Contested Discourses of Women's Identity in Chinese Print Media

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Abstract

From the 1980s, and especially since the late 1990s against the backdrop of rapid economic development and the overwhelming influence of globalization, China has undergone dynamic and complex transformation. Historically sited ideologies and cultural impacts have placed contemporary Chinese women at a crossroads of identity confusion: between adhering to the "rationality" of prevailing definitions of the "good woman" from a traditional perspective, and the "craving" for independence and success outside the confines of the home. Tensions in the ongoing re-definition of women's identity have led to both increasing diversity and to contestation in the presentation of women in media discourse. This thesis explores how women's identity is discursively constructed and how the presentation of women in Chinese print media is affected by the ambivalence inherent in such contested ideologies and cultures. It does so from three perspectives – descriptive, interpretative, and explanatory – focusing on history-honored Confucianism concerning images of ideal family identity of women before the Mao era, what one may call a neutralized gender ideology of the heroic model work identity of women during the Mao-era, influences of Western cultures and feminist critiques with an associated emphasis on consumerism and individualism flooding into China in the post Mao era, and new-Confucianism at the turn of the century with its emphasis on reviving traditional virtues. All are drawn upon in the thesis in terms of their influence on re-constructing contemporary Chinese women's identity. The dynamic transformation of stereotypical representations and the inherent contestation embedded within the conflicting double standard of being a contemporary ideal for women, reflects complex social change amidst rapid economic development and political renovation.

In 1995, the Fourth World Women's Conference was held in Beijing offering a good impetus towards the development of Women's Studies in China. Since then research on women and issues of gender has attracted increasing attention involving multi-disciplinary co-operation. In 2005, UNESCO established a Chair of Media and Gender in the Communication University of China, officially beginning a significant new era of gender/media studies in China. Drawing on Fairclough's argument that, "Language use is constitutive both in conventional ways which help to reproduce and maintain existing social identities, relations and systems of knowledge, and in creative ways which help to transform them." (Fairclough, 1995, p. 55) and van Zoonen's assertion that, "The women's movement is not only engaged

in a material struggle about equal rights and opportunities for women, but also in a symbolic conflict about definitions of femininity" (van Zoonen, 1994, p. 12), this thesis concentrates on such themes as espoused in media texts, seen contrastively and historically in the Chinese context. Its methodological focus is an evidence-based discourse analytical exploration combining both linguistic and ethnographic methods, and integrating both critical and social perspectives in the study of media texts.

The data collected and drawn upon are texts from 1995 to 2005 and onwards, covering those from a national newspaper (*People's Daily 人民日报 Renmin Ribao)*, a women's magazine – (*Women of China 中国妇女 Zhongguo Funü)*, an academic journal – (*Collection of Women's Studies 妇女研究论丛 Funü Yanjiu Luncong*), and a selection of official documents (*PD editorials* etc.). The comparative framework – both diachronically between 1995 to 2005 datasets and synchronically between datasets of *PD, WOC, CWS and PD editorials* attempts to reflect changing social recognition about gender constructs as well as different media appraisals on gender ideology. Data drawn from interviews with journalist practitioners and journalism scholars are also included as counterpoints to the media and to scholarly texts and analysis. Selected narratives from these "insider" voices are documented and analysed, providing important insights into the processes in which the newspaper reports construct specific understanding and categorization of women's identity, and how they may reveal under scrutiny the ideological positions of different media during moments of social transition. The timeframe under scrutiny is a period of women's development in China since the Fourth World Women's Conference held in Beijing in 1995 – regarded as indicated above, as a very important landmark in the second/current Chinese feminist wave (Tan & Liu, 2005). The key metaphorical construction of Chinese women's identity as "*Holding up Half the Sky*" in a "*Harmonious Society*" is investigated against various data sets. The findings reveal the tensions of persistence and resistance of certain ideologies, as well as an uneasy compromising process of the relationship between women and nation, women and family, women and self in the process of addressing an overarching and pervasive Work/Family conflict among contemporary Chinese women. The focus on discursive creativity and inter-textuality throughout this analysis of media discourse corresponds to the nature of dynamic social changes taking place in modern China.

Statement of Candidate

I certify that the work in this thesis entitled "Contested Discourses of Women's Identity in Chinese Print Media" has not previously been submitted for a degree, nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree, to any other university or institution other than Macquarie University.

I also certify that the thesis is an original piece of research and it has been written by me. Any help and assistance that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself have been appropriately acknowledged.

In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

The research presented in this thesis was approved by Macquarie University Ethics Review Committee, reference number: HE28NOV2008-D6192L&P.

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List of Abbreviations

ACWF: All-China Women's Federation

CDA: Critical Discourse Analysis

PD: People's Daily

CPC: Communist Party of China

CWS: Collection of Women's Studies

FWCW: Fourth World Conference on Women

GDP: Gross Domestic Product

MCA: Membership Categorization Analysis

PRC: People's Republic of China

SIT: Social Identity Theory

WOC: Women of China

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Thesis Statement

The thesis concerns an exploration of how women's identity is discursively constructed in a range of distinctive print media in China over time and how contested ideologies and cultures over that time period affected how women are presented in these distinctive print media. This is not a thesis which is directed at a study of feminist theory, nor is it a thesis about gender per se. It is essentially directed at an exploration of the representation of gender issues in China over time and comparatively, involving principally textual analysis of selected print media data (*People's Daily*, *Women of China*), supported by a convenience sample of engaging journalists who would be interviewed on two occasions, and also informed by Chinese academic writing (*Collection of Women's Studies*) on the issues of the print media representation of gender. Contrastive and collaborative insights are accordingly provided concerning the positions taken by the selected print media discourses on the issues under study.

The research offers an examination of the representation in the selected texts of the contradictory and dynamic interaction of a number of ideologies and cultures – history-honored Confucianism concerning images of ideal family identity of women before the Mao era, what one may call a neutralized gender ideology defining the heroic model work identity of women during the Mao-era, influences of Western cultures and feminist critiques with an associated emphasis on consumerism and individualism flooding into China in the post Mao era, and new-Confucianism at the turn of the century with its emphasis on reviving traditional virtues. All these time-related and ideologically imbricated historical moments are drawn upon in the thesis in terms of their influence on re-constructing contemporary Chinese women's identity as represented in the selected print media texts.

The following section begins with a motivation of the research, followed by a brief discussion of the research background of the historical development of women's identity in China, the research questions addressed in the thesis, and a brief overview of the chapter structure of the thesis.

1.2 The Research Context

1.2.1 The Motivation

My passion for gender and language started from my MA thesis undertaking a discourse analysis of Toni Morrison's novel *Beloved*. Since then, I have maintained my curiosity and personal interest in the construction of women's identity in contemporary China where I supposedly belong to those women who hold up "半边天 *ban bian tian,* half the sky". This Chinese proverb on one hand is often seen as evidence to the world that China is a women-friendly country with "amazing and remarkable" achievements in the women's liberation movement led by socialist thoughts of gender equality (Zhou, 1996, p. 32), whereas on the other, as Lawson pointed out, the metaphorical slogan has long been more aspiration than fact as gender inequality still persists in many social sectors under the impact of both cultural heritages and political ideologies (Lawson, 2008; Lin, 2008).

From the 1980s, and especially since the late 1990s against the backdrop of rapid economic development and the overwhelming influence of globalization, China has undergone dynamic and complex social transformation. Historically sited ideologies and cultural impacts have placed contemporary Chinese women at a crossroads of identity confusion – between adhering to the "rationality" of prevailing definitions of the "good woman" from a traditional perspective, and the "craving" for independence and success outside the confines of the home – so which way to go? Generally there are two possibilities – one is the category of typical family-oriented "贤妻良母 *xian qi liang mu,* good wife/mother" as the ideal wife type prescribed by the persistent traditional gendered division of labor, in which the duty of caring for husbands and children is often seen as a "natural instinct" for women, whereas the duty of men is usually based on their social roles (Chen, 2009); the other is the category of a kind of workaholic, usually quoted as "女强人 *nü qiang ren,* superwoman", who is career-oriented, which was more or less fostered by the Maoist radical campaign on women (Shen, 2005). This confrontation of the traditional Confucianism culture focusing on women's family role and the Maoist advocacy of women's work identity places Chinese women at an interesting intersection of cultural values about women which may lead to some confusion for them about what roles they are expected to fill, and which ones they personally want to fill. Accordingly, there arises the image of "第三类女人 *di san lei nü ren*, the *Third Type* woman"– who is trying her best to maintain a balance between career and family in order to qualify for the contemporary definition of a "perfect woman". This identity re-construction is embedded

in diversity as well as in a contestation among several options. One apposite example of the troubling issues surrounding women's identity is that long before I commenced my PhD study, I learned the popular name for the female PhD candidate – *the Third Sex* – in addition to those of men and women. The complex implication underlying this label, which is discussed later in Chapter Five Section 5.2.2.2, reveals the socio-cultural ambivalence about women's development and the ideological contestation of the gender identity reconstructing process in present-day Chinese society.

On one hand, within the socio-cultural context of contemporary multiplicity and coexistence, ideal identities of the past have been substituted by a diversity of model options for modern women, especially those of the younger generation. On the other hand contradictory social changes have evoked new moral dilemmas. Women must now seek economic self-sufficiency even as they continue to bear responsibility for the care of family (Gerson, 2002). According to a definition quoted by Olgiati & Shapiro, gender equality encompasses the position "that all human beings are free to develop their personal abilities and make choices without limitations set by strict gender roles; and that the different behaviors, aspirations and needs of women and men are considered, valued and favored equally" (Olgiati & Shapiro, 2002). In this sense, the preferred "having it all" advocacy does not seem a perfect solution to the work/family conflict experienced by women, as women, including myself, keep asking ourselves questions that offer no easy answers. As Swiss and Walker propose: am I expecting too much? Is it me? Am I alone in this dilemma? Do other women truly have it all? (Swiss & Walker, 1993) According to Lu & Devenish, the mainstream social suggestion of the ideal solution of "Having it All" and construction of the related ideal type of "the *Third Type* Woman" camouflages oppression of women behind a "façade of emancipation" presenting an interesting case of what we may identify as "insidious oppression" (Lu & Devenish, 2005, p.152). It reveals the contestation, the dilemma of keeping the balance between work identity and family identity which clearly hits a sensitive nerve among this generation of working women (Swiss & Walker, 1993). Out of curiosity concerning the ideological contestation underlying *the Third Sex* and, of course, out of my personal ongoing experience seeking illumination for these questions and seeking my own self identity as a woman in China, I targeted gender and language as my PhD research topic area.

According to Wodak, the topic or field of gender and language is "alive and well" with more and more new journals, new books, conferences and discussion forums in recent years (Wodak, 2008, p. 193). It has been investigated through "an increasing range and diversity of

theoretical and methodological" perspectives (Sunderland & Litosseliti, 2008, p. 1). Scholarship on women and language has addressed two main topics: (1) how women (and men) speak (and write); and (2) how they (and other gender-related topics) are spoken of. In each case, as feminists have argued, some kind of linguistic sexism is at work (Wodak, 1997; McConnell-Ginet, 1998; Sun, 1998). In my case, the second topic is the area I have selected as I intend to explore women's identity construction in China as revealed through media discourse.

Since the Fourth World Conference of Women (FWCW) held in Beijing in 1995, women's issues have drawn ever-increasing attention. One of the twelve critical areas of concern set by 北京行动纲领 *Beijing xingdong gangling*, *Beijing Platform for Action*[1] is "Women and Media", and its two consequent strategic objectives are to promote women's ability regarding participation and decision-making in the media industry and to advocate comprehensive and non-stereotypical presentation of women's identity in the media (UNESCO, 1995). Van Zoonen argues that not only do news media claim for themselves a somewhat unambiguous relationship with "truth" and "the world out there", but also people tend to rely on, and believe in, the capacity of news media to present them with a true picture of reality (van Zoonen, 1994). However, as Dyer states, various groups such as blacks, women and gays in particular, find themselves stereotyped in the mass media in addition to their positioning in everyday speech (Dyer, 1993). According to Lippmann, the role of stereotypes is "to make visible the invisible, so that there is no danger of it creeping up on us unawares; and to make fast, firm and separate what is in reality fluid and much closer to the norm than the dominant value system cares to admit" (Lippmann, 1956, p. 96). The label of *The Third Sex* applied to a female PhD student is one such example of stereotypical production through media.

There are two ways in which stereotypical impressions are typically formed – direct and indirect – where representation in mass media is one important way of indirectly forming stereotypes in people's consciousness about certain social groups and their understandings (Lin, 2008). According to Lin, with their increasing role in representing people's work and life experiences, media provide an important platform for cultural communication of a mainstream value system and social norms; yet media selectively chooses what to present, and either explicitly or implicitly replicate stereotypical gender identities such as "男主外，女主内 *nan zhu wai, nü zhu nei,* men are in charge of outside the home, women are in charge of

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[1] The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action is an international declaration of women's rights set up at the UN's landmark Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995. It covers 12 key critical matters of concern and areas for action including women and poverty, violence against women and access to power and decision-making.

inside the home". The long term subconscious instillation of this biased gender identity and relationship brings about a collective unconsciousness among audiences based on the traditional ideology, which reflects exactly de Beauvoir's claims when she writes that "One is not born, but rather becomes, woman" (Beauvoir, 1949).

Further, Bell provides solid underpinning for media study being relevant to my context – it can tell us "a great deal about social meanings and stereotypes projected through language and communication", and how these "reflect and influence the formation and expression of culture, politics and social life" (Bell, 1998, p. 23). In order to realize the objectives of the *Beijing Platform for Action*, it is accordingly necessary and significant in the view of this thesis and elsewhere to conduct research on gender identity in media discourse in China so as to help identify stereotypical constructions and expose the ideological roots of these gender discriminations.

To explore how contemporary media, especially print media, construct femininity and gender relations and in what ways it would be appropriate and valuable to consider the nature of theoretical concepts and cultural factors at work, it is necessary to engage with the underlying ideological motivations of such social changes. As we are living through a period of fast, complex and ongoing social changes, media texts become sensitive barometers in "reflecting and stimulating more general processes of changes" (Hall, 1999). According to Lei and Sun, with the transition of "visible" media products of movies, TV, advertisements, music videos, magazines and "invisible" cultural and ideological interfusion, contemporary Chinese people apparently feel that there are radical changes in play within the mainstream social outlook and value system (2007). Lei and Sun state that people usually attribute the cause of these transformations to the general "change of society". Yet, how and what exactly changes in terms of socio-cultural factors presented and constructed in media discourse requires further scrutiny (Lei & Sun, 2007). Conflicts and tensions inevitably arise among these social ideologies and the similarity and difference among their positions and values reveal the overall framework of social recognition on gender issues (Na, 2008). According to Lin, dialogue and negotiation between each of these ideological orientations result in the complex social changes characteristic of dynamicity and "competing or conflicting interactions" (Lin, 2008, p. 27).

This thesis is principally concerned with exploring issues surrounding the place and positioning of women, attitudes to, and identities of, women as represented in selected print

media texts in China. In doing so, the thesis takes on a historical dimension through the following three periods – pre-Mao era, Mao era and post-Mao era, seeking to address, in outline, the initiatives and development, sometimes forward, sometimes backward, of issues concerning gender and gender representations in China in such media.

1.2.2 The Development of Women's Identity in China

The past century has witnessed tremendous upheaval and transformation in every aspect of Chinese culture and society, from national politics to everyday life. At all levels, some of the most obvious and remarkable of these transformations have greatly affected the development of women's identity (Guo, 1988; Tang & Huang, 1992; Brownell & Wasserstrom, 2002). In this section, and as a contextualisation of the issues addressed in the thesis, a diachronic picture of Chinese women over previous decades or centuries is provided, albeit briefly, so as to reflect the historical and ongoing contemporary process of women's identity construction and development characterized by dynamic interaction between various social forces and ideologies.

In the pre-Mao era, with age-old Confucianism emphasizing the traditional confinement of women within the domestic sphere and their submissive status to men, most women, if not all, were men/family-oriented. In contrast with feminist movements in the other parts of the world, major movements calling for gender equality and women's liberation in the early 20th century such as the May 4th Movement[2] and the socialist movement in China more generally were ironically not led by Chinese women themselves but by the opposite gender (Wang & Liu, 2004). Rather than being an independent feminist movement, the women's liberation movement in the first half of 20th century China was merely a part of the democratic revolution of the Chinese people. What Chinese women fought against in the course of their liberation was not powerful masculine hegemony in the political, economic and cultural domains, but imperialism, feudalism and bureaucratic capitalism, which were denounced as "three big mountains crushing the Chinese people" (Chang, 2010).

During the Mao-era, inspired by the socialist slogan of women "顶半边天 ding ban bian tian,

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[2] The May Fourth Movement was an anti-imperialist, cultural, and political movement growing out of student demonstrations in Beijing on May 4, 1919, which sparked national protests and marked the upsurge of Chinese nationalism, a shift towards political mobilization and away from cultural activities, and a move towards a populist base rather than intellectual elites. The term "May Fourth Movement" in a broader sense often refers to the period during 1915-1921 more often called the New Culture Movement.

Holding Up Half the Sky" in their contribution to the national construction and development as well as of their role in the socialist class revolution, Chinese women were chiefly Party (CPC)-/nation-oriented and the work identity of the "铁姑娘 *tie gu niang*, Iron Girl" model was established. Yet, the Maoist slogan created a myth of sameness between the genders. Women and men were alike – women talked like men, worked like men, and even dressed like men.

In the Post-Mao era since the late 1970s, the country underwent a major shift from class struggle to economic development. According to Shen, as a demonstration of explicit rejection of the previously "monotonous" and "masculine" construction of the *Iron Girl* model, new-Confucianism revived, and women were urged to be family-oriented once again, and femininity came back as a key standard for defining a woman's identity (Shen, 2005, p. 80). From the late 1990s, especially after the Fourth World Conference on Women (FWCW) held in Beijing in 1995, with more examples and evidence of Western cultures and literatures flooding into China against the backdrop of rapid economic development and overwhelming globalization, China underwent a dynamic, complex, and confusing transformational period. On the one hand, traces of the previous trends of nation-oriented, family-oriented ideologies of Marxism/Socialism/Nationalism and new-Confucianism still could be found to be influential in many ways. On the other hand, new thoughts of individualism, feminism from the West and consumerism from the market-oriented economy came also to exert their impact. Consequently, Chinese women are now facing the crossroads of reconstructing their gender identities and re-establishing new ideal models as the shaping process of gender identity in China will depend upon a more complex interaction of internal and external forces.

Amidst this dynamic period of shifting class divisions and clashing cultures – people, including women, may find it difficult and confusing to make a definite or clear choice in terms of identity reconstruction. The government is also trying to determine a proper direction for restoring the mainstream value system more generally for Chinese society. The slogan of "和谐社会 *he xie she hui*, Harmonious Society" is one such policy, put forward by the Party and the government in 2004. This policy has been argued as indicating a neo-conservative movement deriving from various Chinese traditions, and one which has been suspected as containing religious overtones, such as its advocacy for certain Confucian elements of society such as social, ecological, and political harmony to be maintained in a contemporary context in keeping with Western philosophies of rationalism and humanism (Chen, 2005). According to Hu, in addition to its aesthetic function, the social role of

harmony in contemporary China is "to unify the diversity" and more importantly as a means to "mediate conflicts and contestation" among various ideological positions (Hu, 2005, p. 10).

Nonetheless, the concept of the harmonious society in the present contextualization is itself contested in terms of women's identity reconstruction (see the discussion in Chapter Four and Chapter Six). On one hand, traditional ethics emphasizing homemaking and childbearing as women's primary roles is evident in the concept, as is women's family role interpreted as significant in maintaining familial harmony and, accordingly, social harmony at large. On the other hand, the concept carries implications of a dual standard for contemporary Chinese women – production achievement and reproduction fulfillment.

1.3 Research Perspectives

Given that metaphor is the way in which we realize in language how we see one world through the eyes of another, I have selected metaphor as one means of providing a thread throughout the thesis serving to connect and contrast different representations of women across significant historical moments. Here the powerful image of the key metaphorical construction of Chinese women's identity known as "*Holding up Half the Sky*" and its evolutional context of a "*Harmonious Society*" provides a valuable perspective. In short, the perspective taken by the thesis on issues of gender and their print media representation in China is essentially that of a metaphor, in that I seek to explain aspects of Chinese women's identity for example by means of key metaphors such as "*Half the Sky*", "*Iron Girl*", "*the Third Type woman*", "*Have it all*", "*Leftover Ladies*" and so on in their own terms, but also in terms of the position from which they have derived their explanatory basis and in terms of how they have been impacted by a number of historical and ongoing socio-cultural factors.

Characteristic of the thesis is its highlighting of representation – in particular that of the discursive struggle surrounding women's identity –involving discussion of the relevant discourses of China, of the West, including discussion of the discourses of particular political ideologies, seen from a social constructivist perspective (Vygotsky, 1978; Kukla, 2000). I acknowledge that the intellectual framework I am drawing on to explore these discourses and related women's issues derives in great measure from research that has been undertaken outside of China. Since academic study on gender and language issues began in the 1950s, starting with the second wave of women's movement flourishing in the 1970s, feminism has influenced gender and language work considerably (Sunderland & Litosseliti, 2008) (see

Chapter Two for details).

Following the work of Fairclough and Wodak, many proposals and assumptions concerning the relationships between language and gender involve principles of critical linguistics (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997) drawing on the qualitative paradigm within social sciences (Cicourel, 1992). In this regard, the linguistically grounded explorations in this study work to go beyond description and analysis as it seeks to integrate relevant feminist insights drawn from studies of the social construction of gender and, more generally, in taking a post-structural perspective on discourses. (Bourdieu, 1993; Gee, 2008). According to Cameron, the major post-structuralist concerns for study of language and gender are as follows, which provide important illuminations for the theoretical background of exploring Chinese women's identity in this thesis (Cameron, 2005, p. 491):

- Diversity (e.g. class, ethnicity, and their interaction with gender; multiple masculinities/femininities; differences among "women" and among "men")
- Gender being "performed" in an ongoing way, allowing for agency; performance being achieved partly through language (which is therefore constitutive); power being "done" rather than something speakers "have".
- "Local" or "contingent" explanations for gendered language patterns and the importance of specific contexts.

(See Chapter Two for more extensive discussion)

1.3.1 Research questions

Since, as I indicate above, women's studies and gender/media studies have their origin in studies undertaken outside of China, how best to integrate their theoretical bases and frameworks within China's own social reform and cultural transformation becomes a question of the utmost importance. In China, publication of both introductory and indigenous research and scholarly writings on issues surrounding relations between gender and their representation in news media mushroomed after the 1995 FWCW. Of the three themes concerning such research on women and media – women professionals in media, women audiences of media, and media discourses, it is the third theme, focusing as it does on the presentation and construction of women's identity, which so far constitutes a major research area with relatively more research outputs (Yao, 2007).

However, while many of the studies place their attention on women's images in advertisements, TV and movies, informed by communication theory, there is far less attention

paid in Chinese research on dealing with print media discourses (such as newspapers, magazines, journals) from a discourse analytical perspective. This is at the time where tensions in the ongoing re-definition of women's identity have led to both increasing diversity and to contestation in the presentation of women in media discourse. Given this context, what this thesis attempts is an exploration of how women's identity is discursively constructed in selected contrastive print media over time and how the presentation of women in Chinese news media is affected by ambivalences of political and social positionings inherent in such contested ideologies and cultures.

The main concern in this thesis has been particularly with the media portrayal of women in news, which as Byerly says, has "the power to define serious topics of public interests and to identify major players in political, economic, and social processes" (Byerly, 1999, p. 384). The inherent contestation embedded within the conflicting double standards of matching a contemporary ideal of women makes us aware of the complexity and ambiguity of news discourse. The dynamic transformation of stereotypical representations in the media also resonates with underlying complex social change amidst rapid economic development and political renovation. Accordingly, I focus on describing, interpreting and explaining (Fairclough, 1995 & 2010) how such inter-discursivity is at play within selected contrastively positioned print media texts in their (re-)construction of women's identity in present-day Chinese society, an issue which in turn invests my research project with its major motivation.

In light of the above, the following are the research questions that drive the thesis:

● How is women's identity constructed in a range of different Chinese print media discourses such as *People's Daily* (PD) and *Women of China* (WOC) at key historical moments and over time?
  In what ways is women's identity linguistically defined and constructed? How is a series of metaphorical constructions of women's identity centered on *Half the Sky,* presented and how have these constructions evolved?

● What are some of the roles played by such Chinese news media in constructing women's identity?
  To what extent have gender presentations in the Chinese news media influenced Chinese perception of themselves and their behaviors in daily life? In what way has news media strengthened or challenged gender inequality? What attitudes toward women's identity

emerge from different print media sources/types?

- What socio-cultural factors motivate the discursive construction of women's identity in the Chinese context? How can close and comparative analysis of the different print media discourses enable us to identify and investigate struggles between different ideologies and expressions of power?

- What social changes in contemporary China are reflected in selected print media discourses in China over time, and comparatively across selected print media types? How have print media constructions of women changed in response to feminist critiques and wider social transformations? How have images of the ideal woman or role models in China changed over time?

In order to achieve a grounded response to these admittedly broad questions, the following three overarching constructs are essential and invested in this study – theories to do with gender, theories to do with discourse, and theories to do with media (see Chapter Two for details).

Involving elaboration and discussion of themes, contexts and issues historically and contrastively, the thesis concerns the exploration of relationships between discourse and gender identity in the context of print media presentation, engaging interdisciplinary theoretical and methodological approaches, which in turn outline the need for discourse-based investigation involving a differentiated and mixed methodological approach to data analysis (Riazi & Candlin, 2014). Accordingly, these complex questions/themes will be explored drawing on a multi-perspectival methodological framework (Candlin & Crichton, 2011, 2013) (see Chapter Three for details). Making use of a rigorous qualitative and quantitative analysis drawing on techniques from linguistics, the discussion integrates a range of social perspectives informed by the tripartite approach to research encompassed in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), namely the search for descriptive, interpretative and explanatory adequacy (Fairclough, 1995 & 2010).

Following Wodak's argument, there are significant advantages in combining CDA and feminist critique in an overarching methodological approach (Wodak, 2008), a procedure which is adopted in the thesis. Firstly, the theoretical approach needs to be interdisciplinary because the issues to be investigated are too complex to be covered by only one traditional

discipline (Wodak, 2008, p. 196). Interdisciplinarity has always been at the core of CDA. For this thesis, techniques from linguistics, sociology, and studies of communication are all drawn upon in addressing the research themes, including metaphor analysis, membership categorization analysis, genre analysis and narrative analysis (See Chapter Three for details).

Secondly, multiple genres and public spaces need to be included in any study of social phenomena or issues arising, so as to allow for various perspectives as a discursive construction or a form of triangulation (Wodak, 2008, p. 196). For instance the desire to have fresh "hard data" on the portrayal of women, the necessity to include feminist perspectives, as well as reflection on national agendas in the orders of discourses all shape the datasets in the thesis, taking inter-textuality, inter-discursivity and re-contextualisation into account as well as a range of relevant material practices.

In order to research the above issues, the thesis has drawn on a number of datasets from 1995 to 2005 and onwards, covering those from a national newspaper (*People's Daily 人民日报 Renmin Ribao-PD),* a women's magazine (*Women of China 中国妇女 Zhongguo Funü-WOC*), and a selection of official documents such as *PD* editorials. According to Hymes, ethnographies such as narratives are "designed to provide the reader with some apprehension of the fullness and irreducibility of the 'lived stuff' from which the analyst has abstracted structure" while "grammars normally don't" (Hymes, 1996, p, 12-13). Accordingly, in order to substantiate the detailed analysis of the documentation, rather than be driven by the textualization only, selective narratives of journalists drawing on the professional experience of print media production are introduced insofar as they address issues to do with gender and women studies – always seen, however, historically and in a socio-political context. Further in order to present another augmentative perspective somewhat aside from the everyday production of print media, I also adduce evidence of how such issues have been explored now from an academic point of view, drawing especially on commentary data taken from an academic journal (*Collection of Women's Studies 妇女研究论丛 Funü Yanjiu Luncong-CWS*). In this way, it is the hope of the thesis that the inter-textual datasets drawn upon will provide a substantial, triangulated, multi-perspectival basis for this account and statement.

Thirdly, the approach needs to be context-dependent, contextualized and thus historically

oriented (Wodak, 2008, p. 196). The notion of "intertextuality" inherently implies taking synchronic and diachronic communicative events into account. Consequently, the study is contrastive in terms of different types of presentations, and engages with what has taken place since the 1995 Beijing Conference. Datasets – between 1995 and 2005 onwards, between *PD* and *WOC*, between *PD/WOC* and *CWS,* etc. – reveal social changes over time reflected in the construction of women's identity and how different media positions such as of national mainstream newspaper and women's magazine impacted on the production of media texts. In this sense, the construction of the thesis is partly temporal- 1995 to 2005 and onwards- and partly located in relation to different contrasting datasets with different perspectives.

1.3.2 Overview of thesis

To address the research questions and issues set out in the above section, the thesis is structured in the following way in eight chapters. Chapter One provides a general introductory map for the study including the motivation and research background, and proposes the research perspective and questions for the thesis statement of exploring print media construction of issues concerning women's identity in China.

Chapter Two provides some necessary historical background for the reader on the positioning of women in three periods in China's history, leading into a discussion of the researching of issues to do with gender in these different print media in the Chinese context.

Chapter Three sets out the multi-perspectival research methodology adopted, including the sampling strategy, the data collection instruments, the depiction of the data sets, and the data analysis techniques leading to the discussion of the analysis and research findings in the four chapters that follow.

Chapter Four presents a number of key features and issues relevant to the exploration of contemporary Chinese women's identity through the analysis and findings from the chosen corpus of mainstream print media sources of *PD* and *WOC* based on a comparative framework − diachronically between 1995 to 2005 and synchronically as between *PD* and *WOC*. Among the four facets of women's identity − work identity, family identity, work/family dilemma and self awareness, key metaphorical constructions of *"Half the Sky",* *"Harmonious Society"*, and *"Have it All"* are specifically focused on, as they represent

dominant mainstream ideologies either explicitly or implicitly underlying the print media reports.

Chapter Five offers a critical explanation of the presentations of *Half the Sky* and *Harmonious Society* in particular so as to discuss a number of feministically sensitive issues concerning women's identity. Data from the academic journal *CWS* are drawn upon to reveal controversial topics such as *Glass Ceiling*, *Fear of Success*, *Leftover Ladies* and *Double Standard*, providing a feminist landscape of constructing women's identity.

In Chapter Six editorial discourses drawn from *PD* and some complementary official documents are analysed to investigate the prescriptive power of the grand narratives of national discourse on women's identity and to examine the effects of intertextuality on the discursive construction of *Half the Sky* and *Harmonious Society* in relation to national political agendas.

In Chapter Seven, selected narratives from journalism practitioners are documented and analysed in order to allow for a closer and more inter-discursive examination of women's identity in terms of presentation and production. Based on a dataset consisting of two rounds of interviews with journalists and scholars in China, involving convenience sampling (Boxill, Chambers & Wint, 1997), the findings from Chapters Four, Five, and Six are set against these "insider" voices. These narratives can thus serve to provide important insights into the processes in which the newspaper reports construct specific understanding and categorization of women's identity, and how such reports may reveal under scrutiny the ideological positions of different media during moments of social transition.

Chapter Eight provides a brief summary of the thesis, addressing the research questions raised in Chapter One based on the analysis of four discussion chapters, and offers some further research directions.

Chapter Two: Contexts and Themes

2.1 Introduction

Having formulated the problem and research questions, contextualized the problem and proposed a theoretical interdisciplinary framework, and before discussing discourse in newspapers and magazines, it is necessary to review previous studies on gender and media and the theoretical perspective guiding this study. This chapter will present a critical account of the relevant literature in the following two sections.

The first section provides a historical background of the positioning of women in China, involving three progressive periods – the Pre-Mao era, the Mao era and the Post-Mao era, concluding the present construction of gender identity presented in a diversity of images and impacted by a contestation of legacy and contemporary ideologies.

The first part of the second section offers the theoretical background of researching gender in media, by looking into the two waves of the Chinese Feminist Movement as well as the impact from Western feminist movements. The significance of 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing is highlighted particularly in terms of its role in boosting women's studies in contemporary China.

The second part of the second section elucidates the key concepts in examining the discourses of gender identity in the context of media presentation through the emphasis on the dynamic construction of gender identity, the constructive power of discourse and the role of media as the central force to provide certain ways of signification or construction of social meaning.

2.2 Historical Background of Positioning Women in China

As was already discussed briefly in Chapter One Section 1.2.2, given the temporal connection of women's identity in present day China in the context of diverse ideologies and cultures, it is worthwhile to elaborate further on three phases of the positioning of women in China.

2.2.1 The Pre-Mao era (~ 1949)

In the Pre-Mao era, the predominant "history-honored" Confucius presents his classic definition of women's roles emphasizing submissiveness and faithfulness within a patriarchal system – "三从四德 *San Cong Si De*，Three Obediences and Four Virtues" – three obediences means for a woman that she should be obedient to the wishes of her father before marriage, of her husband when married, and of her son in widowhood; and the four virtues refer to morality, proper speech, modest manner and diligent work (Yan & Cao, 1994). Accordingly, to be a filial woman, dutiful wife, and a good mother became a woman's highest life value and the yardstick of moral excellence (Lin, 2000).

The Confucian concept of women's value attached considerable importance to the function of females in maintaining a harmonious status of the family and society, because the harmony of the home, as one of the indicators of social stability, was largely regulated and realized by strengthening the superior vs. inferior relationship between men and women in their respective roles – namely, the right place of a woman is within the family, with her duties limited to cooking and washing as a support to her husband. The strict regulation on women's sphere of activities and responsibilities, as Yang states, had placed Chinese women in this somewhat sacrificial position for a long period of the feudal system in Chinese history (Yang, 2009). Both Chinese and Western scholars identify Confucian thoughts on women as one of the main sources of perpetuation of patriarchal oppression over, and discrimination against women, which was institutionalized within all the structures of feudal society such as family, economy, education, culture and the political system (Yan & Cao, 1994; Pearson, 1995).

At the beginning of the 20th century, Chinese women constituted an extremely important part of the labor force, not only in textiles but in light industry as a whole (ACWF, 2003). The same was true in the UK during the First World War (1914-1918) as women took on "male" factory work (Lloyd George, 1918). Researchers point out that women's participation in the industrial labor force had significant implications for traditional concepts of the family and women's roles. On one hand, the ability to earn individual incomes by women weakened their dependence on the family, whereas on the other hand, work provided the means by which to escape a miserable marriage or to prevent an arranged marriage (Liu, 1989).

According to Andors, the interfusion of political and social change in urban China that "culminated" in the May 4th era (1917-1921), and the rising importance of an urban-based

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industrial system that depended heavily upon women labor, served to integrate the "woman question" with the larger question of economic development and social change (Andors, 1983). In fact, the beginning of Chinese women's movement emerged from the ferment of the May 4th Movement, characterized as it was by a combination of nationalism and a desire for economic development and political modernization. Many gender scholars claim that the enormous undertaking of emancipating women in twentieth-century China must be understood in this historical and social context (Guo, 1988; Liu, 1989; Tang & Huang, 1992).

The "new thought" of the May 4th Movement brought out a renewed social and political consciousness which stemmed mainly from the intellectual revolution and from the West, when intellectuals began to vigorously attack the old Confucian ideals as the most important factor getting in the way of the modernization of social conventions and introduced new social values into China through the media of the "printed word" (Croll, 1978, p. 58). Old ideas and practices were constantly contrasted with those characteristic of western styles. For instance, foreign literature enjoyed a certain prestige, and literary characters like Nora in Ibsen's *A Doll's House* became popular heroines. Since then, the actual roles of Chinese women began to deviate widely from the models of female behavior based on the Confucian value system (Li, 1999).

In addition to the Western feminist thought introduced by the May 4th Movement, when Marxist scholarship was translated into Chinese in the early 20th century, Marxist feminism was officially introduced to China and particularly to the Communist Party of China (CPC) (Yang, 2009), which made the emancipation of women one of its policy platforms from the very beginning. In the tradition of Marx and Engels, Chinese socialists focused on "the economic foundations of the oppression and exploitation of women" and linked their struggle to that "of the proletariat against the forces of capitalism" (Croll, 1978, p. 137). The structured integration of the women's movement into the wider revolutionary movement of the nation affected the future development of the women's movement. One example is the involvement of women in production, war and political activities as the chief means of improving the position of women during the years of the anti-Japanese war (1937-1945). It is to a certain extent resonant with what was happening in the First World War in the UK, when women's vital contribution to the war effort was recognized across society, with David Lloyd George, later the Prime Minister, saying in July 1915, "Without women, victory will tarry" (Egerton, 1988). The integration of women and policies from the CPC explicitly served the needs of the wider national revolution and also implicitly worked towards the redefinition of

the role and identity of women from the government's perspective (ACWF, 1981 & 1989). This theme is discussed in the following section and in more detail in later Chapter Four and Chapter Six of the thesis.

2.2.2 The Mao era (1949-1976)

It was not until the foundation of the People's Republic of China by the CPC in 1949 that thousands of years of feudal oppression and enslavement of women finally ended (Guo, 1988; Edwards, 2002). The leader of the new government, Chairman Mao, announced the birth of a new age by declaring that "the Chinese people, one quarter of the human race, have now stood up" (Mao, 1949). As one half of the population, women too were to be given every opportunity to "stand up". The new government was explicitly committed to improving the position of women in society as it adopted a number of policies and laws to redefine the roles of women and place them in a position of equal status with men in both the public and domestic sphere (Croll, 1983). In particular, the Marriage Law, implemented in May 1950, was designed to outlaw most of the extreme forms of gendered abuse of women and legally reduced the power of the males of the family and kin groups and to form a new basis for gender relations in the family (ACWF, 2003). As stated by Evans, the Law was praised as "the first indispensable step toward dismantling the system of oppressive patriarchal authority" (Evans, 1995, p.361).

According to Mao, women's direct participation in the labor force was believed to be the only road to genuine gender equality (Mao, 1964). As previously stated, the socialist government assumed a direct correlation between women's entry into social production and their power and authority of decision-making in both the domestic and public spheres (Croll, 1983; Tang & Huang, 1992). Accordingly, one of the main characteristics of revolutionary rhetoric was the practical and symbolic importance attached to the participation of women in social production outside the home, for whom it provided a precondition of liberation and a measure of independence (Honig & Hershatter, 1988; Yu, 2007). Furthermore, Yao points out that one of the major objectives of the Communist Revolution during the Mao era was to mobilize the entire population, both men and women, in the economic reconstruction of the nation (Yao, 1983). In the pursuit of "common" goals, the women's movement was once again integrated into the wider national movement. Recognized as making the *"Half the Sky"* contribution to economic development and political stability, women were encouraged to compete with men at work, and to do whatever men did.

During the Mao era in China and in particular the periods referred to as the Great Leap Forward (*大跃进 dayuejin*) (1958-1960)[3] and the Cultural Revolution (*文化大革命 wenhua dageming*) (1966-1976)[4], the depth of radical social change necessary to free women from their traditional role was dramatically illustrated.

The Great Leap Forward was the campaign undertaken by the Party (CPC), aiming to make use of China's vast population especially in large-scale rural communes, to rapidly transform China from a primarily agricultural economy of peasant farmers into a modern communist society through the process of labor-intensive agriculturalization and industrialization (Tang & Huang, 1992). In order to utilize the abilities and talents of one-half the population of the country to speed up national development, there was a huge expansion of women's economic roles as well as women's employment opportunities. According to Tsai, the number of women employed in 1958 soared to seven million, a ten-fold increase over 1949 (Tsai, 1960). Almost all women between the ages of 16 and 60 years were economically active in some form of employment and numerous women entered occupations which had hitherto been male preserves (Davin, 1976). As Shen points out, the new range of women's employment opportunities was "incomparable" to that of any other countries in the world (Shen, 2005, p. 79).

While women were preoccupied with productive labor for the country, as an attempt to reduce the traditional domestic responsibilities of women, the government intended to subsidize communes – small community and service facilities – so as to share in the responsibility for raising and caring for children, supplying and preparing food, washing and sewing and other household services. Croll notes that the most extensive effort ever to release women from the ties and responsibilities involved in maintaining the small individual household and substitute collective services occurred in China at the time of the Great Leap Forward (Croll, 1983). However, what the government did for whipping up enthusiasm for the communes was more out of the national revolutionary need, as everybody involved in communes was urged not only to meet the set targets, but to beat them, rather than out of any

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[3] The Great Leap Forward was an economic and social campaign by the Communist Party of China (CPC) from 1958 to 1961. The campaign was led by Mao Zedong and aimed to rapidly transform the country from an agrarian economy into a communist society through rapid industrialization and collectivization.

[4] The Cultural Revolution was a social-political movement that took place in the People's Republic of China from 1966 through 1976. Set into motion by Mao Zedong, then Chairman of the Communist Party of China, its stated goal was to enforce communism in the country by removing capitalist, traditional and cultural elements from Chinese society, and to impose Maoist orthodoxy within the Party.

specific feminist consideration.

The Cultural Revolution was a period of widespread social and political upheaval in China between 1966 and 1976, resulting in nation-wide chaos and economic disarray. During this period, women were encouraged to participate in the economic as well as social reconstruction of China (Tang & Huang, 1992). According to Luo & Hao, women were well represented in the powerful Political Bureau of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee, the State Council and China's parliament, and the National People's Congress (Luo & Hao, 2007). However, during the Cultural Revolution there was little attention given in the media to the position of women in society (in terms of gender difference) after the suspension of the women's movement and its magazine (*Women of China*), and most Western and Chinese observers agree that it was a period when both feminism and femininity were rejected (Guo, 1988; Liu, 1989; Croll, 1978; Honig, 2002). As pointed out by Honig and Barlow, feminism, any discussion of women's specific problems was declared "petty bourgeois" or any suggestion of a specific female identity or sexual interest was denounced for its improper attitude and unsound ideology (Honig, 2002; Barlow, 2004). According to Zhang, the overall discourse of sacrificing one's life for the revolutionary cause or for the realization of socialism is based on the rationale that a revolutionary does not own his or her body, therefore it was meaningless for women to elaborate their appearance (Zhang, 2005). In Chapter Four Section 4.5.2 there is further discussion of femininity and social change.

The disappearance of gender issues during this period of turmoil derives from the focus on class struggle. Under the prevailing influence of Marxism, class consciousness and class struggle took precedence over gender consciousness and struggle, as women of all classes were expected to "unite to forward their interests" and where the interests of all women were considered to "be one and the same" (Croll, 1983, p.122). According to Croll, it was the "relevance of class struggle to their further emancipation and the applicability of the political and economic goals of the government to the feminist goals of the women's movement" that divided the women's movement itself (Croll, 1978, p. 306). The controversy surrounds the question of whether women should primarily identify with their sex or with their class.

The Maoist period, and particularly the Cultural Revolution period , was characterized by "gender erasure" (Brownell & Wasserstrom, 2002) as both men and women wore short hair and grayish blue "Mao suits" (Yang, 1998). Every traveler's tale from this period comments on the clothing of Chinese people, and particularly on women's clothing, which struck people

as "simple, practical, unworldly, androgynous, unfeminine, or downright ugly" , and in particular women wore their hair in "the short, straight, revolutionary style" (Cusack, 1985; Moravia, 1968; Milton and Milton, 1976, as cited in Finnane, 1996, p. 121). Based on the "de-feminization of female appearance and its approximation to male standards of dress" (Evans, 1995, p. 386), women were required to be "gender neutral", while actually a gender-neutral position did not exist, and as a matter of fact existed as "a disguised male position" as pointed out by Jeanne Hong Zhang (Zhang, 2004). As a result, Mao's slogan "The times have changed, men and women are the same" was propagated and genderless images of *Iron Girls* from the revolutionary period were exulted in the display provided in newspapers, pamphlets, and posters – women steelworkers, farmers, parachutists, and political activists, robust and muscular, looking into the distance with eyes shining with revolutionary zeal or boldly performing physically demanding jobs traditionally done by men (Evans, 2002).

Throughout the whole Mao-era, principles of hard work, frugality, and collective enthusiasm for the "new China" dominated images of women in society. For women's identity construction of this era, two characteristics stand out – a permeation of nation-oriented ideology and an absence of women-based feminism.

A strong nationalist ideology penetrated people's minds through the successful construction of the model woman as being of national interest – the glorious work hero. "To do exactly as men do", women were recognized as not inferior any more, but equal to men. For instance, in the media reports on outstanding model women, only her passion and diligence, her joy and achievements of work were promoted and magnified (see Chapter Four for details). There was no pain or happiness outside work, nor was there any coverage of a woman's family role or private life. Even when there was some depiction of family life, it would be that of the woman sacrificing her family role to that of work, and her consequent feeling of guilt. Individual/family life was diminished to an inconsiderable status, as "*忘我忘家 wang wo wang jia* – to forget self, and to forget family" – was the political slogan to encourage people to fully devote themselves to national construction and development, and to serving the Party (CPC) and its people (Guo, 1988). During that period, the relationship between the individual and the nation was of an absolute nation-oriented system, characteristic of patriotism and collectivism.

With the promotion of "Anything a man can do, a woman can also do", "Women can hold up half the sky", and "equal pay for equal work", women's confidence and social status was

greatly improved (ACWF, 2003). However, the practices and relationships implied by glorious representations of the ideal woman such as *Iron Girls,* suggested principles of group stability and social order. The traditional division of labor, on the other hand, was largely untouched as women's domestic roles and responsibilities remained "unexamined" (Evans, 2002; Honig, 2002, p. 255). To be a "new type" woman in the Mao era, women should free themselves from the domestic burden to participate in work in society. Small domestic chores and individual family were subject to wider revolutionary concerns and national production. Further, the double role (rather than double burden in the present feministic perspective) of women as "建国持家 *jian guo chi jia*, to build the country and manage the household at the same time" – was glorified as being contributively heroic and patriotic (Song, 2005). Accordingly, women-oriented considerations such as the conflict between the traditional view of women "shouldering the family role" and socialist advocacy of women "walking outside home to work" was overshadowed by the urgency and priority of restoring national economic strength and maintaining political stability. On all accounts, as Dai points out, women's own discourse of self presentation and exploration was seen as unnecessary and impossible in the Mao era, owing to the "ignorance" of gender difference in the mainstream ideology and discourse (Dai, 1999).

2.2.3 The Post-Mao era (1976~)

The late 1970s saw the country undergo a major shift from class struggle to economic development and the transformation of its rigid planned economy into a rapid growing market economy. After the death of Mao, Deng Xiaoping, a prominent Chinese reformer, developed what became referred to as "socialism with Chinese characteristics" and a program of national economic reform, which opened a new era in Chinese history known as "Reform and Opening up"[5] to the outside world (ACWF, 2003). The new round of national construction starting from the late 1970s and distinct from the Mao era is usually labeled as the post-Mao era (Na, 2008). According to Croll, the post-Mao Chinese government embarked on a new and "much-heralded" phase of development characterized by "socialist modernization" (Croll, 1983, p.206).

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[5] Reform and Opening up refers to the program of economic reforms called "Socialism with Chinese characteristics" in the People's Republic of China (PRC) that were started in December 1978 by reformists within the Communist Party of China (CPC) led by Deng Xiaoping.

As part of the Four Modernizations drive[6], China was beginning to study and borrow Western technologies. Foreign experts, business people, journalists, and teachers became increasingly common in China. Expressions of Western cultures and literatures flooded into China challenging and confronting the repressive gendered discourses in the Mao-era. According to Honig & Hershatter, foreign movies and books were eagerly received by a Chinese audience that "for years had been isolated from the West" (Honig & Hershatter, 1988, p. 6).

The process of modernization and globalization made the world appear smaller and revealed that the previous closed, monotonous and standardized shell of Chinese society needed to be broken through to allow for a more open diverse environment for development (Guo, 1993). The breakthrough and the corresponding changes in the ideological, political, and social structures of the society have exerted a far-reaching influence on the lives and roles of Chinese women. Firstly, the reform period is marked by a new interest in the image and presentation of the feminine with a shift from "de-feminization" to "re-feminization", which corresponds with the attack on the "gender sameness" of the previous revolutionary years (Evans, 2002, p. 335). Women are not only seen as different from men but also are encouraged to display their feminine features. The monotonous uniformity of nation-wide image of women in blue garb with short-hair receded, and has been replaced with a greater variety of color and style (Croll, 1995). The shift is reflected in media discourse most vividly when images of beautiful and sexually appealing young urban women are displayed on covers of popular/women's magazines as dominant visual representations of women since the 1980s (detailed discussions see Chapter Four Section 4.5.2). According to Chow, Zhang & Wang, reclaiming a feminine self through dress and appearance in the 1980s, especially among the younger generation, signalled the birth of femininity discourse in post-Mao China (Chow, Zhang& Wang, 2004).

As pointed out by Evans (Evans, 2002), the symbolic and representational values of the sudden swing of interest in fashion that contextualized women in such pretty and elegant urban images clearly positions them within particular social and economic categories in the reform era, which was brought about by the material benefits of the consumer economy. So the second characteristic of the post-Mao era in China is revealed as the trend towards urbanization and the growth of consumerism. Transformed from the revolutionary

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[6] The Four Modernizations were goals first set forth by Zhou Enlai in 1963, and enacted by Deng Xiaoping from 1978, to strengthen the fields of agriculture, industry, national defense, science and technology in China. The Four Modernizations were adopted as a means of rejuvenating China's economy in 1978 following the death of Mao Zedong, and were among the defining features of Deng Xiaoping's tenure as head of the party.

representations of the Mao era, the changing images of women as enticing and beautiful underwrite the fact that the revolutionary discourse is being challenged by a "capitalist commercial culture" (Johansson, 2001, p. 103) and "the commercialization of femininity" (Hooper, 1998, p. 172). The desired and different qualities of the feminine are outwardly symbolized by choice of fashion in clothes. In addition to dressing fashionably, there is a great interest in make-up, skin care, jewellery, cosmetics and hairstyle among women who now "know how to be women" (Croll, 1995, p. 178). "小资 *xiao zi,* petty bourgeois" – a relaxing, elegant way of consuming influenced by materialism – used to be severely criticised in the Mao era, but is now a very popular lifestyle among the rising class of young white-collar workers including women (see later in Chapter Four). As was pointed out in an earlier section of this chapter, after 1949, the Mao administration enacted its principles so as to suppress consumption and reinforce production. Decades later these policies were overthrown with an unprecedented national agitation for consumption. Especially from 2001, the government started to advocate vigorously for the expansion of domestic consumption all over the country, giving rise to an increasingly overwhelming culture of consumerism in contemporary China.

On one hand, Chinese women are today to a great extent "sexually" liberated to be able to assert their feminine characteristics, whereas on the other hand, they go beyond the enhancement of physical appearance to adopt alternative life styles offering possibilities for "individual expression and experimentation" that the market economy has legitimized (Evans, 2002, p. 335). This process is related to the third characteristic of the reform era – the move from a collective to an individual focus. According to Luo and Hao, the market economy became less dependent on collective efforts and more recognition was given to the individuals as the communist system in China moved away from imposing the collective will over the individuals (2007). Topics of "self discovery", "self analysis", "quest for self" and "exploration of self value" were at the center of public discussions in the 1980s (Ma, 1999). The shifting emphasis from "大我 *da wo,* big self" to "小我 *xiao wo,* small self" symbolizes the interesting transformation of social gender discourses (see more discussions in Chapter Seven) against the backdrop of declining state control in various social sectors.

During such a period of reform, the government introduced a new and radical Family Planning Policy[7] with significant implications for the new prevailing pattern of small nuclear

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[7] Family planning policy, also known as the One-child policy, is the population control policy of the People's Republic of China (PRC). It restricts urban couples to only one child. The policy was introduced in 1978 and initially applied from 1979.

families and for women's mothering and familial roles. This policy is associated with the women's movement in that family planning would decrease the "centrality of the traditional housewife-mother role" (Andors, 1983, p. 156), and thus create more opportunities for work and study associated with women's individual development (see later discussion in Chapter Four). However, despite the continuing prevalence in the media of a positive construction of women as strong achievers in the world of public work and production, these constructions have not seriously changed "the hierarchized representations of women's attributes and duties" as wives and mothers (Evans, 2002, p. 336). This is so because since the early 1980s the "privatization" of matters associated with love and marriage contextualized descriptions of marital harmony (Chen, 2005), and the wife's self-sacrificing support of her husband was reinforced as a gender-specific requirement of the ideal of a happy marriage. After the revolutionary period and free from absolute collectivism, the concept of family becomes a focus for ordinary people again. Both factors of the market and readership urge the media to turn the focus from pure nationalistic propaganda back to people's everyday life experiences, and to portray these from a closer and more real-life perspective.

Furthermore, it is important to note in this context that in the late 1980s there was a revival of New Confucianism[8] in an attempt to restore the traditional codes of ethics applying to women and to re-emphasize the gender division of labor between the public and domestic spheres. Women's family role of caring for husband and children absent in previous revolutionary narratives is once again highlighted in media discourse and in social recognition. And being a "*贤妻良母 xian qi liang mu,* a good wife and mother" becomes indispensable and crucial to the standard of choosing an ideal wife and defining a woman's ideal identity.

While the mainstream value is still that of the model work image in the drive for economic development, the new focus on family brings to the fore the conflict between women's family role and social (work) role, which was seen earlier either as non-existent as women mostly stayed at home in the pre-Mao era or were diminished by the overwhelming priority of national revolution and construction in the Mao era. Statistics reveal that women have had to face the task of balancing the demands of work and family, undertaking between 2 and 3 hours more housework each day than men (ACWF, 1991, 2001, 2011). Meanwhile guilt is

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It was created by the Chinese government to alleviate social, economic, and environmental problems in China.

[8] New Confucianism is an intellectual movement of Confucianism that began in the early 20th century in Republican China, and further developed in post-Mao era contemporary China. It is a neo-conservative movement of various Chinese traditions and has been regarded to contain religious overtones. It advocates for certain Confucianist elements of society – such as social, ecological, and political harmony to be applied in a contemporary context.

recurrently felt by working women when they are too busy to attend to family and home because of work (see discussions in Chapter Four). Consequently dilemmas of choices and sacrifices across roles between work and family are unavoidable in women's growth and development. As Croll points out, after the gains for women from the economic reforms, it is the ideological constraints of persistent traditional norms that primarily circumscribed the role and development of contemporary career women (Croll, 1983).

Evans points out that, in the former revolutionary period, consistent with the ideological emphasis on collective efforts, discussions on gender issues had nothing to do with subjective or individual expression (Evans, 2002) and women were protected by state enforced polices of collective operations and the communist welfare system. However, in the reform era of radical social change, women are now placed within the competition of a market mechanism as are men, while their re-emphasized familial duties of housework and reproduction are seen as either direct or potential challenges to their career and individual development (Na, 2008). In face of the challenges of adjusting themselves to the transition of old and new systems and in face of the ideological confusion posed by multiple roles and standards (Wang, 2000), Chinese women have developed gradually their own discourse system of exploring self-awareness and become increasingly more proactive in constructing their identities and in women's development (see further discussion in Chapter Five), a position rather different from the state-led or Party-oriented traits in the Mao-era. The incubation of the growing autonomy and feminist awareness in the women's movement must be understood in the context of a transformational Chinese society which allows for an increasing diversity of choices beneath which contestation between various ideologies and cultures occurs.

2.2.3.1 Diversity & Contestation

Evans points out that the growth of the market, private entrepreneurship, and an increased consumer capacity seems to "find full expression in a new range of diverse possible identities for women" (Evans, 2002, p. 340). According to Na, a diversity of options substituting for monofocal models is one conspicuous characteristic of the rapidly transformational China, where multiple factors such as those of tradition and modernity, nationalization and globalization are mixed and clash one against the other (Na, 2008). Different social identity groups start to fracture in terms of contested interests and discourses as the country moves from a giant unitary institution towards a society of pluralistic cultures. Political leaders, national systems, intellectuals, ordinary citizens and women's organizations begin to reflect

on and re-construct a new relationship of women, family and liberation from their respective positions. Here various discourses on women's identity are confronted and contested against the backdrop of a more liberal social environment.

Although many clearly gendered stereotypes still inform media content today, the rigidity of such hierarchical feminine gendered identity has nevertheless begun to breakdown (Carter & Steiner, 2004). An increasingly varied array of feminine images and role models is now available, some of which offer progressive and sometimes challenging alternatives. Representations of women in the public discourses of the post-Mao period have depicted women in a very different range of subject positions. According to Evans, against the "collective-spirited, selfless and androgynous" images of the earlier discourse, the new era gave new meanings to the notion of the feminine ideal (Evans, 2002, p. 340). Women can now be variously represented as an independent busy professional identified as 女强人 *nü qiang ren,* superwoman, or a contented diligent domestic manager identified as a 贤妻良母 *xian qi liang mu,* a good wife and mother , or a new *Third-Type* "perfect" woman who manages to combine family duty with success in public life. Influenced by a rising consumerism and individualism, contemporary Chinese women, especially the younger generation, tend to prioritize their own desires in a prior place in their lives as they confidently come to know what they want and how to achieve those aspirations. Different from their mothers and grandmothers, many of the new-age women reject selfless sacrifice to family; this is what might make them identified as rebellious in traditional terms with stereotypical gender relationships being challenged and resisted.

On one hand, diversity symbolizes a positive social consequence of the opening up and reforms to gender issues and practices (Shen, 2005). However, on the other hand, hybridity represents "a compromise by the individual among the pressures and forces of multiple cultures & institutions" as pointed out by Lemke (2008, p. 33), in the process of which the ideological contestation becomes an inevitable experience for people in search of controlling their identities. For instance, despite their being independent, entrepreneurial, sociable and resolute at work as is consistently advocated by media discourse as achievements of Chinese women's development, a superwoman was for a long time, and even up to now to an extent, often despised by men for their masculine, "rude" manner at work and lack of femininity at home. The image of being a housewife is also controversial. Women with no self-awareness and dependent wholly on family and husband are usually criticized for their deviation from the feministic assertion of genuine liberation and gender equality. Nevertheless, women who

devote themselves whole-heartedly and even sacrifice their own careers to support their husbands' careers are frequently praised, because such sacrificial virtue accords with the altruism advocated in the Mao era and with the reviving new-Confucianism in the post-Mao era.

According to Andors, it is the economic development strategy that contextualizes the dialectical struggle between revolutionary roles for women and which demands a high degree of participation in the public arena and in national construction, and within a traditional culture that emphasizes subordination and domestic confinement (1983). For instance, in the 1980s and later again in the beginning of the new century, there have been suggestions in the media discourses that women should be eased out of their jobs so that men, and especially young men who are presently unemployed, can find jobs (Sun, 1994). In the process where a market economy replaces a planned economy, sudden and general rises in unemployment, especially in the urban areas, give rise to the controversial voices of "Go back home, women" and the defense of women's right to work, from various groups especially 妇联 *fu lian*, Women's Federation (see also Chapter Four Section 4.4.2.2). In this case, it is clear that the woman question remains part of the ongoing dialectic between theory and practice in China, where the transformation of women's roles will continue to be impacted by economic development.

The Cultural Revolution created ideological and institutional opportunities for a potentially more favorable context for women's progress, but also a context in which women found changes difficult and in which past influences remained powerful. According to Chen, the identity of contemporary Chinese women should be explored through the complex interaction of multiple forces such as political agenda, market economy, media transformation, persistent tradition, socialist and post-modern feminism and so on (2006). Amidst this dynamic period of shifting class divisions and clashing cultures – people, of both genders, may find it difficult and confusing to make a definite or clear choice of identity reconstruction. The government is also trying to determine a proper direction for restoring the mainstream value system for society. As was pointed out earlier in Chapter One Section 1.2.2, the slogan of "和谐社会 *he xie she hui*, Harmonious Society" is one such policy put forward by the Party and the government in 2004, which indicates a neo-conservative movement deriving from various Chinese traditions and is itself contested in terms of women's identity reconstruction (see further discussions in Chapter Four and Chapter Six).

In terms of the persistence of traditional norms in the context of ongoing social change, resultant tensions in reconciling the dual demands of work and family on women's time and energies bring about heavy burdens and tough choices for working women, as they could not compete with their male counterparts at work on an equal basis of resources (Croll, 1983) or address their family duties without a sense of constant guilt. To the *Third Type* woman trying to strike a delicate balance between the double roles in order to qualify as a contemporary perfect woman, to walk out of home and to work, this is no longer a difficulty. But the question is – how much freedom does she have in choosing a career and its development? Economic and personality independence is no longer an important issue either, but the question is – must she do everything as men do so as to achieve that?

From *Iron Girls* to a variety of contemporary new models, Chinese women's identities have experienced a series of historical transformations under the impact of various conflicting and interweaving ideologies such as those of the official political agenda and the individual discourse system, socialist canons and traditional ethics, gender equality and gender difference (Zhang & Liang, 2008; Na, 2008). The identity redefinition process encourages presentation in media discourse in terms of a diversified and contested nature also corresponding with an ongoing dynamic interplay between old and new concepts and values.

The next section provides some discussions of how these issues of gender, particularly in the media, have been researched in China, followed by an elaboration of key concepts regarding discourses of gender identity in the context of media presentation.

2.3 Theoretical Background of Researching Gender in Media

To address the exploration of women's identity in the context of media discourse, the theme of language and gender is at the core of the theoretical background for this study. Academic investigations on gender and language began in the 1950s in the West (Shen, 2005). As van Zoonen argues in her book, "the women's movement is not only engaged in a material struggle about equal rights and opportunities for women, but also in a symbolic conflict about definitions of femininity" (van Zoonen, 1994, p. 12). Influenced by these feminist thoughts, linguists started to interpret gender-related asymmetries in the field of language systems and language use as expressions of the linguistic discrimination of women and forged links between these directly to issues of social discrimination (Wodak, 1997).

In China, the study of gender and language did not start until the 1980s, and is still in its early stages, however it has seen a rapid development (Shen, 2005, p. 258). It is acknowledged that the influence of Western research has had a massive effect as a kind of "stimulus" and model for studies on gender and feminism in China. In China there are parallels of practices and theories with the West, but, of course, these Western ideas on gender and feminism are reformulated, rearticulated and re-contextualized in Chinese terms. Moreover, one of the powerful forces behind that recontextualisation is of course the political agenda, and socio-political context within China itself. In China one cannot divorce issues of discussions of feminism and gender from the position of the Party (CPC) nor from key figures in the Party. Whereas in the West that direct connection, between the political ideology of the party and feminism, was not so strong. This becomes the motivation for seeing gender and feminism not just through Chinese eyes, but through Chinese socio-political eyes in this study.

2.3.1 Women's Studies in China

Feminism as a political ideological movement is closely related to social movements in the fight for rights such as suffrage, equal right of education, equal pay for equal work and so on, throughout history. These movements form the historical foundation and theoretical background for feminist thoughts. Feminism is not easy to define because it includes a variety of perspectives and ideas. There are, however, certain common assumptions within feminism. Feminists believe that women's experiences, concerns, and ideas are as valuable as those of men and should be treated with equal seriousness and respect. Feminist theorists aim to understand the origins and continuing nature of women's devaluation in society. Feminist scholarship treats gender, sexuality and the experience of women as a primary category of societal organization and focuses on the construction of gender roles in society and how it holds certain power establishments in place (Anderson, 1993; Hennessy, 1993; Steeves 1987).

Whilst the interest of Chinese researchers and scholars on gender and feminism may not have as lengthy a tradition as in the West, nonetheless there are signals in the intellectual history of China and socialist history of China in the 20th century, that issues of feminism and gender have been articulated from a Chinese perspective. According to Yao, owing to its unique historical and socio-cultural background, the emergence and development of women's studies in China presents a rather different picture from that of Western countries (Yao, 2007). Firstly, in the West, feminist practices and theoretical challenges of tradition come from the group consciousness of women themselves (Chen, 2006), whereas in China, the first call for

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women's liberation came from a group of men heavily influenced by Western ideologies –
bourgeois reformers in the late 19th century, who initiated Chinese women's liberation
movement through campaigns of "*禁缠足 jin chan zu*, Ban to the foot-binding" and "*兴女学
xing nü xue*, Support women's school" (Jie, 2008, p. 103). Secondly, as early as the feminist
emergence itself in China, women's liberation is characterized by the submission of women's
own development to the nation's liberation and the movements that followed were mostly
characterized by top-down liberation initiatives led by the Party and the nation, and
subsequently integrated in the wider construction of national revolutions and social ethics
(see earlier sections 2.2.1 and 2.2.2). From the beginning, the theoretical foundation of
women's studies in socialist China has been grounded in the historical interplay between
Marxism and feminism in a changing socio-political context over time.

We may discern two waves of feminist study in China. The first can be dated back to the May
4th Movement of the May Fourth Era in the early 20th Century, with the introduction of
various Western ideologies and practices. The second and current wave of women's studies
started around the mid-1980s in association with the emerging urban-oriented women's
movement. With a more diversified economy and a more liberal political, social and
intellectual climate, this movement was regarded as a direct response to the old and new
problems confronted by women in light of the economic reforms. In particular, the Fourth
World Conference of Women held in Beijing in 1995 was seen as a very important landmark
in the current wave – a catalytic moment which brought essentially a Chinese position and a
Western position together and the issues of integration and confrontation of two positions
more to the forefront.

2.3.1.1 The First Wave of the Chinese Feminist Movement

Before the first wave of feminism, China was "innocent" of any feministic theory or practice.
As was suggested earlier, in the long history of the feudal system in China, Confucian ethics
of "*男尊女卑 nan zun nü bei*, Women are Inferior to Men" were widely acknowledged as the
natural law (Yang, 2004). Throughout thousands of years' of feudal practice, women were
placed in a subordinate passive status with no independent personality. Under such socio-
cultural circumstances, it is rather difficult for feminist thoughts to burgeon based on the
philosophical legacy itself. In fact, the first seed of feminism came with the "wind and rain"
from Europe and America in the New Cultural Movement of the May Fourth Era (1917-
1921).

The introduction of Western ideologies, including those of Marxism, socialism, feminism, and anarchism, provided a stimulus for cultural fermentation as well as underpinning the rise of first-wave feminist discussions in contemporary China (Chow, Zhang &Wang, 2004). The anti-imperialist, anti-Confucian, nationalist, and intellectual movement aimed at rescuing and regenerating the nation made women's issues one of the central debates for both public and scholarly discourse. As China became aware of the inequality-patriarchy perspective on gender and feminism that had already taken place in the West (Brownell & Wasserstrom, 2002), the problems inherent in the traditional concepts of women's place in Chinese society came to the fore as part of a critical evaluation of the family as "a pillar of the old oppressive social order" (Andors, 1983, p. 58). The core concept of Western feminism – that of gender equality – was formally introduced and "*争女权 zheng nü quan*, Fighting for women's rights" became an iconic slogan of women's liberation in the May Fourth Era.

Lin points out that in a direct response to the slogans of "Fighting for women's rights" and "*个性解放 ge xing jie fang*, Liberation of personality" in the movement, there were quite a number of new women's images appearing in literature works struggling to shake off the bonds of the feudal ideology (2008). Meanwhile the emergence of women's newspapers and journals – *女报学 nü bao xue, Women's Newspaper* issued in 1902 in Shanghai, magazine of *女子世界 nü zi shi jie, Women's World* founded in 1904 by Ding Chuwo, *北京女报 bei jing nü bao*, *Beijing Women's Newspaper* issued in 1905, *中国女报 zhong guo nü bao, Chinese Women's Newspaper* founded in 1907 by Qiu Jin – further symbolizes the awakening feminist awareness in China (Lin, 2008).

However, as pointed out by Andors, women's issues were at this time defined primarily in narrow institutional political terms because the necessity and importance for in-depth and far-reaching social reforms to support even these changes in women's roles was not well understood by most Chinese intellectuals and especially by Chinese women (Andors, 1983). Different from the first wave of Western feminism focusing on social and political power (which refers mainly to suffrage) of gender equality, as pointed out by Yao, the first wave of feminism in China had its focus on autonomy in marriage (Yao, 2007).

In the following decades, until the appearance of the second-wave feminist movement in the 1980s, feminism in China endured different historical periods of national democratic revolution, civil war, the foundation of the new country (PRC), the Cultural Revolution,

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gradually and inevitably localizing the feminist thoughts within the context of specific Chinese national development. As pointed out by some Chinese scholars, this localization process was not a natural process of integrating the socio-cultural factors in China, but an abnormal transformation of gender – neutralized or masculinized femininity – in a series of national revolutions (Yang, 2004). From the perspective of the dominant Marxist ideology, women's liberation was usually seen as a result of social mobility and an integral part of national construction rather than advancement through an independent feminist movement. In other words, women's liberation movements were mostly led by the protagonists of the national revolutions – men, and women were reformed to be the "same" as men (Wang, 1999). For instance male leaders were taken as models, and the male perspective was accordingly taken as the perspective and standard for women to follow, which to this day is still having a far-reaching impact on women's identity construction (Yao, 2007).

In this process of struggling for gender equality in the context of national construction within a masculine framework of anti-Confucian discourse (Barlow, 1994), traditional gender ideologies and an unequal social system remained hidden since male hegemony in politics, economy and culture – the real target for women's liberation from a feminist perspective – was absent from the agenda of the feminist movement during the period. Instead, the class struggle was given priority on the grounds that without the establishment of a new political and economic system there could be "no substance to women's liberation" (Croll, 1978, p. 331). Some scholars argue that, as a subordinate theme to the class struggle, women's liberation in the Mao era did not touch the essence of women's suppression of historical socio-cultural factors and consequently Chinese women's liberation was regarded as an "unfinished liberation" (Andors, 1983, p. 3; Wolf, 1985, Li, 1988). Therefore the awakening of feminist consciousness among Chinese women remained a goal for later feminist movements.

2.3.1.2 The Second Wave of the Chinese Feminist Movement

Since the period of reform and opening up in the 1980s, Chinese society has undergone tremendous changes in terms of its economic system and socio-cultural ideologies in the process of promoting a socialist market economy. According to Barlow, as a rejection of the long-term leftist state hegemony, Chinese women have started to be in favor of the traditional ideology that stresses gender differences (Barlow, 1994). Confucian rules of "*男尊女卑 nan zun nü bei,* Men as superior and women as inferior*", "*男强女弱 nan qiang nü ruo,* Strong men

and weak women", "男主女从 *nan zhu nü cong,* Men dominate and women subordinate" are intensified consciously or subconsciously in media discourses as "right" and "natural" so that women are encouraged to go back to their traditional roles (Yao, 2007).

During the transformational period, voices of "妇女回家 *fu nü hui jia*, Go back home, women" and "阶段性就业 *jie duan xing jiu ye,* Staged employment for women" occur in the public discourses from time to time. On one hand, women's issues such as the large number of laid-off women employees, the difficulty of women in re-entering the job market, difficulties experienced by female graduates in job-hunting, commodified images of women in the discourses of consumerism all come to surface and call for feminist attention. On the other hand, it is becoming evident that certain ideological constraints are inhibiting the further redefinition of the role and status of women – the existence of certain traditional norm pressures on women's family role and the ambiguities surrounding the work/family role conflict for working mothers in public discourses.

In this sense, the second and current wave of the feminist movement which began around the mid-1980s may be regarded as a new-born phase of Chinese native feminism and as a direct response to the old and new problems confronted by women in the era of reforms and opening up (Wesoky, 2002). If we accept that gender knowledge is produced in various social settings and is embedded in an ideological framework that supports existing power relationships between the two genders and the state (see later Section 2.3.3.1), contemporary Chinese women's identity must be reconstructed under the complex interaction and negotiation of multiple forces. Ideologies such as the legacy of Marxist perspective on women, reviving a new-Confucianism of gender labor division, and Western feminist thoughts of self-awareness and social gender perspective are all contested against each other in the reconstruction process.

With increasing communication opportunities in the context of globalization, the second wave of Western feminism beginning in the early 1960s and lasting through the late 1980s has greatly inspired Chinese feminists. With the media at the centre of feminist critique during the second wave movement in the West, feminists campaigned against social and cultural inequalities, which they saw as inextricably linked (Freedman, 2003). If first-wave feminism focused upon absolute rights such as suffrage, second-wave feminism led to a raised consciousness of the illegitimacy of women's secondary social status (Weatherall and Gallois, 2003). The movement encouraged women to understand aspects of their own

personal lives as deeply politicized, and reflective of a sexist structure of power. The feminist activist and author Carol Hanisch coined the slogan "The Personal is Political", which became synonymous with the second wave of feminism in the West (Echols, 1989, p. 416). Despite that the start of the second wave of women's studies in China was 20 years later than that in the West, Chinese women and scholars of women's studies have not only learned the essence of Western feminist theories and practices, but have also started to reflect on their own life experiences. According to Yao, gender equality in China is now no longer merely a political slogan as there is an increasing number of discussions of awakening women's self-awareness in the context of media discourses (Yao, 2007) (see also Chapter Seven).

The current wave of feminism in China is different from the first wave in respect of the following points. Firstly, the current feminist movement and its related research work was initiated and strongly advocated by women themselves, whereas the first wave was promoted by male political leaders and intellectuals. According to Chow, Zhang & Wang, the current feminist campaign is characterized by the "rise of women's consciousness about themselves as women, the formation of women's organizations, and the creation of new forms of activism to protect women's rights and interest and to embark on a new discourse on women" (Chow, Zhang &Wang, 2004, p. 164).

Secondly, current women's discussions and studies have resulted more from efforts by women from below than by the Party/state from above, with an emphasis on women's own identity and interests as a social group (Chow, Zhang & Wang, 2004). In the beginning, informed by a Marxist perspective on women adopted by the Party, the central concerns of women's condition and status were topics such as how women can improve their working competence, and circumstances for success in their careers, contributions of women as *Half the Sky,* all of which reflect the integration of women's problems and their liberation within the national development framework. Decades later, especially since 1995, with the introduction of Western feminist thoughts, tension has been created between the official Marxist ideology of gender and emerging indigenous feminist thinking and practice in China. As pointed out by Wodak, between ways of being in the world as women of certain types of identity and the dominant discourses of male-based public institutions, there are "multiple contextual factors and their interdependency, multiple positioning and the multiple identities women and men perform and live" (Wodak, 2008, p. 195). In this particular context of China, many scholars are exploring the ways in which Marxism interplays with feminism and new-Confucianism, juxtaposing one against the other. A series of topics from Western feminism

such as the work/family conflict for women, and awakening self awareness find an increasing resonance among Chinese women especially in the young generation.

Thirdly, the present wave of the feminist movement distinctively establishes women's studies as an academic discipline and challenges traditional knowledge about women (Chow, Zhang & Wang, 2004). The word "feminism" was firstly used in the article *A Prelude to Selection of America's Women Writers* by Zhu Hong in the journal *World Literature* in 1981 (Yao, 2007). Influenced by women's studies and practices in Hong Kong and Taiwan, many translated books, journals and articles became an important resource and background for women's studies in mainland China. In 1987, *Study of a Woman* by Honore de Balzac translated into Chinese by Fu Lei et al. was published by Hunan People's Publishing House, which introduced the concept of women's studies to Chinese academic circles for the first time. In 1988, *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies* by Margaret Mead translated by Song Jian et al. was published by Zhejiang People's Publishing House, bringing the perspective of masculinity and femininity to China. In the same year, *Development of Women's Ideology* by Du Fangqin, *Secret Sacred Fire – Social History of Sex* by Pan Suiming, *Exploration of Eve – Essays on Women's Studies* by Li Xiaojiang, *Study of Women Theories* by the Research Office of Beijing Women's Federation were regarded as the earliest research outputs of the second wave of women's studies in China (Liu & Zeng & Zhang, 2007). The prime mover in the effort of the current field of women's studies is the All-China Women's Federation (ACWF), the biggest NGO of women's organizations in China.

On one hand, after China reopened itself to the outside world and the growing economy greatly sped up academic exchanges and co-operation between Chinese scholars and their counterparts from other countries, pioneering feminist scholars felt an urgent need to find out more about Western feminism. On the other hand, in the context of China's unique history and cultural values as well as economic and political systems, Chinese scholars tried to seek the local or indigenous roots of women's studies through the processing of critically applying overseas research into the Chinese context. The journal *Collection of Women's Studies* (which is the main data source of Chapter Five in this thesis) founded in 1992, has played a significant role in propelling studies of women's theory with Chinese characteristics, promoting theoretical innovation of women's studies, and giving guidance on practices of women's development (ACWF, 2006). To develop research on women with "Chinese characteristics" and to conduct "equal dialogue" with their counterparts in the international community became the desires commonly expressed by Chinese scholars (Gao, 2000; Li,

2000; Du, 2001). As Welland points out, some Chinese scholars have already worked to pursue new research agendas concerning a profound examination of new problems faced by women in contemporary Chinese society and concerning the integration of global feminist movement into China's own social and economic development (Welland, 2006) – examples include *Eve's Exploration* (1988) and *The Way for Women – to Chinese Women in the Second Half of 20th Century* (1989) by Li Xiaojiang, *Historical and Cultural Trace of Social Gender in China* (1998) by Du Fangqing, *Rise of Women's Power* (2003) by Li Yinhe.

However, despite "feminism" becoming one of the hot terms or topics in contemporary social recognition, it still remains in a marginal non-mainstream position in the Chinese academy as a whole. As Yang argues, some persistent oppression and discrimination against women (though mostly implicitly) are legitimized through the intensification of traditional ethics in the post-Mao discourses, and many women are at a loss about their gender identity and about what women's liberation means for them in terms of feminist perspective (Yang, 2004). There is still a good deal of misunderstanding of feminism, such as regarding it as merely sex liberation, or rivaling with men, or a denial of men's roles, or a complete ignorance of what feminism is (Yao, 2007).

Since the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995, which brought together diverse feminist researches and theories, the powerful influence of Western thoughts and Western activities in respect of feminism and gender, exerted a massive pressure on China's own perspective on women. An ever-increasing attention has been drawn to women's issues and studies in Chinese society and accordingly a rapid growth and expansion of the feminist movement and more fruitful in-depth research works in the field are consequently expected.

2.3.1.2.1 The Fourth World Conference on Women (FWCW) in Beijing and its Significance

In 1995, when the Fourth World Conference on Women (FWCW) was held in Beijing, it drew participation from 189 Governments and with more than 10,000 representatives from both governments and non-governmental organizations (Yang, 2009). The Conference introduced different gender theories and ideologies to China and demonstrated practices of Western feminist movements and achievements of gender equality in various countries. As a result, unprecedented wide attention was aroused in Chinese society, especially within the

academy and among intellectual women, to reflect on and discuss women's issues. Chen points out that the Conference can be seen as a milestone in the contemporary feminist movement in China and the ensuing boost to women's studies in China is significant in adjusting policies of gender equality in the post-Mao era (Chen, 2006). In the welcome speech for the Conference on 4th Sep. 1995, the state President Jiang Zemin announced that "equality between men and women is set as a basic state policy to promote social development in China". According to Shen, the announcement of the basic state policy provides a very important direction for further enhancement of women's rights and future practice of gender equality in China (Shen, 2005, p. 83).

The preparation and the holding of the Conference inaugurated a new stage of sociological studies of women's issues in China. As one result, there has been a surge of women's studies centers in universities in China. In less than two years, from September 1993 to May 1995, 18 women's studies centers were added to the original five, with another 13 established by December 1999 (Zhao & Chen, 2011). These centers also cemented their reputation in the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) and other social research institutions. In 2001, Women's Studies were officially established as a project sponsored by the National Social Sciences Fund (ACWF, 2006). This expansion of academic interest and research potential symbolizes a shift in the pattern of development of women's studies in China from concentration in the ACWF system in the 1980s, to rapid and extensive growth in academic circles in the 1990s (Du 2000).

Of all the efforts toward discipline building at the present stage, the foundation of the Chinese Women's Research Society (CWRC) in 1999 can be interpreted as symbolizing a new phase of discipline building by women's studies in China. By 2012, there were 115 group members of women's research institutes in universities and women's organizations all over the country, 179 directors and 37 managing directors in CWRC (CWRC, 2012). The publication *Collection of Women's Studies* (CWS) was nominated as the journal of the Society (ACWF, 2006), which has become a reference-point for feminist academics dealing with women in China. CWS is singled out as one source of data for study in this thesis for a number of reasons, including its ability to maintain a readership over a long period of time, and its coverage of subjects that were otherwise "silenced" in the mainstream media.

In addition to providing a huge impetus to the current wave of the feminist movement, other significant outcomes of the 1995 Conference on developing women's research and studies in

China include, firstly, that the concept of social gender as a new perspective for the analysis of women's issues was officially introduced and has gradually been accepted by scholars in related fields (Lu, 2006). The integration of a gender perspective within the theoretical feminist framework is significant not only in terms of promoting research on women's issues but also in terms of legislation and public policy making (ACWF, 2006). Huang Qizao explicitly states that "to incorporate gender into policy making, we have to begin gender analysis before a policy, a law, a program, and a project are made" (1996:14, as cited in Chow, Zhang &Wang, 2004). In a way, the ideas and agendas of women's movements embedded in the FWCW documents have thus begun to shape official Chinese gender rhetoric and policy.

Secondly, as global feminism sheds light on China's effort in its incorporation into the transnational women's movement, women's studies in China start to show an interdisciplinary and pluralistic trend as feminism researchers try to extend their exploration to every aspect of human science and social science. Inspired by new concepts such as women's empowerment, sustainable human development and others, feminist discussions in China expanded to include new research topics such as, for example, women and media, women and environment, women and culture, women and psychology. For instance, in *Beijing Platform for Action* (1995) "woman and media" was included as one of its twelve strategic objectives, as media is expected to play a bigger role in enhancing gender equality and women's status.

In this context, this thesis is not simply about attitudes to, and identities of women in China, but rather an opportunity for looking at such attitudes and identities through the lens of history, through the lens of contrastive media and through the lens of journalist practitioners. Representations of gender in the media begin in the West and have a long history. In China, the representation of gender and women in the media is not so extensive as in the West, but in a sense moves through the same questions, however with a Chinese perspective, particularly the historical shift between the pre-Mao and Mao era through to the current era. In the following section, a review of research on gender and media in China with a brief introduction of its Western origin is provided.

2.3.2 Gender and Media Studies in China

According to Mendes and Carter, feminist and gender studies represent key fields of research within communication studies today (Menders & Carter, 2008). Media communication

research based on feminist ideas started around the 1970s in the West (Yao, 2007). Since the emergence of second wave feminism, the main site of struggle of feminism has shifted from a political movement to one of social and cultural criticism. Like other new social movements, feminist media scholars address culture as a site of misrecognition, challenging the marginalization and devaluation of women perpetuated through culture values. Mass media, as the mirror embodiment of social culture and the field where discourse is produced, plays a key role in constructing gender identity and knowledge. In this context, feminist ideas and research methods started to be introduced in China to the field of journalism and communication studies (Wu & Wang, 2006). These second-wave feminists have questioned the role of media including women's glossy magazines and romance novels in presenting and maintaining the patriarchal definitions of femininity. Later on, we may discern how the third-wave ideology starts to question and deconstruct the gender dichotomy focusing on a more post-structuralist interpretation of gender and sexuality in a contemporary context of variety and intermingledness. As Gill (2007, p. 13) says, in poststructuralist theory meaning is "never single, univocal or total," but rather is "fluid, ambiguous and contradictory: a site of ongoing conflict and contestation." Third-wave feminists believe there needs to be further changes in stereotypes of women and in the media portrayals of women as well as in the language that has been used to define women (Li, 2005). These western positions have been adopted and modified by Chinese scholars on gender and media in the current wave of feminist movement in China.

Studies on media communication were introduced to China from the West in the 1980s. However before 1995 there was little attention on women and media from journalist practitioners, and academic papers on social gender were rarely seen in key academic journals related to journalism. *Evaluation of Women's Images in Advertisements by HK Residents* by Ma Lian and Cui Qiyun published in *Journalism and Communication* in 1994 was the first research report on media and women with feminist perspective in Chinese academic journals (Lin, 2008). Since the early 1990s in China, various social changes, including economic prosperity, political democratization, and feminist movements, have been accompanied by a notable cultural trend in which feminist concerns are delivered through many media texts. Yet it was not until the Fourth World Conference on Women (FWCW) held in Beijing in 1995 that research on women and communication officially became a theme of interest in the Chinese academy (Liu & Bu & Chen, 1997).

At this conference, framed by the theoretical and analytical perspectives in the international

documents entitled *The Beijing Platform for Action* (1995) new research topics for women's studies in China were introduced, among which "women and media" was included, as one of its 12 strategic objectives for media to play a larger and more central role in enhancing women's equality and status:

> "The media have a great potential to promote the advancement of women and the equality of women and men by portraying women and men in a non-stereotypical, diverse and balanced manner, and by respecting the dignity and worth of the human person." (*Platform for Action*, 1995)

As one consequence, the study of women in the context of their representation in the mass media started to experience rapid growth in China. The Media Monitor for Women Network, a Beijing-based non-governmental organization founded in March 1996 by a group of women journalists and researchers, has its origins in the 1995 FWCW – "Encouraging the establishment of media watch groups that can monitor the media and consult with the media to ensure that women's needs and concerns are properly reflected" (*Platform for Action*, 1995). This was the first action-oriented group focused on media and gender in mainland China. The goals of the Network included rectifying the discriminating and disparaging attitude towards women as well as the promotion of gender stereotypes, so as to increase the visibility of women and gender issues in media and communications, to enable more women to access media and communications outlets in order to express their thoughts and ideas, and to improve the status generally of female journalists in media and communication agencies (Sun, 2004)

In May 2000, the symposium of "the Fifth Anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women" jointly hosted by Chinese Women's Research Society (CWRS) and United Nations Theme Group on Gender (UNTGG), organized a specific forum of "Women and Media" to reflect on *The Beijing Platform for Action* in terms of women issues in mass media (ACWF, 2006). In 2002, the Press Branch of the United Nations published the *Beijing Proclamation and Outlines of Action* officially listing "women and media" in the "Strategic Objectives and Actions". In September 2004, the Media and Gender Research Institute was set up in the Communication University of China (CUC) in Beijing. One year later, on 22nd September 2005, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) established a Chair of *Media and Gender* in the Communication University of China. According to Liu, Zeng & Zhang, the establishment of the Chair was considered to be a significant milestone in the development of gender/media studies in China (Liu, Zeng &

Zhang, 2007b).

Since 1995, there are more gender-related themes covered in media discourses with an increasingly diversified presentation. For example, topics of women's rights and women's models are reported in the mainstream official media such as *People's Daily* (PD) and CCTV. Programs of *Half the Sky* on CCTV, *Women Today* on Hebei TV, *Pretty Women* on Beijing TV etc. emerge to depict women's multi-layered identities and roles, witness women's achievements, and reveal to an extent some issues and challenges faced by contemporary Chinese women.

There are also some strong achievements in the research field of women and media. Many scholars have been promoting the related research work in an effort to increase gender sensitivity in media and society, expand the impact of a social gender perspective, and advocate for a genuine and diverse presentation of women's identity (Qu, 2007). Some representative research outputs include *Media Culture and Ideological Women – Theory and Practice* by Zhang Jinghua in 1994, *Media and Gender* by Bu Wei in 2001, *Social Gender and Media Communication* by Liu Liqun in 2004, *Media and Gender Studies – Theories and Cases* by Cao Jin in 2008. Academic discussions focus on topics such as representation of gender ideology in media, the impact of media on women's identity, career development of women professionals in media industry, operation of women's media, all contributing to the complex interactive relationship between women and media (Liu, Zeng & Zhang, 2007b).

However, as the interdisciplinary study of gender and media in China has a relatively short history and is still in its beginning stage, research output is limited in terms of both quantity and quality despite the popularity of the research. As to quantity, in the databases of China's academic papers, there are annually, especially in recent years, dozens of articles recorded dealing with the women and media, but the number compared to the overall academic framework in regard to the communication sector and sociology sector still reveals the relatively lower visibility and marginal position of the study in the academy (Chen, 2001). In regard to quality, of two aspects of studies on women and media –how women have been depicted in the media and women working for the media, the focus of many discussions on women's images in media is seen as a relatively direct and simple approach, whereas the analysis for communication processes including journalists, editors, audiences, topics and effects etc are in most cases absent (Liu & Zeng & Zhang, 2007b). In addition, many researchers employ the methodology of content analysis, illustrating changes of women's

images and identities. Studies from structural semiotics to critically investigate beneath the media texts or discourses for the hidden social myths of gender stereotypes and underlying ideologies of identity construction are seldom seen.

On one hand, in a unique historical context of national revolution and development, Chinese women were in a way passively "granted" equal rights to men through the state legislation and system, which leads to a relatively weaker self-awareness or feminist consciousness of women as a social group. Consequently their perception of and reaction to the construction of women's identity in media discourses are affected (Lin, 2008). On the other hand, as Qu pointed out, it is rather difficult to change the male-dominated discourse system of thousands of years' history within the time frame of a decade or two (Qu, 2007).

Another concern for gender and media studies in contemporary China focuses on the indigenous or innovative perspective of its theories and practices (Yao, 2007). As both social gender perspective and theory of gender and communication originated in the West, China has to deal with the borrowed concept and culture in the context of its own value system and unique historical background. Western practices of gender in the media certainly provide very good models in terms of theoretical frameworks for analysis, but owing to the difference between China and other countries regarding politics, economics and socio-cultural background, the question lies in how to reformulate particular positions on the representation of gender in the media from the West and faithfully reflect a Chinese reality. When feminist media researchers, critics, and practitioners attempt to engage constructively with media institutions, the following questions arise: What are women's issues? What is this female perspective that should be integrated across the board? (Minic, 2008) In the Chinese context, the specific circumstances of a transformational post-Mao period of reflecting on socialist gender ideology of the Mao era, returning to traditional ethics of women's roles in the pre-Mao era, and embracing a social gender perspective of Western feminist thoughts must be taken into consideration. At the juncture of transnational feminisms and globalized journalism, representations that acknowledge the particular histories, multiple and simultaneous oppressions, and complexities of women in locations and classes are needed.

2.3.3 Discourses of Gender Identity in the Context of Media Presentation

Involving themes, contexts and issues historically and comparatively, the thesis is about the exploration of discourse and gender identity in the context of media presentation, requiring

study of issues of gender in relation to discourse and in relation to media. And it is through their discourses that gender and media are interconnected. Essentially there are three macro constructs invested in this study – theories to do with gender, theories to do with discourse, and theories to do with media. The following part provides the theoretical research perspective of this thesis by bringing together these overarching constructs and themes.

2.3.3.1 Defining Gender

In order to define gender as constructed in this thesis, issues of gender/sex distinction, issues of identity, issues of stereotyping are discussed, and in particular focused on from the point of view of power, and post-structuralist theory.

Gender identity has long been understood as one's identification as a boy or a girl, a man or woman – namely, male traits such as dominant, independent, intelligent, rational, strong, active, competitive vs. female traits such as submissive, dependent, unintelligent, emotional, weak, passive, cooperative (Peterson & Runyan, 1993). However social gender theory raised by American feminists in the 1970s questions the dichotomy theory of sex, and reveals the significance of socio-cultural factors in constructing gender identity (Rubin, 1975; Mackinnon, 1987). The essence of this theory is based on the sex/gender distinction that the biological account of binary sex is challenged and the sexed body once established as a "natural" and unquestioned "common sense" is re-conceived as more culturally constructed (Shen, 2005). As Butler points out, the supposed obviousness of sex as a natural biological fact attests to how deeply its production in discourse is concealed (Butler, 1990). Since Oakley's *Sex, Gender and Society* (Oakley, 1972), gender perspective has been widely adopted in discussing stereotypical identities and roles of men and women.

According to Woodward, identities are determined by more than class, economics and lifestyle. At a deeper level, identities are also derived from nationality, ethnicity, social class, community, gender and sexuality (Woodward, 1997, p. 1). One of the most influential contemporary theories to consider the importance of social identities and their impact on language use and interaction is social identity theory (SIT) (Tajfel, 1981). According to SIT, people's sense of who they are comprises aspects deriving both from them as individuals and from their membership of social groups (Augoustinos and Walker 1995). SIT recognizes that different social groups vary in terms of the power and status that they have in society, which is a recognition that is essential to a comprehensive understanding of women and men as

social groups (Weatherall and Gallois, 2003, p. 491).

According to SIT, one of the important characteristics of group behavior associated with social identity is stereotyping. Gender stereotypes include masculinity and femininity in personality and images, as well as gender roles in labor division (Shen, 2005; Lin, 2008). In fact, it seems impossible to think about femininity and women without considering, among other things, motherhood and family life, beauty and fashion, love and romance, cooking and knitting. As pointed out by Talbot, if we view stereotypes as "ideological prescriptions for behavior", then actual individuals have to respond to the stereotypical roles expected of them (Talbot, 2003, p. 472). Many scholars point out that the traditional cultural image of father-reading-newspaper-at-breakfast and mother-busy-on-the-domestic-front and conventional patriarchal power relation of "男主外女主内 *nan zhu nei nü zhu wai*, men are in charge of outside the home, women are in charge of inside the home" are still profoundly influential in our experiences of growing up and in social standard of judging identities of two genders (Janice, 1999; Zhang & Lin, 2003). In this sense, stereotypes can be regarded as "the fortress of our tradition" (Lippman, 1956, p. 96).

According to Cameron, stereotyping involves a reductive tendency – to "stereotype someone is to interpret their behavior, personality and so on in terms of a set of common-sense attributions which are applied to whole groups" (Cameron 1988, p.8). Talbot adds that stereotypes focus obsessively on certain characteristics, real or imagined, and exaggerate them like caricatures. As a representational practice, stereotyping involves "simplification, reduction, and naturalization" (Talbot, 2003, p. 470). These stereotypes seem so natural and "given" that few question how they develop, how they are reinforced, or how they are maintained. As Richard Dyer explains,

> The establishment of normalcy (i.e. what is accepted as "normal") through social and stereotypes is one aspect of the habit of ruling groups…to attempt to fashion the whole of society according to their own world view, value system, sensibility and ideology. So right is this world view for the ruling groups that they make it appear (as it does appear to them) as "natural" and "inevitable" – and for everyone – and, in so far as they succeed, they establish their hegemony.
>
> (Dyer, 1977, p. 30)

Power is clearly a key concept and consideration in this regard as stereotypes tend to be directed at subordinate groups such as ethnic minorities and women. Gender is a "doing" which appears as a "being" and "gender reality is created through sustained social

performances" (Butler, 1999, p. 180). Butler makes it clear that gender is constructed through regimes of power and the constrictions of normative, patriarchal culture. In this sense, the representational practice of stereotyping plays an important role in hegemonic struggle by constantly replicating and reiterating traditional gender identity and ideology in an implicit way (Talbot, 2003; Yao, 2007). This is well explained in terms of a Foucaultian understanding that hegemony involves control by consent rather than by force, that is to say, power work through "normalization" of stereotypes and the "disciplinary gaze" of ruling groups (Foucault, 1977, p. 167). According to McLaren, the pervasiveness of the disciplinary gaze results in self-monitoring (McLaren, 2002). Croll also points out it is not only the attitudes of male supremacy inherited by men which seems to perpetuate the traditional structures, but women "too collude in their persistence by internalizing and perpetuating attitudes of inferiority, self-abasement and dependence" (Croll, 1978, p. 289).

Similarly, Bourdieu argues that people, individually and collectively, "internalize their position in social space" (1990, p.100), occasioned through what he calls "habitus" or socialized norms that guide behavior and thinking. Habitus is thus defined as "a system of socially learned cultural predispositions and activities that differentiate people by their lifestyles" (Lull, 2000, p. 157) and "the way society becomes deposited in persons in the form of lasting dispositions, or trained capacities and structured propensities to think, feel and act in determinant ways, which then guide them" (Wacquant, 2005, p.316, cited in Navarro, 2006, p. 16). For example, the Chinese idiom "人言可畏 *ren yan ke wei,* Fear of incurring gossip" is a reflection of the fear of people of being punished for violating certain habitus. Feminist communication scholarship argues that hierarchical gender relations (re)produce social inequalities across time and cultures (Mendes & Carter, 2008), therefore women's lives continue to be culturally defined in markedly different ways from men, which is in fact in part the result of internalized subordination by cultural habitus (Janice, 1999).

Freidan argued that women were trapped in a culture in which they learned that "correct" femininity was domesticity (Friedan, 1965, p. 30). More often than not discrimination against women in terms of labor division is instantiated through the construction of women stereotypes of a good wife/mother. As pointed out by Shen, there are usually three ways of discrimination – overt, covert and reverse discrimination (Shen, 2005, p. 48). In most countries, overt discrimination against women is legally forbidden as it usually evokes criticism and immediate correction. A more intrinsic discrimination yet in a hidden and more tortuous way is usually neglected, such as covert discrimination applying exactly the same

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standard for everyone through a disguised male perspective and standard. Reverse discrimination concerns confining women's development in a certain sphere through glorification of traditional virtues and roles of women. The invisibility of these discriminations makes it more difficult and subtler to contest against the gender stereotypes as an intrinsic part of culture or cultural habitus. However this is not to say that stereotypes pass uncontested. Actually, tensions in and over language and representation are taking place all the time and in different modes. According to Carter and Steiner, gender identities are culturally constructed, and therefore open to challenge, rather than "natural", unchangeable and inevitable (Carter & Steiner, 2004, p. 29). Whenever we talk about gender stereotypes such as good wife/mother, or beauty-mania, with a critical perspective, we are struggling against them. Yet according to Talbot, the problem is that traditional sexist stereotypes are "so resilient and so well entrenched" that repeated contestation may not undermine their "commonsensical status" (Talbot, 2003, p. 480).

