The Image of China in a BBC Documentary and Chinese Audiences' Reception of it: The Case of *The Chinese Are Coming*

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Abstract

China's economic rise has led to competing images of the nation-state in the world's media. Chinese audiences, for their part, are increasingly concerned with how the foreign media represent China. Against this background and taking into consideration the well-known reputation of BBC documentary film as one of the most authoritative Western media genres, this paper examines the 2011 BBC documentary film *The Chinese Are Coming*'s portrayal of China and its reception by selected graduate students at the Communication University of China and commentators at three online Chinese forums. The first part uses content analysis to break down the film into segments and examines its content in terms of seven subject areas and a series of key events, with a particular focus on the different tones of their treatment. It discovers that while a majority of the content is presented in a neutral tone, the film does contain one-sided representations of China's global economic activities and thus contributes to the construction of a negative image of China. The reception analysis is equally mixed. Some audience members believe that *The Chinese Are Coming* is a media product that stigmatizes China on purpose. However, along with a minority of student interviewees and online commentators, I argue that the Chinese audience should take this film as an opportunity to reflect upon their government's global strategies and foreign policies.

Keywords:　　China's image; Documentary film; Reception; Content analysis; Reflection

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Chapter 1.

Introduction

From a global perspective, China is of great importance today. Along with China's increasing comprehensive national power in the twenty-first century, people from all over the world are getting to know more about China and there are growing concerns about how to interpret China's image because of a diversity of discourse strategies on mass media on China's image.

Many recent studies of international relations (Wang Hongying, 2005; Susan L. Shirk, 2007; Jin Canrong, 2010; Shen Jie, 2013) have focused on presentations of national images. Since the end of the Cold War, global attention to national state power is shifting from politics and military to culture, images and soft power in general. In this context, people have become concerned about national images. As Robert Jervis wrote, a proper image and reputation can be "of greater use than a significant increment of military or economic power" in international relations (Wang, 2011: 1).

A country's national image is a concept that relates to both historic and contemporary practices, is both objective and subjective, and constructed through both international and domestic public opinions. So how western countries interpret the image of China matters the country's international relations and the overall development of the world. There are many different affective interpretations of China from the West, such as admiration, fear and denigration. Key discourses that have emerged as popular presentations of China's image include: "China Threat", "China Collapse", "China's Responsibility" and so on.

One important form of mass media products for the presentation and construction of national images is documentary films. To record human society through the camera, there are often subjective representations in the creative process of constructing a

narrative. Therefore, a study of documentary films produced by Western countries serves as a useful way to analyze how Western countries construct particular national images of China.

In this paper, I present how one British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) documentary film contributes to struggles over the presentation of China, with a case study of *The Chinese Are Coming* (Barnwell, 2011). It is a two-part television documentary produced by the BBC, based on interviews with people of different social status in the United States, Brazil, Angola, Tanzania and other African countries. The interviewees are people of different careers whose livelihoods have been effected by China, such as workers, farmers, businessmen, politicians, parents of high school students and so on. Through these interviews, this film discusses China's extraordinary economic growth, the domestic social, cultural and environmental consequences of Chinese industrial expansion in these countries, and how China's exportation of labor and investments in overseas trades have influenced global society (BBC official website, 2011).

The Chinese are Coming serves as a representative case study for multiple reasons. First among these is the context of its production at the BBC. As the oldest national broadcasting organization and the largest broadcaster in the world established in 1920s, the BBC has a strong reputation for the quality of its documentaries and is considered as a global authority for documentary film production (Wikipedia, *en.wikipedia.org/wiki/BBC*). Additionally, the BBC is regarded as the model of international media's commitment to objectiveness and fairness. As Britain is a major western country that has historically played a significant role in shaping global media, its documentaries, to some extent, reflect western countries' attitudes toward China's national image in general. Lastly, the BBC has produced many China-related documentary films, such as *Wild China* (2008), *How China Fooled the World* (2014), *Are Our Kids Tough Enough? Chinese School* (2015), etc.

More specific to *The Chinese are Coming,* this documentary became a matter of popular culture in China when it was first broadcast on BBC and then spread widely on the Internet, especially among those who are interested in documentary films. I came

across this film on one of the most popular social media platforms in China, Wechat's 'Moments' (*pengyouquan*) feed. Many of my friends shared this film with impassioned comments, which led me to pay attention to it. Later a professor of mine at the Communication University of China (CUC) used this documentary film as an example of television production to analyze in class. We watched clips of this film and studied techniques of shooting, editing and the design of subtitles. We also discussed how the presenter's lines and sophisticated filming techniques construct a "China threat" discourse throughout the film. The professor critiqued this film as a typical case to analyze how the Western medias stigmatize China.

There are a number of western documentary films that present a similar image of China and the relationship between China and the world. Some of these include *China Blue* (2005), *China Rises* (2006) and *The China Question* (2011). Among these though, *China Blue* only focuses on Chinese peasant worker issues and therefore presents a limited perspective of the issues. As *China Rises* was released in 2006, there are already many studies on it and does not offer the same opportunities for insights on current audience receptions. Lastly, *The China Question* is relatively new, but it cannot compare to *The Chinese Are Coming* in terms of popularity. Compared to other documentary films, *The Chinese Are Coming* is the most appropriate case to study for this investigation.

The broadcasting of this documentary leads to many controversies in China. Many Chinese audiences perceived this film as a symbol of great prejudice or even hostility against China, for the extreme way it reveals the social problems in China. They see it as support for the more general "China threat" discourse advocated by the West.

From my initial impression, I insisted that this kind of "made in the West" (specifically referring to the media of North America and Europe, such as the BBC and CNN) documentary film purposefully stigmatizes China. However, during my study in communication at Simon Fraser University, my perspective has become more complex and critical. Situating the production of the documentary in terms of global power shifts and issues of global social justice, I have reconsidered my attitude towards this documentary film and this paper reflects the trajectory of my self-reflection.

In this paper, I explore whether this documentary film is fair in its representations, and reflect on Chinese audiences' reception of this film. Rather than finding values in complaining about the documentary's stigmatization, my current perspective is that we should regard this as a warning and an opportunity for self-reflection on the current problems China is facing today and our nation-state's development strategy as we move into the future.

Chapter 2.

Literature Review

2.1. The Rising China

With the increasing development in its economy since China's economic reform and opening up in 1978, China's rise has become an unquestioned fact. The rapid growth of China's economic power is one of the most significant issues in international affairs (Deng and Wang, 2005: 1), which is also the biggest concern in academic studies on China's rise.

Regarding China's economy, Susan L. Shirk argues that China was revived in 1978 by shedding central planning, creating a market economy, and opening to the world (Shirk, 2007: 4). Yong Deng and Fei-Ling Wang claim that "[f]rom 1979 to 2003, the Chinese economy grew at an annual rate of 8 to 9 percent" (Deng and Wang, 2005: 2), which is three to four times faster than the growth of economies in the West. This growth rate is also double that of other developing countries.

From the CIA's forecasting, "[b]y the middle of the twenty-first century, China's economy will once again surpass the United States economy in size, although its per capita income will still be much lower than that in the United States" (Shirk, 2007: 2).

This development is also reflected in its trading power as China has accumulated a huge foreign currency reserve, up to,

> [n]early $300 billion by 2003 (was only $10 billion in 1990), second only to Japan…China is now the world's largest or second-largest recipient of foreign direct investment (after the United States), receiving over $446 billion in foreign capital from 1979 to 2002…With the cheap labor force of over eight hundred million, a high national saving rate (reaching 42 percent in the late 1990s, second

only to Singapore's 51 percent), and a steady marketization of the economy, China still has potential to grow (Shirk, 2007: 2).

In terms of its military might, China's global presence is increasing. In 2009, the U.S. Department of Defense's annual report to Congress showed that "between 1996 and 2008 China's military expenditure grew by an average of 12.9 percent…China's military spending in 2008 had reached $60 billion, about one-seventh of the U.S. defense budget" (Wang, 2011: 4). However, Deng and Wang indicate that some scholars exaggerate China's military power. Such commentators are presented as fearing the potential of China's military modernization, and presenting China as the United States' main military competitor.

In the social dimension, China has made great progress, including improvements in literacy, infant mortality, poverty reduction and overall living standards. From the *Statistical Communiqué of the People's Republic of China on the 2015 National Economic and Social Development*, the per capita disposable income of national residents in 2015 is 21,966 CNY (about 3,527 USD), compared to 14,551 CNY (about 2,253 USD) in 2011, an increase of 50.9% (of CNY) from 2011.

