

Impact of Globalisation on the Local Press in China

– A Case Study of the *Beijing Youth Daily* from 1981 to 2006

Shixin Zhang

Submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of

PhD

The University of Leeds

School of Modern Languages & Cultures

April 2008

The candidate confirms that the work submitted is her own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

This copy has been supplied on the understanding that it is copyright material and that no quotation from the thesis may be published without proper acknowledgement

## ABSTRACT

This thesis addresses the issue of impact of globalisation on the news production and news content at local newspapers in China. By making an in-depth study of *Beijing Youth Daily*, the second biggest local newspaper in Beijing, essential changes in the local newspapers are identified and analysed, thus revealing the relations between the global and local, external and internal influences, the Party-state and the media as well as the media and the market.

The central argument is that globalisation impacts many aspects of local newspapers including media policy, organisation, journalistic practice, journalists' roles and coverage of world news. Such impact is uneven. In the case of the state's media policies and organizational changes the influence is explicit whereas in relation to news production routines and the perceptions of newspeople it tends to be implicit.

Driven by the commercialization of the domestic media, the accelerated world-wide flow of goods and capital, population mobility, and the advancement of information technology, especially the Internet, Chinese local newspapers and newspeople share many commonalities and similarities with the western press and western newspeople but also maintain distinctive characteristics due to China's unique political-social-economic system. Consequently, globalisation is producing neither total homogenization nor total heterogenisation but a mixture.

Globalisation is a process involving a multi-level deregulation and re-regulation, protectionism, capitalism, media convergence, hybridization and domestication driven by the interaction of global and local actors, political, economic and technical factors, and external and internal influences. In the globalisation era, the state still plays a central role. A free press does not emerge in an authoritarian state just because of globalisation.

Key words: news production, media globalisation, local newspapers, media convergence, censorship, China, *Beijing Youth Daily*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank God, I made it.

Special thanks go to my supervisors, Professor Delia Davin and Professor Flemming Christiansen at the Department of East Asian Studies, University of Leeds. They gave me most valuable advice and criticism to keep me on track, moving forward, and finally coming to the end of my academic Long March. Without their guidance over the past three and a half years, who knows where I would have ended up?

I also thank Dr. Robin Brown and Professor Gary Rawnsley at the Institute of Communication Studies, University of Leeds, for their kind comments on the earlier drafts, and Professor Ulf Hedetoft at Aalborg University, Denmark who guided me on globalisation and helped me develop the theoretical basis.

I am indebted to my families and friends. Without their selfless support, my journey would have been lonely and unbearable. A complete list would be too long, but I must thank: my mom Zhang Yulan, my sister Zhang Shichun, my brother Zhang Shifa, Dr. Liu Jinbo, Dr. Ning Yi, Wu Daming, Janice Nga, Zhang Li, Du Huizhen, Alberto Camarena, Gao Lu, Yang Yue-E, Neil Taggart, Christian Høy-Nielsen, Jens Gjandrup, Stuart Gordon, Zhang Yanping, Liu Feng, Cindy Lee, Sun Ming, Chen Ying, Jiao Pei, Xia Lei, Tong Qing'an, Yang Xiao, among many others.

I'd like to express my deepest appreciation to the following organisations for their generous funding and cooperation during my research: Universities UK provided an Overseas Research Scholarship. The Universities' China Committee in London funded my field work in Beijing. The Great Britain-China Educational Trust supported my final stage research, and Aalborg University enlisted me on their fully-funded five-month SPIRIT programme. The *Beijing Youth Daily* and *Nordjyske* media group of Denmark opened their doors and helped me to carry out fieldwork.

Thanks to all my interviewees. Thank you all, named and unnamed.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>ABSTRACT .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>10</b>
1.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS .....	10
1.2 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY .....	11
1.3 HYPOTHESIS .....	11
1.4 METHODOLOGY .....	12
1.5 BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH .....	17
1.6 BACKGROUND TO <i>BYD</i> .....	19
1.7 CHAPTER STRUCTURE .....	29
<b>CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW .....</b>	<b>30</b>
2.1 IMPACT OF GLOBALISATION ON THE NEWS CONTENT MODEL .....	30
2.1.1 <i>Political economy perspective</i> .....	31
2.1.2 <i>Sociology perspective</i> .....	35
2.1.3 <i>Theorizing the impact of globalisation on the news content model (1)</i> .....	43
2.1.4 <i>Theorizing the impact of globalisation on the news content model (2)</i> .....	50
2.2 JOURNALISM RESEARCH IN CHINA.....	64
2.2.1 <i>State/market discourse</i> .....	65
2.2.2 <i>Globalisation discourse</i> .....	68
<b>CHAPTER 3 IMPACT OF GLOBALISATION ON THE INSTITUTION...73</b>	
3.1 OVERVIEW OF CHINA’S PRESS SYSTEM DURING GLOBALISATION PROCESS ...73	
3.2 PRESS STRUCTURAL CHANGES DURING COMMERCIALISATION PERIOD (1978 TO MID-1990s) .....	80
3.3 PRESS STRUCTURAL CHANGES DURING CONGLOMERATION PERIOD (MID-1990s TO 2000).....	87
3.4 PRESS STRUCTURAL CHANGES DURING FLOTATION PERIOD (2001 - 2007) ...95	
<b>CHAPTER 4 IMPACT OF GLOBALISATION ON THE ORGANISATION OF <i>BYD</i>.....</b>	<b>115</b>
4.1 OWNERSHIP.....	116
4.1.1 <i>Dual-track ownership</i> .....	116
4.1.2 <i>Hiring and firing senior management</i> .....	122
4.2 GOALS AND STRATEGIES .....	124
4.2.1 <i>Current strategies</i> .....	125
4.2.2 <i>Strength and weaknesses</i> .....	135
4.2.3 <i>Future goals</i> .....	140
4.3 BUSINESS MODEL .....	141
4.3.1 <i>Distribution and income model</i> .....	141
4.3.2 <i>Media convergence model (BYD vs. Nordjyske)</i> .....	144
<b>CHAPTER 5 IMPACT OF GLOBALISATION ON PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES 161</b>	
5.1 THE AUDIENCE .....	162
5.2 NEWS MAKING PRACTICE .....	167
5.2.1 <i>News values</i> .....	167

5.2.2	<i>News selection</i> .....	177
5.2.2.1	<i>Methods</i> .....	177
5.2.2.2	<i>Diversified news coverage</i> .....	180
5.2.2.3	<i>Politicized news coverage</i> .....	185
5.2.2.4	<i>Globalized news coverage</i> .....	187
5.2.2.5	<i>Editorials and commentaries enhanced</i> .....	188
5.2.3	<i>News sources</i> .....	189
5.2.3.1	<i>Independent reports</i> .....	190
5.2.3.2	<i>Xinhua</i> .....	192
5.2.3.3	<i>The Internet</i> .....	194
5.2.3.4	<i>Other news media</i> .....	195
5.2.4	<i>News forms</i> .....	195
5.3	<b>EDITORIAL STRUCTURE</b> .....	197
5.4	<b>ORGANIZATIONAL CONSTRAINTS</b> .....	200
5.4.1	<i>Structural constraints</i> .....	200
5.4.2	<i>Political constraints</i> .....	202
5.4.3	<i>Commercial constraints</i> .....	206
5.4.4	<i>Managerial constraints</i> .....	207
<b>CHAPTER 6 IMPACT OF GLOBALISATION ON INDIVIDUAL JOURNALISTS</b> .....		<b>210</b>
6.1	<b>BACKGROUNDS AND CHARACTERISTICS</b> .....	211
6.1.1	<i>Backgrounds and demographic profiles</i> .....	212
6.1.2	<i>Party and religious affiliation</i> .....	215
6.1.3	<i>Education and training</i> .....	216
6.1.4	<i>Summary and discussion</i> .....	220
6.2	<b>PERCEPTIONS OF PROFESSIONAL ROLES</b> .....	221
6.2.1	<i>Journalists' roles</i> .....	221
6.2.2	<i>Representation interests</i> .....	225
6.2.3	<i>Role models</i> .....	227
6.2.4	<i>Journalists' social status</i> .....	229
6.2.5	<i>Summary and discussion</i> .....	231
6.3	<b>PERCEPTIONS OF UNETHICAL PRACTICES</b> .....	233
6.3.1	<i>Paid journalism</i> .....	233
6.3.1.1	<i>Written codes</i> .....	235
6.3.1.2	<i>Unwritten codes</i> .....	237
6.3.2	<i>Plagiarism</i> .....	242
6.3.3	<i>Summary and discussion</i> .....	243
<b>CHAPTER 7 IMPACT OF GLOBALISATION ON THE WORLD NEWS REPORTAGE</b> 246		
7.1	<b>WORLD NEWS SOURCES</b> .....	247
7.1.1	<i>Content analysis</i> .....	248
7.1.2	<i>Interview-based qualitative analysis</i> .....	249
7.1.3	<i>BYD vs. The Mirror</i> .....	253
7.2	<b>WORLD NEWS VALUE</b> .....	257
7.3	<b>WORLD NEWS CONSTRUCTION PROCESS</b> .....	261
7.3.1	<i>Important news</i> .....	261
7.3.2	<i>Proximity</i> .....	265
7.3.3	<i>Exclusive</i> .....	269

7.3.4	<i>Drama</i> .....	272
7.3.5	<i>Ideology</i> .....	272
7.3.6	<i>BYD vs. New York Times</i> .....	277
7.4	INTERNATIONAL NEWS FLOW AND FOCUS.....	282
7.4.1	<i>Geographical locations</i> .....	282
7.4.2	<i>Focus of story</i> .....	286
7.4.3	<i>Themes</i> .....	287
<b>CHAPTER 8 CONCLUSION</b> .....		<b>291</b>
<b>APPENDIX: STRUCTURED QUESTIONS FOR INTERVIEWS AT <i>BYD</i></b> .....		<b>299</b>
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b> .....		<b>301</b>

## LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1 CHINA'S NEWSPAPER ADVERTISING VALUE AND GROWTH RATE, 2000 TO 2007. ....	18
FIGURE 3 CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF GATE-KEEPING THEORY .....	40
FIGURE 4 LEVELS OF INFLUENCES ON MEDIA CONTENT IN THE HIERARCHICAL MODEL .....	42
FIGURE 5 THE IMPACT OF GLOBALISATION ON THE NEWS CONTENT MODEL .....	44
FIGURE 6 MEDIA ROUTINES AS RELATED TO THREE SOURCES OF CONSTRAINTS. ....	46
FIGURE 7 HOW FACTORS INTRINSIC TO THE COMMUNICATOR MAY INFLUENCE MEDIA CONTENT.....	47
FIGURE 8 GLOBALISATION THEORIES FOR THE DIFFERENT LEVELS OF IMPACT OF GLOBALISATION ON THE NEWS CONTENT MODEL .....	54
FIGURE 9 CHINESE DUAL-TRACK PRESS MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.....	77
FIGURE 10 MILESTONES IN CHINESE MEDIA POLICIES FROM 1978 TO 2007. ....	79
FIGURE 11 <i>BYD</i> 'S LISTED COMPANY, BEIJING MEDIA CO., LTD, CORPORATE DIAGRAM .....	119
FIGURE 12 <i>BYD</i> 'S FOUR-LEVEL CORPORATE STRATEGIES .....	126
FIGURE 13 FOREIGN NEWSPAPER SAMPLES HUNG IN THE HALLWAY OF <i>THE MIRROR</i> 'S OFFICE.....	134
FIGURE 14: <i>BYD</i> 'S STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES AT DIFFERENT LEVELS. ....	136
FIGURE 15 LINEAR PRINT-TO-WEBSITE STRUCTURE AT <i>BYD</i> .....	150
FIGURE 16 THE MATRIX ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF MEDIA CONVERGENCE MODEL AT <i>NORDJYSKE</i> . ....	152
FIGURE 17 OVERLAPPING MULTIMEDIA-BASED AGE GROUPS. ....	154
FIGURE 18 MULTIMEDIA-BASED JOURNALISTS' REPORTING MODEL AT <i>NORDJYSKE</i> .....	155
FIGURE 19 PRINT-BASED NEWSROOM STRUCTURE AT <i>BYD</i> .....	156
FIGURE 20 GALTUNG & RUGE'S MODEL OF SELECTIVE GATE KEEPING .....	168
FIGURE 21 PHOTO ABOUT HUMAN-INTEREST STORY ON THE FRONT PAGE. ....	174
FIGURE 22 THE TREND OF EDUCATION REPORTS ON THE FRONT PAGE OF <i>BYD</i> FROM 1982 TO 2006.....	183
FIGURE 23 THE TREND OF HUMAN INTEREST REPORTS ON THE FRONT PAGE OF <i>BYD</i> FROM 1982 TO 2006.....	183
FIGURE 24 THE TREND OF ECONOMIC REPORTS ON THE FRONT PAGE OF <i>BYD</i> FROM 1982 TO 2006.....	184
FIGURE 25 THE TREND OF SOCIAL REPORTS ON THE FRONT PAGE OF <i>BYD</i> FROM 1982 TO 2006. ....	184
FIGURE 26 THE TREND OF POLITICAL REPORTS ON THE FRONT PAGE OF <i>BYD</i> FROM 1982 TO 2006. ....	185
FIGURE 27 THE TREND OF GLOBALISATION REPORTS ON THE FRONT PAGE OF <i>BYD</i> FROM 1982 TO 2006.....	187
FIGURE 28 THE TREND OF XINHUA SOURCE AT <i>BYD</i> FROM 1982 TO 2006. ....	193
FIGURE 29 VERTICAL EDITORIAL STRUCTURES AT <i>BYD</i> .....	198
FIGURE 30 HORIZONTAL NEWS PRODUCTION PROCESSES AT <i>BYD</i> .....	199
FIGURE 31 IMPLICATION OF GLOBALISATION ON THE LOCAL PRESS AT INDIVIDUAL LEVEL .....	211

FIGURE 32 THEORETICAL MODEL TO EXAMINE THE IMPACT OF GLOBALISATION ON WORLD NEWS COVERAGE .....	247
FIGURE 33 WORLD NEWS SOURCES FOR THE LOCAL METROPOLITAN NEWSPAPERS IN CHINA.....	256
FIGURE 34 THE STAIRCASE OF TOP-DOWN SELF-CENSORSHIP IN WORLD NEWS. ....	273
FIGURE 35 HIGH SIMILARITIES BETWEEN WESTERSTAHL & JOHANSSON'S MODEL AND <i>BYD</i> MODEL.....	277



## LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 1 LIST OF METROPOLITAN NEWSPAPERS IN BEIJING. ....	128
TABLE 2 LEADING TEN BEIJING NEWSPAPERS FOR ADVERTISING INCOME, SEPTEMBER 2006 .....	129
TABLE 3 COMPARISON OF BUSINESS OPERATIONS BETWEEN <i>BYD</i> AND <i>NORDJYSKE</i> AS MEDIA CONGLOMERATES. ....	146
TABLE 4 COMPARISON BETWEEN <i>BYD</i> AND <i>NORDJYSKE</i> NEWSPAPERS. ....	148
TABLE 5 COMPARISON OF MEDIA CONVERGENCE IN <i>BYD</i> AND <i>NORDJYSKE</i> . ....	149
TABLE 6: COMPARISON OF SENIOR MANAGERMENTS' COMMENTS ON MEDIA CONVERGENCE TREND AND FUTURE STRATEGIES OF <i>NORDJYSKE</i> AND <i>BYD</i> . ....	157
TABLE 7 SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GALTUNG & RUGE AND <i>BYD</i> 'S 12 NEWS FACTORS. ....	176
TABLE 8 CONTENT ANALYSIS SHOWING FRONT PAGE SUBJECTS BY CATEGORY AND BY PERCENTAGE FROM 1982 TO 2006 IN <i>BYD</i> . ....	181
TABLE 9 CONTENT ANALYSIS FINDINGS ON GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATIONS FROM 1982 TO 2006 ON THE FRONT PAGES OF <i>BYD</i> . ....	182
TABLE 10 CONTENT ANALYSIS FINDINGS ON NEWS SOURCES FROM 1982 TO 2006 ON THE FRONT PAGES OF <i>BYD</i> . ....	190
TABLE 11 SOURCES FOR WORLD NEWS ON THE FRONT PAGES OF <i>BYD</i> , 1981-2006..	249
TABLE 12 COMPARISON BETWEEN <i>BYD</i> AND <i>THE MIRROR</i> IN WORLD NEWS REPORTS. .....	255
TABLE 13 COMPARISON OF WORLD NEWS ON THE FRONT PAGE OF <i>NYT</i> AND <i>BYD</i> FROM 5 FEBRUARY TO 19 FEBRUARY 2006. ....	281
TABLE 14 COUNTRY-BASED WORLD NEWS REPORTS ON THE FRONT PAGE OF <i>BYD</i> FROM 1981 TO 2006. ....	283
TABLE 15 REGION-BASED WORLD NEWS REPORTS ON THE FRONT PAGE OF <i>BYD</i> FROM 1981 TO 2006. ....	284
TABLE 16 FOCUS OF STORY IN WORLD NEWS REPORTS ON THE FRONT PAGE OF <i>BYD</i> FROM 1981 TO 2006. ....	287
TABLE 17 THEMES IN THE WORLD NEWS ON THE FRONT PAGE OF <i>BYD</i> FROM 1981 TO 2006 .....	288

## Chapter 1 Introduction

The newspaper, as a traditional news medium, may die out one day. As one blogger wrote in 2005, ‘newspapers are dead but it will take a while for the body to cool down’.<sup>1</sup> But news, as ‘a form of culture’,<sup>2</sup> will never die. This thesis is about the dying newspaper and the undying news in China.

The world is like a huge web in the global era. Every country in the world is like a node on the web, interconnected and interacting. China has shifted from being an isolated country to an influential new world power over three decades since its economic reform began in 1978. Powered by its economic integration, the flow of capital, labour, products and information beyond borders has knitted China into the web of the globe. News media, as a conduit that delivers a mediated society to the audience, reflects the changing society and is itself is changing fast. Against the changing Chinese media landscape, I have chosen one local newspaper as a research object to reveal the impact of globalisation.<sup>3</sup>

In this chapter, essential elements of the thesis will be highlighted, including my research questions, the significance of the study, hypothesis, methodology, the background to the research, an introduction to *Beijing Youth Daily* (abbreviated as *BYD*), and the chapter structure of the thesis.

### 1.1 Research questions

My central research questions are: what is the impact of globalisation on the news production and news content at a leading Beijing local newspaper? What are the main factors that have caused significant changes to news production at newspapers over the past three decades?

By making an in-depth study of the second biggest local newspaper in Beijing, essential changes in press structure and organisation, the journalistic profession and journalists' roles will be identified and analysed, thus revealing the relations between

---

<sup>1</sup>Jemima Kiss, *Newspapers: an industry in crisis*, 10 March 2005, <http://www.journalism.co.uk/2/articles/51294.php>, accessed 18 December 2007

<sup>2</sup>Michael Schudson, *The power of news*, (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1995), p.3

<sup>3</sup>The use of the term ‘local newspaper’ is meant to distinguish *BYD*, a paper under the control of the Beijing municipal Party authorities, from national papers at the central government level like the *People's Daily*. It should be noted that *BYD* is located in the capital city of Beijing but distributed across the country beyond Beijing, though in small numbers. The definition of this term is different from that in the western countries where it refers to the papers that circulate in a specific region, a city or a town, for instance, *Yorkshire Evening Post* is known as a local newspaper in the UK because it is only distributed in Yorkshire.

global and local, external and internal influence, the Party-state and the media as well as the media and the market.

## 1.2 Significance of the study

There are already abundant studies of global and local cultural transformation as well as about China's news media and journalism. The significance of this study is two fold. While most media globalisation studies focus on television and world news flows, this thesis addresses the question of how global forces influence news production in Chinese local newspapers at both macro and micro levels. In addition, this will be one of the few studies to analyse the newspaper in a vertical manner. By looking at one particular pioneering Beijing local newspaper in depth, the paper's temporal changes and the spatial connections with outside world will be revealed.

## 1.3 Hypothesis

My hypothesis is that globalisation and China's unique dichotomy of market-oriented-commercialisation/party-controlled-ideology are two main driving forces behind the transformation of local newspapers. Globalisation impacts on news production but it does not necessarily lead to a free press. On the contrary, it may even lead to more strict censorship and self-censorship in news media at some point. In addition, the influence of globalisation on the news is uneven. Globalisation influences the state's media policies and organisational changes in an explicit manner whereas its influence on the news production routines and perceptions of newspeople tends to be implicit.

In the globalisation era, there have been dramatic changes to the Chinese newspapers in terms of institutional framework, ownership, business operation, newsroom practice, content and state news management methods. Newspapers have been commercialised, professionalised, capitalized and globalised driven by the interaction of local forces versus global forces, internal influence versus external influence, conscious changes versus unconscious changes, and commercial factors versus technological factors. Newspapers and journalists enjoy more autonomy. However, the news media's essential Party-controlled nature remains unchanged. Under the party/state regime, all the changes are engineered, approved, or supported by the party/state. The Party has not and will not let go of the ideological control of the newspapers.

## 1.4 Methodology

This thesis is based on a case study of *BYD* with an aim of revealing in detail how newsrooms are organized and how they relate to each other, the histories of events, i.e., how things happen, the meanings of events both to the actors themselves in their own words and to outside observers.<sup>4</sup>

Specifically, qualitative and quantitative research techniques are used in this study. The qualitative research relies on participant observation and interviews whereas the quantitative research takes the form of content analysis. The goal is to understand and describe the operation of newsrooms, the news making process, factors that determine editorial choices, newspeople's perspectives of their roles, as well as changes in the news output over time. Collecting data on the journalists' turf will contribute to the understanding of the context of news making. Different research methods are used in an integrated way, as 'triangulation of methods improves measurement and helps guard against the danger that findings will reflect the method of inquiry in misleading ways.'<sup>5</sup>

My fieldwork was carried out in two phases: a pilot project and the actual project. The pilot project served two purposes: One was the 'kite flying' effect to see whether the draft interview questions worked well in the real newsroom environment. Based on the feedback, the interview questions were revised and became more focused and manageable for fieldwork at *BYD*. The other purpose of the pilot was to collect data about newsroom operation for comparison purposes to highlight the uniformity of professional practices around the world as well as the uniqueness of newspapers in different social and political contexts.

The first phase of the pilot project was conducted at *Nordjyske*, the largest regional newspaper under the holding company of Nordjyske Medier in Northern Jutland, Denmark in December 2005 and January 2006 during my five-month visit to Aalborg University as a visiting scholar on SPIRIT (School for Postgraduate

---

<sup>4</sup>Lewis A. Friedland and Kathryn B. Campbell, 'Connected research: the Chicago school precedent', in Sharon Hartin Iorio, ed. *Qualitative Research in Journalism: taking it to the streets* (New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Inc., Publishers, 2004), pp.23-24

<sup>5</sup>Jane B. Singer, 'More than ink-stained wretches: the resocialization of print journalists in converged newsrooms', *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, Winter, 81/4, (2004), pp.841-842

Interdisciplinary Research on Interculturalism and Transnationality) programme. I visited the newsroom and interviewed Ulrik Haagerup, the chief editor, on 29 November 2005, and Heine Jørgensen, the managing editor, and Christian Jakobsen, the journalist reporting on crime/police/traffic, on 12 December 2005. Before interviews were conducted, I declared her identity and the purpose of interviews. Each interview lasted between one and two hours and was tape-recorded with approval. Interviews were transcribed afterwards.

The second phase of the fieldwork was conducted at *BYD* in Beijing from 1 February to 1 May 2006. Access to the *BYD* newsrooms and interviews with executives and newspeople were successful and encountered no barriers. The reasons for the easy access was two-fold: I worked at *Beijing Today*, the English newspaper affiliated to *BYD*, as a reporter/editor for two years from 2001 to 2003. She has good contacts and informants at *BYD*. Moreover, *BYD* is a reformist newspaper and its management and newspeople are open-minded.

Before the fieldwork began, the only thing I was requested to do was to submit a brief report to the human resource department stating her name, institution, purpose, duration of stay at *BYD*, and fieldwork plan. The reason given for this request was that I was expected to be based at *BYD* for more than four weeks and hence needed to go through a review and approval procedure according to the *BYD* corporate rules. Approval was granted within a few days and I was given a temporary pass to get into the building at anytime as a staff member. The human resource staff asked me to give them a copy of the PhD dissertation after completion without specifying any reasons. I did not give any definite answer to this request.

### *Participant observation*

Participant observation was employed to observe what newspeople do. It was conducted at the world news division for two weeks from 6 February to 20 February 2006, exclusive of weekends, with the aim of following and understanding the routine production process, identifying newspeople's behaviour and explaining it.

There are two kinds of participant observation. *Participant as observer* means 'the researcher participates with the group being observed and is a functioning part of the group' and *observer as participant* means 'the observer is a neutral outsider who has

---

been given the privilege of participating for the purpose of making observations and recording them.’<sup>6</sup> In order to ensure neutrality and objectivity, I chose to play the second role of ‘observer as participant’.

During the two weeks, I came to the world newsroom around 13:00 hours each day and stayed till about midnight when all the news stories were settled in the pages for the following day. Xiao Bei, the world news editor, assigned me a table and computer just opposite his own in the newsroom. I recorded newspeople’s discussions in the newsroom about the selection of news subjects, reporting angles, page layout, and comments that I considered important and relevant to the research. In addition, I randomly attended the 14:00 hours and 17:00 hours editorial meetings chaired by the managing editor on the day, world news departmental meetings chaired by the world news editor or deputy news editor, and three newspaper agency-wide general editorial meetings on Mondays presided over by the managing editors. I participated in all these meetings and also recorded the discussions on the newsroom floor for later transcription.

### *Interviews*

Structured interviews were used in this study to find out about ‘people’s ideas, their thoughts, their opinions, their attitudes, and what motivates them’, past and present.<sup>7</sup> I interviewed a total of 26 *BYD* staff including two news executives (Zhang Yanping, the President and Liu He, one of the managing editors) and 21 newspeople including reporters and editors from Current Affairs department, Editorial and Comments department, City News department, Domestic News department, World News department, News Assessment Department, and News Centre. Interviewees also included Yang Lan, the chief editor and Yang Junlong, the world news editor at *The Mirror* and Chang Lingxin, one of the managing editors at *The First*. *The Mirror* and *The First* are two new tabloids affiliated to the *BYD* and most of their senior editorial staffs were veteran *BYD* reporters and editors who were transferred to take up key positions at the new sub-papers. These 24 journalists and editors have been anonymised in this thesis.

---

<sup>6</sup> Arthur Asa Berger, *Media and communication research methods: An introduction to qualitative and quantitative approaches* (London: Sage Publications Ltd., 2000), p.162

<sup>7</sup> Berger, p.113

I used three sets of structured questions in the interviews: questions for news executives, questions for reporters and editors, and questions for the commentary page editor. All the interviewees were guaranteed anonymity. As in the pilot project, I declared my identity and the purpose prior to the interviews. Each interview lasted about one or two hours and was recorded with approval.

Demographic data and open-ended comments were also collected. All the interviews were recorded and transcribed manually later. Interview content was categorized and organised using the qualitative analysis software Nvivo (See appendix).

### *Content analysis*

Content analysis was employed to compare and contrast form and content so as to assemble frequencies and establish patterns of messages over time.<sup>8</sup> This study attempted to identify significant temporal changes at the *BYD* over the past 25 years. It examined the news content on the front pages of *BYD* from 1981 to 2006 using two sampling methods: continuous week sampling and composite week sampling. The unit of analysis was the news item including news stories, teasers, titles, and photo reports.

Newspapers were sampled as follows: One week worth of front-page news items in February (from Monday to Sunday<sup>9</sup>) of each year between 1981 to 1998 were collected from the archives of the National Library of China. The reason for using this method was that *BYD* started as a weekly newspaper in 1981, and then progressed firstly to publication twice a week, and then four-days a week until 1994 when the paper started to publish on daily basis with weekly supplements. The month of February was selected because the newspaper usually underwent reforms, reorganisations and launches of new pages or columns at the beginning of a new year. After one-month of transition, these changes should have bedded in. As for the selection of an un-fixed week, Chinese Spring Festival sometimes falls in February interrupting the publication of newspapers for one or two days. Hence, the week before or after the interrupted week was selected to include an entire week of issues.

---

<sup>8</sup> John L. Morris and Sharon Hartin Iorio, 'Glossary', in Iorio, ed. 2004, pp. 213-223

<sup>9</sup> Non-daily publications use the same method to maintain consistency, for instance, in 1982, *BYD* was published twice a week and two day's front page news was calculated; in 1992, *BYD* was published four times a week and four days' front page news was calculated. As *BYD* was re-launched in July 1981, news in 1981 was missed out.

Unfortunately, sampling data from 1999 to 2002 is missing in this research. When I was in Beijing conducting my field work, the newspaper content for this time period was available at the *BYD*'s website, [www.ynet.com](http://www.ynet.com). I checked the availability on the web and decided to collect the samples after my return to Leeds in order not to waste scarce time in the field. However, when I started to collect samples online in Leeds, I was shocked to find that the news pages for this time period were gone. The *BYD* web staff had already removed the content from the web because 'they were too old'.<sup>10</sup> Due to time and funding constraints, I could not go back to China to re-collect this missing data. This is the limitation of this study. However, I believe that the trend of the longitudinal changes at *BYD* remains valid even without this missing data.

Composite week sampling was conducted for the time period from 2003 to 2006. News items on the front pages were selected in a composite way for each month from Monday to Friday, one Monday from the first week, one Tuesday from the second week, and one Wednesday from the third week, until all weekdays (Monday to Friday) have been included.<sup>11</sup>

A total of 1830 news items carried on the front pages in the years of 1982 to 1998 and 2003 to 2006 were sampled.<sup>12</sup> Date, weekday, headline, sub-headline, and lead/first paragraph were recorded where necessary. All the items were coded by the category of theme, style of stories (news or views), sources and geographical locations. Quantitative analysis was carried out using the SPSS software.

The findings from the content analysis are presented in Chapter 5: *Impact of globalisation on the professional practices* and Chapter 6: *Impact of globalisation on the world news reportage*. More details of the sampling and coding methods are specified where the findings are presented and analysed.<sup>13</sup>

---

<sup>10</sup> Information comes from my informant Xiao Bei who called up the ynet online department and passed the information to me.

<sup>11</sup> Roger D. Wimmer and Joseph R. Dominick, *Mass media research: an introduction*, 7<sup>th</sup> edition, (Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth, 2003), p.147

<sup>12</sup> *BYD* was re-launched in the later half of 1981 and the sampling used here was taken from news content in February, thus samples of 1981 were excluded.

<sup>13</sup> Original coding sheets can be required from the author



## 1.5 Background to the research

Twenty years ago Chinese newspapers were said to publish no news — only propaganda — and Chinese journalists were considered to be propagandists towing the official line at the cost of truth. In late 1981, Yvonne Preston, a former correspondent for the *Sydney Morning Herald*, commented: ‘The business of our Chinese counterparts was not news but propaganda: their papers were directly linked to the Party, and they propagated the official line regardless of the truth ... journalists in China and journalists in Australia are not in the same profession at all.’<sup>14</sup>

Twenty years later, the news media’s roles, values, structure, mechanisms, practices and theories have changed. The majority of Chinese newspapers are now run on a business model and a great many are publishing real news, in the same way as the Western media — despite continuing state media supervision. As the new-style editors explained in 2004, ‘Media supervision is not as tight as it was. We are treated as businesses. Our values are increasingly close to those of the global media.’<sup>15</sup> ‘We want to influence decision-makers, not reflect what they think. That makes us very different from the official papers.’<sup>16</sup>

Since Deng Xiaoping’s ‘opening-up’ policy began to transform the economy on all fronts from 1978, the media has moved from an entirely planned system to the market system. The media sector has become larger and more diversified. In 1978 the whole country had only 186 newspapers. Today there are twelve times as many titles, generating 76 times more income, according to a survey by the Interfax News Agency.<sup>17</sup> Statistics show that the country has more than 2,000 newspapers, 8,000 periodicals, 290 radio stations and 420 TV stations.<sup>18</sup> Newspapers belong to conglomerates with 39 newspaper groups controlling 2,137 newspapers across the nation.<sup>19</sup>

---

<sup>14</sup> Steve Keen, ‘News or Propaganda?’, *The Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs*, No.8, (1982), pp.153-154

<sup>15</sup> Jonathan Watts, ‘China loosens leash on public watchdogs’, *The Guardian*, 17 August 2004, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/china/story/0,7369,1284431,00.html>, accessed 12 December 2006

<sup>16</sup> ‘Hu Shuli keeps an eye on corporate China, *Economist*, e on corporate China’, *Economist*, Vol: 371 (2004), p.70-71, [http://www.danwei.org/magazines/the\\_most\\_dangerous\\_woman\\_in\\_ch.php](http://www.danwei.org/magazines/the_most_dangerous_woman_in_ch.php), accessed 12 December 2006

<sup>17</sup> Watts, 2004

<sup>18</sup> ‘China’s Media Rush’, <http://www1.china.org.cn/english/2001/Dec/23061.htm>, accessed 11 December 2007

<sup>19</sup> Jason Leow, ‘China: China’s media shake-up’, *The Straits Times*, 10 April 2004, <http://www.asiamedia.ucla.edu/article.asp?parentid=10080>, accessed 11 December 2007

**BEST COPY**

**AVAILABLE**

Variable print quality

The market potential for newspapers is huge. Far from meeting its death, the newspaper industry grew explosively in the last decade. Though as elsewhere around the world, in face of the competition from Internet-based news media, ‘newspaper readership in China has declined sharply in the last three years, with the number of people who say they read a newspaper at least once a week falling to 22 percent last year (2006) from 26 percent in 2003.’<sup>20</sup> China and India are still defined as the regions for dynamic growth, representing more than 25 percent of global newspaper revenues. China’s daily appetite for news accounts for the largest total daily circulation of any country in the world, with more than 85 million copies of newspapers sold, followed by India with 72 million and Japan with almost 70 million.<sup>21</sup> In 2006, China’s gross newspaper advertising value reached about RMB 78 billion, having grown about 10 percent per year since 2001. Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou were China’s three major newspaper advertisement centres.<sup>22</sup> In Beijing, at least 200 newspapers compete for readers.<sup>23</sup> The diagram below shows China’s newspaper advertising value and growth rate from 2000 to 2007.

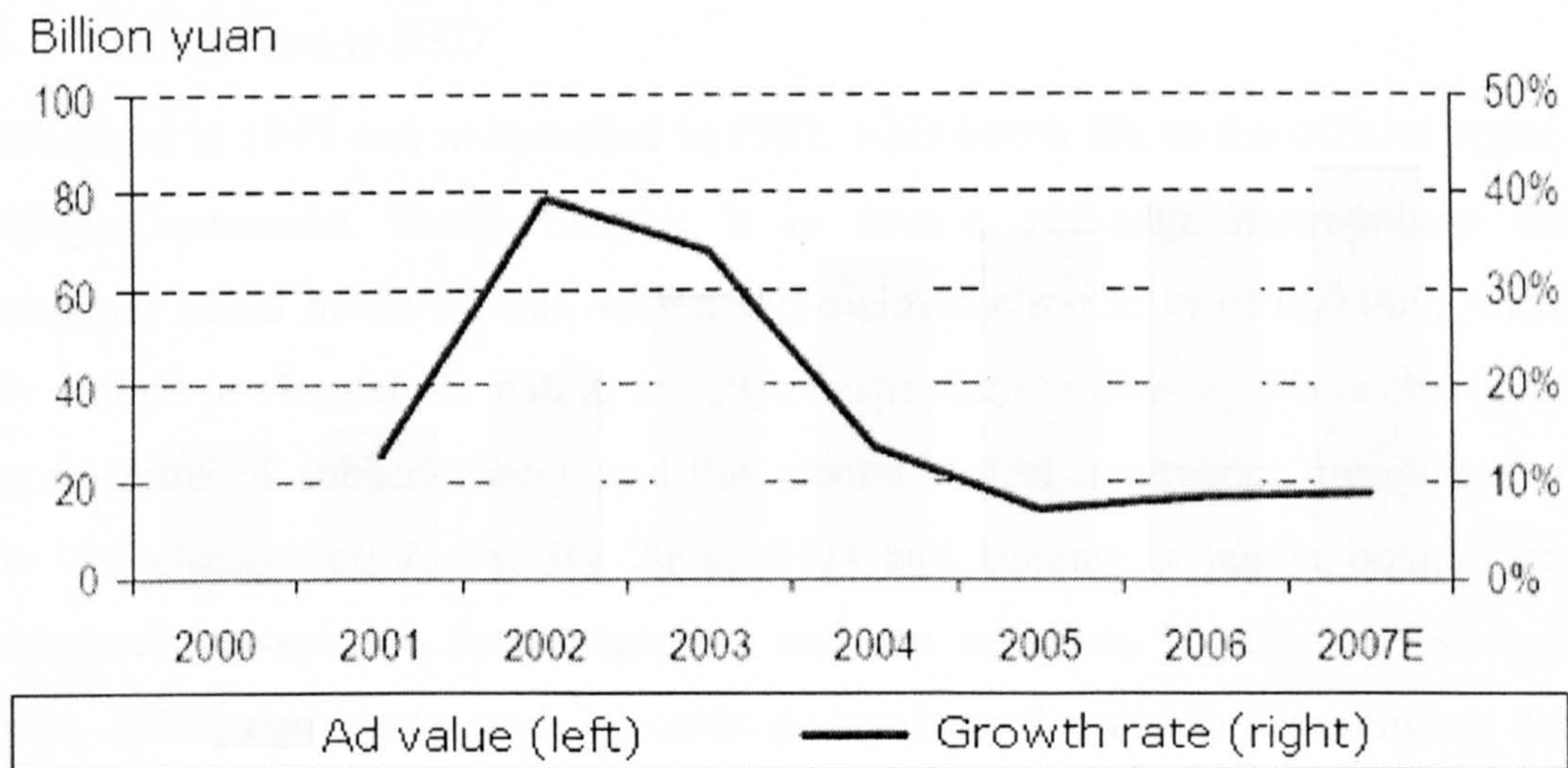


Figure 1 China’s newspaper advertising value and growth rate, 2000 to 2007.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Howard W. French, ‘China Media Battle Hints at Shift on Intellectual Property’, *New York Times*, 6 January 2007, <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/01/06/world/asia/06china.html>, accessed 17 December 2007

<sup>21</sup> James Borton, ‘English press hard-pressed in Asia’, *Asian Economy*, [http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Asian\\_Economy/FL02Dk01.html](http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Asian_Economy/FL02Dk01.html), accessed 17 December 2007

<sup>22</sup> ‘China Newspaper and Book Publishing Industry Report, 2007’, <http://www.researchinchina.com/Report/Media/5178.html>, accessed 18 December 2007

<sup>23</sup> ‘China’s Media Rush’, <http://www1.china.org.cn/english/2001/Dec/23061.htm>, accessed 11 December 2007

<sup>24</sup> Source: ResearchInChina, China’s Media Rush’, <http://www1.china.org.cn/english/2001/Dec/23061.htm>, accessed 11 December 2007

China's shift towards a market economy has triggered waves of news reforms and deregulation. Though the media is still under the control of the Party, this political grip has weakened and media openness increased as the media market has expanded and become more profit-oriented and as it was obliged to open up to foreign competition in advertising and distribution, as part of China's commitment to the World Trade Organisation.<sup>25</sup>

However, as China is still an authoritarian state under the leadership of one party — the Chinese Communist Party — all the reforms are carried out in accordance with the Party's directives and policies. Reforms in the press industry are no exception. Unlike most Western newspapers, which are regulated by the market, Chinese newspapers are regulated by both the government and market forces, and the government is still the dominant player. 'Chinese media have become independent financially but the news content has to be under the control of government,' said Song Jianhua, the then Current Affairs News Editor at *BYD*.<sup>26</sup>

## 1.6 Background to *BYD*

Established in 1949 and re-launched in 1981, *BYD* began life as the official organ of Beijing Communist Youth League. It is now a 100-page metropolitan daily newspaper based in the capital, with a self-claimed circulation of 600,000, ranking only second in circulation, within the city, to the *Beijing Evening News* (but ranked first in terms of subscriptions), and the second largest newspaper group in China after the *Guangzhou Daily*. By 2008, *BYD* had become a media conglomerate owning ten newspapers, four magazines and two websites. Though centred on the media, *BYD* also owns and operates a number of subsidiaries ranging from distribution, logistics, advertising, and arts theatres to tennis events.<sup>27</sup> On 22

---

<sup>25</sup> China accessed to the World Trade Organisation in December 2001. In the post-WTO era, China has made no commitments to open its news media market including newspapers, magazines, radio and TV stations, according to Zhao Qizheng, minister of the State Council Information Office. (this statement was taken from 'China Calls for More Giant Media Groups', *China Daily*, 14 June 2002, <http://www.china.org.cn/english/investment/34631.htm>, accessed 3 October 2006)

<sup>26</sup> This quote was taken from the interview between Song and the author conducted at Luton University on February 7 2004.

<sup>27</sup> The ten newspapers include *Beijing Youth Daily*, *Beijing Legal Evening Post* (an evening newspaper also called *The Mirror*), *Beijing Sci-Tech Report*, *Beijing Today* (an English language weekly newspaper), *Beijing Youth Weekend*, *The First*, *First Finance Daily*, *Middle School Times*, *Middle School Science Post*, and *Beijing Children's Weekly*. The four magazines include *Beijing Youth Weekly*, *Leisure Times*, *39.2 Degree*, and *Shishi Mojing*. The two websites are ynet.com and qianglong.com. The group also owns and operates a number of subsidiaries, including Beijing Media Co. Ltd., Beijing XiaoHongMao (Little Red

December 2004, the Beijing Media Corporation, an advertising unit under the *BYD*, launched its initial public offering on the Hong Kong stock exchange with *BYD* agency as the major shareholder. As a pioneer in a series of reforms in the commercialisation of China's media industry, *BYD* was the first mainland news media company to get listed on the global stock exchange and will be a test case in the media sector for the government to see the implications for the paper's content, ideology and operation.

*BYD* was a market success story, which was manifested in its transition from an obscure tabloid to a media conglomerate, as well as its advertising, distribution and news content. It has transformed itself from an obscure tabloid to a media conglomerate. From 1949 it was an official publication. It was re-launched in 1981 as a weekly four-page tabloid with a circulation of 29,000 copies and an official subsidy of 260,000 yuan.<sup>28</sup> Its official rank was one of the lowest (division level, or *chuji*) and its original location was in a basement warehouse behind the garage of Beijing's Municipal City Hall, which indicated 'both the paper's official connection and humble status.'<sup>29</sup> Because of its obscure status, it was not directly controlled by the Central Party and government and could be flexible in carrying out reforms.<sup>30</sup>

*BYD* underwent a series of internal management reforms and became the first newspaper in Beijing to pursue commercialisation and self-financing. When many official Party papers were unwilling to lose their state subsidy, *BYD* voluntarily gave it up. It 'signed a four-year contract (1991-1994) with the city's financial department that it would not receive any subsidy from the city, while the city would allow it to retain its profits.'<sup>31</sup> Within these four years, its subscription, newsstand retail, and advertising revenue all increased dramatically.<sup>32</sup> Apart from the main newspaper,

---

Cap) Newspapers and Periodicals Distribution Services Co. Ltd., *Beijing Youth Daily* Logistics Co. Ltd., Beijing Childrens Art Theatre Co., Ltd., China Open Promotions Limited (COL), Beijing Gehua Sunshine Advertising Co., Ltd. and Beijing Today Sunshine Advertising Co., Ltd. The group has built a comprehensive press production chain covering publishing, printing, distribution and delivery.

<http://www.hkex.com.hk/listedco/listconews/sehk/20041213/01000/ewp111.pdf>, accessed 12 October 2006

<sup>28</sup> Yuezhi Zhao, 'Toward a propaganda/commercial model of journalism in China? The case of the *Beijing Youth News*', *International Communication Gazette*, Vol. 58, No. 3, (1997), pp.143-157

<sup>29</sup> *ibid*

<sup>30</sup> Enqing Cui, 'Qianyi difang qingnian baoye de jingying zhidao' (Discussing the operation of local youth newspapers), in *BYD yearbook 1992*

<sup>31</sup> Zhao, 1997, p.145

<sup>32</sup> *ibid*

*BYD* launched a series of other titles and established other businesses. In 1993, *BYD* Corporation, a publicly owned enterprise (*quanmin suoyouzhi qiye*) was established with a registered capital amounting to 12 million yuan. Its business scope covered news and publishing services including *BYD* and three specialized papers targeting primary and secondary school students as well as 10 or more non-newspaper subsidiary businesses including joint ventures, advertising firms, high-tech firms and travel firms.<sup>33</sup>

In the decade after 1995, *BYD* gained further financial strength. In 1999 it purchased a 23-floor building in Chaoyang district, the prime business location of Beijing, covering a floor area of 20,000 square meters, and moved in 2001.<sup>34</sup> In addition, it forged a media conglomerate and integrated itself with the global market. Zhang Yanping, the President of *BYD* claims, 'we don't want to be the 40<sup>th</sup> newspaper group, we want to make ourselves into a modern media conglomerate. The new round of competition is about multi-media.'<sup>35</sup> In 2001, *BYD* span off its advertising and sales business from the content section and established Beijing Media Co., Ltd, thus beginning the three-year preparation period in the run up to stock market floatation.<sup>36</sup> In June 2003, *BYD* was confirmed as one of the 35 trial units under the nation-wide cultural system reform scheme and Beijing Media Co., Ltd was floated in Hong Kong. It gained finance of one billion yuan exceeding the total profit *BYD* had accumulated over 23 years. Its market value reached about 4 billion yuan.<sup>37</sup>

Advertising has been fundamental to the commercialisation of *BYD*. At the end of 1990, *BYD* set out a five-year-plan with an aim of turning *BYD* into a market-oriented daily newspaper, a 'paper with news in real sense'.<sup>38</sup> In 1992, the *Youth Weekend* supplement was launched and made a big success in the market with advertisement booming. *BYD* then changed its emphasis from making money from circulation to making money from advertising. 'Since the market economy, advertising revenue has become the pillar of the newspaper economy. In *BYD*, we lose one or two yuan with each copy of newspaper being sold. We have to make up

---

<sup>33</sup> *BYD yearbook 1994*

<sup>34</sup> *BYD yearbook 2000 and 2001*

<sup>35</sup> *BYD yearbook 2003*

<sup>36</sup> *ibid*

<sup>37</sup> *Beijing qingnian baoshe 2005 nian nianhui jiyao (BYD 2005 annual meeting minutes)*

<sup>38</sup> *ibid*

for the loss from advertising.’<sup>39</sup> In 2001, its advertising revenue ranked second in China. *BYD*’s success lies in its readership and advertiser-friendly supplements. ‘The majority of the readers are well-educated urban youth, 87.9 percent of its readers have an education level of high school or above. This is higher even than *People’s Daily*, for which the comparable figure was only 72.7 percent.’<sup>40</sup> These readers represent a dynamic economic growth point and are targets of advertisers. On the other hand, *BYD* launched supplements to engage readers and attract advertisers. In 1995, three weekly supplements on real estate, automobiles, and computers were launched. Up to 2002, *BYD* had won more than 50 percent of the advertising in print media in Beijing over these three areas. On Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, the ‘golden’ days for advertising, the daily advertising revenue stood between 5 to 9 million yuan.<sup>41</sup> During the newspaper’s restructuring in 1999, special supplements that carried finance news and advertising were expanded from 8 pages to 36 pages in the News Weekly supplement covering the areas of telecommunication, travel, health and jobs. Of all the advertisements, real estate is the biggest money-marker.<sup>42</sup> Below is a diagram that shows the growth of *BYD*’s advertising revenue from 1995 to 2004.

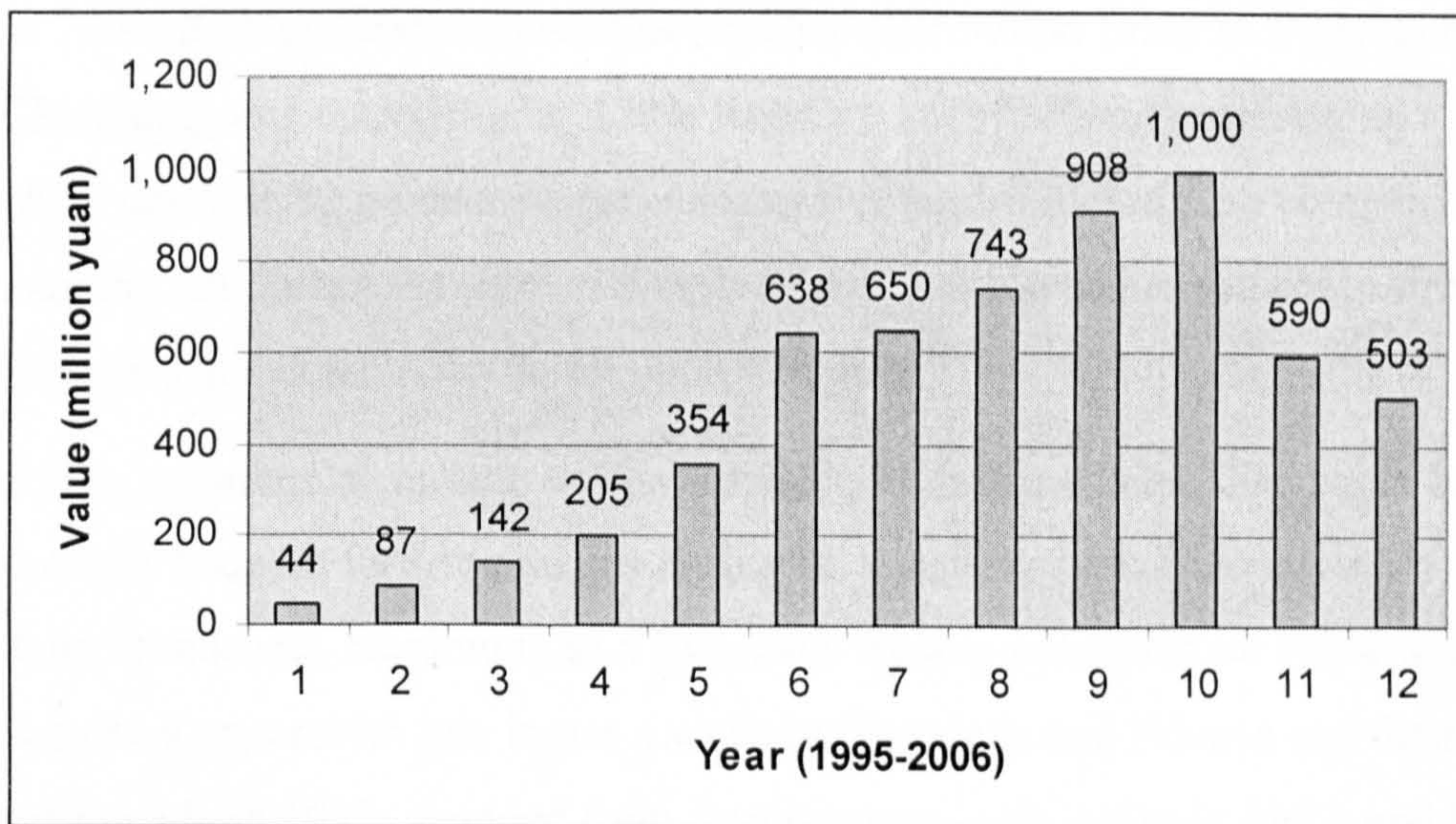


Figure 2 *BYD*’s advertising revenue from 1995 to 2006 (unit: 1 million yuan).

*BYD* also made big breakthroughs in distribution. Like all other newspapers, *BYD* was distributed through post offices before 1992. In 1992, *BYD* launched *Youth*

<sup>39</sup> *BYD Yearbook 2002*

<sup>40</sup> Zhao, 1997, p.146

<sup>41</sup> *BYD yearbook 2002*

<sup>42</sup> *BYD Yearbook 1999*

*Weekend* and started to enter the retail market. 'We invited newspaper retailers and vendors to our offices and collaborated with them to promote distribution.'<sup>43</sup> As a result, the retail sales of first issue of *Youth Weekend* supplement were nearly 20,000 copies. Two months later, it rocketed to 230,000 copies. In 1995, *BYD*, as a daily paper, started to sell in the early morning and 'Little Red Cap' personnel rode bikes in the streets to deliver *BYD* door to door. Subscriptions increased one third each year consecutively from 1994 to 1996. Distribution channels also extended from streets to subways and shops.<sup>44</sup> Starting from 1997, the 'Little Red Cap' distribution company under *BYD* was established and was run independently with a registered capital of 3 million yuan. 'Little Red Cap' made three promises to customers at the beginning: door-to-door subscription, door-to-door delivery, early delivery within the fourth ring road, and free installation of a newspaper box.<sup>45</sup> In order to attract and maintain customers, 'Little Red Cap' took a series of measures to give extras to subscribers, for instance, the supplementary delivery of books, audio products, milk and distilled water. In 2002, *BYD* raised the concept of 'thick paper, rich return' (houbao you houbao) meaning they are committed to provide readers an excellent paper as well as a mix of various services to foster relations with readers.<sup>46</sup> In 2004, *BYD* collaborated with newspaper distribution firms in Tianjin and Chongqing and established a 'Little Red Cap Distribution Shareholding Company' (*BYD* controls 82 percent shares) turning Beijing Little Red Cap company into a national one. It has the right to distribute nation-wide and to run chain firms. Branches are expected to be set up in 12 cities.<sup>47</sup>

*BYD*'s commercial success was inseparable from its content. The paper has been through frequent format changes during its transformation from a weekly tabloid to a daily broadsheet. Beginning as a four-page weekly published on Fridays in 1981, it became a paper with two issues a week on Tuesdays and Fridays and distributed nationwide in 1982, changed from four pages to eight pages in 1987, and began to publish four issues a week on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays in 1992. It launched the 'entertainment-oriented weekend supplement, the *Youth Weekend*'

---

<sup>43</sup> *BYD yearbook 1995*

<sup>44</sup> *ibid*

<sup>45</sup> *BYD yearbook 1998*

<sup>46</sup> *BYD yearbook 2001*

<sup>47</sup> *BYD 2005 meeting minutes*



(Qingnian Zhoumo) on Friday in the same year.<sup>48</sup> In January 1993, the eight-page *Newsweek* supplement (Xinwen Zhoukan) was launched appearing every Wednesday. On 1 January 1994 *BYD* became a broadsheet publishing five issues a week, eight-pages on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Sundays, and twelve pages on Saturday. A few months later, on 1 July 1994, it became a daily paper. The *Newsweek* supplement was expanded from eight pages to sixteen pages and three new weekly supplements, *Real Estate*, *Auto* and *Computer Time*, were launched in 1995. Three more weekly supplements, *Finance*, *Home Appliances* and *Telecommunication Time*, were added in 1998. *Fortune* and *Sports* weekly supplements were launched in 1999 and *BYD* published more than 200 pages a week becoming the thickest daily paper in north China. In 2000, contents were re-adjusted twice and consisted of daily news (pages 1-16), in-depth reports (pages 17-24), daily supplements (pages 25-32) and Life Info (pages 33-48). Seven weekly supplements of *Globe*, *Newsweek*, *Securities*, *Fortune*, *Society*, *Youth Weekend*, and *Next Week* were published every weekday in turn. *BYD*'s website was launched in June 2000. In July 2001, the paper's structure was changed again to include a main broadsheet paper and inside tabloid supplements. In addition, the newspaper's format changed from the size of 33cm (width) x 50.5 cm (height) to 32cm x 52 cm and *BYD* became the first world standard colour daily paper in Beijing in December 2001. All the weekly supplements were removed and content was integrated and categorized under different news genres. *BYD* became a daily paper in a real sense in 2002.

In line with the format changes, *BYD* news reports shifted their focus from the pure official propaganda to reporting news on social events and on the economy, then to the current affairs and political news, and then to the coverage of world events.

During the first phase from 1981 to early 1990s, *BYD* started as a Party paper and official propaganda tool targeting the Youth League and middle school students. After 1987, it targeted all young people in society. In 1988, *BYD* stated an aim of 'orientation towards society in all aspects' (*quan fangwei mianxiang shehui*) and 'satisfying both the Party and Youth League organisations and the wide range of young readers'.<sup>49</sup> *BYD* then began to transform itself from being Party-oriented to

---

<sup>48</sup> Zhao, 1997, pp.146-7

<sup>49</sup> Enqing Cui, 'Erci chuangye tiandi kuan – 1995 niandu shewu gongzuo baogao' (The second carve out 1995 *BYD* work report), in *BYD Yearbook 1994*

being market-oriented. At the end of 1990, *BYD* laid out a five-year development plan to turn *BYD* into a daily paper and clarified its objective of becoming a ‘paper of news in the real sense’ (*zhenzheng yiyi de xinwen zhi*)<sup>50</sup> meaning doing real news not propaganda, which unfolded in the second phase.

The second phase from early 1990s to the mid-1990s saw a focus on covering non-official social events and economic news. At that time, the weekend supplement was popular and became a trend-setter in the newspaper business in China. Against this background, *BYD*’s *Youth Weekend* gained market success in covering ‘soft news’ including social events, lifestyle, human-interest stories and entertainment news. For instance, two pages of stories about a group of elderly people looking for their primary school teachers were published in the *Youth Weekend* on 9 September 1994. Meanwhile, the number of economic reports increased compared with the pre-1990 period. ‘Top news on the front page about the economy was estimated to reach 60 percent to 70 percent every month’.<sup>51</sup> In January 1993, *BYD* launched *Newsweek*, its Wednesday supplement, which transferred the market success of the weekend supplements to the weekdays. The new slogan was: ‘use news values to push the main paper out the market’.<sup>52</sup> It claimed to ‘provide one thing only — news’ and made three commitments to readers: first time, first scene and first eyewitness.<sup>53</sup> *Newsweek* took many unprecedented steps to report on non-official news, breaking events, exclusive reports, in-depth reports, human-interest stories and public opinion surveys. For instance, ‘it not only sells news to readers, it gathers news from readers’.<sup>54</sup> A news hotline was opened on 5 January, 1993 and readers who provided news tips that led to a published story were awarded an ‘information fee’ worth thirty to one hundred yuan. One page published opinion polls on ordinary people’s activities with a motto claiming to ‘give readers a statistical description of reality’.<sup>55</sup> One page carried classified news, later called useful news (*shiyong xinwen*), under the heading ‘we hope there is one piece of news that is of use to you’.<sup>56</sup> In 1995, it

---

<sup>50</sup> *ibid*

<sup>51</sup> Ping Yang, ‘Cong zhouer dao zhousi, xinwen guannian de zhuanbian (From two issues to four issues a week: changes in news values)’ in *Shenei yantaohui lunwen zhuanjuan 1992 (Internal seminar papers collection 1992)*

<sup>52</sup> Zhao, 1997, p.147

<sup>53</sup> *BYD yearbook 1999*

<sup>54</sup> Zhao, 1997, p.147

<sup>55</sup> *ibid*

<sup>56</sup> *ibid*

reported a sensational item about Wang Biaoxia who had a rare disease and was cured due to the *BYD* reports and help from the society and another about Yang Hongwei who was rejected from entering the university due to his ugliness.<sup>57</sup> All these measures pushed up *BYD* sales, increased its market orientation and built up its reputation for reporting soft and in-depth social news.

The third phase was from mid-1990s to the late 1990s. From 1995, newspaper competition in the Beijing market shifted from weekend supplements to hard news. As the *BYD* yearbook reveals, *BYD*'s focus changed from covering social events to covering current affairs and government news with an aim of increasing its 'authority'.<sup>58</sup> For instance, *BYD* issued special supplements to report on the Party and People's Congresses. The top news on the front page of *Newsweek* supplement was set to be the policy-oriented news, 'using the news to demonstrate the influence of policy on people's lives'.<sup>59</sup> In 1995, *BYD* carried a series of reports on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of anti-Japanese war and the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Long March.<sup>60</sup> In 1999, a series of reports was published on NATO's bombing of the Chinese Embassy in former Yugoslavia in May, and a series of reports on using science to expose the Falungong was published in July.<sup>61</sup>

The third phase from the late 1990s onwards was marked by stepped-up participation in the world events coverage. In the late 1990s, *BYD* used a new slogan 'wherever the news is, we are' (*you xinwen de difang jiu you women*). Increased competition on the local market drove *BYD* to reach out to the world and enhance its world news reportage. 'World news reports will be what the Chinese quality broadsheets compete for in the future. We try to increase the proportion of world news and science and technology news. Our people should be at the scene of the big world events.'<sup>62</sup> In 1999, Yang Lan and Wanghao Zheng, two *BYD* reporters, went to former Yugoslavia to report on the peacekeeping operation, which was the first time *BYD* reporters had done on the spot war reports. Also in 1999, Yuan Li, a *BYD* reporter, went to the North Pole in July and the South Pole in December along with a

---

<sup>57</sup> Yanping Zhang, ed. *Xinwen zhouban sanji tiao 1993-1996 (Newsweek supplement's triple jump, 1993-1996)*, Internal corporate material, p.11

<sup>58</sup> *BYD yearbook 1995*

<sup>59</sup> Zhang, ed. *Xinwen zhouban sanji tiao 1993-1996*, p.11

<sup>60</sup> *ibid*

<sup>61</sup> *BYD Yearbook 2000*

<sup>62</sup> *ibid*

Chinese scientific exploration team. At the turn of the century, *BYD* reporters were sent over to the world's 24 time zones and published the 100-page Millennium special report. Other big live world reports include the East Timor peacekeeping operation, the general election in Russia and the Sydney Olympic Games in 2000.<sup>63</sup> *BYD* reporters also reported on the Afghanistan conflict and the Oscar award winning ceremony, and did in-person interviews with 30 Nobel Prize winners in Europe and America to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Nobel Prize in 2001.<sup>64</sup> In 2002, *BYD* reporters were sent to 31 countries to report on 2000 World Cup at a cost of millions of yuan. 'When it comes to the time that all the newspapers have similar news sources, investment made in the news reports becomes critical. We spend tens of millions of yuan to send reporters to report from all over the world. We ask all our reporters to get their passports ready to be prepared to go abroad anytime.'<sup>65</sup>

Despite its market success and reader-oriented news content similar to that of western papers, a striking feature of *BYD* is that it still plays a propaganda role and practices party journalism. This feature consistently weaves through the history of *BYD*, which is determined by its state-ownership nature.

At its re-launch in 1981, *BYD* proclaimed its motto was 'following the Party adamantly' (*jianding buyi gen dang zou*). Since then, one of *BYD*'s main editorial principles has been to 'stick to the positive propaganda and correct guidance of public opinions' (*jianchi zhengmian xuanchuan weizhu de fangzhen, jianchi zhengque de yulun daoxiang*).<sup>66</sup> This principle was reflected in *BYD*'s positive reports and patriotic educational reports, which drew high praise from the party and government leaders. In positive reports, *BYD* set out the principle of 'promoting the image of excellent young people and encouraging the young people at large to commit themselves to the reform and the socialist economic drive' in 1992 and published series stories about nearly a hundred such young people of excellence. On 17 February 1994, it carried a front page report about Jiang Shijie, a prisoner on bail who lost his life to save other people in the icy water, and the following day, it had a

---

<sup>63</sup> *ibid*

<sup>64</sup> *BYD* yearbook 2001

<sup>65</sup> *BYD* yearbook 2002

<sup>66</sup> Pei Xiao, 'Weirao daju wa xinwen, kao zhengmian baodao chansheng baozhi de shehui yingxiang li (Dig news surrounding the situation and produce newspaper's social influence by positive reports)', in *BYD Yearbook 1995*

front page report about the No. 1 Industrial Project in Beijing, which was praised by the then Beijing major Li Qiyan.<sup>67</sup> At the new year 1998, *BYD* launched four pages of theme reports on ‘looking back on 20 years of reform and opening up’. In July and August, 1998, twenty nine reporters were sent out to the flood-struck areas and *BYD* organised a campaign to help students in flood areas to realise their dreams, which attracted donations of 1.6 million yuan.<sup>68</sup>

*BYD* planned series theme reports to carry out patriotic education. Since 1990, it has run columns entitled the ‘Party in my heart’, ‘socialism is good’, ‘reform waves’, ‘national defence education’ and so on, for consecutive five years.<sup>69</sup> In September 1994, He Zhili, the former Chinese ping pong player who married a Japanese man and took Japanese citizenship, claimed that she would beat Deng Yaping, China’s champion player at the Asian Games. *BYD* initiated a debate about how to look at this challenge from He Zhili ‘by seizing this opportunity to promote patriotism.’<sup>70</sup> In 2001, *BYD* launched a series of stories about 80 Communist Party members to celebrate the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Party. In the same year, four pages of reports on ‘a hundred years of pain’ were published in memory of the signing of the Boxer Protocol (Xinchou Treaty) a hundred years earlier on 7 September to emphasize the theme of ‘human rights are a dream without state sovereignty’.<sup>71</sup> In 2004, large-scale reports on the ‘Long March — seeking for the surviving ‘Red Army’ soldiers’, and ‘memories of Deng Xiaoping’ drew praises from the Central Propaganda and Beijing Municipal Propaganda departments.<sup>72</sup>

*BYD*, as a commercialised party paper, successfully balances politics and the market as well as satisfying the party leaders at the top line and readers at the bottom line. It is a good vehicle for tracking progress and change in the Chinese newspaper industry over the past 20 years and analysing the factors that affected the paper’s changes in news coverage and growth as a publication. The study will enable an in-depth look at the power struggles among political, market and journalistic forces as well as the collaboration of global, national and local forces.

---

<sup>67</sup> *BYD* yearbook 1992

<sup>68</sup> Yanping Zhang, ‘Beiqingbao shi ruhe chuli shichang xuqiu yu xinwen jilu de maodun de (How *BYD* handles the conflicts between market needs and editorial rules)’, in *BYD* yearbook 1999

<sup>69</sup> Xiao, *BYD* Yearbook 1995

<sup>70</sup> *ibid*

<sup>71</sup> Xing Chen, ‘Gongzuo baogao (Work report)’, in *BYD* Yearbook 1999

## 1.7 Chapter structure

This thesis examines the impact of globalisation on the news content of local newspaper in China by looking at *BYD*'s current status and its changes. Chapters offer examinations of the press from different levels: media policy and press institutions, media organizational structure and operation, editorial structure and professional practice, individual journalists and world news coverage.

Specifically, chapter 2 presents a literature review laying a theoretical foundation for the thesis as well as clarifying terms and identifying gaps in existing literatures that this dissertation might help to fill.

Chapter 3 examines press institutions by looking at China's press system and policies and major changes over the past two decades to give a picture of the macro-environment under which local newspapers operate.

Chapter 4 examines *BYD*'s organisation looking at its business operation including its corporate undertakings, ownership and business model. A comparison between *BYD* and Denmark's *Nordjyske* is made in the light of media convergence.

Chapter 5 examines *BYD*'s routine by looking at its general professional practice including its target readers, news values, selection, sources, editorial structure and organisational constraints.

Chapter 6 examines *BYD*'s individual journalists by looking at journalists' background and demographic profile, perceptions of their roles, and perceptions of unethical practices.

Chapter 7 examines *BYD*'s world news production by looking at its news sources, news value, construction process, and international news flow. The focal point of this chapter is how the world news is domesticated from particular local perspectives to target a particular local audience.

Chapter 8 summarises discussions in previous chapters and draw conclusions.

---

<sup>72</sup> *BYD 2005 meeting minutes*

## Chapter 2 Literature review and theoretical framework

In chapter one I provided a brief introduction and some background to the current research project, in chapter two I present theoretical frameworks and related models and theories. The chapter is divided into two parts: the first presents arguments about the impact of globalisation on the news content model and lays out the theoretical framework for this thesis. Specifically, a few influential media models from the political-economy and sociology perspectives will be considered, followed by the theorizing of the newly proposed model in two sub-sections, one using a vertical perspective based on Shoemaker and Reese's influence model and the other the horizontal perspective based on different globalisation theories for each level of analysis. The second part of the chapter focuses on past and current research on journalism in China from two predominant angles: market versus state discourses and nationalism versus globalisation discourses.

### 2.1 Impact of globalisation on the news content model

In today's interconnected and interdependent world, a new theoretical model is needed to study the impact of globalisation on local news production and news content. Global capital and cultural flows affect local news production whereas local production and content become global due to technological convergence like digitalisation and the Internet. As Sreberny-Mohammadi characterises it, 'the global in the local and the local in the global'.<sup>73</sup>

Three approaches are commonly employed in the study of newsmaking drawn from the perspectives of political economy, sociology and culture.<sup>74</sup> A brief review will be offered of the political economy and sociology perspectives in communication studies. As the cultural view is often found merged with the social organisational view,<sup>75</sup> the cultural approach will not be reviewed separately here. The impact of globalisation on the news content model derives from the hierarchical influence model and globalisation theories, which will be discussed individually in this section.

---

<sup>73</sup> Annabelle Sreberny-Mohammadi, 'The global and the local in international communications', in James Curran and Michael Gurevitch, eds., *Mass media and society*, second edition, (London: Arnold, 1996), p.181

<sup>74</sup> Michael Schudson, 'The sociology of news production revisited', in James Curran and Michael Gurevitch, eds., *Mass media and society*, second edition, (London: Arnold, 1997), p.143

<sup>75</sup> Schudson, 1997, p.151

### 2.1.1 Political economy perspective

The political economy dimension helps us understand the social institutions that influence news production. However, many theories or media models are either too general or ambiguous to easily apply in empirical research, or they are developed from and oriented towards the Western liberal democratic societies making them difficult to use as universal models. After all, journalism performs different functions in the different political economy contexts of a liberal democratic regime and an authoritarian regime, though many countries fall somewhere between the two. Generally speaking, economic determinism is more evident under liberal democratic regimes whereas state control is more predominant under authoritarian regimes. The media faces a lesser degree of political control and acts as a watchdog over the abuse of political power in liberal democratic regimes, whereas authoritarian regimes insist on journalistic conformity to the official line, believing criticism may lead to social riots and regime collapse.<sup>76</sup>

I select a few popular and influential media theories and models including field theory, the propaganda model, the hegemonic model and the propaganda/commercial model and discuss their strengths and weaknesses individually.

Bourdieu's field theory offers a useful approach for understanding both the role of journalism in modern society and changes in the relationship between the journalistic and political, economic and social fields. His theory explains that society can be divided into different fields and each field enjoys its own autonomy and follows its own rules while they interact with and are influenced by forces from other fields — particularly the political and economic fields. Specifically, the field, in Bourdieu's words, 'is a structured social space, a field of forces. It contains people who dominate and others who are dominated.'<sup>77</sup> The organised hierarchy of fields is not static but dynamic with different actors struggling for the transformation or preservation of the field.<sup>78</sup> The structure of the field is determined by the state of the power relations based on the principles of dominance and legitimacy. The ownership of cultural and economic capital decides the position of an individual or an organisation in a field. Bourdieu's field theory provides a theoretical perspective for

---

<sup>76</sup> Brian McNair, *The sociology of journalism*, (London: Arnold, 1998), pp.84-86

<sup>77</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *On Television and Journalism*, (London: Pluto Press, 1998), p.42

<sup>78</sup> *ibid*



the analysis of journalism. The journalistic field emerged during the 19th century with news-based (stories and events) newspapers and views-based (analysis/comment) newspapers. Bourdieu emphasised the market-determinant nature of the journalistic field, arguing that the journalistic field is much more dependent on external forces than other fields of cultural production such as mathematics, science, and law. 'It depends very directly on demand.'<sup>79</sup> He emphasised that the journalistic field is mainly structured between two poles – markets and readers. Meanwhile, the media also compete for authority or prestige in the journalistic field.

However, Bourdieu's theory is very general and is difficult to apply in a single national context. In addition, it puts great weight on market values or other commercial elements because it was derived from examining television and journalism in France. Such market-determinism is not applicable in the Chinese context. Different political and social backgrounds determine that the structure of journalistic fields is different in France and in China. Bourdieu argues that the constraints on journalism are mainly economic and he emphasises the issues of ownership and advertising as well as changing competition within the journalistic field. In contrast, in the Chinese media landscape, the economic and political forces interlink but political force always has the upper hand over economic force: As Eric Kit-Wai Ma has written, 'market forces are absorbed by the state'.<sup>80</sup>

American scholars Chomsky and Herman developed the multi-tiered propaganda model to study the social role of journalism. They argue that since the 1970s the mass media in the United States have formed part of the political, economic, military and cultural elites that carry out a system-supportive propaganda function. Their propaganda model consists of five news filters: the media firms' size, wealth and concentrated ownership, advertising as a primary income source, reliance on information provided by government, business and experts, flak as a means of disciplining the media, and anticommunism as a 'national religion' and control mechanism. These elements interact with and reinforce one another.<sup>81</sup> Based on

---

<sup>79</sup> Bourdieu, 1998, p53

<sup>80</sup> Eric Kit-Wai Ma, 'Rethinking media studies: The case of China', in James Curran and Myung-Jin Park, eds., *De-Westernizing media studies*, (London: Routledge, 2000), p.28

<sup>81</sup> Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky, *Manufacturing consent – the political economy of the mass media*, (London: Vintage, 1998), p.2

news media structure in the United States, Chomsky's propaganda model reveals the systemic biases of the mass media due to the basic economic structure. The limitation of this model is that the link of professionalism is missing, as Hallin argued that Chomsky and Herman failed to take account of the maturing of journalist professionalism, which is central to understanding how the media operate.<sup>82</sup>

The hegemonic model analyses how the media produce identities, role models, and ideals, how they create new forms of discourse and experience, how they define situations, set agendas, and filter out oppositional ideas, and how they set limits and boundaries beyond which political discourse is not allowed.<sup>83</sup> This model borrowed the concept of hegemony originally developed by Marxist theorist Gramsci. Under the premise that man is not ruled by force alone but also by ideas, the concept of hegemony refers to the domination of one group over another via consent based on the social relations in capitalism between the capitalists and the working class. 'It means political leadership based on the consent of the led, a consent which is secured by the diffusion and popularization of the worldview of the ruling class'.<sup>84</sup> In media studies terms, the concept of hegemony explains how the media culture helps to maintain the class-divided and class-dominated society through a dominant ideology rather than coercive measures. It tends to define unacceptable opposition as dissident and deviant so that the dominant ideology retains continuing popular consent.<sup>85</sup> The hegemonic model works by achieving dominance through media representations of the world. 'The media tell us what to think, what to believe and how our world should be'.<sup>86</sup> McQuail notes that the mass media do not define reality on their own but give preferential access to the definitions of those in authority.<sup>87</sup> Similarly, Gitlin argues that hegemony is a historical process in which one picture of the world is systematically preferred over others.<sup>88</sup> The hegemonic model highlights the media's

---

<sup>82</sup> Edward S. Herman, 'The propaganda model revisited', 1996, <http://musictravel.free.fr/political/political7.htm>, accessed 4 February 2008

<sup>83</sup> Mia Consalvo, 'Hegemony, domestic violence, and "Cops": a critique of concordance - The Shows of Violence', *Journal of Popular Film and Television*, (Summer, 1998), [http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_m0412/is\\_n2\\_v26/ai\\_21221635](http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0412/is_n2_v26/ai_21221635), accessed 8 August 2005

<sup>84</sup> Thomas R. Bates, 'Gramsci and the theory of hegemony', in James Martin, ed., *Antonio Gramsci: critical assessment of leading political philosophers*, Vol. II, (London: Routledge, 2002), pp.245-246

<sup>85</sup> McQuail, 2000, pp.96-97

<sup>86</sup> Representation – How it Works Part One, <http://www.litnotes.co.uk/represent.htm>, accessed 4 February 2008

<sup>87</sup> McQuail, 2000, p.97

<sup>88</sup> Mia Consalvo, 1998

role as a political tool for authority to dominate the society and maintain the status quo ideologically. The weakness of this model is that it derives from political science and ignores other non-political factors such as economy, technology and professionalism that shape the news as it is. In addition, how to put the hegemonic model into practical use is a big problem.

As discussed above, theories and models have developed for media studies in the liberal democratic and capitalist milieu over the past decades. Recognising the uniqueness of China, scholars have tried to either modify and adapt existing Western theories or develop new theories to study news media in the Chinese context. Yuezhi Zhao proposed the propagandist/commercial model in the 1990s, a transitional mixed model that best depicts the Chinese news organisations juggling between the Party line and the bottom line during the country's transition period from a command planning economy to a market economy. Zhao argues that many news organisations have turned into financially independent and profitable business enterprises, yet the Party still maintains overt political control of the news media. This 'duality' of the Chinese media — shaped by both market and political forces — emphasises the differences between Chinese and Western media. Zhao argues that a Western liberal press model is unlikely to develop in China owing to restrictions on Chinese news media's editorial independence and media ownership. Because news media have neither editorial independence nor independent ownership, the news media have not emerged as an independent public sphere outside the Party/state apparatus.<sup>89</sup> However, the weakness of this model is that it is not a model in the real sense as it lacks levels of analysis and sufficient theorization. Like other models discussed earlier, this propagandist/commercial model also misses the professionalism link.

In sum, theories and models have developed to examine and analyse the role of media in society and news production from the political-economy perspective. Such political-economy approaches relate the outcome of the news process to the structure of the state and the economy and to the economic foundation of the news organisations.<sup>90</sup> The limitations of these models lie in the fact that they are under constraints of different political, social and media systems within the particular

---

<sup>89</sup> Yuezhi Zhao, *Media, Market and Democracy in China – Between the Party Line and the Bottom Line*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998), p.151

<sup>90</sup> Schudson, 1997, p.143

national contexts, thus they cannot be used as universal models across countries. In the global era, a new theoretical model that is easy to use in practice is needed to examine the complex relations as well as the changes of economic, political, professional and technological factors that determine the news content.

### 2.1.2 Sociology perspective

The sociology perspective on newsmaking focuses on the news organisation and overcomes the constraints of political economy approaches elaborated in the previous section. This approach comes out of the study of social organisation, occupations, professions and the social construction of ideology, which tries to understand how journalists' efforts on the job are constrained by organizational and occupational routines.<sup>91</sup>

News organisation is important in the communication research because it is an essential link in the process of mediation by which society addresses itself. 'Only by knowing how the media themselves operate can we understand how society influences the media and vice versa.'<sup>92</sup> Media organizations embody the processes through which the output of the media comes into being and examine the interaction of organizational, production, professional and personal factors and their influence on the output of the media.<sup>93</sup> Since the early 1970s, sociologists have observed newsroom practices and concluded that the news organisations and routines as well as elite news sources, especially official sources, produce bias. Schudson showed that the development of professionalism was the outcome of a business model that sought to appeal to an audience.<sup>94</sup> Epstein analysed the structure of American network news organisations and concluded that news was shaped by the organisational values more than producers and newsmen's personal values.<sup>95</sup> Schlesinger examined the BBC's production processes and editorial control system and concluded that the BBC News was affected by the state and competition in the

---

<sup>91</sup> *ibid*

<sup>92</sup> McQuail, 2000, p.244

<sup>93</sup> Margaret Gallagher, Negotiation of control in media organizations and occupations, in Michael Gurevitch et al, eds., *Culture, society and the media*, (London: Routledge, 1982), p.151

<sup>94</sup> Philip Meyer, 'Can Journalism Be Fair? If truth is whatever works for you, there is no need for journalism', *Nieman Reports, The Nieman Foundation for Journalism at Harvard University*, Vol. 54, No. 3, (Fall, 2000), <http://66.249.93.104/search?q=cache:k4-LqAXO55sJ:www.nieman.harvard.edu/reports/00-3NRfall/Can-Journalism.html+professionalism,+journalism&hl=en>

<sup>95</sup> Edward Jay Epstein, *News from nowhere : television and the news*, (Chicago: I.R. Dee, 2000), p.201

market. BBC news was not the product of accidents but rather routinised with a production structure depending on predictable activities owing to the constraints of time.<sup>96</sup> Sigal studied the front pages of the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* and claimed that news was the product of choices based on consensus. From the organisational perspective, news making is routine behaviour bringing together the news organization and the government as well as division of labour. From standpoint of politics, news is an outcome of the bargaining interplay of newsmen and their sources.<sup>97</sup> Gans used participant-observation to study CBS evening news, NBC nightly news, *Newsweek* and *Time* and concluded that all considerations exist to routinize the journalistic task and those governing the choice of sources are of prime significance. The activities of public officials are important for national news.<sup>98</sup>

Later studies focus on privatisation, deregulation, conglomeration, concentration and globalisation of the news media as well as the 'managerial revolution', with more and more professionals acting as 'cultural intermediaries' to promote elite source organisations and manage the news media.<sup>99</sup> The trend is, as the Goldsmith Media Group summarized, that abuses by government, powerful media owners, advertisers and corporate bodies continue, cuts in editorial budgets and journalist workforce reduce reporters autonomy, 'serious' news is further commodified and coming to resemble 'infotainment' or 'newszak',<sup>100</sup> and institutional sources still dominate news.<sup>101</sup> For instance, Murdock noted the series of major acquisitions and mergers in the communication industries in Europe, North America and around the world and argued that corporate concentration, privatization and cross-media ownership failed to promote democracy.<sup>102</sup> Underwood noted that the technology-driven and market-driven changes have caused American newspapers fall under the 'formula pap' of 'MBA journalism' where profit is the driving force, not quality journalism. Modern

---

<sup>96</sup> Philip Schlesinger, *Putting 'reality' together – BBC news*, (London: Constable, 1978), p.152

<sup>97</sup> Leon V. Sigal, *Reporters and officials – the organization and politics of newsmaking*, (US: Lexington Books, 1973), pp.2-5

<sup>98</sup> Herbert J. Gans, *Deciding what's news – a study of CBS evening news, NBC nightly news, Newsweek and Time*, (Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1979, updated 2004), p.281

<sup>99</sup> Goldsmiths Media Group, 'Media organisations in society: central issues', in James Curran, ed., *Media organisations in society*, (London: Arnold, 2000), pp.24-29

<sup>100</sup> Newszak means news converted into entertainment please refer to Bob Franklin's *Italic Newszak* and news media for more details.

<sup>101</sup> Goldsmiths Media Group, pp.24-25

<sup>102</sup> Graham Murdock, 'Redrawing the map of the communications industries: concentration and ownership in the era of privatization', in Marjorie Ferguson, ed., *Public Communication*, (London: Sage, 1990), pp.1-15

corporation management and packaging theories are sapping the vitality of creative editors and reporters.<sup>103</sup> Franklin noted that pressures on news media to win viewers and readers in an increasingly competitive market had changed editorial priorities from investigative and hard news to soft news. News media became part of the entertainment industry instead of providing a forum for informed debate. Journalists were more concerned to report stories that interested the public than stories in the public interest.<sup>104</sup>

In recent years, studies on media convergence have grown in the face of the challenges of declining newspaper circulation across the world and of new media. Newspapers are moving inevitably in the direction of convergence.<sup>105</sup> Media convergence is an advanced model that combines the strength of traditional media and new media, thus making the media conglomerate profitable. Researches show that corporate strategies, competition, financial imperatives, and audience demands are four driving forces behind media convergence. Dailey and his colleagues proposed a 'convergence continuum', a dynamic model, to illustrate the interaction among staff members at newspapers, television stations, and Web organizations. They identified five levels of convergence including cross promotion, cloning, cooperation, content sharing, and full convergence.<sup>106</sup> Similarly, Gordon identifies five forms of convergence in the United States including ownership convergence (ownership of multiple content and/or distribution channels), tactical convergence (cross-promotion and content sharing between print and TV), structural convergence, information-gathering convergence, and storytelling convergence.<sup>107</sup> Quinn notes that in the United States the convergence process focuses on the partnership between a daily newspaper and a local television channel. He concludes that successful convergence satisfies the twin aims of good journalism and good business

---

<sup>103</sup> Doug Underwood, *When MBAs rule the newsroom – how the marketers and managers are reshaping today's media*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), pp.27-29

<sup>104</sup> Bob Franklin, *Newszak and news media*, (London: Arnold, 1997), p.4

<sup>105</sup> Stephen Quinn, 'Convergence's fundamental question', *Journalism Studies*, Volume 6, Number 1, (2005), p.29

<sup>106</sup> Larry Dailey et al 2003, 'The convergence continuum: a model for studying collaboration between media newsrooms', paper submitted to the Newspaper Division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Kansas City, Missouri, July-August, 2003,

<http://web.bsu.edu/ldailey/converge.pdf>, accessed 11 Nov, 2006

<sup>107</sup> Rich Gordon, 'The meanings and implications of convergence', in Kevin Kawamoto ed., *Digital Journalism: emerging media and the changing horizons of journalism*, (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2003), p.57-73,

<http://www2.sims.berkeley.edu/courses/is246/s03/docs/meaningsofconvergence.pdf>, accessed 3 December 2006

practices.<sup>108</sup> Cottle, while looking into BBC newsroom and BBC newscentre, notes that new communication technologies and the technological convergence process may facilitate a 'revolution' in the news production and organization, but they are incorporated and deployed for strategic and competitive advantage.<sup>109</sup>

News organisation also plays a key role in professionalism. News is a product of professionalism interpreting everyday occurrences to citizens and other professionals alike. 'News professionalism has developed in conjunction with modern news organizations and professional practices.'<sup>110</sup> Objectivity or impartiality as well as press autonomy and social responsibility are the central points of professionalism in Western media ideology, as McQuail noted 'the higher levels of professionalism go with more autonomy and with developed views about responsibility to society.'<sup>111</sup> Today, professionalisation has integrated into a dominant global culture of media practices and objectives, as Golding concluded from examining media professionalism in developing countries and collecting data in Nigeria.<sup>112</sup>

In the case of China, news media have become commercialised. Newspapers endeavour to compete in local markets on the basis of the scale of press organisations that control many sub-newspapers as well as having substantial advertising revenue. In Bourdieu's terms, they want to increase and maintain their status in the journalistic field by possessing substantial amounts of economic capital and cultural capital (being professional and authoritative like the *New York Times*, that sets the media agenda in the United States). In Beijing, many of the local papers are exploring ways of being real mainstream newspapers – having rich financial resources and authoritative prestige. Media commercialisation helps cultivate professionalism. As Schudson puts it, 'the commercialisation of the news media in the long run helped shield news production from government control and later helped liberate it from the sway of political parties. Commercialisation has encouraged the

---

<sup>108</sup> Quinn, 2005, p.29

<sup>109</sup> Simon Cottle, 'From BBC newsroom to BBC newscentre: on changing technology and journalist practices', *Convergence*, Volume 5 Number3, (1999), p.22-43

<sup>110</sup> Gaye Tuchman, *Making news – a study in the construction of reality*, (New York: The Free Press, 1978), p.5

<sup>111</sup> McQuail, 2000, p.251

<sup>112</sup> Peter Golding, 'Media professionalism in the third world: the transfer of an ideology', in James Curran, Michael Gurevitch and Janet Woollacott, eds., *Mass communication and society*, (London: The Open University Press, 1977), pp.292-293

development of professionalism among journalists in the very act of commodifying news.’<sup>113</sup>

Having reviewed studies on news organizations, I will now focus on the gate-keeping theories and on Shoemaker and Reese’s influence model to further elaborate how to analyze factors that influence editorial choices and news content produced by the news organization.