Researchers have indicated that gender is ceaselessly being contested both by women trying to protest the age-old prevailing patriarchal definitions of gender and by those yearning to maintain the old and predictable dichotomies (Carilli & Campbell, 2005). Past studies have provided gender scholars with a variety of ways of understanding gender as fluid and open to change, rather than immutable and ahistorical (Mendes & Carter, 2008, p. 1706). For instance, from the perspective of social gender theory, gender is regarded as a product of everyone "doing gender" under different social and cultural conventions (Lorber, 2000), so that it allows possibility for change and reconstruction of certain identities to move toward a more reasonable or equal social structure through breaking away with traditional restricted ethics and biased labor division between genders. In poststructuralist theory the disciplinary power of discourse, prescribing and restricting identities and relationships, can always be resisted and subverted. Inspired by postmodern and post-structuralist theory, the notion of gender proposed by postmodern feminism emphasizes "the contingent and discursive nature" of the social construction of gendered subjectivities (Randall, 2010, p. 116) and concerns gender as a discursive construct subjective to continuous dynamic struggle and negotiation where all kinds of forces compete with each other (Shen, 2005), rather than as a fixed property of individuals.

2.3.3.2 Discourse on Gender

By bringing in post-structuralist theory and post-modern feminism, I am looking at discourse

from the point of view of its constitutive force in the inter-discursive construction of identity. Issues of power and hegemony and issues of ideology are also drawn to provide a comprehensive understanding of the inter-discursive nature of discourse.

Discourse is one of the most significant concepts of contemporary thinking in the humanities and social sciences as it concerns the ways language mediates our interactions with each other and with the social, political and cultural formations of our society and therefore shapes our identities (Baker, 2006). As SIT describes, identity maintenance strategies frequently involve language (Weatherall and Gallois, 2003). Gee defines discourses as socially situated identities by specific groups or types of people through ways of "behaving, interacting, valuing, thinking, believing, speaking, and often reading and writing". In his definition, discourses are ways of being "people like us", "ways of being in the world" and "forms of life" (Gee, 2008, p. 3). According to Holmes, social identities such as gender are constructed via social meaning (feminine/masculine) signaled through stances indexed by linguistic and discourse features (Holmes, 2010).

Foucault makes a major contribution to understanding the relationship between identity and discourse with his concept of the "technologies of the self" (Foucault, 1988), which proposed the role of discourse in constructing identity as exerting influence in bringing about certain social, political and economic conditions and shaping the way we perceive the world and our own selves, in addition to describing or reflecting existing conditions (Gauntlett, 2002). Fairclough further defines the role of discourse or language as follows,

> "Language use is constitutive both in conventional ways which help to reproduce and maintain existing social identities, relations and systems of knowledge, and in creative ways which help to transform them".
>
> (Fairclough, 1995, p. 55)

The constitutive power of language is best instantiated in Foucault's term "orders of discourse" (Foucault, 1972), which ties the macro analysis of society with the micro analysis of particular social exchanges (Fairclough, 1989). According to Foucault, exercise of power and social control is in large measure realized through discourse and the use and meanings of language (Foucault, 1972). And, as he suggests, discourse does not exercise a direct, overt influence on members of a society, but rather exercises hegemonic power that causes them to conform to certain modes of thinking and behavior. In this sense, orders of discourse can be seen as one domain of potential cultural hegemony, with dominant groups struggling to assert

and maintain particular power relationships within and between them (Fairclough, 1995). Consequently the oppression of those with less power and less access to the media and the production of written records can seem "natural", "normal" or even invisible (Thomas & Wareing, 1999). In this regard, as an infinitely important influence on our lives though quite an abstract concept, power is actually demonstrated or achieved through language. This Foucaultian focus on the power effects of discourses is important in the feminist practices as feminists pay much attention to the questions of who has power and how is power produced.

The power structuring process inevitably involves ideology, defined by Fairclough as "representations of aspects of the world which can be shown to contribute to establishing, maintaining and changing social relations of power, domination and exploitation" (Fairclough, 2003, p. 9). Ideological statements are made by individuals, but ideologies are not the product of individual consciousness or intention. As Hall argues, the transformation of ideologies is a collective process and practice (Hall, 1999). Accordingly, gender ideologies of masculinity and femininity are seen as historically and culturally constructed in playing a powerful role in shaping women's lives (Philips, 2003).

The essential view of feminist studies on gender ideology is that women are not equal to men in society – women do not have the same control over their lives as men do, and they are dominated by men in their family life, in the workplace and in other social sections as well, particularly religion and politics (Philips, 2003). It is patriarchal gender ideologies and power relations – as Berger and Luckmann put it, "he who has the bigger stick has the better chance of imposing his definitions of reality" (Berger & Luckmann 1967, p. 127) and as Simone de Beauvoir concluded, "the world's representation, like the world itself, is men's work. They depict it from their own perspective and confuse it with the absolute truth" (Beauvoir, 1949) – that underlies and justifies the domination. For example, the belief that women are "naturally" more nurturing than men contributes to women having to shoulder the major burden for family care (Weatherall and Gallois, 2003).

As ideologies disappear from view into the taken-for-granted "naturalized" world, it is argued by feminists that the dominant view was one that served male interest in keeping women subordinated, without women necessarily recognizing that this was the case (Hall, 1999; Philip, 2003). In this context the use of ideology has Marxist connotations of hegemony, as it is tied to power and domination, the process by which general consent is actively sought for the interpretations of the ruling class. Gramsci's notes on hegemony provide an important

addition to such a concept of ideology:

> … " 'spontaneous' consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group; this consent is 'historically' caused by the prestige (and consequent confidence) which the dominant group enjoys because of its position and function in the world of production." (Gramsci, 1971, p. 12)

This predominance represents not only political and economic control, but also the ability of the dominant class to project its own way of seeing the world so that those who are subordinated by it accept it as "common sense" and "natural". Common sense, as suggested by Geoffrey Nowell-Smith, is "the way a subordinate class lives its subordination" (cited in Alvarado & Boyd-Barrett, 1992, p. 51). However on the other hand, Gramsci also emphasizes struggle. He noted that "common sense is not something rigid and immobile, but is continually transforming itself" (Gramsci, cited in Hall, 1982, p. 73). As Fiske puts it,

> "Consent must be constantly won and rewon, for people's material social experience constantly reminds them of the disadvantages of subordination and thus poses a threat to the dominant class...Hegemony...posits a constant contradiction between ideology and the social experience of the subordinate that makes this interface into an inevitable site of ideological struggle".
>
> (Fiske, 1992, p. 291)

How we "see" ourselves and our social relations matters, because it enters into and informs our actions and practices. As hegemony is conceptualized as a site of ideological struggle over the "common sense", ideologies working by the transformation of discourses (the disarticulation and re-articulation of ideological elements) and the transformation (the fracturing and re-composition) of subjects-for-action, become a practice of social struggle (Hall, 1999). If society is a site of struggle and the exercise of and response to power, then it is through language or discourses that such struggles are made manifest, analyzable, and to a degree, explicable. Because of Foucault's notion of practices, discourse becomes a countable noun – discourses (Cameron, 2001, p. 15) and is therefore seen as a dynamic system that is in continual flux and working on various interconnected dimensions and timescales (Cameron & Maslen, 2010). As pointed out by Kim, there are two separate realms of news media discourse, the first is "the natural or hegemonic realm" (Kim, 2008, p. 393), where certain social constructions appear as transparent descriptions of reality; they are presented as what is taken for granted via media and are unchallenged. The second realm identified by Gamson et al. is "the contested" realm in which different social groups struggle over meaning. The

complex character of hegemonic ideology is emphasized through the distinction between these two realms which is not fixed but changes throughout history; but they also acknowledge that the potential for alternative meaning is still limited within the boundary determined by dominant interests (Gamson, et al, 1991, pp. 382-383).

In short, from the perspective of post-structuralists, discourse is not a closed context-less system representing consistent and compatible values, but is rather the site of very real struggle and resistance full of ideological contradictions and tensions, which provides the possibility of negotiation and reproduction between social groups (Gee, 2008). As the French sociologist and philosopher Bourdieu puts it, discourses are "the tools of struggle between different interpretations, or meaning, of authority, of role" (Bourdieu, 1993, p.80), so around any given object or concept there are likely to be multiple ways of constructing it.

2.3.3.3 The Role of Media in Discourse

Media is seen in this thesis in terms of a primary site of discourse and a site of contestations in relation to ideology as well as political agendas. Mass media have been identified as powerful sites and propagators of discourse which represent social, political and intellectual views and attitudes, and also influence individuals, culture, social structures and political policy (Fairclough, 1995). As Gill notes, "rather than there being a pre-existing reality to the meaning of the categories masculine and feminine, the media were involved in actively producing gender" (Gill, 2007, p. 12).

Firstly, the mass media provide the means of access to much information and represent a potentially powerful force in our society. They can select what is news, who is featured in the print media and on television and radio and, most importantly for linguists, the way those stories are told, and the frameworks in which people get to appear and talk (Thomas & Wareing, 1999). The significant power of media is pointed out by Grossberg et al. as follows:

> "In a contemporary society, the media are probably the most important producers of meaning, when they make claims about the way the world is, they become powerful ideological institutions".   (Grossberg et al., 1998, p. 182)

As important social institutions, media are crucial presenters of culture, politics and social life, shaping as well as reflecting how these are formed and expressed (Bell, 1991). Gauntlett also makes this point in the introduction to *Media, Gender and Identity,*

> "Media and communications are a central element of modern life, whilst gender and
> sexuality remain at the core of how we think about our identities. With the media
> containing so many images of women and men, and messages about men, women and
> sexuality today, it is highly unlikely that these ideas would have no impact on our own
> sense of identity."   (Gauntlett, 2002, p.1)

As pointed out by some scholars, over a half century of research has identified mass media
portrayals of women as profoundly influential in shaping their self-image and self-esteem, as
well as men's and societies' views of women (Nathanson and Young, 2001; Macnamara,
2006).

Secondly, media content is never politically or ideologically "innocent", as media send
"messages" to viewers about the way things are, can be or should be (Nathanson and Young,
2001, p. 189). Because media are essentially ideological, there is always a struggle over
who/what is represented, how and who/what is excluded in media discourses (Fairclough,
1995), According to Bell, news is determined by values, and the kind of language in which
that news is told reflects and expresses those values reflecting ideologies and priorities held
in society (Bell, 1991). As Golding and Elliott suggest, media discourses provide a world-
view supportive of the interests of powerful social groupings and contributing to the
maintenance of asymmetrical power relations (Golding & Elliott, 1979).

Mass media have the opportunity to provide women with more positive depictions and
liberating role models, to help in raising awareness of gender equality among audiences and
readers. Unfortunately, there are many examples of the lack of representation of women and
of negative or stereotypical representations, whether of the national, international, or global
level (Jie, 2008). Not only do women remain ignored, but issues of importance to women's
lives continue to be ignored (Steeves, 1997). In this sense, in dealing with two key issues of
journalism – invisibility of socialization and indivisibility of power in society, mass media
become the main instruments to transmit and reflect society's dominant values of patriarchal
hegemony, and play a significant role in replicating or reinforcing these stereotypical roles of
women (Lin, 2008). Studies of media representation have been conducted to discover how
gender portrayals in media texts function to impose the dominant ideology (Grossberg &
Treichler, 1987, p. 273-280). As pointed out by Newbold et al.,

> "From very early on, feminist analysis attempts to uncover the constructed messages
> behind the representations of women in the media, attributing to these images a crucial

role in the perception of real life women and thus maintaining of a social status quo". (Newbold et al., 2002, p. 269)

Thirdly, if the media are powerful as a site for producing and maintaining dominant discourses, they can also be a possible site for change (Thomas & Wareing, 1999). According to van Dijk, the dialectical relationship between media and society is reflected on one hand in that social ideologies "monitor" the everyday practices of social actors like journalists and editors, and on the other hand that ideologies are formed and changed through the everyday interaction and discourse such as in the press (van Dijk, 1998). For Fairclough,

> Social and cultural changes very often manifest themselves discursively through a redrawing of boundaries within and between orders of discourse, and I shall be showing that this is true of the media. These boundaries are also sometimes a focus of social struggle and conflict. (Fairclough, 1995, p. 132)

As to the communication of reconstruction of social and cultural values within a symbolic excess of old and new, strange and familiar, common and exotic signs, the mass media is definitely among the most powerful communicators and is consequently made one of the chief battlegrounds in the struggle over the meaning of gender identity (Nathanson and Young, 2001). According to van Zoonen, as media production is not simply a matter of reflection but entails a complex process of negotiation, processing and reconstruction, media can thus be seen as social "technologies of gender", accommodating, modifying, reconstructing and producing, disciplining and providing contradictory cultural outlooks of sexual difference (van Zoonen, 1994, p. 41). One of the most publicly discussed changes in recent years has been the move to resist discourses of male hegemony and to encourage symmetry in the representation of men and women (Zhang, 2003). As a result, the female images constructed by the media have changed over time "in response to both the feminist movement and the broader socio-economic changes" (Rhode, 1995).

According to Hall, as a powerful source of ideas about gender identity the media are one place where these ideas are articulated, worked on, transformed and elaborated (Hall, 1999). In this regard, media texts are sensitive barometers of cultural changes and social practices which manifest in their heterogeneity and contradictoriness. As Fairclough suggests, textual heterogeneity and complexity can be seen as a materialization of social and cultural contradictions and as important evidence for investigating these contradictions and their evolution (Fairclough, 1995). Media discourses are of particular interest in examining changing discursive construction of gender identity, and therefore is the primary source of

data for this thesis.

Bell & Garrett point out that media studies is very much a multidisciplinary area, and different disciplines are working within their own notions of what these terms mean (Bell & Garrett, 1998). For linguistic research on the media, the focus has always been the constitutive and discursive nature of the "discourses" in regard to ideology and power, and a close, linguistically proficient analysis of the text needs to be the foundation for all attempts to unpack the ideologies underlying the media discourses (Bell, 1998). Such an analysis shows that even simple-looking news stories are often rather more complex than we suppose. According to Philips, a sound discourse analysis allows for "empirical documentation of the production of gender ideologies, and can reveal in detail how these ideologies are grounded and ordered in discourse" (Philips, 2003, p. 272). Because the orderliness of interactions depends in part upon naturalized ideologies or common-sense, to "denaturalize" them is the objective of a discourse analysis which adopts "critical" goals. Denaturalization, according to Fairclough, involves showing how social structures determine properties of discourse, and how discourse in turn determines social structures (Fairclough, 1985). One of the purposes of this research is to broadly address the role of media in incorporating a feminist perspective within the dominant ideology in China.

When taking into account the scarcity of representations of women in the news media, it becomes quite a challenge to envision representations that are neither patriarchal nor homogenizing. In contrast to ignoring and stereotyping women, or approaching women's issues from a Westernized, global feminist perspective, a specific approach is needed to integrate the global and the local. At the juncture of transnational feminisms and globalized journalism, we need representations that acknowledge the particular socio-political histories, multiple simultaneous oppressions, varied locations, and complexities of women in different classes. The news media, may act as agents of continuing inequality and tension or work toward improved understanding and harmony between genders.

2.4 Summary

The thesis is about the ways in which issues surrounding gender and identities of people have been articulated in China over time, and in recent history. This chapter has provided the underpinning literature review which is correlated and elaborated at various later stages in the thesis.

With recent political, economic, and cultural shifts in China, its society's realities and reigning conceptions relating to gender roles, female sexuality, and the nuclear family system have changed considerably since the early 1990s in particular. Under these circumstances various feminist groups were formed, and they undertook movements to gain gender equality. While there have been contradictory positions about the ways feminism becomes part of popular culture, the trend has been toward a more liberal and independent identity for women in China. In response to popular feminism, many different social groups and organizations have been engaged in the formation of feminist discourse trying to define the meaning of this cultural phenomenon, among them the mainstream media and feminist media, which are adopted as two important data sources/perspectives in this thesis and discussed in the following chapters.

It is argued that women's position as being oppressed in patriarchal capitalism has been reproduced and maintained by the aid of ideological practice via media. Questions remain about the specific ways in which messages in media discourses are constructed, and entangled with various social conditions in China. Locating the discourses within specific socio-economic contexts provides insights into the ways that economic and political structures relates to gender discourse in at least some mainstream newspapers and women's media texts in China in recent times. Before we move on to the data discussion chapters, in the following chapter, the methodological framework of a multi-perspectival approach to the investigation of gender identity in Chinese media discourse in this thesis is provided.

Chapter Three: Methodological Framework

3.1 Introduction

Having formulated the problem and research questions, contextualized the problem and proposed a theoretical interdisciplinary framework, this chapter will focus on methodological exploration. The particular research questions in Chapter One and the conceptualization of gender, discourse and media in Chapter Two necessitate research designs in which the construction of gender as a process and a product of social interaction and power relations can be analyzed, requiring in turn an interpretative research strategy sensitive to the presence of contested orders of discourses – both in media representation as well as in terms of social/institutional interaction it foregrounds.

As stated in Chapter One, the thesis explores how women's identity is discursively constructed and how the presentation of Chinese women in print media is affected by the ambivalence inherent in contested ideologies and cultures. In addressing this theme, firstly the study draws on the tripartite approach taken by writers in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA): descriptive, interpretative and explanatory, aiming to provide a framework for systematically linking properties of discoursal interactions and texts with features of their social and cultural circumstances (Fairclough, 1999). The explicit critical commitment highlights an understanding from a specifically discoursal and linguistic perspective of how people's lives are determined and limited by the social formations in which they engage, while foregrounding the contingent nature of given practices, and the possibilities for changing them (Fairclough, 1998).

The discourses of women's identity are born partly out of a historical conceptualization of women, constructing that ideological system within which we define or structure new or complex constructs on the basis of their past experiences. Accordingly, and secondly, in this study it is of utmost importance to recognize that historicity is a crucial element of any discourse which presents a variety of interpretations to various people over various time periods. The historicity of discourses is reflective also of the naturalization of certain conceptualizations of reality into social consciousness, becoming ordinary commonsensical knowledge.

Undeniably, then, we need to take a position which is historical, but also one in the context of this thesis and its subject matter which demonstrates an awareness of the perceptions evoked by gender and feminism in China over time. As Rampton et al. point out, the contexts for communication should be investigated rather than assumed, and meaning "takes shape within specific social relations, interactional histories and institutional regimes, produced and construed by agents with expectations and repertoires that have to be grasped ethnographically" (Rampton et al., 2015, in press). There are many voices here presented in this thesis – from a contrastive exploration of media examples over time to the interview-based input from the journalists and the content and themes of authors of academic articles – suggesting a more inter-discursive and multi-perspectival way of shaping the methodological framework. The construct of Foucault's "ordre du discours" has proven to be extraordinarily productive in the interpretation and in particular the social and historical explanation of Chinese women's identity construction, especially as language in his formation is to be explored historically as well as synchronically and to serve as a means of providing evidence for shifts in human relationships within institutions (Foucault, 1972). Such a construct not only encompasses discoursal statements but the entire system of ideological positions, beliefs, values, as well as behaviors and actions, all of which are conventionalized by an accretion over time into permissible and impermissible behaviors (Fairclough, 1995).

Thirdly, considering the complex hybridity of any discursive construction of women's identity, it is obvious that no single research and methodological framework on its own can satisfactorily account for the complexities of such discursive forms. Accordingly, I am of the view that it is necessary to employ an integrated multi-perspective approach along the lines suggested by Candlin & Crichton (2011, 2013), in order to offer closer and more adequate analysis of how the discourses of Chinese women's identity as, for example, "Half the Sky", are discursively realized and exploited over time in specific socio-political and historical contexts. To do so will allow the thesis to bring to light, to whatever extent possible, those ideological contestations which exist among various conceptualizations of gender identity and their associated power struggles across social domains.

Of course a full analysis – descriptive, interpretative and explanatory – in relation to the precepts of a multi-perspectival model is simply beyond the capacity of a single thesis, as gender identity is essentially multi-contextual, making it impossible to investigate and analyze all those associated discourses generated in different contexts at different times.

What the thesis can do, however, is to lay out, as it were, the framework, demonstrating as far as it can through various perspectives the dynamic inter-discursive construction of Chinese women's identity as well as the socio-cultural, political and ideological tensions which imbue issues of gender identity within the media discourse in question. Furthermore, to guard against any total reliance on limited sets of textual resources as primary data, this research is supplemented with other data from a range of various other sources, published in contexts of the primary data used – academic articles, official documents, and interviews with journalist practitioners. However, even this catholicity would not even exhaust what a thorough-going study could include, were scope, time, and space available for and permit such a study.

This thesis is not only however a thesis involving a variety of data types, but also one which involves a mixed range of different methodological tools, working within multiple paradigms where qualitative work and quantitative work are integrated to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the object of study. Accordingly, the analytical framework being proposed will explore the discourse of Chinese women's identity in print media through five interrelated perspectives: the analyst's perspective; the semiotic resource perspective; the participants' perspective; the social/institutional perspective; and the social practice perspective (Candlin & Crichton, 2011, 2013). The following sections of the chapter will give more substance to the relevant and appropriate analytical framework chosen for the study.

3.2 Multi-method Research Approach

In terms of the relationship between language and context, Fairclough's framework for CDA (1989, 1992) is influential in linking macro- and micro-phenomena through the operations of power and ideology in any analysis of discourse. The different perspectives of the multi-perspectival model proposed by Candlin & Crichton (2011, 2013) further foreground descriptive, interpretive and explanatory modes of analysis and highlight the inter-discursive nature of research that seeks to combine these perspectives in the exploration of a particular discursive site. Entry points to the analysis will vary in relation to particular sites and their relevant focal themes (Roberts & Sarangi 2005) and to the particular research questions that are being addressed.

The task before the thesis, then, is to seek to provide adequate *descriptions* in terms of capturing and setting down as fully as may be possible how gender identity is represented semiotically in a range of modalities; to provide grounded *interpretations* of the meanings

associated by journalist practitioners and feminist scholars of these representations; and, to offer critically motivated *explanations* of what is presented, or not presented, and what may or may not be meant, in relation to those institutionalities that these constructed identities and these participants are members of, and whose *orders of discourse* their interaction orders both reflect and work to maintain (Candlin & Crichton, 2013, p. 8). Accordingly, a range of candidate methodologies is employed in this study in examining the inter-discursive relationship of these multiple perspectives.

Within an overarching multi-perspectival framework, this thesis adduces a number of datasets, and these datasets are appropriately analyzed by the following methodologies – semiotic and textual studies of salient news discourses, critical and mediated discourse analysis, metaphor analysis, membership categorization analysis, genre analysis, narrative analysis of experiences and accounts, and conceptual framing studies of identity. The main task is that the methodology chosen should suit the data. If we look at the actual textual evidence in print media, taken from a semiotic resource perspective, we are looking at in the ways which the texts are constructed, what tools we use for any corpus analytical, genre analytical and metaphor analytical approach to those data. On the other hand, the data deriving from narratives or interviews from the perspective of the journalists may be appropriately analyzed from the point of view of narrative analysis, together with that of membership categorization and metaphor analysis. The social/institutional perspective imbues the thesis throughout, taking historicity into account. Accordingly, the thesis begins by exploring a 1995 dataset at a moment of crucial and significant re-constructing of contemporary Chinese women's identity, and again a dataset from 2005 when the more diversified and dynamic process of gender identity may be evidenced.

3.2.1 Multi-perspectival framework

Identities surface when we believe our conceptualizations of the world to be representative of objective truths and realities. These conceptualizations, however, can be seen to originate from our ideological beliefs, our cultures, our socio-political experiences, and our histories (an issue taken up previously in Chapter Two). These beliefs and perceptions assume a discursive reality through relevant linguistic and semiotic actions, in particular those of powerful groups of society, which can then lead to certain consequences such as the emergence of social categories and stereotypes, as well as the reinforcement of certain model identities. The discoursal construct of *Half the Sky* as representing Chinese women's typical

identity is thus a product of social conceptualization of reality and reflexive conceptualization of women themselves. Taking *Half the Sky* as such a focal theme, the chapters in this thesis argue that women's identity can be categorized and appraised through multiple perspectives by means of the descriptive, interpretative and explanatory analysis of discursive practices in media discourses, for which Candlin and Crichton's multi-perspectival inter-discursive research agenda (see Fig. 3.1) is seen to be very useful and is adopted in this study (Candlin, 1997, 2006; Candlin & Crichton 2011, 2013; Crichton, 2003, 2010).
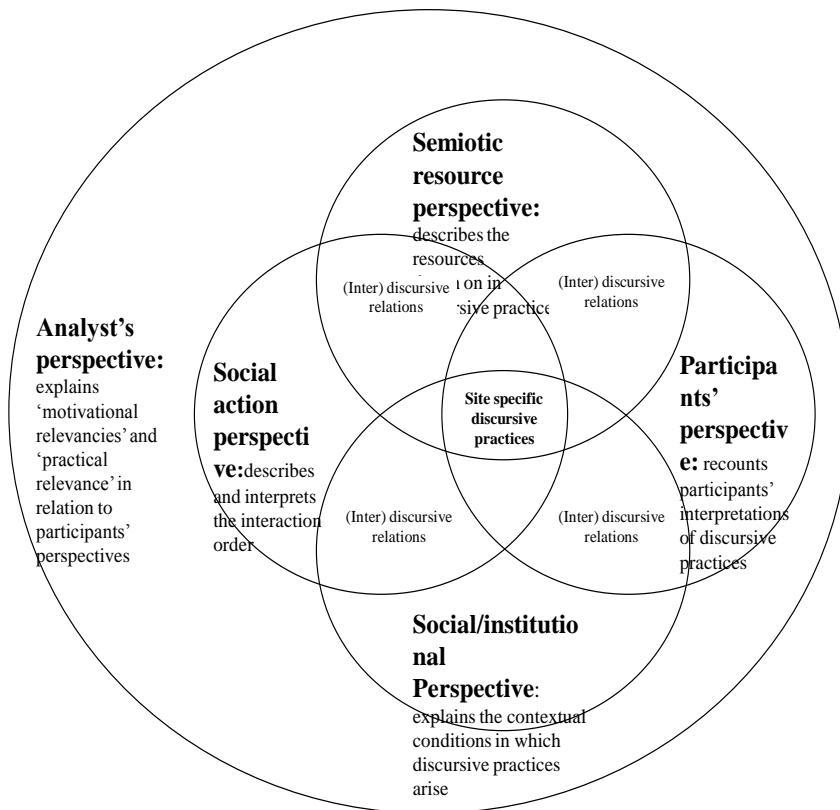
Figure 3.1 Multi-perspectival inter-discursive research agenda
(Candlin & Crichton, 2011,2013)

The diagram reflects Fairclough"s (1992) account of discursive practice as a complex interaction of the textual, the discursive, and semiotic resources and processes – as displayed by the overlaps among the four perspectives. Each of the overlapping circles represents a distinctive but mutually implicating analytical perspective on the discursive practices under scrutiny. The overlaps between them reveal the hybridity of contested boundaries and therefore highlight the inter-discursivity of research and practice (Candlin & Crichton, 2012). At the same time, according to Crichton, "perspective" evokes different ways of perceiving and representing (Crichton, 2010, p. 33). In this agenda, no one perspective is prime, and all perspectives are necessary and mutually informing (Candlin & Crichton, 2012).

As the focal theme of such research, and as exemplified by the chapters that follow, we see gender identity as based on intention and choice, socially and contextually located, best seen not as an event or state but as a process that is relational, interpersonal and inter-subjective (Bhatia, 2007). At the same time, we recognize women's identity as a cultural category inherent in, and a condition of, social systems sustained by natural actors, mediated through processes of conscious strategic communication in interaction involving journalists, editors, and readers. Accordingly, we may say that discourse of women's identity embodies diversity "in its realization and accomplishment, in terms of persons, domains and sites, and at critical moments in such sites" (Candlin & Crichton, 2012, p. 12). The potential, domain-specific relationship between women's identity and associated perspectives inform praxis at particular sites, which can be seen as analytical categories that are in a sense "lenses" which may be differently and emergently understood, invoked and interrelated in determining and activating a research agenda around women's identity for the inter- and intra-professional exploration of particular discursive realizations of gender identity in different sites of engagement. These multiple perspectives are advanced in various ways throughout the chapters of this thesis, and are taken up individually below.

3.2.1.1 Analyst's perspective

The analyst's perspective identifies the motivational relevancies (Sarangi and Candlin, 2001) of the analyst and the practical relevance (Sarangi and Roberts, 1999) of the study as emerging from collaborative engagement between the analyst and the participants (Candlin & Crichton, 2012). Motivational relevance acts "both as a constraint and a means of differentiation" in various interpretations of social life conducted by researchers of social science (Sarangi and Candlin, 2001, p. 356). As Fairclough points out, there is no such thing as a complete and definitive analysis of a text since there are always particular motivations for choosing to ask certain questions about texts and not others. There is no such thing as an "objective" analysis of a text, as it is impossible to approach a text without being "biased" by the "subjectivity" of the analyst (Fairclough, 2003). According to Crichton, the inclusion of the analyst's perspective within the ontology, acknowledges that different analysts with particular interests, research purposes, understanding of the research context, orientations to social theory and distinctive research backgrounds may operationalize the ontology in different ways and give different weightings to the perspectives (Crichton, 2010, p. 35).

In the beginning and end part of Chapter One, I have set out my own personal position – as a

Chinese woman and an analyst of the data, and the analyst's perspective in this thesis – centring on the metaphorical construction of Chinese women's identity known as "*Holding up Half the Sky*" and its evolutional contemporary context of a "*Harmonious Society*". Firstly, according to Olesen, no matter what methodological approach is adopted, researchers of women issues consciously or subconsciously put themselves in the shoes of a feminist, as they pay particular attention to the social/institutional background contributing to women issues (Olesen, 1994), which is regarded as a common characteristic of feminist researchers – having a special interest in the often neglected/ignored facets surrounding women's identity (Reinharz, 1992). Secondly, as metaphor is one way in which we see one world through the eyes of another, the perspective I am taking on feminism and gender and its media representations in China is essentially that of a metaphor, namely that I seek to explain Chinese women's identity of "*Half the Sky*" in its own terms, but also in the terms of a position from which it has derived some basis and which is impacted by a number of historical and ongoing socio-cultural factors, as was previously stated in Chapter One Section 1.3.

As Cagan writes, media products may be seen as a reflection of the changing reality of women's social position and of influence of the women's movement, presenting us with an image of the "new woman", who is more "independent, confident and assertive, finding satisfaction in the world of work and recreation, seeking excitement, adventure and fulfillment" outside the domestic sphere (1978, p. 8). The question to probe here in the Chinese context, is whether "new women" with increased purchasing power, individual achievement and success really do depart from their older, more traditional sisters, and if so, how? Accordingly, the study explores the dynamic transformation of stereotypical representations and attempts to reveal the contested ideologies underlying the transformation and intrinsic dilemma confronted by these "new women" in China.

3.2.1.2 Semiotic resource perspective

The semiotic resource perspective describes the linguistic and semiotic resources creating meaning in social action. The notion of "resources" is drawn from Fairclough (1989) who uses the term "members' resources" to refer to the shared knowledge that enables people competently to participate in interaction (Crichton, 2010, p. 38). The perspective draws on "instrumental" (Duranti and Goodwin, 1992) views of language which emphasize how it is meaningful within the contexts in which it is used, and enable the investigation of

relationships "both within and between texts and to the local and larger scale social contexts" (Crichton, 2010, p. 39).

The semiotic resource perspective in this study focuses on describing the discourses of women's identity instantiated in the Chinese print media of *People's Daily (PD)* and *Women of China (WOC)*, the former produced by a national newspaper of the government and the latter a women's magazine produced by a non-governmental organization – *All Chinese Women's Federation* (ACWF). Framed by media conceptualizations of the world, the way media structure our experiences within its constructed realities, the aim of the perspective here is to develop an account of how the print media represent and construct women's identity through discovering linguistic and semiotic patterns associated with the constructions. This is set out and explained in more detail in Chapters Four and Six.

Reflecting the shared knowledge of members, the language and semiotic resource perspective is linked to our membership of particular socio-cultural groupings, since, at least from a social psychological perspective, it is argued that "people act in terms of their group membership" (De Cremer, 2001, p. 389) and the groups that provide us with such social identities are effective and fulfill their function only when they maintain "positively-valued distinctiveness from other groups" (Tajfel, 1981, p. 259). Such semiotic reflections thus can be seen as sourced from their underpinning ideological belief systems. Powerful groups of society, for example the mass media, and political leaders – "whose jobs put them in daily contact with the creation and diffusion of social stereotypes" (Tajfel, 1981, p. 144) – often determine what is to be held as being normative behavior and what are the correct things to do in constructing one's identity.

The discourse of *Half the Sky* in *PD* is originally and essentially about constructing a model identity for Chinese women from the standpoint of the officially sanctioned media. The preferred representation of women's identities drawing on tradition and underscored by a political agenda, when they are naturalized into everyday thinking, can possibly lay the ground for sanctioning daily behaviors, creating categorizations, stereotypes, even standards for a normal identity of women. On the other hand, the discourse of *Half the Sky* in *WOC* with more of a feminist perspective provides a somewhat different (particularly taken diachronically from 1995 to 2005) representation of women's identity involving more diversified construction of female images and revealing more dynamic contestation of the re-constructing process in contemporary society. In order to analyze the linguistic and semiotic

actions of social groups and individuals that media conceptualization of reality engender, it is argued in this thesis that an integration of the analysis of metaphor and membership categorization is particularly appropriate, when supported by critical discourse analysis and genre analysis. The introduction and demonstration of the approaches is provided in later sections of this chapter.

3.2.1.3 Participants' perspective

Taking the participants' perspective meets the need to acknowledge the subjective experience of participants, so as to develop a shared understanding of the world of the people being studied (Crichton, 2010). The focus on narratives of experience taken in this thesis to operationalise the participants' perspective reflects the fact that narrative has come to be seen as a "mode par excellence for the construction of self" (Georgakopoulou and Goutscos, 2000, p. 75), reflected in the more general use of narrative both as a source of data and as a mode of research for understanding how people interpret and present themselves in authoring their own experience (Clandinin, 2006). The aim of drawing on the participants' perspective in this study is thus to seek to recover participant narrations, in terms of their perceptions of what is going on in representing women's identity in media, specifically in relation to their interpretations of the discursive practices engaged in the production of media discourses.

Narrative is viewed in this literature as a co-constructed performance of self-enacted identity in the telling (Riessman, 2008). On this argument, a narrative involves, concurrently, an interpretation of experience, an act of narrating and an enactment of self in which "identities are situated and accomplished with audience in mind" (Riessman, 2003, p. 7). Accordingly, achieving and making accountable a "mutuality of perspective" (Sarangi and Candlin, 2001, p. 382) between analyst and participants will involve the engagement with narrative on both sides. The recovery of participants' perspectives may thus reflect their narratives of experience, and the explanation of the analyst's motivational relevancies will involve an interpretation of his/her experience, an act of narrating and an enactment of self vis-a-vis his/her engagement with the world of the participants. The value of this interplay of perspectives has been captured by Riessman (2008) who advocates an approach to the documentation of narrative research that foregrounds both the analyst's and participant's perspectives as continuously "in dialogue" in very much the way required by the multi-perspectival approach (Talmy, 2011). Chapter Seven in this study draws on this approach by juxtaposing and keeping my own voice and those of the participating journalists active and in

play, with the aim of making visible and therefore accountable how the analyst's perspective has on the one hand come to align with, and on the other to transform and go beyond that of the participants.

Data for this participants' perspective was gathered through conducting interviews with some journalist practitioners from different news agencies, whose media experiences ranged from three to 22 years. Participating journalists were asked to comment on questions concerning the representation of women's identity in the news media. In this study the participants' perspective focuses on recovering journalists' perceptions of their professional practices at "moments of crisis" (Fairclough, 1992), specifically, moments when journalists are faced with a dilemma between balancing market needs against following particular political agendas. Whether such critical moments are experienced by practitioners, what they identify as such moments, and the relationship between these and the construction of gender identity and relationships advanced through *PD* and *WOC* are thus the key questions to be addressed in designing and implementing the study.

In short, analysis from a semiotic resource perspective on *PD* and *WOC*, and analysis from a social/institutional perspective on *PD* editorials and other official documents can provide important background for analyzing this participants' perspective as the interview inquiry reveals the triangulated relationships between media production and political agenda, media discourse and media production, media discourse and political agenda. The interviews were then subjected to a narrative analysis. This analysis, explained further in Chapter Seven, focuses on identifying practitioners' professional perceptions and critical moments when they are compelled to offer compromise in the dilemma of "properly" producing and representing women's identity in media discourses (Talmy, 2011). In addition, some of the personal accounts by the scholars in *CWS* analysed in Chapter Five in terms of re-construction of contemporary Chinese women's identity are also included as supplementary data to this exploration of the participants' perspective.

3.2.1.4 Social/institutional perspective

Turning to the social/institutional perspective, the point to be made here is that the "already established character" (Layder, 1993, p. 90) of social practices within institutions and broader social conditions cannot be deduced only from the semiotic resource and how participants experience and engage in these practices. Rather, any such inquiry also needs to draw on

social-theoretical resources that address how institutions and societies are themselves produced and reproduced over time; in other words, how they have "an ongoing life that is identifiable apart from specific instances of situated activity" (Layder, 1993, p. 90). In order to explain social change, it is important to examine what power relations have been laid down through history of the institutions and society more generally and to acknowledge the centrality of language in social life. Some influential social theories provide alternative ways of employing language as a significant construct in explaining contemporary society in terms of identity, power and ideology. For instance, Giddens foregrounds in his work that "the meaningful character of human action is given above all by its saturation with language" (Giddens, 1994, p. 3). And according to Foucault, a statement is described as a "function of existence" that people "manipulate, use, transform, exchange, combine, decompose and recompose" which then allows the "realization of a desire, serves or resists various interests, participates in challenge and struggle, and becomes a theme of appropriation or rivalry" (Foucault, 1989, p. 97, 118).

According to van Zoonen, gender identity may be characterized by the dynamic nature of its socio-historical and cultural specificity and its contradictory meanings (van Zoonen, 1994). To operationalize the social/institutional perspective, data selected would provide insights into how the larger social context influences the gender identities and relationships identified through the analyses of the print media of *PD* and *WOC*. These "lines of influence" are explained in Chapters Five and Six where two types of data were selected and analyzed: 1. Articles from *Collection of Women's Studies (CWS)* –a bi-monthly academic journal on women issues; 2. *PD* editorials – supplemented by a number of other official documents on women issues. As Ceulemans & Fouconnier indicate, any meaningful examination of media portrayals of women has to be based on specific social, economic, political and cultural conditions of a given country within a particular period of time (Ceulemans & Fouconnier, 1979). Accordingly, this study attempts to reveal the relationship between the media and the society in the post-Mao era by examining the media construction of Chinese women from 1995 to 2005 (and onwards), with the 1995 FWCW in Beijing as a critical starting moment.

By means of the chosen methodological tools of genre analysis (Bhatia, 2002, 2004), metaphor analysis (Cameron & Maslen, 2010; Charteris-Black, 2004, 2005).) and membership categorization analysis (Sacks, 1992; Sarangi & Candlin, 2003), the findings of the analyses were then combined with analyses from the semiotic resource perspective and the participants' perspective to explore to what extent the construction of women's identity

identified in *PD* and *WOC*, and as identified by practitioners in their professional practices, could be seen to correlate with any social/institutional factors identified through the academic discussions of *CWS* and through officially sanctioned documents, such as *PD* editorials.

3.2.1.5 Social practice perspective

The social practice perspective meets the need to investigate those features of discursive practices which are typically unnoticed by participants because they are routine and taken for granted. The focus is on interpreting how people contribute to social practices through "their participation in interaction" (Crichton, 2010, p. 39). No data was gathered specifically for the social practice perspective in this study. As Candlin and Crichton point out, there is no requirement within the multi-perspectival approach for data to be gathered reflecting each perspective, nor that each perspective should be drawn upon in the analysis. However, it is also possible for more than one perspective to be brought to bear, as if with alternative lens, on the analysis of particular data sets (Candlin and Crichton, 2012).

However, that being said, the interviews with journalists in this study can be seen as such a social interaction in terms of the social practice perspective. As Rapley notes, "Whatever analytical stance is adopted, you cannot escape from the interactional nature of interviews, that the 'data' are collaboratively produced" (2001, p. 318). Consequently narrative accounts of interviews become sites of mediation between intermental and intramental functioning, between beliefs and attitudes about the self and the circumstances of the external world (Jones & Candlin 2003, p. 201). The reason for focusing on the mediated interaction of the interview is that it illustrates how interviews are occasions for the co-construction of meaning. This is most obvious in terms of the question/answer sequences comprising the interview (Talmy, 2011). According to Richards, when talk is seen in terms of situated action, analytical attention is "directed away from what the questions assume the interviewee will pay attention to and towards what is actually being attended to" (Richards, 2011, p.109).

Holstein and Gubrium contrast the active interview of question/answer with conventional approaches by arguing that the latter privilege the *whats* of the interview, taking form in decontextualized content or thematic analyses, in which respondents' utterances are treated as independent of and unaffected by their interactional context; whereas the active interviews are interested in both the *whats* and *hows*, namely, the content and the "interactional and narrative procedures of knowledge production" (Holstein & Gubrium, 2003, p. 68). It is

important to note that by conceiving of the research interview as social practice, my methodological approach to gender identity in media discourse aligns with the critical, social practice theoretical framework of the larger study.

To sum up, the thesis takes as its perspectival entry point the analysis of textual data drawn from *PD* and *WOC* (Chapter Four). This focus on textual analysis leads to the initial foregrounding of the semiotic resource perspective. The value of drawing on the print media (*PD, WOC*) to the study of women's identity in media discourse is that they constitute the first point of contact between media and readers, and therefore enter into, and are inseparable from, the social practice of media communication. Designed to demonstrate and promote certain women model identities, the discourse instantiated by *PD* and *WOC* is a highly strategic and discursive process, the analysis of which seeks to discover evidence for, and to generate an account of these politically motivated constructions and socio-culturally modified constructions of women's identity and the relationships between them.

The second reason for generating the account of these constructions of women's identity in print media discourse is to compare them with how academics perceive the redefining process of Chinese women's identity in terms of socio-political influences and how journalist practitioners perceive it in regard to their own professional practices. Here the point being to discover whether the comparison provides evidence that the discourse implicated in the construction of women's identity in *PD* and *WOC* is also implicated in these journalists' accounts of their practices or explained in these scholarly discussions in the journal *CWS*. There is considerable overlapping and inter-discursivity among the perspectives in terms of inter-textual evidence in media discourses constructing gender identity. According to Candlin and Maley, "discourses are made internally viable by the incorporation of such *intertextual* and *interdiscursive* elements. Such evolving discourses are thus intertextual in that they manifest a plurality of text sources. However, in so far as any characteristic text evokes a particular discoursal value, in that it is associated with some institutional and social meaning, such evolving discourses are at the same time interdiscursive" (Candlin and Maley, 1997, p. 203). Hidden contestation of certain gender identities and related underlying social perceptions is therefore evidenced by inter-discursive relations between multiple perspectives instantiated in the discourses of *PD* and *WOC*, the discourses of academic arguments and practitioners' perceptions of their practices. The main reason for examining the presence of these relations is that print media of *PD*, *WOC*, scholars' discussions of *CWS*, journalist practitioners' professional practices are all subject to the same overarching socio-political

imperative and cultural pressure to present and construct, to endorse and discard, to produce and write.

3.2.2 Data Sets

Although this study is not meant to be a corpus analytical study, it does take into consideration a sizable corpus of textual data, drawn from a range of written discourses – print media texts, academic articles, and official documents. In short, the textual data for this study consists of the following discourses derived mainly from the time period of 1995 to 2005, and onwards (The translation of Chinese data was done by the researcher herself, who has been a professional translator between Chinese and English for over ten years, and all translation of data in this thesis has been proofread by both supervisors):

1) Typical character report on women from *People's Daily (PD)*, *Women of China (WOC)* – sampling through keyword search in titles of "women" and through column categories.

>   1995 *WOC,* 20 articles, 70800 words;
>   1995 *PD,* 35 articles, 48010 words;
>   2005 *WOC,* 39 articles, 110122 words;
>   2005 *PD,* 12 articles, 21528 words;
>   1995, 2005, 2008 *WOC*, 36 Cover Photos. (Chapter Four)

2) Academic articles from *Collection of Women's Studies (CWS)*, – sampling through theme-related keyword search of "family role/identity", "work role/identity", "work/family conflict" and "self identity" on the basis of relevance.

>   1995-2011, 72 articles, approx. 23000 words. (Chapter Five)

3) *PD* 8th March Editorials 1995-2012, plus President Jintao HU's speeches on 7 Mar 1999, and on 8 Mar 2010, approx. 22600 words; and some supplementary documents including relevant policies, declarations, development programs and reports. (Chapter Six)

The primary textual data utilized stems predominantly from *PD* and *WOC* since contemporarily the construct of women's identity has been re-conceptualised and re-moulded most "authoritatively" by the national media and most "convincingly" by the women's media, which strongly endorse women's development. Founded in 1946, *People's Daily (PD)* is the biggest news daily in China, which has witnessed different crucial historical moments of the

nation's development and social transformation including the women's movement. With a stable annual circulation of 2.3 million, it is acknowledged by UNESCO as one of the top ten most authoritative, influential newspapers in the world (Lin, 2008). As one of the most important sites in which and through which the national agenda is articulated and disseminated, national newspapers play particularly important roles in creating identities such as gender identities from a social/institutional perspective. Founded in 1939, *Women of China (WOC)* is a women's magazine with the longest history in China, and was awarded "National Magazine of the Year" in 2003 and 2005. *WOC* has reinvented itself since 2003 in accordance with the market orientation, with a whole new image of color-printing and new popular columns, such as "Person on the Cover" featuring diverse women's identities from various professions especially celebrities from the entertainment and sports fields, as well as successful business women, and "Life" covering a variety of areas of cosmetics/health/consumer advice and psychology. In 2007 the magazine hit a circulation of 0.8 million. The reason to include a women's magazine in the data set is that according to Ferguson, a women's magazine is itself a social system of shaping women's perceptions about themselves and meanwhile forming social perceptions on women (Ferguson, 1983). In other words, the women's magazine is seen as a kind of "women's religion or culture", not only reflecting what is the proper role model for women, but also providing the definition and socialisation process for women's role.

The timeframe under scrutiny is a period of women's development in China since the Fourth World Conference on Women (FWCW) held in Beijing in 1995—regarded, as indicated in previous chapters, as a very important landmark in the second/current Chinese feminist wave (Tan & Liu, 2005). To aid the comparative and diachronic aspects of the study, the corpus was also divided into a number of sub-corpora, in terms of type of news articles (newspaper/magazine) and year of publication (1995/2005).

In regard to the data set in Chapter Five, founded in 1992 and providing a record of the course of Chinese Women's studies and a witness to the process of the Chinese women's movement, *Collection of Women's Studies (CWS)* was nominated as the journal of the Chinese Women's Research Society in 2001. It has been named National Chinese core journal for 14 consecutive years since 1996, and a Chinese Social Science Citation Index source journal （CSSCI） since 1999. The journal's distinct style, academic quality, innovative research methods and insight promote its influence within academic circles and among women. As to the data source in Chapter Six, *PD* editorial is regarded as the banner of

the Party (CPC) in directly expressing the voice of the government, which provides an important window to observe and understand what is happening in socialist China from an official perspective (Yao, 2007).

The textual data is supported by an analysis of interview data consisting of 11 interviews, and the analysis is used to provide a more multi-perspectival analysis of professional and participant's views of constructing women's identity in media:

4) Interviews, two rounds (taken in Dec. 2008- Mar. 2009 and in May- Aug. 2012) – through convenience sampling, 11 participants (see Table 3.1), approx. 36000 words (transcription into Chinese). (Chapter Seven)

Table 3.1 List of Interview Participants

List of Interview Participants
First Round of interviews
- conducted in Dec. 2008 – Mar. 2009.3; 5 interviews; 40-60 min/per person; f-female, m-male.
C, f – A/Professor in School of Journalism, Fudan University, Shanghai, China
H, m – A/Professor in School of Journalism, Fudan University, Shanghai, China
R, m – Professor in School of Sociology, Fudan University, Shanghai, China
N, f – Person-in-charge of women's federation in a medium-sized city, Jiangsu Province, China
Y, f – Editor of a daily newspaper, Shanghai, China
Second Round of Interviews
- conducted in May-Aug. 2012; 6 interviews; 60 min/per person; f-female, m-male.
D, f – Reporter & editor of a magazine (*Xin-Shang Hua Bao,* Channel Young), Shanghai, China
S, f – Editor-in-chief of a women's weekly of a newspaper *(Xin Wen Wan Bao,* Evening News), Shanghai, China
W, f – Editor of a newspaper *(Tian Tian Xin Bao*, Daily News), Shanghai, China
Wm, m – Editor of a newspaper *(Tian Tian Xin Bao,* Daily News), Shanghai, China

X, f – Editor of a magazine (*Xian Dai Jia Ting,* Modern Family), Shanghai, China

Z, f –Reporter of a radio broadcaster (*Shanghai Renming Guangbo Diantai,* Shanghai People's Radio Station)*,* Shanghai, China

Table 3.2 Interview Questions

Interview Questions

First Round of interviews

- Your research or career experiences on media/gender in China;

- Your views on the Fourth World Women's Conference in Beijing in 1995 and its impact on gender study in China;

- Your opinions of the impact of different ideologies and cultures on women presented in media discourse over the decades especially during 1995-2005;

- Your opinions of the role of the media in gender identity construction in China;

- Your views on Chinese women identity/image change over the decades esp. pre-1995 and post-1995 in social activities as well as reflected in media;

- Your understanding of present gender (in)equality both in reality and in media representation in China;

- Your suggestions for the future development of women study/media study.

Second Round of Interviews

- What do you think of the categorisations of *Iron Girl, a Good Wife/Mother, the Third Type Woman* as reported in media discourses? And what's your understanding of an ideal/typical *work identity, family identity* and *work/family conflict* in contemporary Chinese women's identity construction?

- From a journalism production perspective, what you do think of the pros and cons of *Typical Character Report?* Do editors or does government indicate any specific *policy* on the *style/ topic/ orientation* of such reports? Who are the targeted readers of the reports? How do you think readers react to such a style of report? Does your style of reporting change due to the peer pressure of fierce publishing competition among many popular media and web media in contemporary society?

- What do you think about the relationship between *women and nation* in China? Do you consider the link between women and nation a Chinese characteristic of the women's movement? E.g. in terms of women's identity construction, what do

you think of *People's Daily*, and *Women of China*, in relation to other popular media sources like women's pop magazines and websites? And the differences of *authority and authenticity* of these media sources in covering various topics and representing typical/diversified role models? What is your impression of *All China's Women's Federation (ACWF)*? Do you consider it as a *NGO* or not? Why?

- Can you identify some gender stereotypes in media communication? What's your view on these stereotypes? and give some comments. E.g. what do you think of *Superwomen*，*Leftover Ladies, the Third Sex,* and *Marrying a good husband is better than having a good job*, What positive or negative implications do they have? Do you think they connect to *social changes* in Chinese society as a whole? Do you think there is a difference between *male and female perceptions* on these stereotypes? How different might they be?

- Can you identify any gender *discriminations* in China as presented in the media? E.g. what do you think of the ideas of the *Glass Ceiling, Fear of Success, Go Back Home Debate* with regard to career women? And what do you think are the possible reasons—Administrative policies? Social ideologies? Traditional gender labour division? Work/family Conflict? For example, *Burning Candles* vs. *Keep the Balance—*which do you agree with more? – and some possible solutions?

- What *role* do you think the *media* play in reflecting/reconstructing/promoting contemporary Chinese women's identity, in terms of both *positive and negative aspects*? Do you think there is a difference between women journalists and men journalists in their reporting on women's identity? And if yes, what do you think is the reason for this? Do you agree that the increase of the percentage of *women journalist professionals* will enhance its gender perspective and improve on women's presentation in media? What might be the difficulties in genuinely improving women's presentation?

The journalist participants were drawn from a convenience sample rather than a structured sample, because of the difficulty of getting journalists in the context of press censorship in China to comment openly on those practices. And the scholar participants were also drawn from a convenience sample as most of them were from the same university I worked at. The interviews were conducted in two rounds (Interview Questions see above Table 3.2). The purpose of the first round was consultative, to give the researcher a chance to understand more clearly the key themes and concepts of women's identity in media discourse. Five interviewees in the first round consist of practitioners from journalism and scholars from gender and media studies. The questions and answers were analyzed before the second round of interviews was initiated. The second round of interviews was more in-depth and based on a list of questions generated on the basis of the analysis of the data from *PD, WOC, CWS*, and *PD* editorials. The purpose of this round of interviews was to verify the existing domains and facets of women's identity from textual data and provide how practitioners understand them on an insider level. Six interviewees in this round consist of journalist practitioners from two newspapers, two magazines and a radio broadcast.

3.2.3 Methodology Toolbox

Taken as a whole, the multi-perspectival approach I have adopted aims to provide an integrated, inter-discursively oriented framework while acknowledging the reflexivity of the research process to enable a "critical, but open, methodological stance" in order to "understand social life from inside, while striving to make sociolinguistic description and explanation socially relevant" (Sarangi & Candlin, 2001, p. 383). Any multi-dimensional or multi-perspectival thesis of this kind effectively draws upon a toolbox of methodologies. Accordingly, I have identified and drawn upon a range of inter-relatable methodologies in terms of which discourses of women's identity may be described, interpreted and explained. The tools in such a toolbox have varying scope and applicability, and may complement one another from certain perspectives. For instance, lexical grammatical analysis, or corpus based analysis, is very important for the analysis of certain syntactic structures relating to transitivity, modality and so on, which we may find useful across the board in the print material from the newspapers and magazines, the scholars' writings and in the governmental documents. But the limitation of corpus-based work is, of course, that the scan or rather the span that can be identified within the corpus is relatively narrow, especially in terms of ideological, political impacts on gender-related themes which then CDA and genre analysis

can help reveal more effectively. The narrative approach to data analysis started by Labov and Waletzky (1967) on the other hand, is a pervasive and remarkable tool in analyzing the interview as a resource; however we now know that there are considerable variations in the mediated constructs of narratives which we need to take account of by employing other kinds of tools, such as the analysis of the nexus of practice (see in particular Scollon, 2001) and membership categorization analysis (see Sacks, 1992). It's not necessarily a matter of choosing one tool for one job or one perspective. Among the modes of analysis that we choose, some of them will be particularly associated with a particular perspective, others will have the potential to be applied to, or have the power of relating to several different perspectives.

As explained previously in relation to the multi-perspectival framework, particular methods of analysis are not required by, or precluded from the multi-perspectival approach but are referenced to the analyst's perspective in designing the specific research agenda based on certain datasets. The analysis of each data set reflects the perspective from which it is viewed. The actual analyses in these methodologies will be elaborated in the following Chapters Four, Five, Six and Seven, so in this chapter, I refer forward by briefly describing and explaining the methodologies that this thesis is implementing.

3.2.3.1 Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

> *Language is not seen as a transparent medium conveying one's authentic experiences, or what really happened, but is inextricably bound up with ideology constructing subjectivity and reality.* (Gee, 2008)

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) mainly addresses issues of power and language production in society, analyzing "social interactions in a way which focuses upon their linguistic elements, which sets out to show up their generally hidden determinants in the system of social relationships, as well as hidden effects they may have upon that system" (Fairclough, 1989, p. 5). Drawing on Halliday's functional framework and Foucault's orders of discourse, Fairclough defines a "three-dimensional" framework where the aim is to map three separate forms of analysis onto one another: analysis of (spoken or written) language texts, analysis of discourse practice (how a text is constructed and interpreted, and distributed) and analysis of discursive events as instances of socio-cultural practice (Fairclough, 1995). As such, it combines a Bakhtinian (1986) theory of genre (in the analysis of discourse practice) and a Gramscian (1992) theory of hegemony (in the analysis of sociocultural

practice).

Calling the approach "critical" is a recognition that our social practice in general and our use of language in particular are "bound up with causes and effects which we may not be at all aware of under normal conditions" (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 78). According to Wodak, the CDA approach is,

"…fundamentally concerned with analyzing opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language. In other words, CDA aims to investigate critically social inequality as it is expressed, signaled, constituted, legitimized and so on by language use (or in discourse)."   (Wodak, 2001, p. 2-3)

As any CDA study is primarily concerned with institutional, political, gender and media discourses, which bear witness to relations of struggle, power and inequality, media become a particular and apposite subject of CDA analysis because of its manifestly pivotal role as a discourse-bearing institution (Bell & Garrett, 1998). Research on media discourse within the paradigm of CDA in the past decades has largely established the media as a social and discursive institution which regulates and organizes social life as well as engages in the production of social knowledge, values, and beliefs through linguistic means (van Dijk, 1993; Fairclough 1995b; Fowler, 1996). Variations of language use in the media often constitute particular representations of the world, social identities, and relations, projecting certain versions of reality depending on the media's institutional purposes, positions, and interests. In his approach to media discourse, Fairclough suggests that linguistic variations in the representational process at various levels of text production implicate and are implicated by the circulation of different discourses: "a discourse as a type of language associated with a particular representation, from a specific point of view, of a social practice" (1995a, p. 41).

Some outcomes of such ideological invested discourses can include the partial distribution of power and reinforcement of status quo and the creation of stereotypes and categories in the media. For instance, discursive constructs of women's identity in the national media such as *PD* are often the product of powerful ideologies in society in that they reflect the perception of a powerful political agenda on gender identity (particularly in China), which attempts to shape a model identity and in so doing acts to command the consent of their audiences. As an instrument whose purpose is precisely to expose power structures and "disorders of discourse" (Wodak, 1997), CDA can help make relatively more comprehensible complex

power relationships, which appear even more overwhelming when we begin to interpret the ideological intentions behind the media construction of discourses of women's identity. For example, in the data set of 1995 *PD*, there is a report concerning a county magistrate Wei Hong, who is apparently regarded as a successful woman. However, if we approach the texts "critically", her words of "*积极响应国家的号召* to respond actively to the call of the nation" and expressions of "*同样是女性，同样是妻子、是两个孩子的母亲，魏红提起自己的家庭，却显得颇为愧疚* as a woman, a wife and a mother of two kids, she seemed very guilty when mentioning her family" reveal the implicit but pervasive state political ideology and latent yet heavy traditional influence on gender roles, rather different from the apparent image of the new woman constructed as an outstanding successful work identity. This layer of implication can be accessed through CDA by analyzing how underlying ideologies are embodied in linguistic expression. According to Bell, the critical perspective of discourse analysis makes us aware of the complexity and ambiguity of news (Bell, 1998).

Women's identity as a multi-faceted construct is a composite of history and contemporary reality, as is the case with any such socio-political construct or issue in society. Consequently, a historical dimension of discursive actions needs to be added to the basic principles of critical discourse analysis by weaving the elements of self, situated activity, the historical and socio-political contexts through a temporal dimension and "exploring the ways in which particular genres of discourse are subject to diachronic change" (Wodak, 2001, p. 65). According to Layder, "tracing the historical antecedents of the social phenomenon that is being investigated is an absolute necessity" (1993, p. 173). Discourses are multi-layered, often connecting with and re-contextualizing others. As a consequence, they are often replete with paradoxes, contradictions and inconsistencies. Such historical analysis aims to make explicit these inconsistencies in an attempt to bring into focus as much as possible the social/institutional perspective and lay bare the manipulative character of discursive practices (Wodak, 2001). Such contradictions and complexities manifest themselves more centrally within the development of the discourse of *Half the Sky* as a typical Chinese women's identity because gender identity is often shaped by different ideological perspectives, bringing in different expectations and role models which in turn work to cause confusion and contestation.

For CDA from a feminist perspective, according to Lazar, the focus is on how gender ideology and gendered relations of power are "(re)produced, negotiated and contested in representations of social practices, in social relationships between people, and in people's

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social and personal identities in texts and talk" (Lazar, 2005, p. 11). Wodak summarized some specific proposals for feminist CDA, which are adopted in designing the research agenda of this study:

1. Critical Research on gender should challenge simplicitic dichotomies; the whole range of gendered identities in context needs to be considered.
2. Gender should be related to social class, ethnicity, profession, culture, religion and so forth, following the proposal to study multiple public spaces and genres related to a social problem. Gender is always present as a more (or less) salient factor, along with other factors; its specific investigation or piece of research needs to be justified.
3. Gender relations need to be studied over time and space. They change, due to sociopolitical developments. Thus, gender relations form part of larger and more complex social phenomena.
4. Gender can be viewed as an ideological construct. However, many material practices are also involved. Due to context, ideologies are often in stark contrast to material practices, which depend on complex decision-making. For example, gender equality and gender mainstreaming are part of most constitutions in Western democracies; daily practices, however, prove that often neither is the case (Wodak, 2003)
5. Critical studies of gender relations should aim at deconstructing the hegemony and symbolic violence of gender in sociopolitical contexts. Often gender is inherently linked to other identities and subject positions. This should be taken into account. (Wodak, 2008, p. 197)

One distinguishing feature of CDA is its effort to achieve a multi-perspective view involving a range of data and background information, concentrating on linguistic texts, inter-textual and inter-discursive relationships between texts, genres and discourses, the extra-linguistic social variables and institutional frames of a specific "context of situation", and "the broader sociopolitical and historical contexts in which the discursive practices are embedded and related to" (Wodak, 2001, p. 67). Within such an explicit socio-political agenda, its concern is to discover and bear witness to unequal relations of power underlying ways of talking in a society, and in particular to reveal the role of discourse in reproducing or challenging socio-political dominance. We can value CDA as a useful methodology concerned with assembling contextual evidence of many sorts in order to build the richest possible interpretive framework for exploring gender identity in this thesis.

3.2.3.2 Metaphor Analysis

Metaphor is a device for seeing something in terms of something else.
(Burke, 1945)

According to Lakoff, there are few or no ways of talking about life without metaphor (Lakoff,

1993). Consequently, metaphors become a rich resource for people to draw on in their everyday talk in the discursive construction of their identities (Carter, 2004). As a research tool, metaphor can be seen as a mode of thinking, explaining, emoting and as a means of addressing issues of self and the social order in descriptive, interpretive, explanatory terms. We can identify a number of approaches to metaphor: Lakoff and Johnson (1980) take what is essentially a semantic or conceptual view of metaphor – regarding our conceptual systems as intrinsically metaphorical. However, such an approach emphasizing as it does the conceptual and cognitive aspect of metaphor at the cost of de-contextualisation and naturalisation of ideologically loaded phenomena has invited criticism for its lacking sufficient attention to the more direct interaction between culture, context and the choice of metaphor (Charteris-Black, 2004, 2005). As an alternative, the critical perspective to metaphor proposed by Charteris-Black constitutes an approach to the "analysis of metaphors that aims to identify the intentions and ideologies underlying language use" (2005, p. 26). Taking a more interactional perspective to the creation and determining of metaphor, Cameron and Maslen (2010) introduced the notion of what they term "dynamic metaphor". At the heart of their framework lies an understanding of discourse and metaphor as "processes, flows or movement, rather than as objects" (Cameron & Maslen, 2010, p. 82).

In this thesis all three approaches to the determination and analysis of metaphor are considered potentially valuable: conceptual metaphor as a valuable way of exploring print media materials, dynamic metaphor as a means of exploring and explaining contestations in metaphorical construction and development in academic discussions and in the narratives of the journalists. Finally, a critical discourse analytical stance towards metaphor and its significance helps reveal those hidden ideological forces at work.

Firstly, by means of the rhetorical strategy of metaphor use, the discourse of women's identity may be realized and complex constructs such as 半边天 *ban bian tian, Half the Sky* and 和谐社会 *he xie she hui, Harmonious Society* can be made more comprehensible to readers and audiences, as metaphors enable the re-conceptualization of experiences and realities. Metaphorically created realities can be seen as evidence that metaphors are in a way "imaginative rationality" (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980, p. 193). From the conceptual perspective, metaphor can be seen as primarily a matter of mind, as a set of fixed, stable mappings between two conceptual domains: the "source" domain and the "target" – where the "source" domain is usually concrete, consisting of entities, attributes, processes and relationships that are directly, usually physically, experienced, while the "target" domain

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tends to be abstract, taking its structure from the source domain, through the metaphorical link of the "conceptual metaphor" (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). Cameron expands on the notion of "imaginative rationality' by acknowledging that the creation of metaphor can be said to include several cognitive processes, including renaming, substitution, and comparison (2003). The key componential pairs that Cameron discusses are focus/frame and topic/vehicle. Focus refers to the lexical item being used which is "incongruous with the discourse context", while frame is the sentence within which the focus or lexical item appears incongruous (Cameron, 2003, p. 9). For example, within the following sentence or frame, the italicized underlined lexical item is the focus, "*更好地发挥妇女'半边天'作用...引导广大妇女在经济建设主战场上建功立业 to bring better play of the role of women as Half the Sky ...guide women to make achievements in the <u>main battlefield</u> of economic construction*" (2005.12.14, *PD*). Here the words *main battlefield* have war connotations but it is embedded within a frame implying an economic context. The focus can also be referred to as the vehicle of a metaphor, while topic "is the content of the on-going discourse, and which may or may not be actually present as a lexical item" (Cameron, 2003, p. 11).

Secondly, in order to be consistent with the view of discursively realized women's identity in media as heavily colored by socio-political agendas and ideologies (discussed in Chapters One and Two), this study regards metaphor as a product of socio-cultural framing. As Charteris-Black suggested in his approach of critical metaphor analysis, the first stage of identification of conceptual metaphors should be followed by a further stage of explaining the ideological motivation of language use (Charteris-Black, 2005). This approach most usefully takes into consideration the speaker or writer's intention with regard to the creation and diffusion of metaphors, such as women as *半边天 ban bian tian, Half the Sky* and women as *剩女 shen nv, Leftover Ladies* (see later chapters), recognizing that writers and speakers "use metaphor to persuade by combining the cognitive and linguistic resources at their disposal" (Charteris-Black, 2005, p. 11). This critical focus on metaphorical construction provides us with an important perspective for the analysis and interpretation of ideology and illustrates how legitimisation of power relations is performed linguistically (Charteris-Black, 2005).

Thirdly, any analysis of the discourses of women's identity should strive to recognize that gender identity is an indefinite construct, meaning different things to different people, and over different time periods. According to Cameron et al., metaphorical construction could thus best be seen as a dynamic, interactive process or movement (Cameron and Stelma 2004;

Cameron & Deignan, 2006, Cameron & Maslen, 2010). Rather than the view of metaphor as a systematic web of mental connections, realized through language in a uni-directional relationship, Cameron & Deignan argue that the relationship between language and thought is rather a two-way interaction within a single complex system (2006). As such they propose an *emergentist* perspective to bring together the linguistic, conceptual, and socio-cultural aspects of metaphor in use (Cameron & Deignan, 2006). An emergentist perspective on metaphor is part of a broader agenda of a view of discourse as complex dynamic system(s). Metaphor analysis in this perspective looks for evolving patterns of metaphor use across the talk— the development of systems of connected metaphors that frame and re-frame key ideas; clustering of multiple metaphors that signal points of intense interactional activity; the appropriation, negotiation, and co-construction of metaphors on various timescales of discourse (Cameron and Stelma 2004).

For instance, in relation to the themes of this thesis, the ambivalence of women's identity embedded in 半边天 *ban bian tian, Half the Sky* – in terms of work role vs. family role*,* the contestation between tradition and changing political agenda on women in a 和谐社会 *he xie she hui, Harmonious Society* –such metaphors are in a dynamic relationship with each other in constructing contemporary Chinese women's identity. Accordingly, I draw on the discourse dynamics framework for metaphor proposed by Cameron & Maslen (2010), in which metaphor is seen in discourse as social interaction, as distinct from metaphor in isolation. In the flow of talking-and-thinking on the micro-genetic scale of a discourse event, linguistic metaphors shift as people negotiate meanings, extend their ideas, or enjoy exploiting an unexpected possibility opened up by metaphor through reformulation or re-lexication (Cameron & Maslen, 2010). For example, the contrasting pair of metaphors in the data set – 蜡烛两头烧 *Burning Candles on Both ends* vs. 保持平衡 *Keeping a good balance* – is one such example of formulating and reformulating the same issue –double standards on women –from different interest groups or perspectives. The "discourse dynamics" framework on metaphor is inspired and informed by conceptual metaphor theory, but rejects its understanding of metaphor in terms of highly generalized and abstract conceptual domains that pre-exist actual uses of metaphors in language. The fundamental tenet of the discourse dynamics framework is the assumption of interconnectedness of the dimensions of metaphors in use:

- connections across and between *the linguistic, embodied, cognitive, affective and socio-cultural dimensions* of metaphor
- connections between *metaphors and the discourse contexts* where they are used
- connections across metaphors in *a particular discourse event*

- connections between metaphors used in a particular discourse event and metaphors more broadly *across society and over time*

<div align="right">(Cameron & Maslen, 2010, p. 28)</div>

In the light of this interconnectedness, it is important to note that metaphors in this thesis are regarded as a result of our cultural and social negotiation; hence it is safe to assume that all metaphors are intrinsically inter-textual (presence of other texts, hence voices, within a text, which can possibly include some contested versions of discourses) and inter-discursive (a text which represents a particular mix of genres, styles and discourses, which can be seen as orders of discourse that are ideologically invested and realized inter-textually) (Faircough, 2003). On this argument, the analysis of metaphor is a way in which we can understand individual perspectives on discursive construction of women's identity.

3.2.3.3 Membership Categorization Analysis (MCA)

Categories are spectacles through which we routinely, albeit largely unconsciously, observe and classify events and experiences.   (Sarangi & Candlin, 2003, p.116)

Social Identity Theory (SIT) emphasizes that the ways people think and behave depend strongly on the social groups they belong to, particularly in contexts where group membership is salient for some reason. It is assumed that people are generally motivated to view themselves in a favorable way. Accordingly achieving a positive conceptualization of an identity requires "making social comparisons in order to evaluate the opinions and abilities of people who share or do not share a social group membership" (Weatherall and Gallois, 2003, p. 491). The discourse of women's identity takes effect when generalizations take place, thus privileging certain versions of identity over others, more specifically the judgments of one group as a model, objective and positive, and of another group as a contrasting type, unusual and negative. The objectification of a particular perspective or perception can be seen to lead to many categories and stereotypes, setting standards for normative behavior, enhancing in-group commonality and outcasting those who do not fit in with the standards set. Accordingly, the discourse of gender identity is often filled with stereotypical categories, which give preference to one group over another. For example the discourse of *Half the Sky* as typical Chinese women's identity in particular allows a powerful emphasis and promotion of women's work identity over family identity regarding the specific socio-political perspective.

According to Sarangi & Candlin, categorization, generally understood "as definition of

situations (including events, actions, roles, identities, knowledge claims etc) in everyday and professional and institutional settings, is a meaning-making activity, deeply embodied in human experience and understanding" (Sarangi & Candlin, 2003, p.115). In this sense, categorization is multifunctional – it lays ground for future action and provides grounds for assessment, helps gain moral advantage and retain legitimate power of modeling identity. As Jayyusi says, "we are drawing the boundaries of rational membership through the use of a standard of moral membership…persons may organize their moral positions and commitments round certain category identities, identities that are selective and demarcate for them the boundaries of practical membership" (1984, pp. 183-201). In the institutional setting, categorization practices are "both descriptive and evaluative, at implicit and explicit levels" (Sarangi and Candlin, 2003, p. 117), in which language and discourse play a significant, even defining role in how we categorize events and people.

In order to analyze the impact that semiotic actions and social/institutional perspectives have on constructing women's identity, the categories and stereotypes that are generated, an integration of Sacks' (1992) Membership Categorization Analysis (MCA), is very useful. Membership categorization, as Sacks defines it, involves classifications or social types that may be used to describe persons (Hester & Eglin, 1997). In other words, it is really where we have some kind of identification and labeling, either on subjects, or on a theme, a person, and this labeling carries with it certain implications. For instance, 剩女 *shen nv, Leftover Ladies* in the data set, as a reference to unmarried professional women – the expression is in one sense a metaphor, but it is also a kind of categorization, because it carries with it certain implications for people of ideologies and beliefs and values on gender roles, and it also carries with it various references to social structure.

The use of membership categorizations within membership category analysis can be seen as indicative of the influence that our habitus has on our way of receiving and perceiving the world. The discourse of women's identity implies that our experiences and relations with others in society are structured within a socio-political and ideological framework of reality. People categorize not always on the basis of what is objectively true, but rather what they believe to be the truth – their representation of reality (see Bourdieu, 1990, 1991). The essential nature of discursive construction of women's identity creates ideological tensions by assigning people into categories in an effort to (re-)standardize and (re-)structure experiences within society. MCA will allow the analysis of what kinds of categories are created by those in power, indicating what the intention behind and purpose of such categorization is and what

objectives they serve. For instance, within the discourse of women's identity, the assignment of the labels "贤妻良母 *xian qi liang mu, a Good Wife/Mother*", "*第三类女人 di san lei nü ren, the Third Type Women*", to one group over another can be interpreted as a power strategy within an ideological frame, and often leads to various other character-building subcategories, such as "*剩女 shen nü, Leftover Ladies*", and "*第三性 di san xing, the Third Sex*", the correlation between which MCA helps elucidate to some extent.

One important feature of the membership categorization is what Sacks terms "category boundedness" that is those actions, statements, performances which can routinely be expected from members of this or that categorization (Sacks, 1974, p. 219). As Hester and Eglin indicate, we can extend this idea of *expectables* to include rights, obligations, entitlements, attributes and competencies (Hester & Eglin, 1997). For example, "*由于公务繁忙，她时常不在家。为人妻，却不能为夫洗衣做饭；为人母，却不能嘘寒问暖、关心两个儿子的生活成长 Because of busy work, she was often absent at home. As a wife, she cannot cook and wash for her husband; as a mother, she cannot take care of her two sons*" (*1995PD-15*) and "*以实际行动顶起社会主义现代化建设的半边天 To Hold up Half the Sky of socialist modernization construction with practical efforts*" (*2003.8.28 PD*) in the data set of this study, the social expectation on and political obligation of women as *a Good Wife/Mother* or *Half the Sky* are implicitly revealed through the stereotypical categorization of certain identities. According to Dyer, stereotypes are a particular form to do with the representation and categorization of persons (Dyer, 1999). The discourse of *Half the Sky* as Chinese women's identity engenders many delineating categories and stereotypes resulting in the contestation of various versions of identities. Prescriptive labels on women's identity such as "Good wife/mother", "Perfect/Complete women", "Leftover Ladies" (which will be discussed in detail in following chapters) help powerful social groups maintain their social identities and relationships, thus constituting modeling strategies, which is regarded as an important aspect of membership categorization (Sacks, 1992).

MCA can be viewed as a "formal analysis of the procedures people employ to make sense of other people and their activities" (Leudar, Marsland and Nekvapil, 2004, p. 244). Important here is the argument of Sarangi & Candlin that categorizations are *both* the object *and* the means of analysis (2003, p.122). This raises the overarching issue of participant and analyst knowledge as to the question of who "owns" the categorization. As Sarangi & Candlin indicate:

Now, for description to be enacted in the narrow sense, researchers can (and often do) claim proprietary rights; it is their models and their categorizations which they seek to warrant from the data. For interpretation, however, participants in the encounters have proprietary rights; it is their categorizations which make sense to them, and it is in terms of these personal categorizations that they warrant their own accounts of what has gone on. Researchers who seek access to such categorizations cannot operate without some collaborative and cooperative enterprise, itself not easy to establish, and one in which the ensuing categorizations may cut across or restructure the categorizations the researcher might have initially purveyed.

(Sarangi & Candlin, 2003, p. 122)

It is difficult, if not impossible, to step outside discourse. As Foucault notes, "it is not possible for us to describe our own archive, since it is from within these rules that we speak" (1972, p. 146). Therefore our labeling of something or some identity as a discourse is going to be based upon the discourses that we already live with. The issue is to what extent the interaction between the analyst and participants contributes to the ongoing and developing sense of the ways in which certain identities including participants are mutually categorized (Housely & Fitzgerald, 2002). For instance in Section 7.3.3.1 of Chapter Seven, labeling or not – the categorizing dilemma is discussed in an attempt to grasp how the participants involved "display the organization of device and relevant categories, at that time, in situ" (Housely & Fitzgerald, 2002, p.70).

To sum up, MCA helps enable a closer analysis of the impact of linguistic and semiotic actions on gender identity, illustrating the emergence of categories, and more importantly, the relations of power and conflicts of ideologies which are often the cause of such categories. It will also be useful in combination with other methodological tools mentioned in this thesis in order to accomplish to whatever extent, a richer and more multi-layered analysis of the social/institutional impact of ideologically-stimulated language and actions of mass media, thus enriching the framework to make it as multi-perspectival as possible.

3.2.3.4 Genre Analysis

Genres are reflections of disciplinary cultures and, in that sense, those of the realities of the world of discourse, in general. (Bhatia, 2002, p. 23)

A basic model underlying contemporary media theory is a triangular relationship between the text, its producers and its interpreters. Genres first and foremost provide frameworks within which media texts are produced and interpreted (Chandler, 1997). Semiotically, a genre can be seen as a shared code between the producers and interpreters of texts included within it.

Within genres, texts embody authorial attempts to "position" readers using particular "modes of address". Each written text provides a "reading position" for readers, a position constructed by the writer for the "ideal reader" of the text (Kress, 1988, p.107). In other words, genre constrains the possible ways in which a text is interpreted, guiding readers of a text towards a preferred reading, which is normally in accordance with the dominant ideology. In this sense genres are far from being ideologically neutral. Sonia Livingstone argues that "different genres are concerned to establish different world views" (Livingstone, 1990, p.155). Related to the ideological dimension of genres is one modern redefinition in terms of purposes and social functions. According to Thwaites et al., social functions of genres are summarized as follows,

> First, they reflect the hierarchical structure of genres that is used to represent and organize a social institution like the economy: the authorities define a reality on which others subsequently comment. Next, they show that a single genre, such as media news, never works entirely in a singular way. It is marked by degrees of variation that may pressure its conventional cultural impact. Finally, the texts reveal the processes of social negotiation that occur as different genres interact. (Thwaites et al., 1994, p. 108)

This focus on interactive and discursively conceived notions of texts can be traced back to Bakhtin's (1981) notion of heteroglossia — dialogized interrelation of languages and discourses that involves multiple voices speaking through text. According to Bakhtin, there is no creation of language in the discourse that is not influenced by certain social groups, classes, discourses, conditions or relationships. As he puts it,

> There is interwoven with….generic stratification of language a professional stratification of language, in the broad sense of the term "professional": the language of the lawyer, the doctor, the businessman, the politician, the public education teacher and so forth, and these sometimes coincide with, and sometimes depart from, the stratification into genres. (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 289)

According to Fairclough, Bakhtinian theory highlights the productivity and creativity of discourse practice and its realization in texts through intertextuality – the heterogeneity of texts in their forms and meanings (genres, discourses) (Fairclough, 1995). Intertextuality is explained by Fairclough as "the property texts have of being full of snatches of other texts, which may be explicitly demarcated or merged in, and which the text may assimilate, contradict ironically echo, and so forth" (1992, p. 84). Fairclough further suggests that the abstract social and discursive practices can be conceptualized in concrete forms of text by using the concepts of genre, discourse and style — three different yet interrelated ways in

which discourse figures in social practice (Fairclugh, 2003). In this sense, texts can be seen as constituting social relations and practices, and intertextuality becomes the dynamic processes of recontextualization and reconceptualisation of different discourses. Heteroglossia, therefore, can be seen as the competition of different voices, identities and positions to maintain, adopt, or resist power and control.

As Bhatia puts it, genre construction, interpretation and use is based on "socially recognized" conventions from a careful "exploitation" or "manipulation" of shared genre conventions (2004). So on the one hand a range of genres are found in a variety of interacting relationships with one another, unfolding rich and often complex patterns of interdiscursivity, whereas on the other hand expert members of professional cultures are found exploiting this richness to create new forms of discourse, often to serve their "private intentions" within the constructs of socially recognized communicative purposes as realized through specific genres (Bhatia, 2004). This vision of genre and discourse as discursively constrained, situated, and motivated suggest the importance of social and discursive practices in the study of media texts, and the need for an account of the organization of meanings through interactions between different discourses in media texts. It is through the interaction and contestation between genres and discourses, questions of social power are worked through. In other words, studying how media texts draw upon, reorganize, and transform different discourses will provide insights into the processes of ideological and "reality" of identity construction in the media. Accordingly media discourse is treated in this thesis not only in terms of its content, but also as an intention that reorganizes and regulates other discursive practices in a certain order. Media representations, understood in this way, are reconceptualizations of observable linguistic markers according to specific intentions of those involved in the process of media production.

Genre analysis on media texts should thus not only include descriptions of the characteristics of actual texts, especially organizational structures, but also needs to include a contextualized perspective on genre which includes consideration of how and why the texts were produced (Connor, 2004). The main goals of genre analysis of written discourse could be manifold, and one aim is to investigate the interplay at work in the textual process, which, as suggested by Thaites et al., could be done through comparative analysis – in terms of both the process of social historical change and contemporary structure of social meanings focused on a particular genre to examine its "textual and contextual effects" (Thaites, Davis & Mules, 1994, p. 92). For instance in this thesis, a diachronic and synchronic comparative analysis on

contrasting data sets between 1995 and 2005, *PD* and *WOC* are conducted in Chapter Four to reveal the transforming generic pattern of Typical Character Report on women's identity and the varying constitutive social function of different media discourses.

Although genres are often organized hierarchically, this hierarchy is never totally fixed or accepted. These kinds of interactions between genres represent power relationships with the social system which are continuously being worked out. These interactions occur not only over the ways that social institutions operate but also over how they are represented and who is entitled to speak about them (Thwaites et al., 1994, 106). For example one of the primary data sources in this study *PD* uses the news genre's standard signs and connotations to establish its authority in regard to the national political agenda and mainstream social ideology on gender. First, it sets up a national identity for readers, and foregrounds supposedly shared viewpoints and collective experiences. For example the use of collective nouns of "our", "all" in expressions of *我国广大妇女 all women in our country, 我国妇女 women in our nation, 中国妇女 Chinese women, 广大妇女 All women, 亿万妇女 millions of women* is abundant in the data set (see Chapter Six). Second, it employs a specialized vocabulary and syntactic pattern to imply the truth or authenticity of this account. For example, the high frequency of modality use of "must", "should", and constant historical appeal of "*中国妇女运动的伟大实践告诉我们... Great practice of Chinese women's movement tells us that...*" and "*历史和现实雄辩地证明... History and reality well proves that...*". Thirdly, in typifying the way that the news genre organizes material, the text sets up *"a single primary definer"* as the official source of knowledge on identity construction (Thwaites et al., 1994, p. 107). It is exemplified by the pervasive presence of the CPC such as "*在党的领导下 Under the leadership of the Party*" and "*...必须坚持中国共产党领导 ...must adhere to the leadership of the Party (CPC)*" in the chosen corpus.

According to Bhatia, genre "refers to language use in a conventionalized communicative setting in order to give expression to a specific set of communicative goals of a disciplinary or social institution, which give rise to stable structural forms by imposing constraints on the use of lexico-grammatical as well as discoursal resources" (Bhatia, 2004, p. 23). In his proposed framework of "discourse multidimensional analytical perspective" (2004, p. 163), genre analysis includes four procedures – textual procedures such as linguistic description and analysis of texts and generic conventions and practices; ethnographic procedures such as observational accounts of expert behavior and convergent narrative accounts of active professionals; socio-cognitive procedures such as history, beliefs, goals of disciplinary

cultures and analysis of texts intertextuality linked; and socio-critical procedures such as accounts of language, ideology and power, studies of social changes reflected in discourse and studies of socio-cultural backgrounds etc. The framework highlights the multi-dimensionality and interdiscursivity for which the integrity of any generic form would be viewed as a dynamic, flexible, discursive formation and sometimes "contested", rather than a static, fixed form (Candlin and Plum, 1999).

The views of genre developed in Fairclough's framework of intertextual analysis and in Bhatia's framework of multi-dimensional procedures see genre as being linked to social practices and contributing to forms of social action and interaction in social events. Informed by these views, my analysis of genre considers how media texts draw on, echo, and bring together different intertextual resources realized in the forms of discourses, styles, and genres, and how the combinations of these intertextual relations in particular contexts construct specific understandings of gender identities and relationship and shape the transformations of discourse. As far as my thesis is concerned, genre analysis has particular relevance to the semiotic resource perspective and social/institutional perspective in Chapters Four and Six.

3.2.3.5 Narrative Analysis

> *Narratives, and particularly the evaluative elements of narratives, are social phenomena.*   (Labov and Waletzky, 1967)

As Hall, Sarangi and Slembrouck state, narratives enable institutions, to construct the identities of members and non-members; hold people accountable for their actions; and decide when and how to intervene in people's lives (Hall, Sarangi & Slembrouck, 1997). In order to do this, institutions include types of interaction, such as interviews and appraisals, which are designed to elicit narratives. In the process of being elicited, these narratives are "typically transformed to render them tractable for institutional purposes" (Crichton & Koch 2007, p. 376).

Interviews have been used for decades in empirical and qualitative inquiry across the social sciences as a means of generating data and have a growing presence in applied linguistics. This growth has been seen "particularly in qualitative studies that aim to investigate participant's identities, experiences, beliefs, and orientations" (Talmy, 2010, p. 111). According to Hammersley, interviews have always been key to ethnography, due to "their

potential to capture perspectives of, and give a voice to, participants" (Hammersley, 2006, p. 9). The use of interviews in combination with spontaneous talk can create a dialogue between the analyst and the participants, which not only reveals the "tacit and articulated understandings of the participants in whatever processes and activities are being studied", but also increases the analyst's reflexivity about her "own cultural and interpretive capacities" which play a significant role in the analysis and interpretation of linguistic and social practice (Rampton, Tusting et al., 2004, pp. 2-3 in Pichler, 2008, p. 56).

It is now well established that interview talk is seen as a co-construction between the interviewer and interviewee (de Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2008; Mann, 2011). Just as with knowledge in general, interview data are viewed as socially constructed – thus representations or accounts of truths, facts, attitudes, beliefs co-constructed between interviewer and interviewee. Analyzing not only the content – the *whats*, or the product of the interview, but also the *hows*, or the process involved in the co-construction of knowledge and meaning, has significant implications for the analysis of interview data (Talmy, 2011). For instance in an extract from the interviews with journalist practitioners (see Chapter Seven), one interviewee *Wm*, male editor from a daily newspaper, comments on the present gender division of labor at home as "unfair" and tries to avoid making an absolute statement in his narrative by constantly referencing "relatively speaking" (three times) and employing explanatory parentheses such as "in my opinion" and "I mean" when making claims concerning the traditional family focus of woman's identity. According to Rapley, interviewee contributions are always produced in negotiation with the interviewer and extracts from transcripts "should always be presented in the context in which they occurred" (Rapley 2001, pp. 317-319). In this sense, the amendment of *Wm*'s statement in discussing contemporary women's identity indicates his orientation to the interactional context and to his interlocutor as a woman seeking a male voice on women issues. It is important to note that by conceiving of the research interview as social practice, there is a focus on the context, occasioning, and co-construction that is likely to be absent in a thematic analysis.

This study uses tools from discourse analysis to study the narratives of journalists on media construction of women's identity. It aims to suggest a way to analyze practitioner's narratives which will help us to understand both the empirical, "processural" (Rhodes, 1997) nature of the media events they refer to and the effects on such events of contextual, psychological and social factors in terms of identity. The importance of such narratives is not that they are reflections of what really happened, but that they are "reflections of how people understand

and organize their reflections of what occurred" (Jones & Candlin 2003, p. 201). Narrative accounts, in this sense, are sites of mediation between discourses, between beliefs and attitudes about the self-identity and the circumstances of the external reality, for which the construct *nexus of practice* (Scollon, 2001) is useful in understanding this dynamic interaction. *Nexus of practice* is a discourse analytical methodology which Scollon divides into three steps:

1. *Engaging the nexus of practice*, by which is meant researchers as stakeholders in the action and the site reflexively considering their own stance, and that of the participants, to the issues at hand in that site. Sarangi and Candlin (2001) refer to "motivational relevancies" and the need to be aware of these, and engaging in a process of "joint problematization" with participants.
2. *Navigating the nexus of practice*, by which is meant beginning the data collection and analysis, but always from a multimodal and multiperspectival orientation (see Candlin & Crichton 2011, 2013) in collaboration with participants, and the stance taken towards research as historically grounded, transformative, and always "motivated".
3. *Changing the nexus of practice*, by which is meant making use of the process and outcomes of discourse analysis, within such a process not only "after" it to engender positive change.   (Scollon, 2001)

In short the journalists' narratives involved in this study provide a linguistic ethnographic perspective focusing on a number of different levels/dimensions of socio-cultural organization/process at the same time and assuming that the meaning and significance of a text or practice involves an interaction between these levels and dimensions (Rampton et al. 2015, in press). Although it recognizes that selectivity and idealization are intrinsic to data, ethnographic analysis of interviews tries to stay alert to the potential consequentiality of what gets left out. And the resarcher's own cultural and interpretive capacities are crucial in making sense of the complex intricacies of situated talks among journalists being studied.

In this study, a number of conceptual themes (such as work identity, family identity, work/family conflict, self identity) were developed based on the existing domains and facets of the women's identity framework, and a number of thematic concepts (such as *Half the Sky* as work identity, a *Good Wife/mother* as family identity, *Double Standard* in work/family conflict, *Leftover Ladies* as a result of contestation between persistent tradition and emerging self-identity etc.) were developed in the ongoing process of analysis to reflect the topics and themes touched upon by participants which were not explicitly covered by conceptual themes. The process used in the development of these thematic concepts followed broadly the principles of "grounded theory" (Strauss and Corbin, 1990) in which categories are allowed

to "emerge" from the data itself and are continually revisited, re-evaluated and revised during the process of the analysis.

Last but not least, to enrich the investigation of the interrelated perspectives aiming to provide a comprehensive account of the discourse of women's identity, a range of textual and contextual resources as lexico-syntactical and semantico-pragmatic tools are employed in detailed data analysis in the following four chapters. In addition, since one of the main sources for the data of the thesis is *WOC*, where the visualization and positioning of women is very important, the study has also drawn on the toolbox of multimodality (e.g. Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996; O'Halloran, 2004) in order to provide such an analysis on cover photos of the magazine, which is presented in Chapter Four Section 4.5.2.

3.3 Summary

I have argued that as the discourse of women's identity is complex and multi-faceted it requires an appropriately integrated multi-perspectival approach, what Layder refers to as "multi-strategy research", in order to allow the opportunity to analyze with more depth and accuracy (Layder, 1993, p. 120). A multi-method approach will enable closer analysis of how the discourses of *Half the Sky* as an apt example of the discourse of Chinese women's identity are realized, including the motivations and intentions of the producers/practitioners, the power struggle within social domains, in addition to the socio-political and historical contexts which influence the individual and various constructions of gender identity.

My approach belongs broadly within the tradition of critical linguistics – motivated by the aim of providing evidence for a critical questioning of linguistic and semiotic phenomena in socio-cultural terms. This study attempts to offer insights into the workings of the power struggles and ideology conflicts in society. In the process, the study investigates and hopes to make more explicit the social positioning and social perception of media, which offer various representations of women's identity, and the intentions with which they put forward their re-conceptualization of gender roles. The precedence of, and contestation between certain versions of identities/models, for example those of official perspective vs. feminist perspective, is implicative of the power struggles within society between social and political groups. In order to take a closer look at these conflicts I will be analyzing any inter-textual disagreements or discrepancies within the discourses of women's identity by taking into account the different perspectives situated in a changing socio-cultural background affecting

the various re-conceptualizations of gender identity.

Having proposed a theoretical interdisciplinary framework of methodology, we may now begin on a detailed analysis of the data sets. The next four chapters analyze the data within the multi-perspectival framework of the discourse of women's identity as discussed in this chapter. Chapter Four will focus on the semiotic resource perspective on *PD* and *WOC*; Chapter Five will analyze discourses from *CWS* from the social/institutional perspective; and Chapter Six will examine political documents of *PD* editorials from both the semiotic resource perspective and social/institutional perspective; Chapter Seven investigates the interviews with journalist practitioners from both the participants' perspective and the social practice perspective.

Chapter Four: Analysis of 人民日报 *ren min ri bao-People's Daily* (PD) and 中国妇女 *zhong guo fu nü-Women of China* (WOC)

4.1 Introduction

The news story is a major register of language. Understanding how it works is important to understanding the functioning of language in society. For Durant & Lambrou, two kinds of significance stand out in news media language: whether it converys information; and how far it seeks to persuade us towards some particular viewpoint and belief, such as particular gender ideology underlying certain identity construction (2009). These two main functions of media language, and the interaction between them, create the huge influence that "media discourse exerts socially, culturally and politically" (Durant &Lambrou, 2009, p. 26). In relation to studying media texts, van Dijk says that discouse analysis as a method assumes that media messages are specific types of text and talk, which are varied and complex and occur on interrelated levels, which have particular structures and strategies (van Dijk, 1991, pp. 108-116). One of those levels may be the result of choices between alternative ways of saying the same thing while constructing specific themes. According to van Dijk (1998), a thematic analysis is useful for the explication or assessment of these social, cultural and political dimensions of media discourse. In this sense, Chapter Four presents a number of key themes – work identity, family identity, work/family dilemma and self awareness – relevant to contemporary Chinese women's identity construction, and does so through the analysis and findings of the chosen corpus of news stories from a national newspaper – *PD* and a women's magazine – *WOC,* both of which are state issued and state-wide circulated. Among the diverse representation of women's identity and a variety of rhetorical strategies and linguistic tools employed in constructing these identities, key metaphorical constructions of *"Half the Sky", "Harmonious Society"*, and *"Have It All"* and their roles in persuasion are critically elaborated in this chapter as they, in particular, reveal dominant ideologies either explicitly or implicitly underlying these media discourses.

Firstly, despite a growing diversity of women's images after the 1980s, in the media reports work identity remains as one of the most significant facets of Chinese women. This is in part due to the historical influences of Marxism and the socialist political agenda of China since the early 20th century. The discourse surrounding the metaphor of *Half the Sky* is an attempt

on the part of its creators, as the primary definition-maker to create a woman's ideal identity based on the nation's socio-political and economic agendas. It turns out that the *Half the Sky* campaign which originated in the Mao era, still remains as a characterization of mainstream advocacy concerning women's identity from the chosen media and continues to exhibit traces of the Mao-era model identity. Linked to this, *Iron Girl* qualities still can be evidenced in the data sets particularly of *PD* and from the 1995 period.

Secondly, the *Harmonious Society* campaign initiated by the Hu Jintao (previous President) administration in 2004 has had a far-reaching impact on gender identity and gender relationships. It does so by acting to restore the traditional ideology of being a good wife and mother as important contributions to the harmonious family, and, as a consequence, works to ensure the stability of society at large. However, embedded in this campaign is an ambivalent attitude in the media discourses in terms of the contestation of ideological positions between the promotion of the *Half the Sky* work identity and the (re-)endorsement of the *Good Wife/Mother* family identity.

Thirdly, this contestation is implicitly expressed or suggested in the media by adopting the solution of the *Have It All* identity for career women as a means of addressing work/family conflicts. A new model identity – that of the *Third Type Woman*, someone who is able to, or is trying to keep a good balance between work and family roles – is encouraged in current media texts. Despite the fact that the traditional ideological constraints have been reduced to encourage women to redefine their own roles in society, the findings reveal that the delicate balancing process between work/family roles by women is an uneasy compromising process of negotiating the relationships between women and nation, women and family, women and self. Various ideological forces of nation-oriented state politics, family-oriented traditional perceptions, growing developments in feminist consciousness and emerging individualism come together in the process of addressing an overarching and pervasive Work/Family dilemma among contemporary Chinese women.

Fourthly, new topics such as those of daughter identity, expression of love and relationships, assertion of sexuality, affordability of personal hobbies, are all noted in the data sets especially from *WOC* and in the 2005 period. The emerging self awareness of Chinese women, especially of the younger generation, is revealed as an individual identity more independent of previously emphasized family or state affiliations. This emerging self-identity cannot yet be taken to be a mainstream position, but it is a voice which is getting stronger and

stronger with the rise of a "Me Culture" in post-Mao China, especially in the new 21st century.

The examination of newspapers and magazines, which became the central force through their power to provide certain ways of significantion of the situations, is expected to lead to insights into the role of media in the consruction of social meaning. In the following sections of the chapter, through both diachronic and synchronic analyses of the corpus, I provide both argumentation and evidence in support of this overarching thematic framework – work identity, family identity, work/family dilemma and self identity – of the diverse contested women's identities as displayed in the selected Chinese print media.

