Cardiff University

School of Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies

Transforming the global in local magazines: a multimodal analysis of the Chinese *Rayli*

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This thesis is submitted to Cardiff University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

15 April 2016

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TITLE OF DEGREE	PhD
FULL TITLE OF THESIS	TRANSFORMING THE GLOBAL IN LOCAL MAGAZINES: A MULTIMODAL ANALYSIS OF CHINESE RAYLI
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Abstract

In this thesis I study the changing linguistic and visual representations of women at work in the content of the Chinese women's magazine *Rayli* over a 17-year period. Since China's entry into the WTO in 2001, the Chinese magazine industry has been through dramatic changes partly driven by international titles and franchises being introduced into China from global publishers. *Rayli,* launched with a licensing agreement with a Japanese partner, is one such example. One question that is raised by scholars about such processes is the way that both western media models become disseminated into new territories and the extent to which these must be localised and adapted to local cultures. So, what is the relationship between traditional local values and advertising lead culture of consumer capitalism? There have in fact been no such studies of Chinese magazines and studies on global/local media of this nature have tended to be more theoretical and used not so clearly defined notions of 'local cultural values'. More recently, scholars have argued that more detailed empirical work is required to throw light on these processes, especially as they apply to specific contexts.

The thesis seeks to offer one small yet important contribution in looking for ways such global and local interactions can be clearly defined and identified in the case of a lifestyle magazine. In order to do this, the thesis draws on analytical tools from Critical Discourse Analysis and Multimodality to empirically identify details of the ways that the content of *Rayli* has been shifting. This approach provides a highly useful set of tools that allows me to point to the specific details of how participants are represented, what they are represented as doing and in which settings they are seen. It allows me to draw out what kinds of ideas, values and priorities the woman held over time. It also allows me to look at the stylistic choices in design over time, such as the use of image types, typeface, colour and composition. In each case, I identify the way that more global forms of representation and design styles interact with both those that are more local and those that are specifically Japanese, coming from *Rayli*'s parent company. While much of the analysis in the thesis is concerned with changes in *Rayli* magazine itself, I also make a comparison to the Chinese version of *Cosmopolitan* magazine. It is through comparing the current *Rayli* with its former versions and with a US influenced magazine that I assess if, where and how the discourse of women at work have changed. The interpretation of the data is supported with results from interviews carried out with staff at these two titles. The thesis finds shifts in linguistic and visual representations and in design over the 17-year period. The results point to a complex cultural exchange and transformations of what might be thought of as 'local' and the international. Gradually, the discourse of women at work in *Rayli* has been shaped in the neo-capitalist global order and has become intensely mixed up with the sphere of women's libidinal, fantasies and glamour, which lead to the sphere of consumption. This is however achieved by transforming and repacking foreign values and ideas under the mask of local identities, and vice versa, as well as recreating and converting local identities in relation to exterior cultures. A heterogeneous communicative method to (re)produce identity and culture has been created in *Rayli*.

Content page

Images, Tables, and figures

Image

Figures

Tables

Introduction

When I was a teenage girl in Taiwan in the late 1990s, I used to go to the bookshop every month for two magazines, *Beauty* and *Bella.* They were the first female magazines that I came across. It was however not so much because of their content that I read them each month, but mainly because there was not much choice. Before long, maybe within a year or two, I was not sure which magazines I wanted to read anymore. Suddenly there were so many options with new magazines popping up almost every month. There were *Non-no, Kawaii, Vivi* and *Mini* from Japan, *Elle, Marie Claire* and *Madame FIGARO* from France and *Cosmopolitan, Bazaar* and *Vogue* from the United States. There were also localised Taiwanese editions of these alongside the original Japanese, French or American editions. After a period of discovery and reading all of them, I had the feeling that they all looked pretty similar but somehow different. I always preferred the original Japanese magazines to the others, but why? I could only explain that original Japanese magazines had more glamorous photos and a better quality paper than the Taiwanese magazines or the localised editions. Western magazines had glamorous photos and a good quality paper too, however they somehow felt like there was less content in them than in the Japanese ones and this content somehow resonated less with me. I also always wondered why they were different, why the local editions had different content from the original versions, how they decide what to keep from the original editions, what to produce locally and why the local editions for different magazines seem to appear 'local' in different ways and so on? However at that time, they were just immature thoughts that were not dealt with nor answered.

I had the chance to reengage with these questions more seriously when I was doing my MA in International Journalism. I rethought those questions in a more academic way and attempted to seek answers for them. In my MA thesis, I studied the way that magazines are localised differently for different markets. However, it still left me with a number of

questions. How can we best think about the kinds of differences we find between local markets versus international brands? On the one hand, how can we better understand the nature of the details of writing, editing and visual designs in magazines for specific national markets? On the other hand, what do global and local actually mean in a specific context? Perhaps more importantly, what do media, such as magazines, present as local or international and how are these combined and transformed for the purposes of sale, as well as generating advertising revenue? Putting these questions in social aspects brings out other questions, which mainly centre on the notion of what culture, value, ideas and identities are being fostered in the magazines and how they potentially take part in influencing and shaping society. I am therefore interested in searching the best way to observe the changes, edits and localisations in magazines to understand their reflections on the movement of a specific society and their prospective influence on shaping society.

To answer these questions, I decided to place the focus in the context of China; a country that has undergone dramatic changes economically, politically and socially in last 50 years. The two images below substantially show these changes. Image one is the cover of a government journal *Chinese Women* that was published in 1956. Image two is a page from a Chinese edition of a Japanese magazine in the 2010s. The tremendous changes China has been through between the 1950s and the 2010s bring China away from the Cultural Revolution, a time when China was one of the closed-down, poorest and least-developed countries in the world, to a country that has become a member of the WTO and stands as the world's second largest economic power (World Bank, 2015). Its changes and developments are on-going to the extent that China is predicted to pull ahead of the United States to grow into the world's leading economic power by 2019 (World Bank, 2015). One of the sectors that rises and transfers the most with the economic reform is the media industry. PrincewaterhouseCoopers's *Global Entertainment and Media Outlook 2012-2016* (2012)

reported that by 2011, China was the third biggest entertainment and media market. The amount that Chinese people spend on media per year is 1.9 trillion U.S.D. Take magazine segment for example, in 1950 there were 295 magazine titles published in China and by 2013 there were over ten thousand magazine titles being published (Workers' Association of China's Publication, 1980; Liu and Wu, 2014). Beside the great changes in numbers, I surmise that the content, the language, the visual design, the values and the ideological messages in magazines have also been through considerable transformations. Like the two images below, they share the same topic of working women but they look greatly different. This thesis is therefore set as a journey in examining the differences, an attempt to identify the changes in details and a disclosure of the ideology behind the changes.

Image one - *Chinese Women,* 1956   Image two - *Rayli*, 2011

Scholars have commented on the rapidly changing media environment in China and they have helped me to place my concentration on a more specific period and case. Some scholars have pointed out the adoption of international models and the way these models interact with the existing structures, representations and values of an earlier media industry in

China (Chung, 2005; Wu, 2008; Wu and Ng, 2011). The beginning of the increasing international influence can be traced back to Deng's reforms in the 1990s. Afterwards, the joining of the WTO in 2001 has catalysed China's engagement with global media. For that reason, I have narrowed down the focus of my research on the period around the time China joined the WTO. I will study how a Chinese women's magazine has changed linguistically, visually and ideologically before and after China joined the WTO. I have also decided to take *Rayli Fashion and Beauty (Rayli)* magazine as the subject of my case study. *Rayli* was one of the first international magazines launched in China. In 1995, the Chinese publisher, Rayli Group, introduced *Rayli* to the Chinese market through a licensing cooperation with a Japanese partner, Shufunotomo. Since then, *Rayli* has become one of the best-selling women lifestyle magazines in China targeting affluent women in their 20s and 30s. The magazine features mainly Japanese and Korean products alongside the usual global fashion brands. Not only the launch time of *Rayli* but also the nature of its content serve well for the interests of my study. *Rayli*'s developments could provide an ideal outlook to how the changes in the magazine reflect and/or shape the changes in the culture, values and identities during the time frame I would like to focus on. The hybrid content also suits my intention of identifying where and how local and global interact and are presented in the Chinese media.

After sketching the outline of my project, I looked further into the context in which *Rayli's* developments lay: the globalisation and China's media reform. In his speech at the opening of a national science conference, Deng Xiaoping the Chinese leader, who started China's 'opening door' and economic reform, said: 'every people and every nation need to learn from the advantage of other people and other nations, learn from their advanced science and technology' (Deng, 1987, cited in Ouyang and Yang, 1991: 125). The statement made by the great Chinese leader pointed out the path China would take within the next decade, including the media sector. The road Deng was leading China to go down was made possible

because of the existing global network movements, which scholars called globalisation. Globalisation can be seen as a result of the acceleration of transport and communication, the weakening of geographic and national boundaries as well as the increasing quality and quantity of movements. Before Deng, China was a closed nation where there were strict regulations on travelling in and out for people, information, ideas and cultures. China completely lacked the essential factors and environment for the globalisation to process. Therefore, there was not much sharing of global culture or growth of mixed cultures, which other countries experienced after entering the globalisation system. Deng's reform had finally shown China the entrance to globalisation. Afterwards, China's leaders followed Deng's step and gained the ticket to join the WTO. Since then, the globalisation process in China has been unstoppable. The Chinese media sector around this period had ambitions of establishing its own national and international media network, easing the shortage of capital investment in the media industry and promoting its international influence. To fulfil these desires, China had to gain experience, as well as money, from the leading global media corporations (Chin, 2003; Huang, 2007; Hanson and Zheng, 2010). On the opposite side, foreign capitalists found it difficult to resist the temptation of the large potential of the Chinese media market (Huang, 2007). Their mutual needs served as the foundation of a majority of the local-international media ventures in China. It was around this period that globalisation took off in China and it was in this context that *Rayli*, as well as other global magazines, were born in China.

As *Rayli* is a result of China's engagement with globalisation, I started to ponder whether I could find some answers from the existing literature on globalisation history to apply to China and/or *Rayli's* changes and developments, as well as 'global-local' interactions. However, when I compared the globalisation process China has been through to the existing literature, I found variances. Most of the existing arguments can be divided into two categories according to their chronological perspective. One group of scholars argue that

globalisation is an old social event that is centrally a form of intensified capitalism (Wallerstein, 1979; Robertson, 1992; Held et al., 1999). Other scholars however believe that globalisation is a new phenomenon that is unlike any other social change, which happened in the past and it only occurs in the late 20th century (Porter, 1986; Chase-Dunn, 1989; Tomlinson, 1999; Eriksen, 2007). Nevertheless, these scholars' comments still differ on how old or new it is and what specifically makes it old/new. Scholte (2005) combines the two accounts and explains globalisation as a result of antecedents in earlier centuries, whereas the major changes regarding social lives have mainly happened since the 1950s. Although there are plenty of different theories on globalisation history, none of them can be applied to what has happened in China and explain the developments and changes of *Rayli*. I can therefore argue that what has been called globalisation has to be understood on the basis that it happened at different times, at different paces and in different ways in different parts of the world. However, the majority of globalisation studies are carried out from Western urban-based viewpoints to explain some Western issues. In addition, a great percentage of globalisation scholars are professional, Judaeo-Christian, middle-aged men. Studies that are oriented from the angle of the rest of the world are limited. There is a need for studies that consider different voices of globalisation and examine individual cases in different parts of the world. My study on *Rayli* is consequently conducted with the attempt on providing an individual case study in the specific context of China, where its culture, politics and economy, as well as its encounter of globalisation, are very different from the West. It will tell the story of a foreign magazine in China, the way it meets Chinese culture, the means it brings in foreign ideas, the strategies it adopts to co-exist globally and locally and the time it takes to change and the pattern of these changes.

Beyond *Rayli's* globalisation process, localisation tactics and the changes in its content, a greater concern is situated in the magazine's social reflection and social impact. It is

believed that there is no globalisation without the media and communication (Rantanen, 2005). While magazines such as *Rayli* may not appear in China without the occurrence of globalisation, globalisation may be experienced differently in China without magazines like *Rayli*. The study of media globalisation in China and *Rayli* should hence go hand in hand with considering the social and cultural shifts. Historically, the media have always played a major role in shaping society. The rise and fall of empires, the diplomacy, the war, the spread of language and cultural norms can all be tied back to the media (Flew, 2007). It can dramatically influence the economy, technology, politics, values and beliefs that it has its strong leadership in a cultural sphere (Hall, 1977; Thompson, 1995). In the globalised age, media's cultural leadership position is even more rock-steady (Boyd-Barrett, 1977; Appadurai, 1996; Flew, 2007). There are three main reasons for this. Firstly, media corporations are those who endeavour to globalise their business; secondly, the media constructs and develops the global communication infrastructure and rules, and thirdly it is the main method that makes events, information, images and ideas travel across the nation, region and culture to let people make sense of them. In the 1960s, McLuhan (1964) believed that the media was creating a global village and in the 2000s, Pelton (2000) believed that the media was leading people to the age of a worldwide mind. China, where its culture, economy and politics are so different from the West, is now in the global media system. China has witnessed the power of global media through the three means discussed above. But what is the best way to understand the actual social and cultural impact of global media in this unique society? It is clear that the Chinese audience has engaged more in the global media system but what does 'global village' or 'worldwide mind' mean to *Rayli* and to its readers in the context of China? What is shown as global and what is shown as local in the magazine? And how does *Rayli* use the local and/or global to potentially shape the fast changing society in China? A way to examine the interaction between *Rayli* 's content and Chinese culture, as well as the society, is needed here for my research.

Accordingly, I dug into the literature on global media and its influence on regional culture. Although scholars commonly believe the key consequence of global media is the global transmission of culture, the debates of whether global media leads to cultural hegemony or cultural heterogeneity have dominated global media research for decades and have rarely achieved a consensus. The cultural hegemony theory focuses on one-way flow media content from the United States and a few European countries. It is claimed that the imbalanced media power and distribution have led to cultural and economic dependency (Schiller, 1976; Boyd-Barrett, 1977; Tomlinson, 1991, 1997). Scholars who believe in cultural heterogeneity respond that there is not only a multi-directional flow of media contents, but the audience is also composed of active participants who digest media content differently (Katz and Liebes, 1990; Liebes and Katz, 1992; Robertson, 1995; Pieterse, 1996, 2004; Wasko, 2001; Wasko et al., 2001; Drotner, 2004a; Darling-Wolf and Mendelson, 2008). Cultural heterogeneity supports therefore believe that new, local, hybrid cultures and identities are fostered. On the one hand, I question if these theories explain the case of *Rayli* - is *Rayli* simply a form of what scholars call cultural hegemony or cultural heterogeneity? Is *Rayli* just another duplication of other global products that enters a new country in the same pattern and strategy that former scholars claim? Does *Rayli* engage and influence the locals in the same means that homogenisation or heterogenisation theorists indicate? However, on the other hand, it is not the purpose of my study to add another page to the debates or offer another theoretical framework. My intention is to provide some concrete detailed evidence to these theories if they are, to a certain level, comparable to the case of *Rayli* in China.

I further looked into case studies that have been conducted within the field to seek for ideas that can allow me to best interpret the detailed local and global cultural dynamic in China through the case of *Rayli*. The expansion of global media started with news agencies in

the 1800s, followed by broadcasting and showing movies in the first half of the 1900s and then satellite and cable communication in the 1980s. The global media was dominated by European and American transnational media corporations, hence a high percentage of global media research primarily focused on the United States or Europe. At the end of the 1900s, some non-American or non-European global media power started to emerge. The global flow of media products became more complex. Therefore, since 2000, researchers began their studies on global media in non-western countries.

A number of studies have considered Chinese media and cultural changes in the context of global media (Lee, 2003; Weber, 2003; Cao, 2007). It is shown that in Mao's era between the 1950s and the late 1970s, China was closed up from capitalism and international commerce. The media was severely controlled by the Communist Party and the Chinese state was the only legal owner and investor in the media industry, which was used for propaganda interests. After Mao's death, Deng started two reforms. The reforms turned China's media into a semi-independent 'market socialism' model. The commercial media was operated in highly-regulated markets and was still subjected to strict ideological restrictions (Lee, 2003; Cao, 2007). It was not until China joined the WTO that its media industry became further capitalised and foreign-media friendly. The membership to the WTO was a promise to open up the media sector to foreign media. Foreign investments and joint ventures in the media industry were first allowed. While the liberalisation did not apply to news media. Foreign investors were not allowed to participate in those company's media operations and managements (Weber, 2003). By this point, China's media industry has transferred to 'a state-controlled capitalist corporation model' (Huang, 2007: 414). That is to say despite the fact that the Chinese audience is more connected to foreign media and China is increasingly involved in the global media, China's media system is still highly defined by the country's unique political, social, economic and cultural environment. With this in mind, when carrying

out the analysis, the state's economic, cultural, moral and ideological leadership will be taken into consideration to provide a realistic assessment.

The case study on media globalisation, as well as Chinese media and cultural changes, provides a number of ideas, concepts and observations that offers resources to think about *Rayli*. However, although an increasing number of studies have started to look at globalisation on a more local level, these studies still tend to focus on a broader theorisation. The lack of empirical studies remains in this area. Scholars have called for approaching the complexity and specificity of media and cultural changes within a global context from grounding such generalisation in in-depth empirical studies (Drotner, 2004b). It is in the spirit of these more complex engagements that I believe it is useful to examine the detailed changes in *Rayli's* style and content on a linguistic and visual level. Some empirical studies on China in the global media context have been conducted. They mainly address the Chinese broadcasting sector (see for example Guo, 2003; Weber, 2003; Shi, 2005; Fung, 2006; Chang, 2007). There is little attention paid to print media, especially magazines. The very few studies that focus on magazines mainly look into advertisements in magazines with some study on magazine journalism practice and some conduct a content analysis on the construction of identity (see for example Zhang and Shavitt, 2003; Wu, 2008; Sue and Feng, 2010; Li, 2011). This thesis will be the first study on the entire history of a Chinese magazine editorial content and will provide a detailed picture of how and where the visual and linguistic changes happened during the 17-year period.

To accomplish this project, I required a set of methods that allowed me to point to the micro details of the magazine, in terms of language, images and composition. More importantly, the set of methods also needed to allow me to reveal the broader Chinese cultural and ideological changes that are embedded within these different modes. Machin and

van Leeuwen's (2004, 2007), as well as Machin and Thornborrow's (2003, 2006) studies on *Cosmopolitan*, were written with similar intentions in mind and have provided me with an ideal methodological framework to drawn upon. The method of social semiotics they adopted mainly looked at the composition of communication and how it is used, with a view to the idea, values and identities that are delivered. Social semiotics allowed them to present the nature of global magazines, identify the differences and similarities in local versions, reveal the operating processes as well as discuss the interaction between local culture and global cultures in the magazine.

On a linguistic level, the method is highly influenced by Critical Discourse Analysis (Wodak, 1989, 1996, 2001; Fairclough, 1992, 1995, 2003; van Dijk, 1993). CDA in a social semiotic approach encourages the analyst to consider the way people in representation are placed in the social world. It looks into details such as which parts of their identity are foregrounded, backgrounded or concealed. It also asks to what extent people are represented as individuals or in groups, as a unique or generic person and whether the viewer is encouraged to have interpersonal contact with them or not. Each choice can have the effect of connoting sets of ideas, values and attitudes that are not necessarily overtly stated. On a visual level, a number of social semiotic tools from the emerging field of Modality offer a means to observe changes on a grammatical level (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 1996; Machin and Van Leeuwen, 2007). The term 'modality' refers to the semiotic resources available for indicating how true or how real the communication content is, such as in language or images. This includes looking at the naturalistic level of the setting, background, model, colour and lighting.

From Machin and Van Leeuwen, as well as Machin and Thornborrow's articles, it shows that the social semiotic approach, both linguistically and visually, allows me to examine

questions, such as what level of actual details, or what level of relative abstraction, does *Rayli* present in the lives of women, to what degree are women portrayed as individual or collective, and to what extent and where does 'local accent' exist in the higher global structure? These questions are important to my study, as together they show the kind of world the magazine constructed, what kinds of women are staged and what interest the kind of world and women serve. Is it a world where it is sensuous, yet abstracted from reality and social context? Is it a world where it documents the local society as the way it is? Are the women acting alone and strategically? Do the women have interpersonal and familial relationships, which include elements of responsibility and collective goals above and beyond the abstraction of 'getting ahead'? These questions then lead to the issue of whether the global magazine's common interest in selling identities and values relevant to consumer capitalism has taken over traditional local beliefs, in this case largely Confucianism morality and communism.

After the initial stage of analysis, the questions moved on to the reasons behind the changes of representation over time. One of the best ways to understand the operations behind what the magazine constructs and represents was to dig out the answers from people who edit the magazine; the *Rayli* editorial team. Face-to-face interviews were therefore carried out in Beijing over a month in 2012 with staff at the magazine. Follow-up interviews were also done via email in 2012 and 2013. With the idea of making comparisons with the analyses Machin and Van Leeuwen (2004, 2007) and Machin and Thornborrow (2003, 2006) have done on *Cosmopolitan,* I also conducted interviews with the editors of *Cosmopolitan.*

In this thesis I present seven examples, which I use to help me point to the linguistic, visual and ideological changes that I observed and to answer questions, such as what the changes are, what the changes mean, if the changes are influenced by global culture, if there

are any changes for better representing localness and how the changes reflect the shifts in Chinese society. In this case, I would like to find out how women were represented at work over time. Work has been one of the aspects that has changed the most in women's lifestyles. Also Hershatter (1986, 2011, 2007), a historian in modern Chinese women's history and labour studies, believes the issue of female labour in China in the 20th century is highly interlinked with China's political, economic, social and cultural changes. 'Women's place' and the kind of labour they deliver mirror a big picture of the environment of society. Looking into *Rayli*'s representation of women at work not only offers the changes in the magazine itself, but it can also potentially provide an insight into the changes in Chinese society as well as the interaction between the magazine content and society. The work topic was also chosen to enable me to make a better comparison with the analysis done by Machin, Van Leeuwen and Thornborrow.

In the linguistic analysis, I looked at social actors and transitivity. Studying social actors in *Rayli* allowed me to see what kind of people are shown in *Rayli,* what agencies are foregrounded, backgrounded or eliminated and then deliberate the reasons behind the presence or absence of certain social agencies. This helped me reveal the dynamic between traditional Chinese culture and Western identities and where they exist. For example, where are the traditional Chinese values shown? Through collectivity, family bound or responsibilities towards a bigger society? And in what contexts are these values indicated? Or on the contrary, has the Western individualism, consumerism or other Western/global cultures replaced those traditional Chinese values' place in the magazine? If yes, where and in what form do they take place? Through a social actor analysis, I was also able to uncover who the authority voice in the magazine is. Is it still the Chinese Party, is it the lifestyle experts or celebrities, like in most of the Western magazines, or is it someone else? It then led to the issue of what it means in terms of who the authority voice is. Does the Chinese government

still have the power to penetrate the media and control the content to serve its political and economical propaganda interest? Does *Rayli* copy the Western style of expert's advice and behavioural guidance, which would allow the magazine to offer access to symbolic resources and foreground the implicit connection between consumption and cultural citizenship where 'an investment in practices of lifestyle consumption is seen as an investment in the enterprise citizen-self' (Lewis, 2008: 137)? Or does *Rayli* neither hold the Party's voice nor follow the Western lifestyle expert format, but has its own form of authority voice that is different from any other magazine to serve a different interest from propaganda and consumerism?

The linguistic transitivity analysis I did on *Rayli* expose what social actors are portrayed doing and in what kind of context, as well as the potential effects of presenting these social behaviours in a certain social context. This examination answers questions, such as are the women represented doing trivial and abstract activities that lack a concrete outcome or are they characterised as active and capable women who make things happen and produce substantial results? The stereotype of traditional Chinese women is that they are the ones who stay at home to take care of their children and serve their husbands, in-laws as well as the whole family. Besides this, they pay most of their attention to how they look and spend time on concerning issues like how they can please others or worrying that they do not know the solutions to their problems. Do the women in *Rayli* correspond to the stereotype of traditional Chinese women? Are they somehow similar to the stereotypes but somehow different? If yes, what are the similarities and differences? Or do women in *Rayli* represent a 'new' type of woman that has no trace of the stereotype of traditional Chinese women? Again, no matter what the answer is, there is always a reason behind the kind of representation of women that is chosen by *Rayli*. This goes back to the question of what the central interest of *Rayli* is and therefore what kind of social actions a *Rayli* girl could be staged with to best serve the interest. Another aspect transitivity can show is the interrelationship between the participants.

How well do they bond with other? What do they do with their colleagues, friends and families? There has always been a strong sense of collectivity in Chinese society. Individuals always come after the community and the harmony of the group is always more important than a personal interest. Are the women in *Rayli* still aware of it and comply with it? Or do they actually no longer have the sense of collectivity and act alone, like the majority of women shown in Western women's lifestyle magazines?

I also analysed social actors and transitivities that are shown in the visual content of *Rayli* to help me compare the result of textual content and answer some of the questions mentioned above. In addition, I examined how real and detailed the visual content appears to be. Do they document real workers at their actual work place or do they contain models that wear sponsored clothing and strike poses that are staged in photo shoot studios? This uncovers the purpose of images in *Rayli*. Are they used to deliver information and reality or are they used to resemble advertisements to potentially encourage consumption? Importantly, this shows things that we are not able to discover through linguistic analysis. The poses the social actors strike and the expressions they have are very different from both traditional Chinese standards of female quality and the Western standard of sexy. It shows a non-western influence from outside China. This shows a multi-directional dynamic of cultures co-existing in a local magazine. Once more I questioned the purpose of this kind of representation. Is it a rebellion against society or global homogenised female identity? Is it provided as a dreamy and fantasised image to comfort women and let them physiologically escape from the bounds of domesticity and motherhood? If so, what does the escape lead to? Or is it actually just a strategic means for branding and marketing?

So far I have examined the above questions with every edition of *Rayli* from 1995 to 2012. I have seen a society that is changing and also a magazine that is changing. To help

discover more on the local and global, what direction and what kinds of ideas, values and identities are being favoured, I started to look at what levels these are done through the language, images and design style as a whole. I observed the changes of the relationship between text and visual design as well as detailed manipulations, such as the use of typeface, colour and composition. From this it is possible, on the one hand, to see where the local and global are in terms of format, style and pattern and on the other hand, to see the communication roles of linguistic and visual content. Are the visual elements used to support the text? Are the images used to convey ideas, values and identities rather than information? Are the semiotic resources also manipulated to harmonise with some specific attitude? And in what way do they to achieve these intentions? This ties back with one of the central issues I have been researching throughout my studies, the changing in the magazine is the changing in culture, ideas, values and identities. What is the key message *Rayli* tries to convey to the reader? To what extent does the message reflect the changes in society? And how does the message play a part of the forces that shape the changes in China?

As a teenage girl in Taiwan who read all of those different magazines from different countries, localised editions and original versions, I always had various whys in my mind. Why are they different, why are they made like this, why are they telling me different things and why do I have a different feeling when reading different magazines? Now I finally have the chance and ability to put those whys in a more systematic framework and try to seek the answers in a more scientific and academic way. Beginning with the understanding of globalisation and the expansion of global media, I see how all of these different magazines appear in all kinds of forms and styles in different markets. The homogenisation and heterogenisation theories explain the differences existing in the global and local versions of the same magazine to some extent and inspire my concerns on the interaction between a local culture and a global culture. However, some 'whys' remain unanswered. I lay my interests,

questions and concerns in the context of China, which is fast changing and shifting into the global system over the last few decades. In the belief that global culture and local culture are not in binary opposition but occurrence and coexist together to shape a new society, I am attempting to show how these two forces interact and in what form they exist in a Chinese women's lifestyle magazine. I sought for the way I can best analyse the kinds of differences I find between local markets versus international markets, a method that would show the nature of the details of writing, editing and visual design and a tool that would help me to look at exactly how the differences are made to look more carefully at what has changed, how and when it changed and what this means. Therefore, I place my research in a social semiotic framework to see what *Rayli* presents as local or global and how they are combined or transformed for the interest of the magazine. More importantly this can direct me to answer the question of how the local and global are used with a view to look at the ideas, values and identities that are delivered and fostered in the local society. In sum, I will answer the following main questions:

1. What kinds of local and global influences are found in Rayli between 1995 to 2012 in different kinds of content and style?
2. How do local and global values co-exist, intertwine and transform in Rayli over time?
3. How do changes in the contents of Rayli reflect broader shifts in Chinese society?

This thesis is a journey of how I turn my questions of global and local magazines from when I was a teenager into an academic research project. The following chapters will reveal the journey step by step and answer the questions I have always had in my mind as an insight into a non-western story of globalisation to contribute to the big topic of global media.

1. Globalisation, global media and global culture

Rayli, a Chinese version of the Japanese magazine *Ray*, become the bestselling women's magazine in China in the 2000s, with a circulation of 1,050,000 issues and a 20.82% market share. Millions of affluent, urban, Chinese women in their 20s and 30s are attracted to mainly Japanese and Korean products alongside the usual global brands of consumer goods featured in *Rayli*. When flipping through some recent *Rayli* issues, you can see models from China, clothing from Japan, jewellery from Britain, cosmetics from America, body cream from Australia, perfumes from France, chocolate from Belgium, cameras from Korea and cars from Germany. How can we best think about the mixture of products and the messages of *Rayli*? What do these international products in *Rayli* really mean to Chinese society? Many may propose that *Rayli* and its content are the result of globalisation. However, I question whether both globalisation theory and globalisation history explain *Rayli*'s developments and its global-local interactions, as well as provide detailed changes in *Rayli*'s content over time. In this chapter, I will examine the context in which *Rayli* was born, such as globalisation and the global media system. Through this, I intend to illustrate the fundamental power and forces behind the occurrence and changes of *Rayli* and deliberate the applicability of a globalisation theory, globalisation history and global media theory in the case of *Rayli.*

1.1. Globalisation theory

When it comes to the topic of increasing international integration and interchange of foreign politics, economy, events, products, ideas and cultures, people tend to refer to the term globalisation. However, what exactly does this term mean? To what level does it answer my interests of the local and global representations in *Rayli,* as well as the interactions between *Rayli*'s content and the changes in Chinese society? It appears to be a discontented rhetoric that mostly leads to contentions and generalisations.

1.1.1. What is globalisation? - The definition

The term 'globalisation' first appeared in the English language in 1959 (Schreiter, 1997). Within 50 years, the concept of globalisation had become one of the most ubiquitous subjects amongst academics, journalists, politicians and business people (Scholte, 2005; Held and McGrew, 2007 and Jones, 2010). Today, the term globalisation is referred to widely whether considering society, politics, economy, ecology, entertainment or culture (Scholte, 2005; Held and McGrew, 2007 and Jones, 2010). Numerous definitions of globalisation are provided, for example:

> *'Globalisation represents the triumph of a capitalist world economy tied together by a global division of labour.'* (Wallerstein, 1974: 46)

> *'A concept which refers both to the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness about the world as a whole.'* (Robertson, 199: 28)

> *'...globalisation is a world of things that has different speeds, axis, points of origin and termination, and varied relationships to institutional structures in different regions, nations, or societies.'* (Appadurai, 2001: 233)

> *'Globalisation can be defined as the increasing interaction among and integration of diverse human societies in all important dimensions of their activities--economic, social, political, cultural and religious.'* (Aninat, 2001)

> *'A term that captures multiple changes taking place in the world economy, triggered by the dramatic impact of computer generated information*

technology in production.' (Oduaran, 2003: 16)

Despite sociologists' attempts to solidify and clarify the meaning of globalisation, the notion of the word itself remains confusing, poorly conceptualised and nebulous (Giddens, 1996; Jameson, 1998; Beck, 2000; Eriksen, 2007; Held and McGrew, 2007 and Turner and Khondker, 2010). Scholte (2005: 15) pointed out that, *'the confusion persists because the more specific ideas of globalisation are often highly diverse.'*

Difficulties in analysing *Rayli* simply through a globalisation concept occur instantly. If a term is obscure, how can it be used to demonstrate and show the precise changes in *Rayli* that are intended to be identified through this thesis? Furthermore, when placing *Rayli* within the globalisation concepts described above to seek insights, the answers tend to be generic. It can be assumed that due to the expansion of the Japanese global magazines, China is capitalised, its localness is shaped by events happening miles away outside of the country and it is more interlinked with the rest of the world in terms of politics, economy and culture. However, some areas are unclear. For example, through what process and to what extent is China capitalised, what kind of localness is shaped by what kind of foreign events, in what form and to what level? To what level is China more engaged with the global economy, politics and culture compared to before and where exactly do these interlinks happen?

In detail, globalisation theorists tend to comment on five grounds: the acceleration of transport and communication, the weakening of geographic and national boundaries, the increasing quality and quantity of movements, the sharing of global cultures and the growth of mixed cultures (see for example Harvey, 1989: 240; Giddens, 1990; Robertson, 1992; Virilio, 1995; Held et al., 1999; Beck, 2000; Beynon and Dunkerley, 2000 and Eriksen, 2007). It is believed that they are the cores of globalisation (Ibid.).

However, based on Appadurai's (2001) definition of globalisation as discussed above, it is suggested that China could have its distinctive processes and dynamic regarding its globalisation process and experience. Therefore, in the following sections I will consider how these five aspects can be applied to *Rayli* in China.

1.1.2. Globalisation is the acceleration of transport and communication

Sociologists have consistently highlighted that the progression of transportation and communication has played a role in stimulating the process of globalisation (see for example Held et al., 1999; Beynon and Dunkerley, 2000; Rantanen, 2005b; Scholte, 2005 and Eriksen, 2007). Benefitting from the development of modern technology, the faster travel speeds and communication transmissions have brought the interaction amongst regions to an unprecedented level. Giddens, in his interview with Rantanen (2005b: 66), declares that the arrival of a new global age was contributed by 'the intersection of satellite communication and computerisation'; meanwhile Scholte (2005) points out that jet aircrafts have given birth to a supra-territorial quality. The acceleration of transport and communication opens up a path for the four remaining characteristics of globalisation.

1.1.3. Globalisation is the weakening of geographic and national boundaries

The weakening of geographic and national boundaries suggests that in the global age, distance and the borders of realms have become less influential. Ó Tuathail (2000) proposes that social space can no longer merely be mapped in terms of geographical place, distance and borders. Beck (2000: 20) likewise stresses the meaning of globalisation as 'borders become markedly less relevant to everyday behaviour.'

Thanks to the expansion of transportation and communication technology, millions of people travel from one side of the world to another within a day and information flows long

distances around the world within a second. In this context, distances as well as geographic and national borders are no longer absolutes. The link between time and space has been changed by technology (Giddens, 1990; Virilio, 1995, 2000; Beynon and Dunkerley, 2000). Harvey (1989: 240) uses the term 'time-space compression' to depict the phenomenon that 'place' is not territorially fixed, territorial distance is covered in no time and territorial boundaries present no particular impediment. Supporting time-space compression, Ruggie (1993: 173) furthermore claims a 'non-territorial region', and Friedman (1999, 2005) asserts a 'flat world.'

Besides the revolution in transport and communication technology, a greater liberalisation around the world has also played a significant role in fading geographic and political boundaries. Liberalisation refers to the removal of state-imposed restrictions on interconnections between countries in order to create an open, borderless world. The widespread reduction or abolition of regulatory ranges from trade barriers, foreign-exchange restrictions and capital controls to visa requirements (Axford, 1995; Scholte, 2005). Moreover, international organisations, such as the WTO (World Trade Organisation), WHO (World Health Organisation), IPHR (International Partnership for Human Rights) and international NGOs (Non-Governmental Organisations), carry out worldwide administration without being limited to borders and sometimes even act as global governance (Ohmae, 1990 and Dicken, 1998). Friedman (2005) describes the liberalised world as a level playing field. Scholars (Giddens, 1990; Robertson, 1992 and Taylor, 1997) believe the liberalisation has reconstructed the whole world as a single social entity. In the globalised world, geographic distances are shrinking, countries' boundaries are blurring and nations are more interconnected and interdependent on each other.

1.1.4. Globalisation is the increasing quality and quantity of movements

The universalisation of international transportation has firstly helped people to move easier and added to the weakening of national boundaries, thereby allowing people to move further, faster and more frequently. Furthermore, when people do so, they carry and spread ideas, goods and customs (Appadurai, 1990). A globalised world in other words is where movements are exceeding, in both qualitative and quantitative perceptions (Waters, 1995a; Held et al., 1999 and Eriksen, 2007). Quality here suggests the speed of the transit, while quantity means the frequency of the activity. Moreover, movements include not only human travel or migration, but also the flow of information, products, ideas, cultures and even diseases (Featherstone, 1990; Besser, 1995; Held et al., 1999; Beynon and Dunkerley, 2000 and Eriksen, 2007). Since the increasing quality and quantity of movement in the global environment, even people who remain rooted in a local place are more involved in the global world and it has become increasingly difficult for them to disconnect themselves from globalisation (Giddens, 1990).

1.1.5. Globalisation is the sharing of global cultures

Combining the three dynamics that were discussed earlier, people are enabled to distribute their own culture and simultaneously access foreign culture more easily. Scholars therefore believe that there is a shared global culture (Featherstone, 1990; Held et al., 1999; Beynon and Dunkerley, 2000; Scholte, 2005 and Eriksen, 2007). Global culture, according to them, is free of place and time's constraints. It exists outside the usual references to geographical territory. It creates shared standards, comparability and bridging principles for the globalised society, such as the use of English as a foreign language, the global icon Michael Jackson and the use of Microsoft Windows computer operating system.

Some describe this global process as standardisation (Torun, 2004; Palmer, 1998; Conrad, 2010) whilst others imply it as homogenisation (Ritzer, 1996; Beck, 2000 and

Ikenberry, 2007). Both claims, directly or indirectly, imply the concern of people on the planet sharing similar ideas, ideologies and products. That is to say the superior culture erodes the substandard and minor cultures, leading the world towards a single-composition humanity (Tomlinson, 1991). However, another character of globalisation, the growth of mixed culture, shows a different story from this concern.

1.1.6. Globalisation is the growth of mixed cultures

Some accounts argue that the global transmission of products, cultures and customs is carried out in a multi-directional and multi-digestion process (Rutherford, 1990; Tomlinson, 1991; Waters, 1995b and Howes, 1996). As a result, pluralised cultures, instead of a single culture, are produced. These researchers believe that when people encounter a foreign culture, since they are not the passive recipients of culture, people react differently to the same culture and mix the foreign culture in with their own different traditional cultures. This cultural hybridisation or cultural heterogenisation increasingly creates diverse cultures for the world. Hence Reiser and Davies (1944) claim foreseeing a planetary synthesis of cultures in a global humanism[1], Pieterse (1994: 64) believes that 'continued accelerating globalisation means the hybridisation of (already) hybrid cultures', and Lanni (1992) (cited in Scholte, 2005: 253) characterises globalisation as 'a vast and intricate process of transculturation.'

It is important to note that these five aspects of globalisation are not separate components. On the contrary, they are highly interrelated with each other. It is when these are considered altogether, that what scholars describe as globalisation can be best shown (see Figure one for their interrelation). Additionally, it is necessary to understand that the ideas of a shared global culture and mixed culture do not contradictorily exist. These two phenomena

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1. Reiser and Davies (Ibid.) believed globalisation is a universalising process of a worldwide spread of culture, ideas, objects and experiences. During this process, they argued humanity will be developed and the globalised world will be structured along a respect for differences. The universalisation of culture therefore does not rule out cultural identity but leads to cultural heterogenisation.

can coexist and shape the contemporary global society together. On the one hand, the simple notion of cultural homogenisation fails to recognise the interplay, interaction and cultural creativities people have (Robertson, 1992), on the other hand, cultural hybridisation does not necessarily prevent the Western cultural domination (Pieterse, 1994: 60) (see 1.3.4. for further discussion). Globalisation is prone to generate both similarities and differences at the same time (Archer, 1988; Beynon and Dunkerley, 2000). Therefore, the two characteristics together render a more integrated concept of globalisation.
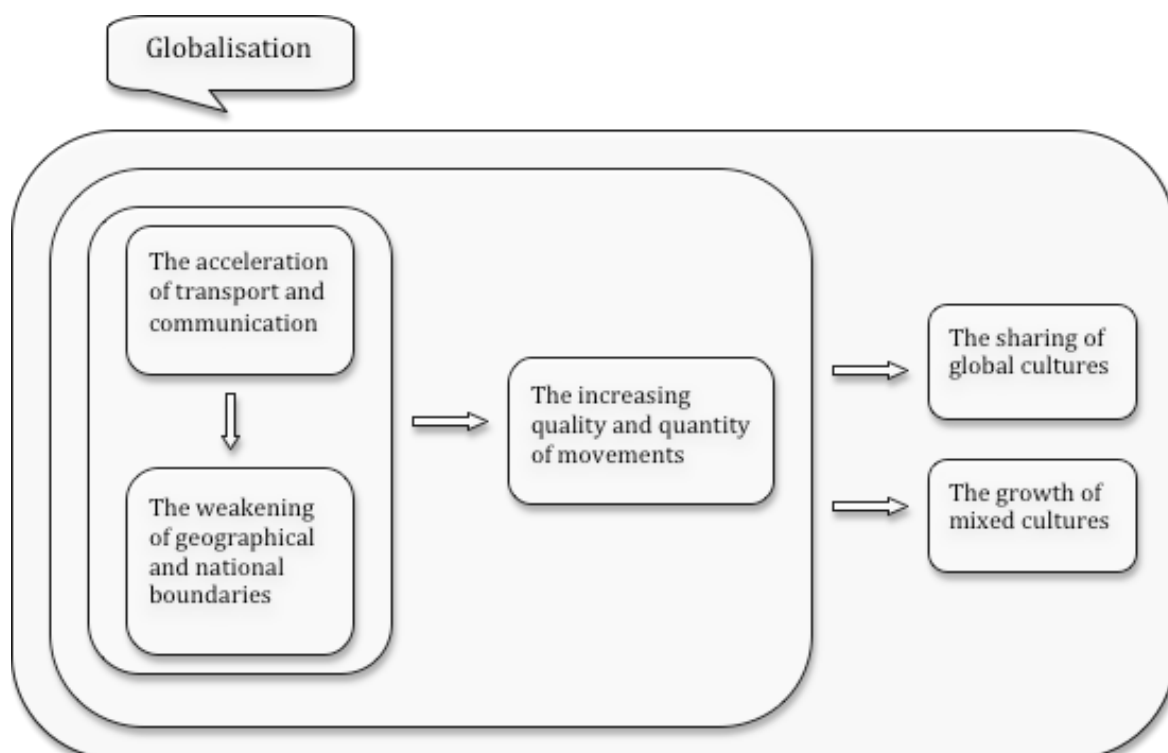
Figure one - what is globalisation?

1.1.7. What does globalisation mean to China? Is it the same thing?

Considering the five aspects of globalisation in the context of China, we can see the acceleration of transport and communication, the weakening of geographical and national boundaries, as well as the increasing quality and quantity of movements happening in China in terms of human travel. Before 1983, Chinese citizens were not allowed to travel across the border. The Chinese government had strict policies on citizens' movement. In late 1983, the Chinese State first allowed citizens of the Guangdong province to travel to Hong Kong and

Macao. This was followed up by allowing citizens in other provinces to travel to a couple of other countries around the Chinese border. It was not easy for foreigners to travel to China either. Under such restriction of citizen movements, the transmission of ideas, information and culture were also relatively slow and limited. It was not until the launch of a new foreign travel policy[2] in 1997 and the joining of WTO in 2001 that the China Party gave its citizens greater freedom to travel abroad and allowed foreigners to come to China. According to the China National Tourism Administration (2006), 10 million Chinese citizens travelled abroad in 2001. Subsequently, with the rising disposable incomes and the relaxations of restrictions on foreign travel, outbound trips grew dramatically year-by-year. In 2010, nearly one billion people had made outbound trips from China (China National Tourism Administration, 2013). As far as inbound travel is concerned, there were around 10 million foreigners entering China in 2001 and this figure has now risen to 133 million people (China National Tourism Administration, 2006, 2013). Once human travel has become a usual event in China, it stimulates other types of travel, such as information, culture, products and ideas.

However, the 'movements' scholars commented that globalisation does not happen to the same degree in China. For example, China has always imposed restrictions on foreign products, information and especially media content. In the 1990s, China opened up its market to foreign businesses in order to solve economic difficulties within the country. Foreign products started to show up on the Chinese market, although these often had a high, luxury tax in comparison to local goods. Therefore, even though international brands and their foreign products were booming on the Chinese market, they were never available or affordable for the majority of Chinese people. Another example is Internet usage. In 1990, the Internet was next to inaccessible in China but by 2012, there were 5.64 billion Internet users in China (China Internet Network Information Center, 2013). However, in the Press Freedom

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2. Interim measures for the administration of Chinese citizens going abroad on tours at own expenses.

Index 2013 report from Reporters without Borders (2013), China was ranked 173rd among 180 countries and was described as having no signs of improvement and being the world's biggest prison for Netizen.

China has certainly experienced some globalisation that most researchers discussed in the cases of other countries. However, with its unique political, economic and social environment, the way China engages with globalisation is also clearly different and cannot be simplified or universalised under the five globalisation factors. The sharing of global cultures and the growth of mixed cultures occurred due to the other three factors of globalisation. If China's experience is unique in terms of the acceleration of transport and communication, the weakening of geographical and national boundaries, and the increasing quality and quantity of movements, the ways in which China encounters with the sharing of global culture and the growth of mixed culture would also consequently appear differently in the context of China. Therefore, questions on global-local interactions in *Rayli* and Chinese society still remain. Concepts and explanations beyond a globalisation theory are needed to understand in what ways the sharing of global culture and the growth of mixed cultures are unique in *Rayli* and China.

Accordingly, *Rayli* will be treated as a specific case and example of globalisation in China in this thesis to consider how its globalisation process is different from any other society. Studying *Rayli*'s changes over 17 years is an attempt to pinpoint detailed facts of China's encounter with globalisation. This includes providing insights over time into what kind of global and local cultures are presented in China, what kind of mixed culture is presented in China and through what way the global culture, local culture and mixed culture are conveyed to society. Answers to these questions will further reveal, more importantly, the ideology behind the way global and local cultures interact. For example, what the value is

behind the kinds of globalness and localness are decided to be presented, how these are represented, to whose interest the representation serves, and in what way the representation reflects Chinese society.

1.2. Globalisation history

The idea of studying *Rayli*'s changes from its birth in 1995 to 2012 is to help understand the process of changes and developments overtime rather than simply presenting the outcome. In doing so, this thesis is intended to be an input towards China's very own globalisation history. It is for this reason that I found it difficult to locate China in the globalisation time frames provided by the literature on general globalisation history (see Table one). There are various studies, many of which date globalisation back to the beginning of colonialism in the 16th century, some to the emergence of the international corporations and others consider it started with the ending of fixed exchange rates or the collapse of the Eastern bloc (Beck, 2000). To avoid unnecessary confusion, I divide those diverse theories into two categories according to a chronological perspective: globalisation is old and globalisation is new. Scholars who believe globalisation is old claim that globalisation can be tracked back to several centuries ago, while scholars who believe globalisation is new indicate that globalisation is a novel phenomenon that only emerged after the 19th century (see for example Wallerstein, 1979; Wallerstein, 2004; Robertson, 1992; Chase-Dunn, 1982 and Bordo et al., 1999). In the following sections, I will provide an overall explanation, point out representative scholars' arguments for both categories and then explain why China does not fit on either account.

1.2.1. Globalisation is old

Theorists who believe globalisation is an old phenomenon mainly regard globalisation as the representation of highly connected and integrated political, economic and social systems, which had extended to a number of continents and have been recorded historically for a long

period of time (Eriksen, 2007: 10). For example, Wallerstein, as Jones (2010) noted, symbolises globalisation as the capitalist world-system. According to Wallerstein's (1979) globalisation theory the outset of globalisation was in the 1500s. He believed that capitalism and the modern-world economic system had become worldwide by the 16th century. Wallerstein (2004: x) points out three turning points of globalisation. First, the 16th century, when the 'modern world-system comes to existence as the capitalist world-economy.' Second, the French Revolution in 1789 changed the world-system from being dominated by liberalism to being determined by geoculture for centuries. Third, the world revolution of 1969 finally undermined the centrist liberal geoculture that held the world-system together and led people to a modern world-system. That is to say, for Wallerstein, globalisation has formed its solidarity in the late 1960s.