Gate-keeping is a term that describes the news selection process within a news organization about ‘whether or not to admit a particular news report to pass through the ‘gates’ of a news medium into the news channels’.<sup>114</sup> Gate-keeping theories are based on the practical work of journalists and editors with a focus on the organizational structure of newsrooms. They have been used and studied in journalism research for over 50 years exploring decision-making on the personal level (looking at their values, personalities, politics, ethnicity, gender), organisational level (looking at corporate culture and values to see the influences at play) and societal levels (looking at the roles and functions of news persons in relation to societal expectations).<sup>115</sup>

Early news media research focused on the news production process including influences on journalists and news organisations.<sup>116</sup> Lewin was the first to use the term ‘gate-keeping’ in 1947 to describe a wife or mother as the person who decides which foods end up on the family’s dinner table. Then he added, ‘the gating process can include a news item winding through communication channels in a group.’<sup>117</sup>

David Manning White expanded Lewin’s gate-keeping ideas using them for the communications field in 1950. White studied the choices of a wire service editor of a small American daily paper and concluded that editors act as Mr Gates and decide

---

<sup>113</sup> Schudson, *The sociology of news*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2003), p.132

<sup>114</sup> McQuail, 2000, p.276

<sup>115</sup> Sondra Rubenstein, ‘Brutal reality challenges media academics’, *British Journalism Review*, Vol. 13, No. 2, (2002), pp. 46-52

<sup>116</sup> Pamela J. Shoemaker and Akiba A. Cohen, *News around the world: content, practitioners, and the public*, (New York: Routledge, 2006), p.3

<sup>117</sup> Gatekeeping: regulate the flow of information,

<http://www.tcw.utwente.nl/theorieenoverzicht/Theory%20clusters/Media.%20Culture%20and%20Society/gatekeeping.doc/>, accessed 4 February 2008



what the public need to know. 'Such a journalist's perception highlights the newsmen's personal and subjective news judgement.'<sup>118</sup>

### Conceptual Model

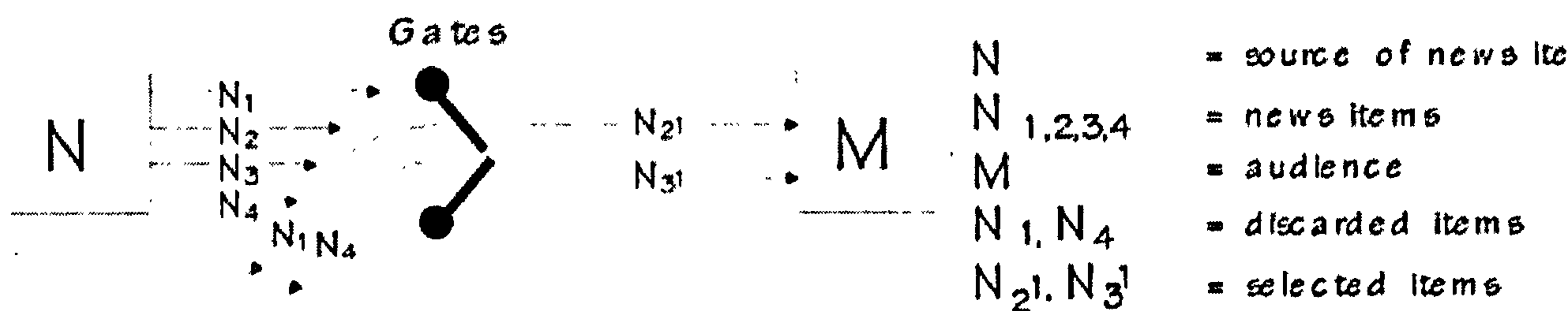


Figure 3 Conceptual model of gate-keeping theory.<sup>119</sup>

Since then, the gate-keeping theory has been broadly used to study the communication process. For instance, in 1955, Breed described how the policy was maintained or bypassed in the newsrooms and concluded that the journalists' socio-cultural situations ensured the conformity of publisher's policy.<sup>120</sup> In 1956 Gieber argued that the news budget, rather than the story itself, was the deciding factor for many choices.<sup>121</sup> In 1974, Dimmick, using the principle of uncertainty reduction, noted that newsmen create a model to decide what news is. Such practices include accepting the news definition of opinion leaders in the newsroom or on a beat, adopting a group consensus through daily professional nitration, accepting key sources' definitions of news.<sup>122</sup> However, the limitation of the gate-keeping theories is that they simplify the news making process by treating news items as natural

<sup>118</sup> Jane B. Singer, 'Online journalists: Foundations for Research into Their Changing Roles', *Journal of Computer-mediated Communication*, 4 (1), (September, 1998), <http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol4/issue1/singer.html>, accessed 4 February 2008

<sup>119</sup> David Manning White, 'The 'gatekeeper': a case study in the selection of news', in Lewis A. Dexter and David M. White, *People, society and mass communications*, (London: Free Press of Glencoe, 1964); pp.160 – 172, cited from <http://www.tcw.utwente.nl/theorieenoverzicht/Theory%20clusters/Media,%20Culture%20and%20Society/gatekeeping.doc/>, accessed 4 February 2008

<sup>120</sup> Warren Breed, 'Social control in the newsroom: a functional analysis', *Social Forces*, Vol. 33, No. 4. (May, 1955), pp. 326-335, <http://www.jstor.org/cgi-bin/jstor/viewitem/00377732/di010789/01p0332w/0?frame=noframe&dpi=3&backcontext=page>, accessed 21 January 2008

<sup>121</sup> Walter Gieber, 'Across the Desk: A Study of 16 Telegraph Editors,' *Journalism Quarterly* 33, No. 3 (1956), pp.423-432, cited from McQuail, 2000, p.277

<sup>122</sup> John W. Dimmick, 'The Gatekeeper: an uncertainty theory', *Journalism Monographs*, 37. (1974), cited from Daniela V Dimitrova et al, 'Hyperlinking as Gatekeeping: online newspaper -coverage of the execution of an American terrorist', *Journalism Studies*, Volume 4, Number 3, (2003), p.402

occurrences that are selected according to a set of criteria. In addition, they tend to individualize decision-making.<sup>123</sup>

Other scholars discuss news as a constructed and manufactured product in society. Molotch and Lester argued that news is practical and purposive. Public events in terms of routine, scandal or accident become news when they are determined by those who have powers to serve the needs of news promoters, assemblers or consumers.<sup>124</sup> Tuchman defined news as a constructed reality dependent upon the social structure and division of labour in the news organisations.<sup>125</sup> Gans claimed news must be mass produced and argued that news organizations, like factories, manufacture their products as cheaply as possible but with sufficient distinctiveness to make them competitive with others.<sup>126</sup> Fishman was concerned about the news production process. By examining journalists' daily work routines, he found that beat structure defines news rather than news values.<sup>127</sup>

In 1996, Shoemaker and Reese extended the gate-keeping framework to include wider social factors and proposed a hierarchical influence model to examine factors inside and outside media organizations that affect media content. This model outlines multiple levels of analysis from micro to macro including individual level, media routines level, organization level, extra-media level, and ideological level, as indicated in Figure 4.<sup>128</sup>

---

<sup>123</sup> McQuail, 2000, p.277

<sup>124</sup> Harvey Molotch and Marilyn Lester, 'News as purposive behaviour: on the strategic use of routine Events, Accidents, and Scandals', *American Sociological Review*, Vol.39, (February, 1974), pp.101-112, <http://www.jstor.org/view/00031224/di974297/97p00437/0?frame=frame&userID=810b4cd7@leeds.ac.uk/01c0a8347500505ca50&dpi=3&config=jstor>, accessed 21 January 2008

<sup>125</sup> Tuchman, 1978, pp.182-183

<sup>126</sup> Herbert Gans, *Democracy and the News*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp.49-50

<sup>127</sup> Mark Fishman, *Manufacturing the news*, (London: University of Texas Press, 1980)

<sup>128</sup> Pamela J Shoemaker and Stephen D.Reese, *Mediating the message: Theories of influence on mass media content*, second edition, (New York: Longman, 1996), p.144

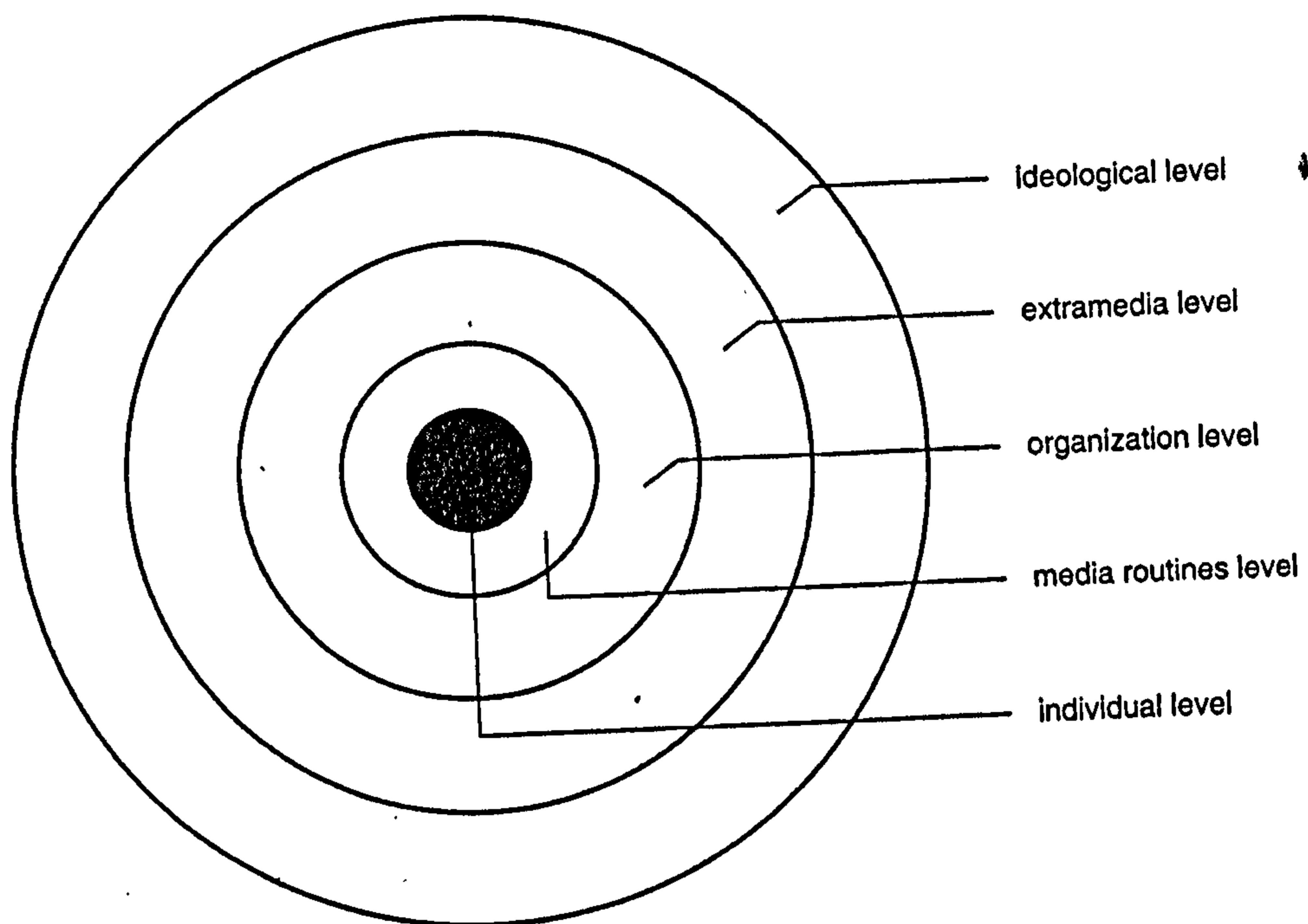


Figure 4 Levels of influences on media content in the hierarchical model.<sup>129</sup>

The appeal of this influence model is that it does not treat news as a mirror of reality but as a manufactured product that is influenced by a wide range set of factors. Its explicit level of analysis is best suited for empirical research in any national context. However, the limitation of this influence model is its lack of the global level, which makes it unable to reflect the whole picture during the globalisation process. In recent years, changes in the structure of media industries like ownership conglomeration and new distribution channels have given new life to organisational research.<sup>130</sup>

Scholars have recently started to carry out comparative research across national borders. It is a challenge to update the influence model to make it fit the global context. Reese has already made attempts in this regard, as he noted that globalisation has affected every social practice and institution in some way. 'Globalisation has created a global news arena in which information is more synchronized in space and time, news practices are more transparently open to world scrutiny and evaluated against more universally available normative standards.'<sup>131</sup>

<sup>129</sup> Shoemaker, 1996, p.64

<sup>130</sup> ibid

<sup>131</sup> Stephen D. Reese, 'Journalism research and the hierarchy of influences model: a global perspective', panel presentation paper prepared for 'Rethinking journalism across national boundaries: new challenges and emergent perspectives', conference

However, Reese only addresses the international and global level from the comparative research perspective and suggests research be done on global events coverage among different news organisations.

I believe that the impact of globalisation on the news making process is not only horizontal, highlighting the sameness and differences across national boundaries but also vertical, highlighting the changes at all levels in a news organisation that shape the news as it is. Hence, the model of globalisation's implications on news content model is proposed and theorized next.

### 2.1.3 Theorizing the impact of globalisation on the news content model (1)

Based on Shoemaker and Reese's influence model, I propose a new model - the impact of globalisation on the news content model from macro to micro levels as indicated in Figure 5. The editorial choice of news stories is the result of a process of decision-making<sup>132</sup>, which is influenced by factors at four levels including press structure and media policy at the institutional level, organizational structure at the organisational level, editorial structure and professional norms at the routine level, and individual journalists at the individual level. In addition, I propose that special attention should be given to analysing how the world news is covered while examining the globalisation's impact on news content. Thus the world news coverage and production forms the fifth level. I will discuss each level individually in detail below.

---

sponsored by the Brazil Society for Researches in Journalism, Porto Alegre, Brazil, 3-5 November 2006,  
<http://www.sbpjor.ufsc.br/pdf/palestras/steve.pdf>, accessed 6 January 2008

<sup>132</sup> Hans-Henrik Holm, 'The effect of globalisation on media structures and norms – globalisation and the choice of foreign news', in Stig Hjarvard, ed., *News in a globalized society*, (Sweden: Nodicom, 2001), pp.113-126

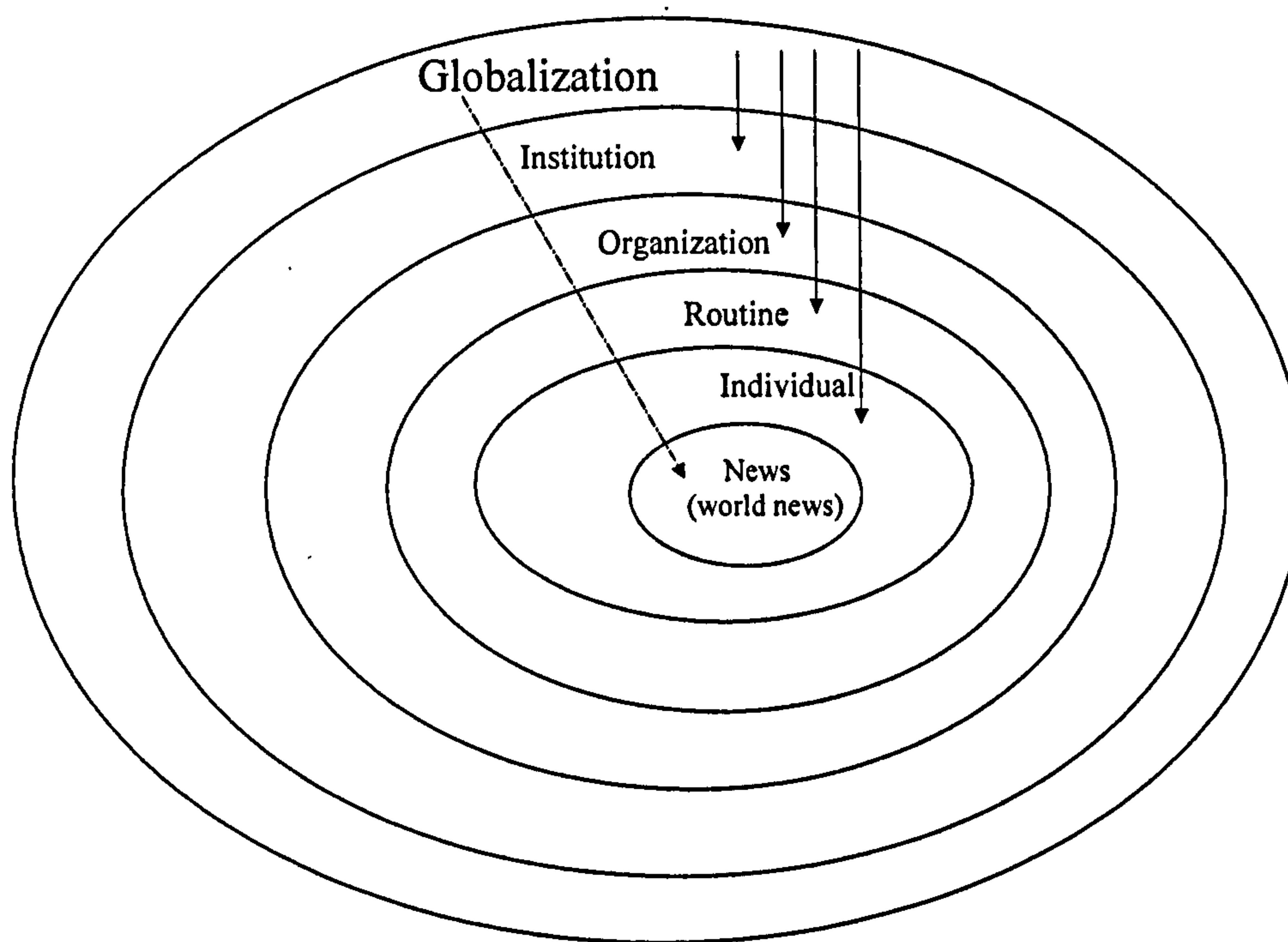


Figure 5 The impact of globalisation on the news content model

At the institutional level, a country's media system and press structure form the bases of the framework within which the news organisations operate. This legislative framework determines the extent of state intervention, the news organisations' autonomy as well as political and economic constraints on the news organisations' operation and news content. Bourdieu's field theory has provided a theoretical orientation for the analysis of journalism. It draws our attention to the system level of analysis and understands the media as an institution within a wider social formation, which contrasts with much research on the media tending to analyse the media in isolation from society as a whole.<sup>133</sup> Bourdieu stresses the structure of the journalistic field and the mechanisms that operate within it because journalists, so caught up in the structural processes that their choices are preconstained, are 'in Plato's metaphor, the puppets whose strings have to be found.'<sup>134</sup>

Commercialisation and globalisation affect the media structure and government policy leading to changes in the operation and content of newspapers, competition in the market, concentration, conglomeration and convergence in the industry. In China, all Chinese news organisations have institutional links with party/state organs. This

<sup>133</sup> Daniel C. Hallin, 'Field theory, differentiation theory, and comparative media research' in Rodney Benson and Erik Neveu, eds., *Bourdieu and the journalistic field*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005), p.224

<sup>134</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, 'The political field, the social science field, and the journalistic field' in Benson and Neveu, eds., pp.42-43

is different from the Anglo-American contexts where the media has relative autonomy and institutional separation from the state. The degree of state control over the news media in China is different according to the type of media and the region. The general pattern is that the media at national levels are closely watched whereas the media at provincial and local levels are more market-oriented and enjoy a higher degree of autonomy.

At the organisational level, news organisations are defined as 'the social, formal, usually economic entity that employs the media worker in order to produce media content.'<sup>135</sup> From the organisational perspective, Paul Hirsch claims that the primary goal for most media organisations is economic profit. Economic constraints, organization structure and ownership play great roles in dictating journalistic decisions.<sup>136</sup> Tunstall argues that news organizations have three types of goals including an advertising revenue goal, an audience or sales goal and a non-revenue goal, which refers to any other objective like the pursuit of policy, political influence, or prestige.<sup>137</sup> A newspaper's operation model includes its ownership, readership, and financing sources. Who owns the newspaper determines how much editorial freedom the newspaper can enjoy. Readers' interests influence what is newsworthy and thus affects the news coverage, which is the core value of the 'market-driven journalism'. 'This is particularly true in the age of globalisation when corporate takeover of the mass media industry has turned the news into a profitable commodity.'<sup>138</sup> Also, the newspaper's content is directly correlated with the interests of those who finance the press.<sup>139</sup>

At the routine level, professional values and norms are becoming more similar around the world. The routines of journalism, set within the economic and political interests of the news organizations, combine to select certain versions of reality over

---

<sup>135</sup> Shoemaker and Stephen, 1996, p.144

<sup>136</sup> Paul Hirsch, 'Occupational, organizational and institutional models in mass media research: toward an integrated framework. in P. M. Hirsch and P.V. Miller, eds., *Strategies for communication research*, pp.13-40, (CA: Sage, 1977), cited from Pamela J Shoemaker and Stephen D. Reese, 1996, p.289

<sup>137</sup> Jeremy Tunstall, *Journalists at work*, (London: Constable, 1971), p.7

<sup>138</sup> Zixue Tai and Tsan-Kuo Chang, The global news and the pictures in their heads – a comparative analysis of audience interest, editor perceptions and newspaper coverage, *Gazette: The international journal for communication studies*, Vol. 64, No. 3, (2002), 251-265

<sup>139</sup> Pamela J. Shoemaker, *Communication Concepts 3: Gatekeeping*, (CA: Sage,1991), p.64

others.<sup>140</sup> As Gitlin claims, 'day by day, normal organizational procedures define the story, identify the issues and suggest appropriate attitudes toward them'.<sup>141</sup>

Shoemaker and Reese used the term routines to refer to those patterned, routinized, repeated practices and forms that media workers use in their jobs and view these routines as a set of constraints on the individual media worker.<sup>142</sup> They proposed that routines stem from constraints in three stages addressing the audience as consumers, media organisation as producer and suppliers as sources. Each routine can be visualized as fitting somewhere in the triangle formed by these three stages as shown in Figure 6.<sup>143</sup>

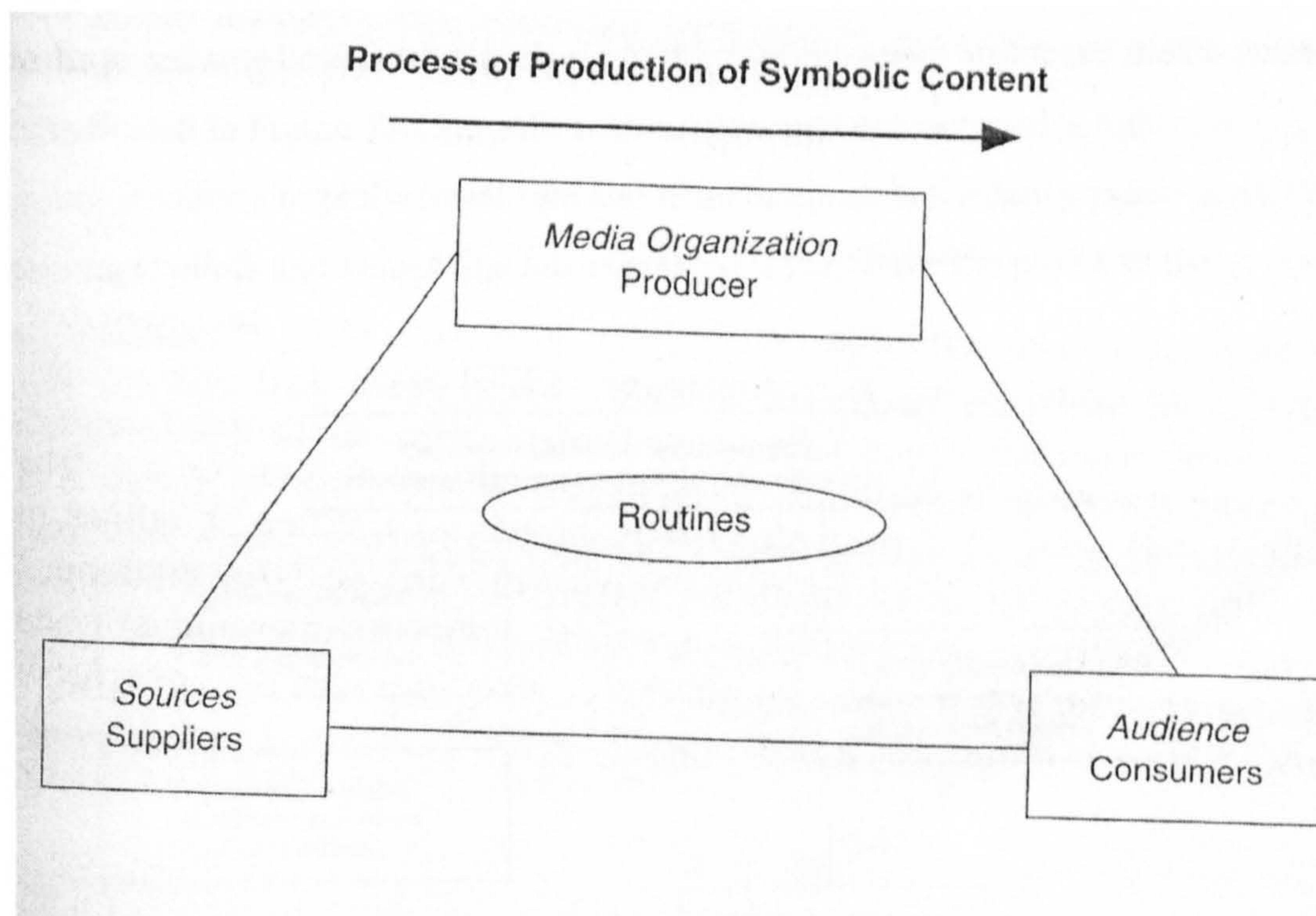


Figure 6 Media routines as related to three sources of constraints.<sup>144</sup>

In examining the newsroom routines, light will be shed on how the reality is constructed.<sup>145</sup> Moreover, major different 'moments' of the communication process

<sup>140</sup> Todd Gitlin, *Whole world is watching – mass media in the making and unmaking of the new left*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), p.4

<sup>141</sup> *ibid*

<sup>142</sup> Shoemaker and Reese, 1996, p.105

<sup>143</sup> Shoemaker and Reese, 1996, p.109

<sup>144</sup> *ibid*

<sup>145</sup> Tuchman, 1978, p.5

in their full cultural and social contexts can be identified.<sup>146</sup> The newsroom is critical in journalism studies, as the sociologist of journalism Brian McNair claims, 'journalism is a social construction, the result of a production process centred on the newsroom and the working environment of the newsroom is the starting point for the individual journalist's activity, defining its routines and limitations. The journalist is a cog in a wheel over whose speed and direction he or she may have little or no control.'<sup>147</sup>

At the individual level, journalists and editors, as gatekeepers, play a key role in selecting, gathering and processing news stories. Shoemaker and Reese showed two paths to indicate how factors intrinsic to the communicator influence media content as indicated in Figure 7. One path is about personal characteristics hidden behind communicator's organisational role and another about individual communicator's personal beliefs and values that are expressed if they have the power in the organisation.<sup>148</sup>

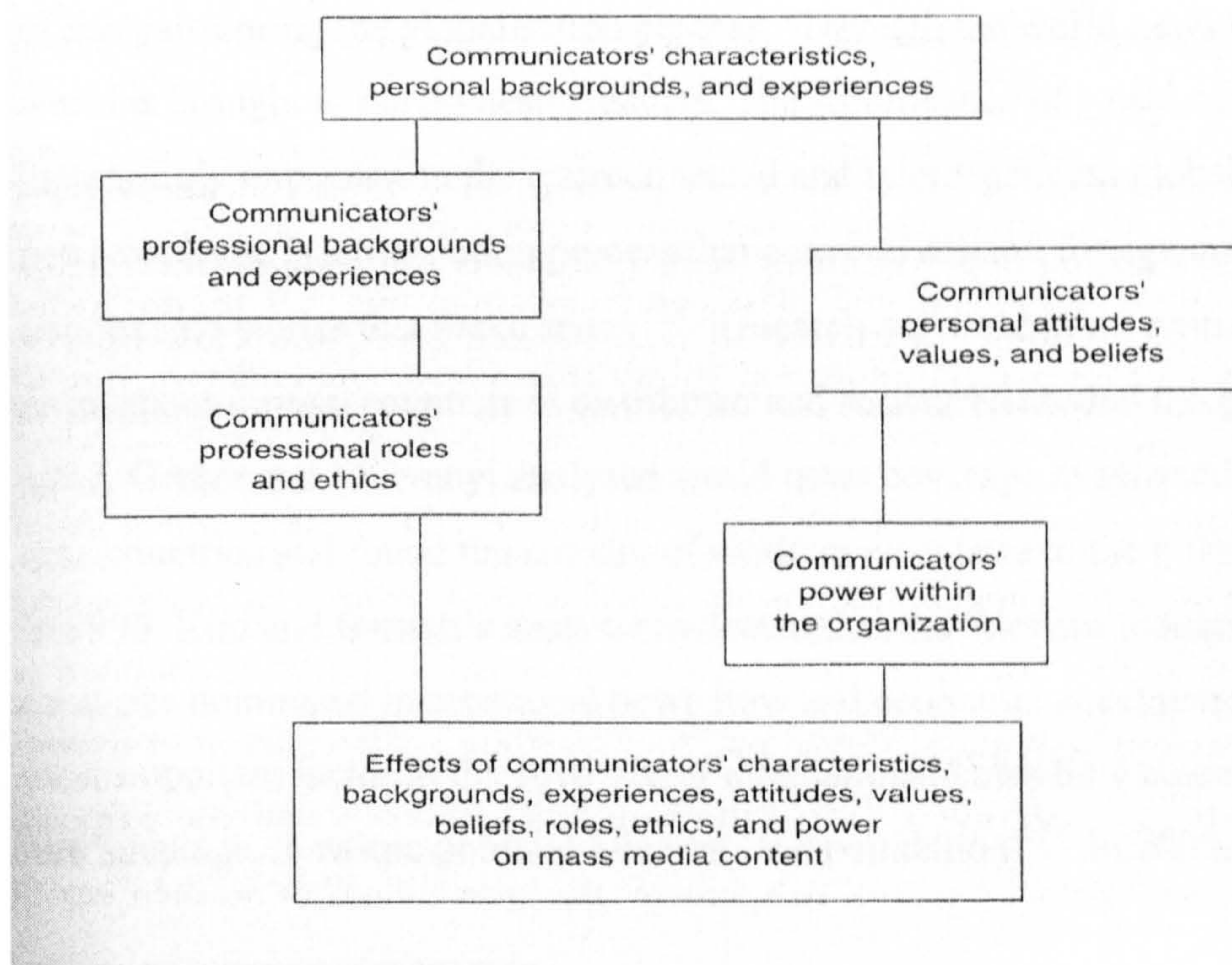


Figure 7 How factors intrinsic to the communicator may influence media content.<sup>149</sup>

<sup>146</sup> Oliver Boyd-Barrett, 'A different scale of difference', *Global Media and Communication*, (Jan 15 2005), <http://gmc.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/1/1/15>, accessed 4 February 2008

<sup>147</sup> Brian McNair, *The sociology of journalism*, (London: Arnold, 1998), p.62

<sup>148</sup> Shoemaker and Reese, 1996, p.64-65

<sup>149</sup> *ibid*



Figure 7 shows that on the one hand, individual journalists' characteristics, personal backgrounds and experiences shape their professional background and experiences. These professional experiences then shape the journalists' professional roles and ethics. Journalists' role conceptions determine how they define their jobs and what and how they should report. On the other hand, personal attitudes, values and beliefs have indirect effects on mass media content in proportion to the amount of power the person holds within the media organisations.<sup>150</sup> Though critics like McQuail points out that Shoemaker and Reese's evidence relating to the influence of personal beliefs and values is inconclusive, there is no evidence to rule out the personal autonomy and influence in the news organisation. McQuail claims that the 'logic of media', which favours personalization, often supports this tendency, as long as it does not conflict with commercial logic.<sup>151</sup>

As for news content, world news is important and should be taken as a separate level of analysis during the globalisation process. Through the world news the outside world is brought to the domestic readers. The significance of world news is increasingly important in the interconnected and interdependent global space. World news coverage is a translation process that converts distant, foreign and abstract notions into stories that make sense.<sup>152</sup> Research on world news centres on how news about foreign countries is distributed and structured around the globe.<sup>153</sup> In 1977, Gerber and Marvanyi analysed world news coverage in selected newspapers in nine countries and found the amount of world news relates to the political system.<sup>154</sup> In 1996, Kim and Barnett's analysis indicated that the Western industrialized countries dominated international news flow and economic development was the most important factor in the structure of international news flow among other factors like language, location, political freedom, and population.<sup>155</sup> In 2000, Wu

---

<sup>150</sup> *ibid*

<sup>151</sup> McQuail, 2000, p.269

<sup>152</sup> Janos Horvat, 'American news, global audience', in Tony Silvia, ed, *Global news – perspectives on the information age*, (US: Iowa State University Press, 2001), p.69

<sup>153</sup> Shoemaker, 2006

<sup>154</sup> George Gerbner and George Marvanyi, 'The many worlds of the world's press', *Journal of Communication*, Vol. 27, Iss. 1 (Winter 1977), 52-66, cited from Shoemaker, 2006

<sup>155</sup> Kyungmo Kim and George A. Barnett, 'The determinants of international news flow: a network analysis', *Communication Research*, Vol. 23, No. 3, (1996), 323-352

investigated the systematic determinants of international news coverage in 38 countries and found that the US was the most covered country in the world. Trade volume and presence of international news agencies were two primary predictors of the amount of news coverage.<sup>156</sup>

Other scholars have analysed the changes in foreign news coverage and expanded the research scope to the audience and globalisation. Scholars examined the Eurovision News Exchange (EVN) and found that EVN, unlike CNN, which broadcast finished international television news to the public, provided the raw news footage to the world's television broadcasters. National and local broadcasters then domesticated the EVN content to meet the requirements of local audiences.<sup>157</sup> Hjarvard noted that proximity to the audience became a more important criterion than societal importance in story selection, which resulted in a decreased amount of world news reports.<sup>158</sup> Holm examined Danish media and concluded that globalisation changed the structure of foreign news production and had strong impact on media policy but the fundamental norms newspeople expressed still reflected traditional news values.<sup>159</sup> Biltereyst discussed the paradox of decreasing foreign news output vis a vis growing globalisation driven by the commercial pressure on media, the audience's waning interest, and the tendency in the West to turn inward.<sup>160</sup> Clausen examined newsroom productions at Japanese broadcast stations and concluded that the challenges in the international newsrooms were twofold: efforts were made to make international news 'a mirror on the world' while efforts were made to 'domesticate' international information for national audiences.<sup>161</sup>

Having clarified and theorized factors that influence the news content from the sociological perspective, I will now elaborate on how to incorporate globalisation theories in the new model to manifest changes next.

---

<sup>156</sup> H. Denis Wu, 'Systematic determinants of international news coverage: a comparison of 38 countries', *Journal of Communication*, 50(2) (2000), 110-130

<sup>157</sup> Akiba Cohen et al., eds., *Global news rooms, local audiences: a study of the Eurovision news exchange*, (London: John Libbey, 1995)

<sup>158</sup> Stig Hjarvard, 'News media and globalization of the public sphere', in Hjarvard, ed., 2001, p.31

<sup>159</sup> Holm, 2001, p.126

<sup>160</sup> Daniel Biltereyst, 'Global news research and complex citizenship: towards an agenda for research on foreign/international news and audiences', in Hjarvard, ed., 2001, pp.57-59

<sup>161</sup> Lisbeth Clausen, *Global News Production*, (Copenhagen: Copenhagen Business School Press, 2003)

#### 2.1.4 Theorizing the impact of globalisation on the news content model (2)

The impact of globalisation on news content through each level of analysis will be discussed in this section using globalisation theories. As Schudson noted, ‘if a major effort of the sociology of media is to explain why the media are the way they are, a concurrent effort seeks to understand why they change.’<sup>162</sup> In the previous section, I attempted to theorize why the news is the way it is. In this section, I try to theorize why the news changes. In terms of the globalisation theories, the new trend in the academic field is to study social transformation or social changes. In addition, studies of the effect of globalisation on journalism will continue to focus on evidence of convergence, homogenisation and the denationalisation of news.<sup>163</sup>

Rather than implying a single unified process, I use globalisation to cover many processes taking place in association with China’s opening to the world such as commercialisation, liberalization and marketization. It could be argued that globalisation may imply a level of coherence that does not actually exist in the real life. Multiple levels are involved in the globalisation process, for instance, at the institutional level, Chinese media policies change to promote more rapid development and competition. At the organisational level, Chinese news organisations copy the commercial strategies of Western media companies. At the individual level, Chinese journalists take western journalists as role models.

Globalisation is a big topic. There is a rich literature addressing this topic from many perspectives — economics, politics, international relations, culture, communication, technology etc. For the purpose of this thesis, globalisation is conceptualised on the basis of two main themes: global connection and local transformation. Academic debate since the late 1980s and early 1990s has centred on the implications of globalisation manifested in debates on cultural imperialism vs. resistance/protectionism; homogenisation vs. heterogenisation; universalism vs. particularism, and glocalisation vs. hybridization.

Globalisation has provided a context for studies not limited to the nation-state that are concerned with its relationship with the global community. However, the concept of globalisation is very general and much of the existing literature on media

---

<sup>162</sup> Schudson, 2003, p.90

globalisation is about television, international news flow and global media conglomerates. Local newspapers are a missing link in the study of media globalisation. I believe that nation-state still plays critical role in the social change and argues that the implications of globalisation on the local landscape vary in different time periods and in different aspects, either explicit or implicit.

To start with, the definition of globalisation is considered. From the perspective of global connection, globalisation can be understood as interconnected and interdependent social processes beyond the limitations of time and space. As Tomlinson claims, 'the notion of connectivity is found in one form or another in most contemporary accounts of globalisation.'<sup>164</sup> Giddens defines globalisation 'as the intensification of world-wide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa'.<sup>165</sup> McGrew speaks of globalisation as 'simply the intensification of global interconnectedness' and stresses that 'goods, capital, people, knowledge, images, crime, pollutants, drugs, fashions and beliefs all readily flow across territorial boundaries. Transnational networks, social movements and relationships are extensive in virtually all areas from the academic to the sexual'.<sup>166</sup> Tomlinson refers to the interconnected and interdependent social life as "complex connectivity" and takes the idea of connectivity to imply proximity.<sup>167</sup> Moran defines globalisation as a process of building a worldwide system of economic, cultural and political interdependence.<sup>168</sup>

From the perspective of local transformation, globalisation is defined as the dialectical relations between the local and global. The term 'local transformation' is used by Giddens who claims 'local transformation is as much a part of globalisation as the lateral extension of social connections across time and space.'<sup>169</sup> In other

<sup>163</sup> Beat Josephi, 'Journalism in the global age: between normative and empirical', *Gazette: the international journal for communication studies*, Vol.67(6), (2005), 587

<sup>164</sup> John Tomlinson, *Globalization and culture*, (Oxford: Blackwell publisher, 1999), p.2

<sup>165</sup> Anthony Giddens, 'The globalizing of modernity', in Annabelle Sreberny-Mhammedi et al., eds., *Media in global context – a reader*, (London: Arnold, 1997), p.19

<sup>166</sup> Anthony McGrew, 'A global society?' in Stuart Hall et al, eds., *Modernity and its futures*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992), pp.65-67

<sup>167</sup> Tomlinson, 1999, pp.2-3

<sup>168</sup> Albert Moran, 'Television formats in the world/the world of television formats', in Albert Moran and Michael Keane, eds., *Television across Asia: Television industries, programme formats and globalization*, (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004), p.2

<sup>169</sup> Anthony Giddens, *The consequences of modernity*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990), p.64

words, local transformation refers to the local changes that are shaped by what happens beyond boundaries of history or geography, as Giddens says, 'this is a dialectical process because such local happenings may move in an obverse direction from the very distanced relations that shape them.'<sup>170</sup> Similarly, anthropologist Friedman claims globalisation is the localization of the world. The globalisation of capital, commodities, and media technologies refers to movement within the global area while globalisation also refers to these things packed into a computer or a living room, 'the reduction of the world to the experience space of the subject.'<sup>171</sup>

Robertson proposes glocalisation as a more accurate term to describe the global/local relationship. Glocalisation is a term that originated in Japan and was adopted by the Japanese business sector to mean global localization, a global outlook adapted to local condition. The term entered business jargon in the 1980s.<sup>172</sup> Robertson states that the global is not counterposed to the local whereas the local is essentially included within the global. 'The concept of globalisation has involved the simultaneity and the interpenetration of what are conventionally called the global and the local, or – in more abstract vein – the universal and the particular.'<sup>173</sup>

Glocalisation refers to the construction of diverse localities through global flows of ideas and information in the personal sphere.<sup>174</sup> In his own words, 'glocalisation involves the synthesis of sameness and difference'.<sup>175</sup>

As Tomlinson pointed out, multidimensional approaches should be used to analyse the complex linkages established by globalisation instead of tackling globalisation phenomenon in one-dimensional terms such as capitalism or nation-state, though he admits that the sheer scale and complexity of the empirical reality of global connectivity is too demanding and nearly impossible to encompass all.<sup>176</sup> Bearing the multi-dimensional approach in mind, I propose that a combination of different globalisation theories addressing different dimensions could be used to examine the implications of globalisation on an entity. For the purpose of this thesis, globalisation

---

<sup>170</sup> *ibid*

<sup>171</sup> Jonathan Friedman, 'Globalisation and the making of a global imaginary', in Gite Stald and Thomas Tufte, eds., *Global encounters: media and cultural transformation*, (Luton: University of Luton Press, 2002), p.21

<sup>172</sup> Roland Robertson, 'Glocalization: time-space and homogeneity – heterogeneity', in Featherstone, Mike et al., eds., *Global modernities*, (London: Sage, 1995) p.28

<sup>173</sup> Roland Robertson, 1995, p.30-35

<sup>174</sup> John Eade, ed., *Living the global city – Globalisation as a local process*, (London: Routledge, 1997), p.4

<sup>175</sup> Roland Robertson et al., eds., *Encyclopaedia of globalisation*, Vol. 2, (London: Routledge, 2007), pp.545-547

<sup>176</sup> Tomlinson, 1999, pp.13-17

theories including cultural or media imperialism, capital and technology flows, cultural flows, global journalistic ethics thesis, and international news flows will be examined at multiple levels of analysis in the model of impact of globalisation on the news content, as indicated in Figure 8 below. This framework was adapted from Diana Crane's theoretical models on cultural globalisation.<sup>177</sup> Crane argued and proposed four models including the cultural imperialism thesis, the cultural flows or network model, reception theory, and a model of national and urban strategies toward cultural globalization.<sup>178</sup> And as Crane concludes, 'each of these four models is useful for explaining specific aspects of the phenomenon of cultural globalization. Since cultural globalization is not static but an ongoing process with dimensions that are continually evolving and consequences that are difficult to predict, we can expect that new models will emerge.'<sup>179</sup>

---

<sup>177</sup> Diana Crane, 'Culture and globalization: theoretical models and emerging trends', in Diana Crane et al., eds., *Global culture: media, arts, policy, and globalization*, (London: Routledge, 2002), p.2

<sup>178</sup> *ibid*

<sup>179</sup> Crane, p. 19

Theories	Process of cultural transmission	Principal actors	Level of analysis	Possible consequences
Cultural or media imperialism	Centre-periphery	Global media conglomerates	National media policies	Homogenisation, protectionism and resistance
Capital and information technology flows	Two-way flows	Global, national and local media conglomerates	Media policies and organisation	Capitalism, marketization and convergence
Cultural flows	Two-way flows	National and local media	Organisation, routine	Hybridisation
Global journalistic ethics	Not applicable	Local newspeople	Individual	Global journalists and global journalism ethics; universals vs. particulars.
International news flow and media imperialism	Centre-periphery	International and national news agencies	World news	Homogenisation, regionalisation and domestication

Figure 8 Globalisation theories for the different levels of impact of globalisation on the news content model

At the media policy level, the cultural or media imperialism thesis results in a country's adoption of protective or resistant measures to counterattack the homogenisation effect caused by the centre to periphery cultural flow.

The cultural imperialism thesis, also called media imperialism, Americanism or Westernisation, originated in the late 1960s and was heavily criticised in academic circles in the 1990s.<sup>180</sup> This thesis proposed that certain dominant cultures threaten to overwhelm other vulnerable ones based on a few domination discourses of America over Europe, of the West over the rest of the world, of the core over the

periphery, of capitalism over everything.<sup>181</sup> The main actors are the global media giants that produce goods, control markets and disseminate products using similar techniques.<sup>182</sup> There is a one-way flow or 'dumbing down' process from the centre to peripheral countries taking 'the 'global' as a site of cultural erosion and destruction, and the 'local' as the site of pristine cultural 'authenticity'.<sup>183</sup> Herbert Schiller was a strong proponent of this thesis who stressed the predominant power of American capitalism.<sup>184</sup> Matthew Fraser followed up Schiller and argued that the 'soft power' played important role in America's dominant status. 'America's global domination has been achieved largely through non-military means. If hard power, by definition, is based on facts, soft power is based on values. Hard power threatens, soft power seduces. Hard power dissuades, soft power persuades.'<sup>185</sup>

The possible consequences of cultural imperialism are homogenisation and cultural synchronization that emphasize the uniformity and standardization around the world and limit or damage the diversity of local cultures as more and more people have access to the same cultural images and products stemming from the west,<sup>186</sup> for example, the McDonaldization,<sup>187</sup> world-wide diffusion of Hollywood movies, American television programs, and English-speaking music cultures. This 'unilateral and hegemonic view' is attacked by many critics who accuse it of 'overlooking the counter currents and ignoring the role of local reception of western culture'.<sup>188</sup> Critics stressed the two-way cultural flow and hybridisation of global and local cultures, as Tomlinson claimed 'culture does not transfer in this uni-linear way. Movement between cultural/geographical areas always involves interpretation,

---

<sup>180</sup> Tomlinson, 1999, pp. 79-80

<sup>181</sup> *ibid*

<sup>182</sup> Crane, 2002, p.3

<sup>183</sup> Ien Ang, *Living room wars: rethinking media audiences for a postmodern world*, (London: Routledge, 1996), p.153

<sup>184</sup> Tomlinson, 1999, p.81

<sup>185</sup> Matthew Fraser, *Weapons of mass distraction: soft power and American empire*, (Toronto: Key Porter Books, 2003), p.10; quoted in Bernd Hamm and Russell Smandych, eds., *Cultural imperialism – essays on the political economy of cultural domination*, (UK: Broadview Press, 2005), p.6

<sup>186</sup> Lee Artz, 'Globalization, media hegemony, and social class', in Lee Artz and Yahya R. Kamalipour, eds., *The globalization of corporate media hegemony*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003), p.20

<sup>187</sup> George Ritzer, *The McDonaldization of society* (London: Pine Forge Press, 1993)

<sup>188</sup> Jan Nederveen Pieterse, 'Globalization as hybridisation', in Mike Featherstone et al, eds, *Global modernities*, (London: Sage Publications, 1995), p.53



translation, mutation, adaptation, and indigenisation as the receiving culture brings its own cultural resources to bear, in dialectical fashion, upon 'cultural imports'.<sup>189</sup>

Despite the debate on whether media imperialism leads to homogenisation, the truth is that the United States is undoubtedly the dominating force in the world.<sup>190</sup> In the media sphere, protectionism and resistance exist in media policies for many developing countries as part of a defence of national sovereignty with an aim of preventing and counter-attacking the homogenizing effect of media imperialism.<sup>191</sup>

Protective measures including restrictive and supportive measures are adopted by nation/states. 'Restrictive measures are meant to regulate the inflow and exhibition of cultural products and supportive measures aim at promoting the domestic cultural industry.'<sup>192</sup> China is a good example of the implementation of both restrictive and supportive measures to counter the destructive effects of global media conglomerates.

At the organisational level, global capital and information technology flows enable and accelerate the capitalism, marketization and media convergence. The global, national and local media conglomerates act as the main actors.

From the world system perspective, capitalism is globalising and capital will flow to where profits can be made.<sup>193</sup> The consequence of the capital flow is marketization which refers to the process in which the world is turned into a single market through transnational companies.<sup>194</sup> Today, capitalism has reached worldwide and almost no countries stand outside the world economy system. 'Capitalism was from the beginning an affair of the world economy and not of nation-states...Capital has never allowed its aspirations to be determined by national boundaries.'<sup>195</sup> Global media conglomerates claim ownership and control by the means of transnational mergers and acquisitions whereas the national and local media conglomerates do the same thing within the national boundaries. However, I argue that the weakness of the

---

<sup>189</sup> Tomlinson, 1999, p.84

<sup>190</sup> Joseph Man Chan, 'No culture is an island: an analysis of media protectionism and media openness', in Georgette Wang et al., eds., *The new communications landscape*, (London: Routledge, 2000), p.253

<sup>191</sup> Colin Sparks, 'The new communications landscape', in Georgette Wang et al., eds., 2000, p.78

<sup>192</sup> Chan, 2000, p.251

<sup>193</sup> Paul S.N.Lee, 'Television and global culture: assessing the role of television in globalization', in Georgette Wang et al., eds., 2000, p.193

<sup>194</sup> *ibid*

<sup>195</sup> Immanuel Wallerstein, 'The rise and future demise of the world capitalist system: concepts for comparative analysis', in Immanuel Wallerstein, ed., *The capitalist world economy*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p.19, quoted in Anthony Giddens, *The globalizing of modernity*, in Sreberny-Mhammedi et al, 1997, p.21

global capital flow thesis is that it ignores the power of nation-state during the marketization process. All economic activities, either by global or national media conglomerates, have to be conducted within the framework of national media policies. It is true that most countries have witnessed deregulation in media policies in recent years. But the flow of global capital is not totally free. Global capital encounters national policy constraints, for instance, the share-holding quotas in running television channels are set for foreign investors in many countries like India, Malaysia, Singapore. Rupert Murdoch had to give up his Australian citizenship so as to operate television channels in the US and it will cost him more than just his citizenship to do the same thing in China. It should also be noted that the size of China gives it strength to fight their battles that other countries do not have.

Deregulation of market and new information technology interact during the techno-economic transformation.<sup>196</sup> The fast flow and diffusion of new information technology throughout the world in the past two decades have connected the world. Manuel Castells summarizes the characteristic of this technological revolution as ‘the immediate application to its own development of technologies it generates, connecting the world through information technology’.<sup>197</sup> Driven and enabled by the new digital information and communication technology, media convergence occurs, which demands that the media regulatory bodies to incorporate multi-media factors and alter the media regulations. It also causes organisational changes at news corporations around the world that have reinvented themselves from single media journalistic outlets to multimedia information handling companies.<sup>198</sup> By means of converging and concentrating as well as becoming more specialised and differentiated, media companies are exploring feasible business models to reach more readers while cutting the cost and enhancing profits.<sup>199</sup>

At the routine level, the two-way cultural flow causes hybridisation during newspeople’s daily practice of journalism with national and local media conglomerates as the main actors.

---

<sup>196</sup> Manuel Castells, *The rise of the network society*, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), p.85

<sup>197</sup> Castells, 1996, pp.33-34

<sup>198</sup> Bierhoff, Jan et al, 2000, *Media innovation, professional debate and media training, a European analysis*, European Journalism Centre, p.7, <http://www.ejc.nl/pdf/pub/mi.pdf>, accessed 3 January 2007

<sup>199</sup> *ibid*

Looking at the big picture of cultural globalisation, the two-way cultural flow means two contradictory trends with some widely disseminated forms of media constituting a homogeneous culture whereas diverse cultural forms and styles increase steadily.<sup>200</sup> The homogenisation/ heterogenisation dichotomy reflects this dilemma of a pulling and pushing between local diversity and global identity or between heterogenized local cultures and a homogenized world culture.<sup>201</sup> However, neither the notion of homogenisation nor that of heterogenisation is complete. Homogenisation presents a deviated reality. In the case of television, research shows that most of the world's television programmes are produced and broadcast within national television systems and do not receive international distribution.<sup>202</sup> O'Regan suggested that the amount spent on local production is 29 times greater than that spent in international audio-visual exchange.<sup>203</sup> Meanwhile, heterogenisation does not reflect the global/local cultural integration and fails to address the spatial and temporal changes in the local culture under the influence of global pattern. Hybridisation is an appropriate concept to examine the impact of globalisation on the local practice because it refers to both temporal and structural process. On one hand, hybridisation reflects the local, national and regional absorption and adaptation of global cultural patterns over time. On the other hand, cultures integrate local elements and imported ones to create new forms of culture.<sup>204</sup>

In the media sphere, with the western norms and practices flowing around the world, hybridisation is one of the consequences of media globalisation, which is mainly manifested in the adaptation of television formats. Hybridisation of television programme formats refers to the copycat phenomena in which national or local media incorporate and clone elements and ideas from popular foreign formats and programmes in their making of national or local television programme.<sup>205</sup> For instance, *The Dictionary of Happiness (Kaixin cidian)*, CCTV Channel 2's most

---

<sup>200</sup> Crane et al. eds., p.9

<sup>201</sup> Boyd-Barrett et al, eds., *Media in global context – a reader*, (London: Arnold, 1997), p.261

<sup>202</sup> Moran, 2004, p.4

<sup>203</sup> ibid

<sup>204</sup> Joseph Straubhaar, '(Re)asserting national television and national identity against the global, regional and local levels of world television', in Joseph M. Chan and Bryce T. McIntyre, eds., *In search of boundaries – communication, nation-states and cultural identities*, (London: Ablex Publishing, 2002), p.188

<sup>205</sup> Anthony Fung, 'Coping, cloning and copying: Hong Kong in the global television format business', in Moran and Keane eds., 2004, p.76

successful quiz show, incorporated the key elements of Celador's global format *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?* including the 'life-lines' of 'phone a friend' and 'ask the audience' into a domestic format.<sup>206</sup> I have not found any English literature about hybridisation of formats in newspapers but my empirical data demonstrate that hybridisation of newspaper formats and news genres exists in China.

At the individual level, news globalisation calls for global journalists and global journalistic ethics in order to develop a well-informed, diverse, and tolerant global 'info-sphere'.<sup>207</sup> Global journalists refer to reporters who understand the intertwined global force and local force thus do reports beyond the limitations of party, religion and country for the public around the world.<sup>208</sup> Journalists around the world need to have basic values in common to perform the functions both of information finder and guardian of public virtue.<sup>209</sup> They should act as global agents and serve the citizens of the world. However journalistic values and practices vary in different countries. The question is whether such global journalists can emerge from the local journalism landscape. In essence, journalists are local shaped by their social background, education, experiences, training and the value system of the country they live in. Their roles are different across different societies. Hugo de Burgh compared Anglo journalists and Chinese journalists and found that Anglo journalists saw themselves as representing the interests of people by providing accurate and timely information and by exposing the wrongdoing of officials or exploiters.<sup>210</sup> By contrast, Chinese journalists were ambivalent, seeing themselves as scrutinizing government and representing the people while they were mere transmitters of the political line of the government.<sup>211</sup>

In addition, journalists should abide by global journalism ethics. As Stephen Ward claims, 'only if journalists embrace the values of global journalism ethics will globalisation mean something more than the development of broadband connections and converging media.'<sup>212</sup> Simply speaking, ethics is about what is perceived right

---

<sup>206</sup> Michael Keane, 'A revolution in television and a great leap forward for innovation?' in Moran and Keane eds. 2004, p.90

<sup>207</sup> Stephen Ward, 'Philosophical foundations for global journalism ethics', *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*, 20(1), (2005), 3-21

<sup>208</sup> ibid

<sup>209</sup> Hugo de Burgh, *The Chinese Journalist – Mediating information in the world's most populous country*, (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), p.179

<sup>210</sup> De burgh, 2003, p.176

<sup>211</sup> De burgh, 2003, pp.173-4

<sup>212</sup> Ward, 2005, 3-21

or wrong. Codes of ethics, perceived as the consciences of journalism, are a collection of dos and don'ts used by news organisations to outline professional norms and values.<sup>213</sup> In practice, truth telling or truthfulness is universally regarded as a most essential and universal item in a code of ethics as journalism's first objective is to seek out and report the truth.<sup>214</sup> Integrity, objectivity and freedom of expression are also widely recognised as significant elements in a code of ethics. On the contrary, taking bribes, libel, invasion of privacy, deception, and plagiarism are regarded as unethical and destructive to journalism.<sup>215</sup>

There is a growing movement toward identifying universal ethical standards for journalism. From a professional standpoint norms should be standardised over cultures and societies to meet the challenges of globalisation.<sup>216</sup> UNESCO and the United Nations have established codes of media ethics for journalists. However, though the international principles are in place, no global code, accepted in of all countries, has been adopted.<sup>217</sup> The barrier to implementing such universal ethical standards is that press freedom that is by no means universal.

In reality, different codes of conduct are implemented in different countries and regions. For instance, Laitila found that European principles commonly stress the truthfulness of information, the prohibition of discrimination on the basis of race, sex, etc., fair means in gathering the information, integrity of the source and the journalist, and freedom of expression and comment.<sup>218</sup> In this thesis, I will explore *BYD* journalists' perceptions of roles and codes of ethics to demonstrate the universal and particular features between China and the world.

At the world news level, as the main part of the media imperialism thesis, the international news flow from the central western news agencies to the peripheral developing countries has been an important theme in the media globalisation debates.

---

<sup>213</sup> Yehiel Limo and Itai Himelboim, 'Journalism and Moonlighting: An International Comparison of 242 Codes of Ethics', *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*, 21(4), (2006), 265–285

<sup>214</sup> Stephen Ward, 'Utility and Impartiality: Being Impartial in a Partial World', *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*, 22(2&3), (2007), 151–167

<sup>215</sup> Renita Coleman, 'Searching for the Ethical Journalist: An Exploratory Study of the Moral Development of News Workers', *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*, 17(3), (2002), 209–225, and Sidney Callaha, 'New Challenges of Globalization for Journalism', *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*, 18(1), (2003), 3–15

<sup>216</sup> Limo and Himelboim, 2006, 265-285

<sup>217</sup> Thomas Cooper, 'Methodological challenges: comparison of codes and countries', in Thomas Cooper et al, eds., *Communication ethics and global change*, (New York: Longman,1989), p.233

<sup>218</sup> Tiina Laitila, 'Journalists' codes of ethics in Europe, *European Journal of Communication*', Vol. 10, No. 4, (1995), 527-544

With western and national news agencies as the main actors, homogenisation, regionalization and domestication are three main consequences of news globalisation.

Debates about globalisation have developed as a consequence of the end of cold war and the collapse of the Soviet Union. Much was written on globalisation in the 1990s.<sup>219</sup> The media globalisation debates centred on two issues: 1) that the global structure of newsgathering and dissemination followed the global flow of economic and political power; and 2) that the 'big four'<sup>220</sup> western news agencies dominated the world news flow and set the international news agenda.<sup>221</sup> Actually, debates about media as international actors have gone through a transformation process from taking media as agents of propaganda from 1920s to 1930s, to the free-flow doctrine of post World War II from 1940s to 1950s, to dependency and media imperialism theory from 1960s to 1970s underpinning the New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) debates, to the new world order of capital freedom and reader autonomy of the 1980s and finally to globalisation in the 1990s.<sup>222</sup>

International news flow studies rose from the media debates. The first international news flow study entitled *Foreign news in the media*, funded by UNESCO and covered 29 countries, was conducted in 1978. The background to the study was that developing countries demanded for a NWICO as part of political actions during their anti-colonial struggle.<sup>223</sup> This report found that politics dominated international news reporting around the world and regionalism was given prime importance. In addition, the United States and Western Europe were the consistent news-makers and the developing nations were not only under-represented but reported in a negative light as hot-spots of disturbance, catastrophe, tension and crisis.<sup>224</sup> This report led to a series of international news flow studies and comparative research. In the 1990s, a

---

<sup>219</sup> Sreberny-Mhammedi et al, eds., 1997, p.vii

<sup>220</sup> The 'big four' Western based news agencies in the 1970s were Agence France Press (AFP), Associated Press (AP), Reuters, and United Press International (UPI). Of the original 'Big 4' UPI virtually withdrew after it barely survived economic crises after the 1980s and is owned (1996) by Saudi-based Middle East Broadcasting Corporation. Its reporting and sales have been considerably reduced. Source: Oliver Boyd-Barrett, 'Global news wholesalers as agents of globalization', in Annabelle Sreberny-Mhammedi et al., eds., 1997, pp.133-134

<sup>221</sup> Annabelle Sreberny and Robert Stevenson, 'Comparative analysis of international news flow: an example of global media monitoring', in Nordenstreng, Kaarle et al, eds., *International media monitoring*, (New Jersey: Hampton Press Inc.1999), p.60

<sup>222</sup> Boyd-Barrett, 1997, p.133

<sup>223</sup> Annabelle Sreberny-Mohammadi et al. *Foreign news in the media: international reporting in 29 countries*, (Paris: UNESCO, 1985), p.9

<sup>224</sup> Sreberny-Mohammadi, 1985, p.52

follow-up study, *the corporate study of foreign news and international news flow*, covered about 40 countries with the goal of mapping the merging global news geography in acknowledgement of the dramatic changes that had taken place in the world both politically and technologically since 1989.<sup>225</sup> This study is still in progress. Initial findings include that the international focus has returned to Asia and that trade has become a major concern in foreign news reports.<sup>226</sup> In addition, the International Press Institute (IPI) report in 1996 highlighted the fact that newspapers in Asia had increased their foreign news coverage, especially about neighbouring countries because of the continuing economic boom that has intensified Asian readers' interest in their neighbours.<sup>227</sup>

News suppliers and geographic maps have changed over time. Homogenisation, regionalisation and domestication are three consequences of world news flow. In relation to homogenisation, Oliver Boyd-Barrett, while reviewing the characteristics of global news agencies, noted that the number of leading print news agencies had declined while television news agencies had increased.<sup>228</sup> However, he argues that the overall picture seems to be more of the same and that news agencies continue to contribute to the homogenisation of global culture in form and in source.<sup>229</sup> Similarly, Chris Paterson's empirical analyses support the agency dependency theory and he concludes that big news agencies have not only continued their dominant role as news providers for traditional media but also for Internet-based e-journalism, which is undemocratic and anti-pluralist.<sup>230</sup>

As for regionalisation, Straubhaar proposed that geo-regional markets emerge in the multi-country markets linked by geography, language and culture such as Western Europe, Latin America, the Francophone market, the Arabic world market, the Chinese market and the Hindi or South Asian market.<sup>231</sup> Hjarvard finds that the

---

<sup>225</sup> Robert Stevenson, 'Project Proposal: Corporate Study of Foreign News and International News Flow in the 1990s', 1995, <http://www.ibiblio.org/newsflow/>, accessed 13 January 2008

<sup>226</sup> Clausen, 2003, p.143

<sup>227</sup> Alvin Shuster, 'Global news, changing views: economy, fall of communism shift media priorities', in Tony Silvia, ed., *Global News – Perspectives on the information age*, (US: Iowa State University Press Silvia, 2001), pp.142-143

<sup>228</sup> Oliver Boyd-Barrett, 'Global news wholesales as agents of globalization', in Boyd-Barrett, eds., 1997, p.141-143

<sup>229</sup> *ibid*

<sup>230</sup> Chris A. Paterson, 'Media imperialism revisited: the global public sphere and the news agency agenda', in Hjarvard, ed., 2001, p.89

<sup>231</sup> Joseph D. Straubhaar, 'Distinguishing the global, regional and national levels of world television', in Sreberny-Mhammedi, ed., 1997, p.285

strategy for global news services for the past decade has been to regionalize the satellite television programming to meet the local interests and needs as for example has been done with the Euronews channel or to form alliances with local actors as CNN has done with the Danish newspaper Berlingske Tidende to run an on-line news service together.<sup>232</sup>

As for domestication, it is an essential process in world news coverage.

'Domesticating the foreign' means delivering foreign events in a way comprehensible and relevant to domestic audiences.<sup>233</sup> World news stories may sprout from the same source but they are presented differently for local audiences around the world. 'Journalists sometimes construct foreign stories in ways which attempt to create links of meaning between the stories and the history, culture, politics, society, etc. of the viewers.'<sup>234</sup> In this sense, Cohen argues that the term 'domestication' is close to 'glocalization' coined by Robertson.<sup>235</sup>

The process of 'domestication' indicates the dichotomies of a tendency featuring both 'universal' and 'particular', 'convergence' and 'diversity' aspects. Clausen claims that 'at the macro level 'global' news, like other information products, is adapted and presented within frames of reference that make it suitable for local markets with imagined receivers or audiences in mind. At the micro level, the processes of framing and priming information (back grounding, foregrounding, selecting and rearranging) in news texts is an inevitable and necessary process in the 'transfer' of information from one framework to another.'<sup>236</sup> Similarly, Gurevitch and his colleagues argue that 'the tendency to 'domesticate' news stories may be regarded as a countervailing force to the pull of globalisation.' They claim that television news is both global and culturally specific. On one hand, 'news events of potentially global interest have become staples of television news services around the world'. On the other hand, 'the 'same' events are told in divergent ways, geared to

---

<sup>232</sup> Stig Hjarvard, 'News media and the globalization of the public sphere', in Hjarvard ed. 2001, p.27

<sup>233</sup> Michael Gurevitch et al, 'The global newsroom: convergences and diversities in the globalization of television news', in Peter Dahlgren and Colin Sparks, eds., *Communication and citizenship – Journalism and the public sphere*, (London: Routledge, 1991), pp.206-207

<sup>234</sup> Akiba A. Cohen, 'Globalization Ltd: domestication at the boundaries of foreign television news', in Joseph M. Chan and Bryce T. McIntyre, eds., *In search of boundaries: communication, nation-states and cultural identities*, (Westport, CT: Ablex Publishing, 2002), pp.171-175

<sup>235</sup> ibid

<sup>236</sup> Clausen, 2003, pp.14-33



the social and political frameworks and sensibilities of diverse domestic audiences'.<sup>237</sup> World news needs to be domesticated because readers are found to show 'increasing interest in locally oriented news: news you can use, news that "hits home". News, like politics, is local.'<sup>238</sup> In addition, to cope with the declining audience for news and increasing competition, 'foreign items tend to be marginalized, domesticated, personalized and made relevant'.<sup>239</sup>

Today, new maps are needed for the world news flow and how the world news is reported in the domestic media should be examined, as Sreberny-Mohammadi claims, 'one of the concerns of this study, in a period of challenges of the sovereignty of the nation-state, is to examine how much news about the "foreign" is actually located at home.'<sup>240</sup> Some scholars suggested that the dominance of the Western agencies seemed diminished in some systems, geographic proximity and national linkages remained dominant in world news selection in many media systems.<sup>241</sup> In this thesis, *BYD*'s coverage of world news will be examined in the light of news suppliers, geography, themes as well as the production process with an aim of mapping the world news flow in China as well as its consequences.

## 2.2 Journalism research in China

Having theorized globalisation's impacts on news content, I will give an overview on the journalism research in China from two perspectives: that of state/market discourses and that of globalisation discourses.

Half a century ago in 1956, Siebert, Peterson and Schramm proposed four normative media models — the authoritarian, the libertarian, the social responsibility and the Soviet communist — to reveal the relations between the government and the press.<sup>242</sup> This book was influential for decades and 'it stalked the landscape of media studies like a horror-movie zombie beyond its natural lifetime'.<sup>243</sup> As the world changed,

---

<sup>237</sup> Michael Gurevitch et al, 1991, pp.206-207

<sup>238</sup> Kevin Noblet, 'Producing and marketing news for the international audience', in Tony Silvia, ed, *Global News – Perspectives on the information age*, (US: Iowa State University Press, 2001), p.53

<sup>239</sup> Biltreyst, 2001, p.48

<sup>240</sup> Sreberny-Mohammadi, 1999, p.66

<sup>241</sup> Sreberny-Mohammadi, 1999, p.69

<sup>242</sup> Frederick S. Siebert, Theodore Peterson and Wilbur Schramm, *Four Theories of the Press*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1963)

<sup>243</sup> Daniel C. Hallin and Paolo Mancini, *Comparing media systems: three models of media and politics*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p.10

the book drew a great deal of criticism and was discarded as outdated and simplistic with poisonous theories due to its narrow Western views. Scholars called on each other to give it a decent burial and move on to the development of more sophisticated models.<sup>244</sup>

Many comparative analyses have since been conducted to map the media systems in different countries and regions. For instance, in 2001, Curran and Park include experiences of countries outside the Anglo-American orbit to counter the parochialism of Western media theory and argue that national states are influential in shaping media systems.<sup>245</sup> In 2004, Hallin and Mancini identified three media system models, namely the polarized pluralist, the democratic corporatist and the liberal models, based on the capitalist democracies of Western Europe and North America.<sup>246</sup>

Chinese media discourse is different from that of the West owing to its unique social system and political economy. Downing pointed out that the major limitation of Western media theories is that they evolve from and are used to explain relatively stable political economies. But China is in a transitional period moving from planned socialism to market socialism.<sup>247</sup> Whereas Western media achieved independence partly through commercialisation, the Chinese party/state has reinforced its control of the media through commercialisation.

### 2.2.1 State/market discourse

In the 1990s, the most distinct characteristic of the Chinese media was the tension between rapid commercialisation and continued ideological control.<sup>248</sup>

Correspondingly, news media discourses centred on the state-market nexus discussing the dual roles of media as commodity in the market and ideological apparatus as well as the compliances and contradictions between the market and the state. Some scholars focus on the paradox of market and state arguing that market liberalisation does not lead to democratisation but may somewhat affect and lessen ideological control. News media are caught in the tension between the market and

---

<sup>244</sup> *ibid*

<sup>245</sup> Curran and Park, eds., 2000, pp.1-3

<sup>246</sup> Hallin and Mancini, 2004.

<sup>247</sup> John Downing, *Internationalising media theories*, (London: Sage, 1996), cited from Eric Kit-Wai Ma, 'Rethinking media studies: The case of China', in Curran and Park, eds., 2000, p.32

<sup>248</sup> *ibid*

state. Other scholars focus on the integration of market and state arguing that the state and market collaborate to pursue both political and economic interests.

As for the paradox of market and state, in 1990, Polunbaum pointed out the tension of Chinese journalists' dual mission of serving two masters, the political authorities and the public.<sup>249</sup> In 1993, Chan concluded that media commercialisation had eroded ideological control in China but that it did not necessarily lead to a free press. He noted that democracy was a combination of rule of law and private media ownership. The development of a free press in China was like the swing of a pendulum, oscillating between left and right as political struggles take sudden turns.<sup>250</sup> In 1995, Chan further argued that the Chinese news media's economic independence had not earned it corresponding editorial autonomy. The China Communist Party tried hard to prevent the force of commercialisation cracking its organizational control over the media.<sup>251</sup> In 1998, Zhao argued that China had taken a unique approach of developing economic liberalisation without a corresponding political democratisation.<sup>252</sup> Liu pointed out that commercialisation did not lead to privatisation but it made the Party's ideological control difficult and that newly found economic power freed some newspapers from their dependence on the state.<sup>253</sup> In 2000, Zhou used a political-economy perspective to study the *Shenzhen Special Zone Daily* and argued that the Communist Party newspaper was experiencing a tug-of-war pulled by the forces of politic and market that has converted the party press into a 'Party Publicity Inc.'<sup>254</sup> In 2000, Wu argued that China's media were more pluralistic, if not democratic, and that gradual liberalisation was economic in nature, but its effect might spill over into the political arena.<sup>255</sup> In 2001, Herbert argued that the Chinese press had undergone a process of liberalisation in non-politically

---

<sup>249</sup> Judy Polunbaum, 'The tribulations of China's journalists after a decade of reform', in Chin-Chuan Lee, ed. *Voices of China: the interplay of politics and journalism*, (London: The Guilford Press, 1990), pp.33-68

<sup>250</sup> Joseph Man Chan, 'Commercialization without independence: media development in China', in J. Cheng and M. Brosseau, eds. *China Review*, (1993), p.25

<sup>251</sup> Joseph Man Chan, 'Calling the tune without playing the piper: the reassertion of media controls in China', *China Review*, (1995), pp.5.1-5.16

<sup>252</sup> Zhao, 1998, p.6

<sup>253</sup> Hong Liu, 'Profit or ideology? The Chinese press between party and market', *Media, Culture and Society*, Vol. 20, (2000), pp. 31-41

<sup>254</sup> Zhou He, 'Chinese Communist party press in a tug-of-war: a political-economy analysis of the *Shenzhen Special Zone Daily*', in Chin-Chuan Lee, ed. *Power, money and media: communication patterns and bureaucratic control in cultural China*, (Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 2000), p.112

<sup>255</sup> Guoguang Wu, 'One head, many mouths – diversifying press structures in reform China', in Lee, ed., 2000, p.63

sensitive areas indirectly weakening the press's mouthpiece role but the process of press democratisation still appeared far away. He noted the striking difference between the official and local press with some smaller newspapers winning large readerships for their exposés of corruption and lurid crime copy.<sup>256</sup> In 2002, Sun noted that mass-appeal papers and sensationalist tabloids flourished and the exposure of official corruption became standard daily fare. But the old and new mechanisms of Party control were still firmly in place.<sup>257</sup>

As for the convergence of market and state, in 2000, Ma argued that market forces were being absorbed by the state. The state could exert power over the media by political means or by the rule of the market, as the state was both a participant and regulator of the market.<sup>258</sup> Pan observed that the media reforms in China were the collaborative efforts of both the journalists and the Communist control apparatuses that jointly explored what market-related mechanisms and practices were justifiable within the party press framework.<sup>259</sup> In 2002, Chan argued that in the absence of democracy, economic development and marketization would not necessarily lead to a free press. However media commercialisation with the endorsement of the state might give rise to a symbiosis between money and power, resulting in state corporatism.<sup>260</sup> In 2005, Windfield and Peng criticized that the traditional press models disregarded the interplay between political and market forces and they argued for an integrated market authoritarian framework highlighting the collaboration between the Party-state and the market for the interpenetration of political and financial interests.<sup>261</sup>

The market/state discourses, from political-economy perspectives, help us understand the state-media relations in developing countries like China that fit in between the authoritarian and liberal democratic media models. However, the weakness of these discourses is that they ignore other factors like professionalism,

---

<sup>256</sup> John Herbert, *Practising Global Journalism – exploring reporting issues worldwide*, (Oxford: Focal Press, 2001), p.149

<sup>257</sup> Wanning Sun, *Leaving China : media, migration, and transnational imagination*, (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002), p.169

<sup>258</sup> Ma, 2000, p.28

<sup>259</sup> Zhongdang Pan, 'Improvising reform activities: the changing reality of journalistic practice in China', in Lee, ed. 2000, p.104

<sup>260</sup> Joseph Man Chan and Jack Linchuan Qiu, 'Media liberalization under authoritarianism', in Moreroe E. Price et al. (eds.), *Media reform: democratizing the media, democratizing the state*, (London: Routledge, 2002), pp.27-47

<sup>261</sup> Betty Houchin Windfield and Zengjun Peng, 'Market or party controls? Chinese media in transition', *Gazette: the international journal for communication studies*, Vol. 67(3), (2005), pp.255-270

technology and most of all, the changes during the globalisation process. Hence, I will look at globalisation discourses in terms of Chinese journalism.

### 2.2.2 Globalisation discourse

The debate on the media and democracy continues in the first decade of the new millennium. In addition, media scholars explore new perspectives and develop new models to understand and explain the changes in the Chinese media system.

New perspectives are explored looking at journalists, investigative reports, audience, press conglomeration, development of city newspapers, web journalism, etc. As early as 1994, Polumbaum observed that the Chinese news media were becoming increasingly interested in providing 'junk-food journalism'.<sup>262</sup> In contrast, in 1998, Chen and other Chinese scholars surveyed 5,800 Chinese journalists nationwide and their respondents expressed a clear-cut preference for the information role over the entertainment role. They considered that Chinese journalists were in a process of professionalization.<sup>263</sup> In 2000, Zhou discussed investigative reporting and argued that the Central Party leadership was adopting a media watchdog role to strengthen the Party's control by smoothing the rough edges of the ongoing Chinese transformation and policing the political, economic and social boundaries of an emerging authoritarian market society.<sup>264</sup> Yong Zhang argued that the de-politicized conception of the audience eroded Mao's Party-masses model of propaganda and made it possible to incorporate the audience surveys into media organisational routines.<sup>265</sup> Zhao opined that the Party, in view of the fragmented and decentralized press structure as a result of the press commercialisation, pushed for press conglomeration with an aim of enhancing political control as well as facilitating press capitalization.<sup>266</sup> In 2001, Huang examined the rise of *city newspapers (dushi bao)* and argued that though market-oriented city newspapers were not independent operations and therefore had little to do with press freedom, their emergence and

---

<sup>262</sup> Judy Polumbaum, 'Between propaganda and junk-food journalism: exploratory terrains in mainland Chinese news coverage', 1994, cited from Lee, ed., 2000, p.151

<sup>263</sup> Chongshan Chen et al, 'The Chinese journalist', in David H. Weaver, ed., *The global journalist: newspeople around the world*, (New Jersey: Hampton Press Inc., 1998), p.29

<sup>264</sup> Yuezhi Zhou, 'Watchdogs on Party leashes? Contexts and implications of investigative journalism in post-Deng era', *Journalism Studies*, Volume 1, Number 4, (November 2000), pp.577-597

<sup>265</sup> Yong Zhang, 'From masses to audience: changing media ideologies and practices in reform China', *Journalism Studies*, Volume 1, Number 4, (November 2000), pp.617-635

rapid development illustrated the end of the heyday of propaganda-oriented Party and government organs.<sup>267</sup> In 2005, Massey and Luo studied online newspapers and found that the multimedia content was rare in the web editions of the 32 Chinese newspapers. Their findings were consistent with a global capitalist-driven template based on the least-cost model and differentiation rules.<sup>268</sup> In 2006, a study by Zhang and others showed that the government was successful in setting the agenda for the media but the media were not effective in setting the agenda for the public. News prominence was largely predicted not by deviance and social significance but by propaganda values.<sup>269</sup>

Correspondingly, new models have been proposed to study China's media reform beyond the market/state nexus during the transformation process. In 2004, Akhavan-Majid incorporated non-state actors like citizens, journalists and entrepreneurs in the analytical framework and argued that the non-adversarial and cooperative interaction between the state and non-state actors played a major role in China's media transformation process.<sup>270</sup> In 2007, Huang proposed the 'from control to negotiation' model. While recognizing the state control and the capital control, Huang's model did not see these controls as dominant but saw the media commercialisation as a result of negotiation between the state, media, market and society.<sup>271</sup>

Among the new analytical perspectives and models, globalisation discourses have emerged and developed especially after China joined the World Trade Organisation in 2001 and won the right to host the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing. As Lee claims, China has had to embrace global capitalism in order to save socialism and Chinese media have been caught in the contradiction of nationalism and

<sup>266</sup> Yuezhi Zhao, 'From commercialisation to conglomeration: the transformation of the Chinese press within the orbit of the Party state', *Journal of Communication*, 50(2), (2000), pp.3-26

<sup>267</sup> Chengju Huang, 'China's state-run tabloids: the rise of 'city newspapers'', *International Communication Gazette*, Vol. 63, No. 5, (2001), pp. 435-450

<sup>268</sup> Brian L. Massey and Wei Luo, 'Chinese newspapers and market theories of web journalism', *Gazette: the international journal for communication studies*, Vol. 67(4), (2005), pp.359-371,

<sup>269</sup> Guoliang Zhang et al, 'What's news in China?', in Pamela J. Shoemaker and Akiba A. Cohen, *News around the world: content, practitioners, and the public*, (New York: Routledge, 2006), pp.162-163

<sup>270</sup> Roya Akhavan-Majid, 'Mass media reform in China: toward a new analytical framework', *Gazette: The international journal for communication studies*, Vol 66(6),(2004), pp.553-565,

<sup>271</sup> Chengju Huang, 'Editorial - from control to negotiation: Chinese media in the 2000s', *The International Communication Gazette*, vol.69(5), (2007a), pp. 402-412

globalisation.<sup>272</sup> Surrounding the national vs. global nexus, discourses cover a wide range of market, technology and ideology with a focus on the relationship between the national responses and global challenges, domestic conglomerates and international capital.

Nationalism revived and nationalist sentiment was repackaged in China in the post-Tiananmen and post-Cold war era, which filled in the ideological vacuum and solved the 'crisis of faith' after the demise of Maoism and Communism.<sup>273</sup> In 1996, Barmé claimed that national pride and achievement acted as a glue that bound the otherwise fragmented Chinese world. Party propaganda and nationalistic aspirations remained evident in Chinese mass media.<sup>274</sup> In 2003, He analysed media reports on the bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade by US-led NATO forces arguing that Chinese media organisations were bureaucratic capitalist enterprises that re-pitched on the view that patriotism was a good commodity both politically correct and commercially viable.<sup>275</sup> Zhao studied Chinese press coverage on the WTO and argued that the Darwinist neo-liberalism was wrapped in a contradictory nationalistic discourse: to subject China to the rules of the global market through the WTO was to redeem the Chinese nation. The suppression of farmers and workers' voices on the WTO deal highlighted the press role in constructing Chinese nationalism by building a strong and powerful China through global integration.<sup>276</sup>

As for national responses to global challenges, in 1997 Chan categorized the treatment of STAR TV in Asia into four categories: virtual suppression (legally banned), regulated openness (allows entry but retains control over signal redistribution), illegal openness (restrict legally but open in practice), and suppressive openness (heavily restricted or very limited openness). Chan claimed that China was representative of the suppressive openness mode where China generally forbade the reception of all external television for fear of ideological influence from the west but in reality tens of millions households picked up signals

---

<sup>272</sup> Chin-Chuan Lee, 'The global and the national of the Chinese media: discourse, market, technology, and ideology', in Chin-Chuan Lee, ed., *Chinese media, global contexts*, (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), p. 1

<sup>273</sup> Jonathan Unger, 'Introduction', in Jonathan Unger, ed., *Chinese nationalism*, (London: M.E.Sharpe, 1996), p.xi

<sup>274</sup> Geremie R. Barmé, 'To screw foreigners is patriotic: China's avant-garde nationalists', in Unger, ed. 1996, pp.207-208

<sup>275</sup> Zhou He, 'How do the Chinese media reduce organizational incongruence? Bureaucratic capitalism in the name of Communism', in Lee, ed., 2003, pp.196-214

<sup>276</sup> Yuezhi Zhao, 'Enter the world: neo-liberal globalization, the dream for a strong nation, and Chinese press discourses on the WTO', in Lee, ed., 2003, pp.32-53

via satellite dishes.<sup>277</sup> In 2000, Hong examined China's television policies in the 1990s and concluded that the China Communist Party had adopted new policies to accept globalisation and maintain the open-door direction as well as to resist Western influence and maintain control on culture and ideology.<sup>278</sup> In 2001, Zhao argued that the Chinese struggle for democratisation remained without proper historical comparisons. Taiwan's path did not suit China. Though China's emerging state controlled media conglomerate structure paralleled the media system in Singapore in many ways, Singapore being a tiny trade-oriented city-state, had few industrial workers and peasants, while China had a billion.<sup>279</sup> In 2003, Lee pointed out that China's national response to global challenges was to 'attack poison with poison' by organizing state media conglomerates to stimulate 'managed competition'. 'The extraordinary profit of the Chinese media has come largely by courtesy of state protection rather than free market competition.'<sup>280</sup> In 2007, Huang found that both an internal shake-up and external opening up were taking shape in both policy and practice in post-WTO China. The media structural reform reflected the government's strategy of absorbing private/foreign capital and western know-how of media management without losing its ownership and political control of the media sector.<sup>281</sup>

#### Conclusion:

When it comes to understanding newsmaking, the traditional approaches are mainly those of political economy and sociology. These approaches shed light on understanding news media from institutional, organisational, professional and personal perspectives. However both are weak in terms of comparative research and analysis of historical changes.<sup>282</sup> A new theoretical model that builds on sociological approaches and incorporates globalisation theories is proposed to overcome the weakness of the existing research approaches.

---

<sup>277</sup> Joseph Man Chan, 'National responses and accessibility to STAR TV in Asia', in Sreberny-Mhammedi et al., eds., 1997, pp.96-98

<sup>278</sup> Junhao Hong, 'Reconciliation between openness and resistance: media globalization and new policies of China's television in the 1990s', in Georgette Wang et al. eds., 2000, p.303

<sup>279</sup> Yuezhi Zhao, 'Media and elusive democracy in China', *The public javnost: journal of the European institute for communication and culture*, Vol. 8, 4, (2001), pp.21-44

<sup>280</sup> Chin-Chuan Lee, 'The global and the national of the Chinese media: discourse, market, technology, and ideology', in Chin-Chuan Lee, ed., 2003, p.10

<sup>281</sup> Chengju Huang, 'Trace the stones in crossing the river: media structural changes in Post-WTO China', *The international communication gazette*, Vol. 69(5), (2007b), pp.413-430

<sup>282</sup> Schudson, 1997, p.154



The model of globalisation's impact on the news content is meant to analyse the factors that influence editorial choices and content from five levels: institutional, organisational, routine, individual and world news. Globalisation has impacts on each level, thus directly or indirectly influences news.

In the case of China, media commercialisation does not necessarily lead to democratisation. Chinese news media play the dual role of commercial entity and state apparatus, which determines the symbiosis media-state relations. Sometimes the news media are caught in conflicts between power and money. In the globalisation era, the co-existence of nationalism and globalisation reflects the mindsets of both the state and the news media to make concerted efforts to integrate with and cash in from the global market as well as building a strong domestic media industry based on nationalist sentiments.

Having theorized the new model and elaborated the Chinese news media discourses, I will take *BYD* as a case study and apply this new model to analyse the implications of globalisation on the news content at local press in China, starting from the policy based institutional level in the next chapter.

### Chapter 3 Impact of globalisation on the institution

This chapter will discuss China's press system, covering its structure and policies and major changes over the past two decades in an effort to give a picture of the macro-environment in which local newspapers operate in China and to demonstrate the implications of globalisation on the local press at the institutional level. This chapter focuses on the changing state policies and regulations concerning newspaper operation as well as global elements that are woven into the transforming press system.

#### 3.1 Overview of China's press system during globalisation process

If globalisation is defined as 'a process in which worldwide economic, political, cultural and social relations have become increasingly mediated across time and space',<sup>283</sup> in China, the globalisation process has progressed over three decades slowly integrating with the world beyond its borders. The process started in 1978 with the reforms and open-door policy and continued with China's official submission for WTO membership in July 1986. At that time, as one of the original signatories to GATT to which WTO is a successor organisation, China perceived GATT/WTO membership in the context of the Chinese historical humiliation and as restoration to its 'rightful place' in the international system.<sup>284</sup> In 1992, Deng Xiaoping called for the market liberalization with the aim of lifting China out of international isolation and domestic stagnation.<sup>285</sup> With China's entry into WTO in November 2001, China reclaimed its legitimate status as a player on the international stage.