4.2 Work Identity – Women Holding up *Half the Sky*

As the impact of the famous Maoist slogan of *"Women Holding Up Half the Sky"* in China has been so far-reaching in liberating women from the domestic sphere to entering the public social workplace and allowing for a powerful promotion of women's work identity, we will start investigating women's work identity from this key metaphorical construction. "*Half the Sky*" campaign dates back to the 1960s, during which *"Iron Girl"* was promoted as the typical women's image summarizing the Maoist ideological position concerning Chinese women's identity. As Jin points out, women were "de-sexualised" to participate and compete with men in the national economic construction and political revolution throughout the Mao era, and the women's liberation movement was integrated in the national movement and development (Jin, 2006).

As was mentioned earlier in Chapter Two Section 2.3.1, from the 1980s China began to undergo a series of dramatic socio-political transformations and stunning economic growth. Monotony in gender images and masculinity associated with advocating *Iron Girl* was subordinated in favor of diversity and the revival of femininity and sexuality. However, given the influences of Marxism and socialism on the Chinese women's movement (see Chapter Two Sections 2.2.1/2 and 2.3.1), work identity remains significant as both an obtained right and an imposed obligation for Chinese women (Jin, 2003), and traces of *Iron Girl* qualities still can be evidenced. This notwithstanding, the diversity of professional pursuit and images, together with the freedom of individual choices evidenced in the datasets of 2005, and of *WOC* in particular reveal how women's work identity has changed along with rapid social changes.

4.2.1 Construction of 半边天 *ban bian tian*–*Half the Sky*

> "The first premise for the emancipation of women is the reintroduction of the entire female sex into public industry."   (Engels, 1884)

In the tradition of Marx and Engels, the government of China turned its attention to the economic foundations of the oppression and exploitation of women and linked their struggle to that of the proletariat against the forces of capitalism (Croll, 1978; Jiang, 2008). It was supposed that entry into the waged labor force would aid women in acquiring a new confidence, power and authority within the domestic and public spheres. The emphasis on the significance of women's work identity in being socially recognized is evidenced in the chosen corpus through some direct quotations of outstanding women figures reported in the print media of *PD* in 1995:

1) 我认为要求男女平等，妇女必须做出<u>出色</u>的工作，得到社会的<u>认同</u>。
                                                                                                  (1995PD-22)
   In my opinion, to achieve gender equality, women <u>must do outstanding work to get recognized by society.</u>

2) 女同志<u>要靠自己的工作和才干来立身，实现自己的人生价值</u>。   *(1995PD-28)*
   Women <u>should rely on her own work and talent to stand up and realize her own life value</u>.

From the very beginning, the Communist Party of China (CPC, hereafter abbreviated as the Party) made the emancipation of women one of its policy platforms. In pursuit of common goals, many in the women's movement note the interdependence between their own women's movement and that of the nationalist revolutionary party movement. After 1949, the new government of China adopted a number of policies to redefine the roles of women so as to place them in a position of equal status with men in both the public and domestic spheres. As was pointed out earlier in Chapter Two Section 2.2.2, in implementing these policies, the government frequently referred to the necessity for women's support, and there were many references to the fact that one major objective of the communist revolution was to mobilize the entire population, both men and women, in the economic construction of the nation (Yao, 1983). Representing one half of the population, women were consequently seen as "great human resources" (see following examples) to "be developed and utilized" so as to speed up the national development. Examples include:

> "中国的妇女是一种<u>伟大的人力资源</u>。<u>必须发掘这种资源，为了建设一个的社会主义国家而奋斗</u>。"
>   *(Mao, 1958)*
> *"Chinese women are <u>great human resources,</u> and <u>must be developed and utilized for the socialist nation's modernization & construction</u>.*

"时代不同了，<u>男女都一样，男同志能办到的事，女同志也能办到。</u>"   *(Mao, 1965)*
"Time is different now. <u>Women and men are the same. Anything a man can do, a woman can also do.</u>"

Among those references that of "*妇女能顶半边天 Women Can Hold up Half the Sky*" was the most widespread, influential and lasting slogan from the Mao era. Most people assumed that it was said by Mao, but when and where Mao said this was actually unknown. The term first appeared in an article introducing active participation in agricultural production of rural women in Hu'nan Province in *People's Daily* (16th May, 1956). Later in the early 1960s in one of his visits to the rural areas, Mao Zedong highly praised women as "*Holding up Half the Sky*" for their remarkable contribution to the national production. Since then, the metaphor "*Half the Sky*" became both an ideological guideline and a precept for constructing women's identity (work identity in particular) and improving women's social status in China.

It was the organization of social production and collective living on a grand scale during the periods of the *Great Leap Forward* and *Cultural Revolution* (see Chapter Two), and their implications for the lives of women, that created the "unprecedented conditions favorable to the emancipation of women" and gave the women's movement an "extraordinary momentum" (Croll, 1978, p. 260). For instance, according to the statistics of the Ministry of Labor Force (*劳动部 lao dong bu*), during 1957–1960, women workers of the state-owned labor system increased from 3.286 million to 10.087 million, by a stunning 206.7% (Ministry of Labor Force, 1987). According to the statistics from Public Information *(信息办 xing xi ban)*, women employees account for 291 million, or 44.96 % of the total employees in China, and are found in almost every industry and trade in 1995 (Public Information, 1995). Statistics from the Report of "Gender Equality and Women's Development in China" issued by the State Department Press in 2005 show that women employees account for 44.8% of the whole employment in 2004, 5.6% higher than that of 2000 (ACWF, 2006). As Li points out, the most substantial women's development of, and since the Mao era is that nearly all mature age women are employed outside the home (Li, 1988).

The metaphorical model plays a particularly salient role in the constitution of a particular ideology – an ideology that deals with the construction of women's roles and designation of women's domains in the public sphere. Recognizing ideology as an expression of group identity and values is important for the understanding of the metaphor use in *Half the Sky*. Through media propaganda extolling glorious "work heroes", women were "convinced" and

"persuaded" that they could and should "hold up half the sky" as men did. However an intrinsic ambivalence is embedded in such a position, as women's work identity and related values are explicitly foregrounded in the metaphorical construction whereas women's family identity and its pattern are equivocally backgrounded. According to Lakoff and Johnson, such selective representation is motivated by intentions, in the sense that "people in power get to impose their metaphors" (1980, p. 157). This ambivalence is further reflected in the later discussions on family identity and work/family dilemma (see Sections 4.3 and 4.4).

Ever since the *Half the Sky* campaign, discourses of women's identity have centred on work and production throughout the Mao era and more or less extending to the post-Mao era. To illustrate this point, this study draws on a corpus of news texts on outstanding women figures showing how that particular discourse centres on an ideologically vested metaphoric model of a particular socio-political agenda. Tabel 4.1 provides a list of *Half the Sky* in headlines of news articles within the timeframe betwen 1995 to 2005 in *PD* database (see Table 4.1).

Table 4.1: *Half the Sky* in *PD* Headlines (1995-2005)

1-1995.4.2 PD	*高邮女干部托起"半边天"* Women Cadres in Gaoyou County Hold Up Half the Sky
2-1995.5.16 PD	*昔日当农奴 今天成主人 西藏妇女擎起高原半边天* Previously as Slaves, Now as Lords, Tibetan Women Hold Up Half the Sky in the Highlands
3-1995.6.30 PD	*空军总医院发挥妇女"半边天"作用* Air force Hospital Bring into Full Play the Role of Women as Half the Sky
4-1995.9.6 PD	*"半边天"女性人物短片比赛观后* Summary of "Half the Sky" Women Figure TV Programme Contest
5-1995.9.11 PD	*全世界"半边天"的盛大节日—为联合国第四次世界妇女大会而作（画）* Festival of World's Half the Sky—Painting for the 4th World Conference on Women
6-1995.9.14 PD	*西华妇女兴县富民撑起"半边天"* Women in Xihua County Hold up Half the Sky by Making the County Prosperous and Rich
7-1996.1.5 PD	*"半边天"改新版* "Half the Sky" TV Show Innovated
8-1996.4.6 PD	*自行车奥运会选拔赛在京举行 全部希望寄予半边天* Cycling Qualifying Game for Olympics Held in Beijing, with All Hopes on Half the Sky
9-1997.1.23 PD	*亮丽"半边天"—记全国城镇"巾帼建功"活动* Bright "Half the Sky"—for Nationwide "Jinguo Jiangong—Women Contribution" Events
10-1997.3.8 PD	*今日"半边天"（图片）* Half the Sky Nowadays (Photos)
11-1998.3.9 PD	*突尼斯妇女撑起半边天* Tunisia Women Holding Up Half the Sky
12-1998.9.1 PD	*在实现我国跨世纪发展的历史进程中充分发挥妇女的半边天作用—在中*

	国妇女第八次全国代表大会上的祝词 胡锦涛 To Bring into Full Play the Role of Women as Half the Sky in the Historical Progress of Our Nation's Cross-century Development—Congratulation Speech by HU Jintao in Chinese Women's 8th National Congress Meeting
13-2000.3.29 PD	河口采油厂女工撑起半边天 Women Workers in Hekou Oil Extraction Factory Hold Up Half the Sky
14-2001.3.23 PD	印度妇女何时撑起"半边天" When Could Indian Women Hold Up Half the Sky
15-2001.9.26 PD	"半边天"为何抓不住半边地 Why Couldn't "Half the Sky" Hold up Half the land
16-2002.1.22 PD	"半边天"西部开发建立功勋 "Half the Sky" Contributed to Development of Western Region
17-2003.8.26 PD	"半边天"的优势 Advantages of "Half the Sky"
18-2003.8.28 PD	认真学习领会胡锦涛总书记重要讲话精神 以实际行动顶起社会主义现代化建设的"半边天" To Carefully Study the Spirit of President Hu Jinto's Keynote Speech, and to Hold Up Half the Sky of Socialist Modernization Construction with Practical Efforts
19-2003.9.7 PD	爱心天使：抗非典的半边天 Love Angel: Half the Sky in the anti-SARS Combat
20-2004.3.8 PD	广西女性撑起非公经济半边天 Women in Guangxi Province Hold up Half the Sky of Non-state-owned Business
21-2004.3.8 PD	会内会外"半边天"（两会剪影） "Half the Sky"in and outside the National Congress (Photos)
22-2004.3.8 PD	中国体育的半边天 Half the Sky in China's Sports' Field
23-2004.4.5 PD	发挥妇女"半边天"作用 认真贯彻男女平等基本国策 习近平 To Bring into Full Play the Role of Women as Half the Sky and Carry Out the Basic National Policy of Equality between Genders
24-2005.12.2 PD	来自半边天的声音—我运动 我美丽 Voices from Half the Sky—I do sports, I am beautiful
25-2005.12.11PD	她们名副其实地支撑起惠安县农村发展的半边天—今日惠安女 They Indeed Hold Up Half the Sky of Rural Development in Hui'an County—Women of Hui'an Today
26-2005.12.14PD	团结动员广大妇女为实现"十一五"规划更好地发挥妇女"半边天"作用 To Unite and Motivate All Women to Bring Better Play of the Role of Women as Half the Sky in Implementing the "11th Five Year Plan"

Firstly, as is evidenced in the headlines from the above table, *Half the Sky* in Chinese print media discourse always refers to women in plural terms. To present a panoramic display of Chinese women's united identity, the media discourse on "*Half the Sky*" covers a wide variety of Chinese women in terms of ethnic groups, professions and practices, as well as from regions of urban and rural areas all over the country.

Secondly, the term is often associated with the achievements of Chinese women who have held up or are holding up *Half the Sky* (see above examples 1, 2, 3, 6, 9, 11, 13, 16, 18, 19, 20, 22 and 25 in Table 4.1). It is particularly evidenced in the year of 1995, when *Half the Sky* was more frequently spotted in the headlines than any other year that follows, which can in part be explained by the occasion of the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 as a model demonstration to the wider world about Chinese women's development. In the detailed media texts of reporting on the achievements of *Half the Sky*, statistical evidence proves to be a convincing way of justifying the factuality and objectivity of such a metaphorical construction of Chinese women's identity and place. Some examples include:

目前，该市有妇女干部 3212 人，占干部总数的 23.3%。   *(1995.4.2 PD)*
At present, there are 3212 women cadres in the city, accounting for 23.3% of the whole cadre number.

培训妇女９６２８人次，培训后的再就业率达８０％。   *(1997.1.23PD）*
9,628 women have taken the training courses, and the re-employment rate after the training hits 80%.

三年来女工共提合理化建议 1234 条，采纳实施 1081 条，创经济效益 2500 多万元。

（2000.3.29 PD）
Women workers have submitted 1234 pieces of advice, among which 1081 were adopted, gaining a total profit of 25 million RMB.

据统计，西部地区参加"双学双比"活动的农村妇女达 4500 多万人次，受表彰省以上的"双学双比"女能手 9600 余人。   （2002.1.22 PD）
Statistics show that there are 45 million women participating in the "Double Study, Double Competition" programme in western region, and more than 9,600 women experts were granted provincial awards.

广州市第一人民医院有女职工 1441 人，占全院职工总数的 72.1%。   (2003.9.7 PD）
There are 1441 women employees in the Guangzhou No. 1 People's Hospital, accounting for 72.1% of the whole.

2003 年中国体育健儿共夺得世界冠军 84 个，女选手占据 49 席。   (2004.3.8 PD）
Chinese athletes won 84 world champions in 2003, among which female athletes got 49.

全县农村女党员 5000 多名，295 个村委会中，都有女干部，仅东园镇就出了 20 多个女硕士。   （2005.12.11 PD）
There are more than 5000 Women Party members in the country, and in all 295 village committees, there are women cadres. For Dongyuan town alone, there are more than 20 women with master degree.

Thirdly, the metaphorical model is also constructed as a governmental expectation on women's roles in national construction (also see Chapter Six Section 6.3). The formulaic verbal pattern of "bring into full/better play the role of women as *Half the Sky*" (see above examples 12, 18, 23 and 26 in Table 4.1) serves to highlight the prescriptive power of the

national ideology underlying the media discourse. Accordingly, *Half the Sky* slogan can be interpreted as a means of official propaganda to motivate women –whose role is "indispensable" (see following Extract 1) and "irreplaceable" (Extract 2) – to participate in "the construction of the great socialist cause of Chinese characteristics" (Extract 1) and in "the national economic construction and social construction" (Extract 2):

1）*妇女是我们国家的半边天，建设有中国特色社会主义的伟大事业，必须有妇女这支伟大力量的广泛参与和不懈奋斗。* *(1998.9.1 PD)*
Women are Half the Sky in our country. The construction of the great socialist cause of Chinese characteristics is indispensable of the wide and constant participation of women.

2）*"妇女能顶半边天"，是个形象的说法。"半边天",不仅表明妇女在人数上占有"半边"之众，而且在推动国家经济建设和社会发展中具有不可替代的作用。* *(2003.8.26 PD)*
"Women Can Hold Up Half the Sky" is a vivid metaphor. "Half the Sky", means women not only account for "half" of the population, but also for irreplaceable role in the national economic construction and social development.

In the context of the *Half the Sk*y campaign, women are encouraged to do as men do, to compete with men in every possible workplace with regard to their contribution to national construction. A synonymous phrase to *Half the Sky* – 巾帼 *jin guo* (literally refers to headscarf of women), now referring to women in contrast to men in terms of work performance/contribution is noted as having a highly frequent occurrence in the chosen corpus of print media. The salient collocations evidenced in the corpus are 巾帼英雄 *jin guo ying xiong*- women heroes, 巾帼建功 *jin guo jian gong*- women contribution, and 巾帼不让须眉 *jin guo bu rang xu mei*- women as not inferior to/as capable as men (须眉 *xu mei*-beard and brow of men, referring to men). In this sense, the phrase is more demonstrative of the *Iron Girl* qualities (see later Section 4.2.3) of masculinity and its associated fighting spirit. For instance, the metaphorical construction of fighting through war-related lexical phrases such as "battlefield" (see following Extracts 1and 4), "heroes" (Extract 1), "army", "combat" (Extract 2), "battle front" (Extract 3) and "win battles" (Extract 4) are all observed in concordance with 巾帼 *jin guo* in the print media texts, especially from the dataset of *PD*:

1）*昔日围着锅台转的河南省西华县妇女，大胆冲破家族束缚，积极投身经济建设主战场，显出了"巾帼英雄"本色。* （*1995.9.14 PD*）
Previously around the kitchen all day, these women in Xihua county of Hu'nan Province, bravely break away from the family boundary to participate actively in the main battlefield of economic construction, which reveals their nature of "Jinguo Yingxiong—Women Heroes".

2）*通过岗位练兵和技术比武提高女工素质。* （*1997.1.23 PD*）
To improve skills and quality of women workers by "army" training at work and technique "combat" (competition).

3) 在改革开放和现代化建设的各条战线、各个领域，"巾帼不让须眉"。

(2003.8.26 PD)

Jin guo bu rang xu mei –women are as not inferior to men at all on all battle front and areas of Reform and Opening up movement and modernization construction.

4) 开展适合妇女特点的"双学双比"、"巾帼建功"、"巾帼文明岗"等活动，引导广大妇女在经济建设主战场上建功立业。 *(2005.12.14 PD)*

Carry out activities of "Double Study, Double Competition", "Jin guo jian gong—Women Contribution", "Jin guo wen ming gang—Women Model Position" that are suitable for women, and guide women to win battles (make achievements) in the main battlefield of economic construction.

According to Lakoff and Johnson, metaphors "highlight and make coherent certain aspects of our experience…metaphors may create realities for us, especially social realities" (1980, p. 156). The association of women's identity with the metaphors of *"Half the Sky"* and "fight" in media discourses reveals the role of metaphor in constituting social identities and re-conceptualizing social reality. Women's identity surrounding *Half the Sky* is consequently recontextualized in the socio-political agendas and women's roles are reconceptualised as "responsibilities" (see following Extracts 2 and 3) that women "shoulder" (Extracts 1, 2 and 3) for the country. In the chosen corpus of *PD* from the period 1995, some metaphorical constructions which allude directly to this shouldering of responsibility are noted:

1) 她感到自己的肩上突然沉重起来："山区贫困，需要发展教育事业…"。

(1995PD –1)

She suddenly feels heavier (responsibility) on the shoulders, "The mountainous area in poverty needs to develop education badly."

2) 重任在肩，义无反顾。 *(1995PD –6)*

She is determined to devote herself, with heavy responsibility on the shoulders.

3) 共和国的同龄人孟秀勤挑起了密云县委书记的担子…挑好保水、富民两副重担。

(1995PD –27)

Meng Xiuqing shoulders the responsibility of the Party Secretary of Miyun County…shouldering the double burden of water-preservation and county prosperity.

With regard to the construction of women's identity as *Half the Sky*, the analysis of the data reveals that over time – from 1995 to 2005 – *PD* discourse is more invested with the national ideology of political agendas emphasizing women's work identity, whereas in the *WOC* texts, this literal phrase is mostly absent. However, in the following section the presentation of women's identity as *Half the Sky* through the construction of the link between women and nation, and the construction of the *Iron Girl* model, is also evidenced in *WOC,* especially in the period of 1995.

4.2.2 Woman & nation

As Wodak points out, there are many situations where other identities override gender identities (Wodak, 2008, p. 194). The construction of Chinese women's identity, especially their work identity, is situated within the construction of the discourse of nationhood, itself resulting from China's unique contemporary historical process. In the Mao era, as Jie points out, to participate in work and in national production was equated with women's own emancipation. It was the government and the Party who guided the movement for women's liberation and participation such as in education and work (Jie, 2008). As a result, the relationship between the individual and the nation was absolutely nation-oriented, characteristic of strong patriotism and collectivism (see Chapter Two Section 2.2). As a consequence, the print media construction of women's identity continues to carry out the campaign of *Half the Sky,* namely to integrate women's development into overall national construction. Seen as the "mouthpiece" of the government and the Party, *PD* is supposed to carry out its function of promoting the policies of the Party and advocating nationalism concerning model identity construction for mass readers. In the following extracts from the keynote speeches by former president Hu Jintao in 1998 and 2003, the close link between women and nation is explicitly reflected:

1） *中国妇女运动的历史揭示了一个深刻的道理：妇女的命运是同国家、民族的命运紧密相联的。只有跟随党积极投身于革命、建设和改革的伟大实践，妇女才能实现自身的解放、发展与进步。只有得到妇女这支伟大力量的积极支持和参与，我国革命、建设和改革事业才能取得成功*。
（1998.9.1 PD）
History of Chinese women's movement reveals a profound truth: women's destiny is closely connected with the country and nation's destiny. Only by following the Party and devoting to the great practices of revolution, construction and reforms, can women realize the emancipation and development of themselves. Only by gaining the active support and participation of women as a great power, the cause of our nation's revolution, construction and reforms can be successful.

2）*自觉地把自己的命运和国家民族的命运紧密联系在一起，在各自的岗位上积极探索、刻苦钻研、努力作出新成绩，不辜负党中央的关怀和重托*。
（2003.8.28 PD）
(Women) should consciously connect their own destiny closely to the country's and nation's destiny, to actively explore, to work diligently, and to make new achievements in each work position, so that not to let down the expectation and support from the central Party and Administration.

The link is firstly and directly revealed through the expressions of "be closely connected with" (see above Extract 1) and "connect…closely to" (Extract 2). Secondly, the appeal to historical evidence "history of Chinese women's movement reveals …" (Extract 1), and the repeated conditional clauses "only by…can…" (Extract 1) serve to further highlight the significance of the link – the Party's guidance is important for the women's movement and women's contribution is indispensable to the national construction (also see Chapter Six

Section 6.2). Thirdly, the lexical adverb "consciously", together with the verbal expression of "not to let down the expectation" (see above Extract 2), reveal that the link, or perhaps better, the governmental expectation on women is being internalized as a responsibility or affection toward the nation. For instance, in the following extracts, pairs of interesting metaphors such as "mother-child" (see following Extract 1), "water-fish" (Extract 2) amd "bird-sky" (Extract 3) are evidenced in the chosen corpus, especially from the dataset of *PD*:

1）为了报答祖国母亲的养育之恩，小如返国后立即投入科学研究工作，把所有的爱都倾注到了祖国的原子光谱化学研究中。 (1995PD –25)
To return the love of motherland for raising her, she devoted all her love to the country's atomic industry/research immediately after she returns to the country.

2） 这个将自己的得失置之度外的鸟儿，就是武汉测绘科技大学的女教授边馥苓同志，她正 在 祖 国 的 蓝 天 上 振 翅 高 飞 。 (1995PD –35)
Professor Bian Fuling from Wuhan Mapping Technology University, is flying like a bird high in the blue sky of the motherland, putting aside her own gains and losses.

3 ） " 党 组 织 是 水 我 是 鱼 。 " (2005PD –8)
The Party (CPC) is water and I am a fish.

As commonly understood, the bonding between a child and a mother, the dependence of fish on the water, and the desire of a bird for the sky, all point to the fact that the former cannot survive or develop without the support of the latter. According to Chilton and Ilyin, political metaphor is not just a linguistic embellishment but a primary means by which people make sense of the world around them (Chilton & Ilyin, 1993). In this sense, the metaphorical construction of the nation as mother, sky and water and women as child, bird and fish in the *PD* texts serves to legitimize the actions of government and the Party in interpreting socio-political issues and reveals the profound impact of nationalism on women's identity construction. The metaphors cited here also suggest that linguistic creativity is not confined to literary discourse but, as a discursive practice, is linked to power structures, sociocultural practices and everyday discourses in a given community (Carter, 2004). In order to be consistent with the view of discursive construction of women's identity heavily coloured by socio-historical ideologies and political agendas, metaphor is regarded as a product of socio-cultural framing, a matter well evidenced in my data.

With regard to the special affection of women to the nation, some scholars have offered the explanation that because of the unique political system in China, women's emancipation and rights do not arise from any bottom-up feminist movement, but rather from radical social revolution and top-down legal and administrative action, as if they were some "favor"

granted to women by a grateful socialist nation (Li, 2003) (also see earlier Chapter Two Section 2.3.1). Drawing on Baker's "corpus-driven" paradigm (Baker, 2006), relative frequencies and emerging statistically significant lexical patterns in the corpus and sub-corpora are examined, involving the following terms in focus: 女人/女性 *nü ren/ nü xing*-women, 国家 *guo jia*- nation, 党 *dang*- Party, 祖国 *zu guo*- motherland, 人民 *ren ming*- people, together with a close examination of their collocates. Concordance analysis reveals the pattern of some stronger collocations as well as some semantic preference around the key concepts such as women, nation, Party. Although at times there are no clear-cut patterns, it still appears that there are some interesting concordance trends contributing to this identity construction, underpinned by socialist national ideologies. For instance, in the chosen print media texts, especially within the *PD* corpus, expressions of "warm" (see following Extract 3) gratitude to the nation for the "favor" that women have received are evidenced:

1) <u>托共产党的福</u>，我们佤族妇<u>女才有</u>今天的平等地位，我们佤族<u>才有</u>今天的饱暖生活。

(1995PD-15)
<u>Had it not been for CPC</u> (the Party), we WA ethnic women <u>would not have obtained</u> the equal status today, we WA ethnic group <u>would not have enjoyed</u> the life of enough food and warmth.

2) <u>为了报答祖国母亲的养育之恩</u>...把她的爱全部献给了祖国和她钟爱的事业。
(1995PD-25)
In order to <u>pay the debt of gratitude to the motherland for bringing her up</u>... She <u>devotes all her love to the motherland</u> and her beloved work.

3) 每当想起上述这些，<u>我心里就涌起一股暖流</u>。国家在并不宽裕的条件下，<u>给我配备了无数好教练和好的训练设施，我们吃的、穿的、用的也几乎都是国家提供的</u>。正因为我的成功<u>离不开祖国的培养</u>，所以我在海外学成后，<u>便回国效力</u>了。
(2005WOC- S2)
Whenever I think of these, <u>I feel a warm flow from the bottom of my heart</u>. The country <u>provides me with</u> numerous good instructors and equipments despite its inadequate situation. Food, clothes, etc. <u>everything is provided by my country</u>. My success <u>cannot be achieved had it not been for the support and cultivation of the motherland</u>, so I <u>return to work for my country</u> after I complete study overseas.

In addition to the lexical noun "motherland" (see above Extract 2), the indirect and direct statement of women being "brought up by" (Extract 2) the motherland and being "provided by" the country (Extract 3) can be interpreted as justifying the act to "devote all her love to the motherland" (Extract 2) and "return to work for my country" (Extract 3). The subjunctive mood "had it not been for the Party, we…" (Extract 1) and "cannot be achieved had it not been for the support and cultivation of the motherland" (Extract 3) serves to highlight the necessity of work for the nation after they are equipped with ability – in a similar way in which the filial child is expected to take care of the older parents when he grows up. In addition to the display of gratitude, the link between women and nation is also demonstrated

through the deep affection of women for the nation/the Party/people, as evidenced in the corpus in both *PD* and *WOC* and from the period of 1995 in particular:

1) <u>与 祖 国 共 命 运 </u>的 地 质 学 家 郝 诒 纯 。
(1995WOC- 5)
Geologist Hao Yichun <u>shares her destiny with the motherland</u>

2) 她想：... <u>唤起更多的人为祖国繁荣富强而奋斗，那才更有意义！一种神圣的责任感驱使着她</u>：等 离 开 跳 伞 队 后 ， 要 改 行 搞 政 治 工 作 。
(1995WOC-6)
She thinks that ...it would <u>be more meaningful a job to inspire more people to strive for a better and richer future of the motherland. The sacred feeling of responsibility </u>urged her to participate in political work after leaving parachute team.

3) 将 <u>自 己 融 化 于 中 华 人 民 共 和 国 的 建 设 大 业 中 </u>。
(1995WOC- 12)
She <u>melts herself in</u> the grand construction cause of the PRC.

4) <u>回 报 哺 育 过 自 己 的 山 区 人 民 </u>... 对 山 区 人 民 的 <u>特 殊 感 情 </u>。
(1995WOC- 19)
...<u>to return the love to the people</u> in the mountainous area who have fostered her...<u>have very special feelings for the people</u> in the mountainous area

5) 她 <u>爱 生 她 养 她 的 祖 国 ， 爱 这 块 热 土 上 的 人 民 </u>。
(1995PD- 31)
She <u>loves the motherland who gave birth to her and fostered her, and she loves the people on this homeland.</u>

6) <u>对人民火一般的情感</u>。   *(1995PD-33)*
She has <u>strong fire-like affection for people.</u>

Since the beginning of the women's movement in China, the destiny of individuals has been closely connected to the nation's destiny (see Chapter Two Section 2.2) and, as a consequence, the realization of women's own values may be translated into the "sacred feeling of responsibility" (see above Extract 2) and the unanimous pursuit of the country's prosperity and its people's happiness. The lexical phrases of "love" (Extracts 4 and 5), "special feelings" (Extract 4) and "strong fire-like affection" (Extract 6) can be seen as justifying some internalized responsibility and actions to "share her destiny with the motherland" (Extract 1) and "melt herself in the grand construction cause of the PRC" (Extract 3). Accordingly, women's work identity is represented, and at the same time evaluated in terms of one's contribution to the nation/the Party/people, resonating with the Maoist ideology of "nation-oriented" policies urging people to be fully devoted as if 忘我忘家 *wang wo wang jia* – to forget oneself, and to forget family. In the system of such high conformity to the edicts of the Party and government, everything, no matter whether public or private, becomes political and organized.

Given that women have been pressed into the service of collective projects of national construction since the Mao era, work identity as the glorious hero to work *for* the country becomes one salient feature. We can note abundant examples of the collocations "for/to the nation/motherland" in the corpus of *PD* and *WOC* and from the period of 1995 in particular:

1) 为国家征收回税款50万元。   *(1995WOC- 2)*
To collect tax of 500000 rmb for the nation.

2) 认为参军对祖国贡献最大。   *(1995WOC- 3)*
She thinks that joining the army will contribute most to the motherland.

3) 立下了为祖国找矿的志愿。
(1995WOC- 5)
She made the resolution to find minerals for the motherland.

4) 为祖国繁荣富强而奋斗。
(1995WOC- 6)
To fight for the prosperity and growth of the motherland.

5) 积极响应国家的号召。
(1995PD-15)
To respond actively to the call of the nation.

6) 一定要把孩子培养成国家有用的人才...将来多为国家、为人民出力办事。

(1995PD- 16)
I must educate the children to become talents useful for the nation...to contribute more to the nation and to its people in the future.

7) 为国家培养出二百余位歌唱家。
(1995PD-20)
To train over 200 singers for the nation.

8) 自己能为祖国做些什么...为祖国作出了重大的贡献。   *(1995PD- 22)*
What she can do for the nation... make great contribution to the motherland.

9) 为国家减少一份负担。
(1995PD- 29)
To reduce the burden for the nation.

10) 为国家和人民做出牺牲和奉献。
(1995PD- 34)
To sacrifice for and devote to the nation and its people.

11) 为国家培养了120名本科生，30多名研究生。
(1995PD- 35)
She supervised 120 undergraduates, over 30 postgraduate students for the nation.

12) 为国家培育了20多个一流大学的研究生，博士生。   *(2005WOC- R5)*
She supervised over 20 postgraduate and PhD students of the first-class university for the nation.

13) 由于"五朵金花"主导设计了国产化第一套大型空压机组，填补了国内重大技术空白，为促进国家装备制造业发展做出了突出贡献。   *(2005 PD –5)*
The first self-made set of pressing machine apparatus designed by five Golden flowers, filled the

gap of the important technologies in the field in our nation, and made outstanding contribution to the apparatus-manufacturing industry of the nation.

In the print media texts, these outstanding women figures and their successful career achievements are not only evident in market competition but, and more importantly, they are affirmed in the form of recognition by the nation. The analysis of the above adverbial categories portrays the "emotionally-loaded" and ambivalent/sentimental constructions of attachments and "belongings" (Wodak, 2008, p. 206). In the mid-1990s, most factories and companies in China were still state-owned enterprises, and people referred to their employers as 单位 *dan wei,* referring to one's employer – a unique term for public enterprises in the context of the planned economy in China. The relation of Nation – *Dan Wei* – individual was characterized by a highly centralized top-down administration through the central Party and government. Therefore it is possible to say that to work for one's employer/ *Dan Wei* means to work for the nation. The collocation "of the nation/people" in the chosen media texts especially from the period of 1995 reveals that the construction of contemporary Chinese women's work identity is still often associated with the sense of belonging to the nation/people:

1) 作 为 一 名 国 家 的 聚 财 人 …… 对 事 业 有 着 火 热 的 心 肠 。
(1995WOC- 2)
As a money collector of the nation…she is very passionate about her work.

2) 我们是国家的执法者，我们言行举止代表政府的形象和法律的尊严。 (1995PD-5)
We are the law executors of the nation, our behaviors represent the image of the government and reputation of law.

3) 作 为 一 名 人 民 的 教 师 … 感 到 自 豪 和 充 实 。
(1995PD- 35)
As a teacher of people….feels very proud and fulfilled.

4) 人民法官…在百姓心中树起了一个人民满意的好法官的光辉形象。 (2005PD- 2)
As a judge of people …sets up a glorious image of a good judge in people's hearts.

The lexical adjectives "passionate" (see above Extract 1), "pride and fulfilled" (Extract 3) can be interpreted as reinforcing the link between women and nation in the context of *Half the Sky* campaign for women's work contributions. In addition, we may note there is a high percentage of Party Membership (see Table 4.2) as well as Army identification (see Table 4.3) among women figures reported in the "Typical Character Report" (see Vignette 4.2-(1)) in the context especially in the dataset from the period of 1995, and many of whom were awarded Titles of "优秀党员 *You Xiu Dang Yuan*- Excellent Party Member". The influence of the Party administration and ideology on identity construction is consequently demonstrated.

Table 4.2 Percentage of Party Membership Identification in the corpus

Years of Publication	No.	%	Total % by Year
1995 WOC	11	65%	
1995 PD	4	24%	1995 89%
2005 WOC	0	0%	
2005 PD	2	11%	2005 11%

Table 4.3 Percentage of Army Identification in the corpus

Years of Publication	No.	%	Total % by Year
1995 WOC	6	43%	
1995 PD	5	36%	1995 79%
2005 WOC	3	21%	
2005 PD	0	0%	2005 21%

In the context of political discourse in China, the ideology of the central Party, representing the core discourse of the nation, inevitably prevails (Jie, 2008). In order to provide a diachronic picture of the relationship between women and nation depicted in print media discourse over time, it is accordingly of interest to search for key lexical phrases explicitly denotative of nationalism and patriotism, such as "祖国 *zuo guo*-motherland" and "*爱国 ai guo*-patriotic" in the dataset. The analysis reveals that there is a conspicuously higher percentage of occurrences of these two phrases from the period of 1995 than that from the period of 2005 (see Table 4.4).

Table 4.4 Percentage of "motherland" and "patriotic" phrases in the corpus

Years of Publication	No.	%	Total % by Year
1995 WOC	10	40%	
1995 PD	12	48%	1995 88%
2005 WOC	3	12%	
2005 PD	0	0%	2005 12%

When women's public identity related with the national interest is emphasized and magnified, women's self-identity and self-awareness is more often than not neglected (Wang & Lu, 2006). As Chow, Zhang and Wang point out, Chinese women's liberation under socialism was criticized as a state-sponsored project underlined by a paternalistic discourse, because women's liberation under socialism has fostered women's dependency on the state and

hindered their self-development (Chow, Zhang, & Wang. 2004), a matter which is further discussed in Chapter Six of this thesis.

In summary, in the chosen corpus from the period of 1995 there is clearly a higher degree of occurrence of the theme of national influence especially from the dataset of *PD,* offering substantial evidence of a tight relation between women's own achievements and national development. Despite its status as a woman's magazine, in 1995 *WOC* shared similar functions to those of *PD* in promoting patriotism and nationalism. In the chosen media texts from the period of 2005, instances of relating women's individual work achievements to national development still can be noted in the *PD* texts, however the frequency of such linkage is much lower than that from the period of 1995. The decreasing occurrence of nationalist discourse on women's identity construction from the period of 2005, and in the dataset of *WOC* in particular, reveals the further influence of the market economy, the increasing liberalism of government policies and the emerging ideologies of individualism. According to some feminist scholars, the economic reform and opening up policies brought in their wake a loosening of the nation's ideological monopoly, and as a consequence a diversification of the paradigmatic women's identity (Barlow, 1991; Rofel, 1999; Wang, 1999). This is a topic which will be further discussed in a later section of this chapter (see Section 4.2.4). In the next section, a vivid instantiation of Chinese women holding up *Half the Sky* is investigated through the model of *Iron Girl* identity and its associated qualities, something which is still evidenced in the chosen corpus of this study.

4.2.3 Model of 铁姑娘 *tie gu niang – Iron Girl*

In the Mao era, as pointed out by Wu, the construction of women's work identity was based on a male standard in which women tried to compete with men in shouldering the same responsibilities and making the same contributions to the state, and as a consequence, gaining recognition of their equal social status (Wu, 2003). Women's identity was in effect "de-sexualized" or "masculinized" (Yang, 2004), not only in the monotonous appearance of short-hair and basic choices of blue/grey work uniforms but also in the spirit of *fire*-passion and *iron*-determination in the context of socialist national construction to keep up with male comrades, as is pointed out by Teng:

"*革命有真革命、假革命之分，根本没有男女之分。*"
"For revolutions, there is a difference between real or fake ones, but no difference between   men   and   women.

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（Teng, 1966）

Especially in the Great Leap Forward period, the nation adopted the policy of "*女替男 nü ti nan,* women to fill up male absence*"* in some sections of production to ease the tensions arising from an inadequate labor force (Ma, 1958). To answer the call of the nation "focusing on heavy industrial construction", women entered professions and practices that they had never entered previously (Deng, 1991). More and more women participated in the frontiers of heavy industrial production lines including mining, mechanics, chemistry, construction and transportation, all of which used to be male preserves. There was the first woman train driver, the first postwoman, the first woman pilot, the first woman miner, along with other "firsts" reported in *WOC* and other print media during that time. In the context of promoting women's contribution through an unprecedented *Half the Sky* campaign, the model of "*铁姑娘 tie gu niang, Iron Girl"* was established as women heroes to urge women to "*苦干、猛干、为钢铁而战* work diligently and fully, and fight for iron and steel" (*WOC*, 1966). During that period, media discourses are replete with typical images of these *Iron Girls* and "*女闯将 Women Pathbreakers"*. Some examples include:

"*冰天不嫌冷，下雪不停工，骨断不哼声，流血不叫疼*"。　　—*铁姑娘大战荒砂*
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　(1958.11.11PD)
"*...fearless of cold in winter, non-stop work in snowy weather, no groan when breaking the bones, no scream when bleeding.*"　　　　—*Iron Girls Combating the Wasted Desert*

"*连续五个夜晚，挑水抗旱不歇肩*"。　　　　　　　　—*科学实验的女闯将*
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　(1973.03.01PD)
"*...carry loads of water to combat draught, with no rest of shoulders at all, for five successive nights.*"　　　　　　　　　—*Women Pathbreakers in Scientific Experiments*

Speaking of women heroes, Mulan[9] is one well-known woman hero in ancient Chinese history who entered the field of battle under the mask of masculine armour. In Maoist ideology, the contemporary version of Mulan is presented as *Iron Girl,* seen as a woman warrior unyieldingly fighting for national construction. Originally, the metaphorical model "*Iron Girl"* was advanced to glorify the spirit of "*一不怕苦，二不怕死*—fearless of hardship and fearless of death" of "*青年女子突击队– Young Women Shock Brigade*" in the grand production movement during the Great Leap Forward period (Jin, 2006). There was no implication here to either compete with men or challenge traditional labor divisions. However, as a consequence of the later sweeping implementation of Mao's statement of "Anything a

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[9] Hua Mulan is a legendary figure from ancient China who was originally described in a Chinese poem known as *the Ballad of Mulan*. In the poem, Hua Mulan takes her aged father's place in the army. She fought for twelve years and gained high merit, but she refused any reward and retired to her hometown instead.

man can do, a woman can also do", the *"Iron Girl"* model was transformed into a sharp weapon to challenge the feudal Confucian oppression on women's roles, giving rise to a heated movement on a large scale to subvert the traditional labor division and even to challenge the physical potential of women (Yao, 2007).

In the chosen corpus of *PD* and *WOC*, the literal phrase *Iron Girl* is almost absent, except for one extract in *PD* from the period of 1995, with the news story actually dating back to 1974:

> 李蕙莲来到林场，带领２０名女青年，建起了专管开山造林的<u>铁姑娘队</u>。
>
> <div align="right">(1995 <i>PD</i>- 19)</div>
> *Li came to the timber land with 20 young women, and established <u>the team of Iron Girls </u>in charge*
>   *of afforestation in the mountains.*

However, despite the literal disappearance of the term *Iron Girl*, conspicuous constructs of *Iron Girl* since the Mao era, such as masculinity in appearance and at work, fighting spirit of diligence, unfailing energy, unyielding will to overcome difficulty, and competition with men, can all still be evidenced in the dataset of *PD* and *WOC* and particularly from the period of 1995.

To elucidate this point, a combination of conceptual metaphor study and critical discourse analysis can provide a more comprehensive framework within which to explain the function of metaphors surrounding the constructs of *Iron Girl* in the Chinese print press.

Firstly, masculinity concerning the appearance of outstanding women as reported in the chosen media texts is presented through expressions such as "short hair" (see following Extracts 1 and 3), "sharp eyes" (Extract 1), "swarthy face" (Extract 2) and "sword brows" (Extract 4) all being typical depictions of the Iron Girl image from the Mao era. Some examples include:

> 1）中等个儿，<u>一头短发，锐利的目光</u>中蕴含着祥和，慈善的脸庞上<u>镶刻着刚毅</u>。
>
> <div align="right">(1995PD-6)</div>
> *She is middle height with <u>short hair, sharp eyes</u> with peace, kind face <u>engraved with iron will</u>.*
>
> 2）面前的这位女性，身着佤族传统的服装，<u>佩带着精致而美丽的银饰，丁当作响</u>。最引人注意的，却是她那张<u>晒得黝黑黝黑的脸</u>。
> *(1995PD-15)*
> *The woman in front of us is wearing the traditional WA ethnic costume, and <u>delicate and beautiful</u>*
> <u>*tingling silver decorations.*</u> *What's most eye-catching is her <u>suntanned swarthy face</u>.*
>
> 3）王小如，淡妆、<u>短发</u>，<u>衣着简朴</u>，鼻梁上架着一副眼镜，平常得简直让你无法说出她有什么特别来，可是在厦门大学师生的心目里，她是<u>一个颇具传奇的女中豪杰</u>。
> *(1995PD-25)*

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Wang Xiaoru, wearing light make-up, <u>short hair and simple dress</u>, with a pair of glasses on her nose.

4）一双<u>剑眉</u>下<u>大大的丹凤眼</u>，透着自信、诚恳和<u>刚强</u>。　　　　　*(2005 PD-4)*
A pair of <u>big Danfeng eyes</u> under her <u>sword-like brows,</u> is shining with <u>confidence, earnestness and strong will</u>.

"不爱红装爱武装 prefer armor over feminine attire" was a politically correct standard lexical phrase for evaluating women's attitudes toward revolutions – as "correct" or "incorrect" (Liu, 1999). According to Evans, masculinised women, and conforming personal appearance between genders became a social revolutionary ideal in the Mao era, because any touch of femininity at that time would have been condemned as immoral and bourgeois (Evans, 1997).

In the above extracts we also note in this context that masculine appearance is usually depicted as connected with "iron will" (see above Extract 1) or "strong will" (Extract 4) of women's identity, both further reflected in the following extracts through the metaphorical construction of women as *warrior*, *fire* and *iron*. These metaphors associated with masculinized qualities can be interpreted as ways of maintaining the Maoist ideology on women's work identity in the print media of *PD* and *WOC*. Firstly data analysis findings suggest a dominance of the metaphor – *"woman is a warrior"* , which is realized through various lexical words of "battle" (see following Extracts 1, 8 and 10), "general" (Extracts 2 and 6), "battlefield" (Extract 3 and 6), "army" (Extract 4), "declare war" (Extract 5), "launch the attack" (Extract 7), "win victory" (Extract 9), "veteran warrior" (Extract 10), demonstrating the fighting spirit of women's identity especially at the workplace:

1）自己生平第一次<u>率队出省作战</u>，面临的挑战十分<u>严峻</u>!　　　　*(1995WOC-1)*
This is the first time for her t<u>o lead the team to battle outside the province</u> in confrontation of very severe challenges.

2）总指挥董彩霞像<u>一位叱咤风云的将军</u>。　　　　*(1995WOC- 4)*
Director Dong Caixia is like <u>a general who is riding the whirlwind.</u>

3）"这里是一个<u>新的战场</u>。"　　　　*(1995WOC- 9)*
This is <u>a new battlefield</u>.

4）方长铨得知，主动<u>请缨</u>。　　　　*(1995PD –18)*
Fang Changquan <u>volunteer for the army (</u>the project as soon as she knows.

5）使吴英萍坚定了向类风湿病魔<u>宣战</u>的决心。　　　　*(1995PD –31)*
This makes Wu Yingping determined to <u>declare war on</u> the rheumatoid disease.

6）全聚德<u>杀出个"杨门女将"</u>。　　　　*(2005WOC- B3)*
There is <u>a female general from the battlefield</u>.

7）但面对机遇，靳任任决定<u>大胆出击</u>。　　　　*(2005WOC-B4)*
Jin Renren decides to <u>boldly launch the attack</u> facing opportunities.

8）在征战国际影坛的道路上，必须承认，我付出过常人难以想象的努力。
(2005WOC-C9)
On my road of <u>tournament battles</u> in international show biz, I have to say that I paid the efforts that is hard to imagine.

9）王广兰凭着技术实力和细腻的攻心术打了一场成功的遭遇战。 *(2005PD –4)*
Wang Guanglan <u>wins a victory of an encountered action</u> by her skill and carefulness.

10）几乎个个是"战功累累"的"老将"。 *(2005PD-6)*
(They are) <u>veteran warriors of numerous battle achievements.</u>

The warrior-metaphor permeates the discourse on women models in the print media at both time points of 1995 and 2005. The conceptual metaphorical construction of combat/battle often occurs in political discourse in an emphasis of nationalism, or determination for victory (Charteris-Black, 2005). In the context of this study, the metaphor acts to inspire the efforts and determination of women to conquer the difficulties at work, as if in face of some battle-like challenge. Accordingly the urgency and importance of women's work contribution and work identity is emphasized, potentially appealing to readers' sense of responsibility and patriotism.

Secondly, in contrast to the traditional femininity of "*柔顺如水 rou shun ru shui,* slow and tender as water", the contrasting metaphors of "*woman is fire*" and "*woman is thunder*", are evidenced in the following extracts to construct a masculinized image concerning women's passion and determination at work:

1）她风风火火地穿梭在高山峻岭之中。 *(1995WOC- 3)*
She is <u>efficient and passionate as wind and fire</u>.....

2）董彩霞风风火火地下去了。 *(1995WOC- 4)*
Dong Caixia is <u>efficient and passionate as wind and fire.</u>

3）女书记雷厉风行的作风，使人们震惊了。 *(1995WOC- 17)*
Her manner of <u>being a general, thunder quick and wind sharp</u> shocks people.

4）言必行，行必果，说干就干，雷厉风行是刘崇明的一贯作风。 *(1995WOC –19)*
It is always her manner of <u>being a general, thunder quick and wind sharp</u>.

5）就能感受到她犀利敏锐、雷厉风行的大将风度。 *(1995PD –23)*
Her manner of <u>being a general, thunder quick and wind sharp</u> can be felt.

6）工作中风风火火的王英杰。
(2005PD –5)
Wang Yingjie is<u>efficient and passionate as wind and fire</u> at work.

The idiomatic phrases "*风风火火 feng feng huo huo,* efficient and passionate as wind and fire" and "*雷厉风行 lei li feng xing,* efficient as thunder quick and wind sharp" serve to create an

unorthodox impression of women's gender identity in terms of work efficiency. In the Mao era, especially in the frantic Great Leap Forward period, "*一万年太久，只争朝夕* – to seize the day, seize the hour" was put forward by Mao Zedong (Mao, 1963) to urge people to race against time in national construction and development to catch up with other developed countries. In the post-Mao era, President Hu Jintao also pointed out in a speech that, "women should study harder with intense responsibility and a sense of urgency" (1998.9.1, *PD*). In the chosen corpus especially from the period of 1995, other salient metaphorical constructions such as "*woman is a running horse*" (see following Extracts 1, 2 and 3) and "*women is a clock fully wound up*" (Extract 1) are also evidenced, again reflecting the unfailing energy associated with women's work identity:

1）县长董彩霞又马不停蹄地跑开了。...她就像一架上紧了发条的钟表，永远不知疲倦地奔忙着、工作着。   *(1995WOC- 4)*
The head of the country Dong Caixia started working right away again, like a running horse without a halt. ...She was tirelessly busy working, as if she were a clock fully wound up.

2）她又马不停蹄地跑银行。   *(1995WOC- 7)*
She went to negotiate with the banks like a running horse without a halt.

3）办完事又马不停蹄赶往顺德。   *(1995PD-35)*
(She) headed for Shunde as soon as she finished the work here, just like a running horse without a halt.

Thirdly, another projection of *Iron Girl* offers an additional facet on contemporary women's work identity – that of unyielding will – as is reflected in the chosen print media texts through the metaphor of "*woman is iron*":

1) 大草原上的暴风雪铸造了她坚毅的性格。
      (1995WOC- 17)
Snow storm in the pasture land cast her strong personality.

2) 10 年领导阅历，铸就了她的卓越才干。   *(1995WOC- 19)*
10 years of leadership experience cast her outstanding ability.

3）笨重的体力劳动耗干了她们身上的"油"，艰辛的架桥生活磨光了她们身上的"锈"。
(1995WOC- 20)
Heavy labor work consume their "oil", arduous bridge construction work polish the rust off them.

4）长期扎根山区，铸就了她不甘人后的精神。   *(1995PD-27)*
Long rooted in the mountainous area, she was cast the competitive spirit.

5）侯晶晶身边的人都说她"意志如钢"。   *(2005PD –9)*
People around Hou Jinjing all said that she had a will as steady as steel.

Verbal expressions such as "cast her strong personality" (see above Extract 1), "cast her outstanding ability" (Extract 2) and "cast the competitive spirit" (Extract 3) can be seen as

resonating with the essence of *Iron Girl* model – see the choices of "iron" referring to being of an unyielding and "steady" (Extract 5) will when confronting difficulties. This unyielding spirit is also highlighted in the chosen corpus through the conceptual metaphors of "*吃苦 chi ku*, eat bitterness" (see following Extracts 1 and 2) and "*啃 ken*, bite bit by bit" (Extracts 3 and 4):

1）她硬是凭着一股吃苦的劲…   *(1995WOC- 11)*
She persistently eats bitterness…

2）她 以 " 最 能 吃 苦 " 著 称 。
(1995PD-3)
She is known for her spirit of "eating bitterness".

3）硬是以蚂蚁啃骨头的精神攻下了英语。   *(1995PD-9)*
She mastered English with spirit of biting the bones bit by bit like ants.

4）她硬是把大学本科课程啃完了，现在又参加了研究生班学习。   *(2005PD –8)*
She "bites" bit by bit all the courses of bachelor diploma and now participated in postgraduate study again.

Last but not least, the ambition to compete with men, as a specific legacy of women's identity from the *Iron Girl* era, is also evidenced in the corpus from the period of 1995.

1）我们每一位女干部在干工作时，在和困难做斗争时，要有和男同志一样的坚韧毅力、果敢精神。   *(1995WOC- 16)*
When we work and combat difficulty, each of our woman comrades, should have the strong will and determined courage as male comrades do.

2）王招英和姐妹们却憋足了劲儿非要和小伙子们比个高低。   *(1995WOC-12)*
Wang Zhaoying and other sisters were determined to compete with their young male counterparts.

3）她与身强体壮的男同事着劲干，毫不逊色。   *(1995PD-32）*
She competes with her male colleagues of strong physique, and is not inferior at all.

However, in the Mao era, the equality between genders based on a male standard disregards the biological gender difference between women and men, and the cost of aspiring to such equality might well go beyond women's expectation. In the context of political propaganda urging people "*忘我忘家* to forget self and to forget family" with regard to their devotion to the national construction, these *Iron Girls* try to do "what men can do" and work excessively regardless of personal "trifling matters" such as family life, individual likings, even one's health condition (Hu & Liu, 2006). According to Li, many *Iron Girls* from the Mao era suffered severe physical pain and chronic illness from overwork (Li, 2008). In the dataset from the period of 1995, three out of 20 occurrences (*WOC*) and seven out of 35 occurrences (*PD*) mention poor health of those contemporary outstanding women figures. However, the poor health condition resulting from overwork is reported either explicitly or implicitly as a

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way of magnifying women's heroic work identity in terms of achievements and contribution to the nation. Some examples include:

1）<u>因病被迫放下工作</u>到医院检查, 医生诊断她已患乳腺癌。　　　　*(1995WOC- 3)*
Owing to the health problems, she was <u>forced to put work aside</u> to go to the hospital, and she was diagnosed with breast cancer.

2）<u>因连续工作</u>，翟北安患上了急性胆囊炎。 *(1995PD- 7)*
<u>Because of continuous work without rest</u>, Zhai Bei'an had acute cholecystitis.

3）经常<u>因工作</u>而<u>耽误了</u>吃饭。　　　　　　　　　　　*(1995PD- 26)*
(She) <u>delays meal time frequently because of work.</u>

4）长年的<u>工作操劳</u>和生活不规律，不仅让金桂兰得了乳腺癌，胆结石。 *(2005PD- 2)*
<u>Overwork</u> and irregular living habits over years, made Jin Gulan a victim of breast cancer and gall-stones.

5）已经<u>工作</u>了两个通宵的陈光明。　　　　　　　　　　*(2005PD- 3)*
Cheng has <u>worked continuously for two days and nights.</u>

6）每天起早<u>贪黑</u>超负荷地<u>工作</u>。　　　　　　　　　　*(2005PD- 4)*
(She) <u>gets up very early to work excessively till midnight everyday</u>.

To sum up, traces of *Iron Girl* qualities from the Mao era, as is evidenced in the chosen corpus of print media *PD* and *WOC,* can be well summarized by the following extract from president Hu Jintao's speech – *To Bring into Full Play the Role of Women as Half the Sky in the Historical Progress of Our Nation's Cross-Century Development* – in the 8th Women's National Congress Meeting in 1998:

<u>希望</u>广大妇女<u>自强不息、艰苦奋斗，为深化改革和促进经济发展贡献更大的力量</u>。…. 各行各业的广大妇女，都要进一步焕发<u>劳动热情</u>，努力做到<u>勤勉敬业、埋头苦干、学赶先进、锐意进取</u>……要努力做到<u>热爱祖国、关心集体、热心公益、自觉奉献、做到艰苦创业、开拓进取、知难而进、自强不息、做到遵纪守法、诚实守信、崇尚科学、爱岗敬业。坚决抵制拜金主义、享乐主义、个人主义和封建迷信</u>…广大妇女要以<u>强烈的责任感和紧迫感</u>，以<u>坚忍不拔的毅力和持之以恒的精神努力加强学习</u>。
——在实现我国跨世纪发展的历史进程中充分发挥妇女的半边天作用—在中国妇女第八次全国代表大会上的祝词　胡锦涛（1998.9.1 PD）
We <u>expect</u> women to <u>constantly strive to be stronger, to endure hardships, work diligently</u> to <u>make a bigger contribution</u> to deepening the reforms and advancing economic development…All women from various fields and professions should further <u>ignite their passion for work</u>, to be <u>diligent, professional, and enterprising</u>…Women should be <u>patriotic, caring for the collective interest, caring for public charity, of sacrificial spirit, diligent and enterprising, creative and fearless of difficulty, constantly striving to be stronger, observing discipline and obeying the law, honest to keep one's word, to uphold science, faithful to work and profession. We must <u>resist vigorously materialism, hedonism, individualism and feudal superstition</u>…Women should <u>study harder with intense responsibility and a sense of urgency, with unwavering determination and persistence.</u>
——To Bring into Full Play the Role of Women as Half the Sky in the Historical Progress of Our Nation's Cross-Century Development, a Congratulation speech by President HU Jintao in the 8th Women's National Congress Meeting.

From the above long list of "expectations" of the Party and the government on women's identity construction and development (also see Chapter Six Section 6.3.1), the metaphors *PD* chooses and highlights in presenting outstanding women's work identity is consequently more revealing of the stance of *PD* as a mouthpiece of the government, passing on the "*Iron Girl*" propaganda ideology from the Mao era in the context of contemporary socio-politcal agendas. For Durant and Lambrou,

> In between the events and reports or stories, there would be a set of creative and editorial processes for giving form to whatever events and actions are depicted. News, in this view, serves an agenda. It can use its own framing and storytelling techniques to highlight issues, to campaign, or to criticize, to celebrate, to promote forthcoming events, or to attract attention to or distract attention from other events. (Durant &Lambrou, 2009, p. 86)

In order to appreciate the selectiveness of this material, as well as the point of view created by emphasis, sequencing and chosen style, it is necessary to understand the construction, or rather the rhetoric, of media discourse. According to van Dijk, an important principle for CDA is that analysis of texts should not be artificially isolated from analysis of institutional and discoursal practices within which texts are embedded (van Dijk, 1988). Therefore in the next section of Vignette 4.2-(1), the unique genre of *PD* in reporting on model identities – 典型人物报道 *dian xing ren wu bao dao,* Typical Character Report is discussed.

Vignette 4.2-(1) "高大全 *gao da quan-High, Big, Complete*" – Typical Character Report

As Kress points out, the processes of communication always take place in a specific social and cultural setting, and the structures of power, of authority, as well as the structures of solidarity, exert their influence on the participants (Kress, 1988). For Fairclough, power is conceptualized both in terms of asymmetries between participants in discourse events, and in terms of unequal capacity to control how texts are produced, distributed and consumed in particular socio-cultural contexts (Fairclough, 1995). As early as in the Mao era, newspapers were defined by Mao Zedong as a tool to "organize people and to propagandize policies, routes and guidelines of the Party" (Mai, 2006). As an important and special component of the state print media, "典型人物报道 Typical Character Report" is of unique Chinese characteristics as a propaganda genre/tool to guide the mass media and to promote typical ideal models from top – the Party/government – to bottom – the mass readers. It has exerted a far-reaching influence on ordinary people in terms of socio-political ideology and recognition,

as in China, hundreds of typical characters and heroic models have been established since 1949 by such reports to be known to the public, and inspired people with faith and power of personality, such as *雷锋 Leifeng*，*张海迪 Zhang Haidi*，*徐虎 Xuhu*. As Li states, Typical Character Report was regarded as "the living spirit of the era, of social perceptions and political ideologies", presenting to the readers a "media version" of China's history (Li, 1989, p. 249). In the context of this, media representation of typical identity models is closely linked with socio-political influence from the outset.

Consequently, as a unique mirror or symbol of Chinese society, such a Report reveals the interactive dynamic process of media, reader, the nation and society (Mai, 2006). Historically speaking, Typical Character Report in China has been through periods of "*政治典型* Political Typical Model" during 1940-1950, "*媒体造神运动* Deity by Mass Movement" during 1960-1970, "*改革发轫* Beginning of Reforms" since early 1980s, "*向现代形象表达的转变* Shift to Express Modernity"since mid-1990s, and "*传播手法的组合式突破* Breakthrough of Combined Ways of Mass Communication" since 2000 (Mai & Jia, 2007).

Whenever speaking of a typical character in media discourse, the print media tend, intentionally, to extract and elaborate on the points of work spirit, with the person highlighted always falling into the category of "fully devoted to work, day and night, forget about meals and sleep, forget about spouse and kids, regardless of health and illness, and sometimes finally die in his/her position of work" (Ou, 2006). However, as Li argues, the monotonous formulaic pattern of Typical Character Report and uniform personality of model characters reported as "*高大全 gao da quan,* High, Big, Complete" stereotypes left readers with the impressions of "perfect", "distant", "statue", "deity" and "waxwork" (Li, 2009).

Nevertheless, such flat and monotonous reports of "unreal" stereotypes filled with some surreal ultimate morality do not sell nowadays among readers and invite criticism of their credibility. Instead, mass readers expect to read more convincing multi-dimensional reports of true personalities of the era seen from their grass-roots aspects (see Chapter Six Section 6.3.1). Features of individual personality in daily life, such as hobbies, personal feeling and love, even one's shortcomings, are what make readers believe and become interested. This new requirement and shift of focus in the typical character report is evidenced in the corpus under study, especially by contrasting the datasets from the period of 1995 and 2005. For example, in the dataset of *WOC* from the period of 2005, "first person" pronoun is prevalently adopted to create a closer relationship between the readers and the writer,

something quite rare in the dataset from the period of 1995. Examples in the following sections of new themes such as the work/family dilemma and emerging self-awareness as are evidenced in the corpus of typical character reports especially in the dataset of *WOC* from the period of 2005, will further demonstrate to us the shifting focus of such reports.

As the biggest national newspaper in China, *PD* paid much attention to promoting women's status and glorifying working women, however, it did not address and care for women from a genuine feminist perspective. Rather, the campaign of "women and men are the same" in the Mao era arose mostly out of a political agenda to evoke passion from women and to mobilize them for participation in national construction (Yao, 2007). Apparently, women were no longer portrayed in the media texts as traditional housewives dependent upon men, as they joined in competition with men at work. However, media presentation of women's full devotion to the national revolution and production highlights the fact of women's affiliation to the state. In incorporating women's interests in broader class definitions and aligned with the wider political aims of national construction, the special interests and self-identity of women were neglected. Accordingly, it is possible to suggest that the *Half the Sky* campaign on women's work identity has had a double-sided impact: on one hand, it certainly promotes women's liberation and gender equality through the construction and emphasis of women's work identity, on the other, women's femininity and self-identity is submerged within a male standard and the national political agenda. However, as discussed earlier, the transformation of Typical Character Report is also evidenced in *PD* since the 1980s, when there has been a revisiting of the previous "Men and women are the same" campaign. For instance, in the next section, transformation of work models from *Iron Girl* qualities to a diversity of new characteristics of women's work identity is examined and evidenced through data from the chosen corpus.

4.2.4 Transformation of work models

With the deepening of the reform and market economy since late 1990s, as well as an increasing liberal atmosphere of cultural coexistence, the ongoing re-construction of social structure and value systems has become a complex and dynamic process. Against such a backdrop of hybridity and diversity, the Typical Character Report moves from the high "deity" stereotypes down to richer, more personalized portraits of the "human" (Su, 2007).

As Mai argues, mainstream values are being marginalized in favour of increasing liberalism

and emerging individualism in the media discourses (Mai, 2006). Analysis of the chosen corpus, especially of the columns of *"How to Achieve Success", "Cover Story"* and *"Business Women"* in *WOC* from the period of 2005, illustrates to us the new definition of being a successful woman in contemporary China, characterized by the rising individualism and feminist development.

Firstly, the work model of women as *Iron Girl* is substituted by a variety of women identities, among which there is a new and different category of the successful career model – "白骨精 *bai gu jin"*, a beautiful female monster's name in a well-known myth novel 西游记 *Journey to the West*. It now refers to "women who are white-collar, backbone, and elite". In the eyes of these outstanding career women, the previous images of career "女强人 superwoman" associated with masculine qualities is now dispreferred. As pointed out by one of the journalists (cf Z's narratives in Chapter Seven) in the interviews of the study, the major difference between 白骨精 *bai gu jin* and 女强人 superwoman is that the former combines beautiful and charming femininity with successful career achievements, whereas the latter has often been criticized for being "un-womanly" in some ways from a femininity perspective. The difference is well presented in the print media texts especially through the pictorial analysis on *WOC* covers which is discussed in the later Section 4.5.2. Another newly-evolved term for superwoman in China is 女汉子 *nu han zi*, female man, which is a very popular label in media discourses during the past couple of years, referring to women with strong body and independent personality.

Secondly, in the wake of reforms and opening up, a growing diversity of women's professions and images comes to be presented in the media. A shift away from the production line of traditional work models to fields that are closely linked with people's spiritual and cultural life such as the entertainment professions of actress, singer, anchorwoman, and popular sports stars, now we see projected a new fashion identity for contemporary Chinese women (Bai, 2006) as evidenced in the chosen corpus of this study. In the dataset from the period of 1995, typical character reports on women's identity cover professions such as head of a county, mayor, secretary of the Party sub-committee, officer in the army or police force, professors and scientists, judges and legal officers, among which there is a high percentage of political figures from the Party and civil servants from the government as typical work models. In the dataset from the period of 2005, especially in *WOC,* pure work models in production no longer dominate the print media texts. We note here clearly how the covers of *WOC* are filled with beautiful, fashionable and sexy women professionals. However, typical

women characters in *PD* continue to involve similar professions of mayor, professor, scientist, engineer and athlete in 2005 as in the 1995 dataset. According to Sun, with the abolition of the government-arranged employment in the planned economic system, women began to have more freedom to pursue their careers so that many urban women left their 单位 *dan wei* to start their own businesses, and many rural women have come into cities looking for labor work (Sun, 2004). In addition, there are more women working in professional and middle level business activities in recent years.

Thirdly, comparing the modifiers in the analysis of concordance patterns of the lexical term "success" between the 1995 and 2005 datasets, despite the highly frequent occurrence of some common qualities such as "unyielding, diligent, determined, and persistent" as qualities of the "*Iron Girl*" legacy, some new key factors of success such as "proactiveness" (see following Extracts 1 and 2), "health", "networking" (Extract 3), "likings" (Extract 4), "luck" and "savvy" (Extract 5) are evidenced in the dataset of *WOC* from the period of 2005, reflecting a more "human" perspective of a contemporary society under the influence of individualism and liberalism:

1）我的幸福是<u>争来</u>的。 *(2005WOC- S1)*
My happiness is gained by my <u>proactiveness</u>.

2）大凡都是<u>争取</u>到的。 （*2005WOC- S8*）
Most (successes) are won by being <u>proactive</u>.

3) 有了<u>健康</u>，想要多大的成功都有希望...聚焦<u>人脉资源</u>为成功推波助澜。
（*2005WOC –S10*）
<u>Health</u> is the guarantee for any success...<u>Networking</u> is helpful for success.

4） <u>做 喜 欢 的 事 情</u> ， 是 一 切 成 功 的 基 础 。
(2005WOC- S11)
<u>To do what you like</u> is the foundation of all successes.

5） <u>好 运 气</u> 加 上 <u>不 怕 苦</u> 再 加 上 <u>悟 性</u> 等 于 成 功 。
(2005WOC- C4)
<u>Good luck</u>, plus <u>hard-work</u>, and <u>savvy</u> will lead to success.

An emerging self-awarenss is also evidenced in the transformation of work models through the shift from nation-oriented work identity – "for/to the nation" (see earlier Section 4.2.2) to self-oriented work identity- "to do what you like" (Extract 4) (also see later Section 4.5.5). In the datasets from the period of 1995 in both *PD* and *WOC*, the fulfillment of work mostly came from patriotic pride in contributing to national construction, while in the dataset from the period of 2005, the fulfillment diversifies as many career women begin to follow their own "interest" (see following Extract 2) and feelings for self-value realization "at inner

heart" (Extract 3) (also see Section 4.5.1). Some examples include:

1) *投身于<u>自己一手开创的</u>事业中，洪怡华<u>依旧忙碌并快乐着。</u>*   (2005WOC- R2)
Devoted to her enterprise <u>established by herself,</u> Hong Yihua was <u>happy and busy.</u>

2) *兴 趣 又 转 移 了 ， 她 <u>喜 欢 上 了</u> 电 视 制 作 和 主 持 人 工 作 。*
(2005WOC-R8)
Her <u>interest</u> changed again, she <u>started to fall in love with</u> the job of TV production and anchoring.

3) *我 很 <u>看 重 生 活 和 工 作 在 我 内 心 的 某 种 激 情 碰 撞</u> 。*
 (2005WOC- S9)
I <u>value the collision of sparkles between life and work at my inner heart</u>.

To sum up, through a diachronic and comparative analysis of the corpus between 1995 and 2005, with the complex transformation of the nation and its rapid economic development, various levels of Chinese society are undergoing radical change with a once dominant value system shifting from the old to the new. The transformation of Chinese women's work identity from *Iron Girls* to a more contemporary model of *白骨精 bai gu jin* reveals a weakening association of women's work identity with the discourse of nationhood, linked to an increasing influence of feminist development and individualism. Through a synchronic comparative analysis of the corpus between *PD* and *WOC*, *WOC* texts, especially from the period of 2005, reflect a more up-to-date version of the socio-cultural construction of women's identity, whereas *PD* persists in its function of propagandizing political agendas of the Party and the government through the restored presentation of *Iron Girl* qualities in the news texts. In the next section, the presentation of women's family identity in media discourses and a mythical representation of the family system in media is investigated, regarding the influence of traditional gender ideology and contemporary socio-political agendas.

4.3 Family Identity – Harmonious Family in a *Harmonious Society*

As was pointed out earlier in Chapter Two Section 2.2.3, *Harmonious Society* as a guiding principle was originated in 2004 by Hu Jintao, the President of China at that time, as a response to and contrast with the rigid conformity of the previous Cultural Revolution period (1966-1976), during which all aspects of social behaviour and aspirations were unified, for example on dress, together with the collective pursuit of unanimous dreams of national prosperity and stability. As Hu points out, harmony represents conformity within diversity. The idea of a harmonious society was one which advocates tolerance and respect for the co-existence of diverse ideologies, cultures, and identities. It derives from the essence of history-

honored Confucianism, in which harmonious interpersonal relationships and harmonious co-existence between humans and Nature is regarded as the ultimate solution to everything (Hu, 2005, p. 10). The principle was put forward against the backdrop of radical and complex social transformations that China was going through as a result of the rapid growth of the market economy, and overwhelming globalization pressure.

The "Harmonious Society" campaign from the Chinese administration is having a far-reaching impact on gender identity and gender relationships, and is acting to restore the traditional ideology of being a good wife and mother as a contribution to a harmonious family, and as a consequence works to ensure the stability of society at large (see Chapter Two Section 2.3.1). In China, women have gone through periods of radical liberation from a rigid home-bound past before the Mao era, a whole-hearted devotion to work for the nation during the Mao era, and a substantial development of democracy and the emergence of liberalism and individualism after the Mao era. The traditional definition of women's role in the domestic sphere persists, however, in terms of both social expectations and women's own self-discipline. As to the media representation drawn from the chosen corpus under study, when media texts write about successful career women their family roles are often covered, revealing the fact that women's family identity is an indispensable standard of evaluating her success. As Shen argues, a woman must be either handling both work and family roles well, or must feel guilty about the inadequate fulfillment of her family role, which will then make her story complete (Shen, 2005, p. 304). Such an impact of traditional gender ideology on women's family role is more conspicuously evidenced in the dataset of *PD* from the period of 1995 than in *WOC* from the period of 2005.

4.3.1 Woman & family

As Kiesling points out, gender identity is a performance that is understood in a complex context that includes not only the immediate speech event, but also knowledge of cultural expectations of gender and knowledge of social structures (Kiesling, 2001). Accordingly, it is of interest for us to take a closer look at the historical organization of family patterns in China and its development. As a basic and important unit of society, a traditional family unit used to be quite large, with the emphasis on authority and stability under a strict patriarchical system – family members must obey the decision of the eldest male family member. This was exactly the setting in which women used to live out their lives in the long history of feudalism before the advent of the 20th century. As subordinates of men, women did not go,

like their fathers, husbands and brothers, out of home to the fields, the marketplace, or the workplace. Rather, they were confined to the domestic sphere of the home, as this was the place for her whole activities and the only place to realize her "values" of being a "silenced" servant or a housewife (Li, 2003).

The revolution waged in the 1800s and 1900s by China's capitalist class was instrumental in eliminating a feudal society – and with it the patriarchal family system. During the May 4th Movement, the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal, political and cultural movement in 1919, China's forefathers vehemently attacked the old code of ethics by which most families lived. The ensuing laws and regulations promoted the basic principles of freedom of marriage and monogamy, leaving a great impact on traditional Chinese families (ACWF, 1981) (also see earlier Sections 2.2.1 and 2.3.1.1 in Chapter Two).

The new government of the PRC in 1949 advocated equality between men and women, especially regarding the construction of work identity. Women began to work outside their homes. Accordingly, women's social role was greatly magnified as they were seen as "holding up half the sky". The importance of women's traditional family role was overshadowed and almost inconsiderably reduced against the backdrop of the nationwide movement of socialist construction (see Chapter Two Section 2.2.2).

The transformation of China's families continued after the 1970s, when China's Family Planning Policy reduced the family scale and the number of nuclear families increased. In small families, usually with three people, women began to have a stronger voice in the decision-making process. According to Wu, it became common for couples to discuss and make decisions together on important matters – such as where and in which sector to work, which house to buy, where to invest money and how to raise their children (Wu, 2003).

Despite the newly gained assertiveness and independence of these new generation women, for the majority of Chinese women, rural and urban, however, it is still within the context of the family and in their performance of familial roles that they are judged. A good worker who neglects his wife and children is still considered a good husband and father, whereas a good worker who neglects her husband and children is not a good woman. Most women sense this distinction, and some media discourses have also encouraged it by an implicit endorsement of a good woman identity through membership categorization (see Section 4.3.2.1).

As Gauntlett points out, modernity is post-traditional, a society cannot therefore be fully modern if attitudes, actions or institutions are significantly influenced by traditions, because deference to tradition – doing things just because people did them in the past – remains the opposite of modern reflexivity (Gauntlett, 2002). Accordingly, in the next section, traditional gender ideology underlying contemporary women's family identity construction is examined.

4.3.1.1 The tradition – 三从四德 *san cong si de — Three Obediences & Four Virtues*

夫，天也，妻，地也; 夫，日也，妻，月也；夫，阳也，妻，阴也。天尊而处上，地卑而处下。 —《易经》
Husband is <u>sky</u>, wife is <u>land</u>; husband is <u>sun</u>, wife is <u>moon</u>; husband is <u>yang</u>, wife is <u>yin</u>. Sky is <u>superior</u> as it's higher up, land is <u>inferior</u> as it's lower down.
— 1 Ching The Book of Changes

In Chinese traditional philosophy, the balance of 阴 *yin* and 阳 *yang* is particularly emphasized. It appears as a mechanism that stresses balance rather than constriction, for the concept that *yin* cannot exist without *yang*, and vice versa, is deeply embedded in Chinese culture. In this context of gender identity, women cannot live without men, and men cannot live without women. However, as is reflected through the contrastive lexical adjectives "superior" vs. "inferior" in the above quotation from *The Book of Changes*, the philosophy conceals a patriarchal reality – *"男尊女卑 nanzhun nübei,* men are superior to women" – that has been operating in China for thousands of years (Li, 1998). This social hierarchy is still present in many aspects of life, and its influence on perceptions of gender roles is still profound (also see Chapter Five Section 5.3.1 and Chapter Seven Section 7.2.3.1).

Similar to the "classic" definition of women's identity from Confucianism as a predominant history-honored ideology-" 三 从 四 德 *San Cong Si De,* Three Obediences and Four Virtues*"(see Chapter Two Section 2.2.1), in the first guide book of code of conduct for Chinese women "*女诫 nü jie* Commandments of Women" by 班昭*Banzhao*, there were such doctrines as "*夫为妻纲 fu wei qi gang,* Husband as Ruler for Wife", "*事夫如事天 shi fu'ru shi tian,* Serving Husband is like Serving God" (Liu, 2009). As Simone de Beauvoir pointed out, "one is not born, but rather becomes, a woman" (Simone de Beauvoir, 1949), Chinese women's identity has been explicitly prescribed by patriarchal behavioral discipline and categorized as inferior to men throughout centuries of feudal societies. Very few people, if any at all, ever referred to women by their names. Instead, women were often addressed as "someone's family member" or "children's mother". There was a saying "*母以子贵、妻以夫荣 mu yi zi gui, qi yi fu rong,* Mom is Proud of Son, Wife is Honored by Husband" from ancient

times, revealing the subordinated and affiliated relationship of women to a family. In those times, marriage was the only destiny for women; women's values were realized and their status represented through taking good care of their husbands and looking after their children at home.

In the context of contemporary social transformation, many traditional ideologies have been criticized and have undergone social change. However as pointed out by Guo, the cultural habitus on gender roles remains so deep-seated that until today, tender, sacrificial and submissive are still regarded as women's virtues, and being a good wife/mother is still seen as a yardstick of moral excellence in reconstructing a contemporary women's identity (Guo, 1993). Interestingly, in the present campaign of establishing a harmonious society, the standard for such a harmonious family usually includes a considerate and caring wife, a smart and talented husband, and filial children, from which we note that the social expectation of women's family identity remains a consistent reflection of the traditional value system of constructing a well-regarded woman's identity (Fu & Zhu, 2007).

4.3.1.2 Construction of *Harmonious Family*

As Chen points out, with the loosening of the nationalist focus on class struggle and collectivism, post-modern society is characterized by decentralization and de-traditionalization, emphasizing diversity, relativity, inclusivity and multi-culturalism (Chen, 2009). During this transformational period, class divisions change, and cultures and ideologies clash with the consequence that identity choices appear confusing, such as that of the gender identity reconstruction of women. Previous family-oriented principles prescribed by Confucianism before the Mao era, nation-oriented ideology advocated by the socialist government in the Mao era, the emerging individual-oriented motto claimed by individualism and a growing feminist development in the post-Mao era all co-exist and contest with each other in shaping contemporary women's identity in China. As a consequence, the reconstruction process becomes one of dynamic and complex struggle among such tensions.

In this context, the government is bent on identifying proper directions for the (re)construction of the dominant mainstream value system within the present social system. Under such circumstances, the slogan of "Establishing a 和谐社会 *hexie shehui* − Harmonious Society" as a new ideological construct, was formally put forward by President Hu Jintao at the 4th Plenum of the 16th CPC Central Committee in 2004, as a means of administrative

advocacy to deal with the rapid complex transformation of Chinese society in the new century (see also Chapter One, Section 1.2.2 and Chapter Two, Section 2.2.3.1). Its basic ideology includes harmony of politics, of economics, of classes, of regions, of ethnicities, of generations and of the eco-environment, *inter alia* through the promoting of proper order based on negotiation and co-existence (Chen, 2005). As gender relationships are just one prevalent influential social relationship, to construct a harmonious gender relationship, and accordingly a harmonious family, will be significant for constructing a harmonious society and maintaining the stability of the state.

The classic sayings "*和为贵 he wei gui*, Harmony is precious" by Confucius and "*天时不如地利，地利不如人和 tian shi bu ru di li， di li bu ru ren he* – Opportunities vouchsafed by Heaven are less important than terrestrial advantages, which in turn are less important than the unity among people" by Mencius[10] brilliantly illustrate the importance of harmony in operating social relationships and systems. Family, in Confucian philosophy, is regarded as an important unit in society. The Confucian saying "*家和而国治 jia he er guo zhi*, Harmony of Family Paves the Way for Harmony of the State" states that stability of a family is the prerequisite to the stability of the nation. According to Guo, based on such a Chinese traditional value system, focusing on social stability and harmony, self identity and individual difference is inevitably submerged in the collective orientation (Guo, 1993). In other words, the key to a harmonious society is that everyone in the family should carry out his or her duty, in which women's family role in particular is emphasized as significant in contributing to familial harmony, and accordingly social stability.

When importance was placed on women's productive roles and Chinese women were called on to fulfill their duty by participating in social production for the socialist nation as the first priority in the Mao era, the traditional family role of women was "neglected" to an extent, as the advocacy of "*男女比翼双飞 nan'nü bi yi shuang fei,* Men and Women Fly High Together" indicated a way of harmony at work in terms of direct and equal contribution to the national socialist construction (Chang, 1988). As pointed out by Evans, a husband's desire for a "virtuous wife and good mother" who was gentle, considerate and who took care of everything, was widely criticized as an expression of "selfish" desires that were, by definition, incompatible with commitment to the collective's needs during the Mao era (Evans, 2002). It

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10 Mencius, born c. 371, ancient state of Zou, China, died c. 289bce, China, is an early Chinese philosopher whose development of orthodox Confucianism earned him the title "second sage." Chief among his basic tenets was an emphasis on the obligation of rulers to provide for the common people.

was not until the Fourth National Women's Congress in 1978 that women's roles as mothers and within the family were re-emphasized in major policy documents. For instance, women were required to "精心培育革命的后代, educate well the next generation of revolution"(*WOC*, 1978.4) which, as pointed out by Liu, was regarded as a way of indirectly serving the national cause (Liu, 2001). Besides childcare, women also remained largely responsible for housework. Along with this assumption of women's responsibility for familial duties came an renewed emphasis on women's family identity through the campaign of the "五好家庭 *wu hao jiating*, Five-Good Family", in which the harmony of family and relationships was regarded as significant in contributing to the stability of the state and society at large. As a result, the previously diminished women's family role during the Mao era is now being re-emphasized in media discourses.

The basic ideological advocacy underlying the "Five-Good Family" emphasizes the traditional definition of a good woman shouldering proper family responsibilities, actions recognized as positive and contributing to the establishment of a harmonious society (also see Chapter Six Section 6.3.2). In the following extract from Hu Jintao's speech in 1998, the significance of women's family role (note, not men's family role) in promoting the "harmonious" "overall social development" is directly pointed out:

> *妇女在家庭美德建设中具有不可替代的作用，要努力做到勤俭持家、尊老爱幼、夫妻和睦、邻里团结、坚持移风易俗、实行计划生育、教育培养好下一代，积极推动良好家风的形成和发展，以实际行动促进社会全面进步。*
> *—在实现我国跨世纪发展的历史进程中充分发挥妇女的半边天作用—在中国妇女第八次全国代表大会上的祝词 胡锦涛*　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　*（1998.9.1 PD）*
> *Women play an irreplaceable role in constructing good family morality. They should actively promote good family tradition and overall social development by being diligent and thrifty in running the household, respectful to the aged and caring for the children in the family, having harmonious spouse relationship, having harmonious relationship with neighbors, persistent in removing out-moded habits and customs (see Five-Good Family), carrying out policy of family planning, and looking after and educating well the next generation.*
> *　　—To Bring into Full Play the Role of Women as Half the Sky in the Historical Progress of Our Nation's Cross-Century Development, a Congratulation speech by President HU Jintao on the 8th Women's National Congress Meeting.*

The family duties of women are made explicit through the emphasis on women's "irreplaceable role" such as "being diligent and thrifty in running the household" and "looking after and educating well the next generation". The use of the modal verb "should" serves to highlight the family role as the obligation for women to fulfil. In the corpus of print media under study, such acknowledgement of women's family role is also evidenced:

> *主妇的贡献小到可以说她成就了丈夫的事业、培养了优秀的新生代，大到她维系了家庭的*

和谐与稳定，也是为社会稳定做出了贡献。   *(2005WOC-S-4)*
On one hand, a woman's family role is seen as <u>supporting her husband's career achievements,</u> <u>looking after an excellent new generation,</u> on the other hand, she <u>helps maintaining the harmony</u> <u>and stability of a family, therefore contributes to the overall stability of society.</u>

While women are still at the same time encouraged to participate in productive labor, both roles of work and family are stressed as equally contributing to national construction and development in the post-Mao era (also see Chapter Six Section 6.3.2). It is the new demand of keeping both harmonies of relationship in family and performance at work that to a great extent brings the double role conflict of working women to the surface (see Section 4.4). In the Mao era, it was the "holding up half the sky" campaign as well as the national organization of community service that "alleviated" the double-role burden of women, as women's family identity was overshadowed by their work identity as "holding up half the sky" for the national construction. In the post-Mao era, it was the revival of new-Confucianism and the waves of "Go Back Home" debates (see Section 4.4.2.2) since the 1980s that made the family role and femininity once again an indispensable focus or component of Chinese women's identity construction. The campaign of *Harmonious Society,* in terms of its impact on women's family identity can be seen as reflecting the state's continuing interest in regulating family practice at a time of market-oriented economic reform, where women are constructed as the key agents of marital order and familial harmony. News content may not directly reflect the theme of there being a need for protection of the patriarchal family system, in a more circuitous ways, husbands and particularly wives as essential elements in the family are encouraged to get along well in (re)consideration of the value of the current marriage system (see also Chapter Six Section 6.3.2).

According to Fairclough, newspapers function to create public identities for social groups as well as for individuals within these groups through the range of textual strategies (Fairclough, 2003). In the next section, some contemporary model identities constructed in the chosen corpus regarding women's family roles are examined so as to reveal some social myths and ideologies hidden behind the narrative structures and the discourses of membership categorization, in the print media texts of *PD* and *WOC*.

4.3.2 Contemporary models

The discourse of women's identity takes effect when generalizations take place, thus privileging a certain version of an identity model, more specifically, the elevating of the

judgments of one group, as objective, natural and true, over those of other groups. The objectification of a particular reconceptualisation of gender identity can be seen to lead to some categories and stereotypes, setting standards for normative behavior, enhancing in-group commonality, and outcasting those who do not fit in with the standards set. According to Sarangi and Candlin, "in the institutional setting, categorization practices are both descriptive and evaluative, at implicit and explicit levels" (Sarangi & Candlin, 2003, p. 118). In China, since the 1980s when family became once again an important focal site of constructing women's identity, a well-known and prevalent label used to describe a good woman and a golden rule to evaluate an ideal wife is –*"贤妻良母 xian qi liang mu, a good wife and mother"*. Even in the context of the more contemporary campaign of the *Harmonious Society*, the unspoken assumption persists that there is still a woman at home to raise the children and manage the household. In the chosen print media texts under study, the cultural models of "a good woman" and "a complete woman" posit how women are talked about, as constructed in social cognition over time, and as positioned by dominant discourses (Gee, 1999).

Starting from the assumption that hegemonic power often takes the form of controlling people's minds (van Dijk, 1997), social cognition can be seen as referring to mental models structuring ideologies. Supporting existing power relations, often asymmetric in nature, such ideological mental models are acquired and (re)produced through social, including here discursive practices, and interact with the personal cognition of group members. If social cognition controls mental models through discourse, widely shared preferred models lend cohesion to a group's beliefs, thus helping to predict group members' actions.

4.3.2.1 An ideal wife – *贤妻良母 xian qi liang mu-a Good Wife & Mother*

According to Hall, how we "see" ourselves and our social relations matters, because such viewing enters into, and informs our actions and practices (Hall, 1999). In the chosen corpus, a definition of *"贤妻良母 xian qi liang mu*, a good wife and mother" is provided through both direct quotation from the outstanding woman identity being reported and through indirect commentary from the news writer, in relation to both social perceptions and women's self-perceptions of a good woman's identity:

她常说，当妻子就要当一个体贴丈夫的贤妻；当母亲就要当一个教养孩子的良母；… 她说，一个人一生中要尽力做好自己的份内事。...她能做到她为贤妻、为良母、为孝顺女儿的

许愿吗？ *(1995WOC-2)*

She often says, as a wife she <u>should be a good wife who looks after her husband,</u> as a mother she <u>should be a good mother who educates her children</u>.....She says, one <u>must</u>, in her lifetime, make full efforts to <u>fulfil her duties</u>. ...Can she keep her promise <u>of being a good wife, a good mother, and a filial daughter</u>?

Firstly, the lexical modifier "good", as Mackenzie points out, is "too suggestive of something absolute and unquestionable" (Mackenzie, 1929, p. 250). According to Hare, the principal function of "good" is to commend, and in commending actions, one is indirectly or directly commending people (Hare, 2001). Secondly, the constant referral to the modal verbs "should" and "must" can be seen as reinforcing an instructional tone, invoking a sense of moral obligation on women's family role as her "duties". According to Sacks (1992), categorization has a purpose, is deliberate, and derives from the commonsense people possess. Through a triangular equation, "good", "should" and "duties" share similar descriptive and prescriptive forces in the traditional definition of stereotypical women's family identity and consequently create the category of a model identity for women.

According to Dyer, stereotypes have to do with the representation and categorization of persons (Dyer, 1999). A good woman as a typical category of the model gender identity is supposed to take care of the family by shouldering the role of a wife and mother to look after her husband's daily life and to educate the children. As Weatherall and Gallois point out, identity is not viewed as something that people *are*, rather, identity is something that people *do* during the business of everyday interaction (Weatherall & Gallois, 2003). It is accordingly of interest to examine in the chosen corpus the verbal concordance patterns involving the following lexical phrases of woman's role as a wife (lexical expressions in Chinese-妻 *qi,* 老婆 *lao po,* 太太 *tai tai*) and as a mother (lexical expressions in Chinese- 母亲 *mu qing,* 妈妈 *ma ma*). From the concordance analysis, "to be a good wife AND mother" is evidenced as a dominant pattern in the dataset, especially from the period of 1995:

1) *作为一个<u>妻子和母亲</u>, 郝斌何尝不希望<u>多多照顾家人，多多承担家务</u>。*
(1995WOC-7)
<u>*As a wife and mother,* Hao Bing wanted to *care more for family members, and do more housework.*</u>

2) *还要尽可能也当好一个<u>合格的母亲和妻子</u> 。* *(1995PD-14)*
And also I should try to be a <u>qualified mother and wife.</u>

2) *为人妻，却不能<u>为夫洗衣做饭</u>，<u>为人母</u>，却不能嘘寒问暖，<u>关心两个儿子的生活成长</u>。*
3) _____ *(1995PD- 15)*
As <u>a wife,</u> she cannot <u>wash and cook for her husband,</u> as <u>a mother,</u> she cannot <u>care for the life and growth of her two sons.</u>

In the print media texts the definition of women's family role is reiterated as "a wife and

mother" (see above Extracts 1, 2 and 3) to "do more housework" (Extract 1), "wash and cook for her husband" and "care for the life and growth of her two sons" (Extract 3). As pointed out by Wolf, "to be a proper woman means you must always be doing things for other people" (Wolf, 1985, p. 112). Accordingly, in describing the attributes of a good woman, the immediate translation of the subject is towards a gentle and caring identity of a wife, a mother, a daughter or even a daughter-in-law. Such a categorization of "a good wife/mother" in media discourse, as Sarangi & Candlin argue (Sarangi and Candlin, 2003), is always both descriptive and evaluative – it has a social as well as a moral value, as different features are highlighted, made salient according to the dominant orders of discourse.

The lexical word "qualified" (see above Extract 2) and the parallel pattern "as a wife, she cannot…as a mother, she cannot…" (Extract 3) further points out the prescriptive categorization of women's family identity. According to Weatherall and Gallois, the ways people think and behave depend strongly on the social groups they belong to, particularly in contexts where group membership is salient for some reason. In the light of Social Identity Theory (SIT), people are generally motivated to view themselves in a favorable way. Achieving a positive self-concept requires making social comparisons in order to evaluate the opinions and abilities of people who share or do not share a social group membership (Tajfel, 1981). Through the discursive power of public and media discourse, social expectations of a women's family identity is in a way internalized as women's self-regulatory action, as is evidenced in the following extract from *PD*:

> 她依然用自己的勤劳和精明当着一个三口之家的家庭主妇，默默承担着传统意义上一个家庭主妇应该承担的一切琐事和俗务。
> *(1995PD-14)*
> *With her diligence and thrift as a housewife to a family of three people, she is silently shouldering the trifling domestic chores that traditionally a housewife should do.*

In the above example, "she" is a vice-mayor of a city of more than one million people, and has obtained a good reputation for administrating the local government through various work achievements. In this sense, she is very successful in terms of her work identity. Nevertheless, family role is still an inescapable topic to cover for the mass readership in reporting her as a typical contemporary woman model, portrayed thus from the perspective of endorsing the image of traditional familial "housewife" "silently shouldering the trifling domestic chores". The use of modal expression "should do" suggests that she is unable to reject the social myth that "women are main providers of housework", as it is already "socialized" as a kind of obligation for women (see housework survey in Chapter Five Section 5.4.1.1). As Goffman

points out, role is the basic unit of socialisation: "it is through roles that tasks in society are allocated and arrangements made to enforce their performance" (Goffman, 1961, p. 77).

Although the government has shown a certain awareness of this issue, instead of changing the deep-seated traditional gender labor division pattern domestically, one modern solution is to encourage the production and promotion of "consumer goods such as washing machines and refrigerators which will lighten the domestic loads of women" (Robinson, 1985, p. 44). Although domestic appliances certainly make life easier, women's responsibility for these tasks does not change. Consequently, the standard of a good woman fulfilling these responsibilities does not change either. In the dataset of *WOC* from the period of 2005, we see that the traditional concept of a good woman as a good wife and mother persists:

> 我培养了一对博士生儿女，我的家庭也非常和睦，许多人都曾向我咨询，<u>怎样才能做一个好妻子、好母亲</u>。
> *(2005WOC-S-8)*
> *I have two children both of whom have PhDs, and I have a very harmonious family, such that many people ask me, <u>how to be a good wife, a good mother.</u>*

"I" in the above extract is a woman scientist and general in the army, who has won numerous awards and titles for her outstanding achievements at work. However under the persistent influence of a traditional definition of a good woman with an emphasis on family role over work role, she feels very proud when she was socially recognized as a good wife and mother. According to Dr. Li Song, the founder of the *Zhen'ai* match-making website, most male members of Zhen'ai do not care much about how successful women are in their careers. Instead, men usually put more emphasis on whether women are good at housework and have a family-oriented personality such as tenderness and submission (CRI, 2009). As is discussed later in Chapter Five Section 5.2.2.1, the definition of a woman's success is conflictingly double-layered; if she does not fulfil a good family role, no matter how many achievements she has obtained at work, she is not seen as a successful woman. In the chosen corpus under study, a woman was categorized as "a disqualified woman" "falling out of the mainstream" when she "cannot fulfill her duty of being a wife and mother", as is evidenced in the following extract in *PD* from the period of 1995:

> 她自嘲地说：“我们那里的妇女封我为‘<u>等外婆娘</u>’，意思是我<u>不入流</u>、尽不了做妻子和母亲的责任。”
>   *(1995PD-15)*
> *She mocked herself, "I was called a 'deng wai po niang', which means a <u>disqualified woman who falls out of the mainstream</u>, because I cannot fulfill my duty of a wife and mother."*

The contrast between the expressions "disqualified" and "mainstream" reveals a division of in-group and out-group categorization of women regarding family identity. Oktar talks about the negative and positive values assigned to in- and out-groups, where "stereotypes about in-groups tend to be positive and stereotypes about out-groups tend to be negative" (Oktar, 2001, p. 318). Such stereotypes are infused into the language and sociocultural ideologies of different groups, reflecting their common beliefs and social positioning. In his study, van Dijk mentions that the positive presentation of one group and negative other- presentation of the other group through an effective medium such as mass media is necessary in order to protect the dominance and social self-image of the party in power in "an increasingly variegated social and cultural world" (van Dijk, 1999, p. 557). In this sense, the positive categorization of "a good wife/mother" and outcasting categorization of "a disqualified woman" in the print media texts such as *PD* and *WOC,* especially from the period of 1995, serve as a narrative advancing specific agendas and ideologies, thereby conveying to a large readership the "media" or "preferred" version of creating and defining social relations and roles. In the next section, the positive in-group categorization of "a happy woman" in terms of family-orientation and "a complete woman" in terms of double standards is investigated in the chosen corpus.

4.3.2.2 From *Happy Women* to *Complete Women*

As was discussed earlier, in the pre-Mao era of dominant Confucianism, women were confined to the domestic sphere as housewives in the background. In the Mao era of vigorous socialism, women were praised as "holding up half the sky" so that they could walk out of the home to the foreground of mass productive labor and socialist construction. In the post-Mao era, with its revival of tradition such as new-Confucianism, the traditional family role of women was "re-discovered" and "re-emphasized" in media discourse as one focal facet of women's identity reconstruction. The importance of family as a priority in a woman's life is evidenced in the dataset of *WOC* from the period of 2005:

> 骨子里非常*传统*，在我的人生中，<u>最重要的就是我的家庭</u>。如果要我在家庭和名利中选择
> 一个我会毫不犹豫地<u>选择家庭</u>。   *(2005WOC- C1)*
> *I am very <u>traditional</u> inside, that <u>the most important thing in my life is my family.</u> If I have to
> choose between family and fame & gain, my choice will <u>undoubtedly be family.</u>*

For many contemporary Chinese women, family is seen as an ultimate anchor point, where they pin their hopes and without regret devote themselves (Liang, 2011). According to the statistics from Chinese Women's Life Quality Report 2005, a survey conducted by *Huakun*

Women's Life Survey Centre on Chinese women's life (*WOC*, March 2006), the first priority standard of evaluating happiness of life for contemporary Chinese women is that of a "happy marriage and harmonious family". Accordingly, we determined that it would be of interest to search for the lexical patterns of "happiness" (lexical expression in Chinese —*幸福 xing fu*) in the chosen corpus. By examining the concordance around the key words of *happiness/happy*, we note the following salient patterns:

1) 巴 桑 多 有 一 个 <u>幸 福 的 小 家 庭 。</u> (1995PD- 13)
Ba Songduo has a small <u>happy family.</u>

2) 以女性特有的细腻和温润，匀调出一个<u>家的温馨和幸福。</u> (1995PD-14)
With a woman's unique tenderness and carefulness, she tunes out <u>the warmth and happiness of a family.</u>

3) <u>婚后的湘湘是个幸福的女人。</u> (2005WOC- C10)
After <u>marriage</u>, Xiangxiang is a <u>happy woman.</u>

4) 她 们 也 热 爱 生 活 ， 努 力 营 造 着 <u>幸 福 的 家 庭 。</u> (2005PD- 5)
They love life too, and make efforts <u>to create happy families.</u>

The concordance pattern of "happy- family" (see above Extracts 1, 2 and 4) and "happy – woman-marriage" (Extract 3) reveals the fact that in the corpus happiness of women is usually related to marriage and family. According to Sarangi and Candlin, categorization – generally understood as definition of situations in everyday and professional institutional settings – is a meaning-making activity, deeply embedded in human experience and understanding (Sarangi & Candlin, 2003, p. 115). In this sense, "a happy woman" can be seen as a categorization of women's identity concerning family orientation, similar to the category of "a good woman" discussed earlier (see Section 4.3.2.1). Interestingly, we also note in the corpus under study a shift of connotation of being a happy woman/a good woman:

1) 一位女性，拥有自己的事业是幸运的，<u>同时</u>又拥有温暖的家庭，那才是<u>幸福</u>的。

(1995PD-17)
A woman, to have her own career is lucky, to have a warm family <u>at the same time</u> is then called <u>real happiness.</u>

2) 『有人认为，为了事业可以牺牲家庭。而我认为，<u>一个好的女人，</u>事业上要成功，家庭<u>也要美满。</u> (1995PD-30)
Some people think it is all right to sacrifice family for career. But I think, <u>a good woman, should have a happy family, as well as a successful career.</u>

3) 有丈夫、孩子，有家庭事业，才是个<u>完整女人。</u> (2005WOC-C1)
To have a husband and kids, <u>both family and career, makes then a complete woman.</u>

As evidenced in the above extracts through the expressions "at the same time" (Extract 1), "as well as" (Extract 2) and "both…and" (Extract 3), the definitions above enhance the threshold of being a happy woman and a good woman by emphasizing the dual requirements of this new type women's identity – "a complete woman" – who is having both a happy family and a successful career. It is a result of the mixed ideological influences of the traditional prescription of a woman's family role and the Maoist campaign of "*Half the Sky*" work identity. On one hand, under the far-reaching influence of the Maoist propaganda, in which the portrait of model women was centred on her work performance for instance of the *Iron Girl* representation in the present media discourse, many of the typical women models are still focused around their work identities. On the other hand, however, as the reviving new-Confucianism since the 1980s with its deep-seated designation about women's family roles poses an additional yet indispensably significant standard on women's evaluation, family identity becomes again one focal aspect of women's identity re-construction. In the context of this, double standards and double roles are imposed on contemporary Chinese women (also see Chapter Five, Section 5.2.2.1 and Chapter Seven, Section 7.2.2).