Table 1 Rankings of 13 Countries' Comprehensive National Power

	Ranking of Comprehensive Power			
	1990	2000	Economic Ranking	Military Ranking
United States	1	1	1	1
Japan	2	2	2	2
Canada	4	3	5	7
Germany	3	4	4	9
France	5	5	6	6
United Kingdom	6	6	7	3
China	8	7	3	4
Russia	7	8	8	5
Australia	10	9	9	10
Italy	9	10	10	11
India	11	11	11	8
Brazil	12	12	12	13
South Africa	13	13	13	12

Deng and Wang interpret "comprehensive national power" as a concept of national power, including economic power, military power, governance, diplomatic influence, human and natural resources, and ecological health (Deng and Wang, 2005: 2). China's ranking of national comprehensive power advanced from eighth to seventh between 1990-2000. This rise is largely reflected in China's economic and military development which are individually placed, at fourth and third place (See Table 1).

China's economic and military power have been growing steadily, representing the rise of China's hard power. However, there are some exaggerated views of China's rise, which have led to the discourse of "China's responsibility". Western countries believe that the more competent China becomes, the greater responsibility it should take and the more contributions it should make to the world.

2.2. Different Presentations of Chinese National Image

Generally speaking, countries stock great value in their national images. As China is attracting some of the most extensive attention from the world, building a positive national image is of great significance for its ability to conduct itself in world affairs.

2.2.1. National Image of China

Generally, a country constructs its national image by two primary means. On the one hand, a country can build its own national self-image through domestic representations aimed at its own population. On the other hand, and increasingly in our globalized world, one countries' national image can be portrayed by outside powers. In other words, China's national image is demonstrated in totally different ways between how China represents itself and how others represent it.

From China's point of view, soft power, including the construction of its national image, is as equally important as its hard power. According to Yuezhi Zhao, "soft power" is a concept from United States and became a popularized concept in China after 2001 (Y. Zhao, 2013: 19). Accordingly,

China has readily embraced the concept of soft power not only because it is compatible with many aspects of Chinese traditional and strategic thinking but more importantly because the concept offers a ready solution to ease the anxieties around the world about China's rise (S. Zhao, 2009: 248).

Demonstrating the Chinese state's quest for "soft power" is the Chinese Media's "going global" strategy. The former propaganda chief of the Communist Party of China (CCP) LI Changchun, gave an important speech in 2008 about the Chinese media's "communication capacity" (*Chuanbo Nengli*),

We must go 'global', strengthening our foreign language channels, expanding our partnership with foreign television organizations, vigorously pushing for the international transmission of our television programs, so that our image and voice can reach thousands of homes in all parts of the world (Cited in Sun, 2010: 54).

Equally important to its "communication capacity", China desires to be more influential (*yingxiangli*), more competitive (*jingzhengli*), more appealing in its image (*qingheli*), and more inspiring (*ganzhaoli*). To pursue these goals, the Chinese government decided to make great efforts in various fields, such as implementing related policies, publishing a series of white papers on cultural communication, and setting up Confucius Institutes in over 100 countries.

In terms of cultural propaganda, China has successfully worked hard to establish a good reputation for its national image. China has hosted many eye-catching events and conferences, including the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing, the 2010 World EXPO in Shanghai, and the 2014 APEC meeting in Beijing. Besides these in country efforts to improve its national image, the Chinese government has also organized or sponsored cultural events in other countries. For example, "[i]n the summer of 2000 China spent millions of dollars and sent cultural groups on a road show in the United States" (Wang, 2005: 74-75). Furthermore, the Chinese government has attempted to polish its national image by utilizing the international media. For instance, the Chinese government hired an American firm—Weber Shanwick Worldwide—to oversee its public relations campaign for the 2008 Summer Olympics (Wang, 2005: 74-75).

From the Western perspective, there has been some agreements on China's national image. For example, they accept China's presentation of itself as a socialist country, and agree that China is still a developing country. Nevertheless, they hold

opposing views on China's national image in other aspects. For instance, some opinion leaders from the United States disagree that China is a peace-loving nation. Such commentators additionally believe that China is neither a victim of foreign aggression nor a force for international cooperation. Most importantly liberal human rights issues have become the main ideology by which the West condemns China (Y. Zhao, 2009: 92).

Wanning Sun describes the relationship between China's self-presentation and Western media's representation as,

> firstly, China's ascent on the global stage as an economic and political power does not automatically bring about a more favorable perception of China in the international community; secondly, China cannot wait for the Western media to change its critical perspectives on China (Sun, 2010: 59).

This divergence of opinions between how China sees itself and how other countries see it is as divisive as ever. However, how to combine and balance the international and domestic considerations, and constantly improve its national image to make it better is China's task to fulfill.

2.2.2.   The China Threat Discourse

The Western critical representations of China's national image are manifested as many different discourses, such as "China Threat," "China collapse" and "neo-colonialism." According to Jin Canrong, there are four basic theories of China from international perspectives, "China threat theory", "China's responsibility theory", "China collapse theory" and "China opportunity theory" (Jin, 2011: 270). As the "China threat theory" has recently hit Western headlines, it is currently the most prevalent one. This discourse implies that China is actively getting involved in other developing countries in order to seize these countries' natural resources (Wang, 2011: 7).

Looking at the historical context, the "China threat" discourse is not entirely new. It existed in earlier forms such as the "Yellow Peril" and the "Red Peril". The latest rendition is a response to developing conditions and evolving frameworks.

The "China threat" discourse is profoundly represented in Western perceptions of China's national image. According to some studies (such as Herbert Yee and Ian Storey,

2002; Jin Canrong, 2011; Lionel Vairon, 2014), the "China threat" discourse has historically developed through three stages.

First, after defeating China in the Opium War, Russian aggression against China forced the Qing government to sign unequal treaties. To excuse their aggression, Mikhail Bakunin (1990) interpreted China as an inevitable threat to Russia thereby giving rise to the original Western interpretation of China as a threat. Consequently, the "Yellow Peril" became a tool to rationalize subsequent invasions of China by imperialist powers.

The second instance of this discourse, the "Red China's threat", was proposed by the United States in the 1950s after the founding of the People's Republic of China. The United States expressed that the victory of Chinese revolution could easily trigger a domino effect in Southeast Asia, which could be a great threat to America (Jin, 2011: 270-271).

The third and most recent evolution of the "China threat" is interpreted differently among scholars. Lionel Vairon claims that the concept of a "Chinese threat" was first posed in the early 1980s in relation to Japan. With the rise of China's comprehensive national power, this concept was coming back to the West after many years (Vairon, 2014: 156). Herbert Yee and Ian Storey argue, "the issue of China threat emerged in early 1993 in the United States" (Yee and Storey, 2002: 2). While, from Jin Canrong's view, the most recent "China threat" happened after the Cold War, and included four waves. The first wave was brought forward in Ross H. Munro's article, *Awakening Dragon: The Real Danger in Asia is from China*, in 1992. In this article, Munro argues that an international military conflict between China and the United States was inevitable. The second wave took place after the Taiwanese leader Lee Tenghui's visit to US in 1995-1996. The third wave resulted from China's increasing economic power which influenced the Asian financial crisis in 1998-1999. The latest wave arose in the new century and mainly addressed cyber security and environment security issues (Jin, 2011: 271).

In a sense, the current "China threat" discourse can be seen as the latest manifestation of longstanding western fears of China as a foreign force.

Overall, there are three reasons for the West to see China as a threat. This first grew from the notion that the Soviet Union and communism were viewed as a threat to the West. James Hackett argues, "[f]ive years after the collapse of Soviet Union, China… [became]the new evil empire" (Hackett, 1995). After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the West lost their strategic international target so that it became difficult to define their national interests. Therefore, they needed a new imaginary enemy to define their superiority against, and China, as a socialist nation, presented the next rational choice.

Second, as G. John Ikenberry reasoned, the West believes that a healthy Chinese economy is vital to them and the rest of the world. However, the astonishing improvement of economy and technology in China is likely to compete with the US. Therefore, the West has to make great adjustments to get along with China's dramatic rise as an economic superpower. John S. Gregory argues, there seems no way for the West to co-exist with China because of its potential as a superpower; this despite its continued status as a developing country, and that its annual income per capita is close to the bottom of the international rankings (Gregory, 2003: 1). From the work of Susan L. Shirk, we can see,

> Yet we feel the hot breath of this economic dragon on our backs. The steady media drumbeat of economic statistics that document China's dramatic growth is making people anxious (Shirk, 2007: 5).

It would seem that China cannot get rid of its status as the imaginary enemy to the West for a long time.

Third, Carl Crow wrote that the West gains a sense of security through denying others completely. It is hard for the West to accept that the Chinese live in thriving and prosperous civilization for thousands of years without the Christian culture. Otherwise they have to admit that China has greater advantages, and the Christian cultural is not omnipotent at all.

However, from Edward Friedman's view of China, its rise is "beneficent, peaceful, unthreatening, and superior to a conflict-prone America-dominated Westphalian order pitting nation against nation" (Friedman, 2011: 22). Instead of the "China threat", Chinese domestic self-explanations are framed as "China's peaceful rise" (*heping jueqi*).

