Mutual Perceptions: Asia, Europe and Germany in a changing global environment

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German Council on Foreign Relations (DGAP)

Supporting partners:

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Asia in the Eyes of Europe: Images of a Rising Giant

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How does Europe perceive Asia’s rise?

We want to know if and how the understanding of Asia in Europe goes beyond a traditional geographic definition of the region but also reflects contemporary regional political, economic, security, social, human and cultural dynamics within what has been called “a true pan-regional Asian system” of international relations (Shambaugh 2008).
How does Europe perceive Asia’s rise?

Research on perceptions wants to know how facts are observed, constructed and understood.

Perceptions matter as a foundation for understanding expectations, choices and decisions of others.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media Outlets</th>
<th>Widely circulated daily (serious)</th>
<th>Tabloid/ 2nd serious daily</th>
<th>TV Primetime news</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>Der Standard</td>
<td>Kronen Zeitung</td>
<td>ORF2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>20min/7:30pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium (W)</td>
<td>Le Soir</td>
<td>la Libre</td>
<td>RTBF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>30min/7:30pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium (Fl)</td>
<td>De Standaard</td>
<td>De Morgen</td>
<td>VTM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>30min/7:30pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>Jyllands-Posten</td>
<td>Ekstra Bladet</td>
<td>TV2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>30min/7pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>le Monde</td>
<td>le Figaro</td>
<td>France2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>30min/8pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>Süddeutsche Zeitung</td>
<td>Bild</td>
<td>Tageschau-ARD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>15min/8pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>Corriere della Sera</td>
<td>Il Giornale</td>
<td>TG1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>30min/8pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>the Adevarul</td>
<td>Libertatea</td>
<td>Antena1-Observator</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1hour/7pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>Daily Telegraph</td>
<td>the Daily Mail</td>
<td>BBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>30min/6pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Voice</td>
<td>Euro News</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>30min/7pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>6 days</td>
<td></td>
<td>7 days</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Electronic versions/ archives (same to hard copies) available
Volume of News

Volume of articles per country

N = 2,770 articles, collected between 1 September to 30 November 2010
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Sources of Articles

- N/A
- Local Newswires
- Local Correspondents
- Non-Local Correspondents
- Non-Local Newswires
Sources of Articles

- Local Newswires
- Local Correspondents
- Non-Local Correspondents
- Non-Local Newswires
- N/A

Countries: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Romania, United Kingdom
Sources of Articles in Germany

- Sueddeutsche (Quality)
- BILD (Tabloid)
- Tagesschau (TV)
- TOTAL

- N/A
- int'l
- domestic
Framing of Asian News in EU media

Asia as an economic powerhouse (well-being of the Asian economies; investment, business opportunities in Asia for European companies); Asian economies as trading partners.
Framing of Asian News in EU media

Sports (Asia Games, Asia Championship, Asian representatives in international sporting events);
Asian lifestyle/culture
Framing of Asian News in EU media

Politics: Security issues, Afghanistan, Obama tour of Asia, territorial disputes, Asia's rising role in International Politics
Evaluation of News total

- Positive: 74%
- Negative: 13%
- Neutral: 13%
### Evaluation of Economic News
- **Positive:** 21%
- **Neutral:** 72%
- **Negative:** 7%

### Evaluation of Social News
- **Positive:** 11%
- **Neutral:** 72%
- **Negative:** 17%

### Evaluation of Political News
- **Positive:** 21%
- **Neutral:** 77%
- **Negative:** 4%

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*Note: The pie charts illustrate the distribution of positive, neutral, and negative news for social, economic, and political categories.*
Imagery: Economic Asia
Imagery: Political Asia
Imagery: The US-Factor
The Media’s “Face” of Asia

How Asia is represented in European media

N = 2,770 articles, collected between 1 September to 30 November 2010
In the Shadow of China

• Key image of Asia:
  • Rising China
• Rising Asia means Rising China
• China as a dominant emerging actor within the 'Asian' context (media analysis)
• China is perceived by the European public as the most important Asian country for Europe in the future
## Media Elite Interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Publications</th>
<th>News Items</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Interviews</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EU (8)</td>
<td>2 dailies + 1 TV News bulletin (Sept-Nov 2010)</td>
<td>2,770</td>
<td>6,155</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia (7)</td>
<td>3 dailies + 1 TV News bulletin (Jan-June 2011)</td>
<td>6,115</td>
<td>7,040</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*May-Dec 2011*
“Mongolia sells worse.”
(Die Presse, Austria)

“It’s not easy [to ‘sell’ a piece on Asia] and yet at the same time we feel, through the viewers’ feedback, that there is a real curiosity for everything that goes on there. Because there is incomprehension, there is a fear, people are afraid, Asia is scary, we are under the impression that they are all going to invade us, that they work like crazy.” (France 2)

“It’s the content that counts.”
(Wirtschaftswoche)

“A good story will be printed. It doesn’t matter where it comes from.” (FAZ)
“Asia is not a great power to me. It’s nothing at all. It’s a geographical concept. Individual countries, of course I would see them as a great power but I see no cohesion.” (Austrian Press Agency)

“My impression is that ASEAN is seen as one big block. But I am located in China, and here it seems like China is the only state that matters.” (Financial Times Deutschland)

“Well, as a journalist, it always seems appealing to concentrate on a single country. It makes things so much easier... even single countries stand and reflect the development of entire regions.” (Handelsblatt)

“The greater region is a rising power, especially economically. And politically, it’s one of the new hot spots, especially because of all the tensions between the states.” (FAZ)
Selection Process

“It needs to be **new, and interesting, and current and relevant.** It has to prove itself **compared to the other topics of the day.**” (Stuttgarter Zeitung)

„So far, it is almost **impossible to go beyond the states when reporting Asia.** If you think of Europe, it is still **difficult** to write about the **EU, without mentioning the member states.**“ (La Repubblica)

“Recently, my magazine has assumed a rather **reactive** role, I think. We react more rather than to set new trends or discover new topics.”” (Der Spiegel)

“When you write about Asia, you write about China. This is one of the **clearest tendencies** I see at the moment.” (Kristligt Dagblad)
Key Findings

• Europeans expect Asia to play an increasingly prominent role throughout the 21st century.

• China is a proxy and symbol of a ‘rising Asia’.

• European media focuses on Asian countries.

• Europe is challenged to react to Asian regional dynamics.
Key Recommendations

- Launch Asia-Europe Public Diplomacy Initiative
- Facilitate Asia-Europe News Media Partnerships and Exchanges
- Market a Wider Asia
- Invest in Asia-Europe Knowledge Community
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