Chapter One

Introduction

Another dawn blowing dust in my face
In a strange city, I unload my bundle of dreams.
The skyscrapers are taller and denser than the trees of home.
The bridge neon lights are like leaves,
Like drops of acid dew in the moonlight,
This cannot moisten my chapped lips....

Here I must bid farewell to a rhythm of life
Which is as slow as the yellow cow plowing.
I must speed ahead as fast as a car
To chase the moment
And build a life from reinforcement steel, and concrete,
And drips of sweat....

-'I Work in the City', extracted verses from a poem byYu Chengda[1]

In the three square kilometer factory complex enclosed by high walls, no wind can blow in. But they were gone in the wind. Also gone is the value of labor that I doubt if exists.

-Words by Yang Wei after serial worker suicides in Foxconn's Shenzhen factory[2]

These excerpts were written by two of the millions of Chinese domestic migrant workers, commonly known as *nongmin'gong* or contractedly *min'gong* (literally peasant worker) in Chinese. These melancholy verses vividly portray the displacement and bewilderment of Chinese migrant rural laborers in the fast modernizing urban society. Due to the *hukou* (household registration) regime,[3] which discriminatorily defines rural residents as outcast from urban citizenship, these migrant workers retain identification with the peasantry, a political-economically as well as culturally disparaged category, regardless of

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[1]Translated by Rachel Murphy and Cited in Murphy (2002). Original source*: Zhongguo Nongcun Qingnian* (China Rural Youth), 2(1996), p.29.
[2] 'Beifeng chuizou de laodong he shengming' (Labor and lives gone in the wind), *Gongren Ribao* (Worker's Daily), 2010.05.22, p.5.
[3]. For a detailed discussion on the *hukou* system and its social ramifications, see chapter 6.

their real occupations. The sheer gravity of their presence in the urban society as a massive labor force and the dualistic reality of a caste-like *hukou* regime and concomitant appalling discrimination and deprivation it has brought about migrant workers have led to huge contradictions, both physically and symbolically.

Migrant workers in the reform era

As widely known, China, the world's most populous country, has been undergoing unprecedented transformation since the late 1970s when the reform that has created the so-called 'Chinese miracle' started. Yet the stagnation of political reform in contrast with economic change has led to a general condition of 'citizenship poverty' in the Chinese society, especially for marginalized groups as migrant workers. During this period of some thirty years, millions of rural peasants released from socialist collective farming teams in the agricultural reform have become migrant workers floating between their ancestral rural villages and developed urban areas, where they work as builders, waiters, maids, cleaners, vendors, and the like, performing all the so-called 'dirty and hard jobs' which most of the native urban inhabitants would not deign to undertake. By the end of 2010, according to official statistical data, there were 242.23 million migrant workers in China (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2011), constituting the largest migrating population in human history. Every year, during the period of c*hunyun* (literally spring transport, referring to passenger transport around the Chinese lunar new year), the sheer massiveness of this group is phenomenal and highly visible when most of them congregate at train stations all over the country, desperately trying to board a train that will take them back to their home villages to celebrate the Chinese new year and the long-awaited annual family reunion. After a two week stay, until the Lantern Festival which marks the end of the celebration, they shoulder their backpacks and join the army of migrants returning to the cities. This momentous scale of passenger transport has been described as 'China is going home' or 'leaving

home' by popular media's exaggerated but vivid narration. This stunning phenomenon has not only become an enduring symbol of the dilemma of China's social transformation, but also an enduring subject of media and cultural spectacle.

Figure 1.1 Migrant workers during *chunyun*, 1993, Chengdu[4]

Since its inception, spontaneous rural-urban migration has captured great attention from the public, the government, and the media as well, within and without China. The annually increasing number of migrant workers and the consequent problems concerning this relatively new phenomenon[5] since the 1980s, (especially after the start of all-dimensional marketization reform in 1992, when the then paramount leader, Deng Xiaoping paid his famous southern visits to frontline cities like Shenzhen and Shanghai), have been at the forefront of public discussion, media coverage and governmental policy making.

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[4] Source: http://blog.voc.com.cn/blog_showone_type_blog_id_538431_p_1.html, retrieved on March 11, 2011.

[5] This does not mean that migration is a new thing in contemporary China. Even in Mao's socially static but politically restless era, large-scale migration involving millions of people took place all over the country. But compared with what has been happening since the reform, the former was in large part passively motivated by ideological indoctrination or was the result of government mobilization. For example, in the Cultural Revolution, millions of urban young people migrated to countryside or mountainous areas, responding to Mao's calling that knowledge youths should make contributions to the revolution by learning from and working with peasants. As to the passive migration in Mao's era, see Lary, D., 1999.

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Evolving from a strictly controlled rural-urban dual household registration system (*hukou*) embedded in Mao's centrally-planned economic and totalitarian political system, China's current population mobility regulation is a mix of paradoxical elements where the *hukou* regime plays a core role. The *hukou* system was initiated in late 1950s by the communist government and has been functioning as a de facto internal passport system that binds with their places of birth. It has been used as a tool of controlling population mobility between countryside and cities as well as between different administrative areas. It was also an effective way of strictly supervising allocation of social resources in a command economy, closely bound up with people's identities, social status, resources, and chances of social mobility. This policy has divided the country into two distinct worlds: the rural and the urban. The *hukou* issue has long been a focus of fierce criticism and debates in the reform era, and a key factor in public contention about migrant workers in the media, academic and policy discourse

After years of fierce struggling between migratory peasants and the state's suppressive apparatus which aimed to police the potentially purportedly subversive '*min'gong chao*' (waves of migrant workers), peasants have won the right to move to and work in the city. But at the same time, in a short term they have no hope of gaining urban *hukou* and thus having access to fundamental social welfare rights in the urban society. This means the state essentially guarantees no protection of the fundamental citizenship rights of migrant workers. Migrant workers have been left in an extremely under-privileged situation and constantly subject to economic and cultural discrimination and deprivation.

This situation has caused profound social consequences and problems concerning unjust treatment to migrant workers, such as arrears of wages, poor and unhealthy living conditions, exclusion by the local communities, unaffordable medical expense, difficulties in children's education, and the like.

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In a country where modernity, with the developmentalist promise of a better future through economic growth, has been insinuating itself into every nook and cranny, it is ironic to see images of migrant builders climbing up scaffolds and threatening to commit suicide just in order to get their delayed salaries. The increasingly fractured and unjust social reality as epitomized in the case of migrant workers thus has presented huge challenges to the very legitimacy of the party-state's nominal socialist creeds and its new political discourse of 'constructing a harmonious society'. These challenges need to be resolved not only political-economically but also symbolically.

Migration and media studies

Media and relevant symbolic systems play consequential roles in social exclusion and inequality. The Chinese party-state in the reform era, needs to symbolically lubricate and legitimize the unpleasant reality based on systematic exclusion of migrant workers from urban citizenship, relevant discriminatory treatment of urban and rural hukou holders, and oppressive political economic apparatus targeting boundary breakers like spontaneous migrant workers. It is the combination of both political economic and symbolic marginalization of migrant workers that well serves the dominant rationale of developmentalism and the needs of vested interest groups (in this regard, including mainstream urban society mainly consisting of elite strata of middle class, officials, and other new rich groups) in the reform period. Implicit and explicit representations of migrant workers in popular media discourses as alien and mute 'Other' have conjured either vigilant gaze and preemptive policy reactions from the urban society patronized by state power or purported 'saviors' who volunteer to speak for the incapable and silenced as they lack such capability. Therefore, exclusion and resistance surrounding migrant issues takes place not only in political-economic dimensions, but also in symbolic and representational facets. Accordingly, it is significant to examine not only how physical deprivation and struggles shape the landscape of migration, but also how the process of interest

contestation circling migrant issues has been symbolically performed in media and other discursive spheres.

Migrant-related issues have received high attention in public contention, especially in government policy and media discourses, and thus become one of the focal points in academic research. Media studies and its contiguous fields, such as cultural studies, have produced abundant literature on media representation of marginal groups like migrant workers. In migration studies, various aspects of labor mobility have been investigated from political, economic and cultural perspectives. The interdisciplinary field of media and migration studies combines the common concerns of the two subjects to the interrelationship between symbolic representation and social structural aspects of migration and migrant people.

However, despite few exceptions(e.g. Florence, 2006; Y. Li, 2004; W. Sun, 2009), most of these inquiries focus on international and cross-cultural migration, emphasizing media's role in impacting on migrants' cognition and imagination about destination countries or regions, constructing migration groups as cultural 'Others', promoting stereotypes and exclusion, or reversely creating cultural identity and politics of diasporic communities via global communication with internet and satellites as its 'highways'. (Wood & King, 2001) Comparatively, little has been said about media presentation and internal migration in a specific transitional society like China, which has a very powerful authoritarian political system and a relatively continuous cultural tradition, while its economy is increasingly being marketized.

In the research field of Chinese internal migration, most surveys have been concerned about the political-economic dimensions, while discursive and representational aspects are relatively marginal. In Chinese media studies, a media-centric perspective dominates. What have been often analyzed are superficial features of media texts, stereotypes in media's expressions, or just

quantitative descriptions of inclinations in the texts, leaving the deeper ideological and framing levels, process of social discursive contention, and the relationship between texts/discourse, institutional/organizational setting, and party-state-society configuration seldom touched.

Research questions and key concepts

Against this background, this research is to, by taking issues about the Chinese internal migrant workers in the reform era as cases, analyze how migrant workers' contradictory and underprivileged citizenship conditions have been discursively contested by various actors-speakers in the Chinese society, including the party-state, the market sector, the social sphere, and the media which penetrate across all these aspects. Major research questions include: in the past three decades, how the party-state has defined the group of spontaneous migrant workers in different periods of time, and how it has (re)constructed its ideological representation of peasants and also migrant workers to legitimize the developmentalist reality of deprived citizenship conditions of migrant workers; how the nature of the very central mechanism of citizenship exclusion, *hukou*, and its relationship with migrant workers have been framed and contested discursively in media and policy discourses; concretely, how major aspects of migrant citizenship, such as fundamental civil, social and cultural rights, surrounding vital cases of social events or policy issues, have been discursively debated in public discourse; and finally, in terms of citizenship conditions of marginalized social groups in a marketized late-authoritarian society, what implication has been displayed in these aspects of public contention concerning migrant workers in a semi-public media sphere which plays a limited yet vital role in public deliberation.

The main concern of this research is the public discursive contention about migrant citizenship as represented in specific media and official policy discourses. But this does not mean that institutional and structural aspects of the

society and relevant institutions are not important. On the contrary, I shall follow a mutually-constitutive framework which accentuates the relational nature of the social world. Thus methodologically, historical institutional analysis of social background and relevant structural elements in which discursive contention unfolds will be used in tandem with discourse analysis of media and policy texts.

In these questions, I have used some terms which may need to be briefly clarified. First of all, the term 'migrant worker' has different meanings in various contexts, though generally it refers to groups of laborers who move from place to place within or beyond a country to find work. In the contemporary Chinese context, internal migrants have been usually labeled by different terms. Each of these labels reflects a certain way of framing the group and emphasizing a certain aspect of the group's characteristics. Among these terms, *liudong renkou* (floating population) broadly includes all variations of population groups that move within or outside their original region of the state-controlled household registration system. Only those who originated from a rural background and move to work in the city in the situation of lacking urban *hukou* are called *nongmin'gong* or *min'gong*. In terms of their social identity and citizenship conditions, *nongmin'gong* remain peasants regardless of their real work and thus their urban residence is not legalized in principle until it is approved by the urban authority through a temporary residence permit system. Historically, derogatory terms such as *mangliu*, were also used to demonize the migrant group. As we shall see later in chapter 4, these terms carry different meanings based on different presuppositions and cultural perceptions about the Chinese peasants and migrant workers. Basically, in this research, I use the term migrant worker in a broad way, loosely close to *nongmin'gong* in Chinese, referring to people who largely identify themselves as peasants though they work in the cities, due to lack of full urban citizenship.

Despite various definitions of the concept, the term of citizenship in this study

mainly refers to a set of institutional arrangements of inclusion and a concomitant set of rights and responsibilities imposed on all its members. Two aspects of meanings are relevant: first, the membership aspect, which means the mechanism of inclusion. In the case of migrant issues in the Chinese context this refers to the *hukou* system which defines differentiated and unjust citizenship categories between rural and urban population. The second aspect is the quality of this membership, viz. various aspects of fundamental civil rights including civil, social, political and cultural dimensions. (Turner, 1993)

By pubic contention, I mean the dynamic process in which different interest-charged social actors-speakers including media itself contest discursively in public discourse to define the issue in question and thus promote a particularly inclined construction of social reality to their advantage. One of the very specific analytical frameworks used to investigate discursive contention is framing, which is the process of social actors-speakers using different frames, or a core organizing idea, to structure discourse about a particular issue in question. There are several different ways to define the concept of framing, and framing analysis itself is also regarded as an interdisciplinary field, or even a 'fractured paradigm' due to its lack of universal definition and operational procedure. (R. M. Entman, 1993)

I also have used the term late-authoritarian to describe the current Chinese state-society relational configuration, where the authoritarian rule is still unassailable, but great changes in the administration and society have been taking place and more importantly the way in which power manifests itself has also been adapting itself in response to changing social conditions. It is under this conceptual framework that I examine the media's discourse and its institutional restrictions, the construction and deconstruction of discursive boundaries set by the ideological and power relations beyond media and policy discourse, and the dynamic public discursive contention marked by active agency in a semi-pluralistic public discursive space.

Outline of chapters

In accordance with the above mentioned research questions, the outline of chapters is as follows:

In Chapter Two that follows this introduction, the background of general social transformation, media institution and population migration will be discussed. China's reform in the past three decades has been generally characterized by a gradualist approach. With the rise of a developmentalist ideology which embraces fundamental elements of neo-liberal doctrines but reserves the state-socialist polity, the Chinese economic sector, except for some state-monopolized industries, has been largely de-regulated and marketized from a once strictly controlled and centrally planned economy. However, despite breathtaking economic growth and social development in the past decades, the developmentalist strategy has led to self-contradictory outcomes in the Chinese society.

Both the media sector and the domestic migration policies have been characterized by this dualistic configuration. While media are allowed to be commercialized and financially independent, they are also required to retain the nature of the party-state's mouthpiece, which, in principle, ensures the party-state's control over public opinion and contention. But commercialization has also unexpectedly loosened media discursive space which, despite its theoretically intact nature of official organ, increasingly accommodates more diverse articulations. Similarly, in the field of migration, rural laborers are allowed to move and work in cities on the basis of market and developmentalist logic, while their fundamental citizenship rights remain deprived. Migrant workers are only valorized as instrumental labor elements in the national economic development project, rather than being equal citizens in a national political development project. In terms of the rewards of both economic development and citizenship, migrant workers are country cousins of their urban

counterparts. These contradictions constitute the background and contextual aspects for the analysis of public discursive contention over migrant issues in the next few chapters.

Chapter Three reviews major theoretical literatures on the concept of citizenship, public sphere and deliberation, framing and media discourse, as well as studies in the field of media and migration. A Western-Chinese comparative perspective is adopted throughout different sections of the literature review chapter, as direct application of Western theories to the Chinese context tends to raise questions of theoretical validity. Among these sections, the discussion of public sphere and deliberation is relevant to the historical instructional dimension of public contention, while that of media discourse and framing is related to the constructivist level of cultural practice. Representative works in the field of media and migration studies conducted from these two perspectives will be critically reviewed.

Based on the previous two chapters of background discussion and review of theoretical literatures, Chapter Four further explains and justifies major research questions of this project and deals with methodological and data collection issues. A mutually-constitutive framework is developed to bring together historical-institutional analysis of social structure and context and framing analysis of symbolic representation. In this research, a constructivist approach of framing analysis is used as a general means to structure the discursive contesting processes about several sub-issues of migrant workers, while a historical institutional approach serves as a contextualizing tool to locate all of these discursive struggles and specific discursive opportunities for different actors-speakers. In terms of methods, critical discourse analysis of purposively selected media texts and policy documents, and in-depth interviews with media practitioners and specialists of the field of migrant worker issues, are the two main techniques of data collection and analyzing, penetrating case studies that focus on process tracing of several landmark social events about migrant

workers in recent years.

Chapter Five deals with the first research question about the Chinese party-state's ideological remaking of migrant workers in the past three decades by critically examining discourse of the top-level party organ, the *People's Daily*, and relevant policy documents. It aims to find out how the party-state has recontexualized its revolutionary ideology of class-based legitimacy to redefine and legitimize the new reality of disenfranchised migrant workers in an authoritarian market society. Analysis shows that migrant workers have been differently framed by the official discourse from passive and threatening 'blind' forces in the period from the late 1980s to the 1990s to a new part of the Chinese working class and a positive force of productivity contributing to the urban life as well as the national development in the first decade of the new millennium. But the new glorifying discourses are in contradiction with the hegemonic discourse of *suzhi* (population quality) which dominates official policies regarding migrant workers. Base on this ideology, migrant workers are undervalued as low-quality labor. It is their sheer muscle as physical laborers rather than their individuality and subjectivity that make their existence economically valuable.

Chapter Six deals with the first aspect of migrant citizenship, viz. the *hukou* system. Based on the discussion of the historical origins and social ramifications of the *hukou* system, this chapter examines how different actors-speakers in the Chinese society have participated in public contention to frame the system and its relevance to issues of migrant workers. Examination of selected media discourses shows that the reason why the *hukou* system needs to be reformed has been framed from different perspectives: economic development, social stability and equal citizenship rights. A crisis frame has been used by relevant actors-speakers on behalf of urban invested interests groups to defend the current institutional arrangements of *hukou* control. In media discourse from pro-reform newspapers, this crisis rationale has been deconstructed on the

grounds of logical reasoning and facts. In terms of public contention over various cosmetic reform policies, the tendency of commercializing *hukou* policies as a tool to benefits the privileged groups has been challenged, while policies targeted on migrant workers have still been dominated by the hegemonic discourse of *suzhi*, which in turn, has been questioned by a limited yet important frame of equal and just citizenship rights.

Chapter Seven examines the multiple aspects of conditions of migrant citizenship rights. Case studies of important incidents or policy issues concerning redistributive and cultural dimensions of migrant citizenship are conducted to examine how these aspects have been contested in media discourses. The case of Foxconn migrant worker suicides is examined to explore the aspects of migrant civil rights. The critical analysis of media discourses and other alternative resources from NGOs shows that there has been a contention between the frame of psychological pressure and that of military factory regime. As for the social dimension of migrant citizenship, the issue about migrant children's education, especially the authority's policies against private schools set up by migrant workers themselves, is chosen as the subject of case study. Public contention over the cultural facet of migrant citizenship is examined through analyzing media discourses about the phenomenon of migrant workers participating in alternative cultural practice and media production in recent years.

And lastly in Chapter Eight, by returning to the mutually-constitutive relationship between institutional structural facets and discursive practices as well as the specific party-state-society configuration in which all the previously scrutinized media constructions are embedded, the thesis concludes with a succinct summary of major findings and a discussion about what implications regarding citizenship conditions of marginalized groups can be drawn from the case of migrant workers.

Media and Migrant Workers in Reforming China

Chinese internal migration in the reform era and public discourse on issues regarding this revived phenomenon, especially the citizenship condition of the rural-to-urban migrant workers, emerged and developed against a background of tremendous socio-economic changes. There may be no parallels in human history in terms of the size of population involved in this migration, which upheaval is comparable in scope to those taking place in the three decades of Mao's China. To begin with, in order to facilitate a better understanding of public discourse on migrant workers in contemporary China, this chapter will contextualize the ensuing chapters by providing a general discussion about historical and social background. Nextly, I will discuss two major issues that are importantly relevant to this project, viz. the Chinese media system and the domestic migration, especially the rural-to-urban migrant workers in the reform era. Against the general social transformation in the reform period, the three parts in this chapter – general social transformation, the propaganda-market driven media system, and the revival and consequent problems of rural-urban migration - provide a general historical and social reference for a critical review of relevant literatures as well as the analysis of media and public discourse about migrant workers in the chapters that follow.

Reform and Social Transformation

Great Changes

Chinese society has undergone far-reaching changes in its transition from a central planned economy to a marketized one since December of 1978, when former paramount Chinese Communist Party (CCP) leader Deng Xiaoping launched his plan of 'reform and opening up', which was later on dubbed as the alleged 'socialism with Chinese characteristics'. With a multifaceted process of

social and economic transformation, 'whose core elements include an expanded latitude for market, mobility, modernization and internationalization together with the phased dismantling of collective and state sectors of the economy' (Selden & Perry, 2010, p. 3), the market-oriented economic reform has been so overwhelming that in many aspects both the state and the society have become so different from what they were in Mao's China, and have become unrecognizable to the outside world. In many ways, Chinese society is becoming increasingly benefit-motivated, driven by a eudaemonic ideology that encourages pursuit of consumption and individual material achievements. Despite its potential conflicts with the regime's revolutionary and socialist origins and political legitimacy, this officially endorsed consumerism has prevailed since the 1990s, filling, in a timely manner, the vacuum engendered by the bankruptcy of revolutionary and communist dogmas that dominated Mao's times. The market economy and the consequent pragmatic mentality have heavily eroded the pre-reform social structures, ideology, ways of life and social relations. (see e.g. F. Chen, 1998) With the gradual establishment of a full-fledged market system, after more than a decade of 'crossing the river by touching the stones', in the 1980s, since the early 1990s China has seen a deepening of economic restructuring and diversification, soaring double-digit growth, privatization of inefficient state owned enterprises (SOEs), increasing social mobility and migration, fragmentation and polarization of the social strata, increasingly pluralistic cultural dynamics, a blend of the global and local forces, as well as the aggravating social and spatial gaps between the poor and the new rich, the urban and the countryside, the coastal economic engine centers and the interior backwaters. (Pei, 1994, 2006a; G. White, 1993)

Admittedly, these huge changes triggered by the economic reform in the last three decades, on the whole, have made China 'rich and powerful' (*fuqiang*), and finally surpass Japan to become the world's second-largest economy behind the United States at the end of the first decade of this century (Barboza, 2010), a

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dream pursued by generations of leading Chinese since the humiliating Opium War in 1840 and the succeeding miserable one and half centuries of western domination. And also it is undeniable that the post-Mao reform has unprecedentedly changed ordinary people's standards of living, endowing them with greater individual autonomy, life chances, and rights to make choices on their own in most economic and cultural activities. Indeed, thanks to Deng's reform, the Chinese society, for the first time, has entered into a relatively stable and flourishing phase in its modern history, while the Chinese people have never enjoyed a better living standard than what they have obtained in the latest reform period. Also the country's status in the international community has not been as strong as it now is in over one hundred and fifty years. All of these great economic achievements have been conveniently capsuled into the popular catchphrase 'the China miracle'. (e.g. Lin, Cai, & Li, 2003 [1996])[6]

Despite huge problems generated by the reform, the three-decade socio-economic and political transformation has brought *inter alia* at least three far-reaching political and socioeconomic changes that are easily over-shadowed by the dazzling splendor of economic surges. (Selden & Perry, 2010, pp. 9-10) First of all, since the late 1970s, though there were periodical reversals in ideological counter-attacks and also some conspicuous exceptional political campaigns, the Party-state, by and large, has abandoned the mass mobilization and campaigns of class struggle that characterized Mao's totalitarian autarchy. In most cases, the state tries to resolve conflicts through the well established and entrenched bureaucratic system that was reconstructed after its destruction in the Cultural Revolution. And almost all the large-scale political campaigns in the reform era are restrained, without involving most ordinary people and interrupting their normal social lives. (e.g. T. White, 1990) Secondly, the state no longer directly controls people's daily lives and most aspects of economic affairs, though it continues to hold tight sway over crucial swathes of the

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[6] Not everyone thinks the 'miracle' is sustainable and applausable as it may seem, see e.g. Jha, 2009.

economy and of important social affairs. (e.g. Y. Zhu, Webber, & Benson, 2010)Thirdly, people have been allowed to migrate between rural and urban areas, or across different regions in the country, though they are still heavily constrained by the *hukou,* or the household registration system (HRS), which controls people's obtainment of legal residence and public resources beyond their places of birth. This increasing population mobility is characterized by unprecedented gigantic waves of internal migration that have been a crucial factor in reshaping the Chinese economic and social landscape. (e.g. Murphy, 2002; Solinger, 1999b; F.-L. Wang, 2010;Xiang, 2004)

Half a century before the post-Mao reform, the Chinese communist revolution spread its 'sparks of fire' in remote and scattered rural strongholds and later the enlarged communist revolutionary bases, from where the Party strengthened and expanded its power and finally seized power. Quite similar to this, the post-Mao economic reform, supposed to revive the Party's legitimate rule after decades of upheavals and chaos, also received its initial momentum from rural China. In the countryside, although the ownership of land remains controlled by collectives to this day,[7] the de-collectivization reform, of 1978 to 1983, relaxed the tight control over land, markets for essential produce and products, and population mobility, finally leading to the disintegration of the commune-based collective farming and allocation systems that were hallmarks of Mao's communist countryside. (Lin, 1988; Nolan, 1983) The attendant restoration of family farming, legalized by the introduction of a contracted household responsibility system, enabled rural families to effectively and autonomously

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[7] Nominally, land in China is officially stipulated as owned by all the people, but in fact it is controlled by different levels of governments. Under the state control, rural households are only granted rights to utilize the allocated plots of land, without the ownership, which institutionally resides with township and village collectives. Thus, the countryside land continues to be owned collectively and has never been privatized, while ostensibly the township or village collectives, but in fact local carders, control the disposal of rural land, and tend to arbitrarily confiscate farmers' land in name of local development and urbanization. This has been a source of continuous conflicts and spurs of resistance and even violence in rural areas in the reform era, as more and more farmers are being deprived of their legal rights to housing and farming land usage due to local official corruption or unfair compensation. As to rural resistance with regard to land disputes, see Ho, 2010. To address these problems of potential sources of social instability, the authority is also considering further reform of the rural land system by institutionalizing the emerging landrental market. (e. g. Deininger & Jin, 2005; Kung, 2002)

manage their allocated plots of land, and dispose all the yields without direct interference from the state, as long as they fulfilled their commitments of providing labor for local collective construction projects and paying the agricultural tax[8] for the state.(Ho, 2010; Shirk, 1993) Thus, the outmoded and inefficient Maoist collective agriculture was replaced by a new system of partly privatization of land use, or more accurately what Riskin (1987) has called a system of 'tenant farming with the production team and the state as landlord'. (also see e.g. Dong, 1996; Krusekopf, 2002;G. Li, Rozelle, & Brandt, 1998) As the control over rural markets and population mobility steadily eased, the reform empowered farmers, unleashing huge agricultural productivity and higher levels of efficiency. The consequence was that peasant incomes rose dramatically in the first half of the 1980s, and most importantly, freed a large number of surplus laborers from farming, who would later work for booming township or village enterprises (Byrd & Lin, 1990), or contribute to the gigantic flows of underprivileged migrant laborers that would pour into booming urban areas, attracted by the thirst of the private sector for cheap workers.

The rural reform went quite smoothly and swiftly, as, except for brief ideological controversy in the leadership, there was essentially no obstruction from below. Because farmers were tightly restricted to their local communes and villages, and enjoyed little benefits and welfare like that urbanites obtained from the state in the pre-reform period, they themselves actually had risked experimenting family-based farming in different forms prior to the official sanction, and ardently welcomed the de-collectivization reform that spread throughout and dramatically changed rural China in the early 1980s. On the contrary, transformation in cities confronted huge resistance, especially in the restructuring of SOEs, as these industries were major sources of local and central tax revenue, and workers of these urban enterprises had been promised lifelong all-embracing welfare from the state covering job-security, housing,

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[8] Since 2006, Chinese farmers have been exempted from agricultural tax. (Xing, 2005)

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children's education, health care, pension, and others. (Selden & Perry, 2010, p. 6) The reform of SOEs has proven, to a certain degree, a massive process of radical privatization of national property. In many cases, businessmen who used to be officials or had connections with the government became the direct beneficiaries of the superficial market reform, while workers were forced to leave the factories, with insufficient compensation, losing almost all the benefits that they had 'earned' through devoting their whole lives to SOEs. Among unemployed state-sector workers, this has created vast economic grievances, which in some cases have been transformed into political ones and spawned myriads of radical reactions through extra-institutional channels. (C. K. Lee, 2000; Pei, 2006a)

Limitations of the Reform

As the reform both in the countryside and in the cities deepened, and in some cases, was distorted because of official corruption, the income gap between those getting rich first and those lagging behind, as well as the gap of economic development between the rural and urban areas (Knight & Song, 1999), began to enlarge dramatically, pushing a large number of rural population 'swarms' into Beijing, Shanghai, Shenzhen and other south-eastern cities - in search of jobs or small businesses. These large-scale migration and mobility waves came to clash with millions of unemployed urban workers who lost their 'iron-bowls' in SOE restructuring in the 1990s. With a severely behindhand and distempered social welfare and protection system, the large scale unemployment of former state industry workers and increasing mobility of cheap migrant laborers, engendered and fueled continuous cleavages, conflicts, discrimination, resistance, and even violence in the Chinese cities. The reform and urbanization created a large disgruntled and restless urban underclass, comprising massive unemployed former SOE workers, millions of peasant migrant workers, landless suburban residents, homeless people, and many others.(Solinger, 2006; Xue & Zhong, 2003) Thus, despite the fact that under the enormous influence of

market-oriented reform, the country's urban landscape has been dramatically changed by financial and estate investment boom, and an export-stimulated economy flourished with China's entry into WTO and increasing integration into the global market, all the tensions and contradictions induced by uneven, and to some, unjust, economic and social restructuring, have surfaced and escalated in the past decades. All the problems engendered during the reform would undermine the economic achievements and social stability that the country has attained, if necessary deeper institutional changes for the underprivileged are introduced to address their accumulating grievances. (Pei, 2006a)

It has been asserted that, compared with China's striking economic transformation, its political system remains reluctant to change fundamentally, if not to remain in frozen state. (e.g. Lai, 2010; Lewis & Litai, 2003;Twining, 2011) The Chinese state's mighty sway over social life has by no means lost its momentum in a moderately pluralistic society-in-state configuration. (Mertha, 2010) Certainly the limited reform of bureaucratic and administrative structures of the political system in the past three decades, which has generated tolerance of a limited public sphere, must not be overlooked. Reform has also led to consolidation of multifaceted governmental institutions, emergence of grassroots political participation in villages and urban communities and a certain degree of legal restriction of official wrongdoing. (Goldman & MacFarquhar, 1999; O'Brien, 2002; Selden & Perry, 2010) However, in spite of these positive changes and the development of so called 'intra-party democracy'(C. Li, 2009; G. Lin, 2004), the one-party authoritarian system evolving from Mao's thirty-year totalitarian rule, by and large, remains essentially intact, and continues to monopolize the control over crucial aspects of economy, culture and society. The various limited institutional changes have been allowed because they are not subversive and never challenge the bottom line of the supreme Party-state regime. Rather, from the perspective of the party-state, they

are 'compatible with the short-term objectives' of the regime. The limits of the Chinese polity thus have rigorously circumscribed the prospects, scope, and effectiveness of pro-democratic political reform in China, and have been deemed as responsible for increasing civil unrest and conflict. Despite the informal rules and norms of accountability that to some extent enforce official obligations (Tsai, 2007), the inherent limitations of top-down supervision within the formal party and governmental institutions have led to wide-ranging governance problems. Among others, the lack of rule of law and the stagnation of political reform have crippled and distorted the nascent market system, weakened effective governance, bred rampant official corruption, undermined social morality, eroded state capacity, and enlarged imbalances in society and polity. All these critical challenges need to be coped with carefully through political transformation.   (X. Lu, 1999; Pei, 2006a, pp. 6-7, 11-16)

Thus, the Chinese reform since the late 1970s has displayed the juxtaposition of a fast changing market economy and a stubborn and repressive authoritarian polity. This has formed a highly dualistic and paradoxical model of development and governance, which has been variously labeled as post-socialism, authoritarian liberalism, state-capitalism, and so forth. (Yasheng Huang, 2008; Jayasuriya, 2001; Litzinger, 2002) This gradualist Chinese model of incremental reform (Goldstein, 1995; K. Yu, 2005) and social transition has been termed 'Beijing Consensus' (Ramo, 2004), which the Chinese ruling authority has readily used to promote its global legitimacy (Burton, 2008), as opposed to the big-bang approach advocated by the liberalist 'Washington Consensus'.(J. Williamson, 1990) While many celebrate the great economic achievements resulting from this model, others have warned of the negative consequences, 'dark side' (Pei, 2006b), or 'externalities' of the increasingly unbalanced reform. Due to the lack of complementary reform of political and other realms, the transition has not only brought about great success and general improvement of material conditions, but also has engendered dramatic increases in virulent

rent-seeking and corruption, official irresponsibility, spatial and class inequality, environmental degradation, ethnic conflict, unemployment, local protests, and many other problems. The prospect of this gradualist and imbalanced approach to socio-economic and political transition thus seems ambiguous and uncertain. (Selden & Perry, 2010; Yao, 2010)

Therefore, despite its tremendous success in economic development, it is misleading to view the socio-economic transformation in China's reform era as a purely economic issue. Rather, it is a highly politicized and restricted economic and social reform, which has essentially been viewed by the ruling authority as a tool to promote its legitimacy and political perpetuity. The reform in the past three decades essentially originated not only from economic collapse and unmitigated disasters caused by Mao's highly politicized and frantic leftist economic campaigns and an inefficient central-planned system, but also from a comprehensive political legitimacy crisis due to the extreme insanity of ceaseless class struggles, factional conflicts, large-scale persecution of political pariahs, destruction of cultural heritage and massive social disorder. Various serious economic problems and political legitimacy crises conflated after Mao's death, severely threatening the party-state's rule. (see Weatherley, 2006, pp. 101-107) It was against this background of comprehensive crisis that the post-Mao party leadership was urged to abandon Mao's radical leftist line and come up with a new justification for its hold over power to legitimate its rule. Bereft of other choices, the pro-reform party leadership launched economic reform that was supposed to greatly raise people's standard of living and achieve economic prosperity. The largely successful reform in the early 1980s renewed and based the Party's legitimacy firmly on economic development in place of revolution and class struggle. In other words, after Mao's death, the traditional source of political legitimacy - revolutionary ideology, charisma of the paramount leader cultivated through personality cult, and moral superiority - had almost run out, the society being thoroughly exhausted after decades of

furious struggles and campaigns. Without other good choices, economic reform came to be the last straw- as a new source of political legitimacy.(Shirk, 1993)

Through what Nathan (2003) has called 'authoritarian resilience', viz, institutionalization of various aspects from increasingly norm-bound nature of top leadership succession to controllable grassroots village-level political participation, continuous ideological adaptation and many other institutional transformations in the reform period (Heberer & Schubert, 2009), the Chinese party-state has managed to sustain its legitimacy and adapt itself to the ever changing conditions without losing its monopoly over political power. Though the validity of this institutionalization has been doubted due to its inherent paradoxes and limits (Gilley, 2003), there is no denying that, with adjustment, the current system has been largely successful in maintaining its stability and mandate. Facing huge challenges in comprehensive fronts engendered by the pre-reform crisis and ever-changing social conditions of the reform decades, the regime has taken many measures predicted by Talcott Parsons and his elaborators, including abandoning utopian ideology and charismatic styles of leadership, empowering technocratic elite, introducing bureaucratic regularization, complexity, and specialization, and reducing control over private speech and action. (Lowenthal, 1970; Parsons, 1951, pp. 525-535, cited in Nathan, 2003) To make all these changes effective and also to bring them under control, and thus avoid triggering demise of the one-party system and a transition to democracy, the party-state has been carefully formulating an ideological rationale of its legitimacy. Despite its *de jure* or nominal status in the Constitution and official doctrines, the traditional ideology has been *de facto* bankrupted. In practice, to ideologically rationalize its legitimacy, the regime has utilized economic achievements, social order, and nationalism as the pivotal sources of legitimacy for its monopoly of state power. (Holbig & Gilley, 2010) Since the marketization accelerated in the 1990s, the party-state has been claiming its legitimacy of rule by apotheosizing itself and indoctrinating the

masses with the notion that CCP is the only political force that is able to ensure continuous high economic growth and benefits for the majority of the people, maintain social stability and avoid large upheavals that characterized China's turbulent modern history, and promote national re-unification and defend national sovereignty; China would suffer from domestic chaos and external invasion but for CCP's monopolized, powerful and determined leadership. (Laliberté, 2008)

The above mentioned disparity between the economic and the political systems, and the party-state's approach to political legitimacy, have heavily influenced every aspect of the Chinese society and caused quite paradoxical phenomena in relation to both the media sector and the migrant population. It is against the market-oriented economic reform without political loosening up that the Chinese media sector has been gradually commercialized and diversified, and thus, to a certain degree, functioned as a leashed watchdog, while its political role as the party-state's mouthpiece remains uncontested, and any overt criticism is enslaved to heavy censorship and punitive mechanisms. Also it is against the above mentioned socio-economic changes and political restrictions that Chinese peasants and other civilians began to migrate to cities to find ways to survive, bringing about a series of challenges to the authority's strict population control, while still being heavily subject to the *hukou* system that legitimizes unequal categories of citizenship based on ascribed residential status. It is at this paradoxical juncture that the issues about Chinese internal migrant workers come into the scope of media's radar and public concerns, and became one of the foci of the circumscribed public discourse in the marketized late-authoritarian Chinese society. Based on the above general survey of the historical background of social changes in the reform period, the following two parts turn to two specific issues: media and migration.

Media system: Change and Continuity

To understand public contestation about migrant issues in today's China, one needs to examine the main arena where it usually takes place, viz.news media and public discursive space produced by them. Concomitant with the general far-reaching and uneven social transformations, the Chinese media institutions have changed prodigiously in the last three decades since the beginning of reform and opening up, especially since the early 1990s when the process of marketization was resumed and expedited after Deng's milestone-setting 1992 southern tour speeches. The media system has gone through several phases from initial commercialization in the 1980s to conglomeration in the late 1990s and the early 2000s. With commercialization, the Chinese news discourse and media content have been largely softened to appeal to an increasingly diversified audience. (J. M. Chan, 1993; Xu. Yu, 1994; Y. Zhao, 1998, 2000a) However, notwithstanding all the dazzling media spectacles in today's cultural sphere, the Chinese media's essence of the Party-state's mouthpiece remains the same as what it was in times of turbulent revolutionary upheavals. It has been officially defined by the Party's doctrines as the 'mouthpiece of the Party and the people'(C. Guo, 1997; B. Tong, 1994), a bottom line that allows no any overt contraventions. The paradoxically self-contradictory media system is heavily conditioned by the macro political economic structures that took shape in the reform period, and in return also serves for these structures, striving for a survival space while interacting with the Party-state, the market forces, and an increasingly diverse and vibrant public.

Historical Legacies

As people look at and evaluate progress and inherent problems of China's current media sphere, it should not be taken for granted that this system has come into being from vacuum as a result of the reform's recent invention. Rather, it contains a long tradition of a new-born modern press that has

correlated its destiny so deeply with the nation's search for modernity that it has become an integral and crucial part of the grand project of social transformation in the Chinese revolution and reform of the last one and half centuries.

China's modern press and journalistic practice originated in the 19th century when some earliest newspapers and journals in modern forms started to be published by Western Christian missionaries. Despite the long tradition of printed publications in imperial times, almost all the Chinese historians of journalism trace the inception of the country's modern press as a result of Western impulse. (e.g., H. Fang, 1991; H. Fang, Ding, Huang, & Xue, 2004; H. Fang & Zhang, 1995; Ge, 1935; B. Li, 2008; T. Wu, 2008;Z. Xu, 2008) The traditional system of official information circulation, *Di Bao*, or the *Imperial Gazette*, catering for elitist imperial bureaucrats' needs for administrative and other exclusive information, was transformed and replaced by an energetic modern institution of large-scale distributed newspapers and periodicals founded by various social groups, which, for the first time, appealed to ordinary people's daily information demand. (X. Zhang, 2007) Since then, largely three types of press had emerged in the period from the late Qing dynasty to the Republic era, representing varying traditions of the modern Chinese press: the intellectual, the commercial, and the party-state. [9]

The first category, intellectual press, arose as a result of the Chinese elite

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[9] These different traditions, in fact, have been interacting and colliding with each other since the beginning of Chinese modern journalism till these days, with occasional interrupts in different historical periods. For example, Liang Qichao, a prominent liberal reformist and thinker, one of the major leaders of the abortive One Hundred Day Reform in late Qing dynasty, was also one of the most distinguished modern Chinese press founders, commentators, and activists. Despite his strong activism and emphasis on media's political role in national transformation, he maintains a quite modest and liberal approach towards press, which he views as a space for free public debate. A functional press, in his opinions, should promote ideas of democracy and freedom, and help people develop critical thinking of their political and social conditions as well as consciousness of their inalienable individualistic rights. (Y. Zhang, 2002) On the contrary, those who were much more radical propagated subversive revolutionary ideologies, berated reformist or conservative approaches to the old system. To them, press is only a tool for the revolutionary party to mobilize the masses to overthrow the old system and build a new one. The revolutionary nationalists and communists that late fought for the supremacy national power constituted the camp of party or revolutionary journalism, which would dominate Chinese press till the dawn of reform and opening up policy in the late 1970s, when a resurgent commercial media sphere that flourished before communist China started to emerge and diversify the previously party-media-dominated space. With legacies of early intellectual journalism, contemporary journalists began to cultivate a journalistic professionalism according to which serve the public interest is the priority of journalistic practice.

'gentry' class's creative imitation of Western media model. The underpinning belief was that with dissemination of new knowledge and modern ideas, the new press could help educate the ordinary people and re-mould the country in response to Western challenges through provocative journalism and reviews. The extraneous Western model was reconstructed to suit an adjusted Confucian framework and a strong concern with rejuvenation of China's lost glory of 'richness and powerfulness' in a turbulent era of internal chaos and external threats. It was set up to serve secular aims of public enlightenment, cultural reconstruction and national modernization, rather than religious ones. As a student of early modern Chinese journalism indicates, the 'rise of an independent 'Chinese elite press' at the end of nineteenth century, modeled on the Protestant newspapers, retaining their modernizing, scientific and educational zeal but discarding Christianity, is perhaps the key transition in modern Chinese journalism's history'. (X. Zhang, 2007, p. 5) Following this tradition, despite huge resistance, generations of Chinese reformists and intellectuals established their press to promote various reform plans. [10] In general, the tradition of intellectual press saw modern media and journalism as an important forum or a public sphere in the Habermasian sense for free information dissemination and idea exchange, largely representing the liberal thoughts and political movements that sought China's modernization and social transformation towards a constitutional democracy in a gradual and reformist way. The free intellectual press held a critical stance towards the authority in the 1930s to 1940s, and shortly perished in the upheaval of Communist revolution. Despite its brief existence, liberal tradition's legacy of ideals of press freedom and a critical and independent media sphere remains an important source of influence over Chinese journalistic practice to this day.   (Yuren Zhang, 2002)

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[10] Among others, as one of the major leaders of the well-known One-hundred Day reform and the constitutional monarchy movement in the late Qing Dynasty, Liang Qichao was one of the most prominent liberal intellectuals who valued and promoted western ideas of constitutional democracy, freedom of speech, and many other basic modern citizenship rights. With many other leading liberals, such as the prominent thinker and activist Hu Shi, the preeminent journalist and publisher Shao Piaoping, Liang was a pioneer among a galaxy of Chinese liberals who epitomized the modern Chinese liberal democratic tradition that has advocated a modest reformist approach to China's modernization. (Y. Zhang, 2002)

The second type, the commercial newspapers, was also inspired by Protestant journalism. But their first mission was not to enlighten the people and thus to salvage the degenerating nation, but to provide news and other public information, to serve the booming commercial industries and people's daily needs in newly flourishing urban spaces in burgeoning big cities like Shanghai. They were essentially 'profit-oriented business enterprises'(X. Zhang, 2007, p. 8), promoting western commercial popular cultures and ways of life in a contextualized and localized way, cultivating Chinese imagination and aspiration of modernity and globality in a period of great social change and cultural remaking. (e.g. Forges, 2007; Jones, 2001; L. O.-f. Lee, 1999; Wagner, 2007;Yeh, 2007)

With the rise of competing statist ideologies of communist utopian and nationalism, an authoritarian or Leninist model of Party-state journalism emerged from radical revolutionary camps, emphasizing modern press's pivotal role in disseminating revolutionary ideologies, mobilizing people in political struggles and uniting the nation to counterattack foreign invasions. With legacies of early radical activism in the late 1910s and the 1920s when the Communist Party was founded, during decades of radical revolutionary uprisings in urban areas and then guerrilla warfare in rural military bases, the Party and its Red Army unceasingly established a series of newspapers and journals at each organizational level, which essentially constituted a rigorously controlled and highly hierarchical paramilitary network of information, serving for the needs of internal mind control and mobilization, as well as external propaganda campaigns in its struggles with the Nationalists. Party media's tactic and powerful propaganda offensive contributed greatly for winning public compassion and support, and thus the Party's final grasp of national power. (Y. Zhao, 1998, pp. 14-16) The post-1949 socialist restructuring set up a party-orchestrated new system of central-planned economy which sealed the party-state's direct and supreme control over all the social resources and made it

virtually impossible for any independent and commercial media to survive. Quickly they were restructured and integrated into a strictly controlled Party-state press system that still exerts its cardinal influences over media, public opinion, education, and culture landscape till these days. [11]

In retrospect, it has been clear that despite a short period of prosperity of chaotic yet free press and public contestation in the turbulent Republic period, the concept of press freedom, as a part of an individualistic-based notion of citizenship rights, advocated by Chinese liberal intellectuals, was quickly weakened and called into question as the constitutional democratic endeavors failed and ended in endless civil wars. When the two leading authoritarian revolutionary parties, the Nationalist and the Communist, came into political dominance after decades of warlord chaos, an increasingly autocratic Party-sate press regulation system was founded to muzzle nascent free press and public speech. This model, based on the experiences of decades of radical revolutionary struggles and facilitated by an unprecedented rigorous media control system[12], reached its unprecedented height in the three decades of Communist rule, under which a once polyphonic media arena was quickly frozen to be an absolutely uniform space where only the voice of the paramount leader was allowed to exist, while all the people were forced to become subjects brainwashed by highly politicalized propaganda machines. (see e.g. Chin, 1954; King, 1966;A. P. L. Liu, 1971) The party-state's viewing media as its mouth-piece and its absolute control on all the media and public space coincided

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[11] According to Sun (1988), due to socialist transformation of all the aspects of the society since the early 1950s, the number of commercial newspapers dropped dramatically from fifty-eight in March 1950 to twenty-five in August 1951 to Zero in 1952. (cited in Y. Zhao, 1998, p. 16)

[12] Despite occasional disruptions and restructuring, the Chinese media administrative and party control institutions after 1949 comprise miscellaneous multi-level governmental and party organizations, including Propaganda Departments, Ministry of Culture, the State Administration or Bureau of Radio TV and Film, the State Administration of Press and Publication, the State Information Office, and so on, all of which were established in an extremely hierarchical and bureaucratic manner. From the top central governmental and central party committee level to the very local county or township level, each of these organizations has its local branches that constitute a nation-wide network of control in charge of media operations and personnel, public information dissemination and cultural affairs all over the whole country. Among all of these institutions, the Central Propaganda Department of the CCP sits at the nerve centre of the network of information control. Through various means of ownership, license, personnel, censorship or self censorship, among others, the Party has firmly ensured the media is under its control and at its convenient disposal. (de Burgh, 2003a, p. 19-21)

with the demise of the concept of inalienable individualistic natural rights in the reconstruction of a Chinese notion of citizenship, which, as discussed in the last chapter, denies the very inalienable nature of widely recognized individual rights. In the name of national development and social stability, despite huge changes in the Chinese society and media itself, the shadow of the Party-state over individuals and the society continues to hamper meaningful media reform, journalists' everyday practice, as well as the boundaries of effective public supervision and contestation in the post-Mao period.

Change and Continuity in the Reform Period

In keeping with the whole neo-authoritarian developmentalist package (Karmel, 1995) that the Party prescribed to resolve extensive crisis in the aftermath of decades of a central-planned economy and totalitarian rule. As early as the late 1970s to the early 1980s, Chinese media had already adjusted itself to absorb new forms of advertising, entertainment, and coverage of news that were in response to and reinforced new economic and political priorities in the post-Mao era. (see e.g. Robinson, 1981) Especially since the accelerated marketization inaugurated by Deng Xiaoping's historic southern tours and speeches in 1992, the Chinese media sector has at the same time undergone great transition in the last three decades, becoming increasingly commercialized, diversified, and audience-oriented in terms of its production and management, without losing its core essence as the Party-state's unconditionally obedient mouthpiece. (Y. Zhao, 1998)

On the one hand, to relieve financial pressures due to the government's decreasing subsidy, market mechanisms were introduced to commercialize and self-finance the media sector that remained, in principle, a propaganda instrument affiliated with the government, a tactic that has been summarized as managing a non-profit or public service institution in the mode of managing an enterprise. With an array of sanctioned reforms in its financial and managerial

aspects, such as re-introduction of advertising as media's primary source of revenue, adoption of differential approaches to news and non-news productions, structural shake-up and conglomeration, listing of non-production parts in stock market, and so on, the Chinese media in the reform period has been heavily commercialized, with its role transferred from an explicit brainwasher in Mao's time to a zealous promoter of economic booming and profit-hunter in the reform period.(J. M. Chan, 1993; Chu, 1994; Yu Huang, 1994; C.-C. Lee, 1990; E. K.-W. Ma, 2000; Pan, 2000, 2005b; Y. Zhao, 1998) The culturally and politically vibrant 1980s saw some of the initial endeavors in public discussions about press freedom and media reforms. Despite the fact that these reforms and discussions were at the mercy of the pro-reformist leadership and virtually ceased to be tolerated anymore after the political crisis in the late 1980s when the pro-reformist fraction was purged, they have proven of great importance: 'the previous totalitarian definition of the media as an instrument of class struggle was officially dropped. While the media were still the Party's ideological tools, new economic roles and cultural construction were also promoted. The media functions were not just to inform, but also to entertain and sell'. (Winfield & Peng, 2005, p. 258)

Since the speed-up of marketization in the 1990s and China's WTO entry in the new century, the former market socialism system, which underpinned but also corrupted the SOE model that media system followed, virtually had proven inefficient and ended in crisis (C. Huang, 2007a; Pei, 1994; G. White, 1993). Heavy administrative regulations and absolute Party-state monopoly not only provided rent-seeking chances that had severely corrupted the system, but also limited the media industry's access to capital in face of post-WTO challenges and increasing financial problems.(C. Huang, 2007b; X. Li & Yang, 2007; Y. Yang & Lee, 2007; Y. Zhao, 1998) To cope with these problems, the post-WTO decade has seen deepening internal restructuring to increase efficiency and partly external opening-up to private and foreign investment to ease under

capitalization in the media system, with the Party-state's approach to media ownership changing from absolute monopoly to majority control.[13](C. Huang, 2007a, 2007b)

As a result of the marketization reforms, the Chinese media has increasingly become a financially autonomous and audience-oriented provider of news, public information, entertainment, and commercial service. The gradually hard-won restricted financial and managerial independence and the very tension of the transformative system gendered by the reforms has, to some extent, led to loosened control over media content that does not directly challenge the Party's bottom line, fostering a circumscribed space for culturally creative, improvised and innovative practices (Keane, 2001; Pan, 2000) as well as the rise of a watch-dog mode of investigative or in-depth journalism underpinned by a nascent ideology of journalistic professionalism. (de Burgh, 2003b; Z. Zhang, 2010) With the market-driven reforms, despite continuous Party-state monopoly and muzzling, 'the system has become authoritarian rather than totalitarian' as the process of marketization has to a certain degree led to 'relative separation of politics from the economy', which unavoidably 'has none the less subjected the state's news management to certain processes of secularization, formalization and regularization'. (C.-C. Lee, 2000, p. 561) Since the 1990s, an increasingly uproarious and market-oriented Chinese popular cultural economy underpinned by media industry, especially television, has emerged and flourished within and without China, while the traditional revolutionary or orthodox Party-dominated cultural forms have been *de facto* largely marginalized. (e.g. Fung, 2003; Keane, 2006; J. Wang, 2008; J. Wu, 2006; Y. Zhu & Berry, 2009) Media's news and entertainment discourse modes have also gone through huge changes to fit in with the socio-economic and cultural transformations. (e.g. Wei Sun, 2008;Y. Sun, 2003)

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[13] According to a regulation promulgated in 2004, foreign and private 'media firms must form a joint venture with a Chinese state-owned media company, who would remain the majority shareholder and licence holder of the media joint venture'. (Huang, 2007b, p. 421)

However, on the other hand, despite dramatic changes in terms of its marketized financial and managerial structures and more diverse discursive modes in non-political content, the core of the media system as the Party-state's mouthpiece, embedded in the authoritarian regime, remains institutionally and ideologically intact. In other words, though the Chinese Party-state's propaganda control has been greatly loosened as propaganda now is only one of the media's multifarious functions and not that predominant and penetrating as it used to be before the reforms(Lynch, 1999), the media is still essentially a strictly and prudently controlled ideological manager on behalf of the Party-state, systematically and firmly manipulated by the Party-state's propaganda departments and public information administrations.(Brady, 2008; Cheek, 1989; C.-C. Lee, He, & Huang, 2008) To unconditionally serve the Party-state has always remained a political precondition for media to play its other roles as a carrier of commercials, a muckraker exposing local official malfeasance or an entertainer amusing the public. Even though the Chinese media in reforms has ceased to be a bald-faced brainwasher, and the ways in which media propagandizes have become more nuanced and tactical in response to an increasingly vibrant and cynical society, to the Party, media and all the other means of symbolic mediation are all the time defined as an instrument that has to be placed under the Party's domination to promote its doctrines and legitimacy. In spite of various trial-and-error restructuring policies and seemingly modern, skillful forms of media production, and many unexpected outcomes gendered by the reforms, as Pan (2005a) points out, the cardinal principle of media reforms has always been to domesticate the market forces in the interests of the Party-state's need for continuous self-legitimating through a Party-dominated press. As its counterparts elsewhere under the rule of a quasi-right-ring bureaucratic-authoritarian regime (Canak, 1984; Harbeson, 1998;O'Donnell, 1978), the Chinese media guided by the ideology of developmentalism is required to 'toe the government's economic and political

lines. Representing the nation and working for development' simply 'came to mean supporting the governments' positions uncritically'.   (Sen, 2008, p. 4)

As the Party's propaganda and media control systems strive to accommodate challenges and changes in a marketized society, the boundaries between the very limited autonomic editorial rights resulting from the reforms and the Party line as a cardinal principle that rules the media system are in fact highly unstable and subject to heavy administrative regulations, content censorship, personnel control and a harsh punitive mechanism. Especially after the politically unrest 1980s, with lessons from the pro-democracy movements within and without China, the Party reasserted, tightened, and upgraded its control over media and public information outlets based on its networked comprehensive fortifying of nationwide 'ideological and thought work' in the post-1989 era. (e.g. Brady, 2005, 2006; Brady, 2008; L. Chen, 2008; Q. He, 2008;Y. Zhao, 2008a)Through careful and rigorous regulations of access policy and introduction of several safety devices (C. Huang, 2007b), or what the Chinese political scholar G. Wu (1994) has called 'kite-flying' approaches, including separation between news production which continues to be a Party prerogative and business operation of non-news sections that are partly open to the market, the Party-state has successfully kept media and other public information institutions off limits to full or majority private or foreign ownership and thus reserved its dominant position in media and public information control. With all these safety measures backed up by both physical and symbolic violence (Y. Zhao, 2008a, p. 19), the regime ensures the market-oriented media would never shirk its mandatory political roles in indoctrinating the public with the Party-state's unassailable authority, serving the state's developmentalist strategies, constructing national identity and unity, legitimizing the Party's grip over power, preempting or marginalizing any politically heterodox views or doubts on the regime's legitimacy.

Hence the Chinese media in the reform period has displayed paradoxical 'dual

personalities': 'simultaneously commodities in the market and ideological apparatuses'(Winfield & Peng, 2005, p. 261)- while being compelled to serve two masters, the Party and the market, at the same time.(Y. Zhao, 1998)   In He's (cited in C.-C. Lee, et al., 2008, pp. 28-29) words, the Chinese media possesses 'a capitalist body' with 'a socialist face', while preserving the 'face' is essentially a prerequisite for maintaining and feeding the 'body'. With the Party's franchise, the Chinese media's operational and managerial structures have been dramatically changed to facilitate a commercial model chasing profits in an oligopoly market. In return, the media is institutionally defined and required to be an always-ready and unconditional propaganda instrument on behalf of the supreme Party-state. With the economic compromise between the Party-state and media sector, an institutional equilibrium has been ensured. With the marketization of propaganda or what some have called the 'Chinese Party Publicity Inc'(Z. He, 1998; C.-C. Lee, et al., 2008), the Party-state has, to a certain degree, successfully transformed the media from a heavily state-subsidized ultra-leftist propaganda tool and brainwasher to a self-financed and motivated soft ideological promoter and also a booming industry, in an increasingly interest-based society where ideas of development and profit-hunting have been preached as new ideologies to preempt both the nothingness of the lost revolutionary utopia and the risks of potential demand for a constitutional democratic change.

The seemingly paradoxical and bizarre formation of a Party-monopolized propaganda tool running in a marketized manner has been facilitated by an array of bounded innovations (Pan, 2005a), including separations between different media genres, broadcasting channels, different pages or time intervals of the same media, which were supposed to serve for the Party's propaganda requirements and the market and audience's needs respectively. Among others, this includes the rise of metropolitan newspapers (*dushibao*) or the so-called state-run tabloids (C. Huang, 2001) in major cities. Despite the fact that they

have to be published as subsidiaries of the dominant Party organs at various levels, these papers largely cater for urban residents' daily information and entertainment needs by covering on day-to-day events in a relatively sensational mode. With similar differentiations in other media genres, as Chin-Chuan Lee et al. have observed in their case study of a press conglomerate, the Chinese media has fundamentally evolved into a two-tier structure that 'represents a complicitous accommodation between power and money engineered by a post-communist bureaucratic-authoritarian regime' and aims to 'absorb political pressure and maximize economic interests', with the first-tier flagship organs seeking to 'publicize the Party's policies, legitimize its mandate to rule and contribute to the establishment of cultural and ideological hegemony', while the second tier 'made up of 'soft' publications' aiming to 'entertain and inform readers while contributing to the social construction of human relationship and knowledge'. Hence with different functions and purposes, the two-tier institutional innovation 'alleviate the pains of packing a 'socialist head' into a 'capitalist body''. (C.-C. Lee, et al., 2008, p. 28)

Approaches to the Media Institutions

To understand the nature and consequences of reforms of the Chinese media and the Party-state-media-market tripartite relationship, a large number of studies have been done with great efforts to understand and interpret the bewildering institutions as well as to improve media theories for better understanding of non-Western, especially post-socialist or late-authoritarian media systems and practices from a comparative perspective. (e.g. X. Deng, 2006; Z. Hu, 2003; C. Huang, 2007b; Pan, 2000, 2005b, 2008; Sparks, 2008; X. Sun, 2010; Winfield & Peng, 2005) The institutional structures and practices of the Chinese media have been variously defined as paradoxical pull-and-push or negotiations between the market and the Party-state forces(e.g. Z. He, 2000; C. Huang, 2007a; Polumbaum, 1994; Xu. Yu, 1994) , a 'Party publicity Inc.' facilitated by arrangements of a functionally differentiated two-tier system (Z. He, 1998; C.-C.

