Asia in the eye of Europe

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Vienna

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media outlet</th>
<th>Type of Media</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Le Monde</td>
<td>Daily newspaper</td>
<td>Editorial Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Le Figaro</td>
<td>Daily newspaper</td>
<td>Chief Editor - International Section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libération</td>
<td>Daily newspaper</td>
<td>Journalist - Asia desk</td>
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<tr>
<td>Le Parisien/Aujourd'hui en France</td>
<td>Daily newspaper</td>
<td>Chief Editor - World</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Croix</td>
<td>Daily newspaper</td>
<td>Deputy Chief Editor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RFI</td>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France Info</td>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>Journalist - International Section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TF1</td>
<td>Television</td>
<td>Section Chief - World and Defense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France 2</td>
<td>Television</td>
<td>Chief Editor - Reports and Investigations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Le Point</td>
<td>Weekly Magazine</td>
<td>Chief Editor - International Section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L'Express</td>
<td>Weekly Magazine</td>
<td>Chief Editor - International Section</td>
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How is Asia covered?
French media outlets rely on networks of local correspondants

- China without exception
- Japan and India also common, with larger outlets including S.E. Asia

- Special preparations will be made for large events, depending on interest of readers, anticipated importance and outlet
• In reacting to events in Asia, French outlets work within existing structure (special envoys, no new hires)

• No special budget allocated for Asia (international budget)

• Asia must compete with global events
VALUES:

• No uniformity, nor distinct pattern of value structure by media type or political bent

• Some did identify human rights as a point of interest, with attention in Asia focused on oppressive regimes and dissidents

• Pertinence to French public a key driver
EDITORIAL APPROACH

• No officially formulated policies

• Pertinence of news
• objectivity
• searching for original angles (value added, important vs e-media)
Reactive or Proactive?

• Most outlets claim both
• Most claim to lean more reactive (radio, TV, L.C., Libé), others more proactive (weeklies, L.M.), while others strive for balance (L.F.).
• More “popular” daily media (L.P., radio or TV) are most reactive.
SELLING ASIA

• Not exceptionally difficult, but depends on topics in France and rest of world
  
• Asia is still seen as far away, but closer than 10-15 years ago (Le Point)
• Economy and Islam related topics in Asia generate interest; obscure topics harder to sell (Le Monde)
• China always in top-10, rest of Asia doesn’t always generate much interest (La Croix)
• A ‘far away from my concerns’ aspect mixed with curiosity, fascination and fear (France 2)
INFO FROM GOV’Ts?

• Most outlets generally sour on « institutional information »

• Few said they would consider press releases, but may glance at them

• Le Monde: What is really needed is an honest exchange of views
Elites’ Personal perceptions on Asia
ASIA AS A GREAT POWER?

Not Asia, but Asian actors are largely economic powers

- China (all identified as economic power, some as military power, one included « societal », though usually avoids political responsibility)
- India (a rising economic power, some identified as cultural power – potential for soft power)
- Japan (economic power, cultural significance for some in Europe)
- One reference to S.E. Asia, but only individual countries that should be given more attention (Indonesia, Thai, Phs)
ZERO notion of Asia as a political power

One alluded to potential, but many explained complexity of internal divisions

Example: Inability of Asia to support Singaporean candidate to IMF
Importance of Asia for France:

Today: 3.59

Tomorrow: 4.4
Most importance issues for France

Economy
- China’s economy; trade and market access for French companies; unfair competition with China; impact on French employment; innovation

China
- China’s growing presence in the world (particularly in Africa)

Afghanistan
- French troops on the ground, must be concerned

Other security/Defense issues
- nuclear (2) and conventional (1)
- terrorism

Cultural understanding (1)
ASEM

Little knowledge of 8th ASEM summit
- exception, Le Monde (press contacts +)

Little knowledge of ASEM in general
- general admission that summits “can’t hurt” but that impact on France is minor to very minor
- no interest seen in press covering such events
- one observation: France is more directly impacted in forums where it stands on its own, not with EU
- difficulty of EU to find common ground on foreign policy, coupled with disunity in ‘Asia’ will keep impact of ASEM to a minimum
### 3 images of Asia
...all over the map...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic giganticism</th>
<th>Economic effervescence</th>
<th>Political archaism</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Huge population</td>
<td>Extremely powerful economy</td>
<td>Splendid landscapes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demographic weight</td>
<td>Economic weight</td>
<td>Political weight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contradicitons</td>
<td>Economic power</td>
<td>Innovation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huge population</td>
<td><strong>Dynamism</strong></td>
<td>Innovation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td></td>
<td>Youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New world balance</td>
<td><strong>Dynamism</strong></td>
<td>Stability/Instability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>Diversity &amp; world unity</td>
<td>Distance (far away)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese power paradox</td>
<td>Angkor Wat</td>
<td>My own ignorance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>Attractive cultural diversity</td>
<td>Resilience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Power</strong></td>
<td>Customs</td>
<td>Intransigence</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nationalism</td>
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ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS

Disagreement or discomfort with concept of “Asia”

China clearly the dominant topic of conversation when speaking of “Asia”
- India, Japan a bit less, others hardly at all
RECOMMENDATIONS

Governments:
more open and free exchange of views through dialogue
- press releases and top-down information ineffective

ASEF:
People-to-people exchanges are effective (press dialogue and exchanges)
This is the end of the presentation, thank you!