and other silk products to Da Xia (大夏国). At the first half of the Second Century AD, the geographer Ptolemy found records about a country called “Seres”. According to textual research by historians, “Thinae” and “Seres” both referred to China (*ibid.*).

These should be the earliest records about China. Those merchants described China as a distant, mysterious, rich and powerful country. Since at that time, these Western countries were underdeveloped, the people there regarded China as an ideal world. Later, more and more Roman businessmen conducted business with China, and the people in the West began to have a better understanding of China. For example, at the beginning of the Second Century AD, the Greek/Roman writer Bardesane described people’s social manners in Seres.² However, compared with the total population in the Roman Empire, the number of people who arrived in China was rather small. The most important reasons are the large geographical distance between the two empires and the lack of a sophisticated means of transportation. Therefore, China had always seemed to be a mysterious place in minds of the people in the West.³ In the 13th Century, the conquest of Eurasia by the Mongol Empire promoted exchange between the two continents, and the number of books about China increased dramatically.

Zhou (2005) specifically regarded “The Travels of Marco Polo” and “The Travels of Mandeville” as the representative pieces of work. He even believed that to some extent, “The Travels of Marco Polo” has significant impact on the impression of China among the people in the West. In the book, China is

described as a wealthy, stable and advanced nation. At that time, European countries were underdeveloped (*ibid.*).

Such a positive impression reached its peak in the West by the age of geographical discoveries and the Enlightenment. Increasing number of Christian missionaries, who were more educated than the businessmen, arrived in China, and they described China in a more detailed manner and more accurately. Based on their first-hand image of China, they described China as a superior and more ideal world.

Those Christian missionaries also began to describe the Confucian moral thinking, imperial bureaucracy, the beautiful Chinese language and the hardworking labour force. Hence more and more people knew more about China at the time when these European nations began building their capitalist societies (*ibid.*). In the minds of the Western people, China was no longer a mysterious nation. On the contrary, it was a good example to learn from, which in a way justified their mission to build a new society. They perceived that with great efforts from the public and the impact of Confucianism, the Chinese indeed led a happy life.

Later more and more Western philosophers were interested in China, at the time when they began to criticize European theology and politics. Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, Voltaire, and Christian Wolf were good examples among them. Although Leibniz himself had never been to China, with information from various sources, he concluded that the Confucian philosophy was similar to Christian theology to some extent.⁴ So he believed that on the one hand, China needed more modern scientific knowledge from Europe; on the other hand, the “Natural Theology” (i.e. Confucianism 儒学) from China was needed in Europe. At the same time, some other philosophers criticized the European feudal autocracy system vis-à-vis China’s political system.

After the Renaissance, Western capitalism gradually developed, but European capitalist economy only began growing rapidly around the mid-Seventeenth Century. With the advanced technological level, the comprehensive national strength of European nations increased dramatically. With the new international order, Western nations were accumulating wealth on a large scale. As the rapid development of the domestic economy called for more raw materials, the Far East became the ideal choice. China which had once been described as an ideal world became a good choice of invasion. With advanced scientific and technological level, the Westerners had no problem in reaching China. At the beginning of the Eighteenth Century, the Westerners’ impression of China became more and more rational, and they soon found that China was not as good as they once imagined.

From the mid-Eighteenth Century onwards, the Westerners’ impression of China changed significantly. Seeing China from the perspective of Western capitalism, they began to question the brutality of the Chinese monarchy. They

also thought that the peasant economy in China was backward, in contrast to the rapid expansion of the Western capitalist economy. Confucian rituals began to be regarded as social indoctrination, because individualism was advocated in the West and people were encouraged to leave the countryside for the urban areas.

From the mid-Eighteenth Century to the early Twentieth Century, the ideal impression of China in the Western countries had completely disappeared. Many historians who study Chinese and Western modern history argue that the Westerners described China as an ideal world for certain purposes. In 1793, British ambassador George Macartney visited China and described China as an uncivilized, cruel and chaotic country. In his mind, the Chinese people were apathetic, greedy, backward, ignorant and rude. This affected the fact that the Westerners began to believe that China was actually not as good as they had imagined and was far behind Europe.