Lee, 2003; C.-C. Lee, He, & Huang, 2007), a sector where the Party-market corporatism[14] unfolds (C.-C. Lee, et al., 2007), a site of collusion between money and power in profound connection with global neo-liberal tendency of market domination (e.g. B. Zhao, 1999; Y. Zhao, 1998, 2000a, 2003, 2008a), or an unfinished reform project that marks China's suspended or stagnated pursuit of political modernity (e.g. X. Gan, 2007; H. Lin, 2004; X. Sun, 2010). Among these studies, according to Chin-Chuan Lee (2000), three major approaches are noteworthy: the liberal-pluralist, the critical new leftist, and the Chinese reformist Marxist.

Following the traditions of confirming and defending individual sovereignty, autonomy and rights to press and free speech, the liberal-pluralist approach hails the arrival of market reforms in media sector and positively evaluates the loosening and emancipatory potentials of market elements, though nevertheless liberal advocates have also been disappointed by the stagnation of further fundamental change in the political aspects of media institutions. (e.g. J. M. Chan, 1993; Chu, 1994;Pei, 1994) According to this approach, market development has been defined as a necessary, though not sufficient, condition for further political change. From this perspective, despite continuous Party-state domination and new forms of socio-economic pressures, the positive progress in media sector brought about by the market-driven reforms has been the transformation from 'mobilized totalitarianism' to 'demobilized liberalization'.[15](C.-C. Lee, 2000, p. 560) But what disappoints the liberals is

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[14] Corporatism has been widely used to analyze different institutional phenomena in different temporal and spatial configurations, and thus to some, it has become a generalized concept. (Williamson, 1999[1985])　It is a term used to describe a system of political, economic, or social organization that views state-structured and regulated corporate groups as collective bodies based on organic social solidarity and functional distinction and roles among individuals. Corporatism advocates class and interest-group harmony over conflict and seeks to accomplish this by incorporating groups representing all sectors of society into the democratic policy-making structure. (Wiarda, 1997)　Despite its western origins, in the Chinese context, with the Party-state's strict control over the society and an uneasy progress of market-driven transformation, corporatism is a widely present phenomenon in the resurgent Chinese civil society, represented by the officially authorized NGOs and private economic associational activities. In fact, empirical studies have shown that '[o]ne distinct feature of NGOs' development in China, relating to their insignificant political role, is their cooperative attitude towards the state.'(Q. Ma, 2006, p.207)

[15]According to C.-C. Lee (2000), the process of 'demobilized liberalization' has three characteristics: first, the general political system under which media operates has become 'authoritarian rather than totalitarian', and hence 'media are no longer expected to reshape the all-encompassing, exclusionary and absolutist

the fact that the marketization process is subject to the Party-state's control and thus is running risks of being distorted by the unlimited state power, resulting in potential collusion between power and money, or what some have labeled as crony capitalism. (e.g.J. Wu, 2009;R. Zhou, 2009) The 'unsettled position'(de Burgh, 2003b)of Chinese media institutions and journalistic practitioners in the Chinese polity has led to the lack of basic protection of press rights and also difficulties in developing a well-established professionalism of self-contained norms and morality within the journalistic field. (L. Chen, 2010; Pan & Lu, 2003)

The second approach is the Chinese reformist Marxist. As the liberal-pluralist ideas have long been denounced and liberal advocates have mostly been persecuted since the 1940s within the Chinese Party-state, the Chinese reformists have had to carefully present their arguments within the confines of the Party-state doctrines. The radical ultra-leftist line was abandoned by the Party and a series of market-oriented reform measures had been taken since the late 1970s. This gave a relatively loose space for a resurgent pro-liberal 'new enlightenment movement'(J. Xu & Luo, 2007) in the 1980s within the media and academia circles, echoing to the suppressed tradition of Chinese liberalism as well as the precarious pro-reformist leadership within the regime.

Most of the proponents had background of working for the Party media or propaganda departments. Hence they had showed themselves as well-meaning advisors to the authority, staking their claims on intended selections of orthodox Marxist doctrines, legitimizing their reform proposals by re-interpretation of the classical texts. Carefully following the Party's bottom line, reformists partook in a series of contestations regarding fundamental concepts of journalism and

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socialist consciousness in Maoist mass campaigns. Second, there are 'various attempts at media experimentation and news improvisation' in response to 'wider and more diverse constituencies in the expanded marketplace and consequently diluting state ideology'. Third, the media's functions have been changed from a pure Party mouthpiece to a 'Party Publicity Inc' whose political loyalty is a pre-condition of financial privileges. The obligations of media have been to promote 'Party images and legitimacy' in exchange of market profits, rather than a bald-faced Maoist style brainwasher.

media institutions, such as, the nature of media, propaganda, freedom of press, public (through media) supervision, and the like. (e.g L. Chen, 1993; X. Sun, 1994[1981/1984])Research on media and press law flourished in the journalism academia which successfully had a press law listed in the authority's legislation agenda, even though it failed in the aftermath of the 1989 political crisis. (X. Sun, 2005)[16]This approach continues to exist in the Chinese media academic and practice sphere, but has been gradually marginalized as the pro-liberal proposal was rejected and its supporters got purged while the comprehensive marketization reforms since the 1990s have further made persisting in Marxist dogmas an anachronism. With the demise of the highly idealistic enlightenment movement of the 1980s and the rise of a market-authoritarian society, the reformist Marxist approach was gradually replaced by drastic contestations between the liberal and the New Leftist. (J. Xu & Luo, 2007, pp. 194-250)

Comparatively, the critical New Leftist approach sees Chinese media in the reform period fundamentally disappointing as it has degenerated into a site dominated by vest interest groups who, in the context of an increasingly globalized Chinese authoritarian market regime, exclusively benefit from the collusion of power and capital. In accordance with western critical leftist discourse, to the Chinese new leftists, the primary concern is not with the state-society relations dominated by the unlimited Party-state power, but with the rising global capitalist hegemony integrated with the Chinese market and its devastating consumerism ideology that demises or illudes the once dominant but now heavily underprivileged marginalized classes, such as peasants and working class. (e.g. Y. Gan, 1998;Hui Wang, 1998)

In the context of globalization and China's rise in global economy, the radical leftist approach sees the Chinese media and information industry as an integral

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[16] Xupei Sun is one of the earliest students of press law and advocates of press legislation in China of the 1980s.He was the chief editor of the *Xinwen Fa Tongxun* (*Press Law Correspondence,* 1984-1988), one of the most important academic journals dedicated to press law and media reforms in the first reform decade. (see L. Chen, 2009, chapter 10)

part of global dynamics of capitalism, 'contributing to the ongoing structural reconfiguration of the political economy of transnational capitalism'. (Schiller, 2005, p. 79)　Now the media is not only under political suppression from the enduring Party-state but also subservient to rampant market-driven distortion of commercialization and valorization that has been supported by the state. (e.g. Y. Zhao, 1998, 2000a,2003) The major problem of the media industry in China since the 1990shas been 'no longer excessive state control but over-marketization'(B. Zhao, 1999, p. 302).Thus it has been suggested that the Chinese need an alternative social democratic community-based approach free from domination of both the Party-state and the market. As one of the most prominent leftist critics of the Chinese media, Yuezhi Zhao (1998, 2008b) argues media reforms in China should not dismiss the revolutionary legacies that underscore socialist values of equality and justice, and thus should not limit the scope only within the 'narrow' liberal democracy. Rather, beyond commercialization, the Chinese media should adopt 'a broad definition of democracy' which 'means that it is necessary to struggle not only for freedom but also for equality and for sense of community'. (Y. Zhao, 1998, p. 191)

Despite all of these different approaches to the Chinese media in the reform period, there has never been a one-size-fits-all model for understanding the quite paradoxical consequences of the change as well as the continuity in the system. Media and journalistic institutions and practice in communist China, in terms of its political nature and its subordinate status within the polity, may usually be categorized as a specimen of authoritarian media model, opposite to the libertarian, according to the so-called four theories formulated by Siebert et al (1956). But the new situation of media sphere in the reform era has definitely nullifies this four-theory-approach which originated from the background of a world in Cold War. Its insufficiency in explaining media models in developing and transformative countries has long been criticized by many students of world media systems, whose attempts that aimed to revise or replace the no longer

valid approach have also suffered from either being too western-centric or only focusing on developing models. (e.g. J. D. Downing, 1996; McQuail, 1994; Merrill & Lowenstein, 1971;Severin & Tankard, 2001) The Chinese market authoritarian media system contains something never seen before and virtually presents a challenge to the prevailing normative media theories, as all elements of the liberal, the authoritarian and the developmentalist can be found within it as a whole.

There has been a general tendency to formulate the Chinese media in the reform era as a result of interplay between the intertwined Party-state power and market forces. (e.g. J. M. Chan, 1993; C.-C. Lee, et al., 2008;Y. Zhao, 1998) Contextualized in an overarching one-party system, the market reforms have been playing complicated and multifaceted roles in reshaping the media systems. Market has made it possible for relatively autonomous management as well as a restricted space for innovations and public supervision. But it is only a necessary, not sufficient, condition for potential systematic democratization. (Peter L. Berger, 1986)As discussed above, the Chinese case has shown that the Party-state has been largely successful in co-opting market forces to relieve its financial burdens in the media and propaganda sectors, as well as creating new forms of control through favorable policies (e.g. the strictly exclusive market access and state-ownership) and administrative disciplines (e.g. the set-up of hierarchical and multifarious administrative bodies).

However, the bizarre combination of the corporatist, the liberal, as well as the authoritarian elements in the Party-state and the market's *pas de deux*, does not mean that there is no any space or possibility for contestations and struggles driven by neutral concerns and idealistic motivation of pursuing public good. On the contrary, ample examples have shown that Chinese media practitioners and activists have never ceased to speak out and challenge the boundaries of the

system, radically or temperately. [17] As discussed in the preceding chapter, similar to the actors of migrant groups, social agency of pro-reformist media practitioners has always been able to manifest itself whenever it is possible. Especially with inception and proliferation of internet in China, space for public contestations, online and offline activism, in spite of heavy censorship and regulations, has been broadened. (G. Yang, 2009) Although an intolerant authoritarian regime continues to hold mighty sway over the society and the boundaries could be extremely unyielding, it is unquestionable that, notwithstanding frequent retrogressness, a resurgent space for civic struggling is circuitously growing.

Internal Migration in the Reform Period

Introduction

The modern idea of free mobility and migration, [18] or the right to leave and return, is usually deemed an inalienable natural human right rooted in natural law, as migration is found in the nature of humanity, and is in actual fact 'a fundamental characteristic of people'. As a report by the Organization of Economic and Cooperation Development (OECD) states, man 'is naturally mobile. In every epoch, in every part of the world and in every civilization, there has been migration. Migration must not therefore be regarded as abnormal phenomenon disturbing the natural order of things. The migrants are no exception because migration is a normal part of people's individual and

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[17] In spite of a cruel punitive mechanism of preempting potential subversive attempts, many Chinese journalistic practitioners have fearlessly endeavored to uncover power abuse at various levels of the Chinese society. According to an annual report by Human Rights Watch (HRW), in 2010, at least '24 Chinese journalists are jailed on ambiguous charges ranging from "inciting subversion" to "revealing state secrets"'. (HRW, 2011).

[18] Free mobility and migration may be viewed as modern ideas, but the practices of human migration began about 160,000 years ago in Africa. (White, Asfaw, DeGusta, et al., 2003) More recently, measures of good governance taken to attract population migration began to be viewed as an important political strategy. For example, Confucius maintains that full implementation of *li* (ritual propriety) and *yi* (appropriate conduct) is a precondition for bring about allegiance: 'This being the case, the common people from all quarters would flock here with babies strapped to their backs.' (Ames and Rosemont, 1999, p.163) Also in his *Arthashastra* (*Science of Government*, 4C BC), the ancient Indian scholar Kautilya advises the prince to develop his country (e.g. to build hospitals) so that the people of the neighboring enemy prince will abandon the latter and join the former in his territory. (Boesche, 2002)

collective lives. This is an essential truth that is little appreciated nowadays and of which we should all become more fully aware.'(cited in G. Liu, 2007, p. 14)

However, the typical western idea of natural rights and citizenship of individuals is absent in contemporary Chinese state and society.[19]Therefore, the idea of free migration or the right to leave and return, and its relevant institutional arrangements, remain only partially recognized and are still far from being a universally accepted standard for respecting and protecting people's mobility rights. While acknowledging the significance of international immigration policies as a weatherglass of the country's degree of openness to the outside world, the discussion here only focuses on China's internal migration in the reform era, which is in fact illustrative of the achievements and limitations of the reform's far-reaching but gammy transformation.

Despite the fact that this large-scale migration and population mobility in the reform era is voluntary and has been a significant phenomenon because of its huge economic and social influences, migration in Chinese society is not new and has always played an important role in Chinese history. Generally, there were two sets of antecedents to the present migrations. One is the internal migration flows to Manchuria and the burgeoning coastal cities since the time of the late Qing dynasty and the republican periods, until 1949, when the Communists seized power. Migration in this long period was driven by various factors including the attraction of the economic tempo in eastern treaty ports, the desire to avoid the wartime belligerency and other social and economic crises. It was an officially sanctioned relocation from densely populated to borders areas. Chain migration of laborers based on informal legal or illegal social networks had been one of the distinctive features of Chinese internal migration from early times.

The second antecedent is officially controlled migrations in the relatively 'static'

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[19] See the comparison between the Western and the Chinese ideas of citizenship in the next chapter.

pre-reform decades from 1949 to 1978, when the authority largely interrupted and diminished the previous mobility in the imperial and Republic times. Compared with previous times, the early three decades under Communist rule had seen the end of free movement of all classes. As most people were strictly confined in their local places of residence under the *hukou* system, only officially sanctioned and largely involuntary migrations or dislocations were allowed in Mao's times, for the sake of the state's political or economic goals rather than any concerns with the benefits of migrant individuals and their families. Therefore, these migrations 'were driven less by pragmatic economic concerns than by the ideological beliefs of China's leaders and the policies that those beliefs produced', and thus made little economic sense. (Lary, 1999, pp. 29-31) Rather, they caused huge trauma and hardship to the migrants and their families, and induced long-term grievances that would become one of the important factors urging the post-Mao reform.

State, Market and Migrant Workers in the Reform Period

As the *hukou* system has been partly relaxed while its core functions of division and exclusion remain substantially unchanged, migration in China's reform period has displayed paradoxical and contradictive characteristics. On the one hand, due to increasing economic marketization, there has been a rapid surge in social mobility and rural-urban migration in the past decades that would be unimaginable under Maoist totalitarianism and its attendant command economy. The past decade has seen steady increase of the number of migrant workers and their According to the National Bureau of Statistics of China(2011), by the end of 2010, there were 242.23 million migrant workers in China, among whom, 145.33 million had migrated beyond their *hukou* jurisdiction. Destinations for 62.5% of those who moved beyond their home cities were in the eastern coastal provinces.

As shown in table 2.1 (C. Fang & Wang, 2010), migrant laborers almost

comprised almost 50% of all the urban employment in 2009. This presents a striking contrast to the fact that there were only less than 2 million migrant workers at the beginning of the reform period. (Project Team of the State Council Research Office, 2006, p. 3) These large numbers of migrants have provided unlimited cheap labor for the booming manufacturing, service, business and other economic sectors in fast developing cities, especially the eastern engine areas. Millions of low-waged migrants have been virtually the main source of China's competitive advantages in global market, and thus have unassailably made great contributions to the country's economic prosperity.

Year	Migrant workers		Urban employed	
	Number(million)	Annual growth (%)	Number(million)	Annual growth (%)
2001	84.0	7.0	239.4	3.4
2002	104.7	24.7	247.8	3.5
2003	113.9	8.8	256.4	3.5
2004	118.2	3.8	264.8	3.3
2005	125.8	6.4	273.3	3.2
2006	132.1	5.0	283.1	3.6
2007	137.0	3.7	293.5	3.7
2008	140.4	2.5	302.1	2.9
2009	145.0	3.3	313.1	3.6

Source: Data for 2001–08 from: National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) various years, *China Statistical Yearbook*, China Statistics Press, Beijing; Department of Rural Surveys various years, *China Yearbook of Rural Household Survey*, National Bureau of Statistics, China Statistics Press, Beijing. Data for 2009 from National Development and Reform Commission 2010, *The Report on the Implementation of the 2009 Plan for National Economic and Social Development and on the 2010 Draft Plan for National Economic and Social Development*, The Third Session of the Eleventh National People's Congress, Beijing.

Table 2.1 numbers and growth rates of migrant workers and the urban employed

On the other hand, owing to the continuity of *hukou* system, migrant laborers from rural areas have been denied basic welfare benefits and other official subsidies or protection that 'belongs' only to full-fledged urbanites. Their exclusion from urban citizenship thus has made them one of the most vulnerable and exploited groups in Chinese society. In cities, they are noncitizens. The process of marketization, that presumably should relax official control over social resources and economic activities, has not necessarily led to the total abolition of this 'caste' system with Chinese characteristics.

On the contrary, despite the fact that to some degree marketization generated partial relaxation of control over social mobility, as this is essentially indispensable to a market economy, the negative consequences of marketizing the economic system triggered and strengthened resistance to *hukou* reform from officials and bureaucracies responsible for maintenance of public order and political stability, wealthier local governments in regions with heavy in-migration flows, erstwhile beneficiaries of the command economy as well as urban residents as a huge vested interest group. Any changes in favor of migrants would harm and burden this gargantuan interest coalition. As Solinger (1999b, p. 9) has eloquently argued, together with a still powerful authoritarian state which contains 'institutional legacies left from the former socialist system', markets 'engendered among the original urbanites a competitive mentality that counted costs and whose rationality was geared to revenue-generation. This state of mind enhanced discrimination and xenophobia against outsiders who threatened city people's own accustomed shares of goods'.

This situation has come to be what Chinese economic historian Hui Qin (2007) has called 'advantages of low human rights', which has long made 'available a steady supply of cheap and controlled laborers who are largely excluded from the benefits enjoyed by urban residents', and secured 'a population that is easily exploited, deprived, and can be discarded when necessary as in periods of economic contraction'.(F.-L. Wang, 2010, p. 83) In this sense, quite similar to its establishment and strict implementation to serve for Mao's central-planned economic strategy that prioritized heavy industry by extracting agricultural value from pinned rural laborers, the limited relaxation of rigid *hukou* control during the post-Mao period has also been in accordance with the state's developmentalist economic strategies, which needed rural surplus laborers to restrictively 'freely' migrate without going out of control, but still retain their innately inferior status, to attract global capital and thus advance the state's export-oriented developmental strategy at minimal cost. (Fan, 2008)This has

always been one of the shrouded and untold key parts in stirring stories about 'made in China' or the 'China miracle'. Consequently, the state, the market and migrant laborers in China's reform period have interacted with each other to continuously generate seemingly rational yet rather paradoxical outcomes. Whatever economic policies the state has adopted, and however mobile the population has been, both in the Maoist and reform periods, the Chinese authoritarian party-state's role of domination over economic and social development has always been the same, despite it sometimes having adapted itself or changed its means of governance to ever re-legitimize its rule as the social condition changed.

Nevertheless, the state or institutional approach (e.g. Amin, 1999; Peck, 1994; Skocpol, 1979,1985) to migration and social change should not necessarily dismiss the unleashed agency of social actors in the market. Marketization never guarantees linear political and social progress. But it is undeniable that the process of marketization since the late 1970s did function as one of the vital factors that revived mobility of social elements from a highly suppressive state, including laborers, and one of the drives that opened certain space for an emergent civil society[20], or more accurately, non-state sector (e.g. Yongnian Zheng & Fewsmith, 2008), that accommodates agency of relatively free social

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[20] The use of the concept 'civil society' (*shimin shehui*) in the Chinese context has been a controversial issue, and there has been divergence between Chinese discussions on 'civil society' and its original context and meanings in western societies. (e.g. Chamberlain,1993; Huang,1993; Nevitt,1996; Rowe, 1993;Wakeman, 1993) As noted by Metzger (1998), in the western tradition, the concept of civil society refers to an un-utopian institutionalized 'bottom-up' political order, in which citizens are free to organize themselves to monitor the state's power, preventing its potential intervention or encroachment in their lives. But in the Chinese tradition, this was replaced by a 'top-down' utopian definition of good governance by moral-intellectual elite. Also as Biao Xiang (1999) has argued, it is particularly important to consider three central factors in an undemocratic context like the Chinese society: (1) autonomy of social life from the state; (2) limits to the power of the state, and (3) both autonomy and limits should be institutionalized, for instance in citizens' rights and obligations. Lacking these fundamental conditions, despite the relative separation of the state and the society in the reform period, it 'is not necessarily congruent with the Western experience summarized in the concept of civil society'.

actors, who utilize market and other non-state space as a battle field to construct their social space, where they bargain and negotiate with the state, re-define the boundaries of power, or even challenge and change the rules established by the state. This is also the case for migration, especially for rural-urban migrant workers. Once the most fundamental conditions had been given, they have continuously driven by desires for better life to migrate through 'marketization of traditional networks', and thus have contested, pushed or eroded the boundaries of the state's migration regime through various strategies of daily life and resistance.   (e.g. Xiang, 1999,2004)

Consequently, it is always important for researchers of migration in the transitional Chinese society to remember that neither structures nor social actors remain static and immune from influences from each other in the conditions of change and uncertainty. Despite the far cry from a thorough dismantlement of the discriminatory migration regime, the state has never conclusively achieved its aims. Rather, it has to adapt the system to respond to increasing resistance and social tensions, to face unstoppable unleashed labor forces, composed of numerous lively individuals, groups, communities, who may utilize all the available resources, including loopholes in the system, bribery, guerrilla tactics, violence, or even organized strikes, to defend their deserved interests. Quite similar to this point, it is also true that public contestation regarding migrant worker issues in media and other public discursive spaces have taken place in the same mutual-constitutional configuration of state, market, and social agency. The next chapter will deal with the emergence, development and dilemmas of a commercialized media sector and a highly limited public sphere that it has paradoxically brewed, and where public contestation with Chinese characteristics has been molded.

Summary

In the above sections, this chapter has described China's general socio-economic transformation and its political limitations since the late 1970s, the propaganda-market driven media system, and the resurgence of rural-to-urban migration and its inextricable fetter of *hukou* system. All these descriptions and analyses have made it utterly clear that all the disparity, imbalance or paradoxes in the reforms, be it the sharp contrast between a market economy and an enduring authoritarian regime, the commercial-professionalist impulsion and the party-state's infrangible ideological control in the media sector, or a fast moving population and the caste-like segregation mechanism of *hukou* that contains and constrains it, are in accordance with the long tradition of a concept of citizenship that privileges the authority's definition of 'national interest'. As we shall see in the next chapter, from this perspective, all the short-term or long-term suppression of people's basic rights, whether it is well-institutionalized political participation or freedom of mobility, has been legitimized in the name of national interest, or its other variations, such as social order and stability, social and economic development, and so on. It is clear that the same political culture is at play when we look at media, new information technology, fissure between the popular and the official discourses, and the authority's adoption of means of control over a fast changing nascent semi-public realm of contestation. As the marketization and commercialization have relaxed and diversified the media arena, the party-state's iron fist never loosens its tight control over public speech. All of these comprise the fundamental institutional and social conditions in which the public contestation about rural-to-urban migrant workers has been taking place in a highly contextualized fashion. Against these backgrounds, we now turn to review relevant literatures on citizenship, public sphere, political deliberation, and the interactions between media and the phenomenon of migration in social sciences.

Citizenship, Public Deliberation and

Discursive Contention

Media representation of migrant issues is dialectically bound with citizenship problems. As part of the symbolic aspects of citizenship, media representation is conditioned by dominant ideologies, institutional arrangements within and without the media sector, and social structures within which it is produced. Media is both an independent and dependent factor in the construction and possession of citizenship rights. An institutionalized, free, independent and pluralistic public sphere, in which media is the major venue and where both individual citizens and collective actors have access to public deliberation, is deemed as an indispensable precondition for fulfillment of civil, political social and cultural citizenship rights. From a Western-vs.-Chinese comparative perspective, this chapter explores relevant literatures on four issues: the ideas of citizenship, public sphere and deliberation, media and discursive contention, and the relationship between media (as as vital site of public sphere and discursive contention) and the representation of migrant citizenship. I will firstly provide a comparative and critical summarization of the different ideas of citizenship in the western and Chinese contexts, closely relevant to the limitations of the current reforms in China. Following this will be a discussion about public sphere, political deliberation and discursive contention, in which media play a vital role and through which citizenship is discursively constructed. After reviewing some of the existing works on relationship between media and migration, the chapter formulates an operational framework for analyzing media discourse and public contention about migrant issues in the Chinese context, before concluding with a summary.

Citizenship and Its Meaning in the Chinese Context

To compare the Western origins of the concept of citizenship and its evolving meanings and highly restricted definitions in the Chinese context is essential for a better understanding of the limitations of the Chinese social transformation in many respects, including the seemingly paradoxically simultaneous deregulation and adaptation of means of control in the actively unfolding issue areas of migration and media.

Western Origins

In the western context, the idea of citizenship, as a framework of thought on and practice of political and social life, has its roots in the traditions of ancient Greek city-states, or the *polis*, and the Roman Empire. As Shafir (1998, pp. 3-4)suggests, in the former, citizenship appeared as 'a double process of emancipation' from tribal bonds to civic communities, and from 'instrumental sphere of necessity' to 'the sphere of freedom', where a coterie of free male citizens were enabled by their endowed citizenship to freely participate in decision making in public political affairs. This meaning of citizenship was diminished in the latter, as in a Roman definition, citizenship became a 'legal status that provided protection from the emperor and his representatives' arbitrary rule', and was understood not as the freedom to deliberate with other members of the community, but the right to be a proprietor under the protection of law. Over time and space, as the conditions in which people construct and practice citizenship underwent transformation, the particular nature and content of citizenship rights and attendant obligations changed accordingly. Based on these two different ancient traditions, modern ideas of citizenship developed along with the emergence of modern nation-states and capitalist democracies in Western societies, where the idea of citizen gradually replaced the 'autocratic model of subjecthood that characterized the feudal era', and citizens were thought as equal, independent and free persons engaging in the 'process of

self-rule'. (Kivisto & Faist, 2007, pp. 15-16) Recent revival of academic focus on citizenship is basically an intellectual response to 'the growing crisis of the welfare state in Western democratic nations, the demise of actually existed socialism, the critical questioning of liberalism and social democracy and the development of informational capitalism' in the last few decades. (Stevenson, 2001, p. 4)

Though there are various definitions of the concept and none of them is unanimously agreed upon; generally and ideally citizenship in the modern sense is understood as a set of institutional arrangements of inclusion (and exclusion) in a particular community (normally defined geographically) which equally bestows a raft of rights and responsibilities on all its members. It is obvious that two major issues come into play here: membership or belonging and attendant rights and obligations bound with it.(Turner, 1993) In this sense, citizenship always and 'inevitably involves a dialectical process between inclusion and exclusion', though the rights and duties brought about by the membership vary by place and time.(Kivisto & Faist, 2007, pp. 1-2) Only those who legally fall into the scope of the community have the right to full membership, while others outside the community are denied to be accepted as members and thus are deprived of access to social resources allocated among community members, even though they physically live within the same geographical space. Citizenship includes a set of rights of individual citizens, and has long been closely connected with human rights. Both concepts are rooted in liberal individualism. (Nash, 2009) But the difference here is citizenship is a concept which identifies legal status of citizens on the basis of nationality conferred by a territorial state, while human rights are based on universal principles of rights that are beyond the scope of a specific nation-state and are supposed to be imprescriptible. In this study, the two concepts have been viewed as relatively intertwined with the normative ideas of human rights used as the critical basis for citizenship analysis.

As to the detailed rights that modern citizenship comprises, in his seminal essay on citizenship and class inequality, British sociologist T. H. Marshall(1998[1950]), by taking the tension between political equality and the *de facto* economic inequality as his starting point, distinguishes three facets of modern citizenship rights, namely civil, political and social rights, historically one by one in this order attained by most Western citizens by the mid to the second half of the twentieth century. He introduces social changes into the study of citizenship as he proposes that rights of citizens expanded as a result of incorporating more and more social members into the state. Among the three parts, civil citizenship emerged first and consists of a set of rights to personal property and freedom conferred by the legal system. Political citizenship refers to the rights to participation in the exercise of political power as a voter, representative, or actor in a social movement. Social citizenship, according to Marshall (1998, p.94), is the social-economic element of the concept and has been defined as 'the right to share to the full in the social heritage and to live the life of a civilized being according to the standards prevailing in society'. There are conflicts and connections between civil and social rights, as the former provides freedom from state power and is not incompatible with social inequality, while the latter qualifies citizens to claim benefits from the state and thus is 'a universal right to real income which is not proportionate to the market value of the claimant'. (Marshall, 1998, p.107) Marshall has been criticized for the 'Englishness' of his views based on the mid twentieth century British experience, his neglect of a cultural dimension, viewing citizens as passive recipients of rights rather than active participants and agents, and overlooking dynamic processes of social struggle and contestation. (e.g. Barbalet, 1988; Rees, 1996; Roche, 1992; Turner, 1993, 1994,2001) Nevertheless, Marshall's work remains one of the touchstones in the debates on citizenship up to the present day.

Though there were early attempts to link political, economic and social to the

cultural aspects of citizenship, through such as what Raymond Williams (1961) terms the 'long revolution' in his discussion about the possibility of a more democratic, diverse and participatory popular culture in a capitalist economy and political system (Stevenson, 2003), the trichotomy of citizenship coined by Marshall lacked a cultural dimension until the last two decades. In recent years, cultural citizenship has become more and more important in an increasingly multi-cultural and globalized world where boundaries of nation-states have been challenged by global flows of information, capital and people. As Turner (2001, p. 12) points out, globalization 'raises new questions about individual identity and therefore brings into prominence questions of multi-cultural membership and cultural empowerment through the possession of citizenship status'.

Culture used to be thought of as practices of meaning and aesthetics production, a field of identity and difference, which should be strictly distinguished from citizenship, the latter being a set of much more universal values and institutional arrangements relevant to membership, inclusion, exclusion, rights and responsibilities in a political community. But as information technology and multi-ethnic immigration develop rapidly in a globalized world, this disconnection between universal citizenship and diverse cultural identity ceases to be valid. A cultural dimension in this context is not only an add-on to civil, political and social rights, the political and economic dimensions of citizenship, but also should be regarded as an integral part of it. As Stevenson (2001, p. 2) argues, whether 'we are talking about the risk society, network capitalism or the concerns of social movements, ideas of symbolic challenge and exclusion remain central. The power to name, construct meaning and exert control over the flow of information within contemporary societies' has been 'one of the central structural divisions today'. Power then 'is not solely based upon material dimensions, but also involves the capacity to throw into question established codes and rework frameworks of common understanding'. In this respect, cultural citizenship, in an increasingly multi-cultural and globalized modern

world, is understood as cultural empowerment that enables members of a community not only to participate in the construction of a national culture, but also, more importantly, to create freely, democratically, effectively and successfully different fluid, transferable and reversible forms of cultural identity and membership.(Turner, 2001)

It is important to note that this understanding of citizenship as a four-dimensional set of membership, rights and responsibilities is not universal. Rather, it is highly contextualized in advanced western societies, and even in these countries, peculiar national understandings of citizenship also varies greatly with different national traditions and current situations - not to speak of non-western countries, where several pre-conditions that underpin the notion and practice of modern citizenship in western countries do not exist or are at an embryonic stage. Among others, those taken-for-granted preconditions of citizenship in western societies include a well developed constitutional democracy in which citizens are entitled to participate in law-making and political activities, a civil society (Walzer, 1998) and a public sphere (Habermas, 1991) relatively independent from the state, where citizens remain autonomous in self-organization, association, public contestation, and other public affairs, free from direct interference of state power. No matter how these conditions have been re-estimated in western societies that are become increasingly globalized, fragmented, fluid, and post-modern, as argued by those who believe in a great rupture in modernity, it is hardly deniable that it is based on these partly accomplished achievements that the debates and reconstruction of more diverse, inclusive, nuanced forms of citizenship become possible.

Though it does not mean that citizenship as an analytical tool for understanding different societies loses its virtue, the contextual difference does limit the degree of applicability of a heavily contextualized definition and actual rights of citizenship in non-Western cases or nondemocratic regimes, and reminds us of examining particular historical, institutional and social conditions of a specific

society. As American sociologist Solinger (1999b, p. 8) points out, despite there being different arguments about the content of citizenship rights among theorists, 'up to now the literature on this topic has been dominated by Westerners and, for the most part, evinces a Western perspective'. This 'European/American understanding' of citizenship connects 'primarily with participation in the political life of the community', and 'roots in a civil and legal status', while in other social situation, this connection may cease to be valid due to different traditions and current institutions. In spite of this, some other insights insist that the nature and specific meanings of citizenship vary in accordance with different political, social and cultural conditions. (Marshall, 1963; Meehan, 1993; Solinger, 1999b) Therefore, the study of different countries needs to consider 'the history of the struggle for rights, and conditions under which they were given, the type of regime or state that granted or conceded them, and the local configuration of citizenship rights'. (Shafir, 1998, p. 15) Among others, Solinger (1999b, p. 7) emphasizes the importance of the current institutional arrangements, which impose effective restrictions on the definition and content of citizenship, and thus impact on a social actor's practice, but also are inevitably subject to legacy of the previous institutions and further changes of social conditions. Therefore, a contextualized examination of social construction of citizenship in a specific society needs to consider both the formal aspects of institutional transformation, such as change of political structure and legal system, as well as the informal aspects of evolvement of social ideology and the agency of social actors.

Citizenship in the Chinese context

In the case of China, the specific nature and content of citizenship rights have been heavily conditioned by the structural elements of the political, economic and cultural systems, which, from a perspective of long-term social change, are also subject to great historical inertia as well as enormous forces of transformation. In such a push-and-pull process, the very nature and actual

practice of Chinese citizenship remain fundamentally different from that in most Western democratic countries. Besides this, in two centuries' fierce struggles in the search for a Chinese modernity, citizenship in China has also taken on diverse forms in different periods and thus needs close and comparative examination. The modern Chinese state that followed the late Qing dynasty has been by no means a constitutional democracy, and this fundamentally matters when we try to understand what citizenship means in the contemporary Chinese context.

In a normative sense, as Kivisto and Faist (2007, pp. 13-14) put it, 'all contemporary states define their legal inhabitants as citizens', but 'citizenship cannot be conceived without its twin sibling: democracy', because in 'nondemocratic regimes, the legal residents of the state remain subjects rather than being citizens. They have membership and certain duties are required, but they lack the rights of democratic citizenship'. Thus Kivisto and Faist insist that 'democracies alone have citizens', though they also admit 'it is true that real existing nations exist on a continuum, with some being more democratic than others', and this 'clearly has implications for the form and especially the content of citizenship'. Such a strict definition of citizenship makes sense in a Western tradition, but it is too narrow and static in a wider context. By this definition, the Chinese people cannot be recognized as citizens at all, since they only have nominal or very limited citizenship rights under the current regime. Ironically, this conclusion abolishes the necessity to sympathetically understand and analyze citizenship conditions in nondemocratic societies like China, and thus ridicules claims by those seeking to improve and consolidate citizenship conditions for all human beings, as their regionally biased definition only serves for a small portion of the global population. It essentializes citizenship and citizen as something that 'is', rather than something that 'is becoming'.

Differently from this static normative concept of citizenship, in their introduction to a comprehensive examination of changing meaning of

citizenship in modern China, Goldman and Perry (2002) adopt a much more neutral formulation which defines citizenship as links between social members and the state in any regime, no matter whether they are democratic or authoritarian. In this sense, citizenship refers to, on the one hand, membership in a political community, and the 'quality of this membership' on the other. Both of them are determined by multiple variables. It is worth quoting them at length to understand how the two approaches differ (Goldman & Perry, 2002, pp. 2-3):

> The concept of political citizenship directs our attention squarely at state-society relations by highlighting the duties, obligations, claims, and/or rights that connect members of society to modern European context, they are by no means limited to that particular pattern. Citizenship exists in authoritarian as well as in democratic polities, and can refer to a range of legal, political, social, and economic links between the state and members of society. As opposed to civil society, this is often interpreted to mean a sphere of associational activity that is relatively autonomous from state control, citizenship presupposes nothing about the autonomy of either state or society and instead spotlights the specific interconnections between them. Moreover, again in contrast to some interpretations of civil society, the term 'citizenship' needs not connote a teleological movement toward a liberal democratic regime.

Apparently, this definition justifies academic inquiry into citizenship in countries like China, even though a fully developed democracy has yet to be established there. This does not necessarily diminish the critical relevance of a definition of citizenship rights based on Western experience. Rather, while a value-free interpretation of citizenship opens space for a sympathetic survey of non-Western experiences, the established general understanding of the civil, political, and social rights is undeniably universal and remain a benchmark for judging citizenship conditions in all countries despite its Western origins. The

Chinese people have developed a form of citizenship based on their heritage of thousands of years of ancient civilization as well as the past two hundred years of revolution and reform, and thus this form of citizenship is different to that which obtains in other countries. But it is not paradoxical at the same time to say that this form of citizenship is subject to a changing relationship between members of the society and the state. The state has in different historical phases endorsed different interpretations of an ideal form of citizenship in response to Western impact.

This calls for our attention on the decisive elements that limit the nature and details of citizenship and thus make them exceptional, as well as the real social life, in which people are not just passive subjects, but positive actors who are inspired by a universal understanding of citizenship, and fighting, through various means, from noticeably violent or peaceful protests to daily tactical resistance, or in James Scott's (1992) term, 'the hidden transcripts', to contest the boundaries of citizenship to claim the rights they were born to deserve. Therefore, though the current Chinese state is a 'non-democracy', or as some designate, a late-authoritarian or semi-authoritarian regime (e.g. Ho, 2008; Q. Wu, 2009), and thus the specific meaning and content of citizenship rights and obligations are different from those in a democratic body politic, it does not mean that it is meaningless or worthless to seek to discern and describe the concept of citizenship in China at the beginning of the 21st Century.

As an idea imported into China from the West about a century ago (Xingzhong Yu, 2002), citizenship in contemporary Chinese history has changing meanings, and has several different equivalent terms in the Chinese language, which makes the understanding of it in the Chinese context more complicated. Among others, *shimin* (literally 'city people'), *guomin* ('nation-state people'), *gongmin* ('public people'), are the most widely used three terms that could be rendered into

English as 'citizen'.[21] However, they lay emphasis on different aspects of citizenship, and 'include and exclude people on the basis of different territorial and political principles'. While *Shimin* is basically a term resulting from the rise of modern cities and urban classes, that have been playing a pivotal role in political activism in modern China, *guomin* refers to all the people belonging to a nation-state, and thus reflects the national crisis that characterized the modern Chinese history. Comparatively, *gongmin* conveys closer meaning of citizen in Western sense. As Goldman and Perry (2002, p. 5)suggest, these terms along with some others 'highlight distinct aspects of state-society relations: nationalism in the case of *guomin*, public spirit in the case of *gongmin*, and urban rights and responsibilities in the case of *shimin*. Their deployment in dissimilar ways by different parties for divergent political purposes suggests the richness of the citizenship debate in modern China.'

Compared with the Western definition of citizenship, which, despite latest developments that emphasize group and cultural dimensions, is largely based on liberal understandings of individual freedom and natural rights, the Chinese acceptance and reinterpretation of the idea of citizenship took on a different look. In their remarkable examination of changes of political keywords in modern Chinese thoughts, Jin and Liu (2009) argue that, when almost all the important modern concepts in Western political thoughts, such as rights, individual, public sphere, society, democracy, nation-state, and all the other terms that evolved from these keywords, entered into China in late Qing dynasty, they encountered reconstruction by the Chinese elite who selectively and prudently tried to find equivalent Chinese terms in which to render them. In this process, modern Chinese intellectuals underwent huge throes when they desperately strived to incorporate Western thought into a Confucian framework that sustained the world of the imperial Chinese state and society, and thus make

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[21] In Australia, the word citizen is used for all levels of citizenship. One could be a citizen of Sydney, New South Wales and the Commonwealth of Australia, with different rights and duties for each political jurisdiction. The practice is largely similar to other multi-level western democracies.

them understandable and legitimate in the Chinese context. This, unexpectedly, caused the withdrawal of Confucianism from the public space, and thus gradually led to a dualism of Confucianism and Western thoughts in the first decade of the twentieth century. In this dichotomy, the private sphere of clans was still dominated by Confucian ethics, while what Jin and Liu term a 'public sphere of gentry'[22]gradually came into being, which was basically a social space where members of the educated gentry could associate and mould themselves into a middle force between the dynastic state and the grassroots society composed of patriarchal clans. But finally the attempt by the gentry to establish a stable constitutional monarchy ended with the collapse of the last dynasty, a momentous event in modern Chinese history that can be explained as the result of the over-growth of the gentry's power and its incompatible conflict with imperial power. When the chaotic political struggles in the early years of the new Republic did not help establish a stable nation-state as promised, and finally ended in warlords ranged against one-another in civil war, the dichotomy of Western ideas and residual Confucianism was attacked, in the famous May Fourth or New Cultural Movement, by radical young intellectuals who were disillusioned by the traditional ethics underpinned by Confucianism as well as by Western republicanism and liberalism. Consequently, a new form of radical revolutionary ideology of egalitarianism arose, along with the emergence of two leading soviet-style political parties with their respective leftist and rightist faces, which would fight for supremacy in China in the following decades, and finally reconstructed an imperial state into a party-state system that remains to this

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[22] Some (e.g. Rankin, 1986,1990; Rowe, 1984) argue that there was a Chinese form of public sphere in the Habermasian sense as early as the eighteenth to nineteenth centuries in the commercially prosperous south-east, while others (e.g. Wakeman, 1993, 1998) disagree and maintain that this sort of 'public sphere' was not independent at all, rather, it was firmly affiliated with the imperial authority. Jin and Liu (2009, pp. 71-99), however, insist that such a form of 'public sphere' did not exist until the early years of the twentieth century, when what they call the 'Confucian public sphere of gentry' emerged as a result of interaction between imported Western ideas and Confucianism. But even this kind of 'gentry public sphere' was not the typical Habermasian public sphere that characterized the rise of liberal democracy in modern Western history, because the participants of this sphere, were not independent individuals with inalienable natural rights. Rather, the main body of this public space was an educated elite class representing clans. It was clans, not equal and free individuals that occupied this space. As the barricade between private space of Confucian clans and public space of political and social life influenced by Western ideas had not been broken through, individuals were still in bondage to family or clans; no idea of independent, equal and free individuals could survive under the circumstances.

day.(Jin & Liu, 2009, pp. 71-99)

In the whole of this process, the Chinese understanding and reconstruction of the idea of inalienable individual rights, which is significant for perceiving a modern definition of citizenship, has never been in complete accord with that in the Western context. In Chinese, the equivalent word to individual is *geren,* literally 'individual person'. But in rendering this term into Chinese, the reconstruction of Western individualism by Chinese intellectuals was driven by two paradoxical forces: on the one hand, traditional Confucian ethics dominating family and personal affairs was subverted, and thus individuals were emancipated from clan restraints and deemed as existentially prior to family and society. But on the other hand, as the individual independence became a matter of common sense in modern Chinese thought, radical intellectuals tended to judge social reality of individual rights according to this established common sense. Facing huge economic and political inequality between individuals in reality, radical intellectuals began to question the validity and universality of the liberal idea of individual rights, and emphasize the class nature of rights. Non-class individual rights theorists were disillusioned.(Jin & Liu, 2009, pp. 169-170) This led to a significant difference between the Western and the Chinese definitions of citizenship, namely, in the modern Chinese idea of the individual, rights are not deemed as inherent and non-exclusionary for everyone. A pragmatic approach to citizenship was adopted to promote the presumed interest of the majority, even though this could mean the deprivation of some rights of some people, or even their outright exclusion. It has been often argued by various regimes in modern Chinese history, that authoritarian rule and its limitation on citizens' civil and political rights are just some unavoidable costs in developing a stable, rich and prosperous nation-state,   (Jin & Liu, 2009, p. 176)

In this context, individual freedom and citizenship rights could only be valid in terms of their instrumental value for economic development, maintenance of the

regime and a stable social order, not because of their nature of inalienability based on the idea of natural law and individualistic self-rule. In other words, though the Chinese definition of citizenship, on the surface, is also composed of state-conferred membership and rights and obligations, it lacks the core idea of natural (rather than prescribed) rights and self-ruled individuals as its basis. Therefore, it has been always subject to obligations imposed by national, collective, or party-state goals, and is still far from what Warren calls 'the right to have rights'(quoted in Xingzhong Yu, 2002, p. 290). As Andrew Nathan (quoted in Goldman, 2002, p. 159) explains, all Chinese authorities since the late Qing dynasty have treated citizen rights not as inherent natural rights, but as awarded by the state. The aim of granting civil and political rights to citizens is to enable them to contribute to the prosperity of the state rather than to circumscribe the state power. Thus, though all the citizenship rights recognized by Marshall's categorization were spelled out in all the Chinese constitutions and national laws enacted at one time or another, 'they were merely conceptual and not backed up by institutions, enforcement, or laws'. (Goldman, 2002, p. 163) In reality, there has always been a huge gap between the seemingly democratic rhetoric of citizenship rights, on the one hand, and distorted actual practice, on the other. The turbulent modern Chinese history has seen great changes of the substance of official definitions of citizen and citizenship in different periods of time under various regimes. This clearly demonstrates the instability and instrumentality of citizenship in China. Theoretically the current Chinese constitution explicitly recognizes all the universal civil and political rights, and in practice, several laws have been enacted to ensure some of these rights. (Goldman & Perry, 2002; Xingzhong Yu, 2002, p. 297) However, in spite of some nascent attempts to advocate a judicial role in constitutional development and hence cautiously challenge the status quo (e.g. Kellogg, 2008), the legal system largely lacks an operative mechanism of constitutional litigation or 'judicialization of the constitution' which is critical for the

enforcement of the constitutional rights. Thus the insecure condition of citizenship rights is further worsened by the general lack of judicial independence under the party-sate regime, and the enacting of some ordinary laws and policies that obviously collide with the constitutional rights provisions.

Against this background, it is not difficult to understand why the ideas of civil and political rights in Chinese society are so weakly institutionalized and that there is still a long way to go before the people could truly enjoy and practice these rights. In fact, though traditionally the sense of belonging to a community in the Chinese context has been extraordinarily strong, community membership seldom necessarily provided all the members with equal rights to participation in political and social affairs. Rather, managerial authority always lay with elites, first with the privileged nobility and then the gentry; membership for the *hoi polloi* only carried a certain degree of social protection or basic welfare bound with their obligations and positions in the social caste system. The Chinese understanding and reconstruction of the ideas about equal political and civil rights for everyone is just a modern phenomenon in response to the Western impact. Thus the development of citizenship ideas and practice in China has proven to be a reversed evolutionary process compared with T. H. Marshall's explanation based on the Western European experience. Apparently, in the Chinese case, for centuries, a commitment to social citizenship has taken priority over civil and political citizenship. (Goldman & Perry, 2002, pp. 5-6) To a large degree, it remains the same in today's heavily marketized China. As O'Brien's (2002) study on Chinese villagers' grassroots elections has shown, most ordinary people, much like their predecessors, do not view citizenship rights as natural and inalienable, nor do they disagree with the prevailing idea that rights are granted by the state for societal or national purposes rather than to enfranchise the individuals. They see citizenship more as a claim to community membership which provides basic social welfare than as a claim to political rights and freedom.

But this limitation should not countervail the real process of people's fighting for their rightful share. Since the reform in the late 1970s, though the cardinal line of party-state rule has all the while remained untouchable, Chinese intellectuals, workers, peasants, and other citizens never ceased to challenge the official interpretations of citizenship. Rather, non-official or alternative definitions espoused by ordinary people as well as by intellectuals have always 'played an important role in the process of boundary definition'(Goldman & Perry, 2002, p. 3), which has been remarkably demonstrated in the pro-democratic movements that intermittently challenged the party-state rule throughout the decade from the late 1970s to the late 1980s, as well as in the mushrooming grassroots resistances to rampant official corruption and encroachment on vital personal interests since the 1990s.[23] As Murphy and Fong (Murphy & Fong, 2006) have argued, most of the literature on Chinese citizenship has mainly spotlighted national identity and the state's institutional arrangements of citizenship rights and obligations through ideology and laws. This focus on dominant state definitions of citizenship has accentuated the institutional and structural limitations of Chinese citizenship, while 'an exploration of the agency and experiences of marginal actors who create, resist, or have to live with the consequences of those state strategies' has been largely omitted. In this sense, it is necessary and meaningful to add some weight to the lighter side of the scales, to pay attention to those who have been most severely deprived of citizenship rights in a specific society, no matter how the nature and scope of these rights have been limited. It is the various legal, political, civil and cultural citizenship categories and related institutional barriers that set the basic mechanism of inclusion and exclusion. But it is also true that people under this mechanism are always able to use whatever resources are available to them to

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[23] A great difference between large scale pro-democratic movements in the late 1970s (Goldman,2002) and the 1980s (D. Zhao, 2004) and the grassroots resistances since the 1990s has been that, while the former advocated ideological contestation and tended to be radical in demanding for reconstruction of the party-state, the latter have largely taken the form of scattered unrest or 'activism through law' (J. Yu, 2007), with the basis of real deep social grievances due to official corruption or malpractice. For a general introduction to and assessment of social resistance and its latest development in today's China, see Selden and Perry (2010).

contest the boundary between inclusion and exclusion. Even the largest of these groups in Chinese society, such as rural-urban migrant workers who have been extremely marginalized, are never just passive subjects of state power. In this sense, citizenship 'classifications and the inequalities they produce are not immutable', something structurally static or irresistible. Rather, the relationship between the specific set of institutional arrangements of citizenship and the agency of social members in a specific state-society frame is a mutually interactive, dialectical and recursive one. In other words, citizenship and its social outcomes limit social members' scope of action, but they are also 'constantly renewed, maintained, lost, or transformed in process of individual and social struggle'. (Murphy & Fong, 2006, p. 4)

Based on the above discussion, citizenship in this study mainly refers to the inclusion and exclusion mechanism related to membership and identities, and the legal rights and duties that are realistically but unequally distributed among citizens in the Chinese society. Thus, the emphasis will be put on the *membership and distributive elements* of the Chinese citizenship, while political aspects will be left in a relatively subordinate position. This does not mean that the political dimension is not important, but since meaningful and substantial political participation in China is still in a rudimentary stage and the exclusive monopoly of political power by the party-state remains extremely rigid, most political actions that seemingly demonstrate representative presence of different interest groups only have superficial and symbolic significance. However, despite the lack of political and civil rights, the deepening market reform in China has substantially enabled individuals, including those marginalized in the reform, to pursue some social and cultural rights that could not even be conceived without the marketization process. While the general condition of negligible political participation remains almost the same to the majority in China, access to distributive economic, cultural and social resources become more crucial for citizenship assessment. It is based on this sympathetic and

critical examination of citizenship under the Chinese state-society configuration that migrant workers, an extremely marginalized social group in contemporary Chinese society, have turned out to be a significant subject of academic inquiry into social contestation of citizenship. With consideration of all the differences in conceptualization and practice of citizenship in the western and Chinese contexts, the next section examines the revival of rural-to-urban migration in the reform period, and scrutinizes literature on its massive influences, positively or negatively, both on the social transformation and the migrants themselves.

Public Sphere and Deliberation

The above section of this chapter compares different meanings of citizenship in the Western and the Chinese contexts. But no matter what kind of context it is embedded, other things in social world, citizenship is culturally constructed. Through influencing media representation, one of the major sites of deliberation and contention in public sphere, social actors-speakers continuously take part in (re)construction of boundaries of both membership and concrete rights of citizenship. In what follows, literatures on public sphere and political deliberation will be critically examined from a comparative perspective.

Public Sphere

In recent political and relevant social theories, the revival of discourses on public sphere and deliberative or discursive democracy has been a vital development and focal point of debates in western academia, which has heavily influenced media and communication studies in their intensive discussions on such issues as institutional challenges of public broadcasting system and media de-regulations driven by the global waves of neo-liberalism. (e.g. Hallin, 2008; McChesney, 2001) In Habermas'(1991/1989) landmark work *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, the idea of public sphere is presented as both a historical annotation and also a Weberian 'ideal type', an 'analytic category, a conceptual device which, while pointing to a specific social

phenomenon can also aid us in analyzing and researching the phenomenon'. (Dahlgren, 1991, p. 2) Therefore, it is both descriptive and normative, a metaphorical term referring to a social space or 'domain of our social life where such a thing as public opinion can be formed' when citizens 'deal with matters of general interest without being subject to coercion' to 'express and publicize their views'. (Habermas, 1997, p. 105) Here it suffices to briefly reiterate Habermas's main ideas for further discussions in this chapter.

The Habermasian story describes the ebb and flow of the bourgeois public sphere in modern Western European countries. The story begins with the rise of a short period of bourgeois public sphere in civic communication taking place in coffee houses, salons, galleries, publications and modern printing media. It was a new social space mediating between the state and the private sphere, which was different from the former 'representative publicness' ritually and symbolically displayed by the nobility of the medieval feudalist states or authoritarian monarchies. (Habermas, 1991, pp. 5-14) The new public sphere was supposed to be a social space or forum whose public accessibility should be widely and equally distributed among citizens, mainly members of the middle class, of a political community, who then could participate in rational-critical discursive contentions about public affairs of their common concerns and interests and thus pose civic supervisions over the exercise of the state's power through free expression of public opinions. In Kant's terms, civic participation in a free public sphere means 'the public use of reason'(cited in James Bohman & Rehg, 1997, p. x).

On the other hand, the conditions that cultivated the burgeoning of the bourgeois public sphere also started to weaken it almost the same time when they had come into being, and thus continuously made it a space of contradictions, conflicts, and dilemmas, that led to its demise. 'One of the key historical changes facilitating the rise of the public sphere was the increasing differentiation of society and particularly a separation of political authority from

the sphere of everyday and domestic life'. (Roberts & Crossley, 2004, p. 2) But due to the rapidly changing conditions and developments of commercialization, urbanization, industrialization, and especially the state and market's increasing infiltration into the private sphere since the mid 19th century, this key condition began to disappear and the bourgeois public sphere started to collapse, decline and finally disintegrated in modern welfare capitalist states. According to Habermas, these developments radically blurred the distinctions between the private and the public, which was the indispensable pre-condition of the very existence of a vibrant public sphere, and consequently the public's rational-critical debate became a victim of the 'refeudalization' process, degenerating back into a new form of 'representative publicness' dominated by power of the state and market. (Habermas, 1991, p. 158)

In this grim landscape of what Habermas (1987, 1988) has called the 'colonization' of life-world by political and economic systems, the welfare state increasingly intervenes in individuals' daily lives, and the relationship of communicatively rational deliberations between citizens and state has degenerated into a utilitarian and strategic one between political brokers and popular consumers. The free rational-critical discursive contention and argumentation between individual citizens in a political community now evolved into a political show of competition for power among self-interest driven parties. Media and journalism's traditional 'critical role in the wake of advertising, entertainment and public relations becomes muted. Public opinion is no longer a process of rational discourse but the result of publicity and social engineering in the media.' (Dahlgren, 1991, p. 4) Rather, it has increasingly been equated with the results of polling surveys, while meaningful political participation, rational deliberation and critical argument have been dramatically reduced to periodic and procedural voting in elections and representative democracy.

Habermas's theory of public sphere, being an integral part of his more ambitious

and comprehensive construction of a theory of communicative action, has been criticized for its practical and theoretical flaws. (Roberts & Crossley, 2004, pp. 10-17) Developed in the 1960s, it has been suffused with a deeply rooted 'quality of romanticism verging on nostalgia as well as a pervasive pessimism'. On the one hand, he idealized the early stage of bourgeois public sphere as a free and universal model, without fully considering its patriarchal and exclusive attributes, and thus contemplating the very existence and potentialities of alternative or counter public spheres cultivated among working class, women and other marginalized underclass groups. On the other hand, following his Frankfurt School predecessors, he excessively negatively evaluated modern developments of mass media. His dichotomic thesis of system and colonization of life-world failed to take into account the complexities of contextualized social psychological and cultural processes of the public's reception and interpretation of media information, meaning production and contested construction of social reality. Also his rationalist model of communicative action renders him unable to consider distorted as well as theatrical aspects in public communication. (Dahlgren, 1991, pp. 5-6; Nicholas Garnham, 1992, pp. 359-360) Nevertheless, in spite of these inherent shortcomings, the Habermasian public sphere remains a vitally relevant starting point and foundation both for efforts to construct different frameworks of theorizing the idea of public sphere and theories searching for a revival of meaningful democratic participation in the form of public discursive contention or deliberation. As Garnham (1992, p. 359) points out, while those criticisms are 'broadly justified, they do not undermine' Habermas's 'continuing claim to our attention as a fruitful starting point for work on urgent contemporary issues in the study of the mass media and democratic politics'. Among these endeavors, discourses about deliberative democracy and studies on public contestation in the process of framing policy-making come to be some most relevant and salient theoretical and practical achievements in recent years.