Wang Jian wrote an article entitled "China talks back", to cope with the international pressure from the "China threat", demonstrating how the Chinese government has published several policies, such as "Peaceful Rise" (*heping jueqi*), "Peaceful Development" (*heping fazhan*), and "Harmonious Society" (*hexie shehui*) since 2003, which is the interpretation of its rapid rising.

2.3. Media Representation and Documentary Films

2.3.1.   Mass Media Functioning in Social Reality

In defining the mass media, Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky wrote, "[t]he mass media serve as a system for communicating messages and symbols to the general populace." They provide individuals information, entertainment and inculcate people with the values, beliefs, and codes of behavior to adapt to the society (Herman and Chomsky, 2002:1).

Stuart M. Hall contributed the notion that representations are images, descriptions, explanations and frames for understanding what the world is and why and how it works in particular ways. While, there are differences between media representation and other representation, the media's main function is to produce meaning and represent the 'reality'.

According to Shani Orgad, "the process of meaning production through signs has been theorized in two main ways: the reflectionist (or mimetic) approach, and the constructionist (or constructivist) approach" (Orgad, 2012: 17). The fundamental difference between the two approaches is their different views of the relationship of what is being represented (the reality), and the representation.

According to Hall, the reflectionist perspective regards media representation as a mirror that reflects true meaning—how the world really exists (Hall, 1997: 24). This can be seen in the historical truth-value of photography, "the idea of a photograph as 'proof' that something really happened" (Orgad, 2012:18). This approach insists that media

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representations are the mimesis of the real world. Therefore, the photograph naturally becomes the inherently objective media representation.

For the constructionist approach, Orgad argues that any representation is inherently and inevitably a construction, a selected representation of some aspects of the reality, which always generates some specific meanings and excludes other. As Hall writes,

> We give things meaning by how we represent them—the words we use about them, the stories we tell about them, the images of them we produce, the emotions we associate with them, the ways we classify and conceptualize them, the value we place on them (Hall, 1997:3).

Overall, the constructionist approach is not about whether the representations can mirror reality, but about how they produce meaning of the reality. As the media environment becomes more competitive, the impulse to construct reality to appeal the market becomes more compelling, which makes it impossible for the media to simply "reflect" reality.

To this Orgad raises the question, why do media representations matter? Answering his own question, Orgad argues that there are strong and complicated power relations encoded in media representations, in turn, media representations produce and reproduce power relations by constructing meanings (Orgad, 2012: 25).

Concerning the power relations in media representations, the structural factors that matter include ownership, control, dependence on major funding sources (notably advertisers) and mutual interests between the government and media. Therefore, what media see as newsworthy and what they are ultimately able to produce is constrained by power relations (Herman and Chomsky, 2002: xi).

According to Herman and Chomsky, in a world of concentrated wealth and major conflicts of class interests, the dominant classes, in order to remain in power, requires systematic propaganda from the media on behalf of their interests; and the propaganda function is a very important part of media's service. In fact, earlier on, Lippmann claimed that propaganda had already become "a regular organ of popular government" (Herman and Chomsky, 2002: lix).

2.3.2. Documentary Films Representation

Cinematography made it possible to capture not only one snapshot of the real world but also a series of snapshots in 1895 for the first time. As the snapshots were displayed in rapid succession, it presented something extremely similar to the movements that we saw in the real life (Chiariglione, 2000: 3).

During this time, most audiences saw a kind of "actuality" film, which served as the earliest documentaries and the first genre of cinema. Even at this early stage, people began to perceive that documentary films could be used to persuade people or promote the images of businessmen and their corporations. After that, the value of the documentary films as a form of social and political critique, ideology, and propaganda was quickly recognized (Aitken, 2006: xxxv).

As a type of art, documentary films not only involve artifice and craft, but also express some ideological and political meanings in the contents. Such representations in documentary films have different meanings at different times. During wartime, they can have positive effects like encouraging soldiers' morale. After the Second World War, critics assessed social documentary productions made by state-sponsored filmmakers in the West, and began to present propaganda with negative connotations (Kahana, 2016: 6). However, documentary film representations in recent years have become increasingly complex with more factors, such as the opinions of sponsors, specialists, governments, and also the public at large.

Compared to other more abstract arts, such as music and sculpture, documentary film is more conducive to present ideologies and political ideas. First, documentary film is visual and intuitionistic, so it is easy for viewers to accept and understand. Second, creators always have a desire to deliver their perspectives to the audiences. Building from the idea that photography shows the world as it really is, documentary makers see film as a useful medium to share their perspectives and interpretations with audiences. "Cinema's strength lies in the fact that, like any art, it imbues an idea with feeling and with captivating form but, unlike the other arts, cinema is cheap, portable and unusually graphic. Its effects reach where even the book cannot

reach and it is, of course, more powerful than any kind of narrow propaganda" (Lunacharsky, 1999: 7).

For our purposes, however literature on documentary film representation is not sufficient enough. Given the place of authenticity, the subject of presentation, and the effects on the audience, we can find that documentary films operate very similar to news. Therefore, literature on news representation can be used to enrich our understanding of the use of documentaries in influencing international relations.

Documentary film representations are strongly influenced by political and economic interests. Therefore, the objectivity of documentary films is controversial. According to Jorgen Westerstahl, objectivity requires both factuality (truth and relevance) and impartiality (balance/non-partisanship and neutrality of position). Meeting the requirement of 'factuality', every shot in documentary films is taken from the real life (Westerstahl, 1983: 403). However, because filmmakers have their own thoughts in selecting and representing our life, the positions documentary films take do not easily remain neutral. As Rachlin argued that journalists cannot report news as an outsider with no bias, in the same way, the documentary producers are not simply recording reality, they are expressing opinions and reconstructing their own social position and opinions through their products (Rachlin, 1988: 13).

Allan Rachlin mentioned, "impartiality is the judge's robe that helps to dress the media in legitimacy and authority" (Rachlin, 1988: 14). Impartiality permits the media to shape their accounts within preferred, ideologically embedded cultural stereotypes and thereby champion those stereotypes (Connell, 1979). Similarly, the documentary film does not simply mirror reality.

People always find documentary films as objective and actual because they record the reality. However, documentary films cannot be understood as a mirror of society, they are actually a part of society, and they are part of the ongoing construction of society. As creative works made by filmmakers, documentary films are derived from real life and are based on producers' understandings and experiences of life.

Chapter 3.

Analysis on *The Chinese Are Coming*

3.1. Methodology

3.1.1. Content Analysis

To analyze the documentary film, *The Chinese are Coming*, this paper employs content analysis. In general, content analysis is often used to analyze written texts, such as news stories with a bulk of texts. However, in this paper, I apply this method to documentary film analysis. Some content analysis research analyzes many documentary films (large quantities as the voluminous texts), and they see each film as a unit of analysis. Instead of that, this paper breaks one documentary film up, analyzing the film shot by shot, and considers segments within the film as units for analysis. I proceed in this manner because there is a large amount of segments in documentary films thus providing similar circumstances as the general approach of using a large quantity of texts.

The definition of content analysis is a systematic, replicable technique for compressing many words of text into fewer content categories based on explicit rules of coding (Berelson, 1952; GAO, 1996; Krippendorff, 1980, Weber, 1990; Stemler, 2001). In the second edition of Krippendorff's *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology*, he defined content analysis as a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use (Krippendorff, 2004: 18). Therefore, it is a helpful method for researchers to deal with large volumes of data and use particular coding rules to manage the data, and finally draw a conclusion to the research questions.

There are several content analysis designs mentioned in Krippendorff's (2004: 82) study. Figure 1 represents a simple design of content analysis, which will be used in this paper for analyzing *The Chinese are Coming*. In the "content analysis" box, there are components including: unitizing schemes, sampling plans, coding instructions, reducing data to manageable representations, inferring contextual phenomena, and narrating the answer to the research questions.
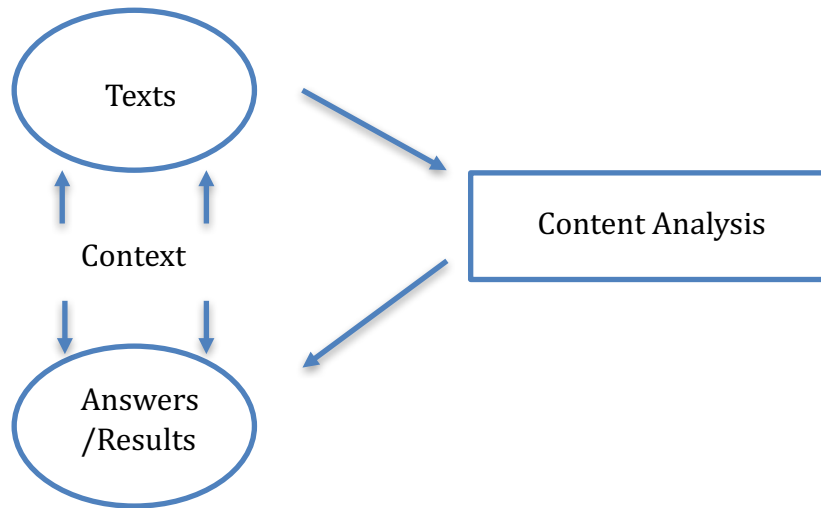
Figure 1   A Design of Content Analysis

3.1.2.   Content Analysis Design of This Research

This paper's content analysis design builds on prior research about China's image in American documentaries since the year of 2000 (see Shen, 2013). The coding categories include: thematic foci (politics, economic, culture, military, society, other), key words and major events. To code the data by different foci, this paper will analyze data in two ways: frequency and duration.

