

China-Africa media relations: what we know so far

中非媒介关系：我们了解多少

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Background 背景

- South Africa became member of BRICS in 2010 at invitation of China 应中国邀请，南非2010年成为“金砖”一员。
- One of the key relationships in BRICS group has been SA – China 南非-中国关系是金砖国家关系中的重要一环。
- Against background of increased presence of China on *continent* – Africa’s largest trade partner 中国是非洲最大的贸易伙伴
- 3-year research project – funded by National Research Foundation 一个由国家研究基金资助的，历时三年的研究项目。



China in the African mediascape

非洲媒体环境中的中国媒体

- Media platform for soft power to support economic involvement and 'going out' policy – part of FOCAC Action Plans 作为中非论坛行动计划的一部分，媒体作为软实力载体可以促进经济发展和中国“走出去”，包含多个层面：
- Across various levels :
 - Infrastructure development 基础设施发展
 - Training 培训
 - Content Production 内容生产
 - Content Distribution 内容分发
 - Direct Investment 直接投资
- Debates about *influence* of Chinese media on journalistic practices and values on the continent and the *success* of its soft power efforts 但存在如下争论，即中国媒体是否会影响非洲的新闻实践和价值，以及这一软实力是否会达成。

Research questions

- How has SA-China and SA-BRICS relations been *covered* in the South African media?
- How do South African journalists *use* Chinese media as a source for their own work?
- What are South African *audiences' views* of Chinese media?
- 研究问题：南非媒体如何报道南非-中国和南非-金砖国家关系？南非媒体记者如何使用中国媒体作为消息源？南非受众如何看待中国媒体？



RQ1: Coverage of China in SA media

- Content analysis – how has China-SA and SA-BRICS relations been covered?
- Interviews – how important do journalists think the China-SA and SA-BRICS relations are for their news agenda?
- 问题1：南非媒体如何报道中国？
- 研究方法：内容分析和访谈

Findings: coverage

- Content: cautious optimism when business story
- Interviews: BRICS, China-SA important for news agenda, from economic perspective:

“My general view of SA’s relationship with China is positive. China is politically and economically one of the most important players and it is to SA’s benefit to expand trade and relations generally”

- ...with some reservations:

“I think it is something that needs to be watched closely. SA should learn economic lessons from China, but not follow them on a political and ideological level. South Africa should be careful not to neglect their relationship with the west. Good relations with the east, west and Africa is essential.

Although we are both part of Brics, the two countries are vastly different in terms of political economics, culture, etc. The relationship is really just business. China sees a market here, and also used SA as its gateway to the rest of the continent. It also wants to dictate terms...”

研究发现：谨慎乐观-访谈显示南非媒体更关注金砖国家和中国-南非关系在经济发展方面的重要性。

Findings: coverage

- Coverage complicated by lack of transparency: difficult to find out ‘what goes on behind closed doors’.
- Leads to sceptical, ‘wait-and-see’ attitude:
The relationship can be compared to young people that like one another and are waiting for that first kiss. It can wonderfully or horribly wrong.
- China itself also still largely unknown quantity: No bureaux or correspondents, leading to shallow, second-hand reporting mostly of official events and releases