Democratic deliberation

Under the influences of works by Jürgen Habermas (e.g. 1987; 1988, 1991, 1996), John Rawls (e.g. 1993; 1997, 1999) and some others (e.g. J. Cohen, 1989, 1997; Elster, 1997, 1998; Gutmann & Thompson, 1998), deliberative democracy, as a relatively new idea, has received revival since the early 1980s[24] and become the most prominent theory of democracy ever since. Being what Dryzek(2000) calls a 'deliberative turn', deliberative democracy is a normatively theoretical as well as practical response to increasing discontent over political alienation caused by the crisis of the legitimacy of modern representative democratic rule in advanced capitalist societies. (e.g. Crozier, Huntington, & Watanuki, 1975;Habermas, 1988) Theoretically, it is a result of mediating the conflicting debates between the liberalist arguments accentuating the citizens' strife based on their pluralistic interests and the republican viewpoints in pursuit of civic harmony based on common interests and values. Practically, it has resulted from the critique of the ideas and practice of liberal democracy said to be divorced from classical promises of democracy in western countries and also the leftist ideal of invigorating citizens' participatory role in political arena. (e.g. Forester, 1999; Gutmann & Thompson, 2004; Jacobs, Cook, & Carpini, 2009; Kramer, 1972; Milbrath, 1965; Rostbøll, 2008; Roussopoulos & Benello, 2003; Verba, Nie, & Kim, 1978)

Deliberative democracy is a normative concept or ideal appealing to a new way of constructing political legitimacy through participatory public deliberation. (e.g. J. Bohman, 1998; J. Cohen, 1989; Manin, 1987; Marti, 2005) As with many other terms in social sciences, deliberative democracy is devoid of a universally accepted definition. Deliberation, according to Przeworski (1998), is 'a form of discussion intended to change the preferences on the bases of which

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[24] Despite the fact that the phrase 'deliberative democracy' was coined by Joseph Bessette in 1980 and many recent developments have made the idea of deliberative democracy one of the most popular and fashionable ideals in today's political theories, it is a revival rather than an invention of an idea that has a long historical tradition whose roots can be traced back to fifth century Athens. (see Besson & Mart, 2006; Bohman & Rehg,1997, p.xii; Elster,1998; Gutmann & Thompson, 2004, p.8)

people decide how to act'. Democratic deliberation 'occurs when discussion leads to a decision by voting'. (Przeworski, 1998, p. 140)Broadly speaking, in Bohman and Rehg's (1997, p. ix) terms, deliberative democracy refers to:

> the idea that legitimate lawmaking issues from the public deliberation of citizens. As a normative account of legitimacy, deliberative democracy evokes ideals of rational legislation, participatory politics, and civic self-governance. In short, it presents an ideal of political autonomy based on the practical reasoning of citizens.

With citizenry's communicative power as the major source of political legitimacy, deliberative democracy emphasizes the importance of equal access to the process of collective judgment and decision-making. It is rational-critical argumentation and communicative reason, rather than manipulative power and money that hold the major sway in a successful democracy. As He and Leib(2006, pp. 4-5) explain,

> Deliberative democracies should structure decision making so that the force of communicative influence is maximized, while the impact of unequal power and wealth is minimized or blocked. Democratic procedures should be structured in ways that shift decisions from those influenced by money and power to those influenced mostly by their own deliberation. Political communication - argument, challenge, demonstration, protest, and bargaining - should be based on the factually true and the sincerely expressed....Deliberative democracies should aim to translate communicative power into state power through processes that, to the extent feasible, involve those affected and remain open to all to have the chance to influence decisions.

According to Gutmann and Thompson(2004, pp. 3-6), deliberative democracy has four characteristics: The first is its reason-giving requirement of justifying decisions made within a political community; the second is that the reasons

given should be accessible in public to all the participants; the third is that it aims to influence and produce a decision that is binding for some period of time so that it is different from an ordinary discussion; and the fourth, the process of public deliberation should be dynamic so that the debate continues after a specific decision is made and thus it is open to further changes. Given these characteristics, deliberative democracy can also be defined as 'a form of government in which free and equal citizens (and their representatives), justify decisions in a process in which they give one another reasons that are mutually acceptable and generally accessible, with the aim of reaching conclusions that are binding in the present on all citizens but open to challenge in the future'. (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004, p. 7)

Mainly there have been two dominant versions of deliberative democracy: the Habermasian critical approach and the Rawlsian political liberal one. The fundamental difference between the two ways of formulating a deliberative conception of democracy is their different understandings of freedom. 'Critical theory is based on a belief both in the importance of learning processes for freedom and in a concern for emancipation from ideological domination'. Comparatively, the concept of freedom in political liberalism is more modestly concerned with 'accommodation of people with different worldviews or comprehensive doctrines.' (Rostbøll, 2008, pp. 8-9) But however many disagreements about value (instrumental or expressive), status (procedural or substantive), aims (consensual or pluralist), and scope (representative or participatory, government or civil society, domestic or international) of deliberation among themselves there are (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004, pp. 21-39), deliberative proponents generally agree on at least one idea: 'the political process involves more than self-interested competition governed by bargaining and aggregative mechanisms'.(James Bohman & Rehg, 1997, p. xiii)

Viewing politics as 'public in nature and instrumental in purpose', the idea of deliberative democracy normatively defies the market theory of politics that

citizens' participation in modern politics can be equated with the model of self-interest driven rational choice in a competitive market process. It claims that politics, with the principles of forum, 'must be an open and public activity, as distinct from the isolated and private expression of preferences that occurs in buying and selling', viz, the market. (Elster, 1997, pp. 11, 26) The recent debates around deliberative democracy have not only remained concerned with purely abstract theoretical argumentations, but also have increasingly paid more attention to empirical aspects and feasibility of deliberative democratic practice, its institutional designs, applicability of practical models and tools, and so on. (e.g. Davies & Gangadharan, 2009; Warren & Pearse, 2008) In spite of its normative and ideal arguments on how the institutional arrangements generating legitimate decisions should be, 'deliberative democracy retains a practical vocation and aspires to be useful as a relevant model of political legitimacy, one used to assess the degree to which real and concrete decisions are legitimate.'(Besson & Mart, 2006, p. xvi)

Even though there are many theoretical and practical difficulties that need to be resolved (e.g. D. A. Bell, 1999; Fish, 1999; Shapiro, 1999; Simon, 1999), to theorists of deliberative democracy, public deliberation is a necessary and integral part of meaningful democratic politics and effective construction of its legitimacy. It is justifiable to pursue it owing to its unique values. According to Thomas Christiano (1997), public deliberation, normally containing discussions about public affairs before making collective decisions concerning them (Fearon, 1998),　has at least three kinds of values justifying its desirability. First, public deliberation has instrumental values as it may bring about some positive results, including better quality and justice of laws and policy-making through public discussion and hearing, increasing legitimacy of laws and policies in a political community, and also improvement of civic virtues through freely and equally participating in deliberation. Second, public deliberation has intrinsic values in that participation in deliberation *per se* is significant for living a good public life

as a citizen or member of a specific political community. And thirdly, deliberation is 'a condition of political justification' (Christiano, 1997, p. 245) as it is during the free and equal participatory process of public deliberation that standards of accessing outcomes of its own are set up by citizens.

Bridging the Two

An autonomous and equally accessible public sphere and civil society relatively separated from state are the most important loci for democratic deliberation. (Dryzek, 2000) Among others, Habermas himself is one of the most prominent advocates of democratic deliberation. Both his early works that endorse the idea of public sphere as well as his late works that have fine-tuned and refined the idea of public sphere and his more ambitious construction of a theory of communicative action have theoretically influenced and contributed to the development and flourishing of deliberative democracy. In his *Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy*, Habermas (1996) connects the ideas of public sphere and democratic deliberation. In his discussions on deliberative politics, with the purpose of answering the 'question about the conditions of a legitimating genesis of law' (p.287) or the validity problem of the democratic system, he turns to procedural forms of political communication in democratic process, where 'the key question is how communicative power ought to be related to administrative and social power'. (p.288) In Habermas's words,

> [W]hat these elites consider plausible will not necessarily convince the citizens. The public of citizens will hardly be moved to take part in the democratic process, or at least to tolerate it benevolently, as long as this public can be viewed only as the ideological plunder of competing parties. This public wants to be convinced that the one party offers the prospect of better policies than does the other party; there must be good reasons for preferring one party to the other. Here one finally reaches

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the point where something that looks plausible from the observer perspective can no longer be translated into an argument that looks plausible to participants in the same way.(Habermas, 1996, pp. 293-294)

In answering this question, a 'normative conceptualization of state and society' is proposed by the republican and the liberal views respectively. According to the former, the gap between state and society could be eliminated by politically conscious citizens' practice of political self-determination based on their collective will. From this perspective, 'the citizens' opinion-and will-formation forms the medium through which society constitutes itself as a political whole'. On the contrary, the liberal view endorses a 'state-centered understanding of politics', according to which the gap between state and society is impossible to be totally eliminated, but only can be 'bridged by the democratic process'. The liberal perspective is 'oriented not toward the input of a rational political will formation but toward the output of government activities that are successful on balance'. (ibid, pp.297-298)

Against these two approaches, Habermas proposes a discourse theory of democratic process that contains stronger connotations than those in the liberal model but weaker than those in the republican one. The process of political opinion-and will-formation remains its gravity, but the discourse theory insists the constitutional principles are the bases on which the process can be institutionalized. Thus, 'the success of deliberative politics depends not on a collectively acting citizenry but on the institutionalization of the corresponding procedures and conditions of communication, as well as on the interplay of institutionalized deliberative processes with informally developed public opinions'.(ibid, p.298) Therefore, in accordance with the liberal viewpoint, the discourse theory accepts the distinctions between state and society, although it 'distinguishes civil society, as the social basis of autonomous public spheres, from both the economic system and public administration.' (ibid, p.299)

Altogether, these two points allow 'a democratic opinion-and will-formation that does not just monitor the exercise of political power ex post facto but more or less programs it as well' (ibid, p.300) within the framework of constitutional democracy.

Based on these arguments, Habermas then distinguishes the political system, especially the parliamentary bodies, and the communicative structures of the public sphere, each of which accommodates differently oriented forms of deliberations, as well as the relation between them. In this configuration, the political system is 'a subsystem specialized for collectively binding decisions, whereas the communicative structures of the public sphere constitute a far-flung network of sensors that react to the pressure of society-wide problems and stimulate influential opinions'. (ibid, p.300) Accordingly, there are two types of publics harboring different forms of deliberations regulated by democratic procedures and constitutional principles respectively, viz., as initially proposed by Nancy Fraser (1992), the 'strong publics' and the 'weak publics'. The former, constructed as a *context of justification*, are mainly composed of parliamentary institutions that contain deliberations of will-formation culminating in policy-making and legally binding decisions, whereas the latter, providing the *context of discovery,* encompass the deliberative practice of opinion-formation by the general public of citizens in autonomous civil society, where the 'currents of public communication are channeled by mass media and flow through different publics that develop informally inside associations'.(Habermas, 1996, p. 307)The interplay between the two publics is crucial for a functionally practical democracy:

> Democratically constituted opinion-and will-formation depends on the
> supply of informal public opinions that, ideally, develop in structures
> of an unsubverted political public sphere. The informal public sphere
> must, for its part, enjoy the support of a societal basis in which equal
> rights of citizenship have become socially effective... Deliberative

politics thus lives off the interplay between democratically institutionalized will-formation and informal opinion-formation. It cannot rely solely on the channels of procedurally regulated deliberation and decision making.(Habermas, 1996, p. 308)

Thus the two parts comprise an ideal configuration of core-periphery publics, namely the central part of strong publics including constitutionally structured political systems permeated with administrative and communicative power, as well as the peripheral part of informal communication in public spheres of civil society and spheres of private life, which constitute the context in which the central political systems is embedded. The very core area includes institutions of administration, judicial system, and democratic opinion-and will-formation, such as parliaments and elections. At the edges of this very core area is the inner peripheral terrain of state-delegated self-governed institutions. Outside the core area lies the outer periphery that branches into 'clientele bargaining''customer' groups, and 'supplier' groups[25], which, before and during the process of decision-making, attempt to 'influence the political process more from normative points of view than from the standpoint of particular interests'. It is in this relatively peripheral social space that news media play a role of vehicle of public opinion, as Habermas (1996, pp. 354-356) indicates, those

opinion-forming associations, which specialize in issues and contributions and are generally designed to generate public influence, belong to the civil-social infrastructure of a public sphere dominated by the mass media. With its informal, highly differentiated and cross-linked channels of communication, this public sphere forms the real periphery.

Thus, Habermas conceives a normative configuration in which, based on the relative separation between state and society, strong publics of will-formation in

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[25]As Habermas (1996, p. 356) points out, 'the distinction between output-oriented "customers" and input-oriented "suppliers" is not a sharp one'.

political system and weak publics of opinion-formation in civil social forces, overseen as well as lubricated by media and other modern information institutions, fulfill different but correlated functions to serve a legitimized and rationalized democracy that enjoys advantages of both representative and deliberative politics.

Deliberation with Chinese Characteristics?

The above discussion about public sphere and democratic deliberation is largely embedded in Western contexts. This raises the problems of uncritical attempts to apply these concepts to a non-Western society like modern China. Thus it is important to examine the Chinese historical and social contexts and compare the different ideal and practical aspects between the Chinese and the Western, as what has been done about the discrepancy of the ideas of citizenship in the preceding part of this chapter.

The ideas and practice of public sphere and democratic deliberation cannot exist without favorable fundamental institutional structures that support them. As we have discussed above, according to the Habermasian definition of public sphere, a successful political public sphere should be able to provide free and autonomous discursive space for public deliberation that is normatively equally open to all the members of a specific political community and should largely follow the rule of rational-critical argumentation. To realize this, the very existence of business institutions, civil rights organizations, or many other non-state organizations is not enough. Even though economic conditions and social structural changes certainly have influences on the formation of the public sphere and civil society, they are essentially different. In the Chinese case, the lack of a well established constitutional democratic foundation could leave the state always in a preemptive position that enables it to circumscribe or even engulf non-state sectors in the name of national development, security or social stability, as precisely demonstrated by the Chinese party-state's rapid intrusion

into non-state institutions after the 1989 political crisis. For example, since the 1990s, media control has been increasingly entrenched and institutionalized through reaffirmation and enhancement of the party-state's 'mouthpiece' policy (e.g. L. Chen, 2008; Q. He, 2008; Rawnsley, 2008), while development of (semi-) non-governmental organizations has been strictly circumscribed through forestalling formation of any potential politically subversive organizations. (e.g. Büsgen, 2005; Y. Lu, 2008, 2009;Zeng, 2007)[26]

In the field of China studies, some scholars have attempted to find evidence to demonstrate a Chinese version of incipient civil society and public sphere during the period from the late imperial to the early republic (e.g. Rankin, 1982; Rankin, 1986, 1990; Rowe, 1984, 1990; J. Xu, 2003) as well as the period of reform since the 1980s (e.g. Gold, 1990; Solinger, 1991; Strand, 1990; M. M.-h. Yang, 1989), triggering myriads of debates among Chinese and non-Chinese scholars alike. (e.g. Z. Deng, 2002; B. He, 1997; P. C. C. Huang, 1993; Rankin, 1993;Rowe, 1993) The continuous failure to establish a stable democracy in modern China, and the crackdown on the 1989 democratic movement, have posed serious questions for many of these thinkers leaving them struggling for an explanation of why this failure persists. The hope has been pinned on well-rounded and robust development of non-state institutions including a law regulated market economy and autonomous civic organizations.

But the problem with many of these studies is that they tend to equate public sphere and civil society with a series of local 'civic' elite or specific non-state social and economic organizations, while the complex relationship between structural and organizational changes and the discursive process is largely neglected. As Calhoun (1993, p. 269) notes,

What is at issue is the relationship between patterns of social

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[26] For example, according the Ministry of Civil Affairs' policy, no any non-governmental organizations initiated by politically subversive 'specific social groups', including migrant labourers, laid-off workers of state or ex-state-owned enterprises, ex-servicemen, should be allowed to exist. (Lu, 2009, p. 108)

organization and a certain kind of discourse and political participation, a public sphere in which rational-critical arguments rather than the statuses of actors are decisive. It is not helpful to collapse discourse or politics into social organization as though neither culture nor the wills of actors mattered. Neither is it helpful to forget how much democratic public life depends on specific kinds of social organization even though they do not necessarily and deterministically produce it.

As we have seen in the foregoing chapter and the first section of this chapter, the Chinese party/state-society relationship is a decisive factor that restricts the formation of equal and undiscounted natural citizenship rights as well as a free and open public sphere composed of democratic and independent media. Thus, simply equating the phenomenon of the very existence of non-state institutions with a politically well-established public sphere and civil society is misleading. Rather than merely focusing on the presence of non-state institutions, emphasis should be put on 'the question of how social integration is accomplished and whether those extra-state institutions have substantial capacity to alter patterns of integration or the overall exercise of power' through discursively rational-critical deliberation and will formation. (Calhoun, 1993, p. 278)

In other words, the somewhat simplistic and deterministic analysis of institutional and structural configurations should be replaced by a more relational and mutually-constitutive perspective from which the main concern is about the dynamic relationship between structurally established institutions and discursive practice by social actors. Therefore, it could be more rational to inquire the ways in which social actors practise discursive actions in response to and also shaping institutional opportunities and restrictions than merely to search for vague traces to attest the existence or inexistence of a Chinese version of public sphere and civil society. This idea not only rectifies the problems of the institutional approach to public sphere and civil society in China, but also defies the potential passive argument that as China lacks any

essential constitutional democracy, the very fundamental infrastructures for a well-established civil society and public sphere, it is not meaningful to examine the specific conditions of people's striving for publicness in China.

Consequently, in terms of political deliberation, the very nature of the Chinese authoritarian regime does not dismiss the values of realistic discursive contention that is happening on a daily and dynamic basis. On the contrary, despite the absence of a well-established democracy, the reform of the past three decades has, to a great extent, relaxed the once rock-bound social structure and discursive space, leading to what some have termed as 'fragmented authoritarianism'. (Lieberthal & Oksenberg, 1988) It is this kind of vagueness of the boundary between the party-state and the society in an era of rapid transformation that both restricts and offers possibility of policy bargaining, political deliberation and public contention. This is a state of what Mertha(2010) has called 'nondemocratic political pluralization', in which disgruntled or disenfranchised officials, the media, and non-governmental organizations are some of the most prominent 'policy entrepreneurs'(Kingdon, 1995) playing vital roles in public policy making, promoting debates, and will formation:

> In fragmented political systems, territorial, jurisdictional, and other political cleavages provide comparatively fertile ground for various contending state interests to push their agendas and to arrive at compromises that better reflect their own parochial or institutional goals, which is exactly the method employed by the policy entrepreneurs in China. (Mertha, 2010, p.74)

This amounts to part of what Baogang He (2006a, 2006b) has called 'authoritarian deliberation' through multi-level participatory and deliberative institutions in China, as opposed to deliberative democracy theorized and practised in Western contexts. In the partly relaxed fragmented authoritarian context, the regime can not only depend on sheer coercive forces to achieve

political compliance, and thus deliberative procedures and practices have to be adopted to resolve collective conflicts through making arguments and counter-arguments in a strictly controlled semi-public sphere under the overarching one-party domination. As 'participation and deliberation require some preconditions in the form of civil rights and the rule of law to be part of a "real" democracy', deliberative forms of discussion, participation and inclusion in an authoritarian setting are nothing but democratic. However, it surely contains non-negligible values and potentials for democratization. (B. He & Leib, 2006, p. 15)

Though at first glance it may seem totally self-contradictory, authoritarian deliberation reflects the complexity of the political and social reality in China. It poses questions of realistic strategies of democratization in authoritarian societies like China, to which largely no attention has been paid in most works about deliberative democracy conducted in western democracies. Thus it represents a chance to test western theories of deliberation. (B. He, 2006b, p. 135) While a liberal version of electoral democracy is absolutely necessary to ultimately democratize inchoate national and local deliberative institutions, the genuine process of deliberation involving large scale public participation and will-formation should be easily dismissed. Both the authority's real application of deliberative techniques for better governance and the public's daily struggles to push the boundaries of public contention are important aspects of deliberative practice in the Chinese authoritarian context.

Media and Discursive Contention

The process of public deliberation, whether democratic or authoritarian as discussed above, is always full of contestations, and consequently, congested with ideological and political struggles concerning different social groups with varying interest articulations. Media is one of the major institutions through which deliberation unfolds. (e.g. Chambers & Costain, 2000;Page, 1996)Various

discourses presented on media by different actors or sponsors are one of the major forms of public contention. The above section has discussed the ideas of public sphere and deliberation, especially Habermas's normative theories that aims to bridge the two ideas, with media being one of the most important opinion-formation mechanisms in democratic deliberation. Specifically, concerns of these discussions here are with the theoretical settings for further reviews of literatures on media and its role in public deliberation with regard to controversial social issues, as well as its implications for contestable constructions of citizenship of marginalized groups in modern societies. In this part, I firstly examine what the literatures on framing analysis have said about how the concrete process of discursive contention takes place through media representations.

Media and Public Contention

In the Habermasian version of public spheres and democratic deliberation, news media and relevant social institutions constitute the weak publics that are more unrestricted and informal in their forms of discourses, more sensitive to social changes and problems, and above all, constitute sites of intense discursive contention and thus the major space of public opinion-formation indispensable for complex democratic politics. Public media and information mechanism thus remain a pivotal institution in the process of democratic political practice in mediated modern societies.

The relevance of the idea of public sphere to institutions and practice of media, especially its journalistic role, has been taken seriously since Habermas's work became available to readership beyond its German origins. [27] According to Garnham(1992), there are at least three virtues of the central thrust of Habermas's approach to public sphere with regard to critical   thinking about

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[27] In the field of media and communication studies, the idea of public sphere and Habermas's main thesis became well-known among students of media and communication in America and Britain as early as the late 1970s through a synoptic essay by Habermas (1974)   and some other secondary texts. (Dahlgren, 1991).

modern media and communication. First, it emphasizes the inseparable relation between the public communication and democratic politics, while the traditional approaches 'fail to start from the position that the institutions and processes of public communication are themselves a central and integral part of the political structure and process'. Second, it focuses on the indispensable 'material resources base for any public sphere' in modern mediated societies, a question occluded by the dominant free press model based on the idealist face-to-face communication. Third, it eliminates the simplistic 'dichotomy of free market versus state control that dominates so much thinking about media policy', as Habermas 'distinguishes the public sphere from both state and market and can thus pose the question of the threats to democracy and the public discourse upon which it depends coming both from the development of an oligopolistic capitalist market and from the development of the modern interventionist welfare state'. (Nicholas Garnham, 1992, pp. 360-361) The role of media is thus beyond what the classical liberalism defines as a market of opinion, a neutral channel between the government and the governed, or 'the fourth estate of the realm'. We need to consider media's complex relations with political and economic powers, social cleavages, and ideologies. This requires alternative approaches to ways in which media can be theoretically and practically constructed and enabled to be autonomous from government and market and fully represent divergent interest in public sphere of democratic politics. (Curran, 1991)

What matters is not simply media, but also the more sophisticated idea and social process of mediation, or in Martin-Barbero's (1993, p. 3) words, 'the articulation between practices of communication and social movements'. Because of the increasingly complicated and professionally dominated mediation of communication channel as well as its content, the universal equalities based on an idealized space of face-to-face interaction are not guaranteed, as the access to cultural resources depends on the specific political

and economic institutional configuration, while the non-transparency of the life-world leaves space for existence of ideological domination. (Nicholas Garnham, 1992, p. 365) Equally important is meticulous observation of psychosocial and cultural processes of daily sense-making and cultural appropriation of media content by users of cultural products within specific contexts. These constitute wider and more nuanced cultural spaces connecting private realm with political and economic spheres and thus widening understanding of media's role in relation to operation of power. (Morley, 1992)

This leads our attention to thoughtful considerations about both complex social processes of discursive contention, negotiation, construction, through which interest preference and identities take shape, and social structural configurations that set institutional and discursive boundaries for media and their symbolic representations. Concerns with both constructivist process of discursive contention and political-economic configurations in mediation are necessary for a fuller critical understanding of communication and media practice and its meanings for modern democracies. Media as institutions or social spaces, therefore, should be viewed as battlefields, which *per se* are complexly intertwined with power and in which social interests and identities are continuously constructed, represented, and contested by different actors with differentiated resources.

In terms of the research focus of this project, viz. the discursive construction of Chinese rural-urban migrant workers' citizenship in news media, it is then required to carefully examine intricate and dynamic process of public discursive contention through media and other public discourses, an integral part of wider struggles concerning interests and identities, contextualized in both the meso-institutional boundaries that confines media discursive practice and the macro-relationship between state and society that defines the regime's nature, ideological space as well as media institutions. Next, I will turn to the literatures on discourse, strategic discursive actions, and media representations of

migrants.

News Discourse and Framing Analysis

Generally, discourse is meaningful symbolic behavior or language-in-action.(Hanks, 1995)However many different ways of defining the term, discourse is not the languages, texts, or symbols used in discursive actions, but the actions themselves involving complex forms of organizing these semiotic elements. In other words, discourse should be viewed as contextualized symbolic activities, rather than objects of these actions.(Scollon, 2001)Discourse is socially constitutive as well as socially conditioned. Through discourse, sense of meaningful reality is socially and culturally constructed under specific linguistic and socio-cultural conditions that are allocated unequally among social actors. As an instrument of power, discourse plays a vital role in the social production of inequality, ideology, and domination. The social-oriented perspective of discourse is concerned with the nature and distribution of linguistic resources that people can employ in social lives. The subjects of discourse analysis thus should be the contextualized discursive activities, and also it 'should be an analysis of the power effects, of the outcome of power, of what power does to people, groups, and societies, and of how this impact comes about. The deepest effect of power everywhere is inequality, as power differentiates and selects, includes and excludes'. (Blommaert, 2005, pp. 1-2)[28]

Among varying categories of discourses in public sphere, media discourse, especially news discourse, the main genre of media content, is of great importance and influence in social life. (van Dijk, 1988b)[29] In modern societies,

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[28] Critical discourse analysis (CDA) as a method will be discussed in the following methodology chapter.
[29]However, news as the dominant discourse genre of media is a relatively new invention. As noted by Allan Bell (1991, p. 1-2), news 'was not always so dominant'. In early days of radio, for example, the youthful BBC 'sometimes found there was a shortage of news deemed worthy to be broadcast. If this happened, no attempt was made to fill the gap. The announcer just said: "there is no news tonight"'. But in 'this later generation, the declaration that there is "no news tonight" comes as a shock, a challenge to convention, even to the shape of reality itself. Now there is always news – unless a strike makes us do without'.

media is one of the major institutions of public discourse forming. As discourse by definition is the language in use in communicative contexts, discourse research shares with media and communication studies the same concern with the relationship between language use and social power. (A. Bell, 1991, p. 7) While one of the prominent socio-linguists thinks the main objective of the subject is 'who speaks what language to whom and when?'(Fishman, 1965), fundamental issues of communication studies are thought to be 'who says what in which channel to whom with what effect?'(Lasswell, 1948)

As one of the prevailing approaches to public discourse in the practices of public deliberation, especially discursive contention through news media discourse (Pan, Lee, Chan, & So, 1999), framing analysis aims to probe into the psychosocial process of contesting issue definition and evoking public resonance through tactically using discursive means. It focuses on, as van Dijk (1997, p. 3)puts it, the 'strategic accomplishments of language users in action'. It is usually an integral part of political sociological analysis of social mobilization, struggles and movements in contentious politics. Through examination of discourse and political process, it seeks to find out how different social interest groups and actors, within specific institutional and cultural boundaries, compete to frame media's agenda and mode of reporting, affect public cognition as well as policy-making, and how media and public opinion reflect, construct and affect collective actions.(D. Zhao, 2006)

News framing analysis looks at how people construct meaning through framing of the 'fact' information in public life. It includes three major analytical units: Discourse itself as a system of textual representation; construction of discourse as a social process and action; and reception and interpretation of discourse as a mechanism of communication effects and social psychology.(Pan, 2006)It should be noted that each of these parts is a dynamic process with its action and setting, interconnects and interacts with others (Fairclough, 1992; van Dijk, 1988b), and thus constitutes an integral part of the dynamic public social life.

(Pan & Kosicki, 1993) However, despite a useful approach to news and other public discourses, it lacks a universal paradigm and has been described as a 'fractured' field of interdisciplinary inquiry. (R. M. Entman, 1993)

Being a social-psychological and cultural approach, framing analysis, with its emphasis on the 'active, creative, constitutive' characteristics of the ways how actors 'frame their claims, their opponents and their identities', has been drawn on by many scholars, including those of media and communication, to balance the structuralist tendency in social movement studies. (Doug McAdam, Tarrow, & Tilly, 2004, p. 16) Since the 1980s, analysis of social movement had tended to focus on resources, political opportunities, organizational power and other non-discursive structural elements, whereas problems of discourse and ideology were handled with from a macro and broad perspective, without closely examining the micro process and tactics of strategic framing in construction of issues and achieving public resonance. (D. Zhao, 2006)To make up this lack, Snow el al. (1986) introduced Goffman's (1974) concepts of 'framing' and 'frame alignment' into social movement research. While Gregory Bateson first coined the term of frame in an essay, it was Erving Goffman first imported this concept into social sciences. (Noakes & Johnston, 2005, p. 3)According to Goffman(1974, p. 21), frames are 'schemata of interpretation' that enable individuals 'to locate, perceive, identify, and label' environment, occurrences and information. Following this constructivist tradition, frames are viewed as 'central organizing ideas'(Gamson & Modigliani, 1989, p. 3)through which social actors interact with each other to 'yield coherent ways of understanding the world'.(Reese, 2001, p. 11)

From a more political and sociological perspective, framing analysis looks at the specific ways in which issues and discourse are constructed and meanings are developed via symbolic means in public arena. (Gamson, 1989, 1992) Being a very important part of political deliberation, 'framing an issue is to participate in public deliberation strategically, both for one's own sense making and for

contesting the frames of others.'(Pan & Kosicki, 2001, p. 39)To effectively mobilize the public and achieve resonance and support for their appeals, actors need to strategically choose which frames to sponsor, find the most productive ways to sponsor them, and connect them with interests and feelings of their constituency. (Ryan, 1991)This is a process called 'frame alignment', which includes five strategies: frame bridging, frame amplification, frame extension, frame transformation(Benford & Snow, 2000; Snow, et al., 1986), and frame appropriation(D. Zhao, 2006, p. 214). Through this process, the boundaries between different 'discursive communities' composed of ideologically and institutionally differentiated 'actors-speakers' are constructed or reconstructed. (Pan & Kosicki, 2001)

This approach spotlights strategic framing by social actors, emphasizes the importance of micro mobilization and discursive practice in social activism and political deliberation, and thus has been widely applied to the examination of broad ideological contest, rhetoric tactics, symbolic aspects of collective actions, and tactical responses from government, media, interest groups, professionals, and the general public. (e.g. Benford, 1993; Gamson & Wolfsfeld, 1993; McCarthy, Smith, & Zald, 1996; Ryan, 1991;Tarrow, 1998) This approach treats cultures as a repertoire or 'tool kit' of symbolic resources, including myths, memes, habits, skills, and styles, which are unevenly distributed among actors-speakers. With in accordance with their ideological stances, these actors-speakers then utilize all the resources available to them to construct their 'strategies of action' with different framing efficacy. (Swidler, 1986)But the problem with this approach is it pays little attention to elements of feelings, unexpected factors and consequences, spontaneity, and objective 'cognitive schema', which could all have effects over the framing process. (D. Zhao, 2006)

Among others, based on works by Gamson et al. (Gamson, 1992; Gamson & Lasch, 1983; Gamson & Modigliani, 1989), van Gorp(2005, 2007)proposes a constructionist approach to issue framing. To avoid confusion, van Gorp

suggests a distinction between persistent frames as part of culture and personal mental structures schemata. It follows that, compared with personal schemata as collections of organized knowledge which develop gradually as individual experience accumulates, frames are relatively stable and change very slow over time, though this does not mean that framing processes are static. 'On the contrary, the framing process is dynamic. The application of frames is subject to negotiation' and contestation.(van Gorp, 2007, pp. 63-64) Frames and framing processes are abstract and implicit cultural phenomena, but they are represented in the clusters of logically 'organized devices that function as an identity kit for a frame'. Based on Gamson et al.'s concept of 'media package'(Gamson & Modigliani, 1989), this has been termed 'frame package'. According to this approach, a frame package is composed of three parts: (1) framing devices, including all manifest part in the texts, such as word choice, metaphors, exemplars, descriptions, arguments, and visual images, lead to and are fit together by the same central idea and organizing theme . That is 'the actual frame, which provides the frame package with a coherent structure'. (2) Reasoning devices are 'explicit and implicit statements that deal with justifications, causes, and consequences in a temporal order'. They are related to the four framing functions identified by Entman (1993; 2004), viz, the promotion of a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation. This is the essential part of a frame package, as reasoning devices have the quality of being widely applicable to various events and issues. (3) An implicit cultural phenomenon that functions as a central theme and thus displays the package as a whole. This could be an archetype, a mythical figure, a value, or a narrative. (van Gorp, 2007, p. 64)

In their studies of media discourse about abortion issue in America and Germany, Ferree et al. (2002) 'emphasize the way that groups work to frame issues to their advantage, attempting to mesh strategy with opportunities'. (p.1) They propose a forum or stadium model of public deliberation, as shown in the

following figure 3.1. (p.11) In this model, the set of all the forums constitute the public sphere where public discourse is carried out. The mass media forum composed of arena (a field, space, or contextual structure, whose contours affect discursive opportunities), gallery (individuals as well as collective groups with specific identities) and backstage (behind-the-scenes strategic and resources support for the actors-speakers), is the master forum of all the other forums and the main site of political contest. Assuming media's pervasive influence, almost all the actors-speakers in other forums are either players of media or members of its audience, or gallery. Media 'is not merely an indicator of broader cultural changes in the civil society but also influences them, spreading changes in language use and political consciousness to the workplace and other settings in which people go about the public part of their daily lives.'(p. 10) For members of other forums, their success in media forum contest is measured by effective *standing* and *framing*. Standing refers to 'having a voice in the media', 'gaining the status of a regular media source whose interpretations are directly quoted', rather than mere 'any sort of coverage or mention in the news', while framing is both a mechanism of inclusion and exclusion of the issue scope and a skeletal structure of organizing ideas, directing public attention to certain issues or events and suggesting what is at stake on them. (p.14) Drawing on the main traditions of democratic theories, they then develop criteria to evaluate the quality of public deliberation, viz. 'inclusiveness, civility, dialogue, argumentation, narrative, empowerment, closure, and consensus'. (p.19)
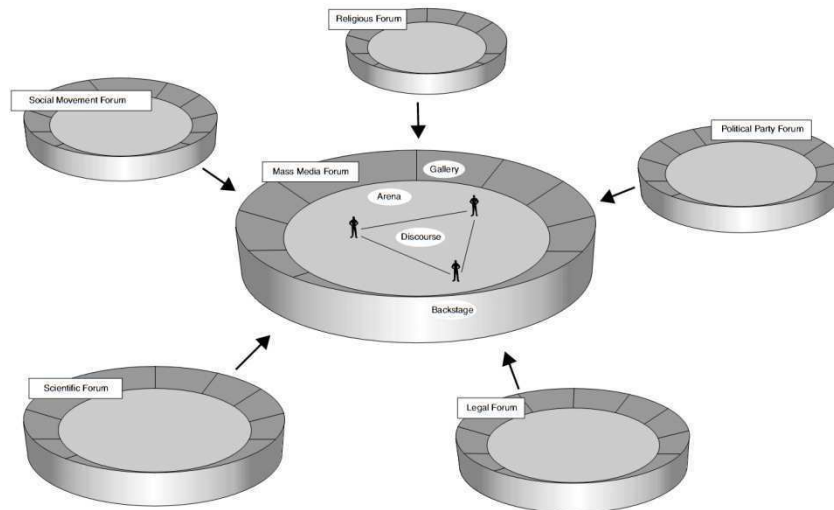
Figure 3.1 Forum/Stadium model of public contention (Ferree et al., 2002)

Based on this model, the distribution of standing among actors-speakers and the corresponding framing process are embedded in the *discursive opportunity structure*. As vital part of larger 'political opportunity structures' for collective actions created by changes in a political system (Costain, 1992; Eisinger, 1973; Kitschelt, 1986; Kriesi, 2004; Doug McAdam, 1982; Meyer & Minkoff, 2004), discursive opportunities are dependent on the broader structural configurations of political realm, economic cultural and social environments, or in other words, the institutional and cultural *contexts*, in which movement actors construct their specific ways of framing the issue in question. While political opportunity structure includes 'all of the institutional and cultural access points that actors can seize upon to attempt to bring their claims into the political forum', discursive opportunity structure only refers to 'the framework of ideas and meaning-making institutions in a particular society' (Ferree et al., 2002, p.62), including both political and socio-cultural components. Media and its institutional structures are one of the focal parts of this framework.

To sum up, based on the theoretical and practical concerns with concrete democratic public deliberation in public sphere, particularly through media discourse, framing analysis provides a juncture where researches about claim-making in collective actions and media discourse and its role in

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ideological contention converge. As shown in the foregoing discussions, any concerns with discursive aspects should not be rent from institutional and cultural contexts. As Wanning Sun (2008, p. 44) points out, the discursive regime is 'a consequence of the intersecting and interacting of an array of factors: political, economic, institutional, cultural and technological'. For the sake of objectives of this research project, it is important to note that both macro institutional and micro discourse perspectives, especially interactions between the two sets of elements, are indispensable for fully understanding framing and discursive contention over Chinese migrant workers' citizenship in media discourse.

Migration and Media Representation

Since the main objective of this project is to examine news discourse about Chinese migrant workers, before continuing to develop a workable framework and discussions about methodology in the next chapter, in the last section of this chapter, it is necessary to review the general issues and also the particular concerns with the case of China in the intersecting field of media and migration studies.

General Issues in Media and Migration Studies

The research about media and migration has been one filed that attracts interests from various disciplines, including media and communication studies, and its neighboring field, cultural studies. The problems of global media representation of international immigrant diaspora, ethnicity, citizenship and cultural identity, have been focal points in this field, inspiring continuous academic ardor from all directions. Research has been done to explore the way media construct image of new comers as well as immigrant consumption or practice of media and the construction of diasporic identities, reflect on the stereotypes that mainstream media mold and call for more balanced and equal representations of migrant groups. Most of them accentuate the influence of media discourse on the

knowledge, attitudes and behavior of citizenry with respect to the migration process. (for some recent examples, see Cubitt, 2008; J. Downing & Husband, 2005; Georgiou, 2006; Mai, 2005; Mihelj, 2004; Ogan, 2001; Sinclair & Cunningham, 2000; W. Sun, 2002)

With regard to international immigration, the process of migrating and construction of individual and collective experiences and identities may be influenced by media discourse in three aspects. (Wood & King, 2001, pp. 1-2)First, through construction of an alluring exotic 'Other', imported information and cultural images from overseas or general global media, whose attractive force is often strengthened by 'successful migrant idols', may have imaginative impacts on and thus stimulate potential migrants.(e.g. Mai, 2001; Mai, 2005; W. Sun, 2002)   For example, in her study of Chinese diaspora, Sun (2002) places an emphasis on the reception and interpretation point of view, and examines Chinese domestic TV dramas about life of Chinese people in Western countries, with the idea of transnational imagination of being Chinese. The major inquiry is into the construction of the desire of modernity through the visual representation of the New World, especially the discourse of 'Chinese in the New World'. Second, migrants' ways of being accepted or rejected as members of the host societies are affected by media's representation, which often are biased due to complex cultural, political and economic factors, and thus shapes the usually contesting social process of inclusion or exclusion. Migrants are constructed as undesirable 'others' or 'trouble makers' and consequently sources of 'threats' and 'moral panic'. Studies on media discourses have shown tendency of criminalizing and scapegoating migrants and thus evoking xenophobia among members of the mainstream society. (e.g. Danso & McDonald, 2001; Kaye, 2001;Mai, 2002)Third, media and cultural products originating from immigrants' home countries via transnational information network play a vital role in shaping sense of an imagined diasporic community as well as cultural and ethnical identity. Also immigrants develop

their own media and cultural forms that embody hybrid influences from both the countries of origin and also the destination societies.(e.g. S.-P. Lee, 2001; Tsagarousianou, 2001;M. Zhou & Cai, 2002)

But these multi-faceted aspects of relations between migration process and discursive construction through media and other sources of cultural products are largely neglected by the socio-economically dominated mainstream migration studies. 'Migration tends to be objectified as a time-space event or process which is largely to be explained in economic, demographic or sociological terms and linked to issues of employment, development, population redistribution, class formation and the creation of ethnic communities', while the 'significance of the media lies beneath the surface of socio-economic processes and its role is almost never explicit by migration scholars'. (Wood and King, 2001, p.3) In other words, media and cultural dimensions remain largely marginalized in these dominant approaches.

Comparatively, discursive dimensions of transnational migration are one of the most important research divisions in media and cultural studies.[30] Media and daily cultural practice is not only deemed as passive reflection of socio-economic process of migration, but actively involved in the social construction of reality of a given diasporic community. In particular, cultural issues about diasporic and hybrid identities in immigrant communities have been elaborated from a post-colonial perspective(Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2000, 1995; Kalra, Kaur, & Hutnyk, 2005) through various means of inquiry. Among them, ethnographic approach borrowed from anthropology has been utilized to trace the emergence and development of different identities in diasporic experiences of receiving and interpreting media discourse. For example, in her study on television's role in daily negotiation among young immigrants, Gillespie (1995, p. 205)asserts that although television talk 'may

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[30] Embodied in institutional establishments like publications, PhD projects, university courses, and international conference (e.g. IAMCR), topic about media and diaspora has been one of the focal points of media and communication studies in recent years.

often seem esoteric and trivial, is an important form of self-narration and a major collective resource through which identities are negotiated', and 'in order to understand how television is implicated in the remaking of ethnicity, or indeed in any process of cultural change', ethnographic enquiry is indispensible.

The Chinese case

Myriads of studies have been done to explore issues about Chinese domestic migrants from various perspectives, including those of spatial, class and gender struggles. (e.g. Gaetano & Jacka, 2004; Pun, 2005; Pun & King-Chi Chan, 2008; Pun et al., 2009; Pun & Ren, 2008;L. Zhang, 2001) However, most of the literature found in the inter-disciplinary field of media and migration research focus on immigration policy and diasporic identity issues in transnational settings. Only a small number of high quality studies have been done to investigate relations between media and trans-local migration within a specific country like China. Given the huge development lag and citizenship differentiation via *hukou* system between the rural and urban areas, issues about the rural-urban migrants in China are getting more attention from Chinese and international media and academia in recent years. Quite similar to problems encountered by new transnational immigrants in western countries, the Chinese rural migrant workers, who are essentially denied full access to urban citizenship under the *hukou* system, as clearly discussed in the previous chapter, find it difficult to integrate themselves into the urban society and offset the urbanites' negative attitudes towards them. Other enduring key issues include media and other cultural institutions' role in migrants' sustained difficulty in constructing a stable identity for themselves, comprehensive conflict of interest between migrants culturally and systematically constructed as subaltern 'Others' and the 'superior' urban mainstream society privileged by the *hukou* system, and so on. Regarding these issues, among others, YanhongLi (2004, 2006, 2007a, 2007b) and Wanning Sun (2004, 2009), with different approaches, respectively explore the roles that media play in the interest articulation and

daily lives of migrant workers.

In her study, Li (2004)adopts a Habermasian normative notion of viewing media (specifically urban newspapers) as a circumscribed 'public' sphere for social contestation and interest articulation, to examine how media, balancing between limited journalistic professionalism and political bottom-line, report and describe migrant workers in vital social events, and estimate whether media provide sufficient and equitable space for different speakers involved in public expression concerning two aspects of migrant issues: redistributive politics of basic economic, social and political citizenship rights, and recognition politics of identity construction. She concludes that, despite restrictions imposed by state, market and urban mainstream society, media in the reform era, to a certain degree, play an imperative role in advocating civil rights, social equality, identity and dignity of migrant workers, and thus promoting the social and institutional changes towards a more open and free society.

This proves that the Chinese media in the reform era is never only a propaganda tool for the ruling class, but it also should not lead to the conclusion that they have become what liberal scholars call 'free market of opinions'. As Li points out, the role of the Chinese party-state and maker forces are far more complex than what any single approach could conceive. The flexibility of media practice under marketization means that actors in media agencies are not totally passive agents of dominant ideologies and power, but on the contrary, under certain conditions or conjunctions of socio-economic and cultural situations, they can react positively to the social needs of justice and equality. The somewhat economic determinist formulation of media political economy is replaced by a more dynamic and mutually constitutive approach to the triangular relationship between state, market and media. (Y. Li, 2004, pp. 299-307; cf. e.g. Graham Murdock & Janus, 1985)

Comparatively, adopting a cultural approach, in her book, *Maid in China:*

Media, Morality, and the Cultural Politics of Boundaries, Wanning Sun (2009) presents an ethnographic study of media use and social construction of boundaries by Chinese migrant maids in cities, whose epistemological status she describes with the term 'intimate strangers'. (p.9) It is deemed as 'the first systematic, book-length investigation of internal rural migration in post-Mao China focused on the day-to-day production and consumption of popular media', unraveling 'some of the myriad ways in which the subaltern figure of the domestic worker comes to be inscribed with the cultural politics of boundaries that entrench a host of inequalities—between rich and poor, male and female, rural and urban'. (p. i)

Falling within the tradition of subaltern studies(see Spivak, 1996)and also embedded in the macro context of social economic changes, Sun's research follows three lines of inquiry: media and cultural production, consumption practices, and everyday politics. According to Sun, the discriminative *hukou* system, despite its relative relaxation in the reform era, still fundamentally defines the migrant Other as not entitled to have access to both material and symbolic aspects of the urban citizenship. The migrant Other thus is not only excluded spatially but also culturally and politically.

In terms of media production, it is identified that representation by media of the urban employers and their marginalized migrant 'Other' is unevenly distributed. While plenty of media coverage is given to urbanites' uncertainty and anxiety caused by intimate strangers' 'incursion' into their domestic space, 'the quotidian and yet profound sense of marginalization and alienation experienced routinely by their Other is seldom registered, let alone understood.' (W. Sun, 2009, p. 2) Through deep description of domestic workers' daily life and discursive representation in media and other cultural forms, Sun argues that, notwithstanding the relaxation of its rigidity, 'symbolic exclusion and boundary keeping' engendered by the *hukou* system have never been virtually eased. As she puts it,

Discursive resources—media stories, television dramas, cartoons—have been marshaled to preserve or reshape 'commonsense' meanings of people and places previously maintained geographically; and a new language of interests, needs, and rights has evolved in response to urban residents' persistent need to delineate and protect the 'territory' of identity and status, in a physical environment that is increasingly permeable to migration. (W. Sun, 2009, p. 8)

In terms of material and symbolic consumption involving urban residents and migrant domestic workers, Sun examines how both an urban middle-class identity of the former and a subaltern no-urban-citizenship status of the latter are reflected and constructed in their respective daily consumption activities, reflecting the very core logic of consumerism in urban China: 'consumption power is correlated with the extent to which one's rights and needs are legitimized through languages.' (W. Sun, 2009, p.121) As consuming subjects, despite restrictions of both material and symbolic aspects, migrants are engaged in their daily active negotiation with the urban mainstream society and appropriation of urban spaces available to them, often in individually and inconspicuously tactical forms, or what Scott (1992) calls 'hidden transcripts'.

In addition to the above reviewed representative works, other studies relevant to media and trans-local migration conducted by Chinese academics largely fall into two approaches. First, there are studies conducted from a perspective of communication technology and social development, in search for effects of media literacy or knowledge diffusion among migrant groups, social network construction, and urban-rural integration through media and other information technology use. (e.g. H. Li, 2009; N. Liu, 2008; Tang, 2005;S. Yang & Zhu, 2006) These works loosely follow a developmental communication paradigm, emphasizing the role of media technology in empowering the marginalized groups and improvement of social integration. Generally, the most common problem with them is their adoption of a relatively simplistic positivist view of

media-centrism, without considering the much more complex institutional configuration as well as cultural process.

Works of the other approach are largely about misrepresentation of migrant workers by mainstream Chinese media. (e.g. H. Chen, 2004; W. Chen, 2007; Gao, Qi, & Liang, 2006; Qiao & Li, 2005;P. Zhang, 2006) But unfortunately, most studies of this kind problematically adopt an overly simplistic positivist approach to media representation, assuming distortion of a 'true' and 'accurate' image of marginal groups rather than examining the contesting and complex discursive process of social construction of reality. Theoretical and methodological frameworks of these studies are also problematically limited to episodic textual descriptions without proposing theoretically inspiring questions. Also generally missing is an elaborate research design which should comprise not only micro level examination of text and discourse, but also meso level of institutions and macro level of wider social contexts.

In sum, in all the above mentioned discourse-oriented studies, a common deficiency is that little has been done to examine media construction of mobility and migration in the Chinese context from a historical dimension, especially how the discourse about migrants has evolved temporally in a genealogical sense. (Foucault, 2002a) Also what is needed is a necessary step towards complementariness of different approaches to media and migration issues in achieving fuller understanding of both discursive regime and institutional settings. In this sense, a Habermasian approach to media institution would be more sensitive to discursive practice and its ideological consequences if more attention is paid to macro process of construction of social reality. Similarly, the cultural approach to daily interaction and power struggles would be more convincing in explaining tactical and creative aspects of social agency if it is contextualized in a historical institutional framework.

Summary

In this chapter, I have reviewed literatures about three themes: the ideas of citizenship, public sphere and political deliberation, media and discursive contention. The literatures I have reviewed above, demonstrate both the institutional and discursive aspects of theoretical resources concerning further discussion of media construction of migration citizenship. On the one hand, a macro and meso historical institutional approach should be taken to examine the structural configuration of public sphere, in which the main locus of discursive contention, media, is embedded. On the other hand, a micro perspective of textual and discursive construction is to be used to probe ideological evolution concomitant with social transformations driven by the state's political and economic agendas.

A Western-Chinese comparative perspective is adopted although these sections, as the application of Western theories to Chinese practice always raises fundamental questions concerning the validity of the Western theories themselves, the conditions under which these theories cane applied to China, and the degree to which the revision of these theories is needed. For example, in understanding framing process, in the Chinese case, the emphasis needs to be transferred from competitive and contentious, though unequal and imbalanced, framing in a constitutional democratic pluralistic state-society configuration, as seen in most Western cases, to framing process dominated by the powerful party-state and counter-process in which other actors try to move ideological and policy boundaries in a moderately pluralistic society-in-state (Mertha, 2010) configuration. Based on this and other comparative theoretical discussions, in the next chapter, I shall come up with some major research questions and justify the methodological framework used to answer them. The detailed ways of data collection and analytical methods will also be discussed.

Chapter Four

Framework and Methodology

On the basis of aforementioned social background and critical review of theories, in this chapter, I shall present research questions and examine methodological issues that are essentially important for qualifying following detailed analysis of discourses and cases hereinafter. Firstly, I will come up with the main research questions of this project, and briefly explain the rationale of asking these questions, their relevance and justification against social and institutional backgrounds as well as existing research output discussed in foregoing parts. Then an operational analytical framework will be formulated to guide the detailed research in the following chapters. The last section is a discussion about the particular methods of data collection and field research and analysis techniques that I adopt to tackle the proposed questions.

Research Questions and Framework

Research Questions

Through examination of media and other forms of public discourse, e.g. policies, concerning migrant worker issues, this project aims to investigate the following major questions:

- From a historical genealogical perspective, ideologically, how has the Party-state continuously reconstructed and legitimized its definitions of differentiated citizenship categorizations concerning migrant workers in the reform period, in a form of rupture as well as continuity with class discourses of the past revolutionary era?

- Specifically, how have elements of social exclusion or inclusion, including identity discrimination, systematic deprivation, and oppressive apparatus,

surrounding *hukou*, the core institution of citizenship differentiation and social mobility control, been contested?

- Regarding the concrete aspects of citizenship of migrant workers, concerning redistributive justice, interest articulation, identity construction, and so on, how have the different social speaker-actors with differentiated resources, under the overarching supervision of the Party-state's policies and ideological line, framed and contested these issues in a propaganda-market-driven media sphere?

After answering these questions, this project, through the case study of migrant issues, aims to, deductively and critically, evaluate what potential significations the social process of marketization without fundamental political changes in the field of public discursive contestation has for citizenship condition of marginalized groups in China.

All of these questions have been reasonably proposed in accordance with theories and concepts reviewed previously, and will be examined in detail in the following findings, discussion and conclusion chapters respectively.

Adopting a historical genealogical approach that most of the existing works lack, in the first question, I aim to understand how the Chinese Party-state has remolded its revolutionary ideology of class, which prioritized the alliance of workers and peasants as its basis of legitimacy, to accommodate and legitimize the new market-oriented developmentalist reality in the reform period, when migrant workers, as a result of vague combination of peasants and workers, are treated institutionally and culturally as social pariahs. Following a Foucauldian approach to historical discourse, by the term '*historical genealogical*', I mean the ways in which how underlying conditions of discourse that constitute what is acceptable have changed over time. (Foucault, 2002a, 2002b) My concern here is with how a new order of ideological discourse that completely could not be imagined in revolutionary era now has been discursively naturalized and

legitimized as acceptable and necessary in the strategic package of authoritarian developmentalism, reproducing hegemony in the reform period.

Comparatively, what the first question conjures is not an episodic analysis of discourse generated in emblematic social events. Rather, it is an overriding and diachronic scrutiny of evolvement of ideological discourses with respect to migrant issues conditioned by different knowledge-power relations. In particular, the motif is how a revolutionary subject based on the alliance of peasants and workers has evolved into a developmentalist subject based on economic logic. In comparison with revolutionary political and traditional discourses about classes, I shall use the method of critical discourse analysis proposed by Fairclough(1992, 1995a, 1995b, 1998, 2003) (with revision, see below this chapter) to examine the Party-state's policy documents and their representation in texts of its mouthpiece, e. g. *People's Daily*, over the last three decades of reform.

The second and the third questions deal with the major two aspects of citizenship that have been surveyed in the literature review chapter. As noted, the term 'citizenship' in this research contains two aspects embedded in state-society relationship: the membership or inclusion and exclusion mechanism in a political community, and the quality of this membership or concrete rights and duties. (Goldman & Perry, 2002) Episodic and comparative framing analysis (see below this chapter) of media and policy texts, based on selected crucial issues or vital social events of great concern and controversy, will be conducted to see how various speakers-actors, with unevenly distributed social resources, especially access to media and cultural space (or in Bourdieu's term, cultural and symbolic capital) at their disposal (Bourdieu, 1989, 1991), have contested the discursive boundaries regarding migrant workers' citizenship rights. By *contesting discursive boundaries*, I mean the symbolic practice of (re)defining or negotiating a social subject and thus differing a discursive community from one another. (Pan & Kosicki, 2001; Snow, et al., 1986) This

may involve various activities of demarcation, expansion, and transcending.

Specifically, question two is about public contention over the first aspect of citizenship, viz. membership, or the facet of exclusion and inclusion of a certain group of people in a political community. In terms of migrant issues in China, as noted earlier, the *hukou* system, is the most fundamental and oppressive mechanism of social exclusion of peasantry-originated migrant workers. It is also one of the focal points of drastic public contestation, as it affects not only underprivileged groups like rural-urban migrants, but also all those urban residents who need to migrate domestically for whatsoever reasons. As discussed in chapter two, *hukou*, is not just a population registration system. Rather, it is in fact a multi-functional institution that facilitates the authority's monitoring of social security and potential subversive forces, differentiates citizenship categories between the rural and the urban, and thus physically and symbolically maintains a discriminatory mechanism that denies migrant workers urban citizenship of rightful residency, identity and multiple basic welfare rights. In asking question two, I shall examine and compare different categories of documental and media discourses to find out how controversial issues concerning *hukou* have been framed by different social actors-speakers.

The third question deals with how various speakers-actors have contested discursive boundaries of the second aspect of citizenship, viz. the concrete civic rights in terms of social and economic rights and cultural identity. Despite differences between theses dimensions, all of them are instrumental in both economic interest articulation and subject-making for migrant workers in the context of authoritarian marketization. To address these issues, I shall select some representative social events to analyze discourses that were generated during the period when they occurred.

As reviewed in the previous chapter, these issues have been investigated separately by media studies and migration research scholars through different

approaches. One of the problems with these studies is their mutual neglect of the usefulness of each others' perspectives. Media studies tend to be media-centric and ignore the larger theoretical vision of social structure and practice that contains media as largely a symbolic part of it (Hesmondhalgh & Toynbee, 2008), while migration scholars tend to take it for granted when they cite documental and media discourses without treating them as essentially outcomes of a complex and power-charged social process of symbolic production and discursive contention in a semi-public sphere of media and cultural space. As I shall discuss below, by adopting a mutually-constitutive analysis framework, I attempt to overcome these methodological shortcomings.

A Mutually-constitutive Framework

To formulate an operational framework, revision of existing approaches is needed. As mentioned before, when applying existing frameworks into the analysis of Chinese media and its discourse, problems caused by contextual disparities should be carefully considered. This requires critical adaptation of theories and approaches with different contextual origins. With contextual sensitivity in mind, I shall propose a multi-level analysis framework for the following research.

