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## **DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

### **Responsible China: A critical discourse analysis of soft power projection through transnational media**

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# **Responsible China: A critical discourse analysis of soft power projection through transnational media**

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## **Abstract**

This research attempts to fulfil three major research objectives situated in the context of China's media going-global project from 2009: firstly, clarifying China's political articulation of China-related economic responsibilities; secondly, uncovering China's media representation of the same issue; thirdly, examining Western countries' media representation of the same issue and detecting the potential influence of China's media discourse on Western journalistic representations. They are generated from the following considerations. In studies of China's responsible power claim, scholars in international politics and relations tried to gauge China's behaviours with certain standards. Only a limited number of studies explored the political ideas behind China's behaviours. Moreover, seldom research in the discipline of media probed into the mediation of China-related economic responsibilities through aspects of media texts, construction, and impact. This research aims to bridge these gaps. The inquiries of political articulation and media representation need to be contextually explored. Therefore, this study mainly applies Norman Fairclough's (1995) framework for critical discourse analysis, which is complemented with a political economic perspective in examining the immediate situational and institutional environment surrounding relevant Chinese and Western media. The policies were retrieved from China's central government online portal. The media analysis focuses on media texts and practitioners in China's Xinhua News Agency, USA's *The Wall Street Journal*, and UK's *Financial Times*. The research findings show that China's political articulation of China-related economic responsibilities was consistent with China's sociocultural understandings of responsibility. China's media representation was congruent with China's political discourse and its media practitioners confirmed the constraining influence of the Chinese government on external communication. Nevertheless, China's media discourse yielded trivial influence on Western media representations. This study makes breakthrough in exploring the path of the message of

China-related economic responsibilities from aspects of its construction and impact. It also has implications for future external communication.

*Keywords:* responsibility, soft power, media representation, discourse, China

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## **Abbreviations**

APEC—Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation

BRIC—A grouping acronym that refers to the countries of Brazil, Russia, India, and China

CBDR—Common but Differentiated Responsibility

CCTV—China Central Television

CPC—Communist Party of China

CRI—China Radio International

FT—Financial Times

FTAAP—The Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific

G20—The Group of Twenty Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors

GAPP—General Administration of Press and Publication of the People's Republic of China

IMF—International Monetary Fund

RMB—Renminbi

SCIO—The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China

SFTZ—Shanghai Free Trade Zone

UK—United Kingdom

UNFCCC—United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

US—United States of America

WSJ—The Wall Street Journal

WTO—World Trade Organisation



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## **Chapter 1. Introduction**

### **1.1 Research Background**

The international community witnesses the changing role of China in international affairs along with its ascending economy and shifting foreign policies. By constantly articulating “guiding globalisation” and “China resolution” in recent years, China is viewed as expanding its influence and playing a bigger role in the world (The Economist, 2017). It is changing from hiding inside of its carapace, a metaphor of China’s low-profile foreign policy during the Deng Xiaoping era in the 1990s (Yan, 2014), to slowly extending its head to areas like global government and climate change (The Economist, 2017). In the meantime, China is also engaging in building national image and enhancing international reputation and striving to make them commensurate with its economy and foreign policies.

A person may be concerned with his/her reputation in a certain circle since it may exert substantial influence to his/her interpersonal relationship in working or studying. Similarly, a nation may also take close notice of its reputation and image in the international environment since it may impact the nation’s conduct with other nations, i.e. the “international political process and outcome” (Wang, 2006, p. 91). The Chinese government is no exception (Ding, 2011). It has tried to build images of, for example, “a peace-loving country, victim of foreign aggression, socialist country, bastion of revolution, anti-hegemonic force, developing country, major power, international cooperator, and autonomous actor” (Wang, 2003, p. 52).

From the year 2009, the Chinese government seemed to devote more to international image building and branding. Both external and internal factors may contribute to this governmental policy initiative.

China’s economic ascendance in recent years has attracted much attention. In particular, during and after the 2008 financial crisis, China’s tremendous economic growth

(Lu F., 2012) highly boosted the world's confidence in economic recovery and development. Nevertheless, as a newly emerging power, it has also generated fear and suspicion from the international community, especially among the established powers. A China threat theory is pervasive in Western political articulations and media representations. They assume that externally, China's booming economy, increasing national strength, and deep-rooted victimhood ideology can result in economic manipulation, while domestically, China's uncertain internal situation is a threat to China itself, which is also a threat to the outside world because of ripple effects.

Facing this situation, the Chinese government is eager to change the foreign perceptions of China, especially of its economy, and strives to disseminate the message that China is economically responsible. Following the eye-catching host of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, it continues to firmly embrace Joseph Nye's (1990) idea of soft power which refers to influence others with attractions instead of weapons or sanctions and embarks on more massive soft power practices. They believe that the dissemination of its traditions and cultural values to the outside world can earn them a better reputation and maintain a favourable and idealised international geopolitical environment for economic reform and construction. They are fully aware of the effectiveness of media and mass communication in a country's global outreach and image management, and make media institutions a vital platform for soft power construction. Particularly, China launched the media going-global project in 2009 and emphasised the role of transnational media institutions in delivering and branding China's national image to the world. Accordingly, projecting China's messages and stances upon China-related economic responsibilities is one of the priorities of China's external communication through transnational media institutions.