Robertson (1992), another theorist who argues globalisation is old, presents globalisation as a pre-dating modernity and the rise of capitalism. He believes globalisation is a phenomenon that took place in the late 1800s, however the origin of globalisation can be tracked back to centuries before that. He indicates five stages of globalisation. The earliest germinal stage dates between 1400 and 1750. It was the time that European countries not only started to establish national communities in Europe, but also opened themselves up to external continents. The spread of the Roman Catholic Church and the Gregorian calendar worldwide were visible results of this outward exploration. It followed with the 'incipient' stage when international relations were set up through international agreements, international legislation and even international exhibitions between the mid-18th century and 1870. However, in this phase, the international society was mainly dominated by European countries. The third stage, referred to as the 'take-off' stage, is took place between 1870s and mid-1920s. This period was marked by the development of new transport and communication technologies. Consequently, global connections were increased in terms of economies,

politics, culture and sports. In addition, the first world conflict took place during this period. Afterwards, it came to the 'struggle for hegemony' stage between mid-1920 and late 1960s. This was when closer relationships between independent nations emerged after decolonisation, along with the founding of the League of Nations, United Nations and other international organisations with a global remit. The final stage is from the 1970s to the present date. Robertson states that at the 'uncertain' stage, global trade, global mass media and global institutions continued to flourish and as a result, the global society became more interconnected and interdependent. Nevertheless, at the same time, uncertainties over the global society occurred. For example, issues such as race, ethnicity, sex, gender and human rights need to be re-examined in a global context; the spread of global environmental hazards and the growth of Islamic Fundamentalism have all led to people's insecurities about globalisation.

1.2.2. Globalisation is new

On the other hand, some scholars, such as Chase-Dunn (1982: 2), Porter (1986: 42), King and Schneider (1991), Bordo *et al.* (1999) and Eriksen (2007) define the beginning of globalisation as a much more recent event. However, these researchers still have variances about how new it actually is and what makes it new. Chase-Dunn (1982: 2) and Porter (Porter, 1986: 42) believe that globalisation started in the late 1800s, while some other scholars (Bordo et al., 1999) emphasise the qualitative and quantitative differences between the 1800s and the present day. Eriksen (Eriksen, 2007: 5) states that globalisation began in the 1980s and stressed people's awareness of each other beyond their own experience. In addition to a shared communicational system, the contemporary globalisation is made as a new phenomenon in terms of consciousness and in a cultural sense. Meanwhile, King and Schneider (1991) believe that globalisation is completely new, since it only occurred with the accessibility of jet aeroplanes and computer networks to the public. Bordo *et al* (1999: 18)

see globalisation as different from previous international engagements due to the modern global process:

> *'raising new issues of government not just because it is conjoined with a political system which gives a louder voice to special interests, but because the economic phenomenon itself is different: integration is deeper and broader than a hundred years ago.'*

To sum up the old and new disagreements, Scholte (2005: 20, 85-119) attempted to conclude globalisation as a result of antecedents in earlier centuries, whereas major aspects regarding our social lives have mainly been taking place since the 1950s. Furthermore, he gave three explanations. First, if globalisation is understood as transworld connectivity, then globality has been a part of human history for centuries. Second, when considering globalisation as transplanetary relations, the relations reached unprecedented levels of growth from around the middle of the 19th century. Third, 'the main, greatly accelerated rise of globality … has occurred since the middle of the twentieth century.'

	Robertson	Wallerstein	Held et al.	Marx	Giddens	Porter, Chase-Dunn	Tomlinson	Eriksen
1400-1500	'Germinal' stage		The pre-modern					
1501-1600		The modern world-system came in to existence as a capitalist world-economy	The early modern	Modern capitalism				
1601-1700								
1701-1750		1789- French Revolution led to the dominance of a geoculture for the world system, one that was dominated by liberalism						
1751-1800	'Incipient' stage							
1801-1850					Globalisation started as the consequences of modernity			
1851-1875			Modern globalisation					
1876-1900	'Take-off' stage					The beginning of globalisation		
1901-1925								
1925-1945	'Struggle for hegemony' stage	1968- the world revolution undermined the centrist liberal geoculture that was holding the world-system together						
1946-1960			Contemporary globalisation					
1961-1970							Cultural planetarisation	
1971-1980	'Uncertain' stage							
1981-2000								The beginning of globalisation
2001- date								

Table one - The diverse viewpoints on the history of globalisation

1.2.3. Understand globalisation process as regional experience

From reviewing the current literature on globalisation history, it can be noticed that little attention is paid to the level of globality in non-Western countries. Turner and Khondker (2010: 8) have commended that 'globalisation is normally understood from the viewpoint of some Western issue, process or location.' Scholte (2005: 14-5) also addressed that most globalisation researchers:

'... emanated from countries of the Northern hemisphere and are published in English. Moreover, most studies of globalisation have come from a limited social base of urban-based, white, professional, Judaeo-Christian, middle-aged men.'

The beginning and the progress of globality in many non-Western countries do not fit the timeframes of current historical globalisation theories. Theories that fail to demonstrate the non-Euro-American history of globalisation can only be considered as theories of the internationalisation process of the West, instead of an overall theory of globalisation development.

Moreover, a globalisation process should not be understood as a generalised concepts. Globalisation is a process that should be apprehended in the notion that it happens at different times, at a different pace and in different ways in different parts of the world. To recognise each region's unique globalisation process, it is important to look into the globalisation history of every country as an individual case. Hence, my study on *Rayli* aims to be an attempt to provide an Eastern, female viewpoint on the topic of globalisation and highlight the specific context of China, where its culture, politics, economic and encounter with globalisation are very different from the West. Taking *Rayli* as an example, this thesis will tell the story of the way foreign media encountered Chinese media, the means that foreign ideas were brought in, the strategies that were adopted to co-exist globally and locally and the time frame during which foreign influences happened and the patterns of these influences.

1.3. Media globalisation

Beyond the matters listed above, more importantly, there is the concern of *Rayli*'s social reflection and social impact. For example, what are the dominating ideas, values and

identities that are forwarded to its readers? How well do these ideas, values and identities

mirror the changing Chinese society? And to whose interest do these ideas, values and

identities serve? It is believed that there would be no globalisation without media and

communication (Rantanen, 2005a). Therefore, in the following sections, the broader global

media context that *Rayli* exists in will be examined. Through examining how global media

corporations expand their influence beyond country borders, I hope to discover some

framework that can be applied to *Rayli*'s encounter with the Chinese market and society.

1.3.1. The expansion of global media

  Although it was not until the late 1980s that an integrated global media was established, the

primal global media system originates back to the 19th century (1997: 10). In the 1800s,

news agencies, such as Havas from France, Wolff from Germany and Reuters from Britain,

became the three major news agencies and marked the first leaf of media globalisation

(Herman and McChesney, 1997; Boyd-Barrett and Rantanen, 1998; Machin and Van

Leeuwen, 2007). These three agencies were domestic news producing enterprises with an

interest in foreign news and sold news to newspaper publishers around the world (Ibids.). On

this basis, in the 1850s, they created a cartel that divided the entire world market for news

content and distributed it amongst themselves, like empire-building nations managing their

colonial empires (Ibids.).

    News agencies held their influence in the global media until the emergence and

ascension of the transnational corporations (TNCs) in the late 1800s (Herman and

McChesney, 1997: 13). Herman and McChesney (1997) asserted that the appearance of TNCs

was the birth of genuine global media. They also believed TNCs contributed most

importantly to globalisation since they made 'a more profound integration of economic

activity across borders' (Ibid.: 13). While transnational media corporations (TNMCs) were

flourishing in extending their operations and investments to foreign countries, two new media technologies, motion pictures and radio broadcasting accelerated the intensification of media globalisation in the first half of the 1900s (Ibid.). In particular, 'the film industry was the first media industry service with a truly global market' (Ibid.: 13). The motion picture industry fitted in with TNCs and built up an oligopoly that was dominated by a few large studios, which were mainly American (Herman and McChesney, 1997; Held et al., 1999; Hafez, 2007 and Machin and Van Leeuwen, 2007). As Herman and McChesney (1997: 14) wrote, by 1914, '85 percent of the world film audience was watching American films.' Although from the outset, Europe global news agencies was dominant, from the 1920s, America had taken the lead and accumulated power over the global media (Herman and McChesney, 1997; Machin and Van Leeuwen, 2007). During the post-war epoch, America furthermore used its military and economic power to conduct an open door policy worldwide and as a result, free information flow became a universal principle, which stimulated media globalisation (Ibids). Herman and McChesney (1997: 18) wrote, 'it was in the post-war years that the contours of the contemporary global media system became apparent.'

In the last two decades of the 1900s, another hotbed of media globalisation was born. Benefiting from liberalisation and new technologies, global media experienced an age of unprecedented expansion (Gershon, 1997; Herman and McChesney, 1997). Towards the end of the 20th century, a trend towards national privatisation of enterprises and global deregulation of businesses led to a 'new stage of global corporate capitalism that has come to provide the basis for the formation of a global media system' (Herman and McChesney, 1997: 26). By this time, the decision making of transnational media business no longer regarded national boundaries (Gershon, 1997). In addition, the development of satellite and cable communication supplied the fundamental factors for the creation of a global network society and a cheap and fast communication service. The revolution resulted in a remarkable

progression in global media business from the 1980s (Gershon, 1997; Pelton, 2004; Castells, 2008 and Thussu, 2010). During this phase, global media joint ventures were carried out by TNMCs to deepen the consolidation of their international business empires (Herman and McChesney, 1997). Herman and McChesney (Ibid.: 56) point out that 'the ten largest global media firms have, on average, joint ventures with five of the other nine giants. They each also average six joint ventures with second-tier media firms.' Through this joint media venture strategy, TNMCs could more easily enter new international markets and corporate with local international partners who best understand the local market (Ibid.). Consequently, national and regional media firms were brought into the global market system.

Since the United States and Europe have played dominant roles throughout media globalisation history, the majority of existing global media literature primarily focuses on the United States or Europe. Meanwhile, when talking about the development of global media, writers usually merely take the developing circumstances of Western countries into account. Hafstrand (1995) was the very first person that looked at the globalisation of consumer magazines. In her study *Consumer magazines in transition: a study of approach to internationalisation*, she pointed out the trend for domestic magazine publishers who increasingly sought to sell their magazines to foreign countries. Hafstand (Ibid.) also reveals the competitive advantages that allowed transnational magazine publishers to meet the demands of multinational readers. By examining the most thriving European magazines' experiences in penetrating magazine markets abroad, Hafstrand (Ibid.) indicates two main formats when internationalising a magazine, the Pan-European magazine[3] and the concepts adapted to national markets[4]. The evidence showed that a major competitive advantage of

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3. A Pan-European magazine 'is that which intended for a segment or target groups of potential readers across different countries that share the same demand for a specific kind of information or entertainment and, therefore, could be served with the same product without further adjustment'. (Hafstrand, 1995: 9)
4. Concepts adapted to national markets means a consumer magazine that is 'dependent on an adaption to the specific demands of different markets. International expansion is based on a concept or an editorial formula that is adapted to different cultures'. (Hafstand, 1995: 9)

internationalising a magazine 'seems to be the ability to transfer managerial skills and unique concepts to different markets, which enhances the revenues' (Ibid.: 12). Hafstrand's study marked the start of magazine globalisation studies. She provided the fundamental factors for understanding successful strategies of producing transnational magazines and established the groundwork for further studies in global magazines. However, Hafstrand's study remains restricted in the 'under-based, white, professional and Judaeo-Christian' view of global media. Moreover, there are some issues, which require to be addressed further. Based on Hafstrand's categories, *Rayli* falls into the 'concept adapted to national market' genre. Also, being successful in the Chinese local market, *Rayli* should have the ability to adapt managerial skills and specific concepts to China to enhance its revenue. There is a need for further insights into what these adaptions mean to local markets, for example what the specific concepts are, what do the concepts mean to different local markets, how are the specific concepts being presented and how do the specific concepts reflect the local society?

It was not until 2000 that researchers started to take non-Western countries into account when considering media globalisation and treating each country as a case study to carry out detailed observations. This was a result of the diffusion of ownership of TNMCs amongst investors and firms in the 1980s and 1990s (Gershon, 1997; Herman and McChesney, 1997; Machin and Van Leeuwen, 2007). Even though the diffusion was limited in the advanced capitalist world, the most powerful international media TNCs had become less American-owned (Tunstall and Palmer, 1991: 209). Plenty of other countries started to participate in the global media industry, as Herman and McChesney (Herman and McChesney, 1997: 42) wrote, 'Japanese Sony, Canadian Seagram, Dutch Philips, and the Australian News Corporation are all ranked in the top thirty list of non-U.S. firms with the largest U.S. investments.' The global flow of media products has become more complex and the export of media entertainment has not only come from America or Europe, but also from other

developing nations (Herman and McChesney, 1997: 42; Machin and Van Leeuwen, 2007: 21). Therefore, it came to the scholars' attention that the global media cannot be understood without exploring the global media landscapes outside the United States and Europe.

1.3.2. Understanding global magazines through case studies

Magazine studies started with a gender-based focus by feminist scholars such as White (1970), Ferguson (1983) and more recently Beetham (1996) and Gough-Yate (2002). Following the gender-based trend, scholars also started to look at 'new man' and the 'lad' (Jackson et al, 2001; Benwell, 2001; Crew, 2003). There are also other studies that consider more general accounts about magazines, with a different focus on the history, tradecraft or professional skills. For example, *A history of American Magazines 1841-1850* (Mott, 1930), *Managing Magazine Publishing* (Wharton, 1992), *Magazine Editing and Production* (Click and Baird, 1994), *Women's Magazines: The First 300 years* (Braithwaite, 1995), *The American Magazine: Research Prospectives and Prospects* (Abrahamson, 1995), *The Magazine Handbook* (Mckay, 2000). As the primary interest of this thesis does not lie in these traditional aspects of magazine studies, the discussion will not go in-depth in these fields but just mention some of the most prominent. Holmes (2008: ix) in his book *Mapping the Magazine: Comparative Studies in Magazine Journalism* notes that,

> *'The qestiuon must be - why has the point of reading magazine to help the understanding of the way society and culture evolves and adapts, the way socio-cultural-economic changes are initiated and disseminated, been overlooked?'*

Placing this concern in the context of globalisation, the questions becomes what is the role global brand magazines play in a local society and culture? In what way do global brand magazines reflect on the socio-cultural-economic changes in a local country and what is the interrelationship between global culture and local culture? Scholars have shown that one way

Doyle (2006) takes *FHM (For Him Magazine)* as a case study and examines *FHM* in a global setting. His article explains 'how media content suppliers may exploit the strength of products and brands that have made a "hit" with their target constituency' (Ibid.: 106). Doyle analyses *FHM*'s managerial strategy and how FHM gains its market leadership throughout different continents. Through the analysis and interviews with the president of FIPP (the Federation International of the Periodical Press) and the international managing director of EMAP (*FHM*'s parent company), he finds that *FHM*'s efficiency in catering to the tastes and interests of its target readership helps it achieve impressive sales figures worldwide. In addition, *FHM*'s business approach and licensing 'yield very significant operational advantages while capitalising on major economies of scale' (Ibid.: 144). Doyle illustrates a profound analysis on one of the most popular business strategies, licensing, among transnational media publishers. Most importantly, he provided empirical evidence to exemplify the advantages and disadvantages.

One of the most in-depth and comprehensive research in this area is Machin and his colleagues' series of work on 44 local versions of the global magazine, *Cosmopolitan* (Machin and Thornborrow, 2003, 2006; Machin and Van Leeuwen, 2004, 2007). They tried to make sense of the nature of global magazines, recognise the differences and similarities in localised magazine editions, understand their operating processes and uncover the interactions between local and global cultures. Their central questions are similar to what I intend to reveal for *Rayli,* for example:

> *'Exactly where does the local get modified? Exactly how can the local*
> *resist the global by taking on and adapting global formats? Exactly at*

what levels can local values and identities coexist with those that arrive

when global conglomerates import their products or when local media

create their own versions of these?' (Machin and Van Leeuwen, 2007: 169)

They conducted multimodal critical discourse analysis and made a comparison between

versions of the representation of two domains of female activity in *Cosmopolitan*, women at

work and women's sexuality. In terms of linguistic format, they identified the key genre of

Cosmopolitan, which is a 'problem-solution genre' or 'question and answer genre'. Machin

and Thornborrow (2003) demonstrated that although the 'problem-solution' discourse

schemes in *Cosmopolitan* can have a 'local accent', these 'local accents' are quite superficial

because the underlying semantic structuring of the discourse is not changed by the 'local

accents' and these discourses show no cultural differences in a deeper sense.

In *Global media: Generic homogeneity and discursive diversity*, Machin and van

Leeuwen (2004) pointed out that although different local ways were used by *Cosmopolitan* to

construct women's work, *Cosmopolitan* also presented a very similar format of presentation

across local versions. They used a storytelling theory to describe the format:

'Global corporate media may tell stories set in different settings and

dealing with people that have slightly different values and looks, but the

fundamental structural reasons for how they behave, for what they want

and how they might attain it, will follow the same logic.' (Ibid.: 119)

Machin and van Leeuwen (Ibid.) showed that *Cosmopolitan* used linguistic style as a lifestyle

through linguistic advertising style, fashion-caption style, street style and conversation style.

These hybrid linguistic styles are crucial since they are chosen 'for the connotations they

bring, [and] for the way that help to express the magazine's identity and values' (Ibid.: 598).
More importantly, it is through these language styles that *Cosmopolitan* can keep on
delivering the same identities and values while local versions are adopted in their own
specific ways and n different local languages (Ibid.).

Lastly the decoding of visual and textual representation of Cosmo-land and Cosmo
identity, a fun fearless female, indicates that the global distribution of Cosmo's value through
the magazine has become part of the global economy. In other words, the feminism
Cosmopolitan delivers is 'intertwined with consumerism, allowing consumerism to become a
discourse with which women can and do signify their roles and identities across the globe'
(Machin and Thornborrow, 2003: 469). The non-neutral genre, format and discourse of
Cosmopolitan carry global meanings and values that favour particular kinds of events,
participants and settings, which serve global consumer capitalism. On this occasion, the
localised content has become 'a surface phenomenon, a local variant of the same global
message' (Machin and Van Leeuwen, 2007: 170).

Thurlow and Aiello's analysis (Thurlow and Aiello, 2007: 305), although does not
directly address the issue of global magazines, reveals how 'the global-local binary may be
managed and realised semiotically.' They draw on Floch's (1995) idea on representations
versus designs to explain that through the use of highly localised visual meanings, visual
designers can serve the concern of national identity while still being able to balance the
interest of appealing international markets in pursuit of symbolic and economic capital. This
particular concept is similar to the way global magazines operate in local markets. On the one
hand, international magazines need to be localised to be acceptable to local readers and
reflect the region's cultural identity; on the other hand, these magazines have to remain global
in the sense that they can attract global advertisers to generate revenue. Through visual social

semiotic analysis, the localised visual meanings in global magazines can be deconstructed. Applying the framework to international magazines, it is the technique of manipulating 'the smallest effective difference/sufficient variation in visual materials to achieve maximum effects of variety/minimal variation in representational material' that allowed global magazines to attend their global and local interests at the same time (Aiello, 2007: 165).

1.3.3. The localness of global media

Based on Doyle's study (2006), it can be assumed that *Rayli* has a considerable understanding of its local readers and receives operational advantage from its licensing partner to become successful in China. However, Doyle only sheds light on the business aspects and lacks much contemplation of the magazine's content. Therefore it is not able to answer questions, such as what exactly is changed/localised to meet the local reader's tastes and interests? Why is certain foreign/global content kept in the magazine? What is the dynamic like between an international model and an existing local magazine's structure? However, Machin and Van Leeuwen (2004, 2007), Machin and Thornborrow (2003, 2006) and Thurlow and Aiello's (2007) studies provide a methodological model of how these questions can be answered through carrying out detailed analysis of the magazine content. The analytical tools they used direct to where local and global exist, identify the interaction between local and global and show how textual and visual representations are chosen to convey a certain identity and value that serve the magazine's interest. Adopting their framework will allow me to show the exact changes that have happened in *Rayli* and the differences in the details of writing, editing and visual design between Chinese local magazines versus international magazines. More importantly, these observations can bring out answers to the central concerns of this thesis. What do the changes and differences mean? How do global culture and local culture coexist to shape a new Chinese society? And what ideas, values and identities are fostered to construct this new society?

In addition, Machin and van Leeuwen (2007: 170) noted that the local editorial team has a different amount of autonomy 'depending on the political and economic relations between the producers of global media and the countries or regions they are produced for or in which way they are localised.' This points to the need of consideration on the interaction between the magazine content and local politics, as well as the economy. This is especially important in the case of China, where politics has its absolute power over media content while economy needs are challenging the existing political structure (Chin, 2003; Huang, 2007; Hanson and Zheng, 2010). Therefore, before being able to identify how politics and economy have influenced *Rayli's* content, it is important to understand China's politics and economy, especially in relation with media. Machin and van Leeuwen's notion meanwhile indicates the limitation of singly relying on analysing content to explain the interplay between global and local. Obtaining an insight into the way local politics and the economy influence what and how foreign content is chosen, deleted or localised will only be possible through interviewing the local editorial team to understand their decision making process.

Rantanen (2005a) believes that media globalisation is an uneven process, which individuals experience differently in different stages and in different countries. However, very few researchers have focused on a specific country and examined its experience of media globalisation chronologically, from before the encounter of global media to after its arrival. Studying *Rayli* from 1995 to 2012 will be the first research project that identifies the different stages of China's relationship with the global media over a 17-year period. Besides, this study will not just label the stages. The analysis will also clarify what these stages mean, what exactly appears differently in media content in each stage and how the different content of each stage reflects the changes in Chinese society. Therefore, it is not only a study on the evolution of a magazine through the lens of media globalisation, but also an exploration of

global media's interaction with a local culture, value and identity.

1.3.4. Global media and local culture

Scholars have commended on the media's influence on the economy, politics, technology, values, beliefs and ideas (Hall, 1977; Thompson, 1995; Boyd-Barrett, 1977; Appadurai, 1999b, a; Held et al., 1999; Flew, 2007). It is believed that the media not only has the power to sway the rise and fall of empires, but also has a fundamental leadership in the cultural sphere. With the invention of new technology, the media has an even more solid status in the process of globalisation and the development of modern society. The advanced speed and scale of media communication nationally and internationally has made the media's impact on society deeper and broader. People principally rely on the information and images the media carries across the nation, regions and cultures to make sense of events in distant places. McLuhan (1962) saw the growth of global communication technology and predicted the recreation of a world structure, which he called 'global village'. Appadurai (1996: 9) believed that the mediascapes, the electronic capabilities of production and dissemination of images of the world created by media, have contributed to a profoundly mixed world experience. Pelton (2004: 19) even claimed that the new media and communication technologies will take people 'beyond the "global village" into the age of "worldwide mind" and will 'link humanity together in almost unimaginable ways by the end of the 21st century.'

What is the role China plays as a part of the global village? What is the mixed world experience China shares with rest of the world? What kind of worldwide mind do people in China possess? What is the unimaginable way that links Chinese humanity together with others globally? These claims appear vague and abstract. Concrete evidence and explanations are needed when considering the way China's local society and culture have intertwined with external forces that are brought in China via global media. Scholars believe the global

transmission of culture is principally a result of the global media since it is the main agency of the global culture flow (Beynon and Dunkerley, 2000; Rantanen, 2005a). The central discussion of media and cultural studies to globalisation has always been about the effects of global media on cultural hegemony and/or cultural heterogeneity. What is the result of China's interaction with global media, cultural hegemony or cultural heterogeneity and where can we find some concrete detailed evidence?

1.3.4.1. Cultural hegemony

Cultural hegemony proponents accuse global media to have led to cultural imperialism (Schiller, 1976, 1991; Boyd-Barrett, 1977; Tomlinson, 1991, 1997). Cultural imperialism refers to the:

> *'...sum of the process by which a society is brought into the modern world*
> *system and how its dominating stratum is attached, pressured, forced and*
> *sometimes bribed into shaping social institutions to correspond to, or even*
> *promote, the value and structures of the dominating centre of the system.'*
> (Schiller, 1976: 9)

These analysts see a dominance of global media by the United States and a few European countries. They claim that there is an escalating one-way flow of media content from them. Through media imports, the West imposes what is deemed desirable and prestigious in the non-Western countries with the purpose of fulfilling their benefits. Boyd-Barrett (Boyd-Barrett, (1977: 117) raised the concern that cultural imperialism is:

> *'... the process whereby the ownership, structure, distribution or content of*
> *the media in any one country are singly or together subject to substantial*

external pressures from the media interests of any other country or countries

without proportionate reciprocation of influence by the country so affected.'

It is therefore argued that the unequal power and media flow between countries will privilege foreign media, threaten the cultures and identities of subordinate cultures, create ideological dependency and result in a single world culture. The call for The New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) was a result of the worry of the injustice and imbalance prevailing in the processing of media information (UNESCO, 1980; Lee, 1986; Uranga, 1986).

However, the cultural homogeny theory has received several criticisms. Held *et al* (1999: 371) felt these notions 'failed to register properly the nature of these encounters and interplay, interaction and cultural activity they produce.' Criticisms from opponents of global media leading to cultural homogeny can generally be divided into three categories. First, cultural homogeny theories lack complete perception of the nature of culture. Researchers (Gupta, 1998; Beynon and Dunkerley, 2000 and Eriksen, 2007) believe that there is no existence of pure culture. Cultural influences on other cultures have existed throughout history since people from different cultures have inevitably communicated and interacted with each other and this has resulted in a cultural muddle. On the basis of Hegel's concept that pure being and pure nothing are the same, Gupta (1998: 21-2) reasoned that:

> *'Pure culture is no culture, we can understand our own culture by relating*
>
> *it to other cultures and perceiving its similarities and its differences.*
>
> *Without having this exercise the total perception or perception of the whole*
>
> *will not be feasible, it will be just a partial perception.'*

If no such pure culture ever existed and cultures keep mixing, why is there a need to be anxious and blame globalisation of media for cultural homogenisation? Also, Beynon and Dunkerly (2000) observed people's capacity to belong to a variety of different cultures or subcultures simultaneously and inhabiting a number of cultural arenas. That is to say that when people encounter new cultures, they are able to imbibe a new culture without abandoning their original cultures. Hence, the import of foreign cultures does not necessarily end in cultural homogeny.

Second, a number of scholars have clarified that there are multi-directional flows of media content and culture (Boyd-Barrett and Rantanen, 1998; Giddens in Rantanen, 2005b; Turner and Khondker, 2010). UNESCO's (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) world cultural report shows that media globalisation is an opportunity for non-Western countries to become active in the era of globalisation (cited in Thussu, 2007). Thussu (2007:11) notes the 'shift from a state-centric and national view of media to one defined by consumer interest and transnational market' has led to the expansion and acceleration of multi-directional media flow. Flew (2007) and Held *et al* (1999) have also noticed the rise of East Asian culture. It is believed that the cultural flow has begun to reverse. Other social scientists (Eriksen, 2007; Turner and Khondker, 2010) suggest that when global power is examined over a longer period of history, it could be discovered that there are shifts of global power between countries from time to time. Consequently it is reckless to say that media globalisation is European or American oriented.

The third type of critique deals with cultural imperialist scholars who fail to see people as active recipients. Researchers (see for example Katz and Liebes, 1990; Liebes and Katz, 1992; Wasko et al., 2001; Wasko, 2001; Drotner, 2004a, b) argued it is a grave mistake to see people as passive cultural receptacles. It is found that people react to cultures differently and

it is unlikely to form a uniform response. In this argument, audiences are viewed as 'active' participants as they select, negotiate and interpret what they receive. During these processes, people usually put themselves into their own cultural context so people from different cultures understand and experience the same media content in different ways. Furthermore, even people from a similar culture would not always conduct the same strategy to absorb a cultural product, so each individual has his or her own, in Bredin's (1996: 165) words, 'self-definition' and 'self-translation'. Beynon and Dunkerly (2000) therefore believed that passive consumption should not be assumed. Instead, they proposed:

> *'... the ability of consumers to indigenise products to serve their own*
>
> *culture interests must be stressed, along with the resistance strategies*
>
> *people employ against any easy take-over of their way of life.'* (Ibid.: 29)

1.3.4.2. Cultural heterogeneity

Therefore, it is argued that global media potentially produces opportunities, not for cultural homogenisation, but for a 'plethora of new local, hybrid forms and identities' (Howes, 1996: 8). Numerous researchers have suggested the cultural hybridisation theory. This theory draws awareness of the 'fluidity, open-endedness and interconnectedness' of cultural media flows (Flew, 2007: 163). Hybridisation, according to Beynon and Dunkerly (2000: 26) 'is best defined as a process of recontextualisation and meaning re-attribution: foreign cultural imports are assigned fresh meanings within the receiving culture.' Sometimes it is also defined as heterogenisation, creolisation, pluralisation, fussiness or a melange, cut-and-mix, criss-cross or crossover. Two main statements support the theory of cultural hybridisation. The first one is that audiences are active receivers, which has been discussed before. Exponents (see for example Katz and Liebes, 1990; Liebes and Katz, 1992; Wasko et al., 2001; Wasko, 2001; Drotner, 2004a, b) of this argument have been trying to find empirical

evidence through audience research, for example, Katz and Liebes's (Katz and Liebes, 1990) and Liebes and Katz's (Liebes and Katz, 1992) studies of audiences reception of the television programme *Dallas*, as well as Wasko and her colleagues' (Wasko et al., 2001; Wasko, 2001) global Disney audience project.

Katz and Liebes arranged 50 groups; each with three couples and compared the ways in which members of different ethnic groups decoded the content of the worldwide hit programme *Dallas*. The result shows that different viewers, educationally and ethnically, differ in 'critical distance'[5] and appear to show a different understanding, involvement and patterns of involvement since their interpretations of the programme are through a complex mechanism. Katz and Liebes (Katz and Liebes, 1990: 187) explain:

> *'During and after a programme, people discuss what they have seen and come to a collective understanding. It is via such understanding ... that the messages of the media enter into culture ... Programmes do not impose themselves unequivocally on passive viewers; that the reading of a programme is a process of negotiation between the story on the screen and the culture of the viewers; and that it takes place in interaction among the viewers themselves.'*

Wasko and her colleagues (Wasko et al., 2001; Wasko, 2001) designed a tripartite method consisting of a questionnaire, interview and observation and assembled over 1250 respondents in eighteen different countries around the world in their study of the reception of Disney products. Their outcomes show that people from different countries tend to

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5. 'The extent to which characters and issues are generalised or personalised and the extent to which statements about the programme refer to the structure of the story or the "life"' (Katz and Liebes, 1986: 197).

experience Disney differently. For example, regarding the question of whether Disney is uniquely 'American', some see Disney as prototypical American, some feel it is not so much American as Western, some think of it as universal and others believe Disney is personal. Another researcher, Drotner (2004a, 2004b), also focused on the way in which audiences in Denmark articulate and try to understand the complex universe of the Walt Disney Company. His conclusion, similarly, shows that viewers have a variety of perceptions of Disney depending on age, issue and to some degree, gender.

The second account of cultural hybridisation is the localisation of global media content. Scholars (Hannerz, 1992; Robertson, 1995; Machin and Van Leeuwen, 2007) supposed localisation of media content would also lead to hybridised cultures. It is emphasised that global media contents are often adapted to fit varied local contexts. Tunstall (2008) identified nine approaches[6] that TNMCs used when exporting media content globally. Eight out of the nine approaches have a different level of local interference and are designed to cater to audiences in different territories. To explain this concept, Robertson (1995) devised the term 'glocalisation'. The term is originally a Japanese marketing term, however Robertson (1995, cited in Jones, 2006: 116) developed it to conceptualise that globalisation is 'a process as an articulation of global-local problematic' and it 'needs to be conceived as involving the creation and incorporation of locality.' Therefore cultural hybridisation advocates believe that the global media have amplified the opportunities for distinct cultures to mix and create cultural diversity. Beynon and Dunkerley (2000: 26) commented:

> *'World-wide there is increased intercultural communication and openness*
>
> *to new cultural influences; increasing numbers of people have become*

---

6. Export without any translation, translated or edited version, versioning, foreign financing, foreign commissioning, a script-sale or format sale, copying of a genre or editorial formula and media policies or media systems.

multicultural in that they are now actively involved in more than one

culture; and there is a greater tolerance of other cultures.'

In addition, Darling-Wolf and Mendelson (2008) carried out audience research on the way Japanese audiences negotiate the representations of *National Geographic's* 'The Samurai Way's story'. Within six focus groups, 36 Japanese students were interviewed to investigate the cross-cultural reception of 'an American text repackaged for a local foreign audience' (Ibid.: 296). Meanwhile, the research also looked into the process of the production of the story and interviewed the producers. It was found that the Japanese informants felt it was difficult to relate *National Geographic's* representations to their daily life. It was found that despite the fact that the story focused on Japanese history and had been localised for the Japanese market, the local language of *National Geographic* was seen as an American text for local Japanese readers. Darling-Wolf and Mendelson concluded that 'the final interpretation of a text - no matter how localised - is not only in the hands of its producer, but also lies in the larger context in which it is received' (Ibid.: 351).

Nevertheless, cultural heterogenisation is not without its critics. On the one hand, Machin and van Leeuwen (2004: 118-9) judge the idea of glocalisation neglecting the fact that some of the glocalisation process 'is the deliberate strategic embedding of certain local discourses into the Western/capital model, and that the corporations involved affect the transformation.' On the other hand, attacks on cultural hybridisation are mainly drawn from the reasons that the concept does not reflect social realities on the ground. Rantanen (2005a, 2005b), Flew (2007) and Pieterse (2009) argue that the problem of cultural hybridisation theory lies in the overly positive power it gives the audience, as well as its failure in considering class inequality, global capitalism and cultural dispossession.

1.3.4.3. Empirical studies as a solution to theoretical debates

While debates on cultural homogenisation and heterogenisation continue, more recent scholars have called for bottom-up culturalist approaches towards media globalisation (Tomlinson, 1991; Screberny-Mohammadi and Mohammad, 1997; Drotner, 2004a, b). There is a need for more empirically based studies and interdisciplinary dialogue on media globalisation. The reason lies in that the complexity and specificity of media and cultural change within a global context cannot be generalised in a standard phenomenon. For example, if placing *Rayli* in the homogenisation framework, we can only be able to assume that some external cultural force is dominating *Rayli's* representation and this external cultural force is eroding China's local culture. However, homogenisation theories will not be able to explain what specific foreign value is being promoted, what part of traditional Chinese culture is challenged and more importantly how the foregrounding and backgrounding are done. On the other hand, based on heterogenisation, *Rayli* is supposed to create new and hybrid local identities due to diverse audience interpretation and editorial localisation of the magazine content. Similarly, the limitation of the theory is that it fails to answer questions, such as what content is localised or kept as the way it is in its parent magazine and what are the reasons behind these decisions? Moreover, what new culture is produced, is it a completely novel identity to China or is it a hybrid identity that combines foreign and local values? If it is a hybrid identity, what foreign and local cultures are combined? In what form do they exist together? And why are the particular foreign and local cultures chosen to be merged together? It is in the spirit of these more complex engagements that it is useful to look at the details of a certain cultural product to provide more specific and concrete answers for media globalisation.

Summary

My research interest started with the broad concern of why *Rayli* appears as the way it is

now. Some cues are clear while others are uncertain. Something in *Rayli* is not local and did not exist in former Chinese media. This indicates that *Rayli* has been through changes over time and the influence might be external. I therefore sought for insight into what the changes are, the forces that might have resulted in the changes in *Rayli* and attempted to reason how the changes reflect Chinese society. I followed scholars' comments on the influence of globalisation and media globalisation to see what level they can be applied to explain what is happening in *Rayli*. Globalisation theories and global media literature are valuable and indicate that *Rayli* could be a product of globalisation and part of what China is currently experiencing is directed from globalisation forces. The theories, however, show a lack of non-white Judaeo-Christian views on the globalisation process of an individual country. Moreover, scholars, on the one hand, highlight the tension between hegemony and heterogeneity and intrigue attention on the preservation and disappearance of difference across cultures (Appadurai, 1996). On the other hand, they call for the need for more attention on 'how cultural and social difference may be mobilised for symbolic and material profit in global(ising) communication contexts, while also being a significant factor in the production and reception of texts' (Aiello and Pauwels, 2014: 277). It is not the intention of this thesis to add another page to the debates or offer another theoretical framework. My intention is to provide some concrete, detailed evidence to these theories if they are, to a certain level, comparable to the case of *Rayli* in China.

What still needs to be explained, alongside existing theories and studies in the area of media globalisation, is detailed information on global media's influence on local cultural products. Take *Rayli* in China for example, what changes have happened in *Rayli* at different levels, what do the changes mean and what kind of ideas, values and identities are being fostered and in whose interest do they serve? I will therefore apply the analytical framework from Machin and his colleagues' (Machin and Thornborrow, 2003, 2006; Machin and Van

Leeuwen, 2004, 2007), as well as Thurlow and Aiello's (2007), studies to look into the micro details of the magazine, in terms of language, images and visual composition. In the meantime, in order to conduct a more localised study that is placed in the complexity of unique and changing contexts, it is necessary to take local social, political and economic factors into consideration. In the next chapter, I will therefore deliberate on China's global media landscape in relation to its society, politics and economy.

2. China's media background and global media environment

In the previous chapter, it has been discussed that globalisation should be understood as a process that happens at different times, different places and in different ways in different parts of the world. Therefore, instead of adding another page on globalisation, global media theory, culture hegemony or cultural hybridisation debates, there is a need to treat different cases of globalisation as individual phenomena to avoid generalisation. From globalisation theories, we can reason that China has experienced some aspects of what has been called globalisation, however this is to a different degree from what scholars have previously discussed (see 1.1.7.). Therefore, what needs more attention is 'the different degree'. What is unique about China's encounter with globalisation?

One way to approach this is through its media content (see 1.3.4.). In doing so, scholars have pointed out that it is necessary to consider the interaction between media content and the local politics, economy as well as culture (Chin, 2003; Huang, 2007; Machin and Van Leeuwen, 2007; Hanson and Zheng, 2010). It is through conducting a case study that puts China's media product, *Rayli,* in its particular local context so that I can better comprehend 'the different degree'. For example, what kind of (different) global values, ideas and cultures are promoted to Chinese audiences with what different means? What detailed changes have happened in *Rayli* at different levels? And what do these changes and fostered ideologies mean to Chinese society?

In this chapter, I will hence focus on the defining factors, the local society, politics and economy that shape the peculiar global-local dynamic in China and explain China's global media context in relation to the country's social, political and economic influence. This examination includes China's position in the world and global media system, China's global media policy and studies that have been conducted in the area of the global-local relationship

between China and its international media.

2.1. China in the world and global media system

2.1.1. The absence of China

Scholars have been trying to explain the world's structure by dividing countries into several groups, basically according to their state of national development. Two of the most well known models are Alfred Sauvy's (1952, cited in Worsley, 1990: 83) 'three world model' and Immanuel Wallerstein's (1974, 2004) 'world system theory'. The three world model was developed in the 1950s when Sauvy categorised the world into a first world, North America and Europe, a second world, the Soviet-led communist union and China, and a third world, for example countries in Africa and Latin America (Worsley, 1990). In the 1970s Wallerstein (1974) proposed a new world arrangement in which he categorised countries into core capitalist countries, the peripheral former colonies and the semi-peripheral countries[7]. In Wallerstein's model, China was one of the semi-peripheral countries lacking the power and economic dominance of core capitalist nations and facing unmanaged poverty. In both models, China was a country that obtained little attention and influence in the world.

Around the 1980s, while globalisation had been escalating around the world, in order to keep up with the global economic activities, national governments started to consider their national economic policies and adapt them to the global market (Gershon, 1997). The most significant policies that were generated under these conditions were deregulation and privatisation (Gershon, 1997; Herman and McChesney, 1997; Machin and Van Leeuwen,

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7. For Wallerstein (1974), the core capitalist countries were characterised by concentrated, high-profit, high-technology, high wage and diversified production. On the other end of the scale lay the peripheral countries. Peripheral countries either lacked strong central governments or were controlled by other core capitalist states who exploited their labour and raw materials. In between the two, are semi-peripheral countries where the governments attempted to enhance their relative position in the world economic system. At the time of Wallerstein's writing, examples of core capitalist countries included the United States, England, France and Holland; examples for semi-peripheral countries included China, India, Brazil and Mexico; and examples for peripheral countries were African countries.

2007). Gershon (1997: 20) stated that 'the combination of international deregulation and privatisation trends coupled with advancements in new media and telecommunications technology has forever changed the global media landscape.'

In the post-war era, the first world core capitalist country, the United States, initiated an ambitious strategy in the global market. With the wish to export products to foreign countries around the world, America exercised its control over international organisations and its military power to force a gradual reduction of tariff barriers through international agreements, bilateral arrangements and open-door policies globally (Herman and McChesney, 1997; Machin and Van Leeuwen, 2007). The United States' key purpose behind these policies was to establish a global media system whereby its transnational media corporations and advertisers could operate globally (Herman and McChesney, 1997: 17). Following in America's steps, a trend towards deregulation spread widely.

One of the most profound deregulation movements was the European Communication Act introduced by the European Community (EC) in 1985 (Gershon, 1997). The EC is comprised of 12 European countries with the purpose of eliminating economic restrictions and benefitting its members through free products, services and information flow within the EC zone (Ibid.). EC members consequently profited from an elimination of taxes on imports amongst its members and the sharing of media and telecommunication services across national boundaries (Ibid.). The EC council ultimately called for a full liberalisation of telecommunication services on 1st January 1998 (Ibid.). Gershon (Ibid.: 27) commented, 'the new Europe is first and foremost the product of a continent wide economic deregulatory movement where the rigid rules of government bureaucracy are finally being swept away.'

When the deregulation was happening around the world, China had just come out from

Mao's governance under which China was a completely closed region from the rest of the world. In Mao's era, between the 1950s and the late 1970s, Mao manifested an unfriendly attitude towards capitalism and international commerce. The media environment was under a severe control by the Communist Party. Mao's central policies were based on a self-strengthening movement, Maoist self-reliance and anti-imperialism campaigns (Cao, 2007). At that time, the Chinese state was the only legal owner and investor of the media industry. Moreover, the media industry merely worked for the government's propaganda interests. It was not until Mao's death that China gained the opportunity to become more open to the rest of the world. The Chinese leader that succeeded Mao, Xiaoping Deng, began an 'open-door' policy in 1979. Since then, China started to introduce market-oriented reforms without political liberalisation (Ibid.: 441). In order to strengthen 'the media as the primary mean of party-state communication with the masses' and 'stimulate the modernisation and economic growth without the need for increasing media subsidies', China opened its market and authorised the media to accept advertising (Akhavan-Majid, 2004: 557). As a result, the media not only gained greater degrees of openness and freedom, but the media's new economic roles and cultural construction were also promoted. However, the media was still the Party's ideological tool and the nature of the media remained fundamentally unchanged (Winfield and Peng, 2005). As a result, China was pretty much still out of reach from the effect of the global media deregulatory movement.

2.1.2. China in transition

In 1992, Deng called for further reforms and openness (Winfield and Peng, 2005; Huang, 2007). It was a turning point for China's media to transform into its contemporary media constitution. Peng and Winfield (2005: 259) commented that this was the genuine breaking down of the ideological barriers to commercialisation. At this stage, Deng saw the market merely as a mechanism for economic development and 'advocated media commercialisation

as an integral part of the overall economic reform' (Ibid.: 259). Consequently, media institutions started to enter the market. The amplifying demands for advertising from media institutions turned the Chinese media into a highly complex commercial system operated to maximise profits (Akhavan-Majid, 2004). Since then, the profit-driven principle has transformed the media industry in China from 'a traditional Communist propaganda-oriented model to an audience-oriented model' (Huang, 2007: 415). For the first time in Chinese history, commercialisation and market forces challenged the Party's political and ideological media authority and led to a more relaxed and flexible media control policy (Winfield and Peng, 2005; Huang, 2007). Moreover, since commercialisation increased the editorial autonomy and competition for advertising revenue, Chinese media started to adopt some Western communication codes, formats and practices (Huang, 2007).

However, even after Deng's reform, the Chinese media industry was still a state monopoly in terms of ownership (Ibid.). Commercialisation created a highly profitable media market without producing a global media friendly environment in China. In a market socialism (marketisation without privatisation) media industry, the commercial media was operated in a highly regulated market and was still subject to strict ideological restrictions (Lee, 2003b: 151). This semi-independent media, according to Cao, (2007: 442) is 'a distinctive pattern of a two-tire system' which consists of 'the propaganda focused Party press and the market-oriented press as the commercial arm of the Party press.' By the end of the 1990s, China's media still attained an unsatisfying and loss-making performance, especially in the print media (Huang, 2007: 415). Huang (Ibid.: 417) commented:

> *'State monopoly of media ownership, the lack of genuine market*
> *competition and an effective watchdog mechanism for media organisations*
> *and the absence of media law under the market socialism model all*

contribute to rampant institutional corruption in Chinese journalism.'

In the meantime, media deregulation around the world had stepped up another level. A prominent act in the deregulation campaign was the American Telecommunications Act of 1996 (Gershon, 1997; Herman and McChesney, 1997; Machin and Van Leeuwen, 2007). The Telecommunication Act of 1996 abolished the boundaries between different media and promoted mergers along with a concentration of cross-markets in the media. Mark Landler (1996: 4, cited in Herman and McChesney, 1997: 50) described it as 'opening up a "Pandora's box of consolidation in the media industry", as deregulation was the order of the day'. In addition, as a result of this Act, if a country wanted to participate in world trade, its national government was obliged to relinquish control over its media. Machin and Van Leeuwen (2007: 16) stated, 'the era of media globalisation had truly begun.'

At the moment, as the media industry has become increasingly dominant in the world economic system, international institutions such as the WTO and IMF have started to involve themselves in international media policy matters and intervene in global media deregulations (Gershon, 1997; Machin and Van Leeuwen, 2007). For example, in 1997, the WTO regulated to stop the special taxes or tariffs that Canada imposed on American magazine publishers to protect the Canadian magazine industry (Gershon, 1997). The deregulatory media environment has allowed the creation of massive media conglomerates and TNMCs (Gershon, 1997; Machin and Van Leeuwen, 2007). The nature of media conglomerates and profit orientation however appeared to be concerning. It is believed that with the desire to maximise their profitability, TNMCs were no longer willing or able to impose critical judgements on whether their media content are appropriate for public consumption. Gershon (1997: 35) wrote:

'In an open marketplace of ideas, the TNMC does not stop to ask whether such materials are suitable for the public. Company officials are more likely to cite the phrase, "We're only giving the public what it wants" ... [And] [t]here are few international laws to govern the conduct of transnational media corporations.'

2.1.3. The emergence of China

It was also around this period, in the late 1900s, that China gained more attention on its appearance in the world from scholars and TNMC officials who saw its huge market potential. Tunstall (2008: 243) presented a new world construction, which was based on geography, religion, cultural tradition and language to serve the global media's interest. The four major regions are Euro-America, China, India and the Arabic-language media. In this media regional pattern, China has become a central territory given that it has around 20 percent of the world's population and has become a major media power. Thussu (2006: 235) anticipated that China might overtake the West, dominate some media sectors and Mandarin Chinese would almost certainly become a global language. Herman and McChesney (1997: 67) referred to China as 'the largest jewel in the Asian media crown' and 'unquestionably the most coveted emerging market area for global media.' The chief Beijing correspondent of the *New York Times* (1988-93), Nicholas D. Kristof (cited in Cao, 2007: 431), also predicted that 'the rise of China, if it continues, may be the most important trend in the world for the next century.'

Moreover, on 11th December 2001, China obtained its official membership to the WTO, which literally meant that China had re-joined the world (Zhao, 2003). The entry to the WTO equalled to a promise to adapt to a more capitalised and more foreign media friendly market. The reform in media industry after joining the WTO established China's foreign media policy

for today's society. The policy however indicated that while China had re-joined the world and had become one of the regions that global media was eager to enter, China's unique social, economic and political scenery remained to challenge global publishers.