The hypothesis in this chapter is that globalisation has impacted the press system in China in a bi-directional manner, from global to local and from local to global. In other words, internationalism has been counteracted by nationalism. This nationalism/internationalism paradox or internal/external (*duinei/duiwai*) perspectives are manifested in China's transitional press system. On the national side from local to global, China has moved from 'state socialism to state

---

<sup>283</sup> Terhi Rantanen, *The media and globalization*, (London: Sage Publications, 2005), p.8

<sup>284</sup> Zhao, 2003, p.33

<sup>285</sup> Chin-Chuan Lee, 'The conception of Chinese journalist – ideological convergence and contestation', in Hugo De Burgh, *Making journalists – diverse models, global issues*, (London: Routledge, 2005), p.120

capitalism'<sup>286</sup> and the commercialisation of newspapers was one of the reforms that opened up China's economy to global capitalism.<sup>287</sup> The party state carried out a series of structural reforms during the press commercialisation over the past three decades to build up and rationalize its newspaper industry. Newspapers tend to be national or local due to the exclusivity of language, cultural and political factors.<sup>288</sup> Chinese newspapers, as an important national institution, benefit from media policies and enjoy economic prosperity. They are protected by the state to a certain extent. China used to protect all its industries. As Gershon said, free market capitalism operates around the world, whereas communism provided a safety net for inefficient business.<sup>289</sup> In its general opening, China has shown caution with the press. On the international side there has been some global to local impact due to China's integration with the global economic system and its extended interaction with the global community. However, China's opening of its newspaper market with the aim of drawing on global capital and know-how has been conditional and partial. Social, political and commercial actors from home and abroad have acted as stakeholders engaging in negotiations during the globalisation process. China's outward attitude towards foreign news organisations has shifted from seeing them as enemies to seeing them as competitors. When once their entry into Chinese press market was completely blocked, they are now allowed partial entry. As Gershon has observed, 'the Cold War was a world of friends and enemies. The globalisation world, by contrast, tends to turn all friends and hostile into competitors.'<sup>290</sup>

Transition in the press system has been orchestrated, engineered and regulated by the state. It started from an internal structural transformation brought about by commercialisation and conglomeration, then moved on to limited integration with the global market. There is a conflict between opening up to benefit from globalisation in investment and knowhow on the one hand and a tendency to strengthen control on the other, because of the political implications of free information. The decisive role

---

<sup>286</sup> Zhao, 2000, p.20

<sup>287</sup> Brian L. Massey and Wei Luo, 'Chinese newspapers and market theories of web journalism', *The international journal for communication studies*, vol. 67(4)(2005), p.359

<sup>288</sup> McQuail, 2000, p.216

<sup>289</sup> Richard A. Gershon, 'The transnational media corporation and the economics of global competition', in Yahya R. Kamalipour, ed., *Global Communication (second edition)*, (Belmont, California: Thomson Wadsworth, 2007), p.58

<sup>290</sup> *ibid*

of the state in managing the impacts of globalisation has been evident.<sup>291</sup> As Castells has argued, 'China's modernization and international opening up is, and was, a deliberate state policy, designed and controlled so far, by the leadership of the Communist Party.'<sup>292</sup>

In China, news media are state owned. Private or foreign ownership of newspapers is forbidden. Newspapers are under direct control of the party and government through the dual-track press management system meaning that newspapers are under the management of both the government's administrative departments and party committee's departments. Although there is no national press law, the press is highly regulated institutionally by means of administrative regulations as will be shown later.

At the administrative or institutional level, newspapers are under control of the General Administration of Press and Publication (GAPP, *Xinwen chuban zongshu*). In order to publish a newspaper, a 'publishing unit' must receive the approval of GAPP.<sup>293</sup> News organisations must be registered and attached to a government ministry, institute, labour group, research institute or other state-sanctioned organisation before being issued the operating license to run a newspaper thus ensuring the party's control of the fundamental press structure.<sup>294</sup> In 1987, the government formed the State Press and Publication Administration (SPPA, *Xinwen chuban shu*). This body's task was to draft and enforce press regulations and to shift regulatory mechanisms from a political-relationship-based framework to a law-based framework.<sup>295</sup> In 2001, SPPA became GAPP.<sup>296</sup> In 2005, China adopted the Regulations on the Administration of Newspaper Publishing (*Baozhi chuban guanli guiding*). Article 4 stated that GAPP is responsible for the supervision and administration of publishing activities nationwide and for making and implementing plans for the total number, structure and distribution of newspaper publishing units nationwide.<sup>297</sup> In addition, state administrative control is exercised through the

---

<sup>291</sup> Manuel Castells, *End of millennium, (second edition)*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), p.323

<sup>292</sup> Castells, 2000, p.289

<sup>293</sup> Report on regulations for print media of the People's Republic of China, Article 19, London, 2006, Index number: LAW/2006/07/17, p.5

<sup>294</sup> Zhao, 2000, p.6

<sup>295</sup> Robert McKenzie, *Comparing media from around the world*, (London: Pearson/Allyn and Bacon, 2006), p.107

<sup>296</sup> <http://www.gapp.gov.cn/>

<sup>297</sup> Report on regulations for print media, 2006, p.5

appointment of senior personnel at the major newspapers. Journalists and editors usually get certificates to practise journalism and receive training organised by the regulatory bodies.

At the content or ideological level, newspapers are under control of Central Propaganda Department (CPD) and its local departments. The Central Government formed the CPD in 1924. Its main function is to 'control ideological work and guide public opinions'.<sup>298</sup> In China, 'prior censorship' under which all news articles have to be checked by the government before printing does not exist. However, newspapers receive restrictions or directives from the central or local propaganda departments either in writing or via telephone calls or meetings on what cannot be covered.

This party/state dual-track press management system showing the framework under which China's media reforms and changes have been engineered and implemented by the government is illustrated in Figure 9 below. Yuezhi Zhao pointed out the party dominates the Chinese press, both ideologically and institutionally. This has assisted the party to remain in power and supervise the current Chinese transformation from state socialism to state capitalism.<sup>299</sup>

---

<sup>298</sup> <http://cpc.people.com.cn/GB/64114/75332/5230610.html>

<sup>299</sup> Zhao, 2000, p.20

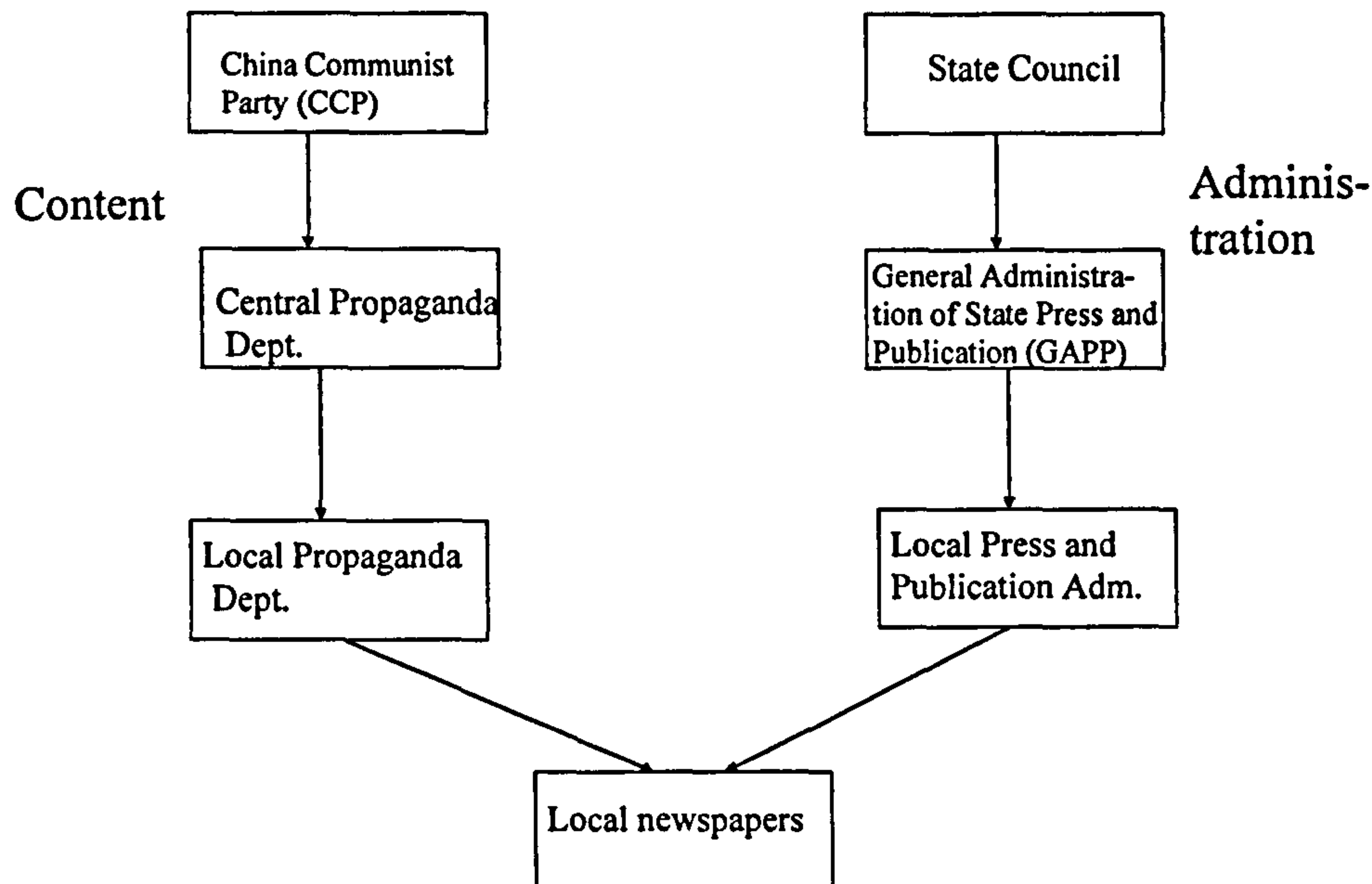


Figure 9 Chinese dual-track press management system.

Under this institutional framework, the transition of Chinese press system during the globalisation process can be divided into three main stages: commercialisation, conglomeration, and floatation.

China's current press system was developed in the 1950s from the Soviet model of Pravda and TASS. Press commercialisation started in 1978 when China initiated institutional reforms and began to open its market, accelerated with Deng Xiaoping's calls for further economic reforms in 1992, and was more or less completed by the mid-1990s. Press conglomeration followed from the mid to the late-1990s. The 21<sup>st</sup> century has been characterised by the floatation period.

Press commercialisation from 1978 to the mid-1990s was mainly about commercialisation of newspaper operations and proliferation of newspaper titles. As Yuezhi Zhao has observed, 'almost all media institutions are now dependent on commercialised financing and have to survive in increasingly competitive media markets.'<sup>300</sup> The single commandist party press model was replaced by a hybrid

<sup>300</sup> Yuezhi Zhou, 'Watchdogs on party leashes? Contexts and implications of investigative journalism in post-Deng China', *Journalism Studies*, Vol.1, Number 2, (2000), p.582

propagandist/commercial model<sup>301</sup> in which a highly centralised authoritarian press system and the decentralized market-oriented press system co-exist<sup>302</sup> on the condition that the power of the Party may not be threatened.<sup>303</sup> Press groups formed when newspaper agencies changed from running a single newspaper to running multiple newspapers, publications and businesses during the mid-1990s. Press conglomeration was recognized and promoted by the party-state as an extension of commercialisation and preparation for the integration with global market. Since China's entry into WTO in 2001, the state has encouraged the newspaper conglomerates to float in both the domestic and global stock market. In the global stock market, to start with, the content and operation sections of press conglomerates were separated and only the operation section was allowed to float. Later on, such restrictions were removed but the state remained the major shareholder of the conglomerate. Publishing conglomerates were allowed to float as a whole. A new state-controlled capitalist corporation model with the Chinese state as majority shareholder of media corporations emerged.<sup>304</sup> These three stages were not separate or isolated but overlapping and interactive. During this transitional globalisation process, the Chinese press system has been characterised by decentralisation, diversification and consolidation in media structure, deregulation and re-regulation in press policies, as well as by partial privatisation in financing. Figure 10 highlights the step-by-step opening up in terms of media regulations from 1978 to 2007.

---

<sup>301</sup> The term 'propagandist / commercial model' was invented by Yuezhi Zhao, *Media, Market and Democracy in China – Between the Party Line and the Bottom Line*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998), p.159

<sup>302</sup> Guoming Yu, *Shanbian de guiji (Changing tracks)*, (Beijing: Zhongyang bianyi chubanshe, 1996), pp.36-37.

<sup>303</sup> X. Yu, 'Professionalization without guarantees: changes of the Chinese press in post 1989 years', *Gazette* 53(1-2), (1994), pp.23-41, quoted from Betty Winsfield and Zengjun Peng, 'Market or party controls? – Chinese media in transition', *Gazette: The international journal for communications studies*, Vol. 67, No. 3, (2005), p.265

<sup>304</sup> Huang, 2007b, p.414

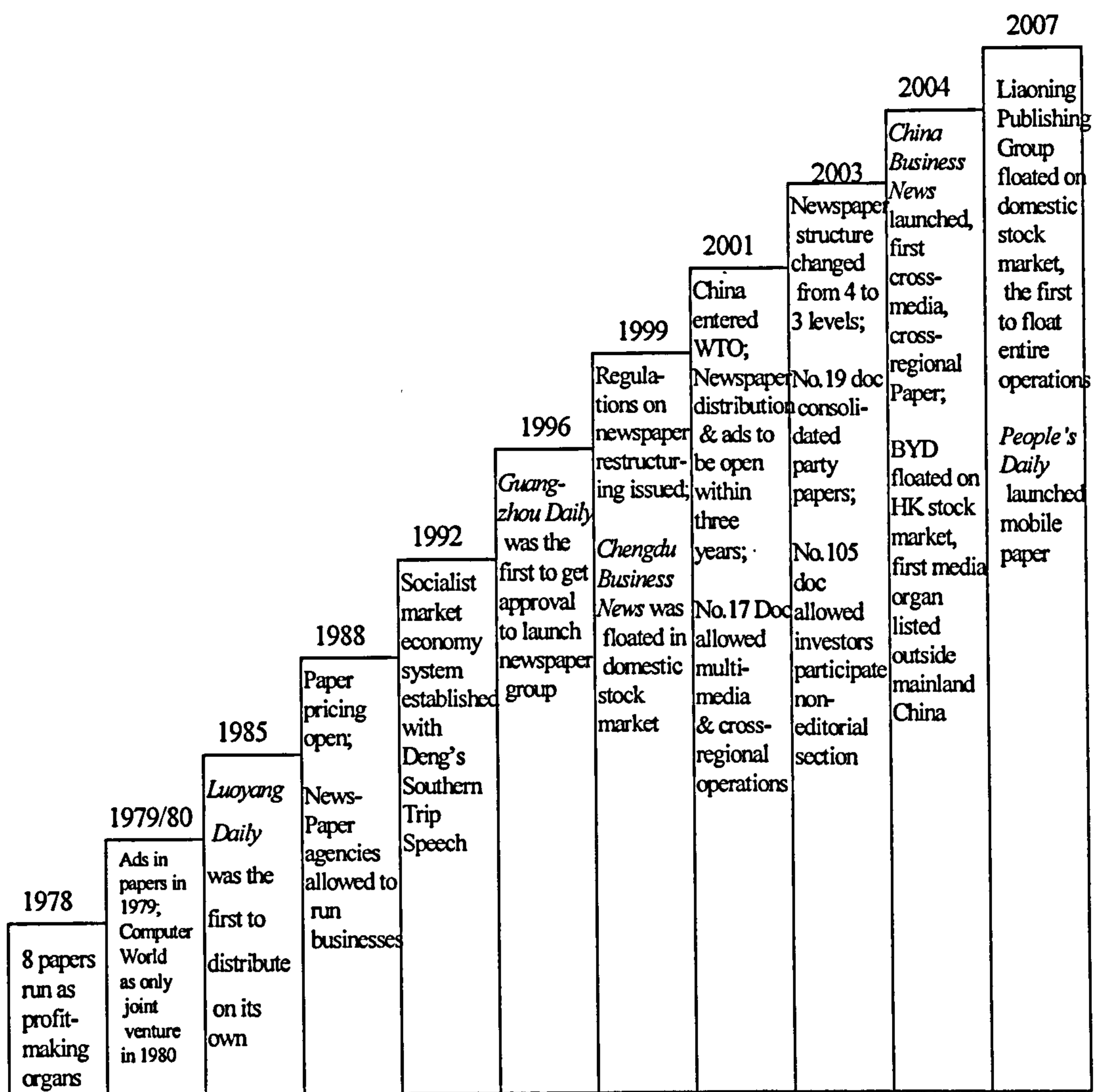


Figure 10 Milestones in Chinese media policies from 1978 to 2007.<sup>305</sup>

Structural transformations have been top-down, engineered by the party state aimed at 'enhancing political control on the one hand and facilitating press capitalization on the other'<sup>306</sup>, though in reality sometimes journalism practices move so fast they change before the media policies are in place to regulate them. The process of media reform has been managed by administrative decree.<sup>307</sup> The impact of globalisation on Chinese press structures will be discussed from the internal and external

<sup>305</sup> Sources: Baoguo Cui et al, *Gaizhi yu zhuanzhe: 2004-2005 nian Zhongguo chuanmei chanye fazhan zong baoao* (Institutional transformation: Report on development of China's media industry (2004-2005), (Beijing: China Social Sciences Academic Press, 2005), p.14, and <http://xwjz1.eastday.com/epublish/gb/paper159/200301/class015900002/hwz595957.htm>

<sup>306</sup> Zhao, 2000, p.3

<sup>307</sup> Sun Xupei, *An orchestra of voices – making the argument for greater speech and press freedom in the People's Republic of China*, (London: Praeger, 2001), pp.124 - 125



perspectives in the next section through the examination of the development of these administration decrees.

### 3.2 Press structural changes during commercialisation period (1978 to mid-1990s)

Commercialisation refers to 'the process by which media come to respond to the profit motive as a driving force and to depend on advertising and other business activities for revenue.'<sup>308</sup> Commercialisation in China started in 1978 as the advertising industry began to revive<sup>309</sup> and gained most momentum after 1992. From 1978 to 1990s, internal change took place through the structural shake-up driven by domestic demand. State newspaper policies moved towards deregulation thus promoting press decentralisation, diversification and operational autonomy in the newspaper industry. Externally, foreign investment in newspapers was strictly restricted. In terms of content, media polices focused on competing with foreign news agencies in news reporting via the so-called the 'outward publicity' (*duiwai xuanchuan*) or 'outward reports' (*duiwai baodao*).<sup>310</sup>

Internal structural changes took the form of decentralisation, diversification, and operational autonomy as the restrictions on advertising, distribution, diversified businesses, and emergence of press conglomerates were relaxed.

Newspapers used to be centralized under Chinese Communist Party's control. With the economic reforms, newspapers have changed 'from being concentrated in the national capital to being dispersed to localities, from the provincial capital to the city and county, and from the power centre to different branches, departments, and bureaus of the government.'<sup>311</sup> Local newspapers have boomed both in number and circulation. By 1996, among the total of 2,163 newspapers, 206 were based in the capital, 877 in provincial capitals and 1,957 were local.<sup>312</sup> Power has also been decentralized from the national government to the regional localities.<sup>313</sup> Apart from the 206 national newspapers, all papers are registered or affiliated to regional or local

---

<sup>308</sup> Joseph Man Chan and Jack Linchuan Qiu, 'China: media liberalization under authoritarianism', in Monroe E. Price, et al, eds., *Media reform – democratising the media, democratising the state*, (London: Routledge, 2002), pp.27-47

<sup>309</sup> Joseph Man Chan, 'Commercialisation without independence: trends and tensions of media development in China,' cited from Guoguang Wu, 'One head, many mouths: diversifying press structures in reform China', in Lee, ed., 2000, p.47

<sup>310</sup> Note: 'outward publicity' (*duiwai xuanchuan*) or 'outward reports' (*duiwai baodao*) refer to the news reports targeting at the overseas audiences including both foreigners and overseas Chinese based in foreign countries.

<sup>311</sup> Wu, 2000, p.47

<sup>312</sup> Note: the total does not include newspapers published at subprovincial levels, cited from Wu, 2000, pp.47-48

<sup>313</sup> Wu, 2000, pp.48-50

government departments, party and youth league committees, research institutes, labour groups, professional associations, etc. Though they are still licensed and ideologically supervised by the CCP, this does represent a step in the direction of autonomy.<sup>314</sup>

In terms of press diversification and proliferation, the commercialisation period witnessed the decline of party organ papers and the rise of market-oriented non-party papers. Evening newspapers, metropolitan newspapers and specialised newspapers proliferated. The monopoly of party newspapers was broken. Prior to 1978, apart from a small number of trade newspapers, enterprise newspapers and evening newspapers, nearly all newspapers in China were party newspapers.<sup>315</sup> By 1988, the percentage of party organs to unofficial newspapers had declined to 25 percent.<sup>316</sup> As for press proliferation, the total number of newspaper titles increased almost 12-fold from 186 to 2,202 between 1978 and 1996.<sup>317</sup> There were three waves of proliferation. In the 1980s, the first wave saw the rise of evening tabloid papers that 'cater to urban readers and raised mild criticisms of unethical business practices, poor public services and suspect social behaviours.'<sup>318</sup> From 1992 to 1994, the second wave saw the rise of weekend editions as well as newspaper page expansion. Since the mid-1990s, the third wave has seen the rise of commercialised metropolitan newspapers established by the CCP major provincial press organs (*shengwei jiguan bao*). Press diversification and proliferation suffered setbacks from late 1986 to early 1987 when the government launched the 'Anti-Bourgeois Liberalization Campaign' to crack down on 'liberal thought'.<sup>319</sup> The 'notice on the rectification of newspapers' (*Guanyu jianjue, tuoshan di zuohao baozhi kanwu zhengdun gongzuo de tongzhi*) was issued in 1987. Specific regulations included: the total number of newspapers should be reduced by 10 percent to 20 percent. Newspaper agencies should not run other affiliated newspapers in addition to their own. Cross-media and cross-business newspapers had to be subject to a responsible host unit and upper level authorities. These measures resulted in a decline in the number of newspapers from 1,359 in

---

<sup>314</sup> Chan and Qiu, 2002, pp.27-47

<sup>315</sup> Jinlin Ding, *Zhongguo xinwen shiye shi (China journalism history)*, (Beijing: gaodeng jiaoyu chubanshe, 2002), p.509

<sup>316</sup> Alex Chan, 'Guiding public opinion through social agenda-setting: China's media policy since the 1990s', *Journal of Contemporary China*, Vol.16, No.53, (November 2007), p.550

<sup>317</sup> Zhao, 2000, p.8

<sup>318</sup> Zhou, 2000, p.583

<sup>319</sup> Ding, 2002, pp.504-506

1986 to 1,022 in 1987. 'In the name of politics, China's newspaper industry suffered a blow and newspaper diversity was also affected to a certain extent.'<sup>320</sup>

In terms of operation, a series of policies was set out in the 1980s giving newspapers more freedom to generate revenue through running advertisements, distributing newspapers, and operating diversified businesses.<sup>321</sup> Prior to the economic reform, newspapers were advertising-free being completely subsidized by the state and distributed exclusively through the post office.<sup>322</sup>

First, the financing model of some newspapers changed from state subsidy to financial independence with the introduction of 'non-profit enterprises operated as business model' (*shiye danwei, qiye jingying*) meaning that the press, though still defined as a non-profit undertaking of the state, was run as a business operation.<sup>323</sup> The reason for such change was that state subsidies were insufficient to cover the cost of running newspapers. By granting newspapers financial autonomy, the state's financial burdens in subsidising news organizations could be reduced. At the end of 1978, eight newspaper agencies led by the *People's Daily* submitted an application to the Ministry of Finance requesting permission to launch business operations while remaining non-profit enterprises with the purpose of generating more income to make up for a shortfall in state subsidies. The application was approved the following year.<sup>324</sup> This event was said to have begun China's newspaper industrialization process.<sup>325</sup>

Secondly, advertising was institutionalised as the media were authorised to accept advertising from 1979.<sup>326</sup> Specifically, Shanghai's *Liberation Daily* carried its first advertisement in China on 28 January 1979.<sup>327</sup> Afterwards, a series of regulations and laws were issued, which formed the policy basis for the news media to run

---

<sup>320</sup> Jinsong Lang, *Zhongguo xinwen zhengce tixi yanjiu (China Journalism Policies System Studies)*, (Beijing: Xinhua chubanshe, 2003), p.75

<sup>321</sup> De Burgh, 2005, p.120

<sup>322</sup> Zhao, 2000, p.6

<sup>323</sup> *ibid*

<sup>324</sup> Yali Guo, *Meiti zhengce yu fagui (Media Policies and Regulations)*, (Beijing: Zhongguo chuanmen daxue chubanshe, 2005), p.161

<sup>325</sup> Jianwu Song et al, *Zhongguo meijie jingji de fazhan guilu yu qushi (Development trend of China's media economy)*, (Beijing: Zhongguo renmin daxue chubanshe, 2005), pp.174-175

<sup>326</sup> Roya Akhavan-Majid, 'Mass media reform in China – toward a new analytical framework', *The international journal for communication studies*, vol. 66(6), (2004), p.557

<sup>327</sup> Lang, 2003, pp.71-72

advertising as business. In November 1979, the Central Propaganda Department confirmed the *Liberation Daily's* act and issued a 'notice on publishing or broadcasting foreign commodity advertisements in newspapers, radio and TV' (*Guanyu baokan, guangbo, dianshitai kandeng he bofang waiguo shangpin guanggao de tongzhi*) that allowed the news media to carry advertisement for both domestic and foreign commodities.<sup>328</sup> In 1982, the State Industrial and Commercial Administration issued 'provisional regulations on advertising management' (*Guanggao guanli zanxing tiaoli*). In 1987, 'regulations on advertising management' (*Guanggao guanli tiaoli*) were promulgated by the State Council. In January 1994, the National People's Congress passed 'the advertising law'. Through issuance of these regulations and laws, advertising, 'as a business operation run by the news media, was gradually established and recognized as a formal institution.'<sup>329</sup> Correspondingly, advertising became a supplement financial source for the news media when the state subsidies were inadequate to cover the soaring costs of media operation in the 1980s. It finally replaced subsidies in the 1990s for all newspapers except a few national titles such as the *People's Daily*.<sup>330</sup> Advertising revenue for the news media grew at an average rate of more than 50 percent annually. By 1994, advertising revenue had reached about USD 1.88 billion.<sup>331</sup>

Thirdly, restrictions on distribution were lifted. Newspapers were solely distributed by the post office for a long time till *Luoyang Daily* became the first to distribute papers on its own in 1985, heralding reform in newspaper distribution reforms.<sup>332</sup> The 'post law' (*Youzheng fa*) promulgated in 1987 laid the legal basis for newspaper agencies to use different distribution channels, either distributing on their own, or through post offices, or commissioning other legal organizations to act.<sup>333</sup>

Fourthly, diversified businesses were allowed. The 'paper famine' (*zhi huang*) and rocketing distribution fees charged by the post office around 1988 put newspaper

---

<sup>328</sup> Ke Zhang, 'Lun zhengfu zai woguo xinwen zhidu bianqian zhong de zuoyong (On the role of government in the transformation of China's journalism system)', *Xinwen Jie (News Journal)*, (2006)

<http://xwj.scol.com.cn/11zy/20061115/2006111551123.htm>

<sup>329</sup> *ibid*

<sup>330</sup> Price, 2002, p.27-47

<sup>331</sup> David H. Weaver, eds., *The global journalist – newspeople around the world*, (New Jersey: Hampton Press, 1998), p.10

<sup>332</sup> Lang, 2003, p.93

<sup>333</sup> Guo, 2005, p.162

agencies that depended on state subsidies into severe deficit.<sup>334</sup> To solve this problem, on 16 March 1988, the SPPA promulgated 'provisional methods on newspaper and periodical agencies promoting paid services and business activities' (*Guanyu baoshe, qikanshe kaizhan youchang fuwu he jingying huodong de zanxing banfa*) that allows newspaper agencies to run non-publishing businesses.<sup>335</sup> This regulation was significant. It was the first time that the government had recognized the separation and independence of the news media's advertising, printing and distribution. Companies or enterprises can be established to undertake these businesses.<sup>336</sup>

Media policies in the 1980s reveal that the relaxation of restrictions on newspaper operation was driven by two factors: 'newspapers' financial setbacks and the Party's promotion of market reform.<sup>337</sup> The result was that newspapers expanded from 1978 to 1989. However, it should be noted that this was only the start of commercialisation process. 'Although advertising grew, economic factors had not yet become a driving force for media system transition.'<sup>338</sup>

After the check that followed the 1989 Tiananmen events, commercialisation of the press was again in full swing in the 1990s with further marketization and privatization in response to Deng Xiaoping's call for 'accelerated capitalist development in China'.<sup>339</sup> A series of press policies were adopted to encourage newspapers to enter the market. In 1992, the SPPA issued a landmark policy that 'required all major newspapers, apart from a few central party organs such as the *People's Daily*, to achieve financial independence by 1994.'<sup>340</sup> Also in 1992, the Ministry of Culture set out new guidelines allowing advertising revenues be largely retained by the media organisations themselves.<sup>341</sup> In the mid-1990s, press

---

<sup>334</sup> Hui Lin, *Wei wancheng de lishi: Zhongguo xinwen gaige qianyan (Unfinished history: the front line of China's journalism reform)*, (Shanghai: Fudan University Press, 2004), p.12

<sup>335</sup> Lang, 2003, pp.71-72

<sup>336</sup> Yongzheng Wei, 'Zhongguo dalu chuanmei liyong yewai ziben hefaxing yanjiu' (Research on legitimacy of Chinese mainland media industry using non-media capital) (part two), *China Journalism Review*, (21 July, 2001), <http://cjr.zjol.com.cn/05cjr/system/2006/12/21/008062378.shtml>

<sup>337</sup> Winsfield and Peng, 2005, p.259

<sup>338</sup> *ibid*

<sup>339</sup> Zhao, 2000, p.6

<sup>340</sup> *ibid*

<sup>341</sup> Hugo De Burgh, 'Chinese journalism and the Academy: the politics and pedagogy of the media', *Journalism Studies*, Vol.1, Number 4, (2000), p.551

regulatory bodies allowed provincial Party papers to publish their own market-oriented subsidiary daily newspapers.<sup>342</sup> These policies pushed major newspapers to enter the market and make profits from advertising. During 10 years from 1991 to 2000, advertisement value increased from 3.5 billion yuan to 71.2 billion yuan, an average annual increase of 35 percent, much higher than the 8 percent annual GDP increase.<sup>343</sup> In terms of privatization, the rise of non-party papers as the dominant media during the 1990s led to the unofficially recognised but de facto privately-run newspapers. Many mass and government entities and social and scientific organizations 'contracted out' their publishing licenses to independent business investors for profits. Legally, these papers were owned by the license holder and are subject to its editorial supervision. However, full operational, editorial and financial responsibility for the paper was assumed by the private investor,<sup>344</sup> as is the case with the *Chengdu Business News*.

In sum, the internal media policies from 1978 to the mid-1990s promoted the commercialisation of newspapers, influenced press ownership and financial support, and consequently brought about unofficial privatisation. However, press liberalisation was uneven with the expansion of apolitical and consumerist contents on one hand and the government's tight political control maintained by means of issuing editorial policies and appointing senior staff on the other. This may be related to what Chengju Huang has called Deng Xiaoping's 'pragmatic authoritarian media philosophy characterized by firm regulation with high flexibility.'<sup>345</sup> Some scholars called this phenomenon 'commercialisation without independence'.<sup>346</sup> Newspapers were operated as business entities, similar to a western capitalist system with advertising, subscription dependence and capital investment. However, officially the media's role was still defined as acting as the voice of the government.<sup>347</sup>

From the external perspective, the Chinese media system was isolated from the world before the reform era.<sup>348</sup> After China opened up, it maintained closed attitudes towards foreign news media and foreign investors during the commercialisation

---

<sup>342</sup> Huang, 2001, p.438

<sup>343</sup> Lin, 2004, p.15

<sup>344</sup> Akhavan-Majid, 2004, p.557

<sup>345</sup> Huang, 2001, p.447

<sup>346</sup> Lee, 2000, p.47

<sup>347</sup> Winsfield and Peng, 2005, p.260-262

<sup>348</sup> Price, 2002, p.27-47

period from 1978 to mid-1990s. Foreign investment in newspaper operation was strictly restricted. When it came to newspaper content, the ‘outwards’ editorial policy showed that the state treated foreign media as hostile.

In 1990, the State Council promulgated ‘Specific implementation measures on foreign-invested enterprises’ (*Waizi qiye fa shishi xize*) that listed journalism, publishing, broadcasting, TV and films as sectors where the establishment of foreign-invested enterprises was banned.<sup>349</sup> In 1991, GAPP issued a circular explicitly stating that foreign-invested enterprises were banned in the press and publication sector. Joint ventures or Sino-foreign cooperative enterprises were also banned in principle including those from Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan.<sup>350</sup> In 1994, GAPP issued a more formal but very similar regulation titled ‘Notice on banning the joint operation of newspapers, periodicals, and publishing houses with foreign investors in China’ (*Guanyu jinzhi zai woguo jingnei yu waizi heban baozhi qikan chubanshe de tongzhi*) reiterating restrictions on joint ventures in news media.<sup>351</sup>

Apart from foreign capital restriction, Chinese editorial policies, the ‘outward reports’ were geared at waging a propaganda war against the ‘hostile’ foreign media. Foreign media were accused of inciting students to demonstrate in the streets during the ‘bourgeois liberalization movement’ at the end of 1986.<sup>352</sup> In view of this, Central Propaganda Department and Xinhua News Agency jointly issued ‘Opinions on improving news reports’ (*Guanyu gaijin xinwen baodao ruogan wenti de yijian*) in 1987.<sup>353</sup> This regulation set principles for waging a propaganda war. It stated that ‘firstly, news reports should be more immediate so as to grab readers and audiences from western propaganda, taking pre-emptive attacks as the primary task (*xianfa zhiren weizhu*) and post-responsive as the secondary task (*houfa zhiren wei fu*). Secondly, distorted western reports on sensitive Chinese issues should not be avoided. Chinese news media should do research and make outward reports in time to promote correct understanding of the world towards China. Thirdly, under the premises that positive reports take the leading problem, critical reports should be made to increase Chinese news media’s credibility. Fourthly, increase transparency

---

<sup>349</sup> Wei, 2001, <http://cjr.zjol.com.cn/05cjr/system/2006/12/21/008062365.shtml>

<sup>350</sup> *ibid*

<sup>351</sup> *ibid*

<sup>352</sup> Chan, 2007, p. 551

<sup>353</sup> Lang, 2003, pp.76-77

of reports on state leaders activities so that foreign media have no chance to make up stories. Fifthly, inward reports (*duinei baodao*) and outward reports were given the same weight. Sometimes, outward reports were prioritised over inward reports. We should really dig up news values of domestic news and world news.<sup>354</sup> In the aftermath of the Tiananmen Square incident in 1989, ‘the party state began to criticize foreign broadcasting as part of the overall effort of foreign countries to bring “peaceful evolution” to China’.<sup>355</sup>

Policies on foreign capital and outward reports reflected the fact that the state portrayed foreign news media as hostile and threat to the party/state regime during the cold war era. Defensive strategies were adopted.

### 3.3 Press structural changes during conglomeration period (mid-1990s to 2000)

Since the mid-1990s, internally, commercialisation continued while press conglomerates emerged and developed quickly as part of structural consolidation. However, the attitude towards domestic non-media capital and private capital was reserved and it was prohibited from entering the press sector. Externally, China started to integrate itself with the outside world. Press conglomerates were formed and consolidated to learn from the foreign management experience,<sup>356</sup> to compete with foreign media conglomerates, and to enhance Chinese news media organisations’ influence both home and abroad.<sup>357</sup> However, the Chinese government did not allow the privatisation of the news media. Joint ventures in the news media sector were still prohibited and foreign investment in newspapers remained strictly restricted.

Press conglomerates emerged in early 1990s as a result of both government policies and market forces.<sup>358</sup> The state played a primary role. Newspaper merger and conglomeration had been pursued as state policy since the mid-1990s in order to rationalise the overgrown press and transform it from a quantity and scale-based model to quality and efficiency-based model.<sup>359</sup> The model of non-profit enterprises

---

<sup>354</sup> Xiaohong Yan, *Zhongguo duiwai baodao jiqiao chutan* (Explore reporting skills on China’s outwards news reports), 1 June 2007, Renmin wang – duiwai da chubo, <http://media.people.com.cn/GB/22114/41180/84930/5811108.html>

<sup>355</sup> Chan, 2007, p. 551

<sup>356</sup> Lang, 2003, p.82-84

<sup>357</sup> Yanjun Sun, *Baoye Zhongguo* (*Press Industry in China*), (Beijing: Zhongguo sanxia chubanshe, 2002), p.313

<sup>358</sup> Sun, 2002, p.313

<sup>359</sup> Zhao, 2000, p.15



operated as businesses did not meet the demands of the newspapers' growing financial strength and increasing competition in the market, press conglomerates came into being and became a trend in the media market.

The background for the emergence of press conglomerates was that news media organisations had gained their legal status as an industry rather than as the state-owned non-profit enterprises. The state decided to promote tertiary industries and regarded the press as part of the tertiary sector (or service sector) by the end of 1992.<sup>360</sup> In 1993, the State Council promulgated a document entitled 'Basic planning for developing China's tertiary services' (*Guanyu quanguo disan chanye fazhan guihua jiben silu*) listing newspapers, radio and TV as cultural and sports undertakings,<sup>361</sup> and thus officially recognising newspapers as an industry. From then on, catch words like 'media industry', 'newspaper industry' and 'media economy' became popular both in the media sphere and the academic sphere.

Subsequent policies were issued to promote newspaper industry in economic terms, for instance, the majority of taxes paid by the news media organizations were returned to the news media. According to the 'Notice of the state taxation administration on further supporting cultural undertakings' (*Guojia shuiwuju guanyu jinyibu zhichi xuanchuan wenhua shiye de tongzhi*) promulgated in 1993, only value added tax was levied on the publishing industry, it was exempt from business tax.<sup>362</sup> Newspapers were also allowed to invest in non-media businesses such as real estate, construction, tourism etc. 'In many cases, the income from these non-media ventures has begun to exceed that obtained from their press-related businesses.'<sup>363</sup>

Spurred by the state's recognition of media industry and its beneficial policies, there was a spree of forming newspaper conglomerates in China from 1990 to 1994. A great many Chinese newspapers turned from running a single newspaper to running a series of newspapers, other publications, and non-media businesses. By May 1994, there were about 20 newspaper groups.<sup>364</sup> To control the excessive growth of press groups, the state re-regulated the market by setting out restrictions on the formation of press conglomerates, for instance, shareholding press groups, non-media

---

<sup>360</sup> Zhao, 2000, p.6

<sup>361</sup> Lin, 2004, p.7

<sup>362</sup> Lang, 2003, p.92

<sup>363</sup> Akhavan-Majid, 2004, p.557

<sup>364</sup> Lang, 2003, pp.82-84

companies, cross-media and cross-region operations were banned. Meanwhile, the focus of the state's regulative strategies shifted from promoting extensive growth to promoting intensive growth. On May 18, 1994, the SPPA set out restrictions in a 'Notice on issues of forming publication and audio visual conglomerates' (*Guanyu shubaokan yinxiang chuban danwei chengli jituan wenti de tongzhi*). It ruled that the would-be pilot project was limited to a few organizations, no shareholding newspaper conglomerates would be formed, non-newspaper companies or organizations should not participate, no cross-province conglomerates would be allowed and the newspaper agency had to submit a proposal for forming conglomerates to the SPPA.<sup>365</sup> A few months later, in November 1994, a follow-up regulation was issued entitled 'Notice on enhancing and improving management of publications, audio and visual markets' (*Guanyu jiaqiang he gaijin shubaokan yingshi yinxiang shichang guanli de tongzhi*) that showed the strategic focus changing from development of scale and quantity to pursuing quality and efficiency. Well-performing units were to be selected to form newspaper or publishing conglomerates for trial.<sup>366</sup> In response to the fact that most major newspaper organisations were de facto business conglomerates, the state's intention of reaffirming party control and elevating wealthy titles to more prestigious status within the party press was clear.<sup>367</sup>

Newspaper conglomerates gained official status in 1996. The *Guangzhou Daily* was the first to get approval to launch a newspaper conglomerate in January 1996 beginning the industrialization of Chinese newspaper industry.<sup>368</sup> The basic structure of a press conglomerate was one major Party newspaper supported by a large number of commercialised subsidiaries.<sup>369</sup> This structure guaranteed the leading role of the Party newspaper and the socialist nature of the press conglomerate. The 'Instructions on granting approval to *Guangzhou Daily* to form newspaper conglomerate' (*Guanyu tongyi jianli Guangzhou ribao baoye jituan de pifu*) issued by the SPPA pointed out that 'with the establishment of socialist market economy, the newspaper competition is getting fierce. In this situation, the formation of socialist modern newspaper

---

<sup>365</sup> *ibid*

<sup>366</sup> *ibid*

<sup>367</sup> Zhao, 2000, p.16

<sup>368</sup> Sun, 2002, p.307

<sup>369</sup> Huang, 2001, p.446

conglomerates with the party newspaper at the core will promote the transformation of newspaper industry from scale/quantity model towards the high efficiency model.’<sup>370</sup> Here, the title of ‘socialist newspaper conglomerates’ reaffirmed that the newspaper conglomeration was carried out under the party’s tight political control. As part and parcel of ‘socialism with Chinese characteristics’, these press conglomerates were financially independent and were expected to take advantage of economies of scale, but were not independent businesses. ‘Rather they are affiliated with the party’s propaganda departments, and their publishers and editors-in-chief are appointed by and accountable to their affiliated party committees. The press conglomerates are under tight political control and are not yet allowed to publish newspapers outside their state-defined geographic areas.’<sup>371</sup>

The choice of the *Guangzhou Daily* was a combination of market activity and political activity. The *Guangzhou Daily*, owning six newspapers and one magazine, was then the wealthiest newspaper with a circulation of 610,000 copies. It ranked the first in China in terms of advertising revenue which amounted to 530 million yuan in 1996. However, the *Guangzhou Daily* was only a municipal organization newspaper, a third-tier organ below the central and provincial newspapers. In circulation terms it ranked below the tenth in the country. It was not the best in terms of influence. The main reason for the government choosing the *Guangzhou Daily* may have been that newspaper conglomerates were new in China. It was safer to use a local newspaper for the trial.<sup>372</sup> This reflected the government’s cautious attitudes in carrying out reforms.

Building press conglomerates was one of the major actions taken by the state in the overall restructuring campaign from 1996 to 1998 with an aim of consolidating the press structure that was ‘fragmented, bureaucratized, overextended and lacking in a scale economy’.<sup>373</sup> In December 1996, the Central Government issued a ‘Notice on enhancing journalism, publishing, and broadcasting management’ (*Guanyu jiaqiang xinwen chuban guangbo dianshiye guanli de tongzhi*, No.37 doc, 1996), which started the restructuring based on the principle of ‘controlling the total number, adjusting the structure, improving quality and increasing efficiency’ (*Kongzhi*

---

<sup>370</sup> Sun, 2002, p.307

<sup>371</sup> Zhao, 2000, p.18

<sup>372</sup> Sun, 2002, pp.307-308

<sup>373</sup> Zhao, 2000, p.14

*zongliang, tiaozheng jiegou, tigao zhiliang, zengjin xiaoyi*). As a result, six national and regional press groups were set up before 1998 by the state and a large number of unprofitable party papers were closed down.<sup>374</sup>

During the restructuring campaign, the state promulgated policies and regulations to encourage newspaper organisations to pursue economic interests on the condition that the social interests remain top priority. In January 1997, the ‘Administrative regulations on publishing’ (*Chuban guanli tiaoli*) set out the legal status of media policies. ‘These changed the history of the media being managed by new documents or notices.’<sup>375</sup> The regulations explicitly state that publishing in China makes social interest at top priority and pursues the best combination of social interest and economic interest.<sup>376</sup> In 1998, the SPPA and industrial and commercial administration issued its ‘Temporary regulations on newspaper agencies, magazine agencies and publishing houses to run paid services and operational businesses’ (*Guanyu baoshe, qikanshe, chubanshe kaizhan youchang fuwu he jingying huodong de zanxing guiding*).<sup>377</sup> This regulation gave newspapers the right to run diversified businesses. Their scope of business was expanded and they could start to try different financing modes. In 1999, the *Chengdu Business News* (*Chengdu Shang Bao*) was the first newspaper to get listed on the domestic stock market. It acquired major shares of a listed company named Sichuan Dianqi through its shareholding company Chengdu Borui Investment Co., Ltd.<sup>378</sup> This event was the start leading to the floatation wave in the 21<sup>st</sup> century in which newspaper conglomerates or publishing conglomerates float in domestic and global stock markets.

In 1998, based on the success of the *Guangzhou Daily* conglomerate trial, the state decided to boost the growth of press conglomerates through merger and acquisition. The SPPA stated in its ‘Development plan for press and publishing industries in 2000 and 2001’ (*Xinwen chubanye 2000nian ji 2001nian fazhan guihua*) that it would support influential party newspapers and implement mergers, restructuring and establishing newspaper conglomerates with party newspapers at the core. ‘By the year 2000, the newspaper conglomerates will be expanded to 5 to 10. By the year

---

<sup>374</sup> Akhavan-Majid, 2004, p.559

<sup>375</sup> Lang, 2003, p.91

<sup>376</sup> *ibid*

<sup>377</sup> Cui, 2005, p.14

<sup>378</sup> Lin, 2004, p.15 and <http://xwjz1.eastday.com/epublish/gb/paper159/200301/class015900002/hwz595957.htm>

2010, newspaper conglomerates will make great growth with more than 10 percent of agencies having operation revenues of more than 100 million'.<sup>379</sup>

In 1999, the press structure was re-adjusted nationwide. The most significant change was that government's role started to shift from running newspapers to regulating newspapers. 'The government organs will withdraw from running newspapers in principle in order to meet the demands of transforming government's functions'.<sup>380</sup> The restructuring adjustment focused on consolidating newspapers, separating publishing and administration, and cancelling state subscriptions, thus pushing press commercialisation ahead. This was out of concern that 'a small number of national and provincial papers and about one third of local papers in the bureaucratic and professional sectors were still dependent on direct institutional subsidies by the mid-1990s'.<sup>381</sup> The adjustment was made through administrative orders. As of 29 August, 1999, the Central Government office and State Council office (Guowuyuan *bangongting*) jointly issued a 'Notice on adjusting newspaper structures at central, provincial, autonomous regions and municipal levels' (*Guanyu tiaozheng zhongyang guojia jiguan he sheng, zizhiqu, zhixiashi tingju baokan jiegou de tongzhi*).<sup>382</sup> This notice revealed the attitude of the government to consolidate trade newspapers and to solve problems like subsidised subscription and administrative allocations. It stated that in principle the central state organs should not run organ papers. Some organ papers can be merged with other newspaper agencies or newspaper conglomerates like the *People's Daily*. Organ papers run by governmental divisions (*si*) and bureaus (*ju*) will be closed down or incorporated with Party papers.<sup>383</sup> On 11 November 1999, the SPPA issued a follow-up document entitled 'Opinions on implementing newspaper restructuring' (*Guanyu luoshi zhongyang 'liangban' 30hao wenjian tiaozheng baokan jiegou de yijian*).<sup>384</sup> According to this document, the newspaper structures were to be adjusted by means of separating administration and publishing, reducing the people's burdens and improving the quality of newspapers and publications.<sup>385</sup>

---

<sup>379</sup> Sun, 2002, p.310

<sup>380</sup> Wei, 2001, <http://cjr.zjol.com.cn/05cjr/system/2006/12/21/008062365.shtml>

<sup>381</sup> Zhao, 2000, p.13

<sup>382</sup> Guo, 2005, p.167

<sup>383</sup> Wei, 2001, <http://cjr.zjol.com.cn/05cjr/system/2006/12/21/008062365.shtml>

<sup>384</sup> *ibid*

<sup>385</sup> *ibid*

In sum, conglomeration was a new form stemming from commercialisation of the state-controlled press. Market forces and state forces, power and money joined hands to promote press conglomeration. At the micro level, newspapers, out of their own growth demands and in face of competition from the market, formed press groups to develop economies of scale. At the macro level, the state used press conglomerates to control chaotic free competition, to limit the proliferation of minor papers, and to consolidate and rationalise the press structure. Through de-regulating and re-regulating, the party/state negotiated with the market forces and reaffirmed its control.

From the external perspective, labour flow, global capital, and the desire to compete with western news media were three driving forces behind the press conglomeration process. Firstly, newspaper senior managers' frequent visits abroad to foreign media conglomerates enabled them to recognize that the conglomerate was the main organisational form for the western press.<sup>386</sup> Impressed by the large size and influence of western media conglomerates, 'they fashion themselves after today's global media moguls, rather than yesterday's Western editors who fought for press freedom from the state. They view conglomeration as a way to realize their political and business ambitions.'<sup>387</sup> Secondly, under the pressure of global media capital, the state consolidated state capital to reaffirm state control and curb the excess of bureaucratic capitalism in the press.<sup>388</sup> Thirdly, press conglomerates were used by the state as a practical way to cope with competition from overseas media organizations. 'They not only transform journalism mechanism but also expand the influence of Chinese news media.'<sup>389</sup>

Although forming media conglomerates was standard international practice, Chinese newspaper conglomerates were different in that they were state-owned rather than privately-owned, party-led rather than market-regulated. They were formed based on principles set out by the Chinese regulatory bodies. 'From the beginning, Chinese newspaper conglomerates didn't operate according to international practice.'<sup>390</sup> They enjoyed benefits and privileges bestowed by state media policies but also

---

<sup>386</sup> Zhao, 2000, p.16

<sup>387</sup> *ibid*

<sup>388</sup> Zhao, 2000, p.21

<sup>389</sup> Ding, 2002, pp.524 - 525

<sup>390</sup> Sun, 2002, p.313

shouldered more pressures than other businesses due to their propaganda task.<sup>391</sup> Their state ownership and socialistic nature were essential characteristics of the Chinese newspaper conglomerates. Xu Guangchun, the former Vice Minister of Propaganda, stated that Chinese newspaper conglomerates must not follow the western way and summed up four features of Chinese newspaper conglomerates marked in four key words: state-owned, socialist, modern, and industrial.<sup>392</sup>

During the conglomeration period, the state still held antagonistic attitudes towards the global capital and western news media and a firm socialist stand at least in terms of ideology. Though the form of newspaper conglomerates was copied from abroad, conglomeration introduced as a result of internal pressures: the growth demands of domestic newspapers, and the state's wish to resolve domestic structural problems and to compete with western media. This was consistent with Deng Xiaoping's pragmatic policy of transforming China from a planned economy to a market economy.

In the end, restrictions on foreign investment in the news media sector remained and the restrictions scope even expanded. At the end of 1997, the State Planning Commission, the State Economy and Trade Committee, and Ministry of Foreign Economy and Trade promulgated the 'Directory for the foreign invested enterprises' (*Waishang touzi qiye zhidao mulu*). Apart from still banning foreign investments made in the journalism sector (*xinwen ye*) and broadcasting and TV sector (*guangbo dianshi ye*), 'they quietly listed the publishing sector (*chuban ye*) as an area that restricted foreign investment in printing, publishing, distribution as well as in the production, publication and distribution of audio and video products.'<sup>393</sup>

---

<sup>391</sup> Peng Cao, *Zhongguo baoye jituan fazhan yanjiu (Research on the Development of Chinese Press Groups)*, (Beijing: Xinhua chubanshe, 1999), pp.87-88

<sup>392</sup> Exact words are: 'Firstly, "state" - These are Chinese newspaper conglomerates not foreign or even western conglomerates. There are different kinds of newspaper conglomerates. We shall explore our own way; Secondly, "politics" - Newspaper conglomerates are socialist, not capitalist; Thirdly, "modern" - Industry. In our country, the newspaper industry is still a non-profit organization but operated as a profit-making organization. We can't turn them into money making machine or a big tax payers. No taxation target shall be imposed on newspaper conglomerates; Fourthly, "industry" - In our country, newspaper industry is still non-profit organization but operated as a profit-making organization. We can't turn them into money making machine or a big tax payer. No taxation target shall be imposed on newspaper conglomerates.' Cited from Cao, 1999, pp.87-88

<sup>393</sup> Yongzheng Wei, 'Rushi qianhou chuanmeifa de tiaozheng (Adjustment of China's media laws before and after China's entry into WTO)', *Chuanmei Toushi (Media Focus)*, (2002)

[http://gbcode.rthk.org.hk/TuniS/www.rthk.org.hk/mediadigest/20020715\\_76\\_33705.html](http://gbcode.rthk.org.hk/TuniS/www.rthk.org.hk/mediadigest/20020715_76_33705.html)

### 3.4 Press structural changes during flotation period (2001 - 2007)

After experiencing the commercialisation and conglomeration phases in the 1980s and 1990s, newspapers entered the phase of flotation in 2001. Apart from further restructuring the press system, media policies started to focus on the integration with the global economy system in early 21<sup>st</sup> century by gradually and conditionally opening the news media market while implementing protectionism to a certain extent.

From the internal perspective, media policies were further de-regulated and re-regulated for domestic press conglomerates. They were allowed to operate cross-regionally and to float on the global stock market. At first only the operation part of the newspaper was allowed to get listed, then the publishing conglomerates were allowed to float as a whole. Private capital was conditionally allowed into the press sector. Nationwide, press restructuring focused on consolidating newspapers at different geographical levels, completely revoking subsidies and addressing the problem of too many similar newspapers competing chaotically. From the external perspective, foreign investment was allowed to enter the commercial sectors of newspapers on condition that the state remained the major shareholder. Strict restriction on the entry of foreign newspapers remained unchanged.

State press policy changes brought about the internal structural changes during this time period in the following five aspects:

Firstly, media policies were deregulated with shareholding conglomerates and cross-region operations allowed. Relaxations on the internal policies started with the No.17 document entitled 'Instructions on carrying out further reforms in journalism, publishing, broadcasting and films' (*Guanyu shenhua xinwen chuban guangbo yingshi ye gaige de ruogan yijian*) and promulgated in August 2001 by the Central Government and the State Council.<sup>394</sup> This document lifted nearly all the restrictions included in the 1994 policy that banned shareholding in newspaper conglomerates, the involvement of non-media organizations, the cross-media and cross-region operations.<sup>395</sup> Under the new No.17 document, shareholding newspaper

---

<sup>394</sup> Wei, 2002,

[http://gbcode.rthk.org.hk/TuniS/www.rthk.org.hk/mediadigest/20020715\\_76\\_33705.html](http://gbcode.rthk.org.hk/TuniS/www.rthk.org.hk/mediadigest/20020715_76_33705.html)

<sup>395</sup> Song, 2005, pp.117-118



conglomerates, non-media state-owned capital and cross-region operations were allowed.

Private capital was still restricted and a dual-track editorial/operation model came into being. On one hand, investors (limited to state-owned companies) were allowed to participate in the operational or commercial sector of newspapers on condition that they held less than 50 percent shares. On the other hand, investors were not allowed to enter the editorial sector of newspapers. Specifically the No.17 document stated that for the media conglomerates, 'operation divisions (newspapers printing, distribution and broadcast transmission network, etc), after being granted with approval, are allowed to be the major shareholder while absorbing capital from large state-owned organizations by establishing limited companies or shareholding companies. However, investors are not allowed to participate in editorial business or operation and management.'<sup>396</sup>

Media conglomerates were now allowed to operate cross-regionally. Specifically, the No.17 document stated that publishing conglomerates, distribution conglomerates and film conglomerates are encouraged to operate across regional. Central and some provincial newspaper conglomerates as well as radio and TV conglomerates shall be selected to operate across regional. Cross-regional operation must be approved and take the form of merge, restructuring and joint operation. The development of too many similar newspapers shall be prevented. The conglomerate shall be responsible for the publicity and operation orientations of its subsidiaries while being subject to the administration of the party committee and government bodies in the area where it is located. Party committees and government bodies shall provide a good environment for the cross-region operation.<sup>397</sup>

The significance of this document was two fold: On one hand, the state broke down the geographical barriers for the central and provincial press conglomerates and gave them more freedom and power to grow based on the market mechanism. On the other hand, the state reiterated that the conglomerates were under the political party/state control. On the basis of adhering to the current administrative control system and power structure, policies in media conglomeration were expected to become more relaxed. As Li Changchun stated at the Work Conference on Cultural

---

<sup>396</sup> *ibid*

<sup>397</sup> Song, 2005, p. 117-118

Institutional Reforms, 'industrial monopoly and segmentation shall be broken. The goal of the cultural institutional reforms was to build a unified, open, competitive, and orderly modern cultural market system'.<sup>398</sup>

On the basis of the No.17 document, Chinese newspaper conglomerates started to implement a cross-region business model to cope with the strong regional competition since 2002, for instance, *The Beijing News (Xin jing bao)*, *The National Business Daily (Meiri jingji xinwen)*, *China Business News (Diyi caijing ribao)* and *The First (Jing bao)*. Regional economic theories were introduced to China's media sector. 'Regional diversity is desirable on its own account, and Chinese companies are best placed to provide it.'<sup>399</sup>

Though there were no new regulations to lift restrictions on cross-media operation, in reality, cross-media became a popular business model with the limitation that broadcasting organisations were able to launch newspaper titles but not vice versa. China Radio International launched the *World News Journal (Shijie xinwen bao)* and *The First Finance (Diyi caijing)* integrated its radio and TV resources and launched a daily newspaper. 'We might carry on expanding into magazines, networks and even news agencies,' claimed the *First Finance*.<sup>400</sup> However, restrictions remained on cross-media operation. The broadcasting services (TV and radio) were able to run newspapers but newspapers were not allowed to operate broadcasting services. That was why the Beijing Media Co. Ltd under the *Beijing Youth Daily* claimed to have invested 250 million HK dollars into TV businesses,<sup>401</sup> in reality they have not been involved in broadcasting business up to the time of writing.

Based on the explicit and implicit regulations, cross-media and cross-region models were established. On 15 November 2004, *China Business News (Diyi caijing ribao)* was launched and marketed by the Shanghai Media Conglomerate (Shanghai wenguang xinwen chuanbo jituan), the *Guangzhou Daily Conglomerate* and the *Beijing Youth Daily Agency*. This was the first national finance daily on a model

---

<sup>398</sup> *ibid*

<sup>399</sup> Michael Keane and Stephanie Donald, 'Responses to crisis – convergence, content industries and media governance', in *Media in China – Consumption, Content and Crisis*, (New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002), p.210

<sup>400</sup> Cui, 2005, p.32

<sup>401</sup> *ibid*

that was cross-media (TV and print) and cross regional (Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou) and organised by multiple media conglomerates.<sup>402</sup>

Secondly, in the aftermath of the No.17 document, a series of regulations was issued from 2003 to 2004 to lift restrictions on the entry of domestic private capital into the media sector and the dual-track editorial/operation model was clarified and developed institutionally with the editorial part of newspapers highly restricted but leaving the commercial part of newspapers open to private investors on condition that the state remained the major shareholder.

Document No.19 opened the way to private capital. Entitled 'Notice on further rectifying the disorderly distribution of party newspapers to lessen burdens on low-level organizations and peasants' (*Guanyu jinyibu zhili dangzheng bumen baokan lansan he liyong zhiquan faxing, jianqing jiceng he nongmin fudan de tongzhi*), it was issued in July 2003 by the Central Government and the State Council. It permitted private investment in the media sector on condition that the print stake holding did not exceed 40 percent.<sup>403</sup>

Also in 2003, the No.21 document entitled 'Opinions on the pilot project of cultural institutional reform' (*Guanyu wenhua tingzhi gaige shidian gongzuo de yijian*) was promulgated by the Central Government and State Council. It stated that 'the operational part of the organization, after being transformed into profit-making companies, is allowed to absorb domestic private capital on condition that the state is the major shareholder and approval is granted. Investors are not allowed to participate in the editorial businesses.'<sup>404</sup>

In February 2004, the State Council formally permitted China's domestic private capital access to the commercial sectors of state-owned newspapers by issuing a circular stating that the operational part of Party newspapers, Party publications, radio stations and television stations can be split off and restructured into enterprises and, with the precondition that the state's absolute controlling stake is guaranteed, can absorb capital from society.<sup>405</sup> This policy legally broke the state monopoly over

---

<sup>402</sup> Cui, 2005, p.16

<sup>403</sup> Huang, 2007b, p.418

<sup>404</sup> Song, 2005, pp. 114-115

<sup>405</sup> Huang, 2007b, pp.420-421

the ownership of news media and demonstrated that 'China has cleared private investors to take direct ownership stakes in the media'.<sup>406</sup>

In May 2004, the GAPP issued the 'Notice on further regulating the formation of publishing partnerships and financing activities of news media organizations and publishing houses' (*Guanyu jinyibu guifan xinwen chuban danwei chuban hezuo he rongzi xingwei de tongzhi*). This notice demanded that all the agencies that had completed the transformation and separation of non-profit and profit-making parts should ensure the leading role of the state-owned capital. All the non-profit news making and publishing organizations were prohibited from conducting any financing activities or operating in the shareholding forms.<sup>407</sup>

The series of policies detailed above formulated the legal framework for state capitalism in the press sector. On one hand, the complete state-ownership was broken with the entry of private capital. On the other hand, the party/state reaffirmed its control by setting restrictions on the market entry of private capital and enhancing the leading role of state capital. Zhao Shi, the vice director of the State Broadcasting Bureau stated at a national broadcasting and film work conference on 21-22 December 2004 that the management of market entry shall be enhanced. 'State-owned, private and foreign invested systems shall be classified. The leading role of the state-owned system shall be enhanced and the state's absolute major shareholding in significant and sensitive areas ensured'.<sup>408</sup>

Thirdly, the government encourages press conglomerates to tap into the global capital market using the dual-track editorial/operation model. As a starting point, the government handpicked certain press conglomerates to trial collaboration with global capital. On 22 December 2004, the Beijing Media Corp. Ltd, the advertising unit under the Beijing Youth Daily Group, was listed on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange and became the first mainland press conglomerate to float on an international stock market. The *Asian Economic News* reported that the *Beijing Youth Daily's* advertising revenue reached 787 million yuan (about \$95 million) in 2003, ranking second to *Guangzhou Daily* nationally. The newspaper floated 25 percent of Beijing

---

<sup>406</sup> *ibid*

<sup>407</sup> Cui, 2005, pp.220-21

<sup>408</sup> *ibid*

Media Corp. to raise HK\$905 million (around US\$116.3 million).<sup>409</sup> In accordance with the government policy, the listing did not include the paper's editorial division which remains under state control. Chinese scholars predict that this dual-track editorial/operation that does not follow international practice will soon be abolished. Yu Guoming, president of the Media Research Institute at People's University in Beijing, said 'the listing will serve as a model for other state-owned newspapers. Eventually the state will have to let go of its grip on the editorial section. You can't just float the rest and keep the editorial part. The democratization of the media in China will come gradually.'<sup>410</sup>

Following *BYD*'s Initial Public Offering (IPO), the trial plan for Chinese media organizations getting listed on world markets was clarified. Qi Yong, director of the Cultural Industry Research Centre of State Development and Reform Committee, said on 9 January 2005, 'it is pressing and feasible that 80 to 100 high-profile domestic cultural enterprises will get listed on overseas capital markets within three to five years. Relevant authorities have made a candidate list for 12 enterprises to float overseas.'<sup>411</sup>

After the first wave of local newspapers getting listed on global stock markets in late 2004, the liberalisation of the media sector slowed down from 2005 to 2006. The government banned local newspapers from publicly issuing shares for two reasons: the corruption scandal at the *BYD*, and *BYD*'s weakened corporate performance in 2005. From June to September 2005, several of Beijing Media's senior managers, including two vice presidents and one advertising manager, were arrested and charged with bribery and embezzlement.<sup>412</sup> This scandal hurt the company's share price and caused a freeze on the new newspaper listings as a whole. Long Xinmin, minister at the GAPP, said, 'If Chinese communications media are to list, they must have very well established management methods. Our traditional media lack this kind of experience. As far as I can see, China will not approve this kind of listing for

---

<sup>409</sup> Beijing Media Corp. IPO a litmus test for Chinese media, *Asian Economic News*, 29 December 2004

[http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_m0WDP/is\\_2004\\_Dec\\_29/ai\\_n8588327](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0WDP/is_2004_Dec_29/ai_n8588327)

<sup>410</sup> *ibid*

<sup>411</sup> Cui, 2005, p.21

<sup>412</sup> Linghua Meng and Tianpeng Li, 'Beiqing de luanxiang yu miju (*BYD*'s chaos)', *Caijing Wenzhai*, [http://www.mediachina.net/index\\_news\\_view.jsp?id=78966](http://www.mediachina.net/index_news_view.jsp?id=78966)

other newspapers.’<sup>413</sup> Apart from this scandal, *BYD*’s net profits fell sharply in the six months after it was floated in Hong Kong. On 26 August 2005, Beijing Media’s mid-year report showed that the company’s net profit for the first half of 2005 stood at RMB170,000, having fallen 99.76 percent compared with RMB 66,309,000 for the same time period of 2004.<sup>414</sup> ‘Beijing Media suffered a severe winter in its operation in the summer of 2005’.<sup>415</sup> *BYD*’s poor corporate performance made the government realise that the media sector is a high-risk one. It thus became more cautious about allowing more newspaper conglomerates to go public.

Fourthly, in order to make the media conglomerates more appealing to investors, China abolished the dual-track editorial/operation model and allowed media conglomerates and websites to issue shares on domestic and overseas exchanges as a whole in 2007.<sup>416</sup> However, in terms of shareholding, the government was likely to introduce an upper limit on foreign ownership but it was not officially declared yet.<sup>417</sup> The second wave of floatation appeared.

Liaoning Publishing Group, established in March 2000 and restructured in 2004, gained approval from China Security Supervision Commission for issuing A shares on the domestic market on 20 November 2007. It was the first publishing conglomerate to list all its operations and editorials. ‘Soaring local stock prices had prompted it to issue its shares domestically rather than in Hong Kong as originally planned.’<sup>418</sup> Before the Liaoning Publishing Group, a total of seven newspaper and publishing companies have already floated in Shanghai, Shenzhen and Hong Kong including Borui chuanbo (Shanghai, 600880), Saidi chuanmei (Shenzhen, 000504), Beijing Media (Hong Kong, 1000), Xinhua chuanmei (Shanghai, 600825), and Xinhua wenxuan (Hong Kong, 0811). But all of them separated their operation

---

<sup>413</sup> Mure Dickie, Newspaper shares ban sets back liberalisation, *Financial Times*, 4 December 2006, [http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/28044a90-8325-11db-a38a-0000779e2340,dwp\\_uuid=9c33700c-4c86-11da-89df-0000779e2340.html](http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/28044a90-8325-11db-a38a-0000779e2340,dwp_uuid=9c33700c-4c86-11da-89df-0000779e2340.html)

<sup>414</sup> Yuchao Chen, Cong redian shijian kan woguo baokan shichang bianhua (Looking at press market changes from ‘hot’ events in China), *Chuanmei (Media)*, 4 December 2005, [http://news3.xinhuanet.com/newmedia/2005-12/14/content\\_3920962.htm](http://news3.xinhuanet.com/newmedia/2005-12/14/content_3920962.htm),

<sup>415</sup> *ibid*

<sup>416</sup> Mure Dickie, ‘Beijing gives go-ahead on media listings’, *Financial Times*, 19 October 2007, <http://search.ft.com/ftArticle?queryText=China%2C+newspaper&aje=true&id=071019000098&ct=0&page=3>

<sup>417</sup> Mengzhen Huang and Lingbo Dai, Xinwen chuban zongshu: wanquan fangkai difang baozhi, chuban jituan shangshi, (GAPP: completely open the listing of local newspaper and publishing groups), CCTV, 24 October, 2007, [http://news.xinhuanet.com/newmedia/2007-10/24/content\\_6934682.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/newmedia/2007-10/24/content_6934682.htm)

<sup>418</sup> Dickie, ‘Beijing gives go-ahead’

section from the editorial one.<sup>419</sup> After the Liaoning Publishing Group, a total of 13 publishing groups were expected to follow the suit and get listed as well.<sup>420</sup>

The reasons for this shift were three fold: 1) the Central Government was promoting cultural reform. Hu Jintao, in his report at the 17<sup>th</sup> Party Congress, stated that ‘efforts should be made to promote the great development and prosperity of socialist culture’.<sup>421</sup> Permitting the listing of the entire newspapers was a signal from government to further open press market. 2) large newspaper and publishing conglomerates already formed through internal restructuring, merges and acquisitions during the commercialisation and conglomeration periods. These restructured conglomerates were productive in making the value of state assets grow 40 percent annually and profits increase more than 30 percent’ and play a key role in the press market.<sup>422</sup> 3) it was proved that the editorial/operation division model created great risks for the press conglomerates but ‘market listings can raise capital and boost their strength, further extending the reach of government’s propaganda policies’.<sup>423</sup>

Fifthly, for the macro press structural adjustment, a new round of media reform in the domestic market started after China entered WTO. Three types of large-scale shake-up occurred: nation-wide consolidation of newspapers, their institutional transformation, and clear-ups of the chaotic market competition.

As for the nationwide newspaper consolidation, in 2001, the government claimed to be shaking up the press structure by closing down inefficient and low-quality titles. However, in the same year, the number of county newspaper titles nearly doubled. In 2002, there were 261 county newspaper titles and about 1,000 trade newspapers. These two kinds of newspapers with about 60 percent of China’s total newspaper output relied on compulsory public subscription.<sup>424</sup> In view of this, starting from 2003, the newspaper restructuring programme targeted the ‘notorious forced public

---

<sup>419</sup> ‘Liaoning chuban chumei dengdai shangshi ‘guohui’ (Liaoning Publishing Group waiting to go public)’, *Caijing*, 25 October 2007, [http://news.xinhuanet.com/newmedia/2007-10/25/content\\_6941238.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/newmedia/2007-10/25/content_6941238.htm)

<sup>420</sup> Dickie, ‘Beijing gives go-ahead’

<sup>421</sup> Liaoning chuban chumei dengdai shangshi ‘guohui’

<sup>422</sup> *ibid*

<sup>423</sup> Dickie, ‘Beijing gives go-ahead’

<sup>424</sup> Huang, 2007b, p.416

subscription system'<sup>425</sup> by reorganising the four-level system with the central, provincial, municipal and county level papers into the three-level system with the central, provincial and local/city levels<sup>426</sup> and by ending the system of forcing party and state entities to subscribe to party newspapers.<sup>427</sup> This state-owned newspaper reform, according to a March 2004 report from Xinhua News Agency, involved a total of 1,452 Party and government newspapers. 'Besides the 677 newspapers already shut down, 325 state-owned newspapers were transformed to commercial newspaper groups while 310 newspapers were separated from government departments, and 94 official journals have been converted to free publications'.<sup>428</sup>

The policy basis for the 2003 press restructuring was the above-mentioned No.19 document and relevant regulations. Soon after the promulgation of the No.19 document, on 1 August 2003, the GAPP issued specific measures stipulating that with the exception of several major official titles – the Party-state's two key national mouthpieces *People's Daily* and *Qiushi (Seeking Truth)* magazine, the party committee at the provincial levels could only run one party newspaper and one party magazine and party papers at the county level and below were to be closed down. This is regarded as the start of giving up the four-level newspaper institution.<sup>429</sup>

As for the institutional transformation of newspapers, the 'Cultural institutional reform trial' (*Wenhua tizhi gaige shidian gongzuo*) involving eight newspaper groups started to 'run onto the fast track'<sup>430</sup> in 2003 with a focus on transforming the commercial sector or operational part of non-profit enterprises into profit-making enterprises. The breakthrough was the split-up of profit-making and the non-profit-making parts of newspapers. However, 'this cultural institutional reform highlighted the issue of ownership (or property right). There were no statements about how to deal with this issue. Ownership may be the main problem in baffling the further development of cultural enterprises.'<sup>431</sup>

---

<sup>425</sup> Huang, 2007b, p.418

<sup>426</sup> *ibid*

<sup>427</sup> Akhavan-Majid, 2004 p.557

<sup>428</sup> Huang, 2007b, p.419

<sup>429</sup> *ibid*

<sup>430</sup> Zhengyi Sun and Tingting Liu, 'Zhongguo xinwenye huiwang: eryue (Reflections on China's journalism industry: February)', *Xinwen Jizhe (Journalists)*, 9 December 2004, <http://www.whxwcb.gov.cn/s1/show.php?id=173>

<sup>431</sup> Sun and Liu, 2004



In 2003, the No.1147 document entitled ‘Implementation plan for the trial project of journalism and publishing institutional reforms’ (*Xinwen chuban tizhi gaige shidian gongzuo shishi fangan*) was promulgated by the GAPP.<sup>432</sup> It made clear that investors were allowed to participate in the operation and management of newspapers. It also ruled that ‘news media organizations that are selected for trial to transform into profit-making businesses, on the premise that the state is the major shareholder, are allowed to expand the finance area according to the finance regulations.’<sup>433</sup>

On 31 December 2003, the State Council promulgated the No. 105 document entitled ‘Notice on issuing two regulations on supporting the cultural industrial development and systematic transformation of operational cultural non-profit organization to profit-making organizations at the selected trial sites for the reform’ (*Guowuyuan bangongting guanyu yinfa wenhua tizhi gaige shidian zhong zhichi wenhua chanye fazhan he jingyingxing wenhua shiye danwei zhuzhi wei qiye de liangge guiding de tongzhi*).<sup>434</sup> This No. 105 document set out specific regulations on taxation, investment, financing, asset handling, and pricing for the selected organizations for trial. The biggest breakthrough of the reform plan was to ‘promote the institutional division of non-profit and profit-making organizations, to retain the non-profit editorial part and leave the other parts like operation, advertising and distribution completely open.’<sup>435</sup>

As for the clear-up of chaotic market competition, in 2005, newspaper restructuring focused on the issue of excessive, disorderly and chaotic newspaper competition in the market. Correspondingly, the ‘Notice on the work of standardizing distribution of newspapers and other publications’ (*Guanyu kaizhan guifan baokan faxing zhixu gongzuo de tongzhi*) was promulgated on 24 August 2005 by the Central Propaganda Department, the State Council and the GAPP.<sup>436</sup> The background of this regulation was that metropolitan newspapers and evening newspapers competed in a chaotic manner resulting in loss of state assets and waste of resources. Looking at the press

---

<sup>432</sup> Song, 2005, pp. 114-115

<sup>433</sup> *ibid*

<sup>434</sup> Cui, 2005, p.13

<sup>435</sup> *ibid*

<sup>436</sup> ‘Tuidong zhuanxing de zhengce zhicheng – jiedu guifan baokan faxing zhixu de youguan wenjian (Policies that push transformation – analysing relevant documents regarding standardizing distribution order for newspaper and publications)’, <http://www.chinesejournalist.cn/html/200511/20051121.htm>

market between 2004 and 2005, the quantity-based growth model adopted by many newspapers failed to solve the 'same quality' newspaper competition, emergence of new media and the changing ways for the public to obtain information. Newspaper revenue declined but the costs remained the same. In 2004, newspapers' advertising growth rate was negative at - 5.06 percent, according to statistics released by the Advertising Division of the State Industrial and Commerce Administration. Such negative growth had not occurred since the economic reforms. Growth was weak in early 2005 with advertising revenue for newspapers increasing by only 5.77 percent in the first four months. The price war was on among a great many of 'same nature' metropolitan newspapers with an aim of maintaining the market share.<sup>437</sup>

In sum, the reforms of internal press policies accelerated after 2001. Shifts occurred at both macro and micro levels in the press sector from the internal perspective during the phase of floatation from 2001 to 2007. At the macro institutional level, the government pushed the restructuring programme further by reducing the levels of newspapers to three, completely abolishing state subsidies, closing down unprofitable small papers, and transforming the commercial sectors of newspapers into companies while retaining control of the editorial section in trial newspaper conglomerates, as well as regulating the disorderly newspaper competition. At the micro operation level, restrictions on geography, medium and financing were relaxed. Newspaper conglomerates were encouraged to run cross-regional and cross-media enterprises as well as issuing shares at domestic and international stock market using the dual-track editorial/operation division model. Private capital was allowed to enter news media with state remaining the major shareholder. The latest change was that the listing of entire newspaper enterprises was allowed but how the party/state retains control of the content or the editorial part of newspaper conglomerates remains unclear.

Turning to the external perspective, during the post-WTO era, the Chinese print media sector was under pressure from globalisation and partially opened its market to foreign media in terms of product and investment. Restrictions on foreign investment in newspaper operation, distribution and advertising were more relaxed but the opening of newspaper sector was full of conflicts and ambiguity.

---

<sup>437</sup> *ibid*

Foreign media enter Chinese newspaper market in two ways: by investment, which may take the form of direct investment or setting up joint ventures, or by printing and distributing foreign newspapers. Chinese policies on foreign investment, printing and distribution will be discussed next.

Newspapers were defined as a specified product in China at the entry of WTO and foreign investors were restricted from the wholesaling and retailing of newspapers for the following three years. In February and April 2002, 'Regulations on guiding the direction of foreign investment' (*Zhidao waishang touzi fangxiang guiding*) and Directory for foreign-invested industries (*Waishang touzi chanye zhidao mulu*) were re-issued individually. In the 'Directory of restricted foreign invested sectors' (*Xianzhi waishang touzi chanye mulu*), the retail and wholesale businesses of books, newspapers and periodicals were listed under the category of 'wholesale and retailing trades' (*pifa he lingshou maoyi ye*).<sup>438</sup>

The government granted foreign investors' limited rights to invest in the commercial sector of the state-owned newspapers. But foreign capital was banned from the editorial operations of newspapers'. Foreign investors were prohibited from setting up press and publication entities on their own but they could collaborate with Chinese counterparts to publish.<sup>439</sup> Two important documents were issued in 2003 and 2004. In 2003, the above-mentioned No.1147 document regulated that 'foreign investment must not be made in the editorial and publishing businesses of news media.'<sup>440</sup> In November 2004, Beijing introduced another policy stating that 'foreign (as well as 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. In other words, it means foreigners are allowed to own no more than 49 percent of a media joint venture. This rule also applies to certain foreign newspapers, e.g. *Lianhe Zaobao*.'<sup>441</sup> These two documents, compared to the No.17 document in 2001 that totally banned foreign capital from

---

<sup>438</sup> Wei, 2002,

[http://gbcode.rthk.org.hk/TuniS/www.rthk.org.hk/mediadigest/20020715\\_76\\_33705.html](http://gbcode.rthk.org.hk/TuniS/www.rthk.org.hk/mediadigest/20020715_76_33705.html)

<sup>439</sup>'Tuijin gaige shixian xinwen chuban dafazhan (Promote reforms and realise the great development of journalism and publishing)', *Zhongguo xinwen chuban bao*, 23 October 2007,

<http://media.people.com.cn/GB/40606/6421265.html>

<sup>440</sup> 'Tuijin gaige shixian xinwen chuban dafazhan', 2007

<sup>441</sup> Huang, 2007b, p.423-4

news media, represented a step forward by the state towards the integration of state capitalism with global capitalism.

Despite the fact that the restrictions on foreign investment were relaxed to a certain extent, the policy did not seem attractive to foreign investors. 'Foreign investors are not exactly queueing up to put their money in newspaper groups, not even in the non-sensitive advertising part of the business. "Foreign parties probably believe returns on their investment in the print media will not be as great as those in broadcasting," said Professor Yu Guoming, a media analyst at China Renmin University.'<sup>442</sup>

In terms of printing and distribution, the policies were ambiguous and conflicting. On one hand, foreign investors were permitted to establish printing and distribution companies. The regulatory bodies claimed in 2007 that the 'printing industry and distribution service market for publications were open'.<sup>443</sup> There were about 40 publishing enterprises dealing with books, newspapers and periodicals and 2,400 printing and distribution enterprises established in the form of joint ventures or foreign invested companies in China.<sup>444</sup> On the other hand, printing of foreign newspapers may be allowed but foreign newspapers were strictly banned from distributing in China.

Printing of foreign newspapers was not new in China. As early as in 1990s, many foreign newspapers were printed in the Pearl River area in South East China. Liu Binjie, Minister of GAPP claimed in 2007 that 'the Pearl Delta has become the world's printing base, serving more than 40 countries and region. Most US major publications are printed in Guangdong province.'<sup>445</sup>

In December 2004, the GAPP allowed foreign newspapers including the *Financial Times* to print in China on a contract basis, while retaining restrictions on distribution.<sup>446</sup> A GAPP official claimed that 'foreign newspapers can print in China

---

<sup>442</sup> Jason Leow, 'China: China's media shake-up, Restructure, re-organise and reform - that is the word from the top to newspapers and broadcasters in China', *The Straits Times*, 10 April 2004,

<http://www.asiamedia.ucla.edu/article.asp?parentid=10080>

<sup>443</sup> 'Tuijin gaige shixian xinwen chuban dafazhan', 2007

<sup>444</sup> *ibid*

<sup>445</sup> *ibid*

<sup>446</sup> Mure Dickie, 'Foreign newspapers given permission to print inside China', *Financial Times*, 25 November 2004, <http://search.ft.com/ftArticle?queryText=China%2C+newspaper&aje=true&id=041125001570&ct=0>

but all the printed papers must be exported and distributed in international market. Not a single copy is allowed to access the domestic market in China. For the near future, foreign newspapers are prohibited from distributing in China'.<sup>447</sup> This policy clarified that foreign newspapers were to be handled as import items. Printing foreign newspapers in China was treated as an industrial act, like all other manufacturing goods, foreign companies can use China as a production base to cut their printing costs.

However, the plan to relax restrictions on foreign newspapers' printing in China was reported to have been blocked in 2005 because of 'concerns raised by colour revolutions against authoritarian governments in Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan.'<sup>448</sup> Chinese regulators linked the foreign newspaper printing in China to national security issues, which 'was likely to disappoint international newspaper publishers, eager to build their presence in what is potentially a huge media market.'<sup>449</sup> No official regulations or policies have been issued in this regard till now. I suspect that the printing of foreign newspapers has been restored in China.

In contrast to the ambiguous policies on printing of foreign newspapers, the government clearly stated that foreign newspapers were strictly prohibited from distributing in China. Dong Yiwei, Director of laws and regulations division of GAPP, claimed that 'up to now, no foreign newspapers or periodicals have been allowed to distribute in China except for a few special-approved papers like Da Gong Bao and Wen Hui Bao based in Hong Kong.'<sup>450</sup> Since 'no commitment was made on editing and publishing by China out of the consideration for the cultural security',<sup>451</sup> foreign newspapers could only get into China through importation, subscription, or copyright cooperation. They 'are currently flown into Mainland China from print sites in Hong Kong and elsewhere, and distribution is limited to places where

---

<sup>447</sup> 'Haiwai baozhi huozhun zai hua yinshua (Foreign newspapers are allowed to print in China)', 4 December 2004, [http://news.bbc.co.uk/chinese/simp/hi/newsid\\_4060000/newsid\\_4067800/4067859.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/chinese/simp/hi/newsid_4060000/newsid_4067800/4067859.stm)

<sup>448</sup> Mure Dickie, 'Beijing blocks foreign newspapers', *Financial Times*, 16 November, 2005, <http://search.ft.com/ftArticle?queryText=Foreign+newspaper%2C+China&aje=true&id=051116009363&ct=0>

<sup>449</sup> *ibid*

<sup>450</sup> Xiaoyu Yang, 'Guowai baozhi jinru neidi shangxu shiri, yinshuachang yinlai xin jiyu (Foreign newspapers still need to wait to enter mainland China, printing factories have new opportunities)', *Quanqiu Caijing Guancha (Global Finance Observation)*, 22 December, 2004, <http://finance.sina.com.cn>

<sup>451</sup> 'China welcomes foreign cooperation on press and publication', [http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200604/25/eng20060425\\_261079.html](http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200604/25/eng20060425_261079.html)

foreigners are numerous, such as hotels and airports, and to approved subscribers.<sup>452</sup> They were allowed to ‘collaborate on columns, information exchanges and the international pages.’<sup>453</sup>

In sum, with China’s entry into WTO, its press policies towards the overseas media corporations and foreign investors were more open and globalized. However these were dual track policies. On one hand, the newspaper’s commercial sectors were open and foreign investors were allowed to be involved in the operation of Chinese media conglomerates on condition that the state was the major shareholder. Foreign investors were also allowed to establish printing and distribution enterprises in China. On the other hand, the state strictly controlled the ideological part and closed it to the outside world by prohibiting foreign companies or investors from getting involved in the editorial section of Chinese newspapers, and prohibiting foreign newspapers from distributing in China.

So far, I have explored institutional changes in the press over the past 30 years in detail from both internal and external perspectives. Three characteristics are summarized below to lay a foundation for the further analysis of the impact of globalisation on the press structural changes.

Firstly, both internal and external press policies were more open and relaxed though such opening and relaxation were gradual. The state’s attitudes towards press reform were cautious, following a pattern of starting from the trial or pilot project, then promoting it on a nationwide basis. The transformation process was a mixture of deregulation and re-regulation. For instance, shareholding press groups, non-media companies, cross-media and cross-region operations were banned in 1994 but those restrictions were lifted in 2001. The injection of private capital and foreign capital was banned before 2004 but allowed afterwards on condition that they were limited to the commercial sector of newspapers and the state remained the major shareholder.

Secondly, the state monopoly was broken in press sector and the dual-track operation/editorial model was introduced and developed. Party-run (*dang ban*) papers changed to party-control (*dang guan*) papers. Although the news media were still declared to be state-owned, such state-ownership was not as complete and pure

---

<sup>452</sup> *ibid*

<sup>453</sup> *ibid*

as that of pre-economic reform era. Before 1978, the party/state monopolized the whole operation of the newspaper, subsidizing the paper and controlling its content. Press commercialisation enabled newspapers to achieve financial autonomy. The commercial sector of newspapers was split from the editorial operation, privatised and run as a business. But the editorial operation was still under the ideological control of the Party in terms of content.

Thirdly, press policies were more relaxed and open to the domestic newspapers than to foreign newspapers. The state encouraged and supported the domestic media conglomerates to integrate with global market and compete with foreign conglomerates. Domestic media conglomerates were protected by the state by the means of partially restricting foreign investment and totally restricting foreign newspapers.

Globalisation had implications for China's press structural changes in both internal and external perspectives, though the impact on external policies was more obvious. Globalisation's impacts behind press policy changes are summarized and discussed below.

Firstly, the press commercialisation from 1978 to the mid-1990s was mainly driven by domestic factors such as financial setbacks to newspapers and national economic reforms. Globalisation was painted as a political threat to the Party regime. Policy was designed to commercialise newspapers inside while totally restricting foreign capital and waging propaganda war outside.

Secondly, globalisation accelerated and rationalized the Chinese newspapers' conglomeration process. Foreign visits made the policy makers and newspaper managers realise that the media conglomerates were international practice. More importantly, the state used the domestic press conglomerates to consolidate state capital to reaffirm party control and to compete with foreign media conglomerates.

Thirdly, with China's entry into WTO, the country's integration with the global economy made possible local-global collaboration.<sup>454</sup> From the local side, the state encouraged foreign investment because China needs global capital to ease its capital shortage as surveys show that 82 percent of Chinese media organizations are desperate for funds. 'Given this, there has been a rising outcry for the lowering of the

---

<sup>454</sup> Huang, 2007b, pp.413-430

threshold for market entry.’<sup>455</sup> The only problem was how much the press sector should be open to the foreign investors. Global capital also brought an opportunity to globalise domestic media. It was important for China’s inexperienced media conglomerates to acquire advanced management skills and know-how<sup>456</sup> as ‘none of them really knows how a global-minded conglomerate should behave or make money — ‘drive profitability’, in finance-speak’.<sup>457</sup> Hence, although no commitment was made to the newspapers, the state took the initiative to open the press sector partially to foreign capital. From the global side, the huge potential of China’s newspaper market attracted global media moguls like Dow Jones and *Financial Times* to enter the market. ‘We believe the Chinese market is very important to *Asian Wall Street Journal*. We established a wholly owned advertising company in Shanghai this August (2007). We are interested in printing in China and we hope one day we can launch a Chinese version of our newspaper.’ Wu Kejia, Public Relations manager told the *Global Finance Observer*.<sup>458</sup>

Fourthly, globalisation led to protectionism. China wanted to maintain its authoritarian regime and avoid any possible ideological damage from overseas. Hence, domestic policies were more open and relaxed than external policies. The IAC/InterActiveCorp, New York based Internet conglomerate, was reported to have invested \$100 million to expand in China by creating services designed for local users. ‘We’ve certainly got enough capital to do damage,’ said Barry Diller, the company’s chief executive officer.<sup>459</sup> Such damage, if made, will not be confined to the commercial sphere by wiping out local web companies, but more importantly will include political damage. The Chinese regulatory authorities are worried that the media, if controlled by investors, ‘will not tow the line with the party and government in time of crisis,’<sup>460</sup> thus the policy imposes strict restrictions on the foreign investments.

