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The development of social media, in the form of ‘web-based tools and services that allow users to [comment], create, share, rate and search content and information’ (Bohler-Muller and Van der Merwe; 2011:2), is changing how we engage with the world. The platform is connecting users in new ways and levelling the playing-field by stimulating conversation versus one-way communication and reaching across the toughest and most remote landscapes. During the last decade, developing countries began embracing social media as incomes rose; technology became more affordable and alternative social networks were crafted to suit regional differences².

China and South Africa are two such developing countries which are embracing communication technologies. They are both experiencing a rise in internet users (though at varying rates) and are increasingly penetrating foreign markets with their media ventures. In fact South Africa and China engage in the each other’s media markets. The South African media company, Naspers, owns the largest stake in China’s Tencent Holdings; while Chinese telecommunications companies, like Huawei, are supplying products to the South African market.

However there are implications to embracing the global technological shift

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while such countries are simultaneously seeking sound policies to meet development objectives. Social media has complicated the political space, because policymaking is met with real-time and intensified public participation. The experiences of China and South Africa reveal that the impact of social media varies between decision-making landscapes. Moreover, it is these unique domestic technological and political changes that could eventually motivate or undermine the diplomatic ties between the two sides. In this paper I will explore the political and diplomatic impact of social media.

China's opinion politics and social media

According to scholars, there are three key influences on policymaking in China: the elite, sub-elite and popular opinions (Fewsmith and Rosen; 2001:152). The political elite have long-standing influence on China's decision-making process, though in some ways, their perceived role has changed over time. When the People's Republic of China was founded in 1949, policymaking tended to be characterised as highly centralised and led by a few powerful senior personalities who faced limited domestic pressure (Hao 2005:2). However as China became more globally involved, policymaking shifted from ideological and personal, to practical and sophisticated. Increasingly policies need to reflect the complex international system, requiring more knowledge of global affairs and specialised expertise. As noted, the new 'Fifth Generation' of leaders are already responding to these demands, being generally higher educated (particularly in social sciences) than their predecessors and seemingly more susceptible to technocratic than political views (Dotson; 2012:6). Moreover as in the sub-elite and popular opinion examples, it appears that unconventional sources are increasingly informing decision-making.

Sub-elites and popular opinion

The latter two groups of influence (sub-elites and popular opinion) have recently

experienced elevated participation in policymaking. Since 1998 the Chinese leadership sought academic input to broaden its sources of ideas and to understand the relationship between the domestic and international environment (Douglass; 2009:4). In this way sub-elites (also known as ‘public intellectuals’ and think tanks) have indirectly influenced government policy through their academic writing, briefings, internal reports and conferences. The group has also played a pivotal role in reconciling government and public positions, as sub-elites are commonly perceived as articulators of public opinion (Fewsmith and Rosen; 2001:154). On the other hand, public opinion has had limited influence on decision-making. Rather, leadership only appeals to national sentiment when it would strengthen official stances on tough policy positions abroad and as a tool in negotiation processes (Sun; 2011).

The role of both groups is changing in parallel with the development of communication technology. Three defining factors have influenced the unique advancement of China’s media infrastructure: economic development since 1978, the commercialisation of the mass media and the reshaping of power and interest groups³. Rapid modernisation led to the Chinese public being granted access to the Internet by the mid-1990s. The introduction of the Internet and the sudden explosion of users (from 20 million in 2001 to over 500 million in 2011) has made policy formation all the more complex (Freedom House; 2011:2).

Social media is enabling wide participation and diffusing influence to the public realm, beyond the traditional echelons of government and previously limited political forums (Wu; 2012:10). Although popular social media sites like Twitter and Facebook are barred, the public in China are using their local versions, like Sina Weibo, as a tool for engagement. Roles are also becoming blurred, as sub-elites infuse public opinion with active debate and the public have an opportunity to be elevated into the sub-elite group. An example is the race-car driver and author, Han Han, whose critical writing has made him the most popular



blogger in China (Wasserstrom; 2012).

It is difficult to determine clear and coherent lines of policy influence on the public. Still there is compelling evidence of a process of negotiation between the state and the public over certain issues and under specific circumstances. The Chinese leadership have recognised the public's ability to influence policy and thus the need to engage the public for support. In response, their own agencies are participating in social media and are engaging with the public. For example since 2009 China's own premier, Wen Jiabao, has conducted live web chats with internet users and responded to screened questions addressing national concerns. There is also the '50-cent army', whose mandate is to post favourable comments about the government, in order to change public opinion (Mou, Atkin and Fu; 2011: 344). Sometimes users are barred access to politically sensitive information, such as the 2011 anti-government protests in the Middle East and North Africa (Freedom House; 2011:10). Similarly a Harvard study has shown that Beijing does not necessarily remove online content that criticises leadership but rather content that could instigate collective action (King, Pan and Roberts; 2012). Therefore government involvement in this new medium has evolved to become both responsive and selective in nature.