Nevertheless, global public opinion polls conducted by world's leading institutions among a vast number of participants around the world illustrate that foreign public opinions

on China may not accomplish Chinese government's initial objectives. The 2009 BBC World Service poll recorded comments from GlobeScan Chairman Doug Miller: "Our poll results suggest that China has much to learn about winning hearts and minds in the world. It seems that a successful Olympic Games has not been enough to offset other concerns that people have" (BBC World Service, 2009, p. 2). The status did not change substantially from 2009 onwards according to polls. Perceptions on China's overall image, its responsibility claim, and its economy among publics in Western countries like the U.S. and the UK were diverse and divided.

The unexpected results of polls may be attributed to the technical and methodological problems in collecting and analysing polls data (Nye, 2004, p. 18; d'Hooghe, 2007). Casting these concerns away, I am more interested in the reasons behind people's judgement of one issue, especially the discourses that people are exposed to when they formulate and express their opinions. It is no doubt that various factors may sway public opinions toward China, such as pre-existing perceptions and political and economic concerns (Wang H., 2011; Liu, 2015). The participants may be exposed to different, and even contrasting, frames of one specific issue, adding to the controversial nature of the issue in question.

Among all these factors, the influence of media can never be ignored, although I also recognise people's capability to understand and analyse the issues with autonomy. Some polls investigated specifically people's access to media and its relationship with people's opinions toward a country. As shown in polls by Chinese institutions in 2012 and 2014, local traditional and new media and China's traditional media abroad were major channels for overseas public to obtain information about China (Communication Strategy Research Office of the Center for International Communication, 2012; 2014). Moreover, a Gallup poll report shows that Americans who follow news about China closely were more likely to view China unfavourably (English, 2012).

Then what mediated messages did publics in countries outside of China receive and how were the messages constructed by different factors and represented in Chinese and Western media institutions? Centring on the path of media messages, China's soft power messages to be specific, this thesis aims to fulfil the following research objectives and questions.

## **1.2 Research Objectives**

Based on the research background, this PhD project mainly focuses on two issues: the discourse of China-related economic responsibilities and the media channels related with this discourse. They will be discussed under the framework for critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1995) accompanied by a political economic perspective.

In regards to the study of China-related economic responsibilities, it is well situated in the disciplines of political economy and international politics and relations. Academia in these disciplines mainly probed into China's behaviours concerning its threat and responsibility, especially in the domain of economy (Al-Rodhan, 2007; Cunningham, 2012). China-related behaviours and stances in environmental protection, currency and finance, and international trade were most frequently articulated as potential and actual threats to the rest of the world. They were also areas that other countries urged China to be responsible. Several scholars explored this issue from a discursive perspective by examining the political discourse and sociocultural background behind China's behaviours (Hoo, 2013; Yeophantong, 2013). Nevertheless, the issue could still be further investigated from the following aspects: the historical typology of China's sociocultural understandings of responsibility, the political discourse of responsibility-related issues, and the intimate links between China's history and current policies.

Concerning China's soft power initiatives in external communication, especially the media going-global project, many studies focused on the infrastructure establishment heavily



invested by the Chinese government, the outbound communication strategies of mainstream media, and the limited influence (Zhang, 2010; Lee, 2014). However, a lack of enough attention is put on the messages delivered through various channels. There is a gap in the clarification of what China's soft power message is, how it is constructed under the influence of various discursive and non-discursive factors and by media practitioners, and how it influences Western media representations. This research aims to bridge this gap by specifically looking into the message of China-related economic responsibilities and its mediation.

Therefore, centring on the message of China-related economic responsibilities and China's external communication initiative- the media going-global project, this research attempts to achieve the following three research objectives: (1) clarifying China's political discourse concerning China-related economic responsibilities and its relation with China's sociocultural backdrop; (2) probing into China's media representation of China-related economic responsibilities, specifically, its construction under the influence of China's sociocultural and political discourses and by China's media practitioners; (3) exploring the potential influence of China's media discourse of China-related economic responsibilities on Western media practitioners and their representations.

### **1.3 Research Methodology**

This research assumes that China-related economic responsibilities were a contextually formulated notion based on a social constructionism epistemological perspective (Burr, 2003). Specifically, China's political articulation and media representation of China-related economic responsibilities were locally shaped in the background of China's sociocultural environment. Moreover, Western media representations of this topic were also constrained by their specific sociocultural backdrop. Articulations and representations were

sustained by discourse practices. The differences between representations of the same issue are manifestations of the underlying power relations.