Fifthly, global events affected the mindset of Chinese policy makers and made them concerned about national security issues. As mentioned above, Beijing stopped the

---

<sup>455</sup> ‘China’s Media Rush’, 4 December 2001, <http://www1.china.org.cn/english/2001/Dec/23061.htm>

<sup>456</sup> Huang, 2007b, pp.413-430

<sup>457</sup> Leow, ‘China: China’s media shake-up’

<sup>458</sup> Yang, ‘Guowai baozhi jinru neidi shangxu shiri, yinshuachang yinlai xin jiyu’

<sup>459</sup> Joe McDonald, ‘Diller’s Online Conglomerate to Expand in China’, *The Associated Press*, 23 November 2007, <http://www.foxnews.com/wires/2007Nov23/0,4670,ChinaInternetDiller,00.html>

<sup>460</sup> Song, 2005, p. 125-126



plan to allow foreign newspapers to print in China due to the colour revolutions in 2005. Shi Zongyuan, the then GAPP director told Financial Times that the role of the international media in such popular revolts had prompted the suspension of what had been an cautious, but significant easing of China's curbs on foreign news publications. 'The "colour revolutions" were a reminder not to let saboteurs into the house and that the door must be closed, so we have closed it temporarily,' Mr Shi said in an interview with the FT.<sup>461</sup>

Sixthly, globalisation enabled the Chinese policy makers to follow international practice. China's WTO membership means its media sector should follow international laws and practice. Limited foreign ownership is an international practice. The state remains the major shareholder in terms of newspaper ownership. In addition, the listing of Beijing Media Corp. on the Hong Kong stock market made China realise that the dual-track model would not work well in the global capital market, thus they allowed publishing conglomerates to float as complete operations. However, it will take time to see how this will work out and what policies and regulations will follow.

#### Conclusion:

Globalisation has had impacts on China's press institutions during the press globalisation process from 1978 to 2007. The Chinese press sector has gone through local-to-global and global-to-local processes based on press policies. The total state monopoly was broken in the press sector and dramatic changes happened in the operation section of newspapers. However, one fundamental thing remained the same: 'the fact that the Party controls the media would never change,' claimed a GAPP official.<sup>462</sup> The scope and pace of Chinese press globalisation has been engineered and controlled by the party/state.

---

<sup>461</sup> Dickie, 'Beijing blocks foreign newspapers'.

<sup>462</sup> Sun and Liu, 'Zhongguo xinwenye huiwang', 2004

Note: 'party controls media' (dang guan meiti) is a significant policy raised in recent years. It means CCP must have the right to make decisions on big issues, the right to control the assets allocation, The right to review and approve the publicity business, and the right to appoint or fire main leaders. It signifies that China's major media must be under the direct operation and administration of CCP and Institutionally affiliated to the CCP's publicity system. Translated and quoted from the above source. Original text:

「党管媒体」是近年提出的重要政策。这不仅是指共产党的各级组织实施对所属媒体的领导而且是指共产党对传媒业必须始终掌握对重大事项的决策权、对资产配置的控制权、对宣传业务的审核权、对主要领导干部的任免权。这就意味着中国主要媒体必须由共产党的一级组织直接主办、主管，在组织上纳入共产党的宣传系统之内。

Keeping pace with China's economic integration with the global market, the Chinese government has supported the growth of the home industries as a protection and competition against the invasion of global media moguls. It has encouraged the Chinese newspaper conglomerates to 'reach out', tapping the global capital market and developing cooperation with foreign media organizations. On the other hand, the state has partially opened the local press market to foreign investors and encouraged foreign media to 'come in' and cooperate with China to tap the international cultural market potential for common prosperity and to bring China's cultural products to the world. However, the state remains the major shareholder in terms of newspaper ownership. As Anthony Fung has written in the context of the TV industry, when China lets foreign capital in, it still likes to retain the upper hand. 'Global capital must be subsumed under red capital in order to break even'.<sup>463</sup> Whether the organizational fusion between global capital and local business can work well in the long term needs to be proven.<sup>464</sup> 'With the steady growth of the economy, the media industry would be more open in the future.'<sup>465</sup>

The press globalisation process has witnessed a marriage between the party/state and market as well as the local market with global market. China is a transitional society moving from state socialism to state capitalism. 'The symbiosis between the state and market economy as well as interpenetration of political and financial interest'<sup>466</sup> emerged during the press commercialisation and conglomeration period. When it came to the period of floatation, 'the partial media privatisation policy may be understood as an effort to channel transactional capital into a mechanism through which China's media industry will benefit, by exposure to media globalisation on the one hand and keeping its Chinese political, cultural and economic identity on the other hand.'<sup>467</sup>

Having discussed the press institution, the questions are whether globalisation has had an impact on the newspaper titles in practice, how the Chinese newspapers operate within the institutional framework in the globalisation era, and what the

---

<sup>463</sup> Anthony Fung, 'Think globally, act locally -China's rendezvous with MTV', *Global Media and Communication*, Vol. 2, No. 1, (2006), p.75

<sup>464</sup> *ibid*

<sup>465</sup> Cui, 2005, p.32

<sup>466</sup> Price, 2002, p.27-47

<sup>467</sup> Huang, 2007b, pp.413-430

major changes have been. *Beijing Youth Daily*, as the first trial newspaper to float on the global stock market using the dual-track model, will be discussed in the next chapter to reveal the impact of globalisation on the newspaper at the operational and organisational level.

## Chapter 4 Impact of globalisation on the organisation of *BYD*

In this chapter the impact of globalisation on the local press will be discussed from the organizational level. Specifically, this chapter will address the business operation of the *BYD*, including its ownership, goals and strategies, and business model as well as changes in these aspects over time. The focus will be on the status quo of *BYD*'s organisation. The research for this chapter is based on the literature, corporate documents and interviews with corporate management and senior and experienced reporters and editors.

The central theme of this chapter is that the effects of globalisation, here taken to involve commercialisation and the use of information technology, influence the ownership, corporate goals and policies, and business models of local newspaper organisations in China like *BYD*, and thus accelerate Chinese style capitalism and media convergence. Declining circulation and advertising revenue, the loss of readers due to the digital revolution and the availability of multi-media news channels are global challenges that face all newspapers around the world. *BYD* is not an exception. In response, *BYD* has re-oriented its corporate strategies under the dual-track ownership model, carried out structural reforms, and developed its business models especially exploring new ways to implement news convergence practices in the newsrooms.

Ownership, economic constraints, and organization structure play a great role in dictating journalistic decisions.<sup>468</sup> In liberal democratic countries, a news organisation is defined as 'the social, formal, usually economic entity that employs the media worker in order to produce media content.'<sup>469</sup> The primary goal for most media organisations is economic profit.<sup>470</sup> In contrast, Chinese news organisations have two goals, political and economic. On one hand, they serve as the party's mouthpieces and pay their dues to the state by advocating the state's policies as well as criticising the wrongdoings of government to maintain the party/state's legitimacy. On the other hand, news organisations pursue economic profit by meeting the demands of their readership and their advertisers in the market. This nature determines that the Chinese news organisations share both differences and

---

<sup>468</sup> Shoemaker and Reese, 1996, pp.172-3

<sup>469</sup> Shoemaker and Reese, 1996, p.144

<sup>470</sup> Shoemaker and Reese, 1996, p.289

similarities in terms of ownership, goals and policies, and business models with their counterparts in the liberal democratic countries.

#### 4.1 Ownership

Ownership is an essential issue that determines the operation, content and management of a news media organization. As Shoemaker and Reese claim, 'the ultimate organization-level power lies with owners, who set policy and enforce it.'<sup>471</sup>

Owners possess two basic kinds of potential control over the symbolic environment. 'First and most obviously, they are able to regulate the output of the divisions they own directly, either by intervening in day-to-day operations or by establishing general goals and understandings and appointing managerial and editorial staff to implement them. Second, they are able to influence the strategies of companies they do not own in their roles as competitors or suppliers.'<sup>472</sup>

The official line on ownership in China is that all the news media are state-owned and this has not and will not change in the foreseeable future. However, changes have occurred to the ownership pattern from the total state control of both content and operation, to the partial control in the form of profit-driven operation under the administration of state-owned institutions, then to the spin-off of business operation from the news content. The state has gradually given financial autonomy to the news media organizations as far as operation is concerned. They can absorb capital from other industries and can launch mergers and acquisitions. But the central control of the editorial department has never changed. The state exercises its power and control over the newspapers by the means of dual-track ownership as well as hiring and firing of senior managements.

##### 4.1.1 Dual-track ownership

The dual-track ownership under which business operation and news content are separate is the most distinctive characteristic of the current pattern of press ownership in China. It means the state gives much leeway and freedom to the organization's operation section while keeping the editorial section in an iron grip. But how does it work?

---

<sup>471</sup> Shoemaker and Reese, 1996, p.173

<sup>472</sup> Graham Murdock, 'Redrawing the map of the communications industries: concentration and ownership in the era of privatization', (in) Marjorie Ferguson, ed., *Public Communication – the new imperatives*, (London: Sage Publications, 1990), p.7

The dual-track ownership underwent an evolution process backed up by state policies. Press organisations were state subsidized administrative units for more than 20 years prior to economic reform in 1978. With further economic reform in 1992, newspapers, although still defined as the not-for-profit administrative units, were allowed to operate as profit-making business organizations (*Shiye danwei, qiye jingying*). Since early 2001, state-owned capital can be invested in advertising, circulation and printing on condition that these operation sections are separated from editorial department. State owned non-media investors are allowed to become shareholders of the Chinese media.<sup>473</sup> However, the state still controls the majority of the news media company's shares. In 2004, the Central Propaganda Department and the General Administration of Press and Publication issued the 'Notice on enhancing management on separating the administration and operation of newspapers and magazines' (*Guanyu dui guanban fenli he huazhuan bankan jiaqiang guanli de tongzhi*), which specifies the requirement for the separation in terms of personnel (civil servants of government organs can't take any posts at news agency and vice versa), finances, and distribution. 'From the institutional perspective, editorials will be separated from the operation and thus turn the newspaper agency into both a propaganda tool and an operation entity. These two sides will be balanced.'<sup>474</sup>

In the case of *BYD*, at the time of its re-launch in 1981, it received subsidies from the government. Like all newspapers in China, it was regarded as a non-profit governmental organization. It was driven to the market because the government funding was so short. The newspaper was pioneering this move and people knew that they had to feel their way. This initiative was a shot in the dark. 'From the beginning, nobody gave us money because the Youth League was a poor organization, very under-funded. It would not give us much money. That's why we had to go to the market. It's been market-oriented since the beginning,' said Liu He, the Deputy Chief Editor. With the intensification of China's reform and opening up policy in 1991 and following Deng Xiaoping's Southern Tour Speech of 1992, *BYD* became a commercialised newspaper by launching market-oriented supplements to boost advertising revenue, by setting up the 'Little Red Cap' distribution company

---

<sup>473</sup> Yu Zhang, 'The reforming role of the Chinese government in China's media transformation', *Media Asia*, vol. 32 No 2, 2005

<sup>474</sup> Cui, 2005, p.95-96

and by expanding its businesses into other areas. In June 2003, the group was selected by China's central government as one of 35 units from the country's cultural sector targeted for carrying out market-oriented reforms.<sup>475</sup>

As one of the four national news organizations selected as trial sites for the cultural reform, *BYD* was publicly listed in late 2004 as *BYD* Beijing Media Corporation Limited. The public listing reflects the dichotomy of the ownership. On one hand, the operation section including advertising, production, printing and distribution is listed. On the other hand, the content section including reporting and editing is not listed.

The nature (of state ownership) will never ever change. But the operation has changed. In the past, the operation section was also controlled by the state. Starting from 2001, we tried to separate the operation and content, said Yanping Zhang, the President of *BYD*.<sup>476</sup>

The Beijing Media Corporation Limited, established in 2001 as a joint stock limited company, listed H shares on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange on 22 December 2004. The listing was a tester for the government to see whether the dual ownership model would work.

As the first Chinese news media company to be listed on the world stock market, the successful IPO (Initial Public Offering) of *BYD*'s non-editorial operations drew the media attention from around the world. The newspaper was called to 'officially hit the capitalist road.'<sup>477</sup> It was the first mainland news media company to be listed in global stock exchanges with businesses covering 'the sale of advertising space, production of newspapers and trading of print-related materials as well as event organising.' The *BYD* agency, owned by the state, holds 65.8 percent of the shares in the listed Beijing Media Corporation and is thus the controlling shareholder. That guarantees the state the greatest power in the listed company. This percentage of shares conforms to the state regulation issued in late 2004 stipulating that 'the leading role of the state-owned organization will be enhanced and the state must hold

---

<sup>475</sup> <http://www.hkex.com.hk/listedco/listconews/sehk/20041213/01000/ewp111.pdf>, accessed 12 November 2006

<sup>476</sup> Interview with Zhang Yanping, 2006

<sup>477</sup> *Beijing Youth Daily on the capitalist road*, [http://www.danwei.org/media\\_business/beijing\\_youth\\_daily\\_on\\_the\\_cap.php](http://www.danwei.org/media_business/beijing_youth_daily_on_the_cap.php), accessed 13 November 2006

the controlling shares in sensitive areas'.<sup>478</sup> The diagram of its group structure is given in Figure 11 below.

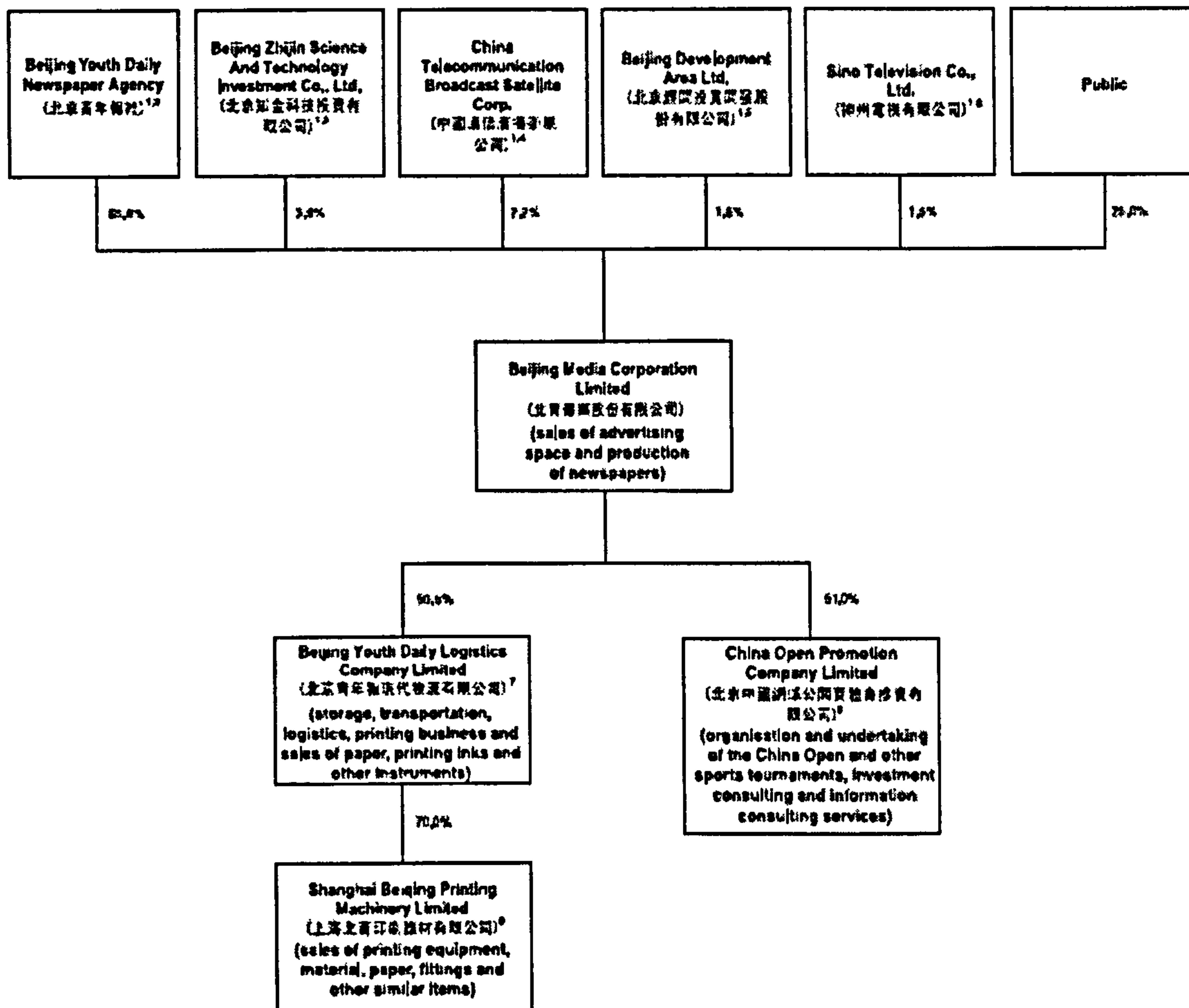


Figure 11 *BYD's* listed company, Beijing Media Co., Ltd, corporate diagram.<sup>479</sup>

As for the content, Soderlund claimed that 'press ownership is one of the factors that have been prominently identified as a determinant of news content.'<sup>480</sup> The dual-track ownership model demonstrates that the state controls the news content, thus it legitimises the top-down political interference from the state regulatory authorities like the Propaganda Departments at national and local levels. 'We are an organization newspaper associated to the government, we must take orders from the government. That is the principle and can't be bent,' said Zhang Yanping, the President of *BYD*.

<sup>478</sup> Cui, 2005, p.13-21

<sup>479</sup> <http://www.hkex.com.hk/listedco/listconews/sehk/20041213/01000/ewp111.pdf>, accessed 13 November 2006

<sup>480</sup> Walter C. Soderlund and Kai Hildebrandt, eds., *Canadian newspaper ownership in the Era of convergence – rediscovering social responsibility*, (Edmonton: The university of Alberta Press, 2005), p.32



After Beijing Media Co. was listed on the stock market, it issued statements to make it clear that the editorial content is closed to foreign ownership. ‘*BYD* produces the editorial content for the *BYD* papers, an area of business which is currently not open to foreign ownership under PRC law. *BYD* has, however, granted us an option under the Advertising Business Agreement to acquire from it any or all of its editorial and publication rights in relation to the *BYD* papers, exercisable from such time as our ownership and operation of such rights are permitted under PRC laws.’<sup>481</sup> This statement leaves ambiguous what kind of editorial and publication rights can be purchased.

This operation/content split model does not conform to international practice and is unique to China. As to whether or not this split model is viable and works in the global market, responses vary among the *BYD* staff being interviewed for this research.

Senior management of *BYD* seem positive and optimistic. They think that the separation of operation and content will pose no problems on the global market because operation is the lifeline of a newspaper and the content part is just an editorial department.

The content and operation, though separated, should be regarded as integrated because operation is the lifeline of the newspaper. Taking myself for an example, I’m the President of *BYD* and at the same time, I am the chairman of board of directors. In fact, it is run in an integrated unit.

The international companies can see that the separation of operation and content is different from a simple advertising company. In fact, the content part has become an editorial department. But the real operation part is all in the listed company. So it is not simply an advertising company, it is the life and blood of the newspaper’s survival. When you hold the life and blood, you hold the value.<sup>482</sup>

Some Chinese scholars worry that the split model is problematic. As *BYD* is still state-owned, the listed Beijing Media Corp. does not have the legitimate right to manage the state assets. Song Jianwu, director of media management institute of

---

<sup>481</sup> <http://www.hkex.com.hk/listedco/listconews/sehk/20041213/01000/ewp111.pdf>, accessed 15 November 2006

<sup>482</sup> Interview with Zhang Yanping, 2006

People's University, claimed that *BYD*, as the major share holder of Beijing Media Corp., is not a 100 percent profit-making business with the right to operate the state assets. Beijing Media Corp. and *BYD* have connected transactions and the industrial chain is broken.<sup>483</sup> Song thinks that the management problems exposed by the listing of Beijing Media Corp are general among the newspaper conglomerates in the Mainland China.<sup>484</sup>

In addition, some journalists point out that the split model has potential institutional problems because operation and content are inter-dependent and should be integrated as one business. The dual-ownership model gives rise to problems about who the newspaper represents, the owner or the investor, especially when the interests of the owner and the investors are in contradiction.

The one who makes the investment will operate the newspaper. It is ridiculous. You can't separate them clearly. The problem is not *BYD* getting listed in the stock market but it is a matter of making real changes in the institution.

I don't think politics decides everything. The difference lies in the operation model or the investment model. It is a question of whom we are responsible to. Investors will decide the newspaper's standpoint. Journalism is a tool of speech. It's not clear whom we speak for.

We had naïve thoughts. We wanted to improve the management and operation model through the listing and make it professional and move in the direction of globalisation. However, in fact, we are far away from achieving this goal. It does not happen now and I think we'll not achieve it in the short term.<sup>485</sup>

Whether the split model is viable on the global market is unclear and still remains a question. But it is clear that the Chinese government intends to relax ownership control over the press by separating the operation and content sections for the benefits of both the party and the news organisations. This move is a progress driven by the economic actors. The model enables the news organisations to go beyond

---

<sup>483</sup> Linghua Meng and Tianpeng Li, *Beiqing de luanxiang yu miju* (The chaos and puzzles of *BYD*), *Caijing Wenzhai*, 1 November 2005, [http://www.mediachina.net/index\\_news\\_view.jsp?id=78966](http://www.mediachina.net/index_news_view.jsp?id=78966), accessed 16 November 2006

<sup>484</sup> *ibid*

<sup>485</sup> Interview with Wang Fang, 2006

China's border to draw on the financial and management resources from the global market for their own growth while the party maintains the ideological bottom line.

With the development of marketization in the news media sphere in China, the dual-track model acts as a gateway, though problematic, for the newspapers to connect with the world capital market and for the overseas capital to enter the domestic press market. One year after Beijing Media Co. went public, Zhang Yanping claimed that 1.04 billion Hong Kong dollars had been raised and more importantly, 'the floatation had made *BYD* conform to international norms and made it more market-oriented, transparent and legal. It made us change our old mind-set and behaviours.'<sup>486</sup>

Floatation has also attracted quite a few trans-national companies. 'In the time of our crisis, MIH Media of South Africa, one of our strategic partners, took initiatives to buy in our shares to express their confidence.'<sup>487</sup>

#### 4.1.2 Hiring and firing senior management

Apart from relaxed control over the operation and tight control over the content, as Chomsky claimed, 'the most important mechanism of ownership control is the power to hire, promote and fire.'<sup>488</sup> How the senior management personnel are hired and fired will be discussed here.

There are about 600 staff at the *BYD* agency, of whom 158 are administrative and 324 are newspeople including reporters and editors. Starting from 1990, all journalists and editors have been hired through open examinations and interviews by the *BYD*. The senior management consists of 13 staff: one chief editor, five deputy chief editors including two executive managing editors, one President and six vice presidents. There's also an editorial committee consisting of six members that sits as the board of directors.

The senior management is a mixture with people appointed by the government and those promoted from within *BYD*. Among the 13 senior management staff, seven were promoted from within the newspaper and four were appointed and transferred from the Beijing Youth League. 'In the past, more senior management were

---

<sup>486</sup> Yanping Zhang, 'Cong baozhi dao xiandai chuanmei jituan: *Beijing qingnian bao* dui wenhua tizhi gaige de chubu tansuo (From newspaper to modern media conglomerate: *BYD*'s initial exploration in the cultural institutional reform)', *Chuanmei*, 25 July 2006, <http://www.chaogewang.com/html/xdcn/cgal/2006/1205/2333.html>, accessed 10 March 2008

<sup>487</sup> *ibid*

<sup>488</sup> Daniel Chomsky, 'The mechanisms of management control at the New York Times', *Media, Culture & Society*, Vol. 21, No. 5, (1999), pp. 579-599

promoted from within the agency. I can't explain the reasons. That's the arrangement of the Youth League', explained a staff member from the Human Resource department during my field work in 2006.

The Beijing Youth League, Beijing Propaganda Department and Beijing Organization Department have the right to appoint or transfer senior agency management staff including the president and chief editor. 'BYD's administrative status has upgraded from division to bureau and the transfer of top leaders between *BYD*, *Beijing Morning Post* and *Beijing Evening News* is frequent.'<sup>489</sup> For instance, Zhang Yabin, the current chief editor, was transferred from the post of chief editor at *Beijing Morning Post* in 2004. Xiao Pei, one of the former chief editors of *BYD* was transferred to *Beijing Evening News* to act as the chief editor in 1998.<sup>490</sup> The appointment of senior management to the major metropolitan newspapers in Beijing is made by the government. 'Three years ago (2002), I left the *Beijing Daily* group and was assigned to work by the group as the chief editor at *Beijing Morning Post*. One year ago (2004), I was transferred from *Beijing Morning Post* to *Beijing Youth Daily*. Actually, it wasn't my choice. Assignment is made by the authorities,' said Zhang Yabin.<sup>491</sup> Usually reasons for changes of senior managers at the press are unknown to the public.

In addition to the 'transferred' chief editor and the Presidents, some senior managers are promoted from within the *BYD*. Zhang Yanping, the current President, is a good example. He joined *BYD* in 1981 and climbed the ladder from reporter to chief editor, then president in 2002. However it should be noted that such promotion must be approved by the Municipal Propaganda Department. Actually it is another form of appointment, appointing the senior management from within the agency instead of transferring somebody from either the government or other newspapers.

In addition to appointing or transferring senior managers, the state fires the managers for 'serious mistakes' though such things do not occur very often. The case of Cui Enqing is an example. Cui worked at *Beijing Youth Daily* for a total of 13 years from 1983 to 1996 as the President of *BYD*. On 5 June 1996, *BYD* reported that 'some

---

<sup>489</sup> Sun, Yanjun 2002, *Baoye Zhongguo (Press Industry in China)*. Beijing: Zhongguo sanxia chubanshe, p.79

<sup>490</sup> Meng and Li, 2006

<sup>491</sup> *Beijing qingnianbao zongbian Zhang Yabin fangtan shilu (Interview with Zhang Yabin, BYD's editor-in-chief)*, 8 April 2005, <http://www.aretter.com/Get/zhubianshezhang/2005-10/25/7171452297065.html>, accessed 18 November 2006

children in Anhui had died after drinking the products of state-owned beverage manufacturer Hangzhou Wahaha Group. The report caused a plunge in sales of the company.<sup>492</sup> Cui was ousted by the Propaganda Department on 11 September and was then replaced by Chen Xing, a deputy editor-in-chief of *Beijing Daily*. Although ‘the reported facts were true and the sources undisputable, the report had a great impact and resulted in serious consequences both at home and abroad<sup>493</sup> because it involved “three deaths” and “the reputation of one enterprise”. Some leaders made severe criticisms of the *BYD* and even suggested that *BYD* should terminate publication and reorganize the management team.’<sup>494</sup> In order to ensure the survival of the *BYD*, Cui resigned at a time of fast growth for the *BYD*. ‘I felt heart-broken when I resigned as *BYD* President,’ Cui later confessed in his autobiography ‘*My heart’s path*’ (*Wode xinlu*).<sup>495</sup>

Three points can be made about this event. Firstly, the government imposes its control on the press through hiring and firing senior management. Secondly, there is always a limit about how far the newspaper’s reports can go, though the line is invisible. Thirdly, that the government controls the news media in the interests of state policies. During the take-off period of economic reform in early 1990s, state policy was to promote economy in society, thus the government prioritised the interests of private businesses and tried to protect the image of businesses. If a similar event had happened occurred in 2006, it is unlikely that anybody would be sacked for such a report.

#### 4.2 Goals and strategies

As Chinese news media have become commercialised, *BYD*’s corporate goals and strategies have been heavily moulded by market competition and technology. Structural analysis is used here to shed light on *BYD*’s overall performance. There are four diagnostic components to a structural analysis. These include looking at the assumptions of the firm (or the background of the firm and industry), current strategies (how the business is currently competing), capabilities of the firm (both

---

<sup>492</sup> ‘*Beijing Youth Daily* President Cui Enqing Ousted’, *CND-Global*, September 13, 1996, <http://services.cnd.org/CND-Global/CND-Global.96.3rd/CND-Global.96-09-12.html>, accessed 18 November 2006

<sup>493</sup> The word ‘abroad’ here may be interpreted as referring to Reuter’s report on the Wahaha incident.

<sup>494</sup> Junhong Zhao, *Toushi Cui Enqing (Perspectives on Cui Enqing)*, (Beijing: Taihai Chubanshe, 2005), <http://appbook.qq.com/book/298/0004.htm>, accessed 18 November 2006

<sup>495</sup> *ibid*

strengths and weaknesses) and future goals.<sup>496</sup> As *BYD*'s background information has already been elaborated in the 'Introduction' chapter of this thesis, current strategies, strength and weakness and future goals will be discussed in this section.

#### 4.2.1 Current strategies

Building up from one obscure tabloid newspaper in the 1980s, *BYD* has become, in 2006, a media conglomerate owning ten newspapers, four magazines and two websites. Though centred on the media, *BYD* also owns and operates a number of subsidiaries ranging from distribution, logistics and advertising to arts theatres and tennis events. Conglomerates are divided into three types on the basis of their core activities: industrial, service and communications. *BYD* is a media or communications conglomerate.<sup>497</sup>

*BYD*'s long-term strategic goal is to become the most profitable, most influential and largest-scale media group in China, with *Beijing Youth Daily* as its core product.

'Towards that aim, we will cross borders, double our income in five years and transform the group into a modern enterprise committed to the development of China's media industry.'<sup>498</sup> *BYD*'s strategies are largely formed by external factors including fierce competition from the domestic newspaper market, the Internet and other new media as well as internal factors, including its desire to enhance its growth and become more competitive.

Based on its long-term goal, *BYD*'s current strategies can be divided into four layers: enhancing the competitiveness of its core newspaper *BYD*, building the *BYD* conglomerate via vertical newspaper concentration, building the *BYD* conglomerate via horizontal cross-media convergence, and absorbing capital and advanced management staff and skills from the global market, as indicated in Figure 12 below.

---

<sup>496</sup> Ardyth Broadrick Soh, *Media management: a casebook*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, (London: Lawrence Earlbaum Associates, 1999), p. 101

<sup>497</sup> Industrial conglomerates are companies that own media facilities but whose major operations are centred within industrial sectors – for example Fiat controls two major Italian dailies, *La Stampa* and *Corriere Della Sera*; Service conglomerates are centred on service sectors such as real estate, financial services and retailing, such as Silvio Berlusconi's master company, Fininvest; Communications conglomerates are centred mainly or wholly in the media and information industries. Well-known examples include Rupert Murdoch's News International, the Maxwell Communications Corporation and Bertelsmann. Source: Murdock, 1990, p.4

<sup>498</sup> <http://www.hkex.com.hk/listedco/listconews/sehk/20041213/01000/ewp111.pdf>, accessed 15 October 2006

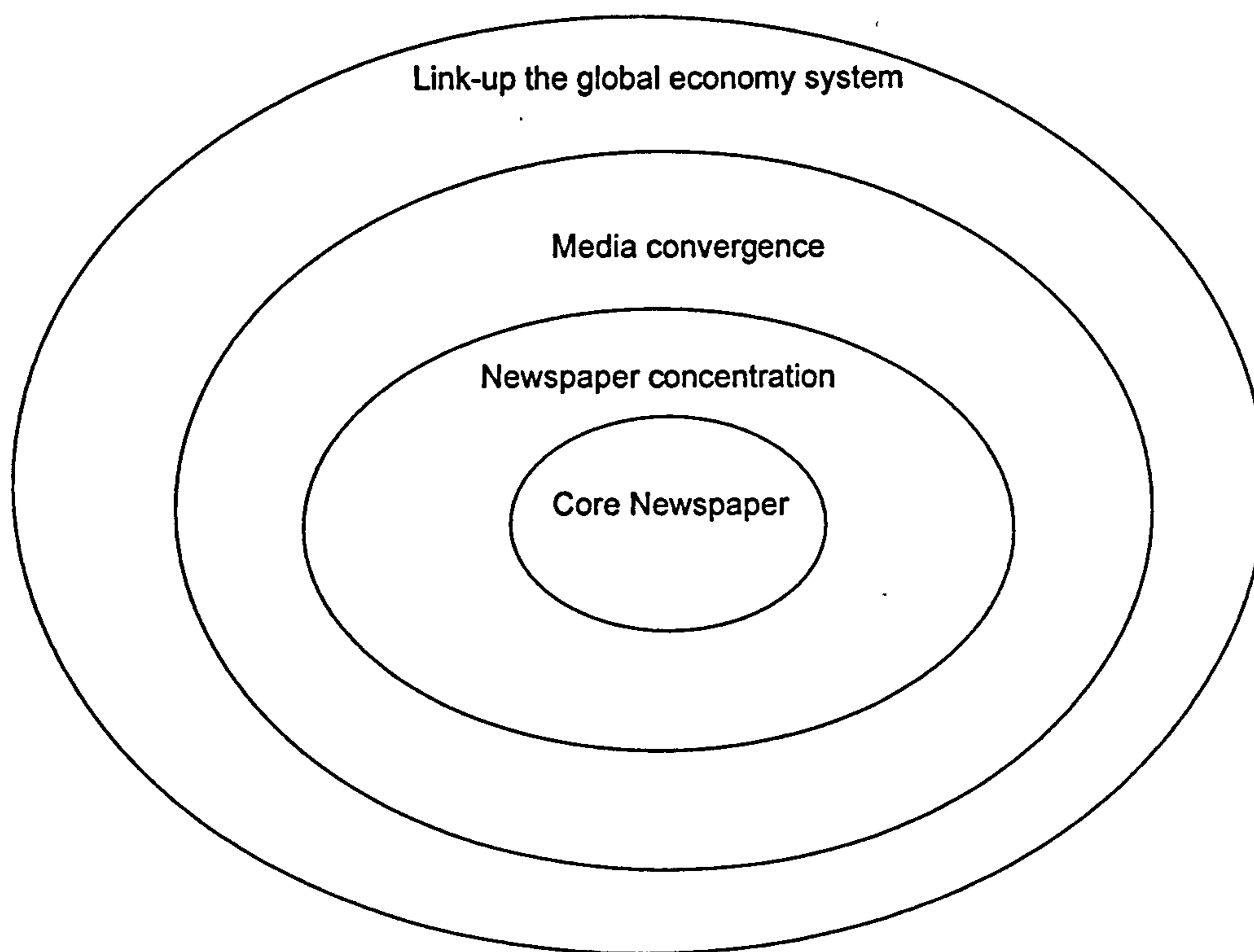


Figure 12 *BYD's* four-level corporate strategies

At the first level, the strategy is to enhance the competitiveness of its core newspaper. *BYD* did this by carrying out a series of reforms in late 2005 and early 2006, covering structural re-organisation, page layout shake-ups, content additions, distribution channel changes, recruitment, personnel reshuffles, formulating performance reviews and salary regulations. Such big reforms were said to be 'the first in *BYD's* history. With the management reshuffle, the average age of the management team is 38 years old, 4½ years less than before.'<sup>499</sup> Revisions of content and layout started to appear at the beginning of 2006. A total of 26 pages are added to the Wednesday, Thursday and Friday issues at an additional cost of 20 to 30 million RMB so as to 'improve the overall quality of the newspaper.'<sup>500</sup> The 'Little Red Cap' distribution company recruited more than 260 delivery staff and purchased new trucks for delivery. The paper is committed to enabling readers within Beijing's Fourth Ring Road to read the *BYD* newspaper before 8 am and making the *BYD* available on news stands before 7.30 am. All these measures are meant to 'enhance the *BYD's* competitiveness.'<sup>501</sup>

<sup>499</sup> *BYD* annual meeting minutes 2006 (in author's possession)

<sup>500</sup> *ibid*

<sup>501</sup> *ibid*

This strategy is driven by fierce local competition from other newspapers and other media conglomerates. In Beijing's newspaper market, prior to the 1990s, the *Beijing Evening News* founded in 1958 dominated the market. 'It had almost no competitors until the emergence of *BYD*.'<sup>502</sup> In the 1990s the Beijing newspaper market was monopolised by two newspapers, *Beijing Youth Daily* in the morning and *Beijing Evening News* in the afternoon. *BYD* ranked first in terms of subscription whilst *Beijing Evening News* ranked first in terms of retail sales.<sup>503</sup> However, this morning-evening monopoly ended around the year 2000. Competition became fierce, especially in the morning market, with the emergence of new commercialised and diversified metropolitan newspapers. In 1998, the *Beijing Morning Post* was launched, claiming to be 'the earliest on the news stands'.<sup>504</sup> In 2000 the *Star Daily* was launched, followed by the *Beijing Times* in 2001. Also, in 2001 *China Times* transformed itself into a daily, and in 2003 the *Beijing News* was launched. Cheng Yizhong, the chief editor of the *Beijing News* at that time, claimed that the biggest problem for the Beijing newspaper market is that 'there are too many vassals but a lack of one king'.<sup>505</sup>

There are altogether ten metropolitan newspapers in 2006 in Beijing, which are competitors due to their similarities in content, format and target readership, as indicated in Table 1 below. The situation is quite unlike the monopoly of one newspaper group in one city found in many Western countries. Newspaper people in Beijing have coined a term to describe the current competition in Beijing – the 'same nature, same city' (*Tongcheng tongzhi*) newspaper phenomenon.

---

<sup>502</sup> Cong liangqiang zhengdou dao qunxiong geju: Beijing baoye shichang jiexi (From two rivals to multiple rivals – Beijing newspaper market analysis), *Chinese Journalist*, 25 March 2004, <http://www.cddc.net/shownews.asp?newsid=5987>, accessed 1 November, 2006

<sup>503</sup> *ibid*

<sup>504</sup> *ibid*

<sup>505</sup> *ibid*



Name	Founded year	Publisher	Circulation
<i>Beijing Evening News</i>	1958	Beijing Daily Agency	700,000
<i>Beijing Youth Daily</i>	1949	Beijing Youth League	380,000 (self-claimed 600,000)
<i>Beijing Morning Post</i>	1998	Collaboration of <i>Beijing Daily</i> , <i>Beijing Evening News</i> and <i>Beijing Youth Daily</i>	180,000
<i>The Star Daily</i>	2000	Beijing Cultural Association	180,000
<i>China Times</i>	2000	China Disabled Persons' Federation	100,000 (self-claimed)
<i>Beijing Times</i>	2001	<i>People's Daily</i> & Beida Qingniao	280,000
<i>The Beijing News</i>	2003	Guangming Daily Group and Southern Daily Group	80,000
<i>Beijing Legal Evening News / The Mirror</i>	2004	<i>BYD</i>	180,000
<i>The First</i>	2004	<i>Beijing Daily</i> , Shanghai Media Group and <i>BYD</i>	50,000

Table 1 List of metropolitan newspapers in Beijing.<sup>506</sup>

In addition, the following Table 2 shows the market share of the leading ten newspapers in Beijing in terms of advertising revenue in September 2006

<sup>506</sup> Circulation figures come from non-official source in 2005: Jing Liu, *The Real Circulation Numbers for Beijing Newspapers*, 26, August 2005, [http://chinadigitaltimes.net/2005/08/the\\_real\\_circul.php](http://chinadigitaltimes.net/2005/08/the_real_circul.php), accessed 5 November 2006.

Ranking	Newspaper	Market share %
1	<i>Beijing Evening News</i>	21.46
2	<i>Beijing Times</i>	15.47
3	<i>Beijing Youth Daily</i>	15.34
4	<i>Life Style</i>	11.86
5	<i>The Beijing News</i>	8.13
6	<i>Beijing Legal Evening News</i>	7.57
7	<i>The Star Daily</i>	7.18
8	<i>Beijing Morning Post</i>	5.44
9	<i>Beijing Daily</i>	3.49
10	<i>The First</i>	2.06

Table 2 Leading ten Beijing newspapers for advertising income, September 2006<sup>507</sup>

Table 1 and 2 show that *BYD* is still in a leading position in the Beijing newspaper market in terms of circulation and advertising income. However, *BYD*'s 'golden era' when it dominated the market in the 1990s has ended. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, *BYD* faces competition from similar metropolitan newspapers that have resources and backing either from governmental organisations or from collaborations of media conglomerates like *The Beijing News*, formed by the Guangming Daily Group and Southern Daily Group. Hence, *BYD* must adapt its strategies to cope with the new competition in the local market. To retain influence and the market share of its flagship newspaper, efforts are being made to increase the competitiveness of *BYD*.

<sup>507</sup> 'Zhongguo baokan guanggao shichang (yuedu) yanjiu baogao (Monthly report for China newspapers advertising)', <http://info.research.hc360.com/2006/10/25150525263.shtml>, accessed 6 November 2006

At the second level, *BYD*'s strategy is to implement vertical newspaper concentration by means of acquisitions, launching new titles independently or in collaboration with other media conglomerates — both locally and nationally (or cross-region). The purpose is to make the group large and obtain as much share as possible in the segmented markets so as to achieve the effects of economy of scale.

Locally, the *BYD* group has developed a series of titles that complement each other. For instance, *BYD* acquired *Beijing Legal News* (*Beijing fazhi bao*) and re-launched it under the title of *Beijing Legal Evening News* (also called *The Mirror*) in May 2004. The strategy is to make *BYD* target a subscription-focused morning newspaper market while *The Mirror* targets the afternoon retail market. *BYD* targets the high-powered and well-educated elite while *The Mirror* targets the less-educated masses.

In addition, *BYD* has launched diversified newspapers or magazines targeted at specific reader groups. It launched *The First* in late 2004, along with *Beijing Daily* and Shanghai Media Group, a newspaper that claimed to be the first photographic paper in China based on the concept of Germany's *Bild*, with a focus on reporting sports news in the run-up to the 2008 Olympic Games. *BYD* also acquired *Leisure Trend*, a direct mailing advertising magazine in 2005, and *39.2 Degree*, a magazine targeting at teenagers, in 2006.<sup>508</sup>

Nationally, *BYD* reached out beyond Beijing to other regions across the country. Two operation models are identified. One is that *BYD* collaborates with other media conglomerates and launches new titles. For instance, it jointly launched the cross-region newspaper *The First Finance Daily* with the Shanghai Media Conglomerate and *Guangzhou Daily* in November 2004. It was the first national finance daily to feature in cross-media (TV and print press) and to cross regions (Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou).<sup>509</sup> The other model is to launch nationwide newspaper series by the means of acquisition. *BYD* plans to form a youth newspaper series across the country based on its strength and experiences of running *Beijing Youth Daily*. Its first step was to acquire the *Hebei Youth Daily* and run it as a pilot project.

At the third level, *BYD*'s strategy is to develop horizontal cross-media convergence (print, Internet and mobile phone) by investing and share controlling as well as

---

<sup>508</sup> *BYD* annual meeting minutes 2006 (in author's possession)

<sup>509</sup> Cui, 2005, p.16

forming strategic partnership with leading new media operators, in an effort to maximize the economy of scope. This strategy was implemented in 2005, after the late-2004 flotation of *BYD* on the Hong Kong stock market.

Like most Chinese newspaper agencies or newspaper conglomerates, *BYD* has its own ynet.com website with the electronic version of all its newspapers. In 2005 *BYD* invested 80 million yuan to become the major shareholder of the news website Qianlong.net.<sup>510</sup> In the same year, it formed a strategic partnership with MSN China so that *BYD*'s own website ynet.com supplies 'the whole content of web information and entertainment channels to MSN.china'.<sup>511</sup> At the end of 2005 the *BYD* controlled Qianlong.net along with people.net and xinhua.net jointly launched a mobile phone news platform.<sup>512</sup>

With the emergence of new technology and new media, *BYD*'s strategy is to integrate different media and develop a cross-media structure including print, Internet and mobile phone networks. This strategy is said to follow the global media convergence trend.

Internet, mobile phone, communication, and the web are what we call the 3G phone and a 3-in-1 integrated network. No matter how you name it, internationalisation or globalisation, this is the general trend towards integration.

*BYD* started off as a print newspaper. We think the competition in the next stage will be the competition on multi-media integration. One medium, if competing on only one level, is least competitive. Even if you are the Big Brother in terms of newspaper or TV or radio, you only have one weapon. It's really difficult to survive and compete given the globalisation background. Thus we need to develop a cross-media structure that combines

---

<sup>510</sup> Qianlong web was jointly founded and jointly invested in 2000 by *Beijing Daily*, *Beijing Morning Post*, *Beijing Evening News*, *BYD*, Beijing TV station and Beijing People's Radio, etc. It has become an influential news website in China. Source: Lei Jin, *Beiqing zhengshi konggu Qianlongwang, maichu kua meiti zhanlue diyi bu (BYD officially controls Qianlong web by shares, making the first step in its cross media strategy)* <http://net.chinabyte.com/85/2089585.shtml>, accessed 8 November 2006.

<sup>511</sup> *BYD* annual meeting minutes 2006 (in author's possession)

<sup>512</sup> *ibid*

our strengths in different media. In the future, whether we are competitive will depend on what kind of combination we have.<sup>513</sup>

In addition to the website and mobile phone based SMS operation, *BYD* wants to operate TV and radio businesses. However, it has encountered policy barriers. Despite the fact that *BYD* approached Ningxia, Henan and Hainan provincial TV stations, they were not allowed to control shares, thus no essential breakthroughs have been made in this regard.<sup>514</sup>

We targeted four media while going public, including newspapers and magazines, TV, communication network and outdoors advertisements. These are the four main investment areas listed in the proposal to raise capital by floating shares. The state strictly controls broadcasting including TV and radio. We don't want to be just an investor. We want to be an operator. Thus, it is difficult to do TV if we want to control the shares. We want to run a channel for a certain time period and we want to hold the shares. That conflicts with the current state policy. It will take some time to do that.<sup>515</sup>

Lastly, at the fourth level, *BYD*'s strategy is to draw international corporate partners, capital and advanced management talents and skills from the pool of the global market. The fact that the *BYD*-controlled subsidiary, the Beijing Media Corporation, went public on the global stock market in 2004 symbolises *BYD*'s link-up with the global capital market.

To attract capital has become a secondary thing to us. The most important thing is to attract international partners who are big companies. In the past, it was difficult to find those companies. Now we are a listed company and transparent. Many international companies have come to us.<sup>516</sup>

In the aftermath of going public, *BYD*'s strategy also focuses on capital operation due to its inexperience and lack of knowledge in this regard. As it states in its 2005 annual meeting minutes, 'though we made great efforts in the investment, no breakthroughs have been made so far.'<sup>517</sup>

---

<sup>513</sup> Interview with Zhang Yanping, 2006

<sup>514</sup> *BYD* annual meeting minutes 2006 (in author's possession)

<sup>515</sup> Interview with Zhang Yanping, 2006

<sup>516</sup> *ibid*

<sup>517</sup> *BYD* annual meeting minutes 2006 (in author's possession)

Having elaborated on *BYD*'s corporate strategies at the four levels of enhancing its core newspaper, developing vertical concentration and horizontal media convergence, as well as benefiting from global capital market, the conclusion can be drawn that globalisation has impacted upon *BYD*'s strategies.

In the first two levels, the impact of globalisation on the corporate strategies is manifested in the competition from the local and domestic market. *BYD* formulates its strategy to enhance its core newspaper and launch new titles in both the local market and the cross-region market with the aim of making itself big, strong and competitive under the pressures from inside the media sector. In addition, in order to win out in the local market competition, some of *BYD*'s new titles are influenced by Western newspaper concepts in terms of layout, format and operation. This copycat phenomenon highlights the interconnectedness between Chinese newspapers and other newspapers in the world. One example is that the *Beijing Legal Evening News*, the so-called *The Mirror*, borrowed the concept from the UK tabloids, *The Sun*, for the purpose of maximising circulation.

I need circulation. I want the maximum circulation. We'll also have the page three girls. We have to do it step by step. A newspaper must go through the evolutionary process from a tabloid to a broadsheet.

*BYD* wants to be the UK's *The Times* while we want to be *The Sun*. English gentlemen read *The Times* at the office while having a copy of *The Sun* in their briefcases. They will read it in the toilet or at home. It does not matter which group of people they are. It meets people's demands at different levels. Our newspaper meets people's demands for lifestyle elements. Meanwhile, our readers can read *BYD*, which satisfies their demands for ideas and viewpoints. That is why *The Sun* has such a big circulation while *The Times* has such a limited circulation. It's not different groups of people but people's different levels of demands. If I say there are going to be roadworks in the Wangfujing area, no matter who they are, whether it is a pedicab-man or a professor living there, they will all pay attention to this news because none of them will go out the next day.<sup>518</sup>

---

<sup>518</sup> Interview with Yang Lan, 2006

*The Mirror* also gets inspiration in terms of design from papers around the world, as front page samples are hung in the hallway of *The Mirror*'s office building to 'enable the art designers have a sense of the layout of the Western newspapers'<sup>519</sup>, as shown in Figure 13.

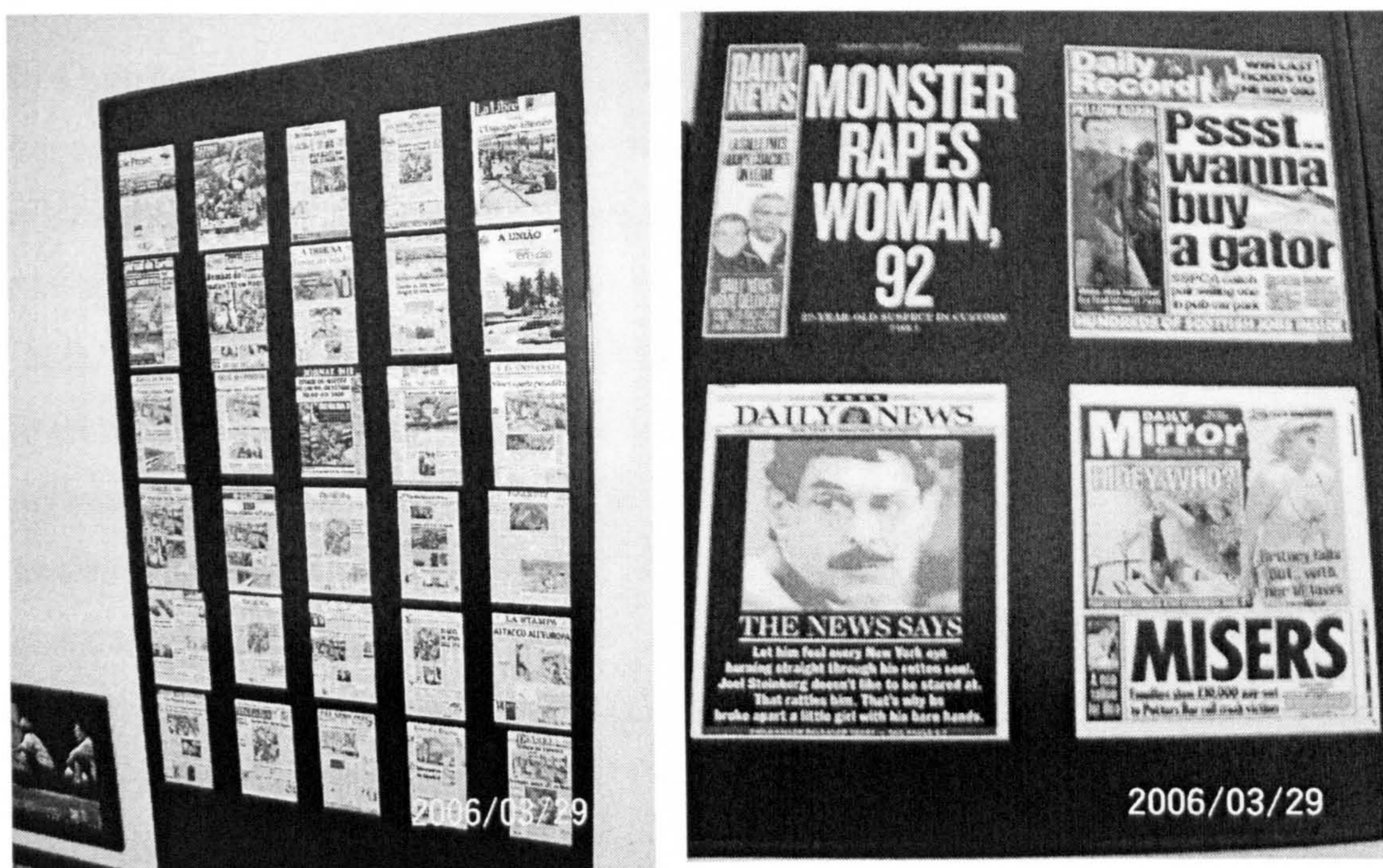


Figure 13 Foreign newspaper samples hung in the hallway of *The Mirror*'s office.

*The First* is another example. Its style and concepts are partly affected by *The Bild*, the picture newspaper and biggest tabloid in Germany. *The First*'s managing editor Chang Lingxin visited *Bild* in an exchange programme and she said,

*The First* is based on the concept of Germany's *Bild*. Even the office structure is affected. *The First* is doing well in terms of its layout. It looks similar to *Bild*. But the quality is not good enough, including the headlines, photos, etc.<sup>520</sup>

The two examples indicate that some Chinese newspaper managers are not narrow-minded and inward looking any more. On the contrary, they are open-minded and

<sup>519</sup> *ibid*

<sup>520</sup> Interview with Chang Lingxin, 2006

look around for the success cases in the world and try to incorporate and adapt the Western concepts into the running of their newspapers.

At the third and fourth level, the impact of globalisation on BYD is explicit as *BYD's* floatation on the Hong Kong stock exchange is driven by economic globalisation and the multimedia convergence driven by new technology.

In a nutshell, globalisation has impacts on *BYD's* external outreaching strategies beyond its local boundaries. Meanwhile, globalisation has impacts on the concepts of newspaper making for local newspapers due to the global mobilisation of newspaper professionals and the freer flow of the newspapers and news making ideas. However, it will be noted that such impacts are only limited to the superficial level ranging from the layout, format to the audience appeal and market segmentation concepts. For the real content of the newspapers, *BYD* papers imitate neither tabloids such as *The Sun* or *The Bild* with their topless women and crime reports, or quality papers such as *The Times* and *The New York Times*. They have their own agendas and their own character. The *BYD*, in particular, retains a strong official imprint. The issue of content will be addressed in more detail in the following chapters.

#### 4.2.2 Strength and weaknesses

As a news organisation, *BYD* has both strengths and weaknesses to implement its strategies stated in the previous section. Generally speaking, *BYD* has strengths in terms of media policies and government support, strong financial and human resources. Meanwhile its weaknesses mainly lie in uneven market competition, a lack of advanced corporate management staff and knowledge, and internal integration.

*BYD's* corporate strengths and weaknesses can be analysed from four levels confirming to its strategies including core newspaper, newspaper concentration, media convergence, and global link-up as indicated in Figure 14 below. It should be noted that its strengths and weaknesses might be reversed at different levels. Its strength at one level may become weakness at another level. For example, *BYD* has strengths in financial and human resources in the local and domestic market but it turns into a weakness when assessing *BYD* globally. Also, its strengths might also be weaknesses at the same time, as when the state facilitates *BYD's* growth at one point but restrains its expansion at another point. For example, *BYD* gained government



supports to control the web company but encounters policy barriers when it plans to expand its business into the broadcasting sector.

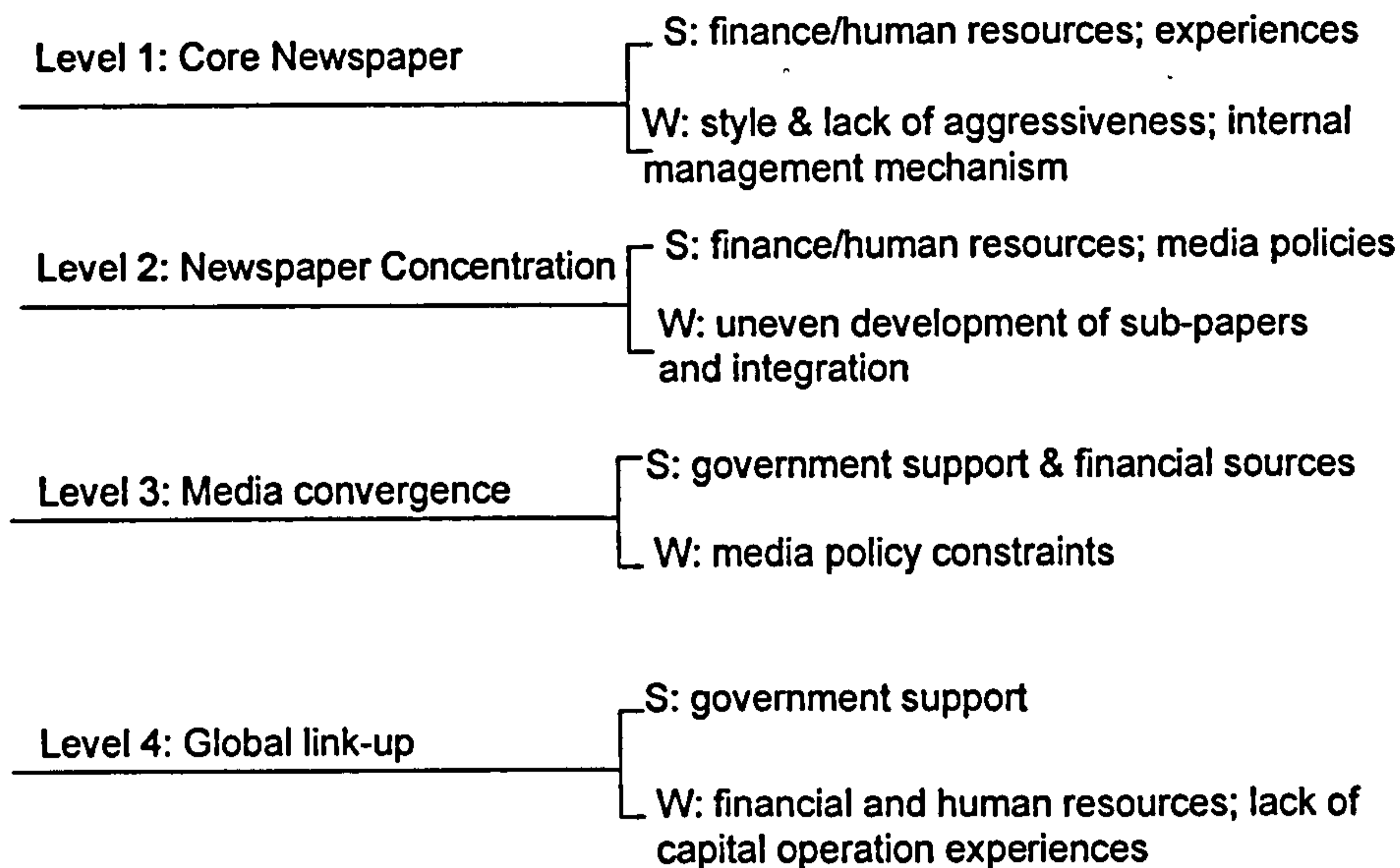


Figure 14: *BYD*'s strengths and weaknesses at different levels.<sup>521</sup>

At the 'core newspaper' level, *BYD* was the first newspaper in Beijing to start the commercialisation process. It has accumulated experience in running market-oriented newspapers and brought together a strong force of professionals who are well educated and experienced. Meanwhile it has accumulated strong financial resources via its advertising revenue, as its income from commercial advertisements has been among the top three for newspaper nationwide for several consecutive years.<sup>522</sup>

Based on its record of strong finance and human resources, *BYD* has planned and implemented much large-scale reporting of news both at home and abroad, which make it competitive in respect of content. For example, *BYD* carried a series of reports on human migration as a result of the Three Gorges Dam project on the Yangtze River, from Sichuan to Shanghai, in 2002 and 2003.

We went there to do interviews and followed the first group of migrants, boarded the ship and arrived in Shanghai. We used four pages for the report in the *Newsweek* section. We were the only media to carry such reports.

<sup>521</sup> In Figure 14, S stands for strength and W stands for weakness.

<sup>522</sup> <http://www.hkex.com.hk/listedco/listconews/sehk/20041213/01000/ewp111.pdf>, accessed 8 November 2006

Migration was a sensitive topic at that time and later scandal exposés were made, including some about the embezzlement of the migration funds.<sup>523</sup>

*BYD* also sends reporters abroad to report world events such as sports events, cultural events, Second World War anniversaries, and so on.

However, *BYD*'s performance in retail sales and its internal management mechanisms are its main weaknesses. According to the 2002 survey, *BYD*'s average daily sales at Beijing news stands were only 45,719 copies, ranking just ninth among the 19 newspapers surveyed, lagging far behind the *Beijing Evening News* and *Beijing Times*.<sup>524</sup> This situation remained unchanged in spring 2006. The low retail sales volume can be attributed to the broadsheet style, which makes it inconvenient to read, especially for people travelling on public transport like the subways or bus, its lack of aggressiveness in reporting, and the internal management mechanisms which are needed to improve in order to motivate news staff. As stated in the *BYD*'s annual meeting minutes of 2006, *BYD* growth has been fast in recent years. However, leaders have made insufficient progress in developing internal management, which resulted in a backward management system and corporate cultures. Communication with internal staff is also insufficient.<sup>525</sup>

In addition, *BYD* has to cope with a not fully free market under different rules. It has to compete with media companies that have stronger government support, with emerging tabloid papers that have a more flexible operational mechanism, and with other media including TV and the Internet.

The reason for the survival of many media companies which cannot be eaten up is they keep getting blood transfusions. So, we are not competing under the same rules. We have to pay a big cost in the competition.

We have to fight against companies with different set-ups. Some may be more flexible than us. They don't get support under the governmental policies. But they have very flexible mechanisms. We have to compete with them. At the same time, we have to compete with the traditional media companies who have a much stronger government support.

---

<sup>523</sup> Interview with Wang Fang, 2006

<sup>524</sup> Guoming Yu, *Chuan mei ying xiang li (Media Influence)*, (Guangzhou: Nanfang Ribao chubanshe, 2003), p.98

<sup>525</sup> *BYD* annual meeting report, January, 2006

And, we need to compete with TV and the Internet. Altogether, we face a great many rivals.<sup>526</sup>

At the newspaper concentration level, *BYD* still has strength in financial resources that enables it to acquire or launch newspapers in local and domestic markets. In addition, its expansion benefits from the deregulated media policies.

In August 2001, No.17 document broke down the boundaries between different media and different regions and allowed multi-media operation and cross-region operation in principle.<sup>527</sup> This document provided a legal basis for *BYD* to expand its business beyond the local market into the domestic market.

*BYD*'s weakness at this level mainly lies in the uneven development of subsidiaries and the integration of newspapers under the same umbrella. Some subsidiary newspapers, though loss-making, shoulder no pressures as they are not completely independent, thus a new conglomerate management/operation model is needed, according to the *BYD* annual meeting report, January 2006.

Integration of editorial resources among newspapers within the conglomerate is a major problem facing *BYD*. At present, *BYD* has ten subsidiary newspapers but each newspaper runs its own content individually, which causes overlapping in coverage and a waste of resources.

We are in the process of integration. We newly acquired *Hebei Youth Daily (HYD)* and wanted to use it as an experiment. Except for significant news and local news, other news — including culture, sports, finance, domestic news and world news — the content will be nearly the same. *BYD*, after finishing the page layout, will transfer the pages to *HYD*, and thus make full use of our strength.

The repetition problem is a big one. The conglomerate will consider this issue in the future. For one news event scene, there's no need for reporters of all the newspapers under *BYD* to rush there together.<sup>528</sup>

At the media convergence level, *BYD*'s major strength is that it gains the government's support and it has the financial resources to build it into a cross-media

---

<sup>526</sup> Interview with Zhang Yanping, 2006

<sup>527</sup> Song, 2005, p. 117-118

<sup>528</sup> Interview with Liu He, 2006

conglomerate. *BYD* has been handpicked as one of the four national news organisations to be a trial site for cultural reform. In the case of *BYD*'s control of Qianlong.net, Zhu Zhijun, a veteran Internet observer and ex-vice president of ccidnet, said 'probably *BYD*'s control of Qianlong.net is an act of the government because *BYD* has its own news website. It's doing well and making a profit. Why have they acquired Qianlong.net when it is in deficit? It does not look like a normal commercial acquisition.' Zhu thinks this act is 'the start of forging *BYD* cross-media conglomerate.'<sup>529</sup>

Although *BYD* receives state support for its media convergence, in reality it still encounters regulation barriers, as the newspapers are not permitted to operate broadcasting businesses in China, which is the main weakness of *BYD* at this level.

At the fourth level, like the third level, *BYD*'s strength mainly comes from government support and government protection. So far, foreign news media organisations are still forbidden to run newspapers in China. 'Competition from overseas newspapers depends on media policy. If the policy does not allow them to exist, they will not exist,' said an interviewee.<sup>530</sup> Apart from this, *BYD*, through global link-ups, is able to draw capital, international talent and international business partners as well as promoting *BYD* to reach the world standard.<sup>531</sup>

*BYD*'s weakness at this level is that it is short of financial and human resources and lacks of capital operation experience compared with large global media conglomerates. Also, the high cost of flotation and the release of business statements keeping in pace with *BYD*'s floating on the global stock market negatively affects *BYD*'s competition in the domestic market. 'In addition to the high cost of the floating, sensitivity towards the stock prices is likely to cause short-term actions. High transparency tends to maximize the crisis, especially as we have to pay a high price in the incomplete market competition in mainland China when we have to use the transparent figures to compete with those who have non-transparent figures.'<sup>532</sup>

---

<sup>529</sup> Meng Gu and Zhijun Zhu, Beiqingbao konggu Qianlong wang: feidianxing de konggu (*BYD* controls qianlong web, atypical share-controlling), *ChinaByte*, 30 August 2005,

<http://www.donews.com/content/200508/6b7913e68fc043718e2fe78fd20b5030.shtml>, accessed 10 November 2006

<sup>530</sup> Interview with Chang Lingxin, 2006

<sup>531</sup> Yanping Zhang, *Cong baozhi dao xiandai chuanmei jituan de Beijing qingnian bao* (*BYD - from newspaper to modern media conglomerate*), 25 July 2006, <http://www.baoye.net/bencandy.php?fid=330&id=13546>, accessed 11 November 2006

<sup>532</sup> *ibid*

The above elaboration shows that *BYD* has much more solid strength in the local and domestic market than that in the global market. Its strength is based on its rich experience, financial and human resources, as well as state support, though it faces growing competition from traditional media, new media and other media conglomerates. In the global market, *BYD* has little strength except the strong backing of the state. In addition, its entry into the global market has reduced its competitive edge in the less-developed and less-regulated domestic market due to the ‘transparency’ requirements. *BYD* looks weak on the global market. However, it must face up to the challenges from the foreign media conglomerates in the long term, a fact that is recognised by the senior management of *BYD*.

Government support can only help us for a certain period of time. We must depend on our own strength to fight with foreign media companies in the real free market. Chinese media companies are very immature and we don’t know what are the traps lying there or the knacks of business because our market is not a fully free market.<sup>533</sup>

#### 4.2.3 Future goals

*BYD*’s long-term goal is to develop into a large cross-media, cross-region and cross-field conglomerate that is the most profitable, most influential and largest-scale media group in China with *Beijing Youth Daily* as its core product. It aims to have the capability to make strategic investments within five years. This is what the Chinese government endeavours to develop and the goal of cultural institutional reforms.<sup>534</sup> ‘We want to be one of the first large modern media companies in China,’ said Zhang Yanping.

The challenge lies in where *BYD* goes as the next step because it must explore and develop a model on its own. Locally, it has no investment models to follow because it is a pioneer and other organisations have not yet reached the same level. Globally, Western models are not totally applicable in China due to differences in politics, ideology, economic development level, readers’ knowledge level and operational norms. However, *BYD*’s experience will provide a good lesson for other local media organisations. ‘Whether we succeed or fail, we will provide a lesson for other

---

<sup>533</sup> Interview with Zhang Yanping, 2006

<sup>534</sup> <http://www.hkex.com.hk/listedco/listconews/sehk/20041213/01000/ewp111.pdf>, accessed 12 November 2006 and interview with Zhang Yanping, 2006

organisations to learn from. But we ourselves have nothing to refer to. Thus, the challenges we face in the future are in all aspects,' said He Liu, the *BYD* managing editor.

From the above we see that *BYD*'s long-term goal is to be a leading multimedia conglomerate in China. How to achieve this goal depends heavily on its business models.

### 4.3 Business model

In this section, the *BYD*'s distribution and income model will be explored. In addition, a comparison between *BYD* and *Nordjyske* of Denmark will be made to highlight the impact of technology on *BYD* and the gap between *BYD* and the world's advanced media convergence model.

#### 4.3.1 Distribution and income model

The distribution model of *BYD* is that for newspaper sales, subscriptions account for 80 percent and news stands sales account for 20 percent of sales income. In respect of income streams, advertisement sales account for 90 percent, with distribution providing for 10 percent.<sup>535</sup>

Thus *BYD* is mainly sold through subscriptions instead of on newsstands. Compared with other major metropolitan newspapers in Beijing, *BYD* is weak in newsstand sales. According to the 2002 survey, *BYD*'s average daily retailing volume at news stands in Beijing was only 45,719 copies, ranking the ninth among the 19 newspapers surveyed, lagging far behind *Beijing Evening News* and *Beijing Times*. 'For a big newspaper whose advertising revenue ranks the second in China, this is an unacceptable figure.'<sup>536</sup>

Problems for the low retailing output lie in the format and content. According to Yu's survey and analysis in 2003, *BYD*'s page colours were too heavy and depressing, the editing was not well-organised, there wasn't enough human interest stories or news to link them to the local community, and it had a strong tendency to

---

<sup>535</sup> The percentage of the business models comes from the interview with Zhang Yanping during my field work; the advertising revenue figure comes from 'Beijing Media Corporation Ltd, annual report 2005, chairman's statement', <http://search.hkex.com.hk/listedco/listconews/sehk/20060503/01000/EWF105.pdf>, accessed 20 November 2006

<sup>536</sup> Yu, 2003, p.98

be an official-sounding newspaper, etc.<sup>537</sup> *BYD*'s page shake-up conducted at the beginning of 2006 have solved these problems to a certain extent. For example, in the 1990s, *BYD* created a so-called 'thick eyebrow and big eyes' style to catch the attention of readers at the newsstand. 'Thick eyebrow' referred to the big headlines in bold while 'big eyes' referred to the large photos. The heavy, thick colour gave an outstanding visual effect. That was good for sales volume as newspapers generally had a plain and rigid layout at that time. However, people found more and more that *BYD*'s weaknesses were heavy colour and printing. Readers' hands were blackened with newsprint after reading the newspaper and they had to wash their hands. This was annoying, especially when people read it in the toilet. In addition, the combination of heavy colour, too many variations in the word font and size, and the vertical and horizontal layout of articles made it look messy. Thus, in early 2006, *BYD* has changed its style using the lighter colours and simplified layout. In terms of content, *BYD* has enhanced its team in covering local news and stresses closeness to the local people and communities. The content of *BYD* will be further examined in other chapters.

Though *BYD* took measures to improve its retail volume, the effect was not obvious in the short term because other newspapers have already grabbed the market and it is difficult to make readers switch their reading habits especially to an old established newspaper. Generally speaking, *BYD*'s page shake up in 2006 was not a revolution but an evolution in terms of newspaper style: it is still a broadsheet, it is still a thick newspaper, it still targets elite readers, its editorial policies remain nearly the same and the editorial team, though there were internal personnel changes, remain nearly the same. The fieldwork revealed another key reason for the poor performance of *BYD* in the retail market which lies in its format and readers' reading habits: the format of *BYD* is broadsheet which is not suitable for mobile people when they are travelling.

In brief, the low retail volume can be attributed to three main factors: the paper's broadsheet format, a reporting and writing style aimed at elite readers instead of the masses, and competition from papers that target the same readership, such as the *Beijing News*.

---

<sup>537</sup> Yu, 2003, pp.98-99

*BYD* remains the leader in terms of subscriptions. Government organisations, corporations and families are *BYD*'s main subscribers. Based on its influence during its growth and successes in the 1990s, *BYD* has developed many loyal readers. Its influence and its official nature may be the main factor that attracts the government organisations. In spite of difficulties in retail sales, *BYD* is still a mainstream newspaper whose value is recognised. 'Its mainstream readership and double back-up from both the official subscription market and private household market (*Gongfei shichang he zifei shichang*) enable *BYD* to maintain its favourable position in press competition. It's difficult for other newspapers to overtake it.'<sup>538</sup>

*BYD*'s income model shows that the big slice of *BYD* income comes from advertisements while it makes little money from circulation. The retail price of *BYD* newspaper is one yuan, which is low but even so it is more expensive than other metropolitan newspapers, which usually cost only 0.5 yuan. In recent years, the price of newsprint has kept increasing while the selling price of newspapers has remained the same. The reason for the astounding low price might be the lack of fully developed free market competition during the commercialisation process. As Zhang points out, the imbalanced income model is due to the pricing factor. The solution lies in the newspaper concentration or monopoly.

It is true we are losing money in terms of circulation because the price in China is set too low. The reason lies in the fact that we haven't finished the process of big fish eating up small fish. After that process is over, we would dare to increase the price. Now we don't dare to do that. I think the current price is not reasonable.<sup>539</sup>

Despite the fact that *BYD* remains state-owned, it is operated in the commercial sector as a pure business entity without state subsidies. Like newspapers in the West, *BYD* is financed by advertising and distribution. It has to stand on its own feet and adapt its strategies to survive in market competition. In addition, with its advertising and distribution covered in the listed Beijing Media Co., on the Hong Kong stock market, theoretically, foreign shareholders, even though their shares are in minority, should have a say in *BYD*. The question is about what and to what extent.

---

<sup>538</sup> Yu, 2003, p.130

<sup>539</sup> Interview with Zhang Yanping, 2006



#### 4.3.2 Media convergence model (*BYD* vs. *Nordjyske*)

As stated earlier in this chapter, *BYD*'s long-term goal is to develop into a large cross-media and cross-region conglomerate. To this end, *BYD*'s strategy is to integrate different media and develop a cross-media structure including print, Internet and mobile phone networks, in other words, media convergence. Information technology plays an essential role in this.

Media convergence is defined here as a situation where news stories are gathered and distributed for and via multiple media platforms including newspaper, TV, radio and Internet to meet the changing demands of audiences who obtain news from different channels. Enabled by the advanced information technology and driven by audience demand, media convergence is mapped in corporate strategies and newsroom structures and practices.

Economies of scale and economies of scope urge media undertakings to become large and to move into adjacent markets: thus cross-media ownership is born.<sup>540</sup> In face of the challenges of declining newspaper circulation throughout the world and of new media, media convergence is an advanced model that combines the strength of traditional media and new media, thus making the media conglomerates profitable.

I use the Danish *Nordjyske Media* to make a comparative case with *BYD* to argue that technology impacts journalistic and business practices. Under different institutional contexts and media systems, news media organizations around the world are in different stages of developing media convergence and have adopted varied convergence forms. As Lawson-Borders claims, 'Convergence is not static, but rather a continuum in which organizations must select the appropriate medium or combination of mediums. Blending media forms should be the strategy when the content and the delivery programs necessitate the arrangement.'<sup>541</sup> The main reason for selecting *Nordjyske Media* versus other cases is accessibility. I won a fellowship and went to Aalborg University, Denmark in 2005/6. *Nordjyske Media* is located across from the university, thus I had the chance to visit the newsrooms and interview professionals there.

---

<sup>540</sup> Ad van Loon, 'Global trends – global solutions?', in Vicki MacLeod, ed. *Media ownership and control – in the age of convergence*, (London: International Institute of Communication, 1996), p.285

<sup>541</sup> Gracie Lawson-Borders, *Media organizations and convergence – case studies of media convergence pioneers*, (London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2006), p.11

Nordjyske Media is a front-runner and a success story in terms of media convergence. 'Described by Martha Stone of Ifra/Newsplex as the best example of a converged media organisation in the world, the group's leadership decided in 2001 to stop talking about the challenges of a digital age. Instead, they set out to transform an unremarkable regional newspaper into a multimedia organisation that produces radio, TV, online and print media from a single converged newsroom.'<sup>542</sup>

Starting also from just one regional morning newspaper, *Nordjyske Stiftstidende*, Nordkyske Media now owns one morning newspaper, two radio stations, one TV station, 19 free weekly newspapers, six free magazines, a company named 3-D sound and one website. In addition, it is the main shareholder of the local soccer team.<sup>543</sup>

Obviously China and Denmark have different media systems. In China, a highly centralised authoritarian press system and the decentralized market-oriented press system co-exist and 'they are not two definitely separate systems'.<sup>544</sup> Chinese leadership looks towards Singapore and Malaysia and adapts their media management systems to a new 'authoritarian liberalism' model — a hybrid form of governance combining economic liberalism and political authorisations.<sup>545</sup> Denmark has adopted a democratic corporatist media system contrasted to a liberal model and a polarized pluralist model. Based upon the democratic principle that 'the press shall be independent of the State',<sup>546</sup> the Danish media market, as a part of Nordic media market, can be characterized by four elements including 'high newspaper circulation based upon a free market economy, strong public service tradition based upon obligatory licence fees, professional governance based upon self-regulated journalism, and strong state intervention based upon cultural policy principles'.<sup>547</sup>

---

<sup>542</sup> Lessons from the front: Convergence at Nordjyske Medier, the journalism leaders' programme, 02 November 2005, <http://journalismleaders.blogspot.com/>, accessed 22 November 2006.

<sup>543</sup> Interview with Ulrik Haagerup, editor in chief of *Nordjyske*, in December 2005

<sup>544</sup> Yu, 1996, pp. 36-37.

<sup>545</sup> Stephanie Donald and Michael Keane, 'Media in China: New convergences, new approaches', in Stephanie Donald, Michael Keane and Yin Hong, eds., *Media in China – Consumption, Content and Crisis*, (New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002), p. 5

<sup>546</sup> Soeren Sandfeld Jacobsen, *Media System of Denmark*, report for the Study on Co-Regulation Measures, (2005), <http://www.hans-bredow-institut.de/forschung/recht/co-reg/reports/1/Denmark.pdf>, accessed 6 Jan 2007

<sup>547</sup> Anker Brink Lund, 'The power of the media in the nordic countries: a comparative perspective', *Nordisk kulturpolitisk tidsskrift*, Vol. 8, No. 1, 2005, pp. 203-227, [http://www.hb.se/BHS/kpc/summery05/05\\_1/BrinkLundsum.pdf](http://www.hb.se/BHS/kpc/summery05/05_1/BrinkLundsum.pdf), accessed 6 Jan 2007

Despite the differences in social-political-economic background and media system, both the *BYD* and *Nordjyske* are moving towards the media convergence, but in different stages and forms. While *Nordjyske* is in an advanced stage of media convergence, having applied a multimultimedia-based model implementing resource sharing, content-sharing and cross-promotion via multi-platform including TV, radio, print and website, *BYD* is in the infant stage and focuses on the single newspaper-based model with a strategy intended to integrate content of *BYD* and its subsidiary newspapers, and promote the interactivity between newspaper and the web (internet and mobile phone).

Comparison is made with regard to media structure, business model, media convergence model (organisational), target groups, news gathering, and senior management's perceptions on media convergence.

In terms of media structure, *Nordjyske* is more diversified as *BYD* is devoid of free newspapers, radio and TV, as indicated in Table 3 below. This is not because *BYD* does not want to expand its business into other media, including radio and TV but because they encountered regulatory barriers. With policy barriers removed in China sometime in the near future, *BYD* is expected to run diversified businesses as much as *Nordjyske*.

Medium	<i>BYD</i>	<i>Nordjyske</i>
Print (paid newspaper)	<i>Beijing Youth Daily</i>	<i>Nordjyske</i>
Print (free newspaper)	0	19
TV	0	1 (24 <i>Nordjyske</i> )
Radio	0	2 (ANR Hit FM and ANR Guld FM)
Online (website)	2 (ynet.com and Qianlong.com)	1 ( nordjyske.dk)
Mobile	SMS	SMS

Table 3 Comparison of business operations between *BYD* and *Nordjyske* as media conglomerates.

In terms of business model, both *BYD* and *Nordjyske* run a local/regional morning newspaper. They are similar in terms of the newspaper type, format and the distribution pattern. Both papers are local morning newspapers in broadsheet form, with tabloid sections inside and they have a similar subscription/retail pattern in which subscription accounts for the overwhelming majority.

Apart from similarities, these two papers have big differences in the following aspects. Firstly, ownership: *BYD* is majority state-owned and *Nordjyske* is owned by foundations, which means *Nordjyske* has much more editorial autonomy. Secondly, market share: though *BYD* has a much bigger circulation figure, it has a small market share (15 percent) and is far from monopolising the region it covers while *Nordjyske* reaches more than half of its target market. If we set 50 percent as a level for a monopoly, *Nordjyske* has monopolised its area. Thirdly, the two papers' ratio of advertising to circulation income is different. *BYD* depends largely on advertising while *Nordjyske* has a balanced income. This means *BYD* is more dependent on the variables in the business sector. The potential risks are that *BYD* is likely to bend its editorial policy to protect the interests of its advertisers. Putting it another way, advertisers are likely to have more influence on newsroom practice at *BYD* than at *Nordjyske*. From the ownership and revenue model, a preliminary conclusion can be drawn: *BYD* is more influenced by the government and market than *Nordjyske*. The business model of these two newspapers is compared in Table 4 below.

	<i>BYD</i>	<i>Nordjyske</i>
Ownership	Local government	Three foundations
Type	Local morning paper	Regional morning paper
Format	Broadsheet with tabloid supplements	Broadsheet with tabloid supplements
Birth	Launched in 1949	Merger among 7 papers in 1999
Circulation	600,000 (self-claimed)	80,000
Market share	15%	75%
Distribution model		
Subscription	80%	90%
Retail	20%	10%
Income model		
Advertising	90%	50%
Circulation	10%	50%

Table 4 Comparison between *BYD* and *Nordjyske* newspapers.<sup>548</sup>

In terms of the media convergence model, both news conglomerates embarked on media convergence in the 21<sup>st</sup> century with *BYD* starting in 2005 and *Nordjyske* in 2003 using it as corporate growth strategy. The difference lies in the convergence approaches. *BYD* maintains the traditional separate and cascade newsrooms with newspapers mainly supplying content to websites with trial integration between print and Web, whereas *Nordjyske* uses matrix-organisation in its newsrooms with reporters separating from media but organised around beats, as indicated in Table 5 below.

<sup>548</sup> Interview with Zhang Yanping, 2006; and interview with Ulrik Haagerup, 2005.

	<i>BYD</i>	<i>Nordjyske</i>
Starting time for media convergence	2005 <sup>549</sup>	2003
Reasons for converging	Growth strategy	Growth strategy
The way of convergence	Separate and cascade newsrooms. Newspapers supply content to websites. All newspapers run separately with their own reporting teams. The trial was launched to integrate print and web.	One newsroom with a matrix-organisation - concentrated around a meeting table. Reporters separated from media, but organised around news beats.

Table 5 Comparison of media convergence in *BYD* and *Nordjyske*.<sup>550</sup>

*BYD*'s ten newspapers and two websites are operated separately. Print and websites are connected in a unidirectional linear way. Reporting and editorial resources are distributed among different newspapers in a cascade way without sharing or integrating, which is a problem to be addressed by the *BYD* senior management, as stated in the 'current strategy' section of this chapter. Simply, the linear print- to- website structure at *BYD* is indicated in Figure 15 below.

<sup>549</sup> *BYD* invested 80 million yuan to become the major shareholder of the news website Qianlong.net. In the same year, forming strategic partnership with MSN China in the way that *BYD*'s own website ynet.com supplies "the whole content of web information and entertainment channels to MSN.china". At the end of 2005 *BYD* controlled Qianlong.net along with people.net and xinhua.net jointly launched the mobile phone news platform

<sup>550</sup> Source for *Nordjyske* data:

<http://www.ifra.com/website/newsplex.nsf/0/74B25B1DD169DA0B85256E90007A6C8D?OpenDocument>

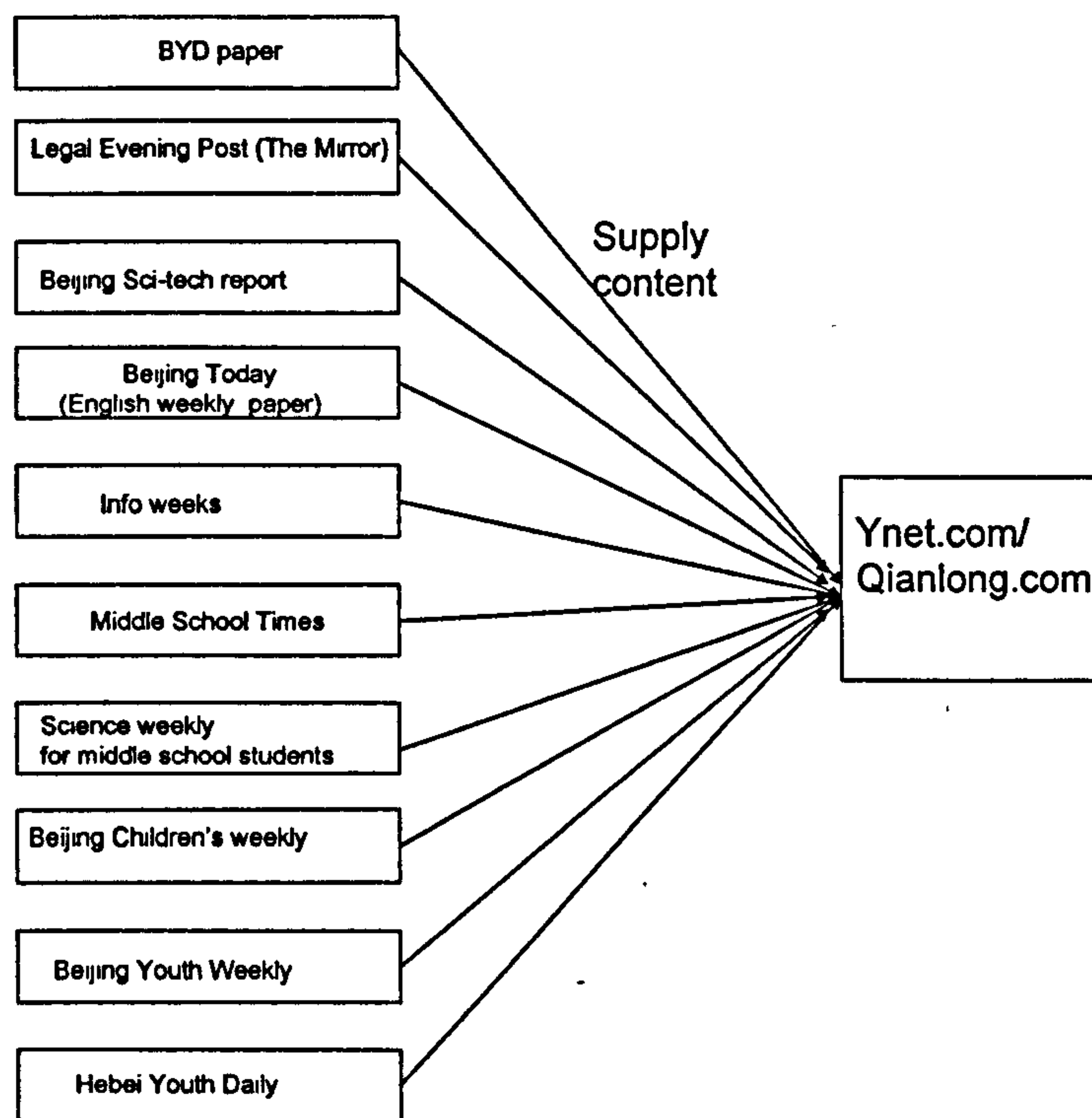


Figure 15 Linear print-to-website structure at *BYD*

In China websites reporting original material in news stories are not permitted. They do not have their own reporting teams and can only transmit and edit the content taken from other sources like newspapers. The websites Ynet.com and Qianlong.com operate their own content including news, entertainment, forums, photos, and other information. Meanwhile, as they are part of *BYD*, they put the content of the *BYD* newspaper and sub-newspapers on the websites. The relationship between the *BYD* newspapers and websites is that newspapers use websites as a medium to put their electronic versions on. On the other hand the websites have their autonomy to select, edit and integrate content from different sources not limited to *BYD* newspapers, for instance, xinhua.net.