The documentary film will be divided by different themes. Through the analysis, the film producer's attitudes toward China is judged and categorized into positive, negative or neutral presentations.

In this paper, the identification of different attitudes is as follows.

First is the positive attitude toward China. This includes positive events involving China that have beneficial influences and can be approved by global audiences. An instance of this is China helping Angola to renovate railways thereby benefiting Angolans to conduct small businesses and make a better living. Using praising vocabularies to describe China is also considered as displaying a positive attitude. The relevant terms include: 'hard working', 'valuable' and 'being welcomed'.

Second is the negative attitude toward China. This includes events involving China that have detrimental impact on the foreign public. An example of this is China's role as an international purchaser of illegal logging in Brazilian rainforests. Also for events that are approved by the Chinese public, however, are represented with negative expressions in this film could add to the negative attitude category. For example, even though "cheap goods" from Chinese exports to Brazil may approve to be a good thing, as it can drive down the living costs for the local population, the film presents these goods in the negative way, as they are said to destroy local Brazilian production, thus posing threats to local manufacturers and to the sustainability of local industry. Using derogatory terms is included in this category. Such terms include: 'threat', 'crook' and 'insidious'.

Third is the category of neutral attitude toward China. This is comprised of events involving China that have no obvious value orientations, for instance, the trade between China and Brazil that mutually benefits both countries. And events that are both positive and negative are included in my category of neutral attitude too. For example, the rapid development of China's steel industry has led to great competition in global steel industry. The film shows the decline of Youngstown and it blames this downfall to China's vicious competition. On the other hand, the film conveys that China is the big engine for the global economy recovery that provided a large share of growth. Using neutral terms to record events is included in neutral attitude, such as 'rise', 'biggest', and 'traditional'.

3.2. Analysis of The Chinese Are Coming

The Chinese are Coming was first broadcast on BBC1 on 24th February 2011. Justin Rowlatt, the presenter travelled across three continents to explore China's

influence on these countries asking people what the world will be like if China overtakes America as the economic superpower of the world (BBC official website, 2011).

According to my content analysis, the documentary film can be divided by different themes. The table below presents my general analysis of *The Chinese Are Coming*, which includes to the distinct categories by which China's actions have been presented as well as the film producer's different attitudes toward China based on these categories. As can be seen, the predominate themes in the documentary include: general information, politics, economy, culture, society, military and other. To provide analytical insight, the table also shows the frequency, total display time and what proportion of the documentary's running time each category takes up.

3.2.1.   General Analysis

From Table 2, we can find that *The Chinese Are Coming* mostly discusses China in terms of society, economy and politics. The parts on society mainly focus on the issues of Chinese settlement and construction in Africa, the influences that China brings to the world, and the problematic issues in many countries caused by China, which accounts for 31.34% of the entire film. Beyond representing the highest proportion of the documentary's running time, elements of this theme are also the most frequently mentioned. The category of economy is mostly about issues of China's import and export trades, and what role China plays in the local economies of America, Brazil, Angola, Tanzania and other African countries. which accounts for 18.96% of the entire film. Although the frequency of economic issues is not high, the proportion is around one fifth of the film, which illustrates that economic issues in this film are concentrated. For politics, it primarily talks about the issues of foreign policies, capitalism and colonialism, which accounts for 17.92% of the entire film.

Table 2   **General Analysis of Representing China's Image in *The Chinese Are Coming***

|	Themes						Length/Ratio	Frequency
General Information	In Angola (Neutral) ep1: 01'40"- 01'50"	In Congo (Neutral) ep1: 46'26"- 46'35", 47'56"- 48'15".	In Tanzania (Positive) ep1: 52'06"- 52'18"	Superpower (Neutral) ep2: 34'07"- 34'15", 34'41"- 34'58".			1'15" 1.07%	4
Politics	Investment Policy (Positive) ep1: 16'46"-17'19" 52'26"- 53'05".	Human Rights Issue (Negative) ep1: 26'22"- 26'28", 28'00"- 28'21", 48'24"- 49'07", 50'46"- 51'00".	Foreign Policy (Negative) ep1: 26'44"- 27'59", 57'40"- 58'20".	Protest (Campaign/Parade) (Negative) ep1: 42'04"- 44'30", ep2: 36'12"- 40'00".	U.S. Tax Improvement (Neutral) ep2: 44'44"- 46'44"	Manipulating Currency (Negative) ep2: 47'07"- 48'50"	20'59" 17.92%	8
	Capitalism (Neutral) ep1: 52'19"- 52'25", 54'39"- 55'10", 55'11"- 56'02", ep2: 53'36"- 56'27".	Colonialism (Negative) ep1:45'03"- 45'11", 53'06"- 53'26", ep2: 32'16"- 34'00".						
Economy	Import & Export Trade (Neutral) ep1: 3'21"- 3'40", 4'05"- 4'22", 3'41"- 4'00", 56'03"- 57'39", ep2: 1'37"- 6'19", 6'50"- 11'05", 22'03"- 22'17", 22'40"- 23'34".	Worker's Wage (Neutral) ep1: 8'01"- 8'20"	Local Trade (Negative) ep1: 29'20"- 30'04", 47'35"- 47'55", ep2: 26'12"- 31'58" 31'59"- 32'15".	Promoting Global Economy Development (Positive) ep2: 48'51"- 50'23"	Creating Jobs (Positive) ep1: 15'50"- 16'14", 32'40"- 32'45"		22'12" 18.96%	5
Culture	Food (Neutral) ep1: 1'50"- 2'49", 8'21"- 8'29".	Language (Negative) ep2: 34'59"- 36'52"	Tai Ji (Neutral) ep1: 52'27"- 54'38"	Hard-working (Negative) ep1: 2'49"- 3'20", 29'00"- 29'19".	Work Attitude (Neutral) ep1: 4'39"- 5'20"	Teamwork (Negative) ep1: 32'20"- 32'39"	11'17" 9.64%	11
	Family Values (Neutral) ep1: 6'16"- 7'31", 17'20"- 17'28".	Work Efficiency (Positive) ep1: 7'32"- 8'00"	Traditional Thoughts (Neutral) ep1: 14'03"- 14'10"	Helping Others (Positive) ep1: 17'29"- 18'00", 51'50"-52'05".	Attitude Towards Going Abroad (Neutral) ep1: 30'05"- 31'37"			
Society	Settlement In Africa (Neutral) ep1: 4'01"- 4'04", 4'23"- 4'38", 28'36"- 28'41", ep2: 12'38"- 12'43", 15'21"-15'49", 18'01"- 18'10".	Construction In Africa (Neutral) ep1: 5'21"- 6'03", 6'04"- 6'15", 10'09"- 10'46", 12'15"- 12'37", 14'11"- 14'20", 51'25"- 51'49".	Benefits Africa (Positive) ep1: 9'00"- 9'05", 9'10"- 9'18", 10'47"- 11'49", 11'50"- 12'09", 36'26"- 36'36".	Destroys Africa (Negative) ep1: 20'09"- 25'49", 39'00"- 42'03", 18'00"- 19'34".	Brings Competition (Neutral) ep1: 28'51"- 28'59", 33'02"- 33'25", 38'05"- 38'16", ep2: 40'55"- 44'43".	Food Quality (Negative) ep1: 33'26"- 35'24", 36'37"- 38'04".	36'41" 31.34%	12
	Made In China (Neutral) ep1: 12'10"- 12'14", 24'58"- 26'11".	Sensitive of Exposure (Negative) ep1: 12'44"- 13'41"	Benefits China (Neutral) ep1: 13'48"- 14'02", 19'20"- 20'08".	Against China (Negative) ep1: 28'42"- 28'50", 32'46"- 33'01", 35'25"- 36'25".	Abuse African Workers (Negative) ep1: 48'16"- 48'23", 49'08"- 50'45".	Undutiful (Negative) ep2: 11'06"- 15'49", 15'50"- 17'59".		
Military	Military Threat (Negative) ep2: 50'24"- 53'35"						3'11" 2.72%	1
Other	Other Countries (Neutral) ep1: 01'26"- 01'40", 16'15"- 16'45", 9'06"- 9'09", 14'31"- 15'20", 18'22"- 19'19", 26'09"- 26'21", 26'29"- 26'43", 28'22"- 28'35", 38'29"- 38'59", 45'44"- 46'25", 46'36"- 47'34", 51'01"- 51'24", ep2: 01'37"- 02'36", 19'35"- 22'02", 22'18"- 22'39", 23'35"- 24'27".	Evaluation of African Workers (Neutral) ep1: 31'38"- 32'19"	Trailer(Opening & Ending) (Neutral) ep1: 00'00"- 01'25", 58'21"- 59'12", ep2: 00'00"- 01'36", 56'28"- 57'52".	Presenter's Interpretation (Negative) ep1: 8'30"- 8'59"	Scenery Shots (Neutral) ep1: 13'42"- 13'47", 14'21"- 14'30", ep2: 3'47"- 3'58", 24'28"- 24'57", 34'01"- 34'06".	Transition (Neutral) ep1: 9'19"- 10'08", 18'11"- 18'21", 25'50"- 26'08", 38'17"- 38'28", 44'31"- 45'02", 45'12"- 45'43", ep2: 6'20"- 6'49", 34'16"- 34'40", 40'01"- 40'54", 46'45"- 47'06".	21'29" 18.35%	