In an editorial from *WOC* on the newly-elected "十大女杰 *shi da nü jie,* Top Ten Outstanding Women" in China in 1998, the social expectation of such completeness or "perfection" of a woman's identity is noted:

> *真正成功的女性是将二者完美结合的女性。本届"十大女杰"极为引人注目的一点，就是她们将"好妻子"、"好妈妈"的形象与"好校长"、"好院长"，"好厂长"等形象的准确定位和完美结合。* （WOC 1998.10, p. 38-39）
> *A woman who combines these two roles perfectly is a truly successful woman. There is one conspicuous point about this year's Top Ten Outstanding Women—that is, they have a precise orientation and perfect combination between roles of "a good wife", "a good mother" and roles of "a good principal", "a good dean" or "a good director".*

The double standards imposed on women to qualify for the "truly successful woman" status are constructed through "a precise orientation and perfect combination between roles" of model family identity and model work identity. In the chosen corpus over time, especially from the *PD* dataset, many outstanding women figures reported in the news stories acknowledge these double standards through fulfilling both work duties and family responsibilities (more details see later Section 4.4.1). This acknowledgement is typically reflected in both direct and indirect quotations through a constant referencing of adverbial expressions such as "meanwhile" (see following Extracts 1 and 3), "and" (Extract 2) and

"also" (Extract 4). Some examples include:

1）她常说："我既要当好市长，还要尽可能也当好一个合格的母亲和妻子。"

(1995PD-14)
She often says, "I should be a good mayor, and meanwhile be a qualified mother and wife."

2) 成功的事业，美满的家庭，这才是真正完美的人生。　　　*(1995PD-30)*
A successful career, and a happy family, is then called a real perfect life.

3）她们在做出优秀的设计工作的同时，都努力去尽家庭主妇的责任。　　*(2005 PD –5)*
They do the work well, meanwhile, all of them try to fulfill the duty of a housewife.

4）说到家务活，芮乃伟的丈夫江铸久非常内疚地说："虽然芮乃伟平时把主要精力都放在了围棋上，但家务也都是她干，做饭她很拿手。　　*(2005 PD –12)*
Speaking of housework, her husband said with guilt, "Though she put a lot attention on Chess (her career), the housework is also done by her, and she is very good at cooking."

She is known for her "cooking" (Extract 4), which most people think of as an indispensable skill of being a good wife and mother, and she is "fulfilling the duty of a housewife" (Extract 3) and "a qualified mother and wife" (Extract 1), all suggest that women are represented or expected in terms of what they do or what they are known for rather than how they themselves feel. The news discourse here conveys no sense of these women's unhappiness or discontent with their situation because the performance or the expectation of a happy woman or complete woman is so immaculately groomed. Women do, in every way, "appear" to be perfect (see the *Third Type* Woman in Section 4.4.1).

However, in contemporary China, with the lasting traces of Maoist ideology and the revival of the new-Confucianism, as well as the growing feminist movement in China, the re-construction process of women's identity is placed under complex and mixed influences signaled in a contested tension among priorities – work, nation, family, and self. As pointed out by Sarangi, roles are transformed over time; there are multiple roles available to any individual within a given activity but some of these roles can be situationally ambivalent and conflicting (Sarangi, 2010). Multiple roles are involved around women's contemporary identity, among which the definition of a complete woman and the ensuing controversy of the double standards/burden invite close investigation. In the following section, the conflict between the double role as well as the attitudes of Chinese women presented in the chosen corpus in dealing with this dilemma will be examined.

4.4 Work/Family Dilemma – "*Have it All*"

In China, while mainstream values persist in terms of the model of work hero in the economic modernization drive, the new focus on family since the 1980s brings the conflict between women's family role and social role to the surface. This clearly hits a sensitive nerve among this generation of working women. According to McBroom, the classic dilemma for women of having to choose between family roles and career roles dates back more than a hundred years, and now becomes a global problem faced by the vast majority of working mothers (McBroom, 1992). However, as Swiss and Walker point out, the term *"working father"* is not even in our vocabulary (Swiss & Walker, 1993, p. 3). Work/family conflict for women continues to be a much debated and controversial issue. According to Charlesworth, many countries have started to pay increasing attention to the balance between work and family, as well as to the ensuing issue of gender equality (Charlesworth, 2005).

Through the analysis of the chosen corpus under study, it is possible to reveal that to the prevailing work/family dilemma and double roles faced by working women in China, a golden solution of *"Have It All"* (Swiss & Walker, 1993) surfaces in media discourses. According to Zhang, in order to qualify for the contemporary definition of a perfect/complete woman, many Chinese women adopt the golden rule and make full efforts to strike a delicate balance by pursuing both a successful career and a happy family (Zhang, 2003). This ideal model is categorized as *the Third Type Woman* (Bao & Guo, 2005), in addition to two further set types – the family-oriented housewife and the career-oriented superwoman. It also has a synonym, as suggested by Guo, "超-贤妻良母型 *chao xian qi liang mu*, beyond-good wife/mother type" (Guo, 1993), who is in essence a combination of inherited traditional virtues and keeping up with modern developments (also see Chapter Seven, Section 7.2.2).

Notwithstanding these previously nation-oriented, family-oriented ideologies, a growing feminist movement and an emerging individualism at the turn of the 21st century placed Chinese women at a crossroads of identity confusion as well as of seeking solutions to the dilemma (Li, 2000). Complex feelings and struggles such as sacrifice, loss, guilt and hesitation surface in the uneasy and compromising process of the successful or unsuccessful handling of one's multiple identities. The analysis of the chosen corpus reveals such ambivalent attitudes among of media discourse representations, together with ideologically motivated contestations underlying the discursive construction of the *Third Type* woman's identity. How much freedom do women actually have in choosing between career and family? To have it all is presented in media discourses as an ideal woman's identity, however, it is precisely the reason underlying the issue of double standards/burden which bring working

women into a situation of role conflict and split personality (Tong, 1994).

4.4.1 Construction of the *Third Type Woman*

In order to better understand these *Third Type women* – who they are and why they are categorized as the *Third Type*, we explore below three women's identities in a typical Chinese family from different generations. We draw the example from an article in *WOC* from the period of 1995 by Xu Min, titled "Women and Kitchen – Change of Relations between Chinese Women and Kitchen from Four Generations of a Family" (1995 WOC 7, p. 24-25).

87-year-old grandma Li has been a housewife for her whole adult life. For her generation, there were two ways to realize her values – one was to give birth to a boy for her husband to carry on the family name, the other was to do the housework well as a housekeeper. Accordingly, the kitchen remained her central sphere of activities throughout her life and the only stage to realize her life values.

63-year-old mum Zhang was a doctor at a time of highlighted gender equality and women's social participation. Women at her time were proud of being a working woman, and "housewife" was regarded as a deprecated title with little social status. During the Mao era, if a woman devoted all her time and energy to housework, she would be considered lazy and showing a lack of enterprising spirit, seen against the backdrop of national construction and change. This was not only a common social expectation, but also a longing from most women themselves to walk out of the home and participate in work. As a result, the importance of the family kitchen was greatly reduced, along with the emergence of collective community services and public dining halls.

35-year-old daughter Wang is a college teacher, who holds a similar aspiration for work as her mother Zhang. But her views on family role and kitchen are quite different from those of her mother. In Wang's opinion:

> *"一个好女人应该在事业上有所成就，同时在家庭里也应该是一个称职的母亲和妻子，而是否能够操作好自己家里的厨房正是衡量一个女人是不是一个称职的母亲和妻子的重要标准之一。"*
> *(1995WOC 7, p. 24-25)*
> *A good woman should obtain achievements in her career, and meanwhile be a competent mother and wife at home. A woman's ability to manage a family kitchen is one important standard to evaluate whether she is a competent mother and wife or not.*

The qualifying words "good" and "competent" reveal here that Wang is traditional in terms of her family concept, despite her strong will and enterprising spirit at work. As Liu says, the contemporary standard for an ideal Chinese wife has shifted from "a good wife/mother" to women who are "*出得厅堂 入得厨房* elegant enough to show around to the guests in the hall, and diligent enough to make good cuisines in the kitchen", referring to a woman who excels both in housework and social life (Liu, 2001). According to a survey undertaken by the writer in Wang's university among female students, 88% of female students said they would like to be a "have it all" woman in the future, only 7% wanted to be career-oriented women, and 5% would become family-oriented women (Xu, 1995 WOC 7, p. 24-25). Accordingly, we may argue that Wang's perception of women's identity reflects a prevailing social expectation as well as women's self-recognition of an ideal woman of her generation.

From their different relationships with the kitchen, we can easily identify grandma Li as the first type of family-oriented good wife and mother, mom Zhang as the second type of career-oriented superwoman, and daughter Wang as the *Third Type woman* that emerges in the new reform era, resonating with the definition of "a complete woman" as discussed earlier in Section 4.3.2.2. These *Third Type* Women are not satisfied with career achievements only, as most of them abhor the title "*女强人 nü qiang ren*, superwomen". They also reject titles of "*单身贵族 dan shen gui zu*, Single Nobles" or "DINK family" (Double Income No Kids) because they would like to be recognized as a happy woman or a complete woman with a harmonious family of a loving husband and lovely children. In the chosen corpus from the period of 1995, the construction of the *Third Type* woman is evidenced through the double standards imposed on those outstanding working women reported in the media texts:

事 业 成 功 了 , 家 庭 如 何 呢 ?
(1995WOC- 2)
She is successful in her career, what about her family?

As Li argues, to be seen as a successful career man, all people want to know is how he did it; while to a successful career woman, the situation is quite different (Li, 1996). What about her family? Does her husband share housework with her? Does she sacrifice family duty at a cost? – Questions concerning her family role are often raised (also see Chapter Five Section 5.2.2.1), which make women consciously or subconsciously fulfill the "double" requirements of being an ideal woman. As Liu points out, it is through the discursive construction of such "an ideal woman" that the hidden power of media discourse to maintain a dominant patriarchal ideology comes into effect (Liu, 2010, p. 68).

Discourses surrounding women's identity are often filled with stereotypical categories, giving preference to one group over another, such as the positive presentation of "a good woman", "a complete woman", and "the *Third Type* woman" in the chosen print media texts. Despite the fact that literal labeling of the *Third Type* woman or "*超-贤妻良母型 chao xian qi liang mu*, beyond-good wife/mother type" is mostly absent in the chosen corpus, the construction of the "preferred" group identity is realized through discursive strategies (Candlin, 2006; Sarangi, 2000) such as the employment of metaphors and through membership categorization devices. As Cameron and Maslen point out, metaphorical constructions reflect how persons think, feel, explain, justify and display membership (Cameron & Maslen, 2010). Here the key metaphor – "*keep the balance*" in the chosen print media texts enables the creation of new and alternate realities, introducing to the discourse of women's identity the paradoxical combination of clarity and ambiguity necessary to present a "preferred" category of women's identity as ideologically standard and ideal. According to Sacks, "category boundedness" constitutes those actions, statements, performances which can routinely be expected from members of this or that categorization (Sacks, 1974, p. 219). The idea of *expectables* as been subsequently extended to include rights, obligations, entitlements, attributes and competencies, as Hester and Eglin indicate (Hester & Eglin, 1997). As the *Third Type* woman is categorised as the contemporary "perfect/complete" woman who "has it all", double roles of family and work are accordingly expected on the part of these women to fulfil the ensuing "expected" obligations. As Jayyusi writes, "we are drawing the boundaries of rational membership through the use of a standard of moral membership…persons may organize their moral positions and commitments round certain category identities, identities that are selective and demarcate for them the boundaries of practical membership" (Jayyusi, 1984, pp. 183-201). In the following section, the discursive construction of the *Third Type* woman is investigated, regarding how metaphors centering on "*keep the balance*" in media discourse reproduce and promote the viewpoints of particular socio-political agendas in creating a model gender identity.

4.4.1.1 Double-role – *balance*

Some scholars point out that metaphor is seen as a fundamental and ubiquitous structure of language, representing a fundamental cast of mind in so far as particular core words within the lexicon structure our perception of the world and ways of thinking about the world (Carter, 2004; Gee, 1999; Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). According to Cameron, however,

language is culture-bound and context-dependent, so that metaphorical construction is seen related to specific discourse contexts of socio-cultural domains (Cameron, 1999, p. 25). Under the mixed influence of traditional gender ideology on women's family role and contemporary socio-political agenda of establishing and maintaining a *Harmonious Society*, "*keep the balance"* is constructed in media texts and adopted as a preferred solution to the work/family dilemma confronted by women. Some examples include:

1）她是一个百万人口大城市的副市长，又是一个平凡普通的女性，在事业和家庭的天平上，她始终操持着平衡的砝码。 *(1995PD –14)*
She is a vice-mayor of a city with a million people, and an ordinary woman meanwhile, who always keeps the weight of balance on the scale of career and family.

2）事业和家庭，是女人肩上一副担子的两头。 *(1995PD – 30)*
Career and family are two ends of a carrying pole on women's shoulders.

3）一肩挑着沉重的家庭，一肩挑着繁重的事业，她靠自身的努力为世人树立起一个军人妻子的美好形象。 *(1995PD –34)*
With heavy family on one shoulder, and busy career on the other, she made efforts to create for the world a beautiful image of an army man's wife.

4）在事业与家庭之间，她知道天平的砝码应该向哪里倾斜。 *(1995WOC –7)*
Between work and family, she knows which direction the weight of the scale should lean toward.

5）作为女人，葛丽玲的心里总在搞平衡：工作要做好，孩子也不能舍弃。 *(2005PD-4)*
As a woman, Ge Liling is always keeping the balance in mind: work should be done, kids should not be abandoned either.

6）她觉得自己"挺会协调的，工作再忙，也不放弃孩子和家庭。" *(2005PD –5)*
She thinks herself "good at keeping the balance, that she will not give up the child and family even if work is very busy".

Extracts 1-4 constitute indirect journalist commentary, whereas Extracts 5-6 are direct quotations from the women figures being reported. We see how the metaphorical construction of "keep the balance" (Extracts 1, 5 and 6) is consistently realized through the lexical expressions of "the scale" (Extracts 1 and 4), "two ends of a carrying pole on women's shoulders" (Extract 2) and "heavy family on one shoulder and busy career on the other" (Extract 3). Metaphors are a rich resource people draw on in their everyday talk in the discursive construction of their identities. As pointed out by Gee, cultural models are signalled by metaphors which play a significant role in shaping public attitudes. Very often people are unaware of the full significance of these metaphors, which are taken for granted (Gee, 1999).

However, in the light of a critical metaphor analysis approach, defined as an "integration of cognitive semantic and pragmatic approaches that is based on corpus evidence" (Charteris-Black, 2004, p. 13), metaphorical structuring is not always automatic and unconscious, but serves very deliberate and strategic communicative purposes. This metaphor approach most usefully takes into consideration the speaker or writer's intention with regard to the creation and diffusion of metaphor by blending both cognitive and pragmatic perspectives, recognizing that although metaphor is not just a linguistic phenomenon, in the language of persuasion writers and speakers "use metaphor to persuade by combining the cognitive and linguistic resources at their disposal" (Charteris-Black, 2004, p. 11). For instance, the use of modal verb "should" (Extract 5) serves to evoke a sense of obligatory responsibility for women to shoulder the double roles. The traditional placement of women's family role as indispensable is legitimised through the adjective modifiers in "an ordinary woman" (Extract 1) and "a beautiful image of an army man's wife" (Extract 3). The lexical adverb "always" (Extracts 1 and 5) can be seen as representing and highlighting the discursive power of these cultural models – the *Third Type* women – in constructing women's identity in social practices.

Nonetheless, the metaphorical construction reveals an ambivalent position of media in addressing the sensitive and controversial work/family conflict, which is reflected in the following extracts from *WOC* through the re-conceptualization of "the balance" as a kind of "role-shifting" for women:

> *1) 好女人就得是好演员，在多变的舞台得演好每个角色，成功塑造人生这个多幕剧的主角，把每个角色都演好演活。*　　　　　　　　　　　*(WOC 2002.6, p. 44-45)*
> *A good woman must be a good actress, to perform each role well on variable stages, to enact successfully the protagonist of the multi-act play of life, performing well and vividly of each role.*

> *2) 女人一定要解决好角色问题。在家里，我就是一个太太的角色，绝不能把明星的姿态带回去；在外面，女人要独立承担自己的社会角色。弄清这个问题，想要婚姻幸福就不是一件太难的事了。*　　　　　　　　　　　*(2005WOC-C10)*
> *A woman must deal well with the role shifting. At home, I am in the role of a wife that I cannot at all bring my work identity back at home. Outside home, a woman has to shoulder her social role independently. As long as the role shifting is clear, it will not be that difficult to manage a happy marriage.*

To keep a good balance as "a good woman" (see above Extract 1) by attending to both work and family, women will have to be "a good actress" (Extract 1) capable of "performing well and vividly of each role" (Extract 1). The ability of "role shifting" (Extract 2) is a basic requirement to handle the double-role situation, as expectations of women in contemporary society are multi-leveled – to be submissive at home in the traditional sense, and meanwhile

to be independent at work in keeping with the modernity ideology. According to Goffman, the distinction between multiple roles and role-set is crucially important in the context of "situated activity roles" (Goffman 1961). For instance at home, she is "in the role of a wife" that she "cannot at all bring work identity back at home" (Extract 2); outside home, she "has to shoulder her social role independently" (Extract 2). However, due to tensions among various ideologies, the distinction between the roles and role-set is actually revealed to be conflicting and burdensome for women (see Chapter Five Section 5.2.2.1); this partly explains the ambivalence of media in face of the ideological contestation between traditional gender ideology and contemporary feminist development.

The ambivalent position of media is also presented through the reflection of family support to working women in addition to the emphasis of women's own efforts in role-shifting. People often say that "*一个成功的男人背后有一个伟大的女人* behind a successful man often stands a great woman". In the chosen corpus, an "understanding and supporting" (see following Extracts) family behind these career achievements of outstanding women figures is evidenced in some datasets from both print media over both time frames, which effectively rewrites the saying to "behind a successful woman often stands a great man":

> *她有理解并支持她的丈夫和子女，他们毫无怨言地把家里的事情完全承担了起来。*
> *(1995WOC-7)*
> *She has an understanding and supporting husband and kids, who shoulder all the domestic chores without any complaints.*
>
> *2) 默默无言站在她身后成为她坚实的后盾的是丈夫。(1995WOC-11)*
> *Silently standing behind her, her husband is her strong support.*
>
> *3) 一位理解她的同行丈夫，一位支持她的女儿，这足以构成尚绍华人生冲浪的出击点和加油站。*
> *(1995PD-17)*
> *An understanding husband and a supporting daughter, become her starting point and gas station in her life surfing.*
>
> *4) 作为妻子，她脑海里不时浮现出丈夫理解与支持的目光。   (1995PD-35)*
> *As a wife, the understanding and supporting gaze from her husband often appear in her mind.*
>
> *5) 丈夫理解我、支持我。   (2005WOC-C1)*
> *I have an understanding and supporting husband.*
>
> *6) 而五个成功的女人身后，则是五个充满慈爱和温情的家庭。来自这些家庭成员的支持，有如丝丝雨露，滋润着"五朵金花"红艳艳的花瓣。   (2005 PD –6)*
> *Behind these five successful women, there are five families full of love and care. The support from these family members moisturizes the five "Golden Flowers" as rain drop and dew.*

Based on the Chinese tradition of "*男主外、女主内 nan zhu wai, nü zhu mei,* men are in

charge of outside the home, women are in charge of inside the home", it is only right and proper for men to work outside of the home and for women to perform housework and take care of children. When women walk outside the home to work with men and work as men do, there is little, if any, attempt made to bring the issue of men possibly sharing in these domestic responsibilities on to the agenda. Despite the fact that the chosen print media of *PD* and *WOC* still endorse "a good wife/mother" identity underscored by traditional gender ideology (see Section 4.3.2.1), there are a few examples in the corpus of "supporting and understanding" husbands who share the housework in an effort to relieve the work/family conflict for women. Even though it is still rather rare and unusual, interesting collations such as "husband-child", "husband-cook", "husband-housework" are evidenced in the datasets from both periods of 1995 and 2005:

1）她的丈夫一直是家务劳动的主力。   *(1995WOC-7)*
Her <u>husband</u> has been the main force of <u>housework</u>.

2）刚到任丘时，家不能搬来，<u>丈夫带着上幼儿园的孩子</u>在沧州。   *(1995WOC-17)*
When she first came to Renqiu, she could not move her family here, so her <u>husband</u> was taking care of their <u>child</u> who was still kindergarten age in Cangzhou.

3）张玉珠晚上加班，总能接到<u>丈夫</u>的电话：“<u>饭做好了</u>，几点能回来呀？”
                                                     (2005PD –5)
Zhang Yuzhu worked overtime in the evening, and she always got phone calls from her <u>husband</u>, "Dinner is <u>cooked</u>, when will you be back home?"

To an extent, the media presentation of family support for women's career and work identity points to the difficulty of covering the double roles on the part of women. As Chen states, men should be encouraged to shoulder more housework and their support should be acknowledged (Chen, 2009, p. 19). However the media coverage on such support is rather limited in the chosen corpus under study, revealing that the main solution to the work/family dilemma is still dependent upon women's own shoulders of "*keeping the balance*". One reason for this might be that the increase in stay-at-home fathers and the growing number of female breadwinners challenges the very core of traditional social labor division, which has until then or even now strictly defined the role of women as devoted homemakers and of men as breadwinners.

Both *WOC* and *PD* establish the preferred solution of "*keeping the balance*" for women covering double roles of a professional and a wife/mother, but the metaphor is absent in the dataset of *WOC* from the period of 2005. It is possible, accordingly, to discern distinct stances in the two print media, as the emphasis in *PD* is on how to keep the balance, while in *WOC* the involvement of a husband in "adjusting the unfair gender relationship and domestic

labor division" (Extract 1) is suggested and the "extreme" (Extract 2) difficulty of the double-burden on career women is directly pointed out:

1) 及时调整家族中夫妻不合理的关系及分工，这不仅是每一个妻子的权利，也是每一个丈夫的义务。每一个家庭，都在经历着寻找"新丈夫"和"新妻子"标准的震荡。

(1995WOC- 3)

It is not only a right of every wife but an <u>obligation of every husband</u> as well to <u>adjust quicly the unfair gender relationship and domestic labor division.</u> Each family is undergoing transformation in search of <u>"new husband"</u> and <u>"new wife"</u> standards.

2) 为人妻为人母，想事业家庭兼顾特别难 。   *(2005WOC- C1)*
As a wife and mother, it is <u>extremely difficult to juggle career and family roles.</u>

We may safely conclude, then, that *PD* is more conservative, and more tradition-oriented, in terms of constructing women's identity especially regarding the family role, while *WOC* is under more influence from a contemporary feminist critique of women's development, especially from the period of 2005.

In the present society, *Third Type Women* are seen as a group of women who appear to be clearly ambitious possessing superior professional credentials who "have it all". Nevertheless, such demanding perfectionism does not come without compromise or cost, a topic examined in the next section of this chapter.

4.4.2 An uneasy compromise

"Having it all" is a myth (Swiss & Walker, 1993). As Swiss and Walker point out, many women have merged their dual roles successfully and have avoided a major collision between their often competing worlds, but none has escaped without trade-offs and personal sacrifices, or struggles and inner conflicts. No one *has* it all, even if from all outward appearances they appear to *do* it all (Swiss & Walker, 1993).

As Thakur points out, for every time the issue of inequality and double-role conflict emerges, a new orthodoxy is constructed around it by emphasizing one or other role of women rather than attempting a fundamental restricting of gender relations (Thakur, 1997). In the post-Mao era, instead of a re-definition of male and female roles, new roles are imposed on top of women's previous work roles. This is clearly evidenced in the media texts of *WOC* as early as in the early 1980s, a matter which resonates with the "perfect/complete woman" categorisation discussed earlier in Section 4.3.2.2:

今天的女性，应尽最大可能，要求自己做到生活，事业完美地统一。过份地把精力用于丈夫、儿女、家务琐事，以至于胸无大志固然不应该; 但忽略、轻视、以至拒绝承担女性应尽的家庭职责也是很不应该的。... 今天，时代要求于妇女的是...勇敢地、不辞辛劳地挑起双重担子。   *(Bai, WOC 1984.7)*
Women today should try their best to unite perfectly life and career together. Women should not devote too much energy to husband, children and domestic chores as an unambitious woman; nor should they neglect, despise, or even deny the domestic responsibilities due of women. Today, women are required to be brave and hardworking in order to shoulder the double-burden.

The constant referral of the modal verb "should", the passive verbal structure of "be required to" and the lexical modifier "due" together serve to highlight the double role expectation as an obligation for contemporary women. However, the verbal expression "try their best to" and the adjectives "brave and hardworking" can be seen as revealing the difficulty of "uniting perfectly life and career". With regard to the double standards and double burden of work and family, contemporary Chinese women have to make uneasy compromises and to struggle as they juggle competing priorities of family-oriented, nation-oriented ideologies and a feminist inspired development of women's self-awareness. On one hand, as Khan et al. argue,

> "The family, with the support of the patriarchal state, imposes restrictions and chains on a woman's rights, beliefs, behaviour and even thoughts….When a woman's identity as mother or wife conflicts with her belief in women's equality or emancipation, she makes uneasy compromises. Such choices are invariably painful. Patriarchy manifests itself most overtly within the family where family loyalty often conflicts with the very sense of being a woman".   (Khan et al., 1994, p. 3)

On the other hand, according to Wu, Chinese women in the first thirty years since 1949, were "being made equal" and "being emancipated" in such a way that they became the instrument rather than the subject of national modernization (Wu, 2010). As pointed out by Croll, it was overriding demands of a nationalist struggle that kept the the alliance between women's own movements and national movements (Croll, 1978). However, as Song argues, the controversy over the instrumentality and subjectivity of gender practice during the Mao era and up to the post-Mao era is never-ending (Song, 2005), because in the context of increasingly dynamic and diverse socio-cultural practices, at different levels – the personal and the public – multiple identities come into conflict with each other and each situation requires its own unique solution.

According to the statistics from *Chinese Women's Life Quality Report 2005* – a survey conducted by *Huakun* Women's Life Survey Centre on Chinese women's life (WOC, 2006), the evaluative indices of high-quality life for Chinese women reveal an interesting mixture of traditional influence and contemporary ideologies. The top eight factors affecting women's

life quality are listed as follows:

1. A happy marriage and harmonious family.
2. A stable income and good life.
3. A job that can realize her value.
4. Health and happy children.
5. A safe and clean environment away from pollution.
6. Rich spiritual wealth.
7. A passion for life, and love for others.
8. Prosperity of the nation, social stability and harmony.

<div align="right">(WOC, 2006, p. 15)</div>

A shift of priorities in women's life and identity re-construction is evidenced in the above list – the traditional focus on family becomes once again the first priority while the nationalist influence drops down to the 8th place. As pointed out by Feuchtwang et al., the economic and political changes that have occurred in post-Mao China have affected all levels of Chinese society and have led to the emergence of new guidelines and directives for women (Feuchtwang et al., 1988). On one hand, the ideological underpinnings of women's work identity remain grounded in the previous notion of gender equality centered on "*Half the Sky*", however with the shift from a rigid planned system to a market-oriented economy, the motivation of constructing women's work identity has leaned towards a more liberal context of individualism with an decreasing impact of nationalism and collectivism. On the other hand, traditional gender ideology is restored in socio-cultural recognition that the standard of an ideal wife as "贤妻良母 a good mother and wife" permeates in both social expectations and women's own self-discipline. However, the mixed and sometimes contested ideological prescriptions on women's identity leave many working women in the difficult predicament of the "double burden", as evidenced in the following extract from *PD*:

为了事业、工作和家庭，梁冰牺牲了自己所有的闲暇时间，不去看电视，不去逛街，不去走亲访友，每天像机器人一样按程序工作，干家务活的时候就是她休息的时候。

(1995PD-8)
For career, work and family, she sacrificed all her own leisure time, no TV, no shopping, no visiting friends at all. She is like a robot as if working according to the programmes. The housework time becomes her time of rest.

The term "robot" vividly depicts the exhausted status of working women who are "having it all" or trying to "have it all", in turn resonating with the alternative metaphor of "*Burning candles at both ends*" as a contrast to the metaphor of "*Keeping the balance*" (see Chapter Five Section 5.4.1). However in the chosen corpus of *PD* and *WOC* over both time frames of 1995 and 2005, such an explicit reflection of the double burden and the exhaustion of

working women is mostly absent. Instead, as discussed earlier, women who "keep the balance" are implicitly categorized as positive and ideal models (see Section 4.4.1.1). And as pointed out by Croll, currently it is women's own self-strengthening that has become an important platform for addressing the work/family conflict (Croll, 1995). As is evidenced in the following extract, women are explicitly encouraged to "rely on herself" to bravely shoulder the double roles:

> *她身体力行，想证明这一点：无论面对的是什么，女性要振作起来，<u>依靠自己的力量去解　　　　　　　决　　　　　　　它　　　　　　　</u>。*
> *(1995PD-17)*
> *She wants to prove this by her own example: no matter what she confronts, women should be confident, <u>and rely on herself to overcome</u> the difficulty.*

Although there have been moments of desperation such as guilt, stress and resentment at home and at work when women make individual choices of compromises and balancing, the decision process is in a way invisible and "unspeakable" (see Chapter Seven Section 7.3.3.2), and the emphasis of the chosen print media texts is still placed on the self-referential qualities of women, resonating with the Four-Self spirit promoted by the government (see Chapter Six Section 6.3.1). As any work/family conflict for women is in essence a representation of social conflict (Mead, 1913), it requires more than women's own efforts such as the role-shifting ability and the round-the-clock availability in juggling career and family (also see Chapter Five Section 5.4.2 and Chapter Seven Section 7.3.3.3). From a critical perspective, striking the delicate or right balance, inevitably involves uneasy compromises on the part of women and invites heated debate especially from feminist groups. In China, the "Go Back Home, women" debate has sallied back and forth in intellectual and academic circles as well as among ordinary people for decades since the 1980s. In the following section, the imbalance resulting from the uneasy compromises is discussed in the chosen corpus.

4.4.2.1 Double-role – *imbalance*

As is disussed earlier in Section 4.3.2.2, the family role is still regarded as occupying a priority place for women's identity reconstruction in contemporary Chinese society. Accordingly when women fail to "keep the balance" between the double roles, the worst scenario of the imbalancing consequence is the deprivation of her family identity, which is evidenced in the chosen media texts:

> *1) 工　作　后　太　忙　<u>没　有　时　间　赴　约　会　</u>*。
> *(1995WOC- 14)*

She was too busy since she started work, leaving no time for dating at all.

2）为了事业终身未嫁。   *(1995PD- 22)*
She did not marry for the whole life for the sake of her career.

3）这种痴迷和执著，耗尽了她菲薄的收入，也最终拆散了她的家庭。
(1995PD –24)
Her fascination and persistence (in career) finally consumed all her humble income and broke her family.

Preoccupied with work identity, sometimes women cannot afford to have a marriage in their life. There is a contemporary Chinese saying that "每一个成功的女人背后都有一个不幸的婚姻, behind each successful woman, there is an unhappy marriage", which forms a conspicuous contrast to that of "每一个成功的男人背后都有一个好女人, behind each successful man, there is a good woman", revealing the double standard on a woman's success (also see Chapter Five Section 5.2.2.1). The choice of being single may be one of the solutions to the work/family dilemma. And according to Wang, in fact, it is a choice in real social practices made by a group of working women especially those in high-ranking leadership positions in China and worldwide (Wang, 2010). However for the majority of working women, they won't choose to go to such an extreme as being single all her life. To have and "enjoy" both family and work identity, women are juggling work and family roles under the media advocacy of the *Third Type* women. As Tong points out, the critical issue lying underneath the perfect appearance of *the Third Type woman* is time management (Tong, 1994). Failure of an "effective" management of time will lead to sacrifice and loss of one kind or another.

In a *WOC* report on ten outstanding working women, with no exception, these women are telling sad stories of their family (roles) – for the sake of career and work, they cannot look after the parents who are ill in bed, nor can they care for their children's homework or husband's career development; usually they have health problems themselves, and many of them suffer unhappy relationships or even a broken family (WOC, 2002, 3, p.17). The report leaves a striking impression that behind each outstanding working woman, there is always and inevitably a miserable family life or inadequate family role. In the chosen corpus of *WOC* from the period of 1995, family roles of those outstanding career women are often constructed as inadequate when she cannot fulfill the role of a good mother taking care of her children. Some examples include:

1）接管了一大摊工作，只好把儿子寄送姐姐家抚养。   *(1995WOC- 3)*
She takes over a lot of work tasks, therefore she has to send her son to live in her sister's home.

2）她 的 一 双 儿 女 ….. 等 候 工 作 晚 归 的 父 母 …. 饿 着 肚 子 。

(1995WOC- 7)
Her children...hungrily waiting for the parents who come home late owing to work.

3）她因工作忙，回不了家，照片上的儿子脚上穿着拖鞋，女儿的裤腿一长一短。
(1995WOC-16)
She could not go back home because of busy work, and therefore in the photo, her son had slippers on feet and her daughter had uneven pants.

4）赶上工作忙，很长时间她回不了家。 *(1995WOC-17)*
When the work is busy, she could not go back home for a long time.

The lexical expressions of "has to send her son to" (see above Extract 1) and "could not go back home" (Extracts 3 and 4) in juxtaposition with "a lot of work tasks" (Extract 1), "busy work" (Extract 3) and "work is busy" (Extract 4) can be seen as revealing the difficult work/family dilemma as well as the helpless position of working women. As discussed earlier in Section 4.3.2.1, contemporary women's family identity is still to a great extent underpinned by the traditional gender ideology that a woman should cook/wash for her husband and children at thome. Accordingly, no matter how successful a woman is at work, "guilt" for her "family members" (Extract 4) is inevitable whenever she has not done or could not do an adequate family role, as is evidenced in the following extracts from *WOC* and *PD*:

1）许多事业有成的女性，往往为自己对家庭的付出太少而怀有深深的负疚感，觉得对不起丈夫，对不起孩子。 *(1995WOC- 7)*
Many women with successful careers, have deep guilt for their inadequate devotion to the family, and feel sorry for their husbands and children.

2）可工作太忙...让老人连饭都吃不上，心里愧呀！ *(1995WOC- 11)*
Work is too busy...unable to cook for elder people in family, she felt very guilty.

3）同样是女性，同样是妻子、是两个孩子的母亲，魏红提起自己的家庭，却显得颇为愧疚。 *(1995PD-15)*
As a woman, a wife and a mother of two kids, she seemed very guilty when mentioning her family.

4）两次落泪，每次都是在提到愧对家人的时候。 *(2005PD- 4)*
She sheds tears twice, everytime she speaks of her guilt for the family members.

Successful work identity and guilty family identity of women form a contrast in media discourses, especially from the period of 1995. Despite glorious achievements at work, these outstanding women in the chosen media texts have to be "guilty" for not being able to be "a good wife/mother", so that her (news)story is made "complete" in a way. The discourse on guilt is significant in revealing the ambivalence of media's stance on the work/family dilemma – on one hand, the persistent traditional prescription of women's family role is highlighted through the intensifying words "deep" (Extract 1) and "very" (Extracts 2 and 3)

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and lexical qualifiers "inadequate" (Extract 1) and "unable" (Extract 2); on the other hand, the theme of guilt is often constructed in the context of family where she is in the role of "a wife and a mother" (Extract 3) instead of in the context of workplace where she is in the role of "a woman with a successful career" (Extract 1). As Yao points out, for men, career success means he is a successful man, whereas for women, both career success and family success together spell out a successful woman (Yao, 2007, p. 37).

In the following extracts of *PD* from the period of 1995, however, failing to fulfill one's family role is exempt from being judged as inadequate or guilty. The reason is nothing "but" (see following Extracts 1 and 2) her devotion to the nation. The sense of guilt for family is submerged in the patriotic pride of her contribution to the "noble" (Extract 2) national cause, which is typical legacy from the Mao era – during which requirement of the family role for women, and the work/family conflict was diminished by the overall nationalist movement. As pointed out by Yao, when women make great contributions to the nation/the Party, their personal sacrifices including their family role will be understood and praised rather than being criticized (Yao, 1983, p. 174).

1) *由于公务繁忙，她时常不在家。为人妻，却不能为夫洗衣做饭；为人母，却不能嘘寒问暖、关心两个儿子的生活成长。但是，她却对西盟 8 万佤、傣各族百姓的生活关怀备至，一心忙着扶贫、忙着管治安、忙着抓计划生育、忙着为县里经济发展要资金找项目。*

(1995PD-15)

Because of her busy work, she could not be around home most of the time. <u>As a wife, she could not cook or wash for her husband, and as a mother, she could not look after two sons' life and growth.</u> <u>But</u> she <u>devoted all her love and care to 80,000 people</u> in Si'Meng county, to support the poor, manage the security work, carry out family planning policy, search funding for economic development in the county.

2) *作为母亲，她耳畔常常响起女儿那轻柔的抱怨声。她为事业舍去了很多，但作为一名人民的教师，一名有突出贡献的女科技专家，她仍感到自豪与充实。她像布谷鸟一样，年复一年地从南到北、从东到西，为了她心中崇高的事业忙碌着。*

(1995PD-35)

As a mother, she often heard <u>the complaints from her daughter</u>. She sacrificed a lot for her work, <u>but</u> as <u>a people's teacher</u> and a woman expert of science and technology, <u>she still felt very proud and fulfilled</u>. Like a cuckoo flying from south to north, and from east to west every year, she is busily working for <u>her noble cause</u>.

Both datasets of *WOC* and *PD* mentioned the theme of guilt of career women for their families. In *PD*, whenever there is discussion on devotion to the nation, its people and the Party, the guilt/sacrifice becomes outweighed by the glorious work contributions, revealing the function of *PD* as the mouthpiece of the government/the Party. The much lower occurrence of the theme in the datasets of *WOC* and especially from the period of 2005 reveals again the ambivalent attitude from the media – on one hand, the family role

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requirement for women remains deep-seated in most people's consciousness; on the other hand, growing feminist development and the particular media stance of *WOC* as a women's magazine, make the open accusation on career women of their family responsibilities harder as the work/family conflict surfaces as a sensitive and central topic in contemporary women's liberation and development. In the next section, the work/family conflict of women is further investigated through "Go back home, women" debates in China.

4.4.2.2 Go back home debates

As Na points out, there have been three periods of Go Back Home debates – in the early 1980s, mid-1990s and at the beginning of the new century (Na, 2008), having a far-reaching impact in the process of reconstructing contemporary Chinese women's identity as they reflect various motivations of various societal groups on gender identity amidst rapid social transformations. According to Norton, motivation and identity are socially constructed, often in inequitable relations of power, changing over time and space, and possibly coexisting in contradictory ways in the individual (Norton, 2000).

In 1995, a letter from Ye Zhen titled "Should the wife quit her job and go back home?" was published in *WOC*, which invoked a heated discussion among readers:

我的工作非常辛苦。忙得顾不上一家人的生活，顾不上孩子的功课，甚至一星期与丈夫都打不上几个照面…（丈夫）他几次三番要我辞职回家，说家里不指着我挣这几个钱，把家搞好了，他才能安心在外工作。…我寻思这累死累活的，两头吃力受埋怨，….干脆歇家里过过舒坦日子。可我妈说舒坦不了，她这一辈子惨就惨在没工作上，一辈子看我爹脸色行事，净受气，别人的饭不是好吃的。…我知道，新中国成立后，妇女翻身解放了，才争得工作的权利。那是老一辈妇女经历过多少痛苦和反省才争取到的权利，才把我们从锅台边解放出来。可事实上，我们领到了工作证，却仍然还得站"锅台"。我感到好累，我心里真矛盾，请帮我拿拿主意。 —叶珍 妻子该不该辞职回家？

(1995.1.WOC, p. 28)
My work is too busy for me to care for my family, nor care for my child's homework. I can rarely meet my husband within a week…(My husband) He asks me several times to quit my job and go back home, saying that he won't count on my income to support the family. If I take good care of the family, he then can have a peaceful mind at work…I am thinking that I am so exhausted and get complained both at work and at family…why don't I just stay at home for an easier life? But my mom told me that an easier life was no easy at all. All her life was miserable because of her jobless situation, that she had to be submissive to my father all the time. It is not easy to rely on others…I know that since 1949, women were liberated away from "kitchen" and granted rights to work, which was won by a lot of pain and struggles from the older generation. Yet in reality, we obtain the right to work now, but still confined to "kitchen" meanwhile. I feel very exhausted and hesitant of the dilemma. Please offer me some advice.

In the letter, various motivations and contested ideological forces are evidenced as

converging on constructing a woman's identity – traditional gender ideology prescribing a woman's family role through "care for my family, care for my child's homework" and husband's expectation of her "taking good care of the family"; socialist feminism emphasising work identity as a prerequisite for women's liberation and equality through the mother's "miserable life because of her jobless situation"; contemporary feminist development evoking self-awareness through the "exhausted and hesitant" mentality of the woman herself. "Go back home, women" debates become a site of contestation of various ideologies in re-defining women's identity. The debates mirror the ambivalence and confusion about women's contemporary roles, and reflect society's inability to offer new solutions to the work/family dilemma. As Swiss and Walker argue, only one theme unifies this emotionally charged topic – balancing work and family persists as one of the major unresolved issues in women's development (Swiss & Walker, 1993).

The "dilemma" of go back home or not and "exhausted" status of balancing the double roles is in fact not a dilemma experienced by Ye Zhen alone. For those women who want to "have it all", they often find themselves trapped in the similar dilemma – if they put work as a priority and are fully devoted to it, they will often feel guity about family or have to sacrifice her health; on the other hand, if they devote whole-heartedly to family looking after husbands and children, it will be conflicting to her pursuit of self-value. As Shen argues there is a tense struggle for women between two conflicting expectations and women are constantly forced to choose between two crucial aspects of their lives (Shen, 2005, p. 210). Under such circumstances of the "unbearable" double burden, some women do choose to quit work and go back home (Na, 2008).

According to the the statistics from a survey of "How do you see 'Go Back Home, Women'" conducted by *Huakun* Women's Life Survey Centre in 2003, 40% of interviewees think "it is hard to keep a balance between work and family" that make them want to "go back home" (Huakun, 2003). According to the report on "2009 Survey of Living Condition for Chinese Career Women" (ACWF, 2009), in 2007, 3% of women are willing to be a full-time housewife, while in 2009, 8.4% are willing to go back home and be housewives, a dramatic increase. For those who agree with "Go back home, women", most of them think it as a way of relieving the pressure of the double burden of work and family.

In addition, social discrimination or a social penalty on "女强人 *nü qiang ren*, superwoman" is also partly the reason for the re-emergence of the argument that "married women" should

go back home and give up their jobs in favor of men and family (also see Chapter Five Section 5.2.2). Scholars have argued that sexist stereotypes encourage people to believe that women are suited only to so-called "traditional" female sex roles and discourage people from accepting women who are "strong, assertive, independent and self-confident", thus inhibiting women's ability to realize their "full personal and professional potential"(Carter & Steiner, 2004, p. 14). As in the above letter by Ye Zhen, her husband will have "a peaceful mind" when she is back at home "taking good care of the family". As to the reason why most men reject "superwomen", firstly it is because these women cannot take good care of the family due to their busy work; secondly it is because many superwomen are often seen as in the image of a sharp-nailed dragon lady, married to her career, briefcase clutched to her chest and more or less characterized by certain masculine qualities such as being independent, assertive, and dominating; thirdly and maybe most importantly, it is because husbands usually cannot tolerate their wives' success, which cause unbearable pressure and "humiliation" to their male confidence and status. As pointed out by Yao, when working women, especially these superwomen, break the traditional gender labor division pattern – husband being the main breadwinner of family, and being respected by his wife for his role of supporting the family – she becomes an "un-woman", and thus makes the husband an "un-man" (Yao, 2007). No wonder the title of "superwoman" is often dispreferred by many successful career women especially those in senior positions. For instance, in the following extract of *WOC* from the period of 1995, such social discrimination against women is evidenced through her self-narrative of "losing a happy marriage because of her super-ness" and the husband's narrative of "You … not a good wife. You are not like a woman":

> *我是海南某公司总经理，<u>我现在最怕被人称作"女强人"</u>。因为我在事业上虽然成功，但在生活上却感到无能—因为"强"而失去了幸福的婚姻。丈夫对我说："你是事业的好伙伴，<u>但不是好妻子。你不像女人</u>……<u>我不是小丈夫，我需要女人钦佩崇拜。</u>"*
>
> *(1995 WOC- 2)*
>
> *I am a general manager of a company in Hai'nan, but <u>I am so afraid to be called "superwoman" by others</u>. I am successful in career, but feeling incompetent in life—<u>I lose my happy marriage because of my super-ness</u>. My husband said to me, "You are a good work partner, <u>but not a good wife. You are not like a woman</u>…<u>I am not a dependent husband, and I need woman to admire and worship me.</u>"*

The image above is very much one of oppression in which "I" am constrained by gender traditions and as a result, now find "myself" trapped in a role which "I" find difficult and even traumatic. As Lu points out, "superwomen" are often stereotypically categorised in media discourses as a "lonely" and "sad" image associated with negative consequences of imbalance between the double roles such as the betrayal of a relationship or a broken family (Lu, 2006, p. 33). Such an implication of sympathy and pity on their failure of family role

and marriage is also evidenced in the chosen corpus of print media texts from *PD*:

可是在事业辉煌灿烂的褙裝之下，在一番轰轰烈烈，热热闹闹之后，往往沉寂出几缕灰色
的　　　　　　　　　　　　　悲　　　　　　　　哀　　　　　　　　　　　　　　。
(1995PD –14)
But underneath the shining glory of career success, there is always a touch of grey loneliness and sadness.

To sum up, the inequality between genders in dealing with the work/family dilemma persists as a result of mixed ideologies such as traditional Confucianism and Maoist thoughts. In this study we note that the construction of the double-role conflict for working women is tactically back-grounded in the print media discourse whereas the preferred model of the *Third Type Woman* and the correspondent solution of "having it all" are fore-grounded especially in the dataset of *PD* and from the period of 1995. Such evidence of being a complete woman *keeping the balance* is mostly absent in the dataset of *WOC* from the period of 2005, which reveals the different ideological stances between the two media sources of *PD* and *WOC* and a shifting function of *WOC* over time.

PD as a national newspaper carrying out the function of being a mouthpiece for the government consistently promotes in its discourse a relatively more conservative stance of a traditional ideology and more centralized propaganda of *"Harmonious Society"* policies by the government. Consequently, women's role as a wife and mother is often covered in the *PD* reports. While *WOC*, as a women's magazine headed by the NGO "All China Women's Federation" (ACWF), shared a similar function of promoting the mainstream ideology as *PD* back in the time frame of 1995. However, in the time frame of 2005, *WOC* are revealed to pay more critical attention to exploring women's real situations of development in ordinary life and to issues such as advancing gender equality and removing discrimination. With its tenet of being the spokesperson for all women in China, *WOC* is trying to construct women's identity with a more feminist and objective perspective in the public media discourses.

The double-role conflict has placed many career women at the crossroads of work and family. A family-oriented housewife, or a career-oriented superwoman, or a super-Third Type woman – which way to go? Such identity conflict and confusion will continue until the voice of women's self-awareness is strong enough to assert a real independent self-identity and personality. In the next section, a growing voice of Chinese women's self-identity is examined in the chosen corpus especially with regard to the future direction of Chinese women's development.

4.5 Self-Identity – Emerging Awareness

As Chen points out, one cruicial issue faced by Chinese women is not about the right to work, nor the equal pay or discrimination at work, but the awakening of women's self-awareness as an individual identity (Chen, 2006). According to Norton, identity refers to how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future (Norton, 2000). Previously Chinese women's identity was characterized by an intrinsic suppressing or diminishing of self-identity, that women's identity was attached to that of the family, or of the nation as the dependents or cogs of the giant national construction machine (Guo, 1993). There was no time, no space, not even an aspiration for a consideration of *the Self*. "Grasp opportunity, develop the self, and above all develop the economy" is a famous remark made by Deng Xiaoping when he visited southern China in the spring of 1992. Since that time, "develop the self" has become a popular slogan. This new "self" is "autonomous, independent, and creative, liberated". In this socio-political atmosphere, women's economic power made them more independent and freer to express their thoughts and desires, and media texts resonated with those changes.

Drawing on data from the corpus of *WOC* and from the period of 2005 in particular, we can note that there are quite a few new topics and themes that were either submerged or absent in the *PD* dataset and from the earlier period of 1995, such as a new focus on the daughter role and relationship with parents, the assertion of sexuality and "Bourgeois" lifestyle, affordability of personal hobbies and leisure time, the freedom to express love and choose a spouse, and the happiness of a woman "being herself". According to Ling, the presented identities are women with more independence and freedom to express individual personalities and diverse options of lifestyle, reflecting a "post-modern" discourse in China (Ling, 2007). This emerging awareness cannot yet be regarded as a maninstream position, but as Bao argues, it is a voice which is getting stronger with the rise of a "Me Culture" in the Post-Mao China, especially in the 21st century (Bao, 2002).

4.5.1 Woman & self

As Ma points out, since the 1990s, "self-discovery", "self-anatomy", "search for self", "explore self value", and "find self-esteem back and realize personality" have become heated

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topics in public discourses (Ma, 1999). Such a shift of emphasis on the individual and "self" indicates an interesting transformation of contemporary gender discourse in China (also see Chapter Seven Section 7.2.3.2), which is also reflected in the chosen corpus under study through constant referral to the concept of self such as "a fear of self-waste" (see following Extract 1) and "in/follow/free" one's "deep/own heart" (Extracts 2, 3, 4):

1）*每当我在家中待的时间长一些，我就会有种自我荒废的恐慌感。*   *(2005WOC-S1)*
Whenever I stay at home for too long, I will have a fear of self-waste.

2）*我很看重生活和工作在我内心的某种激情碰撞。*   *(2005WOC –S10)*
I cherish the certain passion collision of life and work in my deep heart.

4）*跟着自己的心走，跟着自己的直觉走 ，忠于最原初的想法，不被外界所干扰。*

(2005WOC- S12)
Follow my own heart, and follow my instinct, be faithful to my original thought, disregard of external disturbance.

4）*在路上的经历被钱毓定义为给自己的心灵放假。*
(2005WOC –R8)
The journey on the road was defined by Qian Yun as freeing her own heart.

Interestingly, the presence of self-awareness of women is only evidenced in the dataset of *WOC* from the period of 2005, but not in the dataset of *PD* or from the period of 1995, reflecting once again the different stance of *WOC* as a women's magazine and *PD* as a national newspaper in approaching gender identity construction. Since the turn of the 21st century in the context of a growing feminist development and individualism, women have been given more space to contemplate the need of self-actualization, other than the previous "serving" role of a good wife and mother at home, and the honorable role of "half the sky-holder" at work. These model women portrayed in *WOC* in 2005 are representatives of both sense and sensibility – they know what they want, and how to realise those dreams, and many of them refuse selfless sacrifice to family or work, different from what most of their predecessors did. What this new generation of women values as is reflected in the chosen media texts is to listen to women's own aspirations deep in the heart.

According to Zhang and Liang, in China, women's status changes closely with socio-political agendas and state policies, which have left a far-reaching impact on women's identity construction (Zhang & Liang, 2008). For instance, in the dataset of *PD* and *WOC* from the period of 1995, women's identities at home are mostly constructed as a mother/wife; whereas in the dataset of *WOC* from the period of 2005, women's role as a daughter is evidenced in considerable coverage. It may be partly explained by the age variance of the women figures

reported in the print media discourse – most of women reported in 1995 are middle-aged women in their 40s and 50s, with some in their 60s, while many of the women characters reported in 2005, especially from *WOC* are in their 20s or 30s, with some in their 40s. It also reflects the impact of the state policy – Family Planning (One-Child Policy) on reconstructing contemporary women's identity. As pointed out by Andors, contraception and planned births were identified as contributions to building a socialist society as well as factors in women's liberation (Andors, 1983, p. 156).

In the context of the one-child policy and its implementation in China, the new generation of women are mostly raised as "the apple of the eye" in the "nuclear" family, with all expectations on the only child to carry on the family name and glory to become a successful woman/daughter whom their parents can be proud of. In this sense the foregrounding of the daughter-parents interaction in the chosen media texts can be understood as an indispensable way of constructing contemporary Chinese women's self-identity. Some examples include:

1）虽然章子怡也曾绝望过，好在一直都有父母温暖和坚强的臂膀，扶持她走向影坛尖峰。...我父母一直是我人生的舵手，他们指引着我劈波斩浪一路前行。...现在，我给父母买了别墅。　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　（2005 WOC –C2）
Zhang Ziyi was once in despair, but fortunately she has her parent's warm and strong shoulders all the time, leading her to the peak of her acting career....My parents are steersmen of my life, guiding me to cleave through waves and move forward…. Now I bought a villa for my parents.

2）直到现在，我仍非常感激父母给予我的这种绝对的信任...这种勇气则是父亲给予我的。...孝顺父母的最好方式是与他们相处。　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　（2005WOC- C8）
Till now, I appreciate much the absolute trust that my parents have given to me….Such courage was given to me by my dad…The best way to show filial piety to parents is to spend time with them.

3）从那以后，拍戏赚的每笔收入，我都只留点日常的零用钱，其余的则都放在父母那儿，为此，过惯了苦日子的二老很感踏实和欣慰，这正是我这个做女儿的想看到的。...爸妈因为喜欢杭州美丽的西子湖，我帮他们在西湖边买了套房。
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　（2005WOC- C7）
From then on, I only keep a small sum of daily expense with myself and give the rest of my income to my parents. My parents felt very gratified, which was what I want to see as a daughter. …My parents love the beautiful West Lake in Hangzhou, and so I bought them a house beside the Lake.

4）如今，郭晶晶给父母在北京买了一套一百多平方米的房子。...让父母看到子女的成就，他们因子女的成功而感到欣慰也是尽孝的一种方式。　　　（2005WOC –C11）
Now, GuoJinjin bought a house over 100 square metres in Beijing for her parents….It is one of the filial ways to make parents gratified by the achievements and success of their children.

On one hand, great expectations and "warm and strong" (see above Extract 1) support from parents have a significant impact on the daughter's path to growth and success; on the other hand, the importance of a daughter's responsibility of being "filial" (Extracts 2 and 4) and caring for parents when they are successful is accordingly justified in media discourses.

Significantly, media panics about sexuality may be a symptom of the broader shifts involving Chinese women's reconfiguration of themselves as part of the modernization of femininity. In Western modernity the rational individual is privileged, and is entitled to a set of "rights", and the modernized young woman is one for whom individualism, liberty and the entitlement to sexual self-expression are crucial (Ticknell et al., 2003). In the next section, expression of femininity and sexuality of Chinese women is examined through a multimodal analysis of cover photos from *WOC* over different timeframes.

4.5.2 Expression of femininity and sexuality

As Kaindl states, ''non-verbal elements in multimodal texts not only perform the function of illustrating the linguistic part of the text, but also play an integral role in the constitution of meaning, whether through interaction with the linguistic elements or as an independent semiotic system" (Kaindl, 2004, p. 176). Accordingly any image, beyond representing the world – whether in abstract or concrete ways – plays a part in some interaction and constitutes a recognizable kind of text. Based mainly on Kress and van Leeuwen's descriptive framework of multimodality (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001, 2006) and Hallidayan linguistics of social semiotic analysis (Halliday, 1978), this section attempts to employ a multimodal analysis of *WOC* cover photos in order to ascertain the extent to which visual components create meaning and reflect socio-historical development.

As we discussed earlier in Section 4.2.3, women's identity during the Mao era were dominantly the working image of *Iron Girls* such as farmers and factory workers, who responded to the call of "Holding up Half the Sky" and participated in the national production and construction. Three cover photos of *WOC* from that era are illustrative of this era:

Figure 4.1 (a) (1954.4 *WOC*)   (b) (1963.9 *WOC*)   (c) (1964.4 *WOC*)

A construction worker, a textile worker and women pilots are portrayed in the photos. Firstly, all of these women are in the state of working, with their eyes looking away from the viewer and focusing on piling up bricks, operating machines and listening to instructions. If we look closer at the facial expressions, we will find a tinge of a smile on their faces as expressions of fulfillment and pride. The camera shots were to catch the concentration and passion of these women at work. Secondly, these cover girls are ordinary looking without any make-up and in simple inexpensive cotton clothes mostly blue, grey or black in color. There is no particular focus on hairstyle nor any other conspicuous trace of femininity that can be noted. As pointed out by Jin, in the Mao era when neutralized sexuality represented revolution and progress, women would feel ashamed if they showed any "backward" qualities of femininity (Jin, 2006).

Since the "Reforms" and "Opening up" in the 1980s, the "de-sexualisation" of the revolutionary women's images has come to be seen as an "outdated and inhuman" tradition, and femininity of women was awakened after decades of suppression (Jin, 2006). Chinese women started to pay attention to fashion clothes and make-up. Three typical cover photos of *WOC* from the period of 1995 are presented in Figure 4.2:

Figure 4.2 (a) (1995.1 *WOC*)   (b) (1995.7 *WOC*)   (c) (1995.9 *WOC*)

Compared with the cover photos in the Mao era, firstly, the space taken by women models is enlarged to dominate most of the cover page at its center, and the setting is shifted from public workplaces to some private undefined background where the professions of these women cannot be discerned. Kress and van Leeuwen (2001) relate the represented social distance of participants in an image to Hall's (1966) discussion of "proxemics"- at intimate distance, we see the face or the head only. At close personal distance we take in the head and the shoulders. At far personal distance we see the other person from the waist up. At close social distance we see the whole figure. At far social distance we see the whole figure "with space around it". And at public distance we can see the torso of at least four or five people. Accordingly, cover photos in the Mao era represent a kind of distant and public discourse on women's identity, whereas cover photos in 1995 present a closer personal shot of women's identity.

Secondly, instead of looking away from the viewer as is evidenced in *WOC* in the Mao era, women models on 1995 *WOC* covers look at the viewer, directly and smiling. Combining the image act analysis of Kress and van Leeuwen's semiotics (1996) and Goffman's observations (Goffman, 1979), the gaze of models reflect different interpersonal positions toward viewers – if the model looks away from the viewer, it is seen as constructing an idealized exemplar of a class or attribute; if the model looks directly at the viewer, it is more about establishing an equal relationship toward the readers.

Thirdly, instead of the monotonous colors of blue, grey and black, these women models in 1995 are displayed in full bright colors. According to Wang, in the context of a revival of femininity against the previous revolutionary "masculinization of the female", color is regarded as a significant expression in releasing the long suppressed desire for beauty of Chinese women (Wang, 2008). In addition, fashionable curly hairstyles, earrings and light

make-up are noted, all reflecting a conspicuous trace of femininity. As Honig and Hershatter argue, the emphasis and reflections on gender distinction and difference, the wide-spread support for moving women back into "suitable" lines of work, the discussions of womanly virtues in the press, must all be understood in part as a reaction to Cultural Revolution norms (Honig & Hershatter, 1988) (see also Chapter Two Section 2.2.2).

In the new century, the mainstream readership of the popular media especially women's magazines turn to an emerging dominant middle-class of young professional women, usually called "white collars" or referred to as "pink collars" sometimes, who are heavily influenced by the growing development of individualism and consumerism (Bao, 2002). Accordingly, the covers of the *WOC* magazine create for readers a visual space of bright, shining colors and sexy, young beautiful women, with a strong demonstration of contemporary feminine power and consumerism. The production of imagery for and about women represents an extension of "social manipulation" (Bordo, 1993, p. 143) as it encourages them to objectify their own bodies through consumerism. Jackie Stacey suggests that preparing the female body for the gaze involves the reproduction of phallocentric feminine identities "through other forms of consumption" such as purchasing clothing and cosmetics or subscribing to dieting and exercise regimes (Stacey, 1991, p. 156).

Three cover photos of *WOC* from the period of 2005 and three from the period 2008 show further trends in portraying women in the data set:

Figure 4.3 (a) (2005.1 *WOC*)   (b) (2005.10 *WOC*)   (c) (2005.11 *WOC*)

Figure 4.4 (a)(2008.1 *WOC*)　　　　(b)(2008.8 *WOC*)　　　　(c)(2008.12 *WOC*)

Firstly, similar to the cover photos from 1995, the size of the cover models in 2005 and 2008 is also full page portrait, the setting is also private undefined background, and the gaze of these women models is also looking directly at the viewer with confident smiles. Secondly, the clothing of these women represent a variety of fashion designs and elegant modern brands in addition to the color variety. A strong feminine power is also asserted through physical appearance and adornment of the delicate make-up, the most up-to-date hairstyle, the latest fashion design such as see-through, strapless dress and bare midriff, fashion accessories such as tie, necklace, ring and glove. In particular, an "unforgettable" sexual appeal of the cover women who are mostly actresses or anchorwomen are constructed through some very inviting postures, exposing part of the curvaceous body shapes either of shoulder or of waist, or even some part of the mysterious and tempting cleavage. Such a bold "westernized" assertion of sexuality (Wang, 2003) is absent in cover photos of *WOC* from the period of 1995.

According to Bourdieu, gender is a representation, and the body is significant in representing and reconstructing gender, because the body can be a powerful semiotic resource for reflecting culture and social domination (Bourdieu, 1977). In media discourses, the body of women is manipulated, reformed and reconstructed to fit in the present cultural values and social development. Especially in the context of a market economy, as Shen argues, a woman's body is seen as a tool of presentation, reinforcing the discursive power of gender identity construction underpinned by modern ideas of consumption (Shen, 2005, p. 151), which is reflected in the above cover photos of *WOC* from the periods of 2005 and 2008.

In short, the women's magazines undoubtedly draw on a highly sexualized style of language and imagery but sex itself is hardly encouraged, and cover photos of women in *WOC* can be seen as a lens for the interpretation of the special historical and social environment of gender

identity. The significance of the cover women of *WOC* lies not in the images themselves but in the symbolism and how mass media has made meanings for these models, which are produced and developed in response to certain cultural pressure. The analysis reveals that women's images in *WOC* are consistent with social development in China and with the connotation of the ideologies of social class, social gender, sex and consumerism. In the next section self-identity of women is further examined through the freedom of personal hobbies and leisure time.

4.5.3 Affordable hobbies & leisure

The awakening awareness of women's self-identity enables them to contemplate the previous distribution of their multi-roles such as those of family and work. As a result, the need of self-actualization emerges as an increasingly important agenda for individual personality development in contemporary society. As Tian argues, leisure time symbolizes a social wealth and social resource, which both men and women should equally enjoy. Women's entitlement to leisure time and their way of spending the time reflect women's social status and women's development (Tian, 2004).

According to the statistics from *Chinese Women's Life Quality Report 2005,* a survey conducted by *Huakun* Women's Life Survey Centre on Chinese women's life (*WOC*, Mar. 2007), the time of "doing what she likes" for urban women surpasses the time of "doing housework"; the average time for urban women spent on "reading and internet-surfing etc." is 104 minutes per day, higher than the time spent on "doing housework" which is 85 minutes. In the *Third National Survey of Chinese Women's Social Status*, it is revealed that women's lifestyles have become more diversified – travel, gym, recreation and sports, internet, religion, etc.; and on weekends, the leisure time of women is 240 minutes, and of men is 297 minutes (ACWF, 2011).

In this section, in order to grasp a clear picture of the media's presentation of women's leisure time, lexical phrases of hobbies and "likings" such as *爱好 ai hao, 喜好 xi hao* and *喜爱 xi'ai* are examined in the chosen corpus. In the dataset of *PD* over both timeframes, there are only two extracts reflecting women's hobbies and leisure activities, and in the dataset of *WOC* from the period of 1995, there is only one such example:

1) *胡常红平时非常喜爱文艺，也非常注意各种宣传动态，和明星们"有话可说"。*

(1995WOC-2)
Hu Changhong <u>likes arts very much in her leisure time</u> and pays attention to various reports on entertainment, so that she could "talk with" those stars from arts field.

2）采访报道的余暇<u>可以进行自己喜爱的文学创作</u>，同时也不影响她去尽力做一名称职的贤妻良母…<u>如今</u>，赤手空拳打天下，昏天黑地，筋疲力尽。   *(1995PD-17)*
Previously <u>she could keep her favorite hobby of literature writing in leisure time</u> and it won't affect her efforts of being a good wife and mother….<u>however</u> now she was working so hard to start the new journal, day and night, extremely exhausted.

3）这朵柔美金花动如脱兔，<u>最大的爱好就是打乒乓球、打网球</u>。但更多的时候是静如处子，对着电脑画图一画就是半天。
(2005PD- 4)
When this sweet golden flower moves, she is fast as a free rabbit, and <u>her favorite hobby is</u> playing <u>ping pong and tennis</u>. <u>However</u>, more often than not she is quiet as a shy girl staying in front of computer, drawing design sketches for half a day.

Interestingly, if we take a closer look at these examples, it will be noted that the hobbies in the chosen media texts are either related to facilitating her work identity or being sacrificed to her work identity – arts as a hobby (see above Extract 1) is used as a means to assist communication at work of collecting tax from those entertainment stars, literature writing (see Extract 2) is abandoned owing to her exhausting workload, hobby of *ping pong* and tennis (see Extract 3) is provided only as a contrast to highlight her concentration on work identity. Accordingly, it is relatively safe to conclude that the pursuit of individual hobbies and leisure activities for women was not encouraged in 1995 as an important representation of women's identity construction.

Contrastingly in the dataset of *WOC* from the period of 2005, a considerable coverage of individual hobbies and leisure activities of those model women figures is evidenced, as provided in the following examples:

1）<u>读书、听古典音乐、看影碟</u>，乃董卿的<u>闲时三趣</u>。读书，能让人<u>学会思考</u>，让人在不知不觉中<u>变得安静下来</u>，读书让我<u>很快乐</u>。因为音乐会让我的<u>心胸豁然开朗</u>。看影碟是<u>减压的好方法</u>。看电影，能让我们在别人的故事里悄然成长。
(2005WOC C3)
Reading, listening to classical music, and watching DVD, are three fun things for Dongqing in her leisure time. Reading <u>makes me think</u>, and <u>calm down</u> subconsciously, and it makes me <u>very happy</u>. Music <u>enlightens my mind</u> suddenly. Watching DVD is a good way to <u>release pressure</u>. Watching movies will <u>help us grow</u> in other people' stories.

2）为<u>快乐阅读是兴趣所在</u>。   *(2005WOC- C6)*
It is my hobby to <u>read for the sake of happiness</u>.

3）至今保持着<u>写日记</u>的习惯…<u>这毕竟是心灵最自由最宽广的一块精神领域</u>，我不能任其闲置。   *(2005WOC- C8)*
I have kept the habit of <u>personal diary</u>… After all, <u>the personal diary is one vast free spiritual land in my mind</u>, I cannot let it lie idle.

4) 日常生活中的郭晶晶<u>爱穿休闲运动装，爱看电视剧</u>。....看电视剧、看碟也是<u>减压的好方法</u>。   *(2005WOC –C11)*
Guo Jinjin likes <u>casual sportswear</u> in daily life, and she loves <u>watching dramas</u>....watching drama and DVD is <u>a good way to release pressure</u>.

Firstly, hobbies such as "reading", "listening to music" (see above Extract 1), "watching movies/dramas" (Extracts 1 and 4) and "keeping a diary" (Extract 3) are mostly personal and individual, as is evidenced through the expressions of "reading…makes me very happy" (Extract 1), "read for the sake of happiness" (Extract 2) and "free spiritual land in my mind" (Extract 3); or are connected with one's spiritual growth as these hobbies "make me think/calm down", "enlighten my mind" and "help us to grow" (Extract 1). Besides the family role and work role, women nowadays start to re-discover a diminished self-identity as well as the needs of self-improvement of personalities – internal longings and dreams of one's spiritual life journey.

Secondly, sometimes hobbies provide a way of relaxation to "release the pressure" (Extracts 1 and 4). As Bao points out, living in contemporary society, most people are confronted with fierce competition at work and a fast city tempo of lifestyle. As a result, pressure becomes a prevalent and indispensable theme in their life that they must face and learn to handle (Bao, 2002). According to Lull, in post-modern cultures, lifestyle has emerged as a key element of self-identity, providing a lens through which we can view and understand modern communities (Lull, 2000, p. 157). In this sense, lifestyle of these women – partly reflected through individual hobbies and leisure activities – can also be seen as reflecting the wider social changes of individual identity such as gender identity.

As Gauntlett points out, consumerism is one of the clearest ways in which we develop and project a lifestyle, as a feature of the post-traditional era (Gauntlett, 2002). According to Gauntlett, "lifestyle" is not only about fancy jobs and conspicuous consumption but also referring to wider choices, behaviors, and to greater or lesser degrees attitudes and beliefs (Gauntlett, 2002). As Giddens puts it, "Modernity opens up the project of the self, but under conditions strongly influenced by the standardizing effects of commodity capitalism" (Giddens, 1991, p. 196).

According to the Information Office (*xin xi ban*), the share of Chinese women's earnings as a proportion of total family income increased from 20% in the 1950s to 40% in the mid-1990s (Information Office, 1994). A survey of women's consumption conducted by *Huakun*

Women's Life Survey Center in 2005 (2005 WOC 12, p. 26) reveals that 77.3% of married women are the decision-makers concerning "food", "clothing" and daily necessities for family expenditure, which means that women have become the main purchaser and decision-maker of family daily expenditure. The expenses on clothes and related accessories occupy the top place in their monthly expenses; telecommunication and travel come as the second and the third places respectively, and are then followed by fitness, cosmetics and book expenses.

As the major decision-makers in their families, Chinese women's consumption power is an important driving force of the domestic consumer market and is predicted to rise steadily (Chang, 2010). This is not surprising given that one of the most important characteristics distinguishing reform from revolution is the new interest in consumption, in consumer goods and in their styles, colours, materials and brand names, all of which have generated a new phenomenon – consumer desire in China. An increasing number of women cannot only afford the time but also have the economic means to spend on their leisure development. The freedom and affordability of leisure activities influenced by the lifestyle of individualism and the growing "consumption power" incubate a popular modern class characterized by the so-called "小资 xiaozi, Bourgeois" lifestyle among urban women:

> 在<u>梅地亚中心的咖啡厅</u>坐定后，我惊叹，这位身着一袭玫瑰<u>蕾丝上衣，脸上扑着精致的影</u>
> <u>妆</u>，亮粉星星点点若隐若现的当红女主播...她这种<u>小资时代红粉俏佳人的形象</u>，似乎还原于
> 一个生活中更为真实的方静。我们的谈话是在<u>咖啡和浓茶</u>混合的香气中进行的。
>
> （2005WOC- C6）
>
> *After seated in a <u>Café in Media Centre Hotel</u>, I was amazed by her <u>rosy coat with lace and delicate</u>*
> *<u>make-up</u> with glittering facial powder……..her typical image of <u>a Pink Lady in the Bourgeois Era</u>*
> *seems to present a more real Fanjing in daily life. Our talk is held in the mixed scent of <u>coffee and</u>*
> *<u>tea</u>.*

Café, designer clothes, delicate make-up, coffee and tea, pink lady – all of which are typical components of the *Bourgeois* lifestyle in contemporary Chinese society. As Bao points out in his book, "小资 *xiaozi,* bourgeois" ideology and lifestyle was once the target of severe criticism in the revolutionary period when consumption was suppressed and production highlighted (Bao, 2002). Decades later, these Maoist policies are completely overthrown with an unprecedented agitation for consumption. Especially in 2001, the government started to advocate vigorously expanding domestic consumption all over the country, to further speed up the already stunning GDP growth rate (Song, 2005).

Today in an era filled with an ever-growing consumerism and individualism, as Bao points

out, the bourgeois lifestyle is transformed into a "consuming style and ideology" (Bao, 2002, p. 30), which becomes very popular among young professional people of "white collars". The group of women white collars, more often referred to as "pink collars", are a very promising group in terms of commercial value, regarding its size and purchasing capability. A market research report on China's Consumer Confidence Index (CCI), prepared by Nielsen in the first quarter of 2010, indicated that the overall consumer confidence of women was slightly lower than that of men. However, consumer confidence of young Chinese women, under age 30, exceeded that of men (Song, 2010). Nielsen's research report also indicated there have been radical changes in women's consumption patterns. For example, a growing number of Chinese women are buying expensive, high-end beauty and skin-care products. In addition, they want a complete skin-care solution – from facial cleansing to anti-wrinkle methods – rather than the traditional simple way of whitening and moisturising. In addition to cosmetics shopping, women today enjoy holidays, attending art courses and music classes, going to fitness centers, going to concerts and pubs, doing yoga, watching films and dining out. They prefer to wear brand-name clothes, refined hairstyles and elaborate make-up. For bourgeois women, capitalism of fashion and glamour, must-have clothes, heartthrob-starring movies, fine foods and nice houses (Gauntlett, 2002) can improve their self-confidence of being a professional woma and, just as Giddens says, the things people can buy to "express" themselves inevitably has an impact upon the project of the self (Giddens, 1991, p. 196). In the next section, the construction of women's self identity is further examined with regard to the autonomy of women in addressing love and relationships.

4.5.4 Autonomy in love & marriage

Back in the pre-Mao era, marriage was strictly assigned by a patriarchal family system. During the Mao era, especially during the period of the Cultural Revolution, as Yuan points out, "政审 *zheng shen*, political screening" was required for people before they were able to get married, in which people often had to make difficult decisions between personal relationships and a public career future. In such a context, people's public life and private life were mixed up and unified in a way (Yuan, 1993). Love and relationships were seen as rigorously forbidden concepts in both literature and media discourses, and young couples were discouraged from openly expressing their affection for love relationships, otherwise, they would be considered frivolous. Sexual passivity has been inculcated as a virtue of women, and popular culture has contributed to maintaining this idea by investing chastity with positive significance, particularly relating to female characters in various ways. In most

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cases, female character's sexuality has been disregarded or portrayed as passive.

Howver, modern culture views love as an extremely intimate experience, and the mass media have a substantial role in lending significance to these experiences (Illouz, 1997). In the post-Mao era against the backdrop of China's Reform and Opening up policies, as well as cultural communications brought by globalization, social recognition of "forbidden love" changes radically as people start to enjoy greater freedom in relationships and marriage. Through the analysis of the chosen corpus, it is revealed that the theme of love is mostly presented in the dataset of *WOC* from the period of 2005, but is absent in the dataset of *PD* over both timeframes. To a large extent, the construction of any particular form of love is the result of a given soceity's political and cultural structure, and like any other ideological domain was appropriated by different powerful social players (Beall & Sternberg, 1995). The idea of romantic love is not new, but only the transition into secular society and the rise of individualism and liberal trends lay the foundation for the espousal of romantic love in present society (Giddens, 1992). In the context of a more liberal socio-political atmosphere in china in the new century, people are braver in expressing their affection outwardly. Such bravery and freedom is firstly reflected through the direct and indirect quotations about love of these outstanding women figures in the chosen media texts:

1）我想说：我爱她！   *(2005WOC- R1)*
I want to say, I love her!

2) 她笃信爱情是可遇而不可求的。   *(2005WOC- C3)*
She firmly believes that love is dependent on destiny.

3) 我对爱情的处理方式浪漫。...爱由于发自于内心。...爱情是不能去强求的，不能去伤害的。...爱情、婚姻是一种缘分。   *(2005WOC-C5)*
My way of dealing with love is "romantic"... Love is from inner heart...Love cannot be forced nor be hurt...Love and marriage is a kind of destiny.

4) 她欣赏的是天长地久的爱情。   *(2005WOC-C11)*
What she appreciates is ever-lasting love.

A direct assertion such as "I love her" (see above Extract 1) would be considered rather "unorthodox" in the period of 1995 or back in earlier times. Expressions of "dependent on destiny" (Extract 2), "romantic", "from inner heart", "not be forced nor be hurt", "destiny" (Extract 3) and "ever-lasting love" (Extract 4) can be seen as revealing a fact that in the eyes of contemporary Chinese women, their definition and understanding of love is shifted toward a more personal and romantic orientation, which was quite different in the previous decades when individual and private love and relationships were suppressed to a great extent or hidden by other public priorities of work or political participation. The lexical expressions

"she firmly believes" (Extract 2), "my way of dealing with love" (Extract 3), "what she appreciates" (Extract 4) serve to highlight the proactive attitude of women in dealing with relationships. As Sun points out, Chinese women are no longer passively waiting for love or to be arranged in their marriages, instead, they take the initiatives to search for love (Sun, 2004). Compared to the previous generations of their grandmothers and mothers, contemporary Chinese women nowadays are more proactive and independent in choosing a "Mr. Right". For instance, through an examination of the verbal concordance pattern with the key words love and marriage, we note the following patterns salient – "pursue-husband/marriage" (see following Extract 1), "find-man" (Extract 2), "desire-love" (Extract 3), which might be regarded as "unorthodox" in Chinese traditional gender ideology:

1) 爱我的老公和幸福的婚姻，都是我自己*主动争取*来的。···我就暗下决心，一定要马上*找到自己感情的归宿*。 *(2005WOC- S1)*
My husband who loves me and my happy marriage are both actively pursued by me. ... I am determined to find my love immediately.

2) 只想用自己的辛苦努力去赚钱，然后*找个真心实意爱我的男人*。 *(2005WOC- C2)*
I want to make more money by my own efforts and then find a man who loves me sincerely.

3) 我对爱情的处理方式浪漫，*也渴望爱情*。 *(2005WOC-C5)*
My way of dealing with love is "romantic", and I desire for love.

Such "unorthodoxness" is also reflected in the open and direct discussion of the standard in choosing a husband from the viewpoint of a woman, as is evidenced in the dataset of *WOC* from the period of 2005:

1) 我小时候勾画过白马王子的样子，是琼瑶小说里的那种，*帅气高大、浪漫多情*，*现在则多了一条*，就是一定要彼此理解，能给我安全感。 *(2005WOC- C2)*
I had dreamed of my Mr. Right in my childhood, of tall, handsome and romantic hero from romance novels, and now there is one more criteria, that is he should be understanding, and able to give me a sense of security.

2) 我*推崇的男人的品质*，*第一点是他的智慧；第二点是男人的责任心*。 *(2005WOC-C3)*
What I value in men first is his wisdom, and second is his sense of responsibility.

3) 我*不会选择*一个很糟糕的男人做丈夫，*我会按照自己的审美标准和我的品位去选择*。 *(2005WOC- C5)*
I won't choose a bad man to be my husband, I will choose according to my own aesthetics and taste.

4) 我眼中的新好男人一般要具备三个特点：*一是执着。二是得有幽默感。三是一个男人要有童心*。*显然*，明白"知音是可遇不可求"这一道理的方静，在婚恋方面绝对不会*委曲求全*。 *(2005WOC- C6)*
Generally, a new good man in my eyes should have three qualities: first is persistence; the second is sense of humor, and the third is childlike innocence. Apparently, knowing "Soul mate is hard to find", Fangjing will certainly not compromise in love and marriage.

The listing of quality requirements or "criteria" (see above Extract 1) of an ideal husband, the concordance patterns such as "should-qualities" (Extracts 1 and 3), "choose-husband" (Extract 3), "no-compromise" (Extract 4), and the expressions of "what I value" (Extract 2), "according to my own aesthetics and taste" (Extract 3) and "in my eyes" (Extract 4) all highlight the emerging autonomy in decision making and the growing feminine power of a new generation of contemporary women. According to Zhang, the growing freedom of choosing one's spouse reflects an improvement in women's family status and a redefinition of gender relationships (Zhang, 2008). According to several surveys on Chinese women's social status, which were conducted in 1990, 2001 and 2002, women now enjoy greater freedom in making their own marriage-related decisions, and their parents have much less influence over their daughters regarding marriage – in 1990, 30% of women said their parents had arranged their marriages, whereas ten years later, that number fell to 14% (among which just 7% in urban areas) (ACWF, 2006).

However, such freedom and independence of love and marriage also leads to an unexpected problem in contemporary Chinese society especially in the new century – the phenomenon of 剩女 *shen nü*, Leftover Ladies, which is further examined in the following Vignette 4.5-(1) (also see Chapter Five Section 5.3.2.2). Some examples from the chosen corpus are as follows:

1) 我一年到头都在拍戏，如果恋爱了，又没时间跟他在一起，这对他是很残酷的，所以这事现在还是等等吧。 *(2005 WOC- C2)*
I am busy shooting movies all year round outside home. If I fall in love and don't have enough time to be with him, it will be very cruel for him. So I'd better put off the relationship thing to future and wait.

2) 2005 年的情人节，董卿仍和父母一起度过。父母曾追问她到底想找个什么样的伴侣。... 她笃信爱情 是可遇不可求的。...我只能说，情感生活对一个女性来讲是人生中非常重要的部分，但实在不是全部...我便意识到女人还是先要爱自己、善待自己，这一点很重要。 *(2005WOC- C3)*
Dongqing still spent the Valentine's Day in 2005 with her parents. Her parents once asked her what the ideal partner she was after...she believes that love just happens as destiny. ...I have to say that love is a very important part of a woman's life but not the whole part....woman should love herself first and be nice to herself, which is very important.

3) 三十有几的方静，至今还没找到她的如意郎君，虽然父母都着急她的婚姻大事...方静本人对此事的态度却显得很是轻松："等待白马王子的过程并不辛苦，我很享受一个人的生活。" *(2005WOC- C6)*
In her thirties, Fangjing hasn't found her Mr. Right yet, despite that her parents are very anxious about her marriage....Fangjing herself looks rather relaxed on this issue, "The waiting process for my Prince Charming is not that hard, and I enjoy the life by myself very much."

In contrast with the "anxious" (see above Extract 3) state of their parents, many modern, single women in China "enjoy" their independence and feel comfortable and "relaxed" (Extract 3) holding out and "waiting" (Extract 1) for the right man, even as they grow older. They don't want to make compromises because of age such as being "in her thirties" (Extract 3) or social pressure. Meanwhile, however, there are still many over-25-year-olds, fretting under strong societal pressure to marry, who have internalized the cultural and social values that they are left "on the shelf" (see Vignette 4.5-(1)). As Kim points out, women's sexual autonomy was considered a challenge to society since it conflicts with the ideology of the patriarchal nuclear family, which perpetuates the myth that family is the cornerstone of society and naturalizes the male-centred regulation of sexuality and the fixed male/female roles in gender relations (Kim, 2008).

4.5.5 Happiness of being herself

As discussed in previous sections (see sections 4.5.2 and 4.5.4), feeling comfortable with being oneself is very important for many Chinese women as individual identity construction is expanded with a growing diversity of lifestyle choices. As Wang points out, it is now very difficult to use a couple of labels/categories to summarize women's aesthetics and lifestyles in the last decade – in the context of a growing "Me Culture", there are no set rules, as long as you like, you can do it regardless of social commentary from others (Wang, 2008) (also see Chapter Seven Section 7.2.3.2). In Chapter Seven of the thesis, it is reflected through the interview narratives with journalist practitioners that it is now an era of mixing tradition and modernity, with "small mass" becoming the mainstream presentational focus of media production against the backdrop of complex diversity in modern society, especially in urban areas (see Chapter Seven Section 7.3.3.1).

Accordingly, the philosophy of the bourgeois lifestyle (see Section 4.5.3) of enjoying life with freedom and independence makes an important impact on the reconstruction of contemporary women's identity, and the theme of happiness becomes one significant component in a woman's life journey and value pursuit. However the theme of happiness resulting from personal and self-directed feelings is only evidenced in the dataset of *WOC* from the period of 2005 and is absent in the dataset of *PD* and from the period of 1995. The priority of nationalism to background personal/individual desire before the late 1990s may be the explanation here and it is possible to argue that Chinese women especially the younger generation start to pay an increasing attention to their "personal" (see following Extract 1)

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and "spiritual" (Extract 6) happiness over the decade. Some examples are as follows:

1）*所谓幸福，应该是一种很个人化的感受吧。*　　　　　　　*(2005WOC- C1)*
Happiness should be a kind of very personal feeling.

2）*躺在河边，抬头看变化无穷的流云、婆娑的树影，那完全是一种至美的景象，我觉得幸福极了。*　　　　　　　　　　　　　　*(2005WOC-C5)*
Lying beside the river, looking up at the changing clouds and dancing shadows of trees, which was exactly a beautiful scene. I feel extremely happy.

3）*我对物质的东西不在乎，我就在乎高兴。我总能从特别小的事情中体会到更多乐趣。...我经常对自己说，我每天都能被自己最喜欢的童声合唱唤醒，我就是世上最幸福的人 。*
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　(2005WOC- C6)
I don't care about material things, what I care about is happiness. I can always get happiness from very tiny happenings...I often tell myself, that waken up by my favorite children's choir, I am the happiest person in the world.

4) *在赛场外我更率性点，是个喜欢怎么轻松、快乐就怎么生活的人。*
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　(2005WOC- C11)
I am more willful and direct outside the sports court, I am a person who goes after happiness and a free and easy life.

5）*所以，通常是心态决定了个人是否快乐。*　　　　　*(2005WOC-R4)*
So, happy or not, depends upon the state of mind.

6) *总之，她喜欢行走中心灵自由的感觉。*　　　　　　*(2005WOC- R8)*
Anyway, she enjoys the spiritual freedom during the trips.

From the above extracts, it is reflected that in addition to the work role and family role of women, the emerging awareness of self-identity is gaining an increased attention in media discourses. Happiness is constructed as a "free and easy" (Extract 4) "state of mind" (Extract 5), more personal and individual oriented. In this sense, as Zuo and Xia point out, the flight from marriage in China can be seen as partly a result of the greater freedom that women enjoy these days, which is to be celebrated (Zuo & Xia, 2008). But it is also creating social problems. Chinese marriage and the family are undergoing a crisis which manifests itself in the rapidly rising rate of divorce. In the context of social change emerging in the heart of the private sphere, women struggle to deal with married relationships and to make sense of their lives through the experience of reconstructing their roles which are socially constructed within an oppressive culture still much signaled by the traditional, domestic feminine role and performance. In the next section, the phenomenon of *Leftover Ladies* is discussed with regard to the contested ideological forces in redefinining a contemporary pattern of gender identity and gender relationships.

Vignette 4.5-(1) *剩女 shen nü – Leftover Ladies*

The prediction that an era of 剩女 *sheng nü* Leftover Ladies is coming, is not an overstatement.

If Bridget Jones[11] comes to China she will probably find millions of single girls experiencing the same stories as she did – they are at the right age to marry, they want to meet that "special someone", but find themselves alone. "*Leftover Ladies*" is a term used and made popular that classifies women who remain unmarried in their late twenties and beyond . The exact etymology of the term is not conclusively known. According to Tian, it was Xu Wei, the editor-in-chief of the Cosmopolitan Magazine China, who created the term for the first time in 2006 (Tian, 2011). In 2007, the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China released an official statement defining Leftover Ladies as any "unmarried women over the age of 27" and added it to the national lexicon (Fincher, 2012). However it is a term that misleadingly implies these women have failed to meet men's standards, as opposed to having higher standards of their own.

As Zuo and Xia point out, the categorization of *shen nü,* Leftover Ladies, is similar to that of "3S Women" – Single, Seventies (most were born in the 70s) and Stuck – in the Western society (Zuo & Xia, 2008), with another nick-name 三高女 *san gao nü,* Three-High Women – Higher education, Higher income and Higher age (usually aged over 30). As Li reported in *The Global Times*, in the year of 2010 there are 860,000 *shen nü* or *san gao nü* in China, mostly in big cities such as Beijing and Shanghai.

According to Wee and Li, the one-child policy (Family Planning Program) and sex-selective abortions in China have caused a noticeable disproportion in the country's gender balance. Since 1979, when one-child policy was introduced, approximately 20 million more men than women have been born, or 120 males to 100 females born, and by 2020, China is expected to have 24 million more men than women while the global average is 103 males to 107 females (Wee & Li, 2013).

However, interestingly and ironically, it is Leftover Ladies that have become an increasingly large social group and social problem. As Simpson and de Lacey note, Leftover Ladies are usually categorized as a "failure to find a husband" due to "overly high expectations for marriage partners" (Simpson & De Lacey, 2013). However according to Scott, it is the

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[11] Bridget Jones is the main character in *Bridget Jones's Diary*, a novel written by Helen Fielding in 1996. Bridget is a thirty-something single working woman living in London. A film adaptation of the novel was released in 2001.

previously referred to concept of mismatching rule of spouse underpinned by traditional gender ideology that contributes most to the phenomenon of Leftover Ladies (Scott, 2010) (also see Chapter Five Section 5.3.2.2). China has a long history of a conservative and patriarchal view of marriage and the family structure including marrying at a young age and hypergamy, in the context of which there is a prevalent opinion that men tend to marry down the socio-economic ladder and women tend to marry up the socio-economic ladder. Consequently, A-quality men will find B-quality women, B-quality men will find C-quality women, and C-quality men will find D-quality women. The people left are A-quality women and D-quality men. Therefore the increasing popularity of unwed women in China has been largely accredited to the growing number of successful women of A-quality.

In the context of a modern society, Chinese women are provided with more opportunities than in previous generations to realize their individual value. While they are working hard and pursuing a life that their mothers could only ever dream of, they suddenly realize that they have become a group of women that men are reluctant to date or marry. In a country where universal marriage for women was the norm for centuries, it's the most educated and financially independent urban women who are most likely to delay marriage or remain single. In March, China's top online dating portal, *Jiayuan.com*, released a report based on its 85,498-person survey titled *Confessions of a Leftover Lady*, confirming the belief among Chinese women born in the 1970s and 1980s that the more education they have and the higher their salaries, the harder the task of finding a husband (Pratten, 2013). One of the interviewed single woman in Xu's study complained that, "when I was in my 20s, I wanted my ideal husband to be rich, knowledgeable, and with a bright future. After 10 years of hard work, I have earned a lot and succeeded in my career. Finally, however I found I have become the kind of person I had wanted to marry" (Xu, 2009, p. 18).

As Li argues, the pressure from society and family has been the source of criticism, shame, and social embarrassment and social anxiety for many Leftover Ladies, as a Leftover Lady is often ""afraid their friends and neighbors will regard her as abnormal. And her parents would also feel they were totally losing face, when their friends all have grandkids already" (Li, 2010). On the other hand, the pressure incubates to a growing matchmaking business in China such as numerous TV live shows, dating portals, and various organizations and parties. At the urging of their parents, relatives and friends, Leftover Ladies are trapped in an endless succession of blind-dates (相亲 *xiang qin*) which is very popular practice now.

The phenomenon of Leftover Ladies in China is, on one hand, a progressive reflection of feminist and individual development, as more women are financially independent and are able to pursue a single life that may appeal more than the drudgery of a traditional marriage. However, on the other hand, the social discrimination of this particular group identity makes marriage tougher for women. The key is to find a right balance with regard to the emerging self-identity. According to Gauntlett, in modern society, self-identity becomes an inescapable issue. Questions or anxieties about one's own identity happen to most people. They have to make significant choices throughout their lives, from everyday questions about clothing, appearance and leisure to far-reaching decisions about relationships, beliefs and occupations (Gauntlett, 2002). As gender discourse embodies power relationships, amidst the juggling of work identity and family identity, women's self-identity thrives on the emerging awareness of feminine power and individual realization. From the analysis of the chosen corpus under study especially the dataset of *WOC* from the period of 2005, to some extent, contemporary Chinese women are no longer passively subject to the mainstream discourse dominated by the state or traditions, rather, they are becoming subjects constructing a new autonomous discourse of modern femininity.

4.6 Summary

As Bell points out, news content is not independent of its expression which may have a persuasive undercurrent in addition to the information conveyed, and only through a close analysis of the news texts can we have a clear understanding of the nature of news content (Bell, 1998). In this section, a close scrutiny of the chosen corpus , both diachronically between 1995 and 2005 and synchronically between *PD* and *WOC*, reveals that Chinese print media generally foreground the following themes of women's identity construction – work identity is explicitly foregrounded, family identity is implicitly foregrounded, work/family conflict is backgrounded and self-identity of women is backgrounded and foregrounded over different timeframes and between different media sources. The themes that the texts attempt to foreground and background are in relation to the distinct socio-cultural and socio-political atmosphere in China as well as to the varying and different stances of media. According to van Dijk, in the process of the selections, quotations, emphases and mitigations of the speech of various news actors, news texts redefine the power structure and create meanings about the world that news actors inhabit (van Dijk, 1989).

As Conboy points out, the narratives of newspapers place them unmistakenly in their times

(Conboy, 2010). In the context of complex social changes, a diversity of Chinese women's identities including the transformation of work models, the persistence of traditional family identity, the construction of a new model of double roles and the emerging self-awareness of women has been faithfully recorded in the discursive hybridity of media discourses. The representations of social actors in the two media sources (*PD* and *WOC*) provide important insights into the processes in which the two print media construct specific understandings of women's images and positions, revealing the ideological position of each newspaper/magazine during moments of changing socio-political agendas. As pointed out by Carter and Steiner, media organizations and the gendered issues "attendant" to those organisations are "certainly responsive to social-political movements, and to the reactions against them, as well as to broad economic and social changes" (Carter & Steiner, 2004, p. 15).

From the evidence provided in this study, we can note there are substantial social development and changes reflected regarding women's identity from 1995 to 2005 and onwards – such as the declining nationalist interest on women's work identity, the persistent focus on women's family role, the surfacing ambivalence of the work/family dilemma, a growing urbanization and consumerism, the restored femininity and sexuality, the emerging self-awareness among women and the phenomenon of *Leftover Ladies*. But such changes are by no means uniform or form some natural progression. Rather, the re-construction process of Chinese women's identity extends as a dynamic, complex landscape which is partly affected by the nation's socio-political changes but also affected by other factors such as globalization and women's own feminist development of post-modernism.

It is also the case that the positions adopted by *PD* and *WOC* are not consistent either. On one hand, as a mouthpiece of the government, *PD* puts more emphasis promoting nationalism and patriotism when reporting on outstanding women figures, as the concepts of nation/people/Party/army occur in a much higher frequency than in *WOC*. In addition *PD* adopts a more conservative attitude on traditional gender definition through constructing stereotypical women's family identity while maintaining its consistent political agenda of integrating women's work contribution in the *Half the Sky* campaign. Generally speaking, *PD* reflects an overall picture of Chinese women's identity in various workplaces, contributing to the political, economic and cultural construction of the state.

WOC, on the other hand, emerging from a long history of women's magazines dealing with

traditional women's issues and changing over almost 70 years of reporting into a magazine addressing a wide range of issues and committed to gender equality, shares with *PD* a position in regard to women's work identity appraisal, especially in the dataset from the period of 1995, however asserts its feminist perspective more directly in the dataset from the period of 2005, in terms of revealing women's issues such as addressing the work/family conflict and presenting more diversified images of women including the rising self-awareness. As a nationwide women's magazine, it also grounds itself in a more contemporary idea of diversity as one of the major components of public news media. This mix of historical layers ranges from what can be perceived as traditional women's issues like childcare and housework to issues such as political representation of women that are central to feminist concerns. However, in general, the corpus of *PD* and *WOC* reveals a relatively ambiguous attitude taken by media discourses in the contested struggle of the discursive construction of women's identity, particularly in regard to the membership categorization of certain identities such as "a good wife/mother", "a complete woman", "the *Third Type* woman", "*Leftover Ladies*" and the double expectations of work and family roles.