Subsequently, several wars with China further confirmed such Western perception. Although they were still interested in China, they no longer regarded China as an ideal world and they even looked down upon it. Based on data from various sources, the great German philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, who had never been to China, concluded that the Chinese culture was stagnant (Hegel, 2005 (tr.): 5). The French philosopher Montesquieu (Charles-Louis de Secondat, baron de La Brède et de Montesquieu, generally referred to simply as Montesquieu) also described China as an autocratic nation. They even thought that the Western invasion of China was beneficial to China in its modernization.⁵

From the beginning of the Twentieth Century, the Western impression of China varied over time. According to Zhou (2003), the Western impression of China had experienced changes for at least 4 times, oscillating between the positive and the negative. After the Communist Party took power in China and a new government was established, their impression of China changed over time. For example, in the sixties when the left-wing socialist ideology was dominant, there were positive comments in the Western societies on the Cultural Revolution in China. While the famine in China at that time had attracted some attention, it was largely ignored by the mainstream media (*ibid.*). It was only after China's reform and opening up that the scholars began to reflect on the negative aspects and the real causes of the Culture Revolution. At the same time, with increasing trade between China and the Western nations, many Western companies began to invest in China, and the number of positive reports related to China's economic reform had also increased. Many Western scholars also believed that China would "choose the capitalist road", leaving its communist allies aside and joining the Western capitalist nations in the future. Adding to the general fogged perception of China in the West was the fact that China was virtually isolated from the

other nations for certain period of time in the Twentieth Century. Little was known about China, and hence the Western image of China would tend to go to the extremes. Since China's reform and opening up, the West's negative perception of the Chinese regime's political ideology has tended to be mixed with their positive comments on its economic development.

3. "Beijing Consensus"

Based on this historical background, Ramo's "Beijing Consensus" is apparently related to the West's image of China, although at the beginning of "Beijing Consensus", he clearly declared to have studied China without being coloured by the existing Western image of China.⁶ He also indicated that he intended to look at contemporary Chinese development from the perspective of a Chinese. In fact, he proposed that China had emerged as a large nation, and it should not be ignored by other nations. Hence he believed that the discussion on whether to isolate or approach China is irrelevant, and the Western countries needed to have a more comprehensive understanding of China in order to deal with it better.

"Beijing Consensus" is divided into four parts. At the beginning, Ramo proposed that a new and better international consensus had begun to replace the "Washington Consensus" after its failure in all areas of development. In the paper, he negatively commented on the "Washington Consensus", while positively described the "Beijing Consensus". To Ramo, China's new ideas have had a major impact on foreign countries. For these countries which are not only trying to figure out how to develop, but also want to know how to integrate with the international order, while enabling them to be truly independent, China presents a good example in terms of the way of life and the political choices (Ramo, 2005 (tr.): 6). However, Ramo thought that the "Beijing Consensus" seemed to be similar to the "Washington Consensus" which was proposed by certain group of scholars and was imposed on the developing countries. However, the fact is that the so-called "Beijing Consensus" was proposed by Ramo, not by the Chinese government to be imposed on its allies. Therefore, in a way, Ramo seemed to lean on warning the West regarding the possible threat of the emerging China on the existing world order established by the West.⁷

In the second part of the article, "The Useful Axioms of Chinese Development", Ramo described the definition of "Beijing Consensus". Here, he concentrated on innovation and explained the core value of China's development strategy. As a nation which started modern development much later, China has not followed the experience of the advanced countries. On the contrary, it has aggressively introduced innovative and latest technology to promote its economic development. The author suggested that China

managed to solve various reform problems in this way. While cutting-edge innovation is essential to conduct reform, reform inevitably leads to more issues, and China reduces “friction” in reform through innovation (*ibid.*: 12). The so-called “friction” mainly refers to social inequality, corruption and environmental pollution in the process of reform. Ramo believed that these innovations had led to economic growth, but they had also brought about controversies. The government had relied on resources obtained from economic growth to solve the above issues. This is an innovative way of resolving social issues.

In its national development model, the Chinese government is seen as not only paying attention to per capita GDP, but also taking into consideration the people’s quality of life. Following Deng Xiaoping 邓小平’s “black cat/white cat” dictum, Ramo proposed the concepts of the “green cat” and the “transparent cat”. The former refers to environmental protection and the scientific outlook on development to achieve sustainable development, while the latter refers to information transparency regarding data on China’s economic development. According to Ramo, the Chinese government is working hard to build an economic environment for sustainable and equitable development (*ibid.*). Such development concept reflects the Chinese government’s pragmatic approach. Therefore, Ramo specifically pointed out that the continued reform and change since 1979 is driven by knowledge rather than ideology. Those changes seem strange in the eyes of the Westerners who regard China as an ideology-driven society. The author also believed that reform had led to the rapid growth of total factor productivity. In other words, its growth outweighs the sum of the original human and capital investment. The additional growth is a result of emancipation. It is obvious that the modernization of China is different from the “Washington consensus”, as China is developing according to its own development path.