Therefore, the research objectives and the assumption require an integral research method that combines analysis of texts, practice, and sociocultural background in a critical manner. I choose to use Norman Fairclough's (1995) three-dimensional framework for critical discourse analysis as the main method. It includes sociocultural practice analysis, discourse practice analysis, and text analysis, helping to generate a comprehensive understanding of a communicative event (Fairclough, 1995). Due to the need of investigating external communication in China, the framework is extended by adding Entman's (2008) cascading network activation model of mediated public diplomacy as a guide for policy analysis. Moreover, under this framework, I use the method of thematic analysis to analyse China's sociocultural practice and Chinese and Western media practice, and the method of framing analysis to analyse Chinese governmental policies and Chinese and Western media texts. It is notable that the critical discourse analysis is also accompanied by a political economic perspective in exploring the political instructions of China's media global expansion endeavours and the financing and organisation situations of relevant Chinese and Western media institutions. They set the scene for an understanding of the construction and impact of China's mediated messages. See Chapter 3 for a detailed explanation of the research methodology.

I am also aware that in this study featuring a critical discourse analysis, my subject position as an analyst may exert impact on the final findings. I was born and educated in China until I came to UK for a PhD degree. I've also interned in different Chinese mainstream media institutions, including Xinhua News Agency and *China Youth Daily*. Nevertheless, as long as I strictly stick to the research procedures, which will be discussed in detail in Chapter 3. Methodology, these experiences are helpful for my fulfilment of this

project. They sensitise me to identify what the Chinese society conventionally defines the notion of responsibility and what the Chinese government and mainstream media strive to deliver in external communication. Moreover, they can assist me to detect the interrelationships between China's sociocultural background and governmental and media practices.

#### **1.4 Original Contribution to Academia and Practice**

The fulfilment of the three major research objectives contribute to existing theories and research methods and the real-world media and government practice with rich empirical data and research findings and insights.

As to academia, theoretically, it firstly offers a comprehensive understanding of the political idea behind China's behaviours in economy, especially in the international domain. It concretely analyses China's political articulations concerning its responsibilities in environmental protection, currency and finance, and international trade, and closely relates them with China's sociocultural philosophies of the notion of responsibility.

Secondly, in the exploration of the mediation of China-related economic responsibilities, this research incorporates analysis of media texts, its construction, and its impact. Specifically, as to Chinese media representations, the study makes clear the frames used in representing China-related responsibilities in environmental protection, currency and finance, and international trade. Moreover, it proposes the potential influence of China's sociocultural and political discourses on China's external communication constructions. The media practitioner's analysis further confirms the dominant influence of Chinese government and the permeating influence of China's sociocultural discourse. In addition, the analysis of Western media frames and media practitioners indicates the trivial influence of China's media discourse on Western countries.

Methodologically, this study creatively applies Norman Fairclough's (1995) framework for critical discourse analysis in the Chinese setting. It effectively applies the analysis of sociocultural practice by distilling China's sociocultural understandings of responsibility and uses it as the base for the following policy and media analysis. Moreover, it incorporates the analysis of China's governmental policies and explores the potential and confirmatory interrelationship between the different dimensions in a communicative event.

This research also has empirical contributions from the perspective of media and communication. Previous studies showed that the rigid design of soft power initiatives by the Chinese government became an impediment to normal cultural exchanges. For example, opinions from some Chinese Confucius Institutes administrators indicate that cultural congruence may be achieved through channels like academics, but not necessarily and restrictively be confined as a political movement: "Please let us do things academically, peacefully. Students will benefit and teachers will benefit", "I don't think we need to push the language and culture—it is what people need", "I don't like soft power. I think power is aggressive. We just do something all people like" (Paradise, 2009, pp. 657-658). Similarly, a study about global public opinion polls concluded that another Chinese core soft power initiative, the 2008 Beijing Olympics, did not induce positive outcomes probably because that "when delicate sensibilities, lofty ideals, morals and values, i.e. soft power capabilities, are invoked, a stereotypically inscrutable and mysterious China re-emerges" (Liu, 2015, p. 257).

The research findings in this study show that China's mainstream media engaging in external communication also faces the above dilemma. According to media texts analysis (Chapter 6) and media practitioner interviews (Chapter 7), this study finds that the Chinese government exerted dominant influence on China's mediated messages, which did not yield substantial influence on Western media's representations. Therefore, this study suggests adjustments from aspects of the Chinese government's overall external communication

strategies, the mainstream media's financing and organisation, and relevant media practitioners' understandings of cultural congruence.

## **1.5 Thesis Structure**

Following Chapter 1: Introduction, Chapter 2 presents a systematic literature review of research on the conceptions and initiatives of soft power, especially in the case of China, studies of the external and internal factors behind China's media going-global project and the project itself, and studies of media representation of economic issues. It locates the gaps in studies of the message of China-related economic responsibilities and China's media going-global initiative, and proposes five major research questions of this study. Accordingly, Chapter 3 elucidates the methodology in which the main method of critical discourse analysis is introduced. It specifically introduces the sampling procedures and analysis methods, as well as the limitations, in sociocultural practice analysis, governmental policy analysis, and media analysis.