According to Figure 2, the frequency of society (12) is the highest. And culture (11) is also high frequency. Just these two categories take up over half of the frequency of this film. Therefore, it can be seen from this analysis, *The Chinese Are Coming* pays attention on general information, politics, economy, culture and society, and the frequency of each of these categories reach over 4. These categories are important indicators of representing the image of China in this film. However, the frequency of military (1) is very low.
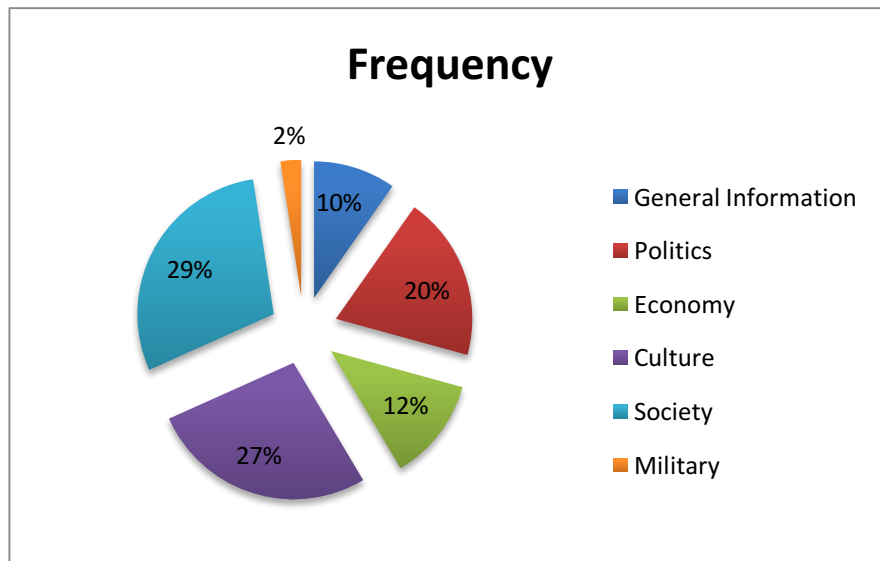
Figure 2   Frequency of Different Categories in *The Chinese Are Coming*

Figure 3 shows the length of different categories in the film. Society is still the biggest concern of the documentary, which takes 2201 seconds. Attention to economy and politics take 1332 seconds and 1259 seconds respectively, which shows their importance to construct the image of China in this film. However, for culture and military, the total of the two (868 seconds) cannot compare to the length of the above categories. This means that the culture and military of China are not the major aspects of the image of China in this film.
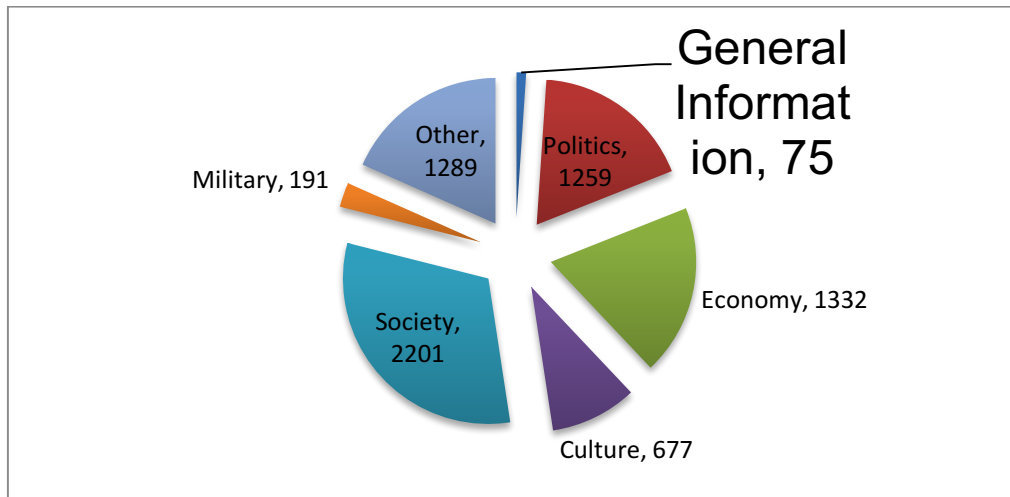
Figure 3   Length of Different Categories in *The Chinese Are Coming*

3.2.2.   Analysis of Keywords and Core Events

The keywords in Table 3 are selected by the statistics of words' frequency, and I selected words that occurred over 6 times as the keywords. There are 8 verbs, 12 nouns and 9 adjectives totaling 29 keywords in all.

Table 3   The Frequency of Keywords in *The Chinese Are Coming*

Verb	Frequency	Noun	Frequency	adjective	Frequency
Grow	15	Business	28	Vast/Giant/Big/Huge	22
Rise	14	Trade/Deal	27	Cheap	15
Build	13	Government/State/Authority	21	Local	14
Threat/Frighten	13	Industry	18	Biggest/Largest	14
Change/Transform/Shifting	13	Competition	16	Communist	10
Invest	8	Job/Employment	16	Global	8
Help	7	Construction/Reconstruction	14	British	7
Influence/Affect/Impact	7	Resources	11	Delicious	6
		Tourism/Travel/Tourist	10	Work Hard	6
		Price	9		
		Risk/Danger/fear	7		
		Human Right	6		

For verbs, the most important words are 'grow' and 'rise', which occur 15 and 14 times each. They depict China's rapid development in recent years. Most of the verbs are neutral, such as 'build', 'change', 'invest' and 'influence', which state the facts that

China's rise has great influence on other countries and even the whole world. 'Help' a positive verb shows up 7 times, which shows China's goodwill and warmth to help other countries developing. 'Threat/frighten' which carry negative connotations appears 13 times, stigmatizes China's rise as a threat to the world. Overall, most of verbs are neutral and stating facts about China.

For nouns, the most frequent words are 'business' and 'trade', which are said 28 and 27 times respectively. These two words are mainly related to China's economic development situation, they are used to convey that the trade between China and other countries is intensive. Most of the nouns are neutral, such as 'government', 'industry', 'competition', 'job', 'construction', 'resources', 'tourism', 'price', 'risk' and 'human rights'. They contribute to construct China's image from different ways, for instance, the import and export trades of China, government's authority, competition in local business market, and the rise of tourism cause of China. In general, most of nouns are neutral words.

For adjectives, one word frequently mentioned in the film is 'vast/big', which is mentioned 22 times. 'Biggest/largest' occurs 14 times. They show China's huge change; as a great power, it needs vast resources to supply its industrial capacities, and that China is also the biggest consumer of resources; and how China's rise has largely influenced other countries. Most of the adjectives are neutral, such as 'cheap', 'local', 'communist', 'global' and 'British', which describe the situation of China and its impact on other countries. Two positive adjectives occur 6 times respectively, they are 'delicious' and 'work hard', which praise China for its food and the diligence of the Chinese people. Most of adjectives are neutrally or positively describing the development of China, and there are no frequently used negative adjectives.

To sum up, most of the keywords are neutral, and only a few words display clear value orientations. To some extent, we can find out some of the film's producer's regard for China from the keywords, but it is not a comprehensive analysis.

In Table 4, we can see ten core events represented in this documentary film, with stories selected from across three continents, Africa, South America and North America. In Africa, China helps to construct infrastructure there, however, at the same time, these efforts threated the habitats of endangered wild animals, and serve as competition for

struggling local businesses. In Brazil, the film also depicts how trade between Brazil and China is thriving, but contrasts this against the depletion of Brazil's rainforests. These core events avoid social issues of China, for instance, the huge survival pressures on Chinese who settled down in the Africa far away home, but focus more on the international impact of China's rise.