Efforts have been made to promote interactivity between print and Web site via chat program on the web and the SMS services on mobile phones. As early as in 2002, *BYD* claimed that Ynet covered live about Uygur acrobat Ahdili's tightrope walking adventure to break the Guinness World Record for a continuous 249 hours in conjunction with the newspaper. The success of this Web broadcast was 'a landmark in the *BYD*'s efforts to innovate reporting approaches and step forward towards

cross-media interactivity'.<sup>551</sup> After Ynet formed a strategic partnership with MSN China in 2005, the website's popularity is enhanced. 'An average of more than 2.1 million people visit the website every day and the daily page view exceeds 100 million times. It has become one of the top five news websites in China.'<sup>552</sup> In November 2006, Domestic News Division of *BYD* collaborated with Ynet to trial the multi-media reporting on an organised cultural event called 'the road of Xuanzang'<sup>553</sup> (Xuanzang zhi lu) with *BYD* reporter in New Delhi, India. A real-time chat column was launched on Ynet for the reporter in India to communicate with netizens in Beijing. In addition, SMS (short messaging) services were provided via *BYD* mobile paper. 'Before doing this multi-platform coverage, we had no idea what it would turn out to be. From the web traffic and netizens' responses, we can see the effect was very good. We implemented the interactivity in real sense with our readers via short messages. It is very encouraging. In the past, it was nearly impossible to interact with readers by newspaper reports. This trial brings us closer to the readers.'<sup>554</sup>

*Nordjyske* runs a circular resource-sharing structure, which sets an operational and effective media convergence model. The special thing about the media convergence model is that they have a round table in the middle of the newsroom. As indicated in Figure 16, the media conductor, who is the 'boss of the day', has the greatest power and decides the newspaper editor (nicknamed A man), Internet, radio, photo and TV editors when important news events occur. 'The conductor is like the leader of those meetings. The Conductor is at the top,' said Heine Jørgensen, Managing Editor at *Nordjyske*. 'Most of the day when everything is fine, A-man has his group making the paper, and so on.'

---

<sup>551</sup> 2002 *BYD* annual report

<sup>552</sup> Zhang, 'Cong baozhi dao xiandai chuanmei jituan', 2006

<sup>553</sup> Hsuan-tsang was a Chinese Buddhist monk and scholar who became famous for his 17 years trip to India in early Tang Dynasty.

<sup>554</sup> 'Zhubian ting yijian (Editors heeding comments)' activity on ynet from 14-22 November 2006. Guests on 22 November 2006: Shao Wen, editor of Domestic News; Yu Xiaorong, assistant editor of Domestic News.

<http://msn.ynet.com/view.jsp?oid=17399248&pageno=1>, accessed 24 November 2006



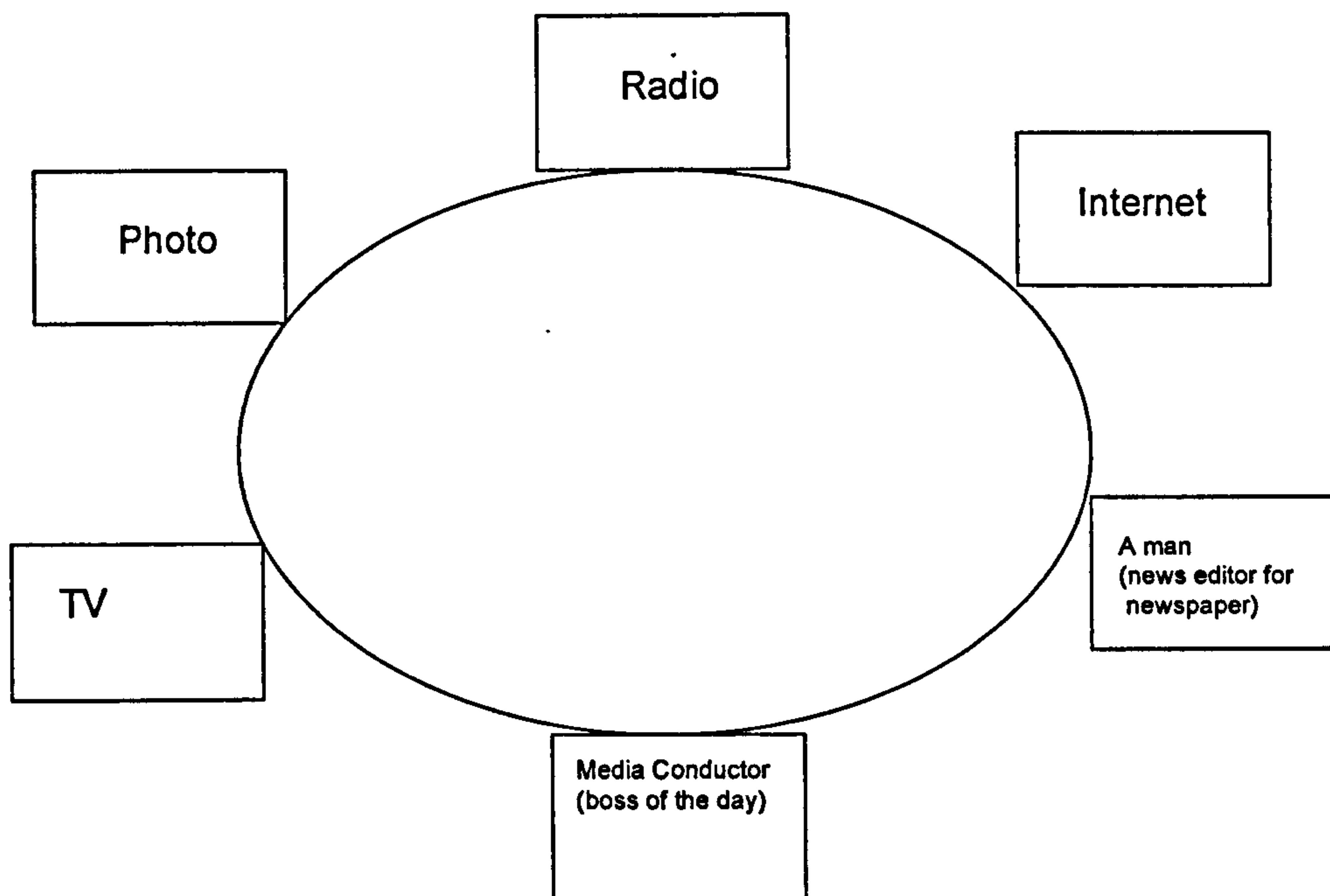


Figure 16 The matrix organisational structure of media convergence model at *Nordjyske*.

Four news conductors at *Nordjyske*, two editors-in-chief and two managing editors, take turns to coordinate news in different media. They decide which story goes to which medium, as well as which media will run the story first.

Tomorrow I'll be there in the chair all day deciding which story should go where, finding out which media play the story first. And then you really have an exciting job. If the story is good enough, it'll be on all media — radio and TV, etc.<sup>555</sup>

The concept behind this multimedia-based model is that the reporting resources are shared to reach the audience/readers in different age groups, via different media.

In terms of target groups, for *Nordjyske*, the market is seen as consisting of different circles represented by different media targeting different age groups. The multimedia-based convergence model enables *Nordjyske* to produce one story but 'hits' different circles at the same time. With the emergence of new technologies and new media, new circles can be added, thus the media organisation is always able to

<sup>555</sup> Interview with Ulrik Haagerup, 2005

have optimal market coverage. The good thing about this model is that it is elastic, expandable and flexible to cope with the changes in the digital era, as indicated in Figure 17.

We absolutely share the resources. We have more media, so we can make more circles. In the old days, we just had the newspaper. So we were just hitting all the people in the circle. Maybe we have 1,000 people who read the newspaper. Out of those 1,000, there might be 50 who listened to the radio and read the newspaper. There may be 200 who both read the newspaper and watched TV, and then a few who did all of it. At some point, we might have 9,000 in the radio circle, and 200,000 in the TV circle. That's where we've never hit before.

Now when we are making a story, we are not just hitting one circle but three of them. Certainly we have a big audience that have never read the newspaper. That's pretty interesting as a journalist and as a media house as well. It's important to make the right story for all the media. We reach different age groups.<sup>556</sup>

---

<sup>556</sup> Interview with Heine Jorgensen, managing editor of *Nordjyske*, in January 2006

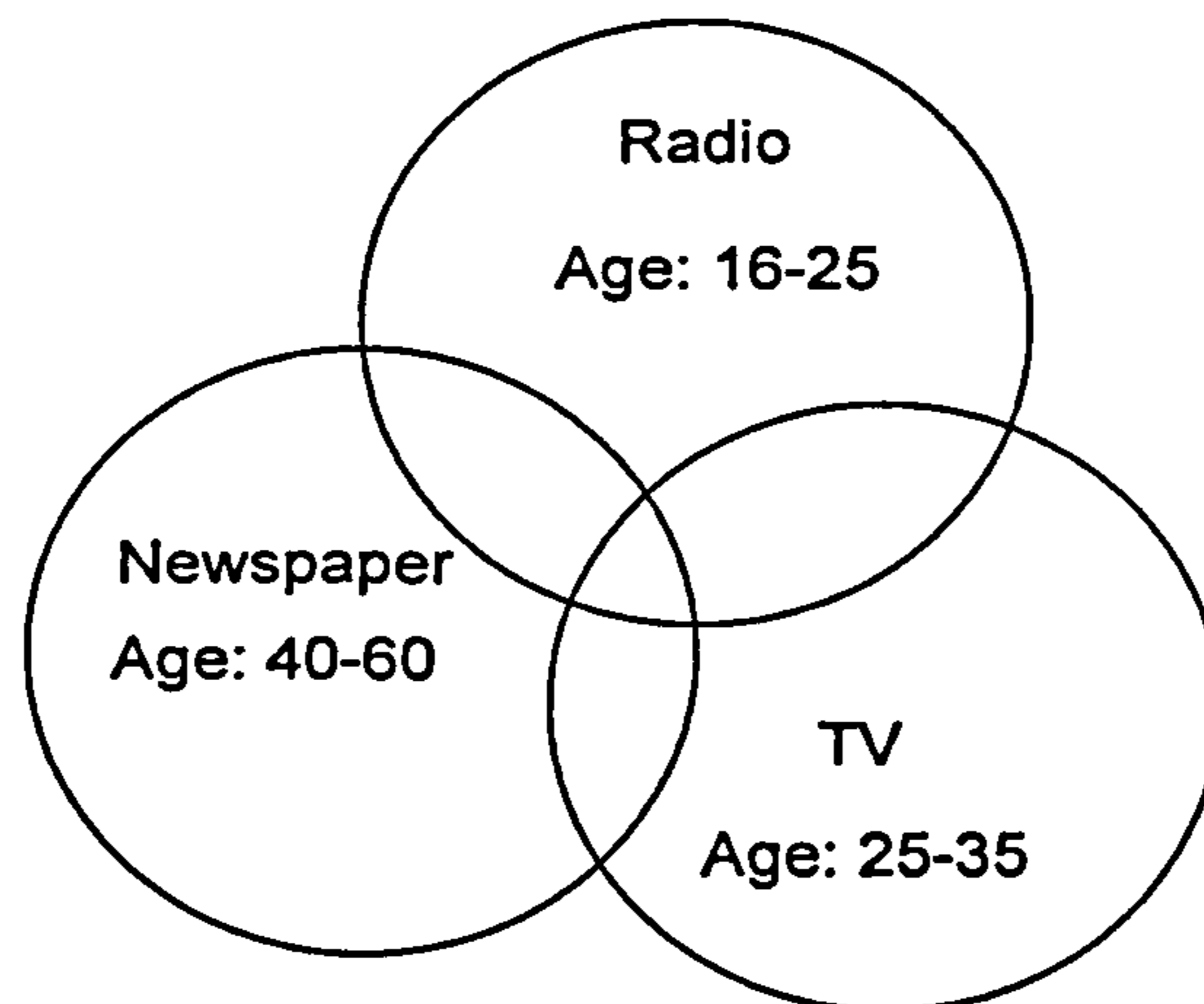


Figure 17 Overlapping multimedia-based age groups.

In addition to hitting different age groups, the multimedia-based business model is also applicable in the advertising department. Cross-promotion via multi-platforms is implemented. Advertisers, no matter what media they want to place advertisements in, can go to one person at the advertising department. ‘We don’t have a newspaper advertisement guy, a radio one and a TV one. That’s one person. If you call in and you say I would like an ad in the newspaper, and then the guy would say, it is not clever, you should get a TV ad instead. No matter what he says, we will sell it. That wasn’t the case in the old days,’ said Heine Jørgensen.

In the case of *BYD*, what they do is based on the single print circle concentrating its resources on launching, acquiring and investing in new newspapers targeting different age groups and specific segmented groups within this circle. TV and Radio businesses are separate circles that *BYD* has not been able to put its hands on. In China, the print press is not allowed to run TV or radio. However, TV or radio can run newspapers.

In terms of newsgathering, *Nordjyske*’s multimedia-based model imposes more responsibilities on the shoulders of reporters who are required to have the expertise in reporting for different media, using different devices. One reporter may need to report for newspaper, TV and radio in one go. ‘In a normal group, a lot of people

make a lot of media. That's how it works,' said Heine Jørgensen. He took his business sector as an example, as shown in Figure 18, and stated that normally a journalist covers a story for multimedia use: print, TV and radio. In the case of a significant story, multiple journalists will be assigned to report for specific media, based on their personal experiences and strength. Another way is that one journalist reports for a newspaper while another journalist reports for broadcasting, both TV and radio, as TV and radio are similar media.

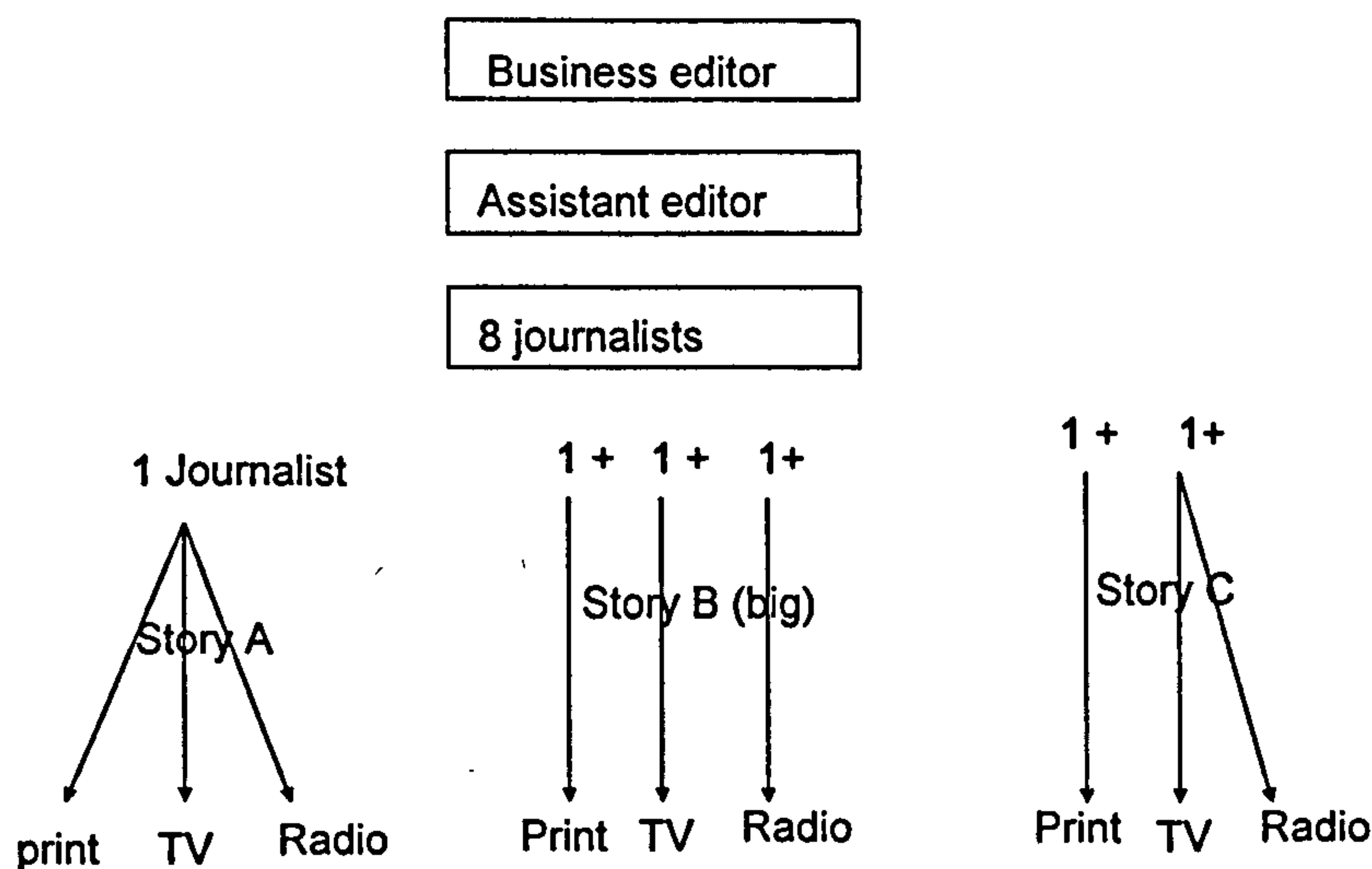


Figure 18 Multimedia-based journalists' reporting model at *Nordjyske*

In comparison, *BYD*'s news reporting is based on single media. Here is an example of the World News Department at *BYD*. As indicated in Figure 19, journalists at *BYD* only report for one medium - the newspaper. Based on the scale and importance of a news event, if the event is big, two journalists might be assigned to work on the same story from different angles. On some occasions, print journalists write and take photographs themselves for smaller stories. For some stories, a print journalist and photographers are assigned together on one story.

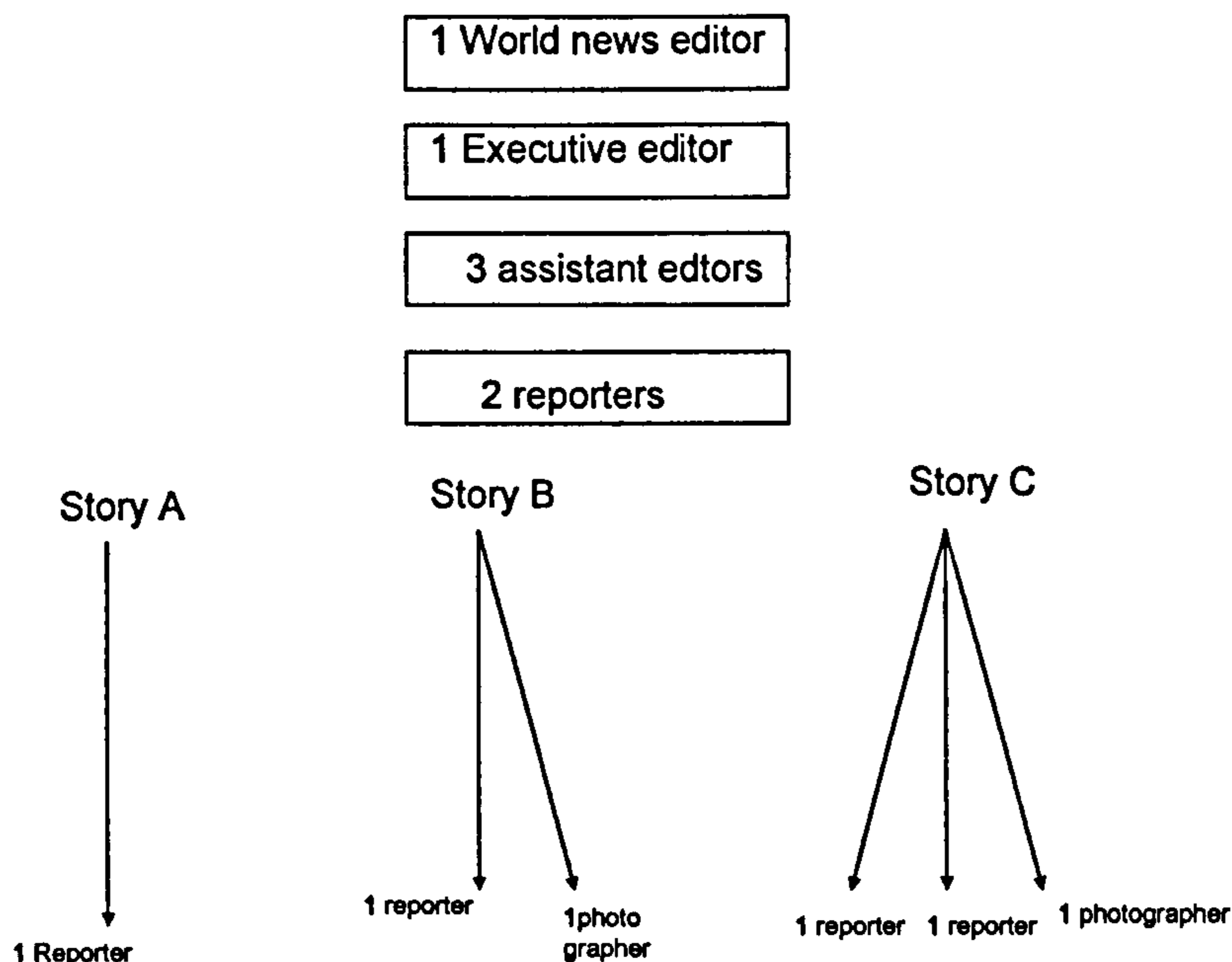


Figure 19 Print-based newsroom structure at *BYD*

The above comparison shows the different reporting models at *Nordjyske* and *BYD*. *Nordjyske*'s reporting is multimedia-based. Reporters are able to report for single or multiple media depending on the importance of the story and the personal expertise of each reporter. In contrast, *BYD*'s reporting is still the traditional print-based approach, when journalists report and write for a single newspaper.

In terms of senior managements' perceptions on media convergence, despite the big gap between *Nordjyske* and *BYD*, it is interesting to note that the senior management at both *Nordjyske* and *BYD* have realised the importance of media convergence. The President of *BYD* and the editor-in-chief of *Nordjyske* both see the media as a distribution channel and think the global trend is towards media convergence. Comments made by the two media organisations' heads are compared in three areas: media channels and content, demand for media convergence and the future corporate strategies. Great similarities and minor differences are identified from Table 6 below.

	Zhang, <i>BYD</i>	Haagerup, <i>Nordjyske</i>
Media are regarded as channels to distribute content	We want to develop a platform for the combination of multiple media. Such combination involves the combination of content. For readers, the content comes first.	We see our newspaper not as what we do but as a distribution channel for journalism. So we provide stories to people, content to people, and the newspaper is just one way to distribute news to people.
Demands for media convergence	We need to develop a cross-media structure that combines our strengths in different media. In the future, whether you are competitive lies in what kind of combination you have.	Because newspapers were monopolies before, the only way you can communicate people. Now there are so many ways. People are using them. If we don't adapt those technologies, then somebody else will do it and steal our customers.
Future strategies	The reason that we went public was to develop a multi-media platform. In addition, going public made the newspaper transparent and enabled us to have closer international cooperation. The most important thing is to attract international partners who are big companies.	We might develop into national or international news media because Northern Jutland is a very small market with 500,000 people. In order to survive, it's very difficult to make money on content. People don't want to pay for news. We have to be able to be more creative and come up with new ways to tell people the stories and new stories to tell them.

Table 6: Comparison of senior managements' comments on media convergence trend and future strategies of *Nordjyske* and *BYD*.

As for media channels and content, both leaders think that there are multi-media channels to distribute content. Content is most important. There are no differences in this regard.

As for demands for media convergence, both leaders identify the need to develop media convergence or the cross-media platform driven by competition and technology. However, the driving forces are slightly different. *BYD*'s demands are mainly driven by the competition. The more combination of media, the more competitive it will become. In contrast, *Nordjyske*'s demands are mainly driven by the new technologies, which provide people with more means to access news as it has already monopolized the region it covers.

As for future strategies, both local/regional media organisations express their intention to develop a national and international media, though the reasons behind the strategy are different. For *BYD*, they became listed on the global stock market with an aim of forming partnerships with big international media companies, to obtain advanced management talent and knowledge. Meanwhile, *Nordjyske*'s international strategy is one of survival as the regional market is not big enough to make big money from the content, as people tend to consume 'free news'.

Apart from the above-mentioned three aspects, both *BYD* and *Nordjyske* have diversified businesses not exclusive to the media services; for instance, *BYD* owns advertising companies while *Nordjyske* owns the 3-D company. Reasons may be different. However, they may share one aim in common in the strategy: to spread the risks. According to Locksley, 'media undertakings seek to spread their risks through forms of concentration at national and international levels.'<sup>557</sup>

The business idea is that before you used to have only one product, the newspaper. Now it's eroding. Four years ago, we got 70 percent of our revenues from that single product, the newspaper. Now our revenue is about 1 billion Danish Kroner. It's increased 400 million Kroner in three years. Only 30 percent of our revenue comes from the newspaper. We have to make

---

<sup>557</sup> Ad van Loon, 'Global trends – global solutions?', in Vicki MacLeod, ed. *Media ownership and control – in the age of convergence*, (London: International Institute of Communication, 1996), p.284

money on many different things. Before we could only make money on one thing.<sup>558</sup>

#### Conclusion:

Globalisation impacts on *BYD* at the organisational level in terms of the ownership model, the corporate goals and strategies, and the business model driven by domestic commercialisation and advances in information technology.

As for ownership, total state ownership under which the state controls both operation and content has changed to a particular dual-track ownership under which operation and content are separate. The party/state still keeps the ideological part under firm control by hiring and firing senior management as well as direct interference in the daily operation. Meanwhile the news organisation has financial autonomy and connects with the global economic market by getting listed on the Hong Kong stock exchange with the state's backing. Allowing foreign capital to enter the business operation of media conglomerate like *BYD* shows the certain degree of globalisation of media, as one of the criteria of media globalisation is 'media market openness and penetration of foreign media capital.'<sup>559</sup>

As for the corporate goals and strategies, Chinese news organisations as business entities are not much different from their western counterparts. Under the Chinese-style capitalism, news organisations endeavour to build into media conglomerates via acquisitions, concentration and convergence to cope with domestic competition from the domestic newspaper market, the Internet and other new media. They copycat and adapt Western newspapers' format, design and concepts as well as absorbing capital and advanced management skills from the transnational media companies.

As for business models, advertising and circulation are two pillars of revenue sources for *BYD*. In face of new information technology and new media, the media

---

<sup>558</sup> Interview with Ulrik Haagerup, 2005

<sup>559</sup> The complete quotation is: Media theories estimate the degree of globalization of the media in terms of the following criteria: the ratio of imported programs to domestic programs, the quantity of program traffic, media market openness and the penetration of foreign media capital, the formation of an audience able to consume foreign media content (intellectually and economically), and the availability of foreign content.

Daeho Kim and Seok-Kyeong Hong, 'The IMP, globalization, and the changes in the media power structure in South Korea', in Nancy Morris and Silvio Waisbord, eds., *Media and Globalization – why the state matters*, (New York: Roman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2001), p.79



convergence model is being explored and adopted around the world though the model is in the process of evolution and there is no formula-for-all model. Different news organisations interpret and develop the convergence model in their own distinctive manner.

In sum, globalisation, the flow of capital, technology, human and ideas, impacts *BYD* as an organisation, accelerating Chinese-style capitalism and media convergence.

## Chapter 5 Impact of globalisation on professional practices

This chapter will focus on current news production and news content and on changes in these areas over the past two decades to identify the ‘major different “moments” of the communication process in their full cultural and social contexts’<sup>560</sup> and to make up the missing link between ‘globalisation’ and ‘journalistic practices’ in the globalisation theories and literatures.<sup>561</sup> By examining newsroom routines, internal and external determinant factors that affect the news making process will be identified to address the question of ‘how the reality is constructed’.<sup>562</sup> A combination of qualitative and quantitative analysis is employed, based on the data collected during my fieldwork at *BYD* in 2006. This chapter consists of four subsections that focus on the audience, the practice of news processing (news values, news selections, news sources and news forms), the editorial structure and organizational constraints.

The following indicators will be used in this chapter to examine the impact of globalisation on the local professional practice at the *BYD*.

- Local distinctiveness – By looking at how the newspeople view their readers, how they process news day by day, where they collect the raw materials, and what constraints they face at work, the local newspaper’s distinctiveness is revealed. Local distinctiveness is important in the globalisation process, as McQuail claims, ‘large parts of Asia can and do look after themselves, or are protected by cultural distinctiveness. Media internationalization probably does lead to more homogenisation or ‘cultural synchronization’.<sup>563</sup>
- Temporal changes– changes in terms of audience, news selection and news suppliers are identified over the past two decades.
- Hybridisation of western forms – the kinds of western news forms, practices or ideas that are imported and adapted in the newspeople’s daily work and news content are identified. Hybridisation, defined as ‘the process whereby new cultural forms are forged out of disparate elements, especially a combination of

---

<sup>560</sup> Boyd-Barrett, ‘A different scale of difference’, 2005

<sup>561</sup> Holm, 2001, p.114

<sup>562</sup> Tuchman, 1978, p.5

<sup>563</sup> McQuail, 2000, p.238

alien or imported forms and local or traditional cultures',<sup>564</sup> addresses the issue of cultural forms and practices in social organizations. Globalisation is viewed as 'a process of hybridisation'.<sup>565</sup>

### 5.1 The audience

Consideration of audience affects news production. The audience is important to any news organization as a key factor determining newspeople's decisions about what content to provide to readers. Michael Schudson states that 'the media organize not just information but audiences because what a reporter is depends in large part on whom a reporter reports to.'<sup>566</sup> Brian McNair voices similar opinions and claims that one indicator of the professionalism of journalists is 'their view of audience' because 'the core business of the journalism industry remains the production of accurate, up to date information on events deemed important by its various audiences.'<sup>567</sup> The audience affects media production by influencing what become news and how the news is presented as the old saying goes, 'he who pays the piper calls the tune.'<sup>568</sup> Based on the interviewees' responses to the two research questions of 'who are the readers?' and 'how to learn about the readers' needs?', the image of readers as well as the gap between readers and newspeople are identified at *BYD*.

#### Elites or masses?

*BYD*'s corporate positioning of audience targets the elites in society, the so-called 'three highs' meaning people who have a high education level, high income and high calibre. Though the corporate slogan of 'three highs' is crystal clear, findings based on individual interviews reveal newspeople's contradictory image of readers constructed on the elites/masses axis.

Those who regard readers as elite class tend to toe the corporate line and describe readers as mainly male, middle-aged, and well-educated white collar workers or business leaders, 'people who have influence on society will be our readers including administrative leaders, opinion leaders, and voice leaders.'<sup>569</sup> Such elite profiles

---

<sup>564</sup> McQuail, 2000, p.497

<sup>565</sup> Pieterse, 1995, p.45

<sup>566</sup> Schudson, 1995, p.25 and 96

<sup>567</sup> Brian McNair, 'What is journalism', in Hugo de Burgh, *Making journalists – diverse models, global issues*, (London: Routledge, 2005), p.29-54

<sup>568</sup> Jaap van Ginneken, *Understanding global news – a critical introduction*, (London: Sage Publications, 1998), p.44

<sup>569</sup> Interview with Lu Fei, 2006

influence newspeople's editorial selection in the newspaper, for instance, the local new editor is unlikely to select violent or trivial events so as to avoid boring readers while national news editor screens out news about poor people like migrant workers and peasants. 'When I make a judgment on a news item, for instance, a topic about rural area, I would say to the editors that we target "three high" groups so we won't take this topic. Beijing basically has no countryside. If we include many rural topics, it won't do'.<sup>570</sup>

Other respondents believe *BYD*'s real readers are not the elite but mostly ordinary people with basic education and a decent job such as employees who take public transport — buses or the subway — to go to work or retired people. They think the definition of the 'three highs' is not accurate and too idealistic. They say *BYD* should also target ordinary people and care about their lives if it is to survive the harsh competition, 'readers should be the masses, the public. If we limit our readers to the "three highs", the newspaper will die. Ordinary people lead very ordinary lives, as a metropolitan newspaper, we should care about their lives.'<sup>571</sup>

The elite/mass disagreement on the target readership does not hinder the development of the newspaper because the newspaper market in China is not highly diversified and segmented but based on a mass audience. There are always people who read the newspapers, 'readers read the paper no matter what kind of papers we make. We might lose some readers and new readers may come.'<sup>572</sup> In order to grab a share in the mass-audience market, Chinese newspaper groups or news organizations, no matter whether they are big or small, or what areas they specialize in, copy each other launching new papers targeting a mass audience. They try to claim markets by making preemptive investments, 'every news organization faces the equal opportunities as long as they appeal to the mass audience market.'<sup>573</sup> This results in the emergence of many new similar metropolitan newspapers staging vicious and rather pointless competition.

Real or imaginary?

---

<sup>570</sup> Interview with Shao Wen, 2006

<sup>571</sup> Interview with Li Yumin, 2006

<sup>572</sup> Interview with Wang Fang, 2006.

<sup>573</sup> Interview with Chang Lingxin, 2006

My research shows that newspeople don't really know who their readers are and what the readers want. There is a gap between newspeople and the audience. Newspeople imagine themselves as readers, guessing what the readers want to read and selecting news based on their own experiences and professional judgement. The rationale is what interests them will interest the audience.

I make assumptions. Sometimes I'll see whether I am interested in it. I imagine myself as a 'white collar' at the age of 37 to 38, having had higher education at the university. If I'm not interested, others might not be interested either. We have no other way. The *BYD* agency always says we have readers' surveys, describing the readers as 37 to 38 years old. But in fact, (we don't know) whether this newspaper format is suitable for the "three highs" to read. The "three highs" group is an ideal group. It is a slogan for the outward publicity. I doubt whether the readers' survey supports this claim. I really don't know.<sup>574</sup>

There are audience research studies but newspeople don't seem to trust them. At *BYD*, a monthly readers' survey report is distributed to each newsroom. However, newspeople complain about the report's 'inaccuracy' and lack of 'credibility'. They don't trust the monthly reports they describe as the same every month. I observed that people in the newsrooms don't even bother to read the report. The monthly survey report fails to serve as a solid foundation for newspeople to draw a good picture of who their readers are and what they want.

Instead, channels for learning about the readers' needs include hotlines, readers' feedback and talking with people in newspeople's own social circle including families, friends and cab drivers. But these channels are random, disparate and alternative. A regular and well-managed mechanism based on accurate market surveying and dialogue with readers is needed to study readers' needs.

Newspeople are aware of the gap between news professionals and readers and try to use different forms and information technology to bridge it. Some news divisions have started to promote the direct and interactive communication with readers, for instance, in 2006, *BYD* operated a 'readers' direct bus' during the National People's Congress (NPC) and National People's Political Consultative Conference

---

<sup>574</sup> Interview with Shao Wen, 2006

(NPPCC)<sup>575</sup> sessions. ‘Readers can tell us their concerns and then we pass them on to the delegates at the congress. This activity achieved very good responses.’<sup>576</sup> In early 2007, *BYD* initiated ‘live web dialogues’ enabling editorial managers and news editors of each news divisions to exchange ideas with Internet users online at *BYD*’s own website *y.net.com*.

Compared with Western newspapers, the distinctiveness of Chinese papers like *BYD* lies in the mass-audience market and the unavailability of authoritative audited circulation figures and readers’ surveys to guide newspeople’s work. In the west, starting from the end of the 20th century, audiences have fragmented and shrunk and newspapers have relied on niche markets.<sup>577</sup> Newspapers have transformed from appealing to a mass audience to tailoring their appeal to many different classes of audiences, from ‘a few messages sent to many people to many messages sent to a few people.’<sup>578</sup> Newspapers keep a close watch on their circulation figures and audience research reports including polling and focus groups to discover the views and demands of audiences.<sup>579</sup>

The fact that news professionals do not understand their audience is not a new problem and it is not limited to Chinese newspapers. As early as 1956, Dr. Walter Gieber studied the telegraph editors of 16 Wisconsin dailies and learnt that the editors were passive and had no real perception of their audience.<sup>580</sup> Although the ultimate goal of the press is to serve the audience, ‘both the sources and the reporters rationalized audience needs but neither seemed to know the audience’.<sup>581</sup> In real life, journalists function as each other’s prime reference group. ‘They may say that they do this or that because “the audience wants it”. But their actual contact with the audience is extremely limited (usually to a few family members and occasional

---

<sup>575</sup> ‘Readers’ direct bus’ refers to the special column in the newspaper in the coverage of the National People’s Congress (NPC) National People’s Political Consultative Conference (NPPCC). The paper serves as the ‘bus’ to deliver readers’ short messages, emails and hotline phone calls to the delegates at the two conferences.

<sup>576</sup> Interview with Mao Longying, 2006.

<sup>577</sup> Lance W. Bennett, *News: the politics of illusion, 5th edition*, (New York: Longman, 2002), p.185

<sup>578</sup> Philip Meyer, *The vanishing newspaper – saving journalism in the information age*, (London: University of Missouri Press, 2004), p.5 and 110

<sup>579</sup> Peter Golding and Philip Elliott, *Making the news*, (London: Longman, 1979), p.111

<sup>580</sup> White, 1964, p.160

<sup>581</sup> Walter Gieber, ‘News is what newspapermen make it’, in Dexter and White, 1964, p.180

neighbours)'.<sup>582</sup> Philip Schlesinger refers to this gap as a 'missing link' and noticed a 'newsman as audiences' model:

There is a missing link between the producers and consumers of news. The newsmen studied know little about their audience's levels of information and knowledge. There is no satisfactory method of feedback which enables them to become more aware. Audience research is sporadic and ambiguous. The gap between producer and consumer does not pose severe problems because it is filled with the conventional wisdom of a professionalism which is largely self-sustaining. Ultimately, the newsman is his own audience. Newsmen see themselves as in a position to take the role of the audience in respect of standards, taste and comprehension.<sup>583</sup>

As for the temporal change, a shift in the readership of the *BYD* over the past 20 plus years is identifiable though the changes have been gradual. In terms of age group, target readers have changed from the high school students in the earliest days, to the expansion of college students and young people in the society, to middle-aged professionals. In terms of the social groups, target readers have changed from the masses to the elite. This shift has mainly been caused by the media commercialization drive in China. When the *BYD* was re-launched in 1981, it was a local government subsidized paper that circulated in secondary schools. In the early 1990s, *BYD* was one of the first newspapers to become market-oriented, targeting the young people and ordinary people. As commercialization developed, a narrowly defined readership emerged. *BDY*, based on its expanding circulation, define a middle-aged elite class, the so-called movers in society, as its target readership because these people, as consumers with high purchasing power, attract advertisers. As Sun Wei, *BYD*'s ex-editor-in-chief, said during an interview at sohu.com in 2003, 'who can afford to buy a house? It's not realistic to ask laid-off workers and cleaners to buy a house at the cost of millions of yuan. Who can afford it? The white-collar professionals. They are able to buy houses and cars. They are our target readers

---

<sup>582</sup> Ginneken, 1998, p.80

<sup>583</sup> Philip Schlesinger, *Putting 'reality' together – BBC news*, (London: Constable, 1978), p.106-133

because they have the biggest influence on the society. Real estates, auto and IT advertisers want to know what the readership is.’<sup>584</sup>

As for the incorporation of western forms, audience research has started to adopt western polling and statistical approaches in China. A fully fragmented audience market like that in the west will emerge in the years to come. In fact, ‘newspapers are starting to serve a fragmented readership.’<sup>585</sup>

## 5.2 News making practice

Journalistic practices will be examined in this section in terms of news values, news selection criteria and news sources. These aspects combine to construct reality in the newsrooms. As Gaye Tuchman states, news is made to construct reality rather than drawing a picture of reality. News making serves organizational interests by ‘reaffirming the institutional processes in which news work is embedded’.<sup>586</sup>

### 5.2.1 News values

News values are particular characteristics of an event that make it more likely to be chosen for the news agenda or ‘newsworthy’.<sup>587</sup> They are ‘working rules’ that derive from the two immediate determinants of news making, perceptions of the audience and the availability of material.<sup>588</sup> News values are used in two ways, as selection criteria and as guidelines for presentation. They influence newspeople’s selection criteria in terms of what news items are selected, what news agenda is set as well as what angles the selected news items are presented from and what is emphasized.

Western news values were developed by the late 19th century (accuracy, impartiality, speed and ‘color’) stemming from ‘factual reporting’.<sup>589</sup> In the 1960s, Norwegians Johan Galtung and Mari Ruge proposed 12 factors that may make an event newsworthy including time-span, scale, clarity, meaningfulness, consonance, unexpectedness, continuity, composition, elite nations, elite persons, personification,

---

<sup>584</sup>Sun Wei, *Beijing qiannian bao jiangshi diyijia zhijie shangshi de zhimei* (Sunwei: *Beijing Youth Daily* will be the first newspaper to get floated in the stock market), 20 October 2003, <http://it.sohu.com/91/64/article214666491.shtml>, accessed 6 March 2007

<sup>585</sup> Interview with Zhang Yanping, 2006.

<sup>586</sup> Tuchman, 1978, pp.5- 21

<sup>587</sup> Chris Paterson, ‘Global battlefields’, in Oliver Boyd-Barrett and Terhi Rantanen, eds., *The globalization of news*, (London: Sage Publications, 1998), p.80

<sup>588</sup> Golding and Elliott, 1979, pp.114-115

<sup>589</sup> Michael Palmer, ‘What makes news’, in Boyd-Barrett and Rantanen, eds., 1998, p.177



and negativity.<sup>590</sup> These factors continue to be cited as ‘prerequisites’ of news selection in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.<sup>591</sup> This model, as indicated in Figure 20 below, resembles the revolving door. Items that fit one or more important news values will get through while others slip out.<sup>592</sup>

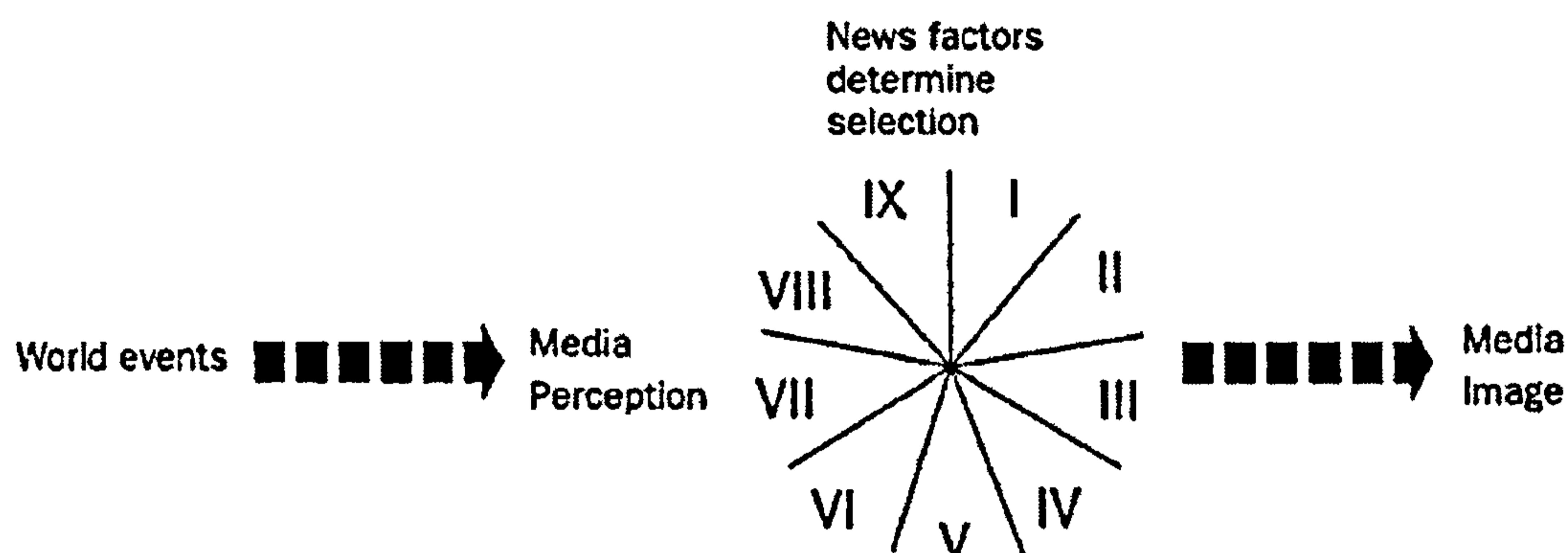


Figure 20 Galtung & Ruge's model of selective gate keeping<sup>593</sup>

News values at *BYD* are examined to pinpoint the similarities and differences between Chinese and western news values. In defining what is news, good news or bad news, findings from the 22 respondents indicate a total of 12 factors that *BYD* news workers consider and emphasize in their journalistic practice. They include immediacy, resonance, truth/facts, unexpectedness, newness and interestingness, significance, relevance, exclusiveness, in-depth, human interest, social and moral responsibility, and education/demonstration. Detailed research results are presented and analyzed below.

### Immediacy

Immediacy is still considered a key element in making news for the newspapers. However, this research shows that newspaper people feel depressed in face of competition from the Internet and other news media like TV and radio in terms of

<sup>590</sup> Johan Galtung and Mari Holmboe Ruge, 'The Structure of Foreign News', *Journal of Peace Research*, (London: Sage Publications, 1965), pp.64-91, <http://www.jstor.org/view/00223433/ap020006/02a00040/0>

<sup>591</sup> Herbert, 2001, pp.31-32

<sup>592</sup> James Watson, 'Representing realities: an overview of news framing', *Keio Communication Review*, No.29, 2007 <http://www.mediacom.keio.ac.jp/publication/pdf2007/pdf/James%20WATSON.pdf>

<sup>593</sup> Watson, 2007, <http://www.mediacom.keio.ac.jp/publication/pdf2007/pdf/James%20WATSON.pdf>

transmission speed. As the Internet is speedy and is a good medium for long-term information storage, it poses the greatest threat to the newspaper, though the newspaper has the strength to do in-depth reports. Two respondents voiced different opinions on the immediacy of news in the information era. They don't think immediacy is extremely important. They tend to stress the readers' perspectives and view events that readers want to know about or that have an influence on the present as news even though some events may have happened in the past. 'News is what the readers want to know, what the readers are concerned about or what they are interested in. News is not what has just happened any more.'<sup>594</sup>

### Resonance

News is defined as anything that attracts the reader's attention, responses and resonance including things that interest and benefit readers, things that readers find interesting and useful as well as human-interest stories. Reader-orientation is highlighted in newspeople's basic news values. They feel obliged to collect news to meet the needs of readers. 'We report breaking events including traffic accidents, fires, and other accidents. Those things exist objectively. We must select them because the public pay attention to them.'<sup>595</sup> In terms of social news, readability is stressed meaning that 'the news is relevant to the interests of the common people and thus attracts their attention and has resonance'.<sup>596</sup> Starting in 2006, a feature column was launched in local news section titled '2020 Search' (*2020 bang nin zhao*). It was meant to provide services and help the audience to seek for information they need, for instance, an aged man got lost for a week and his story was reported in this column.

### Truth/facts

The truthful and factual part of news is stressed. Respondents think truth is the most essential and important among all the criteria for news. The reason is that as news making process is routinized, many journalists have become too lazy or cautious to seek first-hand material and instead base their reports on press releases, hearsay, or phone calls. In addition, pressured by the needs of market, news tends to be dramatized and sensationalized. In this situation, the pursuit of truth and facts is

---

<sup>594</sup> Interview with Tong Lei, 2006

<sup>595</sup> Interview with Geng Zhengsong, 2006

<sup>596</sup> *ibid*

regarded as an important quality for a professional newsman. The director of the quality control department gave two examples to back up his claim that truth is the most important part for news and that professional reporters should have the ability to judge the truth or falsehood of a story and verify the facts.

There was a well-known report about how ‘one minute saved a man from execution’ in 2002. Later on, I went to Yan’an to do interviews on this matter. I interviewed the lawyer, judges and prosecutors. One important point was that it was not one minute. The execution was stopped about one hour before it was due to take place. It was the lawyer who told the *Chinese Business View (Huashang Bao)* reporter about the one-minute story. In that way, the story sounded more dramatic. It was spiced up.

Another example is that all the newspapers in Beijing said the plum trees were all in blossom in a valley at the Fragrant Hill Park. I went there twice. It was not a valley full of plum blossoms. In all, there were fewer than 20 plum trees in blossom. I think that story must have come from a press release issued by the park. The reporter did not check it. He just sent it out under his own name. It misled readers. As a reporter, he ought to have the ability to judge whether the story is true or not, or whether the event has been exaggerated. It’s one of basic capabilities for a professional reporter.<sup>597</sup>

### Unexpectedness

Unexpectedness is also a criterion, ‘when after conducting investigation we find results or reasons behind big events are opposite to what people expect from the surface of events, that’s big news.’<sup>598</sup> A reporter doing local news lists three criteria for rushing to the scene for a report after being tipped off via a hotline. ‘At night, news is mainly about big traffic accidents or fires – immediate events. First, the photos. Will it be dramatic? Will it give us good pictures in tomorrow’s paper? That’s the first condition. Second, casualties. The more casualties the better. Third, unexpected.’<sup>599</sup>

---

<sup>597</sup> Interview with Wang Fang, 2006

<sup>598</sup> Interview with Mao Longying, 2006

<sup>599</sup> Interview with Chu Chenhui, 2006.

## Newness and interestingness

Newness is one element in news, referring to things that have never happened before from the readers' perspective or that are beyond the scope of readers' normal life. News should be interesting, reflecting conflict, uniqueness, peculiarity or specialty. Reports that are irrelevant to people's lives, for instance, of boring meetings in the current affairs pages, and dull writing are generally despised (though they are still typical of the most official newspapers). 'In recent years, things have got better but there are still false, big and empty news items. In a 1,000 words article, there might be only 50 words that are useful to the public. Metropolitan newspapers like *BYD* are much better because we are market-oriented. If we publish items on party's policy, "three representations" everyday, nobody would read it.'<sup>600</sup>

## Significance

The significance of events, a key factor in making news, is judged by whether the events are important and worthwhile to disseminate for the sake of state, individuals and the society or things that change or influence readers' lives. Political issues especially big policy changes are regarded as highly significant because the society is in transition with many new state policies and regulations constantly being issued that have great influence on people's lives and set the direction for the society's development.

Current affairs and politics that closely relate to the state's important policies and principles are news, for instance, Lian Chan<sup>601</sup> visited mainland China and held talks with senior government officials. 'This might be a significant development for the situation across Taiwan straits. Policies that are promulgated by the government authorities are also important. Although those news stories look boring, they usually contain something that will guide the direction the country's going in'.<sup>602</sup>

## Relevance

Respondents mention the relevance of news, especially social news, to people's lives. 'At present, our big stories are mainly about social events tipped via the hotline

---

<sup>600</sup> Interview with Deng Fei, 2006

<sup>601</sup> Lian Zhan was Taiwan's vice president from 1996 to 2000, and was the Chairman of the Kuomintang (KMT) from 2000 to 2005. In August 2005, he left that post after not running for re-election and was succeeded by Ma Ying-jeou.

<sup>602</sup> Interview with Deng Fei, 2006

including accidents and investigative news. This kind of news is closely related to the citizens' lives. Thus, we pay much attention to it.'<sup>603</sup> Local communities are a new focus for coverage as what happens in the residential communities is closely related to people's daily lives. 'New residential communities all have their own websites. People's real interests always appear in chat rooms. We care about the voices of common people, what the common people care about, things that are relevant to their daily lives.'<sup>604</sup>

### Exclusiveness

Exclusiveness is not limited to the events the newspaper reports. Indeed, to cover an event exclusively is more and more difficult in a highly competitive market where different newspapers tend to report on the same news topics. Exclusivity now focuses on unique ideas, angles, editing approaches, photos or page layout. For instance, the *BYD*, like every other newspaper in Beijing, reported that Princess Kiko, the wife of Prince Akishino, the Japanese emperor's second son, was pregnant. Its exclusiveness lay in its approach: the *BYD* editor presented the story by comparing Crown Princess Masako with Princess Kiko, thus differentiating *BYD* from other papers that only reported the pregnancy.

'Relativity' is stressed while defining exclusive news. An editor said it is difficult to report something absolutely exclusive, thus what they pursue, as far as the national news is concerned, is relatively exclusive news within certain geographic and time limits. Media outside Beijing may have reported some news events, as long as no media in Beijing have picked it up, the *BYD* will still run the story and regard it as relatively exclusive.

A bloody murder case happened in Shanxi province in 2005 and suspects were arrested. The public trial was conducted in January 2006. Our reporter saw a small piece on the web saying this case would be tried and he went to the courtroom in Shanxi. On the day of trial, he filed a long story and we made it a top story on our national news page. Our report was out in the paper on the same day with the local newspapers in Shanxi. But other

---

<sup>603</sup> Interview with Geng Zhongsong, 2006

<sup>604</sup> Interview with Tong Lei, 2006

newspapers in Beijing carried this story one day later. You couldn't call it purely exclusive. But it was relatively exclusive.<sup>605</sup>

### In-depth

In-depth reports are highly regarded and they mean different things to different interviewees: informative interviews — 'interviews with somebody may not have a large readership but may contain good information and can educate and enlighten people',<sup>606</sup> extensive coverage of news events — 'for one breaking historical event, the story covers the largest extent including people involved and regions influenced. It is the most comprehensive piece',<sup>607</sup> or usage of different news forms in presentation of a complicated news event — 'for the print press, it is good news if we report a certain event timely and comprehensively using various editorial approaches like photos, tables, graphics, on-the-scene report, analysis, and background information. If it can form such a good combination, it is good news'.<sup>608</sup>

### Human interest

News that contains human-interest elements and shows humanity is regarded as good news. For instance, a news story headed 'couple's true love rescued with people's help' along with a photo was published on the front page on 3 January 2006.<sup>609</sup> It was about a car crash on the highway from Tianjin to Beijing. A young couple inside the car had a row and fought each other. The woman was angry and tried to seize the wheel. The car turned over and caught on fire. The man managed to pull his wife out of the car at the risk of his own life. The couple stood at the roadside, and hugged and cried. The background was the big fire. 'Our reporter came across this car accident on his way back from Tianjin to Beijing. This was a rare scoop. You can sense the love and care from the photo. It is a good story in terms of a breaking

---

<sup>605</sup> Interview with San Ning, 2006

<sup>606</sup> Interview with Deng Fei, 2006

<sup>607</sup> Interview with Mao Longying, 2006

<sup>608</sup> Interview with Long Qinnan, 2006

<sup>609</sup> Man Yi, 'Zhongren shizhu, jiuwei fuqi zhenqing (People help save couple's true love)', 3 January, 2006, <http://bjyouth.ynet.com/article.jsp?oid=7233673>

report.<sup>610</sup>



Figure 21 Photo about human-interest story on the front page.

#### Social and moral responsibility

Respondents recognize the media's social and moral responsibilities and think news should not only be about what happened but should also reveal the implications behind the events. News should voice the citizens' voices, set an agenda for the majority and influence the common people. It should be stimulating, instructive, and in the long term in the interests of readers. Specifically, newspeople see reports that are able to change the state policies or regulations as good news because the news media's social responsibilities are implemented through these reports, as they claim 'our reports play a big role in policy change'.<sup>611</sup> 'If the news can attract attention from the relevant authorities or even cause the birth of new policies, it is good news'.<sup>612</sup>

One journalist cited the example of Sun Zhigang case to make his point. Sun, a 27-year-old graphic designer, was detained by police in Guangzhou, for not having a temporary resident card for the area, and subsequently beaten to death in police custody in April 2003. The *Southern Metropolitan News* broke this news, prompting

<sup>610</sup> Interview with Wang Fang, 2006

<sup>611</sup> Interview with Sheng Hui, 2006

<sup>612</sup> Interview with Li Yumin, 2006

the central government to change the policy towards migrant workers. Sun's case is regarded as 'completely new in China's journalism history. It changed the fate of migrants.'<sup>613</sup>

While the news media around the world is following an 'infotainment' trend to pursue the maximum commercial profits, respondents point out that there is too much "crap" news that contains no useful information or meanings. News media should shoulder moral responsibility.

There is a lot of crap especially in entertainment news. It is not news but rubbish. For instance, Liu Jialing, (a Hong Kong movie star) went to eat hotpot in a restaurant. Then reporters swarmed into restaurant and took many photos of what was left in the hotpot. News media should be moral.

Reporters are not businessmen. They should have moral responsibilities.<sup>614</sup>

#### Education/Demonstration

Respondents point out that news should educate and enlighten the common people as well as help them solve practical problems. News should have demonstration functions for social groups.

Galtung & Ruge claim that the first eight factors are held to be culture-free and they don't vary much along the east-west, north-south or center-periphery axis.<sup>615</sup> My fieldwork finds that the first six factors are universal, as indicated in Table 7 below. However, it does not mean that other factors as shown in Galtung & Ruge's theory do not apply in Chinese media environment. Factors like 'clarity', 'continuity', 'composition' and 'elite nations and person' may also apply in China at least unconsciously though the newspeople do not realize or think them important at the time of interviews.

---

<sup>613</sup> Interview with Deng Fei, 2006

<sup>614</sup> *ibid*

<sup>615</sup> Galtung and Ruge, 1965, pp.67-68, <http://www.jstor.org/view/00223433/ap020006/02a00040/0>



## Similar factors:

G&R	Time-span	Scale	Meaningfulness	Personification	Unexpectedness	Consonance
BYD	Immediacy	In-depth	Significance	Human interest	Unexpectedness	Resonance

## Different factors:

G&R	Clarity	Continuity	Composition	Elite nations	Elite persons	Negativity
BYD	Truth/facts	New & interesting	Exclusive	Social & moral responsibility	Relevance	Education / demonstration

Table 7 Similarities and differences between Galtung & Ruge and *BYD*'s 12 news factors.

The comparison shows that *BYD* newspeople share many news values with western counterparts. Apart from immediacy, scale, significance, unexpectedness, personification, consonance, other elements like social responsibility and pursuit of truth identified by *BYD* respondents are also reflected in the general ethical and moral principles for mass media in liberal democratic countries. After all, the journalists' profession might be described as 'authorized truth teller' or 'licensed relayer of facts'.<sup>616</sup>

The most striking differences between liberal journalism and Chinese journalism lie in the 'negativity' against 'education/demonstration'. While the watchdog and muckraking roles are highlighted in liberal journalism, Chinese journalism still remains a mouthpiece and propaganda tool to a certain extent with a goal of promoting consensus and harmony in society. News such as crimes or disasters rarely reaches the front page. Newspapers are meant to guide the public opinion in a positive way. 'We want to do constructive news. Being constructive means promoting society's healthy development, constructive not devastating'.<sup>617</sup> While

<sup>616</sup> McNair, 1998, pp.65-68

<sup>617</sup> Interview with Sheng Hui, 2006.

western newspapers pursue crime, blood and negativity on front pages as they say ‘blood leads’, Chinese newspapers tend to restrict the front pages to policies and positivism. One editor who attended the MA course in media studies at Luton University compared the front page of the *Daily Telegraph* with that of Chinese newspapers and pointed out that while western papers put the bad news or sensational news, or news closely relevant to people’s lives on their front pages, Chinese papers mostly use big news from central or municipal governments.

What impressed me most was the front page of one issue of the *Daily Telegraph*. The top news was about pollution in the UK, a breast cancer story was in the middle, and the fact that refrigerators produce germs if people don’t clear them regularly was put at the bottom. In the UK, they put bad news, significant or sensational things on the front pages. If they don’t have such material, they put something closely relevant to people’s lives. In China, the last two pieces would never get onto the front page. The newspaper-making concept of the Communist Party in China is that we have all the big news from the central government, or from Beijing municipality.<sup>618</sup>

The universal and distinctive news values held by *BYD* newspeople are determined by the profession/propaganda dichotomy of Chinese news media. They are professionals and propagandists at the same time.

### 5.2.2 News selection

The previous section demonstrates what news values operate in *BYD*. This section will look at how the news values are implemented in newspeople’s practical work and at major changes over the past two decades. In general terms, news content has become diversified, politicized and globalized, and the significance of editorials and commentaries increases dramatically.

#### 5.2.2.1 Methods

Further to the Methodology section in Chapter 1, more details on sampling and coding instructions are given for quantitative analysis.

Content analysis was conducted based on the sampling of a total of 1830 news items carried on the front pages. All the sampled articles are grouped into four time

periods from 1982 to 1988, 1989 to 1993, 1994 to 1998 and 2003 to 2006.<sup>619</sup> The year of 1989, 1993 and 2003 are set as milestones and dividing lines because with the end of cold war, 1989 is commonly regarded as the start of new 'globalisation era'. In 1993, economic reform was re-enforced following Deng Xiaoping's historic southern trip speech. The year 2003 was the year in which *BYD* became a daily in terms of both form and content.

For each news item, its date, weekday, main topic, additional topic and lead/first paragraph are recorded and then coded in relation to news topics (themes), geographical locations and news sources. Some coding approaches and instructions indicated in the project proposal for 'Cooperative study of foreign news and international news flow in the 1990s' are adapted and incorporated in this study.<sup>620</sup>

News topics are coded under 18 headings including politics, economics/businesses, culture, sports, social, crime, entertainment, human interest, environment, natural disaster, globalisation/internationalisation, education, health care, war, science & technology, self-promotion, travel and others. 'Globalisation/internationalisation' is defined as things that have an international touch beyond the nation/state boundary covering a wide range of areas including economics, foreign relations, foreign visits, foreign affairs, culture, sports, war, conflicts, etc.

Every attempt has been made to code consistently. Where an article appeared to fall into more than one category, efforts were made to identify the main subjects. For instance, on 4 February 1986, the news item 'new trend in the city's labour export' (*Woshi laowu chukou chuxian xin dongxiang*) falls into the categories of both globalisation and economics. As the central theme of this thesis is to examine the impact of globalisation, the interconnection and interdependence between China and the world, this item is coded under globalisation rather than economics. For the same reason, on 12 February 1988, the item 'policy unchanged towards sending students overseas' (*Wo paiqian liuxuesheng zhengce bubian*), though falls into globalisation and education categories, is coded under globalisation. On 20 May 2005, the item '91-year-old Japanese soldier knelt at Lugouqiao, confessed killing

---

<sup>618</sup> Interview with Tong Lei, 2006

<sup>619</sup> See methodology section in Chapter 1 for more details.

<sup>620</sup> 'Project proposal – cooperative study of foreign news and international news flow in the 1990s', <http://www.ibiblio.org/newsflow/>, accessed 18 March 2008

Chinese during invasions' (*91sui qinhua rijun changgui Lugouqiao xiezui, ceng shasi Zhongguoren*) falls into human interest and politics categories. It is coded under human interest because in essence this is a personal event rather than a pure political event.

As for geographical locations of the news reports, four levels are used: local, national (domestic), world and central government. As Beijing is the capital of China where the central state administration and ministries are based, there is a need to distinguish news at central government level and real local news. State leadership activities, national congresses, conferences, and meetings as well as regulations and policies promulgated by the central level ministries are coded as 'central' to differentiate them from local news. For instance, the foreign ministry spokesman's comments on foreign affairs are coded as 'central'.

In addition, news events that took place outside China are coded as 'world', however, it should be noted that some news events happened within China but were related to foreign countries, international organizations or have international influence, for instance, the 2008 Olympic Games. In this case, the coding rule depends on the main body of the news report and the reporting place.

Examples are given to clarify the coding ambiguity in terms of locations: 1. On 20 September 2006, for the news item 'Use of Olympic game track plan in the Iron Man World Cup' (*Tieren sanxiang shijiebei sai shouyong aoyun saidao fangan*), the event was held in Beijing and the reporting place was local despite the fact that it was a world event, thus it was coded as 'local'. 2. On 16 August 2006, for the item 'State Forestry Ministry denies developing Russia's millions acres of forests' (*Guojia linyeju zuore founen kaifa E baiwan gongqing senlin*), the main body was the state forestry ministry though it referred to China's activities overseas, and the reporting place was Beijing, thus it was coded as 'central'. 3. On 28 July 2006, the news 'Relatives of Israeli bombing victim Du Zhaoyu took flight to Tel Aviv last night' (*Yunanzhe Du Zhaoyu jiashu zuowan feifu Telaweifu*) was related to the Chinese victim in Israel. But the main body of the report was the victim relatives' activities in Beijing and the reporting place was in Beijing, thus it was coded as 'local'. 4. On 28 January 2003, the news 'Chinese embassy in Iraq denies evacuating Chinese citizens' (*Wo zhu Yi shiguan founen cheqiao*) was coded as 'world' as the main body

of this piece was the Chinese embassy in Iraq, which was outside China, although the reporting place was Beijing.

Using the SPSS software, quantitative findings are demonstrated below. Meanwhile interview-based qualitative analysis is given to support, supplement and explain what lies behind the statistical figures based on respondents' answers to two questions: what criteria are used in the selection of news stories? And, what news stories are regarded as priorities?

#### 5.2.2.2 Diversified news coverage

News coverage has become diversified in terms of both news topics and geographical locations. Subjects that in the past would not have been reported may now be written about. Globalisation, health, sports, environment, natural disasters, travel and war and conflict are all subjects whose coverage has increased rapidly. The top four themes that have the highest frequency rates are globalisation, social events/services/problems, politics and economics. The least reported four themes are other, war/conflicts, environment and science/technology, as shown in Table 8 below.

This corresponds with the transition and growth of *BYD* and social changes at large. As *BYD* has grown from an obscure 'tabloid' newspaper with limited news sources and influence to an influential quality newspaper, its reporting scope has expanded to cover a wide range of areas. Social problems and services that concern the public most like health care and hospital, transportation and traffic, sports, accidents, etc are included in front page reports. This also fits with *BYD*'s reporting principle of enhancing 'readability' (the value of interestingness) and 'closeness' (the value of relevance) to the readers. Keeping pace with *BYD*'s commercialization process, content on the front page are getting more and more diversified.

	Total (%)	1982-88 (%)	1989-93 (%)	1994-98 (%)	2003-06 (%)
Politics 1	14.8	15.2	10.1	7.4	16.4
Economics/business 2	10	6.1	11.2	13	9.5
Culture/art/history 3	4.5	6.1	7.9	6.7	3.8
Sports 4	2.3	0	4.5	4.5	1.9
Social events/ services/problems 5	17.4	24.2	29.2	30.1	13.9
Crime/lawsuits 6	3.7	3.0	3.4	4.8	3.6
Entertainment/ personality 7	2.2	3.0	4.5	3.3	1.9
Human interest 8	2.6	7.6	7.9	4.5	1.6
Environment 9	1.1	0	0	0.7	1.3
Natural disasters/ accidents/weather 10	3.2	0	0	3.3	3.6
Globalisation/ Internationalization 11	20.7	9.1	5.6	5.2	25.2
Education 12	4.2	22.7	3.4	5.2	3.1
War/conflicts/terrorist attacks 13	0.4	0	0	0	0.5
Science/technology/ space 14	1 .8	1.5	3.4	2.2	1.6
Self-promotion 15	2 .1	1.5	5.6	1.9	1.9
Travel/transportation/ traffic 16	3.7	0	2.2	4.8	3.7
Health/hospital 17	5.2	0	0	1.5	6.5
Other 18	0.2	0	1.1	0.7	0.1

Table 8 Content analysis showing front page subjects by category and by percentage from 1982 to 2006 in *BYD*.

Diversification of news is also reflected in the extension of news coverage from local-focus to include news from different geographical locations, as shown in Table 9 below. Local news played an important role on the front page coverage of *BYD*, especially when *BYD* started. At that time, local news accounted for as much as 95.5 percent of the total, this gradually decreased to about 70 percent then to a bit over 50 percent by 2006. World news, referring to events that happened overseas and were reported from overseas, has witnessed a considerable increase from 3 percent in the beginning to the present 14 percent. While national news has climbed up steadily from about 1 percent in the beginning to nearly 10 percent over the past two decades, central level news has increased more sharply from zero to 23 percent.

As *BYD* is a local newspaper based in Beijing, it is natural for it to use its reporting resources to cover local news. In the beginning, *BYD* was small and lacked human resources and access. All it was able to do was to report the local news. As *BYD* grew, it could reach beyond the local boundaries, thus the national, world and central news went up while the percentage of local news went down, though the local news still accounts for more than a half of the total news items.

	Total (%)	1982-88 (%)	1989-93(%)	1994-98(%)	2003-06(%)
Local	59	95.5	70.8	68.8	53.6
National	10.7	1.5	1.1	9.3	9.3
World	11.5	3	4.5	1.9	14
Central	18.7	0	23.6	19.7	23

Table 9 Content analysis findings on geographical locations from 1982 to 2006 on the front pages of *BYD*.

With news topics being diversified, the amount of coverage in education and human interests has undergone sharp decline during the sampled time period. Education reports decreased from 22.7 (1982-88) to 3.4 (1989-93), then rose a little to 5.2 (1994-98), and dropped again to 3.1(2003-06), as shown in Figure 22 below.

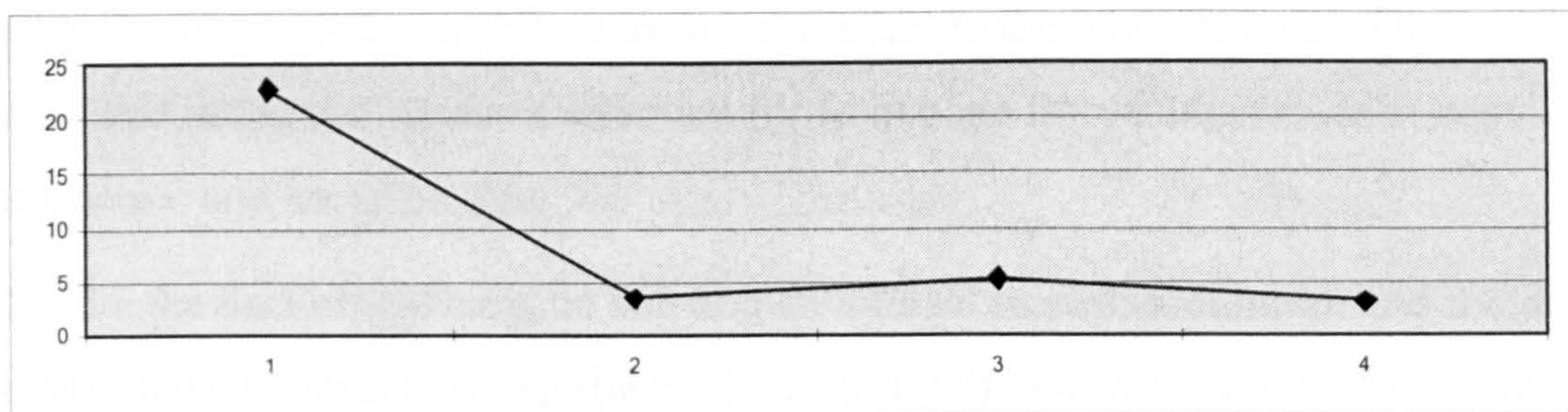


Figure 22 The trend of education reports on the front page of *BYD* from 1982 to 2006.

Human interest stories also decreased having increased slightly from 7.6 (1982-88) to 7.9 (1989-93), then dropped to 4.5 (1994-98) and to 1.6 (2003-06), as shown in Figure 23 below.

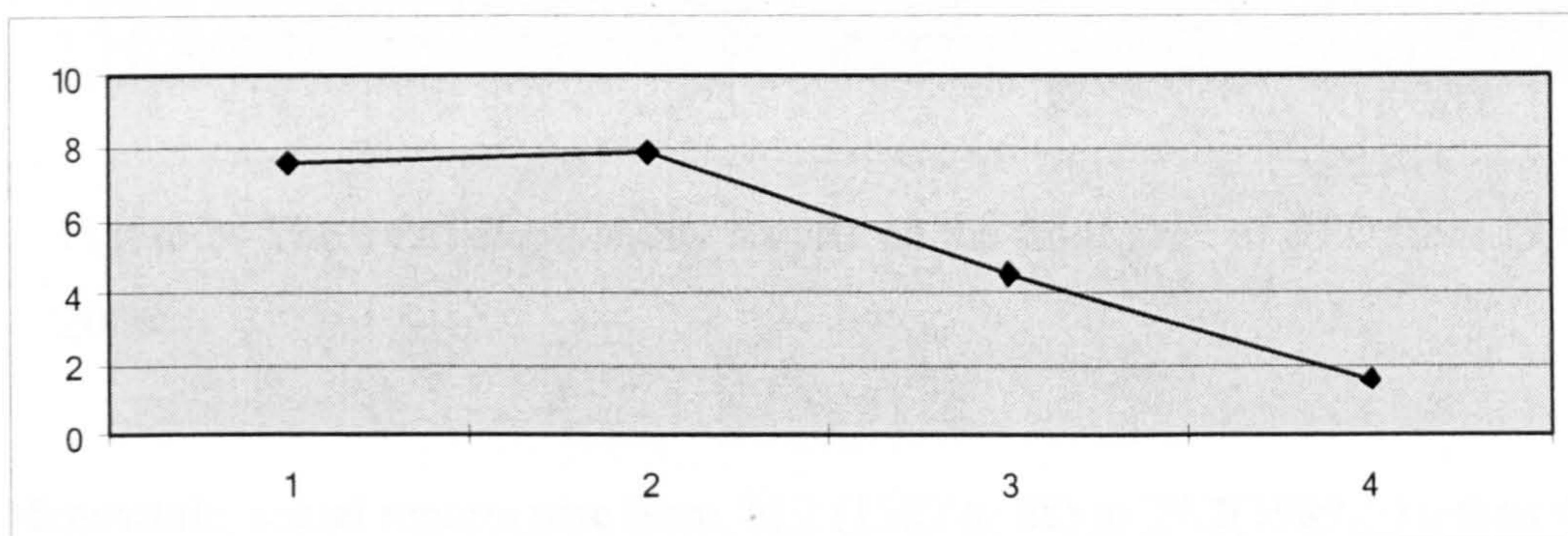


Figure 23 The trend of human interest reports on the front page of *BYD* from 1982 to 2006.

*BYD* started as a newspaper affiliated to the municipal Youth League targeting students, thus education reports accounted for a big chunk of reports on the front page in the initial start-off stage. Later on, as *BYD* grew into a comprehensive broadsheet, reports on education decreased proportionately as coverage became diversified. As far as human interest stories are concerned, in order to attract the readers' attention, *BYD* emphasized 'individuals', 'relevance' and 'closeness' of its news reports to readers in the beginning. As one interviewee said, 'the article I am proud of was the one I wrote in 1995. It was about one of the ten young people named "excellent young people in China" who worked as a mortician, making dead bodies look nicer. It was full of accurate details. That article was given a "best article award" by the *BYD*. At that time, the criteria for good news was readability and human interest with rich background information.<sup>621</sup> As *BYD*'s reputation and

<sup>621</sup> Interview with Li Yumin, 2006



status built up, its focus shifted from 'relevance' to the 'significance'. This is reflected in the shift in news selection for front page from human interest to political, economic and social stories.

Unlike the declining education and human interest stories, economics and social events have undergone sharp fluctuations during the sampled period. Economic reports went up from 6.1 (1982 to 88) to 11.2 (1989-93), then further up to 13 (1994 to 98), but went down to 9.5 (2003 to 06), as shown in Figure 24 below.

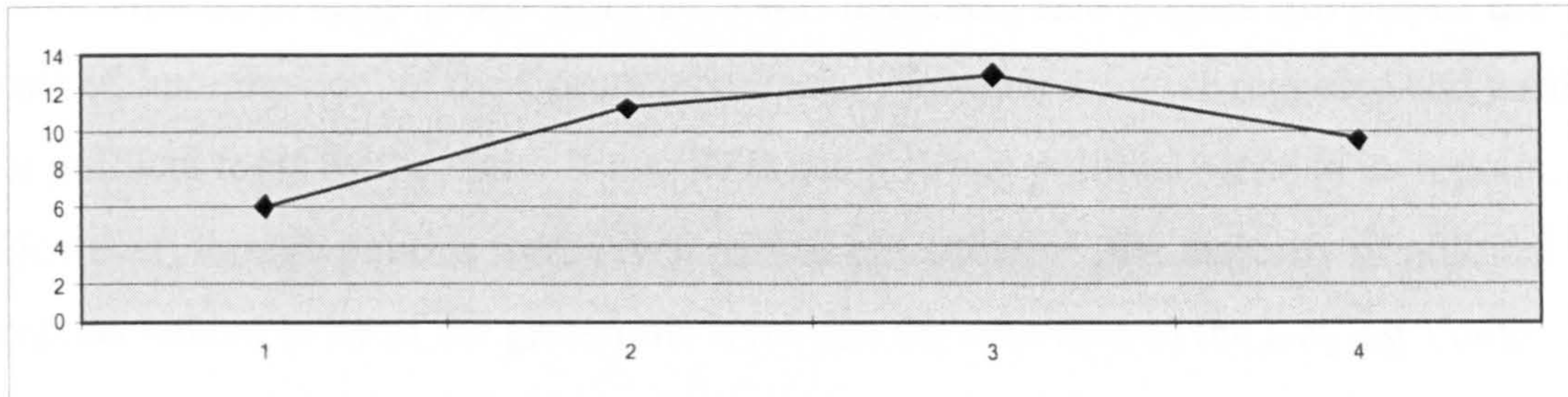


Figure 24 The trend of economic reports on the front page of *BYD* from 1982 to 2006.

Meanwhile, social reports rose from 24.2 (1982 to 88) to 29.2(1989-93), then further to 30.1 (1994 to 98), but fell to 13.9 (2003 to 06), as shown in Figure 25 below.

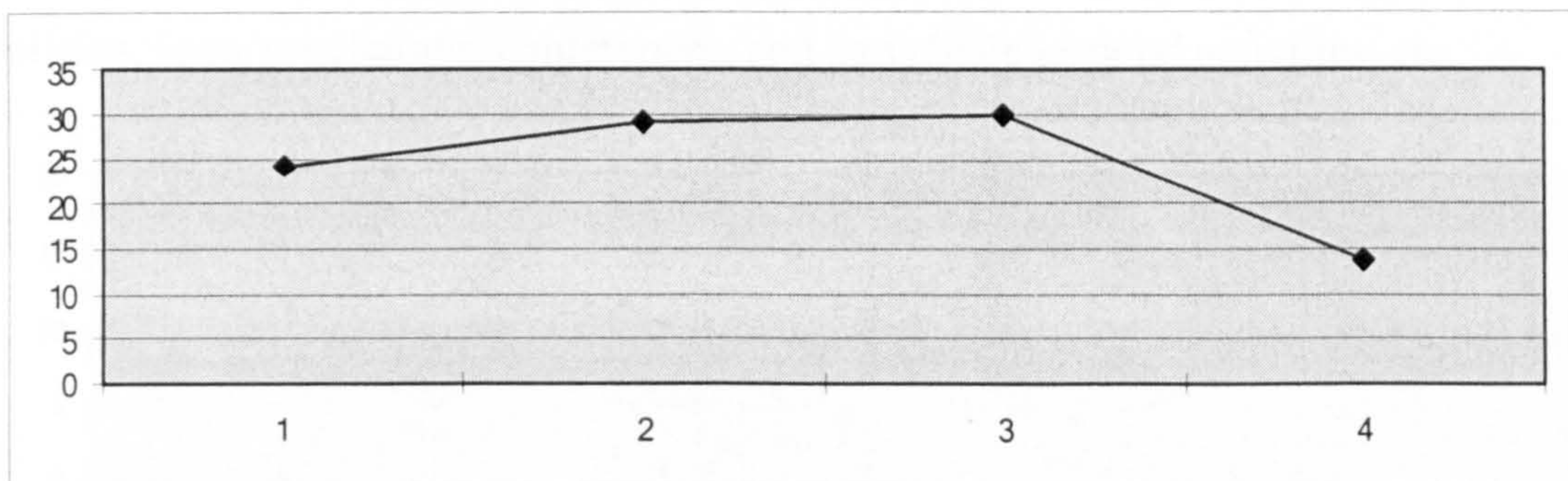


Figure 25 The trend of social reports on the front page of *BYD* from 1982 to 2006.

With the impact of economic reform gaining momentum in the 1990s, the number of economic reports increased dramatically. Meanwhile social reports increased keeping in pace with the emergence of new social problems in the transition period. In the 21st century, with the political reports rising, economic and social reports decrease proportionally due to the limited space on the front page.

### 5.2.2.3 Politicized news coverage

*BYD* news reports have become more politicized and more official as time went by. As indicated in the statistical findings, the amount of central level news increased dramatically from zero in 1982 to 23 percent in 2006. The frequencies of political subjects went down from 15.2 (1982 to 88) to 10.1 (1989-93), then to 7.4 (1994-98) but suddenly climbed up to 16.4 (2003 to 06), as shown in Figure 26 below. Such fluctuation may be driven by the paper's shifts in its status and the macro economic environment. In early 1980s when *BYD* was launched, newspapers still played the role of 'mouthpiece' of the Communist Party. Newspapers were regarded and used as political tools by the state. Thus, *BYD* had a strong political sense in its reports. However, though politics were given paramount attention, the majority of political reports tended to be of the grassroots level like the activities of the Beijing Youth League.

As economic reform gained momentum in the country as well as the commercialisation of the paper itself, economic and social news coverage increased, causing the proportional declining number of political reports. In the 21st century, *BYD* has enhanced its position and authority as a quality broadsheet targeting social elites with political news accounting for the largest part including reports of state policies, laws, regulations, conferences, and party/state leaders' activities, etc.

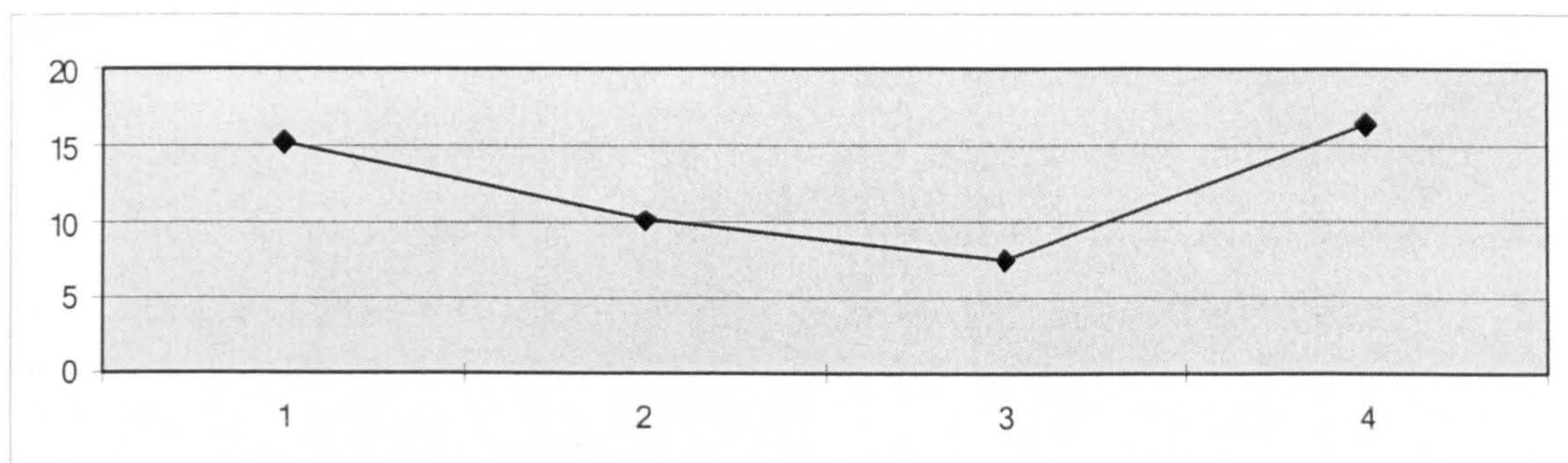


Figure 26 The trend of political reports on the front page of *BYD* from 1982 to 2006.

Politicization of news is supported by the in-depth interviews. The reasons are two-fold: the shift of selection criteria from readability to significance, and the increasing volume of 'instruction reports' (*zhilingxing baodao*). News editors tend to select the stories that will have significance for the ordinary people, the country and society, for instance, news about the policy changes. News that is only interesting will

probably not find its way to the front page. Such selection criteria have shifted over time. 'In the past, we might have chosen the interesting stuff for the front page. Now we see how far and how deeply the news will influence ordinary people, Beijing or China as a whole.'<sup>622</sup> The pattern is that policies override events. Political news from the central and Beijing government are given top priority and presented as top news while 'readable things are buried in inside pages'.<sup>623</sup>

The rise of 'politicized' content has also been caused by the 'instructive' reports from the propaganda departments. Editors admit that they put 'instructive' reports on the front page. Some of the instructive news is significant and deserves to be put on the front page while some does not have news value. 'The front page is the most important. Of course, some 'instructive reports' have to be put on the front page. During the NPC and NPPCC, we pay more attention to politics and current affairs because these two meetings are big events in political life in China. Our judgement is not affected by whether we receive orders or instructions. We must publish it.'<sup>624</sup> However, most journalists complain about the overwhelming amount of instructive news. 'There are so many instructive news stories on our front page because big trees draw big winds. We are still under strict control.'<sup>625</sup> For instance, they had to put a regular propaganda section to promote the 'eight honors, eight disgraces'<sup>626</sup> on the front page in mid-March 2006 as 'a long-term task'.<sup>627</sup> After 22 March, they were ordered to carry reports about the Integrated Circuit (IC card) for public transportation to promote the IC card reform. After the mid-April, the publicity was ordered to change to promote 'learning from Lei Feng' campaign.<sup>628</sup> Too much

---

<sup>622</sup> Interview with Lu Fei, 2006

<sup>623</sup> Interview with Tong Lei, 2006

<sup>624</sup> Interview with Lu Fei, 2006

<sup>625</sup> Interview with Deng Fei, 2006

<sup>626</sup> A simple four character phrase 'Ba rong, ba chi' or the 'eight honors, eight disgraces' put forward by Chinese President Hu Jintao in March 2006, has become the new moral yardstick by which to measure the work, conduct and attitude of Communist Party officials. The list includes Love the country; do it no harm; Serve the people; do no disservice; Follow science; discard ignorance; Be diligent; not indolent; Be united, help each other; make no gains at others' expense; Be honest and trustworthy; do not sacrifice ethics for profits; Be disciplined and law-abiding; not chaotic and lawless; Live plainly, struggle hard; do not wallow in luxuries and pleasures. Source: [http://www.gov.cn/english/2006-04/05/content\\_245361.htm](http://www.gov.cn/english/2006-04/05/content_245361.htm), accessed 26 March 2008

<sup>627</sup> General editorial meeting, 13 March 2006

<sup>628</sup> *ibid*, Lei Feng is China's most famous symbol of sacrifice for others. Born into a poor family in Hunan province, he was orphaned at an early age and worked a number of ordinary jobs—a messenger for a local government office, a worker for the Anshan Iron and Steel Company, and finally a truck driver in the People's Liberation Army. He died while helping a truck to

policy and instructive news makes the front page look ‘too official’<sup>629</sup> and results in sales declining.

#### 5.2.2.4 Globalized news coverage

News coverage has become globalized. In terms of news topics, reports that have the global edge or international elements increase from 9.1 percent (1982 to 88) to 25.2 percent (2003 to 06) with minor fluctuation of 5.6 percent (1989-93) and 5.2 percent (1994-98), as shown in Figure 27 below. In terms of geographical locations, world news has increased from 3 percent in 1982 to 14 percent in 2006. This shows that globalisation has had an impact on the newspaper content.