2.2. China's international media policy

After becoming a member of the WTO, China started an intensification of media reform on both internal and external levels. Domestically, to eliminate loss-making institutions, the Chinese government launched a new State Owned Enterprises (SOEs) policy. The government, on the one hand, closed down or sold small and medium-sized loss-making SOEs, on the other hand it pressed ahead with the partial privatisation of SOEs and transformed them into corporations through a shareholding system (Huang, 2007: 418). This was followed by a formal government document Circular No. 19 being issued. This document regulated two major matters: the ending of forced public subscriptions and the granting of permission for private investment up to 40 percent of the stockholds in the media sector (Ibid.). This reform is considered to be the greatest press reform ever in the People Republic's journalism history and it led to hundreds of Party and government press outlets being shut down (Ibid.).

Internationally, the membership to the WTO was a promise to open up the media markets to foreign media. Under the WTO agreement, foreign investments and joint ventures in the media industry were allowed. Also domestic book, newspaper and magazine distribution was opened up to foreign firms. The liberalisation yet did not apply to the news media sector and foreign investors were still not allowed to participate in media operations and management (Weber, 2003). This resulted in an explosion of foreign media products in the Chinese market, for example, in 2003 *Business Week Magazine* (cited in, Huang, 2007: 420) reported that there were more than 50 foreign magazines in Chinese-language editions

and a dozen more were expected in the coming years. The agreement to open up the media

industry was part of China's intention to establish its own national and global media network.

China wished to gain experience, as well as money, from leading global media corporations

in order to ease the shortage of capital investment in its media industry and promote its

international influence (Chin, 2003; Huang, 2007; Hanson and Zheng, 2010). It nevertheless

turned out to be a win-win situation for China and TNMCs, as Huang (2007: 422) notes:

> *'While China needs western funds and know-how, very few western*
>
> *capitalists could resist the temptation of the huge potential of the Chinese*
>
> *media market. This mutual need has served as the foundation of local-*
>
> *international cooperation.'*

Therefore Chinese government's media regulation policy has been shifted from a

defensive strategy into an offensive one (Hanson and Zheng, 2010). However, this indicates

that the Chinese government still views foreign media as a source of ideological threat and

political uncertainty (Ibid.). There are two key characteristics in this offensive strategy. First,

the Government remains the owner of most of the major media companies (Huang, 2007;

Hanson and Zheng, 2010). Foreign media must enter the market by forming a joint venture

with the government and cannot own more than 49 percent of the joint venture. Nevertheless,

foreign magazine publishers can license their brands and content for publication on the

Chinese mainland once they have obtained the government's permission. Second, there is the

'dual-track' policy, which aims to separate the editorial and business operations in media

organisations (Huang, 2007: 423). Because of this policy, the editorial sector continues to

have a socialist nature, whereas the business operation can be restructured into that of a

commercial company (Ibid.). Huang (Ibid.) identified China's media industry as having

transformed itself 'from a market socialism model to a state-controlled capitalist corporation

model' since joining the WTO (Ibid.: 414).

Media policy has always been influential in the development of the media, as it is the government's intention that through media policy, they can 'manage and shape cultural practices in order to direct media institutions towards a particular policy goal' (Flew, 2007: 171). The relationship between the government and media can also be recognised from Michael's (1990: 40) description, 'regulation of the media of communication is as old as blood feuds over insults, and … as classic an issue as deciding whose turn it is to use the talking drum or ram's horn.' Despite the fact that Chinese audiences are more connected to foreign media and China is increasingly involved in the globalisation process, the Chinese government carefully monitors media imports. The media system is still defined by the country's unique political, social, economic and cultural environment (Winfield and Peng, 2005).

2.3. The dialectical relations between China's media and global media

It is again stressed that cultural, social, political and economic differences can produce distinct global(ising) communication contexts (see 1.1.7., 1.2.3., 1.3.3 and 1.3.4.3). In order to provide a realistic assessment of China's media landscape in the current global media communication, Xin (2010: 299) called for the need to 'critically examine the dialectical relations between China's media/cultural internationalisation and hegemony and that between the state's economic leadership and its cultural, moral and ideological leadership.' A number of researchers have echoed Xin's concern. The discussion below examines studies that have addressed these dialectical relations in different media sectors.

2.3.1. Broadcasting sector

Xin's concern mainly dealt with China's broadcasting sector. As joining the WTO had brought

changes and challenges to China's media industry, Guo (2003) questioned if Chinese

television was still 'playing the game by the rules'. He looked into the development of China's

television regulations during the reformed era, which included China's regulations on

domestic television stations, television programmes, programme production institutions and

foreign programme content. Guo (Ibid.: 15) found evidence that 'China remains as

administrative management in a legal disguise' since the Chinese government uses

regulations rather than law[8] to manage Chinese television. As a result, a number of problems

are apparent, for example:

> *'First, the regulatory regime is still one-sided and inadequate … Second,*
>
> *there is a lack of clear procedures in making regulations and third, many*
>
> *traditional problems such as administrative interference still exist in the*
>
> *implementation of television regulations.'* (Ibid.: 16-7)

The dynamic between China's media regulations and global media also gained Shi's

(2005) attention. In his article, Shi argued that by controlling the global media through

China's regulatory body, Chinese culture has been protected from the powerful Euro-

American media imperialism. Nevertheless, Shi noted that China itself has also developed

into an adherent of the free market economy. It was stated:

> *'[O]n the one hand, Chinese authorities have tried every means to regulate*
>
> *the global media's increasing penetration into local marketplaces in the*
>
> *name of nationalism or cultural/ideological exceptionalism; on the other,*

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8. According to Guo (2003), law 'refers to the conduct of legal rule and management that cannot be dominated by personal whims of a leader' (pp. 6). The differences between law and regulation are '[regulations] are mostly related to particular industries; while [law] addresses the entire society and the public. … [law] incorporates both the rights and obligations of citizens and the juridical person, hence being both restrictive and protective; [regulation], in contrast, is mostly restrictive and punitive' (pp. 7-8).

global media, under the patronage of China's accession to capitalist

globalisation, has also made every effort to integrate the "renegade"

Chinese counterparts into a US-led world system.' (Ibid.: 35)

In these circumstances, Shi (Ibid.) showed that achieving the balance between profit and media content, which would be approved by the restriction of Chinese government censorship, has become a crucial issue for global media players.

Around the same period, Chin (2003) saw the limitation of academic contribution to the theoretical and empirical global media studies on Asian countries. She concerned herself with 'the validity or compatibility of media theories when applying them to the local context' (Ibid.: 80). Chin therefore tried to investigate the Chinese government's strategies towards global media and the Party's regulations on the flow of cross-border television. Two main conclusions were presented; firstly, it is clear that a variety of regulations are deployed by the Chinese government in order to protect the domestic market and restrict the inward flow of television programmes, but there is also a negotiation between 'communication sovereignty and industrial growth' (Ibid.: 82). Secondly, 'the factor of the national interests of the Chinese state remains as the "inescapable building block" of regional integration' (Ibid.: 89).

Besides, from the case of STAR TV's venture in China, Chang (2007) revealed that for overseas media corporations, cultivating a good relationship with Chinese leaders is the key to success in China. However, Chang also stated that an unstable political situation, for example a change of leadership, could shatter the harmony with the Chinese government transiently. It was concluded that it is crucial to consider the local condition in China, especially when it comes to 'areas where the government thought protection was needed to ensure national security and identity' (Ibid.: 11). That is to say when sensitive issues are

touched, 'the state will exercise formidable autonomy to formulate and implement policies restricting the global force' (Ibid.).

These studies show that the Chinese government plays an important regulatory role in the development of global media in China. It also indicated that a complex interaction existed between foreign media conglomerates and the Chinese national party. Chin (2003: 87) therefore argued that:

> *'Understanding political culture in contemporary China is not as simple as applying the binary opposition of the western liberal tradition versus a socialist authoritarian system ... There is no clear-cut distinction between the state controlled and the market oriented, between the liberal and authoritarian; rather they are intricately interrelated with each other. The contemporary Chinese state is simultaneously saying "yes" and "no" to transnational capitalism.'*

Following this, when considering global media in China, the focus should go behind the policies and look deeper into the relationship between regulations and the approaches that global media companies use to negotiate with the Chinese regulations.

It is believed that the interrelationship and negotiation between global and local power have made it difficult for foreign media to succeed in China (Weber, 2003). Weber (Ibid.) argued that the continued limits, which the Chinese government place on media investment by foreign operators, result in international media groups only gaining little ground in accessing the Chinese marketplace, especially the news media (Ibid.). Therefore Weber (Ibid.) attempts to theorise the global-local relationship and 'lay out a vignette of localised

strategic responses by "foreign" media companies to enter the Chinese media market.' He explored CETV-AOL Time Warner, News Corporation and MTV's successes in managing media venture in China. The result points out that embracing 'the strategy of localisation, focusing specifically on relationship building, cultural sensitivity, technology and knowledge transfer through cooperative prediction are the means to entering the Chinese media market' (Ibid.: 281). The successful formula is, firstly, the need of an effective localisation strategy that will smooth the entry to the highly regulated domestic mediascape; secondly, the understanding of 'the government's notion of "an imaged world"[9] for doing business in China and exploiting its discursive constructions of modern Chinese values for relationship building'; and thirdly, when the cultural and political sensitivities have been addressed, other defining aspects, for example regulations and expanded access, will become negotiable (Ibid.: 287).

Opposite to Weber's stance, Fung's study (2006) showed a relatively optimistic view towards global media development in China. Also engaged with the issue of localisation strategies under China's various economic and political restrictions, Fung tried to provide the implications of the globalisation/localisation process through interviewing the staff of MTV and observing MTV's programme productions. His results showed that instead of being more restrictive, the Chinese state has become more liberal after joining the WTO. He disputed that the commercial interests of the Chinese government and the opportunities global media brings have globalised China's media industry. For example, MTV extends its influence into

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9. Weber (2003) uses Long's (1996:43) words to explain Appadurai's idea of 'imagined worlds':
  'To be a member of an imagined world is not, of course, to be spatially contiguous or involved in direct interaction. In fact, imagined worlds are always inhabited by non-existent people, in the sense that there is no one, inhabit worlds always match the qualities or profiles of those who are conceived of as being members. Yet individual and group identities (e.g. ethnic or gender belongingness or stereotypes) . . . get constructed around these imagined people and places precisely when individuals compare and contrast themselves and their situations with those "others". This points to the potential ideological impact of media-transmitted images and symbols, although at the same time one must recognize that widespread and rapid communication entails the continuous transformation of meanings and "reinvention" of old images and traditions'. (Long, 1996: 43–4)

the youth culture, which 'used to be a citadel of the state that was not open to outside interference' (Ibid.: 83). However, the operation of popular culture is allowed only when MTV delivers a predictable and acceptable popular Chinese culture. Therefore, Fung concluded that 'nowadays, transnational media corporations and the Chinese authorities work in tandem to produce a state-global media complex' (Ibid.: 84).

2.3.2. Magazine sector

Scholars have also observed a dramatic transformation in China's magazine industry resulting from the changing international and domestic media regulatory policies. The first women's magazine published in China was *Labour and Women* in 1921 by All-China Women's Federation (ACWF) (Firth, 2008). The content was created under the guidelines of the Chinese Communist Party (Ibid.). From 1921 to 1965, ACWF, founded by the government, published or supervised most women's magazines in China (Ibid.). Furthermore, women's magazines during this period were meant to educate and enlighten women to assist in the revolution (Frith and Feng, 2009). However, almost every magazine in China was stopped between 1966 and 1976, when the Cultural Revolution took place (Firth, 2008). Chinese women's magazines re-emerge during Deng's reform. Women's magazines at this time have gradually disposed of the politically imposed revolutionary style (Frith and Feng, 2009). Instead, they focused on family relations, marriage and love whilst advocating the equality of women (Firth, 2008). From 1976 to 1984, Chinese women's magazines depicted women as contributors to their families and nation, who took part in manufacturing, agriculture and politics (Ibid.).

Following this, the arrival of international consumer magazines turned Chinese women's magazine industry to a new page. The first international consumer magazine arrived in China in 1985. The French media publisher, Hachette Filipacchi Medias, cooperated with

the Shanghai Translation Publishing House to launch a Chinese version of *Elle*. At that time, *Elle* was the only glossy-coloured fashion magazine. Although it faced challenges, such as undeveloped printing and design technology as well as limited high-end readership, *Elle* overshadowed most of the black and white domestic magazines in China and showed the potential of the development of international lifestyle fashion magazines in China. It was not until 1993 that the second international magazine, *Cosmopolitan,* was published in China by American Hearst Magazine International through a joint venture with Chinese Trends Media Group. The third international magazine introduced in China was *Rayli* by The China Light Industry Press (Rayli Group) and then the Japanese magazine, Shufunotomo, through licensing in 1995. From 2000, China has experienced the most flourishing growth in magazine industry in its history (Ibid.). For example, *Vivi* from Japan was launched by Kodansha with China Textile & Apparel Press in 2000, Hachette Filipacchi and China Sports Press Group published *Marie Claire* in 2002 and Conde Nast Publications put out *Vogue* with China Pictorial in 2005. By 2012, there were more than 60 Chinese versions of foreign consumer magazines (Li, 2012). In China today, the high-end international magazine market is dominated by four groups: Hachette Filipacchi Medias, Trends Media Groups, Rayli Group and Conde Nast China.

The arrival and success of international Chinese magazines can be understood through the Chinese government's attitude and policy towards them (Frith and Feng, 2009). State control on magazines has gradually decreased and free market mechanisms were born. The Chinese government started to view foreign-licensed magazines as a profitable sector. Consumer magazines were given the specific task of supporting consumerism for the government's economic reform policy. Moreover, this profitable industry can not only bring its national media industry up to international standards, but it also provides a stage to demonstrate an 'open door policy'. Until today, none of the lifestyle magazines were stopped

by the Chinese government (Li, 2011). Consumer magazines are allowed more freedom and given greater space for popular demands in their contents. It is for this reason that lifestyle magazines appear to focus less on political issues and more on leisure-oriented content, which promotes a consumer ideology that fits with the government's economic plan (Frith and Feng, 2009; Li, 2011).

Despite the fact that the Chinese government no longer holds absolute control over consumer magazines nowadays, the Chinese government still has control over the international magazine sector, especially the business aspect (Wen and Fang, 2003; Loong, 2003; Frith and Feng, 2009). Global magazines can only enter China through two main means: a joint venture or a licensing agreement. In joint ventures, Chinese partners need to take the dominant role having as least 51 percent of the business (GAPP, 2005). Moreover, contents that are directly translated from the original versions are limited to 50 percent (Wen and Fang, 2003). Most of the Chinese editions of international magazines were therefore published through licensing agreements (Loong, 2003; Frith and Feng, 2009). Under licensing agreements, by paying fees or royalties, Chinese local publishers can publish local versions of foreign magazines with international magazines' brand names and editorial strategies.

2.4. The influence of global media on Chinese magazine content and society

In more recent years, scholars have started to look beyond the relationship between China's media policy and global media and pay more attention to the local-global dynamic inside the cultural product itself. These kinds of studies allow scholars to point to various aspects that the influence of international media products brings to the Chinese media industry and society, as well as the way that Chinese media and society respond to the influence. In the following sections, I will review the case studies that address this research trend and focus

particularly on a number of articles that have helped highlight issues that need to be further investigated in this area.

2.4.1. The Western influence

Researchers have widely identified the influence from global media on Chinese local media products. Lee (2003a) suggests that journalism practice in China has shown changing patterns. Wu and Ng (2011) point to Western influences on the kinds of events that are reported and the stance adopted in reporting news events. Li (2011) states that global brand magazines have brought a new generation of lifestyle magazine journalism to China. In terms of broadcasting, Wu (2008: 100) sees that China is increasingly influenced by 'the global culture-ideology of consumerism' through the hybridised use of global and local models, celebrities, settings and artefacts in the way that media products are presented to Chinese viewers. He also discusses the way that Chinese television now clearly expresses a global awareness and readiness for change whilst maintaining a practice of West-resistant localisation.

Moreover, Zhang and Shavitt (2003) identify that modernity and individualism values are predominant in Chinese advertising, especially in magazines, targeting the Chinese X-generation[10]. The nature of advertising in China has changed from emphasising utilitarian aspects to highlighting symbolic, experiential values connected with the use of products (Chung, 2006). Chinese women's magazines now, Luo and Hao (2007) believe, reflect the socio-economic and political-ideological changes in China. The representation of women is no longer real but symbolic, which resembles Western lifestyle magazines (see 4.3., 6.1.3. and 7.4. for further discussion). Sue and Feng (2010: 195) also argue that images in Chinese women's magazines, like their Western counterparts, offer no promise of a coherent

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10. Aged between 18-35 years old with high education and income.

femininity but 'draw comparisons with post-feminism of contemporary western popular culture through a shared loss of a specifically feminist subject position' (see Chapter 6 for further discussion). Glasser (1997) comments that the openness of the market ironically stimulates the re-emergence of women's former stereotypes as homemakers and caregivers (see Chapter 4 for further discussion). Feng and Wu (2007) observe that this is a process where Chinese values related to family, tradition and obligation are making way for the promotion of values from America and Europe, such as self-fulfilment and hedonism, as the ideology of consumerism becomes more established (see 4.3. for further discussion). Researchers have covered the influence of global media on a number of different media platforms in China. The results are all pointing to clear international and American influences.

2.4.2. The Japanese influence

I would like to further discuss a series of studies on international women's magazines in China that has been carried out by Feng and her colleagues (Feng and Frith, 2008; Frith and Feng, 2009; Karan and Feng, 2010, 2009; Feng and Karan, 2011) because they are the very few scholars who have considered the global media power from Japan. While the first international magazine to arrive in China was a Western magazine, the Japanese-style magazine *Rayli* has the largest readership with a circulation of 1,050,000 issues and a 20.82% market share (Cui and Cai, 2012). However, most of the researchers in the area of international women's magazine studies have overlooked the media influence from Japan. Japan has shown a strong presence and influence in popularising its media products overseas, especially in Asian countries (Liu, 2008; Tsutsui, 2010). Allen and Sakamoto (2006: 16) believe 'cultural flows among East Asian countries ... were gradually becoming active and constant more than ever. And Japanese popular culture at the moment plays a central role in the flow.' While China's older generation might still be haunted by Japan's wartime brutality,

Japanese popular culture has become a central part of the youth culture in China (Iwabuchi, 2002). The ethnic and cultural similarity with Japan has created a resonance for other Asian countries (Craig, 2000). The foreign but not-so foreign Japanese popular culture gives the Japanese international media a unique position in transmitting cultural products in Asia. Feng and her co-authors provided a preliminary understanding of Japanese magazines' influence and the three-player (China, Japan and the West) dynamic that is happening in the magazine industry in China.

2.4.3. Gender ideology and consumerism for Chinese women's magazines

More importantly, Feng and her co-authors' research inspired me with questions I would like to address in my research. Feng, as well as Firth (Feng and Frith, 2008; Firth, 2008; Frith and Feng, 2009), focuses on showing the differences among Western-based magazines, Japanese-based magazines and Chinese local magazines through content analysis. They also discuss how the expansion process of women's magazines in China has created a new era for women's magazines in China. In this new era, both international and local women's magazines represent a shift in gender ideology and reflect the growing impact of consumer culture in China (see 4.3., 5.1.5., 6.1.3. and 6.2 for further discussion). They believe that nowadays in China, the messages from magazines to women have taken on a decidedly commercial form due to the demands of the market and the influence of a global consumer culture. As a result, they argue that while these localised international magazines attempt to appear local by featuring Asian models, there are hardly any hybridisations since the commercial forms simply 'reflect and transmit consumer values that clearly serve the interest of global brands' (Frith and Feng, 2009: 14) (see Chapter 4, 5, 6 and 7 for further discussion).

2.4.3.1. The representation of 'new' women identity

Traditionally, the identity of Chinese women roots in Confucian culture, which is

authoritative, patriarchal and family oriented. As far as Confucianism orthodox femininity is concerned, women should be soft, gentle, and submissive and should not have any self-determination. A woman should serve her family according to the rules, obey her father before marriage, obey her husband after getting married and obey her son if widowed. Chinese women are given a new identity, first through Mao and Deng's reforms in China. Women at the time were encouraged to join manufacturing, agriculture and politics as independent and professional participants. In more recent years, women are presented in a newly constructed public role in relation to consumption (Feng and Karan, 2011). Studies have noted a shift in gender ideology in media representation in China. Feng and Firth (2009: 170) discuss that the preferable woman image in magazines has changed from neutrality or masculinity to 'happy consumers striving to possess the accoutrements of a modern consumer society.' Nevertheless, the new happy consumer is a re-consolidation of women's stereotype as a virtuous and dutiful good wife and mother (Glasser, 1997; Feng and Wu, 2007; Luo and Hao, 2007; Song and Lee, 2010; Feng and Karan, 2011).

Karan and Feng (Karan and Feng, 2009, 2010; Feng and Karan, 2011) see this as a result of global and local forces contributing to the construction of new women identity in China through international women's magazines. Feng and Karan argue that in terms of production process, international magazines in China are the product of a multi-level convergence of local reality and global influence (see 4.2., 5.2. and 6.3. for further discussion). Their interviews with editorial personnel from the magazine industry show that in the production process, global cultures will be appropriated and reworked to satisfy the local market. Therefore, these magazines inextricably interweave local and global influence. They note that:

'International women's magazines have finally become "hybrids" of local

Chinese culture, Western culture and other Asian cultures ... at the level of their conception, content selection as well as presentation during the process of production ... to cater to a special market in order to pursue maximum profit.' (Karan and Feng, 2009: 25-27)

In terms of portraying the role of women, their findings also suggest a hybridisation of new Chinese women identity, while women's magazines reinforce traditional gender role stereotypes (see 5.1.5. and 6.1.3. for further discussion). Advertisements in international women's magazines in China, according to Karan and Feng (2010: 23), are showing '[a] woman who is professional, adapts to glamorous appearance and sexual appeal, but also keeps the traditional values of the Chinese society.' They indicate, however, that these international magazines intensify women stereotyping more than local women's magazines. On the purpose of helping advertisers sell products to female consumers, women's lifestyle magazines adopt and reinforce women's stereotypes, predominantly their decorative roles. The authors also state that these magazines give very little coverage to social or political issues to avoid the sensitive issues. On the other hand, consumerism in international magazines is tolerated by the Chinese government since it distracts the public from political debates. Moreover, these magazines show that their portrayal of women is consistent with the images that the government sanctifies.

2.4.3.2. Refining research focus on the representations of 'new' women's identity in *Rayli*

Feng and her co-authors explain how international magazines have changed the Chinese magazine market. They identified that both international magazines and local Chinese magazines delivered mingled cultures of the West, other Asian countries and China. However, this kind of hybridisation of culture is rather superficial since they transmit traditional gender role stereotypes to serve one common purpose, consumerism. From their

research, I make sense of issues that need to be further addressed in the studies of Chinese international women's magazines. First of all, how are these changes presented through language and images? For example, they argue that international women's magazines emphasise youth and good looks to highlight women as fashionable consumers. I would like to provide detailed evidence and descriptions on how the accentuation of young, good-looking consumers is constructed through linguistic and visual semiotic resources.

Feng and Karan (2011: 40) also commented that 'the articles of local sources provide broader social horizons for women to build up a meaningful life, the article of global sources put emphasis on fashion and beauty to commercialise the local Chinese women.' This comment brings up questions, such as: again, Feng and Karan have pointed out the trend of changes and further explanation is needed on what exact values, ideas and ideologies are encouraged and in what means they are delivered to the reader. These questions will be answered in Chapter 4, 5, 6 and 7.

In addition, Feng and Karan's statement above draws a clean line between local and global culture. I argue that internal and external cultural forces however can be combined to co-exist in one form. Foreign identity can be transformed and repackaged under the disguise of local identity; likewise local values can be recreated and converted to relate to exterior values (see 5.1.5., 6.1.3. and 6.4.3.). More importantly, what and why are certain local and foreign cultures chosen to be recreated? And how are these transformations and conversions done to appear acceptable to readers? Detailed answers are provided through the four analysis chapters.

To achieve the representation of the new women identity base on Feng and Karan's interview results (Karan and Feng, 2009: 27), it can be assumed that *Rayli,* as a Japanese

style magazine, 'uses more material from mixed sources of imported pictures and reedited texts.' My analysis chapters look deeper into this finding. I further investigate what *Rayli*'s mixed sources are, what kind of pictures are imported and for what reasons and how these editorial decisions reflect *Rayli*'s interest and Chinese society.

Feng and Karan (2011) point to the topics featured in international women's magazines through content analysis as evidence to the phenomenon. Luo and Hao (2007) quantify the occupations appearing on the cover of women's magazines in China to indicate the identity change. However, I argue that a qualitative approach can provide detailed evidence on the way the new women identity is constructed (see 6.4.3.). The texts, images and design elements in magazines need to be deconstructed to show where exactly and in what form global ideology and traditional Chinese femininity exist, as well as the way they are harmonically represented to co-exist.

2.4.3.3. International lifestyle magazines as the platform for consumerism

Another topic that has been widely discussed in Chinese global media studies is the interrelationship between the Chinese version of international magazines and China's social-economical changes as well as consumerism (Wei and Pan, 1999; Ferry, 2003; Chiang, 2009; Frith and Feng, 2009; Song and Lee, 2010). Before Deng's reform, individuals in China were suppressed and subjected to the communist party-state (Wei and Pan, 1999). A frugal, standardised and simple life was the ideological instruction that the official media taught people in the 1980s (Ibid.). Cultural production was largely dominated by anti-market elites and symbols of capitalism were severely criticised during the Cultural Revolution (McIntyre and Wei, 1998; Wang, 2001).

The post-Cultural Revolution reform however has prominently altered this ideology.

With the rapid growth in personal income, the Chinese consumer behaviour has increasingly become part of everyday life (Frith and Feng, 2009). The emergence of a consumer culture has even gained political and ideological significance in China after the 1989 Tiananmen crackdown (Wei and Pan, 1999). 'The pursuit of lifestyle of conspicuous consumption or self-actualisation becomes a meaningful choice' (Ibid.: 78). Since then, Chinese people started to express their self-consciousness and individuality through consumption. Wei and Pan (Ibid.) comment:

> *'They adopt the official discourse on establishing a market economy to legitimise their fever for consumption and, at the same time, to show their indifference and, in some cases even cautious contempt, to the communist rhetoric and the party-state.'*

Today, the social function in China is no longer packaged as a Marxist category. Instead, the social function and culture have turned into capital and economic activity (Wang, 2001). This change has redefined China's social integration and created the rise of Chinese unique middle class (Ferry, 2003; Song and Lee, 2010). The middle class in China is seen by itself and others to be 'determined by high levels of consumption and leisure' and obsessed with status (Song and Lee, 2010: 161). In other words, consumption marks the status and defines the identity of this social group.

International lifestyle magazines, picked as the platform to perform consumerism for the government's economic reform, are specifically targeted at the middle class in China. In the context that the average monthly income per person is around 5000 yuan (500 British pounds) in 2012, the publishers strategically place these magazines at around 20 yuan (two British pounds) per copy and feature luxury consumption to associate the magazines with a

middle class lifestyle (China Briefing, 2013). International lifestyle magazines have thus been defined as 'a gratification for the rich and a temptation for the poor' (Zhou, 2002 cited in Song and Lee, 2010: 162). Wei and Pan (1999: 75) presents that the younger Chinese generation, who is better educated and financially better off, tends to be more exposed to consumer magazines and thus more likely to bear the value of 'conspicuous consumption, aspiration for self-actualisation and worshipping Western lifestyles.' Ferry (2003: 279) identifies this social change as 'a revolutionary collectivity to a "Chinese-brand multiculturalism" that reasserts the primacy of the individual in the guise of a "consumer revolution".'

2.4.3.4. Refining research focus on the representations of consumerism in *Rayli*

Scholars have drawn a clear connection between the rise of middle class, consumerist culture and international magazines in China; however, the way the consumerist culture is represented in these international magazines requires a more detailed study. I argue that the 'Chinese brand multiculturalism' is not a simple worshipping of the Western lifestyle, but a more complex phenomenon that combines Chinese, Japanese and Western values (see Chapter 6 and 7.3.2. for further discussion). Ferry (Ibid.) states that 'a new cultural imaginary is being remapped with the entry of new goods and services.' How do international magazines create this imaginary culture besides clogging the content with consumer products? How do editors manipulate linguistic choices and visual designs to accentuate and harmonise the consumption value throughout the magazines, even in contents that appear to be not consumer-related? How are the consumerist representations done in a way that appears justified as part of modern Chinese daily life? Again, scholars have directed the tendency of the emerging consumer culture in China, where my intention is to provide precise evidence on the way consumerism is constructed and fostered in *Rayli* through the manipulation of linguistic and visual semiotic resources. Answers to these questions are discussed in Chapter 4, 5, 6 and 7.

Summary

In this chapter, globalisation and global media are reconsidered in the complexity of unique and changing contexts in China. Firstly, I examined China's position in the global system and its reengagement with rest of the world. This was followed by considering the Chinese government's changing social, political and economic stance towards foreign media and the development of international media in China in relation to these changes. These all point to a complex and distinctive dynamic between the local and the global forces in China. This review more importantly provides a sense of the world context, how China fits into it and how Chinese media are changing due to the connection to the world context. This brings the study one step closer to the setting that my analysis lays in. In order to reveal the ideologies buried under media discourse, according to Fairclough (2003), it is necessary to pay attention to the social and cultural goings-on that lie behind texts. Without placing this analysis in the social and cultural goings-on, there would be a danger of carrying out disconnected textual analysis.

I then moved on to studies that have attempted to explain the interplay between the global and local forces in Chinese media products. Scholars have commonly observed the global media's influence on the content and format of Chinese media, as well as the fostering of consumerism and construction of new Chinese women identity. It is therefore believed a new hybrid culture has emerged in China. However, through this thesis, I would like to provide more detailed evidence on these influences and changes through deconstructing the linguistic and visual semiotic resources in the editorial content. This research will therefore demonstrate the way foreign value is transformed and repacked to harmonise with the recreation of local culture through language and image manipulation. In the analysis, the subtle means that are used to construct the Chinese 'new' women identity and consumer

culture that help create the 'new hybrid culture' will be revealed. The contribution of the

research will hence establish more detailed evidence on how global forces interweave with

Chinese society.

3. Methodology

In order to reveal the subtle means that are used to convey a Chinese 'new' women identity and consumer culture in *Rayli*, I need a set of methods that will allow me to analyse the micro details of the magazine, in terms of language, image and composition. More importantly, the set of methods also needs to allow me to point to how the 'new hybrid culture' (see 2.4.) reflects on the changing Chinese society. Machin and Van Leeuwen's (2003, 2004, 2005, 2007) and Machin and Thornborrow's (2003, 2006) studies on *Cosmopolitan* were conducted with similar intentions and have provided me with an ideal methodological framework to draw on (see 1.3.2.). In their studies, through Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) (Fairclough, 1989, 1992, 1995a, b; Wodak, 1989, 1996, 2001; Van Dijk, 1991, 1993b, 1995) and Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (MACD) (Hodge and Kress, 1988; Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2001, 1996), they identified the way that global and local culture and ideology are embedded in different linguistic and visual modes.

To be more precise, the CDA I draw on is a set of specific concepts and tools introduced by Theo Van Leeuwen (2005, 2008 and 2009). Instead of content analysis-type approaches or literary-style interpretations of Cultural Studies, a number of authors have used this set of analytical tools to reveal more precisely the way in which language and grammatical features are used by speakers and writers to construct meanings, to persuade people and even manipulate people (see for example Kress and Hodge, 1979; Kress, 1985; Fairclough, 1989; Wodak, 1989; Van Dijk, 1991). In other words, Van Leeuwen's CDA analytical approach not only provides me with resources for deconstructing grammatical elements in *Rayli*, but also reveals the kinds of identities, ideas and values that are buried in the magazine.

Similarly, I will also adapt concepts and analytical tools from what is called Multimodal CDA for the visual analysis in *Rayli*. Building on CDA, MCDA too provides a set of

analytical tools for detailed observations on photographs, designs and visual compositions. MCDA is useful in pointing out the finer elements of representations and the way different identities, ideas and values may be communicated through slightly different visual manipulations. Modern communication is seldom completed merely by language; CDA itself would miss ideas, values and identities communicated through other semiotic modes. Therefore, it is important to place the meanings that are found from CDA next to the meanings that are created by the accompanying visual modes.

CDA and MCDA together allow me to take a critical approach to *Rayli*. Existing literature has shown that Chinese magazines have become more consumer-oriented and linked to advertising culture. Through these analytical approaches, it will be possible to identify how language and visual elements are used differently over time in *Rayli* to meet the increasing interests in serving consumerism and advertising culture.

Beside those, interviews with staff at *Rayli* and Chinese *Cosmopolitan* will be conducted to help obtain more accurate interpretations of the results from CDA and MCDA. Interviews could bring the social and cultural goings-on that lie behind the representations in *Rayli* to avert the danger of producing a disconnected analysis.

Work-related articles from all the editions of *Rayli* between 1995 and 2012 will be studied. The new Chinese women identity is constructed as a happy consumer (see 2.4.3.1.), however women are frequently represented in working environments. Articles on women at work hence become interesting subjects for observing how *Rayli*, through the choice of linguistic and visual elements, could turn workplaces, which are meant to be subjected to substantial duty and female empowerment, into spheres that are justified to perform consumption culture and celebrate women's traditional roles. Also, the representations of

women at work were one of the key concerns in Machin's and his co-authors' studies on *Cosmopolitan*. Understanding how *Rayli* represents women at work allows me to compare my results to what Machin and his colleagues found.

3.1. Critical Discourse Analysis

> *[CDA] '[s]tudies real, and often extended, instances of social interaction which take (partially) linguistic form. The critical approach is distinctive in its view of (a) relationship between language and society, and (b) the relationship between analysis and the practice analysed.'* (Wodak, 1997: 173)

In the following sections, I will first discuss the development of Critical Discourse Analysis. This includes CDA's absorption of Saussure's concept on studying language as lexical and grammatical elements, Halliday's idea of dealing with language for its social uses and Critical Linguistics theory on language choice as a means to promote ideas, values as well as identities. Critical Discourse Analysts nevertheless felt there was still a lack of development of the nature of the link between discourse, power and ideology. The discussion therefore will then move onto how Fiarclough, Van Dijk and Wodak (see for example Fairclough, 1989, 1992; Van Dijk, 1993b, 2008; Wodak, 1989, 2001) accomplished CDA theoretical and methodological frameworks by placing the notions of power and ideology in the centre for analysing discourse. Meanwhile, I will also explain the importance of power and ideology when studying *Rayli*.

3.1.1. The origin of CDA

3.1.1.1. Saussurean semiotics

The origin of CDA theory can be traced back to Saussure (1983). Saussure believed that the relationship between language and the real world is arbitrary. There is no connection between a word and the concept it represents. Saussure (Ibid.: 15) used the term 'semiology' (from the Greek 'semeîon') to refer to a science which studies signs. A sign is a basic unit of a language system. It is composed of the signifier (the form which the sign takes) and the signified (the concept it represents). The signifier and signified are associated by an arbitrary connection that results in the sign as a whole. As language is a sort of code whose parts are relational rather than referential, Saussure believed the parole and langue of language should be studied. Parole is the concrete use of the language. Langue is the whole system of language that is comprised of signs. In other words, we study the use of language and the underlying system of language. CDA's evolvement is based on this notion that language could be studied in terms of its features as well as lexical and grammatical elements.

Saussure shifted the ancient 'philosophical emphasis on the nature of things, in and of themselves, to a relational world view whereby meaning derives from the priorities human beings construct and perceive among signs in a system' (Mick, 1986:197). However, Saussurean semiology is not entirely clear. Saussure's concept of communication and meaning interpretation is a linear model that the understanding between the meaning receiver and the meaning conveyer is simply based on sharing the same set of cultural conventions of language. Later semioticians contend that this is a deficient way of explaining communication (Barthes, 1972, 1977; Chandler, 2002). Therefore, CDA scholars draw on Halliday's (1978, 1985) linguistic theory to highlight the complex process of contextualisation and interpretation within the relationship between the author and reader.

3.1.1.2. Systematic Functional Linguistic (SFL)/Social Semiotics

Halliday's linguistic theory was the first that concerned itself with the social uses of language. The SFL theory (Halliday, 1973, 1976, 1978, 1985) that Halliday proposed sees language as a social semiotic resource. Here, 'social' refers firstly to the social system, which is synonymous with culture, and secondly to the dialectical relationship between communication and social structure (Halliday, 1978, 1985). He believed linguistic grammar was a 'resource for making meanings' (Halliday, 1978: 192) instead of a code or a set of rules for producing correct sentences. In his book *Language as Social Semiotics: The social interpretation of language and meaning,* Halliday (Ibid.: 2-3) wrote:

> *'[L]anguage not only serves to facilitate and support other modes of social action that constitute its environment, but also actively creates an environment of its own, so making possible all the imaginative modes of meaning ... The context plays a part in determining what we say; and what we say plays a part in determining the context.'*

Halliday therefore argues that semiotics is not simply, as Saussure defines, the general study of signs. Instead, it is 'the study of sign systems … the study of meaning in its most general sense' (Halliday and Hasan, 1985: 3-4).

The concept of language as a social semiotic challenges the traditional separation of language from society and the narrow focus on written language in linguistics. The connection between language and social structure suggests that language is a system of choices made in a condition of other potential options and other forms of communication, which humans have built over time and in diverse cultural contexts. A word and the concept it represents are only connected through conventional rules, which are known as codes. It is only with these codes that people can interpret signs. Hence, social men convey what they

have learned through the conventional codes that underpin languages, customs, traditions and all forms of social practices. Signs, consequently, create meaning and reality through a complex interplay of codes or conventions of which people are normally unaware. The idea here is that language, which is constituted of signs and other communication systems, provides the conceptual framework in, and through, which reality is conceived by people. However, as this conceptual framework is a system of choices that are made by humans, the reality should not be taken for granted as having a purely objective existence.

Adapting the theory from social semiotics, CDA emphasises the meaning potential or systems of resource that guide what communicators can do with language in a particular social context to create a certain reality. When conducting CDA, Halliday wrote (1985: 4-5):

> *'We have to proceed from the outside inwards, interpreting language by*
> *reference to its place in the social process ... It involves the difficult task of*
> *focusing attention simultaneously on the actual and the potential,*
> *interpreting both discourse and the linguistic system that lies behind it in*
> *terms of the infinitely complex network of meaning potential that is what*
> *we call the culture.'*

CDA hence needs to be placed in specific social and cultural circumstances to rationalise meaning making as a social practice. The analysis heavily bases itself in social, historical and cultural explanations of meaning and attempts to relate language primarily to human experience (Halliday and Hasan, 1985: 4). In other words, CDA deals with text intertextually. A text is not merely an isolated outcome of a single contextual configuration; it is the result of the influence of other texts. In addition, language and other systems of socially-accepted meanings can and do change in different times and social contexts. Text has a history and the

history involves the interaction between contemporary communication and social context.

3.1.1.3. Critical Linguistics (CL)

CL scholars (Fowler et al., 1979; Hodge and Kress, 1988), based on Halliday's theory, introduced an analytical approach to explore not only the way language represents the world, but also the way language is used to constitute it. Through looking at the way texts categorise, foreground, background or exclude people, events, places and actions, Fowler et al. (1979) believe that underlying ideology of texts can be uncovered. Hodge and Kress (1988) pointed out that language is a form of social practice. The way people act and how society is regulated and maintained is inseparable from language. It is through language that certain kinds of practices, ideas, values and identities are naturalised and/or promoted. The communicative intentions of speakers and authors can be ambiguous, implicit or sometimes not even presented in the text, yet at the same time, through their specific choice of language, their intentions can be delivered with strong commitments. Critical Linguistics therefore intended to identify these specific language choices and what kind of ideas, values and identities are promoted through them.

Fairclough (1992) however believed that Critical Linguistics' limitation lies in its lack of development of the nature of the link between language, power and ideology. Critical Discourse Analysts then later modified Critical Linguistics to develop methods and theories that could better explain the interrelationship of language, power and ideology, and more importantly map out 'the practices and conventions in and behind the texts that reveal political and ideological investment' (Machin and Mayr, 2012: 4). CDA's critical stance lies in the concept that any social phenomenon should be challenged and not taken for granted (Wodak and Meyer, 2009: 2). Texts might appear normal and natural on the surface, but may in fact not only be ideological but also influence the representation of the world for particular

ends. CDA seeks to expose strategies that are used to disguise ideological messages as normal and natural. The term critical can therefore be referred to as "denaturalising" the language to reveal the kinds of ideas, absence and taken for granted assumptions in texts (Machin and Mayr, 2012: 5). It is through denaturalisation that linguistic elements can become evidence of the connections between language, power and ideology that are hidden from people (Fairclough, 1989). We therefore need to study 'how power relations are exercised and negotiated in discourse' (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997: 272). Rather than focusing on describing and detailing linguistic features, CDA pays attention to 'why and how these features are produced and what possible ideological goals they might serve' (Machin and Mayr, 2012: 4). It is a theory and a method 'for empirical study of the relations between discourse and social and cultural developments in different social domains' (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002: 60).

3.1.2. Discourse

In the 1960s, there was a shift into the conceptualisation of how meanings are constructed through the social use of language (Koteyko, 2006: 135-136). The new position on the view of discourse challenged Saussurean abstract linguistic systems and stressed the process of producing and using meanings within a particular social context. The term discourse was hence used to explain the conditions of language used within social relations that structure them. The definitions of discourse given by the notable discourse theorist Foucault have been the focus of many works in social science. Foucauldian definitions of discourse are not only extremely influential in cultural studies, but are also seen as the common approach to understand the general meaning of a term. Foucauldian discourse can be understood by the three meanings that Foucault gave to discourse in *Archaeology of knowledge* (Foucault, 1972: 72):

'Instead of gradually reducing the rather fluctuating meaning of the word discourse I believe I have in fact added to its meaning: treating it as sometimes the general domain of all statements, sometimes as an individualisable group of statements, and sometimes as a regulated practice that accounts for a number of statements.'

That is to say discourse can be used to refer to statements[11] (1) which have been made, which have meaning and which have some effect, (2) which seem to form a grouping, for example discourse of racism and (3) which are produced by unwritten rules and structures (Mills, 1997). Foucault (1972) further explained that a statement is the smallest unit of discourse and discourse is the body of formulated statements and represents the archive of discourse analyses. There is always a pattern that can be traced in discursive formation. Ideas are formed and constructed, and can be proved by tracing how that patterns' regularity becomes apparent.

I like to pair Foucauldian understanding of discourse with Critical Discourse Analysts' concepts on discourse. In *Language and social change,* Fairclough (1992: 14) defines discourse as 'language as social practice determined by social structures'. He distinguishes a textual and a social theoretical sense of the concept of discourse. The former researchers, for example Saussure (1983), give attention to the analysis of texts and spoken languages, as well as the production and interpretation of speech and writing. The latter researchers, like Foucault, focus on the constitution of areas of knowledge and social practice. Fairclough's (see for example, 1992 and 1999) concept of discourse combines both of these two meanings of discourse. In his later book with Chouliaraki (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999: 18), they

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11. Koteyko (2006: 137) explicates 'a statement subscribes to certain concepts and is a statement only in the surrounding of formulations that it implicitly or explicitly refers to, by the way of modifying them, repeating them, or opposing them'.

suggest:

'We shall use the term "discourse" to refer to semiotic elements of social

practice. Discourse therefore includes language (written and spoken and

in combination with other semiotics, for example, with music in singing),

nonverbal communication (facial expressions, body movements, gestures,

etc.) and visual images (for instance, photographs, films). The concept of

discourse can be understood as a particular perspective on these various

forms of semiosis – it sees them as moments of social practice in their

articulation with other non-discursive moments.'

Meanwhile, Van Dijk's (2009) definition of discourse underlines the need of whole

theories or disciplines of the object or phenomenon. He believes that 'discourse is a

multidimensional social phenomenon' (Ibid.: 67). That is to say discourse is a combination of,

at the same time, a linguistic object, an action, a form of social interaction, a social practice, a

mental representation, an interactional or communicative event, a cultural product or a

commodity. The understanding of discourse therefore involves 'many dimensions and

consists of many other fundamental notions that need definitions' (Ibid.).

Based on how these scholars define discourse, discourse should therefore not be dealt

with as a linguistic unit per se, but with the social phenomena that 'captures what happens

when these language forms are played out in different social, political and cultural arenas'

(Simpson and Mayr, 2010: 5). When texts are placed into broader frameworks of

interpretation, they become discourses. Different kinds of association are brought in and

shape how recipients are encouraged to think of what is represented in the texts. The

discourse hence more importantly 'projects certain social values and ideas and in turn

contributes to the (re)production of social life' (Machin and Mayr, 2012: 21).

This is important for analysing *Rayli*. China has gone through tremendous social, economic, and political changes in last 20 years. The same text would be interpreted differently in 1995, the year *Rayli* was launched, in comparison to its interpretation today. Also, the same text would be understood differently between readers who are familiar with Chinese social practice and those who are not. On the other hand, a same identity, value or idea could be constructed and delivered to readers differently depending on, for example, the time and culture. Similarly, different people with different understandings of Chinese social practice could construct the same message differently. Therefore, applying CDA to analyse texts in *Rayli* is not simply analysing the linguistic units. It is an analysis of the discourse of *Rayli*, in which the dynamic between language and different social, political, economical and cultural arenas is considered.

3.1.3. Power

The question of power is one of the key concerns of CDA (Van Dijk, 1995, 2003: 352, 2008; Fairclough and Wodak, 1997; Machin and Niblock, 2008: 246; Wodak and Meyer, 2009; Machin and Mayr, 2012). The view of power in CDA is heavily influenced by Foucault and Giddens' notion that power is 'a systemic and constitutive element/characteristic of society' (Wodak and Meyer, 2009: 10). While CDA adheres to Foucault's view of treating power as productive rather than as pure compulsion, CDA also underlines the pattern of dominance, whereby some social groups are subordinated to others (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002: 18). In other words, certain people, who have power, have privileged access to social resources that allow them to become the authority, the status and the influence and therefore enable them to dominate, coerce and control what 'normal', 'natural' or 'common' should be for the subordinate groups (Van Dijk, 1995, 2003). Language is one of the key means that powers

use to naturalise and transmit social acts and thoughts that align with their interest. Language hence does not simply work as a vehicle of communication but serves to (re)create a social construction and rules the powers' design. This is the reason why power is assumed as discursive in CDA projects. Discourse reflects and (re)produces the society; and power is transmitted and practiced through discourse (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997).

The point is that power leads to hegemony. Gramsci (1971) believed that hegemony is when subordinate groups are convinced to accept the dominant group's moral, political and cultural values and institutions. In this sense, powers use discourse to construct hegemonic attitudes, opinions and beliefs. However, the practice of power is explicit and implicit. CDA scholars therefore emphasise the importance of studying and revealing what kind of social relations of power are exercised and negotiated in discourse (Van Dijk, 1993b; Fairclough and Wodak, 1997). It is through this that the way that powers make ideology become natural can be revealed.

The concept of power in CDA is helpful to the understanding of the global-local interaction in *Rayli*. Globally, the global media, Japanese Shufunotomo, who is mainly capitalist-oriented, would be interested in using its power to penetrate the culture and ideology that fits in its branding strategy to attract revenue. Locally, the Chinese government on the one hand wishes to rely on global media to achieve media development and capital revenue, whilst on the other hand it imposes relatively strict foreign media policy to protect local media businesses and maintain its social-political stands; the local publisher, who concerns himself with profit, has to achieve a balance between his own interests, parent magazines' terms, readers' expectations and the government's demands; and the readers who potentially have the power to ask for what they want and shape the content of *Rayli*. *Rayli* therefore is a stage play of power. The content in *Rayli* shows who is more powerful to

control public discourse and how such discourse is used by the more powerful to control the mind and action of less powerful groups as well as what the social consequences are of such control.

3.1.4. Ideology

Ideology is another central issue of CDA. The concept of ideology was initially used in Marxist discussion of social control (Marx, 1933). Marx believed that to maintain a society, ideology could be used to bury the contradictory essential relations, which are beneficial to the ruling class at the time. In other words, ideology is a means that dominates force in the society used to convince subordinate and subjugated groups that the current society is justified, warranted and natural. Over the years, the term has been broadly used to refer to a belief system held by individuals and collectives. In CDA, ideology is understood in the sense that it characterises the way people accept certain discourses and help to sustain power relations. In this sense, the identities, values and ideas that underpin a society reflect particular interests of the dominant group. Ideologies can be exercised across all aspects of social life in ideas, values, knowledge and institutional practice.