Chapter 4 analyses the Chinese sociocultural understandings of the notion of responsibility. It examines multiple ancient and modern Chinese literary and political documents listed in China's high school history textbooks. It distils the dominant norms and conventions of responsibility in the Chinese society, which is closely related with self-discipline aiming to ensure the normal running of the whole society. This chapter proposes the typology of the Chinese sociocultural philosophies of responsibility, which guides the following Chinese governmental policy and media texts analysis.

The policy analysis in Chapter 5 is based on documents retrieved from the Chinese central government's official web portal. It concludes a close link between current policies and the Chinese sociocultural background.

The media analysis consists of texts analysis (Chapter 6) and analysis of practitioners (Chapter 7) of three media institutions, China's Xinhua News Agency, UK's *Financial Times*

(*FT*), and USA's *The Wall Street Journal* (*WSJ*). The China-based Xinhua News Agency is the official and largest national news agency in China, while the UK-based *FT* and the USA-based *WSJ* are the widely-read international quality newspapers dedicated to global economic news reports. The two chapters analyse the frames of China-related economic responsibilities in the three media institutions, the construction of China's media representations under the influence of various discourses and political economic factors and by media practitioners, and the potential influence of China's media discourse on Western media representations.

Lastly, Chapter 8 summarises the major findings of this research. Based on the research results, the last chapter also states its development to existing theories and research methods, and its implications to media and government practice. It also proposes future research topics.

## **Chapter 2. Literature Review**

This chapter is divided into five parts. The first section introduces briefly the protocol for the systematic literature review in which I explain the analytical choices and rationales.

Secondly, it focuses on previous studies on the concept of soft power in general and China's soft power initiatives. An operationalising definition of soft power is proposed in this part based on the critiques of previous studies.

Among all of China's soft power initiatives, the media going-global project is particularly emphasised and serves as the pillar in China's outbound communication and soft power projection. Accordingly, the third part zooms in on the studies of China's media going-global project. It firstly focuses on the context of its launch and development from both external and internal perspectives. Externally, it faces the pressure imposed by media imperialism and the China threat theory. As a response, it invests heavily in its own media conglomerates and claims to be a responsible power. In order to obtain a better understanding of the mediation of China's soft power messages during the media going-global project, the following part synthesises the key findings and research approaches of this project and locates its academic gaps. The literature review refers to pertinent literature spanning disciplines of international relations, politics, and media and communication, and strives to locate gaps in media and communication studies.

The fourth part looks into studies on media representations of economic issues, especially in the case of China. It tries to illuminate this study on media representations of China-related economic responsibilities in Chinese and Western media institutions.

The fifth part synthesises the literature review and proposes three major research objectives and five main research questions.

## **2.1 Protocol for Systematic Literature Review**

The literature review was conducted by systematically reviewing sufficient relevant studies. It ensured the comprehensive and balanced selection and use of relevant discussion material. It also helped summarise, appraise, and communicate the results and implications of otherwise unmanageable quantities of research in a clear and orderly manner (Petticrew & Roberts, 2006). This review employed the method of configurative review, in which the synthesis was predominantly organising the qualitative data, as well as the quantitative data if necessary (Gough, et al., 2012).

This protocol includes the review background and objectives and the methods of retrieving, appraising and synthesising.

### **2.1.1 Review background and objectives**

China has been extensively engaging in soft power projection in recent years. From 2009, China launched the media going-global project to make full use of media channels to deliver its messages and values. The project was initiated under the backdrop of media imperialism and pervasive China threat and China responsibility theories. China claimed itself as a responsible power, especially in economy, and made it the core value of soft power practice.

Centring on the message of China-related economic responsibilities and China's media going-global initiative, the systematic literature review focused on existing studies in the following aspects, aiming to distil the key debates and locate gaps in these areas:

(1) Literature about the definitions of soft power, locations of soft power in the case of media, and China's soft power initiatives. This part of review attempted to have a comprehensive understanding of existing studies on soft power, especially in the case of media and in the context of China, and set scenes for the following review and research.



(2) Literature about China's threats and responsibility from perspectives of Western views and Chinese views, which formulated the external and internal background of China's media going-global initiative.

(3) Literature about the mediation of China's soft power message in external communication, especially during media going-global project. Existing studies on media texts, journalistic construction, and media impact in other communicative events were also reviewed to illuminate the research on the specific topic. It is notable that I inserted a brief analysis of major global public opinion polls in the review of studies on public opinion polls in examining the influence a nation's external communication. It aimed to detect if it is necessary to conduct a comprehensive analysis of global public opinion polls in the examination of the mediation, especially the impact, of China's soft power message.

(4) Literature about media representations of economic issues, especially in the case of China.

### **2.1.2 Methods of retrieving, appraising and synthesising**

The review referred to relevant studies in all obtainable channels, such as books, journals, conference proceedings, and dissertations. This review also paid attention to grey literature, such as doctoral thesis not yet published. The main sources of information and the rationale for selection are listed below. The somehow overlapping databases are complementary to each other.