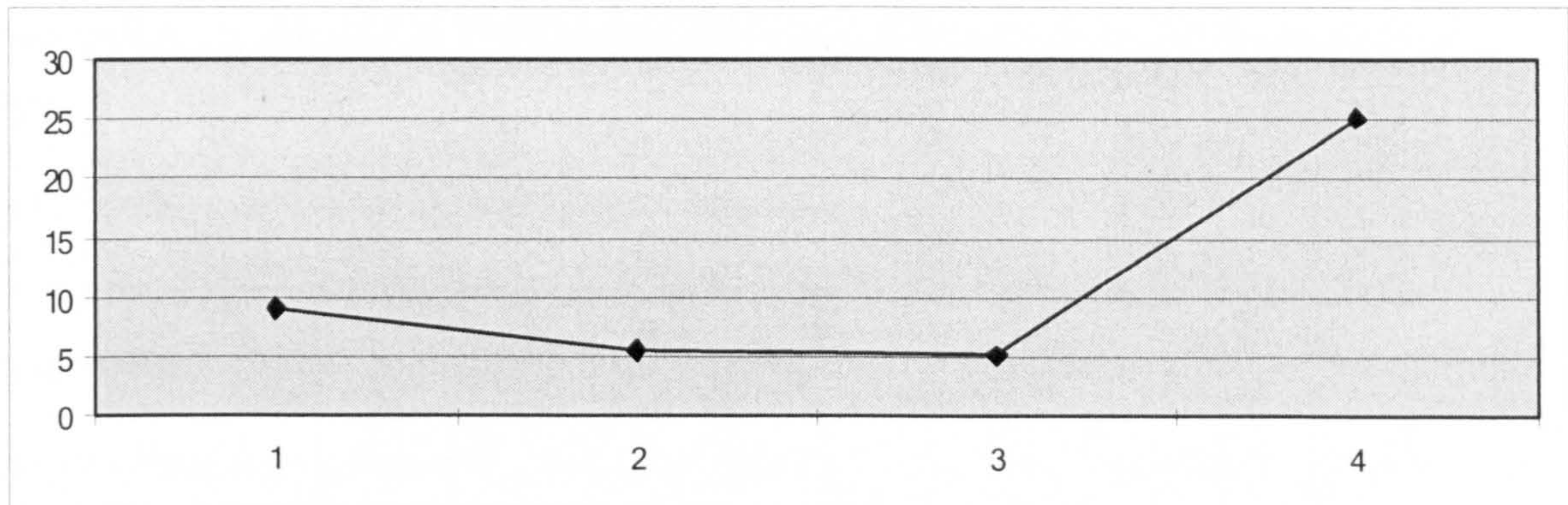


Figure 27 The trend of globalisation reports on the front page of *BYD* from 1982 to 2006.

Interviews revealed four main reasons for the globalised news content including economic globalisation, labour migration, China’s growing participation in the world affairs and the local area’s cultural background. Firstly, globalisation drives the flow of capital, labour and products. With economic globalisation, many international companies come to China and set up offices in Beijing. They hire local employees who are well educated and interested in world affairs. These ‘white collar’ employees working for international companies compose a big portion of *BYD*’s target readership. Thus, the editors intentionally provide world news to meet the demands of these readers.

---

back up aged 22. His diary was later used to characterize him as a selfless and modest person. Lei Feng Day has been commemorated on March 5th since 1963.

<sup>629</sup> Interview with Wang Fang, 2006.

Secondly, demographic mobility also affects the readers' demand for world news. As more and more Chinese people go abroad to study, work or live, their families, relatives or friends based in China become more concerned about world news.

Thirdly, as China becomes more active in world affairs and plays a more key role on the world stage, world news assumes more relevance in Beijing.

Fourthly, people living in Beijing have a certain cosmopolitan outlook. 'Beijing people live in the capital city, the imperial city for generations, and have wider horizons than people living in remote areas. Also, Beijing locals enjoy talking and chatting, they like to chat about things printed in the newspapers. They expect the newspapers to provide topics they can talk about. It's part of the culture of Beijing people to be interested and pay attention to the outside world.'<sup>630</sup>

#### 5.2.2.5 Editorials and commentaries enhanced

Apart from news coverage, editorials and commentaries play a crucial role in the newspaper and their importance is increasing.

From a historical perspective, *BYD* was the first newspaper in Beijing to launch a front-page editorial column in 1994, extending the content from news events to news analysis and interpretation. From 2000, the editorial column was renamed 'Today's Editorial' (*Jinri sheping*) and appeared in the top-right hand corner of page 2, published daily. In 2006, the daily commentary page, which usually appears on page four right after the current affairs section, replaced Today's Editorial column.

*BYD* was not the first to launch a whole page of commentary. As early as 2003 to 2004, quite a few newspapers launched commentary pages and the prominence and significance of commentary pages increased quickly. *The Beijing News* was the first to put them on page two and three. *The China Youth Daily* has a column called Youth Topic, which appeared once a week to start with but now appears five times and they have been moved from later pages to page two. *The Worker's Daily* and the *Southern Metropolitan Daily* also put the commentary on page two.

Greater freedom of expression, the market and the Internet are three driving forces for the increasing popularity of commentary pages. As the director of Commentary Section pointed out, Chinese newspapers have greater space for speech than before,

---

<sup>630</sup> Interview with Lu Fei, 2006

which allows the public to discuss and debate. Newspapers like *BYD* regard and present themselves as quality papers with their own viewpoints and adopt an authoritative voice in the market. 'If you want to establish your authority in the market, you must have a clear direct voice. There's no better way than the editorial.'<sup>631</sup> Meanwhile, pressures imposed by the Internet are driving newspapers to use viewpoints and in-depth analysis to attract readers. 'All the newspaper men analyse what the readers want from the newspapers. If people want to obtain information, they can go to websites like sina.com where they can get more detailed information faster. Apart from basic information, newspapers can also offer viewpoints and in-depth follow-up stories.'<sup>632</sup>

### 5.2.3 News sources

*BYD*'s major news sources are independent reports, the Xinhua news agency and the Internet. Other news sources include news beats, press releases, hotlines, freelances, instruction orders, and other news media. The most essential changes are the increasing dependency on Xinhua news agency and the Internet in the globalisation era.

In content analysis, news sources are classified as independent reports, Xinhua news agency, unidentified sources and other media. Findings in Table 10 below indicate that independent reports account for about 60 percent of all the reports with frequency going slightly down from 77 percent to 57 percent over the sampled time periods. Meanwhile, the frequency of use of Xinhua went up slowly from zero to 9 percent before 2000 but rocketed to 33 percent during 2003 to 2006. The frequency of unidentified sources experienced fluctuation from 16 percent to 23 percent and then 19 percent but went down to 7 percent in 2003-06 while the use of other media accounted for a very small percentage and went through slight changes.

---

<sup>631</sup> Interview with Huang Tanwei, 2006

<sup>632</sup> *ibid*

	Total average (%)	1982-88(%)	1989-93(%)	1994-98 (%)	2003-06 (%)
Independent	60.7	77.3	70.8	68.8	57.7
Xinhua	27.3	0	1.1	9.3	33.7
Unidentified	10.3	16.7	23.6	19.7	7.4
Other media	0.7	1.5	0	0.4	0.7

Table 10 Content analysis findings on news sources from 1982 to 2006 on the front pages of *BYD*.

For the slightly declining trend of independent reports and the increasing use of Xinhua reports, there could be two causes: firstly, to start with, as a new and obscure newspaper, *BYD*'s sources for obtaining news information were rather limited. It had to be aggressive and use independent reports to build up its brand and recognition in the market. After entering the 21st century, *BYD* established its presence, reputation and influence in the market with large circulation and high advertising income. It faced stricter political control from the authorities. It had to pay attention to political correctness. The use of Xinhua reports is always safe. Hence, the independent reports went slightly down while Xinhua reports rocketed on the front page. In addition, the declining use of unidentified sources reflects the general trend of professionalism at *BYD* by identifying the news sources as much as possible. It should be noted that unidentified sources also include some 'instructive reports' ordered by the propaganda departments. In-depth interviews below provide more detail, evidence and reasoning to enrich the quantitative analysis.

#### 5.2.3.1 Independent reports

Independent reports account for a big portion of news reports, though the percentage may vary within different news divisions. According to the respondents, independent reports account for 70 percent of current affairs news, 30 to 50 percent of national news, and more than 95 percent of local news. Self-made reports are usually put as 'the top story or the central story, or made a focus story.'<sup>633</sup> News sources for independent reports can be further classified as on beat, hotline, press release, Xinhua and social life.

<sup>633</sup> Interview with Shao Wen, 2006

1) On the beat. Reporters who work on the beat are mainly from local news section. They are assigned to report certain areas such as education, science and technology, health care, transportation, etc. They establish, maintain and develop a relationship with contacts within the area they work on and keep watch on what's happening in the reported area, for instance, reporters on the education beat keep contacts with schools and regulatory bodies.<sup>634</sup> Reporters on science and technology beat establish contacts with government bodies, research institutes and all kinds of experts.<sup>635</sup> For many government bodies, the so-called 'correspondents' (*Tongxunyuán*) supply information or press releases to journalists.

2) Hotlines and tipsters. Hotlines are mainly used as a news source for the local news section, though in current affairs section, 'occasionally, readers would call us, but not many.'<sup>636</sup> There are a total of five phone lines to handle incoming calls, through which readers provide news information to reporters. In addition, hotline reporters have their own tipsters including amateur photographers who hang around the city and take photos, retired people who liked journalism when they were young but did not have any opportunities to do it, young men who have no regular jobs but hanging around the streets to look for news tips, and retailers selling newspapers at the street stands who often read newspapers and know what the newspapers want.<sup>637</sup> Apart from these grassroots tipsters, there are high-level tipsters who are identified or unidentified staff in certain government departments like 999 emergency centres, the municipal fire brigade or the police. These organizations and newspapers form an alliance, giving each other what is wanted. 'It's a win-win scenario. We mention them in the articles, which promotes their image. They tip us off about breaking news like fires and accidents. They don't care much about the pay for tips.'<sup>638</sup> As there are only a few tipsters in the city and they are known to all the metropolitan newspapers, hotline news tends to be similar to a great extent.

3) Press releases are meant to promote public relations for government organs and businesses. Many press releases are faxed, emailed or handed to the newsrooms or reporters. However, it is hard to calculate the number of press release-based reports

---

<sup>634</sup> Interview with Dong Bingjun, 2006

<sup>635</sup> Interview with Sheng Hui, 2006.

<sup>636</sup> Interview with Deng Fei, 2006

<sup>637</sup> Interview with Chu Chenhui, 2006

<sup>638</sup> *ibid*



because reporters usually do not just copy and submit the press releases. They carry out interviews based on the information contained in the press releases and then rewrite, 'we ask our reporters to do interviews and re-write the material as our own report though the correspondents provide us with information. We'll not use the release directly.'<sup>639</sup>

4) Xinhua. Apart from publishing ready-made articles from Xinhua, newspeople at *BYD* find information in Xinhua's reports and conduct their own investigations and file their independent reports from new perspectives. 'In the Lengshuijiang coalmine disaster report, we get the information from Xinhua. Xinhua released some brief information on the accident that mentioned four female miners. We took up this point to develop a new angle.'<sup>640</sup>

5) Social life. Journalists and editors find information from their social lives including direct observation, talking with people, chatting with friends in journalistic circles. 'My friends are mostly doing news too. We exchange information among ourselves. Anyway, nobody can hide any big event.'<sup>641</sup>

#### 5.2.3.2 Xinhua

The current affairs and national news divisions use more news from Xinhua than the local news division, for instance, Xinhua news accounts for about 30 percent for current affairs<sup>642</sup>, but there is a very small percentage of Xinhua news in local news pages accounting to about 1 or 2 percent just 'to get some information about Beijing.'<sup>643</sup> The rocketing increase in the use of Xinhua source as shown in Figure 28 is mainly due to Xinhua's authority, human resources and access.

---

<sup>639</sup> Interview with Lu Fei, 2006

<sup>640</sup> Interview with Deng Fei, 2006

<sup>641</sup> Interview with Chu Chenhui, 2006.

<sup>642</sup> Interview with Lu Fei, 2006.

<sup>643</sup> Interview with Hao Wanhe, 2006

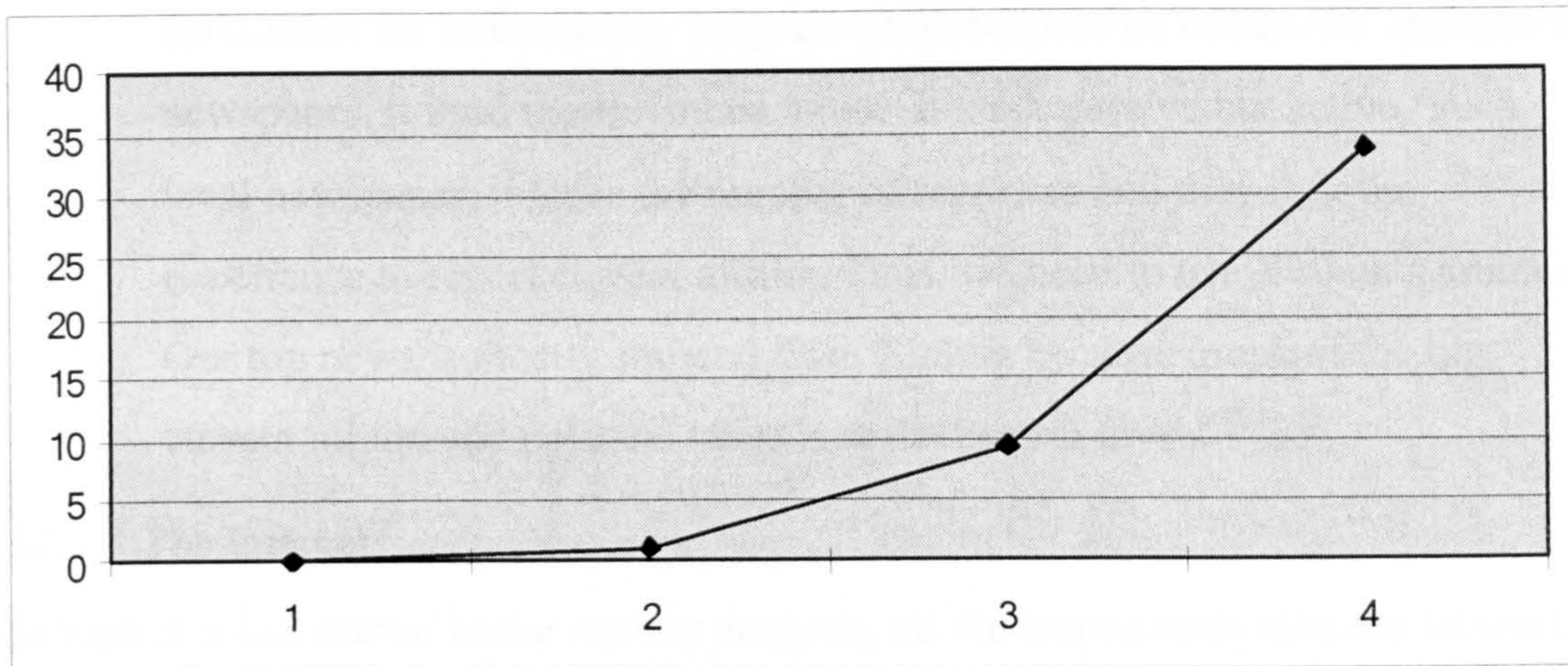


Figure 28 The trend of Xinhua source at *BYD* from 1982 to 2006.

Xinhua is the most authoritative news agency in China providing news to national, regional and local news media. It is widely regarded as safe to use Xinhua news to avoid any troubles or criticism from regulatory bodies. Like nearly all the other news media in China, *BYD* has a contract with Xinhua for the supply of news and photos. There are certain special Xinhua web channels at *BYD* where editors can get news and photos covering a wide range of areas like current affairs, national news, world news and local news. It is a routine for editors to keep watch on Xinhua for the important and updated news. 'Starting from 1996, we use Xinhua's internal web. We have to read Xinhua because after all Xinhua news agency covers a wide range of areas.'<sup>644</sup>

With the transition from an obscure tabloid to a mainstream broadsheet, *BYD*'s focus has shifted from reporting social events to current affairs. 'In the past, above 90 percent of reports were self-written because it was mainly a weekly newspaper with social news at the core. After we become a broadsheet, we need to provide readers with more current affairs news rather than the social news'.<sup>645</sup> However, as a local newspaper, *BYD* needs to depend on Xinhua's rich human resources and access for the central government level news. Such dependency is said to be active instead of passive.

As a local newspaper in Beijing, we have no way to get the first-hand information about the central government or ministries and other authorities. Thus, we mainly depend on the Xinhua news agency and the websites of the

<sup>644</sup> Interview with Sheng Hui, 2006.

<sup>645</sup> Interview with Lu Fei, 2006.

authorities for information. After the *BYD* became an influential mainstream newspaper, it used more Xinhua news. It's not passive but active. As a local newspaper, it lacks the number of reporters and they lack the experience to report current affairs. Thus, we need to use Xinhua's articles. Our top news is mostly sourced from Xinhua because much of the big current affairs and political news is at the central level.<sup>646</sup>

### 5.2.3.3 The Internet

Though it is not shown in the content analysis, all the respondents take the Internet or websites as main news sources due to its immediacy and scope. The rise of the Internet has driven newspeople to find information from websites and develop them into news reports to be published in newspapers based on further verifications and investigations. Newspeople have become more and more dependent on the Internet, 'we depend on the web to a large extent, accounting for about 70 percent'.<sup>647</sup> 'The Internet has become the main news source except for the local news division who have hotlines and beats. We have a strong dependence on the Internet especially for in-depth reports.'<sup>648</sup>

*BYD* started the use of the Internet in the late 1990s. Main sources from the Internet include: Governmental websites including ministries and governmental departments at different levels. Big Chinese portal websites like yahoo, sina, sohu, and netease. Forums, BBS, blogs, chatrooms, residential community websites. As websites in China are not allowed to carry independent reports, news portals relay or re-publish news stories from newspapers and other news media. At *BYD*, the regulations ban the direct use of materials from any websites. 'If we want to use a piece, we can't say the source is a website. It must be published in the newspapers.'<sup>649</sup> BBS, web forums and residential communities' websites have risen to become a main news source because people are outspoken on them and debate political and social topics. 'Some BBS or forums are brave, having guts to say something. People on the BBS may make comments on the current 'hot points' and express their opinions. That

---

<sup>646</sup> *ibid*

<sup>647</sup> Interview with Deng Fei, 2006

<sup>648</sup> Interview with Mao Longying, 2006

<sup>649</sup> Interview with San Ning, 2006

may lead to a news event. Other media may not report it. This is a good news source.’<sup>650</sup>

#### 5.2.3.4 Other news media

Other newspapers monitored by the internal quality control staff as well as TV also form a news source. ‘Information from other newspapers account for about 30 percent to 40 percent’<sup>651</sup> of the in-depth reports page under Current Affairs section. However, the dependency level on other news media varies among different news divisions, for instance, local news section use very little information from other news media.

#### 5.2.4 News forms

Journalistic writing approaches, the use of columnists, cover stories, large photos that are originated from the west are found incorporated at *BYD* though the adaptation of western forms is sometimes unconscious.

Western journalistic writing approaches are adopted such as covering investigative reports, human interest and feature stories, pyramid news writing, and emphasis on conflicts, pursuing objectivity and balance by reporting all the sides in an event and so on. In recent years, these approaches have developed. ‘These days, we don’t report starting with something like “the state statistics bureau released the figures and the economic situation is good”. Instead we might start with farmers in a village talking about its onion harvest this year. The demand for onions arises from Sino-US trade. Starting from there, the article can go into some analysis.’<sup>652</sup>

When the commentary page was launched in early 2006, it incorporated concepts of column and columnist from the west. ‘I borrowed the concept of columnists from abroad but I have no idea how they operate it. The reason that I started this column is to enable readers to form their reading expectations. Columnists are authoritative. When something happens, readers may have read other people’s analysis and interpretations but they still wait and want to see what a certain columnist says.’<sup>653</sup>

The ‘cover story’ on the current affairs pages is another example of editors’ efforts to adapt western forms to suit the Chinese readers’ reading habits. In early 2006, the

---

<sup>650</sup> *ibid*

<sup>651</sup> Interview with Deng Fei, 2006

<sup>652</sup> *ibid*

'cover story' page was launched on Sundays, borrowing the ideas from the *USA Today*. It features common people including actors or actresses, ordinary citizens, people in poverty, etc. 'The individual featured reflects the life of a group of people in the society.'<sup>654</sup> As readers' interest in daily newspapers is thought to reach its lowest point at the weekends, editors try to use feature stories to stimulate their interest, as the editor explains:

We learnt from the *USA Today*. That paper has a cover story on the front page every day featuring a person or an event to draw readers' attentions to a subject. This is from the technical level. The cover story is usually printed on Sundays. There's one special thing in China. Employees are the main readers for the daily newspapers, not the evening papers. They show the least interest in reading dailies at the weekends. We want to stimulate the readers' interest by providing soft news stories in a magazine-like way. So far we have done a few nice issues that draw readers' attention including a street wanderer who adopted more than 600 children over his life. These stories, whether they are about ordinary people or very important ones, are all welcomed by the readers.'<sup>655</sup>

Other western forms are manifested in art design like the use of big photos or the use of a mixture of cartoons, graphics, tables, backgrounder and analysis to cover a news event. 'In the past, we did not have a major photo which is extremely large. Western newspapers often carry a big photo on one page. It is very eye-catching'.<sup>656</sup>

*BYD* newspeople are more and more exposed to the western media and are becoming more aware of the western news making approaches and concepts. They learn more about social and cultural differences and integrate western ideas, forms and practices into their daily work consciously or unconsciously. Various factors facilitate this adaptation. Firstly, western journalistic literature like Associated Press (AP) reporting guidelines and Pulitzer award winning articles promote Chinese journalists' understanding of the western news values. 'When we joined the newspaper, our department got us to study AP writing guidelines for half a year. I read collections of

---

<sup>653</sup> Interview with Huang Tanwei, 2006

<sup>654</sup> Interview with Lu Fei, 2006

<sup>655</sup> *ibid*

<sup>656</sup> Interview with Long Qinnan, 2006

Pulitzer award winning articles. So long as it's not against the rules in China, I try to use western news reporting methods and angles to report'.<sup>657</sup> Secondly, newspeople go abroad on exchange visits or training at western news organisations or higher education institution, which enables them to understand western news forms. Thirdly, the Internet has enabled Chinese newspeople to access western reports easily and the amount of western reporting on China has increased dramatically. 'We know how the foreign media look at China now. There are so many reports. But western media cover many reports about China in a negative manner. They gave us a new angle.'<sup>658</sup>

### 5.3 Editorial structure

For any news organizations, the editorial structure provides a framework under which newspeople produce news. It can be seen as composing a vertical decision making hierarchy and horizontal production process. As Ginneken states, 'although most journalists think of themselves as free and autonomous, almost all work in hierarchical organizations with goals of their own.'<sup>659</sup> Most western news organizations are run as businesses. Owners want a return on their investment when they hire editors and then editors hire journalists. Journalists and editors who select and shape news stories are not only embedded in a vertical organization, but also in a horizontal organization of work. 'They receive news material, edit it and dispatch it to the next person in the assembly line.'<sup>660</sup>

The editorial structure at *BYD* can also be examined both vertically and horizontally. Vertically, the editorial power is distributed in a top-down hierarchical manner with chief editor and deputy chief editors sitting on top, and the editors and journalists acting as gatekeepers at different levels in the daily news making process, as indicated in Figure 29 below.

At *BYD*, the chief editor does not sign off news pages on daily basis, but he exercises his influence over the content by reading and giving comments, as one news editor claims, 'sometimes the chief editor would get involved, calling me to voice his comments on some articles, for instance, he might say some articles have not been

---

<sup>657</sup> Interview with Sheng Hui, 2006

<sup>658</sup> Interview with Mao Ling, 2006

<sup>659</sup> Ginneken, 1998, pp.75-77

<sup>660</sup> *ibid*

handled properly, or the importance of some news piece is not highlighted.’<sup>661</sup>

Below the chief editor are four deputy chief editors who take turns to do the signoff job. In each news section, one news editor acts as the head of the section, one deputy news editor takes over the function of news editor during his/her absence, and some editors and journalists. News editors and copy editors select the news to be covered and assign reporting jobs to journalists. ‘Deputy-chief-editors and editors control the news’.<sup>662</sup>

This editor-centre system was adopted in late 2005 during the *BYD*’s corporate structural reforms. Journalists are now based at each newsroom. Before that, newspeople acted as both journalists and editors, then a concentrated journalists’ department was set up pooling together all the journalists in one room, which made it difficult for editors from different newsrooms to coordinate while assigning jobs to journalists. Though the editor-centre system was introduced mainly because of the requirement of *BYD*’s growth from a weekly to a daily, the editor-centre system in western newspapers has provided a successful and feasible model for *BYD* to refer to, ‘the editor-centre system is learnt from the west. This is the biggest influence.’<sup>663</sup>

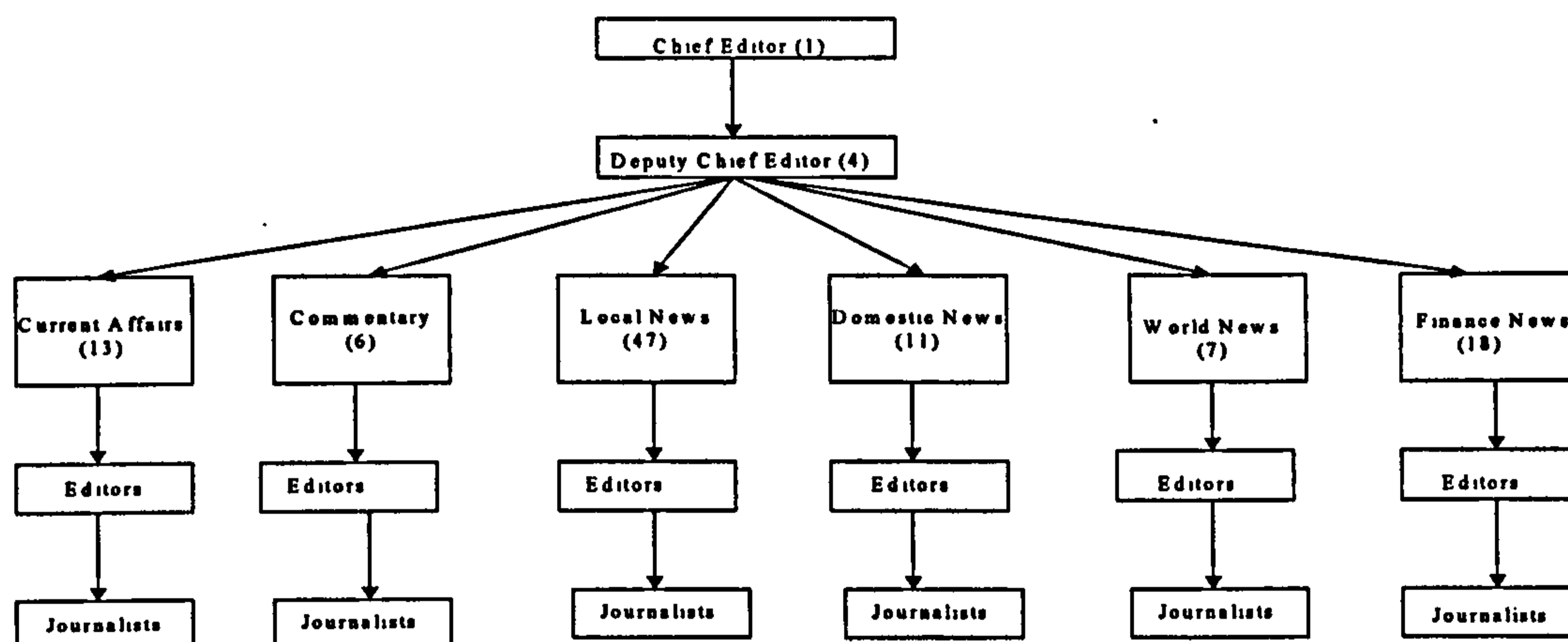


Figure 29 Vertical editorial structures at *BYD*<sup>664</sup>

<sup>661</sup> Interview with Xiao Bei, 2006

<sup>662</sup> Interview with Wang Fang, 2006

<sup>663</sup> Interview with Li Yumin, 2006

<sup>664</sup> The numbers in the brackets refer to the staff number; the order of business units from left to right conforms to the order of pages published. There are more pages and business units under the *BYD* like sports and tabloid supplements, which are omitted here.

The horizontal organization is based on a division of labor that is intertwined with the internal and external factors. Figure 30 below outlines the news production assembly line from newsgathering, editing, and production to final distribution in the market. A total of seven links are involved in the production process: news topics are determined, journalists gather and report, editors attend editorial meetings at 2pm and 5pm hosted by the managing editor on duty, and do the editing job, page design and layout, proofreading, pages signoff. On the next day, the quality control section will give their assessment and comments on the content based on their comparison with other metropolitan newspapers. Though the process is indicated here in a linear manner, it should be noted that some links overlap in reality, for instance, while journalists are still gathering news or writing up reports, editors may have started the editing process. In addition, during the production process, external factors like the political control of Beijing Propaganda Department and the internal factors like the feedback from the quality control section may influence the news production via editorial meetings.

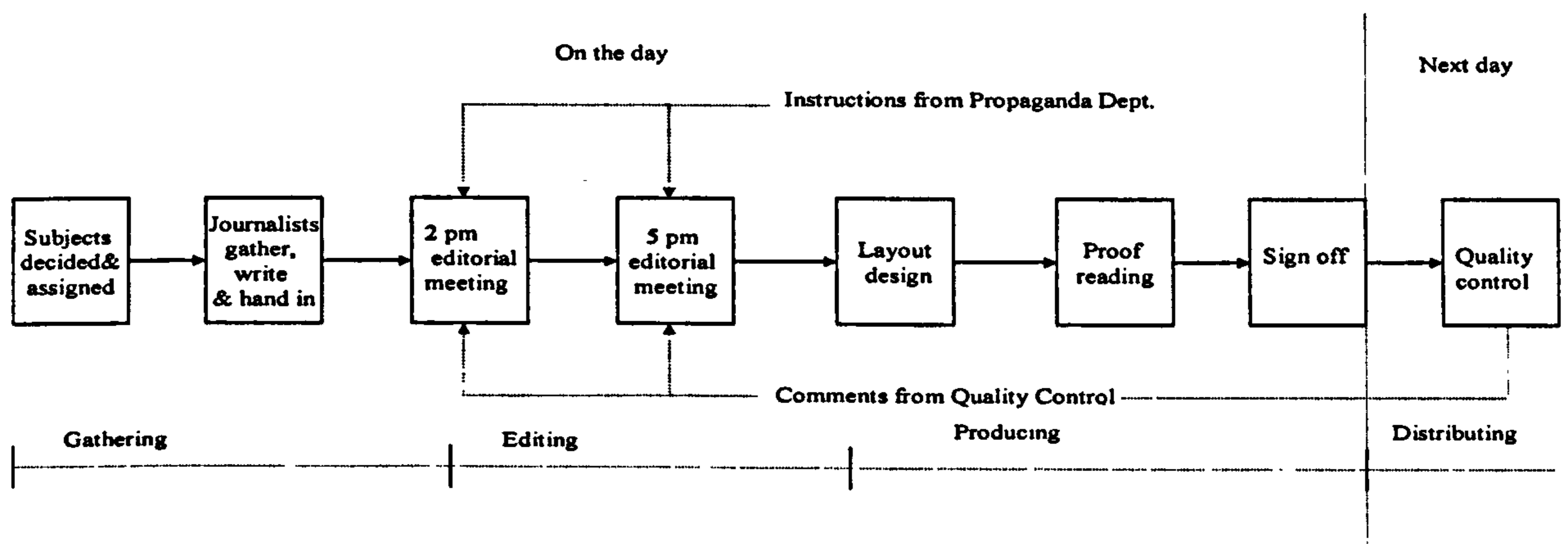


Figure 30 Horizontal news production processes at *BYD*



## 5.4 Organizational constraints

Under the editorial framework, newspeople face structural, political, commercial, and managerial constraints at *BYD* on daily basis.

### 5.4.1 Structural constraints

Structural constraints come from the long and unbalanced production process, the editor-centered system in the newsroom and the influence from the quality control section.

The long, complicated and unbalanced horizontal production process at *BYD* is said to be the ‘prime culprit’ in restraining newspeople from doing their jobs. Time limit is a universal problem in the news making industry and this problem becomes even more severe in the information era with the use of high-speed communication technologies like the Internet. ‘News is like milk. It gets sour very quickly.’<sup>665</sup>

Editors complain that the production process for printing the newspaper is too long, which makes it hard for them to keep the news up to date. One interviewee even suggested that newspapers should be abolished. ‘The newspaper is lagging behind the Internet. Now the web is so fast. In the past, my article might be fresh even for the next day because communication was backward. Now before the news gets onto the page, the situation has changed.’<sup>666</sup>

There are ‘too many links’ in the production process with editors, proofreaders, typeset workers, and graphic designers. ‘After we decide what stories to put in, we have to wait for the machine at the production centre. Then the proofreaders complain they are waiting for us. Each page takes us five hours to finish from layout till the signoff. Even so, we still feel five hours is tight.’<sup>667</sup>

The production process is unbalanced. In the morning, the whole building looks like an empty city. Editors come into the office around 1pm everyday. The majority of editorial workload piles up after 7 pm when the real editing and production process kicks off. This leaves little time for editors to review the substance of an article. Sometimes they can only correct the language errors. A senior editor who visited Germany’s *Bild* on an exchange program pointed out, ‘the biggest problem with *BYD*’s work process, compared with foreign newspapers, is that things are extremely

---

<sup>665</sup> Interview with Heine Jorgensen, 2006

<sup>666</sup> Interview with Xiao Bei, 2006

busy and crowded in the afternoon and night because the production process is not scientific. Sometimes articles arrive just before the deadlines, which leaves the editors no time to read them, thus many mistakes occurred. Editors just polish the language, which is the most passive and ineffective approach.’<sup>668</sup>

As in most newsrooms around the world, conflicts exist between editors and journalists. One interviewee commented that ‘editors complain reporters are supplying too few articles while reporters complain they are too busy.’<sup>669</sup> Apart from this, a veteran journalist on the national news voiced his unhappiness that editors are ‘over-empowered’. ‘There are too many subjects that are arranged by editors arbitrarily. As reporters, sometimes we can’t raise different voices or opinions. It is not that the editors do not want to hear but it is their habit. The ‘editor-centered’ system means what the editor said counts.’<sup>670</sup>

The feedback from quality control section influences editors’ thinking and behavior. Established in 2002, this unit was meant to ‘award the good and punish the bad.’<sup>671</sup> Daily monitoring is carried out with reference to six metropolitan newspapers including *Beijing Morning Post*, *Beijing News*, *Beijing Times*, *Star Daily*, *The First*, and *Beijing Youth Daily*. Due to the harsh competition, the newspaper has to avoid missing any significant news and tries to win out by reports with original angles or different perspectives on the same news subjects. In order not to be caught for missing any big news, editors take the initiative to compare the six newspapers the quality control section monitors.

Editors must do one thing — read the newspapers in the city, to see what other newspapers are reporting. We must compare to see what we have missed. If we failed to report something important that all other newspapers have covered, staff at quality control will raise questions. At present, all the media organizations have different criteria that are hard to find out, except for big breaking news. We are not often caught missing news. But our department has been caught occasionally.<sup>672</sup>

---

<sup>667</sup> Interview with Shao Wen, 2006

<sup>668</sup> Interview with Chang Lingxin, 2006

<sup>669</sup> Interview with Mao Longying, 2006

<sup>670</sup> Interview with Li Yumin, 2006

<sup>671</sup> Interview with Wang Fang, 2006

<sup>672</sup> Interview with San Ning, 2006

#### 5.4.2 Political constraints

Political constraints are imposed via censorship and self-censorship that co-exist and interact in the daily news making process. The state-media relationship is a power struggle full of tension and concessions.

Censorship and self-censorship are about pressures and responses to pressures.

‘Pressure is applied in order to force journalists to change the news (or to omit story) which constitutes censorship. Or pressure is used to create what journalists call a chilling effect, with the hope of inducing journalists to volunteer the change or omission, which becomes self-censorship’.<sup>673</sup> Journalists can react to pressure in three ways: they can fight, they can give in, or they can anticipate their critics, giving in to avoid being pressured.<sup>674</sup>

Censorship in China is formal, overt, coercive and institutionalized by the means of issuing specific directives on what to report, how to report, and what to avoid on regular basis. Pre-publication censorship does not exist in China. Newspapers do not need to send newspaper samples to the government for approval prior to publication. However, post-publication censorship exists with a group of censors ‘checking and reading major media of national influence.’<sup>675</sup> Newsrooms receive top-down directives or the so-called instructive orders<sup>676</sup> from the central and municipal propaganda departments everyday for the sake of maintaining social stability, ‘the government is afraid of chaos in society.’<sup>677</sup>

Three forms of censorship are found at the *BYD* newsrooms: the total ban on certain critical reports and controversial public issues, the limited ban on the framing of news events, and the restrictions on cross-region reportage. Due to arbitrary government bans, a vicious circle is formed in which ‘the more government restraints there are, the more the media want to break through.’<sup>678</sup>

The total ban. News topics banned by the propaganda department cover a wide range of subjects concerning political, economic, social and world news. ‘News that has

---

<sup>673</sup> Gans, 1979, p.249

<sup>674</sup> *ibid*

<sup>675</sup> Eric Kit-Wai Ma, 2000, p.28

<sup>676</sup> *Zhiling*, which is also called publicity orders (*xuanchuan zhiling*), publicity principles (*xuanchuan jilu*), instructive reports (*zhilingxing baodao*) or the policy restraints (*zhengce xianzhi*)

<sup>677</sup> Interview with Tong Lei, 2006

<sup>678</sup> *ibid*

the greatest news values faces the toughest restrictions.’<sup>679</sup> The two kinds of reports mainly banned are critical reports and reports on controversial public issues.

Critical reports are those in which the news media monitor government organs, exposing their wrongdoing in handling big events that closely relate to people’s lives. Controversial public issues include oil prices, shortage of energy resources, gay issues, riots, large-scale crime or accidents. My informants said for example, ‘the oil price increase and the overheating of real estate business are inconvenient areas to touch.’<sup>680</sup> ‘We can’t report on transsexuals. It would be immoral and unethical. Gay or transsexuals must not be over-reported. We need to consider the acceptance of the public.’<sup>681</sup>

The arbitrary total ban leaves nearly no leeway for journalists to do anything but to give in. Even so, journalists fight back. When Harbin’s water supply was cut off due to the pollution of the Songhua River in November 2005, the *BYD* sent reporters to the scene. It was like a running race between the newspeople and the government.

We sent out our reporters to the scene but we only did one page. On the first day, we got in before the Central Propaganda Department could respond. On the second day, all the news was blocked. We were told not to publish any critical reports. We are very careful about the ‘limit’ while covering this kind of news. Usually we don’t criticize the government even if we know the government has done wrong. We only got time to do one page. For the follow-up reports, we were ordered to only use Xinhua news reports. But Xinhua news clearly did not tell the truth. We were able to do nothing. I feel stifled. I have this feeling every day. The editor’s biggest problem is that we can’t do the news or respond while seeing the news. Usually, as a reporter, we are keen to look at troubles in the world. But we know that any big news will encounter restrictions. So we’d better hope for peace in the world, hope for nothing to happen.<sup>682</sup>

Limited ban on the framing of news events. The propaganda departments do not totally ban reports but attach restrictions on the way events are reported. In these

---

<sup>679</sup> Anonymous

<sup>680</sup> Interview with Mao Longying, 2006

<sup>681</sup> General editorial meeting, 13 March 2006

<sup>682</sup> Interview with Shao Wen, 2006

cases, concessions are made and journalists do their best to report within the limits. An example is the collapse of Jingguang flyover bridge in the bustling business centre on the east section of the third ring road in Beijing in early 2006. 'It was a very important breaking event. We gave it two news pages. Coverage was not banned but we needed to report according to the policies and regulations. We reported objectively. They just set the degree and scale of reporting.'<sup>683</sup>

Editors also have to pay attention to how to present the news, including the news placement in the page. For instance, the current affairs section published a Xinhua article about a coal crisis in Beijing in late 2005 and put it as top news. This drew criticism from the propaganda department and resulted in the transfer of the news editor on duty to another department. In such a case, 'they can use Xinhua's articles but they can't give it a prominent place. From a news making perspective, people are concerned about something like this and of course we would put it in the most prominent place so that they can see it. But the propaganda department said the editors showed a lack of political thinking. If it was put in the prominent place, it meant the problem had reached a very severe level. They asked, why don't you handle it in a low-key way? How come other media knew not to use it? If you were going to use it, why did you make it so big? We have to be very cautious when selecting this kind of article.'<sup>684</sup>

Restrictions on cross-region supervision started to be implemented in 2005. The purpose may be to prevent the occurrence of untrue critical reports. Newspeople interpret it as a ban on criticizing local governments in other areas. 'When you do an exposure of another area, you must communicate with the local propaganda department.'<sup>685</sup> Complaints are mainly made by people at national news and current affairs section who cover news outside of Beijing. They think political control has been tightened. The media's 'mouthpiece' role is emphasized while the media's 'watchdog' role is down-played. 'I've been doing news for more than 10 years. It is now I face the toughest policy constraints, the severe winter. We are easily criticized. They keep emphasizing that the news media is the mouthpiece of the party. This

---

<sup>683</sup> Interview with Geng Zhongsong, 2006

<sup>684</sup> Interview with San Ning, 2006

<sup>685</sup> Interview with Liu He, 2006

cuts out our monitoring role. But in news making, if we don't do monitoring, what else shall we do? The news media's responsibility is to monitor.'<sup>686</sup>

Self-censorship is informal, covert, voluntary and institutionalized by the means of embedding in newspeople's judgement. 'There is a greater tendency toward political conformity. Consciously or unconsciously, people censor themselves – they don't need to be called into line.'<sup>687</sup> The fear of criticism or punishment from the propaganda departments causes a chilling effect. 'The department heads kill a story due to concern that the story may cause unnecessary trouble.'<sup>688</sup> News topics are censored once and for all. Editors restrain themselves from reporting topics that have been censored before and from issues they assume to be sensitive even when these issues are not specified in the propaganda directives. They are cautious not to cross the political line, visible or invisible.

At the NPC and NPPCC congresses, delegates are more and more brave about speaking up and Xinhua has become more audacious about reporting. We have done some good reports using Xinhua resources. However, there are some voices at these two meetings that we do not dare to publish. We are afraid to be criticized by the propaganda departments. We can't put too much criticism in one page.

About the death of Milosovech (the former president of Yugoslavia) in prison, his photo was originally put on the front page as the leading photo. I personally think it inappropriate. It was an important event. But how was it related to our domestic politics and diplomacy? What were our country's attitudes? What was the message we wanted the photo to deliver? We are trying to be a mainstream broadsheet. The *Beijing News* used this one as the leading photo on the front page. All other newspapers used small photos. It was a political issue.<sup>689</sup>

The degree of self-censorship varies with individual gatekeepers. 'When the editor is aggressive and stands up to pressure, all those stories may get into print. Some may be conservative and careful. When you get a conservative editor, even if a negative

---

<sup>686</sup> Anonymous

<sup>687</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *On television and journalism*, (London : Pluto, 1998), p.15

<sup>688</sup> Interview with Hao Wanhe, 2006

<sup>689</sup> General editorial meeting, 13 March 2006

report is printed, it will have lost its true color. The deputy-chief-editor is meant to check for political mistakes but leave the content to editors. If an editor has concerns, he would handle the report in a meticulous way.<sup>690</sup>

Censorship and self-censorship, conscious and unconscious, are two interlocking forces that form political control in the newsrooms and cause political conformity. The degree of political control varies depending on factors like the level of the government organs involved in the news reports, the time periods for publishing the news report, the administrative level of the newspapers, etc. The general pattern is that 'rules set by the central propaganda departments are more relaxed than those set by the municipal propaganda departments'.<sup>691</sup> Newspapers are more likely to report critically on low-level government organs rather than central or municipal government, 'if it is municipal government, people know not to touch it, but with the lower-levels like the district government, some brave guys would go to report'.<sup>692</sup> Local newspapers suffer more restrictions and have much less power to interview senior government officials than the national newspapers. Journalists have more autonomy at normal times rather than sensitive time periods like the time of NPC and NPPCC congresses when 'we are not allowed to report much negative news.'<sup>693</sup>

#### 5.4.3 Commercial constraints

Commercial constraints or market censorship are reflected in the advertisements. News as commodity must be sellable to advertisers. As John Keane claimed while criticizing the structural limitations of the market, 'market competition produces market censorship'.<sup>694</sup> *BYD* is market-oriented and advertising income accounts for 90 percent of its revenue,<sup>695</sup> it faces interference from advertisers.

Advertising determines the quantity of news content. The newsroom and advertising departments operate separately on different floors in the same building. The advertising department determines the placement of ads on the pages and then passes the formatted pages to the newsrooms to fill. 'The amount of news keeps pace with

---

<sup>690</sup> Interview with Dong Bingjun, 2006

<sup>691</sup> General editorial meeting, 13 March 2006

<sup>692</sup> Interview with San Ning, 2006

<sup>693</sup> Interview with Mao Ling, 2006

<sup>694</sup> John Kean, *The media and democracy*, (Cambridge : Polity Press, 1991), p.90

<sup>695</sup> Interview with Zhang Yanping, 2006

the amount of ads. When the ads increase, the news will increase. Otherwise, the readers will complain about having so many ads. It's a proportional expansion'.<sup>696</sup>

Advertisers influence editorial policy. They request editors to publish, not to publish, or to delay the publication of articles. In order to maintain the advertising and thus maintain the business profits, although editors have editorial autonomy, they may give in to a certain point in a power struggle between editorial and commercial interests. The most obvious one is the omission of names in critical reports. 'We do not give out names in some critical reports for the sake of advertising.'<sup>697</sup> Bargains and concessions are often made.

While writing about the conflicts in a real estate project, the developer would bargain with us using advertisements. On average there is one case every month of requests being made from the advertisement department about publishing or not publishing or delaying the publication. But we make the final decisions. Editors have the autonomy but we are affected by other factors. We might not name them in the report, for instance, we would just say xxx residential compound.<sup>698</sup>

The degree of market censorship varies between different news genres. The general pattern is that the finance newsrooms suffer the most as they cover news in the areas of real estate, businesses, auto, etc where big advertisers come from. Comparatively, other newsrooms like current affairs, national news and world news are under much less commercial influence as the areas they report are less relevant to the interests of advertisers. 'Compared with finance and industry sections, we don't have many conflicting interests. So we do pure news. We don't have to worry about conflicting interests. I can write about anything I learn about and don't have to shut up because of other factors.'<sup>699</sup>

#### 5.4.4 Managerial constraints

Workload, shortage of staff, inefficient internal communication, and insufficient compensation schemes are identified as *BYD*'s managerial constraints. Journalists are required to get 15 articles of 300 to 700 words per piece published in the newspaper

---

<sup>696</sup> Interview with San Ning, 2006

<sup>697</sup> General editorial meeting, 20 March 2006

<sup>698</sup> Interview with Feng Zhenxiong, 2006

<sup>699</sup> Interview with Deng Fei, 2006



per month. The director of quality control division attributes the shortage of appealing and exclusive photos to the low remuneration for excellent photography. 'There are fewer and fewer independent photo reports. It is a problem of corporate policy. Fresh, exclusive and on-site reporting is what we have missed for long. At 80 Yuan for one photo, it is not worth going out and catching a shot by roaming around the street.'<sup>700</sup> The managerial problems are barriers to boosting newspeople's morale and hinder the development of good journalism.

#### Conclusion:

This chapter indicates that globalisation has had impacts on the professional practices in the local newspapers in China. Dramatic changes have taken place in the *BYD* in terms of audience, news content and sources during the commercialisation and globalisation process. Globalisation has had a homogenizing effect through importation and adaptation of western news forms, ideas, and practice. However, this homogenizing effect is secondary and supplementary. *BYD* maintains its own strong distinctiveness in news-making due to China's unique political-social-economic system.

Essential changes over the past two decades are reflected in the audience shifts from teenage students to middle-aged professionals, and from ordinary people to the social elites. With its status and influence increasing, *BYD*'s news selection criteria have changed from readability to significance. It provides diversified and politized content to meet the demands of the market and the government. Meanwhile, economic globalisation, labour migration, and China's growing participation in the world affairs have led to more global elements being included in the news content. Under increasing political restrictions from the state, it depends more on Xinhua for its resources, access and political correctness. The emergence of new information technology especially the Internet has also influenced the news content, as seen for instance in the increased importance of editorial and commentary, and news sources.

Though minimal and unobvious, globalisation has had a homogenising effect on *BYD*, as reflected in its adoption and adaption of audience research approaches, an editor-centre editorial structure, journalistic writing approaches, the use of columnists and cover stories, and large photos from the west. As a result, direct or

---

<sup>700</sup> Interview with Wang Fang, 2006

indirect, Chinese newspeople share western news values like objectivity, timeliness, scale, significance, and personification. Neither Chinese nor western newspeople have a perfect knowledge of their real readers. They manufacture and deliver news to an imaginary readership. They all face market censorship and pressures from Internet as well as time, human resources and management restraints.

The most distinctive feature of Chinese local newspapers is that the state still plays an important role in the news production process, as reflected in the significance of policy-related and instructive reports. The rise of central government level news, positivism rather than negativity in front page news, state censorship and self-censorship. John Keane notes that political censorship of the media in the liberal state is more invisible. 'The liberal state may exercise five interlocking types of political censorship: emergency powers, armed secrecy, lying, state advertising, and corporatism. Such censorious power of the state is, however, structural and, moreover, invisible.'<sup>701</sup> In China, the Party control is more visible, direct and arbitrary.

---

<sup>701</sup>Chin-Chuan Lee, 'Chinese Communication – Prisms, trajectories and modes of understanding', in Lee, ed., 2000, p.34

## **Chapter 6    Impact of globalisation on individual journalists**

This chapter tries to draw a portrait of journalists at *BYD* that shows how globalisation impacts on their background and on their perceptions of their professional roles and ethics and thus influences news coverage in terms of what and how they report.

I propose a model to examine the implications of globalisation on individual journalists that influence the news as it is, as shown in Figure 31 below. The three indicators, namely local happenings, interconnectedness and sameness and differences, are used to analyse and discuss the impacts of globalisation on journalists' professional profiles (their characteristics, professional backgrounds, party and religious affiliation, education and training), their perceptions of professional roles (what they think of journalists' roles, whose interests they should represent, what are their role models, and their social status), and their perceptions of professional ethics (mainly unethical practices including paid journalism and plagiarism).

- **Local happenings:** identify journalists' characteristics, values, ideas and practices in their daily life.
- **Interconnectedness:** identify the link of local journalists with the outside world based on the mobility of labour, ideas and values.
- **Sameness and differences:** identify the common ground and uniqueness of local journalists embedded within the global context.

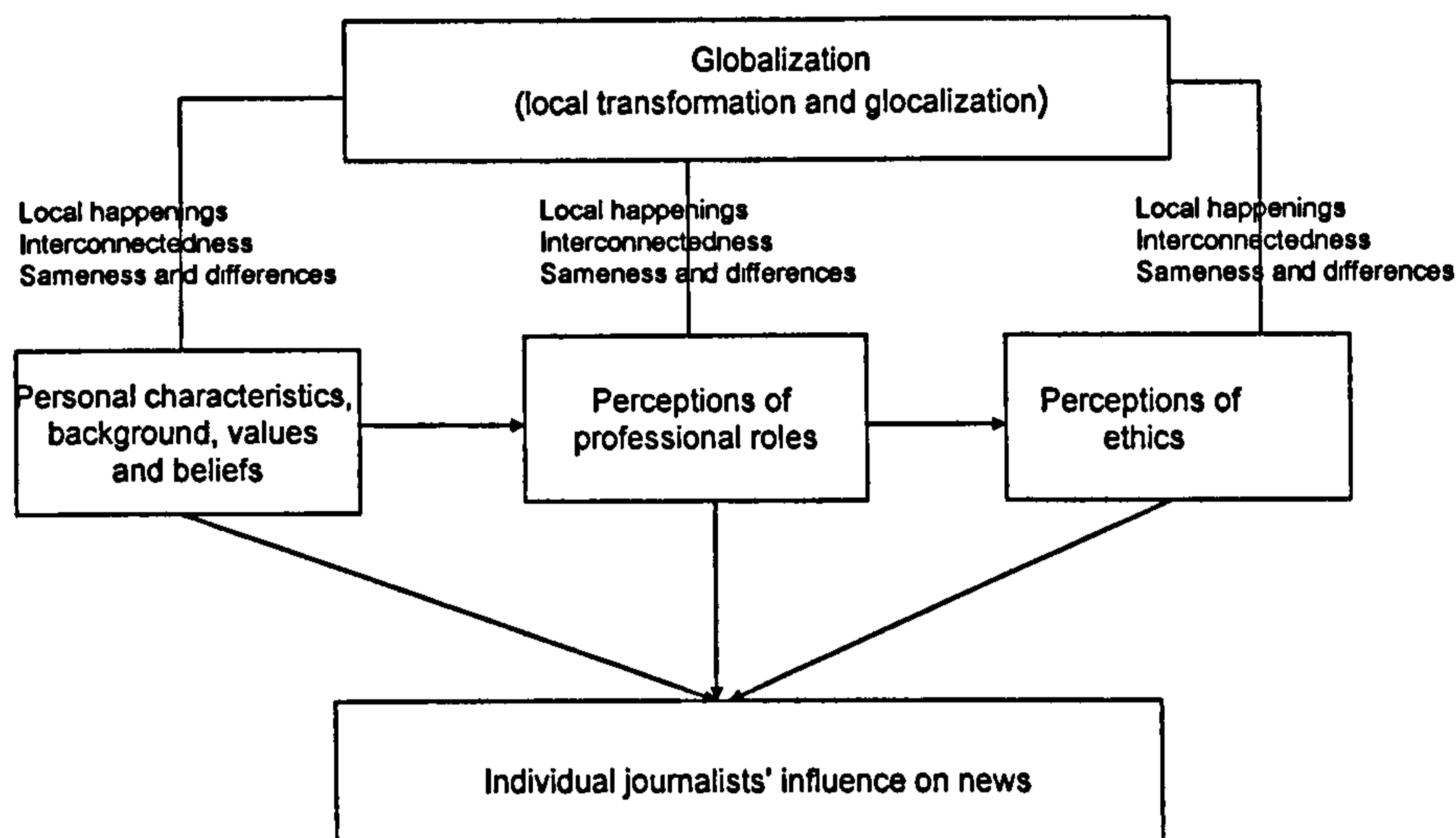


Figure 31 Implication of globalisation on the local press at individual level

### 6.1 Backgrounds and characteristics

News professionals' backgrounds and demographic profiles may reveal general identities of journalists. Their attitudes, training and background are viewed as influential at the individual level.<sup>702</sup>

The latest statistics show that in China more than 70,000 people work in newspapers and news periodicals, whereas more than 600,000 work in radio and TV, and about 2000 work at news agencies.<sup>703</sup> Of all of these, 147,000 people had been granted the new journalist certificate (*Jizhezheng*) in China by the end of January 2005. Apart from these official figures, however, another source states that the number of newspeople in China has risen dramatically over the past decades. 'There were about 300,000 news workers in the 1980s. The figure now is about 700,000, though nobody can tell how the figure is calculated.'<sup>704</sup> Based on the data available at the

<sup>702</sup> Stephen Reese, 'Understanding the global journalist: a hierarchy-of-influences approach', *Journalism Studies*, Volume 2, Number 2, (2001), p.179

<sup>703</sup> Wang Canfa et al, *China's human resource development report No.2 (Zhongguo rencai fazhan baogao No.2)*, (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe, 2005). The data quoted here is taken from the article named China's news team development (*Zhongguo xinwen rencai duiwu jianshe*), [http://news.xinhuanet.com/ziliao/2005-09/13/content\\_3484240\\_1.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/ziliao/2005-09/13/content_3484240_1.htm), accessed 17 August 2007

<sup>704</sup> Chen Lidan, 'On the composition of news workers in China on Journalist's Day' (*Jizhejie tan woguo xinwen congyezhe de goucheng*), <http://www.mediaresearch.cn/user/erjiview.php?list=2&&TxtID=209>, accessed 17 August 2007

time of this writing, we can say there are about 150,000 certified journalists but the real number could be nearly five times more, at 700,000.

At the *Beijing Youth Daily* agency (including all the sub-papers and affiliated businesses), there is a total of 600 staff of whom 300 are journalists and editors.<sup>705</sup> I conducted in-depth interviews with 23 newspeople whose profiles are sampled and categorised in terms of gender, age, party/religious affiliation, father's occupation, educational background and training record. By examining these issues, the question of who are the journalists at *BYD* will be answered.

### 6.1.1 Backgrounds and demographic profiles

Who is a Chinese journalist? Weaver and Wilhoit described a typical American journalist of the 1990s as 'a white Protestant male who has a bachelor's degree from a public college, is married, is 36 years old, earns about \$31,000 a year, has worked in journalism for 12 years, does not belong to a journalism association, and works for a medium-sized (42 journalists) group-owned daily newspaper.'<sup>706</sup> An equivalent description of a Chinese journalist at *BYD* would be typically male, 35 years old, an atheist, married, son of a civil servant, has a four-year bachelor's degree and has worked in journalism for ten years.<sup>707</sup>

In this section, *BYD* journalists and editors' gender, age, father's occupation and work experience will be elaborated.

#### Gender

The proportion of male/female newspeople, including both journalists and editors, is said to be 1:1, according to the Human Resources Department at *BYD*. Though the newspaper may try to hit the gender balance and implement a gender equality policy, I observed that there are more male journalists than female ones involved in reporting. The ratio for the sampled respondents stands at 18:5.

---

<sup>705</sup> Interview with human resource manager, 2006

<sup>706</sup> D. Weaver and G.C. Wilhoit, *The American journalist in the 1990s*, (1992), p.3. Cited from Shoemaker and Reese, *Mediating the message*, 1996, p.66

<sup>707</sup> This description is based on the empirical data collected from my fieldwork. Among the 23 interviewees most of whom are journalists and editors, the gender ratio is 18:5 (male/female); the average age is 35; 16 out of 23 are married; average time period working in journalism is about 10 years. I did not take salary as a variable because it is a very sensitive topic and difficult to ask interviewees about in person. In addition, in China on top of salary, many newspeople have income or benefits from other sources, the so-called 'gray income'. Thus the salary is omitted in this study.

At the national level, a survey entitled 'the status and development of women news workers in China', conducted by China Journalists' Association and the Institute of Journalism of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in 1995, showed that in the newspaper industry, male news workers accounted for 72.5 percent and females accounted for 27.5 percent.<sup>708</sup> In early 2005, national statistics show that the women journalists accounted for 41 percent.<sup>709</sup> Though there are still more male journalists working at news organisations, the national trend is that an increasing number of women are becoming journalists. The gender gap is narrowing.

In terms of gender, the fact that there are more male than female journalists at *BYD*, corresponds with the national trend as well as the world trend. David H. Weaver finds that the average proportion of women journalists across 19 countries was one-third (33 percent). However, a survey conducted between 1988 and 1996 in 21 countries showed that in some countries such as New Zealand and Finland, women journalists are as numerous as men.<sup>710</sup>

### Age

The average age of the sampled 23 interviewees is 35 years against an average of 36 for agency-wide news staff. Of the 23 interviewees, five are aged 20 to 29, 15 are aged 30 to 39, and three aged 40 to 50.

Generally speaking, the labour force at *BYD* is quite stable, with very few people leaving or arriving. Many staff who joined the agency in their 20s in the 1990s grew up with the newspaper and entered their 30s in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In addition, there has been no large-scale recruitment in recent years, except at the end of 2000 when 15 to 16 new people were taken on and in 2005 when another 17 reporters and editors were recruited.

An age-related power hierarchy exists within the news organisation. The general pattern, based on my observation, is that older staff usually occupy the more senior positions while younger or newer staff are in lower positions. In Western news organisations, many people work as journalists all their lives. In China, the majority

---

<sup>708</sup> Lin Lin and Zhang Yuchuan, 'Women journalists' role changes' (*Nuxing baodaozhe jiaose zhuanbian*), <http://xwjzl.eastday.com/epublish/gb/paper159/200305/class015900002/hwz614941.htm>, accessed 17 August 2007

<sup>709</sup> Wang Canfa et al, 2005

<sup>710</sup> David H. Weaver, 'Who are journalists?' in Hugo De Burgh, ed., *Making journalists – diverse models, global issues*, (London: Routledge, 2005), pp.44-47

of journalists are young people in their 20s or early 30s. When they grow older, they stop being front-line journalists and take up editorial or managerial positions.

Nationally, China's 2005 Human Resource Development Report points out that 'the young tendency in the age structure of newspeople is determined by the special nature of news work and the heavy workload. By the end of January 2005, there were nearly 150,000 certified journalists and editors in China, of whom 29 percent were aged 20 to 30, 27 percent aged 30 to 40, 24 percent aged 40 to 50, and only 20 percent aged above 50.'<sup>711</sup>

Globally, journalism is a young person's occupation and most journalists are between 25 and 44 years old. 'In most places, journalists are younger on average (35 years old) than is the workforce in general.'<sup>712</sup> In terms of age, *BYD* and even China is no different from the global trend.

#### Father's occupation

The occupation of fathers may reveal the general social background of newspeople. Based on interviewees' responses, the top three jobs were (1) government civil servants (eight interviewees gave this answer using varied phrases including government civil servant, cadre, government officer, senior diplomat, military officer), (2) engineers (five), and (3) educators (four) including teachers and professors. Other jobs include employees at a state-owned company (two) and worker (one). Most of the interviewees had a family background with moderate or fairly high social status, possessing average or above average economic, social and cultural capital, to use Pierre Bourdieu's concept. Bourdieu showed that individuals' actions are subject to their perceptions of the world that are framed by the environment they live in ranging from their families to social settings as a whole.<sup>713</sup> We may expect that it was the economic, social and cultural capital of their families that gave them access to their comparatively highly status profession. Individuals' social backgrounds affected their choice of journalism as a profession and shaped their personal beliefs and values at work.

#### Work experience

---

<sup>711</sup> Wang Canfa et al, 2005

<sup>712</sup> Weaver, 'Who are journalists?' 2005, p.47

<sup>713</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *The field of cultural production*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993), p.8

In terms of work experience, emphasis is laid on the interviewees' past work track record prior to joining *BYD*. On average, the 23 interviewees have worked in the journalism field for ten years. Three main scenarios are identified from the data. Firstly, some interviewees joined *BYD* directly from university, mainly with a major in journalism or English. Secondly, some joined *BYD* after they had worked at other news media in Beijing ranging from TV stations and radio stations to newspapers, either local or national. Thirdly, some joined *BYD* after having worked in non-news media jobs such as teaching, engineering or in public relations. Internal transfers among various news divisions are common.

### 6.1.2 Party and religious affiliation

In liberal democratic countries, a journalist's party and religious connections are a concern in media ethics because they may compromise the 'objectivity' and 'neutral stand' of journalists in their news coverage. In China, the news media are owned by the state and many journalists are Party members. The ethical code for journalists on the one hand requires them to 'stand up for the truth', and on the other hand, other considerations compel them to be loyal to the Communist Party and government, 'institutional forces that limit truthful disclosure and forgo independence'.<sup>714</sup>

Party membership and religious orientation have been examined at *BYD*. The data show that nearly half are Party members and half are non-Party members. Of the total of 23 interviewees, there are ten non-party members, ten Party members plus two probationary Party members.<sup>715</sup> The remaining interviewee did not answer this particular question. Only one interviewee claimed to be a Christian. He is also a probationary Party member. All other 22 interviewees claimed to be atheists.

Despite the fact that more than half of the sampled newspeople are Party members, no direct link has been identified and established between being a Party member and having political 'bias' in news making. The influence of being a Party member on the news is assumed to be minimal. Both Party and non-Party members may have the courage to stand up for the truth or give way to pressure. The pattern is that those

---

<sup>714</sup> Tom Brislin, *An Update on Journalism Ethics in Asia: Values and Practices as Context for Meaning in Japan, China and Korea*, Presented to the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., March 6-8, 1997. <http://www2.hawaii.edu/~tbrislin/asiaeth.html>, accessed 17 August 2007

<sup>715</sup> Probationary party members are people who are in probationary period, usually of a few months, before being accepted as formal party members. The transfer from a probationary to a formal party member is held to be an honour representing acceptance by the Communist Party.



who hold administrative posts are likely to be Party members. Joining the Party, for many people, is actually a step in their endeavour to climb up the career ladder. If one wants to climb high and fast within the state-owned news organisation, showing loyalty by joining the Party is undoubtedly an accelerator.

### 6.1.3 Education and training

The general pattern in terms of education and training is that newspeople in China belong to the social elite who have received higher education, especially in journalism and languages as well as professional training courses.

Journalism education and training can be used as an indicator to examine the degree of professionalism and reveal links with outside world. Trait theories that were dominant in the 1960s and 1970s include a widely-used element — the provision of training and education — in the distinction between occupations and professions.<sup>716</sup>

Splichal and Sparks argue that, even though there is no strict definition of journalism, the occupation seems to be moving from craft to profession because of changes in education and an emphasis on autonomy and professional ethics.<sup>717</sup>

The *BYD* interviewees' educational backgrounds showed nearly all have BAs or higher degrees. A total of 21 out of 23 (91 percent) interviewees had achieved four-year university level BA degrees or above before joining *BYD*. Some pursue higher academic degrees like an MA or MBA after working a few years at the newspaper. A fairly high professional educational background is identified with seven interviewees (30 percent) having academic degrees in journalism. Language graduates rank second, with six interviewees (26 percent) having BA degrees in languages, including English, Chinese and Japanese. Other degree holders specialised in social sciences like international politics, law, education management, population, or sciences like geography, machinery, and mechanical engineering.

English is a common language skill. From the 1990s, all students started to study English either from primary school or junior high school and English is a compulsory subject at university. Moreover, almost all students are keen to learn it, recognising its importance to their futures in a globalizing world.

---

<sup>716</sup> Howard Tumber and Marina Prentoulis, 'Journalism and the making of a profession', in Hugo De Burgh, ed., *Making journalists – diverse models, global issues*, (London: Routledge, 2005), p.59

<sup>717</sup> Weaver, 'Who are journalists?', 2005, p.48, comments on Slavko Splichal and Colin Sparks, *Journalists for the 21<sup>st</sup> century*, (New Jersey: Ablex, 1994)

The high academic and professionalisation trend identified at the *BYD* coincides with the national trend. According to statistics released by the General Administration of Press and Publications, among the 150,000 certified journalists and editors, 98 percent had three-year college degrees and above. 64 percent hold a four-year BA degree. As for the degree subjects, 30.6 percent had specialised in journalism.<sup>718</sup>

The global trend is that it is more common for journalists to be college graduates but most journalists are not graduates of college-level journalism courses, as Weaver finds that eleven of eighteen countries or territories report more than one-half of their journalists holding a four-year college degree.<sup>719</sup> For journalism graduates, the average percentage among the 14 reporting countries was 41.5. Without including the extremes of Spain, Brazil, Chile and Britain, it was one-third, a little under the US percentage of 36 in 2002.<sup>720</sup>

In sum, the majority of Chinese journalists, 91 percent by *BYD* samples and 64 percent by national survey, have four-year college degrees, of whom about 30 percent are graduates from journalism courses. Putting the figures in a global context, China has a higher percentage of college graduates than the world's 50 percent, but it has a lower percentage who graduated in journalism than the world's 41.5 percent.

As education and training are key indicators of professionalism, it is necessary to look further into journalism training in China. Generally speaking, China's journalism education has adopted Western news values in the curriculum but the professionalism level is still very much influenced by political factors. Yu Xu and his colleagues conducted a survey of 30 China's journalism and communication colleges. They found that the curricula at journalism colleges have incorporated audience appeal and pseudo-Western news values and the market mentality has promoted an appreciation of professionalism in China's journalism schools with the new curriculum focusing on Western media, investigative reporting and story-telling tactics.<sup>721</sup> They also conclude that such changes have not yet put China's journalism schools on a par with their Western counterparts in professionalism because of the

---

<sup>718</sup> Wang Canfa et al, 2005

<sup>719</sup> Weaver, 'Who are journalists?', 2005, p.47

<sup>720</sup> *ibid*

<sup>721</sup> Xu Yu et al., 'Reform and challenge – an analysis of China's journalism education under social transition', *The international journal for communication studies*, Vol. 64, (2002), p.75

'country's politically oriented educational philosophy characterised by a highly politicised course content, lack of academic freedom and myopic views with regard to professionalism.'<sup>722</sup>

Turning to the training records, when I carried out fieldwork at *BYD*, though some respondents claim that there is lack of a 'systematic training scheme', staff at *BYD* did receive training in different forms and on different subjects.

Main subjects include professional journalism, management and leadership, and practical issues like computer skills and the technical production process. Training is carried out in the mixture of in-house and out-house forms. In-house training includes seminars, lectures given by guest speakers, or training sessions organised by the agency. Out-house training includes journalists/editors certification or qualification training sessions organised by the Beijing Propaganda Department, MBA courses at Chinese universities, sending journalists and editors to Luton University in the UK under the MA programme organised by the Beijing Propaganda Department, as well as other exchange or visiting programmes abroad. The focus of training has shifted over the past decade from helping staff to pursue higher academic degrees, to organising systematic seminars on a wide range of social issues, then to the training of professional managers.

Next, a specific case of training sessions offered by the Missouri Journalism School is given to elaborate the integration and conflict between West and East, US and China, as well as global and local forces. When asked about the training issue, most respondents mentioned this four-day long agency-wide training programme by the Missouri Journalism School, held in 2005. The programme covered 'reporting, editing, page design, photography, interviewing, operation, distribution, advertising and everything'<sup>723</sup> and a total of 200 staff from both *BYD* and sub-papers attended.

The fact that American journalism scholars offer training sessions to *BYD* newspeople begs the question about the effects of such training. The feedback was double-edged. On the one hand, some respondents said the training was good and useful enabling them to gain knowledge and understanding about the American newspaper operation model, and the interaction between network and newspaper,

---

<sup>722</sup> *ibid*

<sup>723</sup> Interview with human resource manager, 2006

despite the great differences in news values, shaped largely by the political-social backgrounds.

There are two different sets of news values due to the different political background that decides different news-making environment. But there are same values or views. A big event occurred at the time of training. A female journalist at a radio station convinced a convict to surrender to the police. We debated this and I think there is no definite answer to this question. Some put law as a top priority while others think emotions the most important. The training helps expand horizons and learn what other people think and how they handle a similar case.<sup>724</sup>

However, on the other hand, most respondents thought this training session was too general and basic and it had no direct influence on their practical work, due to the different news practices and different editorial and management mechanism between the Western and Chinese journalism. 'I don't think it was very helpful. There's not much difference from what we learned at the university. For instance, the page layout analysis, subject analysis — these things are universal. Probably Westerners do not fully understand China. They asked why we did not put the report of an explosion event on the front page. For us, it's for the reason everybody knows. It's because of the Chinese situation. There are many things in common, for instance, for 9/11, every newspaper would take it as the most significant news and put it on the front page.'<sup>725</sup>

Direct or indirect, big or small, the training sessions offered by Western higher education institutions have some effect on the journalists because journalism as a "profession" has some universal features. How to adapt liberal democratic news values and practices in the local news making process is another question.

In China, newspapers such as the *BYD* are expanding their collaboration with Western educational institutions. Apart from the above-mentioned training sessions, other domestic and overseas training courses include MBA or EMBA classes at Chinese universities for the mid-level staff, and MA courses in Media and Art management at Luton University in the UK for journalists and editors.

---

<sup>724</sup> Interview with Wang Fang, 2006

<sup>725</sup> Interview with Deng Fei, 2006

Starting from 2003, we have sent out a few staff abroad for training at Luton University in the UK. That's on an order from the Municipal Propaganda Department. A total of 16 staff have been on this programme. The aim is to prepare talents for the 2008 Olympics. This programme will end in 2007. Another plan is to send about 20 mid-level and above managers to attend the MBA or EMBA classes. We are not short of excellent editors and reporters. What we lack are excellent management talents, especially after we floated on the stock market, and our businesses expanded.<sup>726</sup>

The trend in terms of training at the local press is towards integration of the news profession and management, the integration of internal, domestic and international training, as well as the integration of news organisation-sponsored and government-sponsored training.

#### 6.1.4 Summary and discussion

The demographic and professional profiles of journalists at *BYD* can be characterised as follows. The majority of newspeople are in their late 20s and early 30s and come from middle class families. They are mostly atheists and half of them are Party members. They usually hold BA or above degrees with 30 percent specialising in journalism. Training courses in journalism, management skills and computer literacy are offered but not in a systematic way.

Interconnectedness driven by the flow of labour and ideas is mainly reflected in newspeople's educational background and training courses. Chinese journalism training incorporates Western news values in its curriculum. Meanwhile, the agency expands its collaboration with Western higher education institutions driven by the growing research on China's news media by Western institutions as well as China's participation in global events like the Olympic Games in 2008. Journalists' global mobility and exposure to Western news values helps the shaping of professionalism and standardization of global journalism. But the local political constraints in the news making environment remain a great barrier to the development of professionalism.

Sameness and differences between the local press and global trends can be described as follows. In terms of age, gender and education, no big differences are identified

---

<sup>726</sup> Interview with human resource manager, 2006

between journalists in the local press like *BYD* and the general trend in the world. They are young and predominantly male. Most journalists have BA degrees or above degrees with 30 to 40 percent graduating from journalism courses. Differences lie in the fact that the power hierarchy at news organisations is related to the age structure, with young people working as front-line journalists and older people holding the editorial or managerial positions. Western news values are embedded in journalism education and training courses but they need to be adapted to accommodate the Chinese news-making environment. In addition, Chinese journalists are part of social elite and many are Party members.

## 6.2 Perceptions of professional roles

In this section, how journalists think of their roles, whose interests they represent, their role models and what they think of journalists' social status in society will be explored.

While addressing the roles of journalists, the notion of regulative ideal will be used. For journalists, a regulative ideal is a standard to judge what a good journalist is like and to be guided by that. The basic conception of what a good journalist can draw from abstract notions of an ideal journalist and from one's experiences working with or observing an exemplary journalist.<sup>727</sup> I believe that how to depict the role of journalist and their representation interests will reveal journalists' notion of an ideal journalist while elaborating on role models will reveal their exemplary journalist. Through the combination of ideal journalists and exemplary journalists, Chinese journalists' regulative ideal can be demonstrated.

### 6.2.1 Journalists' roles

In terms of journalists' roles, the following question was posed and seven commonly recognised functions of journalists in the West were also provided as prompts in brackets: What do you see the role of a journalist being? (Interpreter, disseminator, adversary, mouthpiece, educator, autonomy, service ideal).

The prompts in the brackets are drawn from Weaver and Wilhoit's study on the role of American journalists. In 1986 they raised the plural roles of journalists as interpreter, disseminator or adversary in the order of prominence, among which

---

<sup>727</sup> Aaron Quinn, 'Moral Virtues for Journalists', *Journal of mass media ethics*, 22(2&3), (2007), pp.168-186

‘interpretation and information come first with opposition a clear but distinctive third option.’<sup>728</sup>

My fieldwork shows that both American and Chinese newspeople share the common values of information dissemination and interpretation by listing ‘disseminator’ and ‘interpreter’ as the two most important roles for a journalist. However, the most distinctive difference is that American journalists highly regard the role of ‘opposition’ while Chinese journalists downplay the ‘watchdog’ or ‘adversary’ role but stress the role of ‘service ideal’ instead. In other words, in order of prominence, while American journalists in the 1980s listed their roles as interpreter, disseminator, or adversary, Chinese journalists in the 21<sup>st</sup> century listed their roles as disseminator, interpreter, or service provider. The details of fieldwork results are given below.

The majority of respondents, 17 out of 22 (77 percent), list disseminator as the primary role of journalists, though different phrases and sayings were used including ‘disseminate information’, ‘inform the public of the truth’, ‘report the facts’, ‘provide information’, ‘accurate reporting’, ‘report the news in a fast, accurate and neutral way’, ‘report objectively and fairly’, etc. Disseminator is commonly regarded as the most important roles for a journalist. Often strongly implied in these answers is support for the basic principles of truth, objectivity and accuracy in news making.

Apart from regarding disseminator as a journalist’s primary role, four out of 22 (18 percent) respondents point out that journalists should be interpreters at the same time. ‘Dissemination of information is the most important, then interpretation. First, tell people what happens, then why it happens.’<sup>729</sup>

Four out of 22 (18 percent) mention the role of service ideal, meaning servicing people or providing services to readers. ‘Disseminating exclusive information is the most important, interpreting is the secondary importantly, service ranks the third.’<sup>730</sup> ‘The first role is disseminating information, then service the people, then the social responsibility under which a certain part is watchdog’.<sup>731</sup>

---

<sup>728</sup> McQuail, 2000, p.255

<sup>729</sup> Interview with Lu Fei, 2006

<sup>730</sup> Interview with Long Qinnan, 2006

<sup>731</sup> Interview with Yang Lan, 2006

Three out of 22 (14 percent) respondents point out that journalist should bear the responsibility of guiding public opinion — for instance, ‘dissemination is primary but it’s not enough to simply disseminate. Journalists have the responsibility of guiding public opinion’.<sup>732</sup> ‘On the basis of dissemination, it’s possible to guide public opinion. But it’s not the journalists’ role. We should report objectively regardless of personal preference or the news organisation’s preference. There might be elements of guiding opinions, propaganda.’<sup>733</sup> Journalists regard upholding objectivity as the most essential in reporting. Meanwhile they realise that they should also play the role of guiding public opinion. There is sometimes a struggle between the often contradictory roles of disseminator and propagandist.

Another three out of 22 (14 percent) respondents mentioned the watchdog role. One admits that the most important role of journalists is to supervise the government and expose the dark side of society.<sup>734</sup> One said the journalist’s role should cover the function of watchdog,<sup>735</sup> and another said the watchdog function should be included in social responsibility.<sup>736</sup> The watchdog role is played down among respondents.

First of all, journalists should disseminate the information. If they play the role of supervision all the time, journalists turn into prosecutors. Their first role is to disseminate information, then serve the people, then take social responsibility in which a certain part is acting as watchdog. The watchdog role can be the most brilliant part. But it does not mean every journalist should do that. Critical reports are like the tip of the pyramid, small but brilliant. I don’t require everybody to do that. Nobody focuses on that. It depends on the news subject.<sup>737</sup>

Finally, two out of 22 (9 percent) respondents mentioned the role of mouthpiece. One claims that journalists should play all the roles listed in brackets in the question, except that of mouthpiece. However, ‘we are required to be the mouthpiece now.’<sup>738</sup> The other respondent, who sounds more radical, said journalists are playing more

---

<sup>732</sup> Interview with Yang Qun, 2006

<sup>733</sup> Interview with Mao Ling, 2006

<sup>734</sup> Interview with Hao Wanhe, 2006

<sup>735</sup> Interview with Chu Chenhui, 2006

<sup>736</sup> Interview with Yang Lan, 2006

<sup>737</sup> *ibid*

<sup>738</sup> Interview with Shao Wen, 2006



and more the role of mouthpiece in reality. 'It's mouthpiece, more mouthpiece, having no social responsibility. Or the social responsibilities become weaker. This is a fact.'<sup>739</sup> He gave an example to back up his assertion.

In 2005, a school bus crashed in Shanxi province, killing all the teachers and children on board. When the *BYD* was tipped off about the accident, a journalist immediately started off for the scene. However, it was a few hours from Beijing. During this time, *BYD* might miss the latest development at the crash scene. A *BYD* editor called up a local newspaper in Shanxi province for help but was told 'we will not go there'. The Shanxi reporter said the Shanxi propaganda department would not allow them to go to the scene. The order came from the top, banning coverage of this incident. Even if the reporter wrote the report, it would not be published.

The *BYD* editor exclaimed, 'comrade, can't you go to the scene out of your responsibility as a journalist for the sake of those children?' The phone was slammed down at the other end.

Out of the responsibility of a journalist, he (the local reporter in Shanxi province) should go there because he could find out the truth and he was the one who could record the truth. He had the right and obligation to record the truth. But if he did not go there, nobody would ever know the truth. He did not have to tell the truth then. But when the time comes, he can tell it. The ideal way is that journalists should work for journalism. One chooses this profession and one should sacrifice anything for it.<sup>740</sup>

This example demonstrates that, in reality, Chinese journalists have to play the role of mouthpiece in certain circumstances, in an unwillingly and reluctant manner, owing to the interference of political agents. 'Adversary supervision should be a significant function but journalists fail to play such an important role due to the policy environment.'<sup>741</sup>

In the order of importance, *BYD* newspeople think journalists should play the roles of 1) disseminator, 2) interpreter, 3) public service, 4) guiding public opinion, 5) watchdog, and 6) mouthpiece. The most significant roles that are widely recognised

---

<sup>739</sup> Interview with Mao Longying, 2006

<sup>740</sup> *ibid*

<sup>741</sup> Interview with Li Yumin, 2006

and accepted among Chinese journalists are disseminators and interpreters. Truth, objectivity and accuracy are regarded as basic values for reporting. Serving people and guiding public opinion also gain a common ground among journalists. Though Chinese journalists think they have a watchdog responsibility and regard it as a professional ideal and a sublime cause for the profession, such an adversary role is compromised in reality and played down due to social and political constraints. Though unwillingly, Chinese journalists still play the role of mouthpiece to a certain extent.

The empirical research reveals a big change in Chinese journalists' roles, from that of being the Party's propaganda tool in the 1980s to being disseminators and interpreters now. In 1985, Hu Yaobang, the then Party General Secretary, stressed that the press should serve as an organ of the Party, the government, and the people. 'The function of the press is not only to inform the people, but more important, to educate the people.' He argued that journalists have to accept the notion that it is their obligation to serve as the Party's propaganda tool.<sup>742</sup> About twenty years later, Chinese journalists depict their first function and obligation as to inform and interpret, which is professional and without any political elements.

### 6.2.2 Representation interests

In response to the question of 'whom do the journalists represent?', six perceptions are identified: public interests, news organisations' interests, journalists themselves, truth or justice, elite or middle-class, and the Party.

Firstly, the biggest majority of respondents (ten out of 19, 53 percent) claim that journalists should represent the public interest, including readers and society as a whole.

Secondly, three respondents (out of 19, 16 percent) think journalists represent the interests of the news organisations because journalists, as employees of news organisations, primarily represent the interest of the news organisations, then it is a matter of what the news organisations represent, the public or the rulers. One respondent said they must represent the rulers' interests as they are state-owned media.

---

<sup>742</sup> Guan Keguang, 'Journalism ethics in China', *Communication ethics and global change*, (1989), pp.194-200

Thirdly, two respondents (out of 19, 10.5 percent) claim that journalists only represent themselves or their own interests because journalism is a profession and news value is the most important thing for journalists. 'Journalists represent themselves. When I write an exposé, I actually represent the "bottom-level" people. When I disseminate a policy, I'm the mouthpiece of the government.'<sup>743</sup>

Fourthly, two respondents think journalists should represent truth and justice and try to get the truth as much as possible. 'Journalists should represent the interests or consequences arising from reports on objective truth and justice'.<sup>744</sup>

Fifthly, two respondents gave answers from the perspective of class. One said that the representation interests depend on the position of a newspaper. Journalists at *BYD* should represent the middle class in society. 'We should represent the mid-level people and satisfy their needs. We are not a paper for corporate bosses or a paper for poor people.'<sup>745</sup> Such representation interests also reflect and correspond with the life of newspeople themselves. As for *BYD*, he felt that the living standards of reporters and editors become more aristocratic by living in big houses, driving cars, etc. 'They are getting away from the bottom-level people. Their feelings have also changed.'<sup>746</sup> The other said *BYD* journalists should represent the interests of the elite, which corresponds with the newspaper's target audience, the "three highs". 'We represent the interests of backbone knowledge-based people, the elite.'<sup>747</sup>

Lastly, one respondent said journalists represent the Party's interests, although 'ideally, journalists should represent the interests of the people.'<sup>748</sup>

Three perspectives can be generalised based on the respondents' answers: public service, professional responsibility (journalists' own interests, truth and justice, news organisations, middle class or elite readers) and the Party. The majority of journalists think the press should serve the public good and represent the interests of people as well as carrying out professional responsibilities. Though state policy stipulates that

---

<sup>743</sup> Interview with Dong Bingjun, 2006

<sup>744</sup> Interview with Feng Zhenxiong 2006

<sup>745</sup> Interview with Wang Fang, 2006

<sup>746</sup> *ibid*

<sup>747</sup> Interview with Wang Biao, 2006

<sup>748</sup> Interview with Mao Longying, 2006

‘the press should serve as the organ of the Party, the government, and the people’,<sup>749</sup> Chinese journalists have downplayed and minimised their role of serving the Party.

### 6.2.3 Role models

As for the question ‘what is the role model for journalists at *BYD*, in China and the world?’ qualities like commitment, passion, bravery, perseverance, hard work, humanity and excellent writing are found to be held dear by journalists.

Well-known investigative and war reporters in China as well as those in the West were identified as role models by my interviewees. Chinese role-model journalists include Zheng Zhi, veteran investigative reporter at *BYD*, Yu Keqin, investigative reporter at *China Business News*, and Lu Yuguang from Phoenix TV who is based in Russia. Western role model journalists include Christiane Amanpour, chief international correspondent for CNN, Robert Capa, a war photographer born in Hungary, and Oriana Fallaci, an Italian political journalist and writer.

The quotations below show the kind of qualities my interviewees admired in their chosen role models:

Zheng Zhi, *BYD*

‘She does news from special angles, digging up different points from the ordinary things.’<sup>750</sup> ‘She’s serious about her work. She confirms every detail and she thinks.’<sup>751</sup>

Yu Keqin, *China Business News*

‘(I admire) people who have the guts to speak the truth regardless of the environment or policy restraints. In order to write one article, Yu can spend half a year on it. He exposed the stock market scandal in Lanzhou. Many reporters work just to finish the workloads set by the news organisation. It’s difficult for them to give up other things just to chase one story. But there are some reporters who do that. And it’s always possible that a story they have chased for so long ends up being killed.’<sup>752</sup>

Lu Yuguang, Phoenix TV

---

<sup>749</sup> Guan Keguangm 1989, p.194

<sup>750</sup> Interview with Wang Fang, 2006

<sup>751</sup> Interview with Mao Longying, 2006

<sup>752</sup> Interview with San Ning, 2006

‘At the time of the Russian hostage crisis, he carried the camera and rushed to the scene. The situation was tense at that moment. Just because you are a journalist, it does not mean terrorists would not shoot at you. You never know what would happen at that time. Poison gas was possible. They are admirable.’<sup>753</sup>

Christiane Amanpour, CNN

‘She’s always in the war zones. You always see her during the Iraq war. She spoke words with great passion and force.’<sup>754</sup>

Robert Capa, Hungarian journalist and photographer

‘Capa is a perfect journalist. He’s born to be a journalist, getting excited whenever going to the battlefield.’<sup>755</sup> ‘Robert Capa is a free soldier. He has professional spirit and journalistic ideal.’<sup>756</sup>

Oriana Fallaci, Italian journalist/interviewer

‘Falacci does not yield to the power.’<sup>757</sup>

Apart from listing specific role models, some respondents stated in general terms which kind of journalists they admire. Similar to the examples stated above, the qualities of commitment and bravery are regarded as the most important. For instance, ‘(I admire) people who have guts, who dare to go to dangerous places like the war zones. They always keep enthusiasm and they are experts in the areas they cover.’<sup>758</sup> ‘I appreciate the works that won Pulitzer Awards.’<sup>759</sup> ‘(I admire) Western reporters who followed the Iraqi or the American army in the desert.’<sup>760</sup> ‘I admire reporters who pay attention to poverty and wars. The fact that they go to those places means they have compassion.’<sup>761</sup>

In addressing journalists’ perceptions of their roles and representational interests, a normative institution is constructed. However, the normative institution may not reveal journalists’ hidden thoughts. In the previous section, the empirical data

---

<sup>753</sup> Interview with Long Qinran, 2006

<sup>754</sup> Interview with Chang Lingxin, 2006

<sup>755</sup> Interview with Deng Fei, 2006

<sup>756</sup> Interview with Yang Lan, 2006

<sup>757</sup> Interview with Deng Fei, 2006

<sup>758</sup> Interview with Mao Ling, 2006

<sup>759</sup> Interview with Dong Bingjun, 2006

<sup>760</sup> Interview with Long Qinran, 2006

showed that *BYD* journalists downplay the role of watchdog. However, in discussing their role models, journalists are explicit that it is important to be courageous and stand up to the authorities. In this sense, Chinese journalists are no different to their American counterparts, who see the adversary role as an extremely important responsibility for journalists

#### 6.2.4 Journalists' social status

In response to the question of 'what do you think of journalists' social status?', a mixed picture emerged. Of the total 18 valid responses, half the respondents indicated that journalists' social status is deteriorating, a third thought it is good or comparatively high, and a minority, one sixth or three out of 18 thought it very or too high.