The future of public influence: technology, youth demographic and nationalism

The ability to influence future policy in China will likely depend on three important variables, namely changing youth demographics, (mobile) technological innovation and nationalism. These factors could result in the rise or restraint of future public influence.

Mobile technology has spread more rapidly than Internet access, with about 986 million mobile phone users in China by the end of 2011 (Freedom House; 2011:3). Furthermore, technological developments mean more people will be able to access the Internet through their mobiles. Such technology could poten-

tially enhance user engagement in the policy process. However this trend should be considered alongside other platforms, because even though Internet users are steadily increasing, television (followed by print media) is still the most favoured source of domestic and international news (Pew Global Attitudes Project; 2008:6). Unlike social media, broadcast media tends to engage viewers through one-way communication that could inevitably influence perceptions on certain issues.

The evolving youth population exercises significant influence on public opinion. According to the National Intelligence Council (2012:11), China's population will reach a median age group of 35–45 years by 2030. This changing demographic (between 18–29 years of age) is also currently using the Internet and social media sites the most (Pew Global Attitudes Project; 2008:31). They also tend to be high school or college educated and wealthier than non-users. Besides their dominance in numbers, the sentiment amongst the youth is also significant. A study by the Unirule Institute of Economics found that the Chinese youth under 25 years of age were consistently more suspicious of authority than their elders (Ford; 2010). There seems to be growing sense of political apathy amongst the youth, who have historically played a pivotal role in pushing reforms. For instance, regarding the 2012 tension between China and Japan over islets in the East China Sea, Professor Zhou Weihong pointed out that young Chinese are not as anti-Japanese as those 20 years ago because they have a more rational understanding of foreign affairs (Hille; 2012). They are becoming more concerned about the effects of economic interdependence and social security (Douglass; 2009:4). This aging demographic could effectively influence the ability of the government to extend its power abroad and instead promote a focus on human capital in order to maximise the fading demographic advantage (National Intelligence Council; 2012: 10-11). At the same time, socio-economic concerns as a basis for future foreign engagement raises the question of how leadership will motivate for issues of limited public interest – especially those



issues that could have large implications for China's image and reception in the world.

Contrary to the popular image of apathetic youth there is clear evidence of rising nationalist sentiment. A study of Internet users in China (Lei; 2011: 309) found that Chinese Internet users are actually a politically salient group. When compared with non-Internet users, they are also more opinionated, critical and likely to have experienced collective action. Nationalism is not a new trend, but in recent years it has become an important supporter of government decisions as seen in the cases of US–China relations, China–Japan relations and the Taiwan question (Yong; 2012). However, it is incumbent upon the leadership to use or channel popular sentiment. For example, following the Chinese embassy bombing in Belgrade, the Chinese government understood that the frustrations of students needed to be vented and that they would inevitably participate in demonstrations (Fewsmith and Rosen; 2001:173). The leadership thus provided buses for demonstrators to go to the US embassy. Still, sentiment can influence the government's agenda. For instance, following the global financial crisis in 2008, many people (online and offline) called for more leadership attention in China itself, to focus on citizens' welfare and social tensions. This might be one reason why 90% of policymakers' time is spent on domestic issues and only 10% on foreign policy⁴. Generally, governments are likely to respond to critical views even when the challenge is beyond their control – because they do not want to be perceived as weak (Lagerkvist 2005:125). The areas in which leadership is likely to react are the areas in which the public are most critical: foreign policy, unemployment and inflation⁵. Therefore, leadership is susceptible to nationalism that could potentially turn into online populism.

These recent developments and the unpredictable influence of emerging trends (mobile technology, youth and nationalism) will introduce greater complexity to Chinese policymaking. While the rationale behind policy decisions remain

closed to leadership, the future determinants provide understanding to policy choices. What can be predicted is that dynamic and subtle negotiations are influencing China's inward and outward looking policy.