As I have made it clear at the beginning, this project basically focuses on media discourse *about* migrant workers, rather than cultural consumption and interpretation of media discourses. But this does not mean that it will be only limited to discourses. In order to understand discursive aspects of social practices, one needs to analyze institutions and even larger social contexts within which social actors-speakers produce them. With emphasis on media discourse, my research extends to contextual aspects of media institutions which define, if not thoroughly solidify, the structural boundaries of discourse production, and the more macro level of state-society configuration in which media production and discourse interact with other social systems. This leads to

a multi-level and mutually-constitutive analysis framework involving *discourse, institutions*, and *state-society relationship*, as demonstrated in figure 4.1. Some of these contextual aspects have been discussed previously in the background chapter, but they will continue to be vital and iterated in the following more concrete and micro analysis of media discourses in terms of how they are articulated in conjunction with their respective institutional, structural and macro cultural contexts.
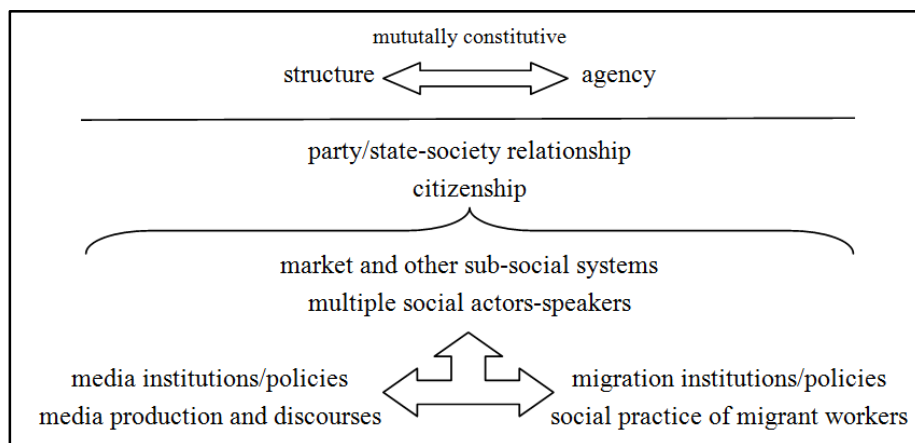

Figure 4.1 Analysis levels

In this framework, the first level of social structural elements, including state-society relationship and citizenship, defined by the particular nature of polity, serves as an overarching framework that contextualizes the other two levels of analysis, viz. examination of media and migration institutions, and case studies of media discourses about major migrant issues. Here the social process of public deliberation and contention on migrant issues through discursive means is viewed as institutionally conditioned but also, to a certain degree, dynamic and open to change. Both structural conditions of discourse production and social agency of actors in the space of institutional 'cracks' should be taken into account. For example, the publicness of media discourse depends on the Party/state's ideology and media institutions that set boundaries of public articulation. But also these boundaries are subject to various pressures from institutional conflicts due to dissonance within the systems, or various strategic

challenges, e.g. bringing critical 'hidden transcripts' into 'public discourse', from practitioners motivated by increasing impulse of journalistic professionalism. (X. Li, 2007; Pan, 2005b; Pan & Chan, 2000)

As illustrated, a *mutually-constitutive* approach to the dynamic and dialectical interaction between *structure* and *agency* is adopted throughout all the levels of analysis. It has long been a vexatious problem in social theories that the relationship between structure and agency is treated based on two divergent social ontologies. As Archer (2000, p. 1)argues, 'the "problem of structure and agency" was widely acknowledged to lie at the heart of social theorizing'. Rooted in this are two strong fallacious tendencies which

> can be epitomized as the 'science of society' versus the 'study of wo/man': if the former denies the significance of society's human constitution, the latter nullifies the importance of what is, has been, and will be constituted as society in the process of human interaction. The former is a denial that the real powers of human beings are indispensable to making society what it is. The latter withholds real powers from society by reducing its properties to the projects of its makers. Both thus endorse epiphenomenalism, by holding respectively that agency or structure are inert and dependent variables.(Archer, 1995, p. 2)

To overcome this dualistic antinomy, among others (e.g. Elias, 1978), sociologist Pierre Bourdieu proposes methodological relationalism. (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992) Dismissing both methodological individualism and holism/collectivism (Knorr-Cetina, 1981, pp. 7-15; Samuels, 1972, p. 249), Bourdieu highlights the '*primacy of relations*' and rejects the commonsense perception of viewing social reality essentially as things and states, rather than relations and processes. He argues this tendency is embedded in the very nature of our use of language, which 'favors substance at the expense of relations'.

(Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 15) Bourdieu theorizes structures and actions in the social world through his notions of differentiated *fields* ('a patterned system of objective forces' and 'a space of conflict and competition') in social space and *habitus* ('a structuring mechanism that operates from within agents' and 'the result of internalization of external structures') of agents, neither of which is totally composed of static structures or agency of social actors. Rather, as Wacquant summarizes,

> [B]oth concepts of habitus and field are relational in the additional sense that they function fully *only in relation to one another*. A field is not simply a dead structure, a set of 'empty places'... but a *space of play* which exists as such only to the extent that players enter into it who believe in and actively pursue the prizes if offers....Conversely, the theory of habitus is incomplete without a notion of structure that makes room for the organized improvisation of agents. (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 19)

Consequently, a more balanced approach to this issue leads to the idea that structure and agency are mutually constitutive. In the field of media and communication studies, this methodological problem has been notably embodied in the antagonistic rift between cultural-oriented and institutional-oriented studies, with their respective emphasis on the agency of users of popular media actively appropriating media content to the interest of themselves or the political economic structures of media systems restricting cultural practices. (e.g. Connell, 1980; Fiske, 1989; Fiske & Hartley, 1978;Golding & Murdock, 1979) Especially the post-structuralist turn in cultural studies denies even soft deterministic mechanism and thus has caused hostile opposition to economic political analysis. The latter insists that, despite the reductionist fallacy of mechanical economic determinism as criticized by advocates of cultural approach, at any rate a soft deterministic approach to media studies is necessary to critically understand power relationship in political

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economic process of cultural production. (Carey, 1995; N. Garnham, 1995a, 1995b; Grossberg, 1995; G. Murdock, 1995; Robins & Webster, 1987)Nevertheless, in accordance with attempts to reconcile the two methodological paths in social theories, some have called for espousing a mutually-constitutive approach to media studies, finding a 'balance, a dialectical middle ground' on which methodological integration of cultural studies and political economy of communication could be achieved. (Babe, 2009, p. 5; Mosco, 2004)

In terms of methodological concerns of this project, following a mutually-constitutive approach, I mean on the one hand, the problems of leaning towards the extreme of either agency or structure should be avoided by replacing a one-sided approach with a dynamic analysis of multi-ply interactions between structural elements and speaker-actors' social practice. This entails that, despite the discourse-oriented aims of this project, it should not be reduced to a pure textual analysis of media discourse. On the contrary, the political-economic institutional aspects of discourse production and discursive contention should be considered as both restrictive factors and a dynamic and flexible social space. Thus they not only circumscribe but also are subject to speaker-actors' interests, actions, negotiations, challenges, and compromises. Also a historical perspective should be taken to look at how the process of structure and agency mutually constituting each other has unfolded in social practice. This invites a combination of discourse-based cultural analysis and historical institutional approach, two major methodologies to be discussed in the following section of this chapter.

On the other hand, the media-centric studies should be supplemented by a macro perspective of social-oriented approach that views media as an integral part of the state-society configuration, rather than the presumed center of it. To understand media discourse, one needs to contextualize both the structures and practice of media-sphere in their larger social settings. Similarly, despite their

merits, studies about migration and citizenship conducted by sociologists and political scientists should take into account the constructivist role media and other semi-public discursive space play in consolidating, contesting, or even deconstructing migration and citizenship issues. Simply citing media texts as objective and unquestionable empirical evidences in analyzing social issues is problematic. These studies should not take it for granted that media texts are just neutral or natural reflection of a 'true' social reality and thus can be used as unquestioned empirical data. [31] Rather, they are essentially results of culturally-institutionally-embedded and ideologically-charged social construction of reality. To avoid these oversights, as shown in figure 4.1, a parallel and balanced approach to media and migration analysis is proposed to integrate their strengths and abstain from problems they may cause.

It is necessary to point out that the absence of a media-user-oriented study that could substantiate how media representations have played out among different actor-speakers is mainly a result of realistic consideration. As the main purpose of this study is to look at discursive constructions of citizenship in media texts, interpretations of these texts by different users in various social contexts are largely elided. Also given funding and time limit of the PhD project, it is beyond the scope of my capability of conducting a comprehensive study that includes production, textual and reception studies at the same time.

Methodologies and Analytical Methods

Based on the above discussion of research questions and framework, this section further explains major methodologies and analytical methods of the project. Following a mutually constitutive approach, to answer the above proposed

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[31] Lack of sensitivity of the constructivistic nature of media and other publicized texts at their disposal can be found in major social scientists' researches in the field of Chinese migration. For example, Solinger (1999) uses large numbers of news stories, feature articles, reviews, literary reports, and other media texts, as supporting materials of her argumentations, without critically considering the role of marketized yet still party-controlled media as one of the major agents of social practice in the process of contesting citizenship for migrant workers. Similar lack of sensitivity of the constructivistic nature of media and other publicized texts at their disposal.

research questions, I adopt a multi-level methodological framework. First, a constructivist approach of framing analysis is used as a general means to structure the discursive contesting processes about several sub-issues of migrant workers, running through all the cases studies in the following chapters. Second, a historical institutional approach serves as a contextualizing tool to locate all of these discursive struggles and deals with structural aspects of media production and its larger social settings of political and economic configurations by identifying the discursive opportunity structure of framing or public contention. Third, critical discourse analysis of media texts and policy documents will be used to examine the discursive structures and frames and the background information of selected cases concerning citizenship conditions of migrant workers, mainly dealing with ideological and textual mechanism of media discursive practices. These two aspects are the main analytical methods that I use to examine collected data of news texts and background information. And lastly, studies of emblematical cases of social issues or events will be used in analyzing public contention over multi-ply aspects of citizenship conditions of migrant workers.

With the institutional and discursive approaches mutually complementary to each other, I attempt to combine political economic analysis with cultural methods, hoping to overcome problems of one-sided analyzing. And in each case study, both institutional and discursive perspectives and relevant research methods will be used in framing analysis of case data. Concrete methods of data collection, analyzing and interpretation will be explained in detail later in this chapter.

Framing analysis

Literatures on concepts and theories of framing analysis as an approach to media news discourse have been discussed detailedly in the previous chapter. Here suffice it to further explain the specific methodological problems and

framework of analysis relevant to my research objectives in this project.

As noted above, framing analysis serves as an overall methodology running through all the case studies of discourse about migrant issues in the following chapters. Different from policy stances, frames are central ideas that organize and provide coherence to a set of ideas or arguments. Thus the aim of framing analysis is to identify these central ideas or frames in public contention about migrant issues through examination of public discourse. Despite the fact that a frame is usually used in a predominant direction, frames are inclusive enough to accommodate pro, anti or neutral policy positions. The main concern is with how various arguments about migrant issues are discursively organized around several specific central ideas or frames that are persistent but also could evolve over time, and how these frames have been distributed among sponsors of different policy stances. (Ferree, et al., 2002, pp. 105-106)

However, despite its micro discourse and social psychological orientation, framing analysis should not be only limited to discourse levels. Analysis of institutional aspects is needed to support a concrete examination of discursive practices of framing issues in public contention. As clearly demonstrated in Ferree et al.'s (2002) study of abortion discourse in Germany and the United States, analysis of cultural and institutional differences are functionally fundamental to comparing and understanding different tactics of framing and their respective characteristics of democratic public contention in the two countries. Without the former, the latter could just be unaccountable. Though this does not mean there is a fixed deterministic relationship between structural elements and actors' discursive actions, it is consistent with what I have discussed above about the mutually constitutive approach and the consequent necessity of combing institutional and cultural approaches together to balance the macro and the micro, the structural and the agent.

Specifically, my objectives here are much more focused on production and

textual construction. From this perspective, framing is regarded as a process of 'struggle over meaning that is ultimately expressed through texts'(Gamson, 2001, p. ix) and the problems of power and distribution of symbolic resources among actors-speakers in public discursive space are fundamental issues.

However, in analyzing framing through media discourses by pluralistic social speaker-actors, because of difference of media and socio-political institutions, the forum model of media and framing (see chapter 3) is problematic in the case of China, where the newly emergent civil society, including a severely circumscribed media and semi-public sphere, has not fully developed into being relatively independent from state power's control on an institutionalized basis. As I have reviewed previously in chapter 2, the society-in-state configuration of the Chinese state-society relationship essentially limits the degree of civic autonomy. Despite increasingly active civic contention and challenges, the framing process of a particular social issue, especially that of extreme political sensitivity, is largely under close supervision of the Party's ideological and propaganda systems. A forum model as seen in western cases is of very low applicability, if not totally irrelevant, in the Chinese context,

Therefore, a typical framing analysis of media discourse in the Chinese context needs some revision of the original framework. Different from the case of Western democratic contention as demonstrated in the forum/stadium model in Chapter 3, in the Chinese case, the emphasis needs to be transferred from competitive and contentious, though unequal and imbalanced, framing in a constitutional democratic pluralistic state-society configuration, as seen in most Western cases, to framing process dominated by the powerful party-state and pro-or-counter-process in which other actors of different economic and social fields participating in contesting ideological and policy boundaries in a moderately pluralistic 'society-in-state'(Mertha, 2010) configuration.

Whereas the examination of strategies and frames that sponsors of different

social interest groups use to promote their ideas and benefits remain relevant, attention should also be paid to how the party-controlled media sector, under pressures of surviving market competition and striving for public credibility, extends relatively liberal information and open new spaces for alternative expressions, and how mediated public discourses resort to people's emotions or cultural schemata that could motivate their support for a certain statement about an issue, policy, event, or movement, thus pushing the boundaries of Party-state dominated discourses. (Zhao, 2007) The main concern here is thus with discursive embodiment of the Party-state's doctrines and legitimization of its new authoritarian discourses on the one hand, and public discursive struggles that, resorting to various resources that are available within a specific discursive opportunity structure, including explicit and implicit historical institutional and cultural factors, contest boundaries of ideology and policies, on the other.

With contextual sensitivity in mind, I shall now identify the major speaker-actors involved in framing domestic migrant issues, and the major constituencies or interest groups in the Chinese Party-state-society configuration that these speakers represent. The categorization remains relevant throughout case studies of framing process that follow. By and large, based on their different interests orientations, I categorize these major actors-speakers into three groups, representing respectively the Party-state, the society, and the market, as shown in the following table 4.1:

Constituencies	The Party-state	The Society	The Market
	Party-state-oriented…News media…*Market oriented*		
Major Actors-speakers	Representatives of party ideological lines	Independent researchers and scholars in the field of migration	Local companies in labor-intensive manufacturing of construction industries
	Departments of central government	Activists of civil rights	
	Party controlled mass organization (e.g. Official labor union)	Officially monitored NGOs and international NGOs or governmental organizations	Interest groups of international capital and foreign investment
	Local governments of areas of migrant origins	Urban residents	Agents of urban tertiary industries
	Local governments of areas of migrant destination	Opinion leaders of migrant workers	Other actors of small urban business involving migrant laborers
	Pro-party-state specialists and intellectuals	Ordinary migrant workers themselves	

Table 4.1 major actor-speakers and constituencies in framing migrant issues

It has to be noted that, though the party-state is juxtaposed with the society and the market, it does not mean that they are equally posited. The juxtaposition here is just for the sake of analytical convenience. As we have seen in the detailed discussion in Chapter 2, despite furious marketization and relative retreat of state power in the past decades, the Chinese authoritarian party-state still dominates the Chinese society and also its largely marketized economy. All the three aspects thus should not be taken equal, balanced, and parallel to each other. While the party-state dominates comprehensively, it is also subject to both its inner departmental fissure or interest conflicts and exterior pressure from the society and the market. Thus the relationship between the three is structurally authoritarian but also full of possible space of compromises. Consequently, actors-speakers representing all the three kinds of constituency could take account into each other's concerns in order to fulfill their own interest articulation.

Among these actors-speakers, news media, embedded in a propaganda-market driven media system (see chapter 2), are both mediators of other speakers' voices and actor-speakers themselves, promoting or muting specific interest articulations. Generally, despite all media are under various forms of party

control and required to be politically loyal to the party-state's cardinal principles, the current media agencies in China can be divided into party-oriented and market oriented categories. In terms of newspapers[32], the former mainly includes all the party organs under direct control of party committees, such as *Renmin Ribao* (*People's Daily*), the mouthpiece of the CCP central committee, and all its equivalents of local party committees at various administrative levels. The latter comprises all the affiliated commercial newspapers established to cater for needs of a culturally increasingly diverse and fastidious audience. The former is called 'Party Paper' (*Dangbao*) while the latter 'Metropolitan Paper' (*Dushibao*). Despite their functional and managerial differences, all the metropolitan papers are institutionally affiliated with corresponding 'parent' party organs, politically supervised by the latter. For example, the well-known prestigious pro-reform commercial newspaper *Southern Weekly* (*Nanfang Zhoumo*) is a subsidiary of *Southern Daily* (*Nanfang Ribao*), the mouthpiece organ of Guangdong Provincial Party Committee. Thus, in accordance with a moderately pluralistic 'society-in-state'(Mertha, 2010) configuration, all media in China institutionally remain party organs, even though their practical operation and social stands may vary dramatically.

The process of issues framing is a process of public contention full of power struggles concerning having one's voice publicly heard and one's way of framing promoted. Thus a framing analysis involves two parts: the contextual analysis of power configuration that limits the *discursive opportunity structure* of framing or public contention (Ferree et al., 2002, see chapter 3), and the examination of the concrete *frame devices* applied in the construction of reality of a specific event or policy issue. The first part is basically a historical institutional analysis of structural and cultural settings of framing and public

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[32] As for broadcasting and news agencies, the China Central Television (CCTV) and official Xinhuan News Agency are the top level party-state mouthpieces. Different from the 'mother-child' relationship between party organs and their affiliated commercial papers, the broadcasting system takes a form of functional division between channels. While the first channels of all television or radio stations remain mouthpieces of the party-state at various levels, other channels cater for diverse market needs for information and entertainment.

contention, aiming to examine the cultural repertoire of frames available for current use and the specific ways in which frames as cultural resources are unequally distributed among social groups and individuals.

The second involves micro and detailed analysis of components of frames represented in media texts. In terms of this, I shall follow van Gorp's (2005, 2007) constructionist approach to issue framing. As reviewed in chapter 3, the approach views available stock of frames and framing process as abstract and implicit cultural phenomenon which are can be examined through reconstructing and analyzing 'frame package', the physical representation of a culturally persistent frame, or 'a cluster of logical organized devices that function as an identity kit for a frame'. A frame package includes three parts: 'the manifest framing devices, the manifest or latent reasoning devices, and an implicit cultural phenomenon that displays the package as a whole'. (van Gorp, 2007, p.64)

Therefore, the analysis of frame packages should include semiotic examination of discursive devices, critical logical analysis of causal rationale, and cultural theme analysis. To investigate more deeply the following questions need consideration: Who is speaking and who is silenced? (Distribution of *standing* among various constituencies, see discussion in chapter 2) What identities are constructed for US and the *Other*? In constructing these identities, what devices (words, metaphors, titles, figures, images, etc.) are used? Who is responsible for the issue in question and thus should be blamed for it? Who is the troubleshooter and thus should be glorified? What are the potentially plausible resolutions? To justify the rationale of reasoning, what narrative or rhetorical tactics and devices are used? And finally, what deeply rooted cultural conceptions or believes are explicitly or implicitly alluded to? These questions in fact involve not only textual mechanisms but also interaction between textual level and contextual level, as seen in discursive practices of (de)contextualization and entextualization. (See the following discussion of

critical discourse analysis)

The two levels of analysis are summarized in table 4.2. It needs to be bear in mind that the two aspects are not totally separated from each other. Rather, as we shall see in the discussion of the methodology of critical discourse analysis, contextual and textual analyses are in fact interwoven and mutually-constitutive. As van Dijk (1997, p. 15)argues, 'Discourses are a structural part of their contexts and their respective structures mutually and continually influence each other'. Next I shall discuss the two methodologies utilized for analyzing the two facets.

Levels	Issues
Historical institutional analysis (context)	Discursive opportunity structure: socio-economic and political settings, cultural tradition, ideological background, etc.
Discourse analysis of frame packages (text and context)	Rhetorical and narrative devices Distribution of *standing* among various constituencies We vs. the Other, identity construction Causal rationale, reasoning devices Embedded cultural themes (de)contextualization, entextualization.

Table 4.2 Levels of framing analysis

Historical institutional analysis

While framing serves as an approach to public discourse on migrant issues, historical institutional analysis is adopted to examine contextual and structural elements in which the discursive practice of social actors is embedded. For this research project, institutionalism approach provides a way of integrating idiographic analysis of discourses and framing processes in specific social events into the macro institutional contexts. As demonstrated above, this constitutes the analysis of discursive opportunity structure that contextualizes framing process.

As an approach to real-world empirical questions about institutional consequences for outcomes, historical institutional analysis, through comparing

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real-world cases rather than variables, examines the ways in which institutions structure and shape behavior and outcomes. (Steinmo, 2008, p. 123) Institutions are relatively enduring collections of formal or informal rules and norms that shape who participates and how they strategically participate in a given process of social practice. They are 'embedded in structures of meaning and resources that are relatively invariant in the face of turnover of individuals and relatively resilient to the idiosyncratic preferences and expectations of individuals and changing external circumstances'.(March & Olsen, 2006, p. 3)Institutions not only limit the actors who are included in a specific social space, but also ultimately structure the menu of choices available to them. (e.g. Immergut, 1992, cited in Steinmo, 2008, p.124)

At least three types of institutional analysis can be identified: rational choice approach sees humans as strategic rational actors, and institutions are important because they frame the individual's strategic behavior; sociological institutionalists see human beings as fundamentally social beings, who tend to follow a 'logic of appropriateness', and institutions serve as cultural norms governing daily social interactions; historical institutionalism takes the both views into its own, thus contending that outcomes of social practice are likely 'a product of both rule following and interest maximizing'. (Steinmo, 2008, pp. 125-126) Historical institutionalism takes history seriously as it maintains that social events and actors' actions take place within a historical context, a specific temporal-spatial configuration of social structures and ideas, which shapes people's experiences and expectations. (ibid., p.127-129)

The institutional approach has been criticized for its lack in explaining change of institutions. Institutions are viewed as 'the legacy of path dependencies'. (March & Olsen, 2006, p. 12) Reasons for difficulty of institutional change may include resistance from the institutionally privileged, the unwillingness to change expectations, and also the tendency of institutions being locked due to continuous investment. They are thus reluctant to change unless there is an

irresistible external shock that would enforce adaptation or transformation at the time of 'punctuated equilibrium'. (Steinmo, 2008, p.129) However, this assumption overestimates structural persistence and underestimates internal and external dynamics of institutions. To address theoretical flaws, scholars have maintained that, in addition to external shocks, ideal pressure is also one of the key factors that motivate potential institutional changes. (e.g. Broderick, 1970; Campbell, 2002;Hall, 1989) Traditionally, interests, not ideas, were thought as the driving forces in social changes. But now embedded ideas are deemed to have framing effects and consequently become basic templates on which other social decision-making processes rely. (Steinmo, 2008, p.130) Thus from a constructivist perspective (P. L. Berger & Luckmann, 1967), the disparity or inconsistency between institutional practices and the beliefs or interpretations of realities on which the institution is based, and the consequent idealistic pressures to reconstruct coherence, could be a source of change. In addition, changes of resources allocation may also lead to 'switches between institutional repertoires'. (March & Olsen, 2006, p. 12)

In this study, the institutional perspective is adopted as a methodological framework for the analysis of discursive opportunity structure of public framing of migrant citizenship. This includes not only structural scrutiny of formal institutions that regulate media operation, public contention, and migration policies, but also examination of accretion of historical and cultural perceptions that have been   internalized and naturalized as common sense over time. These formal and informal historical institutional factors determine the boundaries of appropriate social actions, including public contention, and the specific repertoire of frames that is available for social actors-speakers. This includes a general structural level of factors that affects all the different forms of social practice, and also particular levels that are functional in specific fields of social practice.

Thus, in terms of migration, the public contention over controversial issues

aroused by particular eye-catching events or prominent social phenomena, is governed at the same time by both the historically embedded macro institutional configurations and general cultural conditions of the current Chinese party-state and society, and the specific sub-institutional and cultural conditions concerning media practice, public expression, social identities of peasants and working class, legacies of revolutionary class ideology, cultural perceptions about family, gender, migration and hometown bond, and so on. Some of these factors have been detailedly reviewed in chapter 2. In the following chapters of concrete investigation of public discursive contestation, they will be referred to once again in identifying the discursive opportunity structure for the framing of migrant worker issues, together with analyses of historical, cultural and ideological aspects relevant to the topics in question.

Critical analysis of news discourse in the press

In terms of the second level of framing analysis, viz. discursive devices, reasoning rationale, and cultural themes of frame packages, and strategic contention in issue framing, I shall formulate an analytical framework based on theories and methodologies of critical discourse analysis (CDA)[33]developed by particularly Fairclough(1989, 1992, 1995a, 1995b, 1998, 2003)and van Dijk(1988a, 1988b, 1991, 1992, 1997, 1998a, 1998b, 2008), among others.

It needs to be clearly pointed out that although I shall provide some quantitative description of the news coverage of migrant worker issues in some parts of chapters that follow, critical discourse analysis, as the major methodology that I use to analyze media texts, 'goes beyond traditional content analyses by its systematic account of various structures of news reports in the Press'.(van Dijk, 1991, p.5) It aims to examine, in media discourse, what discursive structures and strategies are brought to bear by various actors-speakers representing the state-party, the society and the market, including media practitioners themselves,

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[33] For a brief description of CDA and its difference from other threads in linguistic studies, see Wodak, 2001.

as categorized above, to discursively reproduce or challenge the dominant ideological framework that legitimates the citizenship conditions of underprivileged migrant workers.

In CDA, 'linguistic-discursive textual structures are attributed a crucial function in the social production of inequality, power, ideology, authority, or manipulation'. (Blommaert, 2005, p.29) As discussed in chapter 3, the mutually-constitutive relationship between ideology and power relations is closely linked to languages and discursive practices, as power in modern society, despite its enduring modality of physical force or coercion, is increasingly actualized through consent manufactured by ideological operation of symbolic means and control over access to these means. (Fairclough, 1989, pp. 3-4; Herman & Chomsky, 2002) Therefore, CDA is closely relevant to analysis of power, hegemonic domination and ideology. (e.g. Eagleton, 1991; Fairclough, 1992; Thompson, 1984; van Dijk, 1998a,1998b) Congruent with its politically critical stance, CDA takes a particular interest in ideological reproduction of power, domination and social inequality. (Blommaert, 2005, pp. 1-2; Wodak, 2001, pp. 1-2) The primary aim of such an analysis thus is to unveil 'opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language'. (Wodak, 1995, p. 204)

Discourse in CDA is regarded not simply as texts or the products of lingual practices, but language as a form of social practice that involves not only text, but also interaction and context, viz. social conditions or contexts that determine and are in turn socially constructed by discursive practices. (Fairclough, 1989, pp. 22-25) In van Dijk's (1991, p.45) words, CDA aims to

> show how the cognitive, social, historical, cultural, or political
> contexts of language use and communication impinge on the contents,
> meanings, structures, or strategies of text or dialogue, and vice versa,
> how discourse itself is an integral part of and contributes to the

structures of these contexts.

Influenced by Foucault's theory of power and discourse[34], Fairclough (1992, chapter 3) constructs a social theory of discourse and provides a three-dimensional conception of discourse, as represented in Figure 4.2:discourse-as-text ('the linguistic features and organization of concrete instances of discourse'); discourse-as-discursive-practice ('discourse as something produced, circulated, distributed, and consumed in society');and discourse-as-social-practice ('the ideological effects and hegemonic processes in which discourse is seen to operate').(Blommaert, 2005, p. 29) Accordingly, CDA includes a three-step progression from description (formal properties of texts), to interpretation (interaction between the process of text production and the process of interpretation), and to explanation (social conditions of interaction and its relationship with social contexts). (Fairclough, 1989, p. 26) He then develops specific frameworks for operationalizing these aspects. For example, as for description, Fairclough argues that three levels of formal features of vocabulary, grammar and textual structures should be taken into consideration: the experiential relevant to knowledge and beliefs, the relational relevant to social relations, and the expressive relevant to subjects or social identities.(Fairclough, 1989, pp. 110-112)
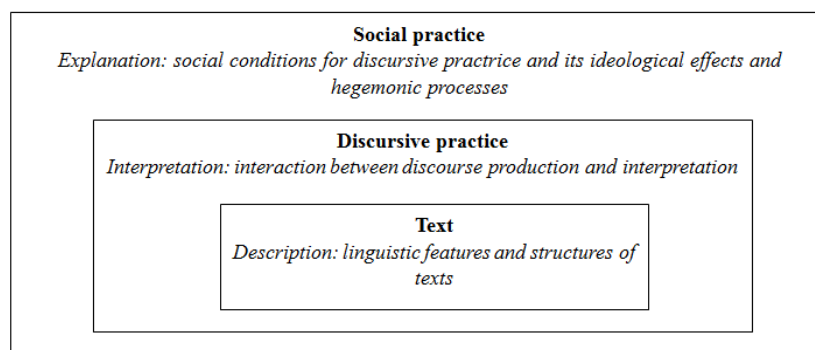
Social practice
Explanation: social conditions for discursive practrice and its ideological effects and hegemonic processes

Discursive practice
Interpretation: interaction between discourse production and interpretation

Text
Description: linguistic features and structures of texts

Figure 4.2 Fairclough's approach to CDA

[34] See Fairclough (1992), chapter 2, 'Michel Foucault and the Analysis of Discourse'. In this chapter, Fairclough summarizes some key ideas about discourse in Foucault's works, including: the constitutive nature of discourse, the primacy of interdiscursivity and intertextuality, the discursive nature of power, the political nature of discourse, and the discursive nature of social change. (pp.55-56)

As mentioned earlier, media as 'gate-keepers in the regimentation of 'expert systems''(Giddens, 1991, cited in Milani & Johnson, 2010, p. 5)in modern society, play a pivotal role in discursive practices. Media discourse, especially news, is thus of great importance in critical discourse analysis. On the basis of general theories and methods of discourse analysis, many (e.g. Allan, 1998; A. Bell, 1991, 1998; Fairclough, 1995b, 1998; Garrett & Bell, 1998; Matheson, 2005; Montgomery, 2007; O'Keeffe, 2006; Richardson, 2007; Talbot, 2007; van Dijk, 1988a, 1988b, 1991, 1998b) have developed their respective approaches to various aspects of media discourse, from conversational interactions in broadcasting media to visual layout of images and texts in the press. Among them, van Dijk(1988a, 1988b, 1991, 1998b) in his studies on news discourse proposes a theoretical framework for analyzing structures of news as a form of discourse, as well as its contexts, viz. 'the cognitive processes of production and reception' and 'the sociocultural dimensions of language use and communication'. (van Dijk, 1988b, p. 2) He then applies this framework to studies on discursive reproduction of the ideology of racism in newspaper discourse, where he highlights concerns with 'the major levels of news discourse structure, such as topics, overall schematic forms, local meanings, style and rhetoric, as well as their relations with cognitive processes of production and understanding, and their socio-cultural and political contexts'. (van Dijk, 1991, p. x)

Based on the above mentioned approaches and the previous section about contextual analysis of institutions, as well as theories and methodologies proposed by other authors (e.g. Blommaert, 2005; Fairclough, 2003; J. Gumperz, 1982; J. Gumperz, 1992; Hymes, 1996; Silverstein & Urban, 1996; van Dijk, 1997, 1998b; Zinken & Musolff, 2009), I shall now formulate a synthesized methodological framework for analyzing news discourse concerning migrant issues in the Chinese press, as visualized in figure 4.3. Here my development of such a framework is unavoidably highly selective as many important aspects or

concepts have to be neglected in order to reach a certain degree of methodological conciseness. Elements of this framework will be explained below.
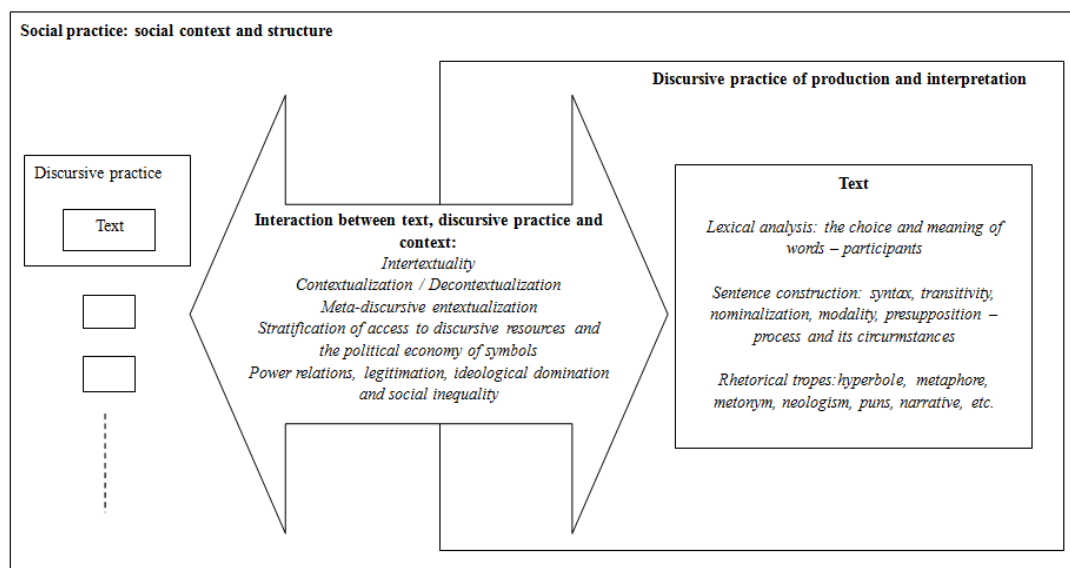

Figure 4.3 A synthesized framework of CDA in this project

Apparently, this framework draws on the general structure of Fairclough's approach. But it also integrates some other concepts and analytical tools from other authors. Firstly, in terms of textual analysis, I shall follow Richardson's (2007, chapter 3) model which comprises three levels of analysis: lexicon, sentence, and rhetoric. And then I mainly focus on mechanism of interaction between text, discursive practice and social practice embedded in context and structure, leading to a critical analysis of ideological effects of discourse.

Textual analysis

As shown in the framework, text analysis is composed of three aspects. The first one is *lexical* analysis which is concerned with the choice of particular words in a sentence and the process of *naming* speakers-actors involved by choosing these words. In other words, it deals with the representation or identification of individual or collective social actors involved in the process in question. In media discourse, people in a particular event have to be given names chosen by

media producers from a range of identities or labels available for use. This naming process of including people within one category and therefore excluding them from other alternative categories, or what Reisigl and Wodak (2001, cited in Richardson, 2007, p.49) have called 'referential strategies', may exert profound psychological, political, ideological and cultural impact on the ways in which they are socially identified, and consequently on the ways in which they are symbolically empowered or deprived.

In this case, people in an event could be individualized to highlight the quality of ordinariness, or collectivized to represent part or the whole of the public. Also, it is very frequent that actors are positively or otherwise negatively defined through construction of the contrast between good 'us' and bad 'them', or the alien 'Other'. This is what van Dijk (1998a, p. 33) has called 'strategy of polarization', viz. 'positive ingroup description, and negative outgroup description'. With regard to this project, I have preliminarily identified the categories of major speaker-actors involved in framing public issues about migrant workers. Through lexical analysis of sampled media texts generated surrounding pivotal policies or events, these actors-speakers and the specific ways of naming them by different categories of media agencies will be detailedly discerned and compared in each case study.

The second aspect of textual analysis is to handle with syntax or sentence construction which is related to representation of *process* and its circumstances, or in other words, questions about *actions*, *arguments* and *judgments* taken by the above named speakers-actors, and *presuppositions* marked through words and sentence structures. Three issues are relevant here: representation of the action, and construction of arguments and presupposed or hidden meanings.

The first issue is conceptualized as the problem of *transitivity* which describes syntactic transformation between active and passive roles designated for participants in the process of action represented in a text. As Mills (1995, pp.

143-144, cited in Richardson, 2007, p. 54) argues, transitivity is concerned with 'what kind of actions appear in a text, who does them and to whom they are done'. Transforming a transitive action in a sentence from active to passive voice results in absence of the agent of the action. Similarly, through what Fairclough (2003, p.12) calls '*nominalization*', actions are reconstructed as entities or state of affairs, rather than dynamic actions full of power struggles driven by specific forces of agents. Consequently, the problem of agents in power being responsible for negative impacts of social changes is discursively eluded, and thus the historically-ideologically-power-charged social process is textually naturalized.

The second issue is about *modality* and *presupposition*, both of which are related to opinions, arguments, or hidden meanings in a text. Modality refers to judgment and attitude of the text's writer or speaker, manifested in modal expressions (words or phrases expressing possibility or obligation regarding a specific event, such as *can, could, will, may, must, should, ought to*, and so on) that are relatively more related to 'opinionated' genres of journalism such as the editorials. (Richardson, 2007, pp. 59-60)   Presuppositions are hidden meanings that are expressed as taken for granted through different linguistic structures, such as use of certain words and wh-questions. (ibid., pp. 63-64)

The third aspect of textual analysis is about *rhetorical strategies* employed in news discourse to denote or connote opinions or implicitly emphasize specific meanings. These opinions or meanings are 'embedded in argumentation that makes them more or less defensible, reasonable, justifiable or legitimate as conclusions'. (van Dijk, 1996, p.24, cited in Richardson, 2007, p.65) Among hundreds of others, rhetorical strategies that are most commonly seen in news discourse include: hyperbole (excessive exaggeration); metaphor ('perceiving one thing in terms of another') ; metonym ('a form of substitution in which

something that is associated with X is substituted for X')[35]; neologism ('a recently created (or coined) word, or an existing word or phrase that has been assigned a new meaning'); puns (word-play that exploits different meanings of a word or words with similar pronunciation); narrative ('the contents of news stories and the ways that such stories are presented'). (ibid., pp. 65-74)

Altogether, the above discussed three aspects constitute a full framework of textual analysis that develops from micro to macro level scrutiny of textual forms, meanings and functions. When practically applied to analyze text *as a whole*, they need to be integrated to achieve macro understanding of news texts as discursive sediments contextualized in media institutions and social structures. In terms of news discourse, these methods of analysis are applicable to various aspects of news stories in the press, including headlines, leads, body text. It needs to be pointed out that these methods mainly focus on word text and therefore are not sufficient for analysis of images and page layout in news discourse. In that case, they will be supplemented by approaches suggested by others. For example, Kress and van Leeuwen(1998) offer a critical approach to semiotic modes of newspaper layout and its functions of structuring text, coherence, salience and framing. A much more systematic methodology for examining visual discourse forms proposed by the same authors will also be referred to when necessary. (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006[1996])

Interaction between text, discursive practice and social context

Despite its importance in analysis of news discourse, textual analysis is limited if we aim to understand ideological mechanism of texts and discursive practice. It needs to be framed within 'organizational analysis, and link the 'micro' analysis of texts to the 'macro' analysis of how power relations work across networks of practices and structures'. (Fairclough, 2003, pp.15-6)   Here my

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[35] As Richardson (2007, pp. 67-68) differentiates, the difference between metaphor and metonym is that 'metaphors operate through transference of similar characteristics while metonymy operates through more direct forms of association'.

concern is with how textual and discursive mechanisms interact with macro social contexts including ideology and social structure.

As illustrated in figure 4.3, analysis of this question is embarked on through using several analytical conceptual tools that are fundamentally crucial for actualization of ideological effects of textual forms which are essentially beyond the scope of a single text. First of all, the mechanism of *intertextuality* or what Fairclough (1992) calls 'interdiscursivity', bridges different forms or genres of texts that are embedded in heterogeneous discursive practices and social contexts within separates patio-temporal configurations. As Blommaert(2005, pp. 46-47) writes, intertextuality highlights 'the fact that whenever we speak we produce the words of others, we constantly cite and recite expressions, and recycle meanings that are already available'. This means 'every utterance has a history of (ab)use, interpretation, and evaluation', which 'invites us to look beyond the boundaries of particular communicative events and see where the expressions used there actually come from, what their sources are, whom they speak for, and how they relate to traditions of use'. In news discourse, the issue of intertextuality or interdiscursivity is embodied in the problems of source and quotation. In other words, this asks the question of *standing* (see discussion about the concept in chapter 3), that is, whose stances or interpretations regarding an event are directly and clearly quoted with the status of a regular news source, and consequently whose voices are less directly mentioned or even totally silenced. The problem of salience and marginalization of a specific speaker-actor's voice in media discourse thus is examined partly through analysis of intertextual or interdiscursive quotation.

Closely related to intertexuality are two discursive mechanisms operating between the levels of a text and its context, that is, the ways in which texts are integrated into and thus have real influences on larger social practices: *(de)contextualization* and *entextualization*. Contextualization (J. Gumperz, 1992) is composed of speaker-actors' activities 'which make relevant, maintain,

revise, cancel…any aspect of context which, in turn, is responsible for the interpretation of an utterance in its particular locus of occurrence'. (Auer 1992,p. 4, cited in Blommaert, 2005, p. 41) In these activities, indexical meanings are made through 'connections between language form and social and cultural patterns'. (ibid.) It is a process in which texts are indexically produced or interpreted to fit a particular context in which discursive practices are taking place. Therefore contextualization involves dialogical interaction between participants of a communication process, even though this does not guarantee co-operativity, sharedness, and 'symmetry in contextualizing power' among them. (ibid., p.43)

Comparatively, the concept of entextualization(Silverstein & Urban, 1996) involves the process of transplanting a text from its original context to a new one and thus creating a new sort of discourse. As Blommaert (2005) explains, through entextualization,

> discourses are successively or simultaneously decontextualised and metadiscursively recontextualised so that they become a new discourse associated to a new context and accompanied by a particular metadiscourse which provides a sort of 'preferred reading' for the discourse. This new discourse has become a 'text': discourse lifted out of its interactional setting and transmitted together with a new context.

The concepts of contextualization and entextualization thus deepen and supplement the analysis of intertextuality by expanding the scope of inquiry from interaction between texts to that between textual and contextual or metadiscursive levels. It is through examining discursive activities concerning contextualization and entextualization that we come to the problems of accessibility, inequality, legitimation, power relations and ideological domination, on the basis of political economy of symbolic resources that is

dialectically and mutually constitutive with dominant social structure. As power domination in modern societies increasingly depends on *exclusivity* or monopolization of access to specific contextualizing spaces(Barthes, 1972[1957]; Blommaert, 2005, p. 45; Bourdieu, 1989, 1991), stratified distribution of textual and contextual resource among different social actors, or hierarchy of the capacity of *access* to and control over text and context as symbolic resource, becomes one of the fundamental mechanisms in reproducing social inequality. As Thompson (1990, p. 59) writes, the

> social location of individuals and the entitlements associated with their positions in a social field or institution, endow them with varying degrees of 'power', understood at this level as a socially or institutionally endowed capacity which enables or empowers some individuals to make decisions, pursue ends or realize interests. We can speak of 'domination', that is when particular agents or groups of agents are endowed with power in a durable way which excludes, and to some significant degree remains inaccessible to other agents or groups of agents, irrespective of the basis upon which such exclusion is carried out.

Therefore, a study on textual and discursive forms 'becomes an investigation into the systems and patterns of allocation of power symbols and instruments, and thus an investigation into basic patterns of privilege and disenfranchisement in societies' (Blommaert, 2005, p. 61), which is thus essentially indispensable for a critical inquiry into social construction of citizenship rights of such marginalized groups like the Chinese domestic migrant workers.

It is at this point where issues of ideology and hegemony come to be integrated into a critical examination of news discourse without losing sensibility of a political economic perspective of media and cultural production and interpretation. With regard to the study on news discourse about Chinese

migrant worker issues, this level of analysis will look at various problems related to legitimation and public contestation. Among these, for example, it will be asked how the contradictory sharp contrast between the disturbing daily reality of severely deprived and marginalized migrant workers, and the alleged 'supremacy' of peasant and working classes in the Party-state's political ideological doctrines, have been discursively conciliated to legitimize and accommodate the Party-state's new authoritarian developmentalist strategies through such textual and contextual mechanisms as intertextuality, contextualization and entextualization in public discourse. It will also be asked to what degree this process of legitimation has been successful or otherwise has been challenged or even frustrated by counter-discursive practices in the process of contesting the state's (re)definition of citizenship.

Case studies and process tracing

In the last part of this section of methodological discussion, I shall briefly explain the method of case studies and the justification of using it in this study.

Based on in-depth empirical observations of one or a certain number of social phenomena or events, a case study is a research strategy to describe and explain features of a large class of similar phenomena, by developing and evaluating theoretical explanations. (Ragin, 2000, pp. 64-87, cited in Vennesson, 2008) As a ubiquitous research design strategy, case studies have been widely used in various research projects with differentiated epistemological perspectives. A case study could be descriptive, interpretive, hypothesis-generating, or theory-evaluating. It could also be used in a either positivist or constructivist research design, or even serve as a bridging point combing both of them.

The fundamental element of a case study is the *process tracing* of the development of a specific event or phenomenon, based on interviews, participant observation, document analysis, and other necessary means, with the aims of understanding the meaning and role of established regularities, the

causal or constitutive relations between multiple variables, uncovering the very delicate meanings that actors construct in their actions and interactions. Process tracing does not involve all the aspects of a phenomenon. Rather, it is structured, and only focuses on dealing with selectively chosen facets of social events. (Vennesson, 2008)

Case studies are used in this project to focus on process tracing of several landmark social issues and events about migrant workers in recent years. For the purposes of this research project, the method of case studies is a necessary and important research strategy because in the fast transforming Chinese society, emblematic social events can provide useful opportunities for scholars to observe and understand social interactions, power and interest struggles, constitutive relations between structural and agent factors, at crucial historical moments, which would otherwise immerge under daily triviality and banality. It is in these crucial social events, subjects of case studies, that fierce contentious struggles gain momentum and public concerns, and thus major policy adaptation or even transformation becomes possible. Usually a large amount of public discourse, especially that of news media, are produced during the period of the event. Case studies of these events thus are useful due to their methodological advantages and empirical significance in understanding contentious moments of social change. Several pivotal cases concerning Chinese migrant workers will be selected and analyzed in the following chapters. And the principles and methods of selection will be succinctly discussed in the last section of this chapter.

Methods of Data Collection

After presenting a full discussion of methodology and methods of analysis above, I shall spend the last section of this chapter explaining the ways in which I collected my research data, including the methods of sampling cases, newspapers and specific articles, and the means by which I gather other archival

and background data.

It is necessary to point out that the choice of newspaper as the major data source is dependent on many realistic considerations. I am clearly aware of the risk of bias of only focusing on printed media while neglecting other forms of representation, such as audio and visual texts in cinema, television and radio. Different forms of media representation have different effects on production of media content and its effectiveness in different social contexts. But due to funding and data accessibility limitations, I have to make a decision about which part of the gigantic body of media discourses I should concentrate on. Compared with television and radio, online newspapers are easily accessible and inexpensive.

Sampling of cases, newspapers and articles

Sampling, a process of defining scope of inquiry, is always indispensable in either qualitative or quantitative studies as the universe of available data in social world is usually too large to be included and examined as a whole in a single research project. (Burgess, 1982, 1984; M. Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995) In terms of news discourse, the tremendous volumes of printed or audio-visual texts generated from daily media practice could be overwhelming and unrealistic for researchers to grasp if no sampling is taken. For this project, despite its case-oriented quality, there is no exception. A 'sampling rationale for the case or cases selected for analysis' needs to be clearly defined.(Vanderstoep & Johnston, 2009, p. 210) Also both the high degree of complexity and multifacetedness of migrant issues in the Chinese society and the huge amount of news output in the Chinese media sphere determine a carefully designed sampling plan is a precondition for projects like this one to be methodologically operationalized.

Largely, this project is a qualitative study on public contention over migrant workers' citizenship condition through media discourse. Therefore, the selection

of cases, newspapers, and news articles are mainly based on non-probability sampling, or specifically, purposive or judgment sampling. Different from statistically representative or probability sampling (Ritchie, Lewis, & am, 2003; Robson, 2002), purposive samples are deliberately selected on the basis of their particular characteristics or features. (Burgess, 1984; M. Hammersley, 1992; Mason, 2002; Ritchie, et al., 2003) Concretely, this project involves sampling of three kinds of unites: newspapers, cases, and articles.

Sampling of newspapers

As discussed previously, the Chinese newspapers in the reform period can be categorized into two groups according to their content and organizational differences: the propaganda-driven Party-state organs and their offsprings, the urban market-oriented 'metropolitan newspapers', or state-run tabloid newspapers. (C. Huang, 2001) The two, despite their institutional correlation and both *in principle* remaining the authoritative voice of the authority, have been functionally differentiated and thus subject to different mechanisms of operation and regulation under conditions of party-state control and market competition. While the former is required to strictly remain the microphone of the party-state's voice at various administrative levels, the latter is allowed to be commercialized to incorporate more diverse ideas and forms of information or entertainment, catering for market and public needs. Therefore, even though institutionally all newspapers remain state-owned and thus subject to the Party-state's propaganda regulations, the internal differentiation in the press has brought about divergence in modes of news discourse and discursive practices between these two groups of agencies. In the preceding section, I have termed these differences as the *Party-state oriented* and the *market-oriented*. (see Table 4.1)

	Title	Affiliation	Established in	Circulation area
Party-state-oriented organs	*People's Daily (PD)* *(Renmin Ribao)*	Organ of the Central Committee of CPC	1948	Nationwide & Worldwide
	Workers' Daily (WD) *(Gongren Ribao)*	Organ of the All-China Federation of Trade Unions	1949	Nationwide
	Southern Daily (SD) *(Nanfang Ribao)*	Organ of the CPC Committee of Guangdong Province	1949	Guangdong Province
	Liberation Daily (LD) *(Jiefang Ribao)*	Organ of the CPC Committee of Shanghai	1949	Shanghai
	Beijing Daily (BD) *(Beijing Ribao)*	Organ of the CPC Committee of Beijing	1952	Beijing
	Henan Daily (HD) *(Henan Ribao)*	Organ of the CPC Committee of Henan Province	1949	Henan Province
	Sichuan Daily (SCD) *(Sichuan Ribao)*	Organ of the CPC Committee of Sichuan Province	1952	Sichuan Province
Market-oriented metropolitan newspapers	*Southern Weekend (SW)* *(Nanfang Zhoumo)*	Southern Daily Group	1984	Nationwide
	Southern MetropolisDaily (SMD) *(Nanfang Dushi Bao)*	Southern Daily Group	1997	Guangdong Province
	Oriental Morning Post (OMP) *(Dongfang Zaobao)*	Wenhui-xinmin United Press Group, supervised by CPC Committee of Shanghai	2003	Shanghai &Yangtze River Delta Region
	The Beijing News (BN) *(Xin Jing Bao)*	Founded by Guangming Daily and Nanfang Daily Group and supervised by the former, transferred to the CPC Committee of Beijing in 2011	2003	Beijing
	Dahe Daily (DD) *(Dahe Bao)*	Henan Daily Group	1995	Henan Province
	Western China Metropolis Daily (WCMD) *(Huaxi Dushi Bao)*	Sichuan Daily Group	1995	Sichuan Province

Table 4.3 Samples of Newspapers

To representatively and comparatively examine news discourse concerning migrant issues, I shall thus need to choose samples of the most prominent and

influential newspapers from these two groups. The selected organs are listed below in table 4.3 and reasons for choosing them are clarified whereafter. However, it needs to be noted that, despite these newspapers constitute the main body of sampling, they do not exhaust all sources of samples. Other sources of news discourse, including international press, such as New York Times, and other kinds of discourse from major Chinese media and websites, such as magazine articles or television video clips, will also be chosen and analyzed for the purpose of complement and comparison wherever it is necessary.

As shown clearly in table 4.3, the selected samples are representative in terms of both areal distribution and importance. Among them, two party organs (*PD, WD)* and one market newspaper *SW* are nationwide distributed, while all the others are regional newspapers categorized into two groups based on their distribution areas: Some (*SD, LD, BD, SMD, OMP, BN*) are distributed in the southern province of Guangdong, the eastern city of Shanghai, and the northern capital city of Beijing, three of the most important destinations of migrant workers in the country; Others (*HD, SCD, DD, WCMD*) are from northern province of Henan and western province of Sichuan, two of the major provinces of large-scale migrant labor export. In terms of importance, all these sampled papers are representative and have significant public influence in the Chinese press sector.

- *PD* is the mouthpiece organ of the Central Committee of CPC, representing the voice of the top leadership of the Chinese Party-state. It is at the top of the Party-state controlled system of journalism and propaganda, and thereby the most important and authoritative party organ in China. It is directly under the supervision of the Party's Central Committee, rather than the Party's Central Propaganda Department. A close examination of *PD*'s representation of migrant issues thus, partially if not fully, reflects the changes of the Party-state's policy and ideological approach towards the marginalized group.

- *WD* is the organ of the All-China Federation of Trade Unions, one of the alleged 'mass organizations' in China that are in fact highly integrated into the Party-state system. It is chosen because of the relative importance of working class issues in the party-state's ideological doctrines and political agenda. Since migrant workers have been defined by the authority as the main body of the new working class since the new millennium, it is reasonable and necessary to include *WD* in a study about discursive contention over migrant issues.

- *SW* is one of the most famous and influential nationwide distributed market-oriented newspapers in China. It has been widely deemed as the country's 'most influential liberal newspaper' (Rosenthal, 2002), one of the most outspoken in China that often dares to challenge and question Party-state doctrines and policies. Different from other selected metropolitan samples with tabloid characteristics, *SW* is a market and journalistic professionalism driven weekly newspaper that features investigative journalism, muckraking reports, critical editorials, column articles, in-depth reviews, thereby mainly catering for intellectual and elite audience. Though, institutionally, it is still subject to the Party-state's rigorous propaganda regulation and punitive mechanism, *SW* dose successfully create a new form of press characteristics different from those of Party organs, on the basis of both the legacies of Chinese modern liberal press and China's current political economic reality. Given these points, *SW* is an indispensable and vital sample for this study.

- *SD*, *LD* and *BD*, are three party organs of the local CPC committees of Guangdong province, Shanghai and Beijing, three of the most popular destinations of migrant groups. Comparatively, *HD* and *SCD* are party organs of the provincial party committees of Henan province and Sichuan province respectively, two of the largest provinces of migrant labor export in China. These newspapers are sampled for the purpose of comparing how

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differently the specific ways of discursive construction of migrant issues in the press have been affected by regional political economic configurations.

- Similarly, the comparative approach is also applied to the study on corresponding market-oriented metropolitan newspapers originating from these two kinds of regions: *SMD*, *OMP* and *BN* are from migrant destination areas Guangdong province, Shanghai, and Beijing respectively, while *DD* and *WCMD* are from migrant origin areas Henan province and Sichuan province. All of these metropolitan newspapers are among the most influential and thus to a large degree representative of local press in their respective cities or provinces.

Sampling of cases and articles

After sampling newspapers, the next step is to decide what cases of vital events or issues should be chosen. And then articles about these cases from the above selected newspapers will be sampled for the next step of discourse analysis. All samples of newspaper articles were retrieved from two major online databases: the *People's Daily* full text database[36] and CNKI online Chinese newspaper full-text database [37] which covers all the other selected party organs and two commercial papers, *SW* and *OMP*, since 2000. Data of other four market-oriented agencies, *SMD*, *BN*, *DD* and *WCMD*, were sampled from their respective official websites or the collection of printed newspapers in the National Library of China in Beijing. Four categories of data will be sampled: routine news stories that will be sub-categorized according to their themes, feature articles that cover episodic stories of daily life or representative figures, review articles (editorials, opinion column and letters from readers) that offer opinions concerning a vital social event, policy or phenomenon, and news photos. Time span of sampling is determined by the research questions, as explained below. To sample cases and articles, I need to follow the first three

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[36]http://data.people.com.cn
[37]http://acad.cnki.net/Kns55/brief/result.aspx?dbPrefix=CCND

research questions developed hereinbefore. Accordingly, sampling of cases and articles is divided into the following three parts:

- Question one, from a historical perspective, examines the Party-state's ideological legitimization of its differentiated citizenship categorizations concerning migrant workers, especially those aspects about redefining the new class relationship. To answer this question, news and other genres of discourse (e.g. pictures, editorials, letters from readers) from the *People's Daily* and relevant government policy documents in the last three decades will be critically analyzed. The time span of data sampling is from 1979 to 2010. It starts from 1979 because in December 1978, the Third Plenary Session of the 11th CPC Central Committee was held in Beijing, an emblematic event marking the beginning of the era of Deng's 'reform and opening up'. During this period of about three decades, 1992 is also a significant watershed as it was in that year China's full-fledged marketization started to take place after Deng's famous tour of South China. But data examination of newspaper articles has only shown dramatic rise of article numbers since the beginning of the new millennium, especially the era of the so-called Hu-Wen administration which started in 2002 and has adopted a sharply different approach to social development compared with its predecessor. On the contrary, the number of articles published in the two decades before 2002 is almost negligible. Thus my comparison is conducted between the pre-Hu-Wen era and the era that followed it, and I shall choose 2002 as a watershed because in that year China had just been formally accepted as a WTO member one year before, and domestically the newly elected fourth generation of top Party leadership started to urge implementation of the new ideological doctrines of 'constructing a harmonious society', for the purpose of suturing increasingly expanding social fissures engendered by the last ten years' spanking marketization. But this limitation of time span of inquiry does not mean that data from

other periods of time are not relevant. To historically examine the genealogical origins and usages of the words '*min'gong*' and '*nongmin'gong*', I shall also briefly check discourses about these specific ways of naming from the *People's Daily* before 1978 and compare them with the new meanings and usages in the reform period.

Technically, I shall analyze news headlines and categorize all the search results into few groups according to their themes. After that, I will use the maximum variation strategy (Patton, 2002, pp. 234-235)of purposive sampling to select representative articles from all these categorized groups of data and then find out the common ideological rationales that cut across all the variations.

• In answering the next two questions, a comparative approach will be used to examine differences between newspapers of different categories and regions of origin. Question two explores public contention over the problem of *hukou* system and relevant exclusive mechanisms concerning migrant workers, or the membership level of citizenship. I shall search the keywords '*hukou*' or '*huji*' (household') and '*nongmin gong*' or '*mingong*' to sample news and opinion articles from the selected newspapers. The general time span of the sampling covers three years from 2008 to 2010. I choose 2003 as the starting point because some of the selected newspapers were founded in that year (*OMP* and *BN*). For those newspapers not covered by databases, the sampling will be based on availability of their respective online e-paper data. A further step of judgment sampling will be conducted to select representative articles of all categories if the number of search results is too large.

• The third question is concerned with pubic contention about detailed aspects of citizenship rights. The corresponding chapters thus consist of a series of case studies on several recent vital events or policy issues

regarding migrant citizenship in the past few years. I shall adopt a method of extreme or deviant case sampling (Patton, 2002, pp.230-234), through which cases are sampled on the grounds of their degree of public influence or controversy and representativeness. Three cases with great importance and public concerns regarding these dimensions will be selected: the incidents of Foxconn migrant worker suicides; the issue of migrant children's education in the cities; the phenomenon of migrant workers being engaged in media and popular cultural production. All the texts about these cases are selected by keyword searching, and a further step of purposive sampling based on categorization of these texts may be conducted if the number of results is too large. Results and time span of sampling will be explained later in each section of the case studies.

Collection of policy archives and in-depth interviews

Besides the above detailed illustration of sampling methods of newspapers, cases and articles, another two sources of data will also be used to acquire contextual information regarding institutional rules and policies. One is the collection of government policy archives, including administrative legislation, various notifications, guidelines or instructions. Most of the documents were retrieved via the central government's website and other online resources. Some documents were collected in the National Library of China in Beijing in 2010 and 2011. The aim of collecting these archives is to review and extract supplementary background information about policy changes.