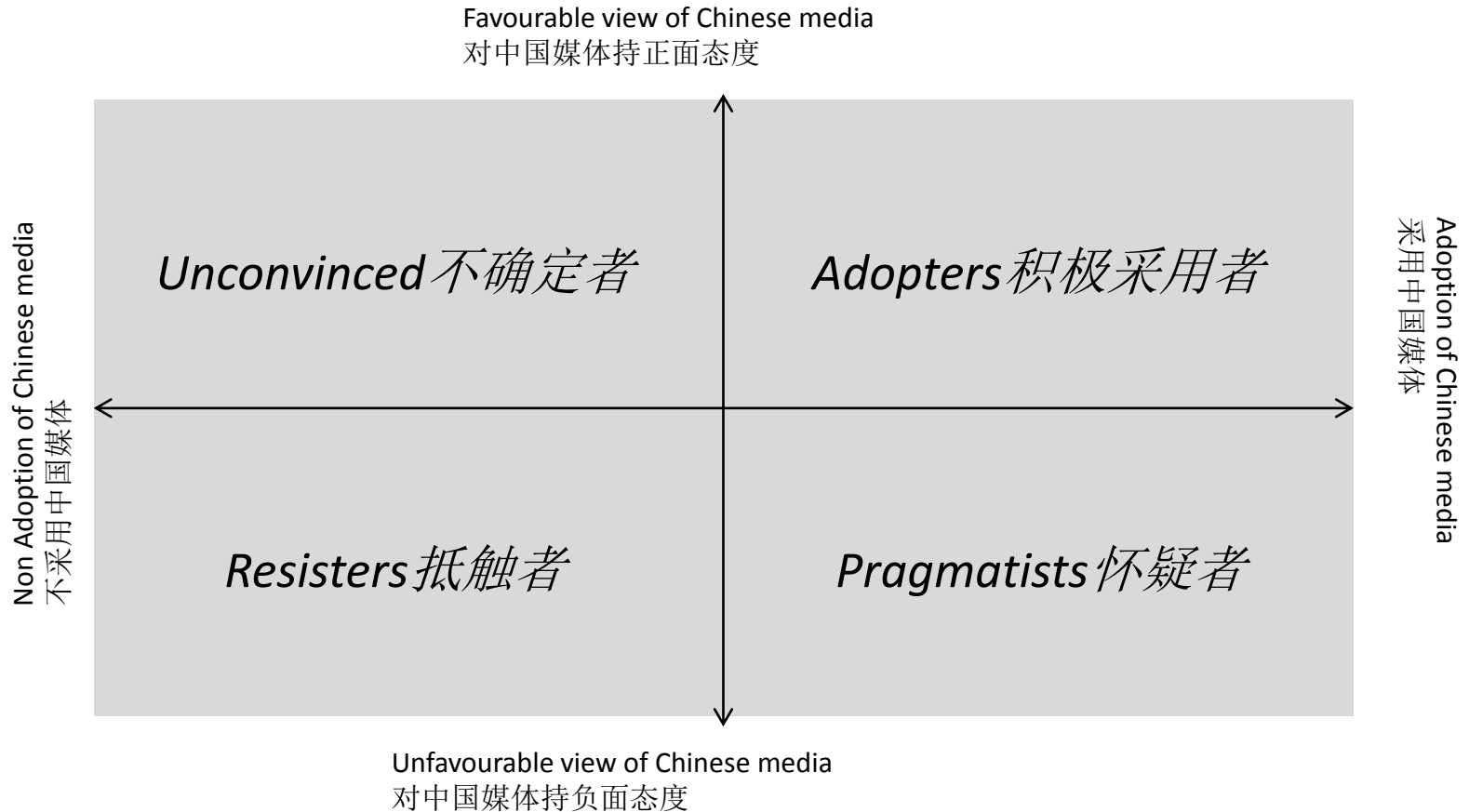
研究发现：由于一些政策信息不透明，南非媒体多持怀疑和观望态度；报道多是二手信息。

RQ2: Usage of Chinese media as a source

- Interviews to establish:
 - To what extent do South African journalists adopt Chinese media as a source in their work?
 - What are their attitudes towards Chinese media
 - What is the impact of Chinese media on the journalistic profession in South Africa
 - Their views on South Africa-China relations

问题2：南非媒体如何使用中国媒体作为信息源，包括：采用比例和态度；中国媒体对南非新闻业界的影响；以及南非记者如何看待南非-中国关系。

A framework of analysis 分析框架



An Adopter

«I do [watch CCTV] actually. Mainly, not as much as I ought to. I do, I think that their Africa coverage is very good. I think it is good from the point of view that they clearly are investing. They have, I think, a stronger commitment to using local people than, say, CNN or BBC. And they tend to do stories that are not necessarily on the main agendas. So, no no, I do watch CCTV.»