**Table 4   The Core Events in *The Chinese Are Coming***

Event	Interpretation	Attitude
The Construction of a Shopping Mall in Angola	Chinese workers are hard-working and settling down in Angola.	Positive
The Renovation of Angola Railways	Mutual benefits between China and Angola, China benefits more.	Neutral
The Wild Animals in Africa are Endangered	Illegal trades of ivory in China.	Negative
Chinese Chicken Farmers Bring Great Competition in Zambia	Zambian farmers have no business, and Chinese chickens taste less good than Zambian chickens.	Negative
Chinese Mine Factory in Luanshya	Chinese owners destroyed the recreational facilities of the public and abuse local workers; but they invest a lot and create many jobs.	Neutral
Trades Between China and Brazil	Mutual benefits between China and Brazil.	Neutral
The Brazilian Rainforest Has been Destroyed	The reason of losing rainforest is illegal chopping, and China is the biggest customer of Brazilian mine and timbers.	Negative
Chinese Cheap Bikinis Dominate the Market in Brazil	The low price brings competition to Brazil bikini factories, Chinese bikinis are in poor quality.	Negative
Chinese Class in American High Schools	Some of the parents think teaching Chinese culture by Communist teachers with Chinese government proved textbooks are insidious methods of misinformation.	Negative
Possibility of the Trade War Between China and America	America holds that China did the first unfair trade move, and they improve the tariffs on certain products to limit Chinese trades. Some people think China's response to this is reasonable, and China plays the significant role in balancing and promoting global economy development.	Neutral

These events draw audiences' attention to what is behind China's rise—a series of disastrous effects. As can be seen from Table 4, half of the ten events are negative, only one of the ten is positive, and the other four events are neutral, which can reflect the producer's attitude towards China to some extent. For example, to explain why the wild animals in Africa are endangered in recent years, this film presents that Chinese may be the main purchasers of the ivory in illegal trades, rather than finding out who did the business to make money. This film blames these disastrous effects and negative changes of these countries mainly on China.

3.2.3. Analysis of Each Categories

The category of general information is mainly about China's current situation in different countries, providing the narrative background of this film. It is a small part of overall film, accounting for only 1.07% of the documentary. Most of the content in the topics raised under this category are neutral.

For the category of politics, it is primarily about China's foreign policies, form of government and other political issues of China. This part is especially important for representing China's image, and accounts for 17.92% of the documentary. From Figure 4, based on the frequency of different attitudes of themes in the politics category, it is clear that the general representation of politics in China is negative. The film shows issues of human rights and foreign policies in a negative way. It also highlights protests and boycotts against China in different countries, which reflects negatively on China's politics.
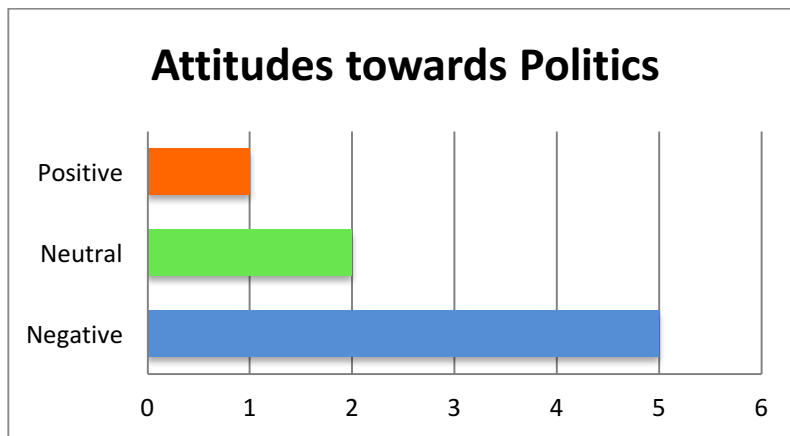
Figure 4   Different Attitudes towards Politics of China in *The Chines Are Coming*

The treatment of China's economy is mostly about China's import and export trades, in contrast to local businesses in different countries. This part is also significant to build China's image in this film, which accounts for 18.96% of the film. Figure 5, indicates that overall the film producer sees the economy of China in a positive way, especially in how China creates job opportunities in Africa, and China's important role in

global economic development. The film also neutrally states the situation of China's trade and the level of worker's wages.

Attitudes towards Economy
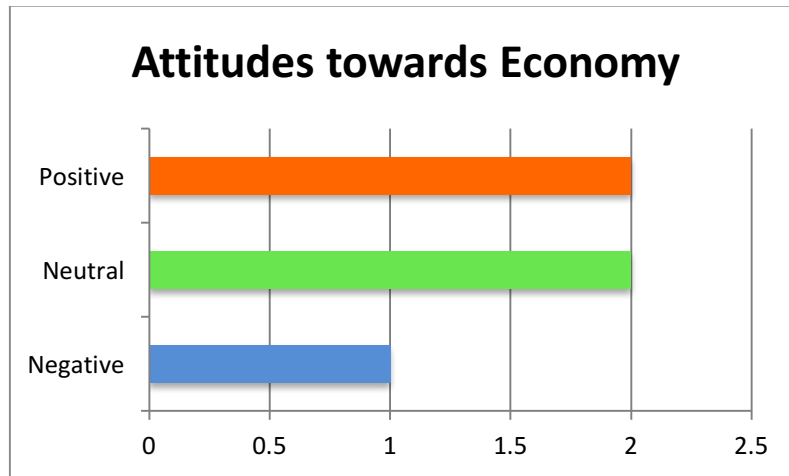
Figure 5 **Different Attitudes towards Economy of China in** *The Chines Are Coming*

The category of culture includes many aspects. For example, Chinese food, language, Tai Ji, and Chinese work efficiency. This film pays less attention to this part however, and it only has the proportion of 9.64 %. From Figure 6, it shows the attitude towards Chinese culture is largely neutral. The negative representation of Chinese labors' work ethic and the teamwork on Chinese farms are based on the fears that Chinese workers are working too hard to leave any chance for local workers in Africa, and the presenter also doubts whether if the African workers he interviews are free to talk about their feelings of Chinese farms before their employer, the owner of this farm. The way the presenter shows his doubts in the film is also a negative way of representing China. After receiving his doubts, audiences may feel that the African workers' approval for Chinese teamwork and the kindness of their employer are not convincing anymore, they may be forced to say good words by their employer.
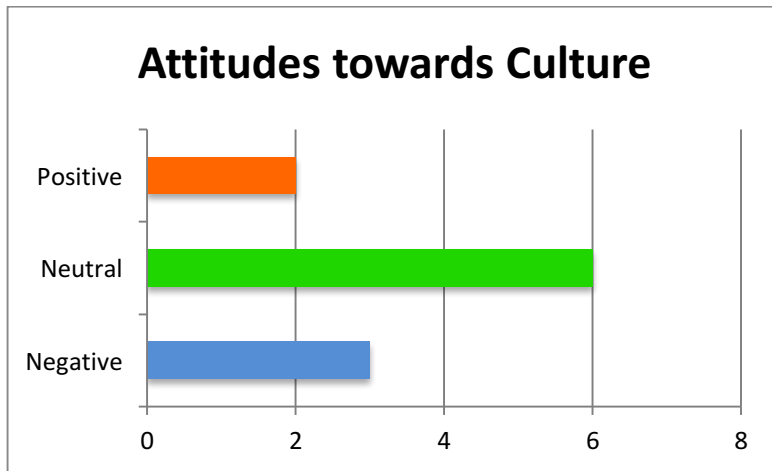
Figure 6   **Different Attitudes towards Culture of China in *The Chines Are Coming***

For the category of society, it is largely about China's influences on societies in other countries. This is the most important category used to represent China's image, which accounts for 31.34% of the documentary. Figure 7, demonstrates that the general representation of this category is negative. The film shows how the vicious competition caused by China in local business market, the poor quality of Chinese food, Chinese low-price goods, and China is irresponsible for the environment, and employment opportunities for African workers.
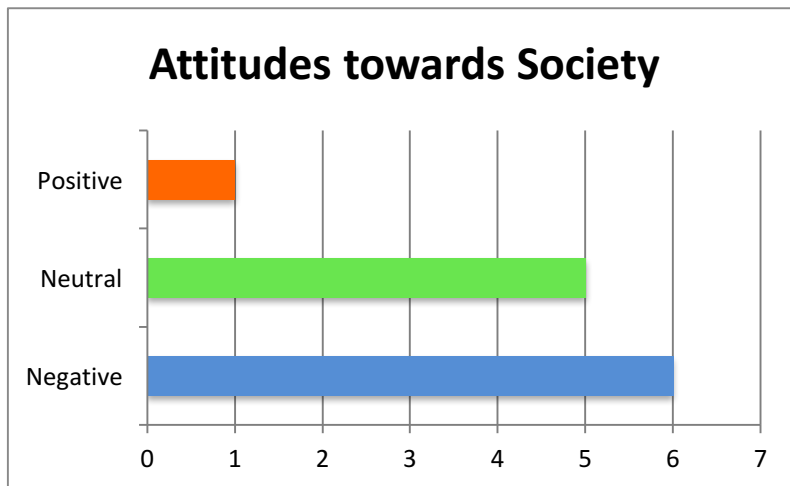
Figure 7   Different Attitudes towards Society of China in *The Chines Are Coming*