(1) Google Scholar<sup>1</sup>: It includes "journal and conference papers, theses and dissertations, academic books, pre-prints, abstracts, technical reports and other scholarly literature from all broad areas of research", all of which are ranked by relevance measured according to full text, author, where the literature is published, and the frequency cited in other scholarly literature (Google Scholar, 2014).

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<sup>1</sup> <http://scholar.google.co.uk/>

(2) E-journals (accessible through Bangor University Library<sup>2</sup>): The choice of journals is based on the 2013 Journal Citation Reports® Social Sciences Edition (Thomson Reuters, 2014). It “offers a systematic, objective means to critically evaluate the world’s leading journals, with quantifiable, statistical information based on citation data” (Thomson Reuters, 2014). The key metric is the Journal Impact Factor, which is the average number of citations received in the given year by articles published in the journal in the previous two years. The current literature review uses this metric to select e-journals. The most relevant top 17 journals are included (*Communication Research, Journal of Communication, Public Opinion Quarterly, Political Communication, International Journal of Press/Politics, Communication Monographs, Journalism, Discourse Studies, Media, Culture & Society, International Journal of Public Opinion Research, Communication Theory, Mass Communication & Society, International Journal of Communication, Journalism Studies, Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly, Asian Journal of Communication, Chinese Journal of Communication*).

(3) Communication source<sup>3</sup>: It offers worldwide full-text content pertaining to communication, media studies, rhetoric and discourse, and related fields (EBSCO, Communication source, 2014).

The literature search included all relevant academic studies regardless of their publication time. Keywords such as “China soft power”, “China soft power media”, and “China media going-global” were applied in the database searching. By sifting through the located literature, all relevant studies that were adequate for fulfilling the above review objectives were kept and organised with the aid of Mendeley, a free software for datasets storage, organisation, and sharing.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://unicat.bangor.ac.uk/search>

<sup>3</sup> [www.ebscohost.com/academic/communication-source](http://www.ebscohost.com/academic/communication-source)

The review adopted a narrative synthesis method, which analysed the relationships within and between studies and assessed the robustness of the evidence with a textual approach (Petticrew & Roberts, 2006). The synthesis was categorised into different themes according to the review objectives. The overall statement and the central research questions were displayed at the end of the literature review.

## **2.2 Soft Power**

This part is devoted to reviewing literature on soft power from three aspects: firstly, the definition, evolution, and critiques of the concept of soft power; secondly, two ways of identifying power in the concept of soft power; thirdly, China's soft power projection through promoting its culture, political values, and foreign policy, and more importantly, its engagement in economic attraction and image delivery through transnational media institutions.

### **2.2.1 Definition**

In the early 1990s, Joseph Nye (1990) first coined the term 'soft power' to describe a country's ability to co-opt and attract rather than coerce in the process of shaping the preferences and long-term attitudes of the public in the receiving country in order to facilitate the missions of the practicing country. In his seminal book, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, Nye (2004, p. 11) concludes that three major resources can help to generate soft power: "its culture (in places where it is attractive to others), its political values (when it lives up to them at home and abroad), and its foreign policies (when they are seen as legitimate and having moral authority)". Broadly, it can also include certain ideas or models that attract other countries to follow willingly (Lye, 2010). In contrast, hard power refers to strategies of "military intervention, coercive diplomacy, and economic sanctions to enforce national interests" (Wilson, 2008, p. 114).

Three behaviours identified by Nye are effective in managing these resources: agenda-setting, persuasion, and attraction (Nye, 2010). Besides, other instruments can also yield the result of generating attraction among foreign publics. One of them is public diplomacy, which is commonly used in government policy for the communication of foreign policies in international relations. It refers to the construction of a dialogue with foreign governments and publics to inform and affect, and then to cultivate favourability toward the practicing country in a longer term (Nye, 2004). Theories and models of, in addition to the above three means, agenda building, framing, and priming are useful in fulfilling public diplomacy<sup>4</sup>. Another instrument, nation branding, is applied from the marketing and branding paradigms with an attempt to reconstitute nationhood by a compendium of discourses and practices (Kaneva, 2011).

As to the concrete resources of soft power, news media is an indisputable one since it can exert quick and imperceptible influence on others by setting favourable agenda, persuading, and eliciting positive attraction (Nye, 2010). Therefore, it is effective in spreading a country's soft power and enhancing public diplomacy (Nye, 2004; 2008). Drawing from Nye's conception of soft power and explanation of the interplay between media and soft power, many scholars probed into the role of news media in a country's soft power initiatives (Green, 2013; Lee, 2014). What's more, according to Nye, a successful economy can serve as a resource for sanctions and payments, but can also be a strong source of attraction (Nye, 2004; 2006). In the context of economic globalisation, the increasingly important reciprocal economic ties and dependence indicate the mutual approval and

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<sup>4</sup> As to agenda building and framing, they focus on how news institutions and journalists highlight certain issues and events rather than others to generate a particular (sometimes biased) description and interpretation of issues (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007; Weaver, 2007; Bakir, 2013). Priming is an extension of agenda building and framing that it further promotes an evaluation standard against certain issues for the audience (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007; Weaver, 2007). Agenda setting concerns the media effect that it ties the government, the media, and the public opinions together by evaluating the salience of and attitude towards certain issues among the three actors (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007; Weaver, 2007).

attraction between two countries, which is the essence of soft power (Zhao, 2007).