Social status can be judged from two criteria – respect and income. Economically most respondents think journalists' income is mid-level. *BYD* staff income may be a little higher than those of their counterparts. This discussion will focus on respect.

Many respondents agree that the respect for journalists in society is declining. They attribute such decline to three developments: commercialisation and market competition resulting in the publication of too many newspapers and too many journalists, among whom some are unethical and immoral, the trivialisation and sensationalisation of news, technology creating diverse sources for highly educated people to obtain news.

Firstly, keeping in pace with the drive for commercialisation, market competition becomes more and more fierce with many new metropolitan newspapers being established and many people joining the journalism profession. From being a small mysterious 'elite', journalists have become a large group. During this transition period, some journalists' unethical and immoral behaviour has tainted the image of journalists and thus reduced the respect for journalists in society as a whole. 'Market competition has become harsher. This leads to a mixture of good and bad newspeople. In every professional field, people's social status during that transition period has declined. The profession of journalism is not an exception.'<sup>762</sup>

---

<sup>761</sup> Interview with Xiao Bei, 2006

<sup>762</sup> Interview with Lu Fei, 2006

Secondly, respondents think that in the past journalists used to speak with an authoritative voice and represent the official line. At present, news content is more trivial and sensational to meet the needs of the common people and to bypass political censorship. Such trivialisation and sensationalisation of news causes journalists' social status to decrease. 'With the emergence of metropolitan newspapers, people pay more attention to the social news. Reports are more likely to target the low-end, for instance, the traffic accident scene, and some trivial things. Thus, the overall reporters' social status is going down. But the level of common people's dependence on the reporters is increasing. People believe that reporters have the right to say things and they must depend on reporters to get their voices heard.'<sup>763</sup>

Thirdly, advanced information technology gives news media organisations more channels to disseminate information and well-educated people have more channels to access news. In accordance with the declining status of print media, the respect for journalists is going down because people tend to use alternative sources they trust, including global and national news portals, web sites, blogs, etc. For instance, 'for common people, they respect journalists because journalists have the right to say things. However, the profession is getting devalued. Many people don't believe newspapers, especially highly educated people. They have their own channels for obtaining information. Newspapers have a lower credibility for them.'<sup>764</sup>

Although half the respondents believe journalists' social status is declining, some think journalists are generally respected and their status is good, comparatively high, or at the average or middle level in society. Journalists' social status depends on the individual news organisations they work for. *BYD*'s journalists enjoy a better social status than their peers in terms of credibility and personal income because 'it is one of the news media in China with the highest advertising income and the newspaper's quality is good.'<sup>765</sup>

A minority of respondents believe that journalists' social status in China is very high or too high. One respondent thinks *BYD* journalists enjoy high social status due to the newspaper's financial success and social influence. The other two respondents think

---

<sup>763</sup> Interview with Feng Zhenxiong, 2006

<sup>764</sup> Interview with Mao Ling, 2006

<sup>765</sup> Interview with Hao Wanhe, 2006

journalists are over-respected in China. They should not be respected that much because the press is not free and they enjoy no autonomy. 'Journalists should not be respected because we don't have the environment to be respected. Journalists are not independent. They are just reporters. They are told what to say.'<sup>766</sup>

In general terms, journalists do not think highly of what has become of their credibility during the news media commercialisation process. Journalists have stepped down from being elite to being the common people. In the past, 'journalists served as a bridge between the authorities and the ordinary people. In this sense, they were a special group of privileged people. The audience also took it for granted that the press represented the Party'.<sup>767</sup> In recent decades, the plurality of newspapers and the expanding labour force has caused trivialisation and sensationalisation. This and problems with ethical issues, the lack of autonomy, heavy political constraints and the availability of alternative news channels has made journalists negative about their social status, while recognizing that they have made economic gains.

#### 6.2.5 Summary and discussion

Interconnectedness is mainly identified in journalists' perceptions of role models and their social status. The flow of cultural products enhances the link between Chinese and western journalists. Owing to increasing exposure to Western cultural products, including books, newspapers, TV news channels, literatures, news reports, etc, Chinese journalists know much about their counterparts in other parts of the world and take them as role models. Advanced information technology, in particular the Internet, has reduced the dependence of well-educated people on newspapers and enabled them to obtain news from news channels perceived as credible, including overseas sources on the Internet. This has had a negative effect on print journalists' social status.

Sameness and differences are evident in journalists' perceptions of their roles and virtues. Like journalists around the world, *BYD* journalists regard the role of disseminator as the most important. David Weaver's survey (1988-1996) finds that

---

<sup>766</sup> Interview with Mao Longying, 2006

<sup>767</sup> Guan keguang, 1989, p.200



‘among the 12 countries or territories reporting on the role of getting information to the public quickly, there was considerable agreement.’<sup>768</sup>

Journalistic virtues that Chinese journalists hold dear are truthfulness, objectivity, bravery, passion, compassion, commitment, hard work, and excellent writing. Virtues in the Australian and American ethics of codes include truthfulness, accuracy, fairness, honesty, integrity, autonomy, independence, impartiality, objectivity, freedom (of speech), transparency, compassion, and courage based on an unscientific sample.<sup>769</sup> With the significant exception that phrases like autonomy, independence and freedom of speech that are missed out from the responses of Chinese journalists, the two sets of virtues are surprisingly similar.

Differences lie in the perceptions of interpreter and watchdog roles in the global journalism landscape. In respect of the interpretation or the analytical function of news media, *BYD* journalists think interpretation very important. However, Weaver finds that there were considerable differences among the 14 countries or territories measured with ‘journalists in Taiwan and France least likely to consider it very important, and those in Finland and Britain more likely to say so.’<sup>770</sup> In normative terms, the watchdog role is thought least important by the *BYD* journalists but it is regarded as an admirable virtue for a journalist. Looking around the world, there were great disagreements with ‘journalists most likely to consider this role very important in the more democratic countries of Australia, Britain, and Finland. Those least likely to see this watchdog role as very important came from Taiwan, Algeria, and Chile, where there has not been a long history of democratic forms of government.’<sup>771</sup>

*BYD* journalists’ ideals on journalists’ roles are unique in relation to the service ideal, the guiding of public opinion, and the mouthpiece. As the function of Chinese newspapers’ has shifted from representing the Party to appealing to an audience, journalists’ roles have turned to a focus on informing, interpreting and providing services. However, because of the state ownership of news media in China, journalists also play an ideological role in guiding public opinion and acting as the

---

<sup>768</sup> Weaver, ‘Who are journalists?’, 2005, p.49

<sup>769</sup> Quinn, 2007, pp.168–186

<sup>770</sup> Weaver, ‘Who are journalists?’, 2005, p.49

<sup>771</sup> *ibid*

Party's mouthpiece, though such ideological roles are downplayed, minimised and performed in an unwilling manner. Empirical data suggests that Chinese journalists in the 21<sup>st</sup> century regard their professional role as primary and their political role as secondary. However, when these two roles collide, in actuality the political role overrides the professional role.

Putting things in a nutshell, Chinese journalists' perceptions as to their roles and virtues are beginning to converge with their counterparts in democratic countries as they treat journalism as a profession, though differences remain due to different political systems.

### 6.3 Perceptions of unethical practices

Two issues pertinent to professional ethics will be explored in this section, including paid journalism and plagiarism. Questions were posed to interviewees: 'what do you think of professional ethics? What do you think of the 'red envelope' or news that is paid for? Do you take 'red envelopes' or plagiarise?'

In China, the 'red envelope' is gift money handed out in a red packet. It is less direct than a straight cash bribe and looks nicer. The 'red envelope' is in origin a traditional symbol of best wishes usually given to children at the Spring Festival (the traditional Chinese New Year) or to newly-wed couples. Nowadays it also signifies asking for a special favour. In the media world, it refers to money given to journalists in contexts such as press conferences.

Paid journalism (*Youchang xinwen*) and plagiarism are two of the most typical ethical issues that have cropped up in China during the commercialisation process.

#### 6.3.1 Paid journalism

Paid journalism is controversial and prevalent in China. Unlike so-called chequebook journalism referring to news organisations making payments to informants and sources — even criminals — to obtain information in the UK, paid journalism in China refers to the payment made to journalists or news organisations to get a story published or suppressed.

No standardised or universal definition exists. Paid journalism is defined slightly differently. For example, it means 'journalists receive bribes for publishing

promotional material disguised as news or features'<sup>772</sup> or it means 'information that is disseminated in the form of news because journalists, editors or news media accept cash, gifts or other benefits.'<sup>773</sup> Though paid journalism can be described in different ways, it contains two key elements: payment is involved and relevant information is presented as news report.

Paid journalism appeared in the late 1980s and has become prevalent in the 1990s. It has become 'the biggest barrier to developing professional ethics in journalism in China.'<sup>774</sup> The causes are two-fold. On the one hand, commercialisation enables Chinese news organisations to have financial freedom and, at the same time, it imposes more pressures on journalists and news organisations. On the other hand, paid journalism is a structural problem rooted in the contradictions between the Party's ideology and the commercialised environment. It reflects the unique connection between news and business in China.<sup>775</sup> Kevin Latham points out that the rise of commercial pressures on journalist and media organisations has seen the development of extensive paid journalism as well as milder forms of sponsorship and commercial influence in editorial decision-making.<sup>776</sup> Zhao Yuezhi attributes paid journalism to the problematic and unchanged press systems. 'The new commercialised outlets face many problems. They may surrender to the pressures of an overall system that remains unchanged.'<sup>777</sup>

In this section, paid journalism will be considered in relation to two codes, written codes and unwritten codes. Written codes are reflected in the regulations promulgated by the government or journalism associations. Unwritten codes are examined through journalists and editors' perceptions of this issue. This separation of written and unwritten codes is based on Philip Meyer's concepts.

In the ethos of journalism, there are two kinds of codes. One kind is written by a committee, is made public, and fairly honestly represents how journalists

---

<sup>772</sup> 'China Press, Media, TV, Radio, Newspapers', <http://www.pressreference.com/Be-Co/China.html>, accessed 26 July 2007

<sup>773</sup> Wang Bo, 'Youchang xinwen de benzhi jiqi falu zeren (the nature and legal responsibility of paid journalism)', *Xinwen Jizhe (Journalists)*, 9 October 2003, <http://tech.sina.com.cn/other/2003-10-09/1400241884.shtml>, accessed 26 July 2007

<sup>774</sup> Feng, Jielan, 'Paoxi 'youchang xinwen' (Analysing 'paid journalism)', *Qingnian Jizhe (Young Journalists)*, No. 12 issue, 2004, <http://www.ddcbxj.com/Article/ShowArticle.asp?ArticleID=796>, accessed on 26 July 2007

<sup>775</sup> China Press, Media, TV, Radio, Newspapers, <http://www.pressreference.com/Be-Co/China.html>

<sup>776</sup> Kevin Latham, 'Nothing but the Truth: News Media, Power and Hegemony in South China', *The China quarterly*, No.163. (September 2000), pp.633-654

<sup>777</sup> Zhao, 1998, p.159

think they ought to behave. The other kind is unwritten, hidden sometimes from the consciousness of journalists themselves. Because it is often unconscious, this latter code is more difficult to describe and analyse, but it is the more powerful of the two.<sup>778</sup>

### 6.3.1.1 Written codes

In China, there are regulations in place against paid journalism, banning news organisations and news workers from accepting cash or valuable bonds from interviewees. The press self-regulation body in China is the China National Journalism and Publication Workers Association (*Zhonghua quanguo xinwen chubangongzuozhe xiehui*) abbreviated and herein referred to as the China Journalists Association. The association was established in 1957 for the purpose of enabling news workers to improve their skills and share experiences and knowledge. After the press was commercialised in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the Journalists Association added two further functions to its role: press self-regulation and defending rights of journalists.<sup>779</sup>

The first regulation that covers paid journalism is the 'Chinese news workers code of ethics' (*Zhongguo xinwen gongzuozhe zhiye daode zhunze*) drafted in 1987 and approved at the fourth directors' meeting of the China Journalists Association in 1991, and revised in 1994 and again in 1997. It states that 'news workers should uphold the uncorrupted style and fight against paid journalism. News workers are not allowed to request, accept or borrow the interviewees' cash, material, negotiable securities, credit cards, etc. They are not allowed to request or accept any cash in any form while attending conferences and activities'.<sup>780</sup>

At the end of July 1993, 'notification about enhancing journalism professional ethics and prohibiting paid journalism' (*Guanyu jiaqiang xinwen duiwu zhiye daode jianshe, jinzhi 'youchang xinwen' de tongzhi*) was promulgated by the Central Propaganda Department and the State Press Administration. This notification stated that no news organisations or individuals are allowed to accept or request cash and portfolios from

<sup>778</sup> Philip Meyer, *Ethical Journalism – a guide for students, practitioners, and consumers*, (New York: Longman, 1987), p.17

<sup>779</sup> Yang Yuanlong, 'Yingguo baoye zilv yu zhongguo xinwen zhiye diode zhunze' (Press self-regulation in the UK and press code of ethics in China), 24 April 2007, <http://press.gapp.gov.cn/news/wen.php?aid=16032&val=news>, accessed 2 August 2007

<sup>780</sup> <http://www.sdxwcb.gov.cn/wxz/20041211165309.htm>, accessed 1 August 2007

interviewees and those who are reported in publications. No organisations are allowed to give cash and negotiable securities to news organisations and individuals.<sup>781</sup>

In early August 1993, the State Council issued a 'supplementary notification on holding press conferences in Beijing' (*Guowuyuan bangongting guanyu zai jing juban xinwen fabuhui wenti de buchong tongzhi*). It also ruled that no cash or negotiable securities were allowed to be given to journalists and news organisations at press conferences.<sup>782</sup>

In January 1997, 'regulations on prohibiting paid journalism' (*Guanyu jinzhi youchang xinwen de ruogan guiding*) were promulgated by the Central Propaganda Department, Ministry of Broadcast, Film and TV, State Press Administration and Chinese Journalists Association. It reiterated the principles against paid journalism.<sup>783</sup>

Though the regulations issued by both the government and the associations are still in place and valid, paid journalism has become a systematic form of corruption ranging from 'business clients to government clients, from an individual practice to a collective custom, and from small gifts to sizeable cash sums and negotiable securities.'<sup>784</sup> To make things worse, reporters not only accept cash to publish promotional material, some even demand 'hush money' to suppress critical stories. In 2005, a total of 480 reporters and others pretending to be reporters are known to have asked for hush fees to keep news of a mine flood out of the public eye. 'Chinese reporters are demanding such hush money with increasing regularity from businesses and government agencies in exchange for the withholding of unfavourable news. In addition, local Party officials, long used to manipulating information, have been complicit in the pay-off system when it suits their needs.'<sup>785</sup>

---

<sup>781</sup> <http://mlrc.cuc.edu.cn/plus/view.php?aid=408>, accessed 1 August 2007

<sup>782</sup> [http://www.law-lib.com/law/law\\_view.asp?id=56598](http://www.law-lib.com/law/law_view.asp?id=56598), accessed 25 July 2007

<sup>783</sup> [http://news.xinhuanet.com/newmedia/2003-05/27/content\\_889218.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/newmedia/2003-05/27/content_889218.htm), accessed 26 July 2007

<sup>784</sup> China Press, Media, TV, Radio, Newspapers, <http://www.pressreference.com/Be-Co/China.html>

<sup>785</sup> Edward Cody, 'Blackmailing by journalists in China seen as 'frequent'', *Washington Post*, January 25 2007, [http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/01/24/AR2007012402061\\_pf.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/01/24/AR2007012402061_pf.html), accessed 25 July 2007

Regulations in the form of written codes clearly ban paid journalism in any form but have failed to act as an effective binding force on the press. To a large extent they are 'like a blank piece of paper.'<sup>786</sup>

### 6.3.1.2 Unwritten codes

Unwritten codes about paid journalism can be revealed from news workers' perception. My fieldwork finds that journalists divide paid journalism into two forms: transport money or the red envelopes that involve small sums of money, usually from 100 to 300 hundred yuan, and paid news that involves a large sum of money, usually more than 1,000 yuan.

Though many journalists think paid journalism in either form is unethical and immoral, they tolerate the red envelopes system because it has become a professional convention. In contrast, they do not condone paid news as it not only involves large sums of money but most importantly influences editorial judgement and decisions. In addition, the trend in the newsrooms is that journalists writing for finance, culture and sports sections are more likely to do paid journalism than those working in other news genres, and journalists are more likely to accept red envelopes than editors.

The majority of interviewees said it is not wrong to accept transport money or red envelopes but it is wrong to demand them. Transport money referred to as the red envelopes is handed out to individual journalists at press conferences or other promotional events by business organisations or government departments, for the purpose of promoting businesses or government organs' products or images. Interviewees think acceptance of "transport money" should not be banned for the following reasons.

1) It has become a journalistic convention and routine. If everybody does it, it should be accepted. 'Red envelopes have become an operational routine within the trade. If you are offered money and you don't take it, it feels as if you have violated the convention. If nobody gives money, journalists go to ask for money, that is wrong.'<sup>787</sup>

---

<sup>786</sup> Xia Yu, 'Zhongguo wanhuatong: toushi jizhe shou hongbao xianxiang' (Perspectives on journalists' acceptance of red envelope), 25 November 2005, [http://www.rfa.org/cantonese/zhuanti/zhongguowanhuatong/2005/11/25/china\\_journalist/](http://www.rfa.org/cantonese/zhuanti/zhongguowanhuatong/2005/11/25/china_journalist/), accessed 25 July 2007

<sup>787</sup> Interview with Mao Longying, 2006

2) There is no strict corporate regulation against the red envelopes. 'I take red envelopes. It's a normal thing in China. But it's up to the greater environment and regulations. The *New York Times* strictly bans the red envelopes.'<sup>788</sup>

3) It just covers travel expenses. 'I only take 100 or 200 yuan. Sometimes, it does not even cover the cost of my taking a taxi. The newspaper's rule is that for each piece published, we get 80 yuan as a subsidy. But, when I go to the suburbs to undertake an interview, even if I drive myself, the expenses will exceed 100 yuan, taking the gas and highway fees into account.'<sup>789</sup>

4) It does not influence editorial decisions or it only influences editorial judgement to a limited extent. 'Nobody gives me money and forces me to write anything. I can still criticise them or write articles based on my own ideas.'<sup>790</sup> 'We don't support journalists asking for red envelopes. But when the organisation offers transport money, a small amount of money, to show gratitude, journalists can stick to the editorial principle. Red envelope or not, it depends on the news value of stories.'<sup>791</sup>

In sum, the unwritten codes about paid journalism in the form of transport money or the red envelope are that journalists should not request money but it is possible to accept it because acceptance of the red envelopes have become a convention and routine and everybody does it. It does not much influence editorial decisions. It only covers the transport expenses incurred for journalists to attend the press conferences, and there is lack of strict corporate regulations to ban this behaviour.

Unlike the transport money that is commonly accepted, paid news is despised and rejected as unethical and immoral. Journalists believe that paid news where a big amount of money is involved compromises independent editorial judgements. This is regarded as unacceptable by journalists. 'The amount of paid news is up to whether there's a deal under the table. It might be up to thousands or tens of thousands.'<sup>792</sup>

---

<sup>788</sup> Interview with Deng Fei, 2006

<sup>789</sup> Interview with Dong Bingjun, 2006

<sup>790</sup> Interview with Mao Ling, 2006

<sup>791</sup> Interview with Lu Fei, 2006

<sup>792</sup> Interview with Dong Bingjun, 2006

The unwritten codes about the paid journalism in the form of paid news involving big sums of money are that it is wrong and should be banned because it compromises editorial independence. However, in practice, the dividing line between transport money and paid news and thus between right and wrong is blurred. An unwritten code can be easily bent. One respondent talked about her experience: 'A Shanghai public relations company came to Beijing for the first time and staff did not know the price situation. Each reporter was given 900 yuan and got the story published.'<sup>793</sup>

People working in news sections like finance, culture and sports are more likely to be accused of writing paid news. 'While going to attend conferences, especially for reports on finance, sports or culture, everybody gets a red envelope. For the hotline news, we usually don't encounter this phenomenon. Sometimes our reporters give money to others out of sympathy. There are cases that somebody wanted to pay us not to report. But as far as I know, no reporters ever took the money.'<sup>794</sup>

Journalists who work at the front line in direct contact with interviewees are more likely to receive red envelopes than editors who always remain at their desks. 'As an editor, I have less chance to get the red envelope. Journalists who work on the front line may get more access to it. They may write something as a news report, and the editor cannot tell whether it is a press release.'<sup>795</sup>

Market forces mainly drive the phenomenon of paid journalism. On the one hand, businesses such as public relations companies want to promote their clients' products or images via the media and thus offer red envelopes as the cost of the promotion of their product. For the businesses, red envelopes are a form of advertising. On the other hand, journalists gain personal profits by accepting the red envelope. In the past, Chinese journalists' incomes were low and they were often invited to dinner by their contacts or interested parties. Such a tradition carries on in the form of the red envelopes, which enables journalists to 'make free use of the money.'<sup>796</sup> The red envelopes reflect the collaboration between businesses and the news media, between the force of the market and the power of the media, between money and power. 'As long as people have the desire to promote and they don't own media, they will spend

---

<sup>793</sup> Interview with San Ning, 2006

<sup>794</sup> Interview with Feng Zhenxiong 2006

<sup>795</sup> Interview with Hao Wanhe, 2006

<sup>796</sup> Interview with Chang Lingxin, 2006



money on promotion somehow. They may give a red envelope to an individual journalist or spend money on advertisements and press releases with a newspaper agency.<sup>797</sup>

Professional ethics determine to what extent businesses are able to set the news agenda. The lack of explicit and strict regulations at news media organisations as well as the weak sense of professional ethics in society can be the driving forces behind the occurrence and development of the paid journalism phenomenon. Professional ethics are important in terms of maintaining the news media's editorial independence and thus fulfils its social responsibility. How to separate journalists' personal profits from their social responsibility is an issue involving professional ethics. Under the current journalism system in China, 'making personal profits and social responsibility are parallel. Professional ethics are important. In the long run, the red envelope is not acceptable because if you take it, you'll be under somebody else's control.'<sup>798</sup>

To eradicate 'paid journalism' and maintain the news media's autonomy and improve a newspaper's credibility, professional ethics in terms of both written codes and unwritten codes are important.

So far, I have discussed paid journalism in the form of transport money and paid news. These two forms both involve individual journalists who accept cash, either in small quantities or massive ones. As the cash or gifts are handed over to journalists in private, or under the table, it is invisible and hard to show how it influences news content.

Next, I will discuss a more visible practice that links business and the editorial function – advertisements disguised as news.

In America, the tradition is to separate advertisements and news. The policy at some newspapers is to ban use of all trade marks or company names unless they are absolutely essential to the story. The reasoning is that an unfavourable reference may annoy someone, and a favourable one is free advertising. As Philip Meyer said, 'putting puffery into the newspaper is the more visible offence, and it can be

---

<sup>797</sup> *ibid*

<sup>798</sup> Interview with Long Qinan, 2006

demoralising for staffers, particularly if they have to participate in it.’<sup>799</sup> However, since the 1990s, the dividing line between advertisement departments and newsrooms has become blurred. MBA graduates run the newsrooms and select the news for the purpose of gaining maximum commercial profits.<sup>800</sup>

In China, it is clearly stated in the ‘Chinese news workers code of ethics’ in 1991 that ‘news reports must be separate from business operations. News organisations are not allowed to make advertisements in the form of news.’<sup>801</sup> Despite the written codes, what is journalistic practice?

The advertisement-disguised-as-news is usually called a press release or contact articles (*Guanxi gao*) in China. It represents collaboration between advertisers and the news organisation. The advertisers may save money by planting advertisements in the newspapers in the form of news stories. The news organisations can provide information to the readers, earn money and keep a good relationship with advertisers. ‘In China, soft news means the news report is a kind of advertisement or press release. It’s something in-between an advertisement and news. Advertisements cost too much. Newspapers want to survive by earning money in different ways.’<sup>802</sup> Generally speaking, interviewees do not hold a very critical attitude towards the advertisement-based press releases. They think it is one kind of news category meant to provide a service to the public. Whether or not to publish the press release depends on whether or not the information is useful to the readers.

Sometimes the report may be made for a private company’s interests to promote their product, but after the report is out, people pay attention to it. It’s not a big deal. Some years ago, one company developed a product, a needle to inject into pork, which tells you if the meat has been filled with water or not by giving a reading of the water percentage. We did a report on this and made it a big piece. People cared about it because it was related to their daily life. After the report was published, people asked where to buy it. It was a public service and it promoted the company.<sup>803</sup>

---

<sup>799</sup> Meyer, 1987, p.41

<sup>800</sup> Underwood, *When MBAs Rule the Newsroom*, 1993

<sup>801</sup> ‘Zhongguo xinwen gongzuozhe zhiye daode zhunze’ (The Chinese news workers’ code of ethics), <http://www.sdxwcb.gov.cn/wxzl/20041211165309.htm>, accessed 1 August 2007

<sup>802</sup> Interview with Chang Lingxin, 2006

<sup>803</sup> Interview with Mao Ling, 2006

Interviewees, especially those from current affairs and world news departments, claim that there is a dividing line between the advertising department and newsrooms. The advertising section and newsrooms operate separately and the advertising department has minimal or no impact on the newsroom.

Commerce may have a minimum influence on the current affairs section. It might have influence on the hotline news in city news section. When you criticise a company, it might be one of your big advertisers. The company might approach the advertising department who will come to us and deliver the message from the company that they want to say things from their side. The current affairs section is least influenced because whenever we attack somebody, it must be a really big issue. He has no way to cover up even if he wants to.<sup>804</sup>

In summary, the advertisement-based press release finds its way into newspapers in two ways: by paying individual journalists by the means of the red envelopes and by paying the advertising department to get into the newspaper. The impact from the advertising department is not evident at *BYD* as interviewees claim that there is a clear dividing line between advertising departments and editorial rooms especially for news sections like current affairs, national news and world news.

### 6.3.2 Plagiarism

Plagiarism is perceived as cheating and morally wrong. Plagiarism involves passing off someone else's work as your own. 'The most obvious use of plagiarism is when another media outlet has a story that a journalist wants to use.'<sup>805</sup> Everywhere in the world news organisations usually have an explicit policy banning plagiarism. For example, the *Arizona Republic* indicates in its ethics code that 'presenting another person's work as your own is cheating and will not be tolerated. Material from other sources, such as wire services or other newspapers, must be clearly attributed in the body of the story or in a credit line at the end of the story.'<sup>806</sup>

---

<sup>804</sup> Interview with Lu Fei, 2006

<sup>805</sup> Chris Frost, *Media ethics and self-regulation*, (Harlow: Longman, 2000), p.89

<sup>806</sup> *Arizona Republic*. (1999), Ethics code, <http://www.asne.org/ideas/codes/arizonarepublic.htm>, accessed 1 August 2007

The 'Chinese news workers code of ethics' (1991) states that 'property rights of colleagues and other authors should be respected. We are against the acts of plagiarism.'<sup>807</sup>

Compared with the accepted behaviour of receiving red envelopes and publishing advertisement-based press releases, journalists at *BYD* are critical of plagiarism, claiming it unethical, intolerable and stating that it should not be permitted. Though respondents claim that they do not plagiarise themselves, they said they often find other newspapers plagiarise *BYD* articles and few people would go to the trouble to pursue the plagiarisers'. 'I've never heard of make-up stories or plagiarism at *BYD*. I know other media plagiarise our stories without identifying the author's name or sources. Few people would pay attention to this matter. Many reporters don't want to take the trouble to pursue it. The basic requirements for a journalist are that he works out of his conscience.'<sup>808</sup> Another respondent said, 'plagiarism or made up stories, if discovered, would lead to the journalists being fired. We have regulations on that.'<sup>809</sup>

### 6.3.3 Summary and discussion

Unethical practices including paid journalism and plagiarism have appeared during the media commercialisation process in China. Though it is clearly stated in the written codes that such unethical behaviour is strictly banned, in reality, journalists have adopted their own conventions and bent the written rules. Red envelopes or transport money involving a few hundred yuan given out at promotional activities like press conferences are generally accepted. In contrast, paid news involving large amounts of money and plagiarism are regarded as unacceptable.

As for the interconnectedness, as China's economy has become globalised and multinational companies have come to China to establish their businesses, including public relations companies. The concept of public relations was imported from overseas. PR companies, either domestic or overseas, do not help restrain unethical journalistic practices like the red envelope. On the contrary, they join the battle of "money for publicity", as one interviewee said: 'the red envelopes are not ethical but even the Fortune 500 companies who come to China give out money. When in

---

<sup>807</sup> 'Zhongguo xinwen gongzuozhe zhiye daode zhunze', <http://www.sdxwcb.gov.cn/wxz/20041211165309.htm>, accessed 1 August 2007

<sup>808</sup> Interview with Dong Bingjun, 2006

<sup>809</sup> Interview with Yang Lan, 2006

Rome, do as the Romans do. Basically all businesses give money.’<sup>810</sup> In August 2007, the *Financial Times* reported that the HSBC and the China Charity Foundation celebrated a decade of working together at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing. Organisers of the event gave 200 yuan to each of the reporters who attended.<sup>811</sup> As Ying Chan, director of the Journalism and Media Studies Centre at the University of Hong Kong says, the multinational companies that allow the payments should be held partly responsible.<sup>812</sup>

Turning to the issues of sameness and differences, written codes in China about bribery and plagiarism accord with global journalism principles. Both bribery and plagiarism are against the international principles of professional ethics in journalism adopted by UNESCO. Principle 4, concerning the journalist’s professional integrity, states ‘the integrity of the profession does not permit the journalist to accept any form of bribe or the promotion of any private interest contrary to the general welfare. Likewise it belongs to professional ethics to respect intellectual property and, in particular, to refrain from plagiarism.’<sup>813</sup>

Differences lie in the unwritten codes. Chinese journalists have justified the acceptance of the red envelope or transport money, a form of bribery, and regard it as a convention. One reason behind this is that there are no strict written corporate codes to restrict such behaviour. By contrast in the UK and US, news organisations usually formulate specific clauses in their editorial policies to address behaviour like bribery and acceptance of gifts, and in so doing attempting to uphold the newspaper’s integrity. However in these democratic countries, the acceptance of freebies like sunshine holidays, free dinners and books is common. As Chris Frost writes, ‘editors and proprietors are now much more likely to allow pressure from advertisers, either real or anticipated, to influence editorial decisions.’<sup>814</sup> It is clear that Chinese journalists are going further and are more tolerant towards unethical practices.

---

<sup>810</sup> Interview with San Ning, 2006

<sup>811</sup> Jamil Anderlini and Mure Dickie, ‘China’s handouts to journalists skew media coverage’, *Financial Times*, London, August 3, 2007, p. 5

<sup>812</sup> *ibid*

<sup>813</sup> ‘International principles of professional ethics in journalism’, in Thomas Cooper et al, eds., *Communication ethics and global change*, (New York: Longman, 1989), p.335

<sup>814</sup> Frost, 2000, pp.161-162

**Conclusion:**

Globalisation has impacts on individual journalists in terms of their characteristics, professional roles and ethics. Global and local forces have met and intertwined to shape who the Chinese journalists are and how they treat news.

The global forces are mainly manifested in journalism education and news organisations' collaborations with Western higher education institutions. Together with the increasing mobility of people, cultural products, values and international news flow, global forces help the development of professionalism in the local milieu. Like journalists around the world, *BYD* journalists see their most fundamental role as that of disseminator. In addition, their concepts of professional roles and virtues are surprisingly similar to those held by journalists in liberal democratic countries. Meanwhile, local forces remain important in shaping individual journalists' values and behaviour. Apart from carrying out professional responsibilities, local journalists are likely to be under pressure from both politics and commerce. Their partial representation of the party/state and their attitudes towards unethical practices like the red envelopes speak volumes in this sense.

## Chapter 7 Impact of globalisation on the world news reportage

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the way *BYD* reports world news based on quantitative and qualitative analysis as well as participant observation conducted during my fieldwork. Global and local markets are bi-directional dependent in world news reports. 'The relationship between global and local is becoming an essential focus in study of the globalisation of news.'<sup>815</sup> The focus of this chapter is on world news production, i.e. how world news is domesticated from a particular local perspective to target the particular local audience, thus manifesting the coexistence of homogeneity/heterogeneity as well as unity/diversity driven by intertwining global forces and local forces.

Four aspects will be explored: news sources, news value, the construction process, and the international news flow, as shown in Figure 32.

- News sources: to explore where the local press obtains the world news. The use of the same sources is believed to cause uniformity or homogenization of world news reports. As Boyd-Barrett argues, global news agencies contribute simultaneously both to processes of national consolidation and to globalisation. 'News agencies contribute to the homogenization of global culture in form and in source. They contribute to the development of local forms, which they then incorporate as contributors and as clients.'<sup>816</sup>
- News value: to explore how the local newspeople perceive the news of global importance, i.e. what is world news? What factors affect its selection and presentation in the world news pages?
- Construction process: to explore how the world news is made or domesticated (selected and framed) in the newsrooms.
- International news flow and focus: world news reports in Chinese media are believed to rely heavily on US sources with about 60 percent of content either translated or adapted from American source materials.<sup>817</sup> However, there is

---

<sup>815</sup> Terhi Rantanen, 'The struggle for control of domestic news markets', in Oliver Boyd-Barrett and Terhi Rantanen, eds., *The globalization of news*, (London: Sage Publications, 1998), p.35

<sup>816</sup> Oliver Boyd-Barrett, 'Global news wholesalers as agents of globalization', in Annabelle Sreberny-Mohammadi et al, eds., *Media in global context – a reader*, (London: Arnold, 1997), p.143

<sup>817</sup> Shi Anbin, 'The taming of the shrew: Global media in a Chinese perspective', *Global Media and Communication*, Vol. 1 (2005), pp. 33-36.

not much detailed and systematic research pertaining to the world news coverage in Chinese news media. Thus, the geographical locations, focus of study and themes of world news at *BYD* will be discussed with the aim of contributing to the study of the global news flow from the particular China perspective at the local level.

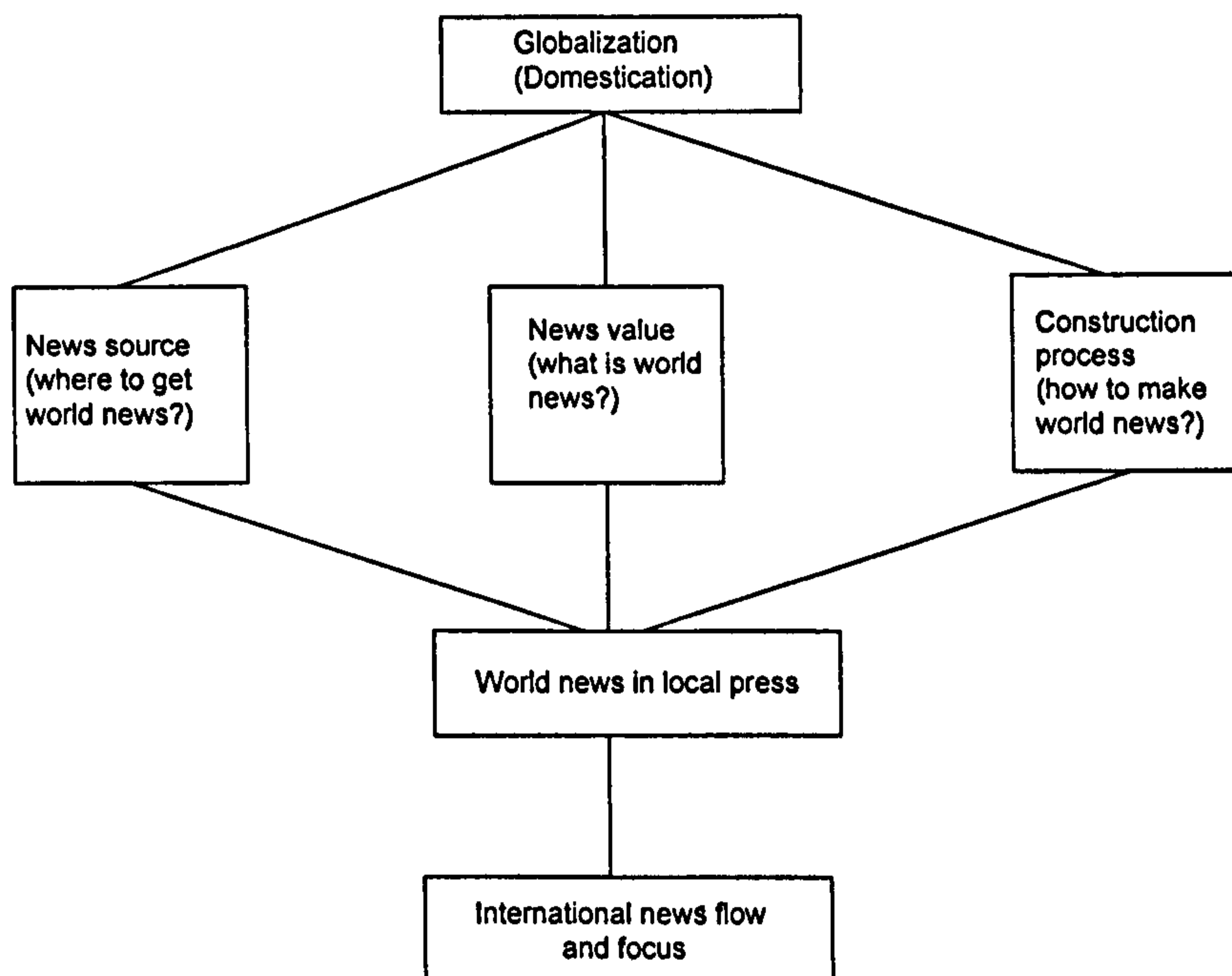


Figure 32 Theoretical model to examine the impact of globalisation on world news coverage

### 7.1 World news sources

World news production is usually a process of repackaging at the level of the local press. Newspeople repackaging or edit the news items from secondary sources including Xinhua, China Radio International and freelancers. In the aftermath of *BYD*'s agency-wide restructuring in November 2006, with the addition of two reporters, independent world news reports that carry *BYD*'s own reporters' names on the byline increased dramatically. In addition to simply repackaging and editing news items in a passive manner, newspeople take initiatives to do more independent, in-depth, interpretative and analytical reports with an emphasis on proximity and relevance.



In this section, the sources of world news reports will be explored and analysed using a mixture of content analysis and in-depth interviews.

### 7.1.1 Content analysis

This content analysis will reveal the world news sources from the longitudinal perspective. The unit of analysis is news story. A total of 408 world news items carried on the front pages of *BYD* from 1981 to 2006 were selected and coded according to the classification of independent reports (or own staff reports), Xinhua, unidentified sources, and other media. All codings were done manually by myself.

World news is defined as global news in this chapter referring to news items that possess global elements regardless of geographical locations, which is slightly different from the world news coding method indicated in Chapter 5, (5.2.2.1). In Chapter 5, events that took place outside China are coded as world news while globalisation news is defined as news that has an international touch beyond the nation/state boundary. A combination of world news and globalisation news in Chapter 5 are used in this chapter to refer to global news or world news. For instance, on 4 February 1997, the news 'Jiang Zemin meets American guests' (*Jiang Zemin huijian meiguo keren*) is coded as 'central' news in terms of geographical locations and 'globalisation' in terms of news topics in Chapter 5. Here it is regarded as world news. On 7 February 1995, the news 'How foreign rubbish keeps coming in despite bans' (*Yang polan heyi lujin bujue*) is coded as 'domestic' and 'globalisation' news in Chapter 5. It is regarded as world news in this chapter. For further generalisation about the content analysis, please refer to the methodology section in Chapter 1 and content analysis section (5.2.2.1) in Chapter 5.

In terms of news sources, as shown in Table 11 below, the Xinhua news agency is the biggest supplier for the world news in the local press, accounting for about 50 percent. Meanwhile, independent reports also account for a big proportion in total a little less than 40 percent. Unidentified sources and other media account for only 10 percent and 1 percent respectively.

Ranking	Sources classification	Frequency	Percentage
1	Xinhua	206	50.5%
2	Independent	157	38.5%
3	Unidentified	41	10.1%
4	Other media	4	1%

Table 11 Sources for world news on the front pages of *BYD*, 1981-2006.

To explore the findings of the content analysis further and identify the non-explicit sources used in newspeople's daily work, interview-based qualitative analysis is presented in the following section.

### 7.1.2 Interview-based qualitative analysis

Three editors and two reporters from the world news division of *BYD* were interviewed during my field work in Beijing in 2006. They identified four sources for world news: state news agencies, *BYD*'s own reporters, commissioned freelancers and Internet.

- State agencies

Xinhua, the state news agency, and China Radio International, the state broadcaster, are the two main sources for the world news. After *BYD* became a daily paper in 1994, it formed a partnership with Xinhua and China Radio International and signed article supply agreements. *BYD* uses articles written by Xinhua's overseas correspondents and makes a payment for them once a year.<sup>818</sup>

Xinhua is now a more important source of world news for *BYD* than it was in the past. Due to the use of advanced transmission technology and the improved journalistic resources, Xinhua is able to provide abundant and comprehensive news items in a speedy way to meet the increasing demand of local press for world news.

Speed, comprehensive coverage, and political correctness make Xinhua a safe and convenient source for world news, strengthening its position in the market.

Complementary sources such as freelancers and Hong Kong newspapers that were used to bolster the news from Xinhua in the past have therefore either been dramatically reduced or even wiped out. The news editor explained his preference for using Xinhua rather than freelancers:

The speed and volume of Xinhua's provision of articles as well as the selection of subjects are far beyond the capability of freelance writers. In the past, Xinhua could only supply reports till 7 pm. After that, they could only send one general article. Now, we don't need to worry about this. We can wait till 10pm and Xinhua may send us 2,000 to 3,000 word articles. Also, they are guaranteed politically correct. I can rest assured. Why not use Xinhua? As for freelancers, I need to pay them but they are not responsible to me. I'm not worried that Xinhua will miss some big news. That is unheard of.<sup>819</sup>

In the past, in addition to the commissioned writers, *BYD* used influential Chinese language newspapers based in Hong Kong like *Dong fang Daily* (Dongfang ribao), *Ming Daily* (Ming bao) and *Apple Daily* as sources for world news. Since 2000, they stopped using these Hong Kong based newspapers due to the enhanced capability of Xinhua and advanced technology like Internet.

The local newspaper's heavy reliance on Xinhua is also the result of self-censorship and the tightened control of government over influential newspapers. Editors are cautious and tend to use Xinhua to avoid trouble.

At present as the propaganda rules are being tightened up, we are very cautious while using the sources. This may be connected to *BYD*'s growth. When the newspaper was in its growth phase, the control level was not as strict as it is now. We have been controlled in a very professional way in the past two years. The orders come from the top down. It's better to use Xinhua circulated articles when we have different sources. When we handle articles from commissioned writers, we have begun to worry about whether the article will bring us any trouble. After all, Xinhua is more authoritative.<sup>820</sup>

Heavy reliance on Xinhua causes the problem of uniformity of news in local newspapers because other newspapers also use Xinhua stories. The challenge is how to differentiate *BYD* from other newspapers so that it can remain competitive in the

---

<sup>818</sup> Interview with Wang Shiling, 2006

<sup>819</sup> Interview with Xiao Bei, 2006

<sup>820</sup> Interview with Yang Qun, 2006

local market. The solution, according to the interviewees, lies in the page layout, editing skills, and more importantly, increasing independent reports.

- Independent reports

To increase the number of independent reports with *BYD* so as to address the ‘same city, same news’ problem, two reporters were assigned to the world news division after the internal organisation reform in November 2005. Before that, the world news division consisted of five editors using secondary sources only. After the organisational change, the world news division was able to produce more independent reports.

Embassies, phone-based interviews and on-site reporting are three main sources for the independent world news coverage.

- a) Embassies

The world news division has established contacts with Beijing-based embassies of foreign countries, China’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Beijing office of international organisations. These organisations hold press conferences, release information and allow their personnel to be interviewed. They thus serve as the primary news sources for reporters’ independent reports.

- b) Phone interviews

Reporters use the phone to do interviews for two different kinds of reports. They call up Chinese experts and solicit their viewpoints and interpretations on important world affairs to write news analysis. They also make international phone calls and directly interview the people or parties involved in news events. For instance, ‘when there were riots in France, through the Chinese embassy in France and our own contacts, we interviewed both French and Chinese people who had personal experience of the events.’<sup>821</sup>

- c) On-site reporting

With the financial backing from the newspaper, reporters are sent abroad to do on-site reporting on major world events. War and conflict ridden regions are the main destinations, for instance, Xiao Bei, the current news editor, went to Afghanistan to report the conflicts in 2001. Wang Biao, one of the two world news reporters went

to Israel and Palestine to report the crisis in the Middle East in 2006. The amount of on-site reporting on world news increased dramatically in the aftermath of the organizational reform in late 2005. It is the strategy of the newspaper to produce more on-site in house reports.

- Commissioned writers/freelancers

The world news division has their own pool of commissioned writers and freelancers who contribute articles to *BYD* with an aim of supplementing other news sources. Using commissioned articles has a long history at the newspaper. Before *BYD* turned into a daily paper in mid-1990s, commissioned articles were one of the main sources for world news. People who had the foreign language abilities and had access to foreign publications like staff working at the Institute of International Affairs or the Academy of Social Sciences was commissioned to select, translate and edit articles for publishing.

Nowadays the amount of articles by commissioned writers is declining dramatically and editors tend to check the translated or edited articles against the original sources. They sometimes kill articles either because they have no way to confirm the facts or the articles are not suitable for publishing for ideological or ethical concerns.

We stress that we only use freelance articles to supplement what we have from other sources on condition that we have the original articles and can make sure everything's all right. We'll see whether or not the articles or viewpoints are suitable for China. For instance, we received one article about a witch eating a girl. For this, firstly, we had no way to confirm the facts. Secondly, it was too gruesome. We couldn't report it because we weren't sure whether the article is promoting the evil religion.<sup>822</sup>

- Internet

The Internet has expanded and multiplied news sources. 'For one story, we can have information from multiple channels and levels.'<sup>823</sup> Chinese news portal websites and governmental websites are the two main sources for world news while foreign websites like the few big world news agencies and foreign news media's websites are

---

<sup>821</sup> Interview with Xiao Bei, 2006

<sup>822</sup> *ibid*

<sup>823</sup> Interview with Yang Qun, 2006

used for double-checking. Domestic websites include sina, Xinhua, Ministry of Foreign Affairs' website, www.org.cn, chinanews.com, etc. Foreign websites include yahoo, BBC Chinese, Japanese Kyodo news, AFP, Associated Press.

The Chinese government's websites have developed gradually. They release information fast. I access the Foreign Ministry website everyday. I browse foreign web sites like yahoo occasionally but I don't read every piece. I don't read foreign newspapers everyday. Whenever there is breaking news, I may check the original articles online.<sup>824</sup>

The Internet has an increasing influence on news making. It is changing from being a secondary source to a primary source. In the past, the print set the news agenda for the web because the web was only used as a platform to assemble the content of newspapers. Nowadays, there is a trend for the most influential news portals like sina.com in China to set the agenda for print media to a certain extent. 'People say we are entering Web 2.0 era and everybody is a journalist. Sina has a great influence on media. If sina puts something as their top story, even if we don't find it interesting, we must do it.'<sup>825</sup>

In sum, content-based quantitative analysis and interview-based qualitative analysis confirm and support each other. Xinhua and independent reports are the two main sources for world news in local press like *BYD*. The use of Xinhua articles is on the rise due to its speedy transmission, its comprehensive coverage and its political guarantees. Xinhua's enhanced capabilities and absolute authority also has marginalized other news sources like commissioned writers. With the newspaper's growing financial sources and pressure from competition on the local market, independent reports are also on the rise driven by the structural change within the news organisation. Internet and freelancers serve as supplementary news sources.

### 7.1.3 *BYD* vs. *The Mirror*

As indicated in the previous section, one of the reasons why *BYD* uses Xinhua as a main news source is that *BYD*'s success has brought about stricter political control of its news content. The assumption is made that newspapers suffer different levels of political restrictions based on the degree of the newspaper's influence. The more

---

<sup>824</sup> Interview with Mao Ling, 2006

<sup>825</sup> *ibid*

influential the newspaper is, the more political restrictions it suffers. In order to prove this assumption, I make a comparison between *BYD* and its affiliated newspaper *The Mirror*. These two papers have different styles, target readers, news sources, and organisational structures in terms of world news coverage, as shown in Table 12 below.

By contrast with the fully developed 25-year-old quality newspaper *BYD*, *The Mirror*, a 2-year-old tabloid newspaper, is in its start-up phase. Unlike *BYD* that uses Xinhua as its major news source, *The Mirror*'s news sources are western news media, AP, Reuters, AFP in particular for the sake of their speed, accuracy and credibility. *The Mirror* is said seldom to use Xinhua for the reason of its having too many restrictions and *The Mirror* needs to be aggressive for growth purpose.

We seldom use Xinhua's stories. This makes us different from other metropolitan newspapers. Generally speaking, there are fewer restrictions on world news. A newspaper like ours has to break through the policy restrictions and print some bold stuff to develop. If we only depended on Xinhua, there would be many restrictions. We are comparatively bold in this regard.<sup>826</sup>

Organisational structures are also different at the two papers. There are two teams working in the world news division at *The Mirror*. One team does the world news picked up from the mainstream world news media and the other team does the feature page called 'China Town' covering stories about overseas Chinese.<sup>827</sup>

Coverage on overseas Chinese plays a key role in *The Mirror*'s world news reporting and Chinese language news media abroad act as its major news source.

We read lots of Chinese newspapers in foreign countries. We have a database listing more than 20 Chinese language news media. The Chinese news media are flourishing in countries like US, Canada, UK, France, Japan, Malaysia, South Africa, and Singapore. We use their stories a lot from these countries. The social status of Chinese is rather high and there are many Chinese living in those countries in Southeast Asia, US and Europe. It's related to their social status and number. We also have formed long-term partnership with some newspapers, exchanging stories and news sources.<sup>828</sup>

---

<sup>826</sup> Interview with Yang Junlong, 2006

<sup>827</sup> *ibid*

<sup>828</sup> *ibid*

This comparison shows that influential newspapers like *BYD* suffer more political restrictions and thus have a heavy dependence on Xinhua as a news source. New newspapers like *The Mirror* suffer fewer political restrictions because their influences are limited, and thus rely much less on Xinhua. On the other hand, new papers use more diversified news sources. They tend to be more aggressive and creative in reporting. It proves the assumption that newspapers suffer different levels of political restrictions based on the newspaper's influence.

	BYD	<i>The Mirror</i>
Year of foundation	1981	2004
Newspaper type	Quality/serious	Tabloid
Target readers	Elite- high end	Ordinary – low end
Organisational structure of world news sections	Editors and reporters work together in one team	Two teams, one in charge of general foreign news, the other in charge of a special section on overseas Chinese.
Number of reporters	2	4
Number of editors	5	5
Main source	Xinhua	Foreign news agencies (AP, Reuters, AFP)
Percentage of Xinhua news	60%	20%
Percentage of independent reports	20%	25%
Editorial style	Cautious	Bold

Table 12 Comparison between *BYD* and *The Mirror* in world news reports.<sup>829</sup>

Putting both *BYD* and *The Mirror* together, global events find their way into Chinese local metropolitan newspapers via multiple channels ranging from in-house reports (representing local forces), state news agency (representing national forces),

<sup>829</sup> The percentage of world news sources in this table is estimated and given by the interviewees.



international news agency (representing global forces), overseas Chinese language newspapers (representing mixture of local, national and global forces) and the Internet (mixed forces), as indicated in Figure 33 below. These sources may overlap and be used in a mixed way depending on the nature of the particular newspaper as discussed above. In addition, it should be noted that apart from the direct news sources indicated by hard-line-arrows in Figure 33, there are indirect news sources indicated by dotted-line-arrows. Global forces represented by international news agencies may get into the local papers via Xinhua and the Internet. Xinhua may form alliances with the big four international news agencies, taking their stories, getting them translated and edited before supplying them to local newspapers. News portals on the Internet like yahoo also use large amounts of news stories supplied by the international news agencies. In this sense, Xinhua and news portals act as secondary gate-keepers.

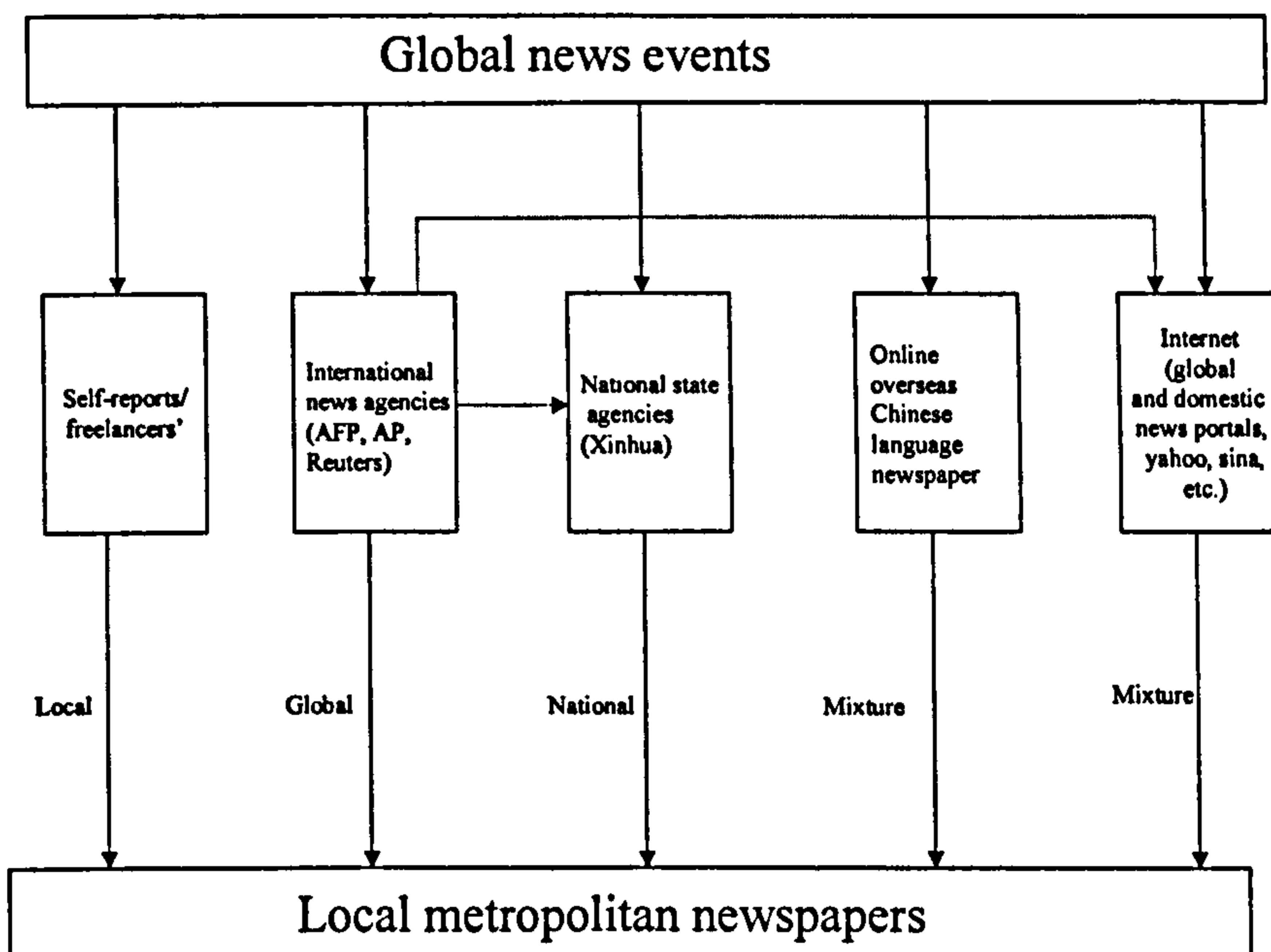


Figure 33 World news sources for the local metropolitan newspapers in China.

It is clear that local, national and international forces intertwine and compete in the local world news arena. Local forces and national forces are on the rise. The findings here challenge the theory of homogenization and global uniformity of world news. According to this theory, homogenisation of world news is inevitable because three or four western news agencies, the so-called news 'wholesalers', are the main

sources of world news. 'The tyranny of supply is nowhere clearer than in this dependence'.<sup>830</sup>

I argue that the few big western news agencies' monopoly and dominance in the world news is not explicit in the local press market in China. Global forces are counteracted by local forces and national forces, which is reflected in the increasing weight of independent reports and heavier dependence on national news agencies. In proportion to China's rising economic power, world news stories contain strong local and national identities by focusing on local perspectives of global events and coverage on overseas Chinese.

## 7.2 World news value

The definition of world news has undergone transformation from foreign news to world news, then to global news. In order to maintain consistency in this thesis, the term 'world news' is used in this thesis to refer to foreign news, international news, or global news.

Events that took place beyond the nation/state border were earlier regarded as 'foreign news'. In recent years, the term 'foreign news' has been felt to stress the 'otherness', making it sound irrelevant and opposite to 'us'. The use of the term 'foreign news' has therefore tended to be avoided by news media and media scholars throughout the world. As early as in 1990, Ted Turner wrote in a memo to all staff 'it is the policy of TBS (Turner Broadcasting System Inc.) that any person, event, etc. which is not part of the United States be referred to as international rather than foreign. The word 'foreign' implies something unfamiliar and creates a perception of misunderstanding. In contrast, international means "among nations" and promotes a sense of unity.'<sup>831</sup> Since 1990s, news media around the world have made common use of the term 'world news' in the classification of news. In recent years, the term 'global news' has been employed, though mainly in academic circles, to imply the trend of news globalisation manifested in the blurred dividing line between domestic news and world news.

The dividing line between domestic news and world news has become blurred.

World news coverage, once largely focused on politics, has been extended to a much

---

<sup>830</sup> Peter Golding and Philip Elliott, *Making the news*, (Longman: London, 1979), pp.104-105

<sup>831</sup> Don Flournoy, 'Coverage, competition and credibility: the CNN international standard' in Tony Silvia, ed., *Global News – Perspectives on the information age*, (US: Iowa State University Press, 2001), p.37

wider range including economy, sports, and culture. As Hans-Henrik Holm has claimed, 'today foreign news has become global news. Economic events now play as much a role in foreign reporting as does politics.'<sup>832</sup> Stig Hjarvard has also argued, 'previously, foreign news denoted news about international politics and events in other nations. Today, many other news topics have acquired a foreign or international dimension (e.g. the environment, technology, fashion, culture), making the borders between foreign and domestic news less clear and obvious.'<sup>833</sup> The process of globalisation and the development of the Internet have changed the geography of news where 'the local, national, foreign, international or global might easily intertwine.'<sup>834</sup>

In China, the term '*guoji xinwen*' (international news) has long been in common use and remains the usual way of referring to world news. However, the term '*quanqiu xinwen*' ('global news') is now used by a few news media, for instance, '*quanqiu xinwen*' appears on the *BYD* website: [www.ynet.com](http://www.ynet.com), though the *BYD*'s print papers still use the term '*guoji xinwen*'.

The conceptions held by *BYD* newspeople of the definition of world news were explored. Addressing the question 'what is world news', respondents pointed out three features: 1) Important events that happen abroad or beyond the nation/state boundary are world news. 2) Events involving overseas Chinese have become important in major world news selection. 3) Events that happen within China but have world-wide influence and importance may also be classified as world news although this practice is not very common.

Firstly, geographical locations remain a key factor in defining world news. Hard news about current affairs, international relations and important political events as well as science and technology, entertainment news that happen beyond the borders of China are commonly regarded as world news. Responses include 'world news refers to the world current affairs and political big events like 9/11, the Iraq war, and analysis of the international relations. Also, news that expands people's horizons, like new things happened in a country',<sup>835</sup> 'all events that happened outside the

---

<sup>832</sup> Holm, 2001, pp.113-128

<sup>833</sup> Stig Hjarvard, 'News media and the globalization of the public sphere', in Hjarvard, 2001, p.32

<sup>834</sup> Daniel Biltereyst, 'Global news research and complex citizenship: towards an agenda for research on foreign/international news and audiences' in Hjarvard, 2001, p.58

<sup>835</sup> Interview with Deng Fei, 2006

borders of China exclusive of Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan are called world news'.<sup>836</sup>

Secondly, overseas Chinese are an emerging focus in world news, revealing that both proximity and relevance are important in deciding what is world news. World news is not reported and treated as isolated events that happen outside China, newspeople have started to pay particular attention to world events that have an impact on China and events that involve overseas Chinese. They tend to find the 'Chinese aspects', 'Chinese elements' and even 'Beijing elements' and present news from the domestic or local angle. Issues or events pertaining to the wellbeing of overseas Chinese, problems they encounter, their happiness and sadness are covered. An event that happens in a foreign country, even if it has no global importance, may find its way onto *BYD*'s world news pages due to a Chinese angle. Responses include 'world news that has impact on us is called important world news. World events with Chinese elements are put on the front page. If it has Beijing elements, it is put as the top news'.<sup>837</sup> '(We cover) important events that happen abroad and are related to China. They may be old topics but Chinese people are concerned about them. Recently, a riot occurred in Sierra Leone and the embassy said there were a few Chinese being besieged. We called up and asked about how many Chinese were besieged and what they were doing there. It was relevant to China.'<sup>838</sup>

The reason for the new focus on overseas Chinese lies in the mobility of capital and labour. Since the economic reform and opening up drive in early 1990s, the number of Chinese people (illegal immigrants, students, tourists, businessmen, government officials etc.) and businesses moving overseas has increased dramatically.

According to BBC Chinese website reports, a total of 480,000 Chinese citizens reside overseas on a long term basis. More than 10,000 Chinese companies have established businesses or made investments abroad in over 160 countries and regions with an investment of about 100 billion US dollars. In 2006, a total of 34,520,000 Chinese citizens went abroad.<sup>839</sup> Correspondingly, overseas incidents like murders,

---

<sup>836</sup> Interview with Long Qinran, 2006

<sup>837</sup> Interview with Yang Lan, 2006

<sup>838</sup> Interview with Wang Biao, 2006

<sup>839</sup> Jiang Xun, 'Ying lifa baohu haiwai Zhongguoren anquan (Laws should be enacted to protect the safety of Chinese overseas)', *BBC Chinese*, 26 August 2007,

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/chinese/simp/hi/newsid\\_6960000/newsid\\_6964900/6964941.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/chinese/simp/hi/newsid_6960000/newsid_6964900/6964941.stm), accessed 2 September, 2007

terrorist attacks or natural disasters that involve Chinese people or businesses have increased greatly. For instance, three Chinese engineers were killed by gunmen in Balochistan in February 2006 and three Chinese port workers were killed in a similar attack at Gwadar in May 2004, both in Pakistan. 'Chinese workers have been targeted in recent years by local militants involved in a long-running insurgency.'<sup>840</sup>

As Johan Galtung says, 'it is fit to print because it fits the cosmology; it is news because it is fit to print.'<sup>841</sup> Globalisation alters the social cosmology for China, thus makes the local newspaper to print world news from a new angle – overseas Chinese.

Thirdly, local events with global importance are treated as world news. With China's opening to the outside world, China has become a stage for events that have world-wide influence, for instance, state leaders' visits and activities in China, high-level economic forums, the Olympic Games, and the six-party negotiations on North Korea's nuclear issues. China has also dispatched peacekeeping troops to world's trouble spots. Big issues and events take place locally need to be reported and presented against the global background due to China's enhanced economic and political integration with the world. Newspeople believe that importance of the events should be more important than geographical location in the coverage of world news. 'World news means events in which international actors participate. The events don't impact on just one actor but on multiple actors. International actors mean nation/states and international platforms.'<sup>842</sup> 'I define world news as global news. Global news can happen in China or outside China. The news event itself is the most important thing happened today on the earth.'<sup>843</sup> 'In fact, the definition of world news is already fuzzy. We are following a fuzzy path. Much news is hard to categorise as world news or domestic news. When President Putin of Russia visited China, we covered his activities in our world news section. But we mostly cover the events that happen outside China.'<sup>844</sup>

A great shift has occurred in terms of world news values in the globalisation era. In the past, isolated events that happened in a foreign country were reported as world

---

<sup>840</sup> 'China workers killed in Pakistan', BBC Chinese, 15 February 2006, [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/4716820.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/4716820.stm), accessed 2 September, 2007

<sup>841</sup> Johan Galtung and Richard C. Vincent, *Global glasnost: toward a new world information and communication order?* (New Jersey: Hampton Press, 1992), p.16

<sup>842</sup> Interview with Chang Lingxin, 2006

<sup>843</sup> Interview with Mao Longying, 2006

<sup>844</sup> Interview with Yang Junlong, 2006

news. Nowadays, although geographical location remains a main consideration in world news coverage, two new key factors are taken into account:

events involving overseas Chinese and events taking place within China may have global significance. These two new considerations are no doubt driven by globalisation in terms of mobility of capital and labour as well as China's rising power and increasing participation in world affairs.

### 7.3 World news construction process

World news selection and treatment will be explored in this section based on my direct observation and interviews at the *BYD* world news department in 2006.

Although there are no documented handbooks or guidelines like those in the west for reporters and editors to use, people at the *BYD* world news department have developed a series of selection criteria based on practical work experience including importance, proximity/relevance, exclusiveness, drama and ideology.

#### 7.3.1 Important news

Important news means 'the thing we covered is what the readers need to know and understand.'<sup>845</sup> World politics, current affairs and breaking news is usually regarded as most important. There are three scenarios in the selection and treatment of important news: important news is classified into the most important and secondary important news. A consensus is reached on the most important news but differences remain on less or secondary important news events due to personal preferences. When there is no really important news available, secondary important news is treated as top news.

In the first scenario, based on the level of importance, news items are classified as the most important news and secondary important news. The most important news is about events that have happened in the last day or two and 'everybody wants to read about.'<sup>846</sup> Breaking world events like the sinking of the Egyptian ferry and developments in international relations including the Iran nuclear issue or Hamas coming to power in Palestine are treated as most important news. Follow-up stories to continuous situations or something that happens quite often are treated as secondary news, for instance, a bombing in Iraq. 'In Iraq, if something big happens,

---

<sup>845</sup> Interview with Xiao Bei, 2006

<sup>846</sup> Comments made by Long Qinnan, world news editor, during participant observation on 8 February in 2006

we publish it. It happens nearly everyday but we don't post it prominently. It is no big deal if one or two Americans were killed in the bombing, or suicide bombs go off somewhere killing a few people.'<sup>847</sup>

For the Focus page on 7 February 2006, two pieces were chosen. The top one was about prisoners who escaped from a Yemen jail including the planner of the Cole attack in 2000. The second one was about the controversial Danish cartoon event. The editor explains that he chose prison break as the most important news for three reasons: 1) an important person involved. The explosion on American destroyer Cole was a big event and the escaped Jamal Ahmed al-Badawi had masterminded it. 2) Dramatic. Badawi had dug a tunnel and led the prisoners' escape. 3) Important organization involved. The international crime-fighting organization issued global warning alert. It demonstrates that 'this event attracts a lot of attention'.<sup>848</sup>

As for the Danish cartoon event, the editor explains that the event was important but they couldn't give it too much attention because 1) Religion is a sensitive topic. 'We don't want to overdo it. We must be cautious. Conventionally, while handling this kind of events, we tend to use Xinhua articles and do not play it up excessively. If we make it too big, it's against the conventions, especially about Muslims who walk around carrying suicide bombs. In China, there have been cases in which a newspaper put a feature about Muslim celebrating their holidays beside a story about pigs. Muslims were angry. Religion is a sensitive topic.'<sup>849</sup> 2) It was a follow-up story and did not happen on the day. 3) It involved a different social system. It happened in the west with press freedom, which is different from China.<sup>850</sup>

This example shows that the most important news involved important people or organizations, important events and drama. Secondary important news might be follow-up stories or might involve politically sensitive events and different ideological values.

The second scenario is where editors' different personal preferences and values cause conflicts around the selection and treatment of secondary important news. The deputy news editor claimed that 'people agree on the most important stories but have

---

<sup>847</sup> *ibid*

<sup>848</sup> Comments made by Long Qinnan, world news editor, during participant observation on 8 February in 2006

<sup>849</sup> *ibid*

<sup>850</sup> *ibid*

different opinions on secondary important stories.’<sup>851</sup> Participant observation backs up his claim. Three cases were recorded in the world newsroom.

Case 1: Editors hold different attitudes towards North Korea news. The world news editor stresses North Korea and regards all the news, no matter big or small, about North Korea as important. Other editors think they only need to report really important news about North Korea. On 6 Feb 2006, the news editor was not on duty and the deputy news editor was in charge. A news item about North Korean media criticizing Japanese officials paying tribute to Yasukuni shrine that other editors thought unimportant was withdrawn. Below is an excerpted dialogue between the deputy news editor (A) and the copy editor (B).

A. Why is North Korea news in the page everyday?

B. The news editor asks me to put it in whenever he sees a North Korean piece.

A. The Indian army withdrawal from Kashmir should be put here. It is a bigger thing.

B. Every time no matter what speech North Korea delivers, the news editor would say, put one piece there and put it on top, it is very important. I think if they speak every day, it is total bullshit.

The next day, the Indian army withdrawal was printed in the side bar in the lower right section of the World News page. No news about North Korea was printed. The reason for the news editor’s overstressing North Korea issue is that ‘it is scarce news’, as he explains during the individual interview below.

North Korea is China’s neighbor and ordinary people find it mysterious. We have no other sources to understand what’s happening there. Thus, I pay special attention to what happens in North Korea. This kind of news is unavailable. It is scarce news.<sup>852</sup>

This case shows that individuals may have a personal bias towards certain countries or regions in their handling of secondary important news.

Case 2: On 20 Feb 2006, for the Vision page, the top news was about Israel and Hamas, which drew no different opinions. However, controversy arose regarding

---

<sup>851</sup> *ibid*

<sup>852</sup> Interview with Xiao Bei, 2006



what to put on top of the side bar as secondary important news. The copy editor (A) prefers to use a stunning photo about enhanced measures introduced in Europe to control bird flu virus while the deputy news editor (B) thinks Iran's nuclear issue more important. The conflict reflects their different news value towards which factor is more important, drama or importance, for the lesser important news.

A: The Iran's nuclear issue is a continuous issue

B: I know but today Russia and Iran are having a negotiation.

A: The negotiation has not yielded any results.

B: It's something like the 6-sides-talk about North Korea. The six-side talk is unlikely to have any result. I suggest we make Iran big.

A: When I read this (Bird flu virus control), this is more fun.

B: Yes, that's more readable but for the Iran story, first of all, this event is important. Secondly, there's a bit of analysis.<sup>853</sup>

In this case, the deputy editor stresses importance over drama. As he has higher power in the newsroom than that of the copy editor, his decision prevails.

Case 3: The clash on 8 February 2006 was about how to treat the news of President Bush being criticized at the funeral of Coretta Scott King, Martin Luther King's widow and human rights activist. The *BYD* managing editor on the day wanted this story to be the top news in the page of World News while the deputy world news editor wanted it put in the middle of the page. Regarding this clash, the deputy world news editor explains,

I wanted the story in this position but the managing editor thought it would be better at the top. Today there's no really important news. It's all secondary news. There's no right or wrong. It varies depending on personal preference. I'm not changing my mind. If the managing editor insists, we'll have to change. He's just raised an idea.<sup>854</sup>

In the end, the deputy editor did not change the position of the King's story. Top news remained the Sultan of Brunei losing his case at the High Court in London to

---

<sup>853</sup> Excerpted dialogue from a world news room discussion on 21 February 2006

<sup>854</sup> Excerpted dialogue at news room on 8 February 2006

have his brother jailed. In this case, the deputy editor was stressing drama over importance.

The three cases cited above show that personal preferences, values and views cause clashes and conflicts in the way the secondary important news is handled. People may stress certain countries, and prioritize drama over importance or importance over drama. Negotiations and compromises are made to solve the conflicts. Those with the most authority in the newsroom tend to be the winners and have the final say.

The third scenario is that less important current affairs tend to be selected as top news if no really important news is available. Editors often struggle to decide on the lead item when they come up with a quiet day. Complaints are often heard like 'today the news is rather dull' or 'we are short of a good top story.'<sup>855</sup> Below is a dialogue between the deputy news editor (A) and the copy editor (B) about deciding on the top news for the World News page on 9 Feb 2006.

A: I've found two pieces. One is about the U.S. Congress. The Republicans are trying to annoy the Democrats. Another is about mad cow disease. They are both a bit distant.

B: I think the party conflict in the US Congress may be boring.

A: Yes, I think the spat is rather dull. Have a look at the North Korea/Japan dialogue and pick something up. It looks dry and dull but it is important. It could be a weak top story. I'll see whether I can find something bigger to be the top story. Today is so quiet. Nothing big. Bird flu in Africa is not new.<sup>856</sup>

It is obvious that not all the top news is truly most important news. Sometimes a news story becomes the top news because there are no better choices.

### 7.3.2 Proximity

Proximity or relevance that highlights a Chinese perspective is another critical factor in making world news. Global events that occur overseas are made relevant to domestic readers by showing that Chinese are involved. In the world newsroom, the 'China angle' is a frequently used phrase. 'Some events may not be big but Chinese get involved in them. In important world events, we try to find our own angles, so

---

<sup>855</sup> Excerpted dialogue from a world news room discussion on 9 February 2006

<sup>856</sup> *ibid*

we phone up domestic experts to make comments. In case of events involving Chinese, we phone up overseas Chinese and organizations for interviews.’<sup>857</sup>

World news is influenced by the factor of proximity in three ways: newspeople deliberately identify a Chinese perspective in important world news, the level of importance of world news is decided on the basis of availability of Chinese elements, importance and cultural proximity are intertwined in determining how the news is presented.

In the first scenario, editors explore the Chinese news angle by following up some points in news items released by Xinhua, and writing up their own reports. For example, on 8 February 2006 the World Features page dated carried a piece on Michael Chong, a Chinese-Canadian, joining Prime Minister Harper’s cabinet on the left of the page and Gordon Brown’s forthcoming takeover from Tony Blair in the UK on the right. The reason for fore-grounding the Michael Chong story was that ‘we found a special point in the story that a Chinese had become a minister in the Canadian cabinet. In the Xinhua release, there was only one sentence about it. We picked it up and made it big.’<sup>858</sup> The *BYD* report entitled ‘Chinese Canadian Minister Proud of His Lineage’ (*Huayi buzhang wei xuetong gandao zihao*) with *BYD* journalist’s name on the byline ends up being embedded within the Xinhua news in print. This example demonstrates that editors deliberately search for a Chinese perspective and highlight Chinese identities to make the news more relevant to the local readers.

Another example shows how the editor used a Chinese angle to frame the Palestine election reporting.

I read that 1,000 observers from US and Europe went to Palestine the night before the Election Day. The piece did not mention the Chinese observers but we wondered whether there were any. We searched the web and found that Huang Li from Xinhua was there, and then through Huang, we got the Chinese observer’s phone number. Our reporter called up and did a phone interview.<sup>859</sup>

---

<sup>857</sup> Excerpted dialogue from a world news room discussion on 6 February 2006

<sup>858</sup> Excerpted dialogue from a world news room discussion on 7 February 2006

<sup>859</sup> Excerpted dialogue from a world news room discussion on 27 January 2006

These two examples show the instinct of newspeople to deliberately pinpoint and frame world news from Chinese news angles.

In the second scenario, news with Chinese involvement outweighs news without Chinese involvement. Unimportant news, if Chinese angle is found and sorted out, can be elevated to important news. Editors are found juggling between the news that is more important but has no Chinese involvement and the news that is less important with Chinese involvement. The importance level of the news itself can be transformed depending whether there are any Chinese links. Usually a piece with Chinese involvement will win out.

A discussion in the newsroom was recorded that reflects the editor's attitudes in this regard. On 8 February 2006, the deputy news editor was considering two pieces of news: one about the 9/11 terror suspect Mounir al-Motassadek from Morocco being released from a German prison and the other about a Hong Kong businessman sponsoring two Chinese students to study in the UK. The 9/11 terror suspect story was more important but had no special Chinese relevance while the student story was trivial but involved Chinese people. The deputy news editor (A) discussed these two pieces with a reporter (B). They started with the 9/11 terror suspect piece. The editor asked the reporter to phone up some Chinese experts in international law so that this piece could be tackled by giving interpretations and an analysis of German legal system. For the student piece, his concern was that the number of students this businessman was going to sponsor was too small.

A: Can you find someone who specializes in law and see what can be reflected in the release of the 9/11 terrorist? We must give it an interpretation.

B: Xu Lanning is a well-known Chinese lawyer who has expertise in international criminal law.

A: When you ask him, describe the event first.

B: What should we ask him? The guy was sentenced to 15 years in prison and he will just walk away now.

A: Ask him what this sentence reveals in terms of the German legal system. I'm considering two items. One is this, the other is about Chinese businessman Ye

Huanrong sponsoring Chinese students in Cambridge but he only sponsored two students.<sup>860</sup>

At this point, a dramatic twist occurred. The editor's hesitation about the choice of the Chinese businessman sponsoring Chinese students triggered the reporter's idea of Columbian President sponsoring 25 Chinese students.

B: Then we could do Columbian President who sponsored 21 Chinese students. It's very dramatic. The President of Columbia made a speech at Peking University. Chinese students put up their hands and asked: 'Can I go to your country to study?' The President said, 'Yep, welcome. Those who want to come raise your hands!' Then many people raised their hands. They all wanted to go to Columbia.

A: That's not bad.

B: But it happened last year.

A: Pin it onto what is happening now. You don't have to make it a brief story. You can make it big. Explore the background. You can ask who has the qualifications to go there.

B: I have not finished my story. The students raised their hands at Peking University. However, it wasn't the students who put up their hands who went, it was the lower-grade students.

A: Have they already selected the students?

B: Yes, it's all settled and the students selected will go to Columbia tomorrow or the day after tomorrow. All the students are from two universities, Peking University and Beijing University of Foreign Languages and Cultures. Strangely some students do not even want to go. Students from Peking University are arrogant.

A: If they don't want to go, that's really good. You can dig deep on why they don't want to go.

B: It's not exactly that they don't want to go. They are not enthusiastic because they have the opportunity to go to Cuba for free every year.

A: Lack of enthusiasm is another point. Even if they are not enthusiastic, some students are going there. You can go into detail with this one. It's interesting when there are stories there. Today you just work on this story.<sup>861</sup>

---

<sup>860</sup> Excerpted dialogue from a world news room discussion on 8 February 2006

<sup>861</sup> *ibid*

The story about the Columbian government sponsoring Chinese students was by chance made a story due to its being exclusive, dramatic, in-house report and most of all having a Chinese angle. This report entitled ‘Columbian president keeps his promises, 21 Chinese students go to Columbia on full-scholarship’ (*Gelunbiya zongtong duixian chengnuo 21 ming Zhongguo xuesheng quanjiang fu ge*) was placed right below the one about overseas Chinese businessman sponsoring Chinese students in Cambridge entitled ‘Chinese businessman in England sponsors Chinese students at Cambridge University’ (*Yingguo huaren qiyejia zizhu jianqiao Zhongguo xuezi*) by China Radio International on the Vision page of 9 February 2006. Meanwhile, the 9/11 suspects story was dropped.

In this example, judged solely from the news value against the global background, the 9/11 terror suspect being released is hard news while the education subject is soft. However, the Chinese elements greatly increase the importance of the education piece thus enabling the education piece to beat the terrorism one.

In the third scenario, whenever the news item has both importance and proximity factors, it is sure to be published, in most cases, in a prominent place. On 8 February 2007, the deputy news editor told me that they chose the seemingly isolated and distant Haiti election as top news for the World News page because it was an important international issue with Chinese relevance. ‘It is an international issue with UN participating. But what makes it important is that there are Chinese peacekeeping police officers there. Chinese people have got involved. This event has a mixture of these two factors – international participation and Chinese relevance, which makes it more important.’<sup>862</sup>

Proximity is one of the greatest considerations in determining news. Newspeople report, interpret, and analyze the news events that happen overseas from the perspective of associating Chinese organizations and people. In this way, distant news events are made close to the local readers by ‘our people’ talking ‘our language’.

### 7.3.3 Exclusive

Exclusive reports are given priority in terms of space and prominence on the page. There are two ways to do exclusive world news. One is to report on new and

---

<sup>862</sup> *ibid*

different subjects that are not being reported by any other newspapers. This is pure exclusive news. However, due to the Internet and other advanced information technologies as well as the monopoly of Xinhua on important world news items, such pure exclusive news is getting more and more scarce. The 'news conformity' problem in the city poses a big challenge to newspeople. 'This is a very severe problem. Same nature, same subjects. We don't have enough unique stuff, or our own characteristics.'<sup>863</sup> The other way is to repackaging world news from the newspaper's own exclusive angle.

At *BYD*, these two methods were developed in tandem in the aftermath of the organizational reform in November 2005. On one hand, the two newly-posted reporters were sent overseas in 2006 to report on world affairs. They covered many topics including the general election in Israel and the Palestine-Israel conflicts in March, anti-drug trafficking in Afghanistan in June, an investigation into overseas Chinese people's lives in South East Asia, a journey from China to Russia to mark the 55th anniversary of establishing Sino-Russian diplomatic relations, and a Sino-Indian boundary visit.

On the other hand, newspeople find different ways to repackaging news, thus making their news reports different from those of other newspapers. An interviewee gave an example about their reports on Hamas from the angle of Chinese female journalist and Chinese observation team. This piece was awarded as an excellent report by *BYD*'s internal evaluation department.

Hamas is important world news and everybody would go to report it. Our angle was to find a Xinhua journalist who used to be based in Gaza. She wrote an article named 'Chinese female journalist and Hamas'. This is what we mean by having different angle. Another angle in reporting on Hamas is using the Chinese observation team. Many officials observed the election in Palestine from different countries, European countries and China. Our own reporter interviewed the leader of Chinese observation team by phone. This angle was unique. No other newspapers did anything like that.<sup>864</sup>

---

<sup>863</sup> Excerpted dialogue from a world news room discussion on 8 February 2006

<sup>864</sup> Excerpted dialogue from a world news room discussion on 6 February 2006

Though improvements were made regarding the world news reports after two reporters joined the team, the world news editor thinks they couldn't do enough due to time and human resource constraints. He pointed out that there are two conditions for local newspapers to do exclusive news: they must send their own reporters to report on important world news events, and they must have the ability to judge and capability to obtain world news. 'We do not have the capability to keep a watch on all the foreign newspapers or go abroad for all the big news. That causes the news conformity. If we had more hands and more time, we could form a special team to do in-depth world news from exclusive angles.'<sup>865</sup>

How to make in-depth exclusive news is at the top agenda of the newsroom. The focus has shifted from pursuing facts to trying to get depth, from passive repackaging to active news planning. Newspeople are not satisfied with just chasing news to fill in the news holes day by day. What they want are heavyweight reports from different angles. One of the biggest problems facing the local newspapers is the time-difference between east and west. Below is an excerpt from a weekly editorial meeting held in the newsroom on 13 February 2006.

Copy editor: We can try to make a whole page report by our reporters. We can't just follow the rolling news everyday. We must do it deep and wide.

Deputy news editor: Not just facts, but deep. For the Chinese who were killed in South Africa, if we only gather facts, it's meaningless. Apart from the facts, we can look into how many cases have been cracked, a series of related problems. We can make a comprehensive report. The problem is the time difference with North and South America.

News editor: (We have) no way to play the game.

Deputy news editor: It's difficult to find anyone before 10pm from here.

Reporter B: Like that time we looked for the Venezuela doctor. It took us two whole days to find him.

Reporter A: If there's something really important, we must wait. But for small things, we don't need to. The minimum time difference is 14 hours.<sup>866</sup>

---

<sup>865</sup> Comments made by the world news editor on 13 February 2006.

<sup>866</sup> Excerpted dialogue of weekly world news editorial meeting held at the newsroom on 13 February 2006.



### 7.3.4 Drama

Whether the news item contains a good story line is important. World news should be interesting to read. 'News selection is based on the judgment of news values. First, importance, second, readability. Importance may include readability but readability does not include importance.'<sup>867</sup> At *BYD*, the Vision page is full of news items that meet this criterion.

### 7.3.5 Ideology

Ideology is embedded in self-censorship. Political constraints tend to supersede professional considerations even for the world news, though generally speaking world news suffers much less from political constraints than other news desks like current affairs or national news. Newspeople attempt to do the news as best as they can, 'within the scope that policies allow, it's up to us how well we can do the news.'<sup>868</sup>

Self-censorship influences world news via three levels as indicated in Figure 34 below. At the first level, the local press is under the political and ideological control of both the Central and Municipal Propaganda Departments. Directives and orders issued by these authorities are passed down to the news organizations via documents, meetings or phone calls. At the second level, instructions from propaganda departments are read out at the general editorial meetings with heads from each news division present. Deputy-chief-editor(s) who host the meetings also give their own comments and instructions that are taken as editorial policies. At the third level, apart from propaganda directives and executives' editorial instructions, editors in the newsrooms filter the world news based on their own experience and judgments. Fearful of being criticized or punished for political errors, editors take cautious attitudes on sensitive topics to avoid trouble. 'There's nothing wrong in being careful. You never know who will criticize you for something. It's good to be careful. Everybody works to earn a living.'<sup>869</sup>

---

<sup>867</sup> Excerpted dialogue from a world news room discussion on 9 February 2006

<sup>868</sup> Excerpted comments at news room editorial meeting on 13 February 2006

<sup>869</sup> Comments made by Xiao Bei on 13 February 2006

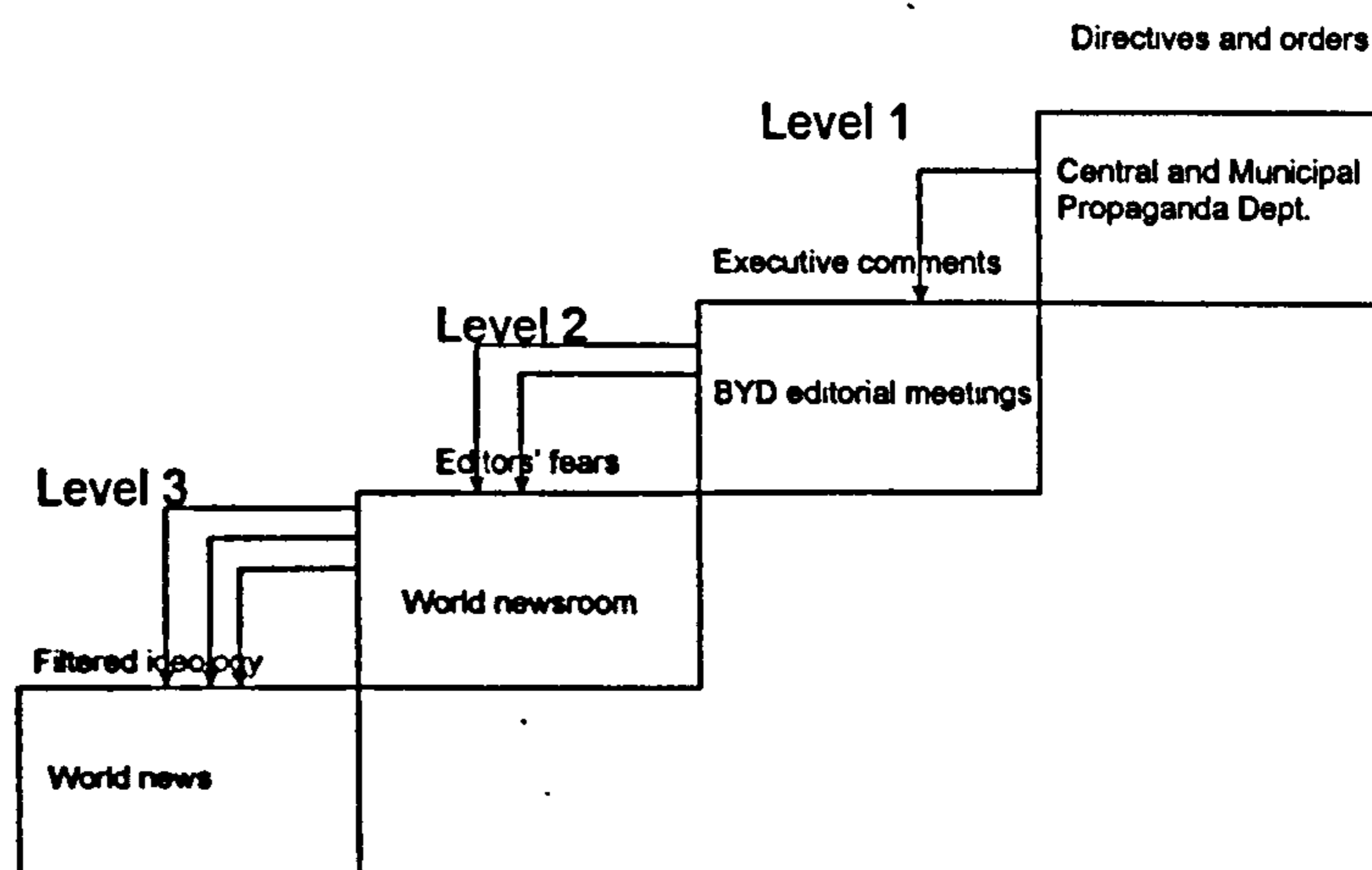


Figure 34 The staircase of top-down self-censorship in world news.