From the author’s point of view, “Beijing Consensus” does not only play a role in China, but under the incoming tide of globalization, China is trying to impose the “Beijing Consensus” on other nations, which will surely lead to international security concerns, since it may cause changes in the existing international order. Of course, it will also threaten the interests of the Western nations. In this regard, Beijing also emerges in a way different from the Western powers. In the paper, Ramo used Germany which emerged during the World War II as an example. He indicated that as a developing nation with great developmental potential, it adopted an asymmetrical defense strategy. China does not directly confront the United States. On the contrary, the country strongly emphasizes on economic development, solves diplomatic conflicts through peaceful approaches, accumulates foreign exchange reserves of up to four hundred billion US dollars, cultivates high-quality armed forces and develops its non-conventional and asymmetrical military forces.

Expanding the sphere of influence of the “Beijing Consensus”, Ramo indicated that China intended to revitalize its national development through reform and opening up, develop good diplomatic relationship with other nations through international trade, and develop its strong armed forces, so as to become a major power in the world. He also argued that such a development model was very attractive for small nations which could learn from China in terms of economic development, and in fact develop their economies by taking advantage of China’s large purchasing power. As for China, international trade has the potential to make other nations rely on it economically, which places itself in a favourable condition, while it may be on the way of becoming a major power like the United States or even replacing the latter.

At the end of paper, Ramo concluded that China was building a new development path of innovation and asymmetrical power to achieve people-centered development and a balance of individual rights and responsibilities, and the Western nations should pursue effective measures to deal with China. Those measures must be made in accordance with the nature of Chinese society and politics, and indirect actions are preferable. He also suggested that the Western nations should consider the following aspects: China’s weaknesses; indirect manipulation as being more effective than persuasion; the utmost importance of overall environment (*ibid.*: 47). Specifically, it is better not to criticize China’s national policies. Instead, the author proposed cooperation with China, through which Western governments could provide subsidies to China, while China could make use of its strengths. For example, on the issues of AIDS in China, traditionally Western countries hold meetings related to HIV in China and send their doctors to China to discuss about its prevention and treatment strategies. However, China is usually against such programmes because of political concerns and the lack of resources. In Ramo’s opinion, Western countries should help China to develop an overall healthcare plan, including an HIV programme. In this way, the original purpose of assistance can also be realized (*ibid.*: 49).

Of course, a better choice is to re-establish a more comprehensive framework of bilateral cooperation to work together to solve the relevant issues. In the process, the US should not make efforts to isolate China. Instead, the two nations should work together in the fields of nuclear proliferation, energy security and others to jointly maintain world security. Besides, Ramo advised China to bear more responsibility as a major world power. According to Ramo, although China would want to continue to pretend that it is still a poor country, it needs to realize that the reason why so many nations are paying so much attention to itself is that the Chinese people are hardworking. Hence, Ramo advised that China should continue its practice and maintain harmonious coexistence with other nations, as well as to prove that a developing country can also become a strong nation (*ibid.*: 50).

Ramo stressed that the subsequent five years would present a great opportunity for China's future development, and if China could seize the opportunity in the international arena, it would be well accepted by all countries. Interestingly, at the end of the article, Ramo justified his conclusion with words from Deng Xiaoping. He said that Deng Xiaoping once said that China would help the other nations after it had reached per capita income of a thousand dollars, and help build a more secure, equitable world.⁸

China's per capita income did exceed one thousand dollars in 2003. Hence, Ramo believed that China should be involved more in assistance projects around the world, since it would become a good example from which other nations could learn, and it should contribute to world development.

There were favourable comments on Ramo's paper among the Western nations. As mentioned above, after the Communist Party took over power in China, the Western nations had twice given favourable comments on China. However, it turned out that the favourable comments were due to the lack of sufficient information on China, which was also the cause of negative comments in the past. At the beginning of 2000, some Western scholars proposed the "China threat" theory and the "China collapse" theory, which were also proven to be far from the reality. Ramo's "Beijing Consensus" seems to be comparatively more rational, since he has a better understanding of the Chinese government's political thinking. Instead of negatively commenting on the Chinese government's political behaviour, he in fact gave favourable comments on the government's role in China's economic development, social stability and public issues.