Since discourse analysis grows out of an awareness of the significance of language beyond the sentence, and of context, these rhetorical processes forming the intended chain of thought, an argument, or a belief in the media construction of contemporary women's identity involve both textual and contextual dimensions. In addition to some lexico-syntactical and semantico-pragmatic tools employed in the discourses to realize certain "rhetorical strategies" that are seen as specific recurrent patterns in the data set, metaphorical construction and membership categorization are also indicative of the contested insights into gender identity and a particular political and ideological belief system. The research goes beyond metaphor's cognitive impact to view the social and discoursal aspects of metaphorical constructions in relation to people's identities and social realities. As Halliday states, newspaper language can be seen very much as a "social semiotic" (Halliday, 1978) which, in its generic range, draws particular social groups into particular styles of presentation. Accordingly, through a closer analysis of the impact of one's linguistic and semiotic actions, membership categorization helps illustrate the emergence of categories, and more importantly, the relations of power and conflicts of ideologies which are often the cause of such categories.

Much of PD and WOC discourse exemplifies a classic form of women's movement's identity politics: writing women's history; ensuring that voices of "ordinary" and prominent women alike are heard in public; and showcasing or celebrating women's achievements.

Notwithstanding the oldest layer of traditional women's issues like home, childcare, fashion etc. these print media combine or oscillate between recognition and deconstruction of women's gender identities to a certain extent. According to Weatherall and Gallois, gender identity may be viewed as indexical and occasioned, discursively constituted in the ongoing business of interaction (Weatherall & Gallois, 2003), a matter which is also reflected in the media presentation of women's identity. For instance, and interestingly, despite in a way of its authoritative nature, the texts of *PD* still betray issues of discursive struggle and uncertainty especially regarding its ambivalent position on the relationship of the *Half the Sky* campaign and work/family dilemma for women. There are traces in the texts which indicate that these positions are not yet entirely uniformly agreed upon as they are ongoing contested issues about the place of women. As Gauntlett points out, in the post-traditional order, self-identity becomes a reflexive project – an endeavour that women will continuously work and reflect on (Gauntlett, 2002, p. 98). As a political movement of gender justice, feminist communication scholarship always has at its core a goal of examining how gender relations are represented, or the ways in which audiences make sense of them, or how media practitioners contribute to perpetuating sexual inequities (Mendes & Carter, 2008). In the next Chapter, these key themes/identities reflected in print media texts in Chapter Four will be picked up in academic discourses of feminist and media studies with a more unequivocal and critical perspective.

Chapter Five: Analysis of 妇女研究论丛 *fu nü yan jiu lun cong-Collection of Women's Studies* (CWS)

5.1 Introduction

As Fairclough points out, discourses are partial and positioned, and "technologization of discourse" is seen as calculated intervention to shift discursive practices as part of the engineering of social change (Fairclough, 1995). In the previous chapter, metaphorical constructions such as "*Half the Sky*", "*Harmonious Society*" and "*Have It All*" in the chosen texts of *PD* and *WOC* reflect the mainstream ideologies underlying typical outstanding women figures reported in the print news stories. *CWS* as a mainstream women's academic journal provides an accumulation of knowledge and experience in covering issues from women's or gender perspective and secures a site accessible to a large readership and to which those interested in women's and gender issues can turn for information and voice their concerns. The authors of *CWS* define their work as providing a forum for women to talk to each other, to identify the issues, experiences, or grievances that they share as women in society, and on that basis to debate their interests. Explicitly concerned with women issues and women's development in China, *CWS* – the academic perspective under study in this chapter –attempts to provide an alternative lens through an examination of some key metaphors such as *Glass Ceiling*, *Fear of Success*, *Leftover Ladies*, *Burning Candles* and *Double Standard* to uncover some crucial issues beneath the amplified media presentation of contemporary Chinese women's identity such as *Half the Sky*. As Carter and Steiner state the messages of media texts never simply mirror or reflect "reality", but instead construct hegemonic definitions of what should be accepted as "reality" (Carter & Steiner, 2004, p. 21). To understand how readers "decode" media texts, it is important to understand how the hegemonic conditions of their encoding encourage readers to make sense of them in certain "preferred" ways (Carter & Steiner, 2004, p. 21). Therefore a critical perspective is adopted in the investigation as such awareness provides a way of seeing the diversity of discourses and their positioned nature (Fairclough, 2003 & 2010) and accordingly reveals the contestation between general national media discourse motivated more by socio-political factors, and academic discourse motivated by a more feminist perspective.

CWS corpus includes 72 articles sampled between 1995 to 2011through theme-related key word search of "family role/identity", "work role/identity", "work/family conflict" and "self identity" (see Chapter Three, Section 3.2.2). A wealth of revealing facts and discursive examples derived from the *CWS* corpus through both individual linguistic items such as particular vocabulary, grammar and the larger discoursal patterns associated with some key metaphorical constructions are presented to reveal and highlight the connotations of language in media contexts in Chapter Four and their underlying ideological assumptions in relation to women's identity. Different from the ambiguous stance towards the hidden patriarchal values underlying the news stories from *PD* and *WOC*, *CWS* is being more definite in pointing out some subtle discriminations and sensitive controversies in women's identity construction and development, and providing a more feminist and critical explanation from these scholars about what may be attributed to the underlying motivations of these issues. Basically, this chapter forms a contrastive analytical perspective to Chapter Four in bringing out hidden issues such as the real place of women at work, the aspiration of women as independent selves, allowing the role conflicts of career women to surface and in so doing, seeking to reveal profound socio-cultural roots underlying these conceptualisations of gender reality.

In the first section relating to work identity, to answer the question of what lies behind the glorious media portrait of women holding up half the sky in China – the problems of employment for women and difficulties experienced by career women in reality are revealed through statistical evidence from *CWS* showing how *Glass Ceiling* resulted from discrimination against women on each step of their career ladder. Furthermore, the inherent inequality embedded in the campaign of *Half the Sky* – namely the exaltation of an equal contribution of women at work contrasting the ignorance of an unequal contribution of women at home – is also pointed out through a discussion of two case studies relating to *Fear of Success* experienced by successful women leaders and female PhDs. In the second part of the chapter concerning family identity, *CWS* discourses reflect an explicit critical stance in relation to a deep-rooted traditional gender ideology, especially that concerning women's family role, which forms a contrast to the implicit acknowledgement of such an impact in the presentation of women's identity from *PD* and *WOC*. Through the use of membership categorisation analysis (Sacks, 1992; Hester & Eglin, 1997), the changing standards of choosing a spouse and the arising *Leftover Lady* phenomenon help explain the ideological contestation between traditional gender divisions and contemporary liberal feminist values. In the last section of the chapter concerning work/family conflict, by means of Cameron's dynamic framework of metaphor approach (Cameron, 2010), distinct metaphorical

constructions from *CWS* as "*Burning Candle at Both Ends*" and "*Double Burden*" reveal a more feminist perspective in approaching the dilemma, which is in contestation with the dominant media discourse endorsed by the ambivalent metaphor of "*Keep the Balance*" in *PD* and *WOC*. Finally in the chapter, the importance of involving men's role and perspectives in resolving such a conflict is pointed out.

5.2 Behind "*Half the Sky*" – Issues in Work Identity

The analysis in Chapter Four reveals that Chinese women's work identity presented in the print media of *PD* and *WOC* is mainly focused on women's positive qualities and remarkable achievements as portrayed in the construction of "women holding up half the sky". As pointed out by Shen, the high employment rate of women in China is well-known to the world, a fact directly related to a series of governmental policies and actions to motivate and maintain women's equal participation in labour since 1949 (Shen, 2005). For several decades, China has persistently carried out national policies of gender equality, and of equal work implying equal pay. However, owing to a deep-seated cultural habitus and stereotypical gender labour division (Yao, 2007), the encouraging presentation of *Half the Sky* and gender equality in *PD* and *WOC* does not reveal the whole picture concerning Chinese women's work identity:

> *1）但在研究中我们发现，<u>虽然</u>在法律上女性获得了与男性相同的机会和权利，<u>但实际上</u>她们在职业场所与男性的机会和权利<u>并不相等</u>。*   *(CWS, Bao & Xu, 2007:18)*
> *But in the research we found out that, <u>despite that</u> women are granted equal chance and right with men in laws, <u>in fact</u> their chance and right in professional places are <u>not equal.</u>*

> *2）随着中国人口的增长和经济发展，一方面，中国妇女的就业保持了较高水平，更多地获得了经济独立的机会。<u>但另一方面</u>，市场经济也带来包括性别分化在内的社会分化，劳动力市场<u>对妇女的歧视也逐渐凸显出来</u>。*   *(CWS, Li, 2008: 67)*
> *With the growth of the population and economic development, on one hand, employment of Chinese women maintains its high level and Chinese women have obtained more chances of economic independence. <u>However on the other hand,</u> market economy also brings about social division including gender division, as well as <u>the increasingly distinct discrimination against women</u> in the labor market.*

The contrastive clause pattern of "in fact…are not equal" (Extract 1) and "on the other hand…the increasingly distinct discrimination against women" (Extract 2) in the above *CWS* texts displays a different landscape of Chinese women's work identity by directly pointing out the existence of gender inequality. The different perspectives adopted by the academic medium of *CWS* and the general print media of *PD* and *WOC* can be partly explained by the politics of representation, which Fairclough regards as of central importance, namely

questions as to whose representations are these, who gains what from them, what social relations do they draw people into, what are their ideological effects, and what alternative representations are there (Fairclough, 1999). In a different manner than the functions of *PD* in promoting a socio-political agenda and mainstreaming model identities, and of *WOC* in reflecting women's career achievements and development, as an academic journal heavily influenced by both the West's and China's own feminist movement, *CWS* attaches much importance to women's issues of gender discrimination in employment and the related socio-cultural causes of such discrimination (Ma & Chen, 2008). For instance, sensitive and controversial issues which lie hidden beneath media propagandized equality and development such as the existence of an extrinsic obstacle – "glass ceiling" (Extract 4), and of an intrinsic obstacle- "fear of success" (Extract 3), or fear of the backlash of professional success experienced by many women in their career paths, are all directly revealed in the chosen corpus from *CWS*:

3) 在对成功的期望上，男性强烈要求事业成功，*而女性则对成功持有某种恐惧心理*。
(CWS, Lu, 2000:5)
On expectation of success, men strongly desire for career success while women hold a certain kind of psychological fear for success.

4) "高校女性教师遭遇的*'玻璃天花板'是真实的*，她们对学术资源的控制仍然*较弱*。"
(CWS, Sheng, 2009: 31)
"The 'Glass Ceiling' encountered by women college teachers are real, their control of academic resources are still weaker."

5.2.1 *Glass Ceiling*

One of the most significant metaphors of women fighting in the workplace for equality with men is that of the so-called "glass ceiling". The metaphor was first put forward by Hymowitz and Schellhardt in 1986 in *The Wall Street Journal*, referring to the invisible barriers that block women from attaining top jobs (Hymowitz & Schellhardt, 1986) and since then the metaphor has continued to be a much debated and controversial issue (Abdela, 1991; Davidson & Coope, 1992; Ryan, 1993; Still, 1997; Barreto, Ryan & Schmitt, 2009).

Despite women having made great progress in achieving leadership equality with men in the workplace ever since the first coining of the metaphor, women are still underrepresented in the upper echelons of various professions and organizations in China. According to the Third National Survey of Chinese Women's Social Status (ACWF, 2011), of all employers of high level talents, 80.5 % of leaders are male, and 20.4% of employers are without female presence at leadership levels. In the chosen data from *CWS*, we may note a salient statistical

means of revealing the existence of such a glass ceiling:

5) 对 2004 年上市公司的调查，在 278 个样本公司中，董事、监事、高管人员总计 5067 人，女性董事、监事及高管人员为 685 人，占 13.52%，没有达到"装点门面"15%。在 278 家上市公司中，有 33 家公司高层中没有女性，占样本数的 11.9%。高层女性在关键职位上任职比例极低且副职多而正职少。…在一些关键职位上，女性所占比例都大大低于 15%，如女董事长的比例是 5.78%，女副董事长的比例是 9.09%，女总经理的比例是 3.31%，女副总经理的比例是 8.36%。   *(CWS, Kang, 2007: 26)*

In the 2004 survey of listed companies (in China), of all 278 sample companies, there are 685 women of all 5067 members of the Board of Directors, of the supervisory board and senior managers, accounting for 13.52%, still lower than the "decorating" level of 15%. In 33 out of 278 companies, there is no woman in senior management level, accounting for 11.9% of the total sample. The percentage of senior women managers in key position is extremely low with more in deputy position and few in principal position. ... In some key positions, percentage of female participation is much lower than 15%, for example the percentage of women as presidents is 5.78%, as vice president is 9.09%, as managing director is 3.31%, as deputy director is 8.36%.

Li (2002) reports that studies show that the percentage of "15%" is a threshold of the "decorating" (Extract 5) minority within a certain group, and that the minority group that accounts for less than 15% will be negatively affected and their mistakes will tend to be magnified. More often than not they will be consequently isolated or marginalized as the "others" in the group. From the above data, women managers with "extremely low percentage" (Extract 5) certainly fall into such a minority group, occupying a position of weaker voices and lesser power in corporate decision making (on this point see later Chapter Seven Section 7.3.2). Similarly, the situation of women political leaders as "the absolute minority" (Extract 6) in the government, the tendency of "the lower percentage" of women in "the higher position" (Extract 7) in educational practice, and the phenomenon of women's "absence in higher positions" (Extract 8) in the field of science and technology are reflected in the following examples:

6) 中国党和政府规定了政府班子至少要有一名女性的名额分配制度，但是执行中就变成了只有一名了。一名女性在各级政府班子中成了绝对的少数，从而在少数服从多数的情形中影响了女性对社会事务决策的影响力。女性市长中 95% 为副职的状况，也影响了她们决策的机会和能力。…中国女市长的绝对数量为亚太第一，但相对数量还不高，同近 6000 名男市长相比，仅为 8% 左右.   *(CWS, Liu & Wang & Zhang, 2001:71)*

CPC and Chinese government set the policy that there must be at least one woman in every administration team, however, it turns out to be the only woman when carried out in practice. One woman becomes the absolute minority in government departments at all levels, so that women's power in social decision making is affected by the majority rule. The fact that 95% of women mayors are in the position of vice mayor also affect their chances and ability in decision making....The absolute number of Chinese women mayors are the biggest in Asia, however the relative number is not big enough—compared to nearly 6000 male mayors, female only accounts for 8%.

7) 2005 年中国普通高校女性教师占全体教师的比例为 43.25%，其中正高级、副高级、中级、初级、无职称的女教师比例分别为 20.58%、39.03%、46.33%、52.08%、51.14%, 呈现

出随职务升高，比例逐渐降低的趋势。 (CWS, Sheng, 2009: 27)
In 2005, women college teachers account for 43.25% of the whole in universities and colleges in China, among which the percentages of professorship, associate professorship, lecturer, assistant lecturer and junior are 20.58%, 39.03%, 46.33%, 52.08%, and 51.14%, revealing a tendency of the higher the position, the lower the percentage.

8) 中国科技人力资源存在较大的性别差距。根据中国科协 2008 年的报告，目前中国女性科技人力资源总量为 1467 万人，占全国科技人力资源总量的 33%。更重要的是，在科研成就和地位上，女性远远落后于男性，存在"高位缺席"的现象。 (CWS, Ma, 2009:38)
There is a big gender gap in human resources of science and technology in China. According to the 2008 report by Chinese Science Association, the current number of female human resources of science and technology is 14.67 million, accounting for 33% of the whole nation. Furthermore, there is the phenomenon of "absence in higher positions" as women are far behind men in terms of scientific achievements and status.

Although in many governmental sections in China a certain quota recruitment on gender grounds such as "at least one woman" (Extract 6) is adopted, a generally lower participation of women "at all levels" (Extract 6) is nonetheless indisputable. In a different manner from the focus on individual and overall achievements of women's work identity as presented as *Half the Sky* in *PD* and *WOC*, *CWS* presents convincing statistical evidence as an objective voice drawn from scholars of women studies so as to present a more comprehensive picture of women's work identity, including its associated difficulties and problems. The Glass Ceiling establishes itself as an implicit mode of discrimination or as a subtle barrier to women's advancement to, and success in leadership positions, and is re-conceptualised as the "big gender gap" and "far behind men" (Extract 8) situation faced by working women in China. This not only reduces social expectations on women's career development but also reinforces the present secondary status of women in the workplace (Wei & Li, 2006). This gap can also be regarded as representing the distinction between the *Half the Sky* campaign and the real situation of women's work identity, a major focus of this investigation of *CWS*.

According to the report by the Second National Survey of Chinese Women's Social Status, 77.8% of interviewees think the reason for the low percentage of women in leadership or senior positions is "social discrimination against women" (ACWF, 2001, p.5). The report of the following Third National Survey of Chinese Women's Social Status reveals that 67.5% of interviewees think the first major reason for the low percentage of women in leadership is the "heavy burden of housework for women", with "social discrimination against women" still accounting for 60.5%, as the third major reason (ACWF, 2011), as shown in the Table 5.1.

Table 5.1 Major reasons for low percentage of women in leadership.
(ACWF, 2011).
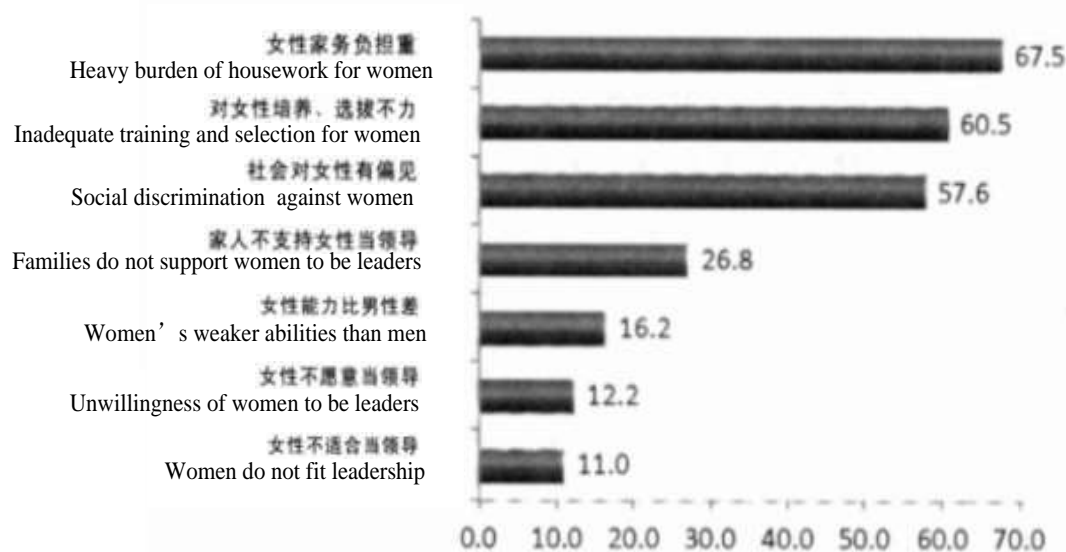
图 15　领导岗位上女性数量少的主要原因　　单位:%
Major reasons for low percentage of women in leadership　　Unit: %

Statistics from both national surveys over time point out the significant influence of traditional gender labor divisions and the existence of a marked socio-cultural bias in relation to women's career development. This issue is further elaborated in the following subsections where the distribution across professions and employment for graduates is examined through analysis of the *CWS* discourse.

5.2.1.1 Distribution across professions

9) 在行业和职业中明显存在着性别隔离现象。 　　*(CWS, Lin & Zhao, 2000:14)*
There is obvious gender segregation in industries and professions.

10) 男女两性存在职业等级差异是不争的事实。 　　*(CWS, Wang, 2003:56)*
The existence of gender segregation and division in labour is an indisputable fact.

As pointed out in the above extracts, gender segregation in occupations and industries is "an indisputable fact" (Extract 10). It represents gender inequality in the labour market and the position of women generally in the economy and in society at large. In the chosen *CWS* texts the "obvious" (Extract 9) existence of such segregation is reflected through contrastive statements summarising women's professions versus those of men:

*11) 即由于行业或者职业的性别隔离，使妇女的就业领域和范围受到很大限制，她们常常集
中在某些所谓的"适合于女性"的有限的就业领域…女性就业者仍主要集中在服务性行业、*

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手工业和商业职业中，体现出高就业率掩盖下的低职业结构状态。这些工作常常是技能低、报酬少、劳动强度大的，如针织业、服务业等。男性主要集中在较重要的、技术性高、收入高的管理、科研工作中，如国家机关、高科技制造业等。

(CWS, Lin & Zhao, 2000:14-16)
Owing to occupational or professional gender segregation, women's choices of employment are greatly restrained, that they are usually gathered in some limited so-called "suitable-for-women" career fields…Women employees are mainly in service industry, handicraft and commercial industry, in which the low profession structure is hidden by the high employment rate. These jobs usually involve low technique requirements, low payment and intensive labor, such as textile industry and service business. While men employees are focused on more important managerial and R&D work of high technique requirements and high payment such as government positions and hi-tech industry, etc.

12) 目前中国妇女在就业中所面临的差别待遇是非常明显的：一方面，女性工作者较多地集中在收入偏低的职业。   (CWS, Zhu, 2005:5)
The salary gap in employment for Chinese women is very obvious: on one hand, women employees are gathered more often in professions of lower income.

For occupational gender segregation – women are usually restricted to "so-called" "suitable-for-women" (Extract 11) professions; accordingly there are designated "female" professions and "male" professions in the labour market, as illustrated through the contrastive intensifiers "low" for women vs. "high" (Extract 11) for men in terms of technical skill requirements, and wages. The comparative expressions "more important" (Extract 11) and "lower income" (Extract 12) further reinforce the effect of inequality between genders as women's sphere is confined and their values depreciated. Another contrasting pattern of "low profession structure" vs. "high employment rate" of women (Extract 11), in conjunction with the verbal expression "be hidden by" (Extract 11), as well as the intensifying expression "very obvious" (Extract 12) can be seen as directly revealing the factuality of gender inequality (also see later Chapter Seven Section 7.3.2) as well as the stance of *CWS* as advancing a challenging feminist discourse with a view to deconstructing the dominant discourse of *Half the Sky* in mass media.

According to Shen, gender segregation across professions mainly results from the socio-cultural factor of patriarchal legacy (Shen, 2005), where the stereotypical gender labor division of "*男尊女卑 nan zun nü bei,* men as superior and women as inferior" and "*男主外、女主内 nan zhu wai, nü zhu mei,* men are in charge of outside the home, women are in charge of inside the home" remains deep-rooted in people's consciousness. The discourse of *CWS* endorses the argument of Shen, and directly points out the "naturalized" expectation from a "long-term patriarchal society" (Extract 13) of such "female" professions, as shown in the following extract:

13) 职业隔离有其深远的社会文化根源，传统社会的性别分工是导致职业隔离的历史基础。长期的父权社会所形成的观念认为，女性只适合于从事家庭服务性和从属性的工作，女性的劳动价值低于男性。 (CWS, Lin & Zhao, 2000:16)
Occupational segregation has its far-reaching socio-cultural root, with gender labor division in traditional society as the historical foundation of occupational segregation. In the long-term patriarchal society, women only suit jobs of subordinate family service and their labor value is lower than men's.

Firstly, the cause-effect relationship between occupational segregation and social-cultural factors is directly stated; secondly, "traditional gender labor division" (Extract 13) is targeted as the major historical cause of the segregation; and, thirdly, the "patriarchal" (Extract 13) system is revealed as the unequal conceptualization of gender reality underlying the gender practices in society. According to Tam, it is the social extension of women's traditional family roles that intensifies the unequal gender stereotypical division and devalues women's labour (Tam, 1997). From the analysis of distributions across professions in the chosen corpus of *CWS*, gender segregation is presented as a part of the glass ceiling and a significant obstacle in promoting gender equality and career development for women. However, the obstacle of the glass ceiling comes into effect even before women start their career. This is an issue which is discussed in the next subsection on employment for female graduates.

5.2.1.2 Employment for graduates

According to Shen, gender discrimination can be categorised as pre-labour market discrimination, employment discrimination and post-labour market discrimination (Shen, 2005). Discrimination in employment for graduates falls into the category of pre-labour market discrimination, as female graduates may well bump into the glass ceiling at the very first step of their career path, namely, when they start the job application process. According to the latest national survey – the Third National Survey of Chinese Women's Social Status (ACWF, 2011), among female graduates with job hunting experiences, 24.7% have experienced particular kinds of gender discrimination. Through the analysis of the chosen texts from the journal *CWS*, the existence of gender discrimination against female college graduates in job hunting is firstly presented by means of some statistical evidence:

14) 从调查问卷的数据结果看，5 所高校中认为自己在求职过程中遇到性别歧视的女生比例分布在71%-85%之间。 (CWS, Shi, 2005：43)
According to the statistics in the survey, the percentages of female graduates who have experienced gender discrimination in job hunting from five universities are between 71% to 85%.

15) 2004 年，一项上海部分高校女大学生就业情况的调查表明，大学生就业确实存在性别歧视… 有55.8%的女生认为求职时遭遇到了性别歧视。

(CWS, Tong &Liang, 2006：32)

In 2004 a survey of employment situation of female college graduates in some Shanghai universities reveal that <u>there is indeed gender discrimination in employment for graduates</u>... <u>55.8%</u> female graduates report that they have <u>experienced gender discrimination in job applications</u>.

The consistent referencing of survey findings and the constantly high numbers "71% – 85%" and "55.8%" quoted in the above extracts can be interpreted as a way of reinforcing the factuality and objectivity of *CWS*'s argument on gender bias. Secondly, the position of feminist critical disclosure on such "normalized" (Extract 17) bias is explicitly articulated through the discourse of intensification and passivization in demonstrating these "overt or covert refusals" (Extract 16) in social practices:

16) 在实际生活中，机关招收公务员，企业、事业单位招收工作人员，<u>明里暗里拒绝接收女性的情况经常发生</u>，<u>不仅一般女工就业有性别歧视</u>，就连女大学生、女研究生<u>也常常因性别问题被许多单位拒之门外</u>。   *(CWS, Li, 2001：34)*
In reality, <u>the overt or covert refusals of women in recruitment</u> for governmental positions and enterprise positions <u>occur very often</u>. Not only general women workers <u>encounter gender discrimination</u>, even female college graduates and postgraduates are <u>often denied by many employers because of gender.</u>

17) 在就业信息方面存在<u>显性歧视</u>。<u>在各类招聘中几乎都有明确要求男生的信息</u>。<u>女生直接被排斥在外</u>。这种<u>显性的性别歧视极为广泛地存在</u>，<u>已经到了熟视无睹的地步</u>。
(CWS, Tong &Liang, 2006：33)
There is <u>explicit discrimination</u> in employment information. <u>The requirement of male candidates is almost typical</u> in all kinds of recruitment advertisements. <u>Female graduates are instantly ruled out.</u> Such <u>explicit discrimination is so prevalent</u> to the extent that people <u>may even find it normal.</u>

The constant usage of intensifying expressions "very often", "often" (Extract 16), "almost", "instantly" and "so prevalent" (Extract 17) can be seen as highlighting the widespread existence of gender discrimination in employment contexts. The reiterated passive verbal structure of "be denied by" (Extract 16), "be ruled out" (Extract 17), "be rejected by" (Extract 18) and "be repelled by" (Extract 19) further emphasises the disadvantageous position and passive status of women in competing in the job market. According to the Third National Survey of Chinese Women's Social Status (ACWF, 2011), there is about 20.6% of "male recruitment only or men as preferred under same conditions" among employers of higher talented applicants in the last three years (2008 – 2010).

Why are female graduates confronted with such "special" treatment in job recruitment? Su points out that this is so because many employers have "plausible" (Extract 18) concerns that female employees' marriage and family life will affect their work performance and consistency (Su, 2002). Women's commitment to family is often seen as incompatible with commitment to their work in a way in which it is not for men (Charlesworth, 1999). This is emphasised in the *CWS* texts as a major ideological obstacle underlying the social practices

of gender discrimination at work:

18) 许多企业领导都算过帐，<u>招收一个女大学生到单位后面临结婚、生育、抚育等一系列问题，起码三五年内不能安心工作，企业非但不能指望她们在这期间创造什么效益，还得承担如孕期产假等劳保福利的各项费用</u>，在这种情况下，<u>用人单位拒收女大学生也就顺理成章</u>。   *(CWS, Zhang & Fan, 1996：33)*
Many employers have <u>made a calculation</u> that <u>for at least 3 to 5 years after recruiting a female graduate in their enterprise, she will face a series of issues such as marriage, pregnancy and bringing up the child that she cannot fully concentrate on work to bring profits to the employer. In addition, the employers should provide additional expenses of pregnancy, maternity allowances for her.</u> Under such circumstances, <u>it seems plausible for female graduates to be rejected by employers.</u>.

19) <u>家务劳动往往会占据女性不少时间和精力，可能影响女性更富成效的工作，这是用人单位排斥女性的一般原因</u>。   *(CWS, Lu, 2000: 5)*
<u>Usually housework occupies much time and energy of women, preventing women from being more productive and efficient at work, which is the general reason that women are repelled by employers</u>.

20) 用人单位<u>不愿意要女大学生（研究生、博士），因为她们上班不久就要生育</u>。   *(CWS, Wang, 2002: 68)*
Employers <u>do not want to recruit female graduates</u> (MA, PhD), <u>because they will have reproductive duties soon after they are recruited.</u>

21) 女性遭受就业歧视的重要原因之一，是<u>承担了生育和家务的重担</u>。   *(CWS, Li, 2008: 66)*
<u>One of the major reasons</u> for women to encounter employment discrimination is that they <u>shoulder the heavy burdens of reproduction and housework</u>.

The lexical choice of the term "calculation" (Extract 18) on the cost of recruiting a woman help explains the "men as preferred" orientation of employers mentioned earlier. The cause-effect structure of "under such circumstances…" (Extract 18), "… is the general reason that" (Extract 19), "…because" (Extract 20) and "one of the major reasons is…" (Extract 20) not only points out the link between the gender bias and women's reproduction role and its ensuing impact, but also reveals the "naturalized" social expectation of women's family responsibilities of "bringing up the child" (Extract 18) and "housework" (Extracts 19, 21), which "occupies much time and energy of women" (Extract 19). Family duties for women, especially those associated with housework is reconceptualised in *CWS* as a "heavy burden" (Extract 21) or as an obstacle rendering the professional paths for career women narrower and tougher (also see later Section 5.4.1.1).

As the "ideal worker" norm of employers is usually the ideal worker unencumbered by domestic responsibilities, with availability for long hours and undisrupted devotion to work, gender identity as a woman is clearly and consequently placed in a disadvantageous position. According to the Survey on Living Conditions of Chinese Career Women in 2007 conducted by *Beijing Yang Guang Tian nü Media Co.*, 82.7% women think pregnancy and giving birth

as matters negative to their career development (Li, 2009). According to the Third National Survey of Chinese Women's Social Status (ACWF, 2011), 19.8% of women conceive gender identity as an obstacle for their career development, even among samples drawn from the higher talent group. For instance, implicit prejudice against women as a gender identity is experienced in the interview process when questions related to marriage and family are raised to evaluate the potentiality of success for "almost all female candidates" (Extract 22):

22）*面试过程中，几乎所有女生都会被问到与恋爱、婚姻相关的问题，这些问题突出了女性的性别身体，使女性自觉地意识到与性别相关的生育等。...面试对女生来说，不是一个展现自我的舞台，而是自信面临打击的场域，是女性身份被强化的过程，是非常负面的人生经验。*
                                                                    (CWS, Tong &Liang, 2006：34)
During the interview process, almost all female candidates will be asked questions related to relationships and marriage, the questions of which highlighting gender identity of woman and reminding themselves to be consciously aware of the ensuing issues of gender such as reproduction etc. ...For female graduates, interview is not a stage for them to assert themselves, but a place to face defeat of confidence. The interview becomes a very negative life experience as her position of being a woman is intensified in the process.

As pointed out in the above extract, the interview becomes "a very negative life experience" for women as their gender identity is being "highlighted/intensified" (Extract 22), traditional gender duty "reminded", and confidence "defeated" (Extract 22) during the interview process. According to Shen, working women are not only exploited economically but also depreciated psychologically owing to the existence of gender discrimination at work and the associated stereotypical gender identity (Shen, 2005). However, the depreciated mentality or "defeated confidence" (Extract 22) of women ironically becomes a "deeper concern" (Extract 23) of employers in recruiting women employees, in addition to the concern of women's family responsibility:

23）*社会的传统理念不要求女性成功，同时也认为女性不可能、不应该成功，长期的社会化过程使女性在竞争意识、进取心上较智力、能力相类似的男性弱，这也是用人单位聘用女性时存在的深层顾虑。*   *(CWS, Lu, 2000: 5)*
In the traditional ideology of the society, women are not expected to succeed, and the success is considered impossible or unnecessary for women. Such a long term socialization leads to a weaker sense of women in terms of competition and ambition compared to men of similar intelligence and ability—which is a deeper concern from the employers in recruiting women.

The irony here is directly addressed in the *CWS* discourse as revealing the discursive power of "traditional ideology" in constructing women's identity. The negation of "be not expected to", "impossible" and "unnecessary" (Extract 23) can be interpreted as a way of justifying the "weaker sense of competition and ambition" of women as a result of cultural "socialization" (Extract 23), and the agent specification referring to traditional ideology as the subject of constructing women's identity can be interpreted as a means of reminding readers to reflect

on the ideological roots of gender identity. In other words, the problems of achieving equal participation and representation at various stages of career paths for women should be conceived in socio-cultural terms, itself having much to do with the persistence of Confucian ideas emphasizing the inferiority of women.

In short, the combination of the "pulling power" of stereotypical gender labor division and the "pushing force" of inadequate family-friendly social employment patterns (Zhang, 2009) are revealed in the analysis of *CWS* discourse as contributing to the formation of glass ceilings as barriers placed in the way of working women's recruitment and promotion. It may require much more effort from both women themselves and the society at large in regard to breaking down this dominant gender ideology and social structure. Through the discourse of *CWS* with its feminist perspective, the reconstruction of women's work identity is revealed to be a tougher career path for women with more agonizing experiences and psychological struggles such as the "unspeakable" fear of success, which is examined in the following section.

5.2.2 *Fear of Success*

Originally introduced by psychologist Matina Horner as a concept in 1968, "fear of success" is described as a motive which, when aroused, results in anxiety about succeeding in the framework of competition (Horner, 1968). In her research, Horner notes that women fear competition, which results from the conflict between femininity and success. The fear comes from "a series of negative feedback and discrimination on successful women" (Horner, 1969). Horner's study marks an important turning point of motives study, and triggers the attention to and investigation of gender difference in the field.

In 1998 an empirical study on Fear of Success was carried out among female college students in China by the Research Group of Development and Education for Female College Students (Yang, 1998), adopting Horner's method of projected stories combined with in-depth interviews. The result demonstrates that a female college student tends to experience huge anxiety when her income is higher than that of the spouse, or when she is placed in a leading/key position in management, whereas for male college students, there is very little concern when placed in the same situation (Yang, 1998). Statistics from a survey of gender difference of achievement motives in China (Jing, 1995), also reveal that the level of achievement motive of Chinese men is much higher than that of Chinese women. With the

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rising level of education, the gap of achievement motive between two genders is further intensified.

As we know, the Chinese traditional role models for men and women –"*男主外、女主内* men are in charge of outside the home, women are in charge of inside the home", still have a far-reaching impact on contemporary social living. It is taken for granted that men should care more about their career while women should care more about family. No one will object to the "strong desire" of a man for "career success", as it is socially recognized as "normal" (Extract 23), whereas the "endless vexations" such as "strange feeling from the husband" and "the sarcastic words from others in society" alongside a woman's successful work identity give rise to a "certain kind of psychological fear of success" for women (Extract 23). Fear of success as a concept is mostly absent from the discourse on successful women figures in the chosen print media of *PD* and *WOC* in Chapter Four, however it is present in the discourse of *CWS*:

24) *在对成功的期望上，男性强烈要求事业成功，而女性则对成功持有某种恐惧心理。女性担心自己成功后丈夫的奇怪感受，社会上的风言风语。男性的成功是社会的常态，而女性成功却可能带来无数的烦恼。* (CWS, Lu, 2000:5)
On expectation of success, men strongly desire for career success while women hold a certain kind of psychological fear of success. They fear the strange feeling from the husband after her success, and the sarcastic words from others in society. Men's success is seen normal in a society, but women's success may bring about endless vexations.

Anxiety of success is often related to competition in achieving the goals. And competition is usually implicitly associated with ambitious and aggressive masculine qualities, which are defined as privileged in the workplace (Kerfoot and Knights, 1993). Therefore, in the professional world, women who are willing to join the competition have to struggle to live up to the masculine ideal of competence, as any display of "uncertainty" and "vulnerability" would be undermining the expectation of their male colleagues (Kerfoot and Knights, 1993). However, when women challenge the stereotype that they are less competent than men through self-promotion for success, they are viewed as less likable by their "acting like men" (Catalyst, 2008). According to Eagle & Karau, these outstanding career women (usually categorized as *女强人 nü qiang ren,* superwoman) will run the risk of being socially penalized for violating the conventional standard of "femininity" (Eagle & Karau, 2002). The use of the intensifying word "immediately" in conjunction with the verb "reject" (Extract 25) from *CWS* extracts can be seen as a good illustration of the discursive power of these social penalties on young female students, as superwoman is "not a positive title" (Extract 26) :

25) 一些女生几乎在表示要追求职业成功的同时就<u>立即表示不想成为"女强人"</u>。
<div align="right">*(CWS, Zhu, 2002:20)*</div>
When expressing their desire for career success, some female students <u>immediately reject the thought of becoming a "nü qiang ren, superwoman"</u>.

26) 有成就的女人被称为"女强人"，<u>这并不是一个褒义的称谓</u>。(CWS, Liang, 2003: 6)
Being called a "superwoman" for successful career women <u>does not mean it is a positive title.</u>

The findings from the study by Moss-Racusin & Rudman suggest that women do not lack the skills to promote themselves successfully. Rather, their fear of success, or fear of a backlash (such as the ensuing social penalties elicited by successes) may lead to a shift away from their pursuit of professional success and back into a self-regulatory mode (Moss-Racusin & Rudman, 2010), such as hiding their ability or lowering their expectation in the competition of education or career in order to solve the conflict between the social expectation of femininity and personal career development. Take contemporary female college students as an example: on the one hand they long for career success which is important and necessary for contemporary Chinese women, whereas on the other hand one of their major concerns is that a successful career might pose a threat to her family life and make her labeled as an "unsuccessful wife and mother". According to Bi, traditional Confucian regulations on marriage and family play an important role in creating fear of success among female college students (Bi, 2005). As a result, once the danger of the threat on family is impending, many of them tend to choose between the dilemma to "sacrifice career success for a happy marriage" (Extract 27) motivated by fear of success, as noted in the following extract from *CWS*:

27) 对当今许多女大学生来说，<u>事业成功与家庭美满是两个具有同样强度、同样吸引力的动机对象</u>。但是成功与幸福对女性来说又<u>常常是相互排斥不可兼得的</u>。当只能"二者取一"的情况下，女大学生说会产生复杂激烈的"<u>趋向</u>"<u>心理冲突</u>。女性解决这种冲突的方式<u>通常是放弃成功、保住婚姻幸福</u>。
<div align="right">*(CWS, Qiang, 1999:8)*</div>
For many female college students today, <u>a successful career and a happy family are two targeted motives of equally strong attraction</u>. But success and happiness are more often than not to women <u>conflicting and cannot be obtained as a have-both</u>. Facing a situation of choosing between the two, female college students will experience <u>complex and fierce psychological tension of "tendency"</u>. The solution to this tension for women is usually <u>to sacrifice (career) success for a happy marriage.</u>

Lexical expressions "often… conflicting" and "fierce tension" (Extract 27) can be seen as revealing the contestation between the imperceptible imposition of traditional gender culture on women's family identity and contemporary feminism on women's self-development. According to Liu & Zhang, women cannot devote themselves as fully as men can do if they are living with this kind of fear of success (Liu & Zhang, 2004). The "personal" choices

women make in respect of fear of success to withdraw from the fierce competition in higher ranking work positions are usually invisible or unsayable to others (also see Chapter Seven Section 7.3.3.2), because the "consciousness of both men and women" are "always entangled" by "stereotypical misunderstanding", and "already infiltrated" by "persistent ideologies" underpinning women's fear of success (Extract 28):

28) 人们对女性和职业的看法，始终跳不出传统的文化心理限定的误区。职业在这误区中选择女性，女性也在误区中选择职业，这就是传统观念给当代人造成的思维定势…现实生活中，男女不平等并非只是职业现象，顽固的"男尊女卑"、"男强女弱"、"让女人更像女人"的观念已经渗透于男女两性的心理。   (CWS, Song, 1998：21)
People's view on women and employment is always entangled in the stereotypical misunderstanding of traditional and cultural psychological confinement. Women are chosen by professions and women choose their professions according to such misunderstandings. This is the thinking set implanted to the contemporary people by traditional ideology… In real life, inequality between genders is not only a professional phenomenon, persistent ideologies such as "men as superior, women as inferior", "strong man, weak woman", "let woman be more like a woman" are already infiltrating the consciousness of both men and women.

In the chosen texts of *CWS*, the traditional gender dichotomy referred to as "confinement" and "the thinking set", together with modifiers such as "always", "persistent", "already" (Extract 28) can be seen as a reminder to readers of its danger and negative impact as a form of cultural habitus or hegemony. In contrast, such critiques on traditional ideology are mostly absent in the discourse from *PD* and *WOC* as analyzed in the previous chapter, where ambiguity and sometimes implicit endorsement of traditional stereotypes are evidenced in some typical character reports. As Fairclough points out, texts are social spaces in which two fundamental social processes simultaneously co-occur- "cognition and representation of the world", and "social interaction" (Fairclough, 1995, p. 25). Accordingly, texts negotiate social relations between people "in circumstances of doubt or contestation, and people attempt to work out textually, in their use of language, the dilemmas they face in defining their own identities" (Billig et al., 1988, p. 16). As a representative battlefront for women's identity reconstruction and women's issues, the discourses in *CWS* contend with the dominant discourse of national print news media which are orientated more toward a traditional gender ideology, in proposing a more feminist and critical perspective in examining contemporary Chinese women's identities. The following sub-section provides two case studies showing how fear of success affects women's career development as outstanding women in leader positions are trapped in the double standards and female PhDs are constructed as the *Third Sex*.

5.2.2.1 Double Standard on successful women

In the print media of *PD* and *WOC* as analyzed in the previous chapter, the concept of the double standard as well as the literal lexical phrase of "double standard/burden" is mostly absent in reporting on a successful woman's identity. Nevertheless, the theme of this double-ness on women is implicitly presented in the discursive construction of a "complete woman" and the "*Third Type* woman" (see earlier Chapter Four Sections 4.3.2.2 and 4.4.1). In the discourse of *CWS*, the sensitive term "double standard" is explicitly pointed out as a dominant social evaluation of a women's success and a crucial issue affecting women's development. In the following extracts, the repeated adverb "still" (Extracts 29, 30) highlights the prevalence of implementing the double standard on women, and particularly the significance of women's family role as an indispensable aspect in defining female success, "no matter how successful she is in her career" (Extract 30):

29) 人们对女性的成功仍然用双重标准来检验，即家庭和事业。如果家庭生活不美满，即使其事业成就毫不逊色于男性，人们仍然不愿把妇女看成一个成功者。

(CWS, Liu &Wang &Zhang, 2001:71)

People still judge a woman's success by double standards, namely family and career. If her family life is not happy, even her career achievements are not inferior at all to men's, people still won't see her as a successful woman.

30) 一个职业失败的女性不会引起人们的议论，但一个家庭角色失败的女人，是得不到同情的，不管她事业多么成功，她仍然被认为是一个失败的女人。

(CWS, Liang, 2003: 6)

The career failure of a woman won't invite criticism from people, but a woman with a failing family role is unpitied. No matter how successful she is in her career, she is still regarded as an unsuccessful woman.

The conditional "if" clause in the above extract serves to reveal the contrasting standards imposed on success between men and women – career for men vs. family and career for women. In China from its early history, according to Wu, the standard by which to evaluate male leaders is always consistent and clear, namely, that work role and family role for male leaders basically maintain similar masculine qualities, whereas work role and family role for female leaders tend to represent divided gender qualities (Wu, 1994). For women leaders, they are expected to act "like men", confident and ambitious in confronting hardships at work; while in everyday and family life, they are expected to act "like ordinary traditional women", tender and considerate, willingly performing the role of a good wife and mother looking after husbands and children. In the discourse of *CWS*, the double standard is firstly reconceptualised as intrinsically "conflicting" (Extract 31) in terms of the divided gender qualities expected from women leaders:

31) 由于历史和现实的诸多因素，领导者的社会规范表现出强烈的男性特征，但社会对女性角色的规范又与领导角色规范截然相反。对女性领导者来说，社会要求她要同时具备两种截然不同的性别气质，并将现实中激烈冲突的形象交织在一起。 (CWS, Gao, 1996：12)
Owing to many factors from history and reality, the social code for leadership is of strong masculine quality, while the social code for feminine roles is totally contrary to the code for leadership. For a woman leader, she is required to have two disparate gender qualities and combine together the intensely conflicting images in reality.

Two gender qualities congregate in women leaders combining both the "social code for leadership of strong masculine quality" and the "social code for feminine role" (Extract 31). Intensifying words "totally" and "intensely" in conjunction with the adjective expressions "contrary" and "disparate" (Extract 31) serve to justify the difficulty and struggle of women in dealing with the conflicting requirements. According to Byerly and Ross, it is assumed that the portrayal of women in the media that depict them as less able, mentally and physically, or where their beauty or domestic service are aspects that are the most highly valued in them, will hold women back from achieving individual success (Byerly and Ross, 2006). The passive verbal structure of "be required to" (Extract 31) and "be trapped in" (Extract 32) implies women's passive status in the power relationship between women's own discourse and the male-dominant orders of discourse in society. In fact, the forthright revelation of the conflicting nature of double standards on women in the texts of *CWS* helps explain the contextualisation of women's fear of success or their "hesitance" (Extract 32) on career ladders, as the struggling path of working women especially for successful career women and women leaders is full of "mental burden" and "spiritual and emotional conflict and pain" (Extract 32):

32) 广大女性领导者长期处于两种评判标准以及两种性别气质的夹缝中，非此既彼，既此又彼，在这种相悖的人格规范及心理冲突中，女性领导者常常陷入鱼与熊掌不能兼得的两难境地，稍有逾越，便会出现"女性雄化"或"女性无能"等令男人生厌、女人不齿的难堪局面，使她们在成长过程中瞻前顾后、举步维艰... 在职务"女高男低"的家庭结构中，不但"大男子主义"的丈夫们很容易失去心理平衡，作为领导者的女性也往往会产生心理负担，使她们在忍受精神和感情的矛盾或痛苦中负重前进。 (CWS, Gao, 1996：12)
Many women leaders have for long been under strain of double standards and two gender qualities, being either this or that, both this and that. In this contrary personality codes and mental conflict, women leaders are often trapped in a dilemma of "either fish or meat". If they overdo even a tiny bit, "masculinized women" or "incompetent women" will bring them into the embarrassing situation of being repelled by men and despised by women, the hardship of which makes it even harder and makes them hesitant a lot in their career development...In the family structure of "woman in higher, man in lower" career positions, not only "male chauvinist" husbands are prone to lose mental balance, women as leaders in career will often have mental burden, which make them move on with spiritual and emotional conflict and pain.

In the light of Chinese traditional ideology of "*男主外、女主内* men are in charge of outside the home, women are in charge of inside the home","*夫贵妻荣 fu rong qi gui*, a wife feels

proud when her husband is successful" is naturally accepted by most wives of male leaders who are willing to be a "贤内助 *xian nei zhu,* good/supporting wife" (Extract 33), sacrificing her own time and energy for the career of her husband (Zhang, 2009). When it comes to the situation of women leaders, however, even for a loving husband, when the achievements of a wife overshadows his own, it is very difficult for him to divest himself of the stereotypical gender relationship of "男尊女卑 *nan zun nü bei,* men as superior, women as inferior" from his consciousness, as he will be "laughed at" (Extract 33) by people:

> *33) 妻子为支持丈夫的事业当好"贤内助"似乎天经地义，无可厚非，而男人要当妻子的"贤内助"则往往会受世人耻笑。*   (CWS, Zuo, 2002: 14)
> *It seems perfectly justified and understandable for a wife to support her husband's career as a xian nei zhu (good/supporting spouse). But when a man is to be a xian nei zhu for his wife, he will often be laughed at by people.*

Consequently, he will "lose mental balance" (Extract 32) in the form of discontentment or negation with his wife, which as Xu and Wang argue, will eventually bounce back to women (Xu &Wang, 1993), resulting in "mental burden" of women in fear of being "repelled by men and despised by women" (Extract 32) and consequently of a "broken marriage or family" (Extract 34):

> *34) 成功的职业女性意味着以男性标准为自己的标准，其结果往往是以牺牲婚姻、家庭为代价:*   (CWS, Liu, 2003: 22)
> *To be a successful career woman means taking male standard as her own standard, more often than not, the result will usually be a broken marriage or family.*

However, such an "unsupportive" attitude from the husband and "painful" emotion experienced by successful career women are not addressed in the media stories about successful women from *PD* and *WOC* in the previous chapter. For instance, in the following extract from *PD*, the "broken family" is merely reported as a factual result of her passion in career, without going any further for investigating the socio-cultural factors affecting women's identity construction:

> *这种痴迷和执著，耗尽了她菲薄的收入，也最终拆散了她的家庭。*
> *(1995PD 9.18)*
> *Her fascination and persistence (in career) finally cost all her humble income and broke her family.*

Whereas the discourse of *CWS*, in addition to its criticism of the double standard on women as conflicting with the natural order, looks beneath the apparent glorious presentation of successful women's identity in print media to uncover the hardships undertaken by these

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women, where the double standard is re-conceptualized as the double-double burden – dual "physical burden" of family role and social role, and dual "mental burden" of concerns for work and guilt for family (Extract 35):

35) 女性要承担来自社会和家庭的双重职责，一方面要随高强度劳动的身体压力，另一方面还要承担双重心理压力，不仅不能像男市长那样用更多的业余时间学习提高，担心落伍，而且因无暇照顾家人而感到内心歉疚。   *(CWS, Liu & Wang & Zhang, 2001:71)*
Women shoulder the double duty from society and family, on one hand they face the physical burden of intense workload, on the other hand, they face the double mental burden that they have concerns of lagging behind because they cannot have more leisure time as male mayors do to study and improve themselves, and they also suffer guilt for not being able to have more time caring for family.

In constant reference to the metaphor of "double-ness" on the identity construction of women leaders – double standard, double duty, double burden – the struggle between traditional femininity and contemporary feminism is reflected and highlighted. For outstanding career women such as women leaders, there are three possible choices; first, to obtain the understanding of their husbands and to seek career success by weakening traditional women roles and accordingly subverting the traditional ideology; second, to adhere to social conventions and conform to traditional regulations to be a good wife; third, to juggle between leader roles and women roles, enduring the split of dual personality and the hardship of excessive burden (Wu, 1994). The findings from the analysis of *PD* and *WOC* reveal that most outstanding women choose the third option (see earlier Chapter Four Section 4.4), namely, of having it all, or at least having both.

However, the solution of having it all requires "constant and dramatic role shifting" in various contexts as well as a round-the-clock availability, matters which are revealed in the discourse from *CWS* as "conflicting" and a "dual burden" contributing to the existence of fear of success and eventually hitting the glass ceiling. According to the statistics in a report by McKinsey & Company on Women Matters (2012) as to the difficulties women face in moving into senior roles, by far the greatest difficulty canvassed was the double burden of many working women – holding down a job while looking after their families – particularly in cultures in which women are expected to take sole responsibility for family and household duties. Many or most women at mid-career or senior level leaving their jobs voluntarily did so because of family commitments (McKinsey, 2012).

The critical re-conceptualisation from the *CWS* discourse of the double standard on women leaders can be seen as a challenge to the old gender ideology in evoking the feminist

consciousness to reconstruct the gendered labor division "男主外、女主内 men are in charge of outside the home, women are in charge of inside the home" toward the new pattern of both men and women "主外又主内 *zhu nei you zhu wai,* in charge of both outside and inside the home" as suggested by Wang (Wang, 1992).

In the following subsection, the identity construction of another group of outstanding women – females with PhDs – is examined regarding their experiences of fear of success through a critical scrutiny into the origination of the label the *Third Sex*.

5.2.2.2 Female PhD as the *Third Sex*

> 世界上有三种人，男人、女人和女博士。
> *There are three categories of people in the world- men, women, and female PhDs.*
> (Wang, 2005)

Since *The Second Sex* by Simone de Beauvoir – "He is the Subject, and she becomes the Other" (Simone de Beauvoir, 1949), women have been seen as a marked group excluded from the centre, to become the second sex and the subordinated social group. As demonstrated in the above quotation by Wang, women as a gender group are further divided as female PhDs (who are representatives of women with higher education and qualifications) and are usually marginalized in some media discourses as the other among the Other – *the Third Sex*. This categorisation on the one hand devalues the intellectual achievements of these outstanding women, while on the other hand, denying the feminine attributes of the group as non-woman-like (Shen, 2005).

According to Oktar, there are the negative and positive values assigned to in- and out-groups, where

> "stereotypes about in-groups tend to be positive and stereotypes about out-group tend to be negative. Stereotyping, in general terms, facilitates needs to justify or rationalize existing negative attitudes towards social groups, social conditions in which one group is systematically treated more favorably than another".   (Oktar, 2001, p. 318)

In this sense, the *Third Sex* can be interpreted as an outcasting strategy of the mass media to alienate female PhDs, a matter unequivocally revealed and contended in the discourse of *CWS*:

36) *"第三性"是当今社会对女博士的代称。它是对追求独立、实现自我价值的高学历女性的一种排斥和异化现象在语言上的反映。女人往往被称作"第二性"或者"他者"，女博士从女*

人这个群体中被排挤出来，成为"他者中的他者"。..."第三性"还间接地揭示了社会生活中业已出现的某种"女性威协论"，说明女性在某些专业领域给男性形成了挑战和压力，她们颠覆了传统男女的角色模式。　　　　　　　　　　　　　　*(CWS, Jiang & Niu, 2008：45)*
"The Third Sex" is an alternative name for female PhDs in society. It is a linguistic reflection of exclusion and alienation of women with higher qualifications who pursue independence and self value. Women are usually regarded as "the second sex" or "others", however female PhD is excluded further from this group as "the other of the others"..."The Third Sex" also indirectly reveals the emerging view of "women threat" in social life. It indicates that women bring challenge and pressure to men in some specific fields as they overthrow the traditional gender role model.

Firstly, as social relations and roles are created, defined and identified in the semiotic resources such as the mass media (Fairclough, 2010), "The Third Sex", and "the other of the others" (Extract 36) can be seen as "linguistic" instantiations of the outcasting strategy. Secondly, the negative other-presentation of female PhDs created and achieved through the "exclusion and alienation" (Extract 36) is revealed as a narrative phenomenon conveying "indirectly" to large audiences the view of a "women threat" (Extract 36).

Language constructs our social reality and meanwhile regulates various social relations and status. In the *CWS* discourse, the socio-cultural motivation underlying such a view of "women threat" and such a categorization of the *"Third Sex"* is uncovered as a male-orientated discourse system. According to Foucault, in every society, "discourses are controlled, selected, organized and re-distributed by a number of procedures" (Foucault, 1981, p. 52). The discourse Foucault refers to here is a general concept of speech act and discursive practice in everyday life. Of the three basic ways of establishing and maintaining the power through discourse – exclusion, division and rejection, the opposition between true and false (Foucault, 1981), the "other-ization" of female PhDs as the *Third Sex* serves as a good demonstration of such division and rejection. The production and distribution of "the *Third Sex*" can be seen as part of a male response to the "challenge and pressure" posed by these outstanding women when they "pursue independence and self-value" and "overthrow the traditional gender role model" (Extract 36). In the next extract, the critical position of *CWS* in contesting against the injustice of the categorization is further reflected:

37) 这种对成就女性的非难和误解，是典型的男权中心的评价方式，严重限制了女性个体的社会选择，影响了了这部分女性的身心健康。　　　　　　　*(CWS, Jiang, 1995: 17)*
This unfair blame and misunderstanding on outstanding women, is a typical standard of male-orientated system, severely restraining women's social options and affecting their physical and mental health.

Firstly, the "male-oriented system" is targeted as the "typical standard" bringing about injustice (Extract 37). Secondly, the unfair categorization is re-conceptualized as "unfair blame and misunderstanding" (Extract 37). Thirdly, the argument against the injustice is

justified through the negative consequence of the categorization such as "severely restraining women's social options and affecting their physical and mental health" (Extract 37). As pointed out by Carter & Steiner, media discourses are important for many reasons including their long acknowledged power to represent "socially acceptable" ways of being or relating to others, as well as to "allocate, or, more usually withhold, public recognition, honor and status to groups of people" (Carter & Steiner, 2004, p. 2). Accordingly, the initial coinage of *the Third Sex* is "legitimized" through the dominant discourse system and extended to a wider range of social consciousness through the reproduction and distribution of mass media. In the following extracts from *CWS*, the passive status of female PhDs being trapped in the hidden discursive practice of the other-ization is fortified through the invisible power of an ideological web, which according to Hall, creates "reality" as an effect (Hall, 1982, 75):

38) 如"女性要适可而止，否则高处不胜寒"，之类的说法，在大学校园里不胫而走。
                                                                            (CWS, Li, 2004: 28)
Sayings like "women should pause on the brink of the precipice in order to avoid being lonely at the top" spread very quickly in universities.

39) 高层女性在高学历比例方面仍低于男性，这其中既有社会因素，也有女性自身的顾虑心理，因为高学历女性在社会上往往被归为另类。   (CWS, Kang, 2007：28)
Percentage of women in higher positions with higher education is still lower than that of men. There are both social factors as well as psychological concerns of women themselves, as women with higher qualifications are usually socially categorized as others.

40) 中国传统的性别意识中，"男主外，女主内"，男性注重事业，女性注重家庭的传统角色分工模式和观念对社会生活有重大影响，也不可避免地影响着女博士对未来工作和职业的期望。受这种观念的影响，女博士会主动调整自身的行为和预期，降低对成功的期望。
                                                                            (CWS, Ma, 2009：42)
In Chinese traditional gender consciousness, "man in charge of outside (home), woman in charge of inside (home), the traditional labor division model and ideology of men paying attention to career, and women to family have far-reaching impact on social life, and also inevitably affect female PhDs expectation of future work and career. Owing to the influence of such ideology, female PhD will automatically adjust their behavior and lower their expectation for success.

Under the "far-reaching impact" (Extract 40) of traditional labor division, women are constantly reminded of the risk of being a female PhD, such as "being lonely at the top" (Extract 38), "socially categorised as others" (Extract 39), so that they inevitably have "psychological concerns" (Extract 39) and are urged to "pause on the brink of the precipice" (Extract 38). Consequently, the relationship between the deep-seated traditional gender ideology and the definition of success for women in contemporary society is mediated by women themselves to "automatically adjust their behavior and lower their expectation for success" (Extract 40).

To sum up, metaphorically speaking, women are holding up half the sky at work in contemporary China, but in fact, the discourse from *CWS* provides a contrastive illustration of women's work identity by revealing the existence of an invisible glass ceiling and its socio-cultural foundations, realized through quoting convincing figures and consistent pragmatic framing of employment discrimination as obstacles; by probing into the complex cause of fear of success experienced by outstanding career women, itself realized by unravelling the imposition of double standards on women leaders and the discursive power or the linguistic "violence" in categorising female PhD as *the Third Sex*. In the next section, the construction of women's family identity in terms of contested positions of traditional ideology between print media of *PD* and *WOC* and feminist argument of *CWS* is investigated.

5.3 Changes in Family Identity

As Du and Xu point out, culture may not be a direct force initiating social transformations of an era, but it is a latent power in terms of psychology and ideology playing a significant role in people's everyday life experiences, such as the far-reaching impact of traditional gender culture on women's identity reconstruction (Du & Xu, 2004). According to van Zoonen, the tension struggles engaged in by feminists, intellectuals, politicians, and "ordinary" women are not only fought in the "symbolic realm of the mass media and the arts", but also in that area of human existence which is characterized by everyday life of "routine, inconspicuous and ordinary activities, thoughts and feelings" (van Zoonen, 1994, p. 176). Accordingly, in this section we shall see that, social projections of traditional ideology on women's family identity in discursive constructions of modes of belonging are being "re-contextualised" (Linell, 1998) through the exploration of the contested standards in choosing a spouse. The tension between embracing and breaking away from the conventional definition on gender dichotomy is highlighted in the discourse of *CWS* through the conceptualisation of "identity trouble" for contemporary Chinese women in "defining and identifying" themselves (Caldas-Coulthard & Iedema, 2008, p.8). Given the innumerable social and technological changes of recent times, one's sense of a stable identity anchored in familiar social class hierarchies and cultural practices or conventions has come under different challenges. Increasingly, people face fragmented and contested identity projects and choices, in which the conflict between social changes and cultural ideological impositions is transformed into a diversified and sometimes contested picture of (re-)defined identities. According to Hall (1982, p. 67) and Williams (1977, p. 113) , a cultural perspective can help us grasp dominant social relations not only in their active and formative process but also in their transformational process, so as

to show the dynamics of power relations inscribed in this process.

5.3.1 Tradition – embracing or breaking?

As Fairclough points out, the role of ideology is significant in securing domination especially in gender relations (Fairclough, 1995). As ideologies generally mask implicit assumptions, the ideological importance of implicit textual content is usually conveyed through the relative foregrounding or backgrounding of explicit textual content or through a presence-absence scale (Fairclough, 1995). The analysis of Chapter Four on women's identity presentation in print media of *PD* and *WOC*, revealed that there is an implicit acknowledgement or endorsement of the traditional gender ideology. However, as a forum of women's issues and pioneer of women studies, *CWS* consistently keeps its focus on women's liberation and development from more of a feminist perspective, and accordingly in the discourse of *CWS*, the impact of traditional gender ideology is explicitly presented through the verbal expression "still remains" (Extracts 41, 42) and fore-grounded as "mainstream" (Extract 42) however from a critical perspective:

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> 41) ...说明"<u>男主外，女主内</u>"的传统思想<u>仍</u>有存在。　　　　*(CWS, Ye, 1996: 43)*
> ...*reveals that the tradition of "<u>Men are in charge of outside the home and women are in charge of inside the home" still remains.</u>*

> 42) 在当今的中国社会，"<u>男主外、女主内</u>"<u>依然是一种主流的家庭性别分工模式</u>。
> 　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　*(CWS, Liu & Ma, 2009: 33)*
> *In present Chinese society, "<u>Men are in charge of outside the home and women are in charge of inside the home" still remains as a mainstream model for gender labor division in the family.</u> .*

The feminist critique of *CWS* is further instantiated in interpreting the shifting pattern of the traditional gender culture in the following extracts:

> 43) 中华民族刻苦、勤奋、克己、献身等优良传统和<u>依赖、屈从、拘谨、自卑等国民积习中的缺憾在女性身上表现得淋漓尽致</u>，作为社会力量象征者的男性对女性的<u>要求只是做个好妻子、好母亲、好媳妇、好奴仆</u>。　　　　　　　*(CWS, Jiang, 1995: 16)*
> *Both good <u>tradition</u> of the Chinese nation such as <u>diligent, hardworking, sacrificial and devoted,</u> and <u>shortcomings</u> such as <u>dependent, submissive, restrained and diffident</u> are fully demonstrated on women. Symbolizing social power, men <u>merely</u> <u>require</u> women to <u>be a good wife, good mother, good daughter-in-law and good servant</u>.*

> 44) 在很多家庭中，<u>丈夫的性别角色态度和性别角色期望仍然是传统的。在丈夫眼中，料理家务和照顾子女仍被认为是女人的职责</u>。...中国妇女在走出家门参加社会主义经济建设这样一场颇具影响的社会运动中，她们<u>不再只是扮演女儿、妻子、母亲的角色</u>，同时也成为一个有收入的就业者，她们的责任<u>由"主内"变为"主内加主外"</u>。　*(CWS, Zhang, 1998: 6)*
> *In many families, attitude and <u>expectation</u> on gender role <u>from the husbands are still traditional. In a husband's eyes, it is <u>still women's responsibility to do the housework and look after children.</u> ...Chinese women walk out of home to participate in the quite influential social*

movement of socialist economic construction. Daughter, wife and mother are <u>no longer their only</u>
<u>*roles*</u>, *as they <u>become</u> a career woman with income. Their responsibility changes <u>from "in charge</u>*
<u>*of inside home" to "in charge of both inside and outside the home"</u>.*

45) 在过去的半个世纪中，中国妇女已经走出了家庭，普遍地参与社会劳动，<u>打破了"男主</u>
<u>*外"的格局。然而，"女主内"的传统却鲜有改变</u>。*   *(CWS, Yang, 2006: 20)*
In the past half century, Chinese women have walked out of family, participated widely in social
labor and <u>broken the pattern of "Men are in charge of outside the home". However, the tradition of</u>
<u>*"Women are in charge of inside the home" has barely been changed</u>.*

On one hand, while the pattern of "*男主外* men are in charge of outside the home" is "broken" (Extract 45) as Chinese women have walked out of family constraints and extensively participated in social production and public sections of work to hold up *Half the Sky,* and men are no longer the only breadwinners of the family; on the other hand, however, the pattern of "*女主内* women are in charge of inside the home" has "barely been changed" (Extract 45). The reason, as argued by Xu & Liu, is that stereotypical gender division remains so conspicuous that men's family role does not change fundamentally as women's work roles do, and men do not shoulder the corresponding share of housework (Xu &Liu, 2003). It is revealed in the *CWS* discourse that male "expectation/requirement" (Extracts 43, 44) of a woman's role is "still traditional" (Extract 44) – "to be a good wife, good mother, good daughter-in-law and good servant" (Extract 43) and "to do the housework and look after children" (Extract 44). As a result, the new pattern for contemporary Chinese women is to be "in charge of both inside and outside the home" (Extract 44) which is then re-conceptualized as the double standard/burden for women in most *CWS* discussions (see later Sections 5.2.2.1 and 5.4.1).

The conjunctive adverb "however" (Extract 45) creates the impression of a contrast between women's work identity and family identity, revealing a contestation between new social changes and a persistent stereotypical tradition on women's identity reconstruction. The contrast contradicts the earlier claim of women holding up *Half the Sky* in the print mass media, and points to the intrinsic ambivalence of the metaphor – elevating women's work identity while leaving her traditional family role intact. For instance, in the previous chapter on the discourse of outstanding women from *PD* and *WOC*, women's role to shoulder family responsibility is suggested through demonstrating her family role in light of the traditional definition or categorising her family identity based on the traditional prescription:

...<u>默默承担着传统意义上一个家庭主妇应该承担的一切琐事和俗务</u>。 (1995PD-14)
...silently <u>shouldering the trifling domestic chores</u> that <u>traditionally a housewife should do</u>.

还要尽可能也当好一个<u>合格的母亲和妻子</u>。   (1995PD, 14)

And also I <u>should</u> try to be an <u>eligible mother and wife.</u>

Feminist scholarship treats gender, sexuality and the experience of women as a primary category of societal organization and focuses on the construction of gender roles in society and how it holds certain power establishments in place. One concern of feminist scholars has been that the sexist messages of these media forms socialized people, especially children, into thinking that dichotomized and hierarchical sex-role stereotypes were "natural" and "normal" (Carter & Steiner, 2004, p. 2). Different from the implicit sanction of traditional influence in the discourse of *PD* and *WOC*, *CWS* adopts a sharp and critical stance in revealing and contending against the discursive social practices underpinned by these traditional ideological forces. For instance in the following extracts, firstly the social "endorsement of traditional roles" (Extract 47) is explicitly pointed out, and traditional gender culture is then reconceptualised as a negative confinement in constructing and socialising women's identity through a cluster of metaphors – "invisible poisonous fog" (Extract 46), "vicious circle", "trap" (Extract 47) and "spiritual shackles" (Extract 48), all pointing to the hidden oppressive power of traditional ideology on women:

46) 几千年封建社会的统治者通过一系列的礼法规范，清规戒律，利用文化的沉淀，把握<u>控制社会风气，以一种无形的毒雾侵蚀于意识形态之中，牵引，捏塑着妇女特有的思维模式，行为方式，使女性失去自我</u>。   *(CWS, Jiang, 1995: 16)*
Dominators of thousands years of feudal society have adopted a series of rules and regulations, making use of cultural legacy to <u>control</u> the social morality, insinuating <u>the invisible poisonous fog in ideology, to guide and shape women's thinking and behavioural pattern</u>, to <u>make women lose their self identity.</u>

47) 在<u>传统角色定型化教育</u>里……而妇女<u>最重要的是结婚、成家和生孩子</u>。妇女<u>应当具有感情、关怀、爱、同情、温柔和服从</u>等特点，<u>这样她才能成为丈夫的好妻子，孩子的好母亲</u>。这样的角色定型化教育所带来的<u>后果</u>是，<u>认同传统角色</u>，妇女受教育程度<u>低</u>下继而妇女发展程度<u>低</u>下之间的<u>恶性循环，深陷在陷阱里</u>.   *(CWS, Deng, 1996: 13)*
<u>In traditional stereotypical role education</u>.....what is <u>most important</u> for women is <u>marriage, family and children</u>. Women <u>should</u> be <u>emotional, caring, loving, compassionate, tender and submissive, so as to become a good wife of her husband and a good mother of her kids</u>. Consequence of such education will be the <u>endorsement of traditional roles</u>, and being <u>deeply trapped in the vicious circle</u> of <u>lower</u> education level and thus <u>lower</u> development level for women.

48) 中国有两千多年的历史。历史赋予中国人民许多美好的传统，又给她们带来了许多<u>精神枷锁</u>。...而中国的传统文化却<u>不主张妇女拥有"自我"</u>，在<u>传统的</u>中国家庭中妇女的角色是<u>"在家从父，出嫁从夫，夫死从子"</u>。   *(CWS, Zhu, 1998: 34)*
China boasts for its over two thousand years of history, which has granted many good traditions on Chinese people <u>but also brought about many spiritual shackles to women</u>. ...But in Chinese traditional culture <u>women are not allowed to have "self"</u>, in <u>traditional</u> Chinese family women's role is <u>"to obey father at home, husband after marriage, and son after being widowed"</u>.

Women's passive status in being "controlled" (Extract 46) by the traditional gender ideology is firstly revealed through the passive verbal structure "be deeply trapped in" (Extract 47) and "be not allowed to" (Extract 48) and the specification of history and culture as the agent to

"guide and shape women", and to "make women lose self identity" (Extract 46). Secondly, the powerful imposition of cultural legacy on women is constructed through contextualizing women's identity in the family sphere. The superlative structure "most important" in conjunction with the multinominal expression "marriage, family and children" (Extract 47), the parallel noun phrases "a good wife of her husband and a good mother of her kids" (Extract 47), and the illustration of "Three Obediences" (Extract 48) all spell out a dominant family-orientation, and accordingly a diminished self-identity of women.

The critical observation of *CWS* on the changing pattern of women "in charge of both inside and outside the home" reveals that the change of family role of women is regarded as an important agenda item in the field of domestic gender equality. In a family of double workers, if the wife is discontented with the traditional labor division and is no longer willing to play the full role of "in charge of inside" and the husband becomes unhappy with the incompetence of the wife, conflict inevitably will arise. The conflict cannot be simply solved by doing more and longer housework by one party but will involve a proper adjustment to the deep-seated role perceptions and expectations of self and the other from both parties. In the next section, the contestation in the dividing standards of choosing a spouse regarding the power distribution in marriage and the awareness of individual identity is examined.

5.3.2 Contested standards in choosing a spouse

As discussed in earlier statements that the double standards on successful women or women leaders are "conflicting" (see section 5.2.2.1) in terms of two disparate gender qualities expected on these outstanding career women. Similarly, the "conflicting" (Extract 49) nature is also presented in the consistent male standard of choosing a spouse in contemporary Chinese society in *CWS*:

> *49) 几所高校男生的抽样调查资料表明：当代男大学生对女性处于一种矛盾的心态中，他们无法用同一种观点去对待自己的未来配偶和异性职业伙伴。作为自己职业伙伴的女性，他们比较欣赏有现代意识，洒脱，能干，有竞争意识，有事业心的女性；作为自己未来妻子的女性，他们又暴露出几千年来所形成的"大男子主义"的观念。他们喜欢以家庭为重、温柔娴淑、贤妻良母式的女性。*
> *(CWS, Jiang, 1995: 16)*
> *Sample surveys on male students from some universities show that the attitudes of contemporary male students towards women is conflicting that they cannot adopt the same viewpoint on their future spouse and female workmate. As to their career partners, they expect women with awareness of modernity and competition, with broadmindedness, competence and enterprising spirit, however as to their future wives, they still hold the "male chauvinism" of thousands of years' history that they prefer women as a good wife and mother, tender and submissive and family-oriented.*

50) 多数男同胞拒绝承认自己的大男子主义，在事业合作、思想交流、友谊交往时，他们已经比较倾向接受具有现代风采、敢想敢干的新型女性；但是具体到家庭生活，他们则要求妻子温柔贤淑，做十足的"贤妻良母"。   *(CWS, Zu, 1999: 6)*
Most men do not admit they have male-chauvinism, and tend to accept new type women of modernity and ambition in work cooperation and friendship communication; however speaking of family life, men still require their wives to be a complete "good wife/mother" tender and submissive.

Different from the ambiguous position on the conflict in *PD* and *WOC* (see earlier Chapter Four Section 4.3.2.1), the discourse of *CWS* is quite definite in terms of revealing the discursive power of divided double standards on women's identity reconstruction. Firstly, the negative expression "not…the same" (Extract 49) and the adversative conjunction "however" (Extracts 49, 50) point out the contestation between traditional and modern impacts on women's identity. The contestation is presented through the "conflicting" male expectations on a "future spouse" "of family life" and a "female workmate" "in work cooperation" (Extracts 49, 50). Consequently women's work identity and family identity are contrasted as incompatible qualities. Secondly, the "still" (Extracts 49, 50) persistent traditional ideology underlying the "preferred" categorization of "a good wife/mother, tender and considerate and family-oriented" (Extract 49) or "a complete good wife/mother, tender and submissive" (Extract 50) is explicitly criticized as "male chauvinism" (Extracts 49, 50), in emphasizing women's family identity over work identity.

The conflicting attitude in confrontation with the social preference of an ideal wife is also presented in women's expectation as the widespread saying goes – "Marrying a good husband is better than having a good job" a matter which is discussed below.. The ever-enlarging group of *Leftover Ladies* in China is itself a consequence of contested standards of choosing a spouse; whereas in contrast, it is more or less embedded with an intrinsic conflict or "dilemma" (Extract 51) between being "prescribed" by the past and "constructed" by the present (Zu, 1999, p. 7):

51)"剩女"们进退维谷。   *(CWS, Zuo &Xia, 2008: 11)*
"Leftover Ladies" are caught in a dilemma.

When the *Leftover Lady* phenomenon was reported and described in the chosen corpus of *PD* and *WOC* (see Chapter Four Vignette 4.5 – (1)), discussion of the cause and solution to the issue is mostly absent. In the discourse of *CWS*, a critical interpretation of the phenomenon as well as a social explanation is given through the examination of the power play between obstinate social convention of spouse-matching and growing self-identity of contemporary women.

### 5.3.2.1 *Marrying a Good Husband is Better Than Having a Good Job*

Before we move onto the analysis of *CWS* data on spouse-matching, it is interesting to firstly look at some evidence from the reports of the Second National Survey of Chinese Women's Social Status (ACWF, 2001) and the Third National Survey of Chinese Women's Social Status (ACWF, 2011), which provide some very revealing facts and social perceptions of gender reality in China. According to the Second National Survey of Chinese Women's Social Status, 53.9% of men (2.1% higher than that in 1990) and 50.4% of women agree with the traditional gender labor division pattern of "*男人以社会为主，女人以家庭为主* the focus of men is society, whereas the focus of women is family"; and 37.3% of women agree with "*干得好不如嫁得好* Marrying a good husband is better than having a good job", 7.1% higher than that of men. Statistics from the Third National Survey of Chinese Women's Social Status (ACWF, 2011) reveal that 61.6% of men (7.7% higher than in 2001) and 54.8% of women (4.4% higher than in 2001) agree with "*男人以社会为主，女人以家庭为主* the focus of men is society, whereas the focus of women is family"; 44.4% agree with "*干得好不如嫁得好* Marrying a good husband is better than having a good job" (10.5% higher than that in 2001 by men, 10.7% higher than that in 2001 by women) (see Table 5.2).

Table 5.2 Change of gender ideology (ACWF, 2011, p. 14)

图 16   男女性别观念变化情况   单位：%
Change of gender ideology   Unit: %
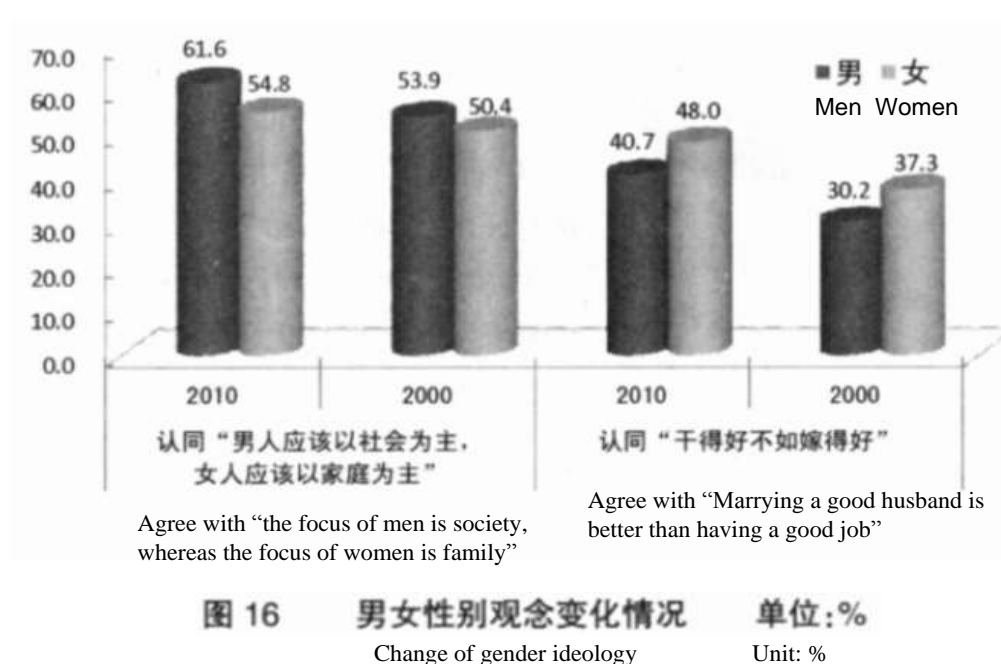
These statistics basically reveal that the traditional gender ideology still has a far-reaching impact on reconstructing contemporary gender identities, and a rise in recognition of tradition is even evidenced to some extent. The print media analysis of *PD* and *WOC* in the previous chapter showed the impact of traditional ideology is ambiguously backgrounded but the priority of family identity is however implicitly presented through the media construction of "a good wife/mother' and "a happy woman" (see Chapter Four Section 4.3.2). In the chosen texts of *CWS*, the influence of the traditional gender pattern and the family-orientation is explicitly pointed out. The following extracts are taken respectively from two articles in 1995 (Extract 52) and 2004 (Extract 53), and deal with the spouse-matching standards from a male perspective (Extract 52) and a female perspective (Extract 53). However the analysis reveals that *CWS* is consistent over time in maintaining its feminist viewpoint of critically evaluating the socio-cultural impact on women's identity construction:

52) 他们中有 64%的人不希望配偶在事业上比自己强，62%的人要求女人"无论事业多么成功，都应努力去做一个贤妻良母"，71%的人把女性因工作冷落了丈夫或孩子看成是一件不能容忍的事，61%的男性认为："工作是重要的，但大多数妇女更需要的是一个家庭和儿女。"
(CWS, Jiang, 1995: 17)
Among them, 64% won't expect their spouse to have better career development, 62% would expect "women's efforts trying to be a good wife and mother, no matter how successful her career is", 71% male college students would not tolerate the fact that women neglect husband or kids because of work, 61% of them think that "work is important, but for most women, a family and children is more important".

53) "男高女低"的择偶追求、"男主女从"的家庭结构得到近半数女大学生的认同。例如，虽然不同调查的抽样不同，但不论是认为"嫁个好丈夫比取得高学历重要"，还是认为"找个好丈夫"是最大幸福的女大学生比例，都超过了 40%，68%的女大学生同意"相夫教子为女人最重要工作"。
(CWS, Li, 2004: 28)
The rule of choosing a spouse such as "Men higher, and women lower", and the family structure of "Men dominate, and women subordinate" have obtained acknowledgement of nearly half of the female college students. For instance, even of the different samples, surveys show that more than 40% female college students agree with the saying "marrying a good husband is better than having a good higher education" and "the biggest happiness is to find a good husband". 68% of female college students agree that "it is a woman's most important job to take care of her husband and children".

Firstly, the factual evidence through constant quotations of numerical figures "64%, 62%, 71%", 61%" (Extract 52) and "40%, 68%" (Extract 53) provides convincing illustrative examples to reveal the prevailing recognition of traditional gender patterns in both genders. Secondly, the resonance of the male perspective with the female perspective is evidenced through men's expectation of women's "efforts to be a good wife/mother" and women's focus on "a family and children" (Extract 52), and women's recognition of "finding a good husband" as the "biggest happiness" and acceptance of "taking care of her husband and children" as the "most important job" (Extract 53). It is pointed out that the spouse-

matching rule of "*男高女低* men higher, women lower" and family structure of "*男主女从* men dominate, women subordinate" are "acknowledged" (Extract 53) by half of female college students and "64%" of male college students "do not expect their spouse to have better career development" (Extract 52), as they do not want their traditional breadwinner status to be disrupted. In the following extracts, the impact of the traditional spouse-matching rule is further illustrated in terms of its discursive power in consolidating the stereotypical gender relationship in the family:

54) 而男性的偏爱仅两项，即未婚妻的容貌和温柔体贴，其中 30 岁以下的男子对女方容貌和温柔体贴有要求的分别高达 44.6%和 57.1%。可见传统的性别角色意识至今仍规范着现代男女的择偶取向。   (CWS, Xu, 1997: 24)
Men's preferences on women are only appearance and tenderness. Among men under 30 who have requirements on women's appearance and soft femininity account for 44.6% and 57.1%. Accordingly the traditional gender ideology today still regulates the contemporary standard of choosing a spouse by men and women.

55) 男性寻求的仍是以家庭为主的传统女性。一些征婚启事明确写出"寻找贤妻良母型女性"，"诚觅传统型女友"。男性多重视容貌，性格等自然条件，女性多重视收入，住房，职业等经济条件。   (CWS, Wu & Chen, 1997: 42-43)
Men seek the traditional women who are family-oriented. In some matchmaking advertisements, there is explicit requirement of "seek woman of a good wife and mother" and "seek girlfriend of traditional type". Men pay more attention to natural conditions such as appearance and personality while women pay more attention to economic conditions such as income, housing and career.

56) 择偶意向反映着男女在未来家庭中的自我定位，即使是自我意识平等意识以及社会劳动能力较强的女大学生也倾向于选择比自己社会劳动能力更强的男性为偶，也都在婚前自觉自愿地做好了在未来家庭中多做家务劳动的准备。在这种择偶意向引导下的婚姻家庭，谁"主内"谁"主外"是不言而喻的。女"主内"得到了男人的认可与鼓励，男"主外"同样也得到了女人的认可与鼓励。   (CWS, Pan, 1998：54)
Inclination of choosing the spouse reflects the self orientation of man and woman in future families. Even female college graduates who have stronger awareness of self and equality, and social work ability tend to choose men with even stronger social work ability, and they are willingly prepare themselves for more share of housework in future family. In a marriage and family guided by such inclination, who is "in charge of inside (home)", and who is "in charge of outside (home)" is self evident. Women "in charge of inside home" are acknowledged and encouraged by men, and men "in charge of outside the home" are also acknowledged and encouraged by women.

Illustrations of men's "preference of appearance and tenderness" (Extract 54) and "attention to appearance and personality" (Extract 55) in contrast with women's "attention to economic conditions of income, house and career" (Extract 55) serve to justify the "self-evident" (Extract 56) social reality "still regulated" (Extract 54) by traditional gender ideology. The adverb "willingly" together with the nominalization of "inclination" (Extract 56) further reveals and highlights the discursive socialization process of gender stereotypes to self-regulatory action, as "women 'in charge of inside the home' are acknowledged and encouraged by men, and men 'in charge of outside the home' are also acknowledged and

encouraged by women" (Extract 56).

The different orientation of choosing a spouse between men and women is further demonstrated in *CWS* as a "staggering" pattern of "*男强女弱* men stronger, women weaker, *男大女小* men bigger, women smaller, *男刚女柔* men harder, women softer" (Extract 57):

57) *男性一般从文化层次、职业性质、社会地位等出发在本层次和下层次择偶，显示出向下择偶的趋向。女性一般在本层次和上层次择偶，显示出向上择偶的趋向。形成了男强女弱，男大女小，男刚女柔的择偶模式。...关于教育程度，提出这一要求的女性几乎全部要求对方学历高于自己，至少学历相当。男性几乎全部要求对方学历低于自己。*
(CWS, Wu & Chen, 1997: 42)
Men usually choose a wife in the same level or the lower level in terms of education, career and social status, revealing a downward trend of choosing a spouse. While women usually choose a husband in the same level or the higher level, revealing an upward trend of choosing a spouse. Therefore the spouse-choosing pattern becomes "men stronger vs. women weaker, men bigger vs. women smaller, men harder vs. women softer". ...In regard to education level, almost all women request that husband's education level to be higher than that of themselves or at least similar, whereas almost all men request the wife's education level to be lower than themselves.

58) *人们在选择配偶时，一般定势是男性的地位与条件要高于女性。这种选择定势极大地妨碍了女性的角色追求，在一定程度上限制了妇女地位的取得。* *(CWS, Lin & Tan, 1999: 25)*
When people choose a spouse, the usual pattern is for men to be higher than women in terms of status and qualifications. Women's role pursuit is severely hindered by such pattern, and women's status improvement is restrained to a certain extent.

The contrastive structure of "lower….downward" with "higher….upward" and "higher than…" with "lower than" (Extract 57) creates a distinction between men and women's standards of choosing a spouse, mirroring the pattern of traditional gender relationships. The negation of the pattern as obstructive in women's identity development through the verbal structure "be severely hindered" and "be restrained to a certain extent" (Extract 58) is seen to be in accordance with the critical stance of *CWS* as being at the forefront in guiding women's development in China,

However, the obstructive impact of the stereotypical gender pattern is also reflected in a new emerging orientation of women becoming "practical" in seeking for a "practical" (Extract 59) husband, which is typically instantiated in the popular saying of "*Marrying a good husband is better than having a good job*" (Extract 59):

59) *不少女性择偶时，首先花费大量的心机考察估价男性的社会地位、经济实力和发展潜力，以便确定男方是否担当得起"主心骨"、"顶梁柱"的作用。正所谓"干得好不如嫁得好"。有车有楼、事业成功的"时代超人"不仅是女性心目中的理想形象，同时也演变为很多女性择偶的现实条件.* *(CWS, Liang, 2003: 7-8)*
When they choose a spouse, many women firstly spend much time and energy evaluating the social status, economic competence and potential of men, so as to confirm his qualification of "backbone" and "pillar". It is what is called "marrying a good husband is better than having a

good job". "Modern superman" with car, house, and a successful career not only becomes ideal spouse but also becomes a practical condition for women to choose a spouse.

60) 如"找一个有房有车的老公，至少省去十年奋斗"，"女白领金老公是婚姻最佳组合"之类的说法，在大学校园里不胫而走。   *(CWS, Li, 2004: 28)*
Sayings such as "finding a husband with house and car, will save ten years' efforts", "white-collar woman with gold-collar husband is the best marriage match", are widespread in universities.

Male dominance in gender relationship as the "backbone" and "pillar" is translated in women's evaluation of men's "social status, economic competence and potential" (Extract 59) as a first and important spouse-matching rule. With the restoration of new Confucianism and government-advocated aspirations for a harmonious society, higher education for some young women becomes the qualification to "marry good", which is exactly a modern version of "good practice of musical instrument, chess, calligraphy and painting (*琴棋书画 qin, qi, shu, hua*) makes a good lady in marriage market". The observation in *CWS* discourse is also evidenced by the statistics of the Second/Third National Survey of Chinese Women's Social Status (ACWF, 2001, 2011) as illustrated at the beginning of this section.

Sayings like "finding a husband with house and car, will save ten years' efforts" (Extract 60) is resonant with the traditional gender division of labor that men are regarded as the main breadwinner shouldering economic responsibility for a family. In China, two popular phrases both widespread and controversial have come into public focus in the last decade, especially in the last couple of years – namely, *蜗居 wo ju* Snail House (refers to married people living in a small apartment)，and *裸婚 luo hun* Naked Wedding (refers to weddings without any expensive expenses such as no grand ceremony, no ring, no car, no house, etc.) – which is of course in part a reflection of the unreasonable housing market in China, but is also a revelation of the tension between the traditional requirement of gender roles (especially that men as breadwinners should provide for marriage such as buying the house) and the dynamic contemporary gender identity reconstruction. The tension is typically reflected in the heated discussion brought by the new round of amendments to the Marriage Law in China in 2011. The amendment is said to be intended to combat the restored traditional gender ideology that has led to social issues such as Snail House and Naked Wedding, but invites much criticism from feminist groups on its side-effects, or failure to protect women's rights in the family. Under the newly redefined law, any property that was purchased before a marriage will no longer be up for negotiation after a divorce; it will belong solely to the one who bought it or whose name is on the deed. Also, if a house or apartment was purchased by the parents of either the bride or groom, it will revert to that person only, instead of being split between the

couple. Controversy has been brewing ever since the changes were proposed. Some experts argue that the new interpretation will put women at a clear disadvantage in a culture in which marital homes are traditionally provided by men (and in many cases, by their parents). As a result of the new rule, divorced men will get to keep a house whose value will undoubtedly skyrocket in China's booming real estate market. Their ex-wives, meanwhile, will not be entitled to any compensation, despite their contributions- financial or otherwise- to the marriage.

Through the *CWS* discussion of *Marrying a good husband is better than having a good job*, the concordance and the contestation of spouse-matching standards between men and women are revealed, in which the role of traditional ideology is directly foregrounded and criticized. Both the persistent traditional pattern of choosing a spouse, and the emerging self-awareness of women posing a challenge through their resistance of the stereotypical regulations lead to the *Leftover Lady* phenomenon in contemporary China, especially in urban regions. In the next section, the arising group identity of *Leftover Lady* is investigated regarding its underlying socio-cultural motivations.

5.3.2.2 *Leftover Ladies*

As discussed in Chapter Four Vignette 4.5-(1), the era of 剩女 *shen nü, Leftover Lady* has arrived with the phrase becoming very popular in the media, and the concept becoming one of heated social controversy in people's everyday lives throughout the past decade. However, in the print media of *PD* and *WOC*, *Leftover Lady* is mostly constructed as a group of single outstanding women with a strong sense of independence and self-awareness, leaving the profound socio-cultural cause(s) untouched and un-critiqued. In examining the discourse of *CWS*, it is noted that the *Leftover Lady* identity is firstly categorized as a group of women, who "are in search of a marriage" but "are left outside marriage" (Extract 61):

> 61) *"剩女" 就是被"剩" 下来条件优秀并渴望结婚的大龄未婚女性。*
>
> *(CWS, Zuo &Xia, 2008: 11)*
> *"Leftover Lady" refers to outstanding single women who are in search of a marriage but are left outside marriage.*

The passive position of these single women is reflected through the passive verbal structure "be left" (Extract 61) in addition to the modifying word "leftover" in the category title itself. The lexical term "leftover" usually refers to something of less desirable quality that nobody wants. As a result, the stereotypical categorisation of "outstanding single women" (Extract 61)

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as "leftover" infuses into the language and socio-cultural ideologies of people's consciousness, reflecting a social positioning of marginalizing this group identity (Sacks, 1992; Hester & Eglin, 1997). According to Mean, it is through everyday discursive practices that categories, stereotypes and social relations are constructed and enacted (Mean, 2001), so that the identity of *Leftover Lady* is built through association with an undesirable group as the Other. By means of discursive strategies of membership categorization to differentiate and exclude these outstanding single women (Sacks, 1992; Hester & Eglin, 1997) through outcasting of the "leftover others" and the "Third-Sex others" (see section 5.2.2.2), media discourses are able to establish an in-group model identity of a good wife/mother who is "happily married" (see Chapter Four Section 4.3.2), thereby advancing particular socio-political agendas and ideologies.

Secondly, and differently from the equivocal position of the conflict between traditional gender ideology and emerging self-awareness of women in *PD* and *WOC* that these women are temporarily left over because of her "busy work schedule" or "demanding requirement for a husband" (Liu, 2010) (also see Chapter Four Section 4.5.4)*, CWS* probes into the conflicts surrounding, and the causes of the *Leftover Lady* phenomenon from a social/institutional perspective. In the following extract, the "dislocated" traditional spouse-matching pattern is regarded as a major contributor to the "*Leftover Lady* crisis" (Extract 62):

62) 一般来说，男性是下位的择偶标准，女性是上位的择偶标准，这必然在择偶互动博弈中出现问题，社会学常常提及的"错位配对法则"得到了充分的印证：把适龄的男女各分成相同对应的等份，按照上述的标准错位配对，结果留下所谓的"男劣等"和"女优等"，这就是我们常说的"剩男"与剩女。由此，"剩女"的产生及其危机也就不足为怪了。

(CWS, Zuo &Xia, 2008: 16)

Generally, men adopt downward standard of choosing a spouse, and women adopt upward standard of choosing a spouse, which will inevitably give rise to problems in the interactive process of choosing. The law of dislocation matching in sociology is fully proved here—men and women of proper age are divided into similar corresponding quantities, and are matched with each other according to the dislocation matching law. It turns out that so-called "inadequate male" and "outstanding female" are left over, which is the Leftover Man and the Leftover Lady we usually refer to. Therefore, the emergence of "Leftover Ladies" and its crisis is not unexpected.

As discussed earlier, the pattern of choosing a spouse between men and women has contrastively "downward" vs. "upward" (Extract 62) orientations, which is established as "inevitably" the main cause "giving rise to" (Extract 62) the emergence of Leftover Ladies. According to "the law of dislocation matching" as is pointed out in the above extract, "Leftover men" with "inadequate" qualifications are usually neglected, whereas "Leftover Ladies" with "outstanding" (Extract 62) achievements are meanwhile embarrassingly shelved

due to lack of qualified husband candidates (Wei, 2011).

Through the expression "therefore", combined with the double negation phrase "not unexpected" (Extract 62), "*Leftover lady*" phenomenon is reconceptualised in the corpus of *CWS* as a crisis for women, as a result of struggle between the traditional spouse-matching pattern and contemporary women's self-development. Both socio-cultural perception and self-perception work interactively in underpinning the process of women's identity reconstruction. If there is any discordance in the interaction between the two perceptions, a crisis will occur. "Leftover Lady" crisis can be interpreted as one typical example reflecting such discordance. As career women obtain more economic power and independence through work, it is natural for them, especially those well-educated and affected more by contemporary feminism, to expect similar autonomy of identity construction in other fields such as marriage and family. However, in reality, more often than not an outstanding career is not equal to an outstanding marriage. Instead, an outstanding career will sometimes lead to a crisis of marriage or family, as revealed in the crisis of choosing and being chosen as a spouse that is experienced by *Leftover Ladies*.

With the rapid social transformation of contemporary Chinse society, many changes in gender relationships and identity are to be expected. However, the spouse-matching pattern within the traditional value system and gender ideology has witnessed few changes as we discussed in the previous subsection, from which we note that the *Leftover Lady* crisis is not an individual crisis, but a group identity crisis faced by many outstanding career women in China. In the discourse of *CWS*, the "slower" social construction process is established as the main culprit of the discordance or the "gap" (Extract 63) leading to the phenomenon of *Leftover Ladies*:

> 63) *此时的断裂在于社会建构女性要慢于"剩女"自我建构的女性。后者处于用现代性视角觉察婚姻家庭中的价值问题阶段，而前者往往正处在现代化的过程中，甚至可能停留在传统性的原地踏步走阶段。...女性行为与社会结构保持一致，则不会有"剩女"危机。*
> *(CWS, Zuo &Xia, 2008: 14)*
> *The present gap is because the social construction of women is slower than the self construction of these Leftover Ladies. The latter approaches the value system of marriage and family from a modern perspective, while the former usually remains in the process of modernization, or even still on a static spot of traditional phase. ...The Leftover Lady crisis would not have existed if women's behaviors were to be in accordance with the social structure.*

The cause of the *Leftover Lady* phenomenon as well as the contestation between modern and traditional values is demonstrated through the contrasting structure of "the latter…from a modern perspective" and "the former….remain in the process….still on a static spot of

traditional phase" (Extract 63). The key expression "slower" serves to justify the innocent situation of Leftover Ladies and further reveals the critical position of *CWS* as a pioneering women's journal on issues such as social conventions.