Drawing on Gramsci (1971), Fairclough (1989, 1992, 1995a) believes that, as through language people share views and believes, analysing what kinds of linguistic choices are used to communicate these views and beliefs can reveal the way these ideologies operate. For the purpose of naturalising a particular ideology, the related ideas, values and activities are often suppressed or concealed in the text. CDA provides an approach to uncover these aspects and identifies what linguistic tactics are used to legitimise the ideology. In the case of *Rayli*, through CDA analysis, it will be possible to point out the different ideologies that are promoted, in what and whose interest these ideologies serve, as well as the linguistic tactics that are used.

3.1.5. Van Dijk and Wodak's influence on CDA

Apart from Fairclough, CDA has also been associated with the ideas of Van Dijk (see for example Van Dijk, 1991, 1993b, 2003, 2009) and Wodak (see for example Wodak, 1989, 1996 and 2001). Van Dijk highlights the social-psychological side of the CDA field, also known as the socio-cognitive approach. The theory serves as a framework systematising phenomena of social reality (Wodak and Meyer, 2009: 25). He emphasises the triad between the discourse, cognition and society. The key concern here is that CDA has to demonstrate the way that societal structures are in turn enacted, instituted, legitimated, conformed or challenged by text and talk (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997; Van Dijk, 1993b). Van Dijk (2009) also introduces the concept of context models. Context models are 'the mental representations of the structure of the communication situation that are discursively relevant for the participant' (Wodak and Meyer, 2009: 26). These models control the pragmatic part of discourse, whereas event models focus on the semantic part. Van Dijk's socio-cognition approach is especially influential in the area of racist discourse in news reports.

Wodak and her colleagues established Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA) in their study of post-war anti-Semitism in Austria (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997: 266). It is called Discourse-Historical Approach since the context is understood as mainly historical and it 'attempts to integrate systematically all available background information in the analysis and interpretation of many layers of a written or spoken text' (Ibid.). This kind of practical application is designed to enable the analysis and disclosure of implicit prejudice discourse.

To summarise, based on Saussure's idea, CDA studies language in terms of its features and the lexical and grammatical elements. The approach however, influenced by Halliday and social semioticians, sees the need to locate discourse in social practice and cultural

circumstances. CL provides CDA the means to reveal why and how these linguistic features are produced and what possible ideological interest they might serve. CDA then absorbs from Fairclough, Van Dijk and Wodaks' concept to better explain the interrelationship between discourse, power and ideology as well as the way that text shapes and is shaped by society.

3.2. Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (MCDA)

'The dominant visual language is now controlled by the global cultural/ technological empires of the mass media, which disseminate the examples set by exemplary designers and, through the spread of image banks and computer imaging technology, exert a "normalizing" rather than explicitly normative influence on visual communication across the world.' (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 1996: 4-5)

'We seek to be able to look at the whole page as an integrated text ... We seek to break down the boundaries between the study of language and the study of images, and we seek as much as possible to use compatible language, and compatible terminology in speaking about both, for in actual communication the two and indeed many others come together to form integrated texts.' (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 1996: 183)

With a wide application of digital technology, Internet and multimedia modern communication is rarely isolated to language. Images, colours, fronts, sounds and symbols are all utilised for meaning making. Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis provides analysts' concepts and tools to describe not only the features and elements of these non-linguistic representations, but also the way that they work together (Machin and Mayr, 2012).

Lacey (1998: 5) points out: '"Seeing is believing" is such a powerful idea that most people accept it as true. However, in Media Studies things aren't so simple.' In media, images often deliver messages that image makers intentionally create to involve in constituting people's acknowledgement of the world. Therefore when analysing images in many disciplines, for example, Media and Cultural Studies, Film Studies and Semiotics, scholars concern themselves with the meaning-making process and factors that influence how we look at images of our world. This concept cannot only be applied to the image itself but also to other visual elements, such as font type, font size, colour, composition and symbols. For this reason, there is a need for a set of analytical tools that allows us to analyse the choice of visual features and the meaning construction in visual representations. MCDA is therefore introduced by CL scholars, such as Robert Hodge, Gunther Kress and Van Leeuwen (see for example Hodge and Kress, 1988; Kress and Van Leeuwen, 1996, 2001; Kress, 2010). They draw on Halliday's model of language to seek a way to deconstruct non-linguistic modes. MCDA adopts a more social approach to observe the finest non-linguistic elements like the way CDA examines lexical and grammatical choices in language. MCDA has become a new sub-field connected to CDA and is seen as a more precise, systematic and accurate approach to non-linguistic analysis (Machin and Mayr, 2012).

MCDA also sees non-linguistic communicative modes as a means of social construction; in other words, they shape and are shaped by society (Ibid.). Therefore, as CDA, when carrying out MCDA, the concern does not lay in the visual choices themselves. What is more important to MCDA is the way that communicative modes play a part of communication of power relations to create, shape, maintain and legitimise certain social practice and ideology in society. As Machin and Mayr (Ibid.: 18) pointed out, MCDA analysts describe and document 'the underlying resources available to those who want to

communicate meanings visually', analyse 'the way that these are used in settings' to 'communicate wider ideas, modes, attitudes and identities' as well as 'why specific means were used to create these.' It is MCDA's job to denaturalise the representation of non-linguistic communication and reveal the power interests that are buried in them.

Moreover, although non-linguistic and linguistic semiotic resources are frequently used together, they tend to be used for different kinds of purpose (Ibid.). As non-linguistic modes tend to have less fixed meanings than linguistic ones, they are more open to various interpretations and are used to express things that may be more difficult to communicate through language. In their articles, Machin and van Leeuwen (Machin and van Leeuwen, 2004, 2005, 2007) show that, through CDA, they reveal how the author makes the advice in *Cosmopolitan* appear fun, practical and authoritative, but it is also through MCDA that they can point to the way that images are used to foreground things the author cannot say in language and distract readers from the absurd tips provided. Machin and Mayr (2012) also show that images may be used by the author not to actually depict what the text communicates, but to help background messages that the text tries to conceal. Therefore, it is when placing the meaning of non-linguistic modes in the accompanying text that it best shows the way communicative choices are used to achieve certain interests of the author.

MCDA is important as modern media tends to use multi modes in communication and MCDA can serve the need to 'bring all means of making meaning together under a theoretical roof, as part of a single field in a unified account, a unifying theory' (Kress, 2010: 5). The rules and principles of MCDA allow analysts to understand how choices, such as relative placement element, framing, salience, proximity, colour saturations and style of typeface, convey symbolic messages through images, sounds, toys and other non-linguistic communicative modes.

3.3. Analytical approaches

3.3.1. Analytical tools of CDA

As pointed out earlier, discourse can be used not only to represent the world but also to constitute the world. By choosing certain linguistic ways rather than others to code events, language is used to shape and maintain a society's ideology and social practice in the interests of the discourse producer. CDA looks at details of linguistic and grammatical choices in the text in order to reveal the identities, values, ideas and sequences of actions that are communicated in subtle ways. By examining the motivated linguistic and grammatical choices of individuals, groups and institutions, CDA offers a clearer insight into the world that they wish to construct. Van Dijk (1998) suggests CDA's approach should be diverse and multidisciplinary, which allows scholars to apply a flexible set of modes or perspectives that best suit their particular analysis. Among a wide range of analytical toolkits of CDA, I draw on Van Leeuwen's (2005, 2008, 2009) concepts and tools for examining what social agencies are referred as and what they are depicted as doing, namely the representation strategy and transitivity.

3.3.1.1. Representational strategy

Representational strategy focuses on the naming and referential choice of discourse. Fairclough (2003) and Van Dijk (1993a) both indicate that naming and referential choices can have significant impacts on how people are viewed. These choices allow the discourse producers to place people in the social world, highlight certain aspects they wish to draw attention to and silence others, as well as simplify events and issues or control their meaning.

Van Leeuwen's (1996b) article, *The Representation of Social Actors*, shows a systematic way to analyse the referential choice and the ideological effect that these cause. I focus on

five representation strategies that Machin and Mayr (2012) have revised on Van Leeuwen's category. Firstly, I look at what social agency is personalised or impersonalised. For example, in the following two sentences:

Sergeant Marsh requires the terrorists to release the hostage.

Our nation requires the terrorist to release the hostage.

The first sentence is a personalised one. In this kind of sentence, the issue on the one hand appears to be more personal. On the other hand, it is more obvious whose voice is behind the statement and whose responsibility it is to deal with the issue. The second sentence is an impersonalised one and it gives extra weight to the statement. It is not just an individual, as everyone in the country is requiring the release of the hostage. However, it also makes it unclear or conceals who exactly wants the hostage to be released. It cannot be the case that every single person requires the same thing.

Secondly, individualised or collectivised social agency will be examined to reveal who is humanised in the discourse. The way humanisation is done, is shown in the following sentence:

Two British citizens, Melissa Newman and Josie Powell, both under 10, as well as three tourists, were killed in the car accident.

Here, by naming the two girls and adding referential information, the British citizens are individualised and humanised. These tactics bring readers closer to them and allow readers to empathise with them. The tourists however are collectivised as a group, which makes it harder for the readers to feel connected with them.

Thirdly, I will look at the use of pronoun and noun. For example, the concept of 'us', 'we' and 'them' can be ambiguous and they can be used to make vague statements and hide power relations. Also the terms can be used to align the reader alongside or against particular ideas. Machin and Mayr (Ibid.: 84-85) take an example from the *Daily Mail* to explain how these slippery terms are used to create an anti-immigration statement:

'We live in a democracy of which we are proud.'

'They shall not be allowed to threaten our democracies and freedom.'

'We have to decide to be strong and fight this global terrorism to the end.'

It was never clear who 'we' or 'they' are. Does 'we' refer to 'the political party', 'the people of Britain' or 'a collection of superpowers'? Does 'they' mean all the terrorists, the people of a particular nation or everyone else apart from the British? This example also shows how the unclear 'we' and 'they' can be used to evoke text producers' ideas as being readers' ideas and 'create a collective "other" that is opposition to these shared ideas' (Ibid.).

Fourthly, I will observe whether social agencies are represented as specific or generic.   Statements like the following two sentences are likely to be seen in *Rayli*:

Chang wears high heels to work.

A woman wears high heels to work.

In the first sentence, Chang is a specific woman. 'She wears high heels to work' does not mean others wear high heels to work and it could be one of her personal features. Whilst in the second sentence, the 'woman [who] wears high heels to work' is represented as a type.

The generic category of a 'woman' can be used to position that if you are a woman, you should wear high heels to work. Furthermore, women are highlighted with high heels whilst other features they have at the work place, for example, hard working, innovative or organised, become less important or ignored.

Finally, I will look at where and how suppression is used to erase the agents from discourse. The elimination of a social agent can make events and issues that are actually created through specific decisions and politics appear natural and inevitable. Consider the following example:

The new policy has led to a waste of human resources.

'The new policy' is not something that has the power to change the way human resources are used. The sentence masks the notion that principles that explain the ways human resources should be used is decided by particular agents. The policy is driven by people who have power to decide the direction of an institution. By suppressing the social agent behind the policy, the social agent is free from being responsible for the waste of human resources.

Machin and Thornborrow (2003) and Machin and Van Leeuwen (2004) showed how these analytical tools could be used to reveal the way that *Cosmopolitan* uses discourse for its branding interests. For example, it was through using first-person accounts of sexual experiences that *Cosmopolitan* articulated the goals of being the fun, fearless female and suggested empowerment in women's sexual relationships. However, other representation strategies in *Cosmopolitan* constructed a naïve and generic reader, which made it possible to place the reader in a generic problem-solution format provided by the magazine to enable women to signify their alignment with the Cosmo world through the shops they go to, the

clothes they wear and the make-up they put on.

3.3.1.2. Transitivity

I also draw on Van Leeuwen's article *Representing social action* (1996a) for a transitivity analysis. Transitivity analysis looks at what social agencies are depicted as doing to see how readers' perception of social agencies can be shaped by the representation of transitivity. As Machin and Mayr (2012: 104) wrote:

> *'This allows us to reveal who plays an important role in a particular clause and who receives the consequences of that action. A transitivity analysis of clause structure shows us who is mainly given a subject (agent/ participant) or object (affected/patient) position … simply it is asking who does what to whom.'*

The activated social actors, the ones who do things and make things happen, are generally an important and positive aspect of representation (Van Leeuwen, 1996a). Activated actors are usually foregrounded and presented as capable of 'action, for making things happen, for controlling others and so forth, is accentuated' (Fairclough, 2003: 150). However, for the passivated social actors, 'what is accentuated is their subjection to processes, them being affected by the actions of others' (Ibid.: 113). In other words, some social actors are directly correlated to action with concrete outcomes and in power, whilst others, who are not involved in such processes, are represented as being weak and ineffectual (Machin and Mayr, 2012). The level of activeness of participants can be identified based on what kind of verbal process type they conduct. There are six types of verb processes, material process, mental process, verbal process, behavioural process, referential process and existential process (Halliday, 1976). The following sections focus on four types of verbal process that are especially

important for my analysis and explain how they effect the representation of social actors.

The material process is when the action has a material result or consequence. Material process is useful for identifying who is active and in control, as well as who is passive or benefited. For example:

The father protected the girl.

The girl is protected by the father.

The two sentences describe the same event however they deliver different connotations. The first sentence focuses on the father having the ability to protect the girl. He is an active person who has control and contributes. The second sentence implies that the girl is vulnerable and needs protection. She is a passive agent that has no power and a beneficiary of the protection. It is important to note that sometimes while a social agent can be given power and has an active role, he/she might only be represented as so when doing destructive actions. Van Dijk (2000) pointed out that this is often seen in the representation of ethnic minorities. For example, in a Chinese newspaper, we might see texts like these:

Tibetans have benefited from the construction of a new train line.

Tibetan extremists were arrested.

Tibetan protestors damaged police cars and burned down public infrastructures.

Tibetan rioters demanded a change in the law.

When placing these four sentences together, the reader can get the sense that Tibetans are unsatisfied extreme protestors that only engage in disruptive activities even when they have benefited from the state's construction. However, they are still powerless social agencies as

the only outcome they get is being arrested. Without saying it overtly, Tibetans are portrayed as unfavourable citizens.

Mental process is the process of sensing and it allows readers to gain insights into the social actor's feelings and thoughts. A participant who is presented with mental processes is often the 'focaliser' or 'reflector' who is empathised. In the meantime, it can also depict the participant as being very busy, although he/she does not produce material transactions. For example:

The Mayor is worried about the increased crime rate.

In this sentence, the reader is encouraged to empathise with the Mayor by being shown the Mayor is worrying. As the reader steps into the Mayor's emotion, the potential effect could be that the reader also worries about the increased crime rate. It could be a mean to tell people what they should feel about certain things. Also, it gives the sense that the Mayor is dealing with the increased crime rate, whilst in fact he might not be.

Behavioural process is where the action does not have a material outcome. This process denotes psychological or physical behaviour, for instance: the girl smiles, the soldier heard a loud noise, the fish breathes. These verbs neither suggest these social actors have particularly strong roles, nor give any sense of an outcome or being a beneficiary.

Verbal process is when the participant is represented through the verb 'to say' and its synonyms. The following example shows how people who are represented as conducting verbal processes could indicate that he/she has a certain level of power to talk, whilst it could also imply that he/she is a talker rather than a doer.

The editor-in-chief told the journalists to find sensational stories.

Here, the editor's power on deciding what kind of stories to cover is not only indicated through his/her position, but also through that he/she was the one who told others what to do. However, it can also connote that the editor-in-chief is not the one who is actively looking for stories. He/she only said what should be done while he/she did not take any action to accomplish the goal.

These analytical components allow me to deal with the huge variety of goings-on in the world into a small number of categories (Machin and Mayr, 2012). By breaking down actions, I will be able to observe more precisely the roles of certain social actors, the power relations between participants and a number of issues that point to the ideology buried in a text. For example, Machin and Thornborrow (2006) use transitivity analysis to show how *Cosmopolitan* women are represented as highly active, but in fact they are subjected to non-material processes, that is to say they engage in actions that have no outcome. Van Leeuwen (1996a) also used action process to analyse how children are represented textually in contrast to teachers. The result shows that children, in comparison to teachers, are rarely represented as having an effect on the world. Van Leeuwen (Ibid.) therefore concludes that 'clearly the ability to "transit" requires a certain power, and the greater that power, the greater the range of "goals" that may be affected by the actors' actions'.

3.3.2. Analytical tools of multimodal analysis

Instead of looking at individual signs and their direct meanings in terms of what they connote or symbolise, multimodal analysis adopts a grammatical approach to visual communication, which considers signs in combination with their use (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 1996; Machin, 2010). That is to say, images, like textual discourse, can be analysed through their

'grammatical' features. Therefore, the grammatical approach of analysing a representation strategy and transitivity will also be applied to multimodal analysis. As textual discourse, the representation of social actors in visual content can be considered through if they are individualised or collectivised, specific or categorised and which social agency is foregrounded or backgrounded. Also visual grammars, such as the gaze, the angle of interaction and the distance, can bring out the relationship between people inside the image and viewers. In terms of transitivity, what participants are depicted as doing in images can equally be understood through verbal process types. The following section explains other grammatical analytical tools that will be applied to my multimodal analysis.

3.3.2.1. Iconography

Iconography deals with the carries of connotation (Barthes, 1977). Barthes pointed out that there is a dictionary of poses in people's hands. Each pose has meanings or meaning potentials. Connotations of poses are drawn from their association within a certain culture. Therefore, it is important to place poses in a Chinese cultural context and decode their meaning potential. As poses, objects in images can be associated with meanings and have connotative powers. It is rare that a particular context exists without the presence of any object. However, why are certain objects chosen rather than others? There is always a reason behind the presentation of a particular object and usually the reason is that they are used to convey certain messages to the reader. Setting is another element that is often used to get general ideas across and connotes discourses, as well as values and identities. The same person, action, pose or object shown in different settings can deliver very different perceptions. It is therefore important to consider what kind of setting things are placed in. Finally, Barthes suggested observing the kind of participants used in the images. Different kinds of models can represent different potential meanings. By looking at the kind of models used in an image, the values, identities and attitudes that the image tries to communicate can

also be identified.

3.3.2.2. Modality markers

Barthes (Ibid.) also proposed that photogenia, the style of the artwork and the techniques of photography, could also be manipulated to connote different potential meanings. These styles and techniques can be decoded through modality makers (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 1996; Machin, 2010). In other words, the analysis is done through looking at how real the representations of elements in the pictures are. For example, in terms of colour, the saturation, differentiation, modulation and hue; in terms of lighting, the levels of illumination and brightness; and in terms of detail, the contextualisation and depth of field. These characteristics point to where photographs resemble or diverge from naturalistic representations and allow us to consider the ideologies that are being communicated through images.

3.3.2.3. Visual design and visual representation

Furthermore, I will be examining the visual design of *Rayli*. Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996) believe that the way design components are used is a means to create meaning potential and communicate values, identities and attitudes. For example, the weight of typography can convey the level of certainty and authority, while the curvature can connote softness and femininity; the composition can point to the information value, like attracting the viewer's attention through the salience of certain aspects; and framing can suggest how messages are connected together or separated to coordinate and harmonise different messages.

For the multimodal analysis, it is important to consider the visual treatments that are done on figurative and representational aspects (Floch, 1995). It is therefore useful, here, to distinguish between representation and design (Aiello, 2007, 2012). Representational

resources are the 'raw' visual material, for example the people, objects and places included in an image, while design resources are the abstract principles used to style basic components of visual material. The same design strategy can be used for different representational contents and, vice versa, the same representational content can use different design strategies (Floch, 1995; Aiello, 2007, 2012). According to Floch (1995: 18-19), design resources can be used as visual treatment to 'constitute a definite secondary system of elaboration' through reorganising particular content units 'to produce new associations and, hence a new meaning; a meaning, moreover, that is more profound than that afforded by the representational aspect alone.' In other words, the first level of potential meanings is created through the selection of representational resources, such as basic visual content and literal images; the second level of potential meanings is added on by the particular way images are presented and stylised within design resources. It is through the process that messages are embedded in visual content.

Take *Rayli* for example, an image might include women in a photograph and the first level of iconic value can be conveyed from clothing, posture, settings and different types of models. A different second meaning can be given to this depending on the design elements that are chosen to treat the photograph. For example, placing it against a pink background with curvy and light fonts will give it a different second meaning from placing it against a black background with angular and bold fonts. Through *Rayli*'s development, I expect it is not only the way women are represented that has changed, but it is also the design strategies that have been used to treat the representation which have changed. Floch's concept on visual treatments is therefore particularly important in understanding *Rayli*. In this context, the analysis begins with looking at the changing representations of women in the magazine and then goes on to look at how changing design plays an important role in the process.

3.3.3. Interviews

Texts, linguistic ones and visual ones, shape social identities and interactions, knowledge systems, as well as beliefs, and are also shaped by them in turn. Fairclough (1989, 1992, 1995b) especially concerns himself not only with the dialectical relationship between semiosis and other elements, but also with the relationship between social change and discursive change. His three-dimensional conception of discourse (Figure two) is designed to explain and analyse the dialectical relation between text, social practice and social structure. Due to the complexity of the way language and visual representation shapes, and is shaped by society, there is a need for a multi-disciplinary and multi-methodological approach.

TEXT

DISCURSIVE PRACTICE
(production, distribution, consumption)

SOCIAL PRACTICE
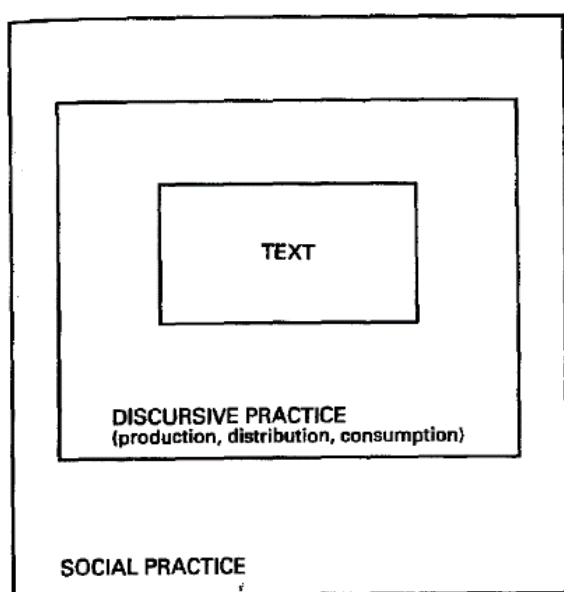
Figure two - Fairclough's three-dimensional conception of discourse (1992: 73)

After the initial stage of analysis, interviews with staff at *Rayli* and Chinese *Cosmopolitan* will be carried out. These interviews are designed to help understand the reasons behind the changes of both textual and multimodal representations, as well as visual design in *Rayli* over time. Fairclough (2003) points out the importance of taking the social and cultural goings-on lying behind media content into consideration to avert the danger of operating a disconnected analysis. Interviews with people involved in the production process of media can help reveal the social goings-on and the way ideologies become embedded in the content (Machin and Abousnnouga, 2013).

Machin and Van Leeuwen's study (2007) on *Cosmopolitan* shows that interviews can be useful for overcoming the limitations of merely relying on analysing content to explain the interaction between global and local. Alongside a textual and multimodal analysis, they carried out interviews with editors, writers and photographers to understand the ideology loaded in the text of *Cosmopolitan*. The interviews allowed them to place the results from textual and multimodal analysis in the consideration of the commercial strategies *Cosmopolitan* used to create a brand which would stand for the ideas, values and identities presented throughout the magazine to align the world of advertising and the consumer culture. It was also through interviews that they were able to understand that only certain details of localisation were utilised to make the brand suitable for new countries.

In November 2012, I spent a month in Beijing to conduct face-to-face interviews with both *Rayli* and Chinese *Cosmopolitan* editors, designers and photographers, 9 interviewees in total. Semi-structured informal interviews were carried out in in the expectation that interviewees would feel more comfortable providing not only professional answers but also personal stories regarding their work at the magazines. Each interview lasted for about 40 minutes. The interviews focused on the following five aspects, (1) the influence of the Japanese parental magazine on *Rayli*, (2) the influence of (Western) global brand magazines on *Rayli*, (3) the local counter forces to Japanese and Western influence, (4) the change of language style in *Rayli* overtime and (5) the change of visual style in *Rayli* overtime. Specific questions were, for examples, what kind of role does Japanese kawaii culture play in the magazine? What has been learnt from Western global brand magazines? I noticed that traditional Confucian values such as family and collectivity are represented less and less in more recently editions, why? Would you say Western consumerism, individualism and neo-liberalism are now the dominant messages in *Rayli*? There is an increasing use of the

addressee 'you' around 2005, why and what are you trying to achieve through this change? Can you tell me about the evolution of *Rayli*'s design templates? And I see *Rayli* represents a very different female identity than *Cosmopolitan*, why? Further questions were then asked via email and Skype calls in 2013. It was through these interviews that I obtained an insight into the local editorial team's decision-making process and the factors that influence their decisions.

3.3.4. Sample selection

From the corpus comprising of all the editions of the magazine between 1995 and 2012, I needed a theme in this thesis that had been featured in *Rayli* throughout these years. The way women are represented at work was therefore chosen to help point to the linguistic and visual changes over time. As discussed in the previous chapter, the representation of women's labour in China has been through different phases due to the Chinese Party's changing political, economical and social stands (see Introduction and 2.4.3.1.). From 1976 to 1984, Chinese women's magazines depicted women as contributors to their families and nation, who took part in manufacturing, agriculture and politics, which means that women were depicted as active social actors who produce material and concrete outcomes for society. Since the arrival of international magazines, the preferable female image in magazines has become a happy consumer that re-consolidates women's stereotype as a virtuous and dutiful good wife and mother. It seems that women do not contribute to material tasks anymore. However, women are still presented in work settings in modern Chinese magazines, arguably to empower feminism. The way that these magazines present consumerism to their readers through work-related features therefore becomes interesting. How do they make a place meant to be subjected to substantial duty and female equality become a place where it is justified to perform consumption culture and celebrate women stereotypes? The representation of women at work is also useful for the comparison of the linguistic and multimodal analysis of the

international editions of *Cosmopolitan* magazine carried out by Machin and Van Leeuwen (2003, 2005, 2007), as well as Machin and Thornborrow (2003, 2006). The comparison will help to indicate what level and in what aspect *Rayli* is similar or different to Western-oriented international magazines.

After the analysis, I have chosen seven representative samples that can best show the changing trends in *Rayli*. The first two samples are from 1999 and 2001, which represent the early stage of *Rayli*. Two of the following three samples are from 2005, whilst the other is from 2006. These three samples show the transition period of *Rayli*. The final two samples are from 2011 and 2012, which demonstrate the more recent years of the representation of women at work in *Rayli*. For the comparison to *Cosmopolitan* magazine, I selected, from *Cosmopolitan*, a number of features that shares similar work-related topics with *Rayli*, collected results from Machin and Van Leeuwen's (2004, 2005, 2007) as well as Machin and Thornborrow 's (2003, 2006) papers, and carried out interviews with some staff from the Chinese *Cosmopolitan* to compensate the limited data.

Summary

In order to carry out detailed observations on the changing global-local relations in *Rayli* over time and explain how the representation of a 'new' Chinese woman identity as well as a consumer culture in *Rayli* are done, I need a set of methods that will allow me to identify the finest manipulations of linguistic and visual semiotic resources in *Rayli*. Machin, and his co-authors' studies on *Cosmopolitan* (Machin and Thornborrow, 2003; Machin and Van Leeuwen, 2004, 2005; Machin and Thornborrow, 2006; Machin and Van Leeuwen, 2007) showed how my research interests could be dealt with through CDA and MCDA.

CDA evolved from Saussurean semiotics, Halliday's social semiotics approach of SFL

and CL's concepts on language choice. Added with Fairclough, Van Dijk and Wodak's contributions on CDA, it has not only become a theoretical framework but also an interdisciplinary analytical approache that 'capture the interrelationship between language, power and ideology', and 'draw out the practice and conventions in and behind texts that reveal political and ideological investment' (Machin and Mayr, 2012: 4). In the late 1980s and 1990s, scholars started to apply the concepts and applications of CDA to other semiotic modes. Hodge and Kress (Hodge and Kress, 1988) as well as Kress and Van Leeuwen (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 1996) introduced MCDA to study the choices of visual feathers just as CDA allowed scholars to study lexical and grammatical choice in texts.

Guided by CDA and MCDA, I can therefore conduct a detailed analysis that allows me to bring out more precisely how *Rayli*, over time, uses the finest linguist and visual semiotic modes together to create an ideology, to persuade their readers to think in certain ways, to believe certain things and take certain actions for certain interests, even though the manipulations are sometimes subtle and concealed. Furthermore, by placing the results of CDA and MCDA in Chinese social practice, considering the social goings-on and reasoning them with the staff at *Rayli* as well as *Cosmopolitan*'s, I will be able to more accurately identify the ways that certain identities, values and ideas become embedded in the content. Interviews with staff at *Rayli* and *Cosmopolitan* will also be conducted to help with interprete the analysis.

The topic of women at work is chosen to help me understand the linguistic, visual and ideological changes in *Rayli*. Seven representative articles from 1995 to 2012 will be presented in the next three analysis chapters to best show the changing trends in *Rayli*. I will also compare the results from *Rayli* to the results from the analysis of a small sample of work-related articles in *Cosmopolitan* and to the *Cosmopolitan* studies carried out by Machin

and his colleagues. I will first show how linguistic and visual representation strategies and transitivity are used by *Rayli* to construct and promote a 'new' Chinese woman identity and consumer culture. Through this, what and how globalness and localness are combined together harmoniously to achieve the construction will also be revealed (see Chapters 4, 5 and 6). The analysis is then accomplished by considering the visual designs and visual representations that are utilised to support *Rayli*'s overall construction of culture, value and ideology (see Chapter 7).

4. Linguistic representations of social actors in *Rayli*

In chapter 1 we saw how the more recent literature on globalisation has pointed to the need to understand the process of globalisation as it happens at different times, different paces and in different ways in different parts of the world. There was also a call for more detailed empirical work, which looked at very specific concrete examples (Machin and Van Leeuwen, 2005). In this chapter and the following chapter, I show how using CDA to look at the language used in *Rayli* provides a highly fruitful way to accomplish just this. With the arrival of global media in China since the Deng reform, it is clear that the representations of women in magazines, as in other media, have changed along with the arrival of consumer culture (see 2.4.). The analysis here allows us to dig a little deeper into these changes and to pick apart the different influences of the traditional, the global and the consumer. The analysis will follow the kinds of analysis carried out by Machin and Thornborrow (2003, 2006) and Machin and Van Leeuwen (2003, 2004, 2005, 2007) in order to look at how the representations in *Rayli* have changed between 1995 and 2012.

In CDA, the various ways that people can be represented are referred to as 'representation strategies' (Fowler, 1991; Van Dijk, 1993; Van Leeuwen, 1996; Fairclough, 2003). The analysis is centred on the question of why a particular word is chosen to name, or not name, a participant over other possible words. Such words, as Van Leeuwen (1996) has shown, can personalise, individualise, generalise or suppress participants and therefore shape the way they are represented for readers. Such word choices can signify wider discourses that are not overtly stated, through words such as 'citizen' or 'local residents', and are therefore highly ideological. To give one simple example of this, at the time of writing, news reports were describing the reactions of 'local residents' to the influx of refugees from Syria, as this could comprise a simple monolithic entity. Such word choices can signify ideas, values and types of identities, which are not specifically articulated.

In this chapter I will focus on examining the linguistic representations of social actors. In the next chapter I move on to the analysis of social action. After the linguistic analysis, the visual representation of social actors and social action, along with the visual design that is used in *Rayli* over time, will be considered altogether in chapters 6 and 7. Interviews with editors of *Rayli* are also conducted to aid the interpretation of the analysis. Of course, what is of interest is the way that such shifts in representations may be different on linguistic and visual levels. The shifting role of design is also crucial in this sense. But in this chapter, I begin with language.

Starting the analysis on a linguistic level is one way that we can look at the details of changes as media corporations come to use the local and the international/global, since such sources themselves tend to prioritise certain kinds of ideas, values and identities. But these are always represented in a state of transformation. Through the interaction of, or use of, these parts, the local and international/global themselves have changed and repositioned. The 'local', as found in the magazine, will always itself have been infused with the ideas, values and identities of the present socio-political moment. But as international/global influences arrive, the need to meet the needs of advertisers, along with a government concerned with hegemonic control, the discourses must also shift and new kinds of local identities and priorities will emerge.

In this chapter, to help me draw out the changing discourses, as well as looking at different versions of *Rayli* since 1995, I also carry out a comparison with the Chinese version of *Cosmopolitan*. While *Rayli* is highly influenced by its Japanese parental magazine *Ray*, its branding priorities reflect more of what is found in the majority of Western originated magazines such as *Cosmopolitan*.

4.1. Linguistic representation strategy in *Rayli*

The analysis in this chapter is carried out on a section that has been consistent in the magazine from 1995 to 2012, called 'women at work'. I have selected seven representative examples of this section in order to show the kinds of changes found in *Rayli*. Two articles from 1999 and 2001 represent the earlier stage of *Rayli*. Two articles from 2005 and one article from 2006 show the transition period of *Rayli*. Finally, two articles from 2011 and 2012 show *Rayli* in its more recent years.

4.1.1. The early years - before 2005

With the title *The life topics of white collar office lady - the real OL* the 1999 article creates a discourse of a typical working day of a fictional office lady. The life is constructed based on the result of a vox pop that is also presented in the article. The following is an extract from the article and an example of the vox pop. In this extract we can see more traditional Chinese values of community belonging, and a clear sense of the marked hierarchy in regards to statues level at work. We also notice the arrival of the use of personal pronouns.

> *'I am an OL from an overseas-invested enterprise in Beijing. I commute to the office on Jianguomen road by underground everyday, it takes me 60 minutes. I usually spend 15 minutes doing my make up before I leave. It is very easy to take the underground. There are no rules for what should be worn at the office but I pay much attention to what I wear ... I have a computer at home and in the office, so I can easily email my clients and cyber-friends. I also chat with my friends and email my boyfriend after work. I do not go to karaoke very often but singing with everyone is the most joyful thing ... The centre of my OL life are my friends, boyfriend,*

hobbies, time, smile, energy and family.'

'Vox pop 7 - What are your happy moments in the office?

• Having lunch with close colleagues

• Receiving compliments from superiors when I accomplish a task

  independently

• Remembering all of the internal phone line numbers

• Working with a guy that I like

• Payday

• Proposals that are accepted by the boss.'

Office ladies	Others	People at work	People outside work
Office lady (OL)	People	*Clients*	*Cyber-friends*
I, me	Everyone	*Boss*	*Boyfriend*
You		*Superior*	*Family*
We		*Colleagues*	*Friends*
		Guy	

Table two - Social actors in *Rayli* 1999 article

Table two shows the social actors that are represented in the 1999 article and these can be categorised into four groups. The categorisation is useful for looking at the way that different participants are represented in the article. As seen in the table, functionalised terms, for example 'boss' and 'superior', are used for people at work. These terms bring a sense of professionalism in the article and sign post the office context whilst there is very little concrete work task involved in the article (see 5.1.). On the one hand the text portrays personalised social actors by using personal pronouns to represent office ladies. It is however synthetic personalisation (Fairclough, 1989). On the other hand by representing people outside of work, such as 'friends' and 'family' and using generic terms like 'everyone' and 'people', office ladies are placed in personal social context and a wider society.

It is important to note that although office ladies are 'synthetically personalised' through the use of personal pronouns, they in fact remain highly generic (see 3.3.1.1.). These office ladies are not individuals but they represent generic office workers. These kinds of representations are different from the generic social actors that are shown in images in *Cosmopolitan* or images in later *Rayli*, which I will discuss later (see 6.1.2., 6.1.3. and 6.3.). The office ladies in this first extract represent the ideas and values of collective belief, experience and action through impersonalisation. An impersonalised sentence can give extra weight to the statement as it indicates that it is not just an individual but every office lady does, wants and believes the same thing.

This extensive use of personal pronouns and synthetic personalisation can also be seen as a device to allow a large population to personalise generic representations as their personal ideas. This tactic is similar to advertising, where mass-produced products are presented as 'made for your need'. Here in the text, when 'I' or 'you' are used, the term actually represents the big group of office ladies. 'I', the fictional character, is created based on the results of a vox pop, which represents the whole group. 'You' is only used in questions of the vox pop addressing all the office ladies who took part in the survey. Therefore, when detailed information is given to 'I', 'me' or 'you', it is not an individual feature. However, when the mass-produced information is represented through personal pronouns, as how it works in advertising, readers can impersonalise the message as theirs.

Another important characteristic of early articles in *Rayli* is the constant reference to colleagues, boss, friends, boyfriend, family and everyone. For example:

'Having lunch with close colleagues.'

'I do not go to karaoke very often but singing with everyone is the most

joyful thing.'

'I go to the shopping mall with my boyfriend.'

'We talk about friendship, relationship and family.'

Again these social actors are represented in generic terms in the article. No extra information is given about any of these social actors, therefore readers do not gain an insight into who or what kind of people they are. In other words, social actors in the article are never really individualised. We will see later articles shift away from this kind of genetic representation. Here the synthetic personalisation could indicate that who they really are or what the personal traits are, are not important. However, by representing people at work and outside work, this helps to construct a collective context. Firstly readers can sense from the texts that these social actors are close friends and colleagues, where work is highly social and community orientated. This is an environment that office ladies are happy to be a part of. Secondly, 'everyone' and 'people' in a broader sense signal an identity, which is highly oriented to wider sphere. This is very different to *Cosmopolitan*, where Machin and Van Leeuwen (2003, 2004, 2005, 2007) find that women's relationships are always strategic and competitive (see 4.2.1.)

When considering the generic representations with the wider social context created by showing people at work, people outside work and using generic collective terms, it can be argued that what is salient here is the value of collectivity and belonging in the Chinese society. This echoes to what has been pointed out by scholars, that Confucian and Chinese traditional female ideology contributes to the construction of a 'new' women's identity in China (see 2.4.3.1.). This was also confirmed by editors in *Rayli*[12]. Joyce Shih, the managing editor, said:

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[12]. Face-to-face interview with Polly Chang, Joyce Shih and Jiaxin Cheng on 26th November 2012.

'I have worked in Rayli for 8 years. I saw Rayli go through a lot of changes but we always valued our traditional Chinese culture, for example family values, collectivities and femininity. Of course we have to adapt ourselves for the newer generation and adjust the content for the readers' appetite for Western culture, but our roots are very much Asian ... We have to make sure we do not compromise too much on traditional Chinese culture ... I believe it is because of this, that we have won the government's award for the best female magazine for the last 5 years.'

Collectivity plays an important role in Chinese society and as a result, especially in earlier *Rayli*, it is *Rayli*'s intention to deliver the collective value in the magazine. Here we see the representations of social actors reflect traditional Confucian philosophy, which sees people as part of a community. It encourages people to take the community above the individual. For this reason people should live their lives based on their roles in the family and society for the sake of community harmony and functionality. In other words, individuality is not promoted. Here, *Rayli* provides information on what all of the office ladies are doing and the discourse that *Rayli* creates delivers the idea that the reader, if you are a 'proper' office lady, should do the same to blend in the community.

I will now move on to the 2001 article *New collegial relationship,* in which the traditional Chinese value of collectivity is also promoted through the representations of social actors. The text begins with introducing the reader to the fact that, for different generations of workers in China, very different kinds of collegial relationships have existed. For example:

'New colleague relationships

Because of the unique purity during that period[13], things between colleagues were also very simple. Everybody had communistic power when facing important work. Everyone had the nerve that could sense communistic power, which was inborn. But many enterprises are now struggling to build this communistic power ... In work, they became very good partners and talked about everything. Once they left the office, everyone returned to their own lives and locked themselves up ... For many people, this kind of life lasted for many many years, even forever. Mother's former colleagues are now all over the place but never disconnect from their communications ... For people of our generation; relationships with colleagues have become a vital component of life. There are more forms of relationships with colleagues and we need more 'art' to deal with these relationships.'

The article then moves on to give a series of personal stories where women encounter very different kinds of collegial relationships in different jobs. We can see them as tour guides, models, IT workers and TV producers. For example:

'Tour guides fly around the world for most of their time ... Lu, Ling and her colleagues seldom have time to get together ... they go out whenever they have a chance.'

'Modelling is a very competitive and cruel industry ... Li, Jun and her colleagues spend a lot of time working together ... Li and Jun said, "When I don't work, I spend time with my family, friends and boyfriend. My

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13. The seventies and eighties in China.

closest friends are those I know from school."'

'The working environment at a TV station makes Tian, Xiao and Qin feel very comfortable at work ... Camera operators, script supervisors, directors and producers all work together like a family.'

'Although Qian Ying is young, she has been working for the same company for three years. The first year was spent working in the human resources department, the second year in the trading department and in the third year she became an IT manager ... Qian Ying said, "... my work and the people I met at work made me more mature."'

First person	Second person	Third person	Others	People at work	People outside work	Names
We	You	They	People	Colleagues	Family	Lu, Ling Lu
Our	Your	Them	Everyone	Staff	Friends	Li, Jun
I		Their	Teenage girls	Tour guide	Boyfriends	Tain, Xiao Qin
Me		She	A/The girl	Model		Qian, Ying
My		Her	Young girls	Producer		
		A/The guy	Youths	Director		
			Someone	Script supervisor		
				Camera operator		
				Boss		

Table three - Social actors in *Rayli* 2001 article

From table three, it can be seen that the way participants are represented follow some

similar patterns to the 1999 article, with the use of personal pronouns, work titles and collective awareness. The key difference here is naming. Office ladies in the 2001 article are represented as individualised named participants. What we can also see from these texts is that people are shown with personal information and depicted as having different kinds of personal lives. For example, the tour guide and her colleagues are close friends even outside of work:

> *'Lu, Ling and her colleagues seldom have time to get together ... they go*
> *out whenever they have a chance ... Although they have been to every*
> *scenic spot with the tour, they are still willing to go with their colleagues.*
> *Even going to the sights we have been to before, the feeling is still*
> *different.'*

The IT worker sees colleagues as people who make her a better person:

> *'Ying Chieng always appreciates advice offered by her superiors and*
> *colleagues ... She said in the last three years, she feels that she has learned*
> *a lot and her personality has become more smooth and tough at the same*
> *time. Work is a place that makes her more mature and become an*
> *adult.'*

The IT producer builds a 'temporary' family with her co-workers:

> *'The relationship between colleagues in the TV station is like a big family*

... Of course this 'family' is built temporarily and it shifts very quickly.

When a programme is finished, there will be another 'family' built for the

next programme and the recruitment will be totally different. It is always

necessary to say goodbye to old 'family members' and to meet new people,

it is like a routine.'

And the model clearly separates her work friends from her private life, as she says:

'I have three different parts of my life in terms of relationships: family,

friends outside work and friends in the modelling profession. When I am

not at work, I am always with my family and my boyfriend. My closest

friends are the people I know from school.'

From the examples above, we can see that these office ladies are not representing a specific
type of person. Through this kind of representation readers can recognise these office ladies
as individuals. Here, these office ladies are, in other words, humanised (see 3.3.1.1.). By
naming and adding referential information, readers can be brought closer to these office
ladies and encouraged to feel what they experience. It is a tactic that is used to create
connections between the reader and the magazine content. Named individuals have since
become the main way *Rayli* represents female workers.

Although the social actors are individualised, the sense of collectivity and belonging
can still be found in the 2001 article. It is important that they are individuals who have
relationships with others and have a sense of belonging. The representation strategies that are

used here to convey collectivity are different from the 1999 article. For example, sentences, like the following, are repeatedly used in the article:

> *'People here are very good at adapting themselves, absorbing experience and inspiring each other in all kinds of environments.'*
>
> *'Everyone works together like a family.'*
>
> *'Chatting, joking, shopping and eating – when youths are together, it is always bustling.'*

Participants are represented with terms such as people, everyone and youth to indicate the sense of being together, sameness among them and belongingness to a certain group, as in *'People here are very good at adapting themselves, absorbing experience and inspiring each other in all kinds of environments.'*

Another important characteristic of articles in earlier *Rayli* is the representation of family. In the 1999 article, family is highlighted as the centre of the office lady's life. We can also see the presence of family in the 2001 texts, where the model says *'When I am not at work, I spend time with my family, friends and boyfriend'*, the IT worker says *'everyone was about the same age and being with them was like being with siblings'* and the TV producer says *'[we] all work together like a family.'* Referring to collegial relationships as family is important here. On the one hand it indicates the importance of work and closeness of the collegial relationship, on the other hand highlights and foregrounds the traditional Confucius family values, although these are not overtly stated. In traditional Chinese society, family is

seen as the closest human connection and the root of the stability of a country[14]. It is not only one of the keys to belonging but also to personal value. The constant reference to family in *Rayli* echoes and emphasises the long-established local ideology. When work is associated with the Confucian family values, not only the relationship but also the responsibility and obligation that a person has to the family are connected to work as well. We will again see this devotion to work in the analysis of social actions (see 5.4.).

4.1.2. The transition years - between 2005 and 2009

More changes occurred around 2005. This was an important period when many of the representations of women at work in *Rayli,* that we see today, first appeared in their embryonic forms. I will start with showing some extracts from articles during this period. In the first article, *Actions for staying enthusiastic at work* (2005(a)), individual stories are shown to demonstrate the ways people make themselves stay enthusiastic at work, with experts evaluating these stories and giving advice. Below are some extracts from the article and Table four shows the social actors used in these:

> *'When you don't feel your work is fresh anymore, the professional burnout*
>
> *and feeling of tiredness will come because you are weak. At a time like*
>
> *this, no matter how much your boss encourages you or your colleagues try*
>
> *to stimulate you, you have lost all of your energy. Have a look at the*
>
> *stories of career knights (big prawn) and beginner level 'little bird' to*
>
> *search for a way to deal with this.*
>
> *...*
>
> *Mirror, 25 years old, 2 years of working experience*

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14. Said by Mencius, the most famous Confucian after Confucius himself. In Chinese: 國之本在家 (Guó zhī běn zaì jiā)

Beijing Kangdewei medical equipment company, Secretary

'When I just started working, I was fully curious about future work and I wholeheartedly wanted to become "the White Bone Demon"[15]. Therefore, despite having a dull secretarial job, I was enthusiastic everyday. However, after working there for about a year, I started to feel tired. Everyday was spent greeting people, preparing tea, answering phone calls, organising documents etc., there was nothing new at all. Therefore eating snakes and tearing up newspapers had become the way in which I released my unhappiness.

Some more time passed and I gradually realised that I could not treat my job like this. I have a long career ahead of me and I must have a way to stay enthusiastic and feel fresh about work. I therefore started to look back on my incapabilities and work harder to become better. Afterwards I reported to the company that in addition to my secretarial duties, I would like to engage in more work in other departments. Because of this, I suddenly have more variety in my work and feel enthusiastic and fresh again.

Expert's Comments:

... The second OL felt tired of her work because she had nothing more to learn. However, she actively looked for opportunities to enhance the possibility to develop. She understands how to turn her stress into motivation and it is very effective. The advice for staying fresh at work is to create endless motivation.'

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15. Similar to the concept of 'superwomen' in English.

First person	Second person	Third person	Others	People at work	People outside work	Names	Expert
We	You	They	Everyone	Boss	Friends	Mirror	Consultant
Us	Your	She	People	Senior employees		Wei, Jia	Founder
I				Employees		Wang, Ya Mei	CEO
Me				Subordinate		Zhou, Yuan	
Myself				Colleagues		Lio, Xiao Xiao	
My				Secretary		Zhao,Yuan Yi	
						Bian, Bingbin	

Table four - Social actors in *Rayli* 2005(a) article

Placing social actors in categories, again, helps with identifying who and how they are represented in the article. Table four shows that there are personal pronouns, more hierarchical work terms and more naming than earlier articles. An office lady is named in English and this is the first time this happens in work articles in *Rayli.* Later, we will see how this naming culture changes and the way it reflects not only the changes in Chinese society but also the magazine's marketing position (see 4.1.3.). Also, for the first time, family is not mentioned and a work advice 'expert' appears in the article. Since this article, 'experts' have become a standard part of the office discourse that *Rayli* creates. The representations of these experts will be discussed later on. From the table, the use of pronouns appears to be similar to the two earlier articles, however it is noticeable when reading through the text that first and second personal pronouns are used dramatically more than earlier. In 4.1.3. I will conduct a statistical analysis to discuss this change.