The other one is in-depth interviews with media practitioners. As for the former source, as one of the major qualitative research methods in social sciences, interviewing is the way for researchers to empirically collect data about what ideas people have about specific issues and why they hold these stances. 'In-depth interviewing is founded on the notion that delving into the subject's 'deeper self' produces more authentic data.' As one of the two main variations

of unstructured interviewing (the other one is ethnographic interviewing), in-depth interviewing does not limit itself within the scope of a pre-fixed set of questions and answers, and thus 'has the potential to reveal multiple, and sometimes conflicting, attitudes about a given topic', providing 'a multi-perspective understanding of the topic'.(Marvasti, 2004, p. 21)

In this study, interviewing is a supplementary means that serves to investigate the major speakers' ideas about what they have publicly said about migrant issues, that is, the background information about the discourses that have been presented. Thus it offers additional contextual information for discourse analysis. In-depth interviews with about 15 journalistic practitioners reporting on migrant issues in China were conducted in 2010 and 2011 on the basis of normative ethical guidelines approved by the ethics committee of the main investigator's institute. All the interviews are based on pre-drafted outlines but not limited to them. A certain degree of natural and random interactions between the interviewer and respondents is crucial for collecting subtle in-depth information about the institutional rules in newsrooms behind the curtain. The interviewing outlines will be included in the appendix.

Summary

In this chapter, I have introduced the major research questions, and the framework, methodologies and analytical methods that I am going to use to answer them. I have reviewed the methodological issues of the mutually constitutive approach, the framing analysis, the historical institutionalism, and most importantly, the critical discourse analysis. On the basis of these reviews, I have then developed a methodological framework for analyzing public contention over issues concerning Chinese migrant workers. The methodologies that I have chosen and integrated are supposed to serve the purpose of examining both discursive and institutional features of the process of social contention and issue framing. All the levels of methodological rationale are

summarized in the following table 4.4. Following this design, in the next few chapters, I shall turn to concrete analyses of sampled data.

Approach	Mutually constitutive	
Methodologies	Framing analysis	
	Case-oriented studies	
Methods of data collection	Collection of policy archives In-depth interview	Purposive sampling of newspapers, cases and articles and data from other forms of media
Analytical methods	Historical institutional analysis	Critical discourse analysis

Table 4.4 Methodology and Methods

Chapter 5

Ideological Remaking of Migrant Workers

To respond to the ever-changing social conditions in the reform era, the Chinese Party-state has been adjusting itself accordingly, including its ideological doctrines. The new reality of the rise of a market-driven economy and the country's integration into the process of globalization has posed acrimonious challenges to the Party-state's pre-reform revolutionary ideology. The increasing dissonance between words on paper underscoring the *de jure* supremacy of the working and peasant classes and the *de facto* capitalization reform policies rendering the two classes underprivileged has led to an ideological crisis or fracture that needs not only political economic suture, but also symbolic appeasement or discursive re-legitimization. Reconstruction of the political hegemony is one of the very core and urgent tasks in the reform period.

This chapter aims to examine one of the vital aspects of this process and mechanism of ideological legitimization, taken by the Chinese Party-state to justify its definitions of differentiated citizenship categorizations concerning migrant workers, which continue to be effective in the reform period. This issue amounts to the central concern of the first research question that has been proposed and explicated in the last chapter. Specifically, from a historical perspective, I shall attempt to briefly analyze how the Chinese party-state has reconstructed its political hegemony of a revolutionary ideology based on class-dominated legitimacy to accommodate and vindicate the new market-oriented developmental reality of disenfranchised migrant workers in the reform period. As I have pointed out earlier, this is a historical examination of discursive evolution regarding migrant issues conditioned by different knowledge-power relations that essentially define different types of subjects. The focus is on how a revolutionary subject based on radical utopianism has been transformed into a developmental subject based on the logic of

marketization, modernization and economic development. News and opinion discourses from the *People's Daily*, the Party-state's highest mouthpiece organ, and relevant policy documents related to migrant issues in the past three decades, will be selected and critically analyzed to answer the question. The contentious aspects of framing and public debates, in which the Party-state's discursive construction of migrant policies has been confronted with counter-discursive practices by various social and market actors-speakers, including migrant workers themselves, will be the motifs of the chapters that follow this one.

Historical institutional background

'Alliance of Workers and Peasants'

Before embarking on the critical analysis of discursive re-legitimization and reconstruction of migrant policies through media discourse, I shall first succinctly examine the legacies of the Party-state's revolutionary ideology of peasants and working class before the market-oriented reform started, how these revolutionary legacies have institutionally and historically impinged on the Party-state's attempts at ideological and policy adjustment and reconfiguration, and how the emergence of new migrant issues have presented serious challenges to the Party-state's traditional ways of   legitimation.

Historically, the pre-reform political ideology was highly constructed on the basis of drastic class struggles involving large scale mass actions, rather than the logic of rationalization. (Schram, 1969)According to its doctrines, the Communist Party is the vanguard and the most advanced representative of the revolutionary working class, around which all other progressive classes are transformed and united for purposes of revolution and socialist construction. Mao's revolution succeeded largely on the basis of moulding class consciousness in the peasantry and a nascent working class. (Dirlik, 1983) Peasants and workers were assumed to be the two underpinning revolutionary classes in the communist ideology, and constituted the very fundamental class

basis of the revolution and social reconstruction movements initiated by the pre-reform regimes. Both classes were mobilized in Mao's radical leftist revolution, civil wars and restless political campaigns after the founding of communist rule, and thus were deemed as the two most revolutionary and prominent classes with whose wishes all members of other classes should humbly comply.

In Mao's time, the Chinese working class was apotheosized as the country's ruling class on the basis of the alleged 'alliance of workers and peasants' which has been constitutionally enshrined as the bedrock of the legitimacy of the Chinese socialist Party-state. [38] In this ideological framework, peasants, especially the poorest of them, were an integral part of the revolutionary proletariat and a group of intimate collaborators with the ruling working class. People were indoctrinated with the idea that struggle between the revolutionary and the counter-revolutionary classes was the principal contradiction that the Party-state and the people had to confront, ceaselessly and vigilantly. Class struggle and class identity thus played an overwhelmingly fundamental role in shaping social relations and constituted 'the linchpin of Mao's voluntarism'(Lieberthal, 2004, p. 68) while other forms of social ties were unprecedentedly weakened or even eradicated in extreme cases, such as that of the violent Cultural Revolution.

As the so-called vanguard of the working class, the revolutionary Party-state constructed legitimacy for its rule through generalization of the concept of working class and definition of different class statuses for different social groups with workers as the political benchmark. Worker thus is not only an occupational mark, but also an identity of political affiliation, an ideological symbol of the mainstream discursive regime in the pre-reform era. (J. Yu, 2007,

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[38] Despite several amendments and different versions, the statement that the people's 'democratic dictatorship led by the working class and based on the alliance of workers and peasants' is the basis of the Chinese socialist state remain intact to the latest version adopted in 1982, which is available at http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/constitution/constitution.html, retrieved on 28 June, 2011.

pp. 93-94) In this political matrix, the Chinese peasants were urged to play aneulogized symbolic role in the revolutionary alliance with workers. Politically, both peasants and workers were *de jure* invested with the highest political position in the pre-reform system. Physical labor was considered more admirable than other forms of labor. At any time, in principle, being a peasant or worker meant one was qualified to claim a privileged position in the political system and require unconditioned compliance from members of those alleged 'backward'classes. However, despite the written divine revolutionary scripture, in practice, there was huge disparity between specific policies targeted on the two revolutionary classes respectively. And the most significant difference between them is made by the institution of *hukou*, a post-1949 invention facilitating the Party-state dominated central-planned political economic system.

As I shall analyze in detail in the next chapter, *hukou* is the 'most important determinant of differential privilege in state socialist China'. (X. Wu & Treiman, 2002) Under this system, all members of society were in principle fixed on their state-designated social positions, or the social work units (*danwei*). (Lü & Perry, 1997; Y. Zhou & Yang, 1994) Among them, all the Chinese peasants, who were as members of rural farming teams organized and severely controlled under the commune system or collective farming teams (O'Leary & Watson, 1982), were defined as rural *hukou* residents, while workers, basically urban *hukou* holders, were distributed into various industrial factories and public service sectors. *Hukou* not only functioned as a tool to control geographic mobility of population and was thus fundamentally important for the operation of a central-planned economy, but also it shaped the extremely differentiated categories of citizenship between rural (peasants) and urban (workers) residents and had a dampening effect on social mobility.

While all the state-recognized workers were covered by a state sponsored from-cradle-to-tomb (though at a relatively low level) welfare system, the absolute majority of Chinese peasants were left virtually without any state care.

Despite few rare channels of rural-to-urban *hukou* change (higher education, Party cadre promotion, and military service),their mobility beyond rural areas and agriculture was stringently forbidden under the *hukou* regime and the central-planned system, and thus they were made permanently subject to the state's policy of price scissors on agriculture and investment priority for industry, the result of which was continuous intersectional resource transfers from the peasants to feed the industrialization and the urban welfare. (Knight, 1995; Knight & Song, 1999)

Consequently, the relationship between the revolutionary ideological creeds, which asserted that workers and peasants were equally masters of the country and allied to construct a new socialist society, and the actual deeds of differentiated citizenship policy that rendered peasants to pariah status, was in fact an inherently conflictual one. Consequently, far from a harmonious relationship, there was tension between the peasants and the party-state in the pre-reform era. As Jean Chun Oi(1989, p. 1) argues,

> [a]lthough the revolution removes landlords from the historical stage, the state and its agents appear as newly powerful claimants on the harvest. To a historically unprecedented degree, the state directs the division of the harvest, and this brings it into direct conflict with the peasantry.... The need for grain, made more urgent by ambitious industrialization policies and a strong commitment to the welfare of the urban population, brings the state into a protracted, though muted, conflict with its peasantry…

Nevertheless, despite these conflicts and the discrepancy between ideology and policies, the pre-reform ideology of the peasantry and the working class largely remained intact until the initiation of market-oriented reform started to break unbending boundaries between the rural and the urban and expedite the process of large scale transregional labor mobility, which presented considerable

challenges to the class-dominated revolutionary ideology in the reform period.

Marketization and Ideological Challenges of Migrant Issues

As concretely reviewed in chapter two, since the late 1970s, coinciding with the process of globalization, China's market-oriented reform characterized by de-centralization and rationalization of the economic and administrative systems, has in many ways fundamentally changed the country's economy and society. The reform started from agriculture in rural area and was implemented smoothly, releasing large numbers of surplus rural laborers who constituted the timely migrant labor force urgently needed by booming township and urban private or foreign invested enterprises in the urban reform. In the whole process, despite bottom-up impetus, the Party-state has played a dominant role in restructuring the disposal of labor. Contrary to the assumption that state power has declined dramatically in a neo-liberal era, the Chinese Party-state, as argued previously, with its state socialist legacies, has remained a comprehensive regulator and controller that has reconfigured itself and its ways of intervening in the economy and the society, 'increasingly designed to ensure economic growth' and political stability, 'rather than to achieve any other social project'.(F. Xu, 2000, p. 17)

However, the whole process of the de-regulation of trans-regional labor mobility and the establishment of a semi-marketized migrant labor system did not take place smoothly without political economic and ideological ravelment. On the one hand, both the obstinate policy of *hukou*, the unit-based inflexible population control and the long entrenched idea of utter division between pariah rural peasantry and state favored 'superior' urbanites, have made it extremely difficult for rural migrants to move freely and be fully accepted by urban society. Because of their deprivation of urban citizenship, they are institutionally and culturally underprivileged and subject to systematic discrimination and oppression.

On the other hand, especially since the 1990s, the increasingly uncomfortable reality of the two previous revolutionary classes, workers (mostly disfranchised in the privatization of SOEs) and peasants (partly and increasingly transformed into new industry workers through urbanization and market-driven labor migration), becoming the two most deprived social groups in the reform period, has displayed sharp inconsistency and thus presented fundamental problems in the Party-state's ideological rationale. As part of the Party-state's macro developmentalist strategic package, the adjustment of the Maoist system of state-controlled labor distribution and the construction of a new labor regime needed to be compromised to reflect various administrative, urban and market interests, and also ideologically justified to legitimize corresponding policies and institutional arrangements.

Domestic rural-to-urban migrant workers are at the very center of the ideological fissure, presenting one of the most underlying and challenging dilemmas of the Party-state's developmentalist ideology. In terms of their citizenship status, migrant workers are peasants excluded from urban welfare system. But at the same time, they have constituted the main body of workers of manufacturing, construction and service sector after rapid urban marketization. The concept and constitution of working class in the reform period thus have changed dramatically. The specific name *nongmin'gong*, literally peasant workers, clearly reflects the group's diasporic status in Chinese society. Despite their high presence in urban life and industrial development, they remain essentially, in some ways, peasants - in terms of both institutional arrangements that deny them access to urban citizenship and the strong tradition of cultural identity of peasantry engendered by mainstream society and also migrant workers themselves. However, these migrants are no longer the kinds of peasants they used to be. This is true, especially for those of the younger generation who have found themselves inseparable from urban life and are more assertive in articulating their citizenship rights. The result has been a dilemma:

They are both peasants and workers, but at the same time they are neither of these because of their institutionalized floating or transient status. (e.g. S. He, 2008;C. Wang, 2001)

Consequently, these floating migrant workers have become the very symbol of the political economic changes of the two revolutionary classes who have been either washed out in the SOE restructuring or repacked into a low cost labor army that has swiftly replaced the former. Given the fact that peasants and workers, at least on paper, continue to be constitutionally declared as the Party-state's ruling base and source of legitimacy, how to legitimize the developmentalist political economic reality is a challenge that needs to be discursively tackled. To find this out, in the next section, I shall critically analyze sampled data of news and opinion articles from the *People's Daily* and important policy texts relevant to migrant issues that have been publish or documented respectively in the past three decades.

Coverage on migrant issues in the *People's Daily*

Party Press and the People's Daily

As the most authoritative party organ, the *People's Daily* incarnates all the characteristics of the Chinese party press which by nature 'is bestowed with an unambiguous political mission - serving as the party's voice to promote its interests, policies, and ideology'. (Z. He, 2000, p. 118) Inherited from the Leninist press model (C. C. Lee, 1990), 'party principle" (*dangxing yuanze*) is regarded as the supreme guideline for the media sector. (L. Chen, 2011) According to party tenets, only positive news and opinions 'about the society and the government that benefits the party's administration was allowed to be covered in the media'. (Luo, 2009, p. 293) Based on this cardinal principle, the priority of the press is to positively propagate the Party-state's ideas and policies under strict guidance of the party's propaganda disciplines, rather than to inform the public or disclose abuse of power by the government. Despite marketization

and bureaucratization of media management and ensuing institutional 'ambiguities and contradictions'(C.-C. Lee, 1994) that have led to, unexpectedly, a certain degree of liberalization and a very limited role of public supervision or watchdog journalism (*young viand*) in media practice (de Burgh, 2003b; J. Tong, 2011; Y. Zhao, 2000b), the party-oriented section of the press remains positive-propaganda-dominated and a tool for conveying the party's voice and leading directions of public opinion (*Kunlun yenta*).

Founded in the era of revolutionary wars, the *People's Daily* is at the apex of the propaganda system, directly under the control and supervision of the Party's central committee and top leadership, whose opinions and policies are often directly reflected in editorials and commentaries in the paper. (People's Daily, 2003) Important editorials from the *People's Daily* normally will be subjects of political study and propagation within all levels of party branches and even non-party organizations. All other forms of party organs (magazines, radio, television, and so on) normally are required to directly copy and reprint or rebroadcast these editorials. (G. Wu, 1994) Despite the rise of other semi-alternative categories of commercial media and online communication as the marketization reform deepens, the *People's Daily* still remains highly important and special in the Chinese political communication system, and widely seen as an explicit and more often implicit indicator of policy or ideological changes signaled by the top leadership. Therefore, discursive representation of specific issues in news and editorials of the *People's Daily* should be a reflection of the Chinese party-state's ideological and policy line regarding these issues.

Given its extreme importance in Chinese politics and media sphere, a systematic study of migrant relevant news texts of the *People's Daily* should reasonably serve to provide a general picture of relevant policy changes, social trends and in particular official approaches towards migrant workers. In order to find out how the Chinese party-state has adopted different policies and ideological lines

regarding migrant workers in different periods of time during the past three decades, it is necessary to carefully analyze discourses of both its mouthpiece organ and important policy documents. All the texts to be analyzed in the following sections are drawn from the *People's Daily* full text online database. The major period of time examined is from 1979 (the beginning year of 'reform and opening up' marked by the Third Plenary Session of 11th Central Committee of CPC) [39] to 2010, with 2002 as the turning point dividing the whole period into two stages. As explained in the methodology chapter, the reason for this choice is because in 2002 the new Chinese leadership elected in the 16th National Congress of CPC started to assume the reins of government[40], resulting in adjustment of policy and political approach. With 'constructing a harmonious society' (*jianshe hexie shehui*) and 'scientific development' (*kexue fazhan*) as the catchphrases and defining discourses of the new leadership's political line, the last decade since 2002 has seen increasing political emphasis on appeasement to growing social unrest and grievances engendered by various problems in the uneven reforms of the previous two decades, including, among others, increasing gap between the poor and the rich, widening regional developmental imbalance, unemployment and environmental crisis. (Yongnian Zheng & Tok, 2007) As motioned previously, data before 1978 will also be used where necessary to compare with that of the reform period.

A general diachronic description of the People's Daily's coverage on migrant issues

To examine the general tendency of changes of discourse regarding migrant workers in the *People's Daily*,   I searched the two most widely used keywords '*nongmin'gong*' and '*min'gong*' (both literally 'peasant-turned workers', referring to Chinese domestic migrant workers bound with rural *hukou* and a social identity of peasantry) in titles of articles published in the *People's Daily*

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[39] See http://english.people.com.cn/90002/95589/6512371.html, retrieved on July 27, 2011.
[40] See http://english.cpc.people.com.cn/66101/6433209.html, retrieved on July 27, 2011.

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from 1979 to 2010. The search results have displayed a sharp contrast between the numbers of news and commentary articles about migrant issues published in the *People's Daily* between the two periods before and after 2002. As clearly illustrated in figure 5.1, from 1979 to 2001, in more than twenty years period of time, only 184 articles are found relevant to migrant worker issues; while the second stage from 2002 to 2010, in less than one decade, had seen dramatic increase in the number of migrant-relevant articles, hitting 1451 (thematically irrelated and repetitive results excluded). The sheer disparity between the numbers of articles in the two periods clearly demonstrates the rapid expansion of labor migration and the increasing gravity of migrant worker issues in Chinese society since the new millennium.
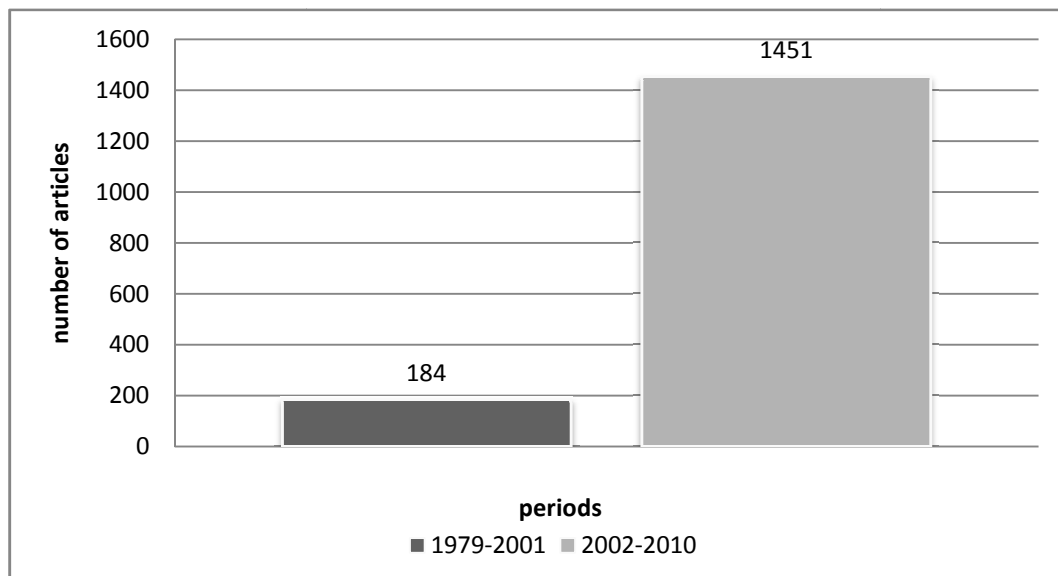

Figure 5.1 Numbers of migrant-relevant articles in the *People's Daily* in periods before and after

2002

Figure 5.2 shows that the annual number of search results of migrant-worker-related articles found in the *People's Daily* largely holds a steady level until the time after 2002, when an abrupt increase emerges. In the period before 2002, the only exception happens in the period between the late 1980s and the early 1990s, when a rise of coverage can be identified. Also figure 5.3 displays the number of migrant-related news and opinion articles

published in the first page of the *People's Daily* during the three decade period. Similarly, abrupt increase of salience of migrant worker issues can be seen in the same periods of time. As normally coverage in the first page of the *People's Daily* means specific issues included are of prime importance in the party-state's political and economic agenda, the sudden augmentation of salience of migrant-related issues signals that these issues have risen up from below policy margins and become part of the top leadership's major concerns since 2002.
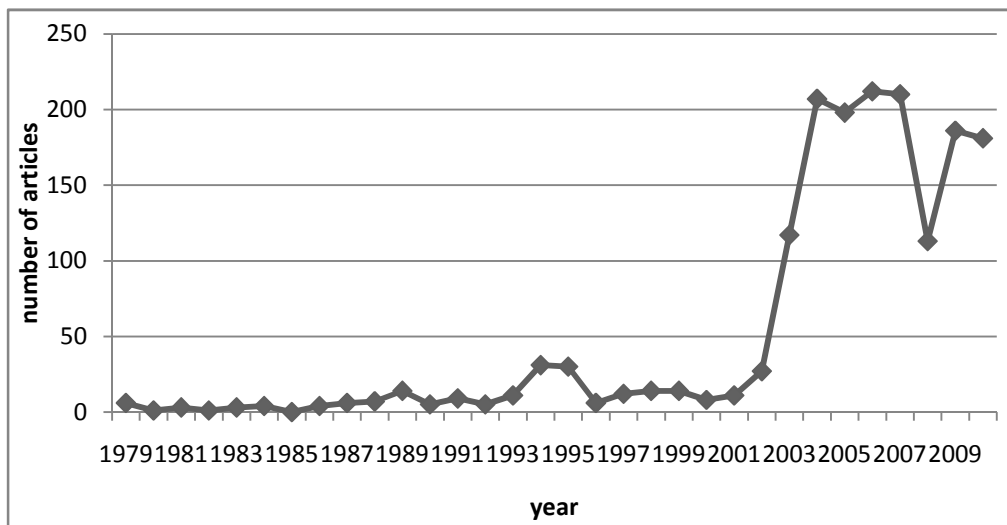

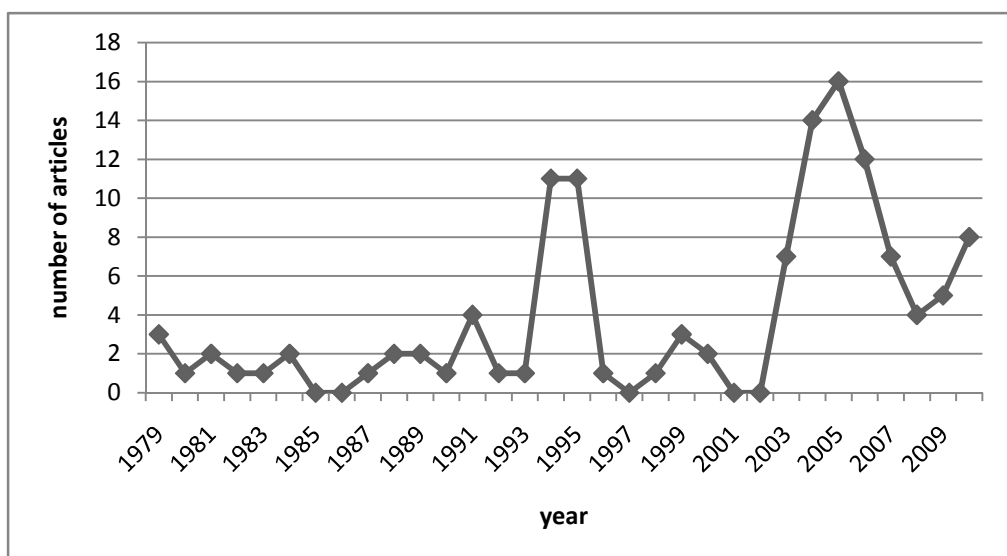**Figure 5.2 Annual numbers of migrant-relevant articles in the *People's Daily***

Figure 5.3 Annual numbers of migrant-related articles published in first page of the *People's Daily*

All these changes as represented in the fluctuant numbers of the *People's*

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Daily's migrant-related articles are in fact in accordance with the transformation of migration policies enacted by the Party-state in different periods of time and the ensuing social effects on labor mobility in the past three decades. The period from 1979 to the late 1980s is the first stage of post-reform spontaneous migration when the policy of strict population control loosened and large scale labor movement started to take place. The second stage is the 1990s. After a comprehensive socio-economic and political crisis, a cautious policy of controllable and restricted labor migration was implemented. It was in this period that migrant worker issues started to become one of the focal points of urban public and official concerns. Due to aggravating problems of unemployment induced by urban SOE reform, various measures and policies aiming to confine rural-to-urban migration were introduced in different local areas. The last stage is the first decade of the new millennium, when previous restrictions on free labor migration were dismantled to facilitate an increasingly export-oriented market economy after China's entry into the WTO. (C. Yang & Yang, 2009)

The surge of migration-related coverage in the *People's Daily* since 2002 is a direct reflection of several important policy actions taken by the top leadership and central government. In 2003, the story that the Chinese premier helped a migrant worker claim her overdue wage triggered a government-initiated nation-wide 'settling arrearage' (*qingqian*) campaign in which all the local governments were required to take effective measures to resolve the long criticized problem. In the same period, the State Council issued several policy documents about migrant worker issues, including, among others, the '*Circular on Improving the Management and Services to Migrant Workers*'[41] in 2003, '*Some Opinions on Resolving the Problems Faced by Migrant Workers*'[42] in 2006, and '*Circular on Improving Current Work Regarding Migrant*

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[41]*Guanyu Zuohao Nongmin Jincheng Wugong Jiuye Guanli he Fuwu de Tongzhi* (January 5, 2003), available at http://202.123.110.5/zwgk/2005-08/12/content_21839.htm, retrieved on July 16, 2011.
[42] *Guanyu Jiejue Nongmin'gong wenti de Ruogan Yijian* (March 27, 2006), available at http://www.gov.cn/jrzg/2006-03/27/content_237644.htm,   retrieved on July 16, 2011.

Workers'[43]in late 2008, 'urging local governments to abolish discriminatory measures against migrant workers and to improve their access to social services'. (China Labour Bulletin, 2008) Apparently, the rise and decline of media coverage was consonant with government policy changes.
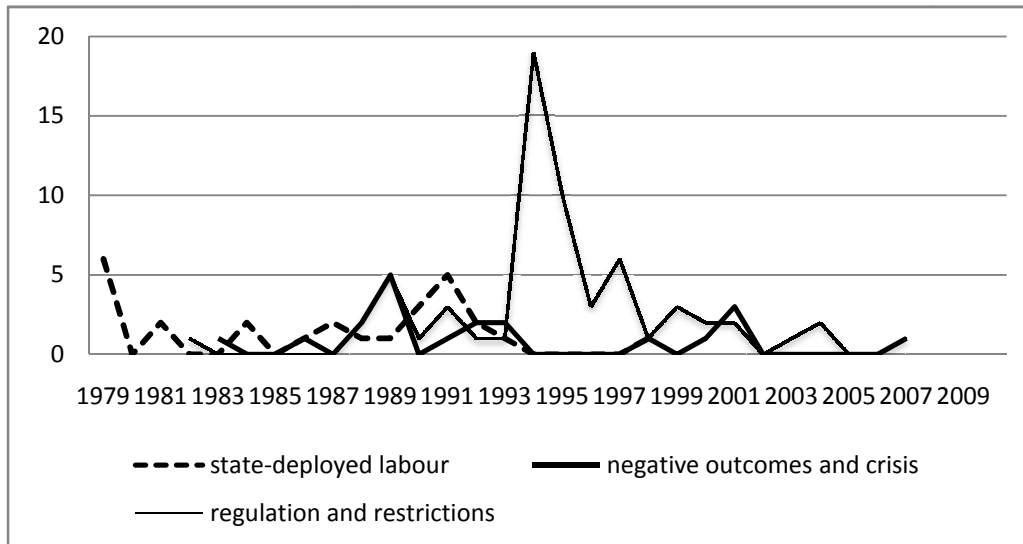

Figure 5.4 Coverage on major negative themes of about migrant workers in the *People's Daily*
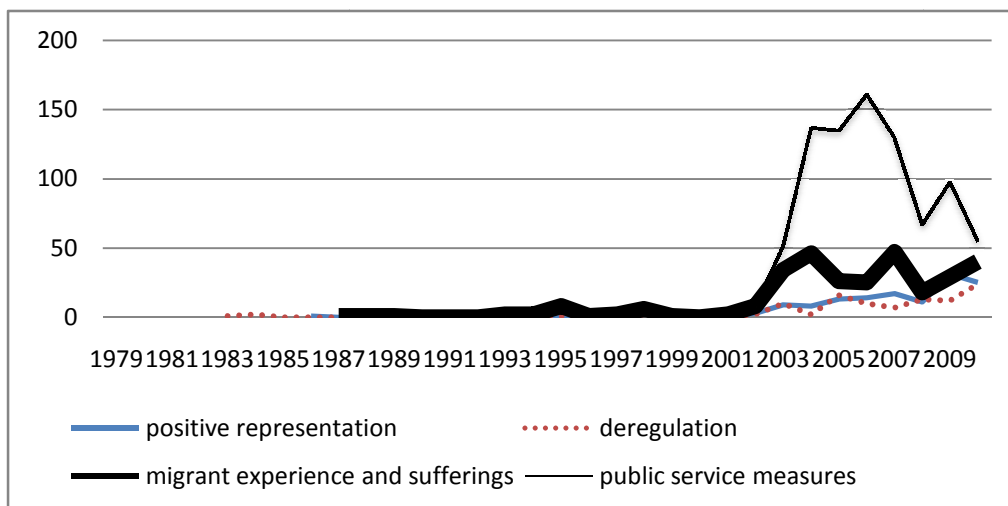

Figure 5.5 Coverage on major positive themes about migrant workers in the *People's Daily*

In terms of themes of these news and commentary articles, analysis of news headlines has shown a general trend away from negatively constructing migrant

[43]*Guanyu Qieshi Zuohao Dangqian Nongmin'gong Gongzuo de Tongzhi* (December 20, 2008), available at http://www.gov.cn/zwgk/2008-12/20/content_1183721.htm, retrieved on July 16, 2011.

workers, as a source of social chaos and crisis, to increasingly depicting them as a relatively positive social force in economic development. From the late 1980s to the mid 1990s, massive groups of migrant workers were described as 'blind waves' (*mangliu*, see below) who were thought to be responsible for instability and public service failure in the urban society. Congruent with this, various oppressive measures of regulation and restrictions were taken. (figure 5.4) As I will suggest below, this crisis discourse was contextualized not only by the socio-economic and political situation in the Chinese society at that time, but also by a long socio-cultural tradition of negatively perceiving unorganized population migration and the Chinese peasants. It functionally legitimized relevant hard-line policies targeted on migrant workers in the period. In contrast, since 2002, the major themes about migrant workers in the *People's Daily* discourse have changed dramatically. (Figure 5.5) A surge in the number of coverage on official measures taken to provide public service and administrative and legal aids to migrant workers is easily visible. This change is entirely accordant with the government's adjustment in its approach to migration regulation, increasingly emphasizing the combination of control and public service rather than only dissuasion and confinement.

Changing ways of naming migrant workers

The changing ways of *naming* migrant workers as a social group have profound connotations laden with cultural and ideological presuppositions, metaphors and bias, and thus may exert influences on the ways in which they are socially identified and symbolically empowered or deprived. In the past three decades, the Chinese migrant workers have been named in various ways in the *People's Daily*'s discourse: *min'gong* (literally 'rural laborers'), a term which originally referred to rural laborers deployed in wartime logistics and social projects and gradually merged with the newly coined term *nongmin'gong*; *mangliu* (literally 'blind currents'), a negative term used to describe enormousspontaneous

population movement between different jurisdictions; *liudong renkou* (literally 'floating population'), a neutral term denoting all the unplanned population mobility; *nongmin'gong* (literally 'peasant-turned workers'), currently the most commonly used term referring to the social group of rural-to-urban migrant workers with rural *hukou* status.

Each of these categories of naming carries a specific general mode of framing the migrant workers and migration issues. Among them, *min'gong*, a term contracted from *nongmin* (peasant) and *gongren* (worker), with its revolutionary historical origins, has a very strong connotation of the state's deployment of rural labor in major public projects, such as flood-prevention, railway construction, and so on, when there was a shortage of state-registered labor under the central-planned economic system. Search results of the *People's Daily* show that the term was firstly used in the civil war when a large number of rural laborers were mobilized to serve for wartime logistic resource transportation and battlefield constructions, and then widely used to refer to subjects of the state's rural labor deployment. Despite the fact that rural laborers were essentially represented as passive actors unconditionally serving the state's major aims, the original term of *min'gong,* with its particular historical implication, did not convey negative meanings about the referents. Rather, they, as a blurry collective group of peasantry, were normally depicted as having made great sacrifices and contributions to the revolution and national construction, as shown in the following selected news headlines of the *People's Daily* in different periods:

- *Heroic Chinese voluntary rural laborers in the War to Resist U.S. Aggression and Aid Korea (yingxiong de zhiyuan yuanchao de zhongguo min'gong).(1951.04.06, p. 4)*

- *In the paean of achieving full-scale triumph of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, rural laborers of Shandong province made great*

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*achievements in water conservancy constructions (zai duoqu wuchanjieji wenhua da geming quanmian shengli de kaige sheng zhong, shandong sheng guangda **min'gong** wei geming ban shuili huo xianzhu chengji). (1968.06.15, p. 3)*

- *To greet commanders, militia and rural laborers in the Defensive Counterattack against Vietnam, central performing arts delegation hold grand gala in Kunming (weiwen canjia ziwei huanjizhan de zhizhanyuan minbing he **min'gong**, zhongyang weiwentuan ge wenyi tuanti zai kunming juxing shengda wanhui).(1979.03.29, p. 4)*

- *More than five million rural laborers headed for construction sites of Huaihe River water-control projects in Anhui province (Anhui zai qi zhi huai rechao wubai duo wan **min'gong** yi luxu benfu gongdi). (1987.12.30, p. 1)*

- *Five million rural laborers devoted to water conservancy project construction in Anhui province. (Anhui sheng wubai wan **min'gong** xing shuili). (1998.11.18, p. 2)*

Since the 1980s, the term *min'gong* had been gradually used to refer to both the traditional state-deployed rural laborers and the newly emerging spontaneous migrant peasants as the market-oriented reform gained momentum. With deepening marketization, the relationship between the state and rural laborers has also been gradually transformed. Increasingly, in a market-driven system of labor distribution, the state's free wheeling action of using low-cost rural labor is no longer taken for granted. After the 1990s, the rise of the new term *nongmin'gong* which gradually replaced *min'gong* is a reflection of this change. *Min'gong* now simply becomes a convenient abbreviation of *nongmin'gong*, a term that originally appeared in the *People's Daily's* news discourse in 1982 but had not become prevalent until the first decade of the new millennium.   (Figure 5.6)
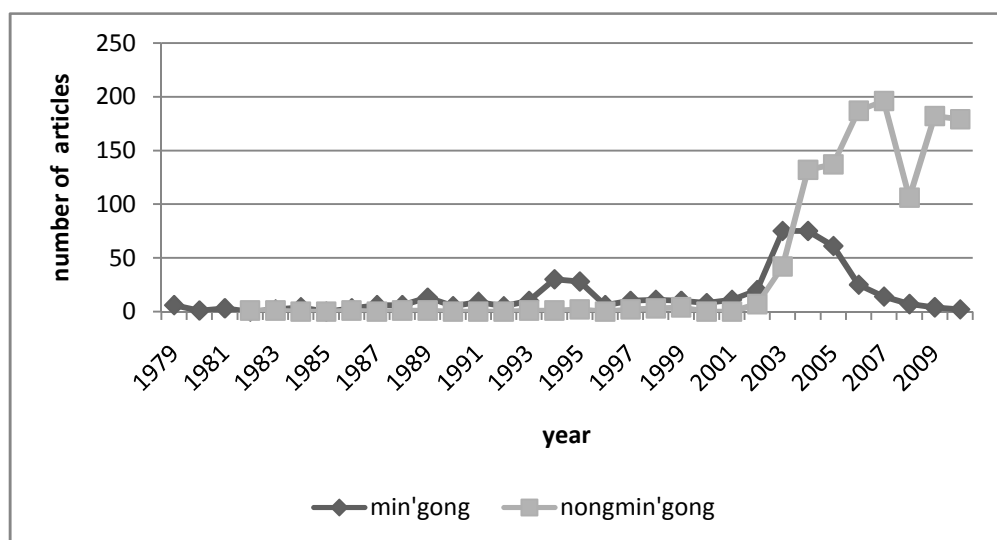
Figure 5.6 Comparison of usage of *min'gong* and *nongmin'gong* in the *People's Daily*

The new term *nongmin'gong* has an explicit meaning that migrant workers essentially remain peasants due to their rural *hukou* status, even though many of them may have lived and worked in the city for a long period of time. In other words, they are *nongmin*, the Chinese term designating peasantry. In modern Chinese thinking, the term *nongmin* is a loanword from Japanese in association with western negative perceptions of peasants who needed to be liberated from backward feudalsocial relations and transformed into modern farmers. As a cultural category, *nongmin* contains long entrenched negative cultural constructions about peasants, countryside, customs and traditional social norms. The adoption of the new term *nongmin* in modern Chinese discourse happened when the gap between rapidly modernizing urban society and the impoverishedrural hinterland deepened. In contrast to the rather debonaire modernity of urban society marked by material prosperity and cultural civility, rural society, inhabited by*nongmin*, the majority of the Chinese population, was deemed by urban-based intellectual elite as gauche, a backwaterfettered by ignorance, unenlightment, supersition, and fatuous feudal customs or rituals. (M. L. Cohen, 1993) Despite differences in many aspects, 'both Communist and non-Communistintellectuals'agreed that 'in order to save andrebuild the Chinese nation, the peasants needed to be utilized and transformed'. (Han, 2005,

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p. 2)In such circumstances, gradually

> the notion of the peasantry as a culturally distinct and alien 'other',
> passive, helpless, unenlightened, in the grip of ugly and
> fundamentally useless customs, desperately in need of education and
> cultural reform, and for such improvements in their circumstances
> totally dependent on the leadership and efforts of rational and
> informed outsiders, became fixed in the outlook of China's modern
> intellectual and political elites.(M. L. Cohen, 1993, pp. 154-155)

This notion has been unprecedentedly reinforced by the administrative rural-urban classcification based on the *hukou* system since the onset of communist rule in 1949. As analysed above, ideologically, peasants and workers were declared revolutioanry classes and bestowed with exalted political status in the newly devised socialist hierarchy. But in fact, this political rhetoric was never instituted in real political economic policies. With the introduction of *hukou*regulation, *nongming*, as a backward cultural category that could be a burden and obstacle for socialist construction, was safely transformed into household-based fixed labour at the state's disposal. Most importantly, in terms of access to state-sponsored services and benefits, the label *nongmin* means rural *hukou* and second-class citizenship bound with it, 'ironically, giving legal confirmation to the second-class culture they earlier had been identified with'. (Cohen, 1993, p.159)

Consequently, despite the possibility of neutral usage in a phenomenological sense, the term *nongmin'gong* inevitably inherits the cultural and social perceptions attached with the term *nongmin*. Accordingly, the use of the term in media and public discourse unavoidably conveys and reproduces long-entrenched presuppositions about Chinese peasants and cultural patterns affiliated with them. Due to their peasant and rural origin and status, they have been systematically and regularly defined as passive actors who are incapable of

rational judgement and decision-making. They have been regularly considered as a major source of social instability, chaos, insecurity and administrative crisis and thus must be subject to powerful official regulation and control.

However, before *nongmin'gong* became the most widely used term, another even more discriminatoryterm with strong negative connotation was *mangliu* (abbreviated from *mangmu liudong*, blind migration), a metaphor that frames non-state-sactioned rural migrants as a mindless mass, without clear direction, just like perilous and plague-like waves. The concept of *mangmu liudong*was originally introduced in a 1953 policy document '*The Directive on Dissuading Peasants from Blind Influx into Cities*'[44]issued by the State Council. But the term *mangliu* had not been widely used in media and public discourse until the 1980s against a background of dramatic increase of migration and comprehensive socio-economic and political crisis in the late 1980s and the early 1990s. The term *mangliu*, as exemplified in the following selected headlines from the *People's Daily*, has a very strong negative implicationof blindness and irrationality, and thus shows a tendency of viewing unorganized migrant workers as a potential source of social turbulence and threat to social stability:

- *Number of travellers rising, trains full, about 0.7 million people with standing tickets. The ministry of railway calls for ahalt to government-financed tours and conferences and dissuading* **mangliu** *of rural labourers.*(*luyou keliu juzeng chezhan lieche baoman shuqi meitian yue 70 wanren zhanzhe chengche tiedaobu huyu shazhu gongfei luyou, huiyi, quanzu min'gong* **mangliu**)   (1988.08.14 page 1)

- **Mangliu**, *a signal.* (**mangliu, yige xinhao**) (1989.03.22 page 2)

- *Letter from a min'gong revealing real conditions of the alleged'***mangliu**' *and calling for development of labour maket.* (*yiwei min'gong toushu*

[44]*Guanyu Quanzu Nongmin Mangmu Liuru Chengshi de Zhishi* (April 17, 1953)*, in Renmin Ribao*, 1953.04.18, page 1.

benbao tulu xinsheng yong qingshen jingli pouxi renmen suoshuo de 'mangliu' huhuan laoli shichang de fayu) (1994.02.15 page 2)

- *Some thoughts about the disappearing of the appellation of 'mangliu'*(*yougan yu 'mangliu' chengwei de xiaoshi*) (2003.04.07 page 4)

The word *mangliu* is a pejorativeexpression homophonicallyconverted from *liumang*, which originally referred to people forced to migrate from their homeland and then was endowed with the derogatorymeaning of hooligan or rogue. The pejorationof the word *liumang* is a result of elite and official narratives and incurrs persistentconcerns and discipline from the state. (D. Zhu, 2006) The character *liu* here means displacement, homelessness, or the status of diaspora, all of which were believed to present an undesirabledisturbanceto the well-ordered ideal Confuciansocial system characterized by family and homeland bond as well as fixed social role. Therefore, historically, emergence of massive migrant crowds tended to be seen as a sign of the loss of 'heavenly mandate' and the rise of turmoil and chaos.(Hsieh, 1993, p. 89) Many other expressions that contain the character *liu* likewise convey similar negative meanings, such as *liucuan* (flee), *liumin* (floating people or tramps), *liukou* (escaping enemy or bandits), *liulang* (stray), *liulanghan* (a homeless man), and so on. This kind of negative perception of unmeditatedpopulation movement was further strengthened by the tragichistory of modern China, brimming with incessantwar, famine, poverty and commotion, all giving rise to large-scale displacement of population. This uncomplimentary sense is preserved in the term *mangliu*. Consequently, the *mangliu* discourse has constituted one part of the vital mechanism of discursively legitimizing the rationale of crisis and control regarding migrant workers in different periods of the past decades. How this model of discursive construction of policing crisis worked for tough policy purposes and how it was gradually antiquated for new loosening purposes will be examined in detail in the following   section.

In sum, the above examination of different ways of naming the group of migrant workers in the *People's Daily*'s discourse has shown that despite variations, generally, all the terms used to denote peasant-turned migrant labourers perceive the referentin a more or less negative way. Among them, *mangliu* is the most uncomplimentaryone, conveying a very strong sentiment of aversenesstowards the rural migrant labourers. *Min'gong*, recontextualized from central-planned state-steered rural labour migration, is now basically an abbreviated synonym of the most commonly used term *nongmin'gong*, both of which imply a culturally negative frame about migrants associated with the specific intellectual mindset and socio-political conditions about the Chinese peasants. Even the relatively neutral terminology of *liudong renkou* (floating population) may also contain an implicit negative presupposition about the state of floating due to the long cultural tradition of abhorring displacement attached with the character *liu*, which has been sketchily discussed above. Other terms once used in specific contexts, such as *min'gongchao* (waves of migrant workers), *wailai min'gong* (outsider migrant workers), *da gong mei* and *da gong zai* ('migrant girls and boys'), and so on, also carry a stereotyped cultural insinuation of depicting migrant labourers as outcasts or inferior.　This is the case even these terms are used in a neutral or even positive context. Because whenever they are in use, all those discriminatorycultural and ideological presuppositions imbedded in them that have been taken for granted for a long time in the mainstream society will be activated and ready for potentially biased interpretations alienating migrant workers as a culturally'inferior Other'.

Legitimizing Controllable Migration

In this part, by analysing news and opinion discourse in the *People's Daily* and relevant official documents, I will find out, in a more detailed way, how the Chinese Party-state has defined the migrant worker issue and how its frames of ideological and policy discourse have evolved to meet different socio-political

goals as time passes. Representative news stories and opinion articles, including editorials, authored commentaries, and letters from readers, published in the *People's Daily*, will be selected and analysed through maximum variation purposive sampling based on the above mentioned thematic categorization of the *People's Daily* discourse.

I shall mainly focus on two periods. One is the period from the late 1980s to the early 1990s when migrant issues attracted great public attention and incurred negative reaction from the mainstream urban society, as represented in the the major themes of the *People's Daily*'s discourse in that period. Another period is the post-2002 one, when the issue of migrant workers has been redefined based on a new mixed approach - as mentioned earlier. By comparing representations in the two different periods, this part aims to examine what discursive changes and continuity they have displayed and how these characteristics have been closely related to macro and meso-levels of contextual transformation.

As for the first period, about 57 articles published in the *People's Daily* from 1988 to 1994 are selected for critical discourse analysis, while in the second period, about 143 representative articles published from 2002 to 2008 are selected. All the articles to be analysed are purposively selected on the basis of my judgement on their importance and relevance to the major concerns in this section,and cover all the main discourse genres including news about vital official policies of (de)regualtion, editorials, authored commentaries, letters from the readers, news photographs, and so on. Through analysing these articles, I shall examine the general line of how migrant workers as an underprivileged social group were discursively and ideologically defined and redefined as the orders of political discourse contextualized in changing socio-economic and political settings have evolved.

Policing the 'Waves'

As displayed in figure 5.4, the *People's Daily*'s discourse about migrant workers

in the period from the later 1980s to the mid 1990s was dominated by negative representations characterized by the so-called '*min'gong chao*' (tidal waves of migrant worker) or *mangliu* and thus conjured an overwhelmingly appalling image of seemingly endless multitudes of rural migrant workers swarming into the cities blindly, disturbing peace and order of the urban society and breeding instability and chaos (*hunluan*). In summary, rural migrant workers were hegemonized through being described as a disorderly mass totally devoid of rationality and individuality.

Given the situation of the later 1980s and the early 1990s when both the market and social sectors were still severely overshadowed by the Party-state's strong role in social and economic control, it is easy to anticipate that the latter two groups' voice would be relatively underrepresented. A rough comparison of standing of different actors-speakers shows that in these selected articles, news resources from the central and local governments and individual officials ranging from the top leadership to the grassroots county level, were absolutely predominant. Most of the other actors-speakers' opinions, including grassroots officials, members of state-owned enterprises or organizations, specialists, urban residents, and also migrant workers themselves, as we will see in the following analysis, were quoted only for the purpose of substantiating and consolidating the government's policy and ideology.

Despite a few exceptions[45], most of the articles followed the tough line of official migration policies, representing spontaneous migrant workers as blind, disorderly and irrational, or as mentioned earlier, *mangliu*. A 'policing crisis' frame dominated official narratives which appealed to various discursive resources, including the traditional biased cultural perception about unorganized population mobility, the fear of social chaos and loss of urban civility, and also the existing properly central-planned national order prescribing different

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[45] E.g. 'Wei min'gong ming ge buping' (Do justice to migrant workers), *Renmin Ribao*, 1989.03.25, p. 2; 'Mangliu bieyi' (Some different thoughts about *mangliu*), Renmin Ribao, 1992.12.12, p. 2.

categories of citizenship for urban residents and rural people. Migrant workers were depicted as invaders and outsiders of the civilized and well-orderedmainstream urban society. Negative words, such as, *hunluan*(chaotic), *mangmu* (blind), *wailai* (outsiders), *fanzui* (criminality), *suzhidi* (low quality), *buwenming* (uncivilized), and so on, were used by government actors-speakers to characterize them. In this threatening picture, migrant workers are passive actors only driven by an irrational craze for money and unpleasantly reminiscent of the chaotic political 'lining-up' (*chuanlian*) in the disastrousCultural Revolution. As one author suggests:

> '*Mangliu*', is like a demon released from a bottle, disturbing the whole country. Waves of millions of men and women hunting for jobs swarm into Guangzhou, Xinjiang, Northeast region, and also many into Beijing. People from different regions converge into this strand of flood current, triggering a series of chain reactions and social problems. The situation of railway transport has deteriorated, and the crowding and congestion has reminded people of the 'grand spectacle'of 'unprecedented''lining-up' (in the Cultural Revolution) .[46]

According to these discourses, consequences of rural labourers''irresponsible''blind' migration were grievous. Many social problems were reputedly caused by 'disorded'influx of migrant workers into the urban society. Especially, rural labourers were represented as having relatively high potential tendency of criminality. In a letter from a reader from a local police station in Zhejiang Province, it was reported that '14% of criminal cases in the district were committed by outsiders (*wailai renyuan*), 16% of major criminals were from outside of the local jurisdiction, and 14 them of them were sentenced.'[47] Here cases of individual criminality were generalized to be linked

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[46]'Mangliu, yige xinhao' (Blind flow, a signal), in *Renmin Ribao*, 1989.03.22, p. 2.
[47] 'Min'gong langchao de kunrao' (Problems brought about by waves of migrant workers), *Renmin Ribao*, 1989.05.24, p. 6.

to migrant workers'displacement and mobility. Similarly, a letter from a staff member of a state-owned copper minery, complained that the previously well-administered working place now had become a breeding ground of criminality and sabotage: 'Because of their high mobility, complex origins, it is very difficult to regulate them. Some min'gong stole copper, iron, electrical wires, and even working tools. Unmeasurable state property has flown into private pockets.' According to this letter, migrant workers even should even be held responsible for the increasing indolence of the state-employed formal staff members, because they now needed to oversee migrant workers - an increase in their workload. [48]

Equally disturbing was the huge pressure unorganized migration had placed on public transport, especially railways. A large portion of the selected articles is about how horrible the situation was when millions of rural migrants crammed into railway stations in cities of migration destination across China, and how the urban social order was endangered when 'blind' migrants occupied city space and wandered aimlessly. [49] Migrant workers were metaphorically described as a floating 'army' and wherever they went, the image was of multitudes of migrant workers with 'dark and languid faces, sleeping on the ground, carrying filthybaggage'[50]. In another story in which migrant workers were interviewed, the journalist described the ticketing hall of the Beijing railway station as full of 'high decibel noise and strong stink', and 'long queues dispersing and formingover and over again, stretching towards the ticket office window where

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[48] 'Shiyong min'gong dailai de wenti' (Problems caused by using migrant workers), *Renmin Ribao*, 1991.05.14, p. 5.

[49] E.g. 'Waisheng shuwan min'gong zhiliu guagnzhou' (Thousands of migrant workers from other provinces lingering in Guangzhou), *Renmin Ribao*, 1989.02.20, p. 2; 'Shiwan min'gong yongru Haikou, xiwang gedi yuyi quanzu' (100 thousand migrant workers sweeping into Haikou, [local government] calling for dissuasion) , *Renmin Ribao*, 1989.03.04, p. 2; 'Shiwan duo min'gong yongjin wulumuqi' (More than 100 thousand migrant workers swarmed into Urumqi), *Renmin Ribao*, 1989.03.18, p. 2; 'Min'gong chao yong dao xibei, lanzhouzhan renmanweihuan' (Migrant waves hitting the northwest region, Lanzhou railway station extremely packed), *Renmin Ribao*, 1989.04.04, p.2; 'Sichuan min'gong dapi beishag, xi'an chezhan renmanweihuan' (A large number of migrant workers from Sichuan Province heading north, Xi'an railway station jammed with people), *Renmin Ribao*, 1992.03.03, p. 5; 'Dapi waidi min'gong yongru Shanghai' (Multitudes of migrant workers flicking into Shanghai from other provinces), *Renmin Ribao*, 1993.02.04, p. 4.

[50] 'Min'gong chao yong dao xibei, lanzhouzhan renmanweihuan' (Migrant waves hitting the northwest region, Lanzhou railway station extremely packed), *Renmin Ribao*, 1989.04.04, p.2.

they became a group of messiness'. [51] The result was 'damage of social order' and extreme chaos (*hunluanbukan*). In contrast, government officials and staff members of railways and other state-owned public service sector agencies were glorified as taking part in a 'combat', desperately fighting to control the 'blind waves' and to restore an endangered social order. [52]

Voices from migrant workers themselves were also quoted to further support this official rationale. In an interview with some migrant workers at the Beijing railway station in 1989, the journalist aimed to find out the reasons why peasants 'blindly' migrated. Quoting words by migrant workers themselves, the interview report implies that migrant peasants were driven by poverty in the countryside and that their major method of job searching was just 'waiting at the train station'until 'people from other construction teams came to the station to recruit migrant workers, kicking to awake us and asking:"Hey, want a job?" And then you go.'[53]

In a 1994 article [54], a letter from a migrant worker was quoted to reflect 'real ideas' from this group of people. But ironically, the words cited in the story made the migrant worker sound like an apologist for the establishment. In the migrant worker's reported opinion it was resonable for the government and urban residents to labelhis ilk, rural migrants, as *mangliu*:

> …to my understanding, why in our society are migrant workers
>
> called '*mangliu*'? There are several reasons: Firstly, they migrate
>
> blindly; secondly, there is great difference between the urban and

[51] 'Chunyun chezhan fang min'gong' (An interview with migrant workers in the train station during the Spring festival transport), *Renmin Ribao*, 1994.01.31, p.2.

[52] E.g. 'Chuan Su Xiang E sisheng caiqu cuoshi, quanshuo zhiliu waidi min'gong fanxiang' (Measures taken in Sichuan, Jiangsu, Hunan and Hubei provinces to persuade lingering migrant workers to return), *Renmin Ribao*, 1989. 03.10, p. 2; 'huoche qiche yiqi pao, tielu gonglu tongshi mang, baiwan min'gong huijia guonian xinglu bunan' (Trains and buses, railways and highways, cooperating to send millions of migrant workers home to celebrate the Chinese new year), *Renmi Ribao*, 1993.01.17, p. 4; 'Nanjing zhan anquan jieyun min'gong 10 yu wan' (More than 100 thousands migrant workers safely transported in Nanjing railway station), *Renmin Ribao*, 1993.02.07, p. 2.

[53] 'Tamen weishenme yongjin cheng?– Beijing zhan qian yu min'gong de duihua' (Why they flock into the cities?An interview with migrant workers in front of the Beijing Railway station), *Renmin Ribao*, 1989.03.14, p. 5.

[54] 'Yiwei min'gong toushu benbao tulu xinsheng' (A letter from a migrant worker revealing his true ideas), *Renmin Ribao*, 1994.02.15, p. 2.

rural people; thridly, migrant workers have contaminated our society's morality, and caused very negative impacts on social stability, and so on.

He then sharply criticized what he called 'incivility','criminality' and 'corruption' of migrant workers. In terms of incivility, according to him, because the jobs migrant workers take on are 'dirty' and 'rough' (*zanghuo, cuhuo*), they do not often change their clothes, and the ways in which they talk and behave may have negative influence on children in the cities; they therefore deservediscrimination from urbanites. Additionally, migrant rural labourers tend to commit crime because they are poor and have very low levels of literacy (*wenhua suzhi di*) and thus are consumed by a desire of survival. 'Whoever you are, as long as you give them money and food, they will do everything for you, including criminal actions.'And lastly, migrants are corrupt because they rely on personal networks and especially leading figures and labour contractors among them to find jobs. Consequntly bribery and illegal labour trafficking prevail. Base on this moralistic condemnation, he finally suggested the government should take effective measures to control and regulate rural migration. In his opinion, a government-organized labour 'market', which operates on the lines of army recruitment ofsoldiers, would be better than 'natural' (*zirande*) migration. And these ideas were praised by the journalist as being 'full of true emotions' and 'helpful for urban people to understand the *mangliu* in a better way'.