After "Beijing Consensus" was published, domestic and overseas media responded to it actively. As Ramo said, the focus of discussion gradually turned to China's economic development. Therefore, people later paid more attention to the "China Model" than "Beijing Consensus". However, favourable comments remained, and Western scholars still have certain interest in the discussion. Take Ramo as an example. Although he gave much favourable comments on China, he aimed to propose measures for Western nations to deal with China so as to get China involved in the existing international system. Therefore, in discussing the "China model", those scholars were always commenting with their own respective nations' interest in mind. In addition, diverse views usually emerged after discussions. Some thought that the "China model" bore similarities with some past examples. For example, Professor Huang Jing from Singapore argued that the "China model" is simply another "East Asian model", referring to Japan and the Asian "tigers" which achieved rapid economic development through opening up, attracting foreign investment and expanding exports. He concluded that China's remarkable economic development was mainly a result of steady foreign investment and prospering overseas market (Ye, 2009). He

also pointed out that Ramo's comment was not a fresh one after all. Huang Yasheng used Brazil's economic development in the 1960s as an example. He indicated that although the state-dominated economic model in Brazil contributed to rapid economic growth to some degree, uneven distribution of social wealth also occurred, which in turn led to many negative economic, political and social issues in the long run (Huang, 2010). These observations led further to more diverse and divergent discussions. It is worth noting that many scholars who are overseas Chinese usually seem to have a better understanding of China.⁹

4. China's Response

Since the "Beijing Consensus" was proposed in 2004, it had attracted intense discussions outside China. However, the Chinese government and the Chinese scholars had kept silent on it for a long time. Chinese officials have never expressed their views on the issue in public. Chinese scholars had also initially been silent about it. In August 2005, an "International Conference on China's Development Road" (中国发展道路国际学术研讨会) was held in Tianjin, in which over one hundred Chinese and foreign political scientists were present. This was the first response on this subject from Chinese scholars.¹⁰ Yu Keping 俞可平, the deputy director of the Compilation and Translation Bureau of the CPC Central Committee (中共中央编译局) and a well-known political scientist, described the "China model" (中国模式) as a strategic choice of China to achieve modernization against the background of globalization. In the future progress of reform and opening up, Yu said, the principle of reform, development and stability should be maintained, and the government should pay attention to both GDP and other human development indicators, such as environmental protection, ecological balance, population growth, national quality, social stability and cultural education (Yu, 2005). While his argument is almost the same as Ramo's as expressed in the "Beijing Consensus", he did not agree with Ramo's appeal for increasing China's international responsibility. Talking about globalization, Yu indicated that China should maintain its own characteristics and continue to be active in the international arena (*ibid.*). Such Chinese official stance apparently was not in total agreement with Ramo's proposals, but it did not publicly oppose them either.

In 2008, along with China's hosting of the Olympic Games and the country's rapid economic growth, heated discussions about the "China model" were again common around the world. At that time, public discussion on it also appeared in China. At the 30th anniversary of the Third Plenum of the Chinese Communist Party Congress (中国共产党十一届三中全会召开30周年纪念大会), Chinese President Hu Jintao 胡锦涛 stated in his speech

that there was no universal development path and development model in the world, and China should not be bound to theories in books and should not regard those development models which have demonstrated certain advantages as perfect. This speech was regarded as the Chinese government's attitude towards the subject. So basically those institutions and scholars of official background were usually very cautious about the "Beijing Consensus" and the "China model". For instance, in a seminar on China-EU strategic partnership on 19th November, Li Junru 李君如, the former vice-president of the Party School of the CPC Central Committee (中央党校) indicated that referring to the "China model" (中国模式) is not suitable, as it is far from the reality. Professor Li was worried that other nations might think that China was trying to impose its development model on them if China kept referring to the "China model". Therefore, he proposed a more familiar Chinese term "Chinese characteristics" (中国特色) to replace the "China model". Zhao Qizheng 赵启正, the director of the CPPCC Foreign Affairs Committee (全国政协外事委员会) held the similar point of view. In a forum organized by the Western Returned Scholars Association (欧美同学会) on 26th September 2009, Zhao stated that China did not impose the "China model" on any other nations. If any developing country was willing to learn from China's experience in reform and opening up, this was a natural phenomenon in the context of globalization. Imposing the "China model" on other nations went against China's national conditions and its existing policies. Furthermore, the "China model" was not universal all over the world.¹¹ On the other hand, also on 26th September 2009, the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (中国社科院) issued the Blue Book on Development and Reform (发展和改革蓝皮书), 《中国道路与中国模式》 [China's development road and China model], in which the "China model" (中国模式) is used in conjunction with the so-called "China's development road" (中国道路).