积极采用者：肯定CCTV等中国媒体的在地化做法。

Senior Manager, TV Station

A Pragmatist

«Let's assume that there's a growing criticism of a land grab in Mozambique, and two or three Chinese business people were driven out of the country as a result of this, and there's a demonstration in front of the Chinese embassy in Maputo. CCTV and the various newspapers in China, how would they react to that? They would be fairly relentlessly one-sided about it. »

怀疑者：对CCTV与在非中国企业的关系表示怀疑，怀疑CCTV不会客观报道。

Commentator, Online publication

A Resister

«There was a lot of contact with Chinese media. And I made it very clear to my employer that I did not care for the way in which that country is governed. I do not believe that it believes in human rights, and I do not believe in supping with the devil. So no, I have nothing to say to them.»

Editor, Weekly paper

抵触者：对中国媒体和社会有严重的怀疑和偏见。

An Unconvinced

«I don't exactly know their agency and how it works...

[It's called Xinhua]

I think I've heard, read about it.»

« [T]he Chinese channel I haven't really watched. I don't know why. It is an interesting question... Maybe there's a perception that [it] is government biased, propaganda as well, but I haven't checked it out as well to have an informed view about it. »

不确定者：对中国媒体很少关注， Editor, Daily Newspaper
也并无意愿。

Impact on journalistic work

中国媒体对南非新闻记者工作的影响

- At the **micro level**, Chinese news media rarely shape content in South Africa. 微观上，对内容影响极少。
 - Xinhua is only present at one large media group.
 - Perception that China is under-reported.
- At the **macro level** opinions are divided on the impact of Chinese *ownership* of South African media 宏观上，主要表现在媒体所有权的影响上，观点不一。
 - Some describe it as “**worrisome**” although the threat is “not immediate, but in the future.”
 - Some say that the Independent has already adopted a **softer stance** on Chinese issues.
 - Others refute that such influence will occur and appeal to **journalists’ agency** and the robustness of South Africa’s media sector.

RQ3: What are South African *audiences' views* of Chinese media?

- How do Chinese media in Africa contribute to boosting China's soft power?
- To what extent do university students in South Africa and Kenya perceive Chinese journalism in Africa as an attractive alternative model?
- How much does the notion of “positive news” resonate with Kenyan and South African college students?
- 问题3：南非受众如何看待中国媒体？包括中国媒体对中国在非洲软实力有何影响；南非和肯尼亚大学生在多大程度上认为中国的新闻业是一个可替代模式，以及是否认同“正面报道”的概念？

Focus groups 焦点小组访谈

- Interview guide with dozen key questions (SA and Kenya)
- Stimulus 1:
 - Two news packages about 2014-2015 Ebola outbreak, Al Jazeera and one from CCTV
 - CCTV footage factual and informative, Al-Jazeera more interpretative
 - Identifying information removed
- Stimulus 2:
 - List of Chinese media companies present in in Africa. The list included: Xinhua, CCTV, CRI, *China Daily*, CNC, *People's Daily*, Weibo and WeChat
 - Questions e.g. “Which are you familiar with, why do you watch/read them?”

Findings 研究发现

1. Chinese media use almost nonexistent in both countries. Could identify AJ but not CCTV (Awareness slightly higher in Kenya) 中国媒体被采用率极低，半岛电视台更有影响力。原因包括：
2. Reasons for low consumption:
 - Stereotypes used to make sense of Chinese media, even if not watched before. China distant and unknown, yet strong opinions.
 - Strong negative biases towards Chinese media (came to light when footage unmasked – changed views)
3. Pre-formed opinions affect interpretation of content
4. Positivity of Chinese media welcomed – different from negative portrayals in Western media
 - 强烈的刻板偏见，对遥远和未知的中国，但随着接触增加，程度减轻；正面报道被欢迎，不同的是，西方媒体更注重负面。

Conclusions 结论

- Chinese presence has grown since 2000s and become more diverse in large African markets
- However, impact remains very limited among journalists and audiences
- Not a problem of access or availability, but preconceptions, biases, stereotypes
- Deep-rooted negative biases may be difficult to reverse
- Indirect influence (e.g. positive coverage of Africa) might have an effect
- 在非洲媒体市场，中国媒体的影响力在上升，也更加多元；但是对当地记者和受众来说，影响力非常有限；核心问题不在接触和使用，而是已经形成的刻板偏见；间接的影响（比如对非洲的正面报道）也许对改变这一现实有帮助。

Read all about it....推荐阅读



<http://www.sachinamedia.info/>

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