South Africa's opinion politics and social media

A continental shift

South Africa is part of a larger continental story. A major trend that is sweeping Africa is technological leapfrogging. It is predicted that by at least 2015, regions such as sub-Saharan Africa will have more people with mobile network access than electricity at home (National Intelligence Council; 2012: 46). This will lead to about 800 million⁶ mobile phone subscribers on the continent, a tool where internet access is increasingly available. With the lack of infrastructure in remote regions, wireless technology is single-handedly advancing communication on the continent. Africa is also taking to social media at a rapid pace, as seen in the case of the microblogging site Twitter. Thousands of people in less technologically advanced countries like Sudan and Cameroon are circulating information through this platform (Barnett; 2012). Moreover online interaction is taking place in less open democracies that have fewer spaces for political expression. In Zimbabwe, traditional communication channels have proved unreliable and expensive and, as a result, Zimbabweans have turned to Facebook as a medium of choice. The social media platform is providing the two important services of connecting locals to the three million Zimbabweans residing outside the country and enabling the public to access information and to make their views known, in an environment of severe press restrictions (Global Post; 2009). The widespread access to social media among the citizens of Egypt also proved a successful tool in mobilising masses of people in a short space of time as well as facilitating the distribution of uncensored public information (Bohler-Muller and Van der Merwe; 2011:2). Social media technology has been proven to possess the potential to connect the African public and to become a powerful



political tool on the continent.

South Africa: a case of limited social media influence

South Africa's communications technology has advanced rapidly. Since 2010 mobile technology access (virtually at 100% penetration), surpassed television access at 82% (Powell; 2012:8). The internet connection on mobile phones has changed the profile of online users in the last five years, to include low income Internet users (de Lanerolle; 2012:4&8). A report titled *The South African Social Media Landscape 2012 Study* found that the social networking gaps between age and the urban-rural divide have closed significantly (IT News; 2012) and that 73% of South African Internet users are also using social media sites (Ipsos Markinor South Africa; 2012). Between August 2011 and August 2012, Facebook and Twitter users grew by 100 000 each month (the former has about 5.3 million users, excluding mobile-only users, and Twitter has about 2.4 million users) (IT News; 2012). In fact South Africa is home to the largest number of posted tweets on the continent, with an average of five million posts in the span of three months (Barnett; 2012).

Despite being one of Africa's most connected societies, the South African social media scene does not presently hold the political potential witnessed in North Africa during 2011 or comparative to China's present experience. While circumstances may change rapidly, the reasons online spaces are not yet influencing policymaking are:

- the fairly recent uptake of social media by the South African public;
- the lack of recognition by the national and political leadership; and
- the larger context which affects the public's recognition.

A primary impediment is the 'new-ness' of social media. Internet access only recently became available to the majority of the public, and they are still using

the technology in superficial ways. For instance, Blackberry smartphones occupy 70% of the South African smart phone market (Powel III; 2012:11). The youth demographic, who dominates the ownership of this device, prefer to use the Blackberry Messenger application in order to send pictures and voice messages. More broadly, South African users connect to the internet (in descending order) to get information; to socialise; for study purposes; for work-related purposes and to seek jobs (de Lanerolle; 2012:4). Seibt (2012) found that besides the unique circumstances in Egypt during 2011, African Twitter users tend use the platform for communicating with friends, connecting with other Africans, and keeping abreast of the news (Seibt 2012).

While the uptake and participation in social media has occurred rapidly, users are still learning about the potential of the platform and thus prefer to connect to their immediate and personal environments rather than for political purposes. Nevertheless as users become used to new devices and platforms, they will inevitably discover new ways to incorporate social media into their daily lives.

There also remains little consensus amongst the national and political leadership regarding the political potential of social media platforms. Besides the posting of events and news, there remains little engagement with public users on government pages. For example, following President Zuma's State of the Nation Address, the public raised their concerns over corruption and job creation on social media sites. Still the presidency's own social media outlets provided limited feedback and interaction with the public (Media Tenor; 2012). Without some recognition of and response to public concern, social media is unlikely to be perceived as a space for negotiation. Rather individual public figures and political parties have taken it upon themselves to engage with the public. The Minister of Public Enterprises, Malusi Gigaba⁷, is one of the few politicians on Twitter who utilise the platform to engage and receive dynamic feedback directly from the public. The main opposition party, the Democratic Alliance (DA),



launched its social media strategy in 2009 (Global Voices; 2010). The strategy includes two interactive websites, online marketing, SMS communication, web access via mobiles and social media engagement (Global Voices; 2010).