As is pointed out in the discourse of *CWS* articulated by Zuo and Xia, "If women's social practices were to be in accordance with the social structure, the Leftover Lady crisis would not have existed" (Extract 63). Consequently, there are two ways of addressing the crisis – quicken the pace of social construction through getting rid of traditional gender ideology, or slow down women's development through restraining women's growing self-awareness. However, compared to the relatively "slow and static" (Extract 63) social construction, the emerging self-awareness of contemporary women especially those with "higher education" is "becoming stronger and stronger" (Extract 64) as argued in the chosen corpus of *CWS*:

64) 在自我发展方面，现代女性对婚姻、生育、职业等的<u>自主意识越来越强</u>，其成就地位<u>越来越高</u>，她们正拥有了<u>越来越多</u>的自我发展的选择权。而且文化程度<u>越高</u>，这种选择权<u>越大</u>。 *(CWS, Lin & Tan, 1999: 25)*
In self development, <u>the self awareness of contemporary women</u> on marriage, pregnancy and career <u>is becoming stronger and stronger</u>. The higher the achievements and the status, the more autonomy in their self development. The higher she is educated, the more autonomy she enjoys.

65) <u>女性主体意识的确立是在新旧文化因素，新旧思想观念不断此消彼长的发展中</u>逐渐确立的。社会存在的矛盾性，<u>必然带来人们思想观念的矛盾性</u>。 *(CWS, Zu, 1999: 7)*
<u>Self awareness of women is established bit by bit through the interactive contestation between new and old cultural factors, new and old ideologies.</u> The social conflict <u>inevitably brings about the conflicting ideologies</u> in people.

Self-awareness of women is re-conceptualized as a way of negotiating change and contestation between the "old" and the "new" (Extract 65). Although women with growing self-awareness question and challenge the dominant system and the discourse on gender that they inhabit – and which positions them as "others" in the dominant male culture – they show resistance mostly at the individual level. Owing to the "inevitably" "conflicting ideologies" (Extract 65), their resistance itself is rather ambivalent and sometimes vague – neither does it have ideological clarity nor are they motivated to take collective action to change the dominant paradigms. This in turn is exactly the efforts *CWS* is making in order to break the dominant paradigms of gender and cultural models manifested in media discourse and to bring about a change in the existing discourses.

To sum up, the deep-seated influence of traditional ideology on women's identity reconstruction and contemporary family structure is explicitly presented and discussed in

CWS through an examination of the spouse-matching standards surrounding the popular saying "*Marrying a good husband is better than having a good job*" and the *Leftover Lady* phenomenon. It is pointed out that despite a number of successive campaigns of women issues and movement (such as *Iron Girl, Half the Sky, Four-Self,* etc. see Chapter Four Section 4.2 and Chapter Six Section 6.3.1), the traditional gendered binaries still persist and are being restored only to an extent among certain mainstream ideologies and dominant discourses. The establishment of a new ruling ideology incorporating gender equality is proving to be a long, arduous and difficult task. In the following section, the persistence of tradition is further revealed through an examination of the tension and struggle experienced by women in dealing with the work/family conflict.

5.4 Addressing the Work/Family Conflict

According to the report "2009 Survey of Living Conditions for Chinese Career Women" (ACWF, 2009), 70% of career women said they face work/family conflict. Twenty nine percent of them think they are able to "keep a balance between work and family" in 2009 (the percentage is 31.2% in 2007, 28.2% in 2008), while 34.1% of them claimed to take a "family-orientation" in the conflict in 2009 (the percentage is 22.9% in 2007, 23.5% in 2008). The above statistics reveal that the re-construction of contemporary Chinese women's identity is trapped in a dilemma or in an ideological contestation between a persistent cultural legacy and prevalent modern social values. Women are struggling to find answers individually because no one really knows how to merge the dual and competing roles of family and professional work. As is pointed out in the analysis of print media of *PD* and *WOC*, "Have It All" is adopted by many working women as a best solution to the conflict in fulfilling a contemporary ideal model of "a complete woman" or "the *Third Type* woman" (see Chapter Four Section 4.4).

The "perfect" solution of the work/family conflict is argued as problematic and excessively demanding in the discourse of *CWS* through a reconceptualised metaphorical construction – *Burning Candles at Both Ends* – to contrast the metaphor of *Keeping the Balance* employed in print media of *PD* and *WOC* (see Chapter Four Section 4.4.1.1). The feminist movement began by determining equality for women in the workplace through gaining entry into the professions. But according to Swiss and Walker, access to the professions is only the first battlefront, as the next critical battle is to fit all of the pieces together in the work/family merger through real change in both the workplace and homes and through mobilizing women

to act collectively (Swiss & Walker, 1993). Charlesworth points out that the work/family debate in fact masks gender inequality (Charlesworth, 2005) because while the traditional educational and career paths for men are more standardized, women in many cultures experience a dilemma regarding the pursuit of education, career, and family. As is evidenced in the *CWS* discourse, now professional women in China are on the verge of a breakthrough as they begin to mobilize and address head-on the seemingly inherent conflict between their careers and their children. In the following section, through an examination of metaphorical function as a way of exercising control or contestation by participants in the debate of the work/family conflict (Cameron, 2010), double standards for women are presented and amplified to the level of a double burden in the discussions of *CWS* to reveal the exhausted status of those women who "have it all". In addition, different from the ambiguous stance of encouraging "women to rely on their own efforts" found in print media such as *PD* and *WOC* (see Chapter Four Section 4.4.2), men's role and perspective is integrated as significant in tackling the work/family conflict as well as reconstructing a new paradigm of genuine equality for both genders.

5.4.1 *Burning Candles* vs. *Keeping the Balance*

According to Fairclough, "ideology" involves the representation of "the world" from the perspective of a particular interest, so that the relationship between proposition and fact is not transparent, but mediated by representational activity (Fairclough, 1985). For instance, in establishing a *Harmonious Society*, the chosen corpus of *PD* as analysed in the previous chapter, the tension of the work/family conflict faced by Chinese career women is implicitly and tactically backgrounded in women's own efforts through the metaphorical representation of "*Keeping the Balance*":

> 她即是一个百万人口大城市的副市长，又是一个平凡普通的女性，在事业和家庭的天平上，她始终操持着平衡的砝码。 (1995PD 6.14)
> *She is a vice mayor of a million-population city, and an ordinary woman meanwhile, who <u>always keeps the weight of balance</u> on the scale of career and family.*
>
> 作为女人，葛丽玲的心<u>里总在搞平衡</u>：工作要做好，孩子也不能舍弃。
> (2005PD 4.25)
> *As a woman, Ge Liling is <u>always keeping the balance</u> in mind: work should be done, kids should not be abandoned either.*

As Fairclough states, dominant metaphors can be seen as constructing domains "in a way which helps to marginalize other constructions from the perspective of oppositional groups"

(1995, pp. 71-2). The dominant metaphorical construction in Chinese media of addressing the work/family conflict as "*Keeping the Balance*", "*Have It All*", *"the Third Type woman"* and "*A Complete Woman*" (see Chapter Four Sections 4.4 and 4.3.2.2), reflects the particular socio-political viewpoints underlying the mass media presentation of women to advocate the in-group identity of women who fit in the category of a contemporary ideal and to exclude the out-group identity who do not fit in the definition of these women models. To see metaphors as resources to understand membership is in line with Chilton's argument of including aspects of CDA in metaphor analysis regarding the dialectic between discourse and social activity (Chilton, 1996).

Different from the ambivalent attitude of *PD* in addressing the double role conflict, in the discourse of *CWS* the critique challenging the default mode of the "have it all" solution imposed on career women in shouldering both work and family responsibilities is presented through the "alternative metaphor" (Ellis, 2001) – *"Burning Candles at Both Ends"* (Extract 66):

> 66) 或许不是效率的问题，而是时间、精力的不够分配，一根蜡烛两头烧似乎是中国现代职业女性日常生活现象的真实写照。　　　　　　　　　　(CWS, Zhou, 1997: 20)
> *Maybe it is not a problem of efficiency, but the inadequate distribution of time and energy. Burning candles at both ends seems to be a real reflection of the daily life of contemporary Chinese career women.*

A *candle*, in cognitive understanding, is usually associated with a kind of sacrificial or altruistic quality. "Burning at both ends" implies late nights and early mornings, i.e., even further sacrifice. Also, it reinforces the doubling up notion that is continually mentioned. As Kress argues, being constituent parts of discourse, metaphors may become an indicator of discursive and, by extension, socio-cultural struggles between social groups (Kress, 1989), the metaphor – *Burning Candles at Both End*s – is employed by *CWS* as representing a feminist perspective in the debate of work/family conflict so as to invoke a somewhat emotional response from the readers concerning the unbearable burden and exhaustion experienced by working women of "covering both roles" (Extract 67). The contrastive negation of "not a problem of efficiency, but the inadequate distribution of time and energy" (Extract 66) serves to further point out the unreasonable gender distribution of labor.

According to Fairclough, texts as elements of social events do have causal effects (Fairclough, 2003). In this sense, the re-conceptualisation of women tackling the work/family conflict as a compromise rather than a solution through a re-formulation of the metaphor (Cameron, 2010)

in the discourse of *CWS* is an attempt to bring about changes in people's knowledge, beliefs, attitudes and values, contributing to shaping women's identities with a more comprehensive social gender perspective. The following examples further reveal that the "double role conflict" (Extract 67) of contemporary Chinese women implicitly mitigated in the discourse of *PD* and *WOC* is argued in a clear-cut way in the discourse of *CWS*:

> 67) 现阶段妇女解放又遇到了以<u>角色冲突</u>为特征的新矛盾，<u>大部分职业女性陷入鱼和熊掌难以两全</u>的境地。<u>无数资料证明：当代职业女性的双重角色冲突是客观存在</u>的。
>
> *(CWS, Jiang, 1995: 18)*
> *In contemporary women's liberation, there is a new problem characteristics of the <u>role conflict</u>, that <u>most career women are trapped in a dilemma of covering both roles</u>. <u>Numerous evidence proves</u> that <u>the double role conflict</u> of contemporary career women <u>exists objectively</u>.*

> 68) 妻子所面对的家庭与事业的矛盾<u>往往</u>比丈夫大。　　　　　*(CWS, Ye, 1996: 34)*
> <u>*The conflict between family and career*</u> *confronted by wives is <u>often severer than</u> that by husbands.*

As gender role conflict results from an ongoing dynamic contestation between traditional ideology and modern social change, whatever option women choose, inevitably "most" of them will "be trapped" (Extract 67) and more or less face the judgment of double standards. The quotation of "numerous evidence" in conjunction with the adverbial expressions "objectively" (Extract 67) and "often" (Extract 68) can be seen as highlighting the prevalence and factuality of the double-role dilemma imposed on contemporary working women. The comparative structure "often severer than" (Extract 68) further points out the critical and feminist position of *CWS* in evaluating the issue. In the following section, unfair distribution of housework and the situation of exhausted working women are discussed in regard to the double-ness (double roles and double burden) and the ensuing negative consequences.

5.4.1.1 Double-ness and burden

As was pointed out in earlier statements in the chosen corpus from the print media of *PD*, the lexical phrase of "double standard for career women" is absent, but the actual imposition on women's identity is implied by means of direct quotations of reported outstanding women, or through indirect journalist commentary on these outstanding women (see Chapter Four and Seven, Section 4.4.1 and Section 7.2.2):

> 她常说："我<u>既要</u>当好市长，<u>还要尽可能也当好一个合格的母亲和妻子</u>。"
> 　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　（1995PD-14）
> *She often says, "I <u>should</u> be a good mayor, <u>and meanwhile should be a qualified mother and wife.</u>"*

> 她们在做出优秀的设计工作的<u>同时</u>，<u>都努力去尽家庭主妇的责任。</u>　（2005PD-5）

They do the design work well, <u>meanwhile, all of them try to fulfil the duty of a housewife.</u>

This is resonant with the findings in the previous section that the traditional gender pattern of "男主外女主内 men are in charge of outside the home, whereas women are in charge of inside the home" has not changed a great deal on the part of men, but has seen a shift on the part of women to become "主内又主外 in charge of both inside and outside the home" (see Section 5.3). The implicit double role requirement in the print news stories represents the discursive construction of a contemporary women's ideal identity impacted by the mixed ideological forces of traditional gender ethics and contemporary perception of socialist feminism (also see Chapter Six Section 6.3.2).

Firstly, in the discourse of *CWS*, the "double standard" for women especially on working women is explicitly revealed as "an unfair treatment" (Extract 71) through the contrastive expressions of "consistent and unanimous" standard for men and "disconnected and even conflicting" (Extract 70) standard for women:

69) <u>客观世界和男性世界</u>对女性持有<u>双重评价标准</u>。   (CWS, Jiang, 1995: 17)
There is <u>double standard </u>towards women <u>in reality and in male world.</u>

70) 职业女性的这种尴尬处境是超出任何一个职业男性认识范畴的。因为社会对男性的价值规范是<u>一致的和统一的</u>，好的职业男性同时意味着是好丈夫和好父亲；对于女性而言，<u>好女人和好职业女性的标准是割裂的，甚至是背道而驰的</u>。   (CWS, Liu, 2003: 22)
<u>The awkward situation of career women is beyond knowledge of any career men.</u> Because the value standard toward men are <u>consistent and unanimous</u>, a good career man means a good husband and father meanwhile; while for women, the standards of a good woman and a good career woman is <u>disconnected, and even conflicting.</u>

71) 对一个男性的业务成功者，人们只想知道他是如何成功的；而面对一位事业有成的女性，<u>情况就大不一样</u>。一般人会想：你这么有成就，的确令人佩服，但是你家里怎么办？你丈夫帮助你分担家务吗？你是不是<u>以牺牲家庭责任为代价</u>？从事社会劳动的女性<u>不得不在身体上和精神上忍受这种不公平</u>。   (CWS, Li, 1996: 8)
To a successful career man, all people want to know is how he did it; while to a successful career woman,<u> it is totally different</u>. People would think that your success is indeed great, but what about your <u>family</u>? Does your husband share <u>housework</u> with you? Do you succeed at the cost of <u>sacrificing family duties</u>? Women who participate in social work<u> have to face such an unfair treatment both physically and mentally.</u>

The "totally different" (Extract 71) standards of success between men and women gives rise to an "awkward situation" of career women that is "beyond knowledge of any career men" (Extract, 70). Because as pointed out by Li, everywhere is filled with "his" standard as it is a "male world" (Extract 69) – women are expected to "be like men" at work, and are expected to "be like a woman" at home (Li, 2000, p. 17). The disparity is also evidenced by a series of questions posed to successful career women, among which some key themes such as

"family", "housework", "sacrifice", "family duties (Extract 71) are often highlighted as important social indicators on the scale of assessing success of a woman's identity (Yao, 2007).

Secondly, the double standards are re-conceptualized by *CWS* narratives as a "serious problem" of "double burdens" (Extract 72) and "double constraints" (Extract 73), which requires "double efforts and double energy" (Extract 72) of working women:

72) *随着广大妇女走向经济社会和政治社会，妇女们遇到了一个严重的问题，即双重角色、双重负担的问题。很多妇女在享受到因经济独立而带来的平等的喜悦之余，渐渐意识到自己承担双重工作—社会的加上家庭的。规定妇女享有工作权利的法律条文并不能保证男子与女子分担家务，共同养育后代，赡养长辈等，结果是，如果你不放弃工作权利，就要付出双倍的劳动、双倍的精力。* (CWS, Li, 1996: 8)
As many women walk into economic and political society, they run into a serious problem—issue of double roles and double burdens. Many women start to realize the double burden—work and family—after their joy over the equality brought about by the economic independence. As laws and rules regulating work rights of women do not regulate male's equal share of housework, raising children and caring for the elders. It turns out that if women don't give up work, they will have to devote double efforts and double energy.

73) *她们受到家庭角色和职业角色的双重约束，她们实际上在做着两份工作，下了班筋疲力尽的妻子回到家里还有一项未完成的工作就是家务，如做饭，检查孩子的作业等；丈夫们往往为了工作可以不干家务，反过来妻子则没有这个特权。* (CWS, Wang, 2004: 23)
They are restricted by the double constraints of family and work roles, that in fact they are doing two jobs. When the exhausted wife comes back home from work, there is another unfinished work waiting for her—housework such as cooking and checking homework of kids. Husbands can usually avoid housework for the sake of work, whereas for wife, there is no such privilege.

As pointed out in the above extracts, "after their joy over the equality brought about by the economic independence" (Extract 72), many working women especially those who have achieved great progress at work often have a changing perception of work rights – not as a liberation but rather as an imposition of an additional workload to "unfinished" (Extract 73) housework. The passive verbal structure "be restricted by" (Extract 73) and the modality "have to" (Extract 72) serve to highlight the powerless and passive position of women in face of the compulsory imposition. The comparative structures of "the laws and rules regulating... do not regulate male's equal share of housework, raising children and caring for the elders" (Extract 72), and husbands having the "privilege" to "avoid" housework vs. wives not having this (Extract 73), can be interpreted as a powerful feminist argument against the inequality embedded in the double standards. The intensifying word "serious" in conjunction with the constant referral of "double-ness" in the discourse of *CWS* can be seen as justifying the living existence of the "exhausted wife" (Extract 73), and accordingly reinforcing the urgency of proper solutions. The "exhausted" (Extract 74) and "stressed out" (Extracts 75, 76) status

resulted from the dual burden are constantly evidenced in the discourse of *CWS*:

74) 把生活和工作的双重压力加在女性身上，让她们感到心身交瘁。
(CWS, Jiang, 1995: 17)
Double burdens of family and work are imposed upon women, making them exhausted physically and mentally.

75) 女性在平等地与男性竞争的同时，家务劳动没有随之消失，为母亲、为妻子的角色仍然存在，她们不堪重负。 *(CWS, Li, 1996: 9)*
When women compete equally with men at work, they become stressed out as their duty of housework does not disappear and their roles of wife and mother still exists.

76) 这种双重角色和双重角色标准的压力，使女性不堪重负。 *(CWS, Liang, 2003: 6)*
The pressure of double roles and double standards makes women stressed out.

The verb "make" (Extracts 74, 76) and the passive verbal structure "be imposed upon" (Extract 74) serve to justify the correlation between the double-ness and exhaustion, as well as to reveal the helpless and passive position of women under the influence of powerful socio-cultural conventions. In extract 75, "housework" that "does not disappear" along with "women's competition with men at work" is explicitly pointed out as the main cause of the exhaustion.

As discussed in earlier comments, a final obstacle for the entrance and advancement of women in professions has to do with family responsibilities (see Section 5.2.1). According to the statistics of the Second National Survey of Chinese Women's Social Status, women are the main carer of households in more than 85% of families, and women's average hours on housework everyday is 4.0 hours, which is 2.7 hours more than men. This gap of housework hours between men and women is only 6 minutes shorter than that reported in 1990 (ACWF, 2001) (see Table 5.3). The statistics of the Third National Survey of Chinese Women's Social Status reveal that women are the main provider of housework in more than 72.0% of families (ACWF, 2011) (see Table 5.4). The conclusion is clear: women still shoulder the main responsibility of housework owing to the persistent traditional definition of family role for women.

Table 5.3 Hours of Housework between Genders 2001 (min) Per Day

(ACWF, 2001, p. 11)

| Nationwide | Urban | Rural |
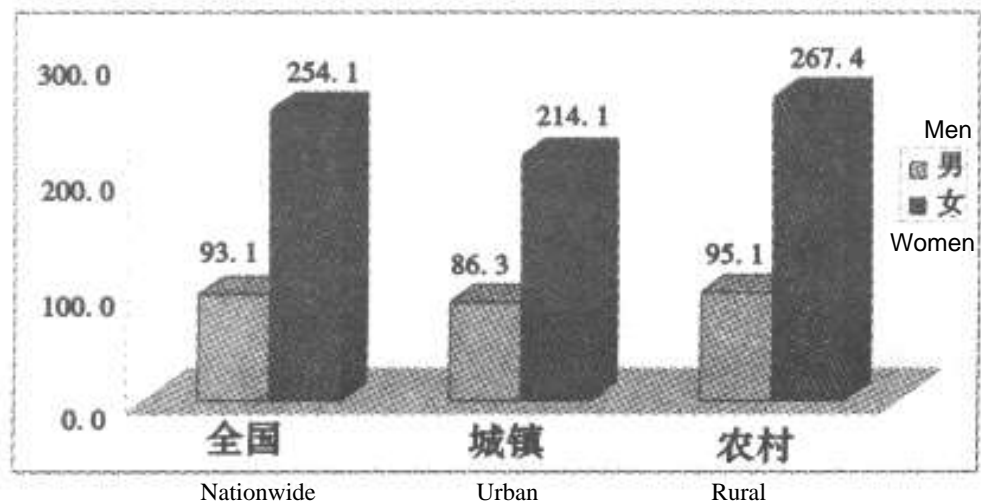
Table 5.4 Hours of Housework between Genders 2011 (min) Per Day

(ACWF, 2011, p. 12)

图 11 分城乡在业者工作日平均家务劳动时间　　单位：分钟／天

Average hours of housework on workday for urban/rural employees　　Unit: min./day
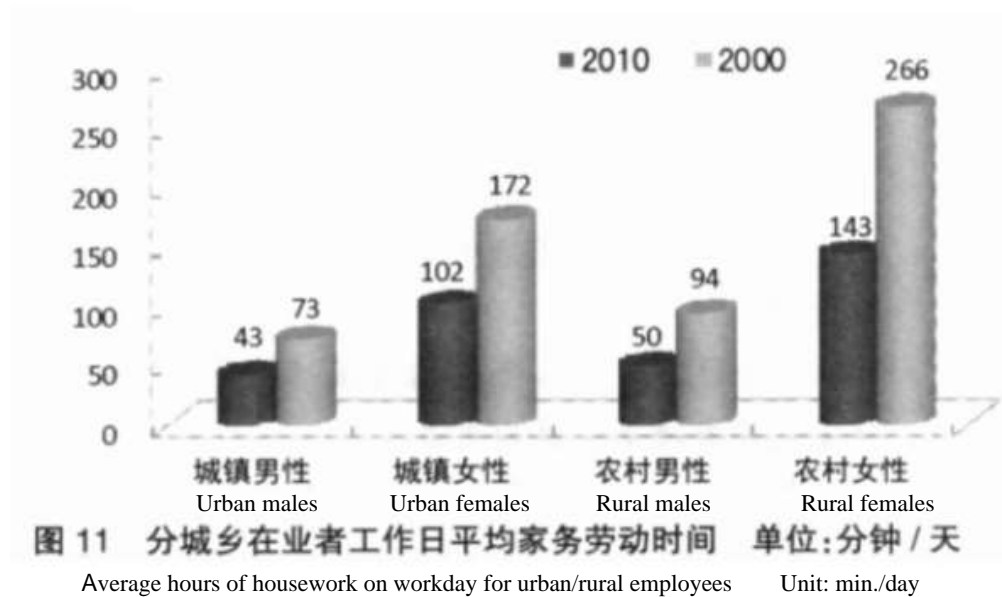
In the chosen corpus of *CWS*, the unfair distribution of domestic labor between men and women is explicitly argued and demonstrated:

77) 她们一方面要按照市场公平竞争的原则与男性一争高下，另一方面又不得不出色地扮演好家庭角色，将大量时间和精力花费在家务劳动上。　　　　*(CWS, Liang, 2003: 6)*
On one hand, women have to compete with men on an equal basis of market competition, whereas on the other hand, they have to fulfill a good family role, spending a huge amount of time and energy on housework.

78) 在城市家庭中，绝大多数与丈夫一样8 小时上班的妻子，也仍然承当着繁重的家务。
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　(CWS, Yang & Luo, 2003: 64)
In urban families, most wives work 8 hours per day same as their husbands, but still shoulder heavy burden of housework.

79) 尽管女性普遍参与社会劳动，但她们依然是家内劳动的主要承担者。若以做饭、洗衣和做卫生等日常家务衡量的话，女性的家务时间几乎是男性的3 倍。　　*(CWS, Yang, 2006: 20)*
Despite that women participate extensively in social labor, they still remain the main carer of housework. Take cooking, washing and cleaning as daily housework, the time on housework of women is almost 3 times of that of men.

80) 无论从全国来看，还是分地区来看，目前女性仍然是家庭责任的主要承担者，家庭责任分担性别不平等现象普遍存在。　　　　　　　　　　*(CWS, Wu, 2006: 101)*
No matter from the scale of a nation or a region, women still remain the main provider of housework. The gender inequality of household duties prevails.

Firstly, the prevailing "gender inequality of household duties" (Extract 80) is revealed through the consistent referral of women as the "main provider of housework" (Extracts 79, 80), spending "a huge amount of time and energy on housework" (Extract 77), shouldering "heavy burden of housework" (Extract 78). Quantification of "3 times that of men" (Extract 79) can be seen as illustrative in reinforcing the factuality of the prevalence. Secondly, the contrastive syntactic structures of "On one hand… on the other hand" (Extract 77), "…same as…but still…" (Extract 78), "despite that…still…" (Extract 79) serve as an effective instrument to emphasize the critical perception of *CWS* on the shifting gender pattern of women "主内又主外 in charge of both inside and outside the home" as the main ideological motivation underlying double standards.

As pointed out in the previous section, women trying to meet the double standards often find themselves exhausted or stressed out in juggling the double roles. Negative consequences in both family life and work life such as inadequate sleep, a worsening health condition, a strained and messy family life, and a decreasing status at work are regarded as partly contributing to some emerging social issues regarding gender identity. For instance, one of the issues – the postponing of pregnancy in working women is evidenced in the following extracts of *CWS*:

81) 在竞争激烈的就业市场中，妇女为了保住自己的岗位不得不推迟生育时间。

In the fierce competition of job market, women <u>have to postpone time of pregnancy and birth in order to</u> keep their jobs.

82) 在城市，特别是大城市，工作和家庭的冲突<u>直接导致了初婚初育年龄推迟，生育率下降，自愿不育者出现</u>。   *(CWS, Li, 2008: 68)*
In cities, especially big cities, <u>the work/family conflict directly leads to the postponement of first marriage and first pregnancy. The birth rate is decreasing and there are women who choose not to give birth to a child.</u>

The modal verb "have to" in conjunction with "in order to" (Extract 81) implies again the passive and helpless situation of women in face of the double burden as balancing work and family persists as one of the major unresolved issues for working mothers in contemporary Chinese society. In Extract 82, the cause of such postponement is "directly" (Extract 82) linked with the work/family conflict through the cause-effect verbal expression "lead to". The treatment of working mothers in the mass media and their subsequent choice of postponement of giving birth mirrors this culture's ambivalence and confusion about women's contemporary roles, and reflects society's inability to offer new solutions to the work/family dilemma.

As pointed out by Zhang, "have it all" as a suggested "ideal" (Extract 83) solution in the print media discourse is not an easy option, because the conflict between roles and the identity gap between expectations will create enormous difficulty for realization of the "ideal" model and consequently "often" (Extract 83) lead to the failure of one role or another (Zhang, 1992), as is evidenced in the following extract from *CWS*:

83) <u>希望二者兼顾</u>一直是职业女性的梦想，<u>然而繁重</u>、重复的家务劳动、繁琐的育儿工作和职业专业水准的要求，<u>常常</u>使职业女性<u>顾此失彼</u>。   *(CWS, Liu, 2003: 22)*
<u>Having both</u> has always been the <u>ideal</u> for career women. <u>However</u>, owing to the <u>heavy, repetitive housework</u> and kids' education, and professional requirements of career, career women <u>often</u> find themselves <u>attending to one and neglecting the other.</u>

The revelation of the gap between the "ideal" expectation and the real situation of "attending to one and neglecting the other" (Extract 83) is a great relief to many women, as women are not alone in the self-doubt and ambivalence they face in their individual struggle to locate the right balance between two important aspects of their lives – family and career. As argued by Swiss and Walker, women regardless of how they have chosen to lead their lives, can now breathe a collective sigh of relief that superwoman is dead; no one has it all even if from all outward appearances they may appear to do it all (Swiss & Walker, 1993). In the print media texts of *PD* and *WOC*, it seems that many of the women have merged their dual roles

successfully and avoided a major collision between their often competing worlds (see Chapter Four Section 4.4.1.1), but as pointed out in the chosen corpus of *CWS*, few have escaped without trade-offs and personal sacrifice, or struggle and inner conflict. The desire and quest of women for self-identity is caught up in a complex web of competing ideologies and discourses and often multiple and conflicting identities. *Burning candles* and *double standards/burden* are the core metaphors which capture the essence of this struggle (Cameron, 2010), where women's discourses such as *CWS* negotiate different worlds of identity – traditional, individual, modern and Westernized.

As Millet points out, the double burden not only becomes an obstacle to women's career paths but also serves as a cause of unequal feelings of women in the marriage system (Millet, 1999). The tackling of the issue, however, cannot rely upon women's efforts alone, as their partners – namely, men's role and their perspective is also important – a subject which is examined in the following section.

5.4.2 Beyond women's own efforts

In the print media of *PD* and *WOC*, the work/family conflict confronted by those outstanding working women is mostly, however implicitly, constructed as "women's own problem" (1995 WOC- 7), which "should" (1995 PD-17) be and "is being solved by women themselves" (1995 PD-8) (see Chapter Four Section 4.4.2). Some examples are as follows:

> 许多事业有成的女性，往往为自己对家庭的付出太少而<u>怀有深深的负疚感，觉得对不起丈夫，对不起孩子。</u>　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　（1995WOC-7）
> *Many women with successful careers, <u>often harbor deep guilt for their inadequate devotion to the family, and feel sorry for their husbands and kids.</u>*
>
> <u>为了事业、工作和家庭，梁冰牺牲了自己所有的闲暇时间</u>，不去看电视，不去逛街，不去走亲访友，<u>每天像机器人一样按程序工作</u>，干家务活的时候就是她休息的时候。
> 　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　（1995PD-8）
> *<u>For career, work and family, she sacrificed all her own leisure time</u>, no TV, no shopping, no visiting friends or relatives. Everyday she is <u>like a robot as if working according to the programmes.</u> The housework time becomes her time of rest.*
>
> 她身体力行，想证明这一点：无论面对的是什么，女性要振作起来，<u>依靠自己的力量去解决它</u>。　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　（1995PD-17）
> *She wants to prove this through her own example: no matter what lies ahead, women <u>should</u> be confident, and <u>rely on herself to overcome the difficulty.</u>*

It is noted that the double burden from the double standards is implied as women's own problem to deal with – if she pays more attention to her career at the cost of sacrificing some part of her family role, she feels guilty for not being able to be "a good wife and mother".

With that constant guilt in mind, she is always struggling to do "better" in order to obtain the "double recognition" from society and family, however usually at the cost of all her own time, sometimes even her health. In the discourse of *CWS*, the "popular" (Extract 84) social perception of the double role conflict as an issue exclusively related to women is directly pointed out:

84) 至今仍有理论主张妇女做强者，勇敢担起双重负担，这一对待家庭劳动的态度在中国很普遍。
(*CWS, Li, 1996: 10*)
There are still viewpoints of housework distribution expecting women to be strong, bravely shouldering the double burden, which is very popular in China.

85) 尽管中国妇女在实现自身解放的过程中，其角色责任已由"主内"变成了"主内亦主外"，但男性的角色并未发生根本的变化，他们的性别角色态度和性别角色期待仍然是传统的。
(*CWS, Jiang, 2001: 27*)
In the process of liberation, Chinese women's role has shifted from "in charge of inside the home" to "in charge of both inside and outside the home". But men's role does not change fundamentally, as their attitude and expectation on gender role is still traditional.

86) 一般认为，实现男女平等主要依靠女性的力量，男性只是旁观者。
(*CWS, Liang, 2003:5- 9*)
Women are generally regarded as the main contributors to realizing gender equality, whereas men are only bystanders.

On the other hand, men's position as "only bystanders" (Extract 86) and men's "unchanging" "traditional" "attitude and expectation on gender role" (Extract 85) are also reflected. As Jiang states, when women are suffering tremendous tensions from the double-role conflict, most men do not seem to be bothered by it (Jiang, 2009). When women's roles have changed radically since they entered public work, men's roles have not changed a great deal in China , as for thousands of years a career is seen as men's main pursuit and their family role is only secondary for them (Jiang, 1995). The "unchanged" men's role at home points directly to the ambivalence embedded in the campaign of women holding up *Half the Sky*, as analyzed in earlier statements – if both men and women each hold up half the sky at work, what about the sky at home?

Where feminism has focused primarily on identifying and advancing the roles and identities of women, its attacks on patriarchy and its redefinition of the identities and roles of women in relationships and in society have inevitably included considerable discussions of the identities and roles of men. There is now a fast-growing scholarly interest in understanding how masculine identities are produced, represented and made sense of by audiences (Carter & Steiner, 2004). According to Macnamara, contemporary debate concerning the pressures on working women with children are inextricably bound up with discussion of the roles and

identities of men in relation to work, fatherhood, and domestic and family involvement (Macnamara, 2006) (also see Chapter Seven Section 7.3.3.3). As Shen points out, feminist thoughts can be very valuable in men's self liberation from traditional patriarchal confinement (Shen, 2005). The following poem by Nancy Smith (Smith, 1973) provides a good illustration of such reciprocal construction of gender identity.

* * *

For Every Woman
By **Nancy R. Smith**, copyright 1973

For every woman who is tired of acting weak when she knows she is strong, there is a man who is tired of appearing strong when he feels vulnerable.

For every woman who is tired of acting dumb, there is a man who is burdened with the constant expectation of "knowing everything."

For every woman who is tired of being called "an emotional female," there is a man who is denied the right to weep and to be gentle.

For every woman who is called unfeminine when she competes, there is a man for whom competition is the only way to prove his masculinity.

For every woman who is tired of being a sex object, there is a man who must worry about his potency.

For every woman who feels "tied down" by her children, there is a man who is denied the full pleasures of shared parenthood.

For every woman who is denied meaningful employment or equal pay, there is a man who must bear full financial responsibility for another human being.

For every woman who was not taught the intricacies of an automobile, there is a man who was not taught the satisfactions of cooking.

For every woman who takes a step toward her own liberation, there is a man who finds the way to freedom has been made a little easier.

* * *

5.4.2.1 Men's role & perspective

From a social gender perspective, feminist efforts to promote gender equality is not to take power back from men nor to regard men as adverse rivals to women, but to reveal how both genders are constrained in a way by traditional gender ideology, and as a consequence, efforts from both men and women must be integrated in order to realize genuine equality between genders. In the discourse of *CWS*, men are also constructed as being "victim to traditional gender ideology" in face of "severe double-role conflict and double-role burden" (Extract 87),

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the same as women:

> 87) 在中国，饱受性别文化煎熬的男性*还不清楚自己就是传统社会性别文化的受害者*。…*双重角色的严重冲突和双重角色的压力使男性严重超载*。但男性面临的角色冲突与女性完全不同，男性依然延续着*"超人"的形象，既要充当工作中的强者，又要成为家族中的顶梁柱*。男性虽然同时兼有职业角色和家庭角色，*但分界线十分模糊，能挣到足够多的钱养家的男人，在家庭才会有地位*。*男性职业角色的失败同时也意味着家庭角色的失败，职业角色失败的男性比家庭角色失败的女性承受更大的压力和更多的嘲笑*。
>
> *(CWS, Liang, 2003:5- 9)*
>
> *In China, men suffered gender culture <u>did not realize they are the victim to traditional gender ideology</u>. <u>Severe double-role conflict and double-role burden make men stressed out</u>. However the role conflict men face is <u>completely different</u> from women's. Men persist in <u>the "superman" image of being strong at work and being the pillar at home</u>. The line between men's career role and family role is <u>rather blurred</u> that <u>only men earn enough money could have status at home</u>. <u>The failure of men's career role means the failure of his family role too</u>. The pressure men face when they fail in career role is <u>much bigger than</u> the pressure women face when they fail in family role, and will accordingly <u>invite more contempt</u>.*
>
> 88) 支配性男性气概在*强调男性强者形象*。做强者，*就要求一个男人无止境地追求"事业成功"*，男人为使自己活得*"像个男人"，就要不断拼争，承受越来越大的压力，牺牲健康，包括平常生活的快乐，他和家人、孩子在一起的时间几乎全部被剥夺*。
>
> *(CWS, Fang, 2007: 8)*
>
> *Dominant masculinity <u>emphasize men's image of being strong</u>. To be a strong man, means <u>an endless pursuit of "career success"</u>. <u>In order to live "like a man", men must keep fighting and enduring an increasing pressure, at the cost of losing health, being deprived of almost all quality time with his family and children</u>.*

However as is reflected in the above extracts, the role conflict of men is "completely different from women's" (Extract 87). For women, the line between work role and family role is "disparate" and "conflicting" (see Section 5.2.2.1), with the latter being emphasized as a significantly indispensable requirement of a woman's identity. Whereas for men, the line between work role and family role is "rather blurred" (Extract 87), with the former being reinforced as the prerequisite construction of a man's overall identity, including his family identity. The double burden for men to "be like a man" is on one hand the excessive emphasis of his "career success" and "dominant masculinity" of "being strong", and on the other hand, is the compulsory ignorance of his family identity/role such as "quality time with his family and children" (Extract 88). In this sense, traditional prescriptions on gender not only restrain women's development, but also bring about excessive pressures on men, as the pressure of a failing career role for men is "much bigger" and "invite more contempt" (Extract 87). It is concluded by many scholars that not only women need to be liberated from the patriarchal system, but so do men (Wei, 2004, Chen, 2009).

According to Connell and Messerschmidt, dominant masculinity is closely related to the biological gender binaries (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005), which assign the ideal

masculine quality as strong and dominant in opposition to feminine quality as weak and submissive (Brannon, 1976). While women are confined to the stereotypical family identity of being subordinated, men's work identity is being magnified as an unyielding "superman" (Extract 87) who "must keep fighting" in "an endless pursuit of career success" (Extract 88). Apparently, being magnified is a good thing but in fact if the extent of magnification exceeds the competence of men, the "increasing" (Extract 88) pressure will make men "stressed out" (Extract 87). In this sense, male attention on feminism can be seen as a way of self-liberation from patriarchal pressures (Zhou, 2001), and the challenge to the dominant masculinity can also be seen as a challenge to the stereotypical traditional gender ideology of "*男主外女主内* men are in charge of outside the home, women are in charge of inside the home*", "男尊女卑* men are superior, women are inferior", "*男强女弱* men are strong, women are weak" and "*男主女从* men dominate, women subordinate". Therefore to involve men's role in breaking the traditional pattern of gender labor division is regarded as "inevitably" "significant" (Extract 89) and "necessary" (Extract 90):

89) 男性在缓解女性角色冲突中起着不可低估的作用。男性必须调整自己的女性价值观，打破传统的"男主外，女主内"的观点，转变几千年所形成的男女两性观念，从行动上体贴帮助自己的妻子。   *(CWS, Jiang, 1995: 18)*
Men play a significant role in easing the role conflict of women. Men should adjust their value system on women, break the traditional view of "men are in charge of outside the home whereas women are in charge of inside the home", change gender ideology of thousands of years' of history, and support his wife in action.

90) 而要消除这样的阻力，靠女性单方面是无法完成的。男女平等不可避免地需要男性的参与和支持。   *(CWS, Liang, 2003: 9)*
It is impossible to eliminate the obstacle based on women's efforts only. It is inevitably necessary to integrate men's participation and support in (promoting) gender equality.

As pointed out in the above texts from *CWS*, the first step of male efforts is to "adjust", "break", and "change" (Extract 89) the traditional gender ideology of prescribing family duty as women's "patent" (Jiang, 1995, p. 18). The next step will be taking actions to "support his wife" (Extract 89) in sharing more family responsibilities. According to the statistics from the Second National Survey of Chinese Women's Social Status in 2001, 82.9% of people agree that "men should shoulder half the housework" (87.9% of women, 77.2% of men) (ACWF, 2001). A decade later, the statistics of the Third National Survey of Chinese Women's Social Status further reveal that 88.6% of people agree that "men should shoulder half the housework" (91.2% of women, 82.0% of men) (ACWF, 2011). The urge for male participation in domestic duties is also consistently presented in the discourse of *CWS*:

91) 建议男子与女子分担家务劳动   *(CWS, Li, 1996:*
8)
It is suggested that men share housework with women.

92) 鼓励男性平等承担家务。   *(CWS, Liu &Wang &Zhang, 2001: 72)*
Men are encouraged to equally shoulder the domestic responsibility.

93) 鼓励男性家庭成员多尊重妇女、分担家务、珍惜爱情、珍爱家庭。妇联应在树立好妻
子、好母亲角色的同时，以不同的形式和角度树立现代好丈夫、好父亲、好儿子等男性典
型并广泛宣传。   *(CWS, Yang & Luo, 2003: 67)*
Men are encouraged to respect women, share housework, cherish relationship and family ACWF
should establish and promote men's ideal of "good husband, good father, and good son" in various
forms, in addition to the establishment of women's ideal of "good wife, and good mother".

94) 鼓励他们在家庭中多承担责任。   *(CWS, Fang, 2007: 8)*
Men are encouraged to shoulder more responsibilities at home.

It is argued that when women accept the "good wife/mother" expectation from men, men should also accept the "good husband/father" (Extract 93) expectation from women to "equally shoulder the domestic responsibility" (Extract 92) or shoulder "more responsibilities at home" (Extract 94), as an effort towards relieving the role conflict for women and consequently contributing to gender equality and harmony. However, lexical verbal choices of "suggest" (Extract 91), "encourage" (Extracts 92, 93 and 94) and the consistent verbal structure of "men are encouraged" (Extracts 92, 93 and 94) create the impression of men's passivity and unwillingness to participate in constructing this gender equality despite women's vigorous encouragement. According to Zuo, this is so because in the eyes of most men, doing housework and looking after children is seen as "negative" in evaluating one's dominant masculinity, and they will be categorized as "losers" if they do a lot of housework at home (Zuo, 2002, p. 14).

As pointed out by Gerson, facing these dilemmas – such as that exemplified through fear of success for women, and fear of being "a loser" for men – young women and men must develop innovative moral strategies to renegotiate work-family conflicts and transform traditional views of gender, in spite of the persisting social/institutional obstacles thwarting their emerging aspirations to balance personal autonomy with caring for others (Gerson, 2002).

5.5 Summary

The articles in *CWS* that we have focused on in this chapter capture many of the issues which the thesis as a whole deals with from looking at *PD* and *WOC* from a more feminist

perspective, showing that *CWS* is more than merely reflecting academic disputes but rather is a space where women can voice and hear voiced grievances that are particularly relevant to them and a platform from which they can question politicians and socio-cultural recognition. Through the analysis of the chosen corpus, it is interesting to note that between the general print media of *PD*, *WOC* and academic media of *CWS* data, the writers do vary between equivocal and unequivocal positions regarding some sensitive issues in reconstructing contemporary women's identity, and the critical stance of *CWS* is expressed through the linguistic and discursive expression of these academic articles by means of metaphor, direct vs. indirect statements, mitigation vs. amplification, among other features. While issues of gender discrimination such as glass ceiling and fear of success are absent in most news stories of outstanding women figures in *PD* and *WOC*, *CWS* texts present such issues as extrinsic and intrinsic "obstacles" crucial to women's development by means of presenting convincing statistics and illuminating case studies on women leaders and female PhDs. Where traditional gender ideology is only implicitly endorsed in the media construction of women's family identity in *PD* and *WOC*, the narratives from *CWS* provide a more clear-cut way of contesting the negative influence of cultural legacy and reveal the tension between traditional and modern values, in particular through the case study of *Leftover Ladies*. While the news texts of *PD* and *WOC* deal with the work/family conflict of women in a more hedged or mitigated way, the unequivocal position of *CWS* is expressed through rather determinedly straightforward statements surrounding the "alternative metaphors" of *Burning Candles at Both Ends* and *Double Standards/Burden*.

According to Fairclough, the contestation of discourses, and its heterogeneity are salient features of contemporary discourse, because the boundaries between domains and practices are in many cases "fluid and open in a context of rapid and intense social change" (Fairclough, 1999, p. 76). As Philips points out, there is no such thing as "a clear one-to-one relation" between one gender ideology and one society, instead there are multiple gender ideologies in all societies (Philips, 2003, p. 272). Of the different voices in the post-Mao era, some seek a return to a position that existed before the Mao era and are echoes of conservative ideas about women through an indefinite discourse. Other voices seek radically to question all elements of a traditional and socialist orthodoxy through a definite discourse, which might be issues to do with women, but also issues to do with the stance taken about women by the public media or government or feminist groups. Such conflicts which exist for many women between their ways of being in the world as women of certain types and the dominant discourses of male-based public institutions (Gee, 2008), together with the

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conflicting stance through which to interpret and motivate these socially meaningful behaviors, become the site of very real struggle and resistance. Throughout this study, it has been emphasized that gender discourse as it is negotiated in the heterogeneities of texts remains unstable and dynamic, and change is investigated in terms of the mapping onto one another of shifting, dynamic socio-cultural practices.

The contestation of discourses in this chapter demonstrates that in the post-Mao years, with the loosening of control at various levels, the state no longer exercises a monopoly on the production of a discourse on women. However, in response to the tensions that exist within any social situation, it still attempts to construct an orthodoxy gender identity and relationship through media discourse. In the next chapter, the prescriptive power of official discourse on women's identity presentation in print media is examined.

Chapter Six: Chapter Six: Analysis of Editorials and National Discourses

6.1 Introduction

According to Althusser, the dominant beliefs, values and practices that constitute ideology serve a political function (Althusser, 1971). As we progress through the education system and enter the workforce, ideology works through state institutions including mass media to interpellate or construct us into particular subject positions in which our work and lifestyle benefit those who control the processes of production (Althusser, 1989). From analyses of typical character reports in print media on contemporary Chinese women's identity especially from the dataset of 1995 (see Chapter Four), a tight "connection" between women and nation is revealed as one of the Chinese characteristics in regard to the "integration" of women's identity construction and development in the overall national construction. As Jie pointed out, under the specific historical circumstances of China the construction of women's identity is inevitably and conspicuously imprinted with political factors as it is constructed in the discourses underlined by the dominant national ideologies (Jie, 2008, p. 106).

As one of the most important sites in which and through which the national agenda is articulated and disseminated, editorial discourses of national newspapers play a particularly important role in creating and promoting national constructs. It has become a common practice, for example, since 1955, that on the day of the International Women's Day, 8th March, annually there would be key editorials from *PD* on women's issues and women's development, which are seen as a top-down official instruction guiding mass media positions and an important political guidance for women's identity construction and the women's movement in China (Jiang, 2006). Consequently, 8th-March editorials from *PD* within the timeframe in scrutiny (1995-2012) are included as the primary data in this chapter.

According to Na, there are three ways of constructing national discourses for contemporary women – the national system, reports and speeches at state level and organized activities by nation (Na, 2008, p. 152). As to the national system, in addition to the Constitution of the

People's Republic of China and the Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Rights and Interests of Women, former President Zemin Jiang announced to the world that gender equality is adopted as a basic state policy in China in his opening speech for the Fourth World Women's Conference in Beijing in 1995. Since then, the government has issued a series of Programs for the Development of Chinese Women (1995-2000, 2001-2010, and 2011-2020), aiming to promote gender equality and women's development. These programs and reports issued by the government are collected as a complementary source in studying the governmental perspective in this chapter. As to the organized activities by the nation, certain models of women's work identity and family identity are constructed and promoted through a series of campaigns organized by ACWF – the biggest women's (semi-)NGO in China with major governmental support, such as "*双学双比 shuang xue shuang bi, Double Study and Double Competition*", "*巾帼建功 jin guo jian gong, Women Contribution*", "*五好家庭 wu hao jia ting, Five Good Family*" (see Subsections 6.3.1 and 6.3.2). The discursive interaction between the state speeches and organized activities on women's identity is also demonstrated to an extent through the examination of the chosen corpus of these official documents.

Drawing on Fairclough's (1995, 2003, 2010) approach to the intertextual analysis of news discourse within the paradigm of CDA and Bhatia's (2004) multi-dimensional framework of genre analysis, this chapter examines the effects of intertextuality on the discursive construction of women's identity in relation to national ideologies sanctioned in editorial discourses in news media, which are generally viewed as part of the "system of checks and balances" for the smooth running of the governmental sphere (Allan, 1998). Focusing on concrete forms of text – discourse, style, and genre, which are respectively associated with representational, identificational and actional meanings of discourse (Fairclough, 2003), this chapter aims to show how *PD* editorials draw on, echo, and bring together different intertextual resources, and how the circulations and combinations of these intertextual relations in particular contexts (such as in a contemporary *Harmonious Society*) construct specific understandings of women's identity as *Half the Sky* in the abstract social and discursive practices such as mass media and gender reality. Analysing the distinctions and connections between representation, identification, and action in editorial texts not only enriches our understanding of media text, but also reinforces the social dimension of the details of text, placing meanings of the text into specific socio-political contexts. According to Bhatia, one of the main goals of genre analysis is to "investigate language as action in socio-critical environments" (Bhatia, 2004, p. 157).

Bakhtin (1996) pointed out that language is used as a key site of struggle between conflicting social forces, all of which wish to constrain meaning to their own ends and therefore give direction to communication within their own preferred definitions in order to achieve their own goals. Consequently, the genre of news discourse is typically seen as hybrid and of inter-discursive construction. According to Montgomery, genre describes more than a patterned, recurrent configuration of elements or units but also encompasses shared understandings between producers and audiences about forms and the purposes they serve. In this sense, although genre is textually manifested in discourse it may also be considered a process "beyond the discourse itself involving a promise, by producers, and recognition, by audiences, of the type of discursive activity being performed" (Montgomery, 2007, p. 27). As suggested by Bhatia, to understand "private intentions" within professional genres and to understand individual, organizational, professional and social identities constructed through discursive practices within specific disciplinary cultures fall into the manifold goals of genre analysis (Bhatia, 2004, p. 157).

Genres are seen as "the specifically discoursal aspects of ways of acting and interacting in the course of social events' which have relative stability and fixity (Fairclough, 2003, p. 65). As Bhatia explains, genres are highly structured and conventionalised constructs, with constraints on "allowable contributions in terms of the intentions one can give expression to, the shape they can take, and also in terms of the co-grammatical resources one can employ to give discoursal values to such formal features accordingly" (Bhatia, 2002, p. 23). In this sense, the chosen corpus of the official documents could be seen as clichéd and repetitive in its content and option of language. In fact, most texts of 8th March editorials from *PD* are very formulaic, complementing the equally ritualistic structure of national speeches themselves, often entailing a sequence of moves such as a canonic headline highlighting the national policy or orientation on women; an opening statement for celebrating the women's day; a review of historical development and achievement; a reiteration of the guidance and support from the Party and nation; a prescriptive call for actions and contributions to the present national construction; and in the end usually a prospect for the bright future of women and nation (see analysis later in this chapter).

Embedded in these generic moves are some rhetorical strategies employed in the realizations of particular themes – the construction of the link between nation and women; and the advocacy of *Half the Sky* model for women. Some major rhetorical strategies are listed as

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follows: strategy of modality – the degree of conviction or authority with which it is presented through constant use of modal verbs "must", "should", in conjunction with temporal reference, appealing to historical authority and morality; strategy of repetition and parallelism- frequent referral to "the Party", "the nation", elevating the significance of national ideology and establishing a larger community and a higher level of relevance of tying women's development to the national context; strategy of unification – first-person plural pronouns of "we", "our" and collective noun of "all women in our country", "Chinese women", constructing women as a whole rather than individual and establishing proximity both culturally and politically; strategy of reinforcement through superlatives and intensifiers such as "most", "very", invoking sense of pride and thus responsibility to fulfil the conceived notion of *Half the Sky* as a patriotic model identity.

In relation to each subtheme in the following section, an overwhelming concatenation of these rhetorical strategies is realized by particular wordings, some of which are purely formulaic, as to that concatenation that brings together particular lexical phrases embedded in political discourses such as "*hold high the banner of Deng Xiaoping theory, and unite closely around the Party's central committee with Comrade Jiang Zemin at its core*" (see Section 6.2.1). There are also those rhetorical strategies realised by particular choices of lexical items, for example the qualifying words such as "right" and "correct" which play a significant role in justifying the underlying political agenda in the chosen corpus. Consequently, corpus work is of considerable importance in critically examining these rhetorical strategies, as Baker points out, where CDA use of corpora is intended to show how the propensity of certain types of texts highlights particular lexical phrases (Baker, 2006). According to Toolan, by means of complex networks of vocabulary expressing various kinds of appreciation, judgement, and affect, speakers can "encode" their interpersonal evaluations of the subject-matter (Toolan, 2001).

In addition to the above rhetorical strategies, a separate and further categorisation is that regularly through these extracts of the chosen corpus we may discern consistent metaphorical construction of *Half the Sky* and *Harmonious Society*, a matter treated earlier in Chapter Four of this thesis. As Bednarek and Caple point out, news stories can, and make use again and again of common or conventionalized metaphors to construe consonance (Bednarek & Caple, 2012), something which is more evidently seen in the editorial discourses in this study. As a historical continuation of women's liberation in China, these two key metaphors reflect the consistent advocacy of work identity for Chinese women as *Half the Sky* and the re-

emphasized unique role of women's family identity in establishing a *Harmonious Society*. However, contested ideologies and an ambiguous governmental position underlying the resulting double standards imposed on women by the two metaphorical constructions is also pointed out at the end of this chapter.

6.2 Nation & Women – a Chinese Characteristic

Despite the major shift since the Mao period, discussed earlier in Chapters Four and Five, it is clear there is now a more dynamic movement in the portrayal of women in Chinese media. However, certain characteristics of the Mao period are still retained. In the previous Chapter Four Section 4.2.2, the close connection between Chinese women's own development and the overall national cause is vividly revealed through metaphorical pairs such as *WATER-FISH, BIRD-SKY* and *SOIL-PLANT* (women are compared as fish, bird and plant, whereas the nation is compared to water, sky and soil) in the chosen texts of typical character reports on outstanding women from *PD* and *WOC*. The headline of the editorial of *PD* on 8th March 2000 "*与伟大祖国一道前进—热烈祝贺"三八"国际劳动妇女节九十周年 Move forward with great motherland: celebrating the 90th anniversary of 8th March International Working Women's Day*" can be seen as highlighting such a "tight" bonding. The bonding as a "distinct Chinese characteristic" (see following extract) is also explicitly defined in the following speech by former President Hu Jintao on 8th Mar., the International Women's Day in 2010:

> *在中国共产党领导下，我国广大妇女始终把个人的前途命运同国家和民族的前途命运紧密结合在一起，开创了艰辛而辉煌的奋斗历程，走出了一条深深植根于我国历史和现实、具有强烈时代特征和鲜明中国特色的妇女解放和发展道路。*
> *Under the leadership of the Party (CPC), all women in our country always tightly bond their own destiny with that of the nation and people, and create a hard but glorious struggling path, which is deeply founded in the history and reality of our nation. The liberation and development path of women (in China) is of strong features of times and of distinct Chinese characteristics.*
> （2010.3.8 Hu's Speech, *PD*）

National speeches and editorial discourses in *PD* in this study make use of the news genre's standard signs and connotations to establish its authority in regard to the national political agenda and mainstream social ideology on gender. Firstly, in typifying the way that the news genre organizes material, the texts set up "a single primary definer" as the official source of knowledge on identity construction (Thwaites et al., 1994, 107). This is exemplified by the pervasive presence of *中国共产党 zhong guo gong chan dang*, the Communist Party of China (CPC) such as *"Under the leadership of the Party (CPC)"*(see above extract) and *"must adhere to the leadership of the Party (CPC)"*(see next section 6.2.1). As was pointed out in

Chapter Two, women's liberation and movement in China is not like Western feminist movements which began against the backdrop of established industrial civilization and prevalent ideology of natural rights to appeal for feminist interests. Rather, the awakening of the Chinese feminist movement began under the circumstances of severe social class conflict and a profound national crisis (see Chapter Two Section 2.3.1). Since Marxist feminism was introduced and established in China during the May Fourth Movement, women's liberation in China has been tied tightly with the nation and people, as a "top-down movement led by the Party (CPC)" and integrated into the overall social revolution and construction (Jiang, 2008, p. 32).

Secondly, the chosen corpus sets up a national identity for readers, and foregrounds supposedly shared viewpoints and collective experiences. For example the use of collective nouns of "our", "all" in expressions of "*我国广大妇女 all women in our country*"(see above extract)*, "我国妇女 women in our nation", "中国妇女 Chinese women", "广大妇女 All women", "亿万妇女 millions of women"* is abundantly noted in most of the following extracts from the data set. "Being constructed as a whole" is regarded as an essential Chinese characteristic of integrating women's movement in the overall national context (Li, 1997, p.81). As Chen claims, the state does not intend to develop women as independent individuals but rather prefers to unitarily construct them as a "passive mass group identity" ready for being called into socialist revolution and construction at any time (Chen, 2006, p. 33).

Thirdly, the national speeches imply the truth or authenticity of the accounts on women through constant appeals to history. For example, the unique link between nation and women in China is suggested as having historical foundations as it is "*deeply founded in the history and reality of our nation*" (see above extract). The following extracts provide more examples of appealing to historical practices through which the bonding between women's development and national construction is acknowledged:

> 1) *中国妇女运动的伟大实践告诉我们，妇女的命运始终与整个国家和民族的命运联系在一起，中国妇女解放运动是中国革命斗争和社会主义建设事业不可分割的一部分。*
> *Great practice of Chinese women's movement tells us that women's destiny is always connected with the destiny of the whole country and nation, and Chinese women's liberation movement is one indispensable part of China's revolution and socialist construction.* （2000.3.8 *PD*）

> 2) *中国妇女的伟大实践告诉我们，妇女的命运始终与国家和民族的命运联系在一起，妇女事业始终与国家的发展和进步联系在一起。*
> *Great practice of Chinese women tells us that women's destiny is always connected with the destiny*

of the country and nation, and women's cause is always connected with the nation's development and progress. （2005.3.8 *PD*）

3) *历史和现实雄辩地证明....只有始终不渝地坚持与祖国共命运、与时代同发展，亿万妇女才能真正成为推动社会历史进步的一支伟大力量。*
History and reality well proves that...Only by unswervingly adhering to sharing destiny with our nation and developing with the times, can millions of women really become a great force of advancing the social-historical progress. （2007.3.8 *PD*）

4) *一个世纪的峥嵘岁月,一个世纪的沧桑巨变...中国妇女实现自我价值、追求个人进步的过程，始终与国家富强、社会发展、人民幸福休戚相关。*
One century of eventful years, one century of radical changes....process of Chinese women's realisation of self value and pursuit of individual progress is always dependent upon the nation's prosperity, social development and people's happiness. （2010.3.8 *PD*）

5) *100 年来的风云变幻和峥嵘岁月...我国妇女运动发展必须坚持与国家和民族同呼吸、共命运。妇女的前途命运历来与国家和民族的前途命运息息相关。...只有自觉融入国家发展和民族振兴的历史洪流，自觉把自己的前途同国家和民族的前途命运紧密结合起来，以实现国家发展和民族振兴为己任，妇女运动才能焕发出强大的生命力、创造力、感召力，才能实现自身发展的伟大目标。*
A hundred years of radical changes and eventful years...Women's movement and development in our country must keep breathing in the same air and sharing the fate with the nation and people. Women's future and destiny has always been closely connected with the future and destiny of the nation and people. .. Only by consciously joining the history flow of national development and revitalization, and consciously and closely connecting individual's future and destiny with that of nation and people, and taking the national development and revitalization as one's own responsibility, can women's movement glow with strong vitality, creativity and charisma, and can they realize great goals of self development. （2010.3.8 Hu's Speech, *PD*）

In regard to the credibility of historical evidence, it is interesting to note that some particular "voices" repeat themselves constantly in and across the above chosen texts from *PD* editorials, such as "*Great practice of Chinese women's movement tells us*" (Extracts 1 and 2), "*History and reality well proves that…*" (Extract 3), "*One century of eventful years, one century of radical changes…*" (Extract 4) and "*A hundred years of radical changes and eventful years…*" (Extract 5). The interactive and discursively conceived notions of media texts can be traced back to Bakhtin's (1981) notion of heteroglossia – the dialogised interrelation of languages and discourses that involves multiple voices speaking through texts. The "languages" of heteroglossia intersect with others in a variety of ways, forming new socially typifying "languages" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 291). In this sense news media over time have adapted to articulate particular variants of language for particular social groups as Bakhtin may have envisaged. Central to Bakhtin's vision of language and text are the notions of stratification and recontextualization (see Chapter Three Section 3.2.2.4), through the process of which the original languages, power relations, and belief systems are redefined and new forms of discourses are formed (Linell, 1998). However according to Conboy, within the heteroglossia of cultural discourse, newspapers' style and content remain

determined ultimately by the voice of the political economy because they have always needed to make a profit through their selection of generic variety and political pragmatism (Conboy, 2010). Consequently the issue of genre has particular importance for this chapter, as well as having stylistic characteristics, genre is also a form of social contract between writer and reader. Generic patterns and the expectations of readers of editorial discourses have always been conditioned by and within socio-political parameters.

Fourthly, these official documents employ a specialized vocabulary and syntactic patterning to create solidarity and responsibility among readers. Through the specialized vocabulary of the repetitive phrases – "connected with" (Extracts 1 and 2), "indispensable part" (Extract 1), "dependent upon" (Extract 4), "sharing destiny with" (Extract 3) and "sharing the fate with" (Extract 5), the link between women and nation is indicated. Adverbs such as "always" (Extracts 1, 2, 4 and 5) and "closely" (Extract 5) can be seen as emphasizing the certainty of the conceptualisation of gender reality being proposed. The modal verb "must" in Extract 5 takes on an instructive undertone as a result of appealing to the historical authority. Examples of specific syntactic patterns employed include conditional clauses and parallel clauses. For instance, two conditional clauses *"only by unswervingly adhering to…can women really become…social-historical progress"* (Extract 3) and *"only by consciously joining the history flow of…can women…"* (Extract 5) serve to amplify the importance of the link between women and nation to a higher level of being a prerequisite to women's development. As Roeh and Nir note in their discussion of the rhetorical effects of parallelism in news discourse, "Parallelisms, …where syntax, lexicon, meter, and vocal properties all interact and reinforce each other, produce a particularly powerful, rhetorically seductive expression" (Roeh & NIr, 1990, p. 235). Parallel structure of *"be always connected with…be always connected with"* (Extract 2) can be interpreted as a way to express the intensity of emotion and generates rhetorically and emotionally powerful language of connecting the women's movement to the national cause. Through appealing to historical voices, the rhetorical strategies used in the above extracts can be interpreted as trying to legitimize the authority and objectivity of the re-contextualization of women's identity in the framework of national construction.

In one sense, editorial discourses such as those derived from *PD* are not simply a record of the past, nor an account of the present. They are also in a sense proposals for the future. They contain within them a certain sense of aspiration, a certain sense of where the society should go. Media representations, understood in this way, are re-conceptualizations of observable linguistic markers according to specific intentions of those involved in the process of media

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production (Li-J, 2009). According to Bhatia, expert members of professional discourse communities are often found exploiting generic conventions to communicate their "private intentions" within the context of socially accepted communicative purposes (Bhatia, 2004, p. 87). The following two extracts demonstrate the strategy of unification of women into the state political agenda, both of which are coming from the ending paragraph of each editorial as a conventional ending move of official discourse looking forward to a bright future by calling for a collective contribution from people:

1) *我们即将进入一个充满机遇和挑战的新世纪，振兴中华的宏伟大业需要包括妇女在内的全国各族人民的奋勇开拓。*.
We are about to enter a new century full of opportunities and challenges, the great cause of revitalizing China needs courageous efforts by people of all ethnic groups of the nation including women.　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　（2000.3.8 PD）

2) *全面建设小康社会，是全国各族人民在新世纪新阶段的奋斗目标，也必然是当代我国妇女运动的主题。实现全面建设小康社会宏伟目标的过程，从根本上说，就是包括广大妇女在内的全国各族人民在中国共产党的领导下，沿着中国特色社会主义道路，创造自己幸福生活和美好未来的过程。*
Comprehensive construction of a well-off society is the goal of people of all ethnic groups of the nation in the new century and new phase. It must also be the theme of contemporary Chinese women's movement. The process of realizing the great goal of comprehensive construction of a well-off society, is in essence, a process that people of all ethnic groups of the nation including women following the socialist path of Chinese characteristics and under the leadership of the Party (CPC), to create their own happy life and beautiful future.　　　　（2004.3.8 PD）

According to Jin, it should be understood that the primary objective of the *PD* editorials on the days of 8th March is to further mobilize women and integrate them in the present political agenda (Jin, 2006). The discoursal mode of "mobilising" is imprinted with highly convergent political ideologies (Jiang, 2006, p. 6) as the government/the Party creates the official discourse in *PD* editorials in a bid to gain collective support for national construction, thus lending legitimacy to proposed tasks and actions. The pronoun "we" (Extract 1) as part of the strategy of unification acts to draw support, referring to everyone in the nation.

Another effective means of drawing audiences' attention to one's own agenda is to amplify it to a national level, making it an obligatory issue, and accordingly the priority. In the above extracts, the strategy of modality such as the use of the verb "need" (Extract 1), the modal "must" in juxtaposition with "also" (Extract 2) and the expression "in essence" (Extract 2) together creates the effect of assimilating women's own goal with that of the nation's "socialist" (Extract 2) requirement. In this way, the women's movement is re-contextualized as an integral component in the national construction such as "revitalising China" (Extract 1) and "comprehensive construction of a well-off society" (Extract 2). Furthermore, the

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inclusion of women in the agenda of the national cause is explicitly reinforced through the strategy of repetition such as the phrase of "people of all ethnic groups of the nation including women" (Extracts 1 and 2) that women as a gender identity are re-conceptualised as "people of the nation". The qualifying word "great" for the "national cause" (Extract 1) and "people's goal" (Extract 2), in juxtaposition with "their own happy life and beautiful future" (Extract 2) increases the patriotic power of the message conveyed and accordingly invokes the collective recognition and a sense of responsibility from readers with the national call for action.

Two features stand out in the close connection between women and nation, revealing the deep-seated Chinese characteristic of socialist legacy – firstly, the Party (CPC) is of foremost authority in "leading" every aspect of the national development including the women's movement and identity construction; secondly, Marxist tradition is of the highest theoretical significance in its gender-policy forming since the beginning. These are illustrated in the following subsections.

6.2.1 "Led by" the Party

我国妇女运动发展必须坚持中国共产党领导。
Women's movement and development in our country must adhere to the leadership of the Party (CPC).
（2010.3.8 Hu's Speech, PD）

As is well-known, China is a country embracing a one-party system within a socialist tradition. One significant aspect of the relationship between women and nation in China is the prior and absolute leadership of the Party (CPC), as is pointed out by former president Hu Jintao in the above extract. The modal "must" correlating with the verbal expression "adhere to" can be seen as highlighting the authority of the leadership and justifying the certainty of the conceptualisation of reality in China.

As early as in 1932, Mao stated that "the liberation of working women is indispensable with the victory of the whole class, that only the victory of the class can bring real liberation to women" (ACWF, 1978, p. 4). The profound elucidation of women's development path by Mao pointed out the direction for women's liberation practice under instruction by the Party. Since then, the Chinese women's liberation movement has been integrated in almost every step of the overall revolutionary progress, and presented with a different focus on various revolutionary tasks during each historical period (Jiang, 2008). In the Chapter Four Section

4.2.2 on women and nation, a relatively high frequency of the lexical phrase "党 *dang*, the Party" is noted in the chosen corpus of *PD* especially in 1995. In this section on official documents of *PD* editorials, there is a much higher frequency of referencing the Party in regard to its significant role in leading the women's movement and promoting women's status:

1) 在党的领导下，近年我国广大妇女…积极投身改革开放和现代化建设伟大实践，在经济、政治、科技、教育、文化、卫生、体育等各条战线上，为推动经济发展和社会进步作出了应有的贡献。
Under the leadership of the Party, in recent years all the women in our country … take an active part in great practices of reform and opening to the outside world and modernization drive, making their due contribution to the economic development and social progress in all fronts of economy, politics, science and technology, education, culture, public health, sports and so on.
（2004.3.8 PD）

2) 长期以来，中国共产党始终把实现妇女解放和男女平等作为孜孜以求的奋斗目标，为我国妇女事业发展提供了坚强领导和重要保证。
For a long time, the Party has always put women's liberation and gender equality as its vigorous goals, and has provided strong leadership and important guarantee for women's cause and development in China. （2010.3.8 Hu's Speech, PD）

3) 妇女事业不断进步，妇女地位日益提高，离不开亿万勤劳善良中国妇女积极投身社会进步，更离不开党对妇女工作的坚强领导。
The continuous progress of women's cause and ever-enhancing status of women depends on the active participation in social progress by millions of diligent and kind Chinese women, and more on the strong leadership of the Party on women's cause. (2011.3.8 PD)

Firstly, the strategy of repetition through phrases of "strong leadership" (Extracts 2 and 3) and "important guarantee" (Extract 2), explicitly points out the role and significance of the Party to the women's movement. The qualifying words "great" and "due" (Extract 1) can be seen as justifying the underlying national ideology of leading and mobilizing women for the historical tasks set by the Party – women participate in "great practices of reform and opening to the outside world and modernization drive" so that they can make "their due contribution to the economic development and social progress in all fronts" (Extract 1). Secondly, expression of "under the leadership" (Extract 1) and the comparative clause through the verbal phrase of "depend on" in juxtaposition with the comparative expression of "on…and more on…" (Extract 3) can be interpreted as a rhetorical strategy to reveal the passive dependence of women's movement on the Party and to highlight the dominant leading position of the Party in the progress of liberating women and elevating women's status in China. Thirdly, as part of the strategy of continuation (Wodak et al., 1999), the above extracts makes a series of temporal references in the forms of "in recent years" (Extract 1), "For a long time…always" (Extract 2), and "continuous … ever-enhancing"

(Extract 3) implying that the consistent "leadership" by the Party has solid historical foundations.

The following examples further reflect the significance of the Party leadership through constant appealing to a higher credibility and authority of history, such as "Great practice of Chinese women's movement tells us" (Extract 1), "History and reality well proves that" (Extract 2), and "A hundred years of radical changes and eventful years profoundly reveals" (Extract 3):

1) *中国妇女运动的伟大实践告诉我们…坚持中国共产党的领导…引导妇女在参与经济建设和社会发展的进程中实现自身的解放，是中国妇女运动健康发展的必由之路。*
Great practice of Chinese women's movement tells us…adhering to the leadership of the Party…guiding women to realise their own liberation in the process of participating economic construction and social development, must be the only road for Chinese women's healthy development.　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　（2000.3.8 PD）

2) *历史和现实雄辩地证明，只有始终不渝地坚持中国共产党的领导，中国妇女运动才能沿着正确的方向前进。*
History and reality well proves that only by unswervingly adhering to the leadership of the Party, can Chinese women's movement go toward the right direction.　　　　（2007.3.8 PD）

3）*100 年来的风云变幻和峥嵘岁月…深刻启示…没有中国共产党…就没有我国广大妇女的历史性解放，就没有我国广大妇女作用的全方位发挥。只有毫不动摇地坚持党的领导，使广大妇女紧密团结在党的周围，使党的主张真正成为广大妇女的自觉行动，我国妇女运动才能肩负起自身历史使命，为国家、为人民、为民族不断做出彪炳史册的贡献。*
A hundred years of radical changes and eventful years…profoundly reveals…If it hadn't been for the Party, there would not have been the historical liberation of all women in our country nor the all-around play of all women in our country. Only by unswervingly adhering to the leadership of the Party, and uniting all women closely around the Party, making the Party's propositions the conscious action of all women, can women's movement in our country shoulder the historical mission to pay constant contribution for the country, people and nation which will shine in the history.　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　(2010.3.8 Hu's Speech, PD)

The correlation of women's movement with the Party's political agenda is explicitly stated by Hu Jintao in "making the Party's propositions the conscious action of all women" (Extract 3) and implicitly legitimated through the re-conceptualisation of "realising women's own liberation in the process of participating economic construction and social development" (Extract 1). The unshakable leadership and the far-reaching influence of the Party guidance over women's cause in China are also demonstrated through the syntactic strategies of the conditional clause such as "only by unswervingly adhering to the leadership of the Party…can women…" (Extracts 2 and 3) and of subjunctive mood adopted such as "if it hadn't been for the Party, there would not have been …" (Extract 3). The Party guidance becomes a "must" (Extract 1) in women's development when it is reconceptualised in the official discourses through the qualifying words of "healthy" (Extract 1), "right" (Extract 2)

and "conscious" (Extract 3) in defining the political direction for Chinese women.

The formulaic expression of "uniting all women closely around the Party" (see above Extract 3) reminds us of the Party-oriented pattern of its socialist heritage which has been one conspicuous Chinese characteristic in various institutions and practices since the foundation of the nation. Accordingly the "center-ness" of the Party is found constantly reinforced in the official discourses in regard to Chinese women's movement:

> 1) *已经跨上新世纪征程的我国广大妇女…一定会高举邓小平理论伟大旗帜，紧密团结在经江泽民同志为核心的党中央周围，为我国的妇女事业谱写出新的篇章。*
> *All women in our country entering the new century…must hold high the banner of Deng Xiaoping theory, and unite closely around the Party's central committee with Comrade Jiang Zemin at its core to write a new chapter of women's cause in China.*　　　　　（2001.3.8 PD）
>
> 2) *让我们更加紧密地团结在以胡锦涛同志为总书记的党中央周围，高举邓小平理论和"三个代表"重要思想伟大旗帜，求真务实，与时俱进，开拓创新，不断开创中国妇女事业的新局面。*
> *Let us unite more closely around the Party's central committee with General Secretary Hu Jintao at its core, holding high the banner of Deng Xiaoping theory and "Three Representatives" thought, to seek truth and keep up with the time, to innovate and create, and constantly open up new situation of women's cause in China.*　　　　（2005.3.8 PD）

Both of the above extracts are from the ending paragraphs of the editorials, a place which usually serves to repeat the essential statement and to provide prospects for the future. "To write a new chapter of women's cause" (Extract 1) and "constantly open up new situation of women's cause" (Extract 2) can be seen as trying to create a passionate invocation among readers for mobilizing women in the national cause as *Half the Sky* of all people in China. The highly formulaic expression or official jargon of "unite closely around the Party's central committee with Comrade Jiang/Hu at its core" (Extracts 1 and 2) has already become an everyday phrase so familiar as a cliché to mass ordinary readers of the national news media such as *PD*. Similarly, other cliché-like phrases from the editorials such as "hold high the banner of Deng Xiaoping theory" (Extracts 1 and 2) and "Three Representatives" (Extract 2) are enlisted in the catchphrases of people's daily vocabulary ("Read China's Agenda", 2012) through constant reiteration of the concepts in the governmental propaganda discourses. The frequency and intensity of the media coverage on these concepts can be seen as revealing the significant impact of the administrative politics and the Party ideologies on social and discursive practices such as the construction of gender identity.

As was reflected in the discussions in Chapter Four, *PD,* as the most important newspaper in China and dubbed the "official mouthpiece" of the Party, is expected to provide an important

channel to advocate the thinking and policies of the Party and the Chinese government among Chinese people (Zhao, 1998). Since the foundation of PRC, the country's political system has operated under the influence of communist ideology and remained intact over the previous decades. Consequently, the Party-led women's movement is heavily influenced by the developing thoughts from Marxism with Chinese characteristics such as that of Deng Xiaoping theory mentioned in the above extracts. In the next section, the guiding theory "firmly adopted" by women's movement in China – Marxist feminism is examined in the chosen texts from *PD* editorials.

6.2.2 "Firmly Adopt" Marxist Feminism

As Yu pointed out, since the foundation of the Party, Marxist Feminism was adopted and applied throughout the process and the practices of Chinese women's liberation (Yu, 2007). Engels wrote in *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* that it is impossible for women to liberate and obtain equal status as men if women are excluded from social labour and confined to personal domestic labour (Engels, 1884) (also see Chapter Four Section 4.2.1). Mao Zedong inherited and further developed this Marxist thought concerning women and their role in saying that women's liberation is dependent upon the economic liberation through participation in social production work (Mao, 1932, p. 32). The theoretical guidance of social work as the prerequisite for women's liberation and women as a "great human resource" has had a far-reaching impact in guiding women's liberation practice to obtain impressive achievements in China (Jiang, 2008, p.4). For instance, millions of women actively answered the call to plunge themselves into the socialist construction so that the number of women workers increased from 600,000 in 1949 to 1.5 million in 1952, and later further increased to 3 million at the end of 1956 (Yu, 2007, p. 131). Later in the 1980s, Deng Xiaoping attributed the inequality between genders in contemporary Chinese society to the preliminary stage of socialist development, and pointed out that the "solution to women issues must depend on the comprehensive social progress, especially economic development" (Deng, 1993, p. 195).

As a product of historical development, the Marxist tradition remains the most significant theoretical reference in China's overall ongoing policy making (Liu, 1989) by the Party and the government including women's development since the foundation of socialist PRC. The following extracts of official discourses reveal the prior status of Marxist thoughts in guiding women's movements in China:

1) 我们党…始终注意运用马克思主义妇女观，分析、研究、解决妇女问题，把妇女作为革命和建设的伟大力量…各级党委和政府…大张旗鼓地宣传马克思主义妇女观。
Our party…always pay attention to applying Marxist Feminism to analyse, study and solve women issues and to regard women as a great force of revolution and construction…Party committees and governments at all levels should…promote vigorously Marxist Feminism. （1997.3.8 PD）

2) 我们希望全社会进一步树立马克思主义妇女观，充分发挥社会主义制度在维护妇女合法权益、提高妇女地位等方面的优越性。
We expect the whole society to further adopt Marxist Feminism and bring into full play the advantages of socialist system in maintaining women's legal rights and improving women's status.
（2001.3.8 PD）

3) 各级党委和政府一定要充分认识妇女的重要作用和妇女工作的重大意义，牢固树立马克思主义妇女观。
Party Committees and governments at all levels should fully realize the importance of women and the significance of women's work, and firmly adopt Marxism Feminism. （2004.3.8 PD）

4) 各级党委和政府要从加强党的执政能力建设、夯实党的群众基础的高度，树立马克思主义妇女观。
Party committees and governments at all levels should adopt Marxism Feminism from the perspective of strengthening the Party's governing capability and consolidating the Party's mass base. （2005.3.8 PD）

5) 各级党委和政府应当....牢固树立马克思主义妇女观。
Party committees and governments at all levels should …firmly adopt Marxist Feminism.
（2010.3.8 PD）

6) 只有…牢固树立马克思主义妇女观，我国妇女运动才能沿着正确政治方向不断前进，我国妇女运动才能越走越宽广。
*Only by …firmly adopting Marxist Feminism, can women's movement in our country keep going toward the right political direction and toward an ever-widening road.*2010.3.8 Hu's speech., PD）

Firstly, a series of intensifying modifiers such as "always", "vigorously" (Extract 1), "further" (Extract 2), "firmly" (Extracts 3, 5 and 6) in correlation with the verbs "apply", "promote" (Extract 1), "adopt" (Extracts 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6) points out and emphasizes the important positioning of Marxist Feminism in the governmental ideology and discourses. The prevalence of the theory is also framed and fore-grounded through the strategy of repetition such as the consistent referencing of the formulaic term *Marxist Feminism*.

Secondly, it is interesting to note in the above extracts that most subjects expected to adopt Marxist Feminism are "Party committees and governments at all levels" (Extracts 1, 3, 4 and 5). Accordingly, the link between women and nation is again demonstrated through the reflected top-down organizational structure of party-nation-women. The strategy of employing modality through constant usage of the modal expression "should" (Extract 1, 3, 4 and 5) serves to create an instructive tone by invoking obligations of being guided by the

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Party and its socialist institutions. Further the conditional clause "only by…can women…" (Extract 6) forms the rhetorical strategy of justifying the necessity of adopting the Marxist ideology in the women's movement. The strategy of unification through the first-person pronoun "our party" in Extract 1 and "we" in Extract 2 reflects the stance of *PD* editorials as a spokesperson for the Party and the government talking to audiences. Through an intertextual analysis of the extracts, we may also note the strategy of transitivity – transparent and explicit agent specification in Extract 2 "we expect…" and implicit agent specification in Extracts 1, 3, 4 and 5 "… should…" is employed to rhetorically create an authority and establish the expectation of translating the national narratives of the official discourse to action in social practices. According to Fairclough's framework (Fairclough, 2010), an analysis of discourses is an attempt to understand ways of representing different aspects of the world in discourse, including representations of social events, processes and social actors. In this sense, the discursive power of official documents such as *PD* editorials in constructing women's identity is revealed to a certain extent through an examination of these rhetorical strategies.

Last but not least, the political motivations underpinning the adoption of the ideology by the Party and the government is also revealed through the illustration of the essence of Marxist Feminism – Women are regarded as "a great force for revolution and construction" (Extract 1), so that "the importance of women and the significance of women's work" should be "fully realized" (Extract 3) as it is "from the perspective of strengthening the Party's governing capability and consolidating the Party's mass base" (Extract 4). In Extract 6, the qualifiers "right", "political" and "ever-widening" in combination with the expression "toward…direction" forms the topos of guidance in constructing the unique relationship between women and nation/the Party in China.

The application of Marxist thoughts on women indeed brings many "advantages of socialist system" (Extract 2) to the women's liberation movement in China particularly in regard to greatly removing ideological obstacles towards progressing women's work identity, a context quite different from that of many Western feminist movements. According to Jie, if it had not been for the state in providing its administrative intervention and systemic facilities, women would not have obtained those tremendous achievements of the liberation movement under the circumstances of the present socio-economic development level in China (Jie, 2008).

Meanwhile, however, according to Jiang, this leads to an overlooking of women's own

discourse, which has been submerged in the grand discourse of national revolution and construction (Jiang, 2008, p. 38). Marxist feminism holds the view of realising women's liberation through the liberation of proletarian or class liberation. Feminism, patriotism or nationalism and labour movements, previously separated, were to be brought together in the one analysis and one struggle (Croll, 1978) (also see Chapter Two Section 2.3.1). However, as Li argues in her study, the key word "class" determines the "collective" quality of the ideology under which individuality and personality must be "diluted" and gender identity be "obscured" (Li, 1997, p. 81). Accordingly, in confrontation with a more grand and urgent issue of national construction, feminist awareness on gender identity is inevitably "omitted" and ensuing women's own issues are consequently recontextualised in the more grand narratives of the nation and people (Jiang, 2008, p. 37). As Wang points out, the victory of proletarian revolution does not overthrow the patriarchal system nor eliminate male-dominated culture (Wang, 2012, p. 13). On the one hand, women have participated in social work making big contributions to the national construction of economy. Whereas on the other hand, arduous housework and the responsibility to raise children brings about the role conflict between work and family as well imposing a heavy burden for career women (see discussions later in Section 6.3.2).

Once women's liberation is assimilated within the framework of national ideology, women's discourses are constructed surrounding the "central tasks" set by the state politics of various national revolutions and constructions. According to Jie, one effective way to guide and control the production of women's discourse is to establish a model identity for women, such as "*Half the Sky*", "*Iron Girl*", spelling out the detailed requirements of value pursuit for women and to invoke responsibilities for people and nation (Jie, 2008). In the following section, expectation of women models from the national perspective are investigated in terms of typical work identity and family identity.

6.3 Half the Sky – Expectation of Women Models

Since Chinese women comprehensively participate in social and industrial production and work, they have been praised as "*Half the Sky*" in playing an important role in promoting economic and social development in all fields (see Chapter Four Section 4.2.1). However, as Yu points out, the honour or the status of this gender equality is obtained only through the process of paying women's "due" contribution to the nation (Yu, 2007, p. 132). In the following extract, the correlation between the metaphorical construction *Half the Sky* and the

corresponding "roles and contributions" is clearly stated by former President Hu Jintao in 8th March speech in 2010:

妇女能顶"半边天"，就是党和人民对我国广大妇女重要作用和突出贡献的最高赞誉。
Women can hold up "Half the Sky", which is regarded as the highest praise from the Party and people for the important roles and outstanding contributions of all women in our country.

（2010.3.8 Hu's speech., PD）

It is "the Party and people" that grants women this "highest praise", which can be seen as resonating with the previous subsection with its discussion of the Chinese characteristic of tight bonding between nation and women. On the one hand, *Half the Sky* shows acknowledgement of women's achievements in the national construction, while on the other, the canonic construction connotes the expectation from the Party/nation to invoke responsibility and to mobilize women to work for the historical tasks prescribed by the government. The double-layered significance of the metaphorical concept is also demonstrated in the state report of women's situation in China:

在社会主义制度下，中国妇女曾被禁锢的聪明才智极大地释放出来。她们以主人翁的姿态积极投身于中国的建设和发展，成为创造物质文明和精神文明的伟大力量。她们是中国改革开放和现代化建设的生力军，在工农业生产、科学、文化、教育、卫生等各项事业中作出了极其重要的贡献。在中国，"半边天"成为全社会对妇女作用最形象的赞誉。
Under the socialist system, the once stifled wisdom and talents of Chinese women have been released to a great extent. Women are actively plunging into China's social development as masters of society, becoming a great force in both economic construction and cultural and ideological advances. They are a vital force in China's reform and opening to the outside world and the modernization drive. Women had made extremely important contributions in various undertakings, including industrial and agricultural production, science, culture, education and health care. In China, the expression "women hold up half the sky" has become the most vivid expression the entire society uses to praise the role played by women.
(SCW, 1994)

In the above extract, firstly, qualifying expressions of "a great force" and "a vital force", can be interpreted as a rhetorical strategy of glorification to recognize women as an important human resource and accordingly to justify the governmental expectation of women's contributions. Secondly, the strategy of reinforcement through usage of superlatives such as "extremely important contributions" and "the most vivid expression to praise" serves to amplify the role of women as holding up *Half the Sky* in the national construction. Thirdly, the noun phrase "masters of society" in contrast with the verbal structure of "be released to a great extent" gives the impression of liberation, and consequently invokes a sense of gratitude to the nation as well as a sense of responsibility for the ensuing devotion. Jiang notes in her survey that most women who joined in work in the 1950s maintained a feeling of being liberated despite differences in profession, position or wages/salary (Jiang, 2009). For

these women, it was the shift of roles from pure "housewife" to "family raiser" that makes them realise a new self value, and makes them willingly devote themselves to the vigorous national construction.

As *Half the Sky* is constructed by the government both as an exaltation and an expectation for Chinese women, these two aspects are highlighted in most of the 8th March editorials in *PD*. As Gallagher suggests, in a socialist state such as China, the government-controlled media with a strong commitment to the emancipation of women seem to "offer exceptionally positive images of women and lay stress on women's contribution to economic and social development" (1981, p. 70). Accordingly, we can note how the following extracts provide good illustrations of governmental appraisal of this model identity of women through the rhetorical strategy of repetition and listing of outstanding examples and achievements:

1) 各个领域各条战线的妇女中涌现出一批又一批先进模范人物和优秀人才，成为改革开放和社会主义现代化建设的一支重要力量，为我国经济振兴和社会发展作出了重大贡献。
There are more and more outstanding women models and talents in all fields and all fronts, being a significant force in the reform and opening to the outside world and the modernization drive and making important contributions in the revitalising economy and advancing social development.
（2000.3.8 PD）

2) 在改革开放和社会主义现代化建设的伟大实践中，她们…在不同的岗位上各显其能，涌现出大批先进模范人物和优秀人才，成为我国经济、政治和文化建设的一支重要力量，经济建设和社会发展的"半边天"。
In the great practice of reform and opening to the outside world and the modernization drive, women… display their talents in various positions and there are a lot of outstanding models and talents, being a significant force in the construction of economy, politics and culture in our nation, and the "Half the Sky" in economic construction and social development. (2001.3.8 PD)

3) 我国广大妇女….积极投身改革开放和现代化建设伟大实践，在经济、政治、科技、教育、文化、卫生、体育等各条战线上，为推动经济发展和社会进步作出了应有的贡献。实践证明，妇女能顶"半边天"，当代中国妇女是推动我国改革和发展的重要力量。
All women in our country…actively plunge into the great practice of reform and opening to the outside world and the modernization drive, making due contribution in all fronts of economy, politics, science and technology, education, culture, health care and sports and in promoting economic development and social progress. Practices show that women can hold up "Half the Sky", that contemporary Chinese women are a significant force in promoting reforms and development of the country.
（2004.3.8 PD）

4) "妇女能顶半边天"。广大妇女…为促进我国的经济社会发展作出了重要贡献。
"Women can hold up Half the Sky". All women…make important contributions to promote economic and social development of the country.
（2005. 3.8 PD）

5) 特别是进入新世纪以来，广大妇女…积极投身全面建设小康社会、构建社会主义和谐社会的伟大实践，在促进改革、推动发展、维护稳定中发挥了"半边天"作用。
Especially after entering the new century, all women…actively plunge into the great practices of comprehensive construction of a well-off society and socialist harmonious society, playing the role of "Half the Sky' in advancing the reform, promoting development and maintaining stability.
（2007.3.8 PD）

6) 我国妇女....为实现社会文明进步、推动中华民族发展作出了不可磨灭的贡献。
Women in our country…make indelible contributions to advancing social civilization and nation's development.　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　（2009.3.8 PD）

7) 中国妇女…撑起社会发展、国家建设的"半边天"，她们在争取男女平等、展现美丽人生的过程中，不断为实现国家富强和人民幸福贡献自身的力量，涌现出一批又一批的先进典型。
Chinese women…hold up "Half the Sky" of social development and national construction. In the process of obtaining gender equality and demonstrating their beautiful lives, they make their contributions to the national development and people's happiness. There are more and more outstanding models.　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　(2011.3.8 PD)

Firstly, the term "*Half the Sky*" (Extracts 2, 3, 4, 5 and 7) frequently spotted in the editorials can be seen as intensifying the effect of the national propaganda discourse on women's identity. The positive appraisal of the role of *Half the Sky* is realized in a "manifest intertextuality" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 117) through certain repetition or reiteration of expressions such as "a significant force" (Extracts 1, 2 and 3) and "make important/indelible/their contributions" (Extracts 1, 4, 6 and 7). The rhetorical strategy of listing is also adopted to increase the credibility and objectivity of the conceptualisation of a specific gender reality in China, examples include "more and more outstanding women models and talents" (Extracts 1, 2 and 7), "in all fields and all fronts" (Extract 1), "in various positions" (Extract 2) and "in all fronts" (Extract 3).

Secondly, *Half the Sky* as playing a significant role or important contribution is contextualised within the national discourse including "reform and opening to the outside world and the modernization drive" (Extracts 1, 2 and 3), "economy and social development" (Extracts 1, 2 and 4), "social development and national construction" (Extracts 1, 6 and 7), "comprehensive construction of a well-off society and socialist harmonious society", "maintaining stability" (Extract 5) and similar phrases. Although the detailed tasks may vary over time, a key theme stands out throughout all these historical tasks − namely a national agenda, based on which the definition of *Half the Sky* is pinned down and confined to a typical work identity advocated by the government.

The administrative expectation of the *Half the Sky* identity to mobilize women is explicitly revealed in the following extracts:

1) 每年 3 月 8 日，我国妇女都要隆重纪念这一节日，以唤起全社会对妇女问题和妇女权利的关注，切实维护妇女的合法权益，动员广大妇女积极投身改革开放和社会主义现代化建设事业。
Every year on 8ᵗʰ March, women in our country will celebrate for the day to call for social

attention on women issues and women rights to protect women's legal rights, and to mobilize all women to actively plunge into the reform and opening to the outside world and the modernization drive.　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　（2001.3.8 PD）

2) 我国政府每年都隆重纪念这个节日，就是要唤起全社会进一步关注妇女的进步和发展，切实维护广大劳动妇女的合法权益，动员妇女积极投身于改革开放和现代化建设事业。
Our government will celebrate the day annually to call for social attention on women's development and to protect legal rights of all working women, and to mobilize women to actively plunge into the reform and opening to the outside world and the modernization drive.
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　（2003.3.8 PD）

3) 我国广大妇女要...为全面建设小康社会、加快推进社会主义现代化充分发挥"半边天"作用。
All women in our country should...fully play the role of "Half the Sky" in comprehensively constructing a well-off society and quickening the process of socialist modernization drive.
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　（2010.3.8 Hu's speech., PD）

4) 各行各业妇女要...在服务科学发展、促进经济平稳较快发展中展现"半边天"的风采。
Women in all fields and in all professions should....display the charisma of "Half the Sky" in serving scientific development and promoting stable and fast economic development.
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　（2012.3.8 PD）

Every year, as it was pointed out earlier, the 8th March editorial of *PD* is specifically tailored for the occasion of celebrating Women's Day and promoting governmental policies on women. On one hand, it presents "a call for social attention on women issues and rights" (Extracts 1 and 2), on the other hand, as a Party-led mainstream newspaper it inevitably has to carry out its function of "mobilizing women to actively plunge into the reform and opening to the outside world and the modernization drive" (Extracts 1 and 2). Firstly, the strategy of modality through constant reference of the modal verb "should" (Extracts 3 and 4) creates a prescriptive tone in defining the essence of the *Half the Sky* construct – that women should "fully play the role of '*Half the Sky*'" (Extract 3), and should "display the charisma of '*Half the Sky*'" (Extract 4) in a series of national constructions. Secondly, "women in our country…to call for attention…and to mobilize women…" (Extract 1) and "our government… to call for social attention… and to mobilize women…" (Extract 2) – though different subjects, the same action, they reveal the strategy of transitivity employed in legitimizing these governmental expectations on women. What individuals or groups tend to be cast as agent? Which tend to be cast as affected target in the text? What kinds of process are particular protagonists reported as initiating? – Halliday's accounts of transitivity (Halliday, 1978) enable us to explore the important issues of textual presentation of women's identity construction from the governmental position. In the above extracts, the agent of "mobilizing" action – the Party/nation is intertextually constructed as spokesman for women themselves through the rhetorical strategy of transitivity – interchangeable subjects (Extracts 1 and 2) and absent agent specification however realised through syntactic modality of

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prescribing an obligation for women (Extracts 3 and 4).

In the next extract we can see the obligation is re-conceptualised as "a glorious mission" and "historic responsibility" for Chinese women:

> 以主人翁的姿态积极投身推动科学发展、促进社会和谐，是中国妇女的<u>光荣使命</u>；在全面推进社会主义经济建设、政治建设、文化建设、社会建设以及生态文明建设中建功立业，是中国妇女的<u>历史责任</u>。
> *It is <u>a glorious mission</u> for Chinese women to actively plunge into the cause of promoting scientific development and social harmony; and it is <u>a historical responsibility</u> of Chinese women to make contributions in the comprehensive construction of socialist economy, politics, culture, society and eco-civilization.*
>   （2010.3.8 PD）

According to Chen, the model identity such as *Iron Girl* is a typical work identity developed under the national ideology of the highly unified gender presentation of "*Half the Sky*" (Chen, 2006, p. 5) since the Mao era. However, in a more contemporary context of social transformations in the post-Mao China, the family role is reemphasized in media discourse as well as in social recognition as a model identity in the definition of the revived traditional ideology of Confucianism. So, in the following section of this chapter, specific requirements of women's work identity and family identity expected from the government perspective are examined, from which the contestation of ideologies underlying the expectations especially of women's unique role in constructing a harmonious society may be reflected.

6.3.1 Iron Girl and Four-Self Spirit

In the earlier discussion of Chapter Four Section 4.2.3 on the model identity of *Iron Girl* based on the selected typical character reports from *PD* and *WOC*, it is noted that the lexical phrase *Iron Girl* is fading out in most contemporary media discourses, yet some important constructs of this once iconic work identity still remain conspicuously in *PD* in both datasets of 1995 and 2005. The typical constructs include "masculine quality", "eat bitterness", "competition with men" and so on, all of which are remarkably evidenced, and even highlighted in the chosen corpus of official documents in this section.

