



Asia in the eye of Europe

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Interviewees



<i>Name:</i>	<i>Affiliation:</i>	<i>Position:</i>
Ou Ming Lüe	Kristeligt Dagblad	Foreign Correspondent
Geir Terje Ruud	Ekstra Bladet	Chief editor on online Newspaper
Jette Maressa Elbæk	Jyllands Posten	Senior Diplomatic Correspondent. Active as foreign news editor during the period of data collecting.
Henrik Brun	Kristeligt Dagblad	Foreign news editor
Thomas Aue Sobol	Freelance (earlier correspondent for Jyllands Posten)	Freelance reporter
Lasse Karner	Danish Embassy, Beijing	Press and Public Diplomacy coordinator and journalist
Tenna Schoer	Tv 2	Foreign news reporter
Pia Elers Caspersen	Børsen	Foreign news correspondent
...	Morgen Danmark	
...	Politiken	
...	Weekend Avisen	
...	Tv 2 – nyhederne (TV)	

Why are they representative?

- All media outlets from the media analysis are represented in the interviewees.
- The freelance reporters that participate are all particularly interested in covering Asia.
- The interviewees consists of freelance, foreign correspondent, stringers, and foreign news editors.
- Problem: still four interviews missing and China might be over represented in the group of foreign correspondents. But that, I guess, reflect the tendency for Danish news outlets to give priority to China (as the major player in Asia).



How Asia-news is made in general among local news outlets

- Usually there are no particular preparations made in advance or rarely based on research made prior to the news story. Kristeligt Dagblad has a particular interest in ethics and human rights so might base some of their coverage on large organization's publications and reports (e.g. Amnesty Int).
- There is an increasing interest in covering Asia, China in particular (Danish Embassy statistics show an increasing number of Danish foreign correspondents in Beijing).
- Most Asia correspondents work from Beijing, and thus give priority to covering China.
- Most outlets also get part of their Asian related stories from international news agencies (Reuters, Ritzau).



How Asia-news is made in general among local news outlets

- More serious news outlets generally employ a correspondent or stringer and almost in every case covering larger areas, but usually working from Beijing.
- This also means that in these cases a special budget is allocated for the coverage of Asia (but rarely more staff will be employed in case of special incidents). This does depend on the scale of the incident though.
- Ekstra Bladet (tabloid) has no specific Asia correspondents or even a foreign news section. EB thus covers lead stories or “stories of the day” / “stories with wide interest”. If special incidents as catastrophes etc. they go all in.



How Asia-news is made in general among local news outlets

CRITERIA

- There are general journalistic criteria for all foreign news coverage (presence, clarity, relevance, local angle, big stories).
- Respondents rarely point to separate criteria for Asia. The criteria are more a question of the paper involved (Jyllands Post: Economy/politics – Kristelig Dagblad: Ethics/religion/human rights – Ekstra Bladet: Big stories/local angle – Børsen: business/economy). Also this depends on the section involved, whether it is culture/politics etc.
- However, there is a broad and shared interest in Asia's economic growth and Asia as an emerging and important market.
- EB prefers stories about Thailand and Danish tourism, paedophilia cases and especially our soldiers in Afghanistan. Not local election somewhere in Asia



Editorial Approach

- There is rarely a specific policy on Asia. Again it doesn't depart much from the coverage of other regions (and is dependent on the general interests of the news outlet). However, stories from Asia seem to be oriented toward issues as China, economic growth, political instability, human rights issues, and trade.
- Coverage are more day to day, but in the larger papers you can find more feature like coverage and larger articles (however business oriented outlets must be short and concise).



Editorial Approach

- Correspondents would mostly prefer to do more pro-active, investigative and in depth journalism and “make” the stories themselves.
- Respondents are rarely clear on the question of partnership but it seems unlikely that it plays an important role. Mostly it relies on the particular reporter and what kind of networks they tap into. But if there are any kind of collaboration it is rarely formal and mostly in a bilateral context.