Nevertheless government could possibly adopt social media strategies in the near future, as was recently suggested. Facebook and Twitter, dominated by young constituents, were common rallying arenas in the run-up to the 53rd National Conference of the ruling African National Congress (ANC) held in Mangaung (Gori 2012). Political campaign pages were created like 'In support of President Zuma for a second term' and 'Anyone but Zuma.' These groups reflect the two opposing camps that exist within the party (Seger 2012). According to the ANC's communications manager, social media will become an important component of government communication during the 2014 elections (Gori 2012). While there is evidence of outreach to the public and the recognition is encouraging, it remains to be seen whether social platforms will be effectively used by leaders who still reach voting demographics through conventional media.

Finally even if ordinary South Africans and policymakers become more engaged online, the question remains whether action will be taken offline or vice versa. According to Gladwell (2010) network societies work simply because they are based on efficiency, weak ties and lack of consensus; rarely requiring users to give up anything substantive. The exception to this view is when physical barriers for engagement exist or when social media is used as an important means to a larger ends. For instance, social media aided the Arab Spring activists in breaking down 'the psychological barrier of fear by helping many to connect and share information' – and in some cases proved a necessary tool to organise physical protests (Kassim; 2012). But in democratic South Africa there exist other avenues to successfully influence policymaking. The Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) was more effective in pressuring the government to pro-

vide AIDS treatment through a multi-campaign strategy than through online engagement. It included working with a range of professionals, providing AIDS education to the public, shaming government and pharmaceuticals on broadcast media and ultimately, taking the government to court (and winning in 2002). Similarly, most South Africans are more likely to pressure policymakers offline, as witnessed in the string of illegal strikes in 2012⁸. The reality is that despite the narrowing technology gap, other divisions exist, such as language (South Africa is home to 11 official languages) and geographic and socioeconomic barriers (UN Children's Fund; 2012). The 2012 miners' strikes at Marikana and the much-reported massacre thereafter also demonstrated the levels of general mistrust among business, government, trade unions and workers. Clear divisions within each interest group are also emerging, as rival unions and political leaders vie for popular support. Such deep-seated differences make it difficult to find common ground and since social media is user-generated, strategic and unified public pressure remains to be seen.

Looking forward, it is necessary (but challenging) to engage a changing society. Leaders will no longer be able to motivate their followers through memories of the liberation struggle, as the 'born free' generation moves away from personal recollection to reading about the past in history books (Herskovitz 2013). Without economic and social improvements and addressing social mistrust, South Africa will continue as an extremely divided society.

China and South Africa's diplomatic relations

There are varying circumstances and impacts when it comes to social media and domestic politics. It is important to assess what impact new communication platforms will have on the formal diplomatic and informal 'people-to-people' relations between two countries. Contemporary South Africa and China share relatively close bilateral ties. Diplomatic ties officially started in 1998 and relations rapidly elevated to a 'comprehensive strategic partnership' in 2010. The



progressive relationship has resulted in a wide range of agreements, including multilateral co-ordination, addressing trade imbalances, and possible co-operation on the peaceful use of nuclear energy (Alden 2012). Judging from the expansive areas of co-operation and the string of visits among high-level officials, relations are strong on both political and economic levels. As the relationship reaches its 15 year anniversary in 2013, it is worth understanding the progress on the public front, specifically what communication technology could reveal about public sentiment.

Yet, public influence on the actual bilateral relationship remains weak. The specific and limited interest in this relationship as viewed outside of social media platforms provides some understanding of the types of opinions that exist online. When China became South Africa's largest trading partner in 2009, critics raised concerns over China's role in Africa and what were alleged to be its purely economic intentions⁹. Still if the relationship is examined as a whole, South Africa's attitude towards China is also defined by economic concerns. South African corporations have a variety of successful investments in China, including in mining, infrastructure and construction, finance and business (Gelb; 2010:17). For instance South Africa's media company, Naspers, is the largest shareholder in China's Tencent Holdings. This acquisition has helped Naspers' internet operations to grow despite the 2009 recession (Bloomberg 2012).

Moreover general media coverage of the bilateral relationship is also reported through an economic prism. A study by Wasserman (2012: 143) demonstrates that China regards South Africa as one of the leading African countries with which to do business; and South Africa views China in a similar light, as its media predominantly covers China as an economically and politically newsworthy topic. A study by the Journalism and Media Studies Centre (JMSC)¹⁰ at Hong Kong University came to a similar conclusion. Global news articles on the China–Africa relationship (between June 2011 and June 2012) focused more on

economic issues and high politics than human interest stories. Even though there are a range of influences in news making the current media system is audience-driven, which suggests such topics are responding to a demand or interest in certain *kinds* of stories.