The second article from the same year, *Bringing luck to work by decorating your desk*

(2005(b)) provides three examples of how office ladies decorate their office and experts, such as the CEO of a career consulting company and a psychology professor, evaluate the quality of their decoration. Below is one of the stories with the expert's comments:

'Ling Zi, 25 years old, Secretary

There is an unwritten rule in our company that mirrors and cosmetics are not permitted on the desk ... But working in customer service, I constantly need to pay attention to my appearance. I therefore figured out a trick to hide these after a long experiment. I have a big office box on my desk. When the box is opened it reveals a big mirror so I can check and fix my make-up discreetly. I act normally when people pass so no one would be suspicious ... I also have a moisturising spray on my table ... I won over my superior's trust [because of the moisturising spray] and we became very close friends ...

Expert's comments:

Don't let your working desk show too much femininity, like make-up, moisturiser and eye drops. Leaders of course like a warm feminine environment but when there is an important position to be filled, he will

forget about you.'

First person	Second person	Third person	Others	People at work	People outside work	Names	Expert
We	You	She	Girls	Boss	Friends	Ling, Zhi	Consultant
Our	Your			HR manager	Boyfriend	Xiao Wen	CEO
I				Senior		Ke, Yi	Doctor of Phycology
Me				Manager		Bian, Bingbin	Director

						Liu, Dan	

In the 2005(b) article the same basic patterns in the use of personal pronouns, technical work terms and naming can be found. The expert is shown again with their job title to provide credibility. What is suppressed from the text is the family, and generic collective terms such as 'everyone' and 'people'. From this we see that experts replace the collectivity found in earlier *Rayli*. In the next chapter, after I examine the social actions of the office ladies and experts, I will further explain how this replacement works to coordinate the magazine's values throughout *Rayli* (see 5.1.5.).

The next text, *Strategies for being successful at work* (2006), teaches graduates how to succeed in their careers incorporating some personal stories, where *Rayli* provides an insight into people's worries at work. Below are extracts from this article:

> *'Trouble 6*
>
> *After graduation, I started working in a state-owned bank. I heard that working in a state-own bank was 'relaxing' but I didn't realise how 'relaxing' it really was. There were rarely any difficult tasks and I always felt that working is easy. There are also quite a few activities ... but after a while I started to get bored of my job. The last time my friends from university and I got together, everyone was talking about their work. Friends who worked in an overseas-invested enterprise talked enthusiastically about their company's new plans whilst I felt increasingly disconnected from them.*
>
> *Rayli's suggestion: We always complain about how the environment stops*

us from improving but rarely think about what we can do to change

ourselves to adapt to the environment. When you are in a laid-back

environment, do not indulge in the easiness of the work. When you meet

your university mates, do not be jealous about how glamorous they look.

They also have their own worries.'

First person	Second person	Third person	Others	People at work	People outside work	Names	Rayli
We	You	She	People	Colleagues	Friends	Yang, Zi	
Us		They	Young people	Graduates	Cyber-friends	He, Miao	
I				Boss	Family	Mai, Yan	
Me				Superior	Boyfriend	Hai, Shao	
My				Manager		Zhou, Si Ya	
						Tao, Le	
						Xiao, Shan	
						Liu, Yan Qing	

Table six - Social actors in *Rayli* 2006 article

What stands out from the social actor categories in the 2006 article is 'Rayli'. From

2006 *Rayli* occasionally represents itself as the expert and gives lifestyle or work advice. In

contrast to the two articles from 2005, this is similar to the earlier articles in the way that

'family', 'everyone' and 'people' are represented. One of the most salient differences between

articles from earlier *Rayli* and articles post 2005 is the emergence of the social actor, 'experts'.

'Experts' have been a common participant in Western mass media (Machin, 2007). It is

believed that in the form of ordinary 'expert' knowledge, Western media offers specific advice

and behavioural guidance, which reinforces commercialism (Lewis, 2008; Ouellette and Hay,

2008; Weber, 2009). Here, we see the Western influence on *Rayli*. In former China, the authoritative voice, in every realm, came from the Party and it supported the social communism ideology. The appearance of an expert voice in *Rayli* has shown a change in terms of who has authority in lifestyle society. In later articles we can further see how experts' advice turns into a consumerism advocate (see 4.1.3.). It is worth noting that *Rayli* has occasionally replaced the role of experts and become the authoritative voice in the magazine itself. This could increase the intimacy between the magazine and its readers since it gives the feeling that the magazine is a real person who cares about you, talks to you personally and gives you advice as a friend.

4.1.3. The recent years - 2010 onwards

In this section I will examine two more recent articles to show how the changes that we discover in the transition period have developed. The article from 2011, *A good job isn't a piece of meat pie that will fall from the sky[16]*, focuses on dealing with job interviews. Again, apart from personal stories, the 'experienced HR' is there to talk about how graduates are expected to behave in job interviews:

> '*Profile*
>
> *Name: Gloria*
>
> *Age: 23*
>
> *Graduation date: June 2011*
>
> *University and major: Shanghai International Studies University, Finance*
>
> *Current company: P&G*
>
> *My GPA is pretty average, it's just around 3.3, and my degree isn't*
>
> *particularly outstanding. But I have good internship experience. I spent a*

---

16. The idiom a piece meat pie fall from the sky means to reap without sowing.

couple of months working at Pepsi and then stayed more than six months at Campbell's. I think, especially for new graduates, being active is very important. Interns are mainly asked to do trivial tasks, so it is crucial to learn and ask for more responsibilities voluntarily ... When I was an intern I had an assignment for myself, which was always do more than your boss expected.

...

Interview tips

1. Put on a light make-up to boost your confidence and make you look more energetic.

2. Carry a foundation, concealer and mirror with you. Double-check your make-up before the interview.

3. You might sweat more when you are nervous; antiperspirants help you avoid any embarrassing sweat.

4. Make sure you stay energetic and treat yourself to a good meal beforehand.

Advice from experienced HR - avoid elementary mistakes

...

About 20% of people are what we call 'interview animals'. They have probably read too much on interview tips and therefore appear to be very experienced. They seem to have a formula for every single question but this is not what we like to see. We can't really tell what kind of people they are.'

First person	Second person	Third person	Others	People at work	People outside work	Names	Expert
I	You	Their	Everyone	Interviewer	Elders in family	Jelly Shi	Senior HR
Myself	Your			Intern		Kelly	Vice director
We				Assistant		Zhang, Jun	
My				Boss		Zhou, Xue Yi	
				Senior		Wang, Hu	
				Junior		Wang, Peng	
				HR		Dai, Jin	
				Leader			

Table seven - Social actors in *Rayli* 2011 article

Social actors in the 2011 article retain the use of personal pronouns, technical work terms, naming and experts. It is around 2011 that more English names are used in *Rayli* articles. In this article, elders in family are presented when office ladies need advice. For example, *'ask elders in the family for job hunting advice'. Rayli* does not represent itself as the expert here; however, advice is slipped in the article from the voice of *Rayli.* In the previous section, it had been discussed that experts became a common representation in Western media for commercial interests. Experts showed up around 2005 in *Rayli,* however during that period we did not see experts being directly associated with consumerism. Here we can see how the expert's voice, especially *Rayli's advice, has* developed into a commercial pawn, like in typical Western media. We can see tips such as *'Carry a foundation, concealer and mirror with you. Double-check your make-up before the interview'*. In addition we can see the purpose of *Rayli* taking over the role of the 'experts'. Instead of using experts, *Rayli* itself can make the game of consumerism work easier. The magazine can choose the ideological messages they like to convey without the intervention of other authoritative voices. Therefore, the magazine can simply build their brand image as well as the *Rayli* girl's

identity as they wish and align them with the magazine's interest.

Now I will move onto the next article. In *Guidelines for the office annual party* (2012), people share stories about their experiences at office parties and *Rayli* then gives advice accordingly. The extract below shows one of the eleven stories in which an office lady talks about the importance of attention to detail at an office party and *Rayli* adds some comments:

> *'Profile*
>
> *Xiao Miao [name]*
>
> *HR assistant*
>
> *Job start date: 2009*
>
> *Maybe because I am a secretary, I always pay more attention to details. When I just got the job, I always chose to sit close to the door at the office party so I could help when the waiters delivered dishes and poured drinks. The seat opposite to the door should be saved for the boss. I also kept an eye on everyone's glass. If any of them were empty, I would pass the drink over straight away. I also would make sure that I have swallowed any food in my mouth before talking to people. They are little things, but after the party everyone thinks I am thoughtful and polite.*
>
> *Rayli Reminder: Practising table etiquette beforehand is the best way to avoid making mistakes. You can also ask advice from elder friends or the elders in your family.'*

First person	Second person	Third person	Others	People at work	People outside work	Names	Rayli
We	You	Her	Everyone	Manager	Friends	Yami	
Our	Your	She	People	Senior colleagues	Elder friends	Echo	
I		They	A/The girl	Colleagues	Parents	Jiji	
My		Them		Boss	Family	Hui Sheng	
				President	Boyfriend	Coco	
						Left	
						Xiao Liang	
						Sophie	
						Xiao Miao	
						Cici	
						Moss	

Table eight - Social actors in *Rayli* 2012 article

The social actors in the 2012 article are similar to those in the 2011 article. The differences lie in that *Rayli* represents itself as the expert to give advice and there are more English names with only one Japanese name used. This could indicate the gradual influence of global culture. In 2001, all of the names are Chinese names; in 2005, one out of 11 people use an English name; in 2006, eight out of eight people have traditional Chinese names; in 2011 six people have Chinese names while two have English names. Interestingly the two people who use English names are given a whole page each for their personal stories and bigger photo portraits whilst the rest of them share a page with shorter stories and smaller ID-sized photos. In 2012, four people have Chinese nicknames, six people have English names and one person has a Japanese name.

It is suggested that the younger Chinese generation, who are better educated and more

financially stable, tend to be more exposed to consumer magazines and thus more likely to bear the value of worshipping Western lifestyles (Wei and Pan, 1999). Readers who can afford *Rayli* tend to be the youth that Wei and Pan talked about. In the interview with Polly Chang, the editorial director of *Rayli*, she mentioned that most of their readers work in China's top 200 international companies and they use English at work. Polly Chang[17] said, 'some of them only speak English at work and they 'must' have an English name. They call each other their English names instead of their Chinese names'. These employees of top international companies in China are those who are better educated and more financially stable that Wei and Pan discussed. *Rayli*, representing social actors using English and Japanese names, reflects Wei and Pan's comment and the influence of the working culture of international companies in China. However for the reader, this kind of naming choice can imply that the preferred lifestyle people are adapting to, exposing themselves to and accepting is foreign culture. This sort of discourse is important for an international lifestyle magazine like *Rayli*, as it mainly features and advertises the popular global brands of perfume, accessories, cosmetics and clothing alongside Japanese and Korean products. As revenue from advertising is the largest source of income for *Rayli*, it is in *Rayli*'s interest that the brand image is coherent throughout the magazine and is suitable for the promotion of foreign products.

Lastly, I would like to go back to the representation of collectivity. There was a withdrawal of family and generic collective terms in the 2005 articles, such as 'people' and 'everyone', however from 2006 to 2012 these social actors are used to point to a wider social context, interpersonal relationships and a sense of collectivity. Personal pronouns are constantly used to individualise the text in *Rayli* from 1999 to 2012, however the level of individualisation dramatically increases from the year 2005. This is revealed by an

17. Follow-up interview via email on 5th February 2013.

examination of the frequency of these personal pronouns. I categorise singular first person[18] and second person pronouns[19] in one category (You and I). They are placed in one category as, in conversations, they indicate individuality and exclude the rest of social actors in the social world. Other pronouns, including plural first person[20], plural second person[21], singular third person[22] and plural third person[23], are in another category (Others). I also place 'everyone' and its synonyms in this category. In contrast to the 'You and I' category, these pronouns, when used in conversation, show the sense of others in the social world and direct to the collectivity. By calculating the times each pronoun is used in the text, the foregrounded value can be shown. Table nine compares the use of 'You and I' and 'Others' in articles pre and post 2005. As evident in the table, there is a dramatic shift from the focus being on others in the pre-2005 period, to the individual in the post 2005 period[24].

	99-04	05-12 Year
Others	83%	17%
You and I	17%	83%

Table nine - Use of pronouns in *Rayli* (for detailed numbers see appendix one)

---

18. First person pronouns: I, me, my, mine, myself.
19. Second person pronouns: you, your, yours, yourself.
20. Plural first person pronouns: we, us, our, ours, ourselves.
21. Plural second person pronouns: you, your, yours, yourselves. In Chinese, singular second person pronouns are different terms from plural second person pronouns so there will be no confusion between weather the terms are directed to single or plural.
22. Singular third person pronouns: he/she, him/her, his/her, his/hers/, himself/herself.
23. Plural third person pronouns: they, them, their, theirs, themselves.
24. In the 1999 article, as discussed before, when 'you' and 'me' are used, those pronounces actually are still directed to collective people. So potentially the used of collective terms could be higher in pre 2005. It is important to note that it is a special case of 1999 article itself. Rest of the articles do no use singular first person or singular second person pronouns to indicate to a collective group.

The high percentage of the use of 'Others' in articles before 2005 indicates that people talk about, pay attention to and care about others. Others are important as in traditional Chinese culture, being part of a group and being like others is the way to establish your identity. Collectivity is highly valued. In the texts of 1999 and 2001, articles often address 'we' and 'everyone' to show a collective experience. For example:

> *'Now <u>we</u> walk through the metropolitan forest, which is built of steel and cement, <u>we</u> encounter all kinds of people, all kinds of wonderful and colourful events and <u>we</u> enjoy the fast-moving life day by day.'*
>
> *'One thing that makes <u>everyone</u> in the travel agency feel blissfully happy is the boss buying us dinner. Because we rarely have a chance to get together, every time we do the boss will always buy us dinner. The boss will ask <u>everyone's</u> suggestions and drive <u>everyone</u> to dinner. <u>Everyone</u> will be enthusiastic to share their knowledge.'*

People immerse themselves in the big society and there is less sense of individuality. The focus is on 'Others', everyone and the group.

However from 2005, in the world that *Rayli* presents, 'others' are not as important anymore. The centre of the world is 'you' and 'I'. In these articles, 'I' provides the life issues or experiences and the magazine itself or 'experts' talk to 'you', as can be seen in the extracts in the last section. Other examples include:

> *'At one point, <u>I</u> was completely sick of my work. <u>I</u> was getting a headache as soon as <u>I</u> walked into the office.'*
>
> *'<u>I</u> had no idea what to wear to go to the first end of year party. I felt I*

would end up wearing strange clothes.'

'Although rehearsing performances is not your "job", all of your

colleagues will take part in the rehearsal! Make sure you do not see it as a

triviality.'

'At a time like this, no matter how much your boss encourages you or your

colleagues try to stimulate you, you have lost all of your energy.'

The differences not only show the frequent use of these pronouns, but also that 'I' does not talk about collective experiences that 'we' have, it only mentions her experience in this personal story, and the magazine talks to 'you' personally and individually. Individuality is always seen as a Western value and has been missing from Chinese society for decades. The emergence of the consciousness of individuality in *Rayli* from 2005 again indicates that traditional Chinese social communalism is transforming itself, closer to the Western 'norm'. The heavy use of the addressee 'you' however, as discussed earlier, could increase the bond between the magazine and the reader. Editors in *Rayli* stated that they wanted their readers to feel that the magazine is a real person talking to you like a friend, instead of feeling like you are reading a textbook[25]. This helps to create an individualised world in which 'you' are alone and only the magazine is on 'your' side to help you.

From the analysis of social actors in *Rayli* between 1999 and 2012, it is found that the discourse *Rayli* constructs for its readers is shifting from traditional Chinese culture towards more Western influenced values. This trend is mainly shown is three aspects. Firstly, the collective value that was once emphasised has gradually lost its stance and has been replaced by individuality. When looking at what kind of social actors are used and how they are presented, it showed that in the 1999 article office ladies are impersonalised. From 2001 to

25. Face-to-face interview with Polly Chang, Joyce Shih and Jiaxin Cheng on 26th November 2012.

2012, office ladies are presented as individuals who engage with other people. However the use of personal pronouns indicate a dramatic change in shifting the focus from collectivity to individuality before and after 2005. Secondly, the appearance of 'experts' suggests that the Party is no longer the single authoritative voice. 'Experts' from different areas, as well as *Rayli* itself, now coach people on what to do, what to believe and more importantly what to buy. Thirdly, the popularisation of English names amongst the youth signals the gradual increase of invasion and acceptance of Western culture.

4.2. The comparison of linguistic representation strategy between *Rayli* and *Cosmopolitan*

As these changes all pointed to Western influences, it raised further questions, such as to what level is *Rayli* similar to Western women's lifestyle magazines? What and where are the similarities and differences? And as *Rayli* is delivering Western values, ideas and identities, are the means used to communicate these messages the same as the tactics used in Western magazines? To answer these questions, I would like to compare the way social actors are represented in *Rayli* and *Cosmopolitan*.

For this comparison, I have selected several articles from *Cosmopolitan* that share very similar topics to the earlier *Rayli* articles. These comparable topics however only apply to articles in *Rayli* after 2005. For example *Rayli*'s *Actions for staying enthusiastic at work* (2005a), *Bringing luck to work by decorating your desk* (2005b), *Strategies for being successful at work* (2006) and *Guidelines for the office annual party* (2012) versus *Cosmopolitan's How to handle a work setback*, *How to stay positive at work*, *10 tricks to help you get ahead at work*, *How your desk can get you promoted* and *When office parties go wild*. It could be suggested that feature topics in *Rayli* have gradually resembled what is covered in *Cosmopolitan* since 2005. To compensate for the limited data of *Cosmopolitan*, I will also

draw on Machin and his colleagues' studies that have been done on *Cosmopolitan* (Machin and Thornborrow, 2003, 2006; Machin and van Leeuwen, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2007; Machin, 2007).

4.2.1. The level of individuality and simplification

I first quantified the way pronouns are used in *Cosmopolitan*'s articles. Based on the five articles I have selected, it showed that, similar to *Rayli*'s post 2005 articles, the representations of social actors foregrounded 'You and I' and backgrounded 'Others'. In other words, individuality is highlighted. 'You and I' are used nearly three times as much as 'Others' (for detailed numbers see appendix two). I further looked into what kinds of participants are mentioned in *Cosmopolitan*. The representation of social actors in *Cosmopolitan* is much more limited in comparison to *Rayli*. Researchers (Eggins and Iedema, 1997; Nevarez, 2000; Machin and Thornborrow, 2003) have pointed out that Western women's magazines present a simplified world. It is a world fragmented from wider social context, where social actors operate free of actual concrete social and individual matters. Social actors tend to have no friends and family, no wider responsibilities or any form of a support network. There is even very little use of 'I' with predominance of the magazine addressing the reader as 'you'. Typical sentences that can be found in *Cosmopolitan* features are like:

> *'These comments hurt, but don't let them bring you down. Instead, do your best not to react. You can say, "Sorry that you feel that way" and then walk away.'*
> *'If you are working hard, you're probably spending more time at the office than at home, so make it look nice.'*
> *'Whilst the economy may cause you anxiety, your job is probably safe. Nevertheless, getting your ducks in line, being proactive and having a plan*

should make you feel more in control of your professional life and give you

some relief.'

We can argue that the world in *Rayli* has also been simplified, as we do not see social class or any economic, racial or political differences. However, the simplification in *Rayli* and *Cosmopolitan* are at a different level. In *Cosmopolitan*'s discourse the girl appears to be alone in the world. The occasional notion of co-workers and the way they are addressed, such as 'jerky cubemates' and 'bitches', implies that the girl does not have much attachment with her colleagues. Her connections with people outside her work are represented as restricted to a very limited type of people through suppression of other social actors (see 3.3.1.1.). The centre of the girl's life seems to be the magazine and her. Differently, in *Rayli*, the girl seems to have better relationships with colleagues, as words like 'jerky cubemates' or 'bitches' are never used to address her colleagues. Also, unlike *Cosmopolitan,* in which family does not exist, family and the elders especially are shown as an important part of life in *Rayli.* For example, we can still see sentences like these in *Rayli* but not in *Cosmopolitan*:

'Everyone talked about their work in our last reunion of university mates.'

'I believe there is real friendship in the workplace whilst it is important to

remain cautious.'

'[T]he interactions between employees are very frequent in our company,

everyone works and lives together like friends. Therefore my colleagues

and I are very close.'

'If I accomplished a task I give myself a little reward, for example having a

10 minute break to have a coffee and chat with cyber pals.'

'I asked elders in my family for job interview advice.'

Despite the fact that there is a reduction in this sense of collectivity in *Rayli* as aforementioned, the world *Rayli* represents has not been simplified as it has in *Cosmopolitan*.

Another difference between *Rayli* and *Cosmopolitan* is the way that genders are represented. In *Cosmopolitan*, co-workers and bosses are mainly female, for example:

>*'If you've tried everything else and you're still having a problem, talk to your boss. Explain to <u>her</u> that you tried to work out the situation on your own first, and lay out what you did.'*
>
>*'Don't be insincere (your boss will see right through it), but try complimenting <u>her</u> on <u>her</u> cute shoes one day.'*
>
>*'There's probably a reason why your co-worker got the promotion - is <u>she</u> always "on" in meetings? Does <u>she</u> get really good feedback from clients? Or does <u>she</u> have a little more education?'*
>
>*'So play nice with your jerky cubemate - you can gripe about <u>her</u> at home later.'*

In terms of gender, the work environment that is presented in *Cosmopolitan* is again simplified and does not reflect reality. Male bosses and colleagues only show up when sex or flirting is involved (Machin and Van Leeuwen, 2007). It has been noted that Western women's magazines reduce everything to gender opposition, constructing a world that insulates women from mundane realities of everyday life and fail to provide a coherent model for living (Eggins and Iedena, 1997; McCracken, 1993; Navarez, 2000). On the other hand, in *Rayli*, colleagues tend to be 'she', a superior or manager could be either 'he' or 'she', whilst a boss is always 'he'. For example:

'There was a girl who got into the company around the same time as me. Because she didn't know how formal the party was, she overdressed and became a "focus".'

'My superior is a female tycoon. She usually looks tough and is difficult to get close to.'

'One time, a manager criticised me in a meeting, so I started to argue with him.'

'My boss puts a lot of pressure on me. Every time I make a mistake, he criticises me harshly.'

Traditionally, before Mao's communalism, China was a male dominated society. Men went out to work and made money for the family whilst women stayed at home, did housework and took care of the kids. It was an unbreakable custom. However, Mao's political slogan 'Women prop up half of the sky'[26] changed the work environment for women in China. There was a tide of female workers in 1949 and the Party provided equal work opportunities and wages for men and women. Gender representation in the work environment in *Rayli* more or less reflects the influence of traditional Confucian culture and Mao's communalism. Women can be in work and in higher positions, however the impact of Confucianism remains, where men are still more likely to have dominant power and work as bosses in corporations. To a certain extent, this does mirror the current work environment in China.

4.2.2. Authoritative voice as advocate of consumerism

Another noteworthy observation is the voice of authority. Further below is a list of experts and authority voices used in *Rayli*:

---

26. 婦女撐起半邊天 – Fu nü cheng qi ban bian tian

• Bian, Bingbin, president of Koray career consulting company, chief of career consultant, and is awarded the CHINA STAFF annual HR manager in 2001

• Liu, Dan, Dr. in psychology, director of clinical philological consulting at Tsinghua University

• Zhang, Jun, vice director of China region human resource department at Omnicom Media Group

• Rayli

Examples of experts and authority voices in *Cosmopolitan's* articles are as follows:

• Heather Clawson, blogger and author of Habitually Chic: Creativity at work

• J. Crew's Jenna Lyons

• Fashion designer Chris Benz

• Designer Jonathan Adler

• Saks Fifth Avenue creative director and fashion star judge Peter Schaefer

• Designer Peter Som

The experts in *Rayli* have some kind of qualification, doctoral degree, award or high position in a corporation. The authorities in *Cosmopolitan* on the other hand attain their credibility through fashion, design and creative work. China has always been a society that values high educational degrees, awards, professional qualifications and statuses. It is therefore not surprising that these experts were chosen to act as the authority in *Rayli*. *Cosmopolitan*'s choice of authority can be seen more as a game of economy. Western women's magazines have a tendency of intertwining feminism and consumerism. It allows consumerism to

become a discourse with which women can signify their roles and identities (Machin and Van Leeuwen, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2007). Likewise, *Cosmopolitan* signifies a world of agency of fun and encourages readers to align themselves with *Cosmopolitan*'s value through acts of their consumption (Ibid.).

Similarly *Cosmopolitan* sometimes takes over the role of 'experts' to give advice to its readers. *Cosmopolitan* does not represent itself as an expert and highlights the fact that it is the magazine that is providing readers with advice. *Cosmopolitan* however is often the narrator of different articles while simultaneously telling the readers what to do, what to believe, what to wear and where to go. For example:

> *'Incorporate these surprising (and sometimes random) expert tips into*
> *your routine to maximise your potential and move up the ladder.'*
> *'Get Bangs.'*
> *'Eighty percent of the time when you look at someone, you look into their*
> *eyes ... Opt for bangs that draw attention to your face - without covering*
> *your gorgeous eyes.'*

Here without directly positioning themselves as experts, *Cosmopolitan* still claims the authoritative role in offering advice. Furthermore, the advice is linked to consumer culture to serve *Cosmopolitan*'s own interest.

4.3. Discussion

It is noted by Ferry (2003: 279) that Chinese social change is 'a revolutionary collectivity to a "Chinese-brand multiculturalism" that reasserts the primacy of the individual in the guise of a "consumer revolution"'. Feng and Wu (2007) argued that Chinese values related to family,

tradition and obligation are making way for the ideology of consumerism. Many other authors have commented that the representations of women in Chinese magazines gradually resemble Western lifestyle magazines (see for example Luo and Hao, 2007; Sue and Feng, 2010) (see 2.4.1. and 2.4.3.). The examination of linguistic representation of social actors in *Rayli* and the composition with the representations of *Cosmopolitan*'s showed that the resemblances appear around 2005 mainly in two aspects. First, the way the first person and single second person pronouns are used to foreground individuality. Second, the magazines take over the authoritative voice to assure the messages coordinate with brand images throughout the magazines and serve their interests of consumerism. These two aspects reflect what Ferry as well as Feng and Wu pointed out. However, the differences between *Rayli* and *Cosmopolitan* still exist in the details.

The level of individuality is different. Women in *Rayli* are shown as having good relationships with others and family is who they always revert themselves back to. *Cosmopolitan* on the other hand represents a more simplified world in which women are alone with the magazine. Others are rarely involved in *Cosmopolitan*'s articles and if presented they are shown mainly as opposition. Another aspect that indicates the world *Cosmopolitan* constructed is at a higher level of simplification lies in the representation of gender. *Cosmopolitan* reduced workers to female colleagues, superiors and bosses and males who only show up when sex or flirting are involved. The representation of gender in *Rayli* on the other hand reflects the local society to a certain level. There are both genders in the workplace while a boss tends to be male. However, the ways in which other experts gain their authority are different. It is through qualification and status in *Rayli* while it is mainly through the involvement in fashion, design and consumer industries in *Cosmopolitan*. This indicates that the game of consumerism in *Rayli* is not yet exercised to the extent it is in *Cosmopolitan*.

Summary

The analysis of the representational strategies used in *Rayli* is the very first attempt to provide detailed evidence to the way the Chinese 'new' women identity and consumer culture are created and the way global forces interweave with Chinese society. Results have pointed out detailed evidence on how *Rayli* resembles Western magazines in terms of broader ideological trends and differ from Western magazines in terms of what level these ideologies are celebrated. The representation strategy nevertheless does not show the way the Chinese 'new' women identity is constructed. In other words, how does *Rayli* promote the image of a professional young woman who is a glamorous happy consumer while also a stereotype of a homemaker and caregiver who embraces a decorative role (see 2.4.3.1.)? Therefore, in the next chapter I will move on to focus on what women in *Rayli* are represented as doing to find some answers. Meanwhile, as the linguistic representation strategy found in *Rayli* implies the emergence of Western consumer culture, I intend to seek further linguistic evidence that marks and reinforces consumerism in *Rayli*.

5. Linguistic representations of social actions in *Rayli*

In the previous chapter I used CDA to examine the changes in representation strategies in *Rayli* between 1995 and 2012. The analysis showed various detailed influences of the local, the global and the consumerism over time. In this chapter I aim to uncover further detailed evidence on the way that localness and globalness are intertwined in *Rayli* to create a 'new' Chinese woman identity. These new Chinese women are said to be young, glamorous, female consumers who embrace their stereotype of a homemaker and caregiver in a decorative role (Glasser, 1997; Feng and Wu, 2007; Luo and Hao, 2007; Feng and Firth, 2009; Karan and Feng, 2010; Song and Lee, 2010; Feng and Karan, 2011). The analysis will focus on the representations of social actions in *Rayli* to show how *Rayli* makes the promotion of this 'new' Chinese woman identity possible through its linguistic choices.

Similar to representation strategies, the kinds of words chosen to represent what participants do, or not do, also communicates wider discourses and identities (see 3.3.1.2.). This can tell us what priorities people are given, how they act and what kind of agency they possess. As shown by Van Dijk (1991, 2000), authorities may be reduced in effect by using a passive sentence, which suggeests implicit agency; ethnic minorities only tend to be represented as active agents when they have a negative impact, whilst represented in a passive role when things are done for or against them. These grammatical options play a key role in meaning making in language (Halliday, 1994).

Using the same seven articles from the last chapter, this chapter will consider the participants, processes and circumstances. In other words, which verb process the doers or done-tos are represented with in what kind of situation. Analysing the representations of social actors and social actions together is highly useful for drawing out the kinds of identities, roles and priorities of women in *Rayli* magazine over time, as China has moved

through major socio-political changes and the media itself has also changed. The examination of social actions together helps to deal with a huge variety of goings-on by organising them into a small number of categories: material process, mental process, verbal process and behavioural process. Considering these verb categories together with the participants and situations allows me to observe more precisely the role of certain social actors in certain realms and a number of issues that point to the ideology buried in a text.

The analysis will show that through representing office ladies mainly in mental, behavioural and verbal processes in troubled circumstances, *Rayli*'s discourse of women at work is not only able to reinforce the traditional Chinese woman stereotype but it is also able to create a stage for lifestyle experts to encourage consumption. In addition, women are represented through material process mainly for the purpose of pleasing people, which falls into the stereotypical caregiver and arguably the decorative role. Before bring the chapter to an end, I will also compare the results for *Rayli* to the transitivities in *Cosmopolitan.* Based on the comparison, I argue that, although originated from a Japanese background, *Rayli* has gradually adopted typical Western magazine representation tactics and objectives for branding and consumerism interests.

5.1. 'I' do trivial tasks

In the previous chapter, I pointed out that four types of social actors could be identified in the 1999 article. I further looked into what kinds of actions were assigned to these four types of social actors. It is found that the office lady is the main active agent.

> *I am an OL from an overseas-invested enterprise in Beijing. I commute to*
>
> *the office on Jianguomen road by underground everyday, it takes me 60*
>
> *minutes. I usually spend 15 minutes doing my make-up before I leave ...*

There are no rules for what should be worn at the office but I pay much

attention to what I wear ... I have a computer at home and in the office, so

I can easily email my clients and cyber-friends. I also chat with my friends

and email my boyfriend after work. I do not go to karaoke very often but

singing with everyone is the most joyful thing. I feel happy when my

proposals are accepted by the boss ... The centre of my OL life are my

friends, boyfriend, hobbies, time, smile, energy and family.'

It can be seen from the extract that the office lady is the main participant that is assigned with verb processes. The texts occasionally mention that '*my proposals are accepted by the boss*', '*I gain compliments from my superiors*' or '*the centre of my OL life are my friends, boyfriend ... and family.*' Apart from the office lady, the rest of the social actors are not represented as active roles. They are represented with very limited verb processes. This echoes what has been discussed in the previous chapter, where these social actors are represented to point to a collective context (see 4.1.1.). Therefore, the transitivity analysis of the 1999's text focuses on what office ladies do. Also, since 'I' is a representative office lady, the discussion treats 'my' and office ladies' action as a unity.

What 'I', the office lady, mainly does can be divided into three categories. The first type of actions is to do with appearance. For example,

'I usually spend 15 minutes doing make-up before I leave.'

'I pay much attention to what I wear.'

'Sometimes I change my mobile phone cases everyday.'

'I search for the latest hairstyle trend.'

These sentences show that although office ladies might be represented as conducting material processes (verbs with concrete outcomes), the tasks are in fact trivial and mainly related to their appearances. The second category is work-related. However, it is found that office ladies are not presented as doing much concrete work but mainly processing their feelings, such as:

'Feel happy when I get compliments from my superior.'

'Feel happy that my proposal is accepted boss.'

'Feel bad about forgetting colleagues' names.'

'Feel bad working on weekends.'

In this case women are represented as engaging in work largely through mental process. Mental processes on the one hand make the office lady the focus of the text and invite readers to participate in her experiences. This kind of representations on the other hand implies much activity is taking place. She is active, though she produces no material transactions. In other words, office ladies are shown as not doing any concrete work. The third category is about what 'I' and the office ladies do in our social lives. For instance:

'On average office ladies go to karaoke with friends once a month.'

'I chat to my friends about celebrities.'

'We talk about friendships, relationships and family.'

'I go to shopping malls with my boyfriend.'

Firstly, the office ladies' leisure time is highly occupied by verbal processes. Verbal processes can connote passivity that women are talkers instead of doers, who actively achieve things and make things happen. Again, that is to say office ladies engage in trivial or abstract activities and in fact do not contribute much. Secondly, the office ladies are portrayed to be

going places with friends frequently. This again reflects, as discussed in the previous chapter, the importance of collectivity (see 4.1.1. and 4.2.1). The traditional Chinese value of collectivity is accentuated in *Rayli* not only through representation strategies but also through transitivity.

This can be seen again in the 2001 article:

'In the office … you talk about the new jokes that you've just heard, I talk about interesting and funny things that happen in the tour and she talks about new places to go shopping … a group of people depart cheerfully … the happiest thing is that we all go out together…'

'They [models] spend more time together than they do with their families. Rehearsing, performing, chatting and even shopping together. Despite their young age, they know how to take care of each other very well … They make sure no one is alone, they chat together happily and give each other mental comfort and security…'

'Everyone is about the same age and being with them is like being with siblings. Chatting, joking, shopping and eating, it is always bustling. Often they [colleagues] help each other, for example when someone is moving house, everyone will contribute somehow.'

'Everyone entertains themselves during hard times … the relationship between colleagues in the TV station is like a big family. Everyone works together to accomplish things … you will make lots of friends and have a chance to meet all kinds of people. 'People here are very good at adapting themselves, absorbing experience and inspiring each other in all kinds of environments.'

The 2001 article describes the collegial relationships of four girls who have different professions. Notably, even though these girls are described as having different collegial relationships, the transitivity shows that these relationships share a certain level of similarity. They like doing things with their colleagues, they have positive and vibrant lives and people appear to be kind and caring. Apart from the TV programme editor, these professional women are mainly represented to be talking, joking, eating and shopping. They are rarely shown to be conducting important material tasks. On the contrary, verbal process verbs mark their low activeness and most of their material processes are linked to consumer behaviour, for example the tour guide says '*everyone will enthusiastically contribute their knowledge for which restaurant has the best boiled spicy fish and where we can go shopping after eating.'*

I will now move on to the 2005 and 2006 texts, where the women share their work experience on how they stay enthusiastic at work, how they decorate their desk and how they become successful at work. Extracts from each of the articles are below:

Mirror, 25 years old, 2 years of working experience

Beijing Kangdewei medical equipment company, Secretary

'When I just started working ... However, after working there for about a year, I started to feel tired. Everyday was spent greeting people, preparing tea, answering phone calls, organising documents etc., there was nothing new at all ... At one point, I was completely sick of my work. I was getting a headache as soon as I walked into the office. ... I talked to the seniors and I realised I have to refill and recharge myself.' (2005a)

"Ling Zi, 25 years old, Secretary

I have a big office box on my desk. When the box is opened it reveals a big mirror so I can check and fix my make-up discreetly. I act normally when people pass so no one would be suspicious ... I also have a moisturising spray on my table.' (2005b)

'Zhou, Si Ya, 23 years old, 1.5 years working experience

PR Company, Administration assistance

To maintain a good working condition ... the main thing is I decorate a beautiful working environment, place some flowers and plants and even some stickers on the computer are all very cute. Therefore even if I am busy, when I see these beautiful things, I will feel the happiness of work ... On occasions when I lose passion in my work, I communicate with superiors and colleagues and I adjust the pace of work and combine my work and life organically.' (2006)

The transitivity analysis of these texts reveals four tendencies. First, 'I' does trivial work instead of being represented as doing substantial tasks. These girls say:

'Everyday was spent greeting people, preparing tea, answering phone calls, organising documents etc., there was nothing new at all.' (2005a)

'I have a big office box on my desk. When the box is opened it reveals a big mirror so I can check and fix my make-up discreetly.' (2005b)

'I decorate a beautiful working environment, place some flowers and plants and even some stickers on the computer are all very cute.' (2006)

In these articles, the actual duties and assignments that these girls carry out are suppressed.

Their work lives seem to be composed of trivial tasks. From what they are represented as doing at work, there is little sense of a strong professional identity or agency. Also, what these girls actually do is always abstracted. For example in the 2005(a) and 2006 articles, the office ladies talk about handling setbacks and frustrations at work:

'I put aside my work at an appropriate level.' (2005a)

'I have to refill and recharge myself.' (2005a)

'I adjust the pace of work and combine my work and life organically.' (2006)

'I learn to use a simple eye to see the complicated world.' (2006)

'I come out with an unbreakable reason to say no.' (2006)

They do not provide any further explanation on what an 'appropriate level' is, what 'organically' means here, how to use a simple eye to see the world or what a simple eye is, what exactly she does to refill and recharge herself or what an unbreakable reason is. Therefore what they do not only seems trivial but also vague. Transitivity hence may suggest acting in the world and making decisions, but these remain abstracted from any specific context.

Thirdly, mental processes are important. For example:

'At a period I was completely sick of my work. I <u>felt</u> a headache coming on as soon as I walked into the office.' (2005a)

'I <u>felt</u> I was competent for the job and I thought I had a strong executive ability.' (2005b)

'I will <u>feel</u> the happiness of work.' (2006)

'I <u>worried</u> about seeing the manager and I <u>was afraid</u> of talking to him.'

(2006)

Alongside the decision-making, we have on the one hand a sense of the internal states of the women, allowing the reader to align not so much with the outcomes of what they do but the associated feelings. On the other hand much of the action that takes place is in the heads of the women, as mental processes, which appears to take the foreground from what is accomplished in any concrete sense. We also find both a sense of confidence, where the women make decisions about work processes, and a constant anxiety about bosses and what colleagues may think. This again points to the local value of being accepted and belonging. This is very different to representations of women in *Cosmopolitan*, who appear to have little regard for the feelings of others (Machin and van Leeuwen 2007).

Besides mental process, there are several other verbal processes, such as:

'I <u>talked</u> to the seniors.' (2005a)

'I <u>asked</u> colleagues about my sketchbook.' (2005b)

'I <u>communicate</u> with superiors and colleagues.' (2006)

'I <u>debate</u> with the manager.' (2006)

Rayli's discourse of women at work signifies that what is important is not the work they do, but the attitudes towards it, how they feel and how they talk about it, showing that there is constant interaction taking place. Again this is an important connotor of the presence of community links and the sense of being aware of how a person is evaluated by and placed within that community.

The tendency of representing women doing abstract and trivial tasks through mental or

verbal processes can be found throughout *Rayli* over time. In the 2011 and 2012 articles, we can find texts like these:

'At that time I had been an intern at L'oréal for a while and I thought I would be able to get into the company ... But I received their letter saying I was unsuccessful. I felt my world was falling apart and under a huge amount of pressure. It was a tough time ... I talked to elders in my family and I reassured myself every night before going to sleep.' (2011)

'I think, for new graduates, being active is very important ... Interns are mainly asked to do trivial tasks, so it is crucial to learn and voluntarily ask for more responsibilities. I also asked my seniors for information and advice. Job-hunting was a tough process but I enjoyed the experience.' (2011)

'I always chose to sit close to the door at the office party so I could help when the waiters delivered dishes and poured drinks. The seat opposite to the door should be saved for the boss. I also kept an eye on everyone's glass. If any of them were empty, I would pass the drink over straight away. I also would make sure that I have swallowed any food in my mouth before talking to people.' (2012)

'I was not sure what to wear to my first annual office party. I felt that I would make a strange choice, so I consulted with my senior colleagues. We went shopping together and I bought a cocktail dress.' (2012)

Again, here we see office ladies represented as engaging with their mental status, conducting verbal processes and being involved in trivial tasks. In general, we can sense that *Rayli* does not try to represent office ladies as hard working, capable at work or professional. In contrast,

mental processes are used to highlight their internal feelings and invites readers to step into with reflections; verbal processes are used to point to the office ladies' connection with people and signals a collective context to the readers. For example, '*I talked to elders in my family*', '*I also asked my seniors for information and advice*' and '*so I consulted with my senior colleagues.*' These have also foregrounded the Chinese local values that elders are wise, as discussed in 4.1.3. Through the portrayal of office ladies doing trivial tasks, *Rayli* constructs women who are eager to be viewed as attentive and courteous. These are all part of the important linguistic tactics of how *Rayli* produces discourse of the 'new' Chinese woman identity and the identity to consumerism.

Overall, the trivial things that women are represented as doing in *Rayli* focuses on their appearances, worries and minor tasks. The image of women paying tremendous attention to their 'looks' is reinforced through promoting beliefs such as '*girls are talented in decorating*' and '*They put in as much enthusiasm in decorating rooms as they dress up and apply make-up to themselves*'. In the meantime, the link between feminism and consumption is strengthened. *Rayli* signifies the message that to be a 'proper' woman, you need to dress up, do your hair and put on make-up. There is no interest in your personality, temperament, abilities or anything 'inside' of you; it is all about your outer appearance, which can be achieved through the use of consumer products. Consumerism hence becomes the discourse that guides women to pursue their identities.

Additionally, depicting women doing minor tasks at work is diminishing women's capability and independence in society. The sense of lacking ability is also illustrated in the various mental and verbal processes that women perform. Mental processes are focused and reflective actions that encourage sympathy and make social actors appear busy. It is to say, even though women in *Rayli* seem like they are busy doing things, they are actuially thinkers

rather than doers. In other words, they are passive agents who are weak and need sympathy. This kind of representations of women at work is very similar to Western magazines such as *Cosmopolitan* (Machin and van Leeuwen, 2007). Verbal processes also give the feeling that these women are talkers rather than doers. Both mental and verbal processes denote that women in *Rayli* are not active agents that make things happen. However one of the characteristics that *Rayli* aligns itself to is modern and fashionable. The powerless woman at work is more a traditional Confucius prototypical. Again, it indirectly indicates that a woman's identity is not demonstrated by her ability.

5.2. 'You' are incompetent

In the previous chapter, I pointed out that there is an increasing use of the personal pronoun 'you' from 2005 (see 4.1.3). What 'you' is represented as doing therefore become important. Below are extracts from articles post 2005 to help with gaining an insight into what actions 'you' are involved in:

> *'When you don't feel your work is fresh anymore, the professional burnout*
> *and feeling of tiredness will come because you are weak. At a time like*
> *this, no matter how much your boss encourages you or your colleagues try*
> *to stimulate you, you have lost all of your energy.'* (2005a)
>
> *'When you are working in an environment that is not suitable for your*
> *ability or quality and makes you feel frustrated, maybe changing the*
> *environment would be a good option.'* (2006)
>
> *'When you get lost and confused among job advertisements and interview*
> *schedules, when you are worried about your career prospects ...*
> *Understand body language to help succeed in your interview ... don't let*
> *your body language and facial expressions ruin your interview.'* (2011)

'On such a special occasion, a tiny thing can change other people's

impression of you, which could make your career smoother in the next

year – or a disaster. How do you be a popular new employee in the end-of-

year party? Rayli shares it with you.' (2012)

From texts above it can be seen that from 2005, *Rayli* constantly positions 'you' as facing

insecurity, having no idea what to do and needing advice. In fact, most of the articles between

2005 and 2012 are written on the assumption that 'you' has difficulties and is in need of a

solution. For example, the general theme of 2005(a) is based on the situation that 'you' has a

waning relationship with the superior and does not know how to deal with it. In the 2006

article, it brings up questions 'you' has, such as:

'How do you choose between dream and reality?'

'How to deal with rumours? Be silenced or attack back?'

'Should you change to a new job? Are you making the right decision?'

These articles create concerns for office ladies, as we can see again in the 2011 article, which

starts with texts such as '*as a rookie to the labour market, you will have all kinds of problems*

when having interviews.' 'You' is presumed to not have any common sense, for example

during an interview you should not answer phone calls, pout your lips, sit on the chair slackly

or play with your nails. The 2012 article positions the annual office party as an event that

might make office ladies' future work-lives miserable. Female workers want to be popular,

however they do not know how and have all kind of frivolous questions. For example:

'How early should I arrive?'

'What should I say to people?'

'Will I be impolite?'

'I heard that the big boss that I haven't seen will show up! Should I go and

talk to him?'

This again provides evidence that *Rayli* has no interest in representing office ladies as confident, capable and professional women. Instead *Rayli* constructs ignorant and impotent female workers. Traits like independency and capability that are generally associated with modern women are suppressed from *Rayli's* discourse. In fact, this kind of representations signifies that Chinese traditional women's virtues and identities are that women are dependent. In addition, these worries signal that the women are isolated. We can see a shift of interpersonal relationships here. In the 2001 text, women like to spend time together, work cooperatively and they take care of each other if there are any problems. The collegial relationship is harmonious and there is a strong sense of collectivity and belonging. In the three texts of 2005 and 2006, women sometimes have quarrels with colleagues or superiors whilst they are always able to please others and become friends again relatively quickly and smoothly. In the 2012 article, the woman still likes to be part of the company society, however she worries that she will not fit in and has to deal with the issues herself. Later we will further see how women applause their own survival and turn against someone who fails to handle the issue.

In 5.1. it has been discussed that women are represented as doing trivial tasks, which marks women's low agency. In addition, from 2005 women are constantly positioned as facing insecurities or issues, for which they do not have the ability or knowledge to deal with these. The repression of women's independency and ability has been taken to a higher level. Instead of being represented as independent and professional, they are constructed as ignorant

and impotent. This reflects a notable Chinese idiom, 'ignorance is a woman's virtue'[27]. This idiom has two interpretations. The first being a literal explanation that women should be ignorant, the other is that although women can be knowledgeable and capable, they should not show it. Both interpretations encourage women to be passive and dependent. In traditional Chinese society, virtual ignorant women needed their husbands to give guidelines and follow their decisions. Transfer this to the context of a modern lifestyle magazine; the discourse legitimises women as being naïve agents who need an expert's advice and should listen to what *Rayli* says for decision-making. Therefore, in the next section I will examine the advice these experts give and seek to provide evidence for the way experts play an important role as part of the construction of the discourse 'new' Chinese woman identity.

5.3. 'Experts' talk abstracts

In the previous chapter, I pointed out that 'experts' have become a common social actor since 2005 and have gradually developed into a way for branding and commercial interests like 'experts' in most Western media. I will now look further into the experts' advice to provide more thorough detailed evidence on how 'experts' fulfil their roles in aligning *Rayli's* branding image and promoting consumerism. In the 2005(a) text, the expert's advice on handling the waning relationship with a superior is as follows:

> *'When the relationship between you and your superior starts waning and*
> *you start losing trust from your superior, what can you do under the sun do*
> *rescue yourself? ... You have to manage your manager… you have to*
> *create a respectful image ...'*

This is very generic advice. It does not consider the readers' individualities. They might have

27. 清朝张岱《公祭祁夫人文》：“眉公曰：‘丈夫有德便是才，女子无才便是德’。

different professions, different relationships with their manager and different reasons for having a waning relationship. Furthermore, it does not fully explain how you can manage your manager or what a respectful image is. The way to manage a superior and a respectful image can differ from person to person and from one profession to another. Readers are generalised and universal answers are given. In addition, this is a relatively passive representations of office ladies in the way that office ladies do not simply do their job well, but manipulate and act strategically in interpersonal relationships. The emphasis in former articles was on communication between colleagues, but since the appearance of 'experts', office ladies are indicated to 'manage' their collegial relationships with manipulation and strategies.