Accordingly, the economic attraction can also be regarded as an element of soft power projection.

However, problems occur when the term soft power is applied practically and strategically. One of the biggest deficiencies is the ambiguous categorisation of soft and hard power resources. Firstly, from the perspective of the power resource itself, the nature of the power resource, as defined by the soft and hard power division, can change when it is applied to a certain context (Gilboa, 2008). For example, the seemingly hard military force can be used softly in humanitarian aid. Secondly, from the perspective of the receiver, they can perceive the nature of the power resource in a quite different way (Gilboa, 2008). For example, the seemingly harmless and soft American values can be viewed negatively in Iran.

Some scholars try to solve the theoretical deficiencies of the term soft power by clarifying the relations between soft power and hard power from the view of essentialism. One strand of arguments believes that soft and hard power resources are inseparably interconnected, like *yin* and *yang*. The term ‘noopolitik’ invented by Arquilla and Ronfeldt (1999) has similar indications. It refers that in this information age, the soft expression of ideas, values, norms, and ethics through different channels is a necessity for foreign policy and it should go in parallel with the underlying raw power, national interest, and might. Thus, the contradiction between noopolitik and the traditional realpolitik<sup>5</sup> is compatible. While another strand of scholars believe that the two kinds of power resources are separated. For example, Japan is advanced in economy, but has a poor reputation in the world because of its vague attitude towards its faults during the World War Two (Xiang, 2010). The third kind of thoughts blurs the division between soft and hard power resources. Korb and Boorstin (2005)

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<sup>5</sup> Drawing from Kissinger’s (1994, p. 137) description of realpolitik, Arquilla and Ronfeldt (1999, p. 29) defines realpolitik as “a foreign-policy behavior based on state-centered calculations of raw power and the national interest, guided by a conviction that might makes right”.

asserted that the concepts of soft and hard power should be discarded and invented the term ‘integrated power’ to refer to the merging of different power resources to protect the United States and disseminate its values. Nye also realised the deficiency of his conception of soft power and invented another term ‘smart power’ in 2003 (the time was stated by Nye himself in his study (Nye, 2009)), and elaborated it in several occasions (Nye, 2004; 2008; 2010). His explanation of smart power shared similarities with *noopolitik* that it also refers to an effective leverage of both soft and hard power resources neither deliberately separating them nor denying their differences.

Another limitation of the term soft power is its vague explanation of implementing mechanisms. To solve this problem, d’Hooghe (2008) pointed out that the rhetorical strategies of the central government should be accompanied by its actual deeds, for example, in the case of China. Lee Yong Wook (2011) and d’Hooghe (2010) asserted that the process of socialisation needs special attention since attraction and persuasion are based on the premise that the projected messages are absorbed and accepted by the target publics.

In addition, multiple scholarly works also pointed out the measurement issues of soft power, which is derived from its theoretical vagueness. Lee Shin-wha (2011) proposed to divide soft power into and measure it from cognitive, affective, and normative dimensions<sup>6</sup>. The Chicago Council on Global Affairs once conducted a multinational survey of public opinion on soft power in Asian countries using five indices as soft power index: economic, cultural, human capital, political, and diplomatic (Whitney & Shambaugh, 2009).

Overall, the above efforts indicate that researchers dedicating to soft power studies attempted to deal with the theoretical ambiguity of soft power from different perspectives, such as clarifying the boundary between hard power and soft power resources, or the

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<sup>6</sup> The cognitive dimension evaluates “how other nations evaluate a state’s image and standing in international affairs”, the affective one “whether other nations like or dislike a state despite its political, economic, and military strengths or weaknesses”, while the normative one “whether or not other countries regard a state’s policy and international role as legitimate and justifiable” (Lee, 2011, p. 15).

functioning mechanisms, or the gauge of measurement. The current research pays special attention to the soft power discourse itself, which is the foundation of any further soft power studies. The above scholarly debates reveal a common thread: the importance of using values as expressed in culture or policies to influence others and obtain what you want, which is a manifestation of the major characteristic of postmodern power (van Ham, 2008). They largely inherited Nye's focus on values:

In international politics, the resources that produce soft power arise in large part from the values an organization or country expresses in its culture, in the examples it sets by its internal practices and policies, and in the way it handles its relations with others. (Nye, 2004, p. 8)

However, Nye's definition of values was vague that he only used "universal", "narrow", or "parochial" to describe values in a soft power discourse (Nye, 2004, p. 11), and the following scholars have not made much progress. An exception is Entman's (2008) theoretical proposal of cultural congruence (or cultural resonance in Sheafer and Shenhav's (2009) work), which refers to the degree of overlap of the dominant political culture between the projecting nation and the target nation.