The same narrow bilateral interest is reflected by the South African online public. There is virtually no commentary on the relationship besides reaction to extraordinary cases or stories with local relevance. An example is the execution of the South African national, Janice Bronwyn Linden, in China during 2011. In 2008 Linden was arrested for possession of drugs on arrival in China and was given the death sentence three years later. Following the story was dynamic commentary¹¹ amongst the South African online community that ranged from a discussion of power relations between South Africa and China, human rights concerns versus the logic of differing legal systems, criticism of both governments, to the basic socio-economic problems in South Africa that encourage people to turn to the drug business. Nevertheless, there was little action beyond these emotional online discussions. Moreover, following the 2012 public outrage over the poaching of 455 rhinos for their horns in South Africa, the journalist Julian Rademeyer (who is writing a book on the trade) commented: ‘there’s this stereotype being sold in South Africa of these evil, Fu Manchu Asians trying to kill our wildlife’ (Powell 2012).

This is not to say that perceptions are not changing – but understanding is developing slowly. As China and South Africa deepen their relationship and physical interaction between publics occur, knowledge will eventually increase on both sides. There are already a number of non-governmental efforts to bring together Chinese and African researchers, journalists and students, helping to raise the communication and interaction levels on both sides. Still these communication channels are new, so discussion topics tend to focus on ‘getting to know each other’ and dispelling common perceptions that still inform general points of



view. Sometimes selective interests are a product of practicality, as the examples of the economic focus of coverage reflected. Yoon Jung Park has noted that the acceptance of Chinese nationals in South Africa is difficult in cases where there is competition over resources, business and employment (Radio Australia; 2012). Likewise the ANC (2012:25) stated in their policy document, ‘the South African foreign policy is an expression of domestic public policy that projects national values and interests’; the core priority being addressing poverty and development. When such national priorities are the underlying basis for outward relations, there will understandably be constraints on the ability to address the larger gaps in perceptions among the countries’ respective publics.

On the Chinese side, public participation is reactive rather than proactively setting the agenda. Even though the following cases are not specific to South Africa, it shows that the Chinese leadership might increasingly have to be more responsive to domestic concerns over foreign policy choices. Along with the increasing number of Chinese businesses in Africa has been the increase of Chinese workers moving abroad. However in 2011, 35,000 workers had to be evacuated from Libya as the conflict began to escalate and in 2012, 25 Chinese workers were abducted in Sudan (Levin 2012). As a result, there is on-going domestic debate between the government (which emphasises that China is not yet powerful enough to protect all its citizens) and the online pressure for leadership and action (criticising China as weak compared with the US, and calling for a change in its non-interventionist policy). Online sentiment over Africans in China was also evident in June 2012¹². African migrants protested the death of a Nigerian national in a Guangzhou police station. In response, the comments posted on Chinese social media favoured the police and were critical of the protestors, calling them ‘troublemakers with no values’ (Lu 2012). Still there is yet to be an instance of online views of the relationship spurring enough interest to be taken up in reality.

Social media can therefore mobilize strong opinions to motivate government action; or the lack thereof can provide the justification not to act. The challenge for China and South Africa then is to raise awareness of and interest¹³ in the bilateral relationship, beyond the traditional spaces, stereotypes and temporary interest of news headlines. Without engagement and interest among the citizens of both countries, it seems likely that the relationship will remain mostly – if not overwhelmingly – determined by leadership, business interests and a reactive public whose understanding of the other side will remain superficial. As witnessed in the recent Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC V), the China–Africa leadership has committed to enhance public engagement and to raise interest and understanding on both sides. The China-South Africa case demonstrates that in an era where leadership needs to be responsive and public attention can be quickly lost, real understanding will need to incorporate mutual interest and relevance to issues at home.

Conclusion

Communication technologies are changing the way users and countries relate to one another. Social media specifically reveals itself as both a progressive and neutral platform. China's political experience shows how decision-making has become more complex. Although the political process remains opaque, internal changes, technological progress and the elevated role of public sentiment are producing an active negotiation process. Democratic South Africa is similarly advancing its communication capabilities. Yet unlike China, it demonstrates the possible limits of social media influence in politics because of factors existing outside of technology. The factors include the preference for using the internet to find information and socialise (as a fairly new tool utilised by the public), leadership is not yet engaging with online constituents as much as they could, and due to socio-economic reasons, the public do not utilise social media as an avenue for negotiation. These two cases thus reveal that while dynamics could



change at the drop of an instant message, social media as a political tool still depends on a range of domestic variables.