The generic and abstract advice can also be found in 2006 when *Rayli* acts as the expert. For example:

> *'It is good to have a dream and you should fight for your dream. But you should realise that Rome was not built in a day. You feel your dream is getting further and further away from your reality but if you think about it from another angle, maybe you haven't worked hard enough for your dream.'*
>
> *'First you need to calm yourself down ... Second, after you have adjusted your emotions, talk to your superior in private.'*

With the same situation as before, the text begins with supposing that readers have difficulties at work and need help. Afterwards, it gives generic and abstract suggestions. Regardless of their distinct personalities, different dreams and what kind of rumours they are facing, they are told to react identically. There is no insight into how realistic their dreams are, how they

can calm themselves down, how they can adjust their emotions or what specifically needs to be said to the superior. This pattern can also be identified in the 2011 and 2012 articles. Further abstract and generic advice are given:

> *'React quickly when there is an unexpected situation.'* (2011)
>
> *'Expand your job hunting circle.'* (2011)
>
> *'Remember that for the annual office party, your dress should be elegant but cute.'* (2012)
>
> *'Try to avoid songs that people are unfamiliar with or songs in a foreign language. A sad romantic song is not a good choice either.'* (2012)

These experts on the one hand are portrayed as, in contrast to the office ladies, knowledgeable, capable and have answers to all sorts of questions. On the other hand, they only provide abstract advice with limited detailed explanations or consideration for individual differences. In other words: futile advice. Although we see material verbs when the expert suggests to *'expand your job hunting circle',* the action is in fact unspecific. It does not give a further explanation on how this can be done. Importantly, these bits of advice are all directives. Directives not only make the tips sound easier, but also give the impression of immediacy and activeness, which distracts the readers from hard working actual actions that need to be taken. Through this kind of representations, *Rayli* can create a 'can-do' positive world akin to what is found in Western advertisements and magazines (Machin and van Leeuwen, 2007).

It is also worth noting that a large percentage of experts' advice focuses on how to behave in relation to colleagues instead of focusing on the actual work and work skills, such as '*Remember that for the annual office party, your dress should be elegant but cute'* and

'Besides dress properly and be punctual, you also need to pay attention to the interpersonal relationships that are different from usual occasions.' This signifies, once again, that women's ability and skill at work is not the important subject. The experts' advice focuses on strategic manipulation of interpersonal relationships. In early *Rayli,* readers were shown a socially rich context with friends, colleagues and communications. Since the experts' voice has arrived, the social rich context has vanished, as well as the actual work processes. The content of *Rayli* has gradually shifted to emphasise strategically dealing with colleagues and bosses. In other words, female workers act as individuals managing others.

It can be argued that experts' abstract advice is not produced in the interest of helping the reader, but in the interest of coordinating the brand image and magazine value throughout *Rayli*. If the advice appears to be concrete, it could give the sense of seriousness and hard-working to the reader, which contrasts with the happy, glamorous consumer tones most lifestyle magazines like to convey. There is also next to no actual identification of any work tasks in the advice provided. The focus is shifted away from actual work or work skills to how to behave in relation to colleagues. By foregrounding the social aspects of women's lives in the workplace and mundane organisational matter, the seriousness of the workplace is backgrounded. The workplace constructed in *Rayli* therefore becomes a place where it is easier and more suitable to embed consumer culture. For example in the 2011 article, besides giving vague and abstract advice such as '*pay attention to your demeanour the whole time*' during an interview, *Rayli* slips in information on which foundation gives you healthier-looking skin tone and suggestions on finding a pair of comfortable mid-heeled shoes for the interview.

5.4. Fitting in by pleasing others

In 4.1.1. I discussed that collectivity plays an important role in *Rayli's* representation strategy

to reflect the local Chinese value. In this section, I would therefore like to examine the discourse of social relationships of office ladies at work to see whether collectivity is also promoted on a social action level. The following extracts show the kind of collegial relationships *Rayli* represents:

> *'Qian, Ying remembers that on an occasion she experienced some 'unhappiness' with her director because of work ... harsh words from the director made Qian, Ying feel oppressed and she cried. Afterwards, she received an email from the director, there was just a simple sentence in it, 'let's talk in private about work, ok?' They soon become friends again.'*
> (2001)
>
> *'My colleagues sometimes work subjectively and that annoys me, while we know that we should maintain a good working relationship together so we can evolve and devote ourselves completely to the company.'* (2005a)
>
> *'Your boss could give you numerous tasks and put a lot of pressure on you ... you might have been criticised harshly by her ... but she can also appreciate your enthusiastic attitude, encourage you and stimulate you. Try to have passion and consonance with your boss and know how to admire her.'* (2006)
>
> *'I was a bit too relaxed at the annual office party ... after everyone was seated, I raised the cup excitedly and wished everyone good luck for the new year. Suddenly the atmosphere became tense for a couple of seconds. I then realised I took over the role of our senior colleague. It was embarrassing but luckily nobody fussed over this.'* (2012)

In these texts women's collegial relationships are presented with numerous mental processes,

for example *'Ying feels oppressed'*, *'I then realised I took over the role of our senior colleague'*, *'I felt like I got a bonus when my boss asked the sales manager to take care of me'* and *'I think it's the best timing for building relationships.'* Through mental processes, these women become the centre of the texts and readers are invited to engage in these women's internal statuses. This helps the reader to feel for the social actors and potentially see these women's experiences as their own. Overall, although most of the articles after 2005 are written on the assumption that office ladies are insecure and in troubled situations (see 5.1.2.), the detailed texts still point readers towards encouraging and smooth collegial relationships. In the 2001 and 2005 texts we see that when they have quarrels, they can still maintain their relationships. In the 2012 text the office lady made a mistake, which could make the seniors unhappy in Chinese society but her colleagues were forgiving.

Remarkably readers are also signified to an admiring, respectful and devoting spirit to boss and company from the employees. Throughout the years, we see texts like *'evolve and devote ourselves completely to the company'*, *'Try to have passion and consonance with your boss and know how to admire her'* and *'I have developed with the company.'* We can also see the importance of office hierarchy in the way that the boss is shown as the one who criticises but also encourages and stimulates you, whilst the woman feels embarrassed when she takes over her senior colleague's role. When looking at this with *Rayli's* advice of *'leaving a bad impression because of things like this is definitely what you don't want to do',* it is as if the text is telling the reader that they should know their place and do what suits their position. This reflects Chinese local values, which are highly influenced by Confucius's lecture that people should confine themselves to their own duties and no further beyond[28]. In traditional Chinese society, it is believed that people should understand their 'places' and act accordingly to maintain the stability of the society. A subordinate, what the woman in *Rayli* is normally

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28. 論語泰伯第八，十四章。子曰：不在其位，不謀其政。

represented to be, therefore should admire and respect her boss and devote herself to the company's development as suggested in *Rayli's* articles. This is very different from what I will later show in 5.6., where in *Cosmopolitan* women would not care about evolving with a company but would want to get ahead (Machin and van Leeuwen, 2007). Additionally, bosses in *Cosmopolitan* are usually shown only in regards to the way women can find strategies to deal with them, just to get ahead (Ibid.).

Again, by showing encouraging and smooth collegial relationships alone whilst reasserting the importance of hierarchy in the office, *Rayli* foregrounds the value of collectivity and emphasises women's interests in fitting in with others. In the following section, I will move on to look at what women are represented as doing to achieve fitting in with others. Relevant extracts are shown below:

'Colleagues thought I was a 'cold' person, so I had to show a different side of me. In a party, I played a heroin and played a spear. I got a big round of applause from everyone ... Moreover, I treated my colleagues to a big feast ... Colleagues were impressed and our relationship improved, we became closer.' (2005a)

'Sometimes it might be good to keep a low-profile to smooth out things with people. You should also consider other people's acceptance when you decorate your desk. Sometimes hiding your true preferences can help win over the hearts of your colleagues.' (2005b)

'I brought people sweets ... they didn't cost much and were easy to give out to people. Afterwards, people always called me the angel of sweets ... I got familiar with colleagues that I didn't have a chance to know. It was worth it.' (2012)

'You should request songs that everyone loves. It can animate the

atmosphere at the party and takes care of everyone at the event.' (2012)

Here we can see women being represented with material processes, such as '*I treated my colleagues to a big feast'*, '*I brought people sweets'* and '*request songs that everyone loves*', these actions are however, again, very trivial ones and related to pleasing others. In these examples, readers are signified by the texts that pleasing people is the way to achieve a sense of belonging. Office ladies are repeatedly suggested to put themselves last and go with what others like in order to fit in. Also, treating colleagues with food is proposed more than once as a way to make people like the office ladies. This is similar to *Cosmopolitan,* in which 'can-do' language is used to give a sense of activeness to women, but when they do something, it seems to be pleasing others in a very strategic way (Machin and van Leeuwen, 2007) (See 5.6. for further discussion).

A new tactic is brought out in the 2012 article, which is to also emphasise the importance of fitting in and the representations of girls who do things that people do not like. For example:

'A colleague who joined the company about the same time as me left with a

poker face when we were rehearsing. Afterwards, when people talked

about her, everyone gave her a low evaluation; is it possible that she

thinks she is a princess?'

'Ha ha, by the way, there was a girl who got in the company at the same

time as me. Because she didn't know how formal the party was, she

overdressed herself and became a "focus". For a pretty long time after the

party she was what everyone "talked" about.'

Here we see how women in *Rayli* have subtly changed from communicating with each other when facing issues, to women who applause their own survival and turn against someone who fails to handle issues. The representations of girls who do not fit in can be seen as a warning sign and an emphasis on pleasing people. It is as if telling the reader that the issue *Rayli* talks about is important and if the reader does not want to be 'that girl' she must listen to *Rayli* and do what the magazine suggests.

Pleasing others is another traditional Chinese female character. On the surface, it can be seen as the 'localness' in *Rayli.* However, this is could be seen as another tactic that is used to promote and legitimise *Rayli's* branding and commercial interest. Confucius philosophy endorses that individuals should place their concern in second position by prioritising other people or society's interests. It is especially applied to women. A renowned traditional Chinese poem writes '*women dress up for people who like them*'[29]. This saying has almost become a maxim in Chinese society. Even things that are believed to be what women like to do, these are done for other people and not for themselves. The completion of personal identity does not depend on individual-self but through the approval of the others. As a woman, your image in other people's eyes is above what you want yourself to be. Foregrounding and supporting this value can also serve the commercial interest of the magazine. *Rayli* can easily (re)produce the kind of femininity that society expects and associates this expectation with products. In other words, to manipulate women's desire to please other people and look like the women society likes to see, *Rayli* can associate the discourse to what attitude they should adopt, what clothes they need to wear, what hairstyle they should have and what kind of make-up they are supposed to put on. It can be argued that

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29. 女為悅己者容 – Nü wei yue ji zhe rong

the emphasis on the collective, alongside experts' advice and what office ladies actually do to fit in, becomes a set of tactics that allows *Rayli* to give guidelines and slip in advice to help branding and commercial interests.

5.5. The representations of 'new-traditional' Chinese women identity and consumerism

Although the magazine seemingly opens a range of options for being a woman, the reader is actually instructed towards a conventional womanhood. The magazine's interest of 'helping' women to find a new modern female identity is questionable. On the one hand, *Rayli* reinforces the identity of traditional Confucius women; on the other hand it constructs a new social relationship for them. It is incongruous that the magazine is guiding 'modern' women to survive from the novel society through conventional philosophy. The intention of preserving women's traditional traits suggests its concern to stimulate the consumer capitalism game. In traditional Confucius culture, a woman's identity is constructed from their appearance and the way in which people view them. This value serves consumer capitalism well. The magazine therefore does not try to create a new discourse of female identity but reinforces the existing identity throughout the years. To take it one step further, to put consumption in its full play, rebuilding a new society that favours consumerism is necessary. The new context that *Rayli* presents is a place where 'experts' can walk in and guide the readers to believe that they can be the ideal girl by buying certain products, going to certain places and doing certain activities. Here, we see how traditional Chinese values, women being docile, attentive and decorative, are reinforced and repacked to serve the interest of Western consumerism and how this consumer culture is disguised and blended in local culture hormonally.

After the arrival of commercial media in China, the media industry strives for revenue and relies on commercials to survive. In order to attract advertisers, magazines have to align

their values with consumer products. Through the way *Rayli* represents social actors as doing, 'I' doing trivial tasks, 'you' as incompetent, 'experts' talking abstractly and fitting in by pleasing others, the magazine can reinforce traditional Chinese women's identity to reconstruct a trivial world of consumption. Scholars (see for example Feng and Wu, 2007; Wu, 2008; Sue and Feng, 2010) have pointed out the ubiquitous consumer culture in modern Chinese women's lifestyle magazines as a result of the influence of global media, especially the Western media (see 2.4.1. and 2.4.3.3.). Western women's lifestyle magazines have been highly associated with consumerism (see for example McCracken, 1993; Machin and Van Leeuwen, 2007; Smith, 2008; McNamara, 2014). Again, I question if Western women's lifestyle magazines construct and convey the same consumer culture through the same female identity and through the same way that *Rayli* represents women as doing. If yes, to what level and where do the similarities exist? If no, what and where are the differences shown? My analysis hence moves on to compare the ways that women are represented as doing in the workplace between *Rayli* and *Cosmopolitan*.

5.6. The comparison of transitivity between *Rayli* and *Cosmopolitan*

Workplace relationships and sexual relationships dominate the discourse in *Cosmopolitan* and both relationships are constructed on the basis that human beings are essentially unreliable (Machin and Van Leeuwen, 2003, 2007). Machin and Van Leeuwen (2003: 502) noted as a result of colleagues-at-work constantly posing problems: '[t]hey plot against you behind your back, they take advantage of you, they double-cross you.' Co-workers in *Cosmopolitan* are repeatedly represented as doing mean and hostile actions, for example:

> *'She criticizes your appearance … she spreads rumors about you … she talks down to you … [and] she belittles your accomplishments.'*
> *'She trashes your idea in front of your boss … She doesn't pull her weight*

- 177 -

on a joint project and expects you to do everything [and] she invites

everyone to an office happy hour except you.'

On the other hand, 'you' addresses the naïve reader who lacks in confidence and knowledge. 'You' is represented as the passive 'done-to' that bears aggressive behaviour from her colleagues. Therefore, *Cosmopolitan* allies with experts and successful people to help 'you' deal with the opposition. *Cosmopolitan* acting as a support to the reader and giving advice is found everywhere in the magazine. For example:

'These comments hurt, but don't let them bring you down. Instead, do your

best not to react. You can say, "Sorry you feel that way". Then walk away.'

'Yeah, it's hard to be amped for someone else when you feel like you got

sucker-punched, but people will be looking to see how you react to the

news ... swing by her desk and say congrats. Feel like you cannot be

sincere face-to-face? Write her an email. Just keep it short and sweet'.'

'Don't get defensive and don't verbally attack her. Approach her in private

and ask her if she has a problem with you. If she denies it, give her

concrete examples of her patronizing you.'

This kind of discourse in *Cosmopolitan* is different from *Rayli* in terms of collegial relationships but similar in the way that women are passive and need help from the magazine. Over time the woman in *Rayli* preserves the sense of collectivity, likes to be a part of the group and does not appear as a 'victim' in the workplace. The tension with colleagues is at a different level. There are one or two unlikeable girls in the workplace that *Rayli* constructed, but they are unlike the offensive colleagues created by *Cosmopolitan*. In *Rayli*, the unlikeable girl does things to herself to become unlikeable. The aggressive girl in *Cosmopolitan* does

things to upset your performance. *Rayli* uses the tactic that you do not want to be like the unlikeable girl in order to place readers in the position of needing help, while *Cosmopolitan* strategically characterises 'you' as a sufferer at work and in need of support. Despite the different approaches, their purposes and results are similar. They both assume women to be naïve and lacking confidence and an ability to deal with their work life. As previously discussed, positioning women as ignorant and needing help not only allows 'experts' to step in the discourse, but also gives the chance to manipulate readers' behaviours, opinions and identities and directs the readers to the consumers' value that the magazine favours.

Another similarity between *Rayli* and *Cosmopolitan* lays in the reinforcement of constructing women as weak and passive by presenting them as doing mainly trivial things, conducting mental verb processes and pleasing others. Machin and Thornborrow (2003: 466) point out that '[i]t is typical of many *Cosmopolitan* articles about work that there is no actual identification of any work task.' What women are presented as doing in work articles include '*you flaunt your tat', 'trolling the ladies' room' and 'working so hard to maintain a year-round deep tan*.' They not only lack any active action towards work, but they are also always in the process of thinking, wanting, feeling or worrying. If there is any concrete action, it is mainly pleasing the others. Examples are given by Machin and Van Leeuwen (Ibid.: 505) and Machin and Thornborrow (2003: 467), '*[f]ind out what is your boss's favourite snack/sweet and try to supply him with it'* and '*[t]ry to express your admiration and to repeat how helpful his assistance was*.' Women are shown as getting what they want in the workplace by giving others what they want. It is also noted that the relationship between the Cosmo girl and superiors is a matter of manipulation. Cosmo girls' typical approaches to their superiors are to '*get others to tell your boss you're great, 'get to know your boss's boss'*, and '*mirror her habits'* (Machin and van Leeuwen 2007). Although *Rayli* also suggests the need for women to please others and manage their superiors, women in *Rayli* have admiration and devotion to

their superiors and their company, which is very different from women in *Cosmopolitan*.

In *Cosmopolitan*, personal relationships, attitudes and appearances are the central issues in the workplace. Work is reduced and simplified to relationship management and outlooks. This discourse of work is one where success is about manipulating relationships and showing personal image through attitude and appearance, but not skills, abilities and things that are inherent to you. In *Cosmopolitan*'s discourse, ultimatelyit is merely about attitude and image that you should adapt. Machin and his colleagues (Machin and Thornborrow, 2003, 2006; Machin and Van Leeuwen, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2007) have summed up that this kind of discourse in *Cosmopolitan* is produced to align the magazine's value with consumer products. Despite the fact that a different collegial relationship is shown in *Rayli*, the intention behind *Rayli*'s discourse is similar to *Cosmopolitan*'s. Over the years, by reducing the workplace to a place for relationship, appearance and attitude management, as well as representing women as agencies that are naïve, passive and lacking the ability to deal with basic interpersonal issues, *Rayli*, following *Cosmopolitan*'s objective, has turned work-related articles as another platform for persuading the readers to align their values to the magazine's brand image and perform consumerism.

Summary

In the last chapter and this chapter, I have examined the representational strategies and transitivity that are used in *Rayli*'s work-related articles to understand what kinds of changes and how the changes take place in the way that women are represented and what they are depicted as doing at work. The aim was to draw out the way that such changes could be thought about in the context of socio-political changes in China, to think about the influence of discourses from international media and how the local itself is represented. It is evident that *Rayli* uses similar representational strategies as Western lifestyle magazines to simplify

and de-contextualise the workplace, where real social forces cease to operate, freeing up the world to the mundane catchphrases of the expert.

In terms of representation strategies, *Rayli* shifted from representing women as more generic and anonymous workers to named individuals to indicate individuality around 2005. In the same period there was also an increase in first person and single second person pronouns, taking on a more personalised and informal form of address akin to advertising. Both of these shifts relate to the rise of individualism and the idea of self-reliance. Women's priorities were no longer to be part of kinship and community ties, but to use one-size-fits-all expert advice to get ahead. From 2005 the power of the expert has replaced that of the social network.

Through the representations of 'I' doing trivial tasks, 'you' as incompetent, 'experts' talking abstractly and fitting in by pleasing others, *Rayli* indicates an identity 'who is professional, adapts to glamorous appearance and sexual appeal, but also keeps the traditional values of the Chinese society' (Karan and Feng, 2010: 23). This tactic resembles what is found in *Cosmopolitan*. Women's lifestyle magazines attribute mainly mental and verbal verb processes to reduce the level of control women have. They have difficulties to resolve basic issues and need to be rescued by 'experts'. Experts, however, do not give concrete advice but simplify the workplace as a place for pleasing people and solutions are often fused with acts of consumerism. These are tactics that *Rayli* use not only to reinforce and repack traditional Chinese values to serve the interest of Western consumerism, but also to disguise and blend consumer culture in local culture.

Some detailed differences, nevertheless, still exist between *Rayli* and typical Western women's lifestyle magazines. Firstly, the dynamic of interpersonal relationships; although

over time *Rayli* has become more focused on 'You and I' and started to represent 'unlikeable' ones, the representation strategies and transitivity used in *Rayli* both show that women in *Rayli* still have a sense of collectivity, have good relationships with others and recognise their family roots. This is very different from *Cosmopolitan*, where family is absent, colleagues are 'bitches' who cannot be trusted and women only act alone strategically to get to the top. It is also the case that the world in Western women's lifestyle magazine remains more simplified. Although *Rayli* has reduced the workplace largely to relationship management, it still reflects more of the reality in terms of gender roles in the office. In *Cosmopolitan*, there are mainly female social actors while males are only shown when sex or flirting is involved. The workplace in *Rayli* finds both genders of colleagues and superiors, although bosses tend to be male. I feel this shows the remaining influence of the combination of traditional Confucius philosophy and Mao's Communism. These two aspects suggest that while promoting some Western cultures, concepts and identities, *Rayli* draws on some facets of local values. This proves what what Karan and Feng (2009, 2010 and 2011) have commented that international magazines in China are a product of a multi-level convergence of local reality and global influence. Although on the visual level, I show these too have certainly been given a more international influence. And indeed in these magazines, identities and actions are represented and given meaning not only by language.

In the following chapters I will focus on the ways visual representations and visual designs are used alongside language. I question if visually *Rayli* represents the same values and identity as it does linguistically. Do the changes we find in language take the same pattern visually? I show there are some differences. Some things that can be represented visually cannot be said in text, at least not yet.

6. Visual representations of social actors and social actions in *Rayli*

In the last two chapters, the analysis has shown that through linguistic choices, in terms of how women are represented and what they are represented as doing, *Rayli* is able to create the discourse of 'traditional-new' Chinese female consumer. However, the construction of women is not only done through language, but also through visual elements in the magazine. It is therefore important to combine the linguistic analysis with a visual analysis to obtain a complete understanding of the messages, values and ideologies that are represented in *Rayli*. This will allow the identification of how language and images work together, and how the different affordances of the two modes can be used to deliver different meanings. In addition, after drawing out the different affordances, it will be possible to understand how each linguistic and visual representational strategy carries meanings that could not be communicated through the other. This is interesting specifically in the case of *Rayli*, where I show that the different levels of influence: international modernity, Japan and the more local, can be given different degrees of emphasis on a visual level than on a linguistic level.

Therefore in this chapter, the study moves on to the ways in which *Rayli* represents women at work in images. This follows the models used in the previous two chapters in regards to representational strategies and transitivity, but here asking the same kinds of questions on a visual level. I will first examine how social actors are represented in images. This is done using the same categories as at the linguistic level, such as whether people are individualised/collectivised, generic/specific or functionalised/nominalised. In terms of social actions, I will again study what social actors are represented as doing in the image. Their actions will be broken down into verb processes (Van Leeuwen, 1996a). This analysis is combined with an analysis of key elements of connotation that can also point to identities and roles in the form of iconography, poses, photogenia and modality (Barthes, 1977; Kress and Van Leeuwen, 1996).

As in the previous two chapters, I look at changes over time in *Rayli* using the same samples and also compare these to the representations of social actors and transitivity in *Cosmopolitan*. The comparison draws mainly on Machin and Thornborrow's (2003, 2006) studies on *Cosmopolitan* alongside interviews with editors from Chinese *Cosmopolitan.* Overall, what this analysis allows us to begin to see is the complexity of cultural exchanges and intercultural engagements that cannot be simply identified as local or global. Nevertheless, at the root lies the fact that this combination is one which serves the needs of consumer capitalism.

6.1. Visual representations of social actors in *Rayli*

In this section, I will focus on what kind of social actors are represented and how, when and where they are represented. As in Chapter 4, we will see the representations of visual social actors also go through three stages: the early years before 2005, the transition years between 2005 and 2009, and recent years from 2010 onwards. A great number of scholars (see for example, Lee, 2003; Zhang and Shavitt, 2003; Wu, 2008; Sue and Feng, 2010; Li, 2011) have concluded that the representations of women in Chinese media are influenced by Western culture and similar to Western media products (see 2.4 and its sub-sections). However, the kind of people, poses, facial expressions and drawing styles that are found in *Rayli* over time are very different from what can be seen in Western women's lifestyle magazines. A larger percentage of *Rayli*'s visual representations can actually be seen as the result of the influence from its parental magazine, the Japanese *Ray.*

6.1.1. The early years - before 2005

Image three - *Rayli* 1999(1)　　Image four - *Rayli* 1999(2)　　Image five - *Rayli* 1999(3)

The three images (Image three, four and five) above show the foregrounded social actors in a 1999's *Rayli* work article. In early *Rayli*, drawings, instead of photos, were a common way to represent social actors. Image three has eight real models in the background while a drawn female figure, which presents the 'ideal' office lady, is in the centre of the page. The 'ideal' office lady is represented through a drawing instead of a real model. Through the low modality drawing, *Rayli* shows a generic but idealised female worker. This shows that the image of a perfect woman cannot be represented by a real person. For example, we can find idealisations on the case of the big round eyes that are out of proportion, the slim figure and unrealistic body proportions. Using a drawing to represent the ideal office lady can also avoid directing the 'ideal' image to concrete personal features. In the background eight 'real' models are represented as generic workers in the way that they all stand in line in very confined and similar poses, like an army of generic employees. Their legs are all very close together, their hands stay close to their bodies and they turn their bodies the same angle and look into the camera from the same direction. They stand a short distance apart from each other, but they are connected as a whole by striking similar poses. No individual stands out from the group. The eight 'real' women represent values that were more acceptable in Chinese society at the

time, as the collective and conservative female. This ties back to the linguistic representations where generic social actors are represented and collectivity is promoted (see 4.1.1.). The drawn ideal office lady and the eight real women in the background create two different female identities. The drawn woman has coloured hair and wears a mini skirt. These signify that she is fashionable and welcoming to new treads. In contrast, the eight models in the background all have black hair and wear longer skirts. They are signifiers of more traditional and conservative women. Coloured hair and mini skirts are features that were not widely acceptable in Chinese society during the time the article was published. Colouring hair and wearing mini skirts started to become a trend between late 1990s and early 2000s whilst they had negative perceptions in Chinese society. As a lifestyle magazine, *Rayli* had to introduce new trends to its readers and by using drawings to deliver a value and trend that was not widely accepted by society, it could tone down the sense of seriousness. The eight traditional and conservative models in the background also smooth out the controversy. Here we see how *Rayli* constructs a visual discourse that suits the magazine's interest whilst reflecting the norms of local society.

Image four is a cartoon that illustrates embarrassing occasions in the office. The style of the drawing is very different from the female figure in the first image. The participants' bodies are minimised while their heads are maximised. Their expressions are simplified into simple lines and circles. Their hands are round without fingers. This image has the lowest modality among all. The hyper-deformed drawing can distract readers from the seriousness of making mistakes at work and turns them into more light-hearted embarrassing moments. This helps *Rayli* to achieve the overall feel-good and optimistic tone throughout the magazine even when talking about problematic issues. This is an early sign of *Rayli*'s attempt to create an overall feel-good and optimistic brand image for the magazine. Later I will show not only how the promotion of this brand image is highlighted through images, but also how the brand

image serves as part of the pleasant world of consumer capitalism (see 6.1.2. and 6.1.3.). Here we can also see the early representations of individuals. We see a centred female worker dealing with work issues. Again, as individuality was not a widely tolerated value at that time, representing individuals through low modality comics can reduce the tension.

The last image (Image five) is a male doll. It is, like the female figure in the first image, represented as the ideal boyfriend. He does not look Asian. On a certain level, he looks more like Barbie's boyfriend, Ken, who has blond hair and big blue eyes. In the 1999 article most of the social actors are placed in blank settings without much work-related props. Without reading the text, one will easily fail to recognise that this is an article about work. This is a common characteristic in early *Rayli* when drawings were used for visual representations. This decontextualisation is however different from what we will see later (see 6.1.2. and 6.1.3.). The art director, Cheng, Jiaxin at *Rayli* believes it was the lack of page design knowledge and ability at the time[30]. She explained:

> '*Contemporary Chinese design was only born in the mid-1980s when graphic design was introduced into China's Special Economic Zone. Even until recent years, large Chinese graphic design has operated at best at a middle level in comparison to the West.'*

The drawings are also important indicators of *Rayli's* influence from Japanese culture. Editors at *Rayli* stated that visually they reference mainly to their parental magazine in Japan, especially in the early stages[31]. Cheng explained further:

> '*To overcome the challenge, the design industry has learnt from Asian*

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30. Face-to-face interviews with Jiaxin Cheng on 26th November 2012.
31. Face-to-face interviews with Polly Chang, Joyce Shih and Jiaxin Cheng on 26th November 2012.

Both Japanese and Chinese researchers have also pointed out the strong presence and influence of Japanese media and culture across Asia and especially in China (Iwabuchi, 2002; Liu, 2008; Tsutsui, 2010). It is believed that while China's older generation might still be haunted by Japan's wartime brutality, Japanese popular culture and media have become a central part of the look of youth culture in China (Iwabuchi, 2002). In the 1999 article, we see this popular youth Japanese culture in China in the form of Japanese comic drawings.

Japanese shojo manga[32] and josei manga[33] are a clear track of Japanese influence in *Rayli's* visual representations of social actors from its beginning. We will again see this influence in *Rayli* in later articles. Drawing characters, rather than real people photographs, are often used especially in earlier *Rayli*. These drawings largely resemble the style of Japanese female comics. The typical character design of shojo and josei mangas are giant glistering doe eyes, exaggerated body shapes, elaborate hairstyles and imaginative and physics-defying outfits (Brenner, 2007). These characters are usually drawn in a more stylised flat manner with strongly elongated, slender limbs and relatively delicate, even line work (Meyer, 2010). The fictional 'ideal' office lady in 1999 reflects this kind of Japanese manga style (Image three). More importantly, this kind of feature accentuations and drawing techniques is not just a style. In shojo and josei mangas, the emotional life of participants is the key of the comic world, therefore their nature is made to manifest in their appearance (Abbott and Forceville, 2011). Due to the essence of manga drawing, we can recognise the

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32. Shojo manga is a manga marketed to a female audience roughly between the ages of 10 and 18.
33. Josei manga is the grow-up version of shojo manga, for women entering their twenties and beyond.

kind of female identity foregrounded in *Rayli*.

The analysis refers to a wide range of manga visual representation codes to identify what these character designs signify (See for example Ogi, 2003; Brenner, 2007; Cohn, 2010; Meyer, 2010; Cohn, 2011; Abbott and Forceville, 2011; Cohn et al., 2012). Eyes are the most significant feature in any character in Japanese comics. In manga design, this connotes that the character is innocent, pure and young. The larger and more-star-full the eyes, the more innocent and pure the character is. It is used not only to indicate women's traditional role as the purer sex but also used to present their internal goodness and purity of spirit. The idealised office lady shown in Image three has large, round eyes with stars in them. That is to say the idealised female worker, despite having her hair coloured and wearing short skirts, she is still an innocent and pure good girl. These representations again tone down the controversy of adopting trends that are not widely seen as appropriate. The body builds of the female figure is extraordinarily slim. Generally, in shojo and josei mangas, the young admirable star characters have slender figures. This kind of body type also suggests purity in spirit. Females are admired for their purity, innocence and cuteness rather than beauty or sexiness (Kinsella, 1995; Avella, 2004). The office lady drawn in Image three is again this type of extraordinarily slim character. In other words, the innocent, cute, pure and admirable traits of the women are again foregrounded. *Rayli's* editors believed this sense of female beauty is similar in Chinese society and therefore more acceptable for Chinese readers[34]. For example, the editorial director of *Rayli,* Polly Chang, said:

> '*It is not just that Chinese women and Japanese women have a similar*
> *facial structure, body build, skin condition and hair type ... More*
> *importantly Chinese and Japanese share a similar Confucius culture and*

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34. Face-to-face interviews with Polly Chang, Joyce Shih and Jiaxin Cheng on 26th November 2012.

Here we see the visual social actor is represented through the Japanese style while corresponding to local Chinese culture. Accordingly, in Image three, we can see *Rayli* use manga style; the big, round eyes with stars and an extraordinarily slim figure, to construct the discourse of females being innocent, pure, and cute. However, the female wears a mini skirt and has coloured hair, which are represented to signify readers that even though she is pure, she should be welcoming to new things. Although the visual style shows an influence from Japan, the innocent and pure quality is what Chinese culture asks from women. Traditional women are expected to be harmless, gentle and inexperienced in Chinese society. Seeking to be different and standing out from the crowd however, is not what Chinese society appreciates traditionally. On the one hand, *Rayli* as a lifestyle magazine has the necessity to introduce new trends, on the other hand it has to minimise the risk of public criticism. Japanese comic drawings in this case serve well the need of smoothing potential problematic topics.

The second image in the 1999's examples (Image four) is a very different style of cartoon drawing from the rest of the manga styles discussed above, as this is in a Japanese manga style. In mangas characters will sometimes turn into super-deformed or hyper-cartoony figures. This kind of representation strategy is often used to express a spontaneous exaggerating emotion while carrying out a playful or humorous effect (Cohn, 2011). This cartoon is used to illustrate embarrassing moments at the office. Here, the super-deformed visual representations can emphasise the participants' reactions but at the same time make the discomfort instance a joke instead of making it difficult. This is important for synchronising

the overall *Rayli* brand image as cheerful and light-hearted. Manga also uses various visual symbols to signal characters' emotions swiftly without cumbersome textual descriptions. It requires cultural references to understand these symbols. Many westerners find these symbols puzzling when first reading a manga (Cohn, 2011). In the super-deformed manga style, gigantic sweat drops convey embarrassment or nervousness, a character that looks like the outline of a plus sign near the forehead indicates anger and the loss of fingers suggests a loss of control. These three examples are all used in the second image of the 1999 article (Image four). Many of these kinds of symbols are from pictorial representation of idioms. Part of the Japanese language and traditional culture is derived from China[35] and the visual style of the origins of Japanese manga (see Image six) is similar to Chinese manga (Image seven). Therefore compared to most Westerners, the majority of Chinese people find it easier to decode these emotional symbols in Japanese manga. However, the structure of the layout in modern manga can still be confusing (see Image eight). Instead of using an intricate layout, the structure of the 1999's cartoon is presented in a very simple arrangement with thought bubbles, which do not relate to the others in sequence. Here we see *Rayli* adopting Japanese visual culture while localising the format for the readers.

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35. Taika reforms started in 645 B.C. by Emperor Kotoku. Japanese envoys and students were sent to China to learn government structure, Confucian philosophies, Chinese writing system, literature, religion, architecture, art and dietary habits. Even today, the impact of Taika reforms can still be seen in Japanese culture.
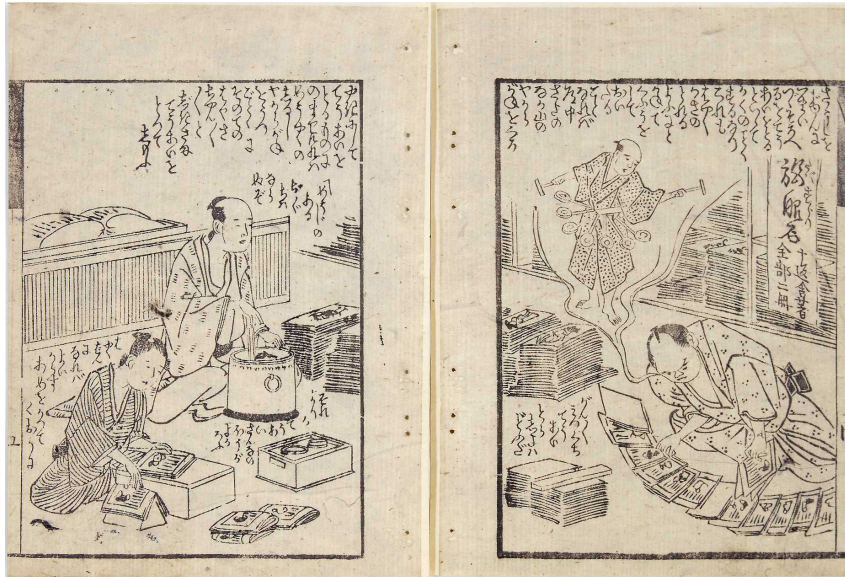
Image six: *Kibyoshi* in 1775 are generally considered to be forerunners of modern manga.
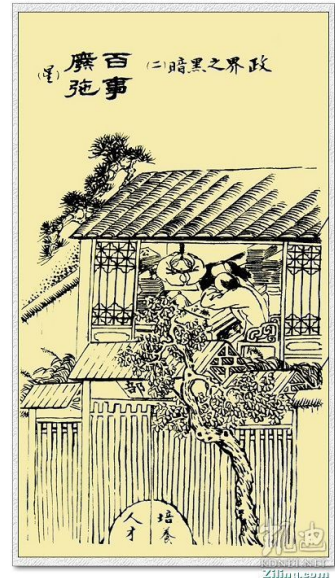
Image seven: Chinese comic in Qing Dynasty (1644-1912)

Image eight: The page layouts of manga are very diverse and can sometimes be complicated.

Now I will move on to the visual social actors in the 2001 article. Image eight, nine and 10 represent another typical visual style in earlier *Rayli* when photos are used.

Image nine - *Rayli* 2001(1)

Image 10 - *Rayli* 2001(2)

Image 11 - *Rayli* 2001(3)

All the photographs that appear in the 2001 article show real women in actual work settings with their real colleagues. Social actors are not striking poses for the photo shoots. They are styled to become magazine models but shown as who they really are in their workplaces. The photographs are like their daily photographs that they take themselves to record their lives. There are no props that are used to suggest a workplace. Objects in the photographs are more or less what we see as we go to their office everyday. These are the typical high modality photos in early *Rayli*. The setting is naturalistic with objects and clutter of everyday office life. This is not what we see in later versions of *Rayli*. The models are posing for the photo but not in the manner of a fashion shoot or connoting fun, which we will see in later *Rayli*. It is also important that these workers are shown in groups, however we can sense that they are different types of individuals instead of generic models found in later *Rayli*. This echoes the linguistic representations of social actors at the time that participants are represented as individuals who have a sense of collectivity and belonging (see 4.1.1.).

6.1.2. The transition years - between 2005 and 2009

Around 2005, as the linguistic representations started to change (see 4.1.2.), some changes in *Rayli's* visual representations also began to occur. Below are photos that are used in the 2005(a) article (Image 12 to 15).

Image 12 - *Rayli* 2005(a)(1)   Image 13 -   Image 14 -   Image 15 -
                                       Rayli 2005(a)(2)   *Rayli* 2005(a)(3)   *Rayli* 2005(a)(4)

The participants in 2005(a) are real women who are not magazine models. The texts give these women names and tell their personal stories (see 4.1.2.). Also in Image 12 the two women are sharing eye contact, which is supposed to convey the impression that they are interacting with each other, however it can be sensed that they are 'acting' it. The other three images (Image 13, 14 and 15) are six real women posing like models for the photographer, however they are not like the confident but generic models we will see in more recent *Rayli* (see 6.1.3.). These images have most likely been captured in a photographer's studio, especially Images 14 and 15 in which backgrounds are uncluttered and only a few props are used to indicate the concept of work. They are unlike the 2001's participants. These women are photographed in model photo-shoot styles. In Images 13 to 15 women are individualised through being represented alone. In 4.1.2. I discussed that it was around this time that experts started to show up in *Rayli* and in 5.1.2. I pointed out that the advice of these experts is gradually inclining towards interpersonal relationships focused on women who are increasingly represented as dealing with isolated issues. Around the same time, women also started to be represented as individuals visually. This is similar to what Machin and van Leeuwen (2007) have found in *Cosmopolitan* that individualised images are used to accomplish the requirements of the magazine to fit with the ideology of women acting alone and strategically. It is also important to note that these images point to the beginning of decontextualised images in *Rayli*. These six women are not in their real work settings but they have props such as a mobile phone, computer, desk, books and files to suggest the idea of work. We see less clutter in these images than in the 2001 images, which allows the reader to focus on the happy and fun tones that the photos create. In later articles we will see how photos are further decontextualised into generic photos that comprise a studio set, which is sparse except for a few props (see 6.1.3.).

Image 16 - *Rayli* 2005(b)(1)

Image 17 - *Rayli* 2005(b)(2)

Image 18 - *Rayli* 2005(b)(3)

During the transition period there is a combination of showing real female workers versus models, and real work setting versus using generic settings, such as Images 16, 17 and 18 from 2005(b) article. The model in Image 16 is a young girly model. Her make-up, hair, pose and expression make this woman a different type than the social actors from images in 2005(a). She is the kind of generic model we will continuingly see in later photos. The setting in this image is also decontextualised although in a different way from 2005(a)'s images. Here the background is out of focus and the details are reduced; the colours are saturated for the model but the colour modulation is reduced for the rest of the photo; the bright lighting on the model's face and clothes makes her look softer but also creates a bright atmosphere. This produces a stylised and idealised image that is removed from reality. As aforementioned, it helps the reader to focus on the feel-good and positive tone of the photo. Combining the model looking slightly to the side and upwards and her hands making a praying pose in front of her neck, the image connotes the sense of hoping, wishing and positive thinking. Image 17 and Image 18 are real women by their actual office desks. These two social agencies look directly into the camera as they are inviting viewers to enter their workspace. This is like what Kress and van Leeuwen (1996: 124) describe as a 'demand image' that creates an imaginary relationship between the social actors and viewers. This also works through the increased use of personal pronouns to make a more personalised and informal form of address. In comparison to photos from the 2001 article, these photos deliver a less formal tone and demand for more engagement with the readers.

Image 19 - *Rayli* 2006(1)

Image 20 - *Rayli* 2006(2)
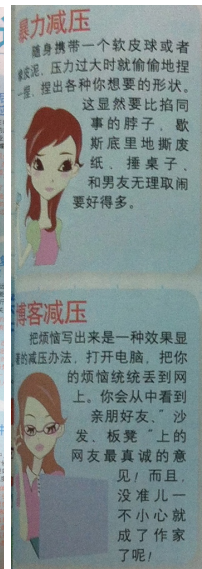
Image 21 - *Rayli* 2006(3)

Image 22 - *Rayli* 2006(4)

Now I will move on to the last example from the transition period. In the 2006 article, social actors are represented via three methods: models, clay figures and drawings. These generic models are all striking poses that imply 'cheering and go for it' in Chinese society. They bend one or both elbows and have their fists by their faces. They all look directly into the camera with big smiles showing their teeth as if they are cheering for the readers and sending positive and feel-good tones to the readers. This is another form of address and personally engaging with the viewer. The poses of the models have also become more playful and the models need not to be shown in their workplace anymore. Their poses not only convey confidence but also fun and positivity. This atmosphere is similar to *Cosmopolitan's* 'can-do', glamorous, lively world where features and advice always sit easily next to acts of consumerism (Machin and van Leeuwen*, 2007). By creating a positive and lively atmosphere, the workplace is also moved away from tasks and responsibilities to the importance of individual feelings and of pleasure.

The drawn figures (Image 21 and 22) are done in a way that is similar to the one we saw in the 1999 article. The thin fine lines, huge eyes and slim body build point to the influence

of manga style. Again, these females in drawings are shown with coloured hair whilst having other pure and innocent signifiers in manga visual language. Interestingly these drawings are used to show worries, uncertainties and insecurities. This again reduced the seriousness of the difficulties and troubles at work. Similarly the only work scene is shown in clay style with four clay-liked figures in a meeting setting. These clay-like figures and objects do not resemble a meeting style in China around 2006 (see Image 23). Participants are in relatively open and relaxed poses, for example the girl has two arms opened out at shoulder height, one of the guys has his legs crossed up high and the standing figure has his arm high up with his legs open. These are not manners that are usually seen in meetings in Chinese organisations. The hair colours of these clay figures are not of a natural Chinese hair colour either. These all make the meeting seem less formal and stressful. In general low modality images are used to make the discourse less connected to real world issues. Also these images can sit nicely next to the expert's generic and abstract advice.

Image 23 - The general meeting room in China around 2006

From what we have seen so far, visual discourse in *Rayli* is departing from a more realistic representation of work to one linking with consumerism and individual pleasure. Real working women in their actual working environment is gradually replaced by a mixture of model and model-like office ladies in photographer studios with props. Decontextualised images and happy-moods-indicating models background the sense of concrete tasks and responsibilities in workplace. On the contrary, this kind of new visual representations

foregrounds the importance of individual feelings and pleasures. Also the positive and feel-good tones this kind of visual representations provide sit easily next to acts of consumption culture and generic experts' advice. We also see influence from Japanese manga culture. Manga drawings are used not only to tone down the seriousness or trouble in the workplace, but also to represent trends that are not widely accepted and thereby avoiding controversy. In the next section, I will examine more recent versions of *Rayli* and show how the visual discourse moves one step further away from reality to create a feel-good atmosphere and encourage consumer culture. In addition, further Japanese cultural influence on *Rayli's* visual representations will be discussed.

6.1.3. The recent years - 2010 onwards

Image 24 - *Rayli* 2011(1)   Image 25 - *Rayli* 2011(2)   Image 26 - *Rayli* 2011(3)

The first image of the 2011 article (Image 24) shows a generic female model standing in a square in front of a building. She looks into the camera and strikes a half-walking, half-hopping pose like she is going into the building happily and energetically. As with Images 19 to 21 from 2006, the model is represented to signify engagement and fun, positive tones. The setting does not provide much detail to inform viewers what kind of situation she is in. That is to say the image is decontextualised. The work concept is only signified through indicative props like her semi-formal clothes and the folders in her hand. Image 24 presents a real

working-woman. It is only through the profile and personal story provided by the text that readers know she is not a model, as she is represented as a generic model visually. She is very different from the real female workers we see in images from the 2001 article. Here the photo is clearly a posed picture. The light of the photograph is modulated on her skin and clothes. In the background, there are slightly out-of-focused trees, which do not inform much on the real surrounding. This photograph can be easily seen as a magazine model photo shoot and can be used to imply many kinds of occasion due to the reduction of naturalistic modality.

Images 24 and 25 show a fusing of work with a fashion shoot. At this point, even when real female workers are shown in photos, they are represented as generic type, which is very different from the individuals in the 2001 photos. These generic social actors are pretty but not supermodels that usually have striking and distinct features. With generic models, readers can focus more on the tone and mood that the models indicate or the products being promoted. The increasing trend of representing generic models visually occurs around the same time when linguistically *Rayli* tries to slip in commercial tips such as '*Carry a foundation, concealer and mirror with you. Double-check your make-up before the interview'*, and *'get yourself a pair of comfortable mid-heeled shoes for the interview'* (see 4.1.3 and 5.3.). In more recent years, we start to see linguistic and visual representations cooperate nicely together in *Rayli* to promote consumerism.

In Image 26, the model is further individualised through close up shots, which allows readers to see her expressions and engage in her mental status. She however remains very generic. She is represented as the young, cute and pretty, but not sexy, type of girl. Readers receive no insight into her personal traits but are encouraged to engage with the mood she represents. The focalisation of her expressions echoes the linguistic transitivity found in *Rayli* that women are represented as conducting mental processes (see 5.1.1.). More importantly,

this again indicates that what is important is not actual work issues but individual feelings. In regards to the setting, again there is a complete absence of any setting and props to denote or connote work. It is from the captions we know that she is giving off expressions and body language readers might see in a job interview. These expressions and forms of body language include concentrating, engaging, lying, challenging, defending and looking uninterested, impatient, bored and enthusiastic (from the centre top photo then goes clockwise direction). It is interesting that even though the expressions or body language are supposed to show a challenging, defencing, uninterested, impatient or bored attitude, the model smiles. This is not the usual facial expression for those kinds of emotion. Additionally, in all the photographs the model has her eyes wide open and eyebrows raised up. The smile, wide-opened eyes and lifted eyebrows resemble cartoonish expressions. The expressions are caricatured that almost seem like a pantomime version. *Rayli* editors explained that these expressions are part of kawaii culture (cute culture) they adopted from Japan[36]. We will also see the influence of kawaii culture in the 2012 visual representations.