Overall, spontaneous migration was seen to have undermined the state-controlled system of organized labour distribution between different spaces divided by both national jurisdictions and also the rural-urban duality. Due to its lack of 'organizationality' and guidance from the state, it was purported that,

> … the spontaneous'migration wave' (*min'gong chao*) has a high
>
> degree of blindness, resulting in not only huge pressure on the public

transport and urban adminstration, but also a lot of sufferings for migrant workers themselves and waste of productive resources in the prcess of migrating. Thus, it urgently needs relevant government departments to organize, guide and protect. [55]

Figure 5.7 The State Council's circular on tightening the control over rural migrants [56]

To rectify these'problems' and recover state authority and social control, as represented in the surge of the number of articles regarding state regulations in the *People's Daily*, a national campaign of incarceration and repatriation of migrant workers had been initiated by the central government and cooperatively implemented by all the levels of state power. On March 5, 1989, when the country was caught in deep economic and political turmoil, the State Council issued a circular on strictly controlling rural migrant workers, as represented on the first page of the next day's *People's Daily*. (Figure 5.7) Following this, in the next few years, especially in 1994 as shown in figure 5.4, a large number of news and commentary articles were publised to positively propagate and justify the government's tightening regulation policies and how these polices and

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[55]   'Ruhe rang "min'gong chao" buzai mangmu liudong' (How to prevent 'migration waves of migrant workers' from flowing blindly), in *Renmin Ribao*, 1994.01.07, p.4.
[56]   Source: *People's Daily*, March 6, 1989, p. 1.

directives were effectively enforced by various levels of government. [57]

However, the process of discursively legetimizing oppressive policies targeted on rural migrant workers was not without contention and struggle. As reflected in the *People's Daily*'s articles, despite absolute dominance of the state's discourse of 'policing the crisis' through implementing rigorous policies and measures, there were alternative ideas, though under-represented and biased as examined above, both from the migrant workers themselves and other social actor-speakers including specialists. In one of the very rare exceptions, even though the journalist described some negative results engendered by large scale population movement, in this interview, a female migrant worker's critical opinions about the discriminatoryterm *mangliu* was directly quoted: 'Everybody calls us *mangliu*. But urban people don't do dirty and hard jobs like constructing buildings. Why isn't it good for us to come here? We can earn some money and also undertake work despised by urban people. Isn't that a contribution to our coutry's development?'[58] Other opinions refecting different approaches to migrant issues from commentators or specialists in the fields of rural economy and agriculture, social management, sociology, and so on, were also cited as suggestions for the government. Such thinking supported spontaneous migration, justifying it as a natural result of the market economy and rejected policies or

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[57]E.g. 'Chuan Su Xiang E sisheng caiqu cuoshi, quanshuo zhiliu waidi min'gong fanxiang' (Measures taken in Sichuan, Jiangsu, Hunan and Hubei provinces to persuade lingering migrant workers to return), *Renmin Ribao*, 1989. 03.10, p. 2; 'Hunan fangzhi min'gong chao gognzuo zuo zai qian' (Preemptive measures taken to prevent 'migrant waves' in Hunan province), *Renmin Ribao*, 1994.01.16, p. 1; 'Nanyue dadi min'gong youxu liudong' (Rural laborers migrate orderly in southern Guangdong province), *Renmin Ribao*, 1994.01.21, p. 1; 'Henan you jihua shudao min'gong chao' (Migrant waves regulated in a planned way in Henan province), Renmin Ribao, 1994.01.31, p. 4; 'Hubei shudao min'gong chao you liangfang' (In Hubei province, effective measures taken to rein migrant waves), Renmin Ribao, 1994.02.17, p. 1; 'Jingxin zuzhi youxu xina, Shanghai tuoshan shudao min'gong chao' (In Shanghai, migrant waves effectively eliminated through careful organization and ordered recruitment), Renmin Ribao, 1994.02.20, p. 1; 'Qianghua guanli xinxi goutong, Anhui yindao min'gong youxu liudong' (In Anhui province, enhanced management and effective informational communication brought ordered migration), Renmin Ribao, 1994.02.20, p. 1; 'Hainan gei waidi min'gong fa jiuye xukezheng' (In Hainan province, work permits issued to migrant workers from other provinces), Renmin Ribao, 1994.03.12, p. 4; 'Guowuyuan jueding: yanhai he jing jin hu deng min'gong shuru diqu chunjie hou yige yue nei ting zhao waidi xin min'gong' (State Council: Recruitment of new migrant workers to be stopped within one month after the Chinese new year in costal migrant worker receiving areas, Beijing, Tianjin, and Shanghai) , *Renmin Ribao*, 1994.11.26, p. 1.
[58] 'Chunyun chezhan fang min'gong' (An interview with migrant workers in the train station during the Spring festival transport), *Renmin Ribao*, 1994.01.31, p.2.

actions aimed atreturning to a strict state-planned labour distribution system. [59]

However, overall, these sources of ideas were carefully selected and defined within the boundary of the macro-frame of 'crisis and control'. As reflected in these discourses, attempts to legitimize spontaneousmigration in this period were largely marginalized and only had legitimacy when highlighting migrant labour's positive role in the natioal interests and economic development. The very core issue lying at the center of rural-urban migration, the *hukou* sytem, and equal citizenship right to migration, were rarely, if not never, mentioned in the *People's Daily*'s discourse. As for issues of infringement of labour rights and migrant workers' access to public service in the city, these problems would not be touched until their status as legal transients were fully accepted and legitimized in the 2000s.

A new working class in discursive making

The hardline policies of domestic migration in the 1980s and the 1990s were gradually replaced by easing approaches in the new millennium. Since 2002, there has been a surge in the number of mirgant-related articles and changes of discursive modes of framing in the *People's Daily,* in tandem with changing macro policial economic situations and the party-state's policy adaptation. With the new generation of top leadership taking power, a new political discourse of constructing a socialist 'harmonious society' (*hexie shehui*) and a series of policies accentuating fairdistribution of social welfare resources among citizens were introduced, with aims of sewing upenlargingand increasingly risky social fissure engendered by unbalanced market-oriented reform and thus rehabilitating the Party-state's political legitimacy undermined by escalatingsocial unrest marked by discontentand resistance of laid-off SOE

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[59]   E.g. 'Wei min'gong ming ge buping' (Do justice to migrant workers), Renmin Ribao, 1989.03.25, p. 2; 'Mangliu bieyi' (Some different thoughts about *mangliu*), Renmin Ribao, 1992.12.12, p. 2.; 'Zhuanjia jiu yindao "min'gong chao" tichu jianyi: jiji shudao xietiao, zengjia jiuye jihui' (Experts suggest to control migrant waves by positive regulation and creating employment opportunities), *Renmin Ribao*, 1994.04.17, p. 8; 'Min'gong chao de shixiang duice jianyi' (Some suggestions about countermeasures for resolving 'migrant waves'), *Renmin Ribao,* 1994.04.18, p. 2.

industrial workers and heavily deprived peasants and rural migrant workers. At the same time, since China obtained its WTO membership in 2001, the Chinese economy has been rapidly integrated into the global economy, resulting in the striking rise of export-oriented economic development, in which net exports accounted for over 30% of the GDP growth in the 2001 to 2008, about twice of that of the 1990s. (K. Guo & N'Diaye, 2009) Both the new political approach and the new mode of economic development summon de-regulation of spontaneous migration.

In terms of migration, with the demolition of the notorious 'Custody and Repatriation' (*shourong qiansong*) system, in the aftermathof the case of Sun Zhigang that stunned the whole nation in 2003[60], discriminatory and violent oppression on transients in the cities has been gradually, to a large degree, loosened and de-regulated. Though still severely underprivileged under the *hukou* regime, migrant workers now could move freely without 'fear or fret'[61]of being detained and repatriated. The general criminalization of spontaneous migration as seen in the 1990s now ceased. As a result, compared with dominant negative narratives in the late 1980s and the early 1990s as analysed above, positive representation of migrant workers came to be the primary frame in the second phase.

As reflected in several official policy documents[62], spontaneous migration was

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[60] The Custody and Repatriation regulation was based on a 1982 centralgovernment decree originally targeted on beggars or homeless people in the city. Under this regulation, people would be detained and returned to their places of origins by the police if they are not legal residents (with *hukou*) or temporary residents (with *zanzhuzheng*, temporary living permit) of the cities where they were living. Then it was expanded to control all the 'three-without' people (*sanwu renyuan*, people without 'fixed place of residence, means of livelihood and permits to live in the city'), including migrant workers many of whom suffered from the oppressive system. Sun Zhigang was a university graduate who worked for a local company in Guangzhou, the capital city of China's most economically prosperous province. On March 17, 2003, because he did not have a temporary residence permit, Sun was detained by the local police and three days later he died of reported torture in the medical clinic of a detention center in Guangzhou. Under huge pressure from media and public criticism, the Custody and Repatriation was finally abolished by the central government in June 2003. For a brief description of Sun's case, see '84 Days and Nights in Guangzhou', available at http://www1.china.org.cn/english/2003/Jul/69295.htm,retrieved on August 11, 2011.
[61] James Cousins. 'A starling's spring rondel'.In Burton Egbert Stevenson, (ed.) *The Home Book of Verse*, Vol. 3, available at http://www.gutenberg.org/files/2621/2621-h/2621-h.htm#2H_4_0062, retrieved on January 24, 2012.
[62] E.g. 'Guowuyuan bangonbg ting guanyu zuohao nongmin Jincheng wugong jiuye guanli he fuwu de tongzhi' (Circular on Improving the Management and Services to Migrant Workers issued by the general

now said to have profound significance for the country's urbanization and economic development. In the *People's Daily*, editorials and commentary articles by government officials were published to support and further explain these new ideas and policies. A 2006 editorial, in response to opinions of the central government's policy document, asserts that 'migrant workers are the most active, capable and respectable new social force in cities and countryside. They reshape themselves in the process of creating wealth of the society. They have been inseparable from urban development and residents'daily life as well as prosperity and progress of civilization in the countryside'. [63] In two commentary articles, a central government official argued that compared with market-driven migration, state-controlled labour migration was not a success. By working in the cities, migrant workers had made great contributions for rural income increase and rural development, strengthening the country's economic competitive powerin the global market after its entry into the WTO, development of urbantertiary industry and life quality.[64]And because of their significant contributions, migrant workers should be respected rather than dscriminated. [65] Another government official holds the same idea that 'although they still cannot get urban hukou and have to float like migratory birds, without them, the cities would lose vitality, just like vessels without blood, and urban life would not be able to continue.'[66] More importantly, migrant

office of the State Council), *Renmin Ribao*, 2003.01.16, p.1; 'Jiu bumen lianhe fachu tongzhi: qingli quxiao dui nongmin'gong de qishixing guiding'(Joint circular issued by nine central government departments: cleaning up and abolishing discriminatory regulations targeted on migrant workers), *Renmin Ribao*, 2004.08.04, p.2; 'Guowuyuan guanyu Jiejue Nongmin'gong wenti de Ruogan Yijian' (Some opinions on resolving the problems faced by migrant workers issued by the State Council),*Renmin Ribao*, 2006.03.28, p. 1; 'Guowuyuan bangongting guanyu qieshi zuohao dangqian nongmin'gong gongzuo de tongzhi' (Circular on Improving Current Work Regarding Migrant Workers issued by the general office of the State Council), *Renmin Ribao*, 2008.12.21, p.3.

[63] 'Quan shehui douyao guanxin he baohu nongmin'gong' (Migrant workers should be cared about and protected by the whole society), *Renmin Ribao*, 2006.03.28, p.1; Similar opinions can been in 'Nongmin'gong: chengxiang xietiao fazhan de shenglijun' (Migrant workers: new forces in the harmonious development of urban and rural areas), *Renmin Ribao*, 2006.02.13, p.9.

[64] 'Women gai zenyang kandai nongmin'gong wenti' (How should we understand the issue of migrant workers?), *Renmin Ribao*, 2002.06.13, p. 5; 'Zhongguo xiandaihua jincheng zhong de nongmin'gong wenti' (The issue of migrant workers in the course of China's modernization), *Renmin Ribao*, 2006.12.01, p. 7.

[65] 'Buyao qishi nongmin'gong' (Do not discriminate migrant workers), *Renmin Ribao*, 2002.05.24, p.5.

[66] 'Nongmin'gong yeshi chengshi caifu de chuangzaozhe' (migrant workers are also creators of urban wealth), *Renmin Ribao*, 2002.02.11, p. 9.

workers also started to be described as protagonists(*zhujue*) of the Chinese industrial working class, rather than merely traditional peasants.[67]The fact that migrant workers had been defined by the official labour union as new members of the Chinese working class and that theyshould be accepted and integrated by the union organization, which would allegedlyameliorate the poor conditions of migrant workers, was hailed.[68]

In comparison with the previous stage, in the selected articles of the period from 2002 to 2008, with more diverse genres of discourse including photographs which were rarely seen before, a large number of stories were dedicated to positive exemplars of individual migrant workers, depicting a largely virtuous, law-abiding and progressive image of the group. Various stories of individual migrant workers were published aperiodically to reflect slices of their daily life or their noteworthy achievements. In a commentary, the journalist tells the story of a young migrant worker who rescued an elderly personwho had been in a car crash, but left without leaving his name. The author identifies the young migrant worker's actionsas a good example of behaviourthat defies some urbanites' negative image of migrant workers. They undertake 'dirty, tiring, heavy and dangerous' work, but this does not mean that they are degenerate. On the contrary, most of them are 'honest, dutiful, well-behaved and law-abiding', and some of them have shown high levels of moralityand should be good examples for urban people. [69] Stories about officially-commended outstanding migrant worker representatives were publishedtherebylauding the behaviour of the group.

For example, in a story about Bao Xianfeng, the country's first migrant worker winner of the prestigiousofficial 'May 1st Labor Medal', he was portrayed as an

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[67] 'Dang nongmin'gong chengwei zhujue' (When migrant workers become the protagonist), *Renmin Ribao*, 2003.09.15, p. 13; 'Nongmin'gong shi chanye gongren de zhongyao zucheng bufen' (Migrant workers are an vital component of industrial workers), *Renmin Ribao*, 2004.12.28, p. 9.

[68] 'Min'gong: gongren jieji duiwu de xin chengyuan' (Migrant workers: new member of the contingent of working class), *Renmin Ribao*, 2003.09.26, p.5.

[69]'Cong yige min'gong jiuren shuoqi' (Some thoughts aboutthe story of a migrant worker who saved a life), *Renmin Ribao*, 2002.05.29, p.4.

assiduous, dedicated and generous person, who had inspired others. As one migrant worker said:'It's unbelievable that we migrant workers can get such a big honor! As long as you are willing to study and work hard, you will have great prospects'. [70] In another feature article, a migrant worker from Henan province who sacrificed himself to save two children in a train crash was eulogized as a 'common hero' and an incarnation of 'outstanding moral quality' of the group of migrant workers. [71] Therefore, migrant workers are no longer threatening 'blind waves', but 'brothers and sisters' of 'ours'. [72]And *dagong*(to work as a migrant worker in the cities) is no long a shameful and humble choice. On the contrary, as the song composed by a migrant worker band goes, now it is a glorious choice. (figure 5.8)

Figure 5.8 '*Dagong* is the most glorious!' (The *People's Daily*, 2005.12.23, p.11)

With this general positive representation, major topics about migrant workers in this period as shown in the selected articles of the *People's Daily* include

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[70]   'Bao Xianfeng: yiyi min'gong zhong de yiyuan' (Bao Xianfeng: one member of the 0.1 billion migrant workers), *Renmin Ribao*, 2004.04.30, p. 5.
[71]   'Li Xuesheng: nongmin'gong de rensheng zhuangju' (Li Xuesheng: heroic feat of a migrant worker), *Renmin Ribao*, 2005.03.23, p. 5; for some other examples, see e.g. 'Guangzhou huanweigong Tan Zhenfeng de zhui 'xing' lu' (Tan Zhenfeng, an Guangzhou environmental protection worker's story of chasing the 'superstar'), *Renmin Ribao*, 2007.10.09, p.8; 'Yige nongmin'gong de jingcai rensheng' (A migrant worker's brilliant life story), *Renmin Ribao*, 2007.12.30, p. 7.
[72]'Wode min'gong xiongdi' (My migrant worker brothers), *Renmin Ribao*, 2005.01.11, p. 15.

problems of institutional and cultural discrimination and legal rights infringement (especially the obstinateproblem of salary arrears), social rights and access to resources of public service (e.g. migrant children's education), and political integration (unionization of migrant workers), which can be summarized into three catchwords: *weiquan* (rights protection/defence), *fuwu* (service), and *yindao guanli*(guidance and management). Together, these aspects contribute to discursively constructing a new relationship between the migrant workers and the Party-state, which is different from that of the previous stage.

The rise of the discourse of *weiquan*, a buzzword that emerged in the Chinese media since 2003, essentially is a discursive response and manifestationof the increasingly confrontational relationship between the powerful and the powerless and ensuing rights defence activism in Chinese society since the late 1990s. Marked by several prominent cases including that of Sun Zhigang mentioned above, 2003 is deemed as the 'year of civil rights defence'. Eventually the term came to cover a very broad range of rights protection activism, from scatteredpersonal resistance to large scale 'mass incidents' (*qunti shijian*), which aims to improve and secure individual or collective citizenship rights by resorting to largely peaceful and legal means within the current political framework. (Hung, 2010, pp. 333-338)

As one of the most downtrodden groups of the Chinese society, migrant workers have had to grapple with systematic discriminationand severe economic deprivation under the caste system generated by the rural-urban *hukou*. Thus, as we shall see in the next few chapters, they have been deeply involved in *weiquan* activism. Since the 2000s, a large number of tragic cases of powerless migrant workers trying to get their delayed or docked money back, by climbing high scaffolds and thereappealing to media and the public for support, have became journalistic potluckfor the Chinese metropolitan media – motivated as it is by both the dicates of the audience maximisation and those of journalisticprofessionalism.Cases of many other kinds of labour rights

infringements, such as deleteriousworking environment, industrial diseases, and so on, mushroomed. Given the width and depth of the social grudges these infringements had caused, to properly address these problems was believed to be the sine qua non for constructing a harmonious society. [73]

In the selected articles of the *People's Daily*, the major focus regarding migrants' lawful rights since 2002 is on, among other issues, the thorny problem of wage arrears which had incurred extensive social conflict, indignation and criticism. Migrant workers'earning is described as *xuehanqian* (money of blood and sweat), and thus any infringement on their rightful remuneration is totally unbearable. In search of the reasons why salary of migrant workers had been so grievously temporized, illegalcontractual practices in industrial chains are considered as the most major and directly-relevant element in the causation of the problem. [74]Other reasons include migrant workers' ignorance of labour protection laws and means of accessing legal aid available to them, and also apathyand nonfeasanceof local government departments. [75] Some of these local governments themselves are also criticized for issuing IOU (*dabaitiao*) to migrant workers in official image or face projects (*xingxiang gongcheng*). [76]

According to this argument, on the one hand, misconduct of industrial sectors and some local governments should be directly responsible for migrant workers'miserable conditions. But on the other hand, the problem was worsened by the reality that there are so many migrant workers and most of them lack consciousness of utilizing legal means to protect themselves. The reason why

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[73] 'Jintian, yinggai wei nongmin'gong xiongdi zuoxie shenme' (Today, what should we do for our migrant worker brothers), *Renmin Ribao*, 2004.11.25, p.10; 'Cong 'min'gong huang' kan goujian hexie shehui' (some thoughts on constructing a harmonious society from the perspective of 'paucity of migrant workers'), *Renmin Ribao*, 2005.07.20, p.9.
[74] 'Tuoqian min'gong gongzi de beihou' (Behind the problem of arrears of migrant workers' wage), *Renmin Ribao*, 2002.03.21, p.4; 'Qieshi baozhang nongmin'gong de hefa quanyi' (Legal rights of migrant workers should be tangibly protected), *Renmin Ribao*, 2003.02.12, p. 12; 'Qianxin beihou de 'tuoqian lian'' ('Chain of overdue payment' behind the problem of arrears), *Renmin Ribao*, 2004.01.12, p. 13.
[75] 'Wei min'gong zhuidao gongzi' (Help migrant workers get their money back), *Renmin Ribao*, 2002.01.21, p.2; 'Bierang min'gong wei taoxin fanchou' (Do not let migrant workers worry about how to claim back salaries), *Renmin Ribao*, 2005.01.04, p. 13.
[76]'Qianxin beihou de 'tuoqian lian'' ('Chain of overdue payment' behind the problem of arrears), *Renmin Ribao*, 2004.01.12, p. 13.

migrant workers' salary is low and often overdue is because, as one author writes, 'there are too many of them. Consequently, their labour is cheap. Also most migrant workers do not have a strong modern consciousness and their ability of defending their rights (*weiquan*) is so low that they can not fully realize their rightful earnings'. [77] Due to their inherent shortcomings, mgirant workers are like a pile of dispersed sands (*yipan sansha*) incapable of fighting against 'evil forces', and their scattered *weiquan* actions normally lead to 'useless and tragic' results. [78]

It was at this moment that the top leadership and its policy bodies of the party-state staged the drastic 'battle' and became the savior of the poor and deprived. They not only enacted and implemented 'spring-wind-like' new policies and regulations to eliminateillegal practices of industries and some local governments, but also ardently cleaned up unreasonable administrative restrictions on migrant workers and effectively provided more public service (*fuwu*) to migrant workers. [79] A national campaign of 'cleaning up arrearage' (*qingqian*) had been launched since 2004 after the 2003 story that the Chinese premier helped a migrant worker get his money back was extensively covered by national and local media. [80] And since 2005, a nation-wide public service campaign of 'spring-wind action' (*chunfeng xingdong*) targeted on migrant workers was initiate[d] [by the central and local governments] to provide employment information, policy education, occupational training, and so on. A large number of news stories were published to propagate how effective these measures taken by the government were.[81] In contrast to reports of themigrant workers' clamour

[77] 'Guanzhu min'gong hefa quanyi' (Focus on migrant workers' legal rights), *Renmin Ribao*, 2002.01.09, p. 12.

[78]'Wei min'gong zhuidao gongzi' (Help migrant workers get their money back), *Renmin Ribao*, 2002.01.21, p.2.

[79] 'Guoban tongzhi ru chunfeng fumian wenuan qianwan nongmin'gong xintian' (Circular of the State Council is like spring wind warming hearts of millions of migrant workers), *Renmin Ribao*, 2003.01.21, p. 6.

[80]'You zongli wei min'gong tao gongqian xiangdao de'(Some thoughts on the story of the Premier helping a migrant worker claim his delayed salary), *Renmin Ribao*, 2003.11.07, p. 6;'Jingdong zongli de min'gong qianxin' (The premier disturbed by the problem of migrant salary arrears), *Renmin Ribao*, 2003.11.10, p. 13.

[81] E.g. 'Shandong chunfeng xingdong wei nong'mingong song gangwei' (Shandong province: migrant workers offered job opportunities in the spring-wind action), *Renmin Ribao*, 2005.02.20, p.1; 'Guangxi:

andcarols, a laudatory and lengthyfeature article passionatelyextolled the central government and the People's National Congress, the country's top legislative body, for their 'wholehearted concern for ordinary people and deep understanding of public sentiments'. It was asserted that with the help from the government, 'interests of migrant workers have been effectively defended and hearts of millions of them havethawed.'[82]

In this process, the official trade union was represented as one of the most important actors in organizing dispersedmigrant workers in their activities of defending rights and also promoting self-improvement.With more and more migrant workers integrated into the official union, it was metaphorically framed as the migrants''family in the city' or 'mother family' (*niangjia*),[83] which is reminiscent of the traditional cultural perception that a married woman's parents's family normally speak for her when she is treated unfairly by her husband's family members. With all these purportedly all-out efforts by the Party and government, migrant workers' faces light up with smiles of pleasure and gratitude in a published photograph. (figure 5.9)

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chunfeng xingdong muyu nongmin'gong' (Guangxi province: migrant workers benefited from the spring wind action), *Renmin Ribao*, 2005.02.22, p.6; 'Dalian: wei fancheng nongmin'gong kaizhan chunfeng xingdong' (Dalian city: spring wind action launched for return migrant workers), *Renmin Ribao*, 2007.02.26, p.6.

[82] 'Qingqian, weile shuqianwan nongmin'gong de liyi – quanguo renda changweihui, guowuyuan guanxin jiejue tuoqian nongmin'gong gongzi wenti jishi' (Cleaning up arrears: for the sake for millions of migrant workers – a memoir of the standing committees of the National Congress and the State Council's work of resolving migrant work salary problems), *Renmin Ribao*, 2005.03.02, p.5.

[83] E.g 'Dang nongmin'gong chengwei zhujue' (When migrant workers become the protagonist), *Renmin Ribao*, 2003.09.15, p. 13; 'Shapingba: nongmin'gong youle ziji de 'jia'' (In Shapingba, migrant worker have had their own 'family'), *Renmin Ribao*, 2005.11.20, p.6; 'An zai chengli youge 'jia'– fasheng zai Harbin nongmin'gong gonghui li de gushi' (I have a 'family' in the city – stories from the trade union of migrant workers in Harbin), *Renmin Ribao*, 2005.12.04, p.7.

Figure 5.9 'Migrant workers smile after 'blood and sweat money'is claimed back'[84]

To sum up, in the second phase since 2002, in the discourse about migrant issues in the *People's Daily*, migrant workers are framed as new members of the Chinese working class, while the relationship between the Party-state and migrant workers has been redefined as 'savior and deprived outcast', rather than 'order-maintainer and touble-maker' as seen in the late 1980s and the 1990s. To reconstruct its legitimacy in respect of migrant worker issues, the Party-state has resorted to its pre-reform era political discursive resources of class hierarchy, in which, as mentioned earlier, the working class was dominant and being a member of working class was a prestigiousstatus. By recalling the nostalgic memory of the golden age of working class in Mao's time, it aims to ideologically legitimize the migrant workers' instrumental status of being part of the state's developmentalist pacakge and also bring discursive comforts to the 'unfinished' new working class.

However, paradoxically, this ideological construction is in deep conflict with the concomitant representation of migrant workers as passive, unorganized, incapable and of low quality (*duzhidi*) as contributors of labour. As seen above, despite positive descriptions in the second stage, migrant workers in both

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[84] Source: *People's Daily*, 2004.12.23, p. 4.

periods are predominantly depicted as passive actors who are subject to either 'blind'pursuit of money that drove them as *mangliu* or having low capability of defending their rights which exposed them toexploitation and abuse of power. In either case, they are passive, hopeless, and helpless. The main reason for this is their nature characterised by under-developed rural *suzhi* (quality) arising from their peasant origins. This is why one of the major components of official treatment package prescribed by the Party-state has been training and education. What is absent from these narratives is an unquestioned presupposition that, *suzhi*, rather than traditional class status, is the core estimatingelement in enacting hierarchization of social relations and value distribution. (Anagnost, 2004; Kipnis, 2006, 2007)It is in this realm of bio-politics where the human body becomes a focial point of discursive contention. On the one hand, migrant workers''low population quality' and their excessively huge quantitymake them devalued according to the market logic. But on the hand, their devaluedness constitutes the so-called capital bonusof population (*renkou hongli*) that fuels economic growth and urban coziness. As examined above, migrant workers are represented as positive forces only when they are framed as making contributions to urban life and national development. Therefore, as Anagnost (2004, p. 193) argues, the'coding of the migrant body as having low quality justifies the extraction of surplus value while it also serves to legitimate new regimes of social differentiation and governmentality'.

Summary

In this chapter, I have examined news and opinion discourse purposively selected from the People's Daily and relevant policy changes in the past decades, especially two periods covering the time from the late 1980s to the mid 1990s and the years since 2002. Descriptive and critical analysis of these articles has shown how differently migrant workers as a marginalized group has been framed by the official discourse as time goes. The dominant negative

representation of migrant workers as passive and threatening 'blind' forces was replaced by relatively positive portrayal of the group as a new force of productivity in serving for the urban life as well as the national development. In terms of its relationship to migrant workers, the party-state was constructed as an incarnation of justice, protecting vulnerable migrants from 'evil forces' and providing services to improve their *suzhi* and thus make their closer to the time of becoming a fully qualified urban citizen. Also a nostalgic discourse of working class, the legacy of the revolutionary past, was deployed to lubricate and legitimize the unpleasant reality. Migrant workers are said to be part of the working class, the (at least theoretically) leading class of the country as enshrined in its constitution.

But these glorifying discourses have been in contradiction with the concurrent ideology of *suzhi*, a hegemonic discourse that dominates official policies as well as media discourse, rendering the Chinese migrant workers in a paradoxical biopolitical condition: on the one hand, based on the long entrenched cultural perception of peasantry and rurality as well as institutionalized socio-economic gaps between the rural and the urban, they are systematically undervalued according to their alleged inferior nature of backwardness; on the other hand, they are highly valued as a de-individualized group of massive labor whose diversity and inalienable natural rights as equal members of the society are simply effaced in the Party-state's developmentalist framework, in which it is their value of instrumentality in the national development that makes their presence necessary.

Chapter 6

Contesting Hukou: Dialectics of Inclusion and Exclusion

In the post-1949 domestic migration in China, *hukou*, or the household registration system, is the very core institution in control of population reproduction and mobility and social resource distribution among rural and urban residents. It is the key mechanism through which differentiated categories of citizenship rights between rural people (agricultural population) and urban citizens (non-agricultural population) were introduced and implemented since the 1950s. It is one of the major institutions of social exclusion and one of the major sources of social oppression and discrimination in the Chinese society. In terms of migrant workers, because of their rural origins and peasant identity, *hukou* system is the main threshold that denies them legal urban residence, identity of urban citizenship and access to relevant welfare rights that are only available to citizens with local urban *hukou*. Without urban *hukou*, despite the fact that migrant workers toil in the cities and make great contributions to the urban development, they remain peasants in terms of their citizenship rights. Thus *hukou* is the decisive element in the first aspect of Chinese migrant citizenship, viz. the membership of urban social community. It is the fundamental mechanism through which migrant workers are excluded from urban citizenship.

In this chapter, by comparing and analyzing sampled articles from 7 major party organs and 6 market-oriented metropolitan newspapers (see chapter 4), I shall examine how different actors-speakers in Chinese society have participated in public contention to frame the *hukou* system and its relevance to issues of migrant workers. First I shall briefly analyze the historical institutional origins of the *hukou* system and its impacts on Chinese domestic migration. Then different discursive modes of framing between party and market newspapers and also between newspapers of migrant sending and receiving places will be

compared to understand how different media institutional and socio-economic contexts affect textual construction. The dynamic discursive struggles between mainstream discourse of the party-state's *hukou* policy and alternative discourses that aim to push or challenge discursive boundaries of the dominant policy will also be probed.

Political economy of the *hukou* system

Historical origins of the hukou system

The fundamental difference between the pre-reform and post-reform migrations in post-1949 China is that the former was basically a tool for the state to fulfill its goals at the cost of individuals' interests and rights to freely leave and return, while the latter partly revived people's freedom to voluntarily move in their own country due to the burgeoning market economy. However, no matter whether it was voluntary or otherwise, all migration in communist China has been subject to the obstinate *hukou* system, which has survived the marketization reform to retain to this day to control over population mobility and allocation of public.

Since the communists successfully established a centrally planned economy in the mid-1950s, the concern with rigid maintenance of social order as well as internal primitive accumulation for industrial development led to the establishment of *hukou* system, a mechanism of exclusion that amounts to 'internal colonization' or what Barth has termed ethnic 'boundary markers'. (cited in Solinger, 1999b, p. 27)   The characteristics of discriminating against part of its own people as despised outcastes based on their residential registration, makes the *hukou* system a mechanism of institutionalized exclusion that is unprecedented in human history.

At the core of the current regime of population control, the *hukou*, or household registration, functions *de facto* as an internal passport system. (K. W. Chan, 1999)Despite the fact that there were precedents of population control and

household registration in the imperial and the republican times, the *hukou* system essentially transcended them in terms of its far-reaching ability to achieve 'unprecedented uniformity, rural-urban duality, and state control' of population movement and economic resources through systematically 'creating and policing divisions, exclusion, and discrimination'. (F.-L. Wang, 2005, 2010)

The establishment of *hukou* system dates back to the early 1950s. In the first few years after the founding of the People's Republic, freedom of migration was confirmed and supported by the party-state and instituted in laws. In this period, *hukou* was only a population registration system with no fundamental difference from any previous household monitoring policies. In principle, except for some 'counter-revolutionary' elements, most people, including rural residents were allowed to move freely. But in the mid 1950s, due to peasants' discontent over and resistance to the collectivization of farming in the agricultural cooperation movement, millions of peasants swarmed into the cities, resulting in crisis in both rural and urban areas. On the one hand, this presented serious impingement on Mao's agricultural collectivization campaign, which was not only an economic means supposed to increase agricultural productivity and thus support industrialization, but also politically significant in demolishing traditional class relations and reconstructing social frameworks in rural society. And on the other hand, in the cities, a sudden increase of large numbers of migrants posed challenges to the urban society in terms of employment, food and other resource rationing and housing, all of which services had already been undermined by a series of economic policies that prioritized investment in heavy industry rather than infrastructure and light industry. (Yulin Zhang, 2003)

Peasants' actions of leaving the rural areas and 'blindly' flowing into the cities were seen by the party-state as 'betrayal'. Given the fact that peasants had always been viewed as the most loyal allies of the revolutionary working class and its vanguard, the Communist Party, this was even more unbearable. To rectify their 'mistakes', a socialist education campaign targeted on peasants was

waged. As the *People's Daily* acrimoniously warned:

> Now we have been faced with an extremely severe problem of thought-work. That is we need to explain to the broad peasant masses and rural cadres: if we put individual and department interests in the first place, rather than the whole nation's interests and the socialist cause, then in fact we will abolish the socialist cause, the Party's leadership, and also the great expectations of peasants.[85]

Institutionally, to respond to these challenges, an unprecedentedly strict *hukou* system was enacted in the mid 1950s through several governmental regulations regarding population movement between rural and urban areas and across different administrative jurisdictions. It was then further entrenched by a series of supporting policies of stringent control on food and domicile rationing in a newly established centrally-planned economy. (Cheng & Selden, 1994; Solinger, 1999b, pp. 43-44; Haiguang Wang, 2003)[86] Since that time, hundreds of directives and documents have been issued by various official policy bodies at different levels to substantiate, fine-tune, and adapt the system according to ever-changing situations of migration control. Gradually, the system was endowed with multifaceted functions of collecting demographical information,

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[85]'Liangshi wenti he sixiang wenti' (The problem of food supplies and the problem of thoughts), *Renmin Ribao*, 1957.08.05, p.1.

[86] As early as in 1950, the Ministry of Public Security issued an internal directive to monitor and control 'reactionists' and other 'special elements' of the population, and then in the next year issued the first regulation about setting up a household registration system among urban residents. In 1953, the registration system was extended to the countryside. But all these early regulations did not have purpose of fixing people in their residence places other than recording geographical information of the population until 1955, when the State Council promulgated four directives that would have profound impact on the Chinese peasantry: *Guanyu Jianli Jingchang Hukou Dengji Zhidu de Zhishi* (Directive on the Establishment of a Permanent System of Household Registration), *Nongcun Liangshi Tonggou Tonxiao Zanxing Banfa* (Temporary Methods for Unified Purchase and Supply of Grain in Rural Areas), *Shizhen Liangshi Dingliang Gongying Zanxing Banfa* (Temporary Methods for Supply of Urban Grain Rations), and *Guanyu Huafen Chengxiang Biaozhun de Guiding* (Criteria for the Demarcation of Urban and Rural Areas). All these sets of rulings made it impossible for people to move freely beyond their *hukou* jurisdictions, and established extremely complicated and strict procedures for applying for permit to migrate, and set up a discriminatory grain ration system that prioritized urbanities and totally excluded rural residents. In the next year, the unified regulation of household registration and population control was affiliated with the Ministry of Public Security. In 1958, all these directives merged into the *Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo Hukou Dengji Tiaoli* (Regulation on Household Registration in the People's Republic of China), sanctioned by the National People's Congress, symbolizing the completion of establishing a national *hukou* system.

controlling internal, especially rural-to-urban migration,facilitating maintenance of social stability and public security, and most importantly, laying the legal foundation for the disparity of resource allocation between the heavily subsidized urbanites and deprived ruralites.

Social ramifications of the hukou system

The social impacts of the *hukou* system after its establishment have been tremendous and comprehensive. As an ascribed status inherited from one's parents, one's *hukou* category (rural or urban) cannot be changed except for some very rare cases, including officially sanctioned migration, army recruitment or entry into a university. *Hokou* is not only a system of control of population movement that fixes people in their ascribed (both spatial and social) position, but more importantly, it is a system of differentiated categories of welfare treatment based on the dual classification of rural and urban population. (K. W. Chan & Zhang, 1999)

Under this system, only legal urban residents, the holders of urban *hukou*, were included in the state's comprehensive welfare system, which enabled urbanites to have access to various public services and rationed resources including food, housing, education, healthcare, pension and so on, based on their work units to which they permanently physically and socially belonged. In sharp contrast, rural residents, regardless of their occupations, were defined as peasants, the holders of rural *hukou*, who were almost totally deprived of any access to state welfare and protection, and had to unconditionally meet the state's needs for food and other resources before they could feed themselves and support rural development. Consequently, the *hukou* system not only pinned all the Chinese people into their ascribed positions in their urban work units or countryside villages, but also separated cities and countryside as two 'unbridgeable classifications'. (Solinger, 1999a, p. 222)

Therefore, despite splendid ideological rhetoric of its necessity for the 'socialist

cause', the essence of the *hukou* system was to divide the population through creating a dualistic spatial and social stratification or hierarchy of different categories of citizenship between the urban and rural areas and also between different administrative regions, with the ruralites effectively forced to be an ascribed 'inferior' category of outcaste in comparison with officially prioritized 'superior' urbanites. Even between urban residents of large cities and small cities, welfare difference could be significant, even huge. Except for very few channels of change, residents are thus locked into their *hukou* categories that are bound to their places of origins. This makes trans-regional migration extremely difficult and all those, especially rural residents, who migrate beyond their own *hukou* areas, will run the risk of being discriminated against and denied access to fundamental welfare rights. (Figure 6.1)
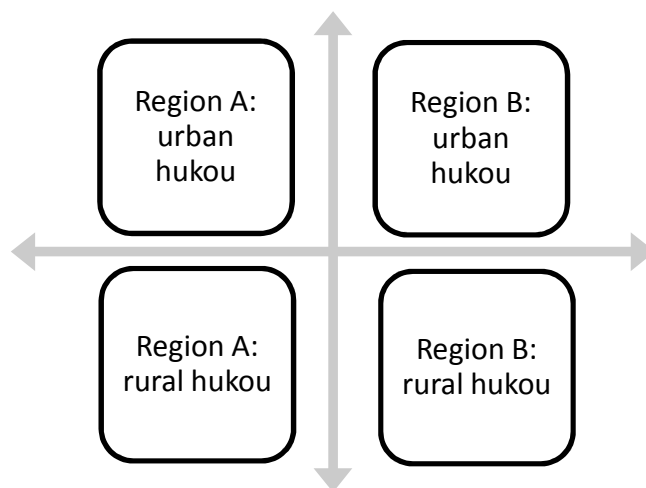

Figure 6.1 Classification of the *hukou* system

As mentioned above, to the state, the main purpose of enforcing this apartheid system 'was to lock onto the land a potential underclass, ready to be exploited to fulfill the new state's cherished project of industrialization'. (Solinger, 1999b, p. 27)The *hukou* system thus is a central element in the implementation of Mao's central-planned industrialization project. (K. W. Chan, 1992)But besides the state's economic concerns, as I have partly mentioned in the previous chapter, a strong political and cultural preoccupation with preventing *luan* (chaos) also

played a vital role in the process of formulating and implementing the *hukou* system. (Mallee, 2000, p. 137) Ideologically, the communist regime propagated the view that disordered migration and dislocation were negative outcomes of failed social governance of its predecessors, and therefore 'blind' migrants or floaters were seen as victims of imperialist invasion and feudalist exploitation. (Lary, 1999, p. 31) Culturally, this idea echoed the traditional Chinese concept of *gutu* or *guxiang* (homeland), the perpetual territorial bond with one's place of origin(Stafford, 1999), according to which migration was not normally encouraged and was only permissible in the face of otherwise insuperable factors - such as wars or natural disasters. The commitment to one's bond with ancestor's place was thus deemed as a pivotal symbol of identity and filial piety. Uncontrolled or chaotic migration in this sense was equated to disorder, crisis and loss of dignity and viewed as a source of misery.

Various terms, as examined previously, such as *mangliu* (blind flows), *sanwu renyuan* (three- 'without' people)[87], and so on, were coined by the authorities to stigmatize migrants and exclude them from state plans, to label them as outcastes so that they were permanently subject to the state's enforceable detention and repatriation. Also, with long term institutional consolidation and ideological propagation, a prevailing social mentality of discrimination against these 'outsiders' and 'floaters' was cultivated and, as argued in last chapter, became part of the hegemonic ideology of *suzhi*. As Pieke (1999, p. 12) has eloquently argued,

> …….pejorative categories such as *mangliu* have the great danger that they may evolve into enduring stigmas: permanent outcastes whose only relevant identity is that they do not belong to the privileged stratum of full citizens. Examples of such exclusionary, catch-all stereotypes (that in certain case may ultimately be internalized by the

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[87]This refers to migrantspeople without fixed place of residence, means of livelihood and permits to live in the city.

people involved and become the basis of ethnic group formation) abound the world over.

It is true that compared with the first three 'static' decades under Mao's rule, the strict control of mobility has been greatly eased and the Chinese people have been able to move relatively freely since the reform in the late 1970s, especially since the introduction of temporary urban residence permit for rural migrants and a national identity card system in the mid-1080s. (Mallee, 2000) But the very limited reform, especially the reservation of *hukou* system, has incurred the invective of many pro-reform policy-entrepreneurs including scholars and media practitioners. They have intensely questioned the legitimacy of the *hukou* system, criticized its unconstitutional nature, and its negative impacts on China's urbanization, social justice, and human rights reputation. (e.g.X. Hu, 2009, 2010; J. Yu, 2006;Q. Zhou, 2003) As Fei-Ling Wang (2010, p. 90) has observed, 'it is increasingly common for critics to view the necessity for *hukou* reform from the perspective of human rights and citizen rights in contrast to the late 1990s when most critiques centered on the system's economic irrationalities'.

Also there have been several local policy changes in the past decade to purportedly 'reform' the system. But as we shall see in the following analysis in this chapter, almost all of these cosmetic 'reforms' ended up with either 'commercialization of urban *hukou*' by setting up very rigorous and high entry conditions that virtually excluded ordinary migrant workers,[88] or by barefaced

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[88]As shown in the following sections of this chapter, for example, many local governments introduced the so-called 'greeting*hukou*by purchasing houses' scheme to serve as a 'stimulus' for the recessionary economy triggered by the 2008 to 2009 global financial crisis, see *China Economic Weekly*, Beijing, February 9, 2009, cited in Wang (2010, p.85). Other entry conditions include high education degree, large-scale capital investment, special expertise the destination cities badly needed, and so on. All these qualification requirements indicate that it is still a far cry from total abolition of *hukou* system and the so-called 'reforms' are just tools for the local governments to compete for developmental resources including capital and intelligence. Urban *hukou* still serve as a planning or exclusionary means for local governments to allocate public

expropriation of land from suburban farmers, who were forced to become urban *hukou* holders while denied most of the privileges that original urban residents have had - all in the guise of accelerating urbanization and erasing duality between urban and rural areas.(Ho, 2010)

In any case, despite intense contestation and some minor changes, the essence of the *hukou* system remains intact to this day. It continues to be a major source of exclusion and discrimination to which rural-urban migrants are subject. Given increasing social mobility and the sheer massiveness of migrant population, of which rural migrant workers constitute the main body, the *hukou* system in fact imposes more or less restrictions on almost everyone in the Chinese society. All these factors have made it one of the hottest sites of drastic public contention in the Chinese public discursive space in the past decade.

Discursive contention about the *hukou* system

Against the above historical institutional analysis of the social origins and impacts of the *hukou* system, in this part, I shall probe into how this long entrenched regime of social exclusion and its relevance to citizenship conditions of migrant workers have been contested by different social actors-speakers in the public discursive space of the Chinese media. By taking the second research question proposed in chapter 4, here I am mainly concerned with how the *hukou* regime has been defined in media discourse, what rationales (causal reasoning of responsibility and resolution) and symbolic resources and strategies of cultural resonance are deployed by different actors-speakers in their sponsorship of a frame, and particularly, how these aspects have been relevant to migrant workers.

Data collection

As explained in chapter 4, the analysis is based on articles relevant to *hukou*

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resources in favor of the urban. (Wu, Zhang, & Chen, 2010)

polices sampled from two groups of Chinese newspapers: seven party organs and six market-oriented metropolis newspapers. Each group includes representative newspapers from major migrant-sending as well as receiving areas. (See Table 4.3) Reasons for selecting these newspapers have been clarified in detail. Keyword search and purposive sampling were used to collect media texts. The time span covers from 2003 (when two of the thirteen the newspapers were founded) to 2011, which should be long enough to reflect dynamic public contention in the past decade.

Most data were drawn from the China National Knowledge Infrastructure(CNKI) online newspaper full-text database. For the four metropolis newspapers (*The Beijing News*, *Dahe Daily*, *Western China Metropolis Daily*, and *Southern Metropolis Daily*) which are not covered in the online database, data were obtained from online e-paper collections on their official websites.[89] After selecting news and opinion articles by searching the keyword *hukou* or *huji*, a further step of closely checking search results and excluding thematically irrelevant or repetitious items of the same category is taken to optimize the data.[90]Also this step is necessary to make sure selected texts are closely relevant to my main concerns and include major genres of media discourse: ordinary news stories, editorials, column articles, cartoons, photographs, and so on. The final search results are shown in table 6.1.

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[89] This means in some cases, the sampled data may be not all-inclusive because of the limit of availability of online data. Addresses of the official websites of these four newspapers are: *The Beijing News,*http://epaper.bjnews.com.cn; *Dahe Daily*, http://newpaper.dahe.cn/dhb; *Western China Metropolis Daily*, http://www.wccdaily.com.cn/epaper/hxdsb; *Southern Metropolis Daily*, http://epaper.oeeee.com.

[90] For example, for articles about similar reform policies implemented by various local governments, I just select one or two representative items of them and discard the others. Normally, articles in which the *hukou* issue is just a secondary or relevant element are also ruled out. But in some cases where the *hukou* issue issubordinate while the main theme is about migrant workers, then the article is reserved.

		Numbers of selected articles
Party organs	*People's Daily*	42
	Worker's Daily	45
	Southern Daily	40
	Liberation Daily	14
	Beijing Daily	22
	Henan Daily	11
	Sichuan Daily	18
Metropolis newspapers	*Southern Weekend*	9
	Southern Metropolis Daily	48
	Oriental Morning Post	26
	The Beijing News	51
	Dahe Daily	19
	Western China Metropolis Daily	41

Table 6.1 Numbers of sampled articles about the *hukou* system

Hukou-relevant articles in 13 newspapers

32%

68%

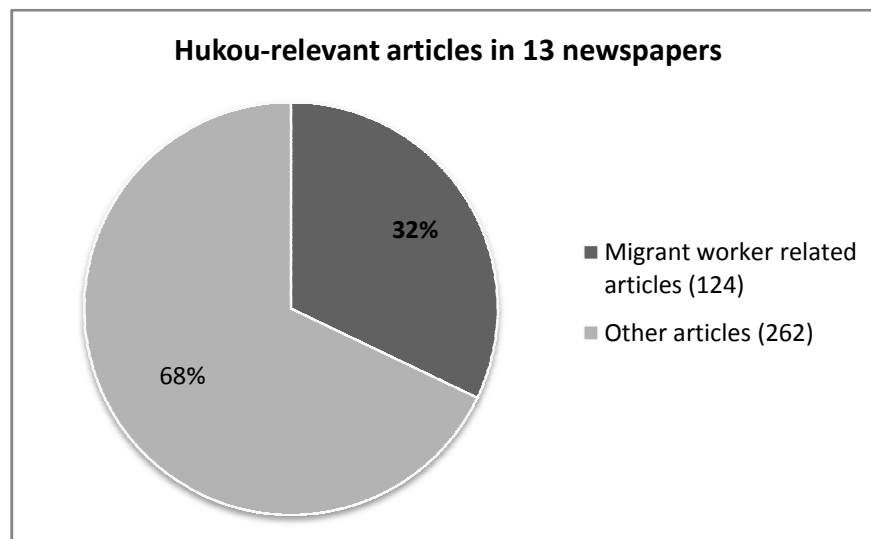■ Migrant worker related articles (124)
■ Other articles (262)

Figure 6.2 Percentage of migrant-worker related articles in *hukou*-relevant articles

Among the seven party organs, the *People's Daily* and the *Worker's Daily* are two national presses. Both numbers of selected articles from the two newspapers are over 40. Among the other five provincial level party organs, only the *Southern Daily* of Guangdong province, the most important migrant receiving area in China, has shown a similar amount of coverage, while the other four have relatively low coverage. As we shall see, this relatively high coverage on *hukou* issues is in accordance with the relatively active reformist approaches as

well as salience of migrant issues in the region. Three of the six market-oriented metropolis newspapers, the *Southern Metropolis Daily*, the *Beijing News* and the *Western China Metropolis Daily*, have more than 40 articles selected, while the others have relatively lower coverage. However, it needs to be noted that the *Southern weekend* is a weekly, and accordingly the number of its sampled articles is relatively low among the metropolis papers. As shown in figure 6.2, the number of migrant worker related articles is 124, about 32% out of the total 386 *hukou*-relevant articles.

Defining hukou

In the past decade, both the party-state and the Chinese public have come to agree that the *hukou* system, a legacy of the pre-reform central-planned economy and population control, needs to be changed. Thus, the core aspect of the public contention is about how to reform the system, rather than the necessity of reform. Surrounding this issue, the party-state and its multi-level policy bodies, the academia, the media, and urban citizens, migrant workers, and other social actors-speakers have taken part in a long term debate. The first aspect of this contention, as represented in the media discourse of the two groups of newspapers, is about how the very nature of the *hukou* system, as an existing institution of differentiated citizenship rights and obligations have been understood by these different social actors-speakers, and why it needs to be changed.

Generally, as represented in the selected articles, regardless of the discourses of the party organs or the market-oriented press, the *hukou* system has been framed as an 'outdated' institution that needs to be reformed gradually. By saying this, these discourses imply a presupposition that *hukou*, when examined in its original historical and social context, was necessary and its establishment was unavoidable. The specific historical situations of the 1950s when the state tried to transform the economy and social structures and thus consolidate its

centrally-planned system were taken as the very specific reasons for appreciating the original purposes of setting up the *hukou* regime. As the author of one article in the *People's Daily* argues, 'objectively speaking, as a special legacy of the specific historical conditions, the current household registration system once played an irreplaceable role in the country's social management'.[91] In one article in the *Workers' Daily*, *hukou* is described as an 'iron fence' erected between the rural and urban areas to 'maintain social stability and the fundamentality of agriculture' in the pre-reform central-planned economic system.[92] In another article, opinions of a professor are cited to explain the two main reasons for the establishment of the *hukou* system: the scarcity of social resources made it necessary to set up a distribution control system; a central planned economic system required strict restriction on spontaneous population and resource mobility to facilitate economic resources allocation and social control by the state.[93] The 'important historical functions' of the *hukou* system in a dualized rural-urban social configuration are said to include identifying citizens, maintaining social order and security, and facilitating the country's industrialization and 'socialist construction'.[94] These ideas received cautious resonance from some of the metropolitan newspapers. In an article in the *Southern Weekend*, one specialist argues that 'the *hukou* system was not necessarily a discriminatory institution. In accordance with the then centrally-planned economic system, it was just a means of distributing meager food and other life-sustaining materials and played a positive role in the early stage of industrialization'.[95] An official researcher from the State Council holds the similar idea - that it was the historical needs of industrialization that made

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[91]'Zhongguo huji gaige jinxingshi' (China's reform of the household registration system in progress), *Renmin Ribao*, 2007.05.09, p.13.
[92]'Qidai gengjia kexue de huji zhidu' (Looking forward to a more scientific household registration system), *Gongren Ribao,* 2007.05.28, p.7.
[93] 'Huji gaige: yige jianjin de guocheng' (Reform of the household registration system: a gradual process), *Gongren Ribao*, 2007.05.28, p.7.
[94] 'Dapo huji bilei, shifang jiji xinhao' (Breaking the barricade of the household registration system, sending out positive signals), *Sichuan Ribao*, 2010.07.16, p. 5; 'Chengdu huji gaige de jiji yiyi' (Positive significance of the reform of household registration system in Chengdu), *Sichuan Ribao*, 2006.11.12, p.1.
[95]'Huji zhidu de yanbian' (The evolvement of the household registration system), *Nanfang Zhoumo*, 2003.04.03.

the *hukou* system necessary.[96]

However, as time elapsed, social conditions changed. With the rise of a market-driven economy in the reform era, the *hukou* system was seen as being increasingly anachronistic. In the media discourse, many reasons for reforming the long entrenched system have been presented. Basically, it has been argued that there are three aspects of negative outcomes of the *hukou* system. First, from the perspective of economic growth and national development, the *hukou* system is seen as the major reason for China's unbalanced dualistic social structure dividing the rural from the urban and thus should be held responsible for the country's lagging urbanization. Consequently, the *hukou* system is considered as a hindrance to the modernization of agriculture and increase of peasants' income. As well, the dualistic characteristics of the Chinese society have caused poverty in the rural areas and thus hindered domestic consumption and economic development. As the author of a commentary article in the *Southern Daily* argues, the current *hukou* system 'severely restricts transfer of rural surplus laborers and makes them get stuck in the rural areas, leading to the retardation of our country's urbanization'.[97]The *hukou* system is viewed as an adverse factor in achieving maximum benefits of human capital in China's economy because of short-termed speculative migration engendered by differentiated citizenship treatment.[98]Despite its weakening power in restricting population mobility, the fact that massive multitudes of rural laborers floating in the cities cannot be fully integrated into the urban society has led to what some

[96]'Huji zhidu ruhe gai' (How to reform the household registration system), *Nanfang Dushibao*, 2008.03.09, p.AA03.

[97] 'Pochu huji fanli, pojie eryuan kunju' (Demolishing hedges of the household registration system, breaking the predicament of dualistic social structure), *Nanfang Ribao*, 2005.12.23, p. A08; For similar ideas, see 'Shenhua huji zhidu gaige' (Deepening the reform of the household registration system), *Renmin Ribao*, 2008.09.03, p.16; 'Quanmin baozhang: huji zhidu gaige de yige fangxiang' (Welfare for all: a direction for reform of the household registration system), *Gongren Ribao*, 2009.02.25, p.7; 'Huji gaige: buzi hai keyi mai da yidian' (Reforming the household registrationsystem: bigger steps expected), *Gongren Ribao*, 2009.12.13, p.2; 'Chongqing moshi, nengfou tupo huji gaige pingjing' (Chongqing model, could it break through the bottleneck of the reform of the household registration system), *Gongren Ribao*, 2010.08.29, p. 1; 'Huji chushen, lada shouru chaju de tuishou' (Household registration and parentage: two factors exacerbating income gap), *Dahe Bao*, 2010.05.25, p. A31.

[98]'Chengxiang huji yu renli ziben shouyi' (Rural-urban household registration system and benefits of human capital), *Nanfang Ribao*, 2009.04.07, p.A11.

calls 'pseudo-urbanization'.[99] Also the imbalance between the rural and urban areas caused by the *hukou* system has been criticized as imparity between the 'Europe-like cities and Africa-like countryside'.[100] Therefore, to reform the *hukou* system and curtail its power in excluding rural population from the urban society, is crucial for accelerating the country's economic development – as well as heightening social equity.

The second reason for reform is that the *hukou* system has led to grievous discrimination, prejudices, social conflicts and injustice, and thus has presented risky challenges for the party-state's objectives of 'constructing a harmonious society' and 'scientific development'. Under this institution, rural population are treated as second-rate citizens deprived of urban citizenship and all the welfare rights attached with it, while ordinary urban people who migrate outside of their own *hukou* jurisdictional area are also unable to claim welfare rights in migration-destination regions. This has led to a caste system and also a widely accepted hegemonic cultural perception marking the urbanites as superior and the ruralites as inferior. As the author of a commentary article in the *People's Daily* points out, there has been a sort of '*hukou* culture', which is composed of

> …….ideas shaped as a result of the long-term unfair distribution of social resources and rights under the *hukou* system. Rural Children were born as rural *hukou* holders, while those who make it to become members of the cities are called fishes 'jumping the dragon gates'; even between big and small cities, there are identity differences due to their economic disparity. ... In the eyes of some people, only aboriginal urban resident are the real hosts of the cities, while all new migrants are guests. Guests should not grab the hosts' rice bowls, and

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[99] 'Wei chengzhenhua de hexin shi huji zhangai' (The core reason for the pseudo-urbanization is the household registration system), *Xin Jing Bao*, 2010.10.16, p. B06.
[100] 'Chengzhenhua nanti: chengshi xiang ouzhou, nongcun xiang feizhou' (Paradox of urbanization: Europe-like cities vs. Africa-like rural areas), *Huaxi Dushibao*, 2010.05.22, p. 4.

all the more they shouldn't snatch the hosts' title '*hukou*'.[101]

This kind of *hukou* culture or what one commentator has called '*hukou*-dominated way of thinking'[102] has given rise to power rent-seeking and thus various phenomena of social corruption and grievances. To obtain urban *hukou*, many offer bribes to officials in charge of *hukou* regulation, while others seek help from underground counterfeiters. To boost the property industry or offset public welfare expense, as we shall see later, *hukou* even becomes a commodity for sale.[103]While rich and well-connected people take these chances to get urban *hukou* in top-ranking cities, migrant workers are denied any hope of getting urban *hukou* and full urban citizenship, and are constantly subjected to discriminatory policies and treatment. *Hukou* has been tied with almost every major aspect of urban public service, from education, health care, employment, to government-sponsored low-rent housing[104], and thus become a monopolized policy lever that favors the elite, rich and powerful.[105]Consequently, *hukou* is one of the major sources of social injustice and the reform of the system is indispensable for ensuring stability and promoting social harmony.

Apparently, from these two perspectives *hukou* is viewed in a negative light on the basis of its role in national development and maintenance of social order. According to this rationale, citizenship, as the inalienable right of all members of a political community, is only an intermediate value in the securing as well as the demolition of the *hukou* system. It is its instrumentality in the state's grand raft of political economic objectives that makes its presence relevant to the issue in question. Rural residents were 'necessarily' deprived of equal welfare rights

[101] 'Huji zhidu gaige hui zou duoyuan' (How far the reform of the household registration system can make it?), *Renmin Ribao*, 2009.02.17, p.5.
[102] ''Huji siwei' bi 'huji zhidu' geng jixu dapo' (It is more urgent to break the hukou-dominated way of thinking than to changed the system itself), *Xin Jing Bao*, 2007.05.06, p. A02.
[103] 'Huji gaige, xiaobu kuaizou buhuitou' (Reform of the household registration system: small steps forward, no way back), *Gongren Ribao*, 2008.03.15, p. 6; 'Dujue hukou zaojia xu gaige huji zhidu' (To prevent counterfeit household registration documents, the system itself needs to be reformed), *Nanfang Dushibao*, 2009.02.18, p. AA23.
[104] 'Hukou: daxuesheng jiuye zhi tong' (Household registration: the main obstacle for university students' employment), *Gongren Ribao*, 2009.03.31, p. 7;
[105] 'Hukou liyi buneng bei tequan juequ' (Hukou benefits should not be snatched by the privileged), *Huaxi Dushibao*, 2010.07.14, p. 8.

in the 1950s for the purpose of engendering primitive accumulation in the early stage of national industrialization, while now these once sacrificed rights need to be resumed to make the most of human capital in an increasingly marketized and globally connected economy. One article published in the *Dahe Daily* is a case in point:

> The central government's policy makes us more clearly understand that many economic problems can be resolved through fulfillment of citizenship rights. For a long time, some people always counterpose economic development to citizenship rights. They think citizenship is about equity, which would undermine efficiency of economic decision-making. But this is not the case. It is because social equity is crucial for faster development in the country's politics, economy and society that it becomes the supreme social principle and ideal. Imagine if the broad peasants are still very enslaved by poverty, if those law-abiding migrant workers pay their tax but cannot enjoy equal social welfare and security, if their children are discriminated in education and employment, could they live harmoniously with urban *hukou* holders? Under such circumstances, how could economic development not encounter problems? [106]

Comparatively, the third perspective which is concerned with equal and just citizenship *per se*, rather than its instrumental role in production and reproduction of the national political economic order, is relatively marginalized in these selected texts. Only a few citations supporting this idea are presented. According to this citizenship-centered perspective, the *hukou* system is a direct and bald-faced infringement of fundamental citizenship rights of the Chinese people. As one specialist of migrant issues argues, the rapidly accumulated massive wealth in China's industrialization and urbanization is achieved by

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[106]'Fangkuan zhong xiao chengshi huji xianzhi shi minyi suogui' (Loosening the control of household registration in medium and small cities accords with the public opinion), *Dahe Bao*, 2009.12.08, p. A10.

depriving peasants of their righteous interests. *Hukou* lies at the very center of this huge unequal social system. It is a sophisticated social exclusion system based on one's places of origin, dividing people into different grades, making some people or a social group outcast from the mainstream society.[107] Another author clearly maintains that the freedom of migration is a fundamental human right, which has been severely violated by the *hukou* system. What it reflects is a

> traditional status society where people are administered according to their ascribed social positions, which is in contrast with a contract society under market economy where people are treated equally in principle. No matter from the perspective of law or morality, a society dominated by *hukou* system is against the principle of equality. [108]

Nevertheless, despite the difference between the above perspectives, it has been a consensus that the *hukou* system is problematic and needs to be reformed. But regarding how to reform it, there has been tense contention among different actors-speakers. Reform policies presented by local governments in migrant receiving regions, particularly Beijing, Shanghai and Guangdong province, three major migrant destinations, have aroused controversy and debates in the media. As we shall see in the following analysis, the major confrontation has been between the gradualist approach which emphasizes the potential risks of radical reforms and the critical approach which berates the tendency of stagnation and partiality of the reform under the pretence of maintaining stability and order in the urban society.