Drawing from Entman's (2008) theory, this research proposes that a better understanding of the soft power discourse should be based on a clarification of dominant values conveyed through major channels under the backdrop of the practicing country's sociocultural context. It further suggests to examine the media representations of target countries to detect the influence of the projecting values on target countries. In this way, the abstract concepts of credibility and legitimacy, which are the ideal outcomes of soft power projection, can be converted into concrete and tangible evidence. This thesis will specifically focus on the values in China's soft power projection and their impacts on Western countries.

Centring on values, this study proposes an operationalising concept of soft power as *the ability of a country/state to make its values attractive among foreign publics through different forms of dialogue and ultimately, to pave the way for its foreign policies.*

The key component of this soft power definition is values. It enables the research on soft power to be more concrete. It also sets the base for further studies on soft and hard power resources division, soft power implementing mechanisms, and measurement.

### **2.2.2 Identification of power**

When we talk about soft power, then where is the power? Confined in the discipline of media and communication, let us restrict the discussion of soft power to the media-related power and the foreign publics are deemed as targets.

The discussion of media-related power can be divided into two aspects: what constitutes power and what the influence of power is.

In terms of power construction, then comes another question, are we talking about “a capacity reserved for media institutions themselves” or “a resource hegemonised by those whose interests lie primarily outside the media” (Freedman, 2014, p. 8)? In the current study, it seems that the bearer and the emitter of mediated soft power can be attributed to the messages and values delivered by the media institutions. However, surrounding the messages and values, there are several other crucial elements, implicitly or explicitly mentioned in the above definition of soft power, that may contribute to the formulation of power. They include the practicing government, the media institution, and implicitly, the sociocultural context that nurtures the values and the political and journalistic practices. Therefore, media power can not only be located inside of media, i.e. the symbolic power of the media language (and sometimes the media as an entity itself, such as its reputation), but also in other institutional and discursive factors which exert influence on the final product of media. This resonates with Freedman’s (2014, p. 3) definition that “media power is best conceived as a relationship



between different interests engaged in struggles for a range of objectives that include legitimization, influence, control, status and, increasingly, profit”, in addition to the acknowledgement that power comes from inside of media. To put it in another way, media power is a fusion of the discursive and non-discursive factors, including the language, institution, politics, and sociocultural backdrop.

Then as to the influence of the media-related soft power, it mainly refers to the target publics’ acceptance of the values from the practicing countries delivered through media channels and even the changing of behaviours. It should be noted that there are different levels of power as stated above. The power finally experienced by the audiences, most probably through the news reports in a direct manner, can not be separated from other sources of power in different forms.

To sum up, the media-related soft power is closely related with a range of discursive and non-discursive factors. Scholars dedicated to media power studies mainly use two strands of theories, namely political economy theory and discourse theory. The detection of power, an invisible entity, in media and communication studies shows the critical stance of scholarship, which refers to “the academic practices and values of critique in intellectual enquiry- questioning, interrogating and challenging the adequacy of explanations of phenomena” (Hardy, 2014, p. 6). To put it in a simple manner, being critical means that the researcher does not take the media phenomena for granted, but inquires the underlying political economic or discursive reasons for certain purposes, for instance, uncovering the inequalities and the dominant interests. Different critical approaches are applied based on the two theories.

In political economy studies, scholars mainly use the critical political economy approach, which tends to “place emphasis on the unequal distribution of power and are critical of arrangements whereby such inequalities are sustained and reproduced” (Hardy,

2014, p. 6). Studies in this strand assume that the production, distribution, and consumption of media content are under the influence of the organisation and financing of communications (Hardy, 2014, p. 7), which are procedures manipulated by power relations. Accordingly, scholars use the approach of critical political economy to delve into the organisation and financing of communications in areas like “ownership patterns, resource allocation, governance arrangements and policy and regulatory regimes” (Freedman, 2014, p. 15) and their influence on media content. In so doing, they detect the invisible power relations.

Critical political economy scholarship<sup>7</sup> often draws on Karl Marx’s materialist conception of power which believes that the social being determines people’s consciousness and his theory is heavily coloured by critique of capitalism (Freedman, 2014; Hardy, 2014). Drawing from this theoretical base, scholars tend to situate communication events in a broader capitalist society and question the relationship between mass communication and resource allocation in social production and reproduction in terms of organisation and financing (Hardy, 2014). The objective of these studies is to unearth and criticise the unequal capitalist market system, showing its radical realism epistemology (Hardy, 2014). But as concluded by Wasko (2014, p. 265), the study of the political economy of media and communications “overall is primarily focused on the economic or the production side of the communication process, neglecting texts, discourse, audiences and consumption”.