Image 27 - *Rayli* 2012 (1)   Image 28 - *Rayli* 2012 (2)   Image 29 - *Rayli* 2012 (3)

In the 2012 article, Image 27 shows participants at a karaoke party. From the caption, readers would know it is an office social occasion. A girl is singing standing up and looking into the camera. She is addressing the reader to engage in her experience. All participants

36. Face-to-face interviews with Polly Chang, Joyce Shih and Jiaxin Cheng on 26th November 2012.

have big smiles on their faces and have some sort of interaction with each other as they are enjoying themselves and having a good time. The bright-coloured setting with tinsel, balloons and tambourines connote a lively and vibrant tone. Readers are invited to join in this feeling. This also signifies to a collective and highly social spirit. The sense of fun and collectivity are also conveyed in Image 28 and 29. Collectivity is maximised in Image 29 through generic models striking the same pose and wearing a similar style of clothing. While in the text we start to see more individualised representations and women acting alone (see 4.1.3. and 5.1.4.), visually we see a counter force to signify the importance of friendship and belonging. However, the kind of visual representations of friendship and collectivity is different from what we see linguistically in early and transition period *Rayli.* Linguistically, *Rayli* used to show readers that women communicate with each other when facing problems, they stimulate each other and evolve together with company (see 5.1.4.). Visually we do not see this kind of working-together spirit. Instead, visually what is important is the fun and happiness women have when they are together. Collective images are what one will not find in typical Western lifestyle magazines such as *Cosmopolitan* (Machin and van Leeuwen, 2007). This shows the importance of considering linguistic and visual representations together. It is through this that we can reveal the way Western and local influences negotiate with each other to create a suitable and balanced discourse for a local market.

Settings in *Rayli*'s photos have entirely moved away from the realistic work environments we see in the early and transition period. All three photos do not tell much about the concept of an office party. The first image uses props like microphones, tambourines, balloons, tinsel, alcohol and food to create a party scene while it could be any kind of karaoke party rather than an office party. In the second and third images, settings are comprised of drawings. There is only the drawing of a fancy-looking candle pendant light in the second picture and the drawing of a wall with a window in the third image. These

drawings are low in modality and do not provide much detail. The abstraction of the settings makes it difficult to tell the exact event they are attending. These girls can be anywhere at any type of occasion.

Not only are the settings in low modality, but also the reduction of naturalistic images is also achieved by the colour and lighting. The colours tend to be rich and saturated and closely coordinated with other elements shown, as can be seen in Images 27 and 29. This produces 'an impression of high stylisation and hence further removed from reality' (Machin and Thornborrow, 2003: 460). Lighting on the other hand can be exaggerated or limited by exposure to make the image look less real. For example, 'high level of soft bright light can produce an effect of almost celestial purity' (Ibid.). This kind of manipulation of colour and lighting can both be found in all images from recent years (Images 24 to 29).

Overall, visually *Rayli* creates a discourse that has been taken away from the real world through placing generic social actors in decontextualised and low modality settings of fun and fashion. This kind of decontextualised and low modality image is very similar to advertising images (Machin, 2004). Advertising photography started the trend of using generic images to focus on creating tones around the brand instead of delivering explicit reference to items being sold (Ibid.; Bull, 2010). This kind of image, due to its generics and timelessness, gives the audience a broader space to associate the tones with their personal experience. For example, using water as a generic background in an advertising image can encourage readers to link the meaning of the product to freedom, escapism, romance, freshness or health depending on personal interpretation. Also, these generic images are so familiar that they can be engaged with almost unconsciously. The powerful ideological advantage allows values and ideas that advertisements promote to be accepted without question (Frosh, 2003). By providing general settings, *Rayli* can arguably achieve similar

effects (see Chapter 7 for further discussion on advertising representations versus *Rayli*'s visual representations).

By reducing the modality, images are moved away from naturalistic to schematic and abstract representations (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 1996). This kind of representations also '[amplifies] opportunities for representing social practice without their normal consequences, in order to allow culture issues to be freely explored, even where they touch on important taboos' (Machin and Thornborrow, 2003: 459-460). Although the Chinese magazine industry has been assigned with the task of supporting consumerism by the government (see 2.3.2.), consumer culture still seems to be a topic *Rayli* does not want to be directly associated with. While the trace of consumerism can be easily found in *Rayli,* Polly Chang, the editorial director of *Rayli*, denied their strong interests in showing readers consumer culture[37]. She stated:

> *'Although we rely on advertisements for revenues, I like to think that we try*
> *our best to give our readers authentic editorial content. We do not want*
> *our readers to think we are commercialised.'*

Generic low modality images not only give *Rayli* the powerful ideological advantage of promoting consumer culture and branding images, but they also reduce the risk of it being directly accused of the negative social consequences that consumerism brings.

Finally, the clothing that models wear is a typical example of the way *Rayli* turns the kawaii aesthetic into fashion and lifestyle. Cuteness is also presented through texture in *Rayli*, such as soft textures that are likely to be related to babies, small fluffy animals and stuffed

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37. Face-to-face interview with Polly Chang on 26th November 2012.

toys are used to represent delicate, cute and cuddly. Models in *Rayli* have a tendency of wearing fur, velvet or flannel clothing for winter. During summer, cute is represented through clothing styles such as layered ruffles, lace fringes and floating skirts or dresses. *Rayli's* editors stated that kawaii aesthetic in *Rayli* crossed over the attitude, the behaviour, the look and more importantly the brand[38]. Polly Chang said:

> *'The girls in Rayli are all about cute. Our magazine is known for this. The sweet cute girls from the neighbourhood ... Our readers can learn from Rayli about what to wear to be cute, how to express themselves to be cute, and what is popular among cute girls.'*

Joyce Shih also explained:

> *'Polly joined Rayli about two years ago. She did marketing in a German company. I think the biggest difference she brings to the team is that she gives clear directions on how to make the magazine coherent across genres and content. Cute aesthetics is one of them.'*

Jiaxin Cheng also confirmed the importance of cuteness in *Rayli* in our interview, *'It is not just about the girls looking cute, I have to make sure the page design looks cute too.'* To understand how kawaii culture influences *Rayli's* visual representations and how the aesthetic works throughout the magazine for different purposes, I would like to look further into kawaii culture.

Kawaii culture began in the 1970s in Japan (Avella, 2004: 213). The original meaning of

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38. Face-to-face interviews with Polly Chang, Joyce Shih and Jiaxin Cheng on 26th November 2012.

kawaii is shy or embarrassed with associations of loveable, darling, small but also pathetic and vulnerable (Ibid.). However, the modern sense of kawaii is more positive amongst the youth in Japan. It is used to describe sweet, adorable, innocent, pure, genuine, gentle, vulnerable, weak and inexperienced social behaviour or physical appearances (Ibid.). In Japan, the contemporary concept of cuteness, such as being vulnerable, weak and inexperienced, seems to stimulate an adoration, sympathy and caring response. Also, cuteness includes feelings and emotions that are aroused by experiencing something charming, cheerful, happy and sweet (Cheok, 2010). By 1992, the word 'kawaii' was estimated to be the most widely used, loved, habitual word in modern-living Japan (CREA, November, 1992: 58, cited in Locher, 2002: 4). A survey done by Kinsella (1995) shows 71 percent of people aged between 18 and 30 either like or love kawaii looking people and 55.8 percent either like or love kawaii attitude and behaviour. The kawaii trend not only maintains its tremendous popularity in Japan but also spreads its influence worldwide nowadays. In 2009, Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced three new ambassadors for Japan. They were young female fashion icons and introduced as 'kawaii taishi' - cute ambassadors (Image 30). Cuteness gives Japan cultural power and is something the Japanese are polishing overseas (Kubo, 2000). Kawaii now represents Japanese popular culture, dynamic of everyday life and most importantly, art aesthetics. Japanese cuteness visual arts are promoted as part of the larger popular culture framework and seen as Japan's newly discovered soft power resource (Borggreen, 2011).

Image 30 - Kawaii taishi: Aoki Misako, Kimura Yu amd Fukioka Shizuka

Cuteness is not merely cuddling cute external objects. It has become a lifestyle, a personal identity, a social behaviour. People become the cute entity themselves by acting infantile. For them, being kawaii not only means using cute merchandise or dressing like cuddling dolls, but also being childlike through the act of incongruous poses, the expression of a naïve look and all together the feeling of inability, dependence and simple-mindedness. In cute culture, people become popular from their apparent weakness, flimsiness and naivety instead of their intelligence, strengths and capabilities. In *Rayli*'s visual design, we can constantly see the influence of Japan's cute cultural power. Manga itself is a direct project of the kawaii aesthetic. In Image three, 21 and 22, we see the manga style female drawings represent a pure and cute identity. Furthermore, cuteness is shown through various other components such as models, poses, objects and colours. The models in *Rayli* are young, especially the ones used after 2010. They look around 20 years old. Additionally, the poses and expressions they strike, for example in Image 26 the model is pulling a wide-eyed innocent expression and acting funny, giving the feeling of coy and childishness. Their poses and clothes also do not come across as seductive. In all of the images from *Rayli* we see above (Images three to five, Images nine to 22 and Images 24 to 29), the models expose limited amount of skin and do not accentuate their curves. They celebrate being infantile and delicate whilst looking attractive. This reflects what *Rayli's* editors say that the kawaii aesthetic in *Rayli* crossed over the attitude, the behaviour, the look.

It is argued that cute culture in Japan is a rebellion or refusal to cooperate with established social values and realities (Kinsella, 1995). On the external level, people, especially women, fill their rooms, cars, desks and handbags with toys, dolls and sparkling decorations like what is shown in the second image of 2005(b) (Image 17) in *Rayli*. They immerse themselves in cuteness to the point where they can feel a transformation and entering a cute-only world. Allison (2002, 2004) argues that cute characters provide a sense of security, intimacy or connection for people who detach themselves from the company of family or friends due to busy and stressful lives. By adopting cute aesthetics into the visual discourse of women at work, *Rayli* can also provide a sense of security, intimacy and connection with its readers and become its readers' shelter and comforter away from work.

The kawaii act can be further internalised to become their attitude and demeanour (Kinsella, 1995). For the purpose of seeking psychological consolation, babies are expected to have less responsibility and legitimately acquire more attention and care due to their tender nature and incapability. In kawaii culture, people emphasise their immaturity and inability as a way to stimulate sympathy, care and adoration and indirectly escape from social expectations. This is very similar to how women are represented in *Rayli's* linguistic texts (see chapter 5). The visual kawaii representations can legitimise the textual representations of women being passive and impotent. Here we see how linguistic and visual representations do not have to directly express the same thing, however they work hormonally together to construct the discourse of female identity.

Cuteness has become a neo-romanticism in Japan for young people who view adulthood as a mean society with restrictions and hard work (Kinsella, 1995). Unlike Western society, where maturity is associated with freedom and independence, adulthood in Japan is

associated with responsibility and a loss of freedom. When people pass through their childhood they are forced to cover up their real selves under layers of artifice. Kawaii has emerged to become an alternative attitude to facing adulthood whilst arguably still under layers of artifice. Nakamaru (1964) has argued that in Chinese culture, adulthood has similar meanings to that of Japanese culture since they both have the same Confucian philosophy roots. As adults, people have to cooperate well in groups, make sacrifices, fulfil obligations to parents, devote themselves to employers and accomplish social expectations. For women, maturity is directly linked to marriage, which means women's jobs are not as important as the husband's and social lives have to be sacrificed. Linguistically we still see this kind of obligation, cooperation and social expectation being represented in *Rayli* (see Chapter 4 and 5). For example:

> *'We know that we should maintain a good working relationship together so we can evolve and devote ourselves completely to the company.'* (2005a)
> *'You should request songs that everyone loves. It can animate the atmosphere at the party and takes care of everyone at the event.'* (2012)

The visual representations however do the opposite of what the texts do. The kawaii visual representations celebrate girls being innocent children who are not obligated to these social expectations and devotion to work. The serious sense of work and social responsibility created by the texts is toned down by cute visuals. Along with low modality images, readers are brought further away from the cluttered busy office. It is as if telling the readers that it is okay to escape from reality and to be as free as a child.

More importantly, the adoption of kawaii design and the representations of kawaii girls can become a discourse, which serves the interests of branding strategy and consumerism of

lifestyle magazines very well. Japanese kawaii industry is involved in fashion, food, entertainment and all kinds of consumer products worldwide. Consumers do not necessarily need to understand or associate it with Japanese lifestyle or a socio-cultural context to like cute products. Hello Kitty and Pokémon are good examples of how kawaii can be used as a branding strategy and be transformed in consumption. For lifestyle magazines like *Rayli*, they can link cuteness to lifestyle as well as identity. In other words, women are represented as pursuing desires of self-pleasure by consuming cute clothes, accessories, music and entertainments. Meanwhile, cute visual designs can bring a friendly demeanour. In a similar way that cute goods are designed in an attempt to create an intimate connection with consumers to encourage people's consumption desire by using cute visual design, *Rayli* can establish a micro-relationship and impart positive feelings between the magazine and the reader. At this level, the cute style is also used to influence the readers' perception of the magazine's content. It serves as a flavoured coating to make the content easier to the consumer. It helps to bring the reader to a desired frame of mind and attitude so *Rayli* can then deliver content that might not otherwise be received. Furthermore, under the one-child policy, Chinese children sometimes experience the lonely consequences of being an only child and have an even bigger desire to make connections. Kawaii design is in the favour of providing security, intimacy or a connection. In the next chapter, I will further discuss how this is achieved, also with the help of *Rayli*'s visual design (see 7.3.1. and 7.3.2.).

6.2. Women as non-transitive meaning carriers

Through manga style and kawaii aesthetic, the representations of women in *Rayli* celebrate being innocent, naïve or even impotent. To further understand the active level of women in *Rayli*, it is useful to look at what women are represented as doing in images. Visual transitivity is an important way to draw out the ideology that is implicit in representations. It reveals the relations between participants as the act towards and respond to each other. In

other words, social actors' characters and relations can be identified by analysing the verb processes. There are three main verb processes shown in the representations of women at work in *Rayli*: behavioural process, mental process and verbal process. Behavioural process can point to intransitive actions, for example waiting and sitting. Girls in *Rayli* often seem to be 'busy' with a behavioural task that has no material outcome. This is an opposition to people who engage in material process and can be linked to agency or being the subject of agency. A person who is busy with behavioural process is relatively passive. Mental process often gives access to the thoughts of some people. However, it is similar to behavioural process that participants do not produce a material outcome or seem as passive. Verbal process shows people through speaking. Again, this kind of process does not bring physical results and can be used to imply people as talkers instead of doers (for detailed verb processes discussion, see 3.3.1.2.).

In the first image of the 1999 edition, the fictional ideal office lady is presented talking on her mobile phone and the rest of the office ladies in the background are striking a standing pose without any action. The second image shows a cartoon character thinking about different kinds of embarrassing situations at work. The participants in these two images conduct verbal process, behavioural process and mental process. In other words, female workers are represented as a passive mental focaliser or talker who do not conduct concrete tasks. This echoes the general linguistic representations of women at work in *Rayli* (see 5.1., 5.2., and 5.4.).

In the 2001 photos we can find some indication of material processes carried out by women. Images nine and 11 from 2001's edition show people at workstations who have stopped what they were doing for the picture. This photo, to an extent, gives the impression that they were working and conducting material processes before being interrupted. They are

very rare photos in *Rayli*'s work-related articles as they have the meaning potential of women producing a concrete outcome. In Image 10, the participants appear to be working on their make-up. The female is having her make-up and hair done by a male. Here, the woman is a passive receiver and does not perform while the man is presented as the active agent that makes things happen. It is worth noting that in Image 11, whilst being interrupted, the only person that is shown to be continuing his work is the male. From these images, work issues are addressed and they signify a vague concept of participants doing material tasks, however it is clear that only the men are active agents who execute work. This is however the highest level of women being productive that are represented in *Rayli.*

The low level of agency of female agents has been the general visual representations of women at work in *Rayli* since 2005. During this period there has been an increasing representations of women leaning, sitting, standing and mainly posing in images. Transitivity is comprised mainly of social interactions, mental processes and behavioural processes. This is similar to *Rayli's* linguistic transitivity representations of women being passive, focusing on interpersonal relationships and not conducting important material tasks (see 5.1., 5.2., and 5.4.). In some images, women seem to be talking to each other whilst others seem to be thinking, however it is not always clear what they are actually doing. What is clear is that they are mostly depicted as smiling. Their mental processes point to happiness and pleasure. It can be argued that participants are represented as performing a valuable role in positively-evaluating discourses that are represented in the images. Adopting Halliday's (1978) linguistic terms to visual transitivity, this kind of action pose, which accomplishes nothing, can be seen as a 'non-transitive' action. It is important to note that even if there is no actual action accomplished by the pose, it could still be a very meaningful icon of agency. Machin and Thornborrow (2006) explain that women in such photos are meaning carriers who act out agency. For example, soldiers might carry meanings through their uniform and posture. 'In

the regime of lifestyle choice it is the visual performance, rather than the doing, where work of connotation takes place' (Ibid.: 181). These social actors resemble people in advertisements. In advertisements, how people look, what poses they strike and what clothes or accessories are shown are the carriers of meaning. What people do does not seem as important.

Throughout the history, women in *Rayli* are mostly represented as having low agency, both linguistically and visually. It was discussed in a previous chapter that this kind of representations reinforces the Chinese stereotypical image of women (see 4.4.5.). The concept can also be used to explain what women are represented as doing at work visually in *Rayli*. The visual discourse, however, performs a task that cannot be completed by linguistic transitivity. By representing women as non-transitive meaning carriers visually, social actors become advocates for the magazine's brand image and consumer culture. Without the distraction of concrete actions, readers can focus on the feel-good and positive tones signalled by the postures and facial expressions of social actors and consumption persuasion is delivered through the clothing, hairstyle, make-up and accessories of social actors.

6.3. The comparison of visual representations of women at work between *Rayli* and *Cosmopolitan*

The analysis of visual social actors and social actions have showed that *Rayli* visually uses kawaii aesthetics, low modality images and represents women as non-transitive meaning carriers to accomplish its branding strategy and links the discourse to consumerism. *Cosmopolitan*'s visual representations of women, revealed by Machin and Thornborrow (2003, 2006) express the core values of *Cosmopolitan*: freedom and power. The discourse is set in a glamorous world in which women live by pursuing consumer products. *Rayli* and *Cosmopolitan* are very similar in terms of linking their visual discourse to branding strategies

and consumption. The differences lay in the identity roots that *Rayli* and *Cosmopolitan* give to women.

The two examples (Image 31 and 32) below are what Ming Ho, editor of Chinese *Cosmopolitan,* showed me during our interview[39]. Ho said, 'this kind of pages are typical representations of women at work that we adapt from our parental magazine.'

Image 31 - Chinese *Cosmopolitan* (1)   Image 32 - Chinese *Cosmopolitan* (2)

This kind of *Cosmopolitan* representations of women at work is very different from *Rayli*'s cute girls. Their appearances are more mature, confident and sexy. *Cosmo* girls wear tighter clothes, shorter skirts and sexier, taller high heels. Their body poses are not shy or timid. In Image 31, the girl's eyes are seductive, her hair is flowing, her lipstick is a sensuous, shiny red and she looks directly at the readers with her upper body slightly leaning forward giving a sense of invitation. Machin and Thornborrow (2003, 2006) have discussed this kind of representations of women at work in *Cosmopolitan* and pointed out that by looking sexy, like the women in Image 31, women attain success and power in the office:

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39. Face-to-face interview with Ming Ho on 30th November 2012.

'The women [...] are model-beautiful, with lush flowing hair. Their sexy

clothes draw on traditional notions of female sexuality and male desire:

short skirts, revealing tops, high heels, shiny red, sensuous lipstick.

Women's sexuality is the source of their power over men and of their

success in the work- place' (Machin and Thornborrow, 2003: 460).

Also *Cosmo* girls are alone in the workplace for most of the time and need to be helped

through tricks or manipulative advice (Machin and Van Leeuwen, 2007). The photo in the

bottom-right corner of Image 32 shows women as conniving and more adept on a social than

on a technical level.

In terms of visual transitivity, it is clear that in both *Rayli* and *Cosmopolitan*, women are

never seen as actually acting upon the world or doing anything constructive. On the contrary,

they pose in photos, looking thoughtful, delivering smiles and jumping in the air like models

do in advertisements. This kind of social action indirectly portrays women as passive and less

capable. Machin and Thornborrow (Ibid.: 461) explained it through Ryder's (2003) comments

on women's romantic fiction:

'Women may be represented as apparently very active while in fact they do

very little, leaving all the real agency to a male hero. For example, the

heroine might be engaged in lots of physical movements which have no

permanent effect or outcome. Additionally, these movements will be

upgraded to give them greater vibrancy. For example, the woman might

move full of fury. Cosmopolitan images, similarly, may show a lot of

energetic activity but this activity has no concrete outcome.'

The difference between the two magazines lays in the type of women they 'sell'. While *Cosmopolitan* has the brand of fun fearless female, *Rayli* is about much more restrained moods, which the editor of *Rayli* described as 'sweet neighbourhood girls'[40]. When asked what defined a sweet neighbourhood girl, Polly Chang explained:

> *'It is like in boys' dream that there is a girl living next door, she is cute, pretty, sweet, friendly but somehow shy. She is not like the very outgoing and sexually confident girls you see in Hollywood movies. You [a boy] like her but you would approach her carefully so you wouldn't scare her away.'*

The femininities in *Rayli* and *Cosmopolitan* show different kinds of preference towards women. In China, the preferred woman identity is influenced by Confucian philosophy. In Han Dynasty[41], the book *Lesson for Women*[42] instructed women in Royal Palace to follow Four Virtues[43], morality, modest manner/appearance, proper speech and diligent work[44]. That is to say, women should have a moral character, appear dignified and reserved, understand when they should talk and when they should not, and devote themselves to their parents, husbands and children. This conflicts with the women in *Cosmopolitan*, who are empowered by sexuality, confidence, freedom and manipulation. However the cute neighbourhood girl in *Rayli*, although she does not strictly follow the identity of traditional Confucian principles for women, she is a good girl liked by society and she desires to get along with people. This is closer to the modern interpretation of female virtues in China.

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40. Face-to-face interview with Polly Chang, Joyce Shih and Jiaxin Cheng on 26th November 2012.
41. 206 BCE-220 CE. Emperor Wu of Han, ruled from 141-87 BC, officially endorsed Confucianism as the national philosophy.
42. 女誡 Nǚjiè, also translated as *Admonitions for Women*, is a work by the Han Dynasty female intellectual Ban Zhao.
43. 四德 Sìdé
44. 婦德 Fùdé, 婦容 Fùróng, 婦言 Fùyán, 婦功 Fùgōng

Interestingly, both *Rayli* and *Cosmopolitan* never explicitly mention the image of cute, sweet girls or sexy, powerful and free women in the text, but they are clearly signalled in their visual discourses through the clothes women are wearing, the things they are doing and the interactions they engage in. It is also important to keep in mind that even though different types of women are presented, both magazines construct a discourse of a glorified world for their readers and signify women can become the 'dream girl' by aligning with social practice through the clothes they wear, the postures girls strike and the attitude they adopt.

6.4. Discussion

6.4.1. Variety in new Chinese women identity?

Rayli and *Cosmopolitan* appear to represent and show different types of women images and identity. Cultural theorists (see for example, Flew, 2007 and Held *et al,* 1999) have also pointed to globalisation bringing variety and new lifestyle choices for people (see 1.3.4.2.). These raise the question if the more opened media environment in China has offered Chinese women more freedom and more options for their lives. It can be argued that Chinese editions of foreign magazines are showing Chinese women a greater variety of what kind of woman they can be: cute, sweet and likeable or sexy, powerful and free. The kinds of women these magazines present to their readers clearly have influences from their parental magazines. *Rayli* shows Japanese cute styles while *Cosmopolitan* encourages women to be playful and seductive, which is a more Western attitude. *Rayli*'s editors, Polly Chang and Joyce Shi, believe the Japanese girl is a more acceptable new identity for Chinese women. The editorial director, Polly Chang, said[45]:

'New generation of Chinese women want something new, something

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45. Face-to-face interview with Polly Chang on 26th November 2012.

different but also something they can feel resonant with their roots ...

Japanese girls are more similar to Chinese girls in terms of facial features,

body styles and traditional culture. Completely westernised products or

attitudes won't work.'

An editor of Chinese *Cosmopolitan,* Ming Ho, on the other hand, believes Chinese women are ready for a 'more novel' and 'more avant-garde' lifestyle[46]:

'*Younger Chinese women are different now. They are very open to new*

things. They grew up with western movies, TV shows and music and they

like them. They want to be like people in western movies.'

It is uncertain what kind of new identity Chinese women are seeking for. However in comparison to the Party controlled age, it seems that Chinese women are now exposed to different kinds of values, attitudes and cultures as well as lifestyles. Localised foreign magazines play a big role in this change.

While it appears that a life with more choices has arrived in China, it is questionable if these magazines do provide a wider perspective on life. The answer might be yes in terms of the range of products they can choose. The answer can also be no when thinking about what people can actually do with their lives. These magazines all direct readers to consumerism. The visual discourses of *Rayli* and Chinese *Cosmopolitan* seem different at certain levels but they are saying a similar message: if you want to be like this, buy. No matter whether you prefer to be a cute girl or a sexy woman, you can become one if you change your hairstyle, buy some new clothes and put make-up on. They give no insight into what kind of concrete

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46. Face-to-face interview with Ming Ho on 30th November 2012.

tasks or internal changes readers should do to open themselves to a different identity. These are only glamourised visual concepts of cute or sexy presented to persuade readers that all it takes to become ideal is in the appearance. There is no alternative way to achieve the life these women want. In the discourse these magazines present, there is actually only one choice for modern womanhood - consumption.

6.4.2. Consumerism and 'visual' in China

After a long history of highly Party-dominated media representations of uniformed identity, Chinese media is now in a new phase of representing women, as we can see in *Rayli* and *Cosmopolitan*. The Chinese government controlled their media and closed their door to foreign media for more than 30 years, but the tide of media globalisation arrived in China and has influenced Chinese society relatively quickly (see Chapter 3). Between 1995 and 2012, the changing visual representations in *Rayli* has pointed to a different lifestyle in China: consumerism. Various reports (Atsmon et al., 2011; Global Times, 2014) show that China for years has been the largest nation of luxury-goods buyers across the world. McKinsey & company's research (Atsmon et al., 2011) predicts that:

'China will account for about 20 percent, or 180 billion RMB (£18 billion) of global luxury sales in 2015 ... Even during the global recession in 2009, sales of luxury goods in the mainland rose by 16 percent, to about 64 billion RMB ... far better than the performance of many other major luxury markets.'

Another interesting note is that Chinese women's spending on luxury goods showed strong momentum. The sales of luxury goods favoured by women have had an annual growth of eight to ten percent in the past few years. Global Times (2014) pointed out that, 'In 2013,

women spent as much on luxury goods as men, while in 1995, more than 90 percent of spending was done by men.'

Why do Chinese buy into this new lifestyle so quickly? And why does consumerism prosper in Chinese society so well in such a short history compared to the West? It can be a result of global media's stimulation, government's promotion, rapid economic growth and the large population of China. However, besides these factors, I would also like to point it to the traditional Chinese 'face culture'. 'Face' has various meanings in different contexts of Chinese culture. Huang's (1987: 71) definition explains a lot on this complex word, '[f]ace is a sense of worth that comes from knowing one's status and reflects concern with the congruency between one's performance or appearance and one's real worth.' The 'face culture' influences Chinese in the way that people care about how they 'look' since the way you look shows their social class, wealth, personality or what kind of person they are. This idea aligns with the visual representations of modern Chinese lifestyle magazines, which try to embed values in the look of social actors to encourage consumerism. In terms of visual representations, *Rayli* does not portray what kind of people the social actors are through what kind of tasks they do, but through what they wear, what make-up they put on, what accessories they have and what pose they strike. That is to say everything is about the look. The 'face culture' that makes people care massively about how they appear has become a hotbed for the visual representations strategies that accelerate consumerism. The visual representations introduced by foreign media goes hand in hand with Chinese 'face culture' to create a new lifestyle for China.

6.4.3. Hegemonic capitalism, heterogeneous means of cultural (re)production

International women's magazines in China are a hybrid of Chinese, Western and other Asian cultures that are created to cater to their special market in order to pursue maximum revenue

(Karan and Feng, 2009: 25-27) (see 2.4.3.1.). We can certainly see this trend in *Rayli*. Chinese models are represented as non-transitive meaning carriers in editorial content as models in Western advertisements. Japanese manga style is used to represent the young, pure, innocent girl and smooth out the risk of promoting a new controversial trend. *Rayli* also carefully uses the manga symbol that Chinese readers would understand while modifying the typical manga layout arrangement to avoid confusion. These are examples of how scholars tend to explain the global-local interaction or so called 'glocalisation' (see Chapter 1).

The hybrid in *Rayli*, or arguably in many other international brand Chinese magazines, is so complex and well strategically mingled together that it is sometimes hard to point to where the West, China or Japan exist in the magazine. Kawaii culture is from Japan, however, when considering the dynamic within the cute culture in *Rayli*, there is not a single culture reference. Part of kawaii culture is celebrating being innocent, vulnerable and tender. These traits to an extent reflect what is expected from women in traditional Chinese society, although they were not associated with the word cute. What *Rayli* does is rename existing Chinese values to promote brand image and link to and promote foreign Japanese ideas of cuteness. The ultimate purpose of representing kawaii however is not to promote Japanese popular culture. It is just a means to link the magazine content to Western consumer culture. In other words, the kawaii culture *Rayli* presents is actually a strategy that reinforces Chinese local traditional women identity, wrapped in Japanese popular culture, to serve Western consumerism.

I would like to use the representations of kawaii culture to further discuss some issues of considering globalisation, glocalisation, hybridisation or hegemony. It is claimed that Chinese youth, who are more exposed to international magazines, are more likely to bear the 'conspicuous consumption, aspiration for self-actualisation and worshipping Western

lifestyles' (Wei and Pan, 1999: 75). Also it was said that international magazines in China use local sources to build up a meaningful life while using global sources to emphasise fashion and beauty (Feng and Karan, 2011: 40). Wei and Pan's argument points to a singular influence of global culture while Feng and Karan's comment draws a clear line between local and global.

I am not arguing that they are false statements. There is however a need for more detailed consideration towards the interaction of global and local. The example of kawaii discourse shows that although the ultimate message of *Rayli* is Western consumerism, the complex dynamic of its visual representations cannot be directed to a singular force. Also this complex dynamic sometimes does not draw a clear line between what local is and what global is. The meaning of life that *Rayli* constructs could be an innocent, pure and likeable woman who is accepted by society. This is however achieved by the clothes she wears, the haircut she has and the attitude she adopts. The former can be said as local and the latter can be said as global. On the other hand, fashion and beauty are accomplished by Western consumerism, but the standard cute and the meaning behind cute are a combination between global and local.

Quantitative approaches to globalisation studies are useful for pointing at overall trends (see 2.4 and its sub-sections). They however have limitations in providing more detailed observations. Take cute representations for example, in quantitative analysis they can easily be placed in one category to be recognised as Japanese or global. This kind of categorising indirectly implies globalisation as a hegemony process and there is no room for negotiating slight cultural differences. Similar to what has been showed in a previous chapter (see 5.5.), foreign values and ideas can be transformed and repackaged under the disguise of local identity while local identities can be recreated and converted to relate to exterior value.

Identities are never fixed (Hall, 1966). Culture is never pure (Gupta, 1998). They are constantly (re)produced in 'a process of becoming rather than being' (Hall, 1966: 4). Therefore, when considering globalisation's influence on identity and culture, we should see it 'as an ongoing processual phenomenon entailing intensified flows and overlaps of both material and symbolic products and practices across geographic, institutional and cultural borders' (Aiello and Pauwels, 2014: 277). The rising concern of losing difference in cultural production as a result of global capitalism is important and based on compelling evidence. However it is also important to recognise the increasing complex, powerful and indeed heterogeneous ways in which identity and culture are overlapped and (re)produced in contemporary global communication.

Summary

Due to the perceptual availability and transcultural potential, visual discourse have a privileged and crucial role in global communication (Ibid.). The visual can work together with the textual to achieve coordinated representations. More importantly, the visual has the ability to 'authenticate, resemble and connote without an aid of language' and often creates meanings and effects that language will not be able to deliver (Ibid.: 276). This chapter shows how *Rayli* uses these characteristics of visual representations to convey ideas, values and identities to its readers.

With manga and kawaii visual style, *Rayli* is able to rename, repack and transform Chinese traditional women's stereotypes into a cheerful, feel-good, positive Japanese popular culture. Also, the visual Japanese popular kawaii culture gives *Rayli* the opportunities to link innocent, pure and cute womanhood to the magazine's own brand image and consumer culture. Together with the use of low modality images, *Rayli* creates tones in which readers

are more absorbent to ideological messages and the magazine is more distant from being accused of social consequences. Visual elements are used by *Rayli* to create and deliver messages that are/cannot be presented through language.

Similar to linguistic transitivity, women are assigned with mental, verbal and behavioural verb processes in visual discourse. Texts and visuals work together reinforcing women as low-ability agencies. From 2005, *Rayli* also use visuals' unique attribute to portray women as non-transitive meaning carriers. Values, ideas and identities are constructed through the tones of poses and expressions as well as the clothing, hairstyle, make-up, and accessories, rather than through the actions. By doing this, social actors become the agencies for the magazine's brand image and consumer culture. Again, this is not what is/can be done through linguistic representations.

It was also found that *Rayli* is very similar to *Cosmopolitan* in terms of using visual representations strategies and visual transitivities to link to brand image and consumerism. The difference is, while *Cosmopolitan* tries to sell the fun and fearless female, *Rayli* believes 'sweet neighbourhood girls' are closer to orthodox Chinese femininity and more acceptable for Chinese society. Either magazine explicitly mentions the image of the sweet, cute girl or sexy, powerful and free woman in the text, but they are clearly signalled through the clothes, hair, make-up, poses, expression and interactions in images. It is worth noting that although different kinds of femininities are shown, *Rayli*'s and *Cosmopolitan*'s discourses signify one ultimate message. The goal is to tell the readers that they can become the 'dream girl' by aligning with social practices through the clothes they wear, the postures they strike and the attitude they adopt.

The differences and similarities found in *Rayli* and *Cosmopolitan* raise some themes for

discussion. Firstly, I argue that although various international lifestyle magazines seem to offer Chinese women more options for their lives, the fundamental and only choice these magazines give is actually to be a consumer. Secondly, I direct the success of commercialised visual representations and consumerism to the Chinese 'face culture'. Finally, I stress the complexity of cultural exchanges and intercultural engagements. We therefore need studies that can identify the different means that allow identity and culture to overlap and be (re)produced in contemporary global communication.

So far, I have examined the linguistic and visual discourses in *Rayli* separately. It has shown that the different affordances of the two modes can be used to convey different meanings. However, it is also important to examine them together. The interrelationships between texts and images 'have to do with the reinforcement of their functions of addressing the reader/viewer and with the congruence or dissonance of their attitudinal meanings' (Martinec and Salway, 2005: 341). Also, I have only considered visual representations by themselves. It is equally important to understand the way design strategies are applied to visual representations to produce new associations and new meanings (Floch, 1995). In the next chapter, I will therefore consider the textual and visual discourse together with design elements to further understand their interrelationships and the meanings they carry in *Rayli*.

7. Text, image and design

In the previous three chapters, the linguistic and visual discourses of women in *Rayli* have been analysed through CDA and a number of social semiotic tools from the emerging field of MCDA (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 1996; Machin, 2007; Machin and Mayr, 2012). It was found that through using the different affordances of linguistic and visual semiotic resources together, *Rayli* was able to have its own unique means to intertwine and (re)create values, identities and ideas that serve the interests of both local and global parties. This chapter will look in more detail at how linguistic and visual elements can be used together as part of communicating discourses. Page composition, or layout, itself plays an important role in the meaning communicated by language and images. This involves how elements are positioned on the page and also considers other features, such as font style and colour. MCDA draws on systematic functional linguistics and semiotics to provide a descriptive framework to deal with the features and elements of composition.

I will look at the use of image, typeface and colour as composition to consider how they are used differently over time and how these point to the different and changing ideological influences on the magazine. The consideration of the layout as a whole is important as representations can only be accomplished with design (Floch, 1995) (see 3.3.2.3.). Different meanings can be given to the same linguistic and visual representations through different design treatments. In other words the values, ideas and identities in *Rayli* are not only constructed and delivered through the way women are represented, but also through the types of surroundings, design elements and forms.

It is clear that the role of images, the type of images that are used and the ways in which they are used, are increasingly used as design resources rather than for illustration or documentation purposes, which shows a dramatic change in *Rayli* between 1995 and 2012 in

Rayli. In some ways this also represents a break down in former genre borders between features, fashion items and advertising. In this chapter, I begin by examining this shift, looking in detail at these changes over time in *Rayli* and how they are used across different kinds of content in the magazine. After looking at the changing role of the images, I look at the way the images themselves have changed. As the results point to an increasing resemblance between work articles and advertisements, I further compare the design elements of *Rayli*'s articles to those of advertisements. Three examples of advertisements are chosen for each period: the early years, the transition years and the recent years. This helps me to explain how the boundaries between editorial and advertisements have been increasingly obscured over time and how the workplace is transformed into the symbolic world of consumerism.

7.1. Changing role of the image in *Rayli*: images as brand indicators

It has been argued that, more broadly, there has been a fundamental change in the role and relationship of text and images in communication (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 1996; Royce, 1998; Martinec and Salway, 2005; Machin, 2007). Kress and van Leeuwen (2001) have argued that it is not so much the case now that we live in a more visual culture, but that the visual is now increasingly used to accomplish different kinds of communicative tasks formerly done by language. On one level, text and image have become more integrated on the page. For example, older school textbooks might have a drawing at the top of the page and then a detailed description of the image in a large body of text below. In contrast, modern visual design would be more likely to have images and texts highly integrated, with images, diagrams and info-graphics all playing an interrelated role. On another level, visual communication has also involved a more sophisticated use of other semiotic resources, such as font shape and colour, which have also taken on the role formerly taken by language. These too have come to interact and fuse with the way that images operate. But, as I will

show, this process requires a particular kind of image. In this first section, I establish how image use has changed in *Rayli* from 1995 to 2012, which allows me to explore how this then becomes more flexible in composition and how it is used in relationship with other design elements.

Image 33 - *Rayli* 1999 layout

I begin with the page layout from the 1999 version. Here we find texts and photographs alongside illustrations on the same page. At this point, as the editors told me[47], you could see the influence of international design, although, by more recent standards this is very primitive. Jiaxin Cheng explained:

> *'For a long time, the Chinese magazine industry only produced*
>
> *propaganda magazines to serve the Party's interests. Lifestyle magazines*

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47. Face-to-face interviews with Polly Chang, Joyce Shih and Jiaxin Cheng on 26th of November 2012.

in China do not have a long history. When international lifestyle magazines arrived in China, Chinese editorial teams did not have their own way of presenting non-propaganda content. It is the same in the case of visual design in general. Propaganda posters dominated the visual design culture in China till late 1900s. At that time, the Chinese visual design industry was aware of the commercial advertising images in the West, but also faced the challenge of understanding the new need and function of commercial images and departed from the style of propaganda and Cultural Revolution. Around this period most of the magazine visual designers did not pay as much attention in creating a visual signpost or coherence.'

This can perhaps be seen when we take a closer look to find that the images and photos are simple illustrations of what we find in the text. On the left-hand page, all of the girls, especially the drawing figure in the middle of the page, are used to support what is said in the text - what an ideal office lady is like. On the right-hand page, the image of a mobile phone and a notebook are used as an indication of the broader topic of each section. The cartoon at the bottom is an illustration of the texts on the right-hand side; the embarrassing moments in office. Different modalities are used but the diagrams play a role of providing support for the text. For Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006), even though there was a combination of different kinds of elements integrated in the composition to some extent, this would still be characterised as an older form of relationship between image and text.

Image 34 - *Rayli* 2001 layout

Moving on to the 2001 version of *Rayli,* we find what for Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) would certainly see as an example of an older text-image relationship. The texts on these two pages not only dominate in terms of space but also the messages that are delivered to the readers. The photos here provide illustration for what is explained in the text. They provide evidence. The images on the left-hand page document real workers talking. These have been assembled to connote the broader issue of collegial relationships, which is the topic of the article. On the right-hand page, images show the tour guide and the models at work, which have been described in the text. Importantly we also find that text and images are separated with clear borders. At this time it was common to find this kind of separate role of text and image, which Machin and Van Leeuwen (2007) had already shown had gone from international versions of *Cosmopolitan* magazine. This kind of relationship characterises the older form of text-image distinction.

Image 35 - *Rayli* 2005(a) layout

Moving on to the 2005 version, we can find more integration of text and image, where the roles played by the two begin to merge. The texts give tips on how office ladies can stay enthusiastic at work. These kinds of messages however are not illustrated in the images. The images of smiling office workers with bright lights are used to help align work with something pleasurable, where being at work can be aligned with being physically attractive and having more individualistic states of mind and needs. That is to say that the images are not used to support the texts in the fashion of those from 1999 and 2001. The images in 2005(a)'s articles are used to give viewers additional meanings that the texts do not provide.

The 2005(b) version's of text-image relationship is a combination of older and newer patterns. On the left-hand page, the bright lighting and the model looking up in the distance with hands in prayer pose connotes optimism and hope in the workplace. The text introduces the topic of the article; how desk decorations can bring you luck at work. The connotation of the image does not have a direct connection with what the text is about. Nevertheless on the right-hand page, the images show a real person at her work desk to support the text that this is a story on how she decorates her workspace. The close-up shots of items are presented to interrelate with what the girl says she has at work. Although in this image we also find attention to lighting and colour, which signals a more symbolic role.

Image 37 - *Rayli* 2006 layout

On the examples of pages from 2006, we find a different level of text-image integration. Texts and images do not have a clear border and they are often overlapped into each other's space. Also the images, including models, drawings and clay figures, are not used to emphasise what is being said in the texts but to convey something that is not communicated through the texts. For example, while the texts are about the ways in which graduates can have a successful start in their careers, the model on the left-hand page shows happiness and a go-for-it attitude through her smile and her left hand making a fist by her face. In the drawings of the figures around the table, they all have a slight worried or thoughtful expression on their face to suggest uneasiness. This provides no clear illustration for what is said in the text, yet it helps to bring connotations of a 'lack of ideas' versus a 'get ahead' attitude. Here if the attitude was communicated in the text itself or attempted through more documentary images, the message would appear rather inappropriate. In the previous chapter, I looked at an image of a real board meeting (see 6.1.2.). Clearly the modality here

plays an important role, being integrated with the cut-out of the woman.

Image 38 - *Rayli* 2011 layout

Moving on to 2011, the left-hand page carries the title '*A good job isn't a piece of meat pie that will fall from the sky*'[48]. The rest of the texts comprise of a survey on worries about job hunting. Here we find the image does not illustrate either of the two ideas and it is the images that dominate the page. Of salience here are the young women connoting prettiness, cuteness and fashion. In particular are the moods of the woman to the right - a shift to individualism not described in the text. The text here becomes subordinate to the images. Other visual elements here also play a key role in which I will come on to later.

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48. The idiom a piece meat pie fall from the sky means to reap without sowing.

Image 39 - *Rayli* 2012 layout

The use of 2012's images is again to convey additional concepts that are not stated in the text. On the left-hand page, the title says '*see you at the end-of-year office party, new employees*'. The image is used to connote happiness and fun. On the right-hand page, the placement of the image and texts appear to be an older style design as they are segregated, although the image sits at the centre having most salience with the text set around it. The image shows two girls sat interacting with each other having fun. The topic on this page is '*Etiquette is the key for the end-of year office dinner*'. The purpose of the image is to signify the fun, friendship and fashion. From talking to the editors[49] it is clear that the use of the image in the overall brand identity of the magazine had become more established by this time (see interview quotes in 6.1.3.).

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49. Face-to-face interviews with Polly Chang, Joyce Shih and Jiaxin Cheng on 26th of November 2012.

From the examples I have presented so far in this chapter, we find some very clear shifts that support Kress and Van Leeuwen's (2006) observations on the changing role of texts and images. In the earlier years of *Rayli*, texts and images were more separated in terms of their placement. Texts had the dominant role to raise topics and issues and images had a supportive role to illustrate a key aspect of these - providing some kind of visual evidence. There was a use of montages of photographic cut-outs, drawings and text early on but the visuals still tended to take an illustrative role. This kind of text-image relationship started to change around 2005. Around this time we see texts become more integrated with images. More importantly, images have their new role in offering information, ideas and values, which are not given in the texts. However, it is striking that the old and new text-image relationships co-exist in *Rayli's* pages even until the more recent versions. Interviews with the editors and art director point to the way they were gradually becoming more sophisticated in adapting international formats and styles, not so much in terms of superficial appearance, but with a greater grasp on how they actually function[50]. Cheng said:

'In more recent years, we started to explore and become more experienced in using techniques that can maximise the ability of page designs, like what we have seen in Western magazines for a long time ... We are now more comfortable with the idea and technique that images do not necessarily have to echo the text. We are more sophisticated in using images that have more room for interpretation.'

In recent versions, *Rayli* no longer uses images for their initial purpose of supporting the text. This has simply ceased to happen. In one sense, images have increasingly taken over the central role of communication on the page. Here each page immediately communicates

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50. Face-to-face interviews with Polly Chang, Joyce Shih and Jiaxin Cheng on 26th of November 2012.

ideas and attitudes core to the brand. The brand itself becomes a priority over the individual

contents.   Although shortly I want to show that it is not so much the image that becomes

central but that we must think of the page, as composition, as a whole, hence the importance

of design itself as an important part of communication.

It has been discussed in the previous chapters that *Rayli* uses visual representation tactics to

achieve an overarching brand image (see 6.1.3. and 6.2.). The changing role of images in

Rayli over time can also be seen as an important part of this process. The way women are

represented visually is accomplished in part through the new role of images, which is to

indicate the kinds of persons, settings and attitudes appropriate to the magazine brand. To

understand more precisely how images are used to perform this role, the following sections

will move on to have a closer look at the way that the images themselves have changed over

time.

7.2. Changing kinds of images used: images as design elements

In 6.1. it has been discussed that over the years, *Rayli* has shifted from using high modality

photos to low modality photos. The details of the objects and settings have changed from

full-grained and detailed with a clear focus, to greater abstraction with increased genericness.

The colours and lighting in the photos have changed from what we would have seen, as if we

were there, to modulate effects that are further away from naturalistic. I have also pointed out

the advantages that low modality images bring to *Rayli*; high ideological power and low

social consequences (see 6.1.3.). All of these have shown similarities to reduce naturalistic

modality photographs in advertisements identified by Machin (2004). It is commonly found

in advertising that the image's details are slightly out of focus, the modulation of light on

models are reduced to make it appear rounded and softer, the scenes are saturated with

diffused lights and colours are saturated and coordinated across the image with fonts, borders

and perhaps the product itself. In this section, I will further examine this changing trend in terms of how low modality images become a part of design elements in *Rayli's* page layout and cooperate with the magazine's ideological purpose.

The shift of image style in *Rayli* is gradually aligning with contemporary western magazines, as Machin and van Leeuwen (2007) find in *Cosmopolitan*. Such lower modality, decontextualised images, Machin and Thorborrow (2003) argue, fit in better with the trivial actions and go-getting world lifestyle magazines presented. They fulfil the necessity to load the magazine and its products with positive values. In other words, whilst an image of an unstylish woman sitting in a cluttered, slightly grubby office may be closer to reality, the kind of connotation it gives would not be what the magazines or their products like to be associated with. Take the 2012 article for example, the trivial hop tips provided by *Rayli* for being successful at an office party are not just accompanied by these images, but realised through these images. This lowered modality is a way in which the kind of solution and advice offered by *Rayli* can operate free of social context and individual circumstances (Ibid.), as text alone or the text sitting next to realistic images of such features would simply not work.