Firstly, instead of the lexical phrase *Iron Girl*, we note a high frequency of the similar or substitute term – 巾帼 *Jinguo* (see Chapter Four Section 4.2.3) referring to outstanding women in terms of equal performance and contribution to men. For example the headline of 8th March editorial in 1995 *PD* is "*展六亿巾帼之风采 Display Charisma of 600 Million Women*

(Jinguo)". Other examples of special lexical collocations surrounding 巾帼 *Jinguo* include "巾帼建功 *jin guo jian gong,* Women Contributions"(Extracts 1 and 2), " 巾帼英雄 *jin guo ying xiong,* Women Heroes"(Extracts 1, 3 and 4) and "巾帼风采 *jin guo feng cai,* Women Charisma" (Extracts 5 and 6) as follows:

1）全国的妇女姐妹们…更加精神焕发地投入"双学双比"和"巾帼建功"活动，以出色的业绩向世界展现 90 年代中国妇女英勇豪迈的风采…巾帼不让须眉，英豪多出裙钗。
Women sisters all over the country…more energetically plunge into activities of "Double Study and Double Competition" and "Women Contribution", to display with outstanding achievements to the world the bold and heroic charisma of Chinese women in the 1990s…Women are not inferior to men, as there are more heroes from women. （1995.3.8 PD）

2）祖国逢盛世，巾帼创伟业。
Women make great contributions as our country is in a prosperous time. (2004.3.8 PD）

3）中国亿万妇女…奏响了一曲曲豪迈动人、激情飞扬的巾帼之歌，涌现出一批又一批矢志不渝、自强不息的巾帼英雄。
Millions of Chinese women….sing heroic and passionate songs of Jinguo (women), as there are more and more women heroes of persistence and self-reliance. （2007.3.8 PD）

4）广大妇女豪情满怀、英姿飒爽…各条战线各个领域群芳争艳，涌现出一批又一批巾帼英雄。
All women are enthusiastic and brave…competing in all fields and all fronts, with more and more women heroes. （2010.3.8 Hu's speech., PD）

5）在创先争优中展现巾帼风采。
To display women charisma in excelling in competition. （2011.3.8 PD）

6）让广大妇女在改革开放和社会主义现代化建设中实现自身价值，尽现巾帼风采。
Let all women realise their self-value and fully display their charisma in the reform and socialist modernization drive. （2012.3.8 PD）

According to Bednarek and Caple, certain words are repeatedly combined, or associated with each other to invoke stereotypes or scripts, thus establishing consonance (Bednarek & Caple, 2012; also see Schmitt, 2010). For example, words and phrases associated with commonly held beliefs about Iron Girl – "bold and heroic" (Extract 1), "heroic and passionate", "persistent and self-reliant" (Extract 3) and "enthusiastic and brave (Extract 4) are used to portray and highlight the *Iron Girl* quality of contemporary Chinese working women. The expression of "compete/competition" (Extracts 1, 4 and 5) is another familiar theme which was abundantly employed in the official discourses of the *Iron Girl* era, when women were urged to rival with men "in all fields and all fronts" (Extract 4).

Secondly, resonating with the findings in the Chapter Four Section 4.2.3 of the hardworking and persistent spirit of *Iron Girl* reflected in the typical work identity of contemporary women in the chosen print media texts, the expectation of such spirit or quality is

demonstrated and highlighted in most texts of the 8th March editorials through the strategy of modality. Some examples include:

1) 各行各业的妇女都应该...做到勤勉敬业，埋头苦干，学超先进，锐意进取，在一切可以发挥作用的地方施展才华。
Women in all professions should...be diligent, hardworking, competitive, enterprising to demonstrate their talents in every possible area. （2001.3.8 PD）

2) 我国广大妇女要勤奋学习、刻苦求知...以坚忍不拔的毅力和持之以恒的精神充实自己、提高自己、完善自己、立志岗位成才。我国广大妇女要勇挑重担、奋发有为。要大力弘扬艰苦奋斗精神，敢于面对困难，勇于迎接挑战，在困难面前不低头，在挑战面前不退缩。
All women in our country should study hard...to enrich, improve and better themselves with perseverance and persistence, and become talents in their work. All women in our country should bravely shoulder the heavy responsibility and make enthusiastic contributions, should vigorously carry forward the hardworking spirit, bravely face the difficulty and meet challenges without flinching in front of hardships and challenges. （2010.3.8 Hu's speech., PD）

3) 各行各业妇女要...埋头苦干、争创一流。
Women in all professions should ...work hard and compete for the best. （2012.3.8 PD）

On one hand, the consistent usage of the modal verb "should" (Extracts 1, 2 and 3) can be interpreted as creating the obligatory undertone of the message and conceptualising the listed work qualities as expectations from the Party and nation. On the other hand, the reiterated work qualities expressed through the lexical phrases of "diligent, hardworking" (Extract 1), "perseverance and persistence", "hardworking spirit" (Extract 2) and "work hard" (Extract 3) form the official prescriptions justifying the "eat-bitterness" quality reflected in Chapter Four Section 4.2.3. Other expressions such as "bravely shoulder the heavy responsibility", "make enthusiastic contribution", "bravely face the difficulties…without flinching" (Extract 2), and "compete for the best" (Extract 3) all point to the construction of *Iron Girl* as invincible fighters.

As Ma and Chen point out, the Party is determined to foster a new generation of women's identity of independent ability and self-development (Ma & Chen, 2008, p. 75). So in addition to the *Iron Girl* spirit, the *Four-Self* spirit – self-respect, self-confidence, self-reliance and self-strengthening (Women of China, 1 Jan 1989) – is proposed as another significant construct of contemporary Chinese women's identity under the umbrella construction of *Half the Sky* in the governmental discourses. The construct was first officially promoted during the Sixth National Women's Congress in 1988. Later in the Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Rights and Interests of Women (1992), and in both Programs for the Development of Chinese Women (2001-2010, 2011-2020), the spirit is "encouraged" (Extracts 1 and 2) and "developed" (Extract 3) as the guiding principle for

shaping contemporary women's identity:

1) 第五条 国家鼓励妇女自尊、自信、自立、自强。
Article 5 The nation encourages women to cultivate a sense of self-respect, self-confidence, self-reliance and self-strengthening. (Law PRCPRIW, 2005)

2) 鼓励妇女成为有理想、有道德、有文化、有纪律和自尊、自信、自立、自强的新女性。
Women are encouraged to study and work harder, and to develop and progress as a new type of women, with lofty ideals, moral integrity, a good level of education and a strong sense of discipline, and with a stronger sense of self-esteem, self-confidence, self-reliance and self-strengthening.
(PDCW, 2001)

3) 大力宣传妇女在推动经济社会发展中的积极作用。在新闻出版、广播影视以及文学艺术等领域，充分展示妇女参与和推动经济发展及社会进步的成就、价值和贡献，大力宣传妇女中的先进模范人物，引导广大妇女发扬自尊、自信、自立、自强的精神。
To vigorously propagandize the positive role of women in promoting social and economic development. In the fields of news publishing, broadcasting film and television and literature, to fully display the achievements, value and contribution of women's participation in promoting economic development and social progress, and to vigorously propagandize the outstanding models of women and guide all women to develop the spirit of self-esteem, self-confidence, self-reliance and self-strengthening. (PDCW, 2011)

Investigating the rhetorical strategy of transitivity, the subject in Extract 1 "The nation encourages women to… " in contrast with the absent agent specification through the passive verbal pattern of "Women are encouraged to …" in Extract 2 and through the imperative verbal pattern of "To propagandize …to display…to guide all women…" in Extract 3 creates an effect of re-contextualising the directives of the state on women's identity in a default mode of a women-nation relationship. In Extract 3, the repetition of "to vigorously propagandize", and the expression of "to fully display" in correlation with the objectives of "the positive role of women", "outstanding models of women" and "achievements, value and contribution of women" can be seen as reinforcing the directive tone in the official documents concerning the role of media in carrying out the governmental advocacy of certain preferred women's identities such as in the national cause of "promoting social and economic development" (Extract 3). The underlying state ideology of enhancing governmental advocacy in media discourses is further explored in Chapter Seven Section 7.3.1 on Typical Character Report in *PD* and *WOC*.

According to Chen, governmental advocacy of the *Four-Self* spirit is intended to awaken the self-awareness and subject consciousness of women and to help them get rid of thoughts of dependence, so as to "consciously, confidently and bravely" shoulder equal responsibilities and fulfil equal roles as men in participation of all fields of social life and national construction (Chen, 2005, p. 14). As to the chosen corpus of 8th March editorials drawn on in this thesis, the following extracts explicitly demonstrate the link between the expectation or

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construction of women's identity of *Four-Self* spirit and the various historical tasks set by the Party and nation:

1) *广大妇女要发扬"自尊、自信、自立、自强"精神...增长为人民服务的本领，为社会主义改革开放和现代化建设建功立业。*
All women should carry forward the spirit of "self-esteem, self-confidence, self-reliance and self-strengthening"...increase the skills for serving people and make contributions in socialist reform and opening to the outside world and modernization drive. (1997.3.8 PD）

2) *让我们...继续发扬"自尊、自信、自立、自强"精神...在改革开放和社会主义现代化建设中不断建功立业。*
Let's ...keep carrying forward the spirit of "self-esteem, self-confidence, self-reliance and self-strengthening"...and keep making contributions in the reform and opening to the outside world and socialist modernization drive. （2000.3.8 PD）

3) *广大妇女争优秀，要大力弘扬自尊、自信、自立、自强的时代精神...为社会主义和谐社会建设作出更大的贡献。*
All women should compete for the best, and fully develop the spirit of time "self-esteem, self-confidence, self-reliance and self-strengthening"...to make bigger contributions in constructing a socialist harmonious society. （2011.3.8 PD）

The objective of developing women or women's spirit is re-conceptualised as "serving people" (Extract 1) and "make contributions" (Extracts 1, 2 and 3) in a series of national actions such as "reform and opening to the outside world and modernization drive" (Extracts 1 and 2) and "constructing a socialist harmonious society" (Extract 3) in different period. The strategy of modality by means of the modal "should" (Extracts 1 and 3) and the imperative mood "Let's" (Extract 2) can be seen as expressing the necessity of action from women to "carry forward" (Extracts 1 and 2) or "develop" (Extract 3) the *Four-Self* spirit. The present continuous tense of "keep carrying forward", "keep making contributions" (Extract 2), and the strategy of comparatives through the expression of "make bigger contributions" (Extract 3) serve to further emphasize the significance of women's role throughout the national development.

In the above Extract 3, firstly, the connection between developing the *Four-Self* spirit and establishing a *Harmonious Society* points to an underlying ideological position of the government in addressing the double role or work/family conflict confronted by women, to an extent similar to the position underlying the *Harmonious Society* campaign (see the following subsection). According to Croll, what is new in the *Four-Self* campaign is not so much the notions of esteem, improvement, awareness, reliance, confidence and respect but their self-referential qualities (Croll, 1995). Now women are perceived as already having entered the social sphere but at the cost of sacrificing something of their self identity for the nation, the career, in addition to that of their families, husbands and children. The new

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emphasis on self-referential qualities finds some resonance in Chapter Four Section 4.4.2 where the chosen corpus of print media reveals that it is women's own self-strengthening that has become an important platform for addressing the work/family conflict.

Secondly, it is interesting to note a shift of focus in the historical tasks set by the Party and nation – from "socialist reform and opening to the outside world and modernization drive" to "construction of a harmonious society" (Extract 3), which emphasizes the importance of stability in social development; and a position more conspicuously reflected in the official texts, especially in the later 2010s. In the context of such political ideology the expectation of women's identity is consequently amended or re-constructed in linking their roles in the new focus on national construction. Both *Iron Girl* spirit and *Four-Self* spirit refer mainly to the construction of women's work identity in response to a governmental perspective. In the following section, the governmental position and the ideological contestation between an emphasis on women's family identity and the persistent anticipation of the "*Half the Sky*" performance at work are investigated in the context of the officially proposed "unique role" of women in constructing a harmonious society.

6.3.2 Unique role in a Harmonious Society

In Chapter Four Section 4.3.1.2, we noted in the chosen print media texts a newly promoted governmental ideology of constructing a harmonious society, first put forward by the former President Hu Jintao in 2004, and which has been playing an important role in shaping contemporary Chinese women's family identity since then. According to Na, family is seen as the basic component of constructing the social order (Na, 2008), a matter pointed out in the following extract by the former President Hu Jintao in his speech on 8th March, 2010:

家庭是社会的细胞，家庭和谐是社会和谐的基石。
Family is the cell of society, that family harmony is the foundation of social harmony.
（2010.3.8 Hu's speech., PD）

The expression "foundation" explicitly points out the significance of family construction in the cause of establishing a harmonious society. The Chinese government attaches much importance to familial stability and harmony in terms of its role in contributing to national stability and harmony, because the ability of managing a household will affect to a great extent the socialist passion and commitment of family members (Jiang, 2009) (also see earlier Chapter Four Section 4.3.1). The following extract from the government report – *The*

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Situation of Chinese Women – explicitly states the government's position and its emphasis:

中国政府重视家庭建设，把家庭的稳定与进步作为促进社会稳定与进步的基础。
The Chinese government pays much attention to the building of families and considers family stability and progress to be the basis for social stability and progress.

<div align="right">(SCW, 1994)</div>

The new policy and orientation is also well represented in the *PD* editorial texts on women. For example, both of the following extracts are headlines of the 8th March editorial in 2005 and 2007:

发展妇女事业　构建和谐社会
Develop women's cause, and construct a harmonious society　　　　(2005.3.8 PD)

促进妇女发展 共建社会和谐
Promote women's development, and co-construct social harmony　　　(2007.3.8 PD)

In the official discourses, women are regarded as "an important force" (see following Extract 2) playing a "unique role" (Extracts 2 and 3) and having "unique advantages" (Extracts 3 and 4) in the contemporary national cause of promoting social harmony and stability. Examples include:

1）各族各界妇女应该明确自己肩负的责任…用自身的文明进步促进家庭的文明进步，促进社会的稳定与发展。
Women from all walks of life should clearly know their responsibility…promote family civilization and development and social stability and development with their own civilization and progress.
<div align="right">（2001.3.8 PD）</div>

2）妇女是构建社会主义和谐社会的一支重要力量。我们要充分发挥广大妇女在构建社会主义和谐社会中的独特作用。
Women are an important force in constructing socialist harmonious society. We should bring into full play all women's unique role in constructing socialist harmonious society.　（2005.3.8 PD）

3）各级妇联组织和广大妇女，要充分发挥在公民道德建设中的独特优势，充分发挥在家庭和社区建设中的独特作用，大力加强社会公德、职业道德、家庭美德和个人品德建设，积极倡导文明健康的生活方式，努力营造平等和谐的良好家风。
Women's federations at all levels and all women should bring into full play their unique advantages in construction of morality and their unique role in construction of family and community, vigorously reinforce construction of social morality, professional ethics, family virtues and personal morality, actively advocate civilized and health lifestyle, and try to create a good family environment of equality and harmony.　　（2009.3.8 PD）

4）妇女…在推动形成人人相互关爱、家家幸福安康、社会和谐发展的良好局面中，有着独特的优势。
Women…have unique advantages in promoting the good situation of people loving each other, happy and healthy family and harmonious development of society.　　（2010.3.8 PD）

Firstly the rhetorical strategies of modality and repetition – the constant employment of the

modal verb "should" (Extracts 1, 2 and 3) in correlation with the noun "responsibility" (Extract 1) and the reiterated lexical phrase "bring into full play" (Extracts 2 and 3) create the obligatory undertone in the messages to construct gender identity under national ideologies. In addition, the strategy of transitivity is implemented again to insinuate the national ideology in women's development as commonsensical recognition. The different positions of *all women* in the same action – as an object in "We should bring into full play all women's unique role in… " (Extract 2) and as a subject in "…all women should bring into full play …their unique role in…" (Extract 3) – again reveal the dominant position of the governmental/political agenda in leading women's development as well as to an extent the passive status of women in the identity construction in political discourses.

Secondly, the connection between women and a harmonious society is seen to be contextualized through women's role in the family sphere such as "family civilization and development" (Extract 1), "construction of family and community", "family virtues", "a good family environment of equality and harmony" (Extract 3), and "happy and healthy family" (Extract 4). Women's family role is clearly highlighted. The emphasis on women's "unique-ness" (Extracts 2 and 3) rather than that of the other gender – men's, reveals a social fact that women's family identity is still constructed in the official discourses as one where, affected by traditional heritage, women are still expected to shoulder main domestic responsibilities. In Chapter Four Section 4.3.1.2, it is claimed that with the revival of new Confucianism since 1980s, the mainstream ideology in terms of both governmental and social perspectives of constructing women's family identity in China is still heavily influenced by the traditional gender definition of a good wife/mother.

According to Chen, on the one hand in the public sphere the nation has liberated women from a patriarchal family to participate in social and industrial production and work, with Marxist Feminism as its leading ideological guidance; however, and on the other hand, out of a consideration for "maintaining social stability and unification", the government maintains some of the cultural heritage concerning women and their role that the gender relationship and structure in domestic sphere is never fundamentally challenged or reconstructed, nor is the traditional impact on people's consciousness totally abandoned (Chen, 2006, p. 35). The slogan of "勤俭持家 *qin jian chi jia,* diligently and thriftily running the household" raised in the Mao era (which is still valid in contemporary official discourses, see the following Extract 2) is specifically targeted at women and promoted through women's federations in social practices (Jiang, 2009). As Jie points out, under historical conditions of women's

liberation discourses created within the grand narratives of national ideologies, the national discourses are to a great extent inevitably influenced by the hegemony of male-oriented discourses (Jie, 2008). In the perception of the Party leaders (who are mostly male), women are always seen as the main carers of household responsibilities and encouraged to practice good household-running. The following extracts further provide examples of establishing an official expectation or prescription on women's family role which is "encouraged and guided" by the government (Extract 1):

1) 鼓励和引导妇女做和谐家庭建设的推动者。
Encourage and guide women to be the promoter for constructing harmonious family.

(PDCW, 2011)

2) 坚持做勤俭持家、夫妻和睦、邻里团结的模范，发挥在家庭教育特别是未成年教育中的重要作用。
(Women) should be persistent models of diligently and thriftily running the household, keeping harmonious spouse relationship and neighbourly relationship, and play an important role in family education especially in educating children. （2010.3.8 Hu's speech., PD）

3) 广大妇女勤劳、勇敢、智慧、善良，她们哺育生命、持家爱国、奉献社会。
All women are diligent, brave, wise, kind, and they nurture life, run the household and love the nation, and devote to society. （2010.3.8 PD）

Shouldering the main duties of household affairs and raising children, "贤妻良母 *xian qi liang mu*, a good wife and mother" has been for a long time regarded as a role of sacrifice for the husband's career development, children's growth and health care of the elderly. As Shen points out, on the one hand, the sacrifices of her time, hobbies, dreams, energy *inter alia* is usually praised through social recognition, yet on the other hand, women's devotion to family are seen as taken for granted from the male perspective (Shen, 2005, p. 211). Women's own interests are constantly "sacrificed" amidst the glorification of their traditional virtues such as being "diligent, brave, wise, kind" (see above Extract 3). In this sense, the power of discourse is realised through the rhetorical strategies adopted by the producers of the media texts and translated into real social practices. For instance, the strategy of transitivity through the imperative pattern with absent agent specification "Encourage and guide women to…" (Extract 1) and the strategy of modality through the modal verb "should" (Extract 2) together create the effect of naturalising the political agenda in the discursive gender practice and reinforcing the significant integration of household management and education of offspring in constructing women's family identity in the national narratives. The collocation of the expressions of "diligently and thriftily running the household", "family education especially in educating children" (Extract 2), and "nurture life, run the household" (Extract 3) with the noun phrases "persistent models" and "an important role" (Extract 2) reveals the

governmental perspective of categorising familial duties for women.

As a result, while women have walked out of home to work, family duties still fall on their shoulders. In other words, in promoting the "unique role" of women in a *Harmonious Society*, women have had imposed on them an additional layer of family responsibility besides the existing advocacy of their work contribution as *Half the Sky*. Since the 1980s, according to Na, the modern model of women's identity in the national discoursal system has been directed at those who excel in *both* work and family roles (Na, 2008), This position is also revealed in the earlier discussions of Chapter Four Section 4.4 on "To have it all" solution, Section 4.4.1.1 on "Double-ness" and later discussions of Section 6.2.2 on "Ideal model as the *Third Type woman*". In this section, official discourses such as those concerning national policies and state leaders' speeches reflecting both an emphasis of women's role in socialist construction and an emphasis of women's function in maintaining family stability, implies the construction of "women's identity of the new era" (see following Extract 2) as the *Third Type woman*. Examples include:

1) 大力宣传妇女在两个文明建设与社会发展中的作用和贡献。
Vigorously give publicity to women for their roles in and contributions to the improvement of ethical progress, material progress and social development. (PDCW, 2001)

2) 广大妇女要…努力提高自身素质，塑造新时代女性形象，积极参与国民经济建设，经实际行动促进社会主义物质文明、政治文明和精神文明的协调发展。
All women should…try to improve their own quality and construct women's identity of the new era, actively participate in national economic construction, promote harmonious development of socialist material progress, political and ethical progress with their practical actions.
（2003.3.8 PD）

3) 妇女既是经济建设的主力军，也是促进社会和谐、维护社会稳定的重要力量。
Women are not only a main force of economic construction, but also an important force in promoting social harmony and maintaining social stability. （2009.3.8 PD）

4) 我国广大妇女要继承优良传统、弘扬时代精神，在促进社会和谐中发挥独特作用…践行职业道德，弘扬家庭美德。
All women in our country should inherit traditional virtues and carry forward the spirit of the times, to play a unique role in promoting social harmony…Women should practice professional ethics and carry forward family virtues. （2010.3.8 Hu's speech., PD）

5) 广大妇女要…努力营造幸福家庭，自觉承担社会责任，始终保持昂扬向上的人生追求…为社会主义和谐社会建设作出更大的贡献。
All women should…try to create a happy family and consciously shoulder social responsibility, keep life pursuit with persistent passion…make bigger contributions to the construction of socialist harmonious society. （2011.3.8 PD）

Through an inter-textual examination of the editorials and national speeches on women in *PD* since 2001, this thesis reveals that, on one hand, women are "a main force of economic

construction" (Extract 3) to "carry forward the spirit of the times", "practice professional ethics" (Extract 4) and to "consciously shoulder social responsibility" (Extract 5); however, they are also "an important force in promoting social harmony and maintaining social stability" (Extract 3) to "inherit traditional virtues", "carry forward family virtues" (Extract 4) and to "create a happy family" (Extract 5). As to the construction of "material progress" and "ethical progress" (Extracts 1 and 2) set in the key political agenda of the Party and nation, the former refers to the economic development of the drive towards modernization, while the latter refers to the construction of a harmonious society. According to Jiang, the emphasis on women's roles in both progresses (material progress and ethical progress) is a result of a mixed influence of Marxist ideology and traditional Chinese culture (Jiang, 2009), revealing the governmental expectation of the double roles associated with contemporary Chinese women's identity. The rhetorical strategy of coordinating pair structure such as "not only….but also" (Extract 3), "…and…" (Extract 4 and 5) serves to highlight the establishment of the double standards for Chinese women in both the public sphere and the private sphere. Furthermore, the strategy of transitivity through the imperative expression of "Vigorously give publicity to" (Extract 1) and the strategy of modality through the constant usage of "should" (Extracts 2, 4 and 5) sets the underlying tone of authority in the implicit construction of the *Third Type woman* in the official discourses, as well as decoding the prescriptive power in the construction of this ideal model in print media texts such as *PD* and *WOC* (see Chapter Four).

The shift of the socio-political agenda from historical tasks of reform and the opening up and modernization drive towards the new campaign of addressing social transformation is also reflected in the modification of the representation of women in official discourses. This reflection is realized through the construction of a *Harmonious Society* in which women are expected to "play a unique role" (see above Extract 4) and "make bigger contributions" (Extract 5), through undertaking double burdens in social reality (Hu, 2005). As the construct of *Half the Sky* as a typical Chinese women's identity mainly points to the public/work sphere (rather than the private/family sphere) from the official perspective, the governmental promotion of social harmony can be seen as an implicit acknowledgement of the contestation of traditional and modern ideologies in regulating and reconstructing contemporary women's identity. Instead of re-examining men's identity and role, the significance of the "unique role" of women shouldering both work and family responsibilities is proposed as a suggested and preferred solution in national narratives.

As Chen observes, the power of male-dominated discourse and national ideologies leads to a "silencing" of feminist voices in official texts such as *PD editorials*, and as a result neither the "double burden" of women nor the request for redefining women's family role attracts much attention in the mainstream national news media (see Chapter Four) (Chen, 2006, p. 85). According to Barlow, once the Party established power in China, it denounced the liberal feminist movement as "bourgeois feminism," and employed the new slogan of "women's emancipation movement" (Barlow, 1994). However the discursive power of the official political discourses on women's identity construction is reflected and being "decoded" in academic discussions (see Chapter Five) and practitioners' narratives (see Chapter Seven), for instance in the *Evaluation Report on Gender Equality and Women Development in China, 1995-2005* issued by ACWF in 2006. It is pointed out in the Report that the traditional role of women in family and gender labor division has not altered a great deal during the past decade. As a matter of fact, gender relationships in regard to domestic responsibilities is seen as the most important factor constraining gender equality in family and women's development at present and in the near future (ACWF, 2006) (also see previous Chapters Four and Five). According to Foucault's explanation of power and knowledge (Foucault, 1972), a long-term domination of the national discourse leads to the difficult situation of women contesting against male hegemony. In this sense, the power of the national system should be what it is important to reflect upon. In this context, the investigation of official documents representing the national system, as set out in this section, can be seen as an attempt to reveal and interpret the latent male hegemony underlying certain constructs such as *Harmonious Society* as promoted by the nation/government.

6.4 Summary

Official discourses, among other discourses, often seek to reconceptualise the narrative meaning of constructs in a convincing manner, as a consequence of which they become naturalized into everyday consciousness (Bhatia, 2007). The discourse of women's identity as *Half the Sky* is often utilized in order to persuade audiences of the feasibility and validity of the different gender representations offered by a particular construct. The *PD* editorials on women's identity and development in China are not only typically characterized by the major metaphors of *Half the Sky* and *Harmonious Society* which carry political resonance, but are also characterized by the fact that the government reports are generically very different from those of news reports and news stories taken from *PD* and *WOC,* as set out and analyzed in Chapter Four of this thesis. Editors of *PD* must be aware that they are writing a language

product with huge consequences because they are sending messages to the whole country. Accordingly, the editorials are carefully written so as to appear to carry authority and conviction. In this sense, official documents are hardly spontaneous and dynamic texts. Instead, it is the mechanical and ritualistic nature of *PD* editorials demonstrated in the meticulous planning of the lexico-syntactic and semantico-pragmatic tools used which makes it possible to convey national ideologies in the most effective and "default" way possible. Ultimately, it will be the government documents which are the regulating documents and the others such as print news media of *PD* and *WOC* relate to that hegemony.

Throughout the editorial texts, connections between women and nation, women's work contribution, and women's family role are regarded as being important, and all these positions are picked up and highlighted in the newspapers and magazine stories, as is analysed in Chapter Four, although in different ways, and to different extent. In addition to the statistical significance of particular choices from the lexico-grammar based on a corpus of texts and the textualization of lexico-grammatical resources used in the corpus, the key themes in the official textual space are also realized typically through the use of a concatenation of rhetorical strategies such as authoritative modality and transitivity. These serve to convey powerful messages about how the government sees the question of the relationship of the genders and the position of women in particular. Together with unification and repetition, they work to create solidarity among readers in justifying and reinforcing the national political orientation. According to Bhatia, although we may often identify and conceptualize genres in pure forms, in the real world they are often seen as hybrid, mixed and embedded forms (Bhatia 2004, p. 25). Accordingly, intertextuality as well as interdiscursivity (see Fairclough, 1992; Candlin, 2006), analysed within the context of generic conventions and practices, are processes adopted to achieve wherever possible the desired results of constructing women's identity according to the national political agenda. Chen points out that the constructions of the women's liberation movement and modern nation have infiltrated the one into the other in that that women's discourses have become in fact an important component of state planning in the context of national discourses (Chen, 2004, p. 4).

In the series of national discourses on gender construction, two key words stand out – "liberation" and "equality". According to Li, liberation refers to actions against suppression and confinement for freedom, of which there are two underlying characteristics embedded – collectivism and neutralised gender awareness (Li, 1997). The ultimate objective for women in China is accordingly set as serving the nation and people, rather than as striving for real

gender equality, giving rise to a much larger sense of "social awareness" among Chinese women rather than "self-awareness" (Li, 2000). Equality, as explained by Lu, refers to the lack of distinction between genders so that women are regarded as absolutely equal to men, and that in a sense the male standard becomes also the standard for women (Lu, 2006, p. 32). As a result, in the post-Mao era, the biggest obstacle for feminist development in China was the lack of "subject consciousness and gender awareness" as is argued by some scholars of women studies (Li, 1988 & 2000; Meng & Dai, 1988). In another words, women's discourse and the autonomy of self-awareness is submerged in the grand narratives of national ideologies and historical themes of national revolutions and construction.

However, over time and in the present period of complex and radical social transformation, it is suggested by Na that the power of national discourse in constructing women's identity is weakened by an increasing hybridity of discourses constructed by various social groups with differentiated positions and perspectives on women, family and liberation, and by a growing diversity of identity options with more emphasis on individuality (Na, 2008) (also see previous Chapters Four and Five). As a result, it is possible to say that no stable or neutral definition can be attributed to the construct of women's identity; instead, what is relatively easier to distinguish are the various representations of women's identity over time and the intentions with which they are offered. The discrepancy as well as struggles among these various discourses and that of the national discourse is well reflected in various discussions on women's issues. This theme is taken up and further investigated in the next chapter dealing with data from interviews with journalist practitioners. It is observed by some scholars that the national discourse on women's identity will still maintain its impact in terms of the continuance of certain ideologies and offerings of behavioural guidance, owing to both the continuity and the fracture of historical development, but it is no longer the one and only discourse for women as such a position cannot any longer be assured of obtaining wide recognition among all women in the country (Zhang & Liang, 2008, p. 91).

Of course, under the specific context of a discourse system with Chinese characteristics, the national discourse representing the ideology of the Party in power inevitably occupies a dominant position. It is not practical to expect a complete break-away from the permeation of the national discourse system and the construction of some totally "pure" gender discourse system. As Jie suggests, the solution is to integrate the social gender perspective and step by step seek to reduce the hegemonic order of discourse in the national discourse system, which must be "a long revolution" (Jie, 2008, p. 108).

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Before the 1980s, media in China was under the complete control of the Party's propaganda system, and served as the mouthpiece of the Party, with all matters made subservient to the interests of the Party and where the goings-on of daily life were made subject to a never-ending propaganda play. Following the opening up and reform policy in the 1980s, the media's role in China has softened from being purely a mouthpiece of the party/state to what could be characterized as "Party Publicity Incorporation" (Chen and Chan, 1998). As suggested by the term *Party Publicity Incorporation*, although the media in China remains tightly controlled, it has lost its former totalist characteristics (Pan et al., 2001). However, it can still be observed that there continues to exist a tension between the Party's control and emerging ideological de-emphasis associated with the development of the new market economy. This is the theme of the following chapter concerning journalist narratives.

Chapter Seven: Analysis of Interviews with Journalism Practitioners

7.1 Introduction

The previous three chapters examined the diversity of Chinese women's identity from different media sources – print news, academic journals, and official documents – revealing a contestation of socio-cultural ideologies and discourses in the re-construction of contemporary Chinese women's identity. As Carter and Steiner argue, the institutional processes and systems that give rise to media forms are largely indiscernible to their audiences, and such invisibility works to the economic and ideological advantage of media organizations, which face fewer challengers and enjoy greater resonance when audiences cannot step back to think who is responsible for the selection and production of texts but instead merely accept texts as "mirrors of reality" (Carter & Steiner, 2004, p. 20). According to Crichton & Koch, narratives, and the language in which they are enacted, are important in institutions as the "raw material" for much institutional work in institutions whose interest is in managing or otherwise affecting the lives of members and non-members (Crichton & Koch, 2007, p. 376). From a linguistic and ethnographic perspective, interviews with journalists try to comprehend both the tacit and articulated understandings of the participants in journalistic processes and activities being studied (Rampton et al., 2015). In this chapter, selected narratives from journalism practitioners are documented and analysed in order to allow for a closer and more inter-discursive examination of women's identity in terms of media presentation and production. Choosing predominantly female interviewees is an essential characteristic which gives the section a distinct voice. Besides interviewing female practitioners on the given topic, the interviews regularly involve in-depth discussions with women about their individual experiences related to that topic as an important part of addressing it. Based on a data set consisting of two rounds of interviews with eleven journalists and scholars (see Chapter Three), the findings from Chapters Four, Five and Six in this research are discussed and tested against these "insider" voices – How do these "insiders" identify and evaluate the constructs of women's identity as they are revealed in the print media? How do they recognize changing perceptions of women in regard to socio-cultural factors? To what extent are their opinions in line with the authoritative stance of government in contemporary China? What ideologically motivated and other struggles face

them in writing their reports? It will be of considerable interest to explore what they have to say, as such narratives can serve to provide important insights into the processes in which the newspaper reports construct specific understanding and categorization of women's identity, and how they may reveal under scrutiny the ideological positions of different media during moments of social transition.

This chapter is presented in two parts. The first part concerns the presentation of diverse women's identity, in which various constructs of women's identity in the thesis in terms of positions and recognition are described and evaluated from a journalistic perspective. Over time, such positions and recognitions have changed and developed and become more fluid in regard to perceptions of the various concepts in question, but not for everyone, not to the same degree, and not in respect of all of the concepts. Some traditional constructs, the socio-political constructs in particular such as *Iron Girl* and even *Half the Sky,* in a way are regarded as somehow "outdated" constructs of the past, but other constructs remain consistent despite relabeling variation and disturbances to central meanings such as that of the *Third Type woman*. During the complex process of reconstructing contemporary women's identity in the context of the media (Linell, 1998; Park & Bucholz, 2009), the contrast and contestation between women living with tradition and women affected by modern individualism are evidenced through the narratives about the marrying maxim – *Marrying a good husband is better than having a good job*, the *Leftover Lady* phenomenon, and the changing definition of success.

While these heritages of the past still remain in people's consciousness reinforced by slogans and other representations, there are changes and shifts to be recognised and acknowledged. The question remains, however, as to how firmly have they shifted, and against which ideologies arising from contemporary social transformations. Accordingly, the second part of discussion focuses on the production of women's identity in media discourses. As Thomas and Wareing point out, any newspaper story goes through several stages before it appears on the page, and many different people can be involved at each stage (Thomas & Wareing, 1999). The consistency and deviation of the typical character report in the chosen media between *PD* and *WOC* in terms of genres and themes are firstly examined. What is important here is to determine what the interviews with these journalists reveal concerning the significant issues which drive their current writing. From the interview data, it appears that

their comments are both quite contemporary and at the same time very forward looking in their opinion and focus. As people in China are living through times of transition and change, and are starting to appreciate diversity and individuality, different opinions and comments on a range of issues are now to be expected. Accordingly, we may note that there will be contested discourses signalled in the narratives, in particular regarding the re-construction/production of contemporary Chinese women's identities. Such contestation is revealed sharply in the struggles experienced by the journalist practitioners in categorizing such diversity and in speaking, as it were, the "unspeakable" in the process of producing news reports. Gender difference and distribution in the professional practices is also noted in relation to examining the reporting perspectives between female and male practitioners.

7.2 Presenting Diversity of Women's Identity

女性是人类的<u>半边天</u>，没有女性参与的载人航天是<u>不完整的</u>。
(武平：没有女性参与的载人航天是不完整的, 15th Jun. 2012)
Women are <u>half the sky</u> of human beings, the manned space flight (in China) is <u>not complete</u>
<u>without women's participation</u>.   *(PD, 15th Jun 2012)*

As we all know, the almost canonical metaphorical construction known to the world about Chinese women is "women can hold up half the sky". Thanks to Liu Yang, who became the first Chinese woman in space as a step towards the nation's ambition to build its own space station, the maxim has now "soared" back, as the UK *Guardian* reporter put it (Branigan, 2012). As was discussed in earlier chapters, the slogan was put forward in the Mao era as a means of signalling the desirability of emancipating Chinese women from the domestic confinements of being a mere "good wife/mother", so as to obtain equal rights and status by participating in social work, as men do. Yet the typical model representing "half the sky" at that time – the *Iron Girl* – arguably deprived women of part of their gender identity such as femininity, which was masked in a desexualized, or rather in a masculinized identity (Zhang & Ke, 1995) (see Chapters Two and Four).

With the deepening of China's reforms and the opening up process, Chinese women gradually took off their thick heavy uniform of soldiers, workers and farmers in an attempt to recapture their long lost feminine identity (Zhang, 2009). According to Wang, the ideal model for Chinese women then shifted from the monotonous "Production/Work Model" to the diverse "Life Models" of a dominant urban social class, revealing the social transition of

collectivism to individualism, and the gradual urbanization process in contemporary China (see Chapter Four). In tune with this, in Wang's view, the media "faithfully" captured and reflected such social changes by presenting a variety of women images (Wang, 2012, p. 13). It is worth examining not only what has changed but also what remains problematic and as yet uncontested.

Despite the simple and absolute labeling of *Iron Girl, Good Wife/Mother*, or even the fact that the famous metaphor "*Half the Sky*" is no longer widely recognized, or is regarded as somehow an "outdated" stereotype among journalism practitioners, the ideological influences underpinning these models can still be found in a presently prevailing but implicitly labeled category – "*the Third Type*" woman. The contestation of traditional and contemporary value systems on gender identity is also vividly exemplified in the comments from reporters on the controversial yet popular motto of "Marrying a good husband is better than having a good job" and on the *"Leftover Lady"* phenomenon.

Situated in an era of rapid change and profound transformation, "diverse" and "complex" can be seen as two key words in describing the tension and dynamics in the identity reconstruction such as gender identity (Liu, Zen & Zhang, 2007). For example, in the interviews, interviewee-H gives a list of identity choices for contemporary women and summarizes the present Chinese women's identity as being "diversified and complex":

> 现在是多元化、复杂的形象，比如性开放，离婚潮，单身，丁克，同性恋，中性化（超女），剩女等。 （H）
> *Gender identities are becoming diversified and complex now, such as liberation of sex, divorce trend, single, DINK, homosexuals, neutral sexualized fashion (Super Girl Show), Leftover Lady etc.* (H)

And interviewee-X also comments on the current ideological trend of people being "relatively more complex, and more diversified" in criticism of tokenistic approaches to diversity:

> 我觉得因为现在的人比较，可能也因为比较喜欢，觉得人比较复杂，比较多元化, 所以不太会给这样一个统一的称谓…因为觉得加一个头衔，大家现在也不爱看。 (X)
> *I think nowadays people tend to be, tend to like, more complex and more diversified, so that it is not possible to put an unanimous label on…because contemporary readers are not interested in something with an imposed label.* (X)

Under the circumstances of contemporary society characterised by diversity and complexity, it is more difficult to give a single definition of an ideal model for people to follow because

readers simply feel "not interested" in the "unanimity", as noted in the above narrative by the practitioners. Tan & Xiao argue that China is now in a historical era of cultural transformation, a background against which prominent women identities from various professions and lifestyles are portrayed in media discourses, as there is no longer a single definition for ideal or success in this era (Tan & Xiao, 2009, p. 33).

As Rampton et al. point out, categories and identities get circulated, taken up and reproduced in textual representations and communicative encounters, and the social and cultural construction of identities, persons and groups could be understood through the help of a linguistic look at the discursive processes. And at the same time, the interview and its commitment as one key ethnographic characteristic is one important option to turn to in taking a long hard look at empirical processes which make no sense within established frameworks (Rampton et al., 2015). In the following section, different categorizations of women's identity in the previous chapters are revisited through the narratives of these interviewed journalism practitioners, so as to enable the distinguishing of their inter-discursive construction, as a reflection of those socio-political and socio-cultural factors underlying the media discourses in question.

7.2.1 Stereotypes "Outdated"?

In the interviews, the first question asked concerned the well-known Chinese women's identity – "*Half the Sky*" metaphor – as represented in print media discourses, and the comments from the practitioners acknowledges its important role in the reconstruction of contemporary Chinese women's identity, as we observe in the following narrative:

> *1) 我觉得你说的<u>半边天</u>，其实是<u>比较早期的，是革命年代提出的概念</u>，因为那时候说起来是<u>为政治服务的这么一个概念</u>。所以<u>延用到现在</u>，这个词义的历史的使命我觉得其实已经逐渐消退了，但是它的<u>真实的社会价值还是存在的</u>，因为的确是这么一个概念，也是把中国从古代到现代的中国历史上的女性定位<u>重新诠释了</u>。这一点是<u>很重要的</u>。　　　*(Wm)*
> *<u>Half the Sky</u> is actually <u>a concept raised in the earlier revolutionary era, acting to serve the politics at that time</u> and till now. The historical role of the term has gradually faded but its <u>real social value still prevails</u> as <u>it is this</u> concept <u>that re-defines Chinese women's role</u> from ancient time to contemporary society, which is <u>of much significance.</u>　　　(Wm)*

Despite its "fading historical role" as it was first "raised in the earlier revolutionary era…to serve the politics at that time", the significance of this famous Maoist slogan in women's development in China is highlighted through the emphatic clause "it is…that" in the above extract in juxtaposition with the authoritative verb "re-define". However, the actual

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employment of the phrase in the media discourse is not as widespread as it used to be. According to interviewee-X, since Chinese women "have already held up half the sky for long" in people's recognition, it is no longer necessary for the additional emphasis:

2) 这样的说法有。但是不太多见，是因为大家早就觉得女性已经是半边天，没有必要再强调这种说法了。虽然说这种说法比较偶尔地在一些比较老派的刊物还是可以见到的。因为我们也是属于妇联旗下的，妇联还是会有这种的称呼，这样的说法的。 *(X)*
The term is still used, but not much. Because people think that women have already held up half the sky for long, it is unnecessary to emphasize it any more. The phrase is still occasionally sighted in some old-fashioned media. As we are affiliated to ACWF (All China Women's Federation), we know that the phrase is still adopted in ACWF. *(X)*

Nevertheless, the reference of the term is "still sighted" in some "old-fashioned media", usually associated with media from government source or government related organizations such as ACWF. According to Ling, these media with official trademarks usually operate from a political agenda, emphasizing the social significance of women's development and the symbol of women's development as part of national progress (Ling, 2007). Temporal references such as "till now", "still prevails" and "still adopted" (Extract 2) in the above extracts can be interpreted as a subtle reminder of the unique political role associated with the term ever since the coinage.

As to the impression of some women stereotypes such as "*Iron Girl*" and "*Good Wife/Mother*", formerly categorized as the typical work identity and family identity in the chosen print media as analyzed in Chapter Four, the journalism practitioners unanimously agree that these labels are "outdated" to some extent in the media reports. Examples include:

1) 我觉得这种称谓现在还是比较少的，不太多见。 *(X)*
I think such terms are relatively rare now, not often seen in media reports. *(X)*

2) 实际上铁姑娘这个说法我很少看到，包括好妻子好母亲这种提法我觉得并不多。 *(D)*
In fact I do not see much of the term Iron Girl, even the Good Wife/Mother does not occur much to me either. *(D)*

3) 我们在采访女性的过程中已经不太使用这三种分类了，比如说铁姑娘这种说法已经是很久远时代的事情。现在很多年轻的读者可能对于这种提法都会很茫然吧。 *(S)*
We seldom adopt the three categories in our reporting about women now, such as Iron Girl is regarded as a very "ancient" term. Many young readers may feel at a loss about this term. *(S)*

4) 我觉得前两者提法离我们已经很远了。可能是红色时期的称呼。好妻子好母亲好象 2000 年以后这种提法也少了。现在年经一代受红色教育的比较少，铁姑娘肯定比较过时了。 *（W）*
I think the former two terms are very distant from our time, they may be the terminology from the Red Era (*revolutionary era). The occurrence of the Good wife/mother also seems to be fading since 2000. The young generation now is exposed to relatively less "Red Education" (*education

of patriotism and collectivism), so that the term of Iron Girl is <u>definitely outdated</u>.   *(W)*

The constant reference in these extracts to the frequency adverbs such as "rare", "not often" (Extract 1), "not much" (Extract 2), "seldom" (Extract 3) lays the basis for justifying the "outdated" impression of the stereotypes on women. The label *Iron Girl* in particular is associated with the "Red Era" long ago, so that "many young readers" (Extract 3) and "the young generation" (Extract 4) may "feel at a loss" (Extract 3) as they were "exposed to less Red Education" (Extract 4). The synonymous temporal adjectives "ancient" (Extract 3), "distant" and "outdated" (Extract 4) modified by the adverbs "very" (Extract 3) and "definitely" (Extract 4) in the above extracts serve to further contrast and emphasize the changing perceptions of these stereotypes in the modern conceptualization of reality, which is actually resonant with the claim of shifting work models for women in Chapter Four Section 4.2.4.

Good Wife/Mother as a label is also noted as "fading" in media discourse, especially "since 2000" (see above Extract 4) where China has moved into an era of faster transformations of culture and society. However the still existent occurrences are mostly found in the "official" (see following Extract 1) or so-called "orthodox" (Extract 2) media, as interviewee-Wm and interviewee-D observe:

1) 如果说贤妻良母，这个是一个文化延续性的问题。我们现在的<u>官方媒体</u>还是<u>很多带有一些政治色彩</u>的。所以用这种词汇，相对来说<u>多一些</u>。   *(Wm)*
Speak of the <u>Good Wife/Mother, this is an issue of cultural heritage. As there is still <u>a heavy tinge of politics in our official media,</u> so that there is relatively <u>more adoption of such category in the official media discourse.</u>   *(Wm)*

2) 这些提法…可能会<u>让人联想到一些年龄层次比较大，然后比较正统的</u>一些刊物。 *(D)*
Such labels in the media may draw readers' <u>association with some media of more orthodox view and readership with older age.</u>.   *(D)*

The fact that the label of Good Wife/Mother occurs "more" in the media of "more orthodox", "older" "official" positions reveals the hidden link between the cultural heritage and the political motivation beneath the presentation/promotion of the Good Wife/Mother image in the official media discourses. The correlation also verifies the earlier statements in Chapter Four which claim that *PD* as an official media holds a relatively more conservative view in constructing women's family identity, and that the comparison between the 1995 and 2005 datasets from *PD* and *WOC* reflects a temporal contrast of changing social perceptions on women's domestic role.

In his narratives, it is also noted by interviewee-Wm that there are different ideological traces underlying the two categories of women's identity, as *Iron Girl* was originated from "revolutionary politics" and *Good Wife/Mother* came from the "cultural heritage", as demonstrated in the next extract:

铁姑娘是从革命的，政治斗争当中来的。贤妻良母是从文化当中来的。这两者（给读者的共鸣，印象）完全不一样。贤妻良母在现在的影响还是很大。第三类女人的提法很少。类型有...现在绝大部分的女性都是第三类。 (Wm)
Iron Girl is derived from revolutionary politics, whereas Good Wife/Mother is derived from the cultural heritage. Therefore the two categories arouse completely different response and impression among the contemporary readers. Good Wife/Mother still has a far-reaching influence today. The label of the Third Type is rare. Yet the type is there.... now most women fall into the Third Type category. (Wm)

The intensifier expression "far-reaching" in conjunction with the adverb "still" in the above extract is seen as an emphasis of the importance and value of the cultural heritage in social recognition. Consequently, despite the fact that both lexical terms of *Iron Girl* and *Good Wife/Mother* are diminishing in the media texts, a new model emerges and is underpinned by both ideological positions – allowing the *Third Type* woman, which may not be unanimously so labeled, to prevail.

7.2.2 The ideal model – "the *Third Type*"

In the previous Chapter Four Section 4.4, "have it all" is regarded as a perfect solution in the print media discourse of *PD* and *WOC* to solve the work/family conflict confronted by professional women. Women adopting such a solution are categorized as the new *Third Type* woman, a designation of contemporary preference by many young women (Tan & Xiao, 2009). According to interviewee-X, the editor from *Modern Family* magazine, the labeling of the *Third Type* may not be so conspicuously evident, however, the actual construction and promotion of the model nonetheless prevails in the media texts:

你说的第三类女人，确实是我们现在大量的排稿报导都是这样一类，但是倒没有给他们特别归类，就是说这样的是属于一类的。但是你听下来，就是说这些人确实都是说家庭和工作都是兼顾的，就是两方面完成得都很出色。这样的人现在确实是出现得挺多的，就是说更多地是倾向于一个工作上既比较出色同时也很兼顾家庭的一个类型。我们的选择（上我们杂志的女性），就是事业和家庭并重。 (X)
The Third Type women you mention, is indeed a major type that we report and edit now. Though they are not specifically categorized as a certain type, the description will tell that they are in fact women who cover both family and work role, and do both roles well. There are actually quite a few examples of such woman in the reports now. The typical women characters that our magazine tends to choose are the those who are outstanding at work and meanwhile fulfilling her family role well. (X)

The "tendency" within media production is as a consequence translated into the "majority" status to occasion "quite a few" (see above extract) occurrences of this identity categorization in the media discourse, as interviewee-W, the editor from a cosmopolitan daily newspaper, also agrees:

> *第三类女人现在<u>倒是经常看到</u>。* (W)
> *The Third Type women are <u>now often seen in the media</u>.* (W)

The acknowledgement of the *Third Type* as an ideal model for contemporary Chinese women on the part of the journalism practitioners noted in the following narratives can be seen as providing in part an explanation for the "Complete Woman" and "Have It All" solution advocated in the print media discourse in Chapter Four Sections 4.3.2.2 and 4.4.1:

> *1) 第三类女人<u>现在是比较推崇的一类典型</u>。* (W)
> *The Third Type woman <u>is now the relatively more popular model</u>.* (W)
>
> *2) 从社会意义上来，<u>成功还是事业和家庭兼顾的那种</u>。我觉得两者兼顾才是成功，<u>还是主流的</u>。* (D)
> *From social recognition, <u>success (for woman) still refers to the one who covers both career and family role</u> well. I think it <u>remains the mainstream definition</u>.* (D)
>
> *3) <u>理想的，肯定是事业和家庭兼顾的</u>。(如果一个女强人或者贤妻良母在人们心中不是一个典型的理想形象吗？) <u>绝对不是</u>。* (Z)
> *<u>An ideal woman's identity is definitely the one who covers well both career and family roles</u>. (In answering the question of is a career superwoman or a good wife/mother still an ideal type?) <u>Definitely not</u>.* (Z)

In the above extracts, the qualifying words – "popular" (Extract 1), "mainstream" (Extract 2) and "ideal" (Extract 3) all highlight the dominant social recognition of this new type of women's identity. The repeated occurrence of "definitely" referenced in the above extract 3 by interviewee-Z, a reporter from a radio broadcaster, can be seen to emphasize the contract of denying a career superwoman or a good wife/mother type as "definitely" not the ideal model in the establishment of the new "definite" ideal of the *Third Type* woman. On one hand, women have been expected to "hold up half the sky" as presenting their work identity since the Mao era, on the other hand, they have to keep shouldering the domestic responsibilities imposed on them by the revival by the new Confucianism of the traditional definition of gender roles since the beginning of the Post-Mao era, as is discussed earlier in Chapter Four Section 4.4. The present struggle for Chinese women is not simply a distinction between work and family identity, but a matter of managing both in some manner, and to strive for harmony.

As in the above extract 2, interviewee-D comments on this struggle by seeing this balancing act as a major achievement in terms of defining "success" for the contemporary woman in China. The standard for success becomes thereby doubled and, accordingly, the threshold of attainment increases. Based on the data from *CWS*, the investigation earlier in Chapter Five Section 5.4 of the struggle behind the apparent "balancing" of the work/family dilemma reveals the hidden double standard and exhaustion experienced by professional women, a matter which is observed as mostly absent in the print media discourses of *PD* and *WOC*, as is examined in Chapter Four.

In the interviews with the journalism practitioners, the question of the metaphorical constructions such as *Burning Candles* and *Keeping the Balance* to describe the work/family conflict faced by Chinese career women was proposed so as to see which description better suits the present situation. It turns out that the journalists have quite different comments to make on these two metaphorical accounts – some hold that women are exhausted juggling between the dual duties, rather like burning candles at both ends, others contend that women actually benefit from the balance and the switching between two roles.

One of the interviewees, S, is an editor-in-chief of a woman's weekly in Shanghai. There is no doubt that she has achieved much in her career, and with a five-year-old daughter and husband, she can accordingly be labeled as a "superwoman" as Tan & Xiao crown those who do excellent jobs on both the family and work fronts (Tan & Xiao, 2009, p. 40). However, in the interview, interviewee-S frankly points out the tensions lying behind the *Third Type* model, and *Burning Candles* is seen as an exact depiction of such tension experienced by many professional women, including herself:

> *我觉得<u>女的是两头烧的状态</u>。我觉得就<u>大环境而言，我们都没法改变</u>。如果没有一个良好的<u>小环境的话，你真的是在两头烧</u>...只能靠营造小环境。营造小环境，<u>其实真的也是很难的</u>。<u>真的很悲观，我自己在这块我也觉得很悲观</u>。然后我生了一个女儿，<u>我觉得更悲观了</u>。*　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　*(S)*
> *I think the situation for career women is<u> like burning candles at both ends</u>. As to <u>the big environment,</u> we <u>cannot change</u>. And if there is not a good <u>small environment</u> for a woman, she is <u>really becoming the burning candle</u>....However to establish a good small environment is in fact <u>very hard too</u>. It's <u>very pessimistic</u>. <u>I myself feel very pessimistic</u> too in this regard. After I gave birth to my daughter, I feel <u>even more pessimistic</u>.*　　　　　　　　　　*(S)*

The public professional side of these women is seen in corporations, law firms, hospitals and news agencies where they appear to do their jobs with ease and efficiency. However, no one

has ever asked these women about their lives and their individual struggle to merge work and family. When the related question is asked, for instance in the interviews of this study, women expressed anger and frustration that expectations and reality are so far apart, and their individual stories unfold to reveal some sad, yet all-too-common themes (Swiss & Walker, 1993). In her narrative from the above extract, the word "pessimistic" is repeated three times fortified by the intensifying adverbs such as "very" and "even more" revealing the hardship of handling the dual roles against the backdrop of both "the big environment" and "the small environment". The "big environment" which refers to the overarching socio-cultural environment is considered "not changeable" as the cultural heritage regarding the definition of gender identity is so deep-seated (Li, 1988), whereas the "small environment" here implies the small family, especially gender relationships and labor divisions within the family, is also "very hard to establish". Such circumstances inevitably give rise to the "pessimistic" mentality experienced by career women as they feel "so helpless" (see the following extract) in trying to shoulder the dual burden and to solve the work/family conflict by "herself", as is argued in the following extract:

> *男女方面性别的差异导致很多问题。可能妈妈会宁可自己累一点也要自己亲手带孩子。但是爸爸并不觉得会领情。所以你就很无奈…我觉得男性没有更多地参与进来，解决这个问题。还是你自己去想办法找人来帮助你。* (S)
> *Gender difference leads to many issues. Maybe a mother will take care of her kid despite her exhaustion, but it is not appreciated by the father, so that she will feel so helpless... I do not think men have made enough efforts to participate and help solve the issue. After all it is the woman herself who tries to seek support from someone else (such as parents or babysitters).* (S)

According to interviewee-S, gender difference is seen as one main cause of the *Burning-Candle* situation of career women, as men simply do "not make enough efforts to participate". This is so because, on one hand, women have walked out of the home to share the economic duty with men to earn for the family; on the other hand, however, men do not react in a corresponding way to share domestic burdens with their working wives (Wang, 2000). The narratives of interviewee-S point out the double burden and gender inequality in domestic labor division. However, what is interesting is that in addition to women's own contention against such injustice, a supportive and understanding voice from a male interviewee-Wm, the editor from a daily newspaper – is heard through his comments on the present gender division of labor at home as "unfair":

> *女性在社会生活中占的比例提高了，相应来说在家庭生活占的比例相应降低，那这一块来说，必须有人去补。男性在这一方面做出，应该，应该做一些补充。因为太太既然不是你自己能够养，既然要参与社会生活，要她去分担一些家庭的压力的话，那男性就应该在这方面做出一些补充做出一些事情，否则的话，这个不公平啊。* (Wm)

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With the increasing participation of women in social life, their participation in family life is correspondently decreasing. Therefore, the decreased family participation <u>should be made up by someone else</u>. Men <u>should make up for the share in this regard</u>. Since you cannot raise the family and your wife by yourself, that your wife has to participate in social work and share some economic pressure of the family, then the man <u>should make some efforts to share some domestic duty</u>. <u>Otherwise it is unfair</u>. *(Wm)*

The repetition of the modal verb "should" expresses the moral obligation as well as the necessity of action from male counterparts in tackling/relieving the work/family tension confronted by women. Nevertheless, it is the constant reference of this modal expression that reflects the still "unfair" construction in reality that men have not participated enough. It is interesting to note that in the linguistic realizations of the interview narratives where these practitioners hedge what they have to say, or where they are somewhat equivocal concerning certain constructs, there is a good deal of modality. On one hand, this reveals the extent to which the practitioners move between factuality and probability; while on the other hand, it shows the extent to which the interviewees are in a sense cautious about associating themselves too directly with these particular positions, in other words, that they are safeguarding their own identity. The struggle of practitioners of how to properly write about the complexity and dynamicity of a transitional society is also partly manifested through the use of modality (see later Chapter Seven Section 7.3.3).

It is also interesting to note from the discursive strategies of self- and other- presentation in the narratives, a contrast between intensification and mitigation (Reisigl and Wodak, 2001) by interviewee-S, a female editor (see previous extracts) and interviewee-Wm, a male editor (see the above extract) in commenting on the same issue of double standards for women. The analysis accordingly sheds light on how female and male practitioners position themselves differently in the interviews and which gender-specific characteristics are attributed to the interview interaction. The contrast between "have not done" and "should do" brings to surface the conflict of the present gender division of labor between husbands and wives, as both interviewee-Wm and interviewee-S mention in their narratives:

1) 有很多(男)人是<u>不愿意啊，这就有家庭矛盾了呀</u>。 *(Wm)*
There are many men who are <u>unwilling to</u> (share the domestic duty), <u>consequently</u> there arises the family <u>conflict</u>. *(Wm)*

2) 大家的思想<u>不在一个平台上</u>讲话，那个时候就会<u>有一些冲突出来</u>。 *(S)*
If their viewpoints <u>are not based on a same platform</u>, <u>accordingly</u> there will be some <u>conflicts</u>. (S)

Differently from the relatively more cynical critique on the struggling situation undergone by the *Third Type* woman as enunciated by interviewees S and Wm (both of whom are married

and have children), the reporter interviewee-Z (who is single) reckons the dual role of career woman to be an advantage:

> 我感觉现在肯定是<u>保持平衡</u>更贴切。我感觉有时候家庭不如意，她可以逃到工作里逃一逃，工作不如意，她可以逃到家庭里找老公的肩膀靠一靠。因为我身边很多人，在工作上受了气，然后回家发现有人可以安慰你; 在家里面（的一些冲突），然后到单位里可以忘掉一些不愉快。　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　(Z)
>
> *I think now <u>keeping the balance is definitely more proper to describe the work/family conflict that women experience</u>. I think that sometimes if she is unhappy in family, she can escape to her work; while if she is unhappy at work, she can go home and cry on the husband's shoulders. Because I know many women around who feel frustrated at work will be comforted at home and likewise they will forget the trifles at home when they go to work.* 　　　　　　　(Z)

In her opinion, interviewee-Z chooses *Keeping the Balance* as "a more proper description" for the dual roles of career women as in her narrative the conflicting dilemma between work identity and family identity of career women is re-conceptualized as a "happy switch" to complement each identity. The re-conceptualization here seems to encourage a different understanding of the dual burden from a more optimistic perspective. Even though the "happy switch" depends much upon the "willingness" of men to think based on "the same platform" (see above Extracts 1 and 2) with women in terms of gender identity re-construction, it at least reflects an alternative perspective from some younger women practitioners who are more proactive and autonomous in pursuing the freedom of individualism and internal values.

In the next section, the arising self-awareness of women, especially of the younger generation, is further examined in the light of dynamic social transformations in China, where traditional legacies and modern ideologies are confronted in re-defining women's identity.

7.2.3 Arising self-awareness

As discussed in Chapter Four Section 4.5 on "Emerging Awareness", an incipient focus on the self-identity of Chinese women is noted in the print media discourse, especially from the 2005 dataset of *WOC*. Since women's status in reality has been radically improved, an increasing number of women have begun to enjoy greater ambitions for personal achievement and to seek more freedom of self-assertion in a range of contexts and situations. However, according to Bi, given the influence of the far-reaching male-oriented discourse originating from Confucianism, from which traditional gender roles and rules are still "being copied" now in various ways, the younger generation of Chinese women feels inevitably

trapped in a struggle between the complex mixture of traditional heritage and modern awareness (Bi, 2005, p. 63).

7.2.3.1 Living with tradition

In the interviews, the question concerning the prevailing marrying maxim underpinned by the traditional labor division of "Men in charge of outside home whereas women in charge of inside the home" – *Marrying a good husband is better than having a good job* – was tested among the journalism practitioners. The conflicting reflections in their narratives reveal the changing perceptions of gender identity and highlight the ideological contestation underlying the *Leftover Lady* labeling in media discourses (the construction and production of this label is further investigated in the later section 7.3.3.1), which reminds us of the earlier discussions on "Embracing or Breaking" of tradition in Chapter Five Section 5.3.1. Living in a very different situation of social environment now, of course, these journalists and their perceptions are not looking back to the past. The question is how different their perceptions have shifted from the past – on one hand, everybody is living with their experiences of tradition, which still "rules" part of our identity; on the other hand, in a new era characteristic of individualism, the "breaking" of tradition is inevitable in the process of listening to the inner voice and seeking a new definition for measuring success.

The narratives from the practitioners are not unanimously in agreement or disagreement on the issue of the marrying maxim, but rather represent an interactive verbal construction process of the gender identity in contemporary marriage or match-making rules in China. Identities, beliefs and attitudes portrayed and revealed through narratives are thus "not given entities, static properties or finished projects", as Georgakopoulou suggests, but rather "practical accomplishments that are constructed- even deconstructed" in the "everyday flow of verbal interaction" (Georgakopoulou, 2006, p. 83). Accordingly, narrative accounts become then "sites of mediation", as Jones and Candlin suggest (Jones & Candlin, 2003, p. 201),

> Narrative accounts, then, are sites of mediation between intermental and intramental functioning, between beliefs and attitudes about the self and the circumstances of the external world. They are simultaneously 'replayings' of particular moments in time, and part of a larger 'reflexive organization of the self'.

The following pairs of extracts can be shown as examples of these narratives as sites of

dynamic mediation of beliefs and attitudes of these journalism practitioners, from which we note that the traditional influences underpinning the maxim are first widely acknowledged (Extracts 1a, 2a, 3a and 4a) and then set in contention against different understandings and personal experiences (Extracts 1b, 2b, 3b and 4b) of these women practitioners:

1a) 我觉得社会舆论好象是越来越流行了。 (W）
I think it is getting more popular now in the social discourse. (W)

1b)女性心里也有矛盾。只能干得好才能嫁得好。不可能自己一点基础没有，就想嫁得好。 (W）
There is also a conflict for women. Only if she is having a good job can she possibly be marrying a good husband. She cannot expect to marry a good husband if she has no establishment of her career.. (W)

2a) 这种说法还是很普遍的。 (D)
The maxim is still prevailing now. (D)

2b) 有的嫁得好，说不定男方会要求女方不工作，或者找一个比较闲的工作，然后一心顾家庭，反而会牺牲很多东西。而且现在婚姻也不是很稳定啦。你嫁得特别好，丈夫比你强势很多，然后你又会有一种不安定感。我觉得男性也有可能会觉得有点压抑的。 (D)
If someone is marrying a good husband, it is likely that the husband will ask the wife to quit job or find a rather casual job so as to focus on family role. Therefore she will sacrifice many things, not to mention the issue of the instability of contemporary marriages. What's more, if one's marrying a extremely good husband, with a husband much superior than you, you will feel a sense of insecurity. While on the other hand the man might also feel a sense of pressure (of raising a housewife). (D)

3a)（在现代社会）还是这样的。我个人觉得这就是个人选择。但是我不得不说，这个还是挺有道理的。我从一个很现实的角度来说，这个是挺有道理的。 (X)
It is still the case now. In my view it is a personal choice. But I have to say it is reasonable. From a very practical perspective, it is reasonable. (X)

3b)现代的人更多是追求干得好并且嫁得好吧。而不是说干得好不如嫁得好。更多的人，因为干得好之后，还是不太会放弃自我追求的，很多人还是会继续工作在事业上有所发展。男的也不一定会特别喜欢这样的女的。可能干得好同时也嫁得好，这样的女的比较独立，男的，会觉得比较能接受。 (X)
I think more modern women seek having a good job AND marrying a good husband, rather than marrying a good husband is better than having a good job. More women won't give up but continue their self pursuit in career after the marriage. On the other hand, men may not like women who endorse this maxim, in stead they tend to accept those who agree with having a good job AND marrying a good husband, as these women are more independent. (X)

4a)女人就想找一个比她更高更强的。这种配偶规律应该是普遍存在的。我周围的女性很多还是憧憬嫁得好的。 (Z)
Woman always wants a husband of higher and stronger qualifications. The matching rule is widespread. There are many women around me who still expect to marry a good husband. (Z)

4b) 我看到很多女性，干得也很好，嫁得也很好。需要聪明的女人。比如杨澜，干得好没有减损嫁得好，嫁得好干得更好。不是拆东墙补西墙，这两者是相辅相成，互相促进的。 (Z)
I see many women having good jobs and marrying good husbands too. It needs wisdom. For instance Lan YANG, her job is no harm to the marriage and her marriage further facilitates her career. The two things are not in the opposite ends but can be complementary to each other. (Z)

Firstly, the constant referencing of the adverb "still" (Extracts 2a, 3a and 4a) in the above narratives in juxtaposition with the list of synonyms of "popular" (Extract 1a), "prevailing" (Extract 2a) and "widespread" (Extract 4a) gives the impression that the traditional regulations of gender identity still exercise a significant impact on contemporary social recognition. The present tense usage of "woman wants a husband of higher and stronger qualifications" (Extract 4a) can be interpreted as implying the factuality of such impact. Topoi of justification of the conceptualization of reality are also formed through use of qualifying terms of the lexical words such as "practical" and "reasonable" (Extract 3a).

Secondly, in spite of the popularity of such a maxim endorsed by a large number of women, there is in fact a "conflicting" feeling towards the operation of the rule. As interviewee-W points out in her narrative, by adopting a conditional clause "only if…can she…" (Extract 1b) that the establishment of one's career, namely, having a good job now becomes a means to an end of marrying a good husband. While it is of considerable interest to hear in another narrative of interviewee-Z, that marrying a "good" husband actually "further facilitates" (Extract 4b) her career, this reveals a sense in which the end is shifted to become the means. Interviewee-Z re-phrases the maxim into "having a good job AND marrying a good husband" as she believes the two ends are "complementary" (Extract 4b) to each other as exemplified by "many women". This re-conceptualization is also reinforced by interviewee-X in her narrative through the comparative usage of "more women…rather than" structure. According to interviewee-X, women holding to this new amended maxim are more "acceptable" to men as they are "more independent" and therefore pose less "pressure" on the husbands (Extract 3b). As a matter of fact, if a woman has to "focus on family role" and "sacrifice many" (Extract 2b) after marrying a good husband, the uneven qualifications between husband and wife usually give rise to "a sense of pressure" felt by men and "a sense of insecurity" by women, and consequently contribute to the "instability of contemporary marriages" (Extract 2b), as observed by interviewee-D in her narrative.

The changing complex of perceptions vis-à-vis the golden rule can be further exemplified in the hot topic or phenomenon of *Leftover Lady* in China, as is argued in interviewee-D's narrative:

女性现在比较挑的这种...她本身比较优秀的话，她一方面就是希望男性要比她强一点，另外一方面，又不希望男性比她强，因为你和一个太强势的人在一起，自己也会觉得很压抑的。这个本身自己就蛮矛盾的。 *(D)*
They (Leftover Ladies) are being relatively picky because….if she is excellent herself, she may be

This represents a "conflicting" dilemma for those outstanding career women in choosing their spouses – for, according to the maxim, they are looking for someone "even better", whereas as a consequence of their career achievements and their more independent personality, they are not expecting someone "much better" – rather, that they are trapped between cultural heritage and modern values of individuality. This is indeed the crucial reason proposed by Jiang for more and more elite career women "being left over" in the contemporary marriage market (Jiang, 2009, p. 27). However, the word "picky" in the above extract also reveals the journalist's stance in categorizing *Leftover Ladies* in the media discourses, namely, that most media tend to attribute the cause to the picky attitude adopted by these ladies concerning potential partners, rather than to the "big" social atmosphere and the prevailing ideologies concerning marriage. Such a stance is misleading in a way for the social recognition directed towards this certain group (Liu, 2010, p. 68) as the label is often considered "derogative", as observed by interviewee-W in the following narrative:

剩女也是贬义。有的人是被动剩下的，有的人是主动剩下的。传统的影响还在的。
(W)
(The label of) Leftover Lady is in its derogative usage. Some are passively left, and some choose to be left. The traditional influence still remains. (W)

In additional to the active "choice" that these Ladies make as a result of new liberal feminism and individualism in contemporary Chinese society, interviewee-W straightforwardly points outs the main cause of the phenomenon as being that of "the traditional influence", which accounts for the "passive" status of women in this context. Because everyone living in a society is more or less inescapably bound to their cultural heritage, as a consequence their positions and recognitions of the world and self such as gender relationship and gender identity are imprinted with "naturalized" social norms (Wu & Wang, 2006). For instance, in the following narrative from a male editor of daily newspaper, interviewee-Wm frankly confesses his perception of women's ideal identity in terms of traditional division, although expressed in a prudent and circumspect manner:

现在目前社会环境来说呢，其实是应该重心放在家庭更多一些。因为母亲，尤其在中国社会，母亲对孩子的影响非常大的。所以我觉得相对来说，我不敢说是 50 对 50，我只能说相对来说他的重心放在家庭方面需要更多一些。有相当一部分的人是这么想的，但是也有持不同意见的。都有。但是，相对来说呢，比例，像我这样想法的比例可能更高一些。因为我是基于中国传统文化的原因而过来的。并不是说我一个人的原因。每一个人都会受到文

化的影响嘛。   *(Wm)*
As far as the present social environment is concerned, women should in fact focus more on family.
Because a mother, especially in Chinese society, has a very big impact on her kids. Therefore <u>in my</u>
<u>opinion</u>, <u>relatively speaking</u>, I can not say 50 to 50, but the focus of a woman <u>should</u> be shifted <u>I</u>
<u>mean relatively speaking</u> more to family side. There are <u>quite a lot of people agreeing with this</u>, and
some others disagreeing. But <u>relatively speaking</u>, the proportion of people agreeing with me <u>may be</u>
<u>higher</u>. <u>It is not what I personally think, it is because I am growing up in Chinese traditional</u>
<u>culture. Surely every body is affected by cultural heritages.</u>   *(Wm)*

As Bi points out, most men favor the "good wife/mother" type over the career superwoman when choosing a spouse under the conventional influence of "men in charge of outside home whereas women inside home" (Bi, 2005, p. 64). The repetition of modal verb "should" in the above extract reveals such moral obligation on a woman's family role as expected from a male perspective as well as from "the present social environment", just as at the end of the extract Wm attributes such recognition to the cultural influence that "affects everybody". However as a senior journalist practitioner exercising due professional caution in his phrasing and claiming, Wm tries to avoid making an absolute statement in his narrative by consistently referencing "relatively speaking" (three times) when making claims concerning the family focus of woman's identity because the narrative discourses seen as a matter of statements of opinion tend to be marked by a subjective stance towards the material. That stance could be conveyed by adding explanatory parentheses or expressions such as "in my opinion" and "I mean" (see above extract), which contribute to the epistemic modality of the discourse concerning how certain or uncertain the speaker wants to suggest they are about what they are saying (Simpson, 1993).

According to Talmy, it is important to conceive the research interview as social practice, accordingly, instead of displaying interviewee-Wm's answers as "de-contextualized reports, stripped of interactional context", the data should be representations or accounts of truths, attitudes and beliefs "co-constructed" between interviewer and interviewee (Talmy, 2011, p.35). In this sense, the amendment of interviewee-Wm's statement in the above example with the constant mitigation of the tone and explanatory parenthesis also indicates his orientation to the interactional context and to his interlocutor as a woman seeking a male voice on women issues. The next extract further underscores the influence of both interview context and interlocutors on the design of his answer:

<u>我没有觉得男性的成功是事业的成功。我觉得一个人，他自己觉得自己个人价值的实现，</u>
<u>这是一种成功。 更重要的是，对家庭氛围的营造，也是一种成功。两种兼有的。女性也是</u>
<u>一样的。我觉得男性和女性在这方面应该是一样的，不存在谁应该在事业上，谁应该在家</u>
<u>庭上。这个是不应该存在的。</u>   *(Wm)*
<u>I don't think career success is defined as a success for men</u>. I think the realization of one's <u>self</u>

value is a success. What's more important is that the establishment of family atmosphere is a success too. (Men) should cover both. So do women. I think men and women are the same in this regard. It should not be the case that someone should focus on career and the other should focus on family. It should not be the case.   (Wm)

The "sameness" of covering both family and career roles between men and women, the definition of realizing self-value as a success and interviewee-Wm's acknowledgement of the family orientation of this definition are reiterated. From the formation of the narrative flow we may recognize his initial difficulties in formulating success for women and his struggle with the original question of "double standard for career women" – both of which are not simply "reports" of what interviewee-Wm feels or believes. Rather he displays appreciation and professional prudence in that he is negotiating some delicate topical and interactional terrain in this part of the interview. Goffman's dual account of the self – the performed character and the performer (Goffman, 1959) provides a way of investigating how interview participants deploy semiotic resources – including language – to (mis)manage their interests through the risks encountered in routine interaction. Because each person's face depends on and is vulnerable to the perceptions of others, interaction involves the management of these perceptions in a constant process of "mutual monitoring" (Goffman, 1964, p. 134) in which each person operates simultaneously as a performer and an audience, attending to, and seeking to adjust to their best advantage the way they align themselves to others and frame what is going on (Goffman, 1981). The statement that "It should not be the case that someone should focus on career and the other should focus on family" in the above example actually contradicts the earlier claim made by interviewee-Wm in categorizing the ideal women's identity as family-oriented. Interviewee-Wm's dual selves – the private self as a man "affected by cultural heritages" (see the earlier extract by Wm) and the situated self as being interviewed as a senior editor of a news daily are consequently demonstrated through his contradictory statements. Accordingly the negotiation and contradiction in his narratives can be interpreted as revealing the struggle between the powerful traditional legacy and modern liberal thoughts on gender identity reconstruction by men, as well as by women.

In the next section, a significant contemporary shift towards individual values and internal pursuits among women, especially among the younger generation, is noted in the narratives from journalism practitioners.

7.2.3.2 Value of individualism

Resonating with the discussion earlier in Chapter Four Section 4.5 on the "Emerging

Awareness" of self-identity, the increasing importance attached to women's self-identity is also reflected in the journalist narratives on measuring the marrying maxim – *Marrying a good husband is better than having a good job*. For instance in the following extract, interviewee-S considers that the followers of the maxim are taking a "huge risk":

具体采访一个女性你婚姻中遇到什么问题，然后在中国<u>高离婚率的当下，其实我们心里面还是觉得要靠自己</u>。有人认为<u>干得好是嫁得好的前提，但一旦嫁得好就不能干得好了。因为从很悲观的角度而言，你干得好你一辈子可以干得好，你嫁得好这个是有风险的，这个风险很大，而且不可控的。</u>
(S)

When interviewing a woman about the issues in her marriage, <u>actually we know in our heart that we should rely on ourselves</u>, especially under the circumstances of <u>high divorce rates in contemporary Chinese society. Some women <u>regard having a good job a prerequisite to marrying a good husband,</u> however, once married a good husband, she will not be able to keep the good job any more. <u>From a pessimistic view, if you do have a good job, you can have a good job for the rest of your life, whereas marrying a good husband is risky, and the risk is huge and uncontrollable.</u>
(S)

In the above narrative, the risk is seen as "huge" and "uncontrollable", because in the opinion of many contemporary women, the previous dependence of a women's identity upon her husband in terms of traditional ideology is being subverted by both women's own growing confidence from economic independence and the "pessimistic" social reality of 'high divorce rates". The adverb "actually" in juxtaposition with the adverbial expression "in our heart" reveals the fact that self-reliance is not merely a slogan deriving from administrative expectations on women, previously discussed in Chapter Six Section 6.3.1 on the "Four Self" spirit, but has already become a principle imprinted in the consciousness of any contemporary career woman who is in search of an independent self-identity in terms of economy and spirit. The arising individualism in constructing contemporary women's identity can also be well exemplified in the tension between young couples with regard to the essential stance on the gender labor division based on the marrying maxim:

我们父母一辈，<u>对这个会比较认同一点。然后反而不会有那么多矛盾。80 后都是独生子女，在这上面矛盾会多一点。</u>
(D)

The generation of our parents <u>may agree more with this maxim, so that they have fewer conflicts. For the generation born in the 80s, who is the only child from each family they <u>will have more conflicts in this regard</u>.
(D)

The older generation, more deeply affected by traditional ideologies on gender identity, tends to enjoy more of a "harmony" at home as they "agree more with the maxim" and accordingly the prescribed labor division. However, among the younger generation in present-day Chinese society, comprised mostly of an only child being raised in each family, since the time of the 1980s (see reference to the One-Child policy in Chapter Four Section 4.5.1), conflict

inevitably arises with regard to issues such as the re-allocation of domestic roles between gender and the work/family dilemma for women. On the one hand, a new generation of women growing up in a social environment of more liberal thoughts and in the administration of One-Child policy adoption enjoys greater freedom of valuing individualism and developing a self-identity other than the previous foregrounded family identity and work identity; whereas on the other, the freedom and development of such self-identity "contradicts" the traditional definition of a woman's family role. Consequently the ideological contestations in the discourses are seen as underlying the tensions experienced by young couples in terms of domestic labor division, as is shown and emphasized in the above contrastive expressions of "fewer" and "more conflicts in this regard" between the generations.

In the interviews where the question of measuring success or defining a model for contemporary women is being asked, most journalism practitioners tend not to give a definite explanation as they appear to reckon that in a modern society characterized by diversity the previous single definition for success and the absolute categorization of models are "outdated". Accordingly, they adopt a more equivocal, or perhaps more open-minded attitude towards variety and individuality. For instance, interviewee-D points out in her narratives that success "is so hard to define" in terms of present social recognition:

也比较多元化，你很难讲什么是成功。 (D)
It is relatively more diverse, so that it is so hard to define success. (D)

According to Tan & Xiao's survey, contemporary Chinese women, especially the younger generation, do not want to "copy" the success of anyone else, as many of them hold a high respect for individuality, and strive to listen to their inner voices (Tan & Xiao, 2009, p. 40). Hence it is worthwhile to note in the narratives some interesting comments about how people felt about their inner selves in seeking a state of success, as noted in the following extract:

成功这个定义我们应该向内寻找。而不是向外在寻找。因为外在的东西永远是会在变动的。然后你往外去贪恋，你永远不知道成功是什么。就迷失了。但是你如果向内去寻找，一种内心的平静啊…一种幸福感啊，你往内去寻找，这种东西是比较恒定的。只要你达到这种状态，我认为成功应该是一种心理的状态。地位？金钱？都无法定义内心的感觉。 (Z)
We should go inwardly to seek definition of success, not outwardly. Because things outward are always changing, if you go outward to seek, you will never know what success is and be lost. But if you seek internally, an internal peace… happiness, it is something stable, if you seek inwardly. If you reach this state, I think you are successful because it is in fact a mental state. Status? Money? None of them can define the feeling inside. (Z)

The consistent referencing of synonymous expressions "inwardly", "internally", "internal" and "inside" reveals a new tendency to value individual choice experienced by many contemporary Chinese, a tendency which runs rather contrary to historical positions where slogans such as "Forget Self" were advocated as evidence of an honorable and heroic spirit in the context of vigorous national construction (see Chapter Four Section 4.2.3). Other than following some previous categorizations of so called "outstanding" women models distant from people's daily life experiences, according to Tan & Xiao what Chinese women recognize in contemporary social environment as their model is those women around them, who are living "faithfully" to themselves (Tan & Xiao, 2009, p. 39).

In the narratives by interviewee-Z in the above extract, success is no longer measured by outward signs such as "status" or "money", but rather is re-conceptualized as "a state of mind" towards "an internal peace, happiness". In the light of living in a time of rapid transition and complex social transformation, such peace of mind and sense of "stability" may be something that prevents people from being "lost" in the "always changing" outward conceptualizations of reality. Resonating with the earlier claim in Chapter Four Section 4.5.5 on "Happiness of Being Herself", the state of being able to be oneself and indeed to be a happy self is picked up again in the narratives from journalist practitioners and proposed as a contemporary ideal of pursuit for Chinese women:

> *我个人认为你自己觉得很舒服很自在，才可能树立自己在家庭或者在事业上的形象。首先和自己相处的好，然后才是你的社会角色，你的家庭角色，我觉得那是一个理想的状态，就是你自己觉得很开心很舒服。* (S)
> *I personally think that if you feel comfortable and at ease of yourself, you can then establish family or career images. Firstly one should be getting along well with herself, then with her social role or family role. To be happy and comfortable with yourself is an ideal state, in my opinion.* (S)

In the above narratives by S, the conditional clause of "if…then" followed by the syntactic pattern of "firstly …then" reveals the priority placement of self-identity construction ahead of women's family and career roles, in a manner different from the findings based on the print media texts under scrutiny in Chapter Four. The repetition of synonymous expressions such as "comfortable", "at ease" and "happy" serves to highlight such priority as "an ideal state" in the consciousness of many contemporary women.

In the following extract, interviewee-S says that when she writes reports on women characters, she tends to "avoid" the actual term of "success", as the new definition for success is seen based more on the state of being "happy" and "comfortable" than on previously so-called "achievements". This can be seen as an appeal to the earlier claim of

interviewee-Z in redefining success as internally-oriented,

我在写稿的过程中<u>我会避免使用成功的字眼</u>，她比如说会是一个很自在很舒服的人，比如说一个大老板、出色的女性，<u>我会很避免使用成功</u>。<u>很多人都避免说我这辈子最大的成功是什么，她们会感觉我挺快乐的，就成功了</u>。 *(S)*
In my writing the reports, I <u>will avoid using the term "success"</u>. When reporting on an outstanding woman such as a female boss, I <u>will try to avoid the word "success"</u>, as they usually describe themselves as <u>free and comfortable people</u>. Many people <u>will avoid using achievements for summarizing their life as in their opinion if they feel happy, they are successful then.</u> *(S)*

The consistent reference to the modal verb "will" serves to express volition on the part of practitioners and people in general about the present measurement of success focused on a contented self-identity construction, as observed in the journalist narratives. It also reveals a conspicuous shift in the value system of contemporary Chinese women towards individualism amidst the co-existence of complex multiple identity choices. In the next section, the production of the multiple presentations is examined in terms of various media positions, gender differences in professional distribution and struggles of practitioners in creating the media reports.

7.3 Creating Women's Identity in Media

Defining gender as discourse leads to the question of what "role" the media play in gender discourse and how that role is realized. According to van Zoonen, the relation between gender and communication is primarily a cultural one, as a negotiation over meanings and values that inform whole ways of life (van Zoonen, 1994). Language in news media structures the representation of what is going on in the world – how stories are selected; how they are organized; and how they are presented. A question central to critical linguistics and to critical discourse analysis is how far, in appearing to report news, "does the process of selecting and representing news shape the news that is reported" (Durant & Lambrou, 2009, p. 85).

In terms of the perspective of media production, there is one prominent factor engaging the media industry in China over the period between 1995 and 2005, and certainly since 2005, namely the issue of the marketplace. At the outset of this study, we looked at women of China as presented in both *PD* and *WOC* in 1995 when the market was not an issue, noticing that at that period there was considerable similarity shared between these two types of media discourses in terms of reporting genre and themes, as evidenced by the data analysis and

discussion in Chapter Four. Whereas, when presentations of women's identity in 2005 are examined, the division becomes more conspicuous as *PD* persists in its function of a national propaganda organ while *WOC* has been renewed and reconstructed to cater more for its readership and the marketplace.

Another significant factor concerning the production of media in China is that according to the statistics from Xinhua News Agency (2012), the percentage of women professionals in the news media industry accounts for 41% of total journalists with the highest percentage of women working at journals and magazines. What is more, among all the 1300 journalists issued with new-edition press cards, more than 700 are women. Accordingly, it is relatively safe to arrive at the conclusion that in the field of news media, women journalists have already "held up half the sky" (*Zhongguo xinwen rencai duiwu jianshe*, 2012).

> 近年来，新闻从业女性数量上升。   *(H)*
> *In recent years, the number of women professional in journalism is increasing.*   *(H)*

As Bell points out, it is important for news audiences to know something of how the news products they consume are manufactured (Bell, 1998). With an "increasing" number of women practitioners in frontline journalism "in recent years" as noted by interviewee-H, it is interesting to propose a number of questions under study – are there any changes in terms of the media orientation in constructing women's identity between different media sources? Do women write women's identity in a more sensitive way? Does cultural heritage still have an impact on the practitioners of both genders in creating the media texts, and to what extent?

7.3.1 Typical Character Report – *PD* and *WOC*

In the interviews, when the questions of the impression formed on the genre of Typical Character Report and on differences between *PD* and *WOC* were proposed to the journalism practitioners, many of them considered the genre and *PD* as rather "political", as, in their words, it usually involves "instructions from the higher administrations" (see following Extract 2):

> 1)看过一些(PD)，它们在政治方面的需求更高一些，"高大全"，爱国奉献，这些都是来自于战争时期和革命建设时期的这么一种报道的方式，直到现在它们依然保持这样一种方式，所以它写出来的...在市场上读者引起共鸣很少。因为它塑造的人物不够全面，它很片面，这样一个人物。   *(Wm)*
> *I read some PD, whose reporting genre characterized by "High, Big, Complete" and "patriotic*

contributions" coming from times of war and revolutionary construction and still preserved till now are more out of political needs. Therefore what it reports....seldom arouses sympathy among readers in the market. Because the character it portrays is incomplete, and very one-sided. (Wm)

2) 看一些(PD)。有些因素，比如上级领导指示。新闻都讲究要素的嘛，要几个要素都要全，那这些要素，一旦涉及到这些要素。比较宏观，比较官方的字眼。我自己因为工作关系看的。但看的读者群越来越少了。 (W)

I read some PD. There are some factors such as instructions from the higher administrations. There are certain elements in news report, which have to be covered. While as far as the key elements (in PD) are concerned, they are relatively more microscopic and official jargon. I read them because of my profession. But the readership (of PD) is decreasing. (W)

3) 不太会有共鸣。说实话，真是没有什么普通人会看人民日报的。没有竞争关系。它是它的发行渠道，不需要参与市场竞争。它的内容完全是根据政治的要求来定。 (X)

There is seldom sympathy (from the readers). In fact, there are not many ordinary people reading PD. It has no competitors, as it has its own distribution channels free from market competition. Its topics are completely dependent upon political needs. (X)

In the above narratives, the genre of "High, Big, Complete" 典型人物报道 *dianxing renwu baodao,* typical character reports "coming from times of war and revolutionary construction" are regarded as outdated among the readers as the reports "seldom arouse sympathy among readers" (Extracts1 and 3) and consequently have a "decreasing" readership (Extract 2). According to Wu and Liu, as the traditional landmark outlet of the Party's voices, *PD* is regarded as an obsolete and unpopular newspaper genre among young readers (Wu & Liu, 2001). However, in spite of its "incomplete, one-sided" (Extract 1) portraits and "microscopic and official jargon" (Extract 2), the genre is "still preserved till now" (Extract 1) by *PD,* because of the persistent orientation of "political needs" (Extracts1 and 3) of the media, which is resonant with the earlier analysis and discussion of the print media texts in the earlier Vignette 4.2-(1) on "High, Big, Complete" Typical Character Report. As interviewee-Wm points out in his narratives that one of the main "political needs" of official media is to establish "positive" identities or models for readers to follow:

它有存在的必要性，因为它必须要树立一个正面形象。而且这个正面形象的确是存在的。因为社会常规的都市媒体报道可能存在负面性倾向，或者说不公正的形象比较多，还是需要有个正面的这么一个报道，来维持这样一个态势吧。我觉得它们还是需要存在的。 (Wm)
It has the necessity to exist. Because it must establish a positive model, which in fact exists in real life. While many social media in urban cities may have a tendency to report more on the negative aspects and identities, it is necessary to have such reports from a positive perspective and maintain the social stability. I think there is still a necessity for such reports. (Wm)

The "necessity" of the genre is further legitimized through the reiterated expressions of modality such as "must", "it is necessary…", and "a necessity", and through the repeated qualifying emphasis on the "positive" direction in maintaining the "social stability" – which in fact has been set as a priority task for the administrative agenda in dealing with complex

transformations in contemporary China (see *Harmonious Society* in Chapter Four Sections 4.3.1.2 and Chapter Six Section 6.3.2). The advocacy of certain established identities can be seen as an appeal to earlier claims from the governmental/official documents in Chapter Six Section 6.3 of this thesis on establishing "*Half the Sky*" as the identity model for Chinese women. It is observed that the key words and concepts in *PD* become widespread and popular among ordinary people through the strategy of frequent reiteration in the media discourses as well as in the national/political discourses – examples include "半边天 *ban bian tian*, Half the Sky", "小康社会 *xiao kang she hui*, Well-off society", "三个代表 *san ge dai biao*, Three Representatives" and "和谐社会 *he xie she hui*, Harmonious Society" etc. ("Dudong Zhongguoketi", 2012). According to Baker, keywords not only point to the existence of discourses, but they help reveal the rhetorical techniques that are used in order to present discourses as common sense or the correct ways of thinking (Baker, 2006, p. 148). As the mouthpiece of the Party (CPC), *PD* has a far-reaching influence in guiding regimented thoughts and establishing a core value system in social recognition in China through imposing on readers the acquisition process of key lexical phrases and themes (Schmitt, 2010).

According to available statistics, ranking as the second largest in circulation volume of daily newspapers in China, *PD* has a daily circulation volume of 2.8 million (Introduction of *PD*, 2010). The number does not strike any surprise among the interviewed journalism practitioners, because the important reason behind its high circulation, as pointed out by interviewee-X in the previous extract, is the unique "market-free" distribution channel of *PD* – it has no competitor at all since it is solely distributed through the official system throughout various administrative levels.

Differently from *PD* which is not much affected or driven by the market, *WOC* and other relatively more popular media put readership and the market as their first concerns, as is pointed out in the narratives of interviewee-S and interviewee-X:

> 我们很大一部分<u>是迎合读者，知道读者最喜欢想知道什么</u>。　　　　　　*(S)*
> *We are <u>mainly catering for readers, of what they like and what they want to know</u>.　(S)*

> (报道<u>时尚的女性</u>)<u>肯定是从市场和发行来考虑的。因为读者喜欢看</u>。　　　(X)
> *(Reporting <u>fashionable</u> women) <u>is definitely out of consideration of market and distribution.</u>*
> <u>*Because readers love reading them*</u>.　　　　　　　　　　　　　　*(X)*

This readership-focus and market-orientation are reflected through the verbal expression

"cater…for" and the cause-effect structure "out of consideration of…because…" The adverbial modifiers "mainly" and "definitely" can be interpreted as a further emphasis on the priority of readers and market in producing media discourses. In the above narratives from interviewee-X, we see that "fashion" has already become one big interest for readers of popular newspapers and magazines in China. And what else the readers "like and want to know" as well as "love reading" is accordingly revealed in the following extracts:

更关注<u>成功时尚的</u>女性形象。 (W)
We pay more attention to <u>women identities of success and fashion.</u> (W)

女性媒体的焦点转向<u>时尚、健康、美容</u>是大气候。 (N)
It is a trend that the focus of women's media is shifting towards <u>fashion, cosmetics and health.</u> (N)

<u>白骨精</u>是我们关注的对象，同时也是我们的目标读者。 (X)
<u>Bu-gu-jin</u>—white collar, backbone, elites—is who we focus, as well as our target readers. (X)

In addition to the category of the "fashionable" women, the image of a "successful" "elite" is becoming another focus of media reports on contemporary women models. *白骨精 Bu-gu-jin* – white collar, backbone and elites, as previously discussed in Chapter Four Section 4.2.4 on "Transformation of work model", gives the impression of combining both career achievements and fashionable appearance, regarded as a main departure from the traditional work model of the somewhat masculinized "superwoman". On the other hand, *Bu-gu-jin* also represents a women's group within the contemporary backbone social class – the urban middle class characterized by possession of some wealth and presenting some individual personality, which falls into the scope of both main portraits and the target readers of the urban media industry. Consequently, as interviewee-X in the above extract points out, *Bu-gu-jin* becomes the focus of urban journalism especially that of women's popular magazines in representing and constructing women's identity, as that is the source of their revenue and that is where their readers are.

The shift to the new model *Bu-gu-jin* is in fact evidenced by the earlier discussion in Chapter Four of the thesis through the comparative analysis of *WOC* between 1995 and 2005 data. According to Luo and Hao, although starting as an official woman's magazine, *WOC* has made efforts to catch up with the market as its reporting discourses faithfully and vividly reflect social changes over the past decades (Luo & Hao, 2005). The impact of the market on *WOC* can also be demonstrated by the statistics from Women of China Magazine Office – the magazine won the awards of "National Magazine" in 2003 and 2005, and in 2007 the

circulation volume hit 800,000 (Zhongguo Funu Zazhishe Jianjie, 2007).

Since the focus for the popular newspapers and women's magazines is essentially on a kind of urban middle class, they do not feel any responsibility for reflecting China in general. Whereas *PD* is, after all, an organ of the national government, it still retains certain responsibilities in terms of coverage, for example, that it should cover as far as possible a wide range of national groupings, as interviewee-D makes clear in the interviews:

> 它有<u>比较丰富的采访资源</u>。采访的人物可能重合。<u>采访的角度会不太一样。不受市场影响那么多</u>。<u>覆盖的（包括）城市，农民，上层精英，普通平民等</u>。　　　（D）
> *It (PD) has <u>richer reporting resources.</u> The characters may be somewhat overlapping in both popular media and official media yet <u>the reporting perspectives will be different</u> as PD is <u>not much influenced by the market</u>. And PD reports <u>cover more extensively from urban areas to rural areas, from elites to ordinary grassroots people.</u>　　　(D)*

The choice of women reported is a way in which national media such as *PD* try to reflect regional, cultural, and class diversity. However some of the practitioners' comments express concern about the ways in which this is done. On one hand, "richer resources" better facilitate the "extensive coverage" of women's identities; on the other hand, the political needs of the media are legitimated through the "different perspectives" that are free of "market influence" – in consequence, a more panoramic picture of Chinese women's identities at large is presented to justify the objectivity of the conceptualization of reality in *PD*'s discourses. However, it might be expected that the groupings are in some sense monotonous, because of *PD*'s deep-seated "political needs" to advocate role models in a top-down way from administrative authorities to social recognition and for mass ordinary readers to follow. In the next extract, interviewee-X argues that the portraits of women in official media such as *PD* tend to be constructed as "stereotypical" characters:

> <u>官方媒体可能会挑一个典型</u>，一个母亲为自己的孩子怎么付出啊，<u>挺爱挑这种的…比较脸谱化的形象</u>。　　　(X)
> *<u>Official media may present a stereotype</u>, such as a woman devoting much to her child. They l<u>ove to choose this kind of…relatively more stereotypical identity.</u>　　　(X)*

Nevertheless, this kind of report is considered somewhat distant from ordinary people because compared to other popular media, the official discourse is not seen as so "humane" or "natural" with regard to women's image projections, as interviewee-W, an editor from an urban popular newspaper, argues regarding the different reporting positions between popular media and official media:

…

（我们更倾向于）比较人性化、自然化的报道。 (W)
(We tend to) report in a <u>more humane and natural perspective.</u> (W)

The arguable distance from the readership and market of official media is also reflected in the earlier discussions on the genre of Typical Character Report in the Vignette 4.2-(1). According to interviewee-S, the distance is partly explained by the differentiating representational focus and readership of the two types of media:

<u>各有各的权威，各有各的方向。现在是一个小众的社会，女性典型多样化，生活方式很多元。PD 比较一元。普通大众而言，想找一个体现小众群体的媒体。</u> (S)
The two types of media have <u>different authority and authenticity</u>. It is now <u>a society of small mass rather than mass mass</u>. Typical women's identity is <u>diversified with multiple choices of lifestyle</u>. PD may be <u>relatively more monotonous</u> in terms of its construction. For the ordinary mass readers, <u>what they expect is a kind of media representing the varied small masses</u>. (S)

Because Chinese contemporary society is characterized by its "diversity" and "multiplicity", the "monotonous" construction of women's identity in the discourses of *PD* can no longer meet the expectations from the mass readership as they are in search of "a media representing the varied small masses". As pointed out by interviewee-S, "small mass" becomes the mainstream presentational focus of media production against the backdrop of complex diversity in modern society, especially in urban areas. The previous "monotony" of identity construction which used to serve as a potent media strategy for propaganda has lost its magic power in the present market-oriented media industry full of fierce competition.

While *PD* is constrained to present a kind of national view and to serve certain political needs, *WOC* to some extent, like other popular media, is driven by its market, but not obviously entirely so. If we look back to 1995, and then look at 2005 until now, what we find, as based on the analysis and findings in Chapter Four of this thesis, is that some of the similarities between the two media which were very significant at the beginning, have become less significant now, whereas some of the oppositions which were not so conspicuous at the beginning, have become more conspicuous now. The discourses in many popular newspapers and magazines, such as *WOC,* have been overlain with issues which now are much more dynamic, complex and differentiated, with the result that simpler categorizing identities have been replaced by a much more complex inter-discursive environment.