For the category of military, it only takes 2.72% of the entire film. In these few minutes, the film shows Chinese military threat to surrounding countries and questions China's purpose for increasing its ever larger military investments.
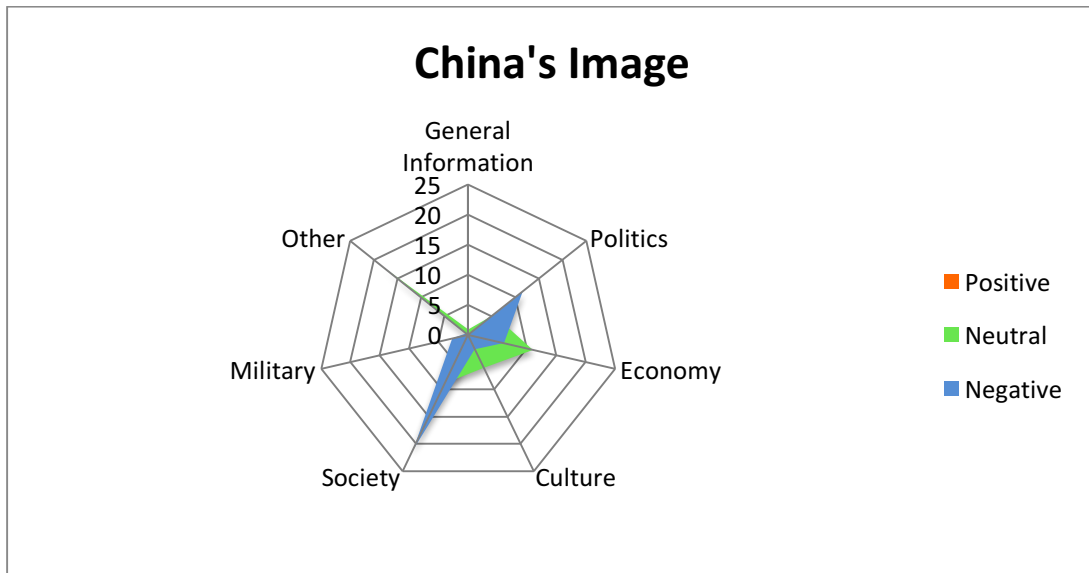
3.2.4.   Analysis of China's image in *The Chinese Are Coming*

According to the collection and file of statistics data, the information can be summarized in a table. Table 5 shows percentages of different attitudes. As can be seen in Table 5, around half of the film represents China's image with a neutral attitude. The other half is mostly negative accounting for 44.31% of the entire film, while positive representation only represents 5.6% of the documentary.

Table 5   Distribution of Different Attitudes in *The Chinese Are Coming*

	Positive	Neutral	Negative
General Information	0.17%	0.90%	0
Politics	1.03%	5.40%	11.49%
Economy	1.87	11.03	6.06%
Culture	1.05%	6%	2.59%
Society	1.48%	8.82%	21.04%
Military	0	0	2.72%
Other	0	17.94%	0.41%
Total	5.60%	50.09%	44.31%

From Figure 8, it shows the visualized China's image. It is easy to identify how the film represents China's image mostly in neutral and negative ways. It involves more negative factors when discussing issues of society and politics, whereas for issues of economy and culture, there are more neutral presentations.

China's Image

Figure 8   Radar Chart of China's Image in *The Chinese Are Coming*

Therefore, from the perspectives of frequency and the length of shooting time, *The Chinese Are Coming* portrays the image of China mostly based on neutral representation. According to the data of distribution of different attitudes, to some extent, this film is also mixed with strong negative attitude towards China.

3.3. Results and Discussion

To do the content analysis, this paper analyzes *The Chinese Are Coming* shot by shot, and summarizes the statistical data from keywords, core events, and different categories, to understand how it represents China's image.

Based on the analysis of keywords and core events, most of the keywords are neutral, and only a few words have clear value orientations. Half of the core events are negative, only one of ten core events is positive, and other four events are neutral. Overall, we can find out the producer's attitude towards China is negative.

The film's content is analyzed in terms of the following seven categories, general information, politics, economy, culture, society, military and other. Among the seven

categories, general information and other are not the core categories, and both of them are represented in neutral way. Politics, economy and society are very important to represent China's image in this film. The contents of Politics and Society are negative, while the film presents China's economy with positive attitudes. This film pays less attention to culture and military. However, when it does, culture is represented in a neutral way, while the military is cast in the negative light. So overall, it can be said that the film represents China in a neutral to negative light.

To sum up, from the analysis above we can draw a conclusion that *The Chinese Are Coming* represents the image of China mostly in a neutral way, but there is still strong negative attitude orientation in this film. Therefore, this documentary film is mainly stating the facts of China, and also reflecting the existing problems of China's society and other aspects in recent years, especially under the background of China's great rise. To some extent, the producer of this film expresses his doubts of these social contradictions and problems of China.

Chapter 4.

Chinese Audiences' Reception and Interpretation

4.1. Comments on *The Chinese Are Coming* from Chinese Audiences

To collect Chinese audiences' comments on *The Chinese Are Coming*, this paper includes comments from graduate students of CUC (Communication University of China) and users of some Chinese online forums. For collecting comments of graduate students in CUC, this paper interviews graduate students who majored in television production in Communication University of China. These students have taken Television Program Creation; the same class I did where the professor shows clips of the documentary film. After contacting 22 people from the class, only 12 of them replied and filled out the questionnaire. Furthermore, 7 of the 12 provided complete and valuable answers to the interview questions. Although the sample size is limited, these interviews can still reflect students' general ideas and receptions of this film after taking the class. For collecting comments from users of Chinese online forums, this paper chooses three famous online forums in China, including *Tianya.cn*, *Baidu.com*, and *Guancha.cn*.

In the interviews, conducted by email I asked participants five questions about the documentary film. To protect interviewees' privacy, their answers will be coded with alphabet letters (such as A, B, C).

1. How did you come across *The Chinese Are Coming* for the first time?

Six interviewees of seven came across this film in the class of Television Program Creation for the first time, and one of them (D) saw it on the Internet first.

2. What was your response to this documentary film for the first time you watched it?

Three of the participants (A, D, E) think this documentary film represents high quality filming techniques. Four of them (B, E, F, G) feel that this film presents an extreme representation of China in a condescending tone. C feels surprised and uncomfortable about this film's representation of China. G points that the title of this film—*The Chinese Are Coming*—may lead to a rejection of Chinese people, as it is similar to "the Devil is Coming" (Guizi Laile), which could imply that China is a devil. B also reflects that this film has many valuable points, such as environmental issues and endangered animals, which are worth our attention and reflection.

3.   What is your understanding of the purpose of producing it?

C and E consider that this film reflects that the British feel afraid of China's dramatic rise. Four participants (B, D, F, G) see the purpose as a means to spread and emphasize the discourse of "China threat" to the world and implant a sense of crisis. B also thinks this film is trying to alienate African countries from China. A answers that the documentary film is propagandistic finding that it portrays China as an evil by invading Africa and seizing its resources, which benefits Britain on the international stage to some extent.

4.   Has your attitude toward it changed since first seeing it?

Three of them (A, B, C) maintain their viewpoints and the attitudes toward this film as before. D adds that Chinese should engage in self-reflection, otherwise there could be a repeat of the "Yellow Peril". E and F used the opportunity to reflect on the Chinese media's one-sided propaganda of Sino-African relations, stating that the Chinese people should study our global strategy in relation to the discourse of "China threat". G believes that the facts presented in this film are already selected, so "I cannot draw a conclusion that BBC is stigmatizing China without knowing all of the facts".

5.   Would you recommend this documentary film to others? (If so: To whom?)

Three of the participants (A, C, F) express that they would not recommend this film to others because it has a strong ideological bias, which they do not appreciate. Others (B, D, E, G) mentioned they are willing to recommend this film to others. For B,

this film is for his/her friends who are interested in Africa and have plans to visit Africa. D would recommend it to people who enjoy well-produced documentary films. E and G, said that they will share this film to their friends who major in journalism or work in media.

Comments from online forums are diverse as following, and to protect users' privacy, their IDs will be replaced by codes (such as A1, B2, C3).

Tianya.cn was founded in 1999. It is an influential online community attracting a great number of netizens from both home and abroad. *Tianya.cn* features humanistic feelings. It is also famous for analyzing online hot issues. People comment and communicate with each other on the platforms provided by *Tianya.cn*, such as BBS, blog and microblog (*Tianya.cn* online forums, *www.tianya.cn*). To understand the context of a hot issue online, people are always inclined to search it on *Tianya.cn* and see what is going on. As a hot issue, *The Chinese Are Coming* was discussed intensely on *Tianya.cn*. Some people believe this documentary film stigmatizes China as a threat to Africa and even the entire world. A1 thought this film is distorting the facts and leading audiences to believe what the film conveys. A2 said the BBC is dressing up as a savior but actually doing nothing good for the world, they are just misleading the public with rumors about China. A3 said that at least we are not colonizing Africa like British did before. A3 also argued that western media always says bad things about China. A4 thought western people are confused now, on the one hand, they despise China for its backwardness; on the other hand, they feared that China is a threat.