Apparently, China tries to separate "Beijing Consensus" (北京共识) or the "China model" from "Washington Consensus" (华盛顿共识). "Washington Consensus" refers to ten advices to Latin American nations from the economist John Williamson, who once served the World Bank, at a conference in Washington in 1989 (Williamson, 2005 (tr.)). Those advices were called the "Neo-liberal Policy Statement", and were supported by the World Bank, and implemented in many countries in Latin America which received assistance from the World Bank. However, due to the fact that most of the international economic organizations were nominated by the United States, the "Washington Consensus" was sometimes seen to be an ideological framework for US dominance (Chomsky, 2000 (tr.)). However, the "Washington Consensus" was ultimately seen as a failure when those Latin American countries did not achieve the expected results. According to Ramo, in contrast, China and India which went against the "Washington

Consensus” had achieved amazing economic development over the years (Ramo, 2005 (tr.)).

In addition, from China’s point of view, the Western political scientists were all proposing that China should bear more responsibilities in the international arena. Ramo stated that China had already risen as a major power in the world for the first time. In September 2005, the US Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick gave a speech entitled “The United States and China are Both Important Players in International Arena”.¹² Traditionally, China is always regarded as a developing nation in the international community. Therefore, if China agrees with Ramo’s appeal, it will not be regarded as a developing country any more. Professor Qiu Gengtian 邱耕田 from the Philosophy Department of the Party School of the CPC Central Committee indicated that China was required to take on international responsibility as that of the US in the Copenhagen climate summit. He believed that those Western scholars had conducted intense discussion on the “China model” so that China would assume responsibility beyond its power. Nevertheless, he also held that China had to bear its own responsibilities. However, as a developing country, China’s international role is clearly limited to its commitment to relevant international obligations. Thus, it is impossible for China to act like the US. Apparently, his opinion reflects the Chinese government’s attitude towards the issue.

After 2010, Chinese scholars began to actively react to the “China model” subject. The Central Compilation and Translation Press (中央编译出版社) published 《中国模式 —— 解读人民共和国的60年》 [“China model”: analysis of the sixty years of the People’s Republic], in which “China model” is redefined. This 630-page book consists of articles concerning the “China model” by Chinese scholars in various fields. The involved authors include Professor Pan Wei 潘维 from the China and World Research Center of Peking University (北京大学中国与世界研究中心), Gao Liang 高粱, a researcher at the Institute of Economic System and Management of the National Development and Reform Commission (国家发改委经济体制与管理研究所), Zhang Baijia 章百家, a researcher at the CPC Central Party History Research Center (中共中央党史研究室), Wen Tiejun 温铁军, the dean of the Agriculture and Rural Development College of the Chinese People’s University (中国人民大学农业与农村发展学院), Professor Hu Angang 胡鞍钢 from the Public Administration College of Tsinghua University (清华大学公共管理学院), Professor Wang Shaogang 王绍光 from the Politics and Administration Department of the Chinese University of Hong Kong (香港中文大学政治与行政学系), and Professor Zhu Yunhan 朱云汉 from the Politics Department of Taiwan University (台湾大学政治系). According to the book’s editor Professor Pan Wei, the “China model” should be called the “Chinese system” (中华体制). In the past 60 years, the “Chinese system”

developed gradually based on the experiences of the Soviet Union and the United States (Pan, 2009: 5). He explained that the “Chinese system” consisted of the “national economy”, “people-oriented politics” and “social system”. “National economy” (国民经济) refers to a unique economic model; “people-oriented politics” (民本政治) represents a unique political mode; and “social system” (社稷体制) is a unique social model. According to a local magazine, the book was selected by the Press and Publication Administration (新闻出版总署) as a classic, and its versions in English and other languages are being prepared (Shu, 2010a). Obviously, Chinese scholars are now confident to conduct discussion on this subject, and plan to play a leading role in the field. Compared with the others, the book 《中国模式 —— 解读人民共和国的60年》 [“China model”: analysis of the sixty years of the People’s Republic] was completed by Chinese scholars, and it will be difficult to arouse corresponding discussion among Western counterparts. Certain issues may take place if such subjects are not taken seriously. Wang Changjiang 王长江, a director of the Central Party School, once published a paper which pointed out that apathy towards political reform (政治体制改革麻木症) had appeared in China, with some people feeling that political reform was not as urgent as before and believed that the existing political system is perfect (Shu, 2010b). This is due to following factors: misleading propaganda by the media, “Beijing Consensus” and other unrealistic conclusions.