Besides the ability of social media to change domestic politics, online platforms reveal the effects of public sentiment on diplomacy. In the case of China-South Africa relations, online opinions reflect the larger relationship characterised by a narrow focus. The gauging of opinions (or lack thereof) reveals the challenging task at hand, in order to raise awareness and develop the relationship to one that is truly comprehensive. Without domestic relevance and mutual interest, it is unlikely that the relationship will widen from its current long-standing political and economic focus.

The discussion of the political and diplomatic implications for recently connected societies like China and South Africa reveal that social media is playing neither a positive nor negative role – rather, a complicated one. Understandably, as such countries grow and develop, they are torn between dealing with hard realities and rising sentiment, which makes the society both enthusiastic and apprehensive toward new advances. These dichotomies raise questions about how technological developments will be managed in the future, because like never before, social media is changing the way governments and people engage.

End Notes

¹ The paper draws from a previously published version: Yu-Shan Wu, *The Role of public Sentiment and Social Media in the Evolving China-Africa Relationship*, SAIIA Occasional Paper No. 134, January 2013, 31pp.

² Take for instance the new social platforms since 2008: Qzone in Asia, Sina Weibo in China, V Kontakte (VK) in Russia and Mxit in Africa. For more infor-

mation see: <http://memeburn.com/2013/02/defying-facebook-which-emerging-market-social-networks-will-stand-tall/>.

³ Presentation by Chinese scholar, The 16th Annual Highway Africa Conference, Rhodes University, Grahamstown, September 2012.

⁴ Seminar by a professor at the China Foreign Affairs University, Beijing, August 2012.

⁵ In the words of a professor at the China Foreign Affairs University, Beijing, August 2012.

⁶ Presentation by Praveen Naidoo of Telkom, The 16th Annual Highway Africa Conference, Rhodes University, Grahamstown Conference Location, September 2012.

⁷ See his opinion piece: Gigaba M, 'I tweet, therefore I am', 28 September 2011, <http://mg.co.za/article/2011-09-28-i-tweet-therefore-am>.

⁸ For more information on the strikes in the South African transport and mining sector in 2012, see Mail & Guardian, 'Strikes rage out of control', 5 October 2012, <http://mg.co.za/article/2012-10-05-00-strikes-rage-out-of-control>.

⁹ Take for example the cable released by the Guardian that showed a US official describing China's Africa engagement as aggressive and as an economic competitor with no morals (for the original cable see: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/us-embassy-cables-documents/250144>, accessed 5 February 2013). Moreover during Hilary Clinton's (the former US Secretary of State) 2012 Africa tour, she warned that Africa should beware of 'new colonialism'; a comment that many believed were directed at China. See: <http://edition.cnn.com/2011/BUSINESS/09/08/america.losing.influence.africa/index.html> (accessed 5 February 2013).

¹⁰ In August 2012, the Journalism and Media Studies Centre at Hong Kong University published an article titled 'Xinhua: Failing to present the Sino-African



relationship?', which reveals that articles written on the China–Africa relationship emphasise economy and politics across the board (including: AFP, Reuters, BBC, New York Times, The Guardian and Al Jazeera). The same stories came up in Xinhua News, except 'livelihoods' (including workers' safety) was another top reported topic. See: <http://datalab.jmsc.hku.hk/2012/08/10/271/> (Accessed in October 2012)

¹¹ See the range of comments in the following articles: Mail & Guardian, 'SA woman jailed in China unaware of impending execution', 11 December 2011, <http://mg.co.za/article/2011-12-11-sa-woman-jailed-in-china-unaware-of-impending-execution>; Iol News, 'Drug mule execution dismay', 13 December 2011, <http://www.iol.co.za/news/crime-courts/drug-mule-execution-dismay-1.1197333#.UL5A0INQGS0>; News24, 'SA woman executed in China', 12 December 2011, <http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/SA-woman-executed-in-China-20111212>.

¹² Refer to comments: <http://www.tealeafnation.com/2012/06/foreigner-dies-in-police-custody-leading-to-mass-protest-by-africans-in-guangzhou/> (accessed 1 October 2012)

¹³ According to the People's Daily Online, the Chinese youth's most favoured tourist destinations include: France, US, Switzerland, Australia and Korea (respectively). South Africa or any other African country did not make the list of 20 favourite destinations to visit. For more information see: <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/102774/7964826.html>.

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