However, some of the users have different interpretations of this film. A5 said he feels guilty after watching this documentary film. A6 felt proud of China for its great rise in industry. A7 suggested that China should pay more attention to its cultural communication in Africa and other countries, reasoning that a mutually beneficial relationship with other countries is very important to foreign affairs. A8 thought this documentary film is objective and does not blacken China's reputation.

Baidu.com was founded in 2000. It is the largest search engine in China and one of the biggest Chinese website. *Baidu.com* is famous for its simplicity and reliability. It is like the Chinese version of *Google.com* (*Baidu.com* online forums, *www.baidu.com*). On

Baidu.com, commenters posted similar opinions of this documentary film. Some people feel angry about the demonization of China, some hold a neutral attitude of it, and others think this film makes them rethink profoundly of China. B1 said, BBC's biased reporting and complains will stir up anti-China sentiment in Africa. B2 thought that Chinese enterprises indeed treat workers with low regard, and due to the great rise, China and other countries are facing serious environmental problems. B3 suggested audiences should think deeply on two issues, one is to review China's globalization strategy; another is to understand "China threat" and try to find out reasonable countermeasures to cope with it.

Guancha.cn was founded in 2010. It is an online news and comments aggregator providing breaking news and original contents. The original contents include interpretations of hot issues, user generated contents of analysis, and various comments (*Guancha.cn* online forums, *www.guancha.cn*). On *Guancha.cn*, many people voiced their concern of this documentary film. Some users hold the view that the BBC has no objectivity in this film. C1 saw this film as the 'pride and prejudice' of the British. C2 believed that the British are jealous of the friendship between China and Africa, and of the great profits that China gains in Africa. Some of them suggested that Chinese should fight back. C3 wrote that Chinese filmmakers should also produce a film named *The Westerners in Africa* to show that they have done more than the Chinese have. Also, some of the commenters reflected on China's past behaviors and advocate for means to improve the present conduct of China. C4 thought the friendly relations between China and Africa are a precious treasure left by the founding fathers of China, instead of sacrificing this relationship to be benefit-oriented, we should cherish our friendship and be considerate to African people. C5 considered this film as an evidence of China's weakness on foreign publicity, arguing that China should strengthen its publicity efforts and education, otherwise this kind of film can influence the nation's young generations.

4.2. Receptions and Interpretation of Chinese Audiences

Summarizing from the comments on *The Chinese Are Coming* above, there are three kinds of attitudes toward this film. First, people feel angry and believe this film stigmatizing China on purpose. Second, people believe this film is a reflection of the reality of China, and that Chinese should reflect on themselves for their past behaviors. Third, people see this film as a great tool of propaganda, they suggest Chinese media should follow "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" (*Yi Yan Huan Yan, Yi Ya Huan Ya*) to produce some documentary films about how western countries harm other countries' interests to strike back.

As can be seen, most of the comments support the first attitude towards this film. They feel angry about this film, which they regard as "ridiculous". From their perspectives the BBC is trying to brainwash people into accepting China as a threat to the world. There is obviously a double standard in the western countries towards China's rise.

For the second attitude, some people provide examples to prove that China indeed has problems regarding its enterprise management and food safety. As the environment issues in China are getting worse, people hold this second attitude towards the film suggesting that Chinese people should be calm, clearheaded, and analyze this film objectively.

For the third one, many Chinese insist that China is just the world factory, and it is innocent. Western developed countries are the world consumer market, and they are the initiators of the evil. Even without China, there will always be cheap producers, which will compete for the business of developed countries.

Besides these views, a considerable number of Chinese audiences think this film shows that British are jealous of China. They claim that China's rise has afforded the nation state with a better and closer relationship with Africa than Britain ever did. These audiences feel proud of China after watching this film.

4.3. Reflection on Chinese Audiences' Reception and Interpretation

From the above, we can see a number of Chinese audiences' attitudes toward *The Chinese Are Coming* clearly. This makes me worried. First, from the result of film analysis, we can find out that this film is mostly based on a neutral narrative. However, many audience members are insisting on BBC's stigmatization of China. Their battled calls in online forums can lead more and more people to follow them with blind patriotism without independent thinking. Also, my own CUC professor took this film as an example of how the western media demonize China in class. This is a telling example for students to accept and follow. Second, to some people's suggestion of "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" (*Yi Yan Huan Yan, Yi Ya Huan Ya*), I would response with another old saying, "do to others what you would want them to do to you" (*Ji Suo Bu Yu, Wu Shi Yu Ren*), otherwise we are just same as them. Third, I feel most worried that some people are shameless about the problems presented in this film, instead of considering their involvement, they feel proud of China as we are strong enough to attract the BBC's attention, which can be an arrogant way of thinking.

As a graduate student who majored in television production at the Communication University of China, I watched clips of *The Chinese Are Coming* in the Television Program Creation class. To some extent, I held the same opinions as the students I interviewed the first time I watched the film. I still remember that I was emotional and expressed my angry with my classmates after that class. Many things I watched in the film were opposed to what I learned before, and most of these depicted China in a negative light. For instance, I learned a lot about Sino-African relations from daily news reports in China, however, this film told stories from the perspective of China taking away the job opportunities from Africans and even abusing African workers. I was most shocked by how the Chinese people in this film were interpreted as aggressive people and numb working machines, as when I was young I learned about diligence and hard working as traditional Chinese moral values. This has made me feel uncomfortable and angry.

However, I watched this film again one year after the first time I knew it in class, then I talked with my supervisor about it and had more thoughts on the film this time. This experience has led to a transformation in my perspective. By reflecting on my former reception of this film, my first impression was informed by the professors' emphasis that this film is a typical example of how western media portrays China with prejudice. Holding these preconceived ideas, which are like wearing the tinted glasses, what I watched could only enhance my preconception. Although I still feel angry about some of the plot lines in this film, I have judged these events differently and gain a different perspective on them after my research. For example, according to the results of this film analysis, this film is mainly presented according to a neutral narrative. Therefore, it is does not completely stigmatize China, and some of the problems presented in the film do actually exist. They are the ones which China should legitimately address. As for this film, people should be open to critical perspectives of China. Except for the harmful effects on China's image, a documentary film like this may also have positive influences on China's development. Instead of being an enemy, these documentary films should be seen as a wake-up call to change our ways of thinking, and to reflect on China's global strategies and foreign policies.

Chapter 5.

Conclusion

5.1. Successes of this Research

This paper discusses how the documentary film—*The Chinese Are Coming*—conveys China's national image, and Chinese audiences' reception of it. To explore this topic, this paper uses three methods. it first analyzes secondary literature, then summarizes and synthesizes them in reasonable ways to generate the literature review of this paper. Second, using content analysis method to analyze the documentary film, and reach a conclusion on the way in which China's image are represented in this film. Third, interviewed and searched online open resources to collect Chinese audiences' reception and interpretation of this film.

Based on the result of content analysis of this film, it states facts of China and reflects on China's existing problems in recent years from different aspects, including politics, economy, society, culture and military, in the context of China's great rise. This paper draws the conclusion that *The Chinese Are Coming* is mainly based on a neutral narrative. However, it must be admitted that this film presents China with a negative orientation (negative part accounts for 44.31% of the entire film). It contributes to the "China threat" discourse through presenting China's image as culturally hegemonic and as an irresponsible economic superpower, especially in terms of how it portrays more and more Chinese settle down in Africa as a form of neo-colonism.

From the interviews and internet user data collection, this paper discovers three kinds of attitudes toward this film from Chinese audiences. Some of them feel angry about the stigmatization of China; some of them think it reflects the reality of China; and others regard this as a tool of politic propaganda. Actually, the problems presented in

this film are issues that China can address, Chinese audiences should not stick to their views of criticizing and stubbornly denying culpability. In order to improve China's present situation and future development, the Chinese people should see this kind of documentary films as a wake-up call. Therefore, China can make changes to its global strategy and foreign policies in time. In this way, China's image can be improved on the global scale.

5.2. Limitations

This paper presents a case study of *The Chinese Are Coming*, which is produced by BBC in 2011. Although this documentary film is representative of documentary films about China, there are still limitations of this research.

First, the analysis of only one documentary film is not convincing enough to illustrate how documentary films build China's image from the western perspectives.

Second, the chosen documentary film is not the most influential Western presentation of China's image. Not all BBC produced documentary films present negative attitude of China, there are also some films that praise China as a great country; for instance, *The Story of China, Chinese New Year: The Biggest Celebration on Earth Reunion.*

The third limitation is the small scale of collected data to represent Chinese audiences. The interviews only included seven participants to dig deeper into details of their reception and interpretation of this film, and there are only three selected online forums for collecting the users' opinion.

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