Is selling Asia difficult?

- There is a general agreement amongst respondents (also correspondents working abroad) that Asia sells well. That there is an increasing interest in Asia's development. And that the interest goes beyond a merely economic perspective.
- So far I didn't detect any large differences between the respondents on this question.
- One interesting response was that China sells well, while the rest of Asia is difficult.



Prediction/expectation of future foreign reporting.

- Greater weight on foreign news, especially in the new media (www) targeting young readers – basic idea that globalization effects media.
- General agreement amongst respondents that Asia will play an even greater role, especially China (both when it comes to politics and economy). This is also structurally reflected in an increasing number of correspondents deployed in Asia.
- The news items from Asia (meaning China in this case) can be more complex as peoples' knowledge of Asia/China is becoming more extensive with the intensity of the present coverage.



Asian bodies/gov. Active in disseminating knowledge – interest?

- There was a general lack of interest in covering press releases. It respondents did consider it, it would be a component of a story. E.g. new government policy on death penalty as a component of a story on human rights.
- Another possibility would be business oriented outlets participating in dissemination of new economic policies etc.
- Most respondents who considered the possibility would underline the need for a critical examination of the information, which might indicate a skepticism towards Asian institutions.



Is Asia a big power? In which field?

- Question generally not accepted, i.e. Asia is not accepted as an entity you can generalize
- Asian countries/regions are conceptualized as powerful (esp. China/India/Japan)
- Reveals an idea that Asia is diverse, fragmented, and not politically coherent – often opposed to the EU.
- However, economy is the most widely accepted category that is considered as something pertinent to the linking of Asia and power
- In a few instances, Asia is perceived as becoming a more unified power in the elite perceptions (and a few also mentions ASEAN).



Asia leader in International politics?

- Again, question not really accepted – unless we specify with particular reasons.
- Yes: 2 respondents (increasingly)
- No: 6 respondents
- In many cases China/India's agency and demeanour at the COP15 climate meeting in Denmark serves as the proof of a new kind of Asian potency – political agency (especially refers to China as a political actor).
- A few mentioned a growing political self-confidence (mostly relating to China).



Which issues in your country's current relations with Asia have the most impact on your country?

- Respondents generally thought the question to be too simplistic. Depends on which field.
- Economy and trade are widely agreed as the most important
- Politics and culture as a distant second.
- Present: 3-3.5
- Future: 4-4.3
- Everybody agrees on the increasing influence of Asia.



Do the elites know and care about ASEM? Do they find it useful to your country's relation with Asia? (Q.15&Q.16)

- Only two respondents were familiar with ASEM (contrary to ASEAN that most know).
- Editor from Kristeligt Dagblad knew about the meeting and believed it to be important, but considered the general population (i.e. not politicians) as generally outside such interactions – i.e. few would have any insight on the issue unless particular interest.
- They generally point out that “we” need to do better press work 😊 ...



Images associated with Asia

- 3: China
- 2: Diversity, determination, rice, economic growth
- 1: fast trains, technology, inequality, the future, democratic challenges, corruption, mass production, Buddhism/Hinduism, reliable people, emerging middle class, environment, Japan, Thailand
- (measured in 3,2, and 1 votes)



Highlights/several special points in the findings

- Numbers and ratings provoke Danish reporters
- Asia is perceived as diverse, but regions and countries are evaluated as important political and economic actors
- Asia is gaining more ground but needs a united front (often opposed to the EU)
- COP-15 (meeting on climate change in Copenhagen was a reference point for Denmark's acknowledgement of the rise of Asia.)



so what?

i.e. you have to analysis the findings, conclude and make suggestions to Asia and your country

- Two points:
 - 1. Asia is often synonymous with China
 - 2. Growth and markets are central to the elite perceptions, and Asia will be more and more visible in peoples' lives.
- By the way: hope all is well, would have loved to be in Vienna with you guys but 'the Times they are a-changin'... daddyhood!
- thanks Cher for helping out!