In addition, Machin and Thornborrow (Ibid.) argue it is the switch to lower modality images that also allows images to shift from their use as mere illustrations to integrated parts of the magazine's composition. In *Rayli* the content includes clothing styles, make-up tips, hairstyle trends, relationships, travel, diet, health, work, advertisements and all sorts. Arguably the main interests of the magazine are the products they promote and the advertisements, as these are the magazine's main source of revenue. For this reason, *Rayli* requires kinds of images that can fuse these different forms of content together as a whole to serve the products they promote and the advertisements. The ideas, values and identities

communicated in the features about getting ahead in your career are the same as those found in a fashion item or advertisement. Lower modality, context-free images therefore become important for this purpose. Through context-free images, *Rayli* can more easily create coordinated visual representations and values across genres through the type of models, the style of clothing, hair and make-up, and the attitude they present. After all, these elements are the main messages of the magazine. Images in *Rayli* therefore have become part of the design elements for the whole magazine. This can take different forms and be realised through different modalities. For example, in the pages from the 2012 version above, the left-hand image is more naturalistic yet clearly using a posed set with attractive, fashionable models, carefully-placed props and high-colour saturation. The image at the centre of the right-hand page is equally as posed, but the setting is represented in drawings only. Both clearly work for the brand and both could be used across different kinds of content. This can be contrasted to the highly naturalistic images in the 2001 version. The newer kinds of images, abstracted of the clutter of everyday life, are more suited for fusing with the kinds of design elements to which I now turn my attention.

7.3. Changing use of the semiotic resources of design

I now move on to look in more detail at other elements that are used in the page design of *Rayli* and how these have changed from 1995 to 2012. It has been argued that design elements, like colour and typeface, have also been taking over roles formerly performed by writing (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2001). I look in detail at how the use of these has changed over time, again as the editor and designers have come to be more sophisticated and subtle in their deployment.

Typefaces, colours and how they are used in compositions also communicate ideas, values and identities. Kress and van Leeuwen's (1996) draw on Halliday's (1985) three

communicative meta-functions to draw out how these can be used in meaning making. The first is the ideational metafunction, where a system should be able to communicate ideas outside of itself. For example, bold typeface can communicate durability, as opposed to a very slim one, which suggests something less durable. The second, the interpersonal metafunction, is where a system must be able to communicate the attitudes and stances taken to these ideas by a communicator. For example, a curved typeface might communicate a gentler attitude than a highly angular one. The third is the textual meta-function. Here a semiotic system must be able to create coherence amongst its parts. In language this is grammar. In a mode such as fonts, this can be in terms of the way that font size can be used to indicate levels of importance on a page. It can be used to link elements across a composition through using the same kind of colour or font.

It has been shown by Kress and van Leeuwen (Ibid.) how design features can be deconstructed and analysed in terms of them being a set of choices, from which a designer selects in order to convey certain ideas and attitudes as well as to create a coherent linkage across a page (see 3.2, and 3.3.2.2.). In terms of typeface, colour and layout, these authors show it is possible to identify some of the basic building blocks, which dictate these choices. Drawing on the toolkits provided by Kress and van Leeuwen, the analysis of semiotic resources in *Rayli* shows the influence and gradual adoption of the design style of international women's lifestyle magazines.

7.3.1. Typefaces and composition

To begin with, I start by analysing the font sizes in 1999's page design (Image 33). The font sizes indicate a certain level of hierarchy in the headings and main text, yet there are a number of different sizes with no consistent sense of how these create rankings in the items. On the left-hand page, the font size of the sub-heading is smaller than the text. On the right-

hand page, the diagrams serve as supporting the details for the texts, however the font size of the diagram is bigger than the texts. Furthermore, the typefaces in the feature do not necessarily have an association with either hierarchy or the relevance of the contents. For example on the left-hand page, the heading, sub-heading and texts are in three different typefaces. However on the right-hand page, the sub-headings and majority of the text are in the same typeface as the heading on the left-hand page. There are also some random typefaces that are only used in a sentence or a small section, such as the black text in the pink highlighted on the top and text on the left corner on the right-hand page. These different typefaces show a sign of randomness.

In the 2001 article, font sizes and colours are used to achieve an indication of the level of importance of the text (Image 34). The title of the article is in the biggest font size, next the headings of each section and then the text. Introductory texts are in bold to separate them from the main text. In the women's profiles, their professions are also highlighted in a bold font. In terms of colour, sub-headings are all in a white font with green highlighting underneath. Blue is also used co-ordinately for women's names, ages and job titles. The use of typeface however is not as coordinated. Size and weight are used for salience and importance; the hierarchy however ends up with many different levels, which is overly complicated. The use of font size and weight for rhyming and clarity is still at a relatively primitive stage. The lack of sophistication can also be seen in the use of typeface. Two typefaces are used, however one of them is only used for some parts of subtitles and interviewees' profiles. Typefaces do not indicate a hierarchy or relation of text. By 2001, Western magazines had been using fonts more systematically on pages for some time as a key part of the layout (Machin and Van Leeuwen, 2007).

In the design of the examples from 2005(a), it is clear that more attention has been

given by designers to use typeface to create an easy-to-identify hierarchy and rhyming across the pages (Image 35). In addition, the hierarchy and rhyming go beyond font size to include other typeface features. The English text 'part 1' and 'part 2' are in very different font styles from the rest of the text and give a very clear indication that these two pages are on different subjects. The headings and sub-headings are in different typefaces, which also help the reader to understand the hierarchy of texts. This is more similar to the design that has been used in Western magazines. After 2005(a) the use of font type seems to be relatively limited. Most of them follow the pattern that one key typeface is used for all main text, sub-heading and most part of the headings while the other part of the heading is in a different typeface and designed conversations in photographs are in another typeface.

Interviews[51] with *Rayli* editors and designers explained that in 2001 they were aware of the design trend in Western magazines to some extent but they were still lacking the experience to use these ideas (see interview quotes in 7.1.). However, while the 2005(a) version shows an attempt to use fonts for rhyming on the page, the art director Jiaxin Cheng said that in her opinion, this now looked very 'over-designed'. Since then, they have therefore been trying to achieve a cleaner design so they use limited typefaces to balance between creating a clear hierarchy and maintaining tidiness of the pages. We can see this thought reflected on the layout design of *Rayli* in more recent years. Take the 2012 article for example (Image 39). There are only two typefaces used in the article. One of them is always used in lightweight and the other one is always used in bold. The title of the article is written in combination of the two typefaces. Sub-headings are all in the same typeface in bold while the texts are all in the other typeface in lightweight. This shows that although fewer typefaces are used, the rhyming and hierarchical indications are more thought-through and clear. Also,

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51. Face-to-face interviews with Polly Chang, Jiaxin Cheng and Chunhua Zhou on 26th of November 2012.

from the font sizes, readers can easily identify four levels of texts. The title of the article in the biggest font, next the heading of each topic, followed by the sub-headings and then the texts in the smallest font size.

Furthermore, identities and attitudes are also communicated through font styles. In 2005(a) the slim, curved and tall fonts are used for English words 'part 1' and 'part 2'. Blue and pink sub-headings are also in slim and tall font styles. They are emotional and expressive fonts, which curvy can be associated with femininity and slim, as well as tall, can be seen as sleek, elegant and light. These are qualities that can be connected with the cute, sweet, gentle girl *Rayli* tries to create. Although the texts may not say that women are slight, gentle and cute, the font style in which the texts are written does. This is a sign of designers at *Rayli* during that time starting to think more carefully about how fonts can also be used to communicate particular ideas, values and attitudes they intend to embed in any particular article and also in the general branding of the magazine. This kind of intention can also be seen on the right-hand page of the 2011 article. Directives such as 'CAUTION' and 'GO ON' are in bold and use uppercase letters. The heavy weight and capitalisation help to communicate the ideas of importance, urgency and confidence. As suggested by Floch (1995) and Aiello (2012), such design treatments and design resources 'are part of the way that the representations of the women, here found in images which also become designed mainly for symbolic work, are also shaped into the brand' (Chen and Machin, 2014: 298).

7.3.2. Colours and composition

Across the same time scale, we also find a shift towards a more sophisticated use of colours in design, using them much more precisely to create meanings and to give form to the composition. The use of colours, in the page design in 1999 and 2001, shows an awareness of the need to create rhyming. But *Rayli*'s application of rhyming colours around this time was

crude and used with little awareness[52]. 'This kind of design won't be approved nowadays', Qu Chen said with a grin. In the 1999 article (Image 33), pink and blue are used as main colours to create a connection between the two pages. Pink is also used for the clothes of the drawn office ladies. These were signs that editors at that time had the awareness of colour rhyming through pages. The lack of sophistication however shows in that the hues of the rhyming colours are all different. Take blue for example, the background blue and the blue texts on the left-hand page, the blue sub-heading on the right-hand page and the blue in the diagrams are all in different hues. In the 2001 article, yellow and green are used to link the two pages. The art director Jiaxin Cheng however pointed out that not only the use of blue was rather unnecessary, but also the photos were too cluttered and busy to create a nice colour rhyming between the page layout and photos[53].

The use of colour in 2005(a) and (b) editions again echoes what designers think as over-design by more contemporary standards. For example, in the 2005(a) article (Image 35), blue and pink are the main colours to connect different elements together in different pages. The blue and pink are, however, again used in too many different hues. Other colours such as green and red also stand out from the page whilst having no colour rhyming with rest of the elements. There are too many colours although they are used in a very symmetrical way. The three design editors interviewed all admitted that at that time they were still too inexperienced[54]. The 2006 design (Image 37) shows another step closer towards modern visual design in Western magazines. Colours are not only used co-ordinately in background and texts but also in the clothing that the models wear. The overarching colours are pink and blue; we can see these colours in the background, headings and subheadings. We also see these colours used in other design elements such as banners and models' clothes. The clothes

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52. Face-to-face interviews with Jiaxin Cheng, Chunhua Zhou and Qu Chen on 26th of November 2012.
53. Face-to-face interviews with Jiaxin Cheng on 26th of November 2012.
54. Face-to-face interviews with Jiaxin Cheng, Chunhua Zhou and Qu Chen on 26th of November 2012.

of the drawn female figures are also all in blue or pink clothes and the clay-like male figures are all in blue suits. Jiaxin Cheng, the art director, however expressed that the rhyming colours were too prominent on pages, 'they were too right in your face' that the page design appeared too busy.

Since then, a more subtle yet effective use of colour rhyming and alignment has been found. In the 2011 page design (Image 38), different kinds of elements are shown in the same colour in different places across the two pages. The colour of 'GO ON', 'CAUTION' banners and the banner in the heart rhyme with the first, the colour of the heading and the banner of the left-hand page; second, the colour of designed dialogs on the right-hand page, and third the heading and sub-heading of the text at the bottom of the right-hand page. This orange colour is also very close to the colour of the model's hair colour on the left-hand page. The font colour in the two hearts rhymes with the box fill colours on the left-hand page, as well as the sticker tape on the right-hand page. The model on the left-hand page wears a neutral grey jacket with a white dress, which do not clash nor add to the colour scheme, which creates a more modernist aesthetic. This kind of colour linkage can also be seen in the 2012 page layout. Red is not a dominant colour but it plays the important role as a cohesive colour in the two pages. First of all, it is used for the borders to frame the two pages as a whole. The same red colour can be seen on the left-hand page for part of the title, one of the balloons, some of the writing in the background, the signing girl's cap and the tambourine, as well as the top of the girl sitting at the end. On the right-hand page, the red is used for the banners, titles, designed conversations, the star signs and one of the girl's dresses. On the one hand we find these rhyming colours are not necessarily the dominant colours that we saw in Image 37, but the rhyming was more thought-through. On the other hand the decontextualised photos (see 6.1.3.) with less colour create a cleaner colour rhyming for overall page layout compared to the busy page design in earlier years. This kind of colour coordination is one of the tactics

advertisers use in their design to create the stylised world of advertising. But in this case we find such communication strategies in the article about work activities and work relations.

The colour scheme of *Rayli,* especially in the later versions, points again to Japanese influence, mainly from the kawaii aesthetic (see 5.1.1.2.). The editors and designers of *Rayli* confirmed that this is the reason why pink is the most used colour in *Rayli*, followed by baby blue and red[55]. Polly Chang explained in our interview:

> Chang: '*The pink and blue we like to use are the kinds of colour you are very likely to see in clothes and products for babies, pink for baby girls and blue for baby boys.*'
> Interviewer: '*Why*?'
> Chang: '*The colours are babies' colours. They are innocent, harmless and cute.*'
> Interviewer: '*What about red.*'
> Chang: '*Red is a very Chinese colour. It's a colour of celebration and festivity. It is also vibrant and generic. Red is a happy colour.*'

The colour scheme in *Rayli* is softer and more diluted when comparing it to the colours in *Cosmopolitan,* in which the colour themes are more saturated. Dilute colours could indicate more muted or restrained moods while saturated colours have a potential meaning of bold and emotional intensity. Both *Rayli* and *Cosmopolitan* use pink extensively to point ideationally to femininity, but interpersonally to confidence in *Cosmopolitan* and restrain in *Rayli. Cosmopolitan* has the brand of the 'fun fearless female'. This is the reason it uses colours to point to attitudes of forthrightness. In contrast, the editors and designers express the colour choice of *Rayli* lying in a cute, soft and sweet attitude, which echoes the sweet neighbourhood girl *Rayli* tries to represent. These uses of colour choice communicate the

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55. Face-to-face interviews with Polly Change, Jiaxin Cheng, Chunhua Zhou and Qu Chen on 26th of November 2012.

female identity these magazines promote. Again, *Rayli's* texts may not overtly say that girls are restrained and soft and *Cosmopolitan's* texts maybe not state that women are confident and fun, while the different chromes of pink used in *Rayli* and *Cosmopolitan* do the work. It is important to note that the muted colours found in *Rayli* cut across different genres in the magazine. Advertisements, editorials and work articles cease to play distinctive roles but harmonise through the branding processes.

We can occasionally find some saturated colours in *Rayli*. These exciting colours can point to fun while they often sit among the soft and restrained colour tones. This is very different from *Cosmopolitan* in which fun and boldness are always maximised. In the 2012 page layout (Image 39), we find a rare case that a saturated colour is heavily used without the company of tone-downed colours. It is important here as the red that is used in the 2012 article, although not a muted colour, is chosen for the same purpose of coordinating different topics, articles and genres throughout the magazine. This article was in a January 2012 issue. The time of publishing this issue was very close to Chinese New Year, a time that red is highly used to create a festive atmosphere. People buy red clothing, red accessories and red decorations. *Rayli* on the one hand promoted products in red colour, but on the other hand used red across the issue to connote the Chinese New Year. Red therefore was not a randomly chosen colour for the article but a decision that was made to help the reader associate the work article with products *Rayli* promotes around this period.

7.4. Discussion

Before 2005, although editors and designers at *Rayli* acknowledged the trend in Western magazine design, the graphic design industry in China was still much less developed compared to the West. By 2005, the page design in *Rayli* started to show early signs of a more sophisticated adoption of Western design and in recent years has shifted to something

much closer. From what I have discussed so far, *Rayli* has increasingly used photographs as a key means to communicate brand values, where the same kinds of images and persons are seen across all kinds of content. At the same time images are treated less like an 'illustration' or documentation, but more as part of the page design alongside font, colours and composition. At the level of design I have dealt with so far in this chapter, there is a clear influence, acknowledged by the staff at the magazine, of international, and more specifically Western, design styles. Ultimately, on the one hand this involves a shift in how language and visual communication are used and the other involves harmonisation of genres, where features, lifestyle, fashion, advice and advertising become indistinguishable.

More importantly, this level of design is one way that the discourses communicated at the level of language and the photographs, discussed in previous chapters, are realised. For example, linguistically *Rayli* transforms the office into a place for social relations with colleagues often at a level associated with Chinese traditional women's virtues (see Chapter 4 and 5). Yet it is highly decontextualised and individualised. This kind of linguistic representation is deployed alongside images that connote positive moods and cute, pretty, young women interacting, usually in what appears to be pleasant conversation. Images also present these women in reduced modality, where settings are clean, uncluttered and bright, or even represented though cartoons or line drawings (see 6.1.3.). These modalities are important for allowing the trivial advice and petty social interactions to gloss over the very real issues of everyday work, seen in the images in 2001. The images become the central pieces, also used as a design, around which the text is added. To these we can add the use of fonts and colour which are used to link text, images and other elements creating overall integration, and also communicating ideas and attitudes such as 'elegance', 'expressivity', 'gentleness'; none of which may be communicated by the language or images, but can be used to create harmony across the magazine.

Luo and Hao (2007) suggested that the media's representation of women in China is no longer real but symbolic, which resembles Western lifestyle magazines and advertisements. In text, the world *Rayli* represents is arguably more realistic than typical Western lifestyle magazines (see 4.2.1.). This kind of linguistic representations is however used alongside and surrounded by the type of images and design treatments that are highly used in advertisements to create a symbolic world. The local realities have been hijacked for the purposes of consumer capitalism. This explains the reason why scholars, such as Luo and Hao, criticise the unrealistic experimental representations and consumer culture that are highly shown in Chinese media nowadays (see 2.4.1. and 2.4.3.3.). Furthermore, the changing role and type of images, as well as the changing use of semiotic resources in design, can be a means to connect different genres in the magazine back to advertisements and products. The following sections will further explain how these changes have blurred the boundaries between editorials and advertisements, in other words how a place such as office can become part of the symbolic world of consumerism.

7.5. The vanishing boundaries between work and consumption

In the paper *Global media*: *generic homogeneity and discursive diversity*, Machin and Van Leeuwen (2004) demonstrate that in the international versions of *Cosmopolitan* magazine, advertising and editorial content increasingly resemble each other. Furthermore it is not just a *Cosmopolitan* phenomenon but it can also be found in cases where local media organisations seek to establish their own titles. For example, the editor of a Vietnamese women's magazine *Women's World* admitted that one of the influences of Western magazines is they feel the need to create 'harmony' between editorial and advertising content (Ibid.: 103). As aforementioned, *Rayli's* editorial director Polly Chang denied that the magazine serves for consumerism and advertisements. However, it suggests a different story when comparing what has been shown

earlier to the visual treatments and design that are used in advertisements in *Rayli*.

Image 40 - 2000. 09. advertisement   Image 41 - 2001. 10. advertisement   Image 42 - 2002. 03. advertisement

The three images above show the typical examples of editorial content versus advertisements between 1995 and 2004 in *Rayli*. The types of photos and the way that they are used are very different between these two genres. Photos on the page of the September 2000 issue (Image 40), its editorial content can be seen to document real people and have high modality since there is no evident artificial lighting or colour manipulation. The advertisement on the right-hand side features a close-up shot of a model with the background eliminated. The colours are saturated and the light has been used to dim the colours. It is clear that the image is highly edited compared to the editorial content. The photographs in the editorial content are used to present information on what 'real people' wear, while the advertisement photos are used to present the imagery, likely 'beauty' and 'sexy', that promotes the product in the advertisement. The page design shows that there is an attempt of integrating the editorial content and advertisement by using pink as the overarching colour. Other than that, there is very little similarity between the photos of the editorial content and the advertisement.

The dynamic between the editorial content and the advertisement on the page of October 2001 (Image 41) is very similar to the first example. The editorial photos are of high modality, which include real people and settings. Again there is little evidence of editing, with next to no artificial photo effects. On the other hand, the advertising photo has a very low modality background. The woman is a generic model and is used to connote rather than to illustrate or document. Again colour is the only source that is used to link the two genres. Of note in this case is that while the editorial content features a holiday designed to make you fit and lose weight, the advertisement next to it is for chocolate bars. Little attention has been given here to make the editorial content and advertisement compatible. On the page of the March 2002 issue (Image 42), the topic of the editorial content is health and the two advertisements are for health products, which makes the placement of editorial and advertisement more harmonious. However, there is a significant difference between these two genres in terms of the type of photo, the way the photos are used and the use of semiotic resources, so that it is easy to tell the editorial content apart from the advertisement.

Looking again at the features from 1999 and 2001, we find that the types of photo and the way the photos are used are very different from the advertisements analysed above. In the period between 1999 and 2004, the visual designs are very different between these two genres. It shows that in the early years of *Rayli*, advertisers already had the clear knowledge of how to use photos for their connotative role and also how to integrate these with other semiotic resources to make the overall advertising visual design appear as a whole. However, at this point *Rayli* was still using visual contents to present information and facts, as opposed to selling a brand.

Image 43 - 2005. 08. advertisement   Image 44 - 2006. 07. advertisement   Image 45 - 2006. 11. advertisement

Around 2005 a different kind of relationship between editorial content and advertisements started to emerge. In terms of visual design, editorial content tried to look like advertisements and advertisements tried to look like editorials. The design of the advertisement is similar to the 2006 work article analysed earlier. Both have models smiling brightly and striking dynamic poses although not engaged in any concrete form of material transitivity. These models are used as meaning carriers, which can be transferred to the product, advice or context (see 6.2.). The background is completely removed therefore suppressing any local or circumstantial issues. There are some close up shots of the models with individual experience in texts to give a sense of intimacy and personal engagement. Colours and font sizes are used to indicate the hierarchy of the text. Also colours are used to coordinate with titles, clothes and other objects in the page, which produce a sense of high stylisation and order. The composition of the August 2005 advertisement takes more of the form of an editorial feature. However the similarity of the two genres is also a result of the change of types of images that are used and the way the images are used in editorial content.

The July 2006 advertisement (Image 44) is an example of typical kinds of photos that advertisers used in this period in *Rayli*, especially for cosmetic products. It is usually a close-up shot of a pretty woman. The model would mostly look away from the cameras smiling,

appearing as thoughtful, perhaps a little coy. The light is likely to be manipulated to smooth the model's skin tone to create flawless beauty. There will also be a softening effect through exposure, which also serves to avoid any deeper, darker tones and shadow. The colours on the one hand could be pure and unmodulated, which give the impression of an abstract and less than real effect; on the other hand the colours tend to be rich and saturated, which make them sensual and exciting. These kind of photos also started to be used in editorial contents. The page on the left-hand side of 2005(b)'s feature is one of the examples (Image 36) .

During this period, *Rayli* clearly began to blur the boundary between editorial and advertisement in terms of visual design. On one level, advertisements shifted away from the former look in order to fit more with the brand. This can be seen in the advert from August 2005 (Image 43). Here the advertisement mimics the composition of the editorial features. Largely the increasing similarity in these two genres lays in the types of images used, the way the images are used and the choice of semiotic resources. These are the aspects that *Rayli*'s editorial content has transferred primarily to resemble advertisements.

Image 46 - 2010. 03. advertisement   Image 47 - 2011.08. advertisement   Image 48 - 2012. 12. advertisement

After 2010, the homogeneity between editorial content and advertisement in *Rayli* shifts to a new level. On the March 2010 page (Image 46), we find one example. At the top is a

cosmetic advertisement and at the bottom is an editorial article about a brand of cosmetics. It is not just simply matching an advertised product with the content of an editorial feature. First of all the advertisement is merged with the background and there is no border to define the boundaries of the advertisement. The whole page becomes a single composition where the lower section appears to be a detailed description of the images above. The colour of the border of the bottom section and one of the highlighted headlines are done in the same colour as the heart in the advertisement. This also helps to connect the advertisement to the editorial content. The designer chose to feature a product that is in a blue container, which links back to the products that are shown in the advertisement above. Furthermore the headline of the advertisement is in a font that is different from the rest of the text (the texts are in the same font) and it is significantly bigger. This communicates that the headline of the advertisement is the headline of the whole page but not just the top half. The way that semiotic resources are manipulated to unite editorial content and advertisements was not seen in previous *Rayli* pages.

The other two examples from August 2011 and December 2012 (Images 47 and 48), are typical of advertisements for fashion, clothing or jewellery at the time. Women in these advertisements strike poses to connote energy and happiness. They are the agents of no clear actions. If there is more than one participant, the interaction between them is usually close and joyful. The key message that is conveyed through them is appearance, attitude and form of social interactions. This is very similar to how women are represented in the photos that are used in 2012 for the features on work. The backgrounds of these advertisements are frequently blank using out-of-focus general scenes or simplified sketches. This is also one of the characteristics of the photos that is seen in the 2011 and 2012 work-related features. The manipulation of colour and light are in the fashion of the July 2006 advertisement (Image 44). A more recent trend is using slightly overexposed lighting around the models,

particularly on their faces. This kind of lighting can achieve an effect of a dreamlike ambience. This kind of lighting technique is also used in the photos of the 2011 and 2012 work articles.

From the analysis above, we see that *Rayli's* visual representation of work-related issues has been increasingly shifting to that of advertisements. Between 1995 and 2004, *Rayli* chose a different visual representation strategy than that of the advertisement. There was next to no similarity between the editorial content and the advertisement visually. Since 2005, there has been a gradual adoption of advertising visual representation into editorial contents, however advertisements have been mimicking the page composition of editorial contents. Both *Rayli* and advertisers have started to pay attention to blend their content together with the clear understanding of the importance of the brand and of the media outlets, as fundamentally it is a vehicle for consumerism. There were some immaturities in the early stage of this process, however by the year of 2010 the homogenisation between the two genres had achieved a sophisticated level.

The ultimate communicative goal of advertisements is to persuade audiences to use a product or service. The strategies that advertisers adopt are by no means restricted to advertisements. They can be used whenever people want to persuade others to do something. Traditionally magazines in China had the roles of informers, educators or entertainers, even if this was clearly in terms of the government ideology, and this is what *Rayli* editors believe they are[56]. While many magazines might still argue their roles, it is going to be difficult for some of them to deny their preoccupied interest in consumerism. As we can see in *Rayli,* visually the editorial contents are presented in a very similar format to the advertisement.

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56. Face-to-face interviews with Polly Chang, Joyce Shih and Jiaxin Cheng on 26th of November 2012.

This is a format that is used to stimulate consumption. Gradually, in the case of work sphere in *Rayli*, the visual design has been shaped in the neo-capitalist global order and has become intensely interwoven with the sphere of women's libidinal, fantasies and glamour. The composition of editorial content, the photos that are chosen, the ways the photos are used and the manipulation of semiotic resources are all geared up for social agencies to signify their alignment with a kind of fantasy lifestyle, of a generic cute, pretty and stylish young woman who is entirely focussed on her inner feelings and anxieties, which often relates to trivial interpersonal matters, where the magazine offers solutions in the form of hot-tips and consumer products. Stripped of real-world issues yet anchored in actual Chinese values of social acceptance and community membership, this, through contemporary design, becomes fused into the ideology of global capitalism. Ultimately, whatever the degree of local inflection, the overall result is that it all becomes subject to the brand: all genres and all social practices. The dominant driving force here is consumer capitalism. Design in this sense is the tool by which all becomes harmonised under its ideological umbrella.

Summary

In this chapter I have examined the relationship between texts and images within *Rayli* and the way design is used to provide an additional level of meaning that can tighten other representations in the magazine back to consumer culture. Firstly this is done through giving images the role of conveying moods and vibes that textual content is not able to provide. Secondly this role of image is achieved by using lower modality images. It is also through using lower modality images that images have become a part of design elements in the magazine. Thirdly the design treatments such as image, colour, typeface and composition, all work together to create a cohesive idea, value and ideology that can be linked back to advertisements and products. Furthermore, these three changes also serve and legitimise the linguistic and visual representations in *Rayli*.

As a result, the changes all point to similarities found in typical Western lifestyle magazines and advertisements. I further proved the resemblance through comparing the editorial content to advertisements in *Rayli* over time. In the early years of *Rayli*, designers paid little attention to coordinate between the two genres. The transition started around 2005 and in recent years the boundaries between editorial content and advertisements have almost vanished. The *Rayli* editorial team denied their interests in serving consumer culture and advertisements. The high similarities between the two genres however make it hard to believe that *Rayli* has no intention in offering staged scenarios as advertisements do. When these kinds of staged scenarios are created in work articles, the workplace can be transformed into a place for persuading consumption. Readers are indicated that the dreamlike lifestyle can take place through the clothes they wear, the make-up they use and the way they look.

Conclusion

Globalisation and media, especially debates regarding cultural hegemony and cultural heterogeneity, have been prominent in media and cultural studies literature for two decades. These discussions, however, tend to address more broadly accepted, yet not so clearly defined, notions of the 'global' and of the 'local'. The notion of 'cultural values' in itself has never really been broken down into its components and use in a fairly un-interrogated way. Scholars have continually highlighted the importance of providing more concrete and detailed evidence on the complexity and specificity of medial and cultural change within a global context (Tomlinson, 1991; Screberny-Mohammadi and Mohammad, 1997; Drotner, 2004a, b). These have called for the need to ground such generalisation in in-depth empirical research. Nevertheless, in a recent special edition on global/local communication, Aiello and Pauwels (2014) argued that this research task had still not really been taken up with any vigour – that we still had relatively little hard, empirical evidence in regards to the way that international flows of representations, styles and forms become themselves taken on, transformed and in the process transform what the local might mean, perhaps even somehow amplifying this. Responding to this challenge, my research project set out to look at the details of changes in magazine styles and contents on a linguistic and visual level. Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis, or at least one that embraced political economy, provided the kinds of tools which media and cultural studies had to some extent lacked – often coming at such issues through theoretical concepts.

In this thesis, at its heart I ask questions such as, what exactly can be identified as 'global' and 'local'? The answer to this lies in the first place in the specific socio political context, which I examined regarding China early in the thesis. But they can also be found in the level of language, of visual representation and of design. Given this, it is meaningful and productive to ask how the 'global' and 'local' intersect at a variety of levels in terms of

language style, linguistic structure, narrative and visual style. And perhaps more importantly, as would be the core question in Critical Discourse Analysis, what discourses are realised in this communication – in other words, what kind of cultural values, ideas and identities are buried in the language, the images and the design? And how can we connect these to the socio-political and to the political economy? And therefore finally, if we can identify something 'local', how does this change as the external arrives? In terms of the concerns of CDA and multimodality, we would assume that this might happen in subtle ways and in different ways in different modes. Through exploring these questions the thesis attempts to offer one small yet important contribution in identifying ways such complex global and local exchanges, overlaps, interrelations and transformations can be identified and understood in the case of one women's lifestyle magazine.

The thesis, step by step, reveals however that ultimately, regardless of the level of local counter forces and influence, the overall discourse and social practices become subject to the dominate driving force of consumer capitalism. Clear inflections of the local remain. And the global is a mixture of forces, especially Western and Japanese. Both the local and the global become transformed. This is subtle and found often in the subtle detail of language and design. But in the end what we find is a heterogeneous package designed systematically to (re)produce identity and culture in the name of consumer capitalism. Through transforming and repacking global cultures under the mask of local cultures, and vice versa, recreating and converting local cultures in relation to global cultures, the linguistic grammars and visual semiotic resources all become tools for harmonising the sphere of women's libidinal, fantasies and glamour, which lead to the sphere of consumption.

While looking for answers in the existing literature on global media, I found that current globalisation theories are not so helpful in the case of *Rayli* in China. *Rayli* is not simply a

form of what scholars call cultural hegemony or cultural heterogeneity. The magazine is not just another duplication of other global products that enters a new country. It neither engages with nor influences the local culture in the fashion that homogenisation or heterogenisation theorists indicate. It is clear, as more recent scholars indicate, that we need to know more about specific cases and learn more about the details of transformations (Aiello and Pauwels, 2014) and I would argue that this must include the level of different communicative modes, what happens through them and in regards to the way they interact. Then these must be connected to the political economy in precise ways.

Since the early 2000s, Chinese audiences have been more connected to foreign media and China has increasingly become involved in the economic globalisation processes, however the media system was still highly defined by the country's unique political, social, economic and cultural environment (Winfield and Peng, 2005). In Chapter 2 I discussed that overall, the Chinese media has gone through some major changes from a state run propaganda system to one that is more open to global media. The industry began to look outwards to international markets to place its own media products and consider how internal changes could take place through new relationships with international outlets and through imports of products, style and formats. Across media formats, scholars have pointed to patterns where there is a sense of readiness for change but also an element of resistance through certain kinds of localisation running across television, news, magazines and advertising (Wu, 2008; Feng and Wu; 2007). From existing literature, it is clear that more traditional Chinese culture, which combines Confucianism, Marxism and Maoism, has been challenged and changed by Western values, such as consumerism, individualism and hedonism. And it is at this point that the value of the focus on one magazine becomes clear. During these times of change, what takes place within the pages of one magazine? How do these changes reflect these changes? But also how are these changes part of the ideological

shift that we see taking place, as the values of Confucianism, for example, must give way, or somehow be reformulated to the individualism of consumerism? In this sense, this thesis is one of the first examples of such a detailed empirical study of a media product over time, aligning this analysis to such major socio-political transformations.

The tools of CDA and MCDA also allow the identification of clear linguistic and visual markers of such changes and point to where they lie in different modes. I focused on representational strategies and transitivity, in both language and images, that were used in *Rayli*. These allowed me to reveal the way discourse producers place social actors in the world, highlight certain aspects of identities and silence others, as well as simplify and abstract events and issues in order to recontextualise their meaning. For example, in the case of *Rayli,* linguistically while we see family values and a sense of responsibility to community throughout the years, women's individuality and isolation are also increasingly foregrounded. It is through identifying the micro details of linguistic choices that subtle changes could be revealed. On the same concept, visually we see women being represented as innocent and passive, which corresponds to the traditional Chinese female identity. However, when looking into how the innocence and passivity are represented, it can be realised that the traditional Chinese understanding of womanhood is repackaged and linked to Japanese kawaii culture, which is ultimately used for branding interest and serving the hegemonic idea of consumer culture. In addition, Barthes' (1977) ideas on iconography, Kress and Van Leeuwen's (1996) concepts on modality and Floch's (1995) notion on visual designs also provided a way to identify meanings, values, ideas and identities that were not overtly stated yet communicated through things like visual symbolism and design. It is through this that I can show, in Chapter 7, how design treatments such as typefaces, fonts and colours have increasingly become ways of integrating identities into the world of consumerism. We see that although images could still signify symbolic Confucian values, through the choice of

using different semiotic resources, these values are decontextualised from a wider specific context and as a result are more suitable for creating a coordinating brand image and promoting consumer culture.

This research also pointed to the clear value of supporting textual and political economic analysis with interviews with the staff at *Rayli* and Chinese *Cosmopolitan.* This was one way to help understand the ways that editors, designers and writers were aware of some of the balancing that needed to be done, with an awareness of the commercial needs of the magazine to reach advertisers, the look of other new titles entering the market and also the need not to lose readers. It was clear that staff at the magazine, on the one hand, had a clear sense of updating the magazine to match international styles and the way that young female readers were highly drawn to some of the values of what they saw as modernity, but on the other hand there was a need to maintain a sense that some of the ideas and values about themselves that these women carried, such as the sustained weight of responsibility to family obligations. It was through these interviews that it was clear that while magazines like *Cosmopolitan* find young women seeking agency through fun and independence, in *Rayli* independence was formulated as a kind of withdrawal from responsibility in the form of kawaii culture.

Carrying out the analysis over time threw up some very specific insights into how representations of aspects of women's life, here work had changed over time – as identities, ideas and values shifted with the arrival of consumer capitalism. The way representations of work in *Rayli* changed could be divided into three stages: the early years - before 2005, the transition years - between 2005 and 2009, and the recent years - 2010 onwards. In the early years of *Rayli,* traditional Chinese values of community belonging and a clear sense of the marked hierarchy, with regards to status level at work, were highlighted in the linguistic

discourse. This is done through placing either synthetic personalised female workers or humanised individuals in a wide social context in which 'everyone' and 'people' were foregrounded. Female workers belonged to a highly social and community oriented workplace where they were happy to be a part of and people communicated when facing problems. This is very different to *Cosmopolitan* magazine from the same period, where women's relationships are always strategic and competitive. Visually high modality images, which documented real workers and real workplaces, were used as illustrations of the texts. The drawing styles, often used to represent work in *Rayli,* pointed to the cultural influence from its Japanese parental magazine. Manga style drawings were, on the one hand, used to construct pure and innocent young girls, which reflects the local female identity. On the other hand, it was used to smooth-out sensitive issues or difficult situations, so culturally clashing issues, such as women standing out from her colleagues, would tend to be dealt with in drawings rather than photographs. At this point is was also clear, corroborated by the interviews, that the composition of feature pages showed little experience in using photographic techniques, typefaces, fonts, colours and visual semiotic resources to connote meanings and ideas. What we find then is a more traditional use of modes to communicate ideas, which would later be accomplished by a more sophisticated use of semiotic resources.

In the transition years, many of the representations of women at work in *Rayli,* that we see today, first appeared in their embryonic forms. Firstly, on the linguistic level more first person and singular second person pronouns and more naming were used to individualise female workers. We started to see more influence from Western values of individuality and the more personalised and informal form of addressing akin to advertising. Another important influence from the Western media was the appearance of 'experts'. Occasionally, *Rayli* took over the role of experts to give readers generic and abstract advice. This showed the change of authority voice in Chinese lifestyle realm. Later, the experts' advice shifted further to form

the voice of a consumerism advocate. Visually, social actors were also more individualised. We also started to see more generic models in lower modality photos. These photos were used to indicate feel-good and positive moods. Decontextualised images and happy tones indicating models backgrounded the sense of concrete tasks and responsibilities in the workplace. The new visual representation foregrounded the importance of individual feelings and pleasure. This kind of visual representation again resembled advertising and sat easily next to the act of consumption culture and generic expert's advice. Generic low modality images not only give *Rayli* the powerful ideological advantage for promoting consumer culture and branding images, but also reduced the risk of it being directly accused of the negative social consequences that consumerism brings. The visual design started to show a more Westernised style. For example, colours, fonts and typefaces were starting to be used to signify female identities that were not and/or cannot be stated in the texts. The editors and designers however stated that the visual treatments were still immature and the page layouts were often over-designed. In a sense, it could be said they were still learning the technologies (Fairclough, 1992) of the semiotic tools of consumer capitalism. Fairclough observed that from the 1990s there was, what he called, a technologisation of discourse where language began to be used more systematically for the purposes of exerting ideological influence. This is the case for the development of visual semiotic resources in design (Ledin & Machin, 2015). This import of technologisation can be clearly seen across the development of design in *Rayli*, in a sense allowing things to be said that formerly would have not been possible with the older use of modes.

One stark change, which the new technologised form of multimodal communication has allowed, is that *Rayli* has, in more recent years, shifted to a discourse of individualism where female workers are decorative, impotent and essentially alone. This in itself creates the perfect stage for the voice of the expert of *Rayli* to gain power. Yet closer examination of the

kinds of transitivity realised in this advice, shows that it was highly abstract and generic, arguably not produced in the interest of helping the reader but in the interest of coordinating the brand image and promoting consumerism. This is similar to what is found in *Cosmopolitan* and most Western media, in which expert advice reinforces branding and capitalistic interests (Machin and Van Leeuwen, 2007; Lewis, 2008; Weber, 2009).

The branding and consumer discourse are also maximised with the help of *Rayli*'s visual communication. At this time generic models and more decontextualised, lower-modality photos completely replace real female workers in higher-modality, documentary-style images. The coordination of typefaces, fonts and colours is also harnessed into additional meanings, where women and social relations come to highly resemble the feel-good world of advertising. At this time, we can still see some traditional Chinese values, for example collectivity showing through images and linguistically women are represented as decorative, venerable and ignorant, as well as being eager to please others. However, I argue that these traditional values are simply harnessed to legitimise *Rayli*'s brand image and consumer culture. In other words, these local accents are at one level rather superficial since these do not change the underlying structure of the discourse. This points to the complex dynamic of cultural exchange in *Rayli*. Traditional local values are transformed to serve Western consumer culture. Another example of the complexity of cultural overlap and intercultural engagement is the Japanese kawaii visuals in *Rayli*. In *Rayli*'s kawaii discourse, the traditional Chinese understanding of womanhood is renamed and linked to the Japanese idea of cute for the purpose of promoting brand image and consumerism.

Through studying *Rayli* and the global communication, of which covers a 17 year period, the thesis identified how and when the changes in *Rayli* happened as well as identifying the forces behind these changes. Comparing to the Party controlled period, the

changes seem to suggest that Chinese women are now exposed to different kinds of values, attitudes, cultures and lifestyles. I however question if the arrival of international titles have really widened the freedom of Chinese women. Firstly, in these magazines the variety of identities, values and choices of lives are provided, however they all link readers to consumer capitalism and its individualism. That is to say, one identity and one life choice. Secondly, traditional female traits are used as guidelines for 'modern' women to survive in the so-called new social structure. It is incongruous that magazines such as *Rayli* place women's survival in a novel society through conventional philosophy. I question how young Chinese women will make sense of themselves and their worlds in the seemly modern and free life *Rayli* constructed, while in fact they are highly constrained back to traditional roles and given limited life perspective.

Rayli claims to offer solutions to life problems, yet in fact through its multimodal communication and decontextualisation, it allows raw consumerism and individualism to sit next to responsibility to family and place in society. And the responsibility is softened with images of young women who hide behind childhood, yet are delivered as fashion and choice. The analysis of *Rayli*'s discourse has contributed to current globalisation and global media literature by revealing detailed and concrete evidence to the unique means used by *Rayli* to combine and intertwine the local and the global to (re)produce identity and culture. While much current literature emphasises the justifiable concerns of the invasion of hegemonic global ideology and the threat to local culture, the thesis highlights that it is equally important to understand the heterogeneous communicative methods that are created to make a successful communication of global ideology possible. This points to the need for future studies to identify the unique and complex communicative methods produced by the individual, local media for surviving in a global media network.

In addition, the study is the first study that has examined the development of global media and its relationship with local culture in a specific country over 17 years of time. While Western viewpoints and more generic theoretical assumptions about global flows of culture dominated studies of globalisation and global media I show how an empirical research framework based in multimodal critical discourse analysis can provide a systematic way to describe, document and analyse these processes. It is through the micro linguistic, visual and compositional evidence that globalisation and global media's impact as well as interactions in different regions and local culture can be better understood.

Furthermore, the study of *Rayli* has offered valuable knowledge for global magazine journalism. Being the best selling international magazine in China for years, *Rayli* evidently holds the secrets to stand out from Western magazine tycoons such as *Vogue*, *Elle*, *Marie Claire* and *Cosmopolitan*. *Rayli'*s unique communicative methods that are disclosed by the study can be an insight into its success. *Rayli's* rewarding means of exploiting language, images and design can be learned, applied and improved by future international titles who are launching in China. Not only for magazine journalism, but the communicative techniques employed by *Rayli* could also be a valuable lesson for other forms of global communication in China.

The chosen methods, CDA and MCDA are however not without limitations. The analytical toolkits I used in this thesis allowed me to examine how linguistic and visual text are composed. But I emphasise that the analysis can only reveal what semiotic resources have been used and what meaning potential these have. I cannot say from the application of these tools what the intentions of the authors are nor how readers will receive these texts. The first limitation was addressed by conducting interviews with staff from *Rayli* and *Cosmopolitan*. Understanding the process of the production of texts help overcome the risk of imposing my

own assumptions of the intentions of the text producers. Regarding the second limitation, with the time and space limits I was unable to consider the different ways that audiences deal with the texts. Therefore, audience reception study is an area of potential future research that can build on the findings of this thesis. Future research can pay more attention to the questions of how the human mind works in engaging with the texts and how this translate into social action. This will allow us to show more comprehensively the way ideology and dominant discourses work. We will then be able to understand the way that people use and reuse semiotic resources not only in mass media but also in our day to day lives.

Other directions for future studies can be directing the focus back to the West. For example, comparing the strategies global brand magazines used for local markets to the tactics that are revealed in the thesis. As an alternative, one can also look at the reserve cultural flow from China to the West to understand to what level the tactics can be reversed. In doing so, we can not only better understand the nature of global magazine operations but also the employment of semiotic resources for translating global and local cultures. Finally, with the digital media revolution in mind, the same research framework that was used in the thesis can be applied to *Rayli*'s digital content. With a greater knowledge of the interaction between print media and digital media form, magazine publishers will benefit from being better equipped for the transformation and the future of magazine industry.

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Appendices

Appendix one - The use of pronounce in *Rayli*

	I, Me	You (singular)	He/She & They	Everyone (and other synonyms)	We
	You and I		**Others**		
1999	14 (18%)	4 (5%)	23 (32%)	30 (38%)	6 (7%)
	18 (23%)		**61 (77%)**		
2001	6 (6%)	6 (6%)	43 (43%)	32 (32%)	13 (13%)
	12 (12%)		**88 (88%)**		
2005(a)	70 (62%)	26 (23%)	3 (3%)	9 (8%)	5 (4%)
	96 (85%)		17 (15%)		
2005(b)	21 (47%)	18 (40%)	3 (6%)	0 (0%)	3 (7%)
	39 (87%)		6 (13%)		
2006	83 (46%)	82 (45%)	11 (6%)	2 (1%)	4 (2%)
	165 (91%)		14 (19%)		
2011	36 (38%)	46 (48%)	6 (6%)	5 (5%)	3 (3%)
	80 (81%)		14 (19%)		
2012	69 (43%)	45 (28%)	19 (12%)	24 (15%)	3 (2%)
	114 (71%)		46 (29%)		

Appendix two - The use of pronounce in *Cosmopolitan*

	I, Me	You (singular)	He/She & They	Everyone (and other synonyms)	We
	You and I		Others		
How Your Desk Can Get You Promoted	1 (3%)	20 (67%)	8 (27%)	1(3%)	0 (0%)
	21 (70%)		**9 (30%)**		
10 Tricks To Help You Get Ahead At Work	0 (0%)	38 (70%)	9 (17%)	5 (9%)	2 (4%)
	38 (70%)		**16 (30%)**		
How to Handle a Work Setback	1 (2%)	33 (69%)	11 (23%)	2 (4%)	1 (2%)
	34 (71%)		**14 (29%)**		
When Office Parties Go Wild	20 (34%)	4 (7%)	20 (34%)	3 (5%)	11 (20%)
	24 (41%)		**43 (59%)**		
How to Stay Positive at Work	0 (0%)	29 (77%)	5 (13%)	2 (5%)	2 (5%)
	29 (77%)		**9 (23%)**		
Total (average)	**146(72%)**		**85(28%)**		

Appendix three - Interview consent form

<u>Consent Form - Confidential data</u>

I understand that my participation in this project will involve responding to a series of interview questions exploring issues surrounding media representations of women at work in Chinese magazines.

I understand that participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I can withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason.

I understand that I am free to ask any questions at any time. I am free to withdraw or discuss my concerns with Ariel Chen, the researcher or her supervisor at Cardiff University, Dr. David Machin.

I understand that the information I provide will be shared with the research team or research supervisor and may be used in subsequent publications.

I understand that the interview will be audio or video record in order to help researcher transcribe the interview.

I understand that the information provided by me will be held confidentially, such that only the researcher and her PhD supervisors can trace this information back to me individually. The information may be retained indefinitely. I understand that I can ask for the information I provide to be deleted/destroyed at any time and, in accordance with the Data Protection Act, I can have access to the information at any time.

I also understand that at the end of the study I can ask for additional information and feedback about the purpose of the study.

I, _____(NAME) consent to participate in the study conducted by Ariel Chen, School of Journalism, Media & Cultural Studies, Cardiff University with the supervision of Dr. David Machin.

Signed (researcher/student):

Signed (Participant):

Date:

同意保密协议书

我理解我将要参与这份采访涉及到一些列关于中国杂志对女性工作者的表述。

我理解我参与这项研究是出于完全自愿的原则，并且我知道我在任何时段可以收回我的信息。

我理解我在任何时段都有自由询问任何问题，我有权利收回或者与Ariel Chen或者其导师Dr. David Machin讨论我的疑虑。

我理解我所提供的信息将要在这个研究课题组内部或者与导师之间讨论，同时也理解数据将可能被用作之后的发表。

我理解采访将会被录音或者录像以更好的用于转录文字的保真性。

我理解我的信息就会被用保密的方式保存，只有此课题研究者以及其导师可以跟踪这些信息到我个人。信息有可能会被无限期保存。依据Data Protection Act的条例我理解我有权利在任何时候删除和销毁我提供的信息，我在任何时候可以进入我的信息。

我同事也理解，当这个研究结束的时候，我可以询问和索取任何附加的信息和反馈。

我，_____（姓名）同意参与这项由Cardiff University, School of Journalism, Media and Culture Studies,的学生Ariel Chen实施的研究，导师是Dr. David Machin。

研究员签名:

被采访者签名：

时间：