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[107] 'Liu Kaiming: huji zhizao qishi' (Liu Kaiming: the household registration system produces discrimination), *Nanfang Dushibao*, 2010.07.05, p. SA31.
[108] 'Wei chengzhenhua de hexin shi huji zhangai' (The core reason for the pseudo-urbanization is the household registration system), *Xin Jing Bao*, 2010.10.16, p. B06.

Contesting hukou reform and its relevance to migrant workers

Crisis frame and gradualist approach

Generally, the official policy-line of *hukou* reform is modest and follows a gradualist approach.[109] A crisis frame has been applied to arouse worries of potential pressure and social problems in the aftermath of unleashing rural population which are now under the *hukou* control. In the discursive contention over *hukou* reform, big cities are focal points of public and media attention. Analysis of the selected articles has shown that reform policies in major migrant receiving places such as Guangdong province, Shanghai and Beijing have received large amounts of media coverage. Comparatively, party organs in Beijing and Shanghai have displayed similar cautious standpoints and represented purportedly 'radical' reforms as 'dangerous' or sources of potential 'crisis'. Consistent with restrictive policies formulated by local government in Beijing[110], in a commentary article published in the *Beijing Daily*, the author describes reformist critical stances as claiming that the *hukou* system needs to be unlashed immediately.[111] The author accepts that it has been a public consensus that reform of the *hukou* system is necessary and there have been various arguments from 'romanticists calling for citizenship rights, radicals requiring abolishment of the system in one night, moderates supporting gradual changes, and conservatives emphasizing dangers of reform'. Apparently the author agrees with the gradualist approach where particular national conditions (*guoqing*) make it impossible to eradicate the institution immediately:

> Whenever people talk about reform of the *hukou* system, they insist it
>
> needs to be abrogated instantly. Any other different ideas will be

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[109] 'Shenhua huji zhidu gaige' (Deepening the reform of the household registration system), *Renmin Ribao*, 2008.09.03, p.16; 'Wo buhui mashang quxiao hujizhi' (China will not abolish the household registration system immediately), Huaxi Dushibao, 2006.03.21, p. 7; ''Jieti fangshui' shi huji gaige keyi tuixing'(The laddered model of household registration reform should be popularized), *Xin Jing Bao*,2010.09.23, p. A02.
[110] 'Beijing shangbu jubei tiaojian fangkai huji' (Conditions have not been ready in Beijing for *hukou* abolishment), *Renmin Ribao*, 2001.03.17, p. 4.
[111]'Yishuo huji gaige jiushi mashang wanquan fangkai?' (The household registration system has to be abolished immediately?), *Beijing Ribao*, 2010.05.14, p. 16.

attacked and labeled as 'discrimination' and 'bigotry'. But in fact their ideas are against the principle of 'seeking truth from facts' and lack rationality and peaceable attitudes. I can understand their eagerness for reform, but I definitely cannot identify with their radical and partial armchair talk in defiance of real national conditions and degree of difficulty of the reform.

According to the author, the very specific social conditions of rural-urban dualistic social structure and huge developmental gap in different regions are the main reason for the desirability of a gradualist reform approach. Especially in super large cities like Beijing and Shanghai,

> …….if *hukou* control eliminated immediately, these cities' high quality resources of education, health care and social security will attract people from all over the country or even other countries, which would inevitably result in unprecedented crisis of public finance, administration and service. Recent facts have shown that, despite increasing fiscal power and ability of public service in cities like Beijing, conflicts between population, resources and environment have been increasingly aggravated. Capacity of cities has limit. While these cities need to accelerate their development of rural-urban integration and public service system, it is absolutely necessary for them to scientifically and rationally control influx of population.

The *Liberation Daily*, the party organ of Shanghai, holds similar the idea that *hukou* reform should follow a gradualist approach and avoid potential 'blind-spots'. In a commentary article, the author argues that due to the 'huge gap in income and welfare rights between the rural and urban areas and stagnation of urbanization, if the *hukou* system is eliminated at once, large population influxes would make the cities plunge into chaos and

collapse'.[112]Another article accentuates the so-called potential 'blind-spots' and 'traps' of *hukou* reform. According to the author, the western ideas of viewing urbanization and unlimited freedom of migration as desirable are problematic. Liberal-oriented approaches are not suitable in the Chinese context due to differences between social conditions and cultures. The rural *hukou*, despite its problems, offers guarantee for Chinese peasants' social security because it is tied with rural land policy. Under rural *hukou* and the social identity of peasantry attached with it, peasants at least have small plots of land allocated to them by the state, which secure their basic livelihood. The author continues to suggest that unlimited freedom of migration does not exist. Furthermore, what migration means in the Chinese society is different from that of the West. The traditional rural Chinese society has been dominated by the idea that being displaced and having to leave one's home place is a miserable fate. Also according to the author, the idea of urbanization should not be admired blindly. The original purposes of establishing *hukou* system and adopting the strategy favoring industrialization over urbanization, s/he argues, were not to discriminate against peasants, but to prevent excessive expansion of cities and limit the development of urban problems that would ensue from such expansion. In conclusion, the author emphasizes the importance of a gradualist approach and the necessity of preserving *hukou* control.[113]

However, analysis of the selected articles shows that these crisis discourses have encountered a lot of criticism.[114] Among other party organs, the *Worker's Daily* has displayed a modestly critical stance[115], while the *Southern Daily* clearly disproves the connection between deregulation of *hukou* system and urban

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[112] 'Huji gaige yi xunxu jianjin' (Reform of the household registration system should follow a gradualist approach), *Jiefang Ribao*, 2004.11.25, p. 13.
[113] 'Huji gaige: buneng hushi qianjin zhong de mangdian' (Reform of the household registration system: blind-spots should not be neglected in the road of progress), *Jiefang Ribao*, 2007.12.27, p. 6.
[114] 'Guonei renkou liudong buneng leisi yu guojia jian yimin' (Domestic migration should not be like international immigration), *Dahe Bao*, 2005.08.15, p. A04; 'Huji gaige ying cong da chengshi poti' (Hukou reform should start from big citis), *Dongfang Zaobao*, 2007.02.27, p. A15; 'Beijing huji gaige buneng manzuyu xiaoxiuxiaobu' (Hukou reform in Beijing should not limited to cosmetic repair), *Xin Jing Bao*, 2007.0421, p. A02.
[115] 'Huji gaige: buzi hai keyi mai da yidian' (Reforming the household registration system: bigger steps expected), *Gongren Ribao*, 2009.12.13, p.2

population expansion:

> *Hukou* system cannot stop population from flowing into cities, but will just cause more difficulties for those people. There already are a large number of migrant populations in big cities like Beijing and Shanghai, but if people can find suitable jobs they will not leave these cities just because they do not have local *hukou*. This proves that population migration is decided by a city's economic structure, rather than the *hukou* system. But the problem is, the *hukou* system does not help prevent population movement, but severely deepens discrimination against floating population.[116]

This opinion has resonance in the metropolis press discourse. In an article published in the *Southern Weekend*, a market-oriented quality paper subsidiary to the *Southern Daily*, the commentator sharply criticizes the prevailing idea of 'controlling population expansion through entrenching the *hukou* system'. It is argued that those who endorse this idea know it is wrong. The question is whether their insistence is because they believe the system is right or because they may be influenced by their vested interests as beneficiaries under the current institutional arrangement. All those discriminatory policies against migrants thus have bought about cost-free benefits for urban governments and privileges for urban *hukou* holders. [117]

Among other metropolitan newspapers, *The Beijing News* criticizes the rationale of purported crisis and special national conditions as self-circular argumentation: The *hukou* system has engendered a dualistic social structure and huge regional disparity. In turn, these problems now have become excuses for preserving the *hukou* system and postponing meaningful reforms concerning it.[118]Similarly, in

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[116] 'Zuizhong haishiyao quxiao huji zhidu' (The household registration system should be abolished ultimately), *Nanfang Ribao*, 2007.11.22, p. A02.
[117] 'You wen 'huji xianzhi renkou' sheng' (The idea of 'controlling population expansion through entrenching the hukou system'prevails again), *Nanfang Zhoumo*, 2005.07.28, p.B14.
[118] 'Dapo huji gaige de xunhuan lunzheng' (Break the circular argumentation in the reform of the household registration system), *Xin Jing Bao*, 2009.03.21, p.B06.

another report, a scholar argues that the idea that the proper timing of *hukou* reform has not arrived yet because of rural-urban gap is totally untenable. The increasing rural-urban gap is a result of the *hukou* system. As long as the system exists, 'the elimination of rural-urban difference is impossible'. [119]If there is an imbalance and the imbalance is wrong, while a gradualist approach is adopted in transforming the flawed system, should not a separate compensatory system be devised for those disadvantaged by the imbalance?

The above analysis, despite its episodic nature, has clearly displayed the dynamic process of public contention over the rationale of *hukou* reform. A significant similarity between the dominant *hukou* augmentation and what we have seen previously in the discursive construction of 'blind migration' or *mangliu* is the use of the crisis frame. In either case, migrants are viewed as threatening 'Others'. The purported 'crisis' and ensuing fear of 'chaos' are floating or empty signifiers conveniently utilized by the groups of vested interests to defend the status quo. But when examined in a dynamic and semi-pluralistic sphere of public contention, as shown above, this illegitimate nature of the dominant rationale of empty and circular argumentation is constantly subject to negotiation and discursive subversion.

Contesting reform policies

Among the various reform policies developed by local governments, three issues are hugely controversial: The first is the introduction of the so-called 'resident *hukou*' (*jumin hukou*) in place of the original different categories of rural *hukou* and urban *hukou*; the second is the policy of 'getting urban *hukou* through buying property in the city'; and the third, the campaign of 'peasants giving up their state-allocated land plots in exchange for urban *hukou*'. All these alleged 'reform' policies have aroused public contention and heavy media coverage.

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[119]'Huji gaige de zhang'ai' (Obstacles of the reform of the household registration system), *Xin Jing Bao*, 2008.10.25, p. B02.

As part of *hukou* reform, the first policy aims to purportedly abolish the different categories of agricultural and non-agricultural *hukou* and realize identity equality between rural and urban residents.[120] Implementation of this policy in many local areas has been celebrated as the end of rural *hukou* and the coming of equal citizenship.[121] This formal change of rural and urban identity difference is viewed as the first step of *hukou* reform and a positive signal. [122] However, generally, it has been argued that the 'unification of rural and urban *hukou*' only has symbolic and superficial significance, because the real differentiation is in the treatment of welfare rights and benefits attached with *hukou*. With this policy, as represented in a large number of news stories and commentary articles, what has been changed is only the name of population registration, not the discriminatory treatment of rural and urban residents in terms of their different welfare rights.[123] As one commentator argues, 'this change of name is just the first step towards equality of citizen identity, but has not uprooted inequality caused by dualistic *hukou* system. In fact, various welfare benefits connected with current *hukou* system are the real baton directing people's choice of *hukou* places'.[124] It is because of the cosmetic nature

[120] 'Woguo jiang dali tuijin huji zhidu gaige' (China will deepen hukou reform), *Renmin Ribao*, 2007.03.31, p. 4; 'Huji zhidu gaige queding fangxiang' (The direction of hukou reform is confirmed), *Nanfang Dushibao*, 2008.12.14, p. AA12.

[121] E.g. 'Xi'an tiaozheng huji zhunru zhengce, sanniannei chengxiang wu chabie' (New hukou policy introduced in Xi'an, rural-urban differences will be gone in three years), *Dahe Bao*, 2006.03.07, p. A22; 'qige shidian shi jiang quxiao nongye hukou' (Rural hukou to be abolished in seven experiment cities), *Henan Ribao*, 2006.06.20, p. 1; 'Taiyuan hebing chengxiang huji' (Rural and urban hukou unified in Taiyuan), *Renmin Ribao*, 2007/06/04, p. 10; 'Shisan ge shengshiqu yi quxiao nongye hukou' (Rural *hukou* abolished in 13 provinces), *Dongfang Zaobao*, 2008.12.10, p. A19; 'Guangzhou huji yiyuanhua gaige niannei qidong' (The reform f unifying rural and urban *hukou* will start this year in Guangzhou), *Renmin Ribao*, 2009.07.31, p. 5.

[122] 'Woguo huji gaige shishang kuaichedao' (Hukou reform in China accelerated), *Renmin Ribao*, 2008.10.15, p. 13; 'Tongyi chengxiang hukou zhishi yige jiji xinhao' (unifying the rural and urban hukou is just a positive signal), *Gongren Ribao*, 2005.10.29, p. 1.

[123] E.g. 'Huji gaige shi tupo chengxiang eryuan jiegou de qidian' (Hukou reform is the starting point of changing rural-urban dualistic structure), *Nanfang Ribao*, 2007.04.02, p. A02; 'Youle jinchenbg menpiao, nanxiang shimind aiyu' (Ticket to the city does not guarantee urban citizen treatment), *Nanfang Ribao*, 2008.03.05, p. A05; 'Eryuan hongou buhui yiye tianping, dangqian huji gaige qiwang guogao' (Dualistic gap not to be filled overnight, current hukou reform excessively anticipated), *Nanfang Dushibao*, 2008.10.11, p. AA13;'Huji gaige: chengwei tongyi yuanyuan bugou' (Hukou reform: name unification is far from enough), *Dongfang Zaobao*, 2008.10.20, p. B07; 'Suoxiao hukou de fuli chayi shi huji gaige de guanjian' (The key of hukou reform is to reduce welfare difference), *Gongren Ribao*, 2009.06.04, p. 3; 'Luohu chengshi geng rongyi ma' (Has it become easier to reside in the cities), *Renmin Ribao*, 2010.01.07, p. 17.

[124] 'Huanjie huji maodun de zhengjie' (The right solution to the hukou problem), *Dongfang Zaobao*, 2007.05.13, p. 10.

of the policy and the unchanged differentiated citizenship rights of rural and original urban residents, in some cases, those who transferred from rural into urban residents, required to resume their status of rural residents. [125]Consequently, it is just the same wine repacked into a new bottle. (Figure 6.3)

Figure 6.3 From urban and rural *hukou* to resident *hukou*: old wine in a new bottle[126]

As for the second issue, as early as in the 1990s, some local governments introduced the so-called 'blue-stamp *hukou*' (*lanyin hukou*), which was issued by the local authority to those who were from other cities and bought property or invested in the specific city, according to official standards. Holders were given largely equal welfare treatment. Gradually, it became a common means of sale promotion in the real estate industry. [127] In the past decade, especially when there was economic downturn, to promote economic development, local

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[125] 'Huji gaige zhong daliang 'nongzhuanfei' yaoqiu 'feizhuannong'' (In hukou reform, many people require to resume their status of rural residents), *Huaxi Doushibao,* 2007.05.31, p. 2.

[126]'Quxiao chengxiang huji huafen buyao jiyu hecai' (Abolishing rural and urban hukou? Don't be anxious to sing the praises), *Nanfang Dushibao*, 2011.12.30, p. QB02.

[127] 'Lanyin hukou: zheshe jiaoyu gongping zhi shang' (Blue-stamp hukou: a reflection of inequality of education), *Renmin Ribao*, 2009.08.28, p. 18.

governments would utilize the policy of 'blue-stamp *hukou*' to attract investment, human resources and stimulate economy.[128]The policy has been severely criticized for its utilitarian and unjust nature. In a commentary article in the *Worker's Daily*,[129] the author argues that the result of this policy is that *hukou* has become a tool for city governments and groups of commercial interests to acquire monopolized benefits. This in turn leads to aggrandizement of the current dualistic *hukou* system, rather than reforming the unreasonable institutional arrangements. In an editorial of the *Southern Metropolis Daily*, it is maintained that this policy has no any positive public values and economic development should be stimulated through reforming the *hukou* system rather than commercializing it:

> As a public policy, *hukou* should not be packed for sale. This is obviously in violation of the principles of public-will and justice in formulating public policies. It serves for particular private interest in the name of public policy. Objectively, getting *hukou* and relevant welfare treatment through buying property has become a form of social exclusion by threshold of money. [130]

The third policy of 'land in exchange for urban *hukou*' has aroused even more controversy. According to this policy, despite local variations, peasants who apply for urban *hukou* have to give up their rights over rural household contracted farming land and fully become urban residents. However, the problem is, under these circumstances, that relevant equal welfare rights attached with urban *hukou* are normally discounted and cannot be fully

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[128] 'Xin huji zhengce yinbao ershoufang nuandong' (This winter, with new hukou policy, market of secondhand property is booming), *Huaxia Dushibao*, 2006.11.16, p.40; 'Luohu Chengdu mengkan geng dile' (It's now easier to get Chengdu hukou), *Sichuan Ribao*, 2008.12.11, p. B02; 'Jiting gonggong ziyuan fenpei de 'xiaozhonghua'' (Prevent public resources from becoming privileges of a small group of people), *Gongren Ribao*, 2009.02.22, p. 2.

[129] 'Kunbang hukou maifang zhengjiu buliao fangdichanye' (The new policy of greeting hukou by buying property cannot save the real estate industry), *Gongren Ribao*, 2009.02.11, p. 3.

[130] 'Huji gaige caishi ladong loushi de yuandongli' (Hukou reform is the real drive force for real estate sector), *Nanfang Dushibao*, 2009.02.14, p. AA02.

guaranteed.[131] In some places, it even has become a coercive process of forcing peasants to change their *hukou* status, one that has incurred resistance from peasants.[132] A specialist on peasant issues argues that it is wrong to simply abolish the *hukou* system when peasants are forced to be urban residents but not given social rights of pension and health care which have been enjoyed by people of urban origin.[133] The author of a commentary article in the *Western China Metropolis Daily* even describes this as a campaign of 'annihilating peasants'.[134]Among others, the *Southern Metropolis Daily* shows a more critical stance by focusing on the self-contradictory logic of the policy and its violation of fundamental citizenship rights. In one article, the critic questions the justice of the policy of 'land in exchange for *hukou*'.[135] He argues that it is immoral to enforce such an unfair policy which places peasants in a position of having to exchange land for public service and public goods. Because,

> ....as citizens, rural residents should have had largely equal access
> to public service and public goods as their urban counterparts have
> had in the same region. This should be the first principle of morality
> of modern states as well as the current constitution. But the
> rural-urban dualistic *hukou* system violates this principle. Its major
> problem is not that it divides rural people from urban people, but that
> *hukou* has become the legal basis of a caste system on which rural and
> urban residents are endowed with differentiated rights and welfare.
> According to such a system, the government only has to be

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[131] 'Guangdong nongmin'gong jifen ke zhuanhu' (Guangdong migrant workers can change hukou status on the basis of accumulated points), Renmin Ribao, 2010.06.08, p. 14; 'Rural-urban hukou reform initiated in Chongqing), *Renmin Ribao,* 2010.07.30, p. 4.

[132] 'Ersanxian chengshi huji songdong que nan xiyin nongmin'gong luohu' (Hukou policy has been loosened in medium and small cities, but it is not attractive for migrant workers), *Gongren Ribao*, 2011.12.01, p. 5; 'Nongmin'gong buyuan rucheng?' (Migrant workers do not want to become urban residents?), *Nanfang Ribao*, 2010.01.28, p. A04; 'Weisha nongmin buyuanyi nongzhuanfei' (Why peasants do not want to change from rural hukou to urban hukou), *Sichuan Ribao*, 2010.11.26, p. 5.

[133] 'Huji he tudi gaige de tongbu jinxingshi' (reform of hukou and land in progress), *Dongfang Zaobao*, 2007.01.30, p. A15.

[134] 'Qiangbi nongzhuanfei baolu niuqu de shehui mima' (Compulsory hukou change exposes social distortion), *Huaxi Dushibao*, 2010.11.01, p. 8.

[135]'Tudi huan huji shi yizong gongping jiaoyi ma?' (Is it a fair deal for peasants to give up land in exchange for urban hukou?), *Nanfang Dushibao*, 2010.08.03, p. AA31.

responsible for welfare of urban residents, but basically assume nothing for rural residents.

Thus, it is the state's unfair *hukou* policy that has led to a huge political and economic gap between the rural and urban areas, which in turn makes the urban *hukou* attractive and valuable. In other words, this means the state has owed peasants public service and public goods for decades. What the government now does comes short of compensating peasants' for their losses. Rather government sells urban *hukou* to peasants who have already been institutionally deprived and this happens in a coercive context. Therefore, the author calls on people to jump out of the logic trap of the economic deal and view the problem from a perspective of inalienable citizenship:

> To be a legal urban resident is to have full citizenship, the nature of which is equality. Anyone, no matter living in the city or countryside, as long as s/he is in the same administrative region, should have been given largely equal access to public service and goods. If it is not equal, then the government should equalize it. The government's responsibility in ensuring equal citizenship should be unconditional. Citizenship does not need giving up anything to do a deal with the government. In the view of citizens, the government should not be a businessman; in view of the government, peasants should not be beggars.

Apparently, from the above examination of public contention over three major 'reform' policies, we can see a similar opposition between the frame of economic development and that of citizenship. These *hukou* 'reform' policies were developed to dismantle the disparity between rural and urban areas, stimulate economic development, and promote urbanization. One the other hand, the rationale's logical contradiction and its negative outcomes in practice have become subjects of public criticism which follows a frame of equal citizenship

rights. From this perspective, the market logic of commercializing *hukou* has been questioned and deconstructed.

Hukou and migrant workers

In public contention over all the major *hukou* reform policies, migrant workers have always been one of the vital social groups who receive substantive media coverage (figure 6.2). In public contention regarding the relationship between *hukou* and migrant workers, there are two major aspects of concerns as seen in media discursive representation. The first aspect concerns how the current *hukou* system has severely circumscribed migrant worker's freedom of migration and full access to urban citizenship. Another one is about how to reform the system and thus offer migrant worker a chance to gradually escape their discriminated rural *hukou* status and integrate into the urban mainstream society. In this respect, the reform policy of the so-called 'accumulated points system' (*jifen zhidu*) introduced and implemented in migrant receiving areas such as Guangdong province has received high public attention and kindled public debates as represented in the selected media discourses.

In history, as examined previously, *hukou* had long been used as a shield to prevent migrant workers, who were then depreciated as *mangliu*, from entering the city. Relevant policies, such as the temporary residence permit (*zanzhuzheng*) and the system of detention and repatriation, based on the *hukou* regime were formulated and implemented to control and limit rural migrant laborers and purge the so-called three-'without' floating population. In the case of Sun Zhigang, as mentioned earlier, the very absence of temporary residence permit directly led to his persecution and death. Despite the state's ideological and policy changes and the dismantlement of persecutory apparatus in the last decade as analyzed in chapter 5, the *hukou* system remains intact to date (January 2012) and continues to be an institutional source of exclusion and discrimination against migrant workers.

In the selected newspaper articles, it has been widely argued that *hukou* is the core institutional basis on which policy and cultural discrimination against peasants and thus migrant workers has been generated. As analyzed in detail earlier, the very specific way of naming the group migrant workers, *nongmin'gong*, which was imposed on them by the mainstream urban society, reflects their 'inferior' status in the existing unbalanced social structure based on the dualistic rural-urban *hukou* system. The term '*nongmin*' (peasants) has become a stigma ascribed to them at the time of birth. Consequently, as one author argues, 'peasant is not only an occupation, but also a social identity'. Even though peasants come to work in the city, they are still called *nongmin'gong* (peasant workers). The term '*nongmin'gong*'

> …….not only implies implication of identity discrimination, but also means sharp contrast of discrepant treatment. They are not entitled to enjoy welfare rights of housing, health care, employment, education and pension which are only exclusive to urban citizens. To eliminate this kind of discrimination, changing the term *nongmin'gong* is just a starting point. The key is to change the real differentiation in treatment behind the term. [136]

This is why though even many new and neutral terms have been coined to refer to migrant workers, they still cannot identify themselves as fully accepted members of the urban society. A news story in the *Worker's Daily* reports the introduction of a new term, *xinshimin*, literally new city people, with which, according to a survey in Gansu province, only 2.8% of the interviewed migrant workers identified themselves. [137] This story clears shows the hierarchical differences of cultural identity and rights between 'low-grade' *nongmin* (peasants) and 'high-grade' *shimin* (city people or urban citizens) on the basis of

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[136] 'Nongmin'gong gaiming shige xitong gongcheng' (To eliminate the term of *nongmin'gong* is not just the change of the name, but a systematic project), *Henan Ribao*, 2011.12.28, p.5.
[137] 'Jin 2.8% jincheng nongmin'gong rentong ziji shi 'xinshimin''(Only 2.8% migrant workers identify themselves as 'new city people'), *Gongren Ribao*, 2009.12.28, p. 1.

hukou system. Through specific discursive apparatus, such as the term of nongmin'gong or *wailaigong* (literally 'workers from outside of the city'), the discriminatory institutional boundaries between *nongmin* and *shimin* have been consolidated culturally and psychologically. Due to the rise of labor mobility in a market-oriented economy, migrant workers have emerged and become a very special group of people which lives in a state of limbo. As mentioned before, especially the younger generation of migrant workers have been culturally and economically intertwined with the urban society and become detached from their original identification with the peasantry and its rural ways of life. But they are denied institutional channels of becoming full *shimin*. As the author of one commentary article in *The Beijing News* argues, 'the new generation of migrant workers does not want to go back to their rural villages as their parents did; so what they want is city identity, demolishment of the *hukou* barricade, equalization of citizenship rights, especially equal educational rights for their children.'[138]

To address this problem, in some places, such as Guangdong province, the country's largest migrant worker receiving region, a new immigration policy of 'accumulated points system' has been introduced and popularized. According to this new policy, those migrant workers who can meet specific requirements to reach a certain level of points (60 in the case of Guangdong) will be eligible to apply for local urban *hukou* and become full-fledged legal urban residents. The measurement criteria include educational background, professional skill, community service and contribution as well as moral merits.[139]In a news story published in the *Worker's Daily*, Xie Hongfen, a female migrant worker in Zhongshan city who was granted local urban *hukou* after more than ten years' hardship and waiting, is hailed as 'the country's first person receiving urban

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[138] 'Xinshengdai nongmin'gong zui xuyao shenme' (What does the new generation of migrant workers need the most?), *Xin Jing Bao*, 2011.06.04, p. B01; also see 'Zhuoli jiejue xinshengdai nongmin'gong wenti' (Earnestly resolve problems faced by the new generation of migrant workers), *Henan Ribao*, 2010.03.03, p. 10.
[139] 'Guangdong nongmin'gong, jifen keyi zhuan hukou' (Migrant workers reaching a certain level of accumulated points are eligible to apply for hukou transfer), *Renmin Ribao*, 2010.06.08, p. 14.

hukou through accumulated points'.[140]Despite some migrant workers' cautious attitudes, under this policy, it has been argued, urban citizenship becomes more attainable for migrant workers so that it is now possible for them to 'get it by jumping a bit higher'.[141] In the *Southern Daily*, the party organ of Guangdong CCP committee, this new policy has been celebrated as 'opening a door for migrant workers' city dream'.[142]Exemplars of 'excellent migrant workers' awarded urban *hukou* through the new policy were propagated.[143] Compared with policies introduced in other regions (e.g. Shanghai), according to the party organ, it is a significant breakthrough, because,

> …….in terms of the *hukou* issue, this policy's rationality and fairness
> is embodied in its high inclusion of the most underprivileged social
> stratum. In large cities, migrant workers, widely acknowledged as the
> most underprivileged group, are the most important benchmark of
> measuring degree of success and rationality of local *hukou* reform. In
> this sense, the most progressive significance of the *hukou* reform in
> Guangdong province has been that it benefits the broad migrant
> workers by setting up a more reasonable threshold.[144]

However, this policy in Guangdong province has also been criticized for its excessive emphasis on educational requirements which, it is been argued by the *Oriental Morning Post* in Shanghai, has in fact excluded the majority of migrant workers who had no chance to get access to high-quality education due to rural underdevelopment.[145] Even in the *Southern Metropolis Daily*, a subsidiary of

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[140] 'Fendou shi yu nian zhongyu nadao chengshi hukou' (Migrant becomes urban hukou holder after more than years' fighting), *Gongren Ribao*, 2010.12.06, p. 4.

[141]'Guangdong nongmin'gong kandan 'jifen ruhu'' (The new *hukou* transfer policy of 'accumulated points' is not popular among migrant workers as expected), *Gongren Ribao*, 2010.10.11, p. 3.

[142] 'Jifenzhi wei nongmin'gong chengshi meng dakai yishan chuang' (The 'accumulated points' system opens a door for migrant workers' city dream), *Nanfang Daily*, 2010.08.11, p. A04.

[143] E.g. 'Baiming youxiu wailaigong huode zhongshan huji' (About one hundred migrant workers granted urban hukou in Zhongshan city), *Nanfang Ribao*, 2008.02.02, p. 7; '97 ming youxiu nongmin'gong zuo biancheng foshanren' (97 distinguish migrant workers became Foshan hukou holders yesterday), *Nanfang Ribao*, 2008.07.23, p. A11.

[144]'Guangdong huji gaige de shizhixing jinbu yiyi' (The substantial progressive significance of hukou reform in Guangdong province), *Nanfang Ribao*, 2009.04.01, p. A02.

[145] 'Guangdong huji gaige buying hushi zuida qunti' (The largest group affected by the hukou system should not be neglected by the hukou reform in Guangdong), *Dongfang Zaobao*, 2010.06.11, p. A43.

Southern Daily, the 'progressive significance' of the new policy was also questioned through news stories about migrant workers' real experiences. The attachment of various professional and honor requirements to the new policy has been satirized as process of 'an emperor selecting his concubines'.[146]Because of high requirements, for most migrant workers, the new policy thus has been like 'the moon in water' or 'a flower in the mirror'. Especially the high threshold of educational requirement makes it more like a hurdle race in which most players are destined to fail. (Figure 6.4)

Figure 6.4 'Accumulated points system': a hurdle race[147]

In a feature story, migrants' real experiences are represented and their personal narratives are directly quoted to reflect effects of the reform policies. In the article, several migrant workers' personal stories become epitome of the history of Chinese migrant workers' struggling with the *hukou* system and concomitant discrimination and suffering imposed on them in the past decades.[148]Among them, Zhao Shunchao, now a female white collar, who migrated from a western rural province to Shenzhen more than twenty years ago and started working as a factory girl, found it still hopeless for her to become a true *Shenzhenren*

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[146] 'Shi fangkuan ruhu bushi huangshang xuan xiunu' (It's loosening hukou transfer policy, not the process of an emperor selecting his concubines), *Nanfang Dushibao*, 2010.03.18, p.FA02.
[147] 'Jifenzhi: youxian ziyuan yu puhui lixiang jian de xianshi lujing' (Accumulated points system: the realistic path between limited resources and the ideal of equal citizenship), *Nanfang Dushibao*, 2010.05.27, p. QA10.
[148]'Dadong 20 nian li 'shimin' haiyou duoyuan' (After 20 years' working as a migrant worker, how far is it from becoming a true urban resident), *Nanfang Dushibao*, 2011.12.13, p. AA23.

(resident of Shenzhen) even after two decades' contribution to the city. Despite her 13 years' work of community service and the great honors she has received from the government for this work, she was denied Shenzhen *hukou* just because these contributions do not meet specific rigorous requirements of the new 'accumulated points system'. Consequently, the superficial openness and underlying exclusive nature of these policies have led to a dilemma: 'It seems that everywhere in this city I am being accepted and approbated, but it never gives me a dignified identity.'

Therefore, as clearly demonstrated in the above analysis, the dominant rationale of *hukou* policies regarding migrant workers has been the bio-political logic of valuation of human body epitomized in the discourse of *suzhi*. This is exactly accordant with the general logic of the party-state's hegemonic ideology of developmentalism in the reform era, according to which the value of human body and population should be measured on the basis of their value in the grand project of national or regional capital accumulation and economic development. Within this framework, citizenship, including its inclusive and thus exclusive aspects (*hukou* in the case of this chapter), is essentially an instrumental lever used by various levels of political economic bodies to meet their developmental aims and thus maximize their own power and interests. Similar to the macro-level discursive construction of rural migrant workers from a negative force (*mangliu* and crisis) to an ideologically glorified but low-quality economic resource (the new working class and *suzhi*), in the case of *hukou*, the dominant discursive regime has been a circular narrative of crisis and *suzhi*.

As we have seen in the above examination of different aspects of public contention over reform policies, in regions where the local authority needs to maintain the existing interest configuration which favors vested interest groups, the discourse of crisis and chaos and threats from outsiders will be the major excuse for refusing essential reform. While in other regions where local economic development needs a large number of migrant laborers, very limited

reform policies will be formulated and the hegemonic discourse of *suzhi* will serve as the major excuse for preserving certain exclusive apparatus. Discursively and also systematically, despite this paradigmatic change, the direction of attribution remains the same: in the case of the crisis view, migrant workers are framed as threats and thus are the main reason for preservation of the existing *hukou* system, while in the *suzhi* case, it is because migrant workers' low quality requires a filtration process. In both cases, crisis or chaos and *suzhi* remain empty or floating signifiers which are conveniently available to justify an unjust reality.

However, as shown above, in some cases, this rationale has been discursively contested and questioned by different actors-speakers as represented in discourse from most metropolis newspapers. Thus different from the single perspective of the party-state's hegemonic ideology in chapter 5, in this chapter, we have seen a more dynamic image of public contention in a semi-public media sphere under an authoritarian market economic configuration. Compared with the dominant developmentalist frame in which citizenship is seen as valuable for its instrumentality, the frame of self-contained citizenship, despite its relatively marginalized state, has been used to question and deconstruct the problematic logic of instrumentalism and developmentalism endorsed by political economic power.

Summary

In this chapter, I have examined media representation of the first aspect of migrant citizenship, viz. the exclusive and inclusive mechanism of *hukou*. Based on the discussion of the political economic origins of the *hukou* system and its social impacts on rural population and especially migrant workers, thematically selected articles from thirteen major Chinese newspapers, including seven party organs and six market-oriented metropolis newspapers, have been critically analyzed and compared. In these discourse, the necessity of reforming the *hukou*

system has been framed from different perspectives viz. economic development, social stability and equal and just citizenship rights. A crisis or chaos frame is adopted by relevant actors-speakers of major urban invested interests to justify consolidation of *hukou* control, while in liberal-minded media discourse, this self-contradictory circular argumentation is refuted on the basis of logical reasoning as well as factual evidence. In terms of public contention over major reform policies of great controversy, the very cosmetic or unjust nature of these approaches and relevant authorities' inclination to commercialize *hukou* policies have been criticized from various aspects. Lastly, as for new policies of *hukou* reform and its relevance to migrant workers' integration into the urban society, the hegemonic discourse of *suzhi* in formulating these policies has been dominant. Migrant workers have been valorized on the basis of their body's inherent quality and economic value to the receiving region's development, while fundamental equal citizenship as an inalienable and independent value for all is silenced.

Chapter 7

Discursive Construction of Migrant Citizenship:

Case Studies

Chinese migrant workers in the reform era continue to be excluded from urban citizenship under the *hukou* system. As examined in last chapter, this core aspect of migrant citizenship and relevant reform policies has been discursively contested by various actors-speakers through media discourse. In this chapter, how the second level, viz. the major aspects of migrant citizenship conditions, including the redistributive justice and cultural identity facets, have been constructed in public contention will be examined. This examination will be based on three case studies: the highly controversial incidents of serial suicides in Foxconn's Shenzhen factory park in 2010; the issue of migrant children's education; and the emerging phenomenon of migrant workers' participation in mass media and popular cultural production.

Introduction

In terms of basic labor rights of migrant workers, the first case to be studied is about a series of appalling incidents where migrant workers employed by Foxconn, the world's largest producer of electronic components and an outsourcing manufacturer for well-known brands including Apple and Nokia, committed suicide in a wave in their factory compound starting in 2007. Especially in the period from January to November of 2010,eighteen staff members of Foxconn's Shenzhen factory committed suicides by hanging themselves or jumping down from plant or dormitory buildings, stirring up fierce public contention in relation to working conditions and fundamental civil, social and political citizenship rights of migrant workers under both physical and mental deprivation. The reason for choosing this case is because it epitomizes various political economic aspects of Chinese migrant workers'

citizenship conditions. It reflects the civil and social aspects of citizenship rights, because the serial incidents are deeply connected with fundamental labor rights, including salary, decent working environment, social security and basic public services that have been denied migrant workers because of the *hukou* regime effect The sampling covers the period of the whole year of 2010 and search keywords include '*fushikang*' (foxconn), '*zisha*' (suicide), '*tiaolou*' (jump down from tall building), '*nongmin gong*' or '*mingong*'.

The second case largely falls into the scope of the social aspect of migrant citizenship which refers to migrant workers' basic social welfare rights, such as education, health care, housing, pension, and so forth. In this respect, one of the most important issues triggering social resentment is the educational problems of migrant workers' children, both those stay-at-home children and those drift-with-parents. For the former, they have been suffering from long time separation with their parents, resulting in grievous psychological and social problems. For the latter, the problems are that they have been systematically continuously excluded from the urban educational system bound with the *hukou*, while migrant activists' unremitting endeavors of establishing independent schools for migrant children have tended to be stamped as illegal and ceaselessly cracked down by local authorities.

The issue has long been a social problem since the 1990s. But only in recent years with rapid general increase of public and official concerns with the migrant worker issue, they have presented themselves as pressing challenges that need to be addressed through policy adjustments. In this study, I mainly focus on the educational problems of children who migrate with their parents and thus live outside of their *hukou* jurisdiction. It is this inconsistency between fundamental educational rights and their *hukou* status that has made the issue a problem. The sampling of news discourse encompasses the period from 2007 to 2011. The keywords include '*mingong zidi xuexiao*', '*daong zidi xuexiao*', or '*nongmin'gong zinu xuexiao*', all literally meaning migrant children schools.

The third case is about the cultural facet of migrant citizenship which is concerned with migrant workers' cultural identity and participation in cultural practice. Despite the relatively low attention it received in the past, the cultural identity problem of migrants has become increasingly important in recent years, as the so-called post-1980s or post-1990s new generations of young migrant laborers have become the main body of migrant workers. Different from their parental generation, they grew up and have been living in an era of internet, popular media culture and globalization. They thus have more cosmopolitan cultural needs and are more eager to express themselves and construct their own cultural identities. In this regard, I shall select the recent phenomenon of young migrant worker being involved in popular media production as focus of the case study. Specifically, I shall examine the case of the famous migrant duo Xuri Yanggang, two young migrant singers who received popularity after posting their music on a video-sharing website. They were invited to perform on the national stage of the 2011 Chinese New Year's Eve TV Gala *('chunjie lianhuan wanhui'*, or *'chunwan'* in abbreviation). Sampling period of these cases is from 2010 to 2011, and the search keywords include *'Xuri Yanggang'*, *'min'gong geshou'* (migrant worker singer), *'min'gong yuedui'* (migrant worker band),and *'chunwan'*.

In this research, as mentioned before, citizenship mainly refers to redistributive and identity aspects, while the political aspect of citizenship rights in terms of meaningful political participation in official policy-making is not included. Normatively, this should be one of the most important and fundamental facets of universal citizenship rights in a democratic political context. However, in China, because of the general authoritarian political conditions, political citizenship, despite general loosening of political control of the society on a daily basis, remains largely subordinate and circumscribed compared with other sides. Meaningful and organized non-party-state political activism is strictly limited. Despite the fact that migrant representatives have been elected to the People's

Congress (PC), the country's 'rubber stamp' parliament system, at various levels since 2007, these participations largely only have symbolic or cosmetic significance. According to some of my interviewees, in both policy discussion and media coverage, appeals for workers' freedom of association are extremely sensitive and strictly censored.

Of course, this does not mean the formal political facet is not important. In fact, to a certain degree, all three of the above mentioned cases are relevant to the political facet. The foxconn case is closely related to the reality of migrant workers' rights poverty as manifested in the fact that lack of organizational power has left atomized individual workers powerlessness. The reality that migrant children have been deprived of access to urban educational systems may have profound political implications in terms of reproduction of a second generation of a poor working underclass and thus augmentation of social fracture and risks of instability. And lastly, the cultural practice of migrant idols also at least indirectly reflects the lack of alternative media and cultural resources for migrants in a party-state dominated propaganda-market-driven cultural sphere, even though cultural consciousness has been increasingly cultivated among the younger generations.

		Foxconn Suicides	Children's Education	Cultural Idols
Party organs	People's Daily	8	12	10
	Worker's Daily	9	13	8
	Southern Daily	4	6	5
	Liberation Daily	2	8	4
	Beijing Daily	0	17	3
	Henan Daily	2	6	2
	Sichuan Daily	1	2	3
Metropolis newspapers	Southern Weekend	4	1	2
	Southern Metropolis Daily	8	3	6
	Oriental Morning Post	10	7	1
	The Beijing News	20	20	3
	Dahe Daily	9	6	8
	Western China Metropolis Daily	11	6	6

Table 7.1 Numbers of selected articles relevant to case studies of migrant citizenship rights

Most data of these cases were collected from the thirteen newspapers in a similar way to that adopted in the preceding chapters. But some alternative sources including reports by NGOs and online visual materials may also be used when necessary. The numbers of selected articles relevant to each case are listed in table 7.1.

Foxconn suicides: Debating factory regime

Introduction

While rural laborers were subject to systemic deprivation and exploitation by the state in its industrialization, in the reform era, they continue to be subject to a new labor regime that institutionally sets floating migrant workers in an inferior status in order to facilitate labor-intensive industries in the booming 'world factory'. In a globalized network of capital value transmission, the workspace, dominated by specific factory regimes, is the starting point where labor value of these migrant bodies is extracted. The very nature of the general labor regime thus is embodied in the factory system to which migrants are subject physically and mentally on a daily basis in local as well as global

contexts. Following the concept of factory regime(Burawoy, 1985), many works have been done to investigate the important role of workplace as a form of bio-power in disciplining, objectifying and valorizing laborers in various social and historical contexts, including the Chinese case. (e.g. Cravey, 1997; Lü & Perry, 1997; Pun, 2005;Warde, 1989) In this section, the case of Foxconn migrant workers' suicides will be studied to examine how the factory regime, in terms of migrant civil rights in relation to labor conditions, has been discursively framed and contested by different actors-speakers through varying genres of media discourse.

Framing Foxconn suicides

On 23 January 2010, Ma Xiangqian, a 19-year-old migrant worker from Henan province of central China, killed himself by jumping from his dormitory building in Foxconn's giant factory complex in Shenzhen after purported long-term work pressure, unfair treatment and torture.[149] Just about half year before this young rural boy's suspicious death, on 16 July 2009, Sun Danyong, a 25-year-old worker in Foxconn's iPhone production department, committed suicide after being beaten and interrogated about a missing iPhone prototype that was founding his possession.[150]The two incidents received some media coverage but were forgotten quickly. They were viewed as adventitious incidents rather than part of a larger disturbing phenomenon until a string of similar deadly suicides hit major national and local media in May. In the period from January to November of 2010, eighteen employees of Foxconn, the world's largest manufacturer of electronic components, committed suicides in their workplace, with fourteen deaths.[151]The striking concentration of serial deaths in a short period of time captured attention from all aspects and became

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[149] ''Diyi tiao' Ma Xiangqian zai fushikang de rizi' ('First jump': Ma Xiangqian's days in Foxconn), from http://www.dooland.com/magazine/article_60991.html, retrieved on 17 July, 2011.
[150] 'Sun Danyong, Chinese Engineer, Kills Himself After Losing '4G' iPhone Prototype', from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2009/07/21/sun-danyong-chinese-engin_n_242429.html, retrieved on 17 July, 2011.
[151] A list of the serial suicides is available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Foxconn_suicides, retrieved on 17 July, 2011.

one of the then most controversial topics in public contention.

In the whole process of public contention over these tragic incidents, various stake-holders and speakers representing different interests and concerns were involved in contesting Foxconn's factory managerial system and relevant issues of labor rights of migrant workers in the Chinese social context. Foxconn and its major business partners, such as Apple, were obliged to respond to the situation, provide proper explanations for these incidents, and suggest reasonable remedies. The central and local governments and other official organizations relevant to labor rights, such as the official trade union, were also required to investigate the situation and offer an official rationale regarding responsibility and potential resolution. Other actors-speakers include specialists, intellectuals, media commentators and other public opinion leaders in producing specialized elucidations and suggestions. Labor rights NGOs were also active in framing the Foxconn factory system by presenting alternative explanations. Voices from migrant works themselves are also deployed by different speakers to support their specific definitions of the issue. All the discourses produced by these actors-speakers were then represented and mediated by in major media's news stories and narratives. Thus media actors themselves were also involved in framing the issue.

As for media coverage, as shown in table 7.1, among the party organs, the two national newspapers, the *People's Daily* (eight articles) and the *Worker's Daily* (nine articles), have relatively high coverage on the case of Foxconn suicides, while all the local party organs show relatively low or even no coverage. Four articles were selected from the *Southern Daily*, the party organ of the CCP committee in Guangdong province, where most of the suicides took place. Given the fact that Foxconn has factories and substantive investment in both Henan and Sichuan provinces, the relative low coverage in party organs from

both areas may has been partially affected by local economic concerns. [152]

Compared with party organs' relatively low coverage which includes 24 selected articles, 62 relevant articles were sampled from the six metropolis newspapers. (Table 7.1) Coverage on the issue in *The Beijing News* is the most prominent among these metropolis papers, with20 articles being selected. The *Southern Metropolis Daily* and the *Southern Weekend*, both from Guangdong province, showed modest coverage. Compared to their parental party organs, metropolitan papers from other local regions of Shanghai, Henan and Sichuan also had moderate coverage on the Foxconn case. To a certain degree, the sheer contrast is illustrative of the difference between inclinations of news making in the propaganda-oriented party press and market-oriented metropolitan newspapers.

Critical analysis of these selected articles has shown that three major frames were present in the public contention over the serial suicides of Foxconn migrant workers. One is the frame of *psychological pressure (individual blame)*, which, embedded in a larger discourse about the younger generation of migrant workers, attributes the problem to the purported relatively 'weak' and 'vulnerable' mental qualities of these young migrant victims. According to this frame, they were said to be not as mentally strong as their parental generation was in withstanding work pressure and harsh working conditions. The second frame is that of *militarized factory regime (micro systemic blame)*, which defines the issue as tragic outcomes of and migrant workers' desperate resistance to the inhumane nature of Foxconn's factory managerial system. The third one is the frame of *'rights' poverty (macro-systemic blame)*, which argues that despite potential individual psychological fragility and Foxconn's paramilitary factory regime, it is the general underprivileged condition of migrant laborers that triggered the problem. Each of these frames presupposes

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[152] 'Fushikang luohu Zhengzhou daidong 50 wan ren jiuye' (New Foxconn factory opens in Zhengzhou offering employment for 0.5 million people), *Xin Jing Bao*, 2010.08.05, p. B05; 'Fushikang ru chuan dailaile shenme' (What has Foxconn brought into Sichuan?), *Sichuan Ribao*, 2010.10.23, p. 3.

different rationales and has discursive sponsors.

Psychological pressure frame

The psychological pressure frame defines the serial incidents of suicides as isolated cases triggered by problems and pressures of social transformation as well as psychological 'defects' of individual migrant workers. After an investigation into the problem, the spokesman of Shenzhen government declared that, despite some managerial problems in Foxconn, one of the main reasons for these incidents was that these migrant workers were very young, mentally immature and vulnerable, and thus lacked sufficient ability to adapt themselves to work and life pressures. The official then called on both the government and the company to provide services of psychological counseling and to improve managerial methods and work and life conditions of migrant workers. Foxconn quickly followed the official explanation to attribute the problem to its 'staff members' personality and sentiments', rather than its own systematic problems in organizing and managing labor force.[153]Specifically, as stated by the company, all these suicide victims included three categories of people: those with troublesome relationships, those with physical problems, and those who lacked consciousness of self-precaution. In other words, all those migrant workers who committed suicides were both physically and mentally 'weak'.[154]

This idea received support from some professional psychologists, who claimed that the rate of suicide among Foxconn's 0.4 million staff members in its Shenzhen factory is lower than the national average rate of suicide.[155] Thus the

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[153] 'Shenzhen diaochazu jinru fushikang' (Shenzhen official investigative team entered Foxconn), Renmin Ribao, 2010.05.21, p. 13; 'Jiu fushikang lianxu fasheng yuangong zhuiloiu shijian, Shenzhen shizhengfu juxing xinwen fabuhui' (Shenzhen government holds news briefing regarding foxconn suicides), *Renmin Ribao*, 2010.05.27, p.13; 'Shenzhen shi huiying 'fushikang tiaolou shijian'' (Shenzhen government responds to 'Foxconn suicides'), *Xin Jing Bao*, 2010.05.27; 'Shenzhen shi: fushikang guanli youwenti' (Foxconn has problems in its managerial aspects), *Dongfang Zaobao,* 2010.05.27, p. A18.
[154] 'Tamen name nianqing, nianqing de lingren xinji' (They were so young, a fact leaves pains in our hearts), *Gongren Ribao*, 2010.5.19, p. 3.
[155] 'Fushikang 'baliantiao' zhimi' (mystery of 'eight serial suicides' in Foxconn), *Nanfang Zhoumo*, 2010.05.13, p. A01.

major reason was attributed to specific mental characteristics of the younger generation. It was argued that the serial suicides reflected psychological crisis among young migrant workers under huge work and life pressure in the fast transforming Chinese society. The new generations of the post-1980s or post-1990s young migrant workers were described by professional psychologists as having relatively low adversity quotient compared with their parental generations.[156] In a news story of the *Worker's Daily*, a post-1970s female migrant worker from Hunan province said, management in factories was more rigorous and managers' attitudes gruffer when she started to work as a maiden migrant worker, but there were not so many incidents like the Foxconn suicides. 'To make money and support our family, we can simply endure anything'.[157] The older generations of migrant workers who were born in the period from the 1950s to the 1970s were then lauded for being steadfast and persevering in face of difficulties and social pressure. They were hardworking and did not mind low salary and harsh working conditions. They only wished to earn money as much as possible to support their families in the countryside.

In contrast, the new generations of migrant workers do not intend to work as hard as their predecessors and go back to the rural areas. Despite the fact that most of them lack basic professional skills, they have been dreaming of integrating into the urban society. One manager in Foxconn who once supervised two generations of migrant workers described the new generation as 'too anxious to achieve quick success and get instant benefits' (*jigongjinli*).[158] However, according to one author in the *People's Daily*, these young migrant workers,

lack clear understanding and grasp of the social reality. When they

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[156] 'Fushikang shijian baolu chu yuangong xinli ganyu jizhi buwanshan zhiye juandai yincang xinli weiji' (Foxconn case reveals problems of the mechanism of staff member psychological counseling and psychological crisis rests in occupational weariness), *Renmin Ribao*, 2010.07.08, p. 19.

[157] 'Beifeng chuizou de ladong he qignchun' (Labor and lives gone in the wind), *Gongren Ribao* (Worker's Daily), 2010.05.22, p.5.

[158] 'Fushikang 'baliantiao' zhimi' (mystery of 'eight serial suicides' in Foxconn), *Nanfang Zhoumo*, 2010.05.13, p. A01.

entered into factories like those of Foxconn, highly frequent overtime work, ironhanded management, cold and indifferent interpersonal relationships, transformed them into screws of machines or 'blue ants' in massive 'barracks'. In a word, to them, work and life has little fun. Facing such a stressful social environment and mirthless working environment, these young people who were not persevering became vulnerable. Disappointment in a love affair or just a minor ailment ... any this kind of small detonation cords could push them to walk towards windows and jump down.[159]

Consequently, it was maintained that the solution should be the establishment of routine psychological education and training for young migrant workers and improvement of corporate culture and internal management. Suggestions were made for governments and employers to take more measures to help young migrant workers to improve their mental health and cultural satisfaction. [160]In a letter to the editors of the *People's Daily*, one migrant worker called on employers and local governments to provide services of psychological health training and cultural activities to young migrant workers.[161]Accordingly, experts of crisis management and psychology were invited by Foxconn to investigate and resolve purported mental problems of staff members. Even eminent monks were invited to dispel misfortune and comfort employees. [162]Also introduced was a risk prevention mechanism, including establishment of an internal psychological work-team, installation of anti-suicide nets, anti-suicide rallies,

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[159] 'Rang tamen geng reai shenghuo'(Make them love life more), *Renmin Ribao*, 2010.06.07, p.19.

[160] 'Xinshengdai dagongzu xinli jiankang kanyou' (Mental health condition of new generations of migrant workers is worrying), *Gongren Ribao*, 2010.05.19, p. 7; 'Qiye guanhuai yuangong fei bunengye' (It is not impossible for employers to care about their staff members' needs), *Jiefang Ribao*, 2010.05.22, p. 5.

[161] 'Guanzhu xinli jiankang qianghua tuozhan xunlian' (Focus on psychological health training), *Renmin Ribao*, 2010.12.03, p. 5.

[162] 'Fushikang diaocha jieguo jiang gongkai' (Foxconn investigfative report will be open to the public), *Xin Jing Bao*, 2010.06.13, p. A22; 'Buwen yuangong wen guishen?' (Ask help from ghost and god rather than employees?), *Huaxi Dushibao*, 2010.05.13, p.7; 'Pojie fushikang yuangong zisha de mozhou' (Decoding imprecations of Foxconn suicides), *Nanfang Zhoumo*, 2010.05.13, p. A04.

and 'no-suicide' pacts.[163]

Based on this rationale, it was the combination of pressure of social transformation and vulnerable mentality that should be responsible for the crisis. The aspect of managerial problems was also mentioned. But in most cases where a psychological frame was dominant, the issue of factory system was treated as one of the many relevant factors. The problem reflected by the serial suicides was framed as a new phenomenon in relation to new characteristics of younger generations of migrant workers, who, in comparison with their parents were depicted as both physically and psychologically defective. By intertextual appropriation of professional discourse of psychology and other social scientific explanations, this frame defines the issue in question as a story of 'growing pains', in which social pressure engendered by economic trends was naturalized as something unavoidable to which migrant workers had to adapt themselves. Resultantly, it was specific social actors' own responsibility to improve their ability in order to fit in with the needs of the society, while responsibilities of the actors of the state power and market capital, who, through the combination of discriminatory citizenship policies and mechanism of labor-intensive production, had rendered migrant workers in an extremely underprivileged status, were discursively shirked.

Frame of militarized factory regime

However, the psychological pressure rationale was challenged by the frame of militarized factory regime which, based on vivid investigations into real life conditions of Foxconn's migrant workers, emphasized the inhuman nature of Foxconn's profit-maximization management system which deprived migrant workers of their basic labor rights through what has been viewed as labor abuse,

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[163]'Xinli fushidao shangma tai caoshuai?' (Was it a brash decision to set up a psychological work-team?), *Nanfang Dushibao*, 2010.5.27. p. AA08; 'Ben fangfa: fushikang yaojian 'tianluo diwang' (A clumsy method: Foxconn to install anti-suicide nets), *Dahe Bao*, 2010.05.27; 'Fushikang yuangong 'shenxi shengming' youxing' (Anti-suicide rally organized for Foxconn employees), *Xin Jing Bao*, 201.08.19, p. A24; 'Fushikang gai zhimian yuangong candan de rensheng' (Foxconn should face its employees' gloomy life), *Dongfang Zaobao*, 2010.05.27, p. A22.

low salary level, excessive workload, strict factory discipline, disrespect for personal dignity and minimized social well being. The validity of psychological approach and naturalization of work and life pressure were questioned.[164]Both major academic and media institutions published first-hand reports on migrant workers' real work and life conditions in Foxconn.