What these selected narratives indicate is a sense from the journalists that while they are trying to reject on the one hand the monotonous national/official position, on the other hand they are struggling to write about this now much more complex discursive environment in

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order to present what their readers want. As interviewee-Wm, a senior editor of an urban news daily, states in his narratives about the "agony" confronted by the writers of media texts:

有又想偏精英，又想多报道大众的矛盾心理。这个经常存在。要反映现实，但是同时又要反映这样一个趋向性的东西，这个的确存在这样一个痛苦。 *(Wm)*
There is a constant dilemma of focusing more on the elites or representing more of the mass public. It is indeed an agony as we want to represent social reality on one hand, and meanwhile to reflect a tendency of focus on elites on the other hand. *(Wm)*

The words "dilemma" and "agony" together with the modifiers "constant" and "indeed" reveal the conflict between the media representational objective and the function of catering for the readers, as experienced by these journalism practitioners. The struggle in writing and producing media discourses is further investigated later in Section 7.3.3. In the next section, we first examine the rise of women professionals in journalism practice and its possible impact on the media presentation of women's identity.

7.3.2 **The rise of professional women**

In many countries, direct gender discrimination against women is prohibited by law and many countries have installed some kind of affirmative action policy to facilitate the entrance of women and minorities into the media industries. In the interviews with the journalism practitioners, when the question of women's participation in professional practice was posed, most of them agreed with the fact that the percentage of professional women is increasing to the extent of reaching a "majority" in terms of quantity. Examples from the narratives include:

女性从业者人数，远远超过了(男性)。 *(Wm)*
The number of women professionals is much bigger than that of men. *(Wm)*

女性还是比较多的。超过一半。 *(D)*
The number of women professional is relatively bigger, more than half. *(D)*

复旦新闻学院，几十个女生，7，8 个男生，进了媒体之后，男生更少了。新闻从业者基本上被女性所把持了。新闻学院就是这样一个例子，它是输送记者的源头。 *(Z)*
Take School of Journalism in Fudan University for instance, there are around 50 female students and only 7 or 8 male students. After they enter the practice, there are even fewer male professional. Journalist practice is basically dominated by women professionals. The School of Journalism is one such example as it is a source for journalist output. *(Z)*

The comparative usage of "big" modified by the adverbial expressions such as "much", "relatively" and "more than half", as well as the contrastive number of students of different gender in School of Journalism, juxtaposed with the passive use of the verb "be dominated by" in the above extracts all demonstrate that women have "basically" held up half the sky in

the media industry, at least numerically speaking. Based on the percentage of female journalism students, according to interviewee-Z it is not unexpected that there are certainly more women among frontline journalists than before. In the context of journalism, some editors believe having women in a newsroom makes a difference (Marzolf, 1993).

However, the inequalities faced by women in the media industries are mostly brought about by indirect discrimination, which – by being less visible – tends to be more difficult to contest. For instance, two issues are revealed from the narratives about the increasing number of women professionals. One relates to the management level which may still be very male-dominated as these practitioners observe from their interviews:

男性在领导中占多数。   *(Wm)*
Men are the majority in the management.   *(Wm)*

（女性在）上层领导层，比较少。,   *(D)*
However in the upper management level, there are only a few women.   *(D)*

领导还是男性多。   *(Z)*
In terms of management, there are more men than women.   *(Z)*

The contrastive expressions of "a few" with "more than" and "majority" reveal a rather different composition of women's participation at management levels in contrast to the frontline situation, which actually places a question mark against the earlier assertion of women professionals holding up "half the sky" in journalism practice. Despite the large number of women practitioners in the industry, all kinds of organization procedures and routines have led to the situation where it is still men that dominate the leadership (Shen, 2005). According to the survey undertaken by Chen and Bu, in China the percentage of professional women in the high-ranking management levels of journalism is only 4.4% in 1995, and 9.6% in middle level management (Chen & Bu, 1996). The statistics of the follow-up survey in 2005 revealed a similar scarcity of women and an absolute dominance of men in all organizations and institutions of journalism (Chen, 2005) (also see discussion of the "glass ceiling" in Chapter Five Section 5.2.1). For instance, in the following extracts interviewee-W contends that it is the "absolute" male "dominance" at the executive level rather than the quantitative "majority" of feminine participation that will "certainly affect the reporting perspective" of the media, and interviewee-S observes that the reporting style is dependent more upon the style determined top-down from "management" rather than the actual gender of the reporters:

我觉得，数量上女性居多，主导方面是男性来主导。领导层是男性多，绝对多。会影响报纸的报导角度。　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　*（W）*
In my opinion, numerically speaking there are more women professionals, but men are still the dominant decision makers. In the management level, men account for the absolute majority, which will certainly affect the reporting perspective.　　　　　　　　　　　　*(W)*

报道风格和领导风格有关，和(报道人)性别不太大关。　　　　　　　　　　　　　*(S)*
The reporting style is more related with management style than with gender of the reporters.　*(S)*

Even when female reporters enter newsrooms, the content of news does not necessarily become more gender sensitive. From the above extracts, one can see the limitations of simply increasing the number of female journalists in the newsroom without fundamentally challenging the way news works (Byerly & Ross, 2006). In this sense, women's interests as a social group is defined primarily by the journalistic principle of balance rather than by an explicitly feminist politics. Interviewee-Wm further points out that the key issue of gender equality/inequality in journalism practice is underlined by the "more complex" system issue rather than the simple number of practitioners:

这不在于人数。定义定错了，这不在于人数。不是女性从业者，而是比较复杂的一个制度上的事情。　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　*(Wm)*
It is not about the quantity of practitioners. It is a wrong presupposition, as it is not about the quantity. It is not an issue of the number of women professionals, but a more complex issue concerning the system.　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　*(Wm)*

The "more complex" system-related issue is argued as the real cause of the present professional distribution between genders, resulting from both complex cultural heritage and administrative practices. Power relationships in the media represented by male dominance in management inevitably exerts influence on the media presentation of women's identity such as the selection of topics, sequencing of newsworthiness, framing of generic patterns and ways of narrating *inter alia*., as the communication process is embedded within the understanding and hidden position of the communicators (Lin, 2008). Male-dominance in the journalist industry as producers, specialists and public spokesmen, consequently gives rise to an understanding and positioning based on an "invisible" male perspective or standard, seen partly as a reflection of traditional gender dichotomy – *男主外女主内 nan zhu wai, nü zhu mei*，men are in charge of outside the home, women are in charge of inside the home.

Feminist news researchers have long argued that in the macho culture of most newsrooms, journalists' daily decisions about what is newsworthy remain firmly based on masculine news values (Ross & Carter, 2011). This raises another issue from the narratives under study, namely that of journalist focus – hard news in relation to politics and economy regarded as

essentially a masculine reserve, whereas for female journalists, the focus was ever the family and the home. In the evaluation of hard news vs. soft news by interviewee-W, it is the former and the producers of the former that hold sway in the media industry:

我觉得女性记者现在挺多的。但是占主导的还是男性。因为女性一般报道的都是软新闻，生活类，时尚类，美食类啊。男性，则是（报道）硬新闻，时政类，经济类，那种主导社会的比较多一些。　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　*（W）*
I think there are quite a lot of women reporters now, but the dominant power is still in the hands of men. Because women usually report on soft news such as sections of life, fashion and cuisine etc. Whereas men usually report on hard news such as current politics and economics, which are more significant in guiding the society.　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　*(W)*

Ross and Carter suggest that the emphasis on "hard" news over "soft", "fact" vs. opinion, time constrained daily news over human interest features, public vs. private, all produce a gender-differentiated news agenda (Ross & Carter, 2011). According to Krakow and Kranich, journalists' "hard news-soft news" distinction has institutionalized a gendered division between "serious, important" news that is overwhelmingly masculine and "human interest, lifestyle" news that is more likely to be the purview of women reporters and readers (Krakow & Kranich, 1991). The qualifying expression "guiding" in the above extract points to the reason why even a large number of women professionals cannot sway the dominance of men in practice. This is so because the key to the issue lies in the gender distribution of news themes, and, accordingly, in gender identity construction in relation to the theme-related media discourses. As Jiang notes, traditional gender stereotypes have been imitated extensively in media production ever since China's Reforms and the Opening up policy; instances of this phenomenon including that it is always the "happy contented" women who occupy the advertisements of kitchenware and family decoration while advertisements for mechanical items and automobiles are usually led by authoritative male images, with 95% of life/fashion magazines printed with sexy pretty cover girls while 99% of current affairs/success magazines are highlighted with large headshots of male political leaders or business legends (Jiang, 2009, p. 26). This perspective is also discernible in the attendant presumption that women's everyday lives are intrinsically less "newsworthy" as a result (Allan, 1998, p. 133).

As the traditional gender division of labor is still deeply imprinted in social recognition, the (re-)conceptualizations of gender reality in media discourses have had a far-reaching impact on ordinary readers with regard to issues of gender identity (re-)construction. Sun indicates that the reading patterns of adult men and women in China are basically in line with the "still

mainstream" gender labor pattern of "男主外女主內 *nan zhu wai, nü zhu mei*, Men are in charge outside the home whereas women are in charge of inside the home"; that women prefer readings about "family health", "cuisine cooking", "parenthood" and "relationship" and so on, while men prefer texts related to "practical skills", mainly out of "work and study needs" (Sun, 2012). As argued by Ross & Carter, such a situation undermines and under-reports women's contribution to social, economic and cultural life and in so doing, diminishes democracy (Ross & Carter, 2011).

Accordingly, in journalist practices, there is an implicit gender division between the categories of hard news and soft news not only with regard to readers but also in terms of producers. This is significant because in a way what we see there is a professional reflection of issues which before we saw only in general social terms. For successful career women, there are always some kinds of tension between "femininity" and professionalism. Firstly, they are accused of having lost their femininity since their jobs require them to be away from home and to "neglect" their husband and children (van der Vijingaard, 1990). Secondly, another tension between "femininity" and professionalism is expressed, for instance, by female journalists who believe that "feminine" values such as compassion, kindness and humanity are at odds with qualities expected of journalists such as a certain amount of directness and toughness (Neverla and Kanzleiter, 1984). While "femininity" and such professionalism are not inherently at odds with each other, it is the current definitions of femininity and the historically specific requirements of a certain professionalism that produce tensions felt by many working women. Now there is a continuation of the *status quo* in some respects, yet also some sort of a challenge is still posed in terms of the training of new journalists. Creedon (1993) argues that workplace routines and norms force reporters to conform to dominant values. And unfortunately a "macho" newsroom culture seems to be quite stable across countries (Byerly & Ross, 2006). One could see here the limitations of simply increasing the number of female journalists in the newsroom without fundamentally challenging the way news works.

According to Rodgers & Thorson's study, female reporters "drew upon a greater diversity of sources, stereotyped less, and wrote more positive stories than did male reporters" (Rodgers & Thorson, 2003, p. 658). Interviewee-Wm states in his narratives that in spite of the conventional division of gender in news reporting categories, the rise of women in some cross-boundary reports is to be noted:

比如说，时政，社会部，法律交通，建筑工程，调查记者，战地记者，这种大部分都是男 *性。女性也有…现在女性也有很多优秀的到一线。因为她们的关注度比较大，比较容易沟* *通，然后呢，注意力观察力非常强，所以，她们在这方面的优势。* *(Wm)*
For example, in the categories of current affairs, social events, legal and traffic, construction projects, investigation report and war report, most journalists are men. There are women too…now there are also many outstanding women journalists in the frontline (of hard news) such as in the battlefield. Because women have a wider attention and better communication skills, and very good focus and sharp observation, they have some advantages in this regard. *(Wm)*

Firstly, according to Talmy's claim concerning the interview as a social process of co-construction (Talmy, 2011, p.28), interviewee-Wm's narratives in response to the gender division of hard news vs. soft news portray a mitigated statement of acknowledging the division by referring to "many outstanding women journalists in the frontline" and listing of some feminine "advantages" in reporting that hard news used to be a masculine preserve. Adverbial expressions "too" and "also", followed by a series of praising adjectives used in comparative terms such as "wider" and "better" are used to reveal the mediated efforts by the interviewee in the dialogue with a woman interviewer on women's identity. However, as pointed out by Shen, women journalists "must make more and harder efforts" in order to win the opportunity of getting involved in and reporting on "hard news" (Shen, 2005). Women reporters in action like *阎丘露薇(Rose Minqiu)*, who is crowned in the Chinese media as "the rose in the battlefield" (a well-known war correspondent from HK, China, reporting in the Iraq War in 2003), and Olga Guerin (a correspondent for BBC News) and Kate Adie (an English journalist) in the West, are still rare and in the minority.

Through their narratives practitioners also admit that most of the reports on women's identities or issues are written by women professionals:

大多还是出自女记者。男记者对此关注、参与比较少。 *（W）*
(Women's reports) are mostly written by women reporters. Male reporters do not pay much attention to such reports and therefore they do not participate much. *(W)*

男记者占写这些报道的记者只占总数的20-30%左右吧.。 *(S)*
Male reporters for these reports only account for 20-30%. *(S)*

On one hand, these women-specific reports are seen "mostly" in sections of soft news such as themes of family and life which are not directed at the "attention" of men practitioners. Even where there is some little male participation in some of the reports, this is explained by interviewee-S in her later narratives merely as a consequence of administrative decisions out of consideration for gender balance as far as some gender-sensitive topics are concerned. On

the other hand, women's discourses produced by women professionals themselves may indeed allow for a possibly more sensitive or feminine perspective in their reporting stance in terms of gender awareness. According to Carter, female reporters have drawn attention to the ways in which gender dynamics shape life in the newsroom (Carter, 2005). As interviewee-Z states in the following extract, the presented identity is consciously or subconsciously influenced by the producing identity:

女性的记者多于男性，这会渗透在你报道的方方面面。我们深有同感，像这样的新闻我们会加以特别的关注，其实也等于你自己是有立场的，因为你是一个编辑的身份。这个报道你会用它，而且你会放在很前用，在很好的版块用，哪，让领导听听!这种偏向性，你根本感觉不到。因为是自己的立场嘛。相当于催眠，暗示嘛。整个的话语环境肯定是有利于女性的。女性制作人，肯定自觉不自觉地有偏向性。   (Z)

As the number of women professionals is bigger than men, the impact of which will certainly penetrate in every aspects of the reports. We do have such experiences that for instance, such topics/news on women will catch particular attention from us as editors, because we ourselves have our own stance. And accordingly it will be reported and put in a better position in the pages— Hey boss, you should read this! The preference can not be felt at all by the media producers, because it is their own stance. Just like hypnotism and implication. The whole discoursal environment is definitely in favor at women. Women producers certainly have their own preference, consciously or subconsciously.   (Z)

This "penetrating" influence is realized through the interactive production process of media texts between the producers and the produced as a result of the co-construction of women's identity in the media discourses. Firstly, women professionals retain their "own stance" of being themselves exponents of women's identity According to Bell, the positioning or stance-taking expressed in news discourse usually originates with the news media "as an institution, such as its proprietors, managers, news executives, editors-in-chief, and reporters" (Bell, 1991, p. 38). Secondly, such a stance will be "naturally" translated into the "particular attention" and "preference" in creating the media semiotics of gender identity through an inter-textual pattern of reporting. As Bazerman argues, "intertextuality is not just a matter of which other texts you refer to, but how you use them, what you use them for, and ultimately how you position yourself as a writer to them to make your own statement" (2004, p. 94). In other words, women journalists' professional practices and reality of life experiences come together in the sense that women practitioners are "writing their own identities", in some way. In the above extract, the words "hypnotism" and "implication" are used by interviewee-Z to further explain the relationship between the rising women professionals and the presentation of women's identity in contemporary media discourses. Thirdly, there is the positive expectation from the majority of female practitioners that the "discoursal environment" is "consciously or subconsciously" in favor of women with a more gender-sensitive awareness from frontline journalists.

We should observe that under the influence of feminist thinking the increasingly obvious "feminization" of mass media may appear to represent a kind of counteraction against "symbolic annihilation" because females seem to have become more sharply a focus and concern of society at large, at least to an extent (Liu, Zen & Zhang, 2007). However, following the analysis of the narratives from women practitioners, what lies hidden behind this false appearance remains the unequally distributed gender power structure underpinned by deep-seated cultural heritages in the "big" social environment. This tension between an awakening feminist awareness and socio-cultural convention is further investigated later in Section 7.3.3.2.

According to interviewee-W, there are "indeed more reports on women than before" (see following extract). However, as Krakow and Kranich point out, "any improvements in women's treatment in the news will require not simply more coverage of women or the presence of more women journalists but a fundamental change in news as a narrative genre" (1991, p. 9). As was pointed out in the earlier claim that it is not the *quantity* of professionals that determines the media stance, the key of reconstructing women's identity in the media lies in the *reporting* stance (Conrad & Biber, 2000; Lombardo, 2004) – whether it is "with a perspective of gender equality" or not:

> *现在媒体女性报道是比以前增多了。但是我觉得还是不太够，然后从报新闻的角度，也是有待商榷的，它能不能站在一个男女平等的角度来进行女性的报道。* （W）
> *There are indeed more reports on women than before. But I do not think it is enough. And the perspective of the reporting is still under question—whether it is reporting on women's issues with a perspective of gender equality.* (W)

Both male and female reporters can employ progressive story stances that encourage gender-sensitive reporting despite a male-dominated newsroom culture. In the following section, issues concerning the labelling of women's identities among certain groups through membership categorization, the latent impact of social norms in evaluating a women's identity, the lack of a male perspective and the matter of inadequate participation in mainstreaming social gender identity are discussed. All of these topics are seen as challenges to journalism practitioners in creating media discourses against the backdrop of dynamic social transition.

7.3.3 Struggle in transition

If the media texts in China from the revolutionary period of the Mao era are seen as somewhat black and white, now we may detect more shading of diversified and contested discourses in terms of "social semiotics" (Hodge & Kress, 1988), as contemporary post-Mao society has become characterized by a complex and mingled set of influences from both tradition and modernity. Matters have become more contextualized, requiring closer observation and analysis of particular contexts and circumstances. This complex inter-discursivity of the environment now places requirements or even challenges on journalists to reflect this diversity in their use of language and imagery, in a manner now more imperative than would have been the case back in 1995. As Conboy states, journalism can be viewed as an intersection of many conflicting interests, some of which, at some points in history, have clearer priority than others (Conboy, 2010). When in the narratives these journalism practitioners say that readers may find the official media such as *PD* a little boring, this may be because *PD* is constrained as the official organ and from an administrative perspective to keep on presenting some sort of balance. However, popular magazines are not controlled in the same way, and as a consequence journalists now have to deal with these much more fractured, much more diverse environments and to represent these in their writing. While debates about difference and equality are common to both academic discussions of cultural politics and media practices relating to it, a possible divergence between them stems from deconstructionist cultural theory's relation to the question of normativity and its disregard for the institutional and organizational contexts in which media practitioners have to operate. Any change in media content requires day-to-day decisions on which issues to select and how to address them, and therefore depends on some sort of normative criteria.

We may note from the selected narratives under study that on one hand there is a decrease of absolute statements and an increasing acknowledgement of probability adopted as the discoursal strategy in dealing with a multi-layered social recognition and its inherent diversity of media discourses. Whereas, on the other, an increase of hedging strategies with regard to the influence of cultural heritage in re-constructing gender identity, such as that of women's identity in media texts, is now questioned by some journalists, especially women practitioners. At all levels discursive negotiation takes place: the production of media texts is replete with tensions and contradictions resulting from conflicting organizational and professional discourses. So in the following sections, the labeling disturbance of the more implicit labeling of *Good Wife/Mother* vs. the explicit labeling of *Leftover Lady*, and the intrinsic conflict of advocacy of the *Third Type* woman vs. hedged writing in acknowledging the Double Standard and Fear of Success are discussed in terms of the ideological

contestations.

7.3.3.1 Categorizing the diversity – labeling or not?

In the earlier Section 7.2, we noted from the journalist narratives that the simple and absolute labeling or assigning of people into categories to overtly systemize and structure experiences is no longer popular in journalistic practice. According to interviewee-S, such "monolithic" categorization as *Iron Girl, Good Wife/Mother* and so on is outdated in the new media especially in urban newspapers as reflected through the reference to the adverb "seldom" in her narratives:

> *我想现在特别是新兴的都市里的报纸已经不太有这种很铁板一块的划分的方式了。* *(S)*
> *I think this very "monolithic" categorization of identities is now seldom seen in contemporary new media especially urban newspapers.* *(S)*

It is often stressed by journalist practitioners that they don't want to pigeonhole people. In the narratives of interviewee-X, an editor from *Modern Family* magazine, a further explanation for this decrease in explicit categorization is given in terms of professional perception:

> *可能是因为现在的人其实不太喜欢被按上一个框框一个头衔。被称为这样的，其实你就觉得对它有一个定势的认识。我是觉得现在的媒体比较不太倾向于用这样的东西。而且我个人来说的话，如果我自己做到这样的内容，我可能也不会去给它安这样一个头衔，就算它可能很符合这样子。但是这个是从我本身的职业角度来说的。* *(X)*
> *It is probably because contemporary people do not like to be put under a label or tag. To be labeled (as some type), actually means that you have a stereotypical impression of it. In my opinion contemporary media practice does not tend to label (certain people/things). Take myself for instance, if I am to report on such identities, I will not give a label to them, even they might fit well into this certain category. However it is out of my own professional considerations.* *(X)*

Simple absolute categorization appears to be dis-preferred by both contemporary media practitioners and ordinary people at large, because the "labeling" act is often associated with some "stereotypical" recognition, usually offering a negative impression in a modern social context characterized by increasing diversity and complexity. Meanwhile the discursive down-toning of the statements concerning the dis-preference of categorization reflected through the adverbial expressions such as "I think" (interviewee-S), "probably", "in my opinion" and "out of my own professional considerations" (interviewee-X) in the above extracts, can also be interpreted as an appeal from the practitioners to current re-conceptualizations of society and its members as diverse rather than singular. As pointed out by Minic, while diversity in terms of women reported is recognized as something to be endorsed, highlighting their group identity is seen as problematic (Minic, 2008, p. 308).

This journalistic tendency of non-labeling is also reflected in the earlier discussions in Chapter Four Section 4.3.2.1 on the Ideal Wife of "*a Good Wife/Mother*", where we note a difference between the 1995 and 2005 datasets in terms of the occurrence of the actual "label" in the selected print media texts. Fewer occurrences of the title "Good Wife/Mother" are to be discerned in the 2005 datasets. Furthermore, in Chapter Four Section 4.4.1, the lexical phrase "The *Third Type* woman" is absent in both 1995 and 2005 datasets. Nonetheless, the actual categorization as well as the advocacy of this identity is still constructed through various "discursive strategies" (Candlin, 2006; Sarangi, 2000) in the discourses, as is analyzed in Chapter Four. It can be argued, then, that this lack of labeling does not in effect equal the non-categorization of certain identities in the media discourses. As pointed out again by interviewee-X, the labeling actually becomes implicit or hidden in the media constructs of women's identities:

比如说，同样做一个女人，<u>我可能不太愿意别人把我称为什么比如说贤妻良母，就是说不太喜欢加上这样的称谓</u>，但是我们对于这种的报道和公众想要了解这样的女人，<u>其实讲出来的还是贤妻良母，好妻子好母亲</u>。   *(X)*
For instance, as a woman, I <u>may not want to be called as a "good wife/mother", as I don't like to be labeled</u> (as a certain type). But what we report and what the public want to know <u>is still as a matter of fact xian qi liang mu –Good Wife/Mother</u>.   (X)

There exists however a conflict in that as Chang claims, the magazines (media) actually portray prejudicial social myths concerning women held by a traditional patriarchal society and that these myths play an important role in encouraging women to conform to traditional ideologies constructed by the patriarchal system (Chang, 2010). On the other hand, a more open and liberal social atmosphere of modernity makes it harder to record in black and white any persistent widespread acknowledgement of these patriarchal constraints on the portrayal of gender identity. For example, as interviewee-X maintains in the above extract, contemporary women usually "do not want to be called or labeled" within the traditional housewife category of "Good Wife/Mother", yet the constructed identity in the media discourses is "still as a matter of fact" that of the Good Wife/Mother. A journalistic solution to this conflict is revealed in the discoursal strategy through the hedge of labeling and the contextualization of certain identity constructs.

我们会给女性建立一个固有的形象，比如说贤妻良母，现在要需要工作上有所成就，你都<u>得挑这样的人往里面套，如果她不是这样的人，我们就可能说不做报道，或者说不进行一个宣传</u>。就会觉得她不是一个合格的，好的，典型。还是会有一个框框在那里。   *(X)*
We may <u>set up a certain image type for women</u>, such as xianqi'liangmu, Good Wife/Mother, who is now required to be somewhat successful in her career too. Accordingly we <u>have to choose women</u>

of this type for report. If she doe not <u>fit into this category, we may not report on her, or not</u> <u>advocate on her identity,</u> because she is <u>not considered as a qualified good typical identity.</u> There are <u>still certain categorizing rules for reporting</u>.　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　(X)

From the above narrative of interviewee-X, we may note that the *Third Type* woman, without being actually labeled as the third type, is nevertheless constructed as such in the media texts through the certain "default" rules of "choosing women of this type" to report – a good wife/mother, and one who is also successful in her career. The reiterated "certain" image type and rules, the correlation of "fit into" and "category", the conditional "if…" clause and the adjective "qualified" in the above extract – all demonstrate to us that there is still some screening categorization in terms of reporting identities affected by some hidden impact of invested ideology. According to Ferguson, media, and especially women's media, not only represent women's identity in its conceptualizations of reality but also bring out a cultural influence which is transmitted through media so as to educate women readers in a particular way (Ferguson, 1983). When readers read about women's semiotics as reflected in mass media, such as women diligently cleaning the home, tenderly serving the husband, or whole-heartedly caring for the children, these constructs are constantly implanted as standards or perceptions to categorize certain groups of identity as well as the readers' own identities, even where these constructs are not summarized to have an apparent lexical label on the identity (Zhang, 2009).

To label or not? – This is one of the key questions raised in membership categorization analysis (Hester & Eglin, 1997) regarding the semiotic resource perspective and the social/institutional perspective in the multi-perspectival framework. The preference for avoiding labeling in journalism practice highlights an interesting but ultimately self-conflicting phenomenon, namely, the popularity of the very debated and widespread label of *Leftover Lady* in reference to unmarried professional women in contemporary Chinese society. The following exploration of this labeling further highlights the ambivalent stance of media practitioners towards traditional gender ideologies in the contemporary Chinese print media context.

Firstly, the prevalence of the label as well as the intensity of its coverage in the media is argued by Wang to be the result of these urban *Leftover Ladies* maintaining "more and bigger media power" so as to assert in the media discourse about their own needs (Wang, 2010, p.31). Such an advantage is also reflected in the narratives of interviewee-Wm in the interviews:

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因为媒体当中的女性比较多。对自身的关注导致这个词语的盛行。控制者中的女性比例相对比男性高一些。而且是在这个年龄段高一些。 *(Wm)*
Because there are <u>relatively more women professionals in the media practice</u>. <u>Their focus on self identity gives rise to the prevalence of this label</u>. In the main practice of journalism, <u>the percentage of women is relatively higher than that of men, and particularly in this specific age group</u>. *(Wm)*

According to interviewee-Wm, the advantages arising from the greater quantity of women professionals is one major cause of heated media attention to this certain identity group, because the "specific age group" in the above extract referring to women professionals at the age of their late 20s to 30s exactly overlaps with the age group of *Leftover Ladies* (see Vignette 4.5-(1)). Therefore, resonating with the earlier claim in Section 7.3.2, women journalism practitioners are indeed more or less "writing their own stories" in the media texts, as many of them fit well into the category of *Leftover Ladies*.

Secondly, when the question of their impressions on *Leftover Lady* is proposed, many practitioners regard it merely as a neutral label for a certain identity group or a certain choice of individual lifestyle:

剩女，是大龄未婚女青年的简称而已，<u>只是一个代号，不是和她们的性格她们的事业多么强有关系，我觉得没有直接关系，还是个人的一个人生轨迹问题。</u> *(S)*
Leftover Lady is <u>only an abbreviation for women</u> who reach certain ages but still remain single. <u>It is only a symbol, not relevant to their personality or career achievements, in my opinion. It is only an individual choice of lifestyle.</u> *(S)*

剩女，我觉得现在的媒体基本上也没有贬义，只是形容一种人群。 *(X)*
Leftover Lady, <u>in my opinion it is not in negative meaning in media as it is only used to describe a certain group of people.</u> *(X)*

所以这个词，<u>只是一个社会符号而已。</u>因为每个时代都有这样的人。<u>我没有觉得这是一种贬义，这是一种自嘲吧。</u> *(Wm)*
This term is <u>only a social symbol</u>. There are such types of people in each era. <u>I don't think it is in negative meaning. It can be a self-mockery.</u> *(Wm)*

The reiterated referencing of the adverb "only" in the above narratives – "only an abbreviation", "only a symbol", "only an individual choice" (interviewee-S), "is only used to describe" (interviewee-X), "only a social symbol" (interviewee-Wm) – gives the impression that the label does not seem to be carrying with it many implications, as it is seen as a common name for something or somebody. The denial from both interviewee-X and interviewee-Wm of the negative connotation of the label in the media discourse can be interpreted as an attempted effort from the professional perspective to justify the self-conflicting labeling of *Leftover Lady* in the practice that the label is "not relevant to"

(interviewee-S) some imposed categorization or social recognition. The word "individual" used by interviewee-S further appeals to the contemporary journalistic assertion of its modern liberalism and respect for diversity.

However as Sacks defines it, membership categorization usually involves classifications or social types that may be used to describe persons (Hester & Eglin, 1997). If the label of *Leftover Lady* is used to "describe a certain group" (interviewee-X) of women's identity, the labeling inevitably carries with it certain implications of people, ideologies, beliefs and values (Sarangi & Candlin, 2003). The labeling, accordingly, becomes a kind of social categorization. As Sarangi & Candlin point out, "language and discourse play a significant part in how we categorize" (2003, p. 115), therefore an examination of the coinage and the spread of the label *Leftover Lady* will be quite revealing as to the prevalence of the constructed identity in the media discourse.

Thirdly, hidden implications of the label are disclosed in spite of the acclaimed neutrality of the categorization, from some journalism practitioners. For instance, interviewee-W, a female editor from an urban news daily argues against such neutral perceptions in her narratives, that the label is actually in its "derogative" usage:

> *剩女也是贬义。*   *(W)*
> *(The label of) Leftover Lady is in its derogative usage.*   *(W)*

And interviewee-Wm, a senior editor from a news daily points out the fact that the lexical phrase of the label is in fact "created" by men:

> *剩女，这个词也是男性造出来的。*   *(Wm)*
> *Leftover Lady, the phrase is created by men.*   *(Wm)*

The coinage of the label as a male creation is confirmed by Wang – *Leftover Ladies* are regarded as being "left" by men or male standards (Wang, 2010, p. 32). Unveiling the myth of the popular *Leftover Lady* phenomenon, a deep-seated male-oriented ideology is noted underlying its popularity as a label in media communication. As we see, *Leftover Ladies* is in one sense a categorization, but it is also a kind of metaphor. The metaphorical construction of the identity group "being left over" by another so-called dominant group(s) suggests the passive status of women in reference to the social structure of the gender relationship. This passivity however contradicts the earlier claim of Vignette 4.5-(1) on the autonomy and independence of Leftover Ladies, who are outstanding in career and conscious of individual

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pursuits. Despite their good qualifications and their professional achievements, these women are still constructed as the weaker or more passive identity, as being "left over" by men. Rong concludes in her study that the constructive process of such stereotypical gender relations is related to the male-oriented stance of the media, especially the masculine discourse power used to represent women's identity (Rong, 2011, p. 134).

As a matter of fact, according to Wang, there are far more "Leftover Men" than *Leftover Ladies,* resulting from the long-standing imbalances in the birth ratio in China (Wang, 2010, p.31), a matter also pointed out by interviewee-Wm in the interviews:

男性剩得很多很多的呀。	*(Wm)*
There are <u>so many leftover men</u> (too).	*(Wm)*

However "*Leftover Lady*" rather than Leftover Man is placed as the priority in the media agenda of coverage. As Wang further argues, it is the contrast of priority of the former and ignorance of the latter in media communication that reveals the injustice of the gender relationship as well as the hidden power of media in underpinning the hot issue of *Leftover Lady* (Wang, 2010, p.31). The popularization of the label in the media discourse gives rise to an inescapable anxiety of the targeted group and people around them such as parents of these ladies, as interviewee-D points out in her narratives:

*我觉得媒体会<u>把一群人标签化，会加重这个标签化，扩大这个标签化，有一种放大聚集的</u>
<u>作用。会产生某种焦虑的。年纪越小受影响可能越大。</u>* *(D)*
I think the media <u>tend to label certain groups of people,</u> and intensify and magnify the labeling
process. <u>The magnification will lead to an anxiety of the labeled groups. The younger the readers,</u>
<u>*the more they will be affected.*</u> *(D)*

Leftover Ladies are consequently seen as victims of the labeling or categorizing acts of the media, as the categorization itself become "intensified" and "magnified" by powerful media communications to induce "an anxiety" among the labeled group. The anxiety is accordingly contextualized as an urge for immediate action for obtaining a relationship and marriage, the issues of which are now on the top of the agenda of *Leftover Ladies*. As we note, there is an increasingly hot match-making business and presence of live TV shows (such as *非诚勿扰 fei cheng wu rao*, *If You are the One*, the top TV show in audience rating nation-wide) in China, resulting partly from the widespread anxiety of Leftover Ladies, where younger women, especially in their early 20s, are indentified as active backbone participants. This is also reflected in interviewee-D's narratives above that women of younger ages tend to "be

affected more" by the social processes of the intensification and magnification of media impact.

Liu in her study observes that there is a rather higher percentage (43.48%) of negative portraits of *Leftover Ladies* in the media discourse than positive reflections (22.36%) (Liu, 2010, p. 67). This may explain in part why *Leftover Ladies* are so anxious to get married as they want to rid themselves of the "pitiable" label imposed on their identity. However, Wei argues that most of the media reports attribute the cause of this hot phenomenon more to the "demanding, material, picky" attitude of these Leftover Ladies than to any more profound social motivations such as traditional heritages and career pressures (Wei, 2011, p. 113). Of course, there might exist some choosy attitude on the part of the ladies, but the factor of this individuality is over-emphasised whereas the significant role of a social environment characterized by structural transitions and ideological transformations is downplayed in the media texts (see also Chapter Five Section 5.3.2.2). Consequently, it is harder to evoke a more sympathetic or tolerant perception toward this identity, and to make a fair judgment of the group and the dilemmas experienced.

The uncertain and ambiguous position of the media in terms of its dealing with complex social factors leads to an "alternative" solution of the issue of *Leftover Lady* – namely, to teach these ladies how to prevent themselves from being "left"; as is observed by interviewee-X in the interviews:

现在媒体讲到剩女，<u>基本上都是教大家怎么样不剩。</u>   （X）
Now when media speaks of Leftover Ladies, it is <u>basically to teach them how to prevent themselves</u>
<u>from being Left</u>.   (X)

Interviewee-X's observation is reflected and reinforced in the claim by Liu in her study when she argues that there is a reasonably high percentage of media texts concerning the (re-)education of *Leftover Ladies* so that they may attract partners, such as various "how-to-dos" references to cosmetics, fashion, and the elevating of femininity, in an effort to get rid of the "leftover" single status (Liu, 2010, p. 68). These seemingly women-oriented suggestions are in fact derived from a male perspective constantly reminding women of the "link" between their inadequacy in some way or other and in particular their passivity in marriage match-making. In this sense, the (re-)education of the identity group in media discourse is seen as projecting a social practice engaged in re-constructing women's identity under the pressure of a persistent and powerful male hegemony. Within the discourse of women's identity, the

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assignment of the label "*Good Wife/Mother*" and "the *Third Type women*", to one group over another can be interpreted as a power strategy set within an ideological frame, one often leading to various other character-building subcategories such as "*Leftover Ladies*" and the "*Third Sex*" (see Chapter Five Section 5.2.2.2), the correlation between which membership categorization analysis helps elucidate, at least to some extent.

As Pauly (1991, p. 19) says, discourse is constructed through certain recurring themes and phrases in media texts. And those choices have clear social and ideological implications because they often signal the opinions of certain groups while at the same time discrediting or silencing those of others (van Dijk, 1991, p. 116). As remnants of subjective conceptualizations of reality, such categorizations – from the implicit labeling of *Good Wife/Mother* to the explicit labeling of *Leftover Lady*, reflect through the selected narratives under review here the struggle of journalism practitioners in dealing with traditional heritage. In the next section, feministic awareness from journalistic professionals, especially women practitioners, challenging the ambiguity of the media stance on "unspeakable tension" faced by career women is examined.

7.3.3.2 Tension behind the choices – the unspeakable

From the earlier discussions in Chapter Four Section 4.4.1 and Section 7.2.2 we note that the *Third Type* woman is constructed in most media texts as an ideal model for contemporary Chinese women. However, the categorization of the type as a mainstream identity is constructed through a discourse strategy of "implicit" imposition rather than giving it an apparent label like *Iron Girl* as in the revolutionary period. For example, as interviewee-D points out in her narratives:

> *我觉得这一种推崇是隐含的。*   *(D)*
> *I think the admiration (of The Third Type Woman) is underlined implicit.*   *(D)*

The labeling ambivalence in the previous section 7.3.3.1 on one hand provides a journalistic explanation for the absence of labeling because of a social environment characterized by diversity and individuality. On the other, the contestation of ideologies between tradition and modernity imbricated in these constructs of identity is revealed through membership categorization analysis, explaining in particular the hedging attitude of the media toward the rules for categorizing.

The typical image of having it all – career and family roles – is widely acknowledged in the selected print media texts of *PD* and *WOC* analysed in Chapter Four, while the tension experienced by these women resulting from the contested ideologies underlying the model – such as fear of success, the double standard – is absent. However, in Chapter Five Sections 5.2 and 5.4 of this thesis such tension is boldly picked up and argued in the selected texts drawn from academic discussion in *CWS* through the examination of an intrinsic cause to *Glass Ceiling, Fear of Success*, and in the re-phrased (Cameron, 2010) metaphorical construction of the double burden – *Burning Candles at Both Ends*. According to Jiang, "double-ness" or co-existence is regarded as one specific characteristic of the social transitional period (Jiang, 2009, p.26). On one hand, women influenced by modern feminist liberalism long for a break-away from traditional shackles, while on the other, it is impossible to sever the link between past and present, as cultural heritages are so deep-rooted in people's consciousness. Scholars and researchers on gender from *CWS,* who are seen as the pioneers with a sharper sensibility towards social critique with a feministic perspective, are among the first to become aware of the double standard placed on women in terms of social expectation (see Chapter Five). Similarly, the journalism practitioners as "the uncrowned king" in public opinion are also seen as pioneers in social criticism, in a way. During the interviews, when the question concerning the hidden tension experienced by professional women is proposed, many practitioners admit that there is not enough media attention on sensitive women's issues such as the glass ceiling, the fear of success, or the pressure from double standards, as far as the general popular media is concerned:

媒体中没有特别深入讨论过。 *(D)*
There is not much in-depth discussion about these aspects in the media. *(D)*

媒体对玻璃天花板问题有体现。但是对成功恐惧心理真的很少提到。 *(S)*
There are some reflections on the issue of Glass Ceiling in the media, but there is indeed little coverage of Fear of Success (FOS). *(S)*

我看到的很少。成功恐惧心理，好象没有媒体提到。 *(Z)*
From what I see, there are very few reports (on these issues). Especially for Fear of Success, it seems to me that no media ever mentions this. *(Z)*

(在媒体报道中有体现吗？) 好象国内很少。 *(X)*
(Question: Do you see reflections of these issues in media?) It seems there is so little coverage in the domestic media. *(X)*

Behind the existing achievements of Chinese women in the foreground of media discourses, narratives from practitioners in the above extracts reveal the inadequacy of media coverage on what lies behind the aspiring propaganda of gender equality surrounding the *Half the Sky*

canon. Even though some of them mitigate their statements by adding parentheses like "from what I see" and "it seems" out of professional caution, the reiterated usage of negations such as "not much" (interviewee-D), "indeed little" (interviewee-S), "very few", "no media ever" (interviewee-Z) and "so little" (interviewee-X) can be interpreted as highlighting the consistent hedging stance of media with regard to representing these controversial gender ideologies.

As interviewee-D and interviewee-S point out in their narratives, there might be "some reflections" (interviewee-S) but they are not "in-depth" (interviewee-D). One main reason for the equivocal commitment to reporting extensively on the issues of the glass ceiling, fear of success and double standards is that these issues actually involve a latent complex contestation of social ideologies such as that existing between traditional gender divisions and modern feminist progress, deriving from both Maoist doctrine and Western liberalism. It is the dynamicity of the contestation that makes it harder for the media to write definitely on some identity constructs, influenced as they are by certain ingrained ideologies. The way of media hedging in terms of exploring such issues in depth is further revealed by interviewee-X, an editor of *Modern Family* magazine, in the following extract. According to interviewee-X, the manner that media deals with these sensitive topics of gender discrimination and identity dilemma experienced by career women is compared to playing an edge ball in table tennis:

国内基本上会用一个好象打擦边球的方法，就是说，我看到现在，其实国内的媒体不太会直接回答这个问题，只是说，它会教你一些心理的调节方法，然后技巧方面的…就是技巧，比如说把自己变得更有女人味呀，让别人觉得你没有距离感呀，就是说它都会教一些比较讨巧的，而不是说真的回答这个问题。我们杂志讨论这些问题的时候，我觉得会比较避让的。不正面探析这类现象的原因，而是侧面引导大家如何去通过技巧避免或者将损失减到最小。就是会教你一些技巧啊，就是怎么样的。其实（这些技巧）不能啦。（不能从根本上解决问题）。 (X)

In domestic media, it is <u>basically</u> like <u>playing an edge ball. So far as I see domestic media <u>usually do not report on these issues in a direct way.</u> Instead they just <u>teach you some psychological adjustment methods and tips…some tips</u> such as how to make oneself of more feminine charm, how to make oneself appear less distant to others. The media <u>teach you some tips rather than provide real solutions to these issues.</u> When our magazine deals with these issues, I think it <u>tends to adopt a dodging position. It does <u>not directly explore the cause of these issues/phenomena, but indirectly teaches us how to bypass them or reduce the cost to the minimum through some tips.</u> Some practical skills such as…<u>Actually (these tips) can not (fundamentally solve these issues).</u> (X)

The trick of playing an edge ball is that it does "not directly" hit the centre or focus but responds to the issues through a kind of "bypass" such as "to teach some psychological methods" to "reduce the cost to the minimum through some tips" rather than "to explore the cause" and "provide real solutions" (see above extract). The constant reference to expressions such as "not…in a direct way", "not directly" and "indirectly" can be translated as illustrating

the "dodging position" adopted by Chinese media, whereas adverbs of "basically" and "usually" further reveal such a position as a common journalist practice in handling the ideological controversies. interviewee-X also points out that these tips "actually cannot fundamentally solve the issues".

The hedging attitude of media is also exemplified in the reports on the disputatious enforcement of the New Marriage Law in China in 2011, which evokes much opposition from feministic quarters claiming that the new amendment does not protect women's rights properly. In interviewee-X's narratives, the technique of "playing an edge ball" is employed again in handling the subtlety of disputed social recognition of the issue in media reports:

> *之前闹得很大的新婚姻法的问题，关于财产的分配，主要是房子这一块。你可以看到<u>大量的媒体报道都是在给这个东西做解释，然后大家如何</u>…就是媒体的方向肯定是不会说这个法不好，这个法不完善，这个我们肯定是不能说的。<u>我们只能说在这个法的基础上，你怎么样学会保护自己，这个法出来以后，怎么样用一些技巧让家庭更和谐，肯定是这样的内容</u>。* (X)
> *As to the previously heated discussion of the New Marriage Law on the distribution of property especially on real estate, you can see <u>a mass of reports providing explanations for the law, and then teaching readers to</u>…As far as the media's stance is concerned, the defect or the fault of the new law will certainly not be criticized. We certainly cannot do that. <u>What we can say is how to protect oneself based on the articles of the law. The reports will certainly be topics such as how to use some tips to make the family more harmonious after the enforcement of the new law.</u>* (X)

On one hand the media is fulfilling its role of reflecting social issues by its "mass reports" on the related issues. But on the other the three-time repetition of the adverb "certainly" shows the limitations of the media in terms of its chosen stance and regulations of practice in confrontation with official enforcement of legal authority. Accordingly, "bypass" is adopted as the professional solution in producing the media discourses such as providing some "useful tips" for women readers to "protect" themselves however "based on the articles of the law". *Modern Family* is one typical women's magazine in China which deals with themes of presenting women's identities and reflecting some women's issues. Consequently interviewee-X's narratives can be interpreted as representing a certain "insider" voice from the practitioners with regard to some feministic perspective.

The ambiguous position of media is further reflected in the "little" (interviewee-S) or "no" (interviewee-Z) (see earlier extracts in this subsection) coverage of fear of success in the media texts, which is in fact in resonance to the earlier claim in Chapter Five Section 5.2.2 that fear of success (FOS) observed as a specific psychological status of career women resulted from a mixture of influences of socio-cultural factors (Bi, 2005) are mostly absent in

the discourses of pop media. According to Bi, there is such a widespread fear of success among contemporary female college students that they not only have to pay "a bigger price" on the path to success but also have to be equipped with "enough courage" to endure the tension of mentality and overcome the obstacle of traditional gender ideology (Bi, 2005, p.64). In the narratives of interviewee-S, the tension is accordingly demonstrated as the dilemma of "active or passive sacrifice" of career women to the family role under the influence of "pervasive social cultural factors", and the obstacle is attributed to the inequality between genders in terms of traditional labor division:

采访女性时，关于女性的家庭角色，主动的被动的牺牲都有。这种社会文化的无处不在，你说我是碍于社会文化这么做，但是从小教育什么的，都会影响。不能说是主动或是被动。男性可以一路往上攀登，然后周围的人会为你叫好，你需要你的家庭配合，他们就得配合，你也认为她们理所当然就得配合你。 (S)
When interviewing women with regard to their family roles, sacrifice is seen as both in active or passive terms. With the pervasive influence of social cultural factors, it is hard to conclude that I sacrifice because of social culture, as we are educated so since childhood, and the impact can be dated back then. So it is really hard to discern the passive or active choice of the sacrifice. Men can go all up the ladder of social roles and applauded by people. Whenever he needs family support, the family will support him and he takes the support for granted. (S)

The inequality lies in the different measurement of success for women and men, as for men they can "go all up" the social ladder to pursue their work identity without the obstacle of being pinned to their family duties, as women are. Furthermore, family support for a man's pursuit of success is "taken for granted" whereas family support for her pursuit is usually seen as a luxury to ask or afford (Wang, 1992). Women have to make difficult decisions in balancing their work identity and family duty, in which sacrifices are inevitable, no matter whether out of willingness or reluctance. As a result, fear of success becomes one typical mentality that most career women who have made tough decisions in keeping the balance will experience. However in most media texts constructing women's identity, especially in respect of the work/family dilemma, fear of success is regarded as "unspeakable" or is translated as a "personal" choice:

成功恐惧心理，如果是女的话，确实是像你说的，她这样选择是更有时间照顾家里呀什么的。这是她的一个个人选择。但是不知道是因为她的恐惧成功还是喜欢这样。 (X)
Fear of Success, for a woman, is indeed like what you said out of consideration for having more time for family. This is her personal choice. But we do not know whether it is out her fear of success or because she likes to do so. (X)

From interviewee-X's narratives we note that the main consideration of stopping at a certain point on the social career ladder by many working women is out of a concern for the fulfillment of her family duty. But the negative structure of "do not know whether…or…"

reveals that the decision making process especially the psychological conflict such as fear of success experienced is not addressed in the construction of these identities by most media. According to interviewee-S, an editor-in-chief of a women's weekly, the decision making process is "invisible" to others/readers because there is "no report from this aspect in the media discourse":

选择之前的心路历程是别人看不到的。又不可能解释给每一个人听。媒体上没有报道过。我们只报道她何以成为现在，很少有人去关注之前发生的一切。   *(S)*
The mental process leading to the decision is <u>invisible</u> to others. It is <u>impossible</u> to explain to everyone. <u>There is no report from this aspect in the media discourse. We only report what she becomes now, there is seldom attention paid to her life journey resulted from a series of tough decisions concerning work/family balance.</u>   *(S)*

Both words "invisible" and "impossible" can be interpreted as uncovering the hidden hardships experienced by women in face of work/family conflict or in other words work/family balance. In interviewee-S' narratives she is actually questioning the absence of media "attention" to the "toughness" of the decisions made beneath the presented outstanding or successful women's identity in the discourses. The challenging tone is emphasized through the adverbs such as "only" and "seldom" in the above extract. As a women journalist, interviewee-S also points out the practitioners' struggle of breaking through the hedging stance and speaking out the unspeakable:

想办法，有些不能说的东西，不好说的东西，想办法换一种方式去表达这件事情。有想说出来的欲望。   *(S)*
Try to figure out a way to speak the unspeakable, to reflect it in an alternative way. There is a desire to speak it out.   *(S)*

Despite the prevalent hedging stance in media practice concerning contested ideologies underlying some women issues, feministic awareness to unmask the myth of contemporary gender (in-)equality is reflected in the selected narratives of these journalist practitioners. In the next section, the significance of the other "*Half the Sky*" is brought into the agenda of women's identity (re-)construction in terms of (re-)conceptualization of gender reality in media.

7.3.3.3 The other "Half the Sky" – men's perspective

In Chapter Four Section 4.4.2 it is claimed that women have to shoulder the double burden and resolve work/family conflicts mostly on their own, as set out in the findings from the selected print media texts of *PD* and *WOC*. In Chapter Five Section 5.4.2 however the

discussion of selected *CWS* texts proposes an additional or alternative perspective, namely that of men, to address the work/family dilemma. As argued by some feminist scholars in *CWS*, women as *Half the Sky* in China have made strong efforts to fulfill both their expected work identity and their family role, whereas men, as the other Half the Sky, have not made correspondingly adequate efforts especially in the sharing of domestic duties with their working wives. A similar question is also raised by women journalism practitioners in the interviews where many of them complain about the unequal share of housework between genders:

> *在家庭工作矛盾方面，对男性提的相对少，相对非常少。在做家务方面，男性有分担得更多的趋势。但是做家务的量相对女性，非常少。大家都在呼吁说男性要参与家庭事务，要参与子女教育，都在呼吁，当然是很好的呼吁，但是口号喊喊，始终到现在为止也还是口号而已。* *(S)*
>
> *With regard to the work/family conflict, there are relatively fewer, very few media reports for male readers. There is a tendency of men's sharing more housework now, however the amount of share of men is very little compared to that of women. Everyone is talking that men should participate in housework and children's education. But despite its good reason, talking is just talking after all. Till now it still remains in the stage of talking.* *(S)*

The modality of "should" in the above narratives on one hand reflects public awareness of expecting men's participation as obligatory, yet on the other hand reveals the factuality of inequality between women and men in terms of sharing domestic duties. The inequality is highlighted through the repetition of qualifying adverbs and comparative expressions such as "relatively fewer, very few" and "very little compared to". The slow and weak enforcement of such expectations in the conceptualization of reality is challenged by interviewee-S as she sharply points out the fact that "talking is just talking after all, till now it still remains in the stage of talking". The gap between media's construction and gender reality is also pointed out in interviewee-D's narratives:

> *媒体当中性别已经很平等了。远远比现实当中要平等多了。* *(D)*
>
> *Gender equality is well presented in the media discourses, far more better than constructions in reality.* *(D)*

The comparative expression and also the comparison "far more better" can be seen as emphasizing the imbalance of gender construction between media's presentation and the real world. The qualifying expression of "well presented" equality in the media discourses further contrasts the "not-so-good" fact of gender practice in actual life. In the following extract, interviewee-W provides a further explanation for the lack of male participation in family responsibilities, that there is far less media discourse with regard to family identity construction "targeted at" male readers than at women readers:

在这个男权社会，媒体报道时，传统的性别分工对女性的家庭角色还是有影响的。很少有针对男性做一些报道，因为女性的东西还是女性在看。女性多看一点这样的东西，她的地位提升，在家庭地位的提升，还是需要男性来共同做一些，然后才能提升自己的地位。但是这些报道都是针对女性的。如果针对男性多一些，这样的家庭报道，这样子对提升女性的地位是有作用的。需要对男性进行教育。 (W)

In such a patriarchal society, the traditional gender division is still influential in defining women's family roles in media reports. There are very few such reports targeted at men. Since issues about women are still read by women. No matter how much more women read, the enhancement of her status especially in family will need men to make joint efforts to realize. But the reports are mostly targeted at women. If there are more reports of family themes targeted at men, it will be useful for enhancing women's status. Men should be educated. (W)

Firstly, interviewee-W points out that it is still a "patriarchal society" with the "influential" traditional gender division. Consequently, there are "very few such reports" of family-related discourses targeted at men as they are "mostly targeted at women". Nevertheless the "enhancement of women's status" cannot be "realized" with a unilateral input of reading more and doing more by women themselves. The bilateral participation of "joint efforts" from men is regarded by interviewee-W as both "necessary" and "useful". The modal verb "should" correlated with the passive usage of "educate" can be interpreted as reinforcing the urgency and the expectation from women to turn "the talking" (interviewee-S) into action in reality. Yet interviewee-W also suggests in the next extract an optimistic prospect brought by the media's "talking", that despite the inadequate share of housework, men are actually undertaking more responsibility in terms of children's education:

男性在家务方面倒跟以前差不多。但在育儿方面，比我们的父辈或者比我们早一代的人要好多了。可能和媒体的宣传也有关。父亲在子女生长过程中承担的作用。可能父亲也有这种意识了。 (W)

With regard to housework sharing, there is not much change. But in terms of kid's education, men are doing much better than our fathers' generation. This may have to do with the media discourses of propagandizing father's role in a child's growth and consequently evoking the awareness of fathers. (W)

The change of "men's doing much better than our fathers' generation" is explained by interviewee-W as partly a result of media propaganda to evoke the awareness of father's roles among male readers. It can be seen as a positive reflection of media's function of re-constructing gender identity and relationships towards a feministic direction by destabilizing traditional gender identities in terms of motherhood and fatherhood through approaching both as parenting. According to Minic, blurring gender differences in this way can be seen in terms of transforming majority cultures rather than affirming a minority group's identity (Minic, 2008, p. 313).

In addition to the necessity of men's participation in promoting gender equality especially with regard to the familial sphere, the importance of integrating the men's perspective in addressing the work/family conflict of professional women is pointed out by some journalism practitioners:

> *公平地说，虽然我是女性，但是我仍然想说，其实男性和女性在传统文化的压力下，都面临着双重负担，女性做好事业，又要遵从传统好妻子好妈妈的角色，而男性呢，传统要养家糊口，又要活出真我，自己快乐，然后很多人就会觉得他没出息。他也有这种负担，还是来自于传统文化。传统文化对女性造成的压力，这种压力反过来会延到那个男的上面。所以说解放女性，也是说解放男性。*   *(S)*
> *To be fair, even I am a woman, I still want to say that both men and women are facing the double burdens under the pressure of traditional culture. Women do the work, and meanwhile have to fulfill the traditional role of a good wife/mother; whereas traditionally men should earn money to support the family, if he wants to get rid of the duty and just be a free self, he will be regarded as a loser by many people. The burden is also from the tradition. The pressure on women caused by traditional culture is likewise imposed onto men. Therefore to liberate women is to liberate men as well.*   *(S)*

Resonating with the earlier claim in Chapter Five Section 5.4.1.1, the above narrative of interviewee-S shows that the pressure of contemporary "double-ness" is imposed on men as well as on women, since both genders are "under the pressure of traditional culture". For women, the double standards refer to the social and traditional appraisal of women covering both work identity and family identity, whereas for men, the dual burdens concern the obligation of being the main breadwinner to feed the family and the growing feministic expectation to share in housework (Jiang, 2009). In this sense, traditional culture is seen as having a double-edged impact, as both women and men are confined by its gender expectations as revealed through the modality of "have to" and "should" in the above extract. Expressions such as "to be fair", "both…and", "likewise", and "as well" can be interpreted as justifying the similar situation of the dilemma experienced by men as well as by women.

"To liberate women is to liberate men as well" – previously throughout the history of feminist movements, the term liberation is always used in correlation with the Second Sex, namely, women. According to Nathanson and Young, "men are silenced now…just as women were silenced in the past" (2001, p. 67). The long absence of a male perspective in the feminist campaign is now reflected on by some scholars of women's studies (see Chapter Five Section 5.4.2.1) and by journalism practitioners as a significant and indispensable factor in addressing some fundamental gender issues. Since the end of the 20th century, gender and communication scholars became much more interested in also researching some of the ways in which men and male sex roles were portrayed, and began to explore how communication systems and processes contributed to the construction of different forms of masculinity

(Benwell, 2003; Beynon, 2002). Macnamara argues in his book that with gender as a concept, gender identity and roles of men and women in societies should not be formulated in feminist terms alone, and the nature of men, male identities and men's roles should be given space (Macnamara, 2006). For instance, while men's participation in housework is often regarded as a way to help relieve the pressure of double burden for women in terms of family duty, from a male perspective the bigger pressure on men as the expected major supporter of the family is to be reduced with regard to the appraisal of men's work identity. In this sense, liberation becomes reciprocal between both gender identities.

According to interviewee-X, integration of men's voices and perspectives is now expected by some media producers of women's magazines to give a more comprehensive rather than unilateral understanding of certain issues. In the following extract, expressions of "too monotonous" and "not a different voice" could be seen as legitimizing the necessity of involving men's viewpoints. The popularity of the new column reflected through the statement "we like to read it very much" can be interpreted as a further justification for the new journalist practice of the integration:

> *但是其实我挺想要有男同事的。也会太单一。讲来讲去，都是女性认同的事情。没有一个别的发声。我们杂志是有一个专门的栏目，会有一个话题出来，然后这个话题，让男人说说男人的看法，让女人说说女人的看法。我们自己也挺爱看的。因为女性的想法，我们比较容易想到。男性，原来他的想法是这样想，和我们想的不太一样。男性杂志，我挺爱看男性杂志。女的，对男的会有一个既定，会认为男的在这个问题上肯定是这样想的。结果他其实也不一定这样想。* (X)
>
> *But in fact I'd like to have some male colleagues. It is too monotonous that whatever we talk about is around women issues. There is not a different voice. We have a special column in our magazine, that to seek both men's and women's voices on a selected topic. We as editors like to read the column very much. It is easier for us to figure out women's perspective. But for men, men's opinions are different from what we think. I like reading men's magazine. Women usually have a presupposition for men's thoughts that men must think in this way. It turns out that he might not think so.* (X)

The contrast between "the presupposition for men's thoughts from women's perspective" and the fact that "he might not think so" can perhaps be seen as an appeal to the earlier claim by interviewee-S that it is only "to be fair" (S) to draw in men's positions in dealing with gender issues such as women's identity reconstruction. After all, there are two "Half the Sky" components comprising the whole picture of gender identity and relationship. The present imbalance of gender awareness in media discourses is already taken seriously by some practitioners, as there is an increasing expectation of interactive gender perspectives in media production.

7.4 Summary

How gender is (re)produced in the media demands a consideration of the ways in which media forms are produced. As pointed out by Carter and Steiner, what is critical is the complex interaction of institutional structures, organizational constraints, the basis of financing and the possibility of advertisers' pressure, the regulatory context, as well as the predispositions of individual workers and owners (Carter & Steiner, 2004, p. 17). In sum, this chapter provides some insights from a journalist perspective in terms of both the presentation and production of women's identities in media discourses. As media "discourse" is regarded as important both for what it reveals about a society and how it contributes to the character of society (Bell, 1998), one would expect that journalism plays a central role in shaping our perceptions of gender relations (Carter, 2005). Accordingly, first through a critical framework of analyzing the narratives by journalist practitioners, the contestation of socio-cultural ideologies underlying the diversity of women's identity presented in print media discourse in China is revealed as between traditional gender labor division and the contemporary liberalism and individualism.

As to the production aspect, firstly the difference between *PD* and *WOC*, and the changes from 1995 to 2005 are examined through the practitioners' explanations regarding the patterns of discourse, genre and style. Secondly, gender distribution in the media industry is revealed as a significant factor underpinning the orders of discourse on gender constructs in media. Last but not least, as media representations are seen as the media's construction of reality mediating "the relationship between the ideological and the real" (Newbold et al., 2002, p. 261), this mediation and negotiation is reflected through the struggle of journalist writers in categorizing the diversity of women's identities and reflecting latent tensions underneath the "preferred" construction of certain identities. In an attempt to change the male-dominance in professional practice and consequently to reformulate the discursive construction of gendered discourse, the integration of a male perspective is argued from the narrative data as significant in promoting genuine gender equality in media presentation. However, as pointed out by Talmy, voice is situationally contingent and discursively co-constructed (Talmy, 2011), accordingly, this section does not endorse any generalizations concerning women's identity from journalism practitioners, as the quotations and narratives are relatively more discernible in various conceptual discourses of society within which the contestation occur between different versions of reality, and the dynamicity with which one's representations regarding certain constructs can change.

From Chapter Four to Chapter Seven, the four chapters taken together provide a multi-dimensional examination of Chinese women's identity as revealed through an analysis of print media discourses complemented by argumentation of gender academia and narratives of journalist practitioners, in which Chapter Four categorizes certain contemporary women's identities based on the print media texts of *PD* and *WOC* from a semiotic resource perspective, Chapter Five, based on the data from *CWS*, looks beneath categorized identities to reveal the contestation of ideologies and discourses from a social/institutional perspective, while Chapter Six elucidates the administrative impact of the identity construct through an exploration of data drawn from official documents, seen from a social/institutional perspective, with Chapter Seven providing journalist explanations for the presentation and production of the contested identity constructs and discourses from a participant's perspective as well as a social practice perspective. In the next chapter, a brief conclusion of the thesis with some implications for future study is provided.

Chapter Eight: Conclusion

8.1 Summary

The study of gender discourse not only provides a descriptive account of gender identity and relationships but also reveals how language functions as a symbolic resource to understand and manage personal, social, and cultural meanings and identities. In this sense, the thesis explores how women's identity is discursively constructed and how the presentation of Chinese women in print media is affected by the ambivalence inherent in contested ideologies and cultures. In addressing this theme, the study draws on the tripartite approach of critical discourse analysis – descriptive, interpretative and explanatory – and the multi-perspectival methodological framework linking discoursal properties with their social and cultural circumstances.

This last chapter provides a brief summary of the thesis, addressing the research questions raised in Chapter One based on the analysis of four discussion chapters of inter-textual datasets, and, finally, includes some discussion of further research directions arising from the thesis.

8.1.1 Analysis on *PD* and *WOC*

Chapter Four presents a number of key facets – work identity, family identity, work/family dilemma and self-awareness- relevant to contemporary Chinese women's identity construction, and does so through the analysis and findings of the chosen corpus of a national newspaper – *PD,* and a women's magazine – *WOC,* both of which are state-wide issued and circulated. Among the diverse representation of women's identity and a variety of rhetorical strategies employed in constructing these identities, key metaphorical constructions of *"Half the Sky", "Harmonious Society"*, and *"To Have It All"* are critically elaborated as they, in particular, reveal dominant ideologies either explicitly or implicitly underlying these media discourses.

Firstly, despite a growing diversity of women's images after the 1980s, in the media reports work identity remains as one of the most significant identity facets of Chinese women. This is in part due to the historical influences of Marxism and the socialist political agenda of

China. The *Half the Sky* campaign which originated in the Mao era, still remains as a characterization of mainstream advocacy concerning women's identity from the chosen media and continues to exhibit traces of the Mao-era model identity. Linked to this, *Iron Girl* qualities still can be evidenced in the data sets particularly of *PD* and from the 1995 period. Secondly, the *Harmonious Society* campaign initiated by the Jintao Hu administration in 2004 has had a far-reaching impact on gender identity and gender relationships. It does so by acting to restore the traditional ideology of being a good wife and mother as contribution to the harmonious family, and, as a consequence, works to ensure the stability of society at large. However, embedded in this campaign is an ambivalent attitude in the media discourses in terms of the contestation of ideological positions between the promotion of the *Half the Sky* work identity and the (re-)endorsement of the *Good Wife/Mother* family identity. Thirdly, this contestation is implicitly expressed or suggested in the media by adopting the solution of the *To Have It All* identity for career women as a means of addressing work/family conflicts. A new model identity- that of the *Third Type Woman*, someone who is able to, or is trying to keep a good balance between work and family roles, is encouraged in current media texts. Despite the fact that the traditional ideological constraints have been reduced to encourage women to redefine their own roles in society, the findings reveal that the delicate balancing process between work/family roles by women is meanwhile an uneasy compromising process of negotiating the relationships between women and nation, women and family, women and self. Various ideological forces of nation-oriented state politics, family-oriented traditional perceptions, growing developments in feminist consciousness and emerging individualism come together in the process of addressing an overarching and pervasive Work/Family dilemma among contemporary Chinese women. Fourthly, new topics such as those of daughter identity, expression of love and relationships, assertion of sexuality, affordability of personal hobbies are noted in the data sets especially from *WOC* in the 2005 period. The emerging self-awareness of Chinese women especially of the young generation is revealed as an individual identity more independent of previously emphasized family or state affiliations. This emerging self-identity cannot yet be taken to be a mainstream position, but it is a voice which is getting stronger and stronger with the rise of a "Me Culture" in post-Mao China, especially in the new 21st century.

The comparative framework – both diachronically between 1995 to 2005 datasets and synchronically between *PD* and *WOC* datasets attempts to reflect changing social recognition about gender constructs as well as different media appraisals on gender ideology. From the evidence provided in this study, we can note there are substantial social changes reflected in

relation to women's identity from 1995 to 2005 and onwards – such as the restored femininity, the revived focus on family role, the emerging self-awareness among women, the phenomenon of *Leftover Ladies*. But such changes are by no means uniform or form some natural progression. Rather, the re-construction process of Chinese women's identity extends as a dynamic, complex landscape which is partly affected by the nation's socio-political changes but also affected by other factors such as globalization and women's own movement of post-modernism. It is also the case that the positions adopted by *PD* and *WOC* are not consistent either. On one hand, *PD* adopts a more conservative attitude on traditional gender definition while maintaining its consistent political agenda of integrating women's work contribution in the *Half the Sky* model identity. On the other hand, *WOC* shares with *PD* a position in regard to women's work identity appraisal, especially in the 1995 data sets, but asserts its feminist perspective more clearly in the 2005 data set in terms of revealing women issues such as addressing work/family conflict and arising self-awareness. However, in general, the corpus of *PD* and *WOC* reveals an ambiguous attitude taken by media discourse in the contested struggle of the discursive construction of women's identity, particularly in regard to the membership categorization of certain identities and the double expectations of work and family roles.

8.1.2 Analysis on *CWS*

Chapter Five explores the metaphorical presentations of *Half the Sky*, *Harmonious Society* and *To Have It All* by investigating a number of sensitive issues around women's identity. Data from the academic journal *CWS* are drawn to reveal these controversial topics such as those of *Glass Ceiling*, *Fear of Success*, *Leftover Ladies* and *Double Standard*, providing a relatively more feminist landscape in the process of (re-)constructing contemporary Chinese women's identity.

Different from the ambivalent and implicit ideological positions taken in the texts from *PD* and *WOC*, *CWS* is more explicit and expressive in revealing and discussing some of the key issues in contemporary Chinese women's identity construction. From the data analysis, we can note that the four facets of women's identity established in Chapter Four – work identity, family identity, work/family conflict and self identity – are also focused on by scholars of women' studies, however the perspectives they explore reflect more humanistic and feminist considerations and point further to the future direction of the women's movement in China. Firstly, as regards work identity, contrasting the exaltation on *Half the Sky* achievements in

PD and *WOC*, the analysis of the chosen corpus from *CWS* provides an alternative perspective on issues such as discrimination against women on their career ladder, and fear of success experienced by many women in their pursuit of professional goals. Secondly, as regards to family identity, the *CWS* data present an explicit critical stance towards some deep-rooted traditional ideologies of women's family roles, which forms a contrast to the implicit acknowledgement of such impact in *PD* and *WOC*. The mixed standards of choosing a spouse and one ensuing popular phenomenon of *Leftover Ladies* may help explain the contestation among contemporary gender ideologies and relations. As to the work/family conflict, distinct metaphors from *CWS* such as "*Burning candle at both ends*" and "*Double burden*" reveal a more feminist departure point in approaching the dilemma, than that embedded in the ambiguous metaphorical construction of "*Keeping the balance*" in the chosen corpus of *PD* and *WOC*. The *CWS* data also suggest the importance and necessity of acknowledging men's role and joint efforts in resolving such a conflict, in addition to women's own efforts as suggested in the print media of *PD* and *WOC*.

In short, data analysis of academic discussions from *CWS* in Chapter Five can be regarded as providing a more critical and feminist awareness in terms of noting the diversity of media discourses and their positioned nature, and thus forming a contrastive analytical perspective to the corpus of *PD* and *WOC* in terms of some subtle discriminations and sensitive controversies in relation to women's identity reconstruction and development.

8.1.3 Analysis on *PD* editorials and national discourses

In Chapter Six, editorial texts from *PD* and from some complementary national documents are analysed to investigate the prescriptive power of the grand narratives of national discourse on women's identity and to examine the effects of inter-textuality on the discursive construction of *Half the Sky* and *Harmonious Society* in relation to the national political agendas.

Firstly, analysis of data from governmental sources highlights the "connection" between nation and women, and the "integration" of women's development in the overall national construction. Secondly, in addition to the persistent advocacy over time of *Half the Sky* as the ideal work identity for Chinese women in the media discourses particularly those of governmental affiliations, the unique role of women in the present cause of establishing a *Harmonious Society* being examined reveals contested ideologies underlying the implicit

double standards imposed on women. Thirdly, since official documents are hardly spontaneous and dynamic texts, the mechanical and ritualistic nature of *PD* editorials and other official documents demonstrated in their meticulous presenting of specific generic patterns and selected lexico-syntactic and semantico-pragmatic resources makes it possible to communicate national ideologies in the most effective and "default" way possible.

Under the specific context of a discourse system with Chinese characteristics, the national discourse representing the ideology of the Party in power inevitably occupies a dominant position. However in the present period of complex and radical social transformation, some scholars observe that the power of national discourse on constructing women's identity is weakened by an increasing division and plurality of discourses constructed by various social groups with differentiated positions and perspectives on women (Na, 2008; Zhang & Liang, 2008).

8.1.4 Analysis on interviews

Linguistic ethnographic analysis of the narratives serves a way of enriching a fundamentally linguistic project. Chapter Seven examines the interviews with journalist practitioners from the participants' perspective. Selected narratives from these "insider" voices are documented and analysed, providing important insights into the processes in which the newspaper reports construct specific understanding and categorization of women's identity, and how they may reveal under scrutiny the ideological positions of different media during moments of social transition.

Firstly, as to the presentation of diverse positions on women's identity, various constructs of women's identity over time in terms of positions and recognition are described and evaluated from a journalistic perspective. While the heritage of the past still remains in people's consciousness, reinforced by slogans and other representations, there are changes and shifts to be recognised and acknowledged. For example, some former constructs, especially the ones bearing historical socio-political imprints, are to be regarded as somehow "outdated" concepts of the past. On the other hand, some new constructs arise from contemporary social transformation directed against certain traditional ideologies. Secondly, as to the aspect of producing of women's identity in media from journalists' perspective, the interviews reveal significant issues which drive the current writing of these journalists. As people in China are living through times of transition and change, and starting to appreciate diversity and

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individuality, different opinions and comments on a range of issues are now to be expected. This is so in these practitioner narratives – where contested discourses are signaled in regard to the re-construction/production of contemporary Chinese women's identity, and where struggles experienced by the journalists in categorizing such diversity and in speaking as it were the "unspeakable" in the process of producing appropriate news reports are revealed.

From Chapter Four to Chapter Seven, the four data discussion chapters together provide a multi-dimensional examination of the discursive construction of Chinese women's identity in the media discourses complemented with academic argumentation and practitioner narratives. In the next section, some implications are summarized in response to the research questions of Chapter One, and some future directions of research study are suggested and outlined.

8.2 Implications

This thesis began as an exploration of the following questions:
1. How is women's identity constructed in Chinese media discourses?
2. What socio-cultural factors motivate the discursive construction of women's identity in the Chinese context?
3. What is the role of Chinese media in constructing women's identity?
4. What social changes in contemporary China are reflected in media discourses in China over time and comparatively across media types?

What we are now able to say is that responses to questions 2 and 3 regarding socio-cultural factors and the role of media are very significant in interpreting and explaining the responses to Question 1 of identity presentation. Question 4, in relation to the revealing of social change is more difficult to address as it involves complex discursive processes seen from various perspectives. Accordingly, the multi-perspectival methodological framework proposed in Chapter Three with its inter-textual datasets is particularly valuable as it presents a substantial, triangulated, multi-dimensional basis for the examination of the inter-discursive construction of contemporary Chinese women's identity in media discourses. It is the multi-dimensional complexity of the key research questions that motivates the mixing. Textual analysis, the formal structures of grammar and the propositional meaning of sentences still count, but they become just one among a large array of semiotic resources available for the local production and interpretation of meaning (Verschueren, 1999), as ethnographic research perspective has considerable momentum in modern sociolinguistics (Coupland & Jaworski,

2009).

In the overall context of its major themes, this study also attempts to offer insights into the workings of the power struggles and ideology conflicts in society. In the process, it hopes to investigate and make more explicit the social positioning and social perception of media, offering as they do various representations of women's identity, and the intentions with which they propose their re-conceptualization of gender roles. More generally, it is hoped that the study will help to raise an increasing awareness and interest in gender and media research in China, and therefore work to promote true gender equality and women's development in society at large.

8.2.1 Metaphorical construction of *Half the Sky* and *Harmonious Society*

Metaphor is not just a linguistic embellishment, but a primary means by which people make sense of the world around them. According to Ellis, metaphors help us to construct reality, to reason about it and to evaluate it (Ellis, 2001). This study takes its starting point of investigating Chinese women's typical identity known as *Half the Sky* and extends this metaphor further to examine the dynamic development of the metaphorical identity construction in a more contemporary context of the *Harmonious Society* campaign. The analysis points to metaphorical constructions in the press being both grounded in basic image schematic structures and highly influenced by attitudes expressed by societal groups, based on the notions of identity modelling and transformation. The metaphors cited in this study suggest that linguistic creativity is not confined to literary texts but as a discursive practice is linked to power structures and socio-cultural practices (Carter, 2004). The combination of conceptual metaphor studies with critical awareness concerning metaphor and dynamic systems is employed to provide a more comprehensive frame for explaining the function of metaphor in use in the Chinese print press – how metaphorical constructions reproduce and promote the viewpoints of particular social groups, constitute certain social assumptions, and underpin specific ideological contestations of gender identity.

The origin of the metaphor *Half the Sky* was rooted in a particular ideology of nationalism from the Mao era – an ideology that dealt with the national construction of women's roles and the designation of women's domains. On the one hand, the discourse surrounding the metaphor of *Half the Sky* in the chosen corpus of *PD* and *WOC* still reveals an attempt on the part of its creators to establish a model woman's identity such as that of the *Iron Girl* within

the national narrative and keeping the "historical" women-nation connection tight (see Chapter Four and Six). The government of China can be seen as the primary definition-maker in building this women's ideal identity in favour of certain state socio-political and economic agendas. On the other hand, the remarkable achievements of Chinese women's development over the past decades in terms of widening work opportunity and enhanced social status are constantly demonstrated and highlighted through the metaphorical representation of *Half the Sky*. However, subtle issues relating to work identity such as that of the glass ceiling and the fear of success experienced by many working women, mostly absent in *PD* and *WOC*, are picked up in the data sets of *CWS* argumentations and narratives of journalist practitioners (see Chapter Five and Seven), where the gender inequality behind the glorious *Half the Sky* representation is to a certain extent unmasked.

It is also interesting to note that the reference of *Half the Sky* campaign in China is mainly directed towards its salient association with work identity rather than family identity, as women are mostly expected to hold up half the sky at workplaces and in social positions. In terms of family identity, whether women should hold up half the sky, or indeed the whole sky, has always been rather an ambiguous question to address both from the government's perspective and in the media discourses. Nevertheless, we can assert that it is in fact a key issue in contemporary women's development from a feminist perspective, revealing as it does a persistent and traditional gender ideology underlying major gender issues of discrimination and inequality. While for men the home is a site of leisure, clearly marked by a temporal and spatial distance from the workplace, for women it is a place of work inhabited by husband and children who require constant and continuous emotional and material care. As Komter points out, this domestic sphere becomes the site where gender conflicts and power differences are directly and incessantly experienced, fought out, modified and accommodated, in an often tacit and inconspicuous process (Komter, 1985).

The construction of *Harmonious Society* can be seen as partly an answer from the government to the sensitive question of "representing" *Half the Sky* at home, however in a rather equivocal and ambiguous way (see Chapter Four and Six). The idea of a harmonious society is one which advocates tolerance and respect for the co-existence of diverse ideologies, cultures, and identities. It derives from the essence of history-honored Confucianism, in which the balance and harmony of things and their relationship is of utmost importance. Influenced by the new-Confucianism since the 1980s and the campaign of *Harmonious Society* in the new century, the traditional definition of women's role in

domestic sphere is re-emphasized, reflected through a series of metaphorical constructions of cultural models such as *"a good wife/mother"*, *"happy woman"*, and *"complete woman"* in the chosen corpus. According to Gee, cultural models are signaled by metaphors (1999). However, as the campaign was initiated against the backdrop of radical and complex social transformations that China was and is going through as a result of the rapid growth of the market economy and overwhelming globalization, it has inevitably embedded within itself a complex and dynamic connotation of ideological ambivalence and contestation. Firstly, *Harmonious Society* provides an endorsement of the traditional family identity of women as "a unique role" in constructing a harmonious society, regarded as helping promote social stability in general. Secondly, the slogan implies the double expectations on women in terms of the *Half the Sky* emphasis on work identity and a revived traditional focus on women's family identity. The contestation between traditional gender ideology and contemporary women's emancipation development is "resolved" or "concealed" through the double standards imposed on working women, who should *keep a good balance*. *The Third Type woman* and *To Have It All* solutions suggested in the chosen corpus can be seen as exemplifying such an "answer" to women in dealing with work/family conflict from the media "authorized" by the government.

However, the unique double-ness implicitly levied on women's identity in *PD* and *WOC* is challenged by some scholars of women's studies in *CWS* and journalist practitioners in their narratives, typically through a contrasting metaphorical construction of the double roles as *burning candles at both ends* rather than *keeping a good balance* (see Chapter Five and Seven). The hidden issue of the double burden and the work/family conflict faced by women surfaces to reveal the underlying ideological struggle between socio-historical recognition and contemporary perceptions of culture and politics. In this sense, metaphor use in the Chinese media's definition of the double roles reflect the particular viewpoints of the media, while at the same time is influenced by the way the public perceive the subject. In other words, being constituent parts of discourse, metaphors may become points of consensus or contestation between the social groups that act as participants in the debate. According to Cameron, metaphors display multiple interconnected dimensions, all of which are dynamic, unfolding in time and contexts of use: linguistic, cognitive, affective, physical and cultural (Cameron, 2010). Accordingly, the evolution of the metaphors surrounding Chinese women's identity as *Half the Sky* into the post-Mao era can be seen as embedded within the dynamic interaction of diverse cultural and ideological contestations.

The present research attempts to go beyond the cognitive impact of metaphor and aims to view the social and discoursal aspects of metaphorical constructions in relation to people's identities and social realities. Although the desire to bring about a change in the existing discourses and dominant paradigms of gender, to break the stereotypes of gendered binaries and cultural models, is strongly manifested in some discussions from the chosen corpus, especially that of *CWS* and some narratives of journalists, the grounded reality of women's existence is quite the contrary (Zubair, 2007). Contemporary Chinese women aspire to be individual human beings and struggle to find a voice for themselves through creating these alternative discourse and metaphors, yet their desire and quest for self-identity and gender equality is caught up in a complex web of competing ideologies and discourses and often multiple and conflicting identities. *Burning candles* and *Leftover ladies* (see Chapter Four and Five) are such core metaphors which capture the essence of this struggle, where women in China negotiate different worlds of identity – traditional, political, individual, modern and westernized – through inter-discursive discourses.

8.2.2 Socio-cultural factors and social change

In terms of the critical perspective adopted in this study, socio-cultural factors are regarded as playing a significant role in the discursive construction of Chinese women's identity in media discourses. Men and women usually find it difficult to make the apparently obvious corrections to gender constructs in media presentations, as both in the case of men and women, sense of identity and sense of place in culture and society are tied up in the "ideological history" of relationships between men and women as well as in the "powerful framework" of socialisation processes (Scollon, 1995, p. 237, 240). The historicity of discourses is reflective of the naturalization of certain conceptualizations of reality into social consciousness, becoming ordinary commonsensical knowledge. In this study, it is also of utmost importance to recognize that historicity is a crucial part of the discourse of women's identity as historical conceptualizations of women contributes to the ideological reality within which we define or structure gender constructs on the basis of past experiences. The construct of Foucault's "order of discourse" proves extraordinarily productive in the interpretation and in particular the social and historical explanation of gender identity construction, as language in his formation is to be explored historically as a means of providing evidence for shifts in identity transformation and certain human relationships (Foucault, 1972).

The identities of Chinese women have passed through different phases from "newly liberated" women deriving from feudalism in the early 1920s to "desexualized" *Iron Girls* of asceticism in the 1960s, from the ideal-wife model "Liu Huifang" (a submissive, sacrificing, tolerant heroine shouldering double burdens of work and family in a nationwide popular soap opera) in the 1980s to the ever-increasing number of *Leftover Ladies* over the past decade. Diachronically, gender identity moves from monotonous stereotypes to a complex diversity of choices. Of course, in the process of these identity transformations there are tense struggles of persistence as well as resistance of certain ideologies, and gender discourse is negotiated in media production, text and reception. In this thesis, ideologies of different historical periods such as the persistent traditional prescription of a *Good Wife/Mother* in the pre-Mao era, to the overwhelming state politics of the *Iron Girl* model in the Mao era are examined in terms of their impact on constructing contemporary Chinese women's identity in the post-Mao era, especially regarding the family role and the work role. At the same time, many western cultures and feminist thoughts are rigorously introduced to China through the globalization process, especially since the 1995 FWCW held in Beijing, offering women new inspirations and more space with emphasis on individual values and pursuits.

The data analysis of this study reveals that for work identity and family identity of women, nation-oriented and family-oriented ideologies remain respectively as important perceptions underlying certain gender constructs in media texts such as *PD* and *WOC* (see Chapter Four and Six). However, the findings also show that to some extent women are no longer passively subject to the structure of mainstream discourse dominated by the state or tradition, rather, they become subjects constructing a new autonomous discourse of modern femininity (see Chapter Five and Seven). In the understanding of post-modernist feminism, the concept of power is deconstructed in the manner suggested by Foucault whereby power (in his terms "capillary" power) is operated not occupied, scattered not concentrated (Basili, 1991). Further, gender discourse itself embodies the power relationships in the system of modern discourses characterized by an "ambiguity of boundary" and a "potential for plurality" (Shen, 2005, p. 69). Accordingly, in the post-Mao era, there has been a post-puritan variety of choices to be a modern woman, with not only the awakening femininity as a response to the previous desexualisation movement, but also the growing space and awareness of individual choices of being a good, tender wife/mother, or an independent and successful career woman, or a perfect woman of having it all, as a response to the development of liberalism and feminism. Underlying these alternative images and identities is an ideological contestation between historical and modern concepts, between Eastern and Western cultures, as well as an unstable

and dynamic construction of gender identity including and excluding certain versions of femininity in an often contradictory way (van Zoonen, 1994).

The identity dilemma of seeking and defining a contemporary ideal/model for women leads in turn to the diversity of women's presentation in print media discourse and an increasing mixture of public discourses in China. As is mentioned earlier, the approach to these media discourses is context-dependent and thus historically oriented. The notion of contextualization and inter-textuality inherently implies taking synchronic and diachronic communicative events into account. Consequently the study is contrastive of different types of presentations and engages with what has happened since the 1995 Beijing Conference. Comparative analyses of datasets – between 1995 and 2005 (and onwards), between *PD* and *WOC*, between *PD/WOC* and *CWS*, between print media texts and journalist narratives – demonstrate a complex and dynamic process of constructing and reflecting on women's identity in the media, and reveal social changes over time, reflected through the discursive construction of women's identity.

One of the social changes significant to women's identity reconstruction and development is the arising "Me Culture" – the shift from the collectivism of the Mao era to individualism in post-Mao China, in which Chinese women start their journey of awakening a self-awareness, seeking a self identity, other than the family/work identity based on the orders of discourse constructed by men as a kind of women-family or women-nation interdependence. Although the process of this self quest may be full of pains of denial and dilemmas of departure, the efforts may still be confined to certain groups of women, it is both an inspiration and aspiration for a growing feminist power toward an ultimate and genuine gender equality (Na, 2008). According to Li, such an extraction of women's own self identity as a "woman" from the discourse of "women and men are the same" is unprecedented in the history of the feminist movement in China and can be regarded as the real starting point of Chinese women in terms of developing an independent self identity (Li, 1998).

8.2.3 The role of media in constructing gender identity

As Bell points out, media are dominant presenters of language in our society at large; journalists do not write articles, they write stories – with structure, order, viewpoint and values (Bell, 1991). In the news are carried those stories and images of the daily happenings of our societies, determined by values, and the kind of language in which that news is told

reflects and expresses those values (Bell, 1998). Media communication is thus the few talking to the many (Scollon, 1998). Such practices are shaped, with their commonsensical assumptions, according to prevailing relations of power between groups of people. However, the connections between the use of language and the exercise of power remain obscure. According to Fairclough, it is in fact the normal opacity of these practices to those involved in them – the invisibility of their ideological assumptions, and of the power relations which underlie their practices – that helps to sustain these power relations (Fairclough, 1999 & 2014).

As is mentioned in Chapter One, CDA has an explicit socio-political agenda, a concern to discover and bear witness to unequal relations of power which underlie ways of talking in a society, and in particular to reveal the role of discourse in reproducing or challenging socio-political dominance. In this context, media become a particular subject of CDA analysis because of their manifestly pivotal role as discourse-bearing institutions (Garrett & Bell, 1998). Accordingly, a closer critical linguistic examination of media texts and their construction and interpretation is vitally important in revealing the workings of power and ideology underlying the orders of discourse of gender identity.

Defining gender as discourse leads to the question of what "role" the media play in gender discourse and how that role is realized. It seems indisputable that many aspects of women's lives and experiences are not properly reflected by the media. Many feminist media studies have identified that, in diverse media texts, women have been depicted as sex objects and devoted homemakers within the bounds of "true womanhood – piety, purity, submissiveness, and domesticity" (Triece 1999; Wood 1994). In the chosen corpus of this study, stereotypical categorizations such as the *Iron Girl,* a successful woman, *a Good Wife/Mother*, a happy/complete woman, the *Third Type woman*, and *Leftover Ladies* are replicated in media texts, endorsing traditional definitions and political expectations on women's work and family roles (see Chapter Four). Certain definitions of reality are therefore aligned with "common sense", with what "everyone knows to be true" of being a woman or man. In essence they are thus ideological in nature. However, these various identity categories (especially the *Third Type woman* and *Leftover Ladies*) surrounding the metaphorical construction of women's identity as *Half the Sky* in a *Harmonious Society* in the Chinse print press, underpinned by reference to political and activist sources and public opinion, reveal an ambiguous position of what the media writes and how it does so in regard to the complex ideological contestations underlying these gender constructs.

As is mentioned earlier, representation has always been an important battleground for contemporary feminism and media are seen as part of feminism's cultural and material struggle. In this thesis, the ambiguity of media texts such as *PD* and *WOC* on women issues in terms of contested social perceptions are pointed out and argued in some discussions in *CWS* texts and narratives of journalists (see Chapter Five and Seven), as a feminist attempt to "publicize" existing conflict of double standards on women and produce a symbolic challenge to the dominant patriarchal codes of society (Melucci, 1988). According to Carter and Steiner, the media are instrumental in the processes of gaining public consent, and media images dissemble the extent to which they are aligned with the interests of powerful groups in society (Carter & Steiner, 2004). Feminists have been arguing that most of us cannot see how patriarchal ideology is being actively made to appear as "non-ideological", "objective","neutral" and "non-gendered" (Carter & Steiner, 2004, p. 2). In this sense, media are construed as a kind of "technologies of gender" (van Zoonen, 1994, cf. Section 2.3.3.3), expressing and incorporating gender discourse that arises from and regulates social, political and other contexts. Thus the news media become sites at which women, the women's movement, feminism, and women's issues are ignored or displayed in particular ways.

The relationship between male dominance among media professionals and masculine discourse in media texts is another enduring issue in feminist media theory. In the narratives of journalist practitioners in this study, the ever-returning question whether an increase of women professionals in media industry would imply an improvement of the representation of women and femininity and its discussions reflect the intrinsic contested nature of gender itself as an identity "performatively constituted by the very 'expressions' that are said to be its results" (Butler, 1999, p. 33). Any improvements in women's treatment in the news will require not simply more coverage of women or more women journalists but a fundamental change in reconstructing the media's orders of discourse. As Fairclough argues, the media are positioned between public orders of discourse and private orders of discourse, constantly transforming source public discourse for consumption in domestic settings and redrawing its boundaries with these public and private orders of discourse (Fairclough, 1995). In this way, the final obstacle for the entrance and advancement of women in media professions reflected in the narratives (see Chapter Seven) – the domestic and parental responsibilities of working women – also proves to be a double burden imposed on all other professions of women's identity constructed in the media.

The employment of a multi-perspectival framework to the analysis of the construction of gender identity, including datasets drawn from print media texts, scholarly discussions, official documents and practitioners' narratives, stresses the diversity and proliferation of discursive practices and productive processes in which certain gender ideologies are creatively re-articulated. The focus on discursive creativity and inter-textuality in this analysis of media discourse corresponds to the nature of dynamic social changes. We are living through a period of rapid and continuous transformation of society and culture, and the media as a discursive practice play a significant role in reflecting and stimulating more general processes of change, which to an extent are limited by hegemonic relations and structures (Fairclough, 1999 & 2010). Consequently, one major aim of this research is, among other things, to regard media as a terrain of hegemonic struggle to promote a social gender perspective and to raise the awareness of ordinary audiences to the extent that they too will recognize the patriarchal nature of media output and overcome their ill-informed preference for it.

8.2.4 Limitations and future directions for research

Of course, to assume that certain identities or images "represent" either worsening or improving social status for women in China overall is problematic because images are "polysyemic" and cannot simply be "read" according to any straightforward formula (Ross & Carter, 2011, p. 23). As Gallagher (2005) notes, while such research is important, results provide only part of the story of women's continuing marginalization in the news media. That said, trend data are invaluable in sketching out the broad landscape of women's coverage in the Chinese print media and in reality. Moreover, as Sunderland and Litosseliti point out, most gender and language study can be described as broadly feminist, in its questioning of androcentrism and "objective" or "universal" truths, and in its commitment to the promotion of progressive gender relations (Sunderland & Litosseliti, 2008, p. 17). However, according to Gill, there is no stable, unchanging feminist perspective from which to make a cool appraisal of contemporary gender in the media. Rather, feminist ideas are constantly transforming in response to different critiques, to new or previously excluded constituencies, to younger generations, to new theoretical ideas, and to the experience of various kinds of struggle (Gill, 2007). It is hoped that this research will demonstrate a multi-dimensional picture of contemporary Chinese women's identity and living experiences and reveal hidden issues of identity trouble and double standards in media presentations. Most importantly, it is hoped that the observations and interpretations offered will inspire some useful directions for

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further investigation of these issues by researchers in a variety of disciplines. And a further goal of this thesis might be to raise awareness about the ways in which gender representations in media and gender identity as a whole affect individual life choices and chances, and thus women's and men's relative personal opportunities for personal success, and to contribute to a political agenda that seeks to deconstruct and subvert these conventions and expectation, challenging taken-for-granted assumptions about their inevitability and paving the way for genuinely democratic gender relations (Carter & Steiner, 2004).

This thesis sets out to engage with a diachronic and synchronic exploration of Chinese women's identity as constructed in print media between 1995 and 2005 (and onwards) motivated by the aim of providing feminist insights and evidence for a critical questioning of linguistic and semiotic phenomena of gender identity in socio-cultural terms. This has been accomplished through a multi-perspectival methodological framework employing a number of inter-textual data sets. This is of course only a step, with some limitations owing to the research scope of the thesis, and one which could be further substantiated and improved by future possibilities of research. There are a couple of very interesting and worthy directions – for the purpose of the analysis, datasets were constructed by choosing media texts in the time frame between 1995 and 2005, which could be extended to include the following decade of 2005-2015, in order to reflect a more up-to-date situation; the primary data source of *PD* as a mainstream national newspaper in China and *WOC* as a national women's magazine could be complemented by some new or alternative type of media such as women's popular magazines or fashion pictorials or television broadcasts or online media to allow a more detailed analysis and a more comprehensive depiction of the diverse landscape of women's identity; the identity focus of this study mostly focused as it is on urban career women reveals an inadequate attention to other groups/classes of women such as housewives or rural women; it would also be interesting and helpful to conduct some comparative study of women's identity in media between China and some Western cultures to investigate the inter-cultural interaction. It is these opportunities which I hope, in part at least, to take up and advance in my future research work on women and media.

Finally I would like to end my thesis with an apposite quotation –

"*Despite the constraints women have faced in achieving equality, they continue to forge ahead undaunted*" (Carilli & Campbell, 2005, xv.).

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03rd December 2008

Ms. Huiling Xu
C5A 569, Linguistics Department
Macquarie University
NSW 2109

Reference: HE28NOV2008-D06192 L&P

Dear Ms. Xu,

FINAL APPROVAL

Title of project: "Comparing women's political presentation in print media discourse between China and Australia: A discourse analytical study"

Thank you for your recent correspondence. Your responses have addressed the issues raised by the Division of Linguistics and Psychology Sub-Committee of the Ethics Review Committee (Human Research) and you may now proceed with your research.

Please note the following standard requirements of approval:

1. Approval will be for a period of twelve (12) months. At the end of this period, if the project has been completed, abandoned, discontinued or not commenced for any reason, you are required to submit a Final Report on the project. If you complete the work earlier than you had planned you must submit a Final Report as soon as the work is completed. The Final Report is available at: http://www.research.mq.edu.au/researchers/ethics/human_ethics/forms

2. However, at the end of the 12 month period if the project is still current you should instead submit an application for renewal of the approval if the project has run for less than five (5) years. This form is available at http://www.research.mq.edu.au/researchers/ethics/human_ethics/forms If the project has run for more than five (5) years you cannot renew approval for the project. You will need to complete and submit a Final Report (see Point 1 above) and submit a new application for the project. (The five year limit on renewal of approvals allows the Committee to fully re-review research in an environment where legislation, guidelines and requirements are continually changing, for example, new child protection and privacy laws).

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3. Please remember the Committee must be notified of any alteration to the project.
4. You must notify the Committee immediately in the event of any adverse effects on participants or of any unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project.
5. At all times you are responsible for the ethical conduct of your research in accordance with the guidelines established by the University http://www.research.mq.edu.au/researchers/ethics/human_ethics/policy

If you will be applying for or have applied for internal or external funding for the above project **it is your responsibility** to provide Macquarie University's Research Grants Officer with a copy of this letter as soon as possible. The Research Grants Officer will not inform external funding agencies that you have final approval for your project and funds will not be released until the Research Grants Officer has received a copy of this final approval letter.

Yours sincerely

Mr Colm Halbert
Chair, Division of Linguistics and Psychology Sub-Committee to the Ethics Review Committee (Human Research)
Acting Associate Dean of Research

Cc: Dr. Stephen H. Moore, C5A 503, Linguistics Department

RE: Ethics Amendment 1 - Approved (Ref No. 5200800550)

1 message

Fhs Ethics <fhs.ethics@mq.edu.au>   Wed, Nov 21, 2012 at 12:00 PM
To: Ms Huiling Xu <irenexhl@gmail.com>
Cc: Prof Chris Candlin <chris.candlin@mq.edu.au>, Dr Stephen Moore <stephen.moore@mq.edu.au>

Dear Ms Xu,

RE: 'Contested discourses of women's identity in Chinese print media'
(Ref: 5200800550)

Thank you for your recent correspondence regarding the amendment request.
The amendments have been reviewed and we are pleased to advise you that the
amendments have been approved.

This approval applies to the following amendments:

1. Project title changed to 'Contested discourses of women's identity in
Chinese print media' - focus on Chinese context only;
2. Revised Information and consent forms (in English and Chinese).

Please accept this email as formal notification that the amendments have
been approved.

Please do not hesitate to contact us in case of any further queries.

All the best with your research.

Kind regards,

FHS Ethics

****
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Dear Ms Xu,

Title of project: 'Contested discourses of women's identity in Chinese print media' (Ref: HE28NOV2008-D6192L&P)

FINAL REPORT APPROVED

Your final report has been received and approved, effective 11th December 2013.

The Faculty of Human Sciences Human Research Ethics Sub-Committee is grateful for your cooperation and would like to wish you success in future research endeavours.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Peter Roger
Chair
Faculty of Human Sciences
Human Research Ethics Sub-Committee

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