At the first level, directives from the top are passed top down without giving any reasons. In most cases, directives are about political issues, religion, criminal acts or riots that may be copied by people in China. There is always a fear that social unrest might be sparked in China. Protests abroad could inspire copycat action in China. For instance, at the weekly general editorial meeting on 20 March 2006, there were three directives read out by the managing editor on duty about the world news including ‘keep a low profile and don’t spice up the riots among university students in France’, ‘No reports on a female university student being raped in Japan’ and ‘Xinhua articles must be used to report on the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands’.

Newspeople feel frustrated about censorship from the propaganda departments. One copy editor claims, ‘it’s very tiresome to do news. We have to worry about what the Central Propaganda Department says, what the Municipal Propaganda Department say and so on. We must filter all these things everyday before doing the news.’<sup>870</sup> He thought the Central Propaganda Department was evil and cynical. ‘The Central Propaganda Department is the source of evil. They are cynical, for instance, when Bush comes to visit China, the orders will come banning all criticism of Bush.

<sup>870</sup> Excerpted dialogue from a world news room discussion on 13 February 2006

After Bush is gone, it's all right to criticize him in whatever way. They don't have any criteria or standards. It's all ad hoc.'<sup>871</sup>

Apart from political issues, cultural issues are also included in the directives. While I was carrying out participant observations in the world news room, an order from the municipal propaganda department was circulated on controlling the news reports regarding Valentine's Day in China. Discussions between the news editor (A) and the deputy news editor (B) about this order were recorded below.

A: Today the propaganda department has criticized the Valentine's Day reports because there are so many of them. But it's an actual social phenomenon. Young people celebrate it not because they worship the western cultures. Society has developed. It's just a way of spending leisure time.

B: They want to reduce the occurrence of love affairs among mid-aged or old people, so they ask people not to celebrate Valentine's Day.<sup>872</sup>

This dialogue reflects the responses from editors towards the directives passed down from the Propaganda Department. Even for the non-political cultural events like St Valentine's Day, top-down ideological-control is tangible. In this case, the mood in the newsroom towards the directives is disrespectful and half-hearted. Usually nobody voices any objections or any opinions at the editorial meetings when the directives are circulated orally by senior editorial executives. However, they are free to discuss them in private when they get back to the newsrooms. Despite the fact that editors don't agree with the orders and may think them ridiculous, they have to obey and censor the news accordingly. The dialogue below shows how news editor (A) and copy editor (B) actually evaluated and handled the news after they received the ban on Valentine's Day.

B: Xinhua issued tens of Valentine photos including overseas photos.

A: What can we do? It's not that I don't want to use them. Actually the chief editor did not say anything but these are orders from the top. Xinhua did not receive the publicity instructions. The instructions are from the municipal propaganda department.

B: Xinhua does it from another angle. It says all the Valentine Day's gifts are tainted with blood. They may make use of child labour or the diamonds are stolen in war

---

<sup>871</sup> *ibid*

<sup>872</sup> Excerpted dialogue from a world news room discussion on 10 February 2006

zones. This article is interesting. But even though we're not promoting Valentine's Day, in fact if we criticise Valentine's Day, it may also bring us trouble. Today there is nothing except Valentine. We can do nothing about it.<sup>873</sup>

Without the regulatory order, Valentine-related stories or photos would have been published in the Vision page. In reality, this page ended up on 14 February with the top news being a snowstorm in the US, the second news about Katrina hurricane investigative report, and a big photo of the Carnival festival in Nice.

At the second level, in addition to passing out propaganda directives at the editorial meetings, editorial executives give comments or censor news stories as a way of setting intangible editorial policies. Below is an example about the chief editor censoring a commentary article on the brutality of taking the bear's gall. The background is that China is sometimes criticised or attacked abroad, or by international organizations on political and social issues. In response, the local press imposes self-censorship in accordance with governmental policies and strategies to avoid providing evidence for China's critics. This example is from a newsroom meeting at which the world news editor passed on messages from the agency-wide general editorial meeting on 13 February 2006.

The commentary department had been harshly critical of the brutality of taking the bear's gall. The chief editor said the commentary was definitely correct but he ordered that it be dropped. The reason is that we are hosting the Olympic Games in 2008. The World Olympic Games committee has attacked us for human rights and animal rights issues. Many organizations have pressured the Olympic Committee regarding the mistreatment of animals in China. We must be careful given this background. You never know what might cause trouble.<sup>874</sup>

At the third level, on one hand, editors carry out the instructions of the propaganda departments and the news executives, for instance, on 13 February 2006, the world news editor gave the deputy news editor a warning about the editorial policies, 'the most important thing is gate keeping. Your primary task is "gate keeping" and secondary task is "news planning". This year is the so called "the year of public opinion orientation" (*Yulun daoxiang nian*) by the Central Propaganda Department.

---

<sup>873</sup> Excerpted dialogue from a world news room discussion on 13 February 2006

<sup>874</sup> *ibid*

Efforts are to be concentrated on the orientation of public opinion.<sup>875</sup> On the other hand, editors themselves take the initiative to handle sensitive topics with great care including religion, North Korea, and the Iran nuclear issue. They either use articles from Xinhua or China Radio International or they simply don't touch those topics. In addition, some topics are more sensitive than others, for instance, the North Korea issue is more restricted than Islamic issues, 'usually we don't do any reports on North Korea except using Xinhua reports. For Islamic stuff like Al-Qaeda, we must be cautious, trying not to break their religious taboos. We don't use Xinhua reports about Islam all the time. But we do use Xinhua for all North Korean reports.'<sup>876</sup>

In sum, ideological control by the means of self-censorship is at the core and takes a primary role in the making of world news. Hence it is confirmed that determining factors that influence the treatment of world news at *BYD* include ideology, importance, proximity, exclusiveness and drama.

In 1994, Westerstahl & Johansson proposed five criteria for foreign news events becoming headlines – is it important, dramatic, geographically and culturally relevant, accessible to reporters and do the events accord with the mainstream ideology in society.<sup>877</sup> Comparing the *BYD* model with the Westerstahl & Johansson model, as shown in Figure 35 below, no striking difference has been found. The only different factor lies in the 'access' in Westerstahl & Johansson's model and 'exclusiveness' in *BYD*'s model. *BYD* newspeople do not pick up 'access' as an important factor because they use Xinhua news agency as their main source, the secondary news source. If they encounter any 'access' problems with the primary news source, they can always turn to the secondary one. On the other hand, other metropolitan newspapers in Beijing also use Xinhua as the main source, 'exclusiveness' is thus more important to them due to the concern of competition.

Though the world news selection criteria may be universal and homogeneous, what these criteria mean and how these selection criteria are implemented in the daily practice are quite different, which results in the differences in the world news content among papers in the world.

---

<sup>875</sup> *ibid*

<sup>876</sup> Excerpted dialogue from a world news room discussion on 8 February 2006

<sup>877</sup> Jörgen Westerstahl and Folke Johansson, 'Foreign News: News Values and Ideologies', *European Journal of Communication*, Vol. 9, No. 1, (1994), pp.71-89

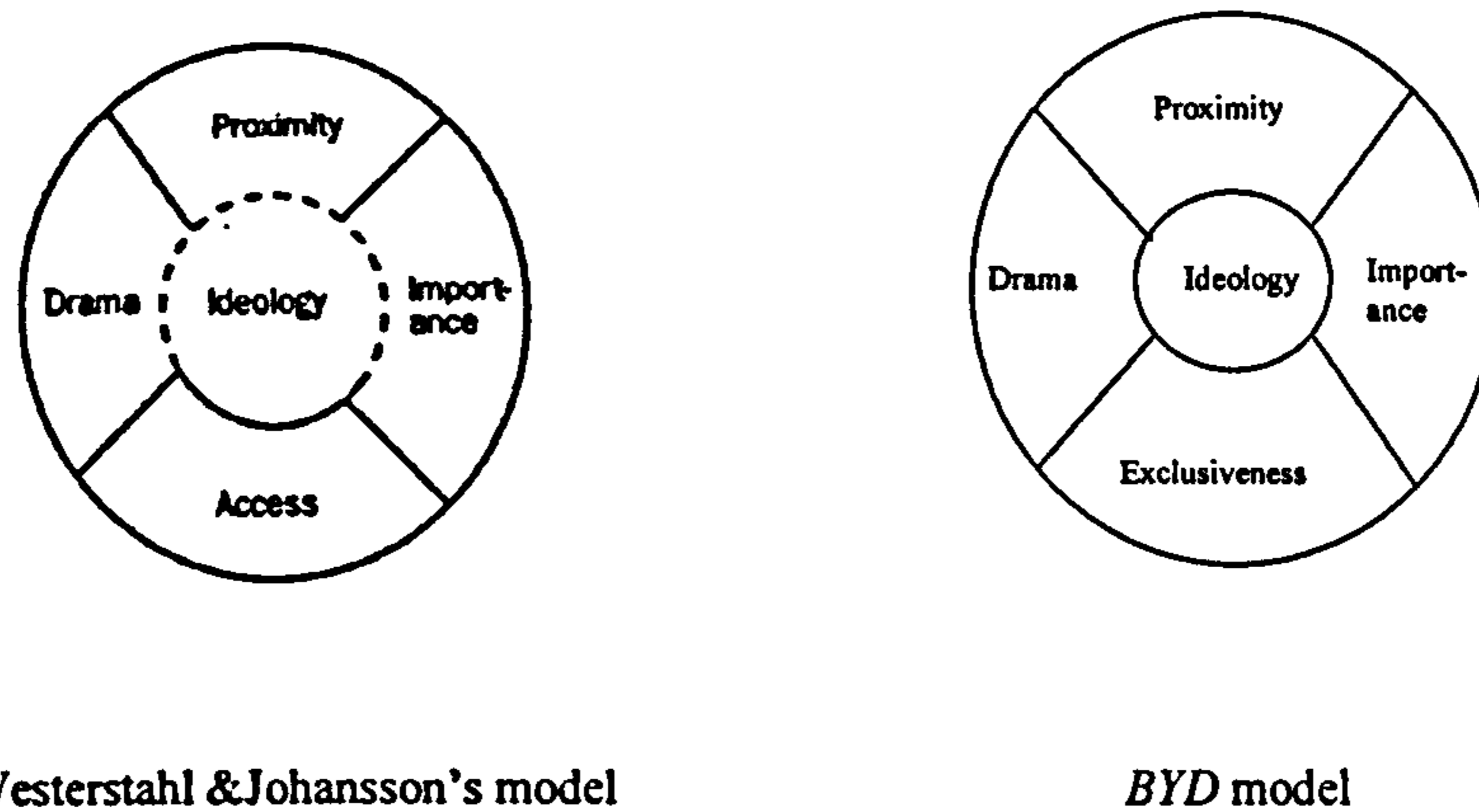


Figure 35 High similarities between Westerstahl & Johansson's model and *BYD* model

### 7.3.6 *BYD* vs. *New York Times*

In order to further prove the argument that selection criteria are universal but the ways these selection criteria are implemented are different, a small-scale comparison is made between *BYD* and *The New York Times* (abbreviated as *NYT*). The purpose is to identify the commonalities and differences in agenda-setting and framing in domesticating world news in these two newspapers.

The reason for selecting *NYT* rather than any other broadsheet is that *BYD* aims to imitate the *NYT*, standing at the local city level but having national and international influence. Two weeks of world news samplings from 5 February (Sunday) to 19 February (Sunday) 2006 have been selected and compared. *NYT*'s samplings are based on its database on the newspaper's website under the category of 'world' while *BYD*'s samplings are picked from the newspaper's website from front page, Today's Focus page and world news pages. As the world news in the Vision page is mostly soft news meant to entertain or expand readers' horizons, which is difficult to match in *NYT*, the content of this page is not included in this comparison.

The unit of analysis is the news story. Headlines are coded on the basis of country and theme, as indicated in Table 13 below. In terms of the countries and regions the

two newspapers report on, it finds that both papers set a similar agenda on the unstable areas in the Middle East including Iran, Iraq, Palestine, Israel as well as Afghanistan. In addition, both papers attach much attention to the affairs of countries within their regions. For *NYT*, Iraq is its most reported country and covers South America in detail while *BYD*'s most reported countries are the United States and Japan and it covers more news on Asia.

Specifically, *NYT* carried a total of twenty world news stories on its front pages during the sampled two-week period, of which five were about Iraq, two about Israel-Palestine, and Haiti. Other countries that were reported once include Iran, China, Japan, Egypt, Chad, Sudan, Mecca, Britain, and Bolivia. *BYD* carried a total of thirty world news items on its front pages, of which six were about US, three about Japan, Iran, Italy, and Russia, two about Palestine-Israel, Egypt, Philippine, Pakistan, and Russia. Other countries reported once include France, Africa, Iraq, and Haiti.

In terms of news subjects, *NYT*'s top agenda tends to be politics in foreign countries especially elections and democracies, but also oil and drugs. The Iraq items concerned sectarian division, power-sharing and votes, the Haitian one was about votes, as was the one on Egypt, there was one item on China's censorship, and one item on justice system in Japan. Altogether 8 out of 20 were about internal politics in foreign countries. In comparison, *BYD*'s top agenda tends to be on international relations with the US and Japan, and disasters/accidents. Other concerns were bird flu virus and the Olympics. Specifically, six items were about the US and Sino-US relations including one on prisoner abuse, one on chemicals and cancer, one on Grammy award in the US, two on the Sino-US lawsuits and one on the China threat in the US. In addition, three items were about Japan and Sino-Japan relations including two on Sino-Japan strategic dialogue, and one on Japan's history. Six items were about disasters and accidents including two on a ferry which sank in Egypt, three on mud slides and stampede tragedy in Philippines and two on Chinese engineers killed in Pakistan.

The two newspapers set the same agenda on the 'hot spots' like Iran's nuclear development, the Danish cartoon controversy, the Iraq situation, the Haitian election and the Palestine /Israel conflict. For instance, on 2 February 2006, the Iran nuclear issue was picked up by both *BYD* and *NYT* on the same day. *NYT* reported that

'Iran's nuclear challenge: the resolution, Nuclear Panel Votes to Report Tehran to U.N'. Meanwhile, *BYD* reported that 'IAEA<sup>878</sup> decided yesterday to report Iran's nuclear issue to UN's Security Council (*Guoji yuanzineng jigou zuo jue ding Yilang he wenti tijiao anlihui*). Iran terminates all voluntary cooperative measures on nuclear issue' (*Yilang zhongzhi zai he wenti shang yiqie ziyuan hezuo cuoshi*).

However, the two newspapers may cover the same country or area but focus on different events, from different angles, or give different weights to the reports. The most striking example is Iraq. Both newspapers covered Iraq on their front pages. However, *NYT*'s coverage on Iraq was much more weighted than that of *BYD*, as *NYT* carried five items while *BYD* carried only one item during the sampled time period. In addition, *NYT*'s reports on Iraq were more diversified including oil, insurgency, sectarian division and internal politics. In contrast, *BYD* only reported one event about a German hostage in Iraq. While the *NYT*'s emphasis on Iraq was due to heavy US involvement in that country, the *BYD* put more weight on Japan reflecting Chinese preoccupations. Angles were also different. While *BYD* paid attention to Sino-Japan relations, *NYT* paid attention to Japan's internal politics.<sup>879</sup> On Haiti, both papers covered the election on their front pages. However, *NYT*'s focus was on the politics in Haiti while *BYD* focused on China's peacekeeping involvement in Haiti's election.<sup>880</sup>

The two newspapers pick up the same news events but presented them in different ways. The number of news items and placement of reports on news pages was also different. For instance, both papers picked up Sharon's illness due to his political role in Israel and the Middle East at large. However, *BYD* placed this news on its front page while *NYT* handled it in later pages.<sup>881</sup> Also, both papers picked up the pioneering face transplant in France. While *NYT* did not put too much weight on it

---

<sup>878</sup> IAEA stands for International Atomic Energy Agency.

<sup>879</sup> *BYD*'s reports: 1) 6 Feb, Mon, Japanese foreign minister's comments on history incurred China's anger (*Ri waixiang meihua qinlue lishi zhongfang biao shi qianglie fen kai*); 2) 8 Feb, Wed, China and Japan will hold the forth strategic dialogue (*Zhongri jiang juxing disilun zhanlue duihua*); 3) 13 Feb, Mon, China and Japan exchanged opinions on critical issues during the forth strategic dialogue (*Zhongri disici zhanlue duihua jiu tuchu wenti jiaohuan yijian*). *NYT*'s report: 12 Feb, Sun, In Japan, justice is not only blind, it holds a stopwatch

<sup>880</sup> *NYT*'s reports: 1) 10 Feb, Friday, Candidate of Haiti's poor leads in early tally with 61% of vote; 2) 16 Feb, Thur, Deal reached to name Victor in Haiti's vote; *BYD*'s reports: 1) 15 Feb, Wed, Chinese peace keeping police in Haiti are highly alerted (*Zhongguo Haidi weihe jingcha jinru yiji zhanbet zhuangtai*)

<sup>881</sup> *NYT*'s report: 12 February, Sunday, page 16, Sharon stable but remains in a coma after surgery; *BYD*'s report: 12 Feb, Sun, page 1, Sharon remains in critical conditions (*Shalong zai chuan bingwei*)



and placed it in later pages, *BYD* handled it as the most important event and placed it on the front page with big photos attached to the news story because 'many people in China are waiting to undergo the same face-changing operation. This is an ethical, scientific, humane, global issue'.<sup>882</sup>

Date	<i>NYT</i> (theme)	<i>NYT</i> (country)	<i>BYD</i> (theme)	<i>BYD</i> (country)
5 Feb	Nuclear	Iran	Nuclear	Iran
	Oil fuels insurgency	Iraq	Ferry sinking	Egypt
			China rescue ferry	Egypt, China
			Stud tragedy	Philippine
6 Feb	Sectarian division	Iraq	Hostage release	Iraq, Germany
			Nuclear	Iran
			History	Japan, China
7 Feb	N		Face transplant	France
			Lawsuit	US, China
			Danish cartoon	UN
8 Feb	Trial on terrorists	Britain, US	China threat	US, China
			Strategic dialogue	China, Japan
9 Feb	Danish cartoon	Mecca	Bird flu	Africa
	TV	Russia		
10 Feb	Votes	Haiti	U2 won Grammy	US
11 Feb	N		Winter Olympic	Italy
12 Feb	Drug	Bolivia	Winter Olympic	Italy
	Justice	Japan	Sharon sick	Israel
			Lawsuit	US, China
13 Feb	Votes	Iraq	Strategic dialogue	China, Japan
	Abuse case	US		
14 Feb	Votes	Egypt	N	
	Hamas ouster	US,		

<sup>882</sup> Interview with Lu Fei, 2006

		Israel, Palestine		
15 Feb	Censorship	China	Nuclear	Iran, China
	Reconstruction	Iraq	Peacekeeping in votes	Haiti, China
16 Feb	Votes	Haiti	Prisoners abuse	US
			Engineers attacked	Pakistan, China
17 Feb	N		Winter Olympic	Italy, China
			Engineers attacked	Pakistan, China
			Chemicals cause cancer	US
			Hamas visit Russia	Russia, Palestine
18 Feb	Power shift	Iraq	Mudslide disaster	Philippine
	Oil meant for rich and poor	Chad		
	Role of NATO	US, Sudan		
19 Feb	Hamas and Abbas clash	Palestine	Hamas refuse talk with Israel	Palestine, Israel
			Russian oil company in Beijing	Russia, China

Table 13 Comparison of world news on the front page of *NYT* and *BYD* from 5 February to 19 February 2006.<sup>883</sup>

In sum, it finds that the two papers set the same agenda on world security issues like the Iran nuclear issue, the Danish cartoon controversy, Hamas and Palestine-Israel relations. But that accounts for a small portion of news items. The two newspapers set different agendas on many other issues driven by their own editorial policies. For

<sup>883</sup> Detailed comparison of sampled world news pages between *NYT* and *BYD* can be required from the author.

example, *NYT* focused on politics and democracy in foreign countries while *BYD* focused on international relations with US and Japan, disasters and crimes. In addition, Chinese involvement in world events is deliberately highlighted at *BYD*. This proves the argument that selection criteria between *BYD* and the west are similar but the implementation of these selection criteria is different. Chinese newspapers set a similar agenda on certain global issues like world security and international politics to that of the western papers. However, Chinese papers have their own agenda on other issues and frame the same subjects in different ways. Unity and diversity co-exist in world news reporting for both Chinese and western papers.

#### 7.4 International news flow and focus

In order to provide a mediated news map that indicates emerging trends in international relations in the new geo-political order,<sup>884</sup> the *BYD* agenda in reporting world news will be explored from three perspectives: 1) Geographical priorities – certain specific countries and regions that receive frequent reporting are identified as geographical priorities in *BYD*'s world news coverage, 2) Focus of story, or the role of China in the selection of world news, is examined, and 3) Thematic priorities – subjects that are more likely to be picked up and reported in world news are identified as thematic priorities.

Based on the definition and coding of world news indicated in the content analysis section in this chapter, 7.1.1, a total of 408 world news items have been further classified in terms of geographic locations, focus of story and themes with reference to the coding instructions specified in the project proposal for 'Cooperative study of foreign news and international news flow in the 1990s'.<sup>885</sup>

##### 7.4.1 Geographical locations

World news items have been classified and coded under specific countries and world regional areas separately, as shown in Table 14 and 15 below. As for specific countries, Table 14 shows that non-applicables<sup>886</sup> ranks the top, followed by the

---

<sup>884</sup> Stevenson, 1995, <http://www.ibiblio.org/newsflow/design/>, accessed 27 April 2007

<sup>885</sup> *ibid*

<sup>886</sup> For the coding of geographical locations, 000 represents non-applicable meaning unidentified countries, or the specific countries have the minimum impact on the news items the newspaper covered. For instance, the items, 'Overseas Chinese celebrate Spring Festival' (*Haiwai tongbao yong butong fangshi qingzhu xinchun*) on 4 February 1997; 'Bans on expatriates

United States, Japan, Iraq, the United Nations and other international agencies, Russia, the United Kingdom, Indonesia, North Korea and Pakistan. As for regional areas, Table 15 shows that Asia/Pacific tops the ranking, followed by non-applicable, North America, Western Europe, Middle East, Central and Eastern Europe, Africa and Latin America.

Ranking	Code	Coding instructions	Frequency
1	000	Non-applicable/none	87
2	102	United States	59
3	603/713	Iraq/Japan	29
4	001	UN agency/International organizations	20
5	417	Russia	16
6	325	United Kingdom	15
7	712	Indonesia	12
8	726/727	North Korea/Pakistan	10

Table 14 Country-based world news reports on the front page of *BYD* from 1981 to 2006

---

accommodation at resigned hotels are lifted' (*Waibuoren dingdian zhusu xianzhi quxiao*) on 16 April 2003, and 'Summit to be held on post-Tsunami issue' (*Dizhen haixian zai hou tebie fenghul jiang juxing*) on 30 January 2005 are coded as non-applicable.

Ranking	Code	Coding instructions	Frequency
1	700	Asia/Pacific	103
2	000	Non-applicable/none	83
3	100	North America	64
4	300	Western Europe	53
5	600	Middle East	48
6	400	Central/Eastern Europe	21
7	001	UN agency/International organizations	20
8	500	Africa	12
9	200	Latin America/ South America /Central America/ Caribbean	5

Table 15 Region-based world news reports on the front page of *BYD* from 1981 to 2006

The following six points can be drawn from the statistical findings: Firstly, the non-applicable category ranks first in Table 14 and second in Table 15. The finding here reflects the fact that China has reached out beyond its state borders to interact with the world community as a whole. The trend is two fold: World and regional events that involve multiple country actors are staged in China, and China is getting more and more involved in the world events. Further quantitative analysis on the non-applicable themes shows that the majority of non-applicable items are about sports and economy. Specifically, 34 out of 86 (40 percent) non-applicable items are related to sports, and 24 out of 86 (28 percent) are about economy.

Secondly, regional affairs have become the major concern in world news coverage. Table 14 shows that five of the top eight countries (Japan, Russia, North Korea, Indonesia and Pakistan) are China's neighbours and belong to the same regional blocks. Similarly, Table 15 shows that news about Asia/Pacific is reported most frequently compared with other regions. This demonstrates that China is playing a more and more active and important role in the regional economy and politics.

Thirdly, developed countries in the North and West play a major role in setting the news agenda of local newspapers. Table 14 shows that the largest numbers of world news items are about US, Japan and UK. Table 15 shows a similar pattern with North America ranking third and western Europe fourth. Developing and underdeveloped regions like Africa and South America are at the bottom. Decades after the first International News Flow study was conducted in 1978, the pattern of world news flow from the 'developed' countries to the 'developing countries' remains unchanged.

Fourthly, Table 14 demonstrates that China's relations with big powers like US (ranking the 2<sup>nd</sup>) and Japan (ranking the 3<sup>rd</sup>) are important and play a critical role in China's foreign policies.

Fifthly, Table 14 lists Iraq in the 3<sup>rd</sup> place and North Korea the 8<sup>th</sup> whereas Table 15 lists the Middle East in the 5<sup>th</sup> place. This demonstrates that Iraq, North Korea as well as the Middle East are global hotspots on the news agenda of local press due to their importance in world security.

Lastly, Table 14 lists the UN as the 4<sup>th</sup> place and Table 15 lists the UN as the 7<sup>th</sup>. It shows that China is becoming more and more active and involved in the international affairs. For example, China sends peace-keeping troops to the war or conflict regions, and China participates in the disaster relief activities. Meanwhile, global diseases like SARS attracted attention from international organizations.

In sum, geographically, the focus of world news flow is on the news that has global actors and elements, regional areas that surround China, world's superpowers and developed countries, world's war/conflict intensive hotspots, and international organisations like the UN.

#### 7.4.2 Focus of story

The variable of story focus is meant to acknowledge that "foreign" news can take place at home as well as overseas. It includes two elements — geographic location of the event and involvement (or lack of it) of your country.<sup>887</sup> In this study, two elements – geographic location of the event, domestic or overseas, as well as involvement of China or Chinese – are considered while coding the world news stories.

As shown in Table 16 below, the most frequently reported issues are about 'domestic events with important involvement of own country', amounting to 198 items. 'Overseas events with important involvement of own country' comes the second, at 119. The third is 'overseas events with no important involvement of own country' at 89, and lastly, 'domestic events with no important involvement of own country' are ranking bottom with the number of only 2.

This shows that while selecting and presenting world news, the focus of story is largely on the 'home' and 'us' based on that 'domestic events with important involvement of own country' and 'overseas events with important involvement of own country' get the most coverage. The local press also gives a lot of cover to world news regardless of the involvement of their own country. They report the domestic news with only foreign actors the least. Thus conclusion can be drawn that the local press put the 'us' news involving international actors as top priority. Meanwhile, important world news, with or without own country involved, is also important.

---

<sup>887</sup> Stevenson, 1995, <http://www.ibiblio.org/newsflow/design/>, accessed 27 April, 2007

Ranking	Codes	Frequency
1	4 (Domestic events; important involvement of own country)	198
2	2 (Overseas events; important involvement of own country)	119
3	1 (Overseas events; no important involvement of own country)	89
4	3 (Domestic events; no involvement of own country)	2

Table 16 Focus of story in world news reports on the front page of *BYD* from 1981 to 2006

#### 7.4.3 Themes

As shown in Table 17 below, international relations enjoys the highest frequency, 117 items, which includes the state-to-state visits, bi-lateral relations, statement by Foreign Ministry's spokesmen, and other foreign affairs.

Military/war/conflict/terrorist attacks rank the second at 58,

Economics/business/trade and Sports rank the third and fourth at 55 and 54

respectively, Natural disasters/Accidents and Culture rank the fifth and sixth at 33 and 31. Other themes like crime, politics, education, health, and travel/transportation are low profile. Entertainment stands at the bottom.

This shows that local newspapers pay the greatest attention to international relations in world news coverage. In addition, world security issues including military issues, war, conflicts, terrorist attacks that are both important and dramatic are prioritized in the world news agenda. Economics, sports, disasters and accidents along with culture carry the similar weight in the world news coverage.



Ranking	Codes	Themes	Frequency
1	11	International relations	117
2	13	Military/war/conflict/terrorist attacks	58
3	2	Economics/business/trade	55
4	4	Sports	54
5	10	Natural disasters/Accidents	33
6	3	Culture	31
7	6	Crime/Law	22
8	17	Health	13
9	12/16	Education/Science	6
10	5	Social events/services/problems	5
11	1	Politics	4
12	16	Travel/transportation	3
13	7	Entertainment	1

Table 17 Themes in the world news on the front page of *BYD* from 1981 to 2006

In sum, the local press tend to prioritize themes like international relations and politics, world security, as well as world economy, sports events, global disasters and cultural exchange. The focus on these themes manifests the globalisation process in terms of political globalisation, global issues, economic globalisation and cultural globalisation. The range of world news reportage has expanded to reach all the important fields in modern society.

#### Conclusion:

Globalisation impacts world news coverage via the intertwining of global, national and local forces. As a consequence, homogenisation, regionalisation and domestication occur at the same time, among which domestication is the most obvious and strongest effect.

Globalisation does not cause homogeneity but plurality of world news channels in the local press. Independent reports, national news agencies, international news agencies, overseas Chinese language newspapers and the Internet combine to form the

world news sources. National and local forces are paramount, which is reflected in the majority use of Xinhua and the rapid increase of independent reports. As to the global force, in addition to the direct use of international news agencies by local newspapers like *The Mirror*, a national news agency like Xinhua may use news stories supplied by the international news agencies and then transmit the edited version to the local newspapers.

Globalisation blurs the line between world news and domestic news and helps transform 'foreign news' in the direction of 'global news'. Global events are covered from the local perspectives. The proximity/relevance becomes one of the most important factors in delivering world news to the domestic readers. This is reflected in newspeople's endeavor deliberately to locate Chinese elements and develop national identities in the global news events. Homogeneity or conformity is found in world news selection criteria. *BYD*'s criteria include ideology, importance, proximity, exclusiveness and drama, which is very similar to the western model developed by Westerstahl & Johansson. Such homogeneity or conformity is the consequence of both professionalism and globalisation. Homogeneity in the selection criteria causes homogeneity in the world news coverage to a certain extent. However, how the same selection criteria are implemented varies greatly at different papers, leading to the diversity of world news presentations, as shown in the comparison between *NYT* and *BYD*'s world news coverage.

The international news flow has gone beyond the centre-peripheral process and the media imperialism theory does not stand firmly. Although developed countries still play a major role in setting the news agenda of local newspapers, it should be noted that the local press has made the domestic news involving global actors a top priority. It also focuses on regional issues, the world's war/conflict hotspots and international organisations like the UN due to China's rising power in the world economy and increasing participation in the regional and world affairs. Such diversity is also reflected in the world news subjects with international relations and politics, world security, and world economy on top of local press's news agenda in additions to sports, global disasters and cultural exchanges.

In a word, homogenisation or unity exists but it is neither exclusive nor the most important consequence of globalisation. Domestication and regionalisation are on the

rise and gaining momentum. Global, national and local actors play joint roles in the glocalisation of world news in the local press.

## Chapter 8 Conclusion

This thesis has explored the impact of globalisation on the news production and news content at local newspapers<sup>888</sup> in China by the means of examining the current status and identifying significant changes to *Beijing Youth daily*, a municipal level paper, over the past three decades.

The central argument is that globalisation impacts many aspects of local newspapers including media policy, organisation, journalistic practice, journalists' roles and coverage of world news. Such impact is uneven. In the case of the state's media policies and organizational changes the influence is explicit whereas in relation to news production routines and the perceptions of newspeople it tends to be implicit.

Driven by the commercialization of the domestic media, the accelerated world-wide flow of goods and capital, population mobility, and the advancement of information technology, especially the Internet, Chinese local newspapers and newspeople share many commonalities and similarities with the western press and western newspeople but also maintain distinctive characteristics due to China's unique political-social-economic system. Consequently, globalisation is producing neither total homogenization nor total heterogenisation but a mixture and co-existence of unity and diversity. As Mike Featherstone claims, 'the binary logic which seeks to comprehend culture via the mutually exclusive terms of homogeneity/heterogeneity, integration/disintegration, unity/diversity, must be discarded'.<sup>889</sup>

Globalisation is a process involving a multi-leveled deregulation and re-regulation, protectionism, capitalism, media convergence, hybridization and domestication driven by the interaction of global and local actors, political, economic and technical factors, external and internal influences. In the globalisation era, the state still plays a central role, as Colin Sparks argues, the powers of states do not reduce and the state remains central to any political process in the contemporary world.<sup>890</sup> A free press does not emerge in an authoritarian state just because of globalisation.

---

<sup>888</sup> The use of the term 'local newspaper' is meant to distinguish *BYD*, a paper under the control of the Beijing municipal Party authorities, from national papers at the central government level like the *People's Daily*. It should be noted that *BYD* is located in the capital city of Beijing but distributed across the country beyond Beijing, though in small numbers. The definition of this term is different from that in the western countries where it refers to the papers that circulate in a specific region, a city or a town, for instance, *Yorkshire Evening Post* is known as a local newspaper in the UK because it is only distributed in Yorkshire.

<sup>889</sup> Mike Featherstone, 'Global culture: an introduction', in Mike Featherstone, ed., *Global culture – nationalism, globalization and modernity*, (London: Sage Publications, 1990), p.2

<sup>890</sup> Colin Sparks, *Globalization, development and the mass media*, (London: Sage Publications, 2007), p.221

My conclusions may be summarized in eight major points. First, globalisation leads to a mixture and co-existence of universalities and distinctiveness between the Chinese local newspapers and western papers. At the organizational level, the business model of Chinese news media is similar to that of its western counterparts with advertising and circulation as two major revenue sources. However, Chinese newspaper conglomerates are state rather than privately-owned and party-led rather than market-regulated. Whilst the primary goal for most western media organisations is economic profit, although they have clear political positions and they endeavor to advance certain values and views of the world, Chinese news organisations set explicit political and economic goals. They serve as the party's mouthpieces by advocating the state's policies while pursuing economic profit by meeting the demands of their readership and their advertisers in the market. At the professional practice level, both Chinese and western newspeople face market censorship and pressures from the Internet as well as time, human resources and management restraints. However, unlike the fragmented western press market, China still has a mass-audience market. On the other hand authoritative audited circulation figures are unavailable. Chinese newspeople share similar news values to those of their counterparts in liberal democratic countries like immediacy, scale, significance, unexpectedness, personification, consonance as well as social responsibility and pursuit of truth. However, while the roles of watchdog, political critic and muckraking are highlighted in liberal journalism and many of their newspapers pursue crime and blood on front pages, Chinese newspapers are meant to guide the public opinion in a positive way. Their front pages are restricted to policies and positivism. Chinese journalists like other journalists around the world take 'disseminator' as their most fundamental role, and their conceptions of professional roles and virtues are surprisingly similar to those held by journalists in liberal democratic countries. However, local journalists maintain their distinctive identities and have their own rules of right and wrong, for instance, they are more tolerant of unethical practices like the 'red envelope'. At the world news level, Chinese newspapers' selection criteria are very similar to those in the west including ideology, importance, proximity, exclusiveness and drama and the agenda on certain global issues like world security and international politics is thus similar. However, the implementation of selection criteria varies greatly at different papers, leading to the diversity of world news presentation.

Secondly, globalisation leads to deregulation and re-regulation in the state's press policies. China is a society in transition from state socialism to state capitalism. In the media sphere, the press structure has gone through commercialisation, conglomeration and floatation stages. During this transition process, both internal and external press policies have become more open and relaxed. For instance, newspapers were distributed solely by the post office before 1985. The 'post law' promulgated in 1987 allowed newspaper agencies to use different distribution channels, either distributing on their own, or through post offices, or commissioning other legal organizations to act. Shareholding press groups, non-media companies, and cross-media and cross-regional operations were banned in 1994 but those restrictions were lifted in 2001. Since then, newspaper conglomerates have been encouraged to run cross-regional and cross-media enterprises and to issue shares on the domestic and international stock markets. The injection of private and foreign capital to news media was banned before 2004 but was allowed afterwards on condition that it was limited to the commercial operating section of newspapers with the state remaining the major shareholder.

Deregulation and re-regulation promoted de-centralisation, diversification and consolidation in media structure. Newspapers used to be centralized under the control of the Chinese Communist Party. With economic reform, newspapers, once concentrated in the national capital, have been dispersed to localities, from the power centre to different government branches, departments, and bureaus. Local newspapers have increased both in number and circulation. Party organ papers declined and market-oriented non-party papers flourished. After 2001, the government consolidated the press structure by reducing the levels of newspapers from four to three, completely abolishing state subsidies, closing down unprofitable small papers, transforming the commercial sectors of newspapers into companies while retaining control of the editorial section in newspaper conglomerates, and regulating newspaper competition. Through de-regulating and re-regulating, the state has consolidated state capital to reaffirm party control and to compete with foreign media conglomerates.

Thirdly, in China globalisation has reinforced protectionism in a new form. Apart from integrating with the global economy system by gradually and conditionally opening the news media market, the state has adopted supportive, protective and

resistant measures to counter the destructive effects of global media conglomerates and the homogenisation effect caused by the centre to periphery cultural flow. The Chinese government has supported the growth of home industries and the floatation of Chinese newspaper conglomerates on the domestic and global stock market with the aim of easing capital shortage and enabling inexperienced domestic media conglomerates to acquire advanced management skills and know-how from overseas. However there is conflict between this opening up to the benefits of globalisation and the preservation of an authoritarian regime and avoidance of any possible ideological contamination from overseas. With China's entry into WTO, foreign investors were allowed to become involved in the operation of Chinese media conglomerates on condition that the state remained the major shareholder. Meanwhile the state prohibited both the involvement of foreign companies or investors in the editorial section of Chinese newspapers, and the distribution of foreign newspapers in China. The decisive role of the state in managing the impact of globalisation is evident.

Fourthly, globalisation has led to Chinese-style capitalism and marketization. As in a western capitalist system, newspapers in China, though state-owned, have financial autonomy and are operated as business entities with advertising, subscription dependence and capital investment. In *BYD*'s case, the corporate ownership has shifted from total state ownership in the past to the current dual-track ownership that has allowed foreign capital into the business operations while the party/state still retains ideological control by hiring and firing senior management as well as by direct interference in daily operations. *BYD* has been built into a media conglomerate by the means of launching new titles, acquisitions, concentration and convergence to cope with competition from the domestic newspaper market, the Internet and other new media. In 2004, it floated on the Hong Kong stock exchange and thus connected with the global economic market, absorbing capital and advanced management skills from transnational media companies. In addition, it borrows concepts from Western newspapers, for instance, of *BYD*'s subsidiary papers, the *Beijing Legal Evening News* has copied the UK's *Mirror*, and *The First* copied the *Bild* in Germany. All these measures are market-oriented and meant to maximize the newspaper profits by pursuing economy of scale and scope.

Fifthly, globalisation leads to media convergence. Declining circulation and advertising revenue, and the loss of readers due to the digital revolution are global

challenges facing newspapers around the world. In response, media convergence has become a global trend. News content is delivered to audiences via multi-media distribution channels. Using convergence as a corporate growth strategy, different news organisations have developed different approaches. *BYD* focuses on the newspaper-based model with a strategy of integrating the content of *BYD* and its subsidiary newspapers, and it promotes interactivity between newspapers and the web (internet and mobile phone). It maintains the traditional separate and cascade newsrooms with newspapers mainly supplying content to websites. By contrast, *Nordjyske* of Denmark has applied a multimedia-based model implementing resource sharing, content-sharing and cross-promotion via multi-platform including TV, radio, print and website. It uses matrix-organisation in its newsrooms with reporters separating from media but organised around news beats. At present, *BYD* is blocked by policy barriers that prohibit newspapers from running broadcasting services in China. When the market is further deregulated, there is possibility that *BYD* will follow *Nordjyske*'s practice.

Sixthly, globalisation has led to the hybridisation of newsroom structure, newspaper formats, genres, practices, and audience research methods. The copycat phenomenon occurs in the newspapers. In *BYD*'s case, the editor-centre editorial structure was copied from the west and adapted in the newsroom organisations. Journalistic writing approaches such as investigative reports, human interest and feature stories, pyramid news writing, emphasis on conflicts, pursuing objectivity and balance by reporting all the sides in an event, the use of column and columnists in the editorial and commentary pages, cover stories, and large photos, all originated from the west and have been incorporated and adapted at *BYD* to suit Chinese readers. Western polling and statistical approaches used in audience studies have been adapted in China and a fully fragmented market like that in the west is expected to emerge in the years to come. This hybridisation process is facilitated by different factors including the accessibility of western newspapers, western journalistic literature like Associated Press (AP) reporting guidelines and Pulitzer award winning articles, newspeople going abroad on exchange visits or for training at western news organisations and higher education institutions, the increasing coverage about China in the western news media, and western reports which are easily accessed via the Internet. All these enable Chinese newspeople to integrate western ideas, forms and practices into their



daily work consciously or unconsciously. However, such homogenizing effects are secondary and supplementary. *BYD* maintains its own strong distinctiveness in news making due to China's unique political-social-economic system.

Seventhly, globalisation leads to diversity, domestication and regionalism in world news coverage. The *BYD*'s case demonstrates the plurality of world news sources in local newspapers including national news agencies, own staff, international news agencies, overseas Chinese language newspapers and the Internet. The monopoly of the few big western news agencies and their dominance in the world news is not explicitly reflected in the local press market in China. Local and national forces counteract global forces, as is reflected in the increasing weight of local papers' independent reports and heavier dependence on national news agencies. Global forces represented by international news agencies play an indirect and secondary role, supplying news to local papers through secondary gate-keepers of Xinhua and the Internet that translate, edit and transmit news.

The rapid development of diaspora during the globalisation process is reflected in the domestication of world news coverage in local newspapers. Overseas Chinese are an emerging focus in world news. Global events are not reported as isolated events that happen outside China. Instead they are reported from local perspectives with a focus on the role of China and the impact on China. Political and cultural proximity/relevance becomes one of the determinant factors in world news coverage. Driven by the mobility of capital and labour as well as by China's rising power and increasing participation in world affairs, newspeople deliberately locate Chinese elements and angles and develop national identities in global news reporting.

International news flow has moved beyond the centre-peripheral process towards domestication and regionalisation. It is true that the United States and the developed countries still play a major role in setting the news agenda for local newspapers. However, the media imperialism theory fails to give us a complete picture. Geographically, the dividing line between domestic news and world news is increasingly blurred. Local newspapers make domestic news involving global actors a top priority and they focus on Asian regional interests, war or conflict hotspots and international organisations like the UN. Regional affairs have become the major concern in world news coverage. This demonstrates that China is playing a more and more active and important role in the regional economy and politics. Thematically,

the range of world news reportage has expanded from a focus on politics to reach all the important fields in society from international relations and politics, world security, to the world economy, sports events, global disasters and cultural exchanges.

Eighthly, globalisation leads to diversified, politicized and global content in the local newspapers but does not lead to or accelerate the development of a free press. On the contrary, it may even lead to stricter censorship and self-censorship in news media at some point.

In line with its rising status and influence as well as the transformation of selection criteria from readability to significance, *BYD* provides diversified and politicized content to meet the demands of both the market and the government. In addition, more global elements are included in the news content. Some people may think the more commercialised and more successful the paper is the fewer political restrictions it suffers and the less dependence it has on the news agencies. However, this study finds that the more influential the newspaper is, the more political restrictions it suffers. For instance, *BYD* now suffers more political restrictions and is thus heavily dependent on Xinhua as a news source. *The Mirror* suffers fewer political restrictions because its influence is limited, and it thus relies much less on Xinhua.

The state still plays an essential role in the news production process. State censorship and self-censorship was tightened up after China joined WTO in 2001. Restrictions on cross-regional supervision started to be implemented in 2005, which newspeople interpreted as a ban on criticizing local governments outside their own area. Criticism and pressures from international organizations and western news media on political and social issues do not help foster a free press in China. Instead they often backfire. The local press imposes self-censorship in accordance with governmental policies and strategies to avoid providing material for China's critics. For instance, as we saw in chapter 7, the chief editor at *BYD* censored a commentary article on the brutality of bear gall extraction because the report might be used against China in the foreign media. In China, globalisation does not necessarily lead to democratisation. Chinese news media play the dual role of commercial entity and state apparatus, which determines the symbiosis of media-state relations.

The limitations of this thesis are that sampling data from 1999 to 2002 are missing in the research and the whole thesis centres around one case study of the *BYD*. The

study of a single paper from one area is undoubtedly of limited utility in the development of a generalised understanding of local newspapers in China.

Further research should be done to develop comparisons between Chinese newspapers and western newspapers on the coverage of significant global events such as the Olympic Games Torch Relay in 2008. By examining news reports in different news media in different countries, hidden agendas can be revealed and light can be shed on state-to-state relations, ethnic tensions, and economic conflicts and so on.

## **APPENDIX: STRUCTURED QUESTIONS FOR INTERVIEWS AT *BYD***

### **1. Personal background**

Age:

Title:

Marriage

Religion

Party Member:

Socio-economic background ( father's career):

Education background

Work experience

Trainings attended:

2. What's the routine work on daily basis?
3. What is news?
4. What is good news?
5. what is bad news?
6. what is world news?
7. What are the major news sources?
8. Any changes in news sources and section criteria over the past 5 or 10 or 20 years?
9. What are the criteria used in the selection of news stories?
10. What news stories are regarded as priorities? (what news goes to the front page and/or top news)
11. What are the major problems or constraints in reporting?
12. What are the significant problems in the production process? What do the journalists/editors complain about?
13. What's the impact of western tradition or norms on news coverage?
14. Who are the readers? How do you learn about the readers' needs?
15. How to compete with other metropolitan papers in the same nature in the same city?
16. What are the causes, characteristic and impacts of the organization reform in 11/2005? Any comments on the page reforms or reorganization in history?
17. What do you see the role of journalist? (interpreter, disseminator, adversary, mouthpiece, educator, autonomy, service ideal)

18. What are the biggest changes over the past 5 or 10 or 25 years?
19. What do you think of journalists' social status?
20. What do you think of professional ethics? What do you think of 'red envelope' or paid news, as well as writing 'soft news'? Do you take 'red envelope', plagiarism or make-up stories?
21. What's the role model journalist at *BYD*, China and the world?
22. Why do you choose *BYD*? Why do people leave *BYD* or the newspaper profession?
23. What do you think of the major differences between Chinese journalists and western journalists?
24. Who do the journalists represent?
25. What are the recruitment criteria? Any major changes?
26. What do you think of the media globalisation and its impact on content?

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Akhavan-Majid, Roya (2004) 'Mass media reform in China – toward a new analytical framework', *The international journal for communication studies*, Vol. 66(6): 553-565
- Ang, Ien (1996) *Living room wars: rethinking media audiences for a postmodern world*, London: Routledge
- Artz, Lee (2003) 'Globalisation, media hegemony, and social class', in Artz, Lee and Kamalipour, Yahya R. eds. *The globalisation of corporate media hegemony*, Albany: State University of New York Press
- Barne, Geremie R. (1996) 'To screw foreigners is patriotic: China's avant-garde nationalists', in Unger, Jonathan ed. *Chinese nationalism*, London: M.E. Sharpe
- Bates, Thomas R. (2002) 'Gramsci and the theory of hegemony', in James Martin, ed. *Antonio Gramsci: critical assessment of leading political philosophers*, Vol. II, London: Routledge
- Bennett, Lance W. (2002) *News: the politics of illusion*, 5th edition, New York: Longman
- Berger, Arthur Asa (2000) *Media and communication research methods: An introduction to qualitative and quantitative approaches*, London: Sage Publications Ltd.
- Bierhoff, Jan et al. (2000), 'Media innovation, professional debate and media training, a European analysis', European Journalism Centre, <http://www.ejc.nl/pdf/pub/mi.pdf>, accessed 3 January 2007
- Biltereyst, Daniel (2001) 'Global news research and complex citizenship: towards an agenda for research on foreign/international news and audiences', in Hjarvard, Stig ed. *News in a globalized society*, Sweden: Nodicom
- Bourdieu, Pierre (1993) *The field of cultural production*, Cambridge: Polity Press
- Bourdieu, Pierre (1998) *On television and journalism*, London: Pluto Press
- Bourdieu, Pierre (2005) 'The political field, the social science field, and the journalistic field' in Benson, Rodney and Neveu, Erik eds. *Bourdieu and the journalistic field*, Cambridge: Polity Press
- Boyd-Barrett, Oliver (1997) 'Global news wholesalers as agents of globalisation', in Sreberny-Mhammedi, Annabelle et al., eds. *Media in global context – a reader*, London: Arnold
- Boyd-Barrett, Oliver (2005) 'A different scale of difference', *Global media and communication*, 15 Jan, <http://gmc.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/1/1/15>, accessed 4 February 2008.
- Breed, Warren (1955) 'Social control in the newsroom: a functional analysis', *Social forces*, Vol. 33, No. 4: 326-335, <http://www.jstor.org/cgi-bin/jstor/viewitem/00377732/di010789/01p0332w/0?frame=noframe&dpi=3&backcontext=page>, accessed 21 January 2008
- Brislin, Tom (1997) 'An Update on Journalism Ethics in Asia: Values and Practices as Context for Meaning in Japan, China and Korea', Presented to the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., March 6-8, <http://www2.hawaii.edu/~tbrislin/asiaeth.html>, accessed 17 August 2007.
- BYD 2005, 2006 annual meeting minutes (Internal material).
- BYD annual meeting report, January, 2006 (Internal material).
- BYD Yearbook 1992, 1994, 1995, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003 (Internal material)
- Callaha, Sidney (2003) 'New Challenges of Globalisation for Journalism', *Journal of mass media ethics*, 18(1): 3-15.

- Cao, Peng (1999) *Zhongguo baoye jituan fazhan yanjiu (Research on the development of Chinese press groups)*, Beijing: Xinhua chubanshe.
- Castells, Manuel (1996) *The rise of the network society*, Oxford: Blackwell
- Castells, Manuel (2000) *End of millennium*, second edition, Oxford: Blackwell
- Chan, Alex (2007) 'Guiding public opinion through social agenda-setting: China's media policy since the 1990s', *Journal of contemporary China*, Vol.16, No.53: 547-559.
- Chan, Joseph Man (1993) 'Commercialization without Independence: Trends and Tensions of Media Development in China', *China review*, pp. 25.1-25.21
- Chan, Joseph Man (1995) 'Calling the tune without playing the piper: the reassertion of media controls in China', *China review*, pp.5.1-5.16
- Chan, Joseph Man (1997) 'National responses and accessibility to STAR TV in Asia', in Sreberny-Mhammedi, Annabelle et al., eds. *Media in global context – a reader*, London: Arnold.
- Chan, Joseph Man (2000) 'No culture is an island: an analysis of media protectionism and media openness', in Wang, Georgette et al., eds. *The new communications landscape*, London: Routledge.
- Chan, Joseph Man and Qiu, Jack Linchuan (2002) 'Media liberalization under authoritarianism', in Price, Monroe E. et al. eds. *Media reform: democratizing the media, democratizing the state*, London: Routledge.
- Chen, Chongshan et al, (1998) 'The Chinese journalist', in Weaver, David H. ed. *The global journalist: newspeople around the world*, New Jersey: Hampton Press Inc.
- Chomsky, Daniel (1999), 'The mechanisms of management control at the New York Times', *Media, culture & society*, Vol. 21, No. 5: 579-599
- Clausen, Lisbeth (2003) *Global news production*, Copenhagen: Copenhagen Business School Press
- Cohen, Akiba A. (2002) 'Globalisation Ltd: domestication at the boundaries of foreign television news', in Chan, Joseph M. and McIntyre, Bryce T. eds. *In search of boundaries: communication, nation-states and cultural identities*, Westport, CT: Ablex Publishing
- Cohen, Akiba et al., eds. (1995) *Global news rooms, local audiences: a study of the Eurovision news exchange*, London: John Libbey
- Coleman, Renita (2002) 'Searching for the Ethical Journalist: An Exploratory Study of the Moral Development of News Workers', *Journal of mass media ethics*, 17(3): 209–225
- Consalvo, Mia (1998) 'Hegemony, domestic violence, and "Cops": a critique of concordance - The Shows of Violence', *Journal of popular film and television*, Summer,  
[http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_m0412/is\\_n2\\_v26/ai\\_21221635](http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0412/is_n2_v26/ai_21221635),  
 accessed 8 August 2005
- Cooper, Thomas (1989) 'Methodological challenges: comparison of codes and countries', in Cooper, Thomas et al, eds. *Communication ethics and global change*, New York: Longman
- Cottle, Simon (1999) 'From BBC newsroom to BBC newscentre: on changing technology and journalist practices', *Convergence*, Volume 5 Number 3: 22-43
- Crane, Diana (2002) 'Culture and globalisation: theoretical models and emerging trends', in Crane, Diana et al., eds. *Global culture: media, arts, policy, and globalisation*, London: Routledge
- Cui, Baoguo et al, (2005) *Gaizhi yu zhuanzhe: 2004-2005 nian Zhongguo chuanmei chanye fazhan zong baoao (Institutional transformation: Report on development*

- of China's media industry (2004-2005), Beijing: China Social Sciences Academic Press
- Dailey, Larry et al (2003) 'The convergence continuum: a model for studying collaboration between media newsrooms', paper submitted to the Newspaper Division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Kansas City, Missouri, July-August, 2003, <http://web.bsu.edu/ldailey/converge.pdf>, accessed 11 Nov, 2006
- De Burgh, Hugo (2003) *The Chinese journalist – mediating information in the world's most populous country*, London: RoutledgeCurzon
- De Burgh, Hugo (2000) 'Chinese journalism and the Academy: the politics and pedagogy of the media', *Journalism studies*, Vol.1, Number 4, p.551
- Dimmick, John W. (1974) 'The Gatekeeper: an uncertainty theory', *Journalism monographs*, 37, cited from Dimitrova, Daniela V et al, 'Hyperlinking as Gatekeeping: online newspaper -coverage of the execution of an American terrorist', *Journalism Studies*, Volume 4, Number 3, (2003), p.402
- Ding, Jinlin (2002) *Zhongguo xinwen shiye shi (China journalism history)*, Beijing: Gaodeng jiaoyu chubanshe.
- Donald, Stephanie and Keane, Michael (2002) 'Media in China: New convergences, new approaches', in Donald, Stephanie et al. eds. *Media in China – consumption, content and crisis*, New York: RoutledgeCurzon
- Downing, John (1996) *Internationalising media theories*, London: Sage, cited from Ma, Eric Kit-Wai (2000) 'Rethinking media studies: The case of China', in James Curran and Myung-Jin Park, eds. *De-Westernizing media studies*, London: Routledge.
- Eade, John ed. (1997) *Living the global city – globalisation as a local process*, London: Routledge
- Epstein, Edward Jay (2000) *News from nowhere: television and the news*, Chicago: I.R. Dee.
- Featherstone, Mike (1990) 'Global culture: an introduction', in Featherstone, Mike ed. *Global culture – nationalism, globalisation and modernity*, London: Sage Publications.
- Feng, Jielan (2004) 'Paoxi 'youchang xinwen' (Analysing 'paid journalism)', *Qingnian Jizhe (Young Journalists)*, No. 12 issue, <http://www.ddcbxj.com/Article/ShowArticle.asp?ArticleID=796>, accessed on 26 July 2007.
- Fishman, Mark (1980) *Manufacturing the news*, London: University of Texas Press.
- Flournoy, Don (2001) 'Coverage, competition and credibility: the CNN international standard' in Silvia, Tony ed. *Global news – perspectives on the information age*, US: Iowa State University Press.
- Franklin, Bob (1997) *Newszak and news media*, London: Arnold.
- Fraser, Matthew (2003) *Weapons of mass distraction: soft power and American empire*, Toronto: Key Porter Books, cited from Hamm, Bernd and Smandych, Russell eds. (2005) *Cultural imperialism – essays on the political economy of cultural domination*, Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press.
- Friedland, Lewis A. and Campbell, Kathryn B. (2004) 'Connected research: the Chicago school precedent', in Iorio, Sharon Hartin, ed. *Qualitative research in journalism: taking it to the streets*, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Inc., Publishers.



- Friedman, Jonathan (2002) 'Globalisation and the making of a global imaginary', in Stald, Gite and Tufte, Thomas eds. *Global encounters: media and cultural transformation*, Luton: University of Luton Press.
- Frost, Chris (2000) *Media ethics and self-regulation*, Harlow: Longman.
- Fung, Anthony (2004) 'Coping, cloning and copying: Hong Kong in the global television format business', in Moran, Albert and Keane, Michael eds. *Television across Asia: television industries, programme formats and globalisation*, London: RoutledgeCurzon.
- Fung, Anthony (2006) 'Think globally, act locally -China's rendezvous with MTV', *Global media and communication*, Vol. 2, No. 1: 71-88.
- Gallagher, Margaret (1982) 'Negotiation of control in media organizations and occupations', in Michael Gurevtch et al, eds. *Culture, society and the media*, London: Routledge.
- Galtung, Johan and Ruge, Mari Holmboe (1965) 'The Structure of Foreign News', *Journal of peace research*, London: Sage Publications, pp.64-91.
- Galtung, Johan and Vincent, Richard C. (1992) *Global glasnost: toward a new world information and communication order?* New Jersey: Hampton Press.
- Gans, Herbert (2003) *Democracy and the News*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Gans, Herbert J. (1979) *Deciding what's news – a study of CBS evening news, NBC nightly news, Newsweek and Time*, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, updated 2004.
- Gerbner, George and Marvanyi, George (1977) 'The many worlds of the world's press', *Journal of Communication*, Vol. 27, Iss. 1, Winter: 52-66
- Gershon, Richard A. (2007) 'The transnational media corporation and the economics of global competition', in Kamalipour, Yahya R. ed. *Global Communication* (second edition), California: Thomson Wadsworth.
- Giddens, Anthony (1990) *The consequences of modernity*, Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Giddens, Anthony (1997) 'The globalizing of modernity', in Sreberny-Mhammedi, Annabelle et al., eds. *Media in global context – a reader*, London: Arnold.
- Gieber, Walter (1956) 'Across the Desk: A Study of 16 Telegraph Editors,' *Journalism Quarterly* 33, No. 3: 423-432
- Gieber, Walter (1964) 'News is what newspapermen make it', in Dexter, Lewis A. and White, David M. *People, society and mass communications*, London: Free Press of Glencoe.
- Ginneken, Jaap Van (1998) *Understanding global news – a critical introduction*, London: Sage Publications.
- Gitlin, Todd (1980) *Whole world is watching – mass media in the making and unmaking of the new left*, Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Golding, Peter (1977) 'Media professionalism in the third world: the transfer of an ideology', in James Curran, Michael Gurevitch and Janet Woollacott, eds. *Mass communication and society*, London: The Open University Press.
- Golding, Peter and Elliott, Philip (1979) *Making the news*, London: Longman
- Goldsmiths Media Group (2000) 'Media organisations in society: central issues', in James Curran, ed. *Media organisations in society*, London: Arnold.
- Gordon, Rich (2003) 'The meanings and implications of convergence', in Kevin Kawamoto ed. *Digital Journalism: emerging media and the changing horizons of journalism*, Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers  
<http://www2.sims.berkeley.edu/courses/is246/s03/docs/meaningsofconvergence.pdf>, accessed 3 December 2006

- Guan, Keguang (1989) 'Journalism ethics in China', *Communication ethics and global change*, pp.194-200.
- Guo, Yali (2005) *Meiti zhengce yu fagui (Media policies and regulations)*, Beijing: Zhongguo chuanmen daxue chubanshe.
- Gurevitch, Michael et al, (1991) 'The global newsroom: convergences and diversities in the globalisation of television news', in Dahlgren, Peter and Sparks, Colin eds. *Communication and citizenship – journalism and the public sphere*, London: Routledge.
- Hallin, Daniel C. (2005) 'Field theory, differentiation theory, and comparative media research' in Benson, Rodney and Neveu, Erik eds. *Bourdieu and the journalistic field*, Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Hallin, Daniel C. and Mancini, Paolo (2004) *Comparing media systems: three models of media and politics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- He, Zhou (2000) 'Chinese Communist party press in a tug-of-war: a political-economy analysis of the Shenzhen Special Zone Daily', in Lee, Chin-Chuan ed. *Power, money and media: communication patterns and bureaucratic control in cultural China*, Illinois: Northwestern University Press.
- He, Zhou (2003) 'How do the Chinese media reduce organizational incongruence? Bureaucratic capitalism in the name of Communism', in Lee, Chin-chuan ed. *Chinese media, global contexts*, London: RoutledgeCurzon.
- Herbert, John (2001) *Practising global journalism – exploring reporting issues worldwide*, Oxford: Focal Press.
- Herman, Edward S. (1996) 'The propaganda model revisited', <http://musictravel.free.fr/political/political7.htm>, accessed 4 February 2008.
- Herman, Edward S. and Chomsky, Noam (1998) *Manufacturing consent – the political economy of the mass media*, London: Vintage.
- Hirsch, Paul (1977) 'Occupational, organizational and institutional models in mass media research: toward an integrated framework' in Hirsch, P. M. and Miller, P.V. eds. *Strategies for communication research*, CA: Sage, pp.13-40
- Hjarvard, Stig (2001) 'News media and globalisation of the public sphere', in Hjarvard, Stig ed. *News in a globalized society*, Sweden: Nodicom.
- Holm, Hans-Henrik (2001) 'The effect of globalization on media structures and norms – globalisation and the choice of foreign news', in Hjarvard, Stig ed. *News in a globalized society*, Sweden: Nodicom.
- Hong, Junhao (2000) 'Reconciliation between openness and resistance: media globalisation and new policies of China's television in the 1990s', in Wang, Georgette et al., eds. *The new communications landscape*, London: Routledge.
- Horvat, Janos (2001) 'American news, global audience', in Silvia, Tony ed. *Global news – perspectives on the information age*, Iowa: Iowa State University Press.
- Huang, Chengju (2001) 'China's state-run tabloids: the rise of 'city newspapers'', *The international communication gazette*, Vol. 63, No. 5: 435-450.
- Huang, Chengju (2007a) 'Editorial - from control to negotiation: Chinese media in the 2000s', *The international communication gazette*, Vol.69(5): 402-412
- Huang, Chengju (2007b) 'Trace the stones in crossing the river: media structural changes in Post-WTO China', *The international communication gazette*, Vol. 69(5): 413-430
- Jacobsen, Soeren Sandfeld (2005) 'Media System of Denmark, report for the Study on Co-Regulation Measures, <http://www.hans-bredow-institut.de/forschung/recht/co-reg/reports/1/Denmark.pdf>, accessed 6 Jan, 2007.

- Josephi, Beat (2005) 'Journalism in the global age: between normative and empirical', *Gazette: the international journal for communication studies*, Vol.67 (6): 575-590.
- Kean, John (1991) *The media and democracy*, Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Keane, Michael (2004) 'A revolution in television and a great leap forward for innovation?' in Moran, Albert and Keane, Michael eds. *Television across Asia: Television industries, programme formats and globalisation*, London: RoutledgeCurzon.
- Keane, Michael and Donald, Stephanie (2002) 'Responses to crisis – convergence, content industries and media governance', in Donald, Stephanie Hemelryk, Keane, Michael and Yin, Hong, eds. *Media in China – Consumption, Content and Crisis*, New York: RoutledgeCurzon.
- Keen, Steve (1982) 'News or Propaganda?', *The Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs*, No.8: 153-154.
- Kim, Daeho and Hong, Seok-Kyeong (2001) 'The IMP, globalisation, and the changes in the media power structure in South Korea', in Morris, Nancy and Waisbord, Silvio eds. *Media and Globalisation – why the state matters*, New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
- Kim, Kyungmo and Barnett, George A. (1996) 'The determinants of international news flow: a network analysis', *Communication research*, Vol. 23, No. 3: 323-352.
- Laitila, Tiina (1995) 'Journalists' codes of ethics in Europe', *European journal of communication*, Vol. 10, No. 4: 527-544.
- Lang, Jinsong (2003) *Zhongguo xinwen zhengce tixi yanjiu (China Journalism Policies System Studies)*, Beijing: Xinhua chubanshe.
- Latham, Kevin (2000) 'Nothing but the Truth: News Media, Power and Hegemony in South China', *The China quarterly*, No.163. September: 633-654.
- Lawson-Borders, Gracie (2006) *Media organizations and convergence – case studies of media convergence pioneers*, London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Lee, Chin-chuan (2000) 'Chinese Communication – Prisms, trajectories and modes of understanding', in Lee, Chin-Chuan ed. *Power, money and media: communication patterns and bureaucratic control in cultural China*, Illinois: Northwestern University Press.
- Lee, Chin-chuan (2003) 'The global and the national of the Chinese media: discourse, market, technology, and ideology', in Lee, Chin-chuan ed. *Chinese media, global contexts*, London: RoutledgeCurzon.
- Lee, Chin-chuan (2005) 'The conception of Chinese journalist – ideological convergence and contestation', in De Burgh, Hugo, *Making journalists – diverse models, global issues*, London: Routledge
- Lee, Paul S.N. (2000) 'Television and global culture: assessing the role of television in globalisation', in Wang, Georgette et al., eds. *The new communications landscape*, London: Routledge.
- Limo, Yehiel and Himelboim, Itai (2006) 'Journalism and Moonlighting: An International Comparison of 242 Codes of Ethics', *Journal of mass media ethics*, 21(4): 265–285
- Lin, Hui (2004) *Wei wancheng de lishi: Zhongguo xinwen gaige qianyan (Unfinished history: the front line of China's journalism reform)*, Shanghai: Fudan University Press.
- Liu, Hong (2000) 'Profit or ideology? The Chinese press between party and market', *Media, Culture and Society*, Vol. 20: 31-41.

- Loon, Ad van (1996) 'Global trends – global solutions?', in Vicki MacLeod, ed. *Media ownership and control – in the age of convergence*, London: International Institute of Communication.
- Lull, James (1997) 'China turned on (revisited): television, reform and resistance', in Boyd-Barrett et al, eds. *Media in global context – a reader*, London: Arnold.
- Lund, Anker Brink (2005) The power of the media in the Nordic countries: a comparative perspective, *Nordisk kulturpolitisk tidskrift*, Vol. 8, No. 1: 203-227.
- Ma, Eric Kit-Wai (2000) 'Rethinking media studies: The case of China', in James Curran and Myung-Jin Park, eds. *De-Westernizing media studies*, London: Routledge.
- Massey, Brian L. and Luo, Wei (2005) 'Chinese newspapers and market theories of web journalism', *Gazette: the international journal for communication studies*, Vol. 67(4): 359-371.
- McGrew, Anthony (1992) 'A global society?' in Hall, Stuart et al, eds. *Modernity and its futures*, Cambridge: Polity Press.
- McKenzie, Robert (2006) *Comparing media from around the world*, London: Pearson/Allyn and Bacon.
- McNair, Brian (1998) *The sociology of journalism*, London: Arnold.
- McNair, Brian (2005) 'What is journalism', in De Burgh, Hugo, *Making journalists – diverse models, global issues*, London: Routledge.
- McQuail, Denis (2000) *McQuail's mass communication theory*, 4th edition, London: Sage Publications Ltd..
- Meyer, Philip (1987) *Ethical Journalism – a guide for students, practitioners, and consumers*, New York: Longman.
- Meyer, Philip (2000) 'Can Journalism Be Fair? 'If truth is whatever works for you, there is no need for journalism', *Nieman Reports*, The Nieman Foundation for Journalism at Harvard University, Vol. 54, No. 3, Fall.  
<http://66.249.93.104/search?q=cache:k4-LqAXO55sJ:www.nieman.harvard.edu/reports/00-3NRfall/Can-Journalism.html+professionalism,+journalism&hl=en>, accessed 10 August 2005
- Meyer, Philip (2004) *The vanishing newspaper – saving journalism in the information age*, London: University of Missouri Press.
- Molotch, Harvey and Lester, Marilyn (1974) 'News as purposive behaviour: on the strategic use of routine Events, Accidents, and Scandals', *American sociological review*, February, Vol.39: 101-112.  
<http://www.jstor.org/view/00031224/di974297/97p00437/0?frame=frame&userID=810b4cd7@leeds.ac.uk/01c0a8347500505ca50&dpi=3&config=jstor>, accessed 21 January 2008.
- Moran, Albert (2004) 'Television formats in the world/the world of television formats', in Moran, Albert and Keane, Michael eds. *Television across Asia: television industries, programme formats and globalisation*, London: RoutledgeCurzon.
- Morris, John L. and Iorio, Sharon Hartin (2004) 'Glossary', in Iorio, Sharon Hartin, ed. *Qualitative research in journalism: taking it to the streets*, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Inc., Publishers.
- Murdock, Graham (1990) 'Redrawing the map of the communications industries: concentration and ownership in the era of privatization', in Marjorie Ferguson, ed. *Public communication*, London: Sage.
- Nel, François (2005) 'Lessons from the front: Convergence at Nordjyske Medier', the journalism leaders' programme, 02 November,  
<http://journalismleaders.blogspot.com/>, accessed 22 November 2006.

- Noblet, Kevin (2001) 'Producing and marketing news for the international audience', in Silvia, Tony ed. *Global news – perspectives on the information age*, US: Iowa State University Press.
- Palmer, Michael (1998) 'What makes news', in Boyd-Barrett, Oliver and Rantanen, Terhi eds. *The globalisation of news*, London: Sage Publications
- Pan, Zhongdang (2000) 'Improvising reform activities: the changing reality of journalistic practice in China', in Lee, Chin-Chuan ed. *Power, money and media: communication patterns and bureaucratic control in cultural China*, Illinois: Northwestern University Press.
- Paterson, Chris (1998) 'Global battlefields', in Boyd-Barrett, Oliver and Rantanen, Terhi eds. *The globalisation of news*, London: Sage Publications
- Paterson, Chris A. (2001) 'Media imperialism revisited: the global public sphere and the news agency agenda', in Hjarvard, Stig ed. *News in a globalized society*, Sweden: Nordicom.
- Pieterse, Jan Nederveen (1995) 'Globalisation as hybridisation', in Featherstone, Mike et al, eds. *Global modernities*, London: Sage Publications.
- Polumbaum, Judy (1990) 'The tribulations of China's journalists after a decade of reform', in Lee, Chin-Chuan ed. *Voices of China: the interplay of politics and journalism*, London: The Guilford Press.
- Polumbaum, Judy (1994) 'Between propaganda and junk-food journalism: exploratory terrains in mainland Chinese news coverage', cited from Lee, Chin-Chuan ed. *Power, money and media: communication patterns and bureaucratic control in cultural China*, Illinois: Northwestern University Press.
- Quinn, Stephen (2005) 'Convergence's fundamental question', *Journalism Studies*, Volume 6, Number 1: 29-38.
- Quinn, Aaron (2007) 'Moral Virtues for Journalists', *Journal of mass media ethics*, 22(2&3): 168–186.
- Rantanen, Terhi (1998) 'The struggle for control of domestic news markets', in Boyd-Barrett, Oliver and Rantanen, Terhi eds. *The globalisation of news*, London: Sage Publications.
- Rantanen, Terhi (2005) *The media and globalisation*, London: Sage Publications
- Reese, Stephen (2001) 'Understanding the global journalist: a hierarchy-of-influences approach', *Journalism Studies*, Vol. 2, No 2: 173-187.
- Reese, Stephen D. (2006) 'Journalism research and the hierarchy of influences model: a global perspective', panel presentation paper prepared for 'Rethinking journalism across national boundaries: new challenges and emergent perspectives', conference sponsored by the Brazil Society for Researches in Journalism, Porto Alegre, Brazil, 3-5 November 2006, <http://www.sbpjor.ufsc.br/pdf/palestras/steve.pdf>, accessed 6 January 2008.
- Report on regulations for print media of the People's Republic of China, Article 19, London, 2006, Index number: LAW/2006/07/17, p.5.
- Ritzer, George (1993) *The McDonaldization of society*, London: Pine Forge Press.
- Robertson, Roland (1995) 'Glocalization: time-space and homogeneity – heterogeneity', in Featherstone, Mike et al., eds. *Global modernities*, London: Sage
- Robertson, Roland et al., eds. (2007) *Encyclopaedia of globalisation*, Vol. 2, London: Routledge: 545-547.
- Rubenstein, Sondra (2002) 'Brutal reality challenges media academics', *British Journalism Review*, Vol. 13, No. 2: 46-52.
- Schlesinger, Philip (1978) *Putting 'reality' together – BBC news*, London: Constable.
- Schudson, Michael (1995) *The power of news*, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

- Schudson, Michael (1996) 'The sociology of news production revisited', in Curran, James and Gurevitch, Michael eds. *Mass media and society*, second edition, London: Arnold.
- Schudson, Michael (2003) *The sociology of news*, New York: W.W. Norton & Company
- Shi, Anbin (2005) 'The taming of the shrew: Global media in a Chinese perspective', *Global media and communication*, Vol. 1: 33-36.
- Shoemaker, Pamela J and Reese, Stephen D. (1996) *Mediating the message: theories of influence on mass media content*, second edition, New York: Longman.
- Shoemaker, Pamela J. (1991) *Communication concepts 3: gatekeeping*, CA: Sage.
- Shoemaker, Pamela J. and Cohen, Akiba A. (2006) *News around the world: content, practitioners, and the public*, New York: Routledge.
- Shuster, Alvin (2001) 'Global news, changing views: economy, fall of communism shift media priorities', in Silvia, Tony ed. *Global news – perspectives on the information age*, US: Iowa State University Press Silvia
- Siebert, Frederick S., Peterson, Theodore and Schramm, Wilbur (1963) *Four theories of the press*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Sigal, Leon V. (1973) *Reporters and officials – the organization and politics of newsmaking*, London: D. C. Heath.
- Singer, Jane B (2004) 'More than ink-stained wretches: the resocialization of print journalists in converged newsrooms', *Journalism & mass communication quarterly*, Winter, 81/4: 841-842.
- Singer, Jane B. (1998) 'Online journalists: Foundations for Research into Their Changing Roles', *Journal of computer-mediated communication*, 4 (1), September, <http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol4/issue1/singer.html>, accessed 4 February 2008.
- Soderlund, Walter C. and Hildebrandt, Kai eds. (2005) *Canadian newspaper ownership in the era of convergence – rediscovering social responsibility*, Edmonton: The University of Alberta Press.
- Soh, Ardyth Broadrick (1999) *Media management: a casebook*, 2nd edition, London: Lawrence Earlbaum Associates.
- Song, Jianwu et al (2005) *Zhongguo meijie jingji de fa zhan guilu yu qushi (Development trend of China's media economy)*, Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue Chubanshe
- Sparks, Colin (2000) 'The new communications landscape', in Wang, Georgette et al., eds. *The new communications landscape*, London: Routledge.
- Sparks, Colin (2007) *Globalisation, development and the mass media*, London: Sage Publications.
- Sreberny-Mohammadi, Annabelle (1996) 'The global and the local in international communications', in James Curran and Michael Gurevitch, eds. *Mass media and society*, second edition, London: Arnold.
- Sreberny-Mohammadi, Annabelle and Stevenson, Robert (1999) 'Comparative analysis of international news flow: an example of global media monitoring', in Nordenstreng, Kaarle et al., eds. *International media monitoring*, New Jersey: Hampton Press Inc.
- Sreberny-Mohammadi, Annabelle et al. (1985) *Foreign news in the media: international reporting in 29 countries*, Paris: UNESCO.
- Stevenson, Robert (1995) 'Project Proposal: Corporate Study of Foreign News and International News Flow in the 1990s', <http://www.ibiblio.org/newsflow/>, accessed 13 January 2008.
- Straubhaar, Joseph (2002) '(Re)asserting national television and national identity against the global, regional and local levels of world television', in Chan, Joseph M. and

- McIntyre, Bryce T. eds. *In search of boundaries – communication, nation-states and cultural identities*, London: Ablex Publishing.
- Straubhaar, Joseph D. (1997) 'Distinguishing the global, regional and national levels of world television', in Sreberny-Mhammedi, Annabelle et al., eds. *Media in global context – a reader*, London: Arnold.
- Sun, Wanning (2002) *Leaving China : media, migration, and transnational imagination*, Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Sun, Xupei (2001) *Orchestra of voices – making the argument for greater speech and press freedom in the People's Republic of China*, London: Praeger.
- Sun, Yanjun (2002) *Baoye Zhongguo (Press Industry in China)*, Beijing: Zhongguo sanxia chubanshe.
- Sun, Zhengyi and Liu, Tingting (2004) 'Zhongguo xinwenye huiwang: eryue (Reflections on China's journalism industry: February)', *Xinwen Jizhe (Journalists)*, <http://www.whxweb.gov.cn/s1/show.php?id=173>, accessed 20 April 2007.
- Tai, Zixue and Chang, Tsan-Kuo (2002) 'The global news and the pictures in their heads – a comparative analysis of audience interest, editor perceptions and newspaper coverage', *Gazette: The international journal for communication studies*, Vol. 64, No. 3: 251-265.
- Tomlinson, John (1999) *Globalisation and culture*, Oxford: Blackwell.
- Tuchman, Gaye (1978) *Making news – a study in the construction of reality*, New York: The Free Press.
- Tumber, Howard and Prentoulis, Marina (2005) 'Journalism and the making of a profession', in De Burgh, Hugo ed. *Making journalists – diverse models, global issues*, London: Routledge.
- Tunstall, Jeremy (1971) *Journalists at work*, London: Constable.
- Underwood, Doug (1997) *When MBAs rule the newsroom – how the marketers and managers are reshaping today's media*, New York: Columbia University Press
- Unger, Jonathan (1996) 'Introduction', in Unger, Jonathan ed. *Chinese nationalism*, London: M.E.Sharpe.
- Wallerstein, Immanuel (1979) 'The rise and future demise of the world capitalist system: concepts for comparative analysis', in Wallerstein, Immanuel ed. *The capitalist world economy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p.19, cited from Giddens, Anthony (1997) 'The globalizing of modernity', in Sreberny-Mhammedi, Annabelle et al., eds. *Media in global context – a reader*, London: Arnold.
- Wang, Bo (2003) 'Youchang xinwen de benzhi jiqi falu zeren (the nature and legal responsibility of paid journalism)', *Xinwen Jizhe (Journalists)*, 9 October, <http://tech.sina.com.cn/other/2003-10-09/1400241884.shtml>, accessed 26 July 2007.
- Wang, Canfa et al, (2005) *China's human resource development report No.2 (Zhongguo rencai fazhan baogao No.2)*, Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe.
- Ward, Stephen (2005) 'Philosophical foundations for global journalism ethics', *Journal of mass Media ethics*, 20(1): 3-21.
- Ward, Stephen (2007) 'Utility and Impartiality: Being Impartial in a Partial World', *Journal of mass media ethics*, 22(2&3): 151-167.
- Watson, James (2007) 'Representing realities: an overview of news framing', *Keio communication review*, No.29, <http://www.mediacom.keio.ac.jp/publication/pdf2007/pdf/James%20WATSON.pdf>, accessed 8 March 2007.

- Weaver, D. and Wilhoit, G.C. (1992) *The American journalist in the 1990s*, cited from Shoemaker, Pamela J and Reese, Stephen D. (1996) *Mediating the message: Theories of influence on mass media content*, second edition, New York: Longman
- Weaver, David H. (2005) 'Who are journalists?' in De Burgh, Hugo ed. *Making journalists – diverse models, global issues*, London: Routledge.
- Weaver, David H., ed. (1998) *The global journalist – newspeople around the world*, Kresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.
- Wei, Yongzheng (2001) 'Zhongguo dalu chuanmei liyong yewai ziben hefaxing yanjiu' (Research on legitimacy of Chinese mainland media industry using non-media capital) (part two), *China Journalism Review*, 21 July, <http://cjr.zjol.com.cn/05cjr/system/2006/12/21/008062378.shtml>, accessed 6 March 2007
- Wei, Yongzheng (2002) 'Rushi qianhou chuanmeifa de tiaozheng (Adjustment of China's media laws before and after China's entry into WTO)', *Chuanmei Toushi (Media Focus)*, [http://gbcode.rthk.org.hk/TuniS/www.rthk.org.hk/mediadigest/20020715\\_76\\_33705.html](http://gbcode.rthk.org.hk/TuniS/www.rthk.org.hk/mediadigest/20020715_76_33705.html), accessed 8 April 2007.
- Westerståhl, Jörgen and Johansson, Folke (1994) 'Foreign News: News Values and Ideologies', *European journal of communication*, Vol. 9, No. 1: 71-89.
- White, David Manning (1964) 'The 'gatekeeper': a case study in the selection of news', in Dexter, Lewis A. and White, David M. *People, society and mass communications*, London: Free Press of Glencoe, cited from <http://www.tcw.utwente.nl/theorieenoverzicht/Theory%20clusters/Media,%20Culture%20and%20Society/gatekeeping.doc/>, accessed 4 February 2008.
- Wimmer, Roger D. and Dominick, Joseph R. (2003) *Mass media research: an introduction*, 7th edition, Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.
- Windfield, Betty Houchin and Peng, Zengjun (2005) 'Market or party controls? Chinese media in transition', *Gazette: the international journal for communication studies*, Vol. 67(3): 255-270.
- Wu, Denis (2000) 'Systematic determinants of international news coverage: a comparison of 38 countries', *Journal of communication*, 50(2): 110-130.
- Wu, Guoguang (2000) 'One head, many mouths – diversifying press structures in reform China', in Lee, Chin-Chuan ed. *Power, money and media: communication patterns and bureaucratic control in cultural China*, Illinois: Northwestern University Press.
- Xia, Yu (2005) 'Zhongguo wanhuatong: toushi jizhe shou hongbao xianxiang' (Perspectives on journalists' acceptance of red envelope), 25 November, [http://www.rfa.org/cantonese/zhuanti/zhongguowanhuatong/2005/11/25/china\\_journalist/](http://www.rfa.org/cantonese/zhuanti/zhongguowanhuatong/2005/11/25/china_journalist/), accessed 25 July 2007.
- Xu, Yu et al. (2002) 'Reform and challenge – an analysis of China's journalism education under social transition', *Gazette: The international journal for communication studies*, Vol. 64 (1), 63–77.
- Xu, Yu (1994) 'Professionalization without guarantees: changes of the Chinese press in post 1989 years', *Gazette: The international journal for communications studies*, 53(1-2): 23-41
- Yang, Ping (1992) 'Cong zhouer dao zhousi, xinwen guannian de zhuanbian (From two issues to four issues a week: changes in news values)' in *Shenei yantaohui lunwen zhuanjuan 1992* (Internal seminar papers collection).



- Yang, Yuanlong (2007) 'Yingguo baoye zilü yu zhongguo xinwen zhiye diode zhunze' (Press self-regulation in the UK and press code of ethics in China), 24 April, <http://press.gapp.gov.cn/news/wen.php?aid=16032&val=news>, accessed 2 August, 2007.
- Yu, Guoming (1996) *Shanbian de guiji (Changing tracks)*, Beijing: Zhongyang bianyi chubanshe.
- Yu, Guoming (2003) *Chuan mei ying xiang li (Media influence)*, Guangzhou: Nanfang Ribao chubanshe.
- Zhang, Guoliang et al, (2006) 'What's news in China?', in Shoemaker, Pamela J. and Cohen, Akiba A. eds. *News around the world: content, practitioners, and the public*, New York: Routledge.
- Zhang, Ke (2006) 'Lun zhengfu zai woguo xinwen zhidu bianqian zhong de zuoyong (On the role of government in the transformation of China's journalism system)', *Xinwen Jie (News journal)*, <http://xwj.scol.com.cn/llzy/20061115/2006111551123.htm>, accessed 3 March 2007.
- Zhang, Yanping (2006) 'Cong baozhi dao xiandai chuanmei jituan: Beijing qingnian bao dui wenhua tizhi gaige de chubu tansuo (From newspaper to modern media conglomerate: BYD's initial exploration in the cultural institutional reform)', *Chuanmei*, 25 July, <http://www.chaogewang.com/html/xdcn/cgal/2006/1205/2333.html>, accessed 10 March 2008.
- Zhang, Yanping ed. (1997) *Xinwen zhoukan sanji tiao 1993-1996 (Newsweek supplement's triple jump, 1993-1996)*, (Internal corporate material).
- Zhang, Yong (2000) 'From masses to audience: changing media ideologies and practices in reform China', *Journalism studies*, Vol. 1, No. 4: 617-635.
- Zhang, Yu (2005) 'The reforming role of the Chinese government in China's media transformation', *Media Asia*, vol. 32 No 2.
- Zhao, Junhong (2005) *Toushi Cui Enqing (Perspectives on Cui Enqing)*, Beijing: Taihai Chubanshe, <http://appbook.qq.com/book/298/0004.htm>, accessed 18 November 2006.
- Zhao, Yuezhi (1997), 'Toward a propaganda/commercial model of journalism in China? The case of the Beijing Youth News', *International communication gazette*, Vol. 58, No. 3: 143-15.
- Zhao, Yuezhi (1998) *Media, market and democracy in China – between the party line and the bottom line*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press
- Zhao, Yuezhi (2000) 'From commercialisation to conglomeration: the transformation of the Chinese press within the orbit of the Party state', *Journal of communication*, 50(2):3-26.
- Zhao, Yuezhi (2001) 'Media and elusive democracy in China', *The public javnost: journal of the European institute for communication and culture*, Vol. 8, 4: 21-44.
- Zhao, Yuezhi (2003) 'Enter the world: neo-liberal globalisation, the dream for a strong nation, and Chinese press discourses on the WTO', in Lee, Chin-chuan ed. *Chinese media, global contexts*, London: RoutledgeCurzon.
- Zhou, Yuezhi (2000) 'Watchdogs on Party leashes? Contexts and implications of investigative journalism in post-Deng era', *Journalism Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 4: 577-597.