5. Conclusion

In the past, Western impression of China has changed a lot over time. With development of information technology, such impression of China has become more and more rational. Ramo’s article “Beijing Consensus” is a good example in the field. Although he aimed to look at China without being influenced by preconceived opinions, he still maintained his ideological point of view. It is worth noting that he recommended rational exchange with China, since China has become a major power in the world. On the issue of the “China model”, silence on the part of China could be counterproductive. When it comes to “Beijing Consensus” and the “China model”, Chinese scholars remain cautious, while intending to actively participate in the discussion. While being cautious and confident, it is important for China to take the favourable comments from Western scholars seriously, and pay attention to the possible effects on China’s future development.

Notes

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1. *Hou Hanshu – Xiyu Zhuan* 后汉书. 西域传 [“Documentary on western regions” in Book of the Later Han].
2. According to the relevant records, in Seres, killing, prostitution, theft and worship were strictly prohibited. The country had a vast territory, but there were no temples, prostitutes, unpunished thieves, murderers and murder victims. One thing was special: Seres gave birth all the time. Obviously, the author was very curious about the Confucian civilization in the Chinese society, and he was quite impressed with large population in China. Hence he guessed that the Chinese gave birth every day (Coedes, 1987 (tr.): 57).
3. For example, in the Sixth Century AD, in the *Universal Christian Topography* by Byzantine monk Cosmas Indicopleustes, China is called “Tzinitza”. The author respected China as the “country of silk”, and thought that China was far away from the Byzantine Empire. Zhang Xushan 张绪山, professor of history at Tsinghua University, believes that Tzinitza is as important as the Roman Empire in the mind of Cosmas Indicopleustes. (Zhang, 2002) In the Thirteenth Century, in books of travels by Giovanni da Pian del Carpine and William of Rubruck, China was called “Cathay”, a wealthy nation ruled by a highly respected Khan (Zhou, 2005).
4. When he studied *I Ching* 易经 (“Book of Changes”), he found that its mathematical law was similar to his binary numeral system..
5. For related arguments, refer to the famous American historians on China John K. Fairbank, Joseph R. Levenson and Mary Wright.
6. This referred to the Western countries’ basic political attitudes towards China.
7. The meaning of the term “threat” here follows the way the word is used in Ramo’s “Beijing Consensus”. In English the term “threat” is more moderate than in Chinese “威胁” (Ramo, 2005 (tr): 2).
8. In 1979, Japanese prime minister Masayoshi Ohira 大平正芳 met Chinese vice premier Deng Xiaoping 邓小平 in China. The former asked Deng what is the objective in progress of modernization. After a while, Deng replied, “Now, China’s per capita income is US\$250. Our goal is to reach US\$1000 by the end of this century.” In other words, the figure was expected to quadruple within 20 years. Deng Xiaoping also said, “If we reach the goal, we can do something to contribute to the world’s development. We regard it as a well-off society, at that time, when the problems of food and clothing have been resolved among all Chinese.” (《邓小平文选》第二卷 [Selected works of Deng Xiaoping, vol. 2], p. 237).
9. For more documents on the subject, refer to papers by Zheng Yongnian 郑永年, Huang Jing 黄靖, Zhang Weiwei 张维为, Yao Yang 姚洋, etc.
10. Social Sciences Academic Press (社会科学文献出版社), the Central Compilation and Translation Bureau (中央编译局), CASS International Cooperation Bureau (中国社会科学院国际合作局) and Tianjin Normal University (天津师范大学) jointly held the “International Conference on China’s Development Road” (中国发展道路国际学术研讨会) in which nearly 50 domestic and foreign experts participated in discussions. Their points of view were collected in 《中国模式与“北京共识”: 超越“华盛顿共识”》 [“China model” and “Beijing consensus”: Beyond the “Washington consensus”] published by 社会科学文献出版社 (Social Sciences Academic Press), 2006 (2006年6月第1版).

11. On 7th December 2009, four articles were published in 《学习时报》 [Study times] which is sponsored by the Central Party School (中共中央党校). The authors of all the articles were against referring to the “China model”, which showed that the Chinese government had remained cautious when facing Western scholars’ favourable comments. Those four articles are: Li (2009), Zhao (2009), Shi (2009), Qiu (2009).
12. “2005年美国副国务卿佐利克提出中国是美国的‘利益攸关方’” [U.S. undersecretary Robert Zoellick stated that China was the United States’ ‘stakeholder’], 北京晨报 (Beijing Morning Post), 16th September 2009.

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