Among others, a series of reports conducted by professors and students from mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan reveal appalling problems under this factory's regime; in terms of labor recruitment, in order to reduce labor cost, Foxconn used a large number of internship student workers who were paid less than formal workers and were not covered by social insurance; s for workplace management, the main methods were 'scolding' and treating workers like machines. Workers were strictly locked into intense and overtime work regimes, repeating the same working procedure, while the rigorous rules of workshop access control and hostile administrative relationships made workers feel like they were living in 'an authoritarian labor concentration camp of the new era'; working life's time and space were also deliberately designed to serve Foxconn's global strategy of 'just in time production' which aims to maximize profit return by minimizing in-process inventory and relevant costs. Workers' life was managed only as an extension of production. Catering, entertainment, cultural and sporting facilities were only ornamental features as workers' after-work time was severely shrunk by overtime work. Under such conditions, purposes of everyday life was not to meet workers comprehensive life and social needs, but to reproduce labor force so as to meet production needs at the lowest cost and within the shortest period of time; work risks in terms of industrial injuries were not effectively prevented and workers who suffered from injuries were not treated in a just and fair way; and lastly, the absence of a powerful and independent trade union which could monitor corporate behavior and organize the workers and speak for them had left workers in an atomized

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[164]'Xinli yisheng neng zhizhi 'shiyi liantiao' ma?' (Can psychiatrists stop the 'eleven serial suicides'?), *Jiefang Ribao*, 2010.05.27, p. 2.

status so that they were not able to organize themselves and effectively defend their interests and basic labor rights.[165]

Similarly, another report by Students & Scholars Against Corporate Misbehaviour (SACOM), a Hong Kong based NGO, also reveals labor abuses such as ones related to low wages and lengthy working hours, management system characterized by 'absolute obedience' and 'inhuman punishment', depressing working and living environment, absence of an effective trader union and grievance mechanism, and lack of restrictions from relevant industrial codes of conduct. Particularly, the report highlights the global network of industrial production in which Foxconn workers were embedded. As the world's leading contract manufacturer, Foxconn operates in cooperation with various top brands including Apple, HP, Sony, Nokia, among others. All these companies had specific codes of conduct to which their supplier should adhere in order to ensure decent working and living conditions for workers. The report argues, the Apple's Supplier Code of Conduct 'states that workers will not be harassed, that working hours will be in compliance with local law, and that overtime work should be on voluntary basis. Disappointingly, these are merely promises on paper'. (SACOM, 2010)

Major media also published investigative reports and commentary articles concerning Foxconn's factory system. In a story published in the *Worker's Daily*, workers' own words were cited to depict the existential crisis imposed on them by the factory system: 'When you are working, you have to be 100% concentrated on yourself and cannot be distracted by anything else'. Whenever workers enter into the workshop they would have this kind of feeling: 'everyone has no difference from a machine'. While 'machines operate by electricity and receive annual maintenance, what about man? ' For those workers whose lives have been consumed in factories, 'what should they depend on to continue life,

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[165] 'Liang'an sandi gaoxiao fushikang diaoyan zongbaogao' (Respots on Foxconn case conducted by teachers and students from university in mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan), from http://tech.163.com/10/1009/15/6IIHU0KT000915BD.html, retrieved on July 18, 2011.

the negligible salary earned by overtime work?'[166] The strictly controlled mode of labor-intensive production in Foxconn was deemed reminiscent of scenes depicted in Charlie Chaplin's classic film *Modern Times*, in which workers were treated like machines and forced to work under huge physical and mental pressure. [167]

Qiu Feng, a scholar of political science in Beijing, emphasized the asociality of Foxconn's factory regime:

> Workers' sociality was obliterated. They were enclosed in a narrow 'city within the city' and all their lives were integrated into the efficiency calculating system. Assembly lines extended to every aspect of their daily life while relationships of family, relatives, and friends were excluded and deserted. The iron-and-blood mode of management adopted by Foxconn was centrally embodied in its authoritarian security-guard regime, by which, the characteristics of a 'city within the city' were enhanced and asocial space shaping established and consolidated. [168]

In two feature articles [169] based on ethnographic-style latent investigations conducted by the *Southern Weekend*'s journalist, the factory regime's steely nature was embodied in the layout of buildings which are erected trimly and 'devoid of idiosyncrasy', 'except for building numbers composed of English alphabets and figures'. 'So are machines in workshops, cargo containers in depositories, even workers in uniform at assembly lines'. In such an environment, interpersonal relationship had been extremely indifferent and thus workers became 'familiar strangers' to each other.

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[166] 'Beifeng chuizou de laodong he shengming' (Labor and lives gone in the wind), *Gongren Ribao* (Worker's Daily), 2010.05.22, p.5.
[167] 'Fushikang di shiyi tiao yu guotaiming 'ershige jiaru''(The eleventh suicide in Foxconn and Terry Gou's 'twenty ifs'), *Nanfang Dushibao*, 2010.05.26, p.GC06.
[168] 'Fushikang xianxiang: laodongzhe yihua de yangben' (Foxconn phenomenon: a specimen of labor alienation), *Nanfang Dushibao*, 2010.05.23, p.TM01.
[169] 'Fushikang 'baliantiao' zhimi' (mystery of 'eight serial suicides' in Foxconn), *Nanfang Zhoumo*, 2010.05.13, p. A01; 'Yu jiqi xiangban de qignchun he mingyun' (Youth and destiny in company with machines), *Nanfang Zhoumo*, 2010.05.13, p. A02.

Figure 7.1 Foxconn's female workers at assembly lines [170]

Because of low wages, Foxconn workers were eager to ask for overtime work. Even work injuries were admired by workers, simply because in this case they could rest with payment. The severe economic deprivation of workers' labor rights was exemplified by an ironic scene at the massive industrial park of the iPhone maker:

> In front of the newly opened mobile phone shop, the salesman was demonstrating the fashionable iPhone to Foxconn workers. All of them were closely staring at his every 'super-cool' operation, as if looking at something magic. But in fact, all these famous-brand products, including iPhone and iPad, were produced by Foxconn, and almost every component of these products was processed by their own hands. However, none of them once dreamed of having one final finished product.

Thus the resolution should be change and adaptation of the Foxconn's managerial system, especially to increase workers' wages and well-being

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[170] Source: *Southern Weekend*, 2010.05.13, p. A01.

treatment, and to dismantle the punitive mechanism of factory control. In response to public criticisms, the local official trade union in Shenzhen modestly criticized Foxconn's para-military management system, highly hierarchicalized bureaucracy, and rigid managerial methods which 'machinized workers'. What Foxconn should do was not only to provide psychological support but also to resolve problems in its management system.[171] Foxconn defended itself by promoting a psychological approach as analyzed above and taking measures to open its factory compound to media in order to change public opinion.[172] Among other actors, relevant departments of the central government either sent out an investigative team or expressed sorrow for the incidents, while Apple which had also been criticized[173] reacted by dispatching an investigative team as well as subsidizing Foxconn to raise worker's wage. [174]

Frame of rights poverty

The frame of 'rights' poverty extends beyond both the psychological and factory regime frameworks to define the Foxconn case as a manifestation of a wider reality concerning the general migrant labor regime and consequent wide-spread conditions of infringement of basic labor rights in the authoritarian developmentalist context of the reform period. The tragic serial suicides as a phenomenon are attributed to the current institutional arrangements which undermine rural laborers' citizenship in order to facilitate the mode of production that has been labeled by 'made in China'. Thus what should be reflected on is the general developmentalist ideology and relevant institutional arrangements.

Among the selected articles, one opinion article published in the *Southern*

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[171] 'Fushikang zhuilou shijian pinfa rangren jingxing' (Serial suicides in Foxconn received vigilant concerns), *Nanfang Ribao*, 2010.04.14, p. A11; 'Fushikang ruhe zouchu zisha yinyin'(How could Foxconn get rid of the shadow of serial suicides), *Renmin Ribao*, 2010.05.21, p. 13.

[172] 'Ben fangfa: fushikang yaojian 'tianluo diwang' (A clumsy method: Foxconn to install anti-suicide nets), *Dahe Bao*, 2010.05.27

[173] Lang Xianping jianyi fushikang gai shengchan fangshi (Economist Larry Hsien Ping Lang suggested Foxconn to change its mode of production), *Xin Jing Bao*, 2010.07.08, p. B05.

[174] 'Pingguo huo butie fushikang daigong chanpin' (Apple to subsidize Foxconn-made products), Xin Jing Bao, 2010.05.28, p. A20.

Metropolis Daily clearly attributes the serial deadly incidents to migrant workers' underprivileged position in the current political economic systems. According to the author,

> For a long time, labor force in our country has been used as if it is a kind of purely natural resource. Compared workers with developed countries, workers in China not only have no rights to collective bargaining, but also no basic welfare rights, so that some have come to the conclusion that: in our country, it is legal to appeal for environmental protection, but illegal to call for labor right protection. If this situation remains, in my opinion, even though many measures have been taken to improve worker's mental health and cultural life, the root causes of worker suicides will not be removed.[175]

Thus problems have been closely related to general labor alienation engendered by the authoritarian developmentalist model in the current Chinese society. Foxconn workers' predicament is in fact also the whole society's problem. The whole country in the developmentalist reform agenda is in fact a larger Foxconn where citizens are defined only as economic subjects whose values are measured by its functionality in wealth creation and economic growth. The very specific developmentalist agenda of the state in the context of both national and global economic crisis is then questioned: migrant workers, through their hard work and sacrifice, have contributed to fulfillment of the state's goal of *baoba* (protect eight, the goal of 8% annual economic growth rate) and produced the world's most advanced electronic products, but their own wealth has been accumulated at the lowest speed. In *Time* magazine, Chinese migrant workers were acclaimed as heroes and the person of the year in 2009 because of their contribution to global economic recovery.[176] However, with closer examination

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[175] 'Quanli pinkun shi zhuilou shijian pinfa de genyuan' (Right poverty is the root cause of the serial suicides), *Nanfang Dushibao*, 2010.04.15, p. SA26.

[176] 'Person of the Year 2009: The Chinese Worker', from http://www.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,1946375_1947252_1947256,00.html, retrieved on July 18, 2011.

of Foxconn suicides, as one journalist of the *Southern Weekend* argues,

> the so-called fortitude of Chinese migrant workers praised by the
> *Time* magazine as 'lightening the future of human being', is in fact
> the indispensable quality for them to endure machinery alienation and
> capital deprivation. Could such 'fortitude' be their bearable heaviness
> of being? While computers, mobile phones, cars, all products have
> become outcomes of capital, sweat, youth and even life, all these
> costs are being devoured by the capital.[177]

The sharp contrast between Steve Jobs' staff members' creative and
self-satisfactory state of working and the depressing life of Foxconn's workers
who produce Apple products under the Chinese Model, thus clearly reveals the
real roots of the tragedy. As one professor argues, the Chinese conomic growth
was achieved at the cost of basic labor rights.

> [T]he identity of *nongmin'gong* has been taken as an excuse to
> undervalue their labor. The average wage of Chinese migrant workers
> is lower than that of most developing countries, so that they are not
> able to settle down in the city and have to drift between the rural and
> urban areas. Their lives thus have been rootless, undignified, and
> separated from family members, with the old left unattended and the
> young uncared-for.[178]

The solution, as argued by many commentators, should be to take effective
measures to reform the dualistic *hukou* system, promote rural-urban integration,
and protect fundamental labor rights including, despite doubtful possibility in
the current Chinese polity, legalizing empowerment and self-organization of
migrant workers through means of a relatively independent trade union. [179]

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[177]'Yu jiqi xiangban de qignchun he mingyun' (Youth and destiny in company with machines), *Nanfang Zhoumo*, 2010.05.13, p. A02.
[178] 'Fushikang de fansi youxie jiandan' (Foxconn's reflection is too simple), *Dahe Bao*, 2010.05.27.
[179] 'Tiaolou de tamen ben bugai wuzhu' (Those who committed suicides should have not been so helpless), *Renmin Ribao,* 2010.05.21, p. 13; 'Zuzhihua de gongren fangneng chengwei qiangzhe' (Only organized

In sum, in this section, three major ways of framing the case of foxconn suicides in relation with basic labor civil rights of migrant workers have been examined. The psychological pressure frame has been adopted by Foxconn and relevant official actors to define the problem as mainly an issue of individual mental health. Based on a social Darwinist ideology, the victim migrant workers themselves have assumed to be responsible for the tragic results because of their immanent physical and mental defects which have made them not strong enough to withstand and thus survive social pressure in a competitive environment of market economy. The class orientation of this discourse is clearly seen in its decontextualized and one-sided rationale of attribution. The hegemonic discourse of *suzhi* again has been conveniently used to serve interests of the dominant coalition of capital and political power in an authoritarian developmentalist polity.

In contrast, the frame of militarized factory regime encontextualizes this psychological discourse from an individualized and decontextualized scientific framework to a much more complicated network of bio-power and discipline in the factory system. Vivid representations and interpretation of the effects imposed on workers by the authoritarian managerial system have been developed by various actors through investigative reports or media discourse. As we have seen from the above analysis, actor-speakers who advocate this frame are mainly civil activists and media commentators. By using this frame, they have been playing a role of independent investigators whose responsibility is to uncover hidden stories behind curtain and thus speak for the underprivileged. And thirdly, the frame of 'rights' poverty further advances the debate towards the macro reality of labor regime under the current authoritarian developmentalist polity. The general underclass conditions of Chinese migrant workers, as exemplified in the Foxconn case, have been pre-installed in the

workers can be stroing), *Dahe Bao*, 2010.05.28; 'Laodong baozhang: shixian timian laodong de bixu' (Labor insurance and security: necessary condition for decent work), *Gongren Ribao*, 2010.05.29, p. 6; "Weien bixian weiquan' jidai zuoshi' (Measures should be taken to implement the principle of 'stabilizing the society by rights protection'), *Dongfang Zaobao*, 2010.05.31, p. A22.

general mode of 'China model', which, as argued by some, is characterized by the combination of low human rights and labor-intensive production.

The poor second generation: contesting migrant children's education

Introduction

The problem of migrant children's education is one of the many important issues concerning migrant workers' social citizenship rights in the urban society. Similar to many other aspects of public service, the educational system in China is hierarchicalized on the basis of administrative levels and the *hukou* system. As one of the fundamental welfare rights, one's educational right is bound with her or his *hukou* jurisdiction, which means s/he can only get access to educational resources within the local area of his or her origins. This institutional arrangement is largely a legacy of the central-planned political economic system which assumed citizens' permanent residence in a specific location. As argued previously, the *hukou* system has led to extreme disparity of economic development and social resource distribution between different jurisdictions and also between rural and urban areas, with large cities and generally urban areas in a favored position while small cities and rural areas relatively underinvested. In terms of education, the institution of highly unbalanced resource distribution has left education in rural areas almost in bankruptcy while most high quality resources have been invested in urban education.

The disparity in the pre-reform period was maintained well and received no challenges as the rural and the urban societies were basically totally separated from each other. But when millions of rural laborers started to migrant to work in the cities, this became a problem. After migrating to the cities, almost all young migrant parents have to make a choice to either leave their children back

home or take them to the cities. The former have been called *liushou ertong* (stay-home children) taken care of by their grandparents, while the latter have been called *dagong zidi* (migrant children). According to a 2009 national survey, there were more than 17 million migrant children, of whom 58 million were left home while 14 million migrated with their parents. 40 million of these children were younger than 14. [180] However, under the hereditary *hukou* system, all these children of rural migrants were born (no matter where they were born) as rural *hukou* holders, a *de facto* status of second-class citizenship directly inherited from their parents. This means not only do migrant workers themselves have no urban citizenship, but also their children are defined as the second generation of an outclass denied access to urban public services, including education.

In response to huge public criticism, the central government has formulated various policies urging local governments to ease and gradually resolve the problem. Two policy documents specifically targeted on the issue of migrant children's education, *Provisional Regulations of Floating Children's Education*[181] and *Some Opinions Regarding Improving Work On Compulsory Education of Migrant Workers' Children*[182] were promulgated in 1998 and 2003 respectively. Migrant children's education is also included in the central government's *National Program of Action for Child Development in China* (2001-2010). [183]However, most of these polices remain at the level of general guidance without concrete compulsory operational requirements, and local urban governments have been largely indifferent to these plans which in fact would increase their fiscal burden and thus undermine their vested interests.

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[180]'Suiqian rucheng, kewang yizhang anwende shuzhuo'(Migrant children eager to have a table school table), *Gongren Ribao*, 2009.12.03, p. 5

[181] *Liudong Ertong Shaonian Ruxue Zanxing Banfa* (March 2, 1998), from http://www.moe.edu.cn/publicfiles/business/htmlfiles/moe/moe_621/200409/3192.html, retrieved on August 23, 2011.

[182]*Guanyu Jinyibu Zuohao Jincheng Wugong Jiuye Nongmin'gong Zinu Yiwu Jiaoyu Gongzuo de Yijian* (September 13, 2003), from http://www.gov.cn/zwgk/2005-08/14/content_22464.htm, retrieved on August 23, 2011.

[183]*Zhongguo Ertong Fazhan Gangyao (2001-2010)*, from http://www.edu.cn/20011009/3004216.shtml, retrieved on August 23, 2011.

Consequently, as long as the *hukou* system remains dominant, most 'reform' measures taken by urban authorities only have cosmetic effects. In order to get a seat in state-run schools for their children, normally migrant parents have to have special connections with insiders and bribe or 'donate' a large amount of money to the school to get admitted. Consequently, most migrant children have been left excluded by the combination of *hukou* and money from the public educational system. The huge void of educational service has thus left space for mushrooming private illegal schools for migrant children (*dagong zidi xuexiao,* migrant children school) which, expectedly, remain subject to continuous official clampdown. Fierce struggles and confrontations between the state power and civil forces regarding migrant children's education have thus been staged again and again. It is in this situation that clashes between migrant children's right to equal education and the strongly fortified *hukou* barricade that excludes them from educational resources in migrant receiving cities, have led to an enduring source of social conflicts and public contention.

Media coverage and public contention

The problem of migrant children's education has been one of the most discursively contended issues in media discourse regarding migrant workers. As shown in table 7.1, among the selected articles, party organs have more coverage on the issue of migrant children's education than that of metropolitan newspapers. Particularly, the *Beijing Daily* has 17 relevant articles selected, the most among party organs. However, analysis of news themes of these articles has shown that almost all of them are about positive measures taken and achievements made by the Beijing government to 'improve migrant children's education with loving care', while constant oppressive measures towards migrant children schools and resistance from migrants are silenced. It is the same for the *Liberation Daily*, the party organ of Shanghai, one of the major migrant receiving areas. Comparatively, the *Southern Daily* takes a modest critical stance in covering cases in other regions, but keeps a relatively positive

approach in local case. Both *Sichuan Daily* and *Henan Daily*, party organs of the two largest migrant labor sending provinces, have adopted a relatively critical perspective towards migrant receiving regions' polices. As for metropolis newspapers, *The Beijing News* has 20 articles selected while others less than ten. In these articles, various aspects of the issues of migrant children's education have been debated from different angles. The details of daily conditions of migrant schools and students are investigated in depth in several feature articles.

Generally, relevant stake-holders in the public contention over migrant children's education include actors of various sections of the party state, viz. the central government, governments of migrant sending areas and governments of migrant receiving areas, as well as actors of the social sphere composed of operators of migrant schools, migrant workers and their children, NGOs and other public opinion leaders who are able to have a voice in public media. Different frames have been used by these actors to define the issue and formulate their rationale regarding responsibility and resolution, viz. who should be responsible for the current problems and what should be the most feasible measures to resolve them. In this regard, how migrant workers' fundamental social rights (right to equal education in this case) have been discursively debated is the focal point of examination.

Embedded in these media discourses are two major discursive packages. The first one is about social exclusion and reproduction of *qiong erdai* (poor second generation), a catchword referring to children of an underclass. Here the major concern is how the reproduction of migrant children as the generation of an underclass has been discursively legitimized or questioned. Another one is about the legitimacy of private migrant schools and relevant government responsibilities. In this regard, specifically, rationales of different speakers will be examined to find out what arguments have been presented to justify or cast doubt on government's relevant policies and how the general issues of equal

citizenship rights to education and government's responsibilities in reforming the current institutions have been contested.

Reproduction of the poor second generation

Large amounts of coverage have been focused on discriminatory treatment and social exclusion that migrant children have experienced in daily life and how these mechanisms of institutional and cultural exclusion may have contributed to blocking upward social mobility and thus solidifying intergenerational status transmission. Education is usually regarded as one of the very fundamental resources for individual members of the underclass to change their status. But for migrant children, their *hukou* status has left them in a condition of second-class citizenship and denied them access to public educational system. For these migrant children, they may have already failed at the starting line.[184] As represented in the selected articles, discrimination against migrant children has originated around various effects of the *hukou* regime - including institutional exclusion of migrant children from urban public schools, urban authority's systematic suppression of private migrant schools, and cultural and identity discrimination from mainstream urban society.

Due to the *hukou* system, migrant children do not normally have entitlement to study in local public schools in receiving cities. The purported reason for this is that educational resources are redistributed on the basis of the number of '*hukou* population' in a specific administrative region. Migrant workers and their children are not local '*hukou* population' and therefore are not entitled to enjoy local public service. Thus the rationale has been that because urban resources are limited, welfare rights of the local *hukou* population have to be ensured and migrants' access to these resources must be restricted. To urban policy-makers, the existing dualistic rural-urban *hukou* system has been the very fundamental institutional justification for their policies. In their eyes, 'migrant workers even

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[184] 'Qiong erdai: bie rang wo shuzai qipaoxian' (Poor second generation: please don' let me fail at the scratch line), *Renmin Ribao*, 2011.03.31, p.18.

could not move to the city. Now they have the right to migration and to work in the city, but they do not have the right to *hukou* transfer and welfare rights of social security and children's education'. [185] Even though in recent years limited quota has been left for migrant children, normally before they can be accepted by public schools, their parents have to pay large amounts of 'donation' money to the school and prepare all the required documents, which are usually extremely hard to get. [186] Similar to *hukou* policy, in some regions, the 'accumulated points system' has also been introduced to ease the problem of migrant children's education. But the real effects of this policy have been doubtful (as discussed earlier) because of the overly high bar. [187]

Also the continuous oppressive actions taken by urban authorities to shut down or incorporate migrant schools are another form of social exclusion. Most of the private schools of migrant children are not registered and legalized by the government and thus have been subject to official clamp-down. Usually illegality and poor teaching facilities are the main excuses for the authority to shut down these schools. 'Wherever an area will be developed, all migrant workers inhabiting there have to leave and migrant children's schools will be demolished'.[188]

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[185] 'Min'gong zinu chou gaozhong, weishenmne?' (Why should migrant children worry about their high school education?), *Sichuan Ribao*, 2008.02.20, p.B03.

[186] 'Qiuxuemeng, zai kunjing zhong qianxing' (Dream of education: move on in the face of challenges), *Renmin Ribao*, 2010.03.01, p. 12; 'Zai nongmin'gong zidi xuexiao zhijiao de rizi' (Days in the school of migrant workers children), *Gongren Ribao*, 2010.12.13, p. 4; 'Beijing 30 suo dagong zidi xuexiao shoudao guanting tognzhi yigxiang 3 wan ming xuesheng' (30 migrant schools in Beijing required to shut down, affacting 30 thousand children).*Xin Jing Bao*, 2011.08.16; 'Fenliu xuesheng baodao reng bei suo 'wuzheng'' ('Five documents' required when migrant students enrol in public schools), *Xin Jing Bao*, 2011.08.17, p. A08.

[187] 'Weile rang nongmin'gong zinu shanghaoxue' (Measures taken to ensure migrant children's education), *Gongren Ribao*, 2008.11.23, p. 1; 'Ying jianli jifenzhi dagong zidi anfen ruxue' (It is necessary to set up accumulated pointssystem, migrant children will be accepted to study in public schools on the basis of their points), *Beijing Ribao*, 2011.03.13, p. 3; 'Wailaigong zinu jifen ruxue, kanshang qu henmei, shiji xiaoguo youxian' (Accumulated points system introduced to resolve migrant children's education: it looks beautiful but with little real effects), *Nanfang Dushibao*, 2011.07.26, p. GS12; 'Wailaigong zinu, zaoyu ruxue kunjing' (Migrant children encounter problems of education), *Nanfang Ribao*, 2011.09.01. p. A13; 'Dali shishui wailaigong jifen ruxue ruhu ruzhu' (Accumulated points system introduced in Dali to resolve problems of migrant children's education and migrants' hukou transfer), *Nanfang Ribao*, 2011.11.02, p. A09.

[188] 'Suiqian rucheng, kewang yizhang anwende shuzhuo'(Migrant children eager to have a table school table), *Gongren Ribao*, 2009.12.03, p. 5

Figure 7.2 Migrant children vs. local students with urban hukou[189]

Besides these two aspects, cultural and identity discrimination from the mainstream urban society also has profound negative influences on migrant children's mentality. Most public schools in the city hardly would like to accept migrant students. According to one commentator, there are three reasons for this:

> First, this is opposed by urban families who think style of study and school will degenerate if migrant children are accepted; second, operators of public schools are worried that if migrant children come to study, they will affect the school's average educational level and proportion of students entering schools of a higher grade. ... and third, urban officials are worried that if the problem is totally resolved, the city will become a low-lying depression of education which would

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[189] Source: *Southern Metropolis Daily*, July 26, 2011, p. GS12.

attract more migrant students so that the city would be over-burdened. Therefore, even though the city has the ability to provide equal education to all students, barricades are necessary to block influx of migrant children. [190]

Apparently, migrant children have been negatively perceived as 'inferior' invaders threatening vested interests of the mainstream urban society. Discrimination extends into classrooms when migrant children are admitted to study in public schools. They are called *jiedusheng* (transient or guest students), which clearly implies their second-class status in the school regime. In many aspects, migrant students are not treated equally. Classes are separated between local and migrant students. In some cases, almost all the local student changed their schools after these public schools were dominated by migrant students. All these forms of discrimination and exclusion have rendered migrant students in a condition of strongly feeling neglected and excluded from other students, which would leave mental trauma in their mind. Consequently, most migrant children have to live with profound identity crisis and have found it difficult to either fully integrate into the urban society or retreat back to their original life. Self abandonment and the sense of inferiority thus dominate the group of migrant children. Therefore, it has been argued, the issue of migrant children's education needs to be seriously addressed because this may be potentially risky if these children grow up with psychological 'defects'. [191]

Thus through maintenance of mechanisms of systematic social exclusion, inter-generational social status transmission between migrant workers and their

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[190] 'Dagong zidi chengshi jiuxue de zhang'ai zai nali' (Where are the barricades that prevent migrant children from public education in the city), *Dongfang Zaobao*, 2011.08.22, p. A22. As for the third purported reason, government officials in Beijing clearly expressed their worries to the media , see 'Beijing jiang jinli jieshou dagong zidi ruxue' (Beijing local authority says it will try best to accept migrant children to study in its public schools), *Xin Jing Bao*, 2010.01.25, p. A09.
[191] 'Nongmin'gong zinu gaozhong de kezhuo zai nali?' (Where are high school tables for migrant children?), *Renmin Ribao*, 2008.02.19, p. 11; 'Wailaiwa, zai jing 'jiedu' hao ganga' (Awkward conditions of migrant transient students in Beijing), *Gongren Ribao*, 2009.09.17, p. 5; 'Suiqian rucheng, kewang yizhang anwende shuzhuo'(Migrant children eager to have a table school table), *Gongren Ribao*, 2009.12.03, p. 5; 'Dagong zidi xuexiao xiaozhang: wo you yiduzi hua yaoshuo' (Headmaster of migrant school: I have so much to complain), *Gongren Ribao*, 2010.12.26, p. 1; 'Dang pingquan yundong yushang shimin quanli' (When equal rights movement encounters civil rights), *Dongfang Zaobao*, 2011.08.24, p. A23.

children has been ensured. The reproduction of migrant workers as cheap and underprivileged labor force thus has been at partly realized through exclusion in the regime of education. The very marginality of migrant children is embodied in transiency of migrant schools which have been institutionally and spatially peripheralized as well as their discriminatory encounter in public schools where they have been stigmatized as subaltern 'Others'. These children's paths to self-fulfillment thus have been severely limited so that they may positively or passively choose to retreat to their subgroup culture, which may on the one hand exists as a form of resistance to mainstream values, but on the other hand, as exemplified in Willis's (1977) classic study on reproduction of young working class labor, ironically contributes to the reproduction of their underclass status.

'Black schools' and government responsibility

The problem of the legitimacy of private migrant schools is at the center of public contention over the issue of migrant children's education. Among the selected articles, most are focused on the reasons why these schools have existed and how to make sense of local governments' polices targeted on these schools. Normally, most these so-called 'black schools' have been framed by local governments as illegal and some even hazardous in terms of their low-quality teaching, sub-standard facilities, or managerial misbehavior in order to justify their actions of shutting down many of these schools. Among these factors, *weifang* (dilapidated buildings) or other potential safety loopholes are the most commonly used reasons for clamp-down. [192]

On the contrary, market-professionalism-oriented metropolitan newspapers and pro-reform public opinion leaders have asked the question why there has been

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[192] 'Gansu shouge nongmin'gong zidi xuexiao qiantu kanyou' (The first migrant school in Gansu province has a dim future), *Gongren Ribao*, 2007.05.30, p. 8; ''Feifa' min'gong zidi xuexiao bei jiaoting' ('Illegal' migrant school ordered to be shut down), *Nanfang Dushibao*, 2009.07.02, p. FA36; 'Wo keyi buban dagong xuexiao, dan bixu ba xuesheng fenliu hao' (I can stopping running this school, but the government has to ensure these students' education), *Nanfang Ribao*, 2011.08.23, p. A19; 'Dagong zidi de wanmei jieju shi shenme' (What is the ideal way to resolve the problem of migrant children's education), *Xin Jing Bao*, 2011.09.03, p. B02; 'Yisuo jianlou xuxiao yincang zhe 260 duoge xiwang'(More than 260 students' hope of future is upheld by a tousy school), *Dahe Bao*, 2011.12.01, p.C09.

space for these schools to survive and what proper approaches should be taken when dealing with private migrant schools. It has been argued that it is because of the systematic exclusion and the government's absence in providing basic public service to migrant workers that a market for private education for migrant workers has flourished in cities' peripheral regions where most migrant laborers reside. Compared with high entry threshold and cost of public schools, these privately-initiated schools are cheap and easy to access. Also compared with strong discriminatory treatment in public schools, in migrant schools, despite problems of low-quality teaching and humble facilities, all students are from migrant worker family and share a similar social background. They are treated equally and thus have opportunities for socialization. [193]

Figure 7.3 Classroom of a migrant children's school in Beijing[194]

However, migrant schools are assumed as a suboptimal or alternative choice in the absence of access to public education. Despite general positive representation of migrant schools in metropolitan media, there are also some

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[193] 'Nongmin'gong zidi xiao cheng 'hexiao beihou kunjing'(Predicament of 'black' migrant schools), *Gongren Ribao*, 2007.02.01, p.5; "Chule jianda qudi, haiyou gengduo yaozuo de shi' (Besides shutting down, more measures need to be taken to resolve problems), *Gongren Ribao*, 2011.06.08, p. 3.
[194] Source: *The Beijing News*, August 3, 2011, p. A11.

investigative reports which inquire into problematic aspects of these schools in depth. For example, in one story published in the *Southern Weekend*, the journalist investigated the tendency of operators of some migrant schools utilizing their marginal status to win public sympathy and donations. The struggles between state power and migrant schools have sometimes provided an opportunity for these operators to attract media coverage and public attention to their advantage, while voices of teachers, migrant students and their parents are silenced. It has been argued that some migrant schools have fallen into a vicious circle: 'the more abominable your teaching conditions are, the more sympathy and social donations you can get'. But as one scholar points out, the public should not only blame these operators for their tendency of profit-seeking, but also have to understand that the key reason for this phenomenon is that the government has not assumed its responsibility in providing public educational service to migrant children. The precondition for demolishing these schools should be that 'the government takes its responsibility to meet students' needs. Compared with no place to study, these migrant schools at least offer the last choice for these children'. [195]

This idea has been shared by other market-oriented newspapers. The government's ironhanded approach to migrant schools has received criticism from these media. It has been argued that 'school buildings should not be viewed as normal illegal buildings, because they are connected with millions of migrant children's destiny'. [196]In one commentary article published in *Western China Metropolis Daily*, the author asks:

> Is it necessary to issue demolishment nonfiction today and these
>
> migrant schools will become rubble tomorrow? Is it necessary to treat
>
> them like plague? These schools do not ask for one cent from the

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[195] 'Qiong haizi zaoyu wenti xuexiao - dagong zidi xuexiao de lingyimian' (Poor kids encounter problematic schools: the other side of migrant schools), *Nanfang Zhoumo*, 2011.08.24.
[196] 'Dagong zidi xuexiao, ying 'wu anzhi bu guanting'' (Migrant schools should not be shut down if no alternative plans arranged beforehand). *Xin Jing Bao*, 2011.08.17, p. A02.

government, but they do the same thing to educate children that should be the government's responsibility. When has 'shut-and-clamp-down' become the unanimous policy? ... It is because migrants' needs are not met by public schools that these migrant schools have come to exist. The urban authority should have felt very grateful for their partaking of educational responsibility. If these schools have to be shut down, the government should first provide alternative choices for migrant children. It should not just ban these schools and take care of nothing after this.[197]

Therefore, it has been suggested that the most appropriate resolution is not to indiscriminatingly shut down these schools, but to 'strengthen supervision and regulation of their ways of management, educational training for teachers and managers, direct their conduct, so that these schools can become effective resources offsetting deficiency of public education.'[198] Others call on the government to take a more open attitude towards private migrant schools, to support their development and strengthen private educational forces.[199] It also has been argued that, migrant children's education should not only been seen from a pragmatic perspective as manifested in some local governments' policies of allowing migrant children to study in vocational schools which have problems with recruiting new students. 'In face of migrant workers, the pragmatic mindset should be replaced by the idea of equal rights.'[200]

To sum up, in this section, I have examined media representation of the issue of migrant children's education. The first major aspect of public contention has been social exclusion of migrant children and its potential negative effects on these children's social integration and social mobility. It has been argued by

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[197] 'Dagong zidi xuexiao buneng xiang guan jiu guan' (Migrant schools should not be shut down just becasue the government wants to), *Huaxi Dushibao*, 2011.08.17.

[198] 'Dagong zidi de wanmei jieju shi shenme' (What is the ideal way to resolve the problem of migrant children's education), *Xin Jing Bao*, 2011.09.03, p. B02

[199] 'Minban xuexiao qineng 'gongban' liaoshi' (Private migrant schools should not be simply replaced by 'public' schools), *Nanfang Dushibao*, 2008.07.04, p. FA34.

[200] 'Yi quanli siwei cujin jiaoyu gengjia kaifang' (To improve opennessof the educational system by advocating the mindset of equal rights), *Dahe Bao*, 2011.03.02, p. A05.

various actors that under the current *hukou* system, migrant children have been severely discriminated against and excluded from the mainstream urban society, a fact that has led to their sense of inferiority and social apathy. This may be viewed as a form of cultural resistance but also a factor that fosters reproduction of an underclass second generation of migrant labor. Another major aspect is the issue of private migrant schools, which have been defined as trouble makers by urban authorities but receive a more balanced assessment from market-oriented media as well as public opinion leaders. Generally it has been argued that 'illegal' migrant schools should not be an excuse or shield for the government to evade the fact of its irresponsibility in providing effective educational service for migrant children.

As we have seen in above discussion, local governments of migrant-receiving cities, representing the vested interests of urban citizens, have generally adopted a relatively conservative approach to the issue in question, as migrant children have been constructed as a threat to the urban educational system. Also, to a certain degree, migrant children's reaction of self-protection to prevailing discriminatory apparati in schools imposed by urban mainstream society have been decontexualizd from its political-economic conditions and repackaged into the essentialized discourse of individual *suzhi*. Their potentials and consequently citizenship treatments thus have been bound to their parental class origins. Only when checked by critical commentators, may this rationale start to be challenged. The tendency toward irresponsibility and favoritismin this regard by urban governments has been criticized by scholars and activists. However, in all this hullabaloo, the voices of migrant children themselves are not heard.

Grassroots idols: identity construction and cultural practice

Introduction

In the last section of this chapter, I shall briefly examine media construction of the cultural dimension of migrant citizenship by studying the case of the

phenomenon of migrant cultural idols taking part in national TV production, especially in *chunwan*, the CCTV's Spring Festival Eve TV Gala. The major concerns are why and how the discourse of migrant workers has been integrated into the national TV stage, how the phenomenon has been represented in media discourse.

Cultural citizenship is closely related to the process of self-making and being-made. (Ong et al., 1996)In the past decades, Chinese migrant workers have undergone generational changes, with new generations of the post-1980s and post 1990 increasingly replacing their parents and becoming the main body of migrant labor. As mentioned before, these new generations have grown up in an environment of China's fast marketization and globalization. New forms of technologies and cultures have stormed people's traditional ways of life as well as their cultural expressions. For migrant workers, there is no exception. Different from their parental generations who basically minimized their cultural needs, despite existing huge economic and cultural gaps between social classes, young migrant workers have more access to cultural forms via mobile phones and internet and thus have cultivated more cultural impulses of self expression. This has been manifested in the emerging phenomenon that more and more migrant workers have endeavored to participate in both their sub-cultural and also public cultural practice in recent years. This includes various forms of cultural practices, including *dagong wenxue* (migrant literature), *min'gong hechangtuan* (migrant choir), *min'gong jiewutuan* (migrant group of street dancers), *min'gong yuedui* (migrant band), *min'gong geshou* (migrant singers) and *min'gong chunwan* (Chinese New Year's Eve gala for migrant workers). Some migrant workers even established a migrant worker museum by themselves, with the purpose of 'recording our own history' and 'preventing it from being represented, falsified or misunderstood'. [201]

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[201] 'Women de lishi ziji jilu qing wu daixie gaixie huo wudu' (We record our own history, please do not represent, falsify or understand it), *Gongren Ribao*, 2011.05.30, p. 4.

In the contexts of both the party-state's ideology of 'harmonious society' and an increasingly marketized cultural sphere, this new pulse of migrant cultural practice has been quickly caught by national media. Since 2007, figures of migrant workers have started to emerge on the national stage of the Chinese New Year's Eve TV Gala (*chunjie lianhuan wanhui*, normally called *chunwan* for short) presented by CCTV, the country's largest state-monopolized broadcasting network. In the Chinese media culture, *chunwan* has a very special status in terms of national attention it has received (it is broadcast on the Chinese new year's eve when all nationwide Chinese families are having their reunion dinner) and also its cultural importance in shaping media and popular culture in the past three decades. C*hunwan* has not only served as a form of entertainment for the year's eve, but also functioned as a carrier of national ideology. The combination of traditional family gatherings on Chinese New Year's Eve and the form of national media event of revelry has effectively embedded the national discourse within the metaphor of family reunion and thus served to sustain the state-dominated ideological order. Therefore, *chunwan* is in fact a media ritual through which an imagined harmonious national community is constructed on local, national and global basis. (X. Lu, 2009; Pan, 2010; B. Zhao, 1998)

Migrant workers and chunwan

In the early years of *chunwan*, representations of floating population including migrant workers were largely negative. For example, in 1990, a sketch titled *chaosheng youjidui* (over-birth-quota guerrillas) depicts rural migrants who tried to evade the state's one-child policy as absurd and benighted. Migrant population themselves did not stage the program until 2007, when a group of children in migrant schools in Beijing participated the national media event, reading a poem entitled *xinlihua* (words from my heart). In the program, background of the group of migrant students was a large screen displaying pictures of sunflowers under blue sky, a typical political metaphor referring to

children in the Chinese context. (figure 7.4）[202] The poem reads:

> In the past, if someone asked me who I am, I would not like to
> answer, because I was afraid, afraid those urban kids would deride
> me ...But now if you ask me what I want to say, I would say I love
> my mum and dad, because it is mum who has cleaned streets in the
> city and it was dad who has built skyscrapers of the new century.…
> In writing class, I wrote: others compare their parents with mine; I
> compare my future with theirs.

Figure 7.4 *Words from my heart*: migrant children at the Spring Festival TV gala, 2007

Audiences both on the spot and in front of television listened to their reading
with eyes full of tears. Through this form, the reality of migrant children's
discriminatory experience was transformed into sensational narratives about
their hope and love as well as eulogization of migrant laborers as urban
constructors. Migrant workers were thus symbolically recognized as members
of the national community constructed by the *chunwan* discourse. No one was
excluded and the actual reality of differentiated citizenship and discrimination
experienced by migrant children were thus safely replaced by positive spirit in
the hope of a bright future.

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[202] Video (in Chinese) of this program is available at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gGs3BpRP16c, retrieved on September 14, 2011.

In 2011, again, migrant workers were invited to perform on the stage of *chunwan*. Among them was a migrant worker duo band called *xuri yanggang*. The duo got their popularity in August 2010 by posting a self-made video onto a Chinese website. In the video, the two migrant workers sang the song entitled *Chuntian Li* (In the spring) which was originally composed and performed by Wang Feng, a Chinese popular rock music star. The video was set in a dormitory room where the two migrants sang the song with their upper parts of the body naked, a scene familiar to millions of people who once experienced underclass life in China. (figure 7.5)

Figure 7.5 Migrant duo: 'If one day, I am old and lonely'[203]

The video appropriates Wang Feng's original song and contextulized it from a general musical expression of nostalgia and loss in life to a typical daily scene of migrant workers' life. This made it receive huge popularity online, popularity that the original song did not earn. The lyrics of the chorus part read: 'If one day, I am old and lonely, please leave me in those past days; If one day, I leave this world without a word left, please bury me in the spring'. The singers almost screamed out this part in a hoarse voice, which apparently strengthened its

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[203] The earliest version of the video was published on a video sharing website in mainland China. A copy of the video is available at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T6solhayYFo, another adapted version with English subtitles is available at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vlVjmEoms90, both retrieved on September 14, 2011.

sentimental power. The video on Youku, the largest video-sharing website in mainland China, received about 2.6 million views. [204] Many users' comments have expressed their strong emotions when watching the video. Apparently, the video, including both its content and context, is reminiscent of ordinary people's daily struggles and hardship in the fast transforming Chinese society, especially for those of the underclass, such as migrant workers, as demonstrated in the following selected comments of the Youku video:

> Whenever I listen to them singing this song, it reminds me of my days drifting in Shenzhen, days of being migrant workers.

> Whenever I listen to Xuri Yanggang singing this In the Spring, I always silently shed tears. Because I once underwent the same hardship. It's cool!

> Wang Feng is a professional singer, so however good his singing is, he has limitation. But Xuri Yanggang is beyond the limitation. Their singing is not only full of emotions, but also voices from many people's heart, their experiences, their understanding of life… how to compare between the two?

Almost an overnight internet sensation, the video received huge popularity and even made the party secretary of Hunan province shed tears. [205] Quickly the duo attracted attention from mainstream media. And finally the duo was invited to perform the same song on the stage of *chunwan* in 2011. However, after this, they were quickly integrated into the mainstream entertainment industry, trying to find greater fame on stage. Ironically, according to the logic of the market, their fame has to be maintained by valorizing and exploiting their specific identity of grassroots origins, something that has made them unique and thus valuable in the cultural market. Nevertheless, the phenomenon of migrant

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[204] See http://v.youku.com/v_show/id_XMjIwNjIwNDI0.html, retrieved on December 12, 2011.
[205] 'Min'gong zuhe 'zuidiceng de nahan' changku Hunan shengwei shuji' (Party secretary of Hunan province moved by migrant duo's 'underclass cry'), *Huaxia Dushibao*, 2010.11.12, p.12.

workers getting fame and popularity *per se* did trigger media coverage and public contention regarding their migrant worker origins and cultural expression of the underclass.

Figure 7.6 Migrant duo Xuri Yanggang at the Spring Festival TV gala, 2011[206]

In terms of media coverage of the case of Xuri Yanggang, it has been largely focused on its value of entertainment. Thus most selected news stories were published in page of entertainment news and mainly about the topic of grassroots idols and the duo's copyright disputes with the original writer of the song. [207]Generally the phenomenon has been framed as a positive cultural expression of loss, sorrow, hope, belief, and common experience of the underclass. In the *People's Daily*, it has been argued that Xuri Yanggang is 'one of us'. It is their 'unprofessional' performance that has evoked huge public resonance among ordinary people. The positive attitudes towards difficulties expressed in their song were the most precious qualities. [208] In one

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[206]From http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HzduMWz2jT8, retrieved on September 14, 2011.

[207] 'Nali caishi caogen mingxing de wutai' (where is the stage for grassroots idols), *Beijing Ribao*, 2011.02.08, p.12; 'Meile 'chuntian' xuri yanggang qu nali' (Without 'the spring', where can xuri yanggang go?), *Nanfang Dushibao*, 2011.02.13, p. AA15; 'Zaimei de chuntian yexu zunzhong banquan' (No matter how beautiful the spring is, copyright has to be respected), *Nanfang Ribao*, 2011.02.14, p. F02; 'Caogen ming mingxing hai nan zoujin 'chuntianli'' (It is still difficult for grassroots idols to get 'in the spring'), *Jiefang Ribao*, 2011.02.17, p. 5; 'Zai bense he xingwei zhijian quxiang hefang?' (What is the right path between 'natural color of grassroots' and 'commercialized cultural idols'?), *Nanfang Ribao*, 2011.03.06, p. 16.

[208] 'Meigeren douneng zoujin 'chuntianli'' (Every person can go into the spring), *Renmin Ribao*, 2011.02.10, p. 4.

commentary article published in the *Worker's Daily*, the author of argues:

> In their song, we can see optimistic belief in dreams... When they sang the song in their rented dormitory with their upper parts of the body naked, they may not realize, as representatives of millions of migrant workers, they would be paid huge attention by the public... In the audience, everyone of us was actually once present at the scene, once experienced the history in person. We have similar experience and dreams, similar disappointment and sorrow, as well as similar 'persistence' .While watching their performance of individual struggles and sorrow, we wish in our society, hope and sorrow of this huge group of people would not be forgotten shortly. ... This song and all the stories that took place around it, are in fact expression and records of a group, an episode of our history. Under waves of urbanization, the state of being drifting has been something common. Changes of time and space need artistic expression. This kind of expression is positive and free, not represented by others. [209]

In some articles, the phenomenon has been connected to general concerns with improvement of livelihood and well-being of underclass people, including migrant workers, in the Chinese society. As one author in the *Liberation Daily* argues:

> For migrant workers, poor rural people, unemployed urban workers, young employees, or 'ant tribes' of young university graduates, all of them heard their own voices from this song. Embedded in the song are deep concerns with people's well-being. ... 'Getting old and lonely', 'leave the world without a word left', all these words reflect the underclass's worrying about their future. In market competition and distribution of social wealth and power, they have either

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[209] 'Jizhu chutian li dui mengxiang de zhizhuo' (Remember these dreams in the spring), *Gongren Ribao*, 2010.11.16, p. 3.

encountered injustice or failed to grasp chances, and consequently became marginalized and in lack of income, social status and power of expressing themselves.[210]

In terms of the duo as a representative of grassroots cultural idols, it has been argued that their participation in popular media is a dilemma. On the one hand, through media, their expression and voices may reach more people, evoking more public attention to issues of migrant workers and other marginalized groups. But at the same time they run the risks of being integrated to commercial cultural mechanism which would eliminate their cultural genuineness by making their marginality as selling points. Paradoxically, the original purposes of expression that once promoted their popularity and public resonance now have been replaced by commercial incentives. [211]

In sum, in this section, the cultural dimension of migrant citizenship has been exemplified in the case of migrant workers' appropriation of mainstream culture and their participation in mainstream media's cultural production. The very specific grassroots-initiated cultural forms have played a powerful role in promoting alternative cultural expressions which may receive profound public resonance and thus evoke public consciousness of both their own situations and those of others, especially the group represented by the cultural actors. Migrant workers' performance on the stage of TV gala has ritual significance in terms of its ideological representation of symbolic social inclusion. But on the other hand, the mainstream media's integration of these marginal cultural actors has led to deconstruction of their marginalized identity and meaningful cultural expression. The very specific original uniqueness has therefore become a form of cultural capital which can bring profits in the market.

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[210] 'Chuntianli buyao tingguo jiuwang' (Do not forgetthe song In the Spring after listening), *Jiefang Ribao,* 2010.11.28, p.2.
[211]'Xuri yanggang bei zhaoan de mingyun' (Xuri yanggang's destiny of amnesty and surrender), *Nanfang Zhoumo*, 2011.02.25, p. F30.

Summary

This chapter, based on three case studies, has examined some major aspects of migrant citizenship rights. The first case of Foxconn suicides has displayed how basic labor rights of migrant workers have been contested by different actors-speakers through different frames. Three major frames have been identified: the psychological press frame is used as a discursive tool to attribute problems to migrant workers themselves and justify the labor regime, while the other two frames of factory regime and right poverty have defined the issue as infringement of workers basic civil rights through systematic bio-political discipline and rights deprivation. The second case of migrant children's education has shown how the discriminatory mechanism that excludes migrant children from public educational resources has been contested surrounding the issue of illegal migrant schools and government responsibilities. It has been argued that the deprivation of equal rights to education has been doing good service for solidifying upwards social mobility, maintaining the privileged status of urban vested groups and also reproducing the poor second generation of migrant workers. Migrant children's marginality has been embodied in aspects of institutional and cultural discrimination and also the urban authority's enduring clamp-down on space of migrant-imitated self-education. And lastly, the cultural dimension is mainly concerned with migrant worker's self-expression in cultural forms as well as its relationship with the commercialized mainstream media cultural sphere. The case of migrant workers performing on the national TV stage has shown that the relationship between marginalized groups and mainstream cultural sphere is contradictory. Migrant's appropriation of mainstream culture in new context has the potential of creating unique cultural forms which may serve their purpose of self-construction. But as soon as these forms are accepted by the mainstream media sphere, it goes to its opposite and become subject of cultural consumption.

Chapter Eight

Conclusions

In this study, I have examined how major aspects of Chinese migrant worker's citizenship rights have been discursively constructed in media discourse. Major questions that have been investigated include how the party-state has differently defined the group of spontaneous migrant workers in different periods; how the nature and various reform policies of the hukou regime have been contested discursively in media and policy discourses; and concretely, how have major aspects of migrant citizenship have been discursively debated in public discourse. By combining a historical institutional perspective with a cultural linguistic approach, the study has contextualized the examination of media texts and other relevant discourses in the background of both socio-political transformation in the past three decades and enduring cultural perceptions and ideologies. Discursive construction is seem as social actor's active practice which is embedded in and also actively redefines these structural as well as ideal contexts. In formulating an analytical framework, western-originated theories and theoretical adaptations in the Chinese context have been critically reviewed. Major finding chapters have been configured according to the definition of the concept of citizenship. This study has followed a two-tier approach to the concept, which divides citizenship into two sets of relationship: the mechanism of inclusion or exclusion relevant to one's membership and identity in a specific community, and related rights and obligations attached with this membership. In the study, the issue of migrant worker citizenship mainly refers to urban citizenship. For the former aspect, discussion has been focused on the *hukou* system, the key mechanism of social exclusion in contesting urban citizenship, while for the latter, major distributive aspects closely related to the *hukou* regime, including basic civil, social and cultural rights, have been examined.

In the party-state's ideological construction of migrant workers, examination of full texts of party newspaper and relevant policy documents has shown that, in the past three decades, the Chinese party-state has adopted different approaches to the migrant group. In the phase before 2002, the official discourse negatively framed migrant workers as uncontrolled waves of blind population who had presented grievous challenges and risks to social stability. The dominant discourse of policing this chaos and crisis of population control was largely a legacy of the previous decades of a strict centrally-planned political economic system and petrified social order based on the *hukou* regime. It was also the manifestation of the then political economic mixture of a nascent market economy and vestiges of traditional systems. In this context, the discourse of *mangliu* and many other relevant pejorative terms used to name migrant groups, had been a reflection of not only the specific social conditions in which these discourses were shaped, but also some lasting cultural perceptions regarding social mobility and social order in the Chinese traditional political culture, in which it is assumed that large scale displacement of population reveals rise of chaos and loss of political mandate.

With establishment of a market economy in the mid to late 1990s, integration into the global market as well as final dismantlement of oppressive apparatus targeting migrant populations, the freedom of migration has been partly ensured and rural migrants encouraged to work in labor-intensive industries since the new millennium. Accordingly, the official discourse regarding migrant workers also has changed from negative representation to a dominant positive description of migrant workers as contributing to national development. The traditional ideology of the working class has been deployed to symbolically eulogize and comfort the new and underprivileged labor class. However, the specific discourse of the working class has been entextualized from a political economic status in pre-reform era to an empty signifier devoid of any essential political economic rights and benefits which it used to have in the pre-reform

class-dominated era. In the reform era, the developmentalist ideology has set the hegemonic discourse of *suzhi*, or one's quality as measured by economic values, as the core benchmark that defines hierarchical boundaries between the superior and the inferior. Together with long entrenched negative cultural biases about ruralness and peasantry and the current rural-urban dualistic *hukou* regime, this developmentalist discourse has paradoxically left migrant workers in a status of being individually undervalued and disfranchised but collectively instrumental and highly valued in economic development.

In terms of public contention over the *hukou* system, the first facet of urban citizenship, through historical institutional analysis, I have examined its essence as a hereditary caste regime which divides population into rural and urban residents, endowed with differentiated and unequal citizenship rights. The crisis frame once used to justify polices against spontaneous migration has continued to be used by urban authorities to vindicate the current *hukou* system bound with fundamental entitlements to urban welfare and public services. In response to this, different frames have been used by pro-reform actors to refute the circular argumentation of the crisis frame and justify the necessity of reforming the *hukou* policy. There have been two major approaches to the justification: the first one appropriates the discourse of developmentalism, emphasizing negative outcomes of the hukou system that have hindered economic development, suppressed domestic consumption and undermined social stability. Comparatively, another one goes beyond the developmentalist framework and defines the *hukou* system as a direct infringement of fundamental human rights and equal citizenship. Various measures taken by urban authorities to 'reform' the *hukou* regime have been lauded as great achievements rather than as assuming government's responsibilities in ensuring equal citizenship rights. Concrete entry policies have been dominated by the hegemonic ideology of *suzhi*, according to which *hukou* has been an instrument for local urban governments to filter 'low-quality' population. These rationales have been

modestly questioned in pro-reform media discourses and news narratives about daily experiences of migrant workers.

The second facet of citizenship, viz. concrete rights and obligations attached to citizenship categories, has been examined through case studies. The *hukou* system, as the core mechanism of social exclusion, has been at the center of distribution of the civil and social aspects of citizenship, as these rights are instructionally attached with the *hukou* regime. In terms of basic labor rights as manifested in the case of Foxconn suicides, the discursive strategy of decontexualizing the issue from its organizational and social settings and thus defining it as purely self-contained individual tragic incidents was used by relevant market and government actors to evade responsibilities. On the contrary, counter-frames of factory regimes uncovered the inhuman nature of managerial system and both physical and mental disciplines in labor-intensive industries. And the frame of rights poverty has related the military factory system to the general condition of labor regime under the context of authoritarian developmentalism. In terms of social rights, the case of migrant children's education was chosen and studied. In this respect, the *hukou* system has played a fundamental role in enacting institutional and cultural exclusions and discriminations against migrant children. Media representation of this issue has shown deep concerns with negative effects of these exclusions in migrant children, especially the problem of class reproduction of the poor second generation of migrant workers. As for the cultural aspect, I examined the case of migrant workers' cultural practice and their participation in media production. The case has shown a paradoxical situation in which migrant workers' self-expression was promoted but also exploited and thus alienated by the mainstream political economic order.

Overall, this study has shown that discursive construction of migrant citizenship in the Chinese context has largely been circumscribed by the general authoritarian developmentalist social order and the ideology that legitimizes it.

In the official discourse, migrant workers have been defined as source of cheap labor that fuels the Chinese model of development based on labor-intensive industries. In the pre-reform era, peasants were totally deprived of freedom of migration and locked in agriculture for the state to extract their surplus values for industrialization. In the reform period, rural migrants were gradually endowed with right to move but no right to urban citizenship. Similarly, the new labor regime sets them in an outcast position in order to prepare large amount of cheap labor at the lowest cost to attract investment. Accordingly, the dominant ideology of developmentalism has legitimized the status quo by using two major sets of discursive or frame packages: one is the discourse of national conditions which emphasizes the current dualistic reality between the urban and the rural areas and uses it as an excuse for maintaining the current institutional arrangements. A variation of this frame is that of crisis or chaos, which presupposes potential social problems and instability if the current configuration of citizenship is totally dismantled. The other one frames migrant workers themselves as the major source of problems. The very specific discourse often used is that of *suzhi*. In this discourse, defects of migrant laborers, which are in fact outcomes of the enduring social reality of rural-urban disparity, have become the very specific reason for maintaining exclusive mechanism and rural-urban duality. Both rationales originate from the authoritarian developmentalist ideology and relevant institutions, according to which, citizenship is not a set of inalienable and equal fundamental rights for all, but a means for development. In this context, citizens are just physical bodies charged with human resources, which need to be disciplined and valuated according to their *suzhi*.

As shown in this study, the hegemonic developmentalist rationale has been questioned, challenged and even refuted by alternative frames utilized by different actors-speakers in a semi-pluralistic propaganda-market-driven media sphere. As examined in this study, this media sphere has been characterized by a

two-tiered system composed of party organs and marketized journalistic-professionalism-oriented media. Also distribution of media across different regions has also provided space for diverse opinion expression. As one of my interviewees says, 'when local media cannot cover on some topics which are relevant to local government or other major stake-holders, some market-oriented media may share sources of news and promote cross-regional supervision of public opinion'. (*Yidi yulun jiandu*) [212]the major counter-frame as seen in the examination of media discourse largely adopts the fundamental definition of citizenship as equal rights for all. It has been repeatedly emphasized that the currently system needs to be reformed and migrant citizenship needs to be ensured not just because these changes are necessary for social development, but also because they are relevant to human dignity and justice.

Basically, this study has focused on media representation. All the other aspects concerning concrete mechanism of media production and daily politics of media use and cultural practice are beyond its scope. However, these issues could be potential topics of future studies that connect discourse and daily practice.

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[212] Interview conducted on 19 April, 2010, Guangzhou.

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9 December 2009

Reference: FOA27NOV2009-D00011

Mr Dianling Huang
PhD Candidate, International Communication
Department of Media, Music &
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Faculty of Arts, Building Y3A
MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY NSW 2109

Dear Mr Huang,

FINAL APPROVAL

Title of project: 'Framing Migrant Workers: News Discourse and the Social Construction of Mobility in Reforming China.'

Thank you for your responses to the Committee's conditions of approval, as outlined in our email dated 7 December. Your responses have been reviewed by the Chair of the Faculty of Arts Ethics Review Committee (Human Research). Approval of the above application is granted effective 8 December 2009, and you may now proceed with your research.

Please note the following standard requirements of approval:

1. The approval of this project is **conditional** upon your continuing compliance with the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007)*.

2. Approval will be for a period of five (5) years subject to the provision of annual reports. **Your first progress report is due on 8 December 2010.**

   If you complete the work earlier than you had planned, you must submit a Final Report as soon as the work is completed. If the project has been discontinued or not commenced for any reason, you are also required to submit a Final Report on the project.

   Progress Reports and Final Reports are available at the following website:
   http://www.research.mq.edu.au/researchers/ethics/human_ethics/forms

3. 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 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).

4. Please notify the Committee of any amendment to the project.

5. Please 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.

6. At all times you are responsible for the ethical conduct of your research in accordance with the guidelines established by the University. This information is available at: http://www.research.mq.edu.au/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

Catriona Mackenzie
Associate Professor
Chair, Faculty of Arts Ethics Review Committee (Human Research)

Copy: Naren Chitty