In discourse studies, the approach of critical discourse analysis is widely used that scholars in this strand focus more on the power emitting from discourses. Audiences’ perceptions can be shaped by media discourses, and a certain media representation is also the result of other discourses. This mainly rests on Michel Foucault’s thoughts about discourse. Comparing with the earlier Marxist theory, discourse studies view power in two different

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<sup>7</sup> Babe (2009) had a detailed introduction of the different approaches in the studies of critical political economy of media and their intellectual origins.

ways. Firstly, instead of assuming that power relation is maintained by dominant class in a fixed manner, which is a feature of structuralism, discourse theory believes that power relation is evolving and is attributed to the changing discursive practices, which is the tenet of poststructuralism (Barker, 2012; Hardy, 2014). Secondly, instead of uncovering the class conflicts and struggles, discourse theory concerns more about the construction of meaning and knowledge through discourses and their implications (Barker, 2012; Hardy, 2014). However, this strand of study is often criticised for failing to consider the underlying economic relations.

Whether political economic factors outweigh discursive factors or otherwise separates scholars in media and communication studies. Some scholars made a breakthrough by integrating critical approaches besides a mere focus on either of the above aspects (see Wasko (2014) for a detailed discussion). To facilitate my own research, I also consider both factors, and interpret the logics in my own way.

According to political economy studies, power is supposed to originate from politics and economy in manners of organisation and financing. Based on this theory, it can be postulated that power can be eliminated by getting rid of corresponding organisation and financing. However, as discussed above, power comes from, but can not be restricted to, political economic factors alone. Therefore, it is proper to examine other sources of power in the analysis of media power. Foucault's works, such as his discussion of sexuality (Foucault, 1990), inspire this study. The restrictions put on sexuality were partly from political economic factors, for instance, for the sake of reproduction of qualified labours. However, other factors coming from dietetics, economics, and erotics also restrained sexual pleasure, which was made a socially constructed notion rather than a physical reality (Foucault, 1990). Viewing media products, such as media texts, also as contextually shaped, this research aims to detect the media power in the case of China's soft power projection with considerations of

language, institution, politics, and sociocultural backdrop without separating factors with different natures.

### **2.2.3 China's soft power initiatives**

The basic idea of soft power was quickly adopted by China's political leaders when Nye's book, *Bound to Lead* (Nye, 1990), was translated into Chinese in 1992 (Wang & Lu, 2008). It was given the highest strategic significance when the former Chinese president Hu Jintao stressed the importance of enhancing culture as China's soft power<sup>8</sup> at the 17<sup>th</sup> Chinese Communist Party National Congress in 2007 (Cao, 2014).

China's pursuit of soft power is accompanied by its own social and economic development and its awareness of the necessity of positive global perceptions of itself. The world has witnessed China's ascent since its reform and opening-up from the early 1980s. In terms of economy, China overtook Japan and became the world's second largest economy in 2010 (Li & Sligo, 2012), and now is heading for the position of the United States, whose economy has never encountered rivals (Page & Xie, 2011). At the same time, China became aware of the importance of international image in development and national power (Ramo, 2007; Wang J., 2011). Although the Chinese government has put forward the peaceful rise, peaceful development, and harmonious world theses in succession (Kurlantzick, 2007; Ramo, 2007; Ding, 2008), the discourses controlling foreign public's negative perception of China,

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<sup>8</sup> It should be born in mind that the term soft power, initiated by the American scholar Joseph Nye (1990), was to justify the American values and attractions in terms of politics (e.g. the pluralist democracy), economy (e.g. the free market system), and culture (e.g. Hollywood, CNN, and McDonald's). However, the term is now extensively used in different countries with different situations in different ways, becoming a shared concern worldwide. But they basically inherit the primary proposition of the original concept of soft power that power is projected through attraction and persuasion in harmless manners. In the case of China, the wide use of "China's soft power" is also based on this proposition (Glaser & Murphy, 2009), but also indicates China's situations. Some scholars interpreted it as "soft power with Chinese characteristics" (Glaser & Murphy, 2009). The strands and features of China's intellectual debate about soft power are explained in detail in Glaser and Murphy (2009). Overall, the Chinese leadership is in favour of the idea that Chinese culture is the core source of China's leverage of soft power (Glaser & Murphy, 2009). They embrace the arguments, similar with Wang Huning's (1993) (a former professor from Fudan University, published comments on Nye's soft power in China for the first time) opinions, that political systems, national morale and culture, economic system, and historical paths can all be explained as resources of cultural attraction.

such as China threat, Chinese collapse, and neo-colonialism, are still pervasive (Ramo, 2007; Wang J., 2011). Under this backdrop, the goals of China's soft power projection as articulated in China's official announcements, concluded by Ding (2008) from the perspective of foreign policy, are to maintain a favourable and idealised international geopolitical environment for China's economic reform and construction and enhance China's status at regional and global levels.

Driven by the strong aspiration to build a favourable global image (Li, 2009), China launched a series of soft power activities, including Chinese religion and traditional culture and arts exchanges, international programs carried out by Chinese universities, promotion of Mandarin learning activities, and export of Chinese media, tourism, and sport (Hunter, 2009; McGiffert, 2009; Wang J., 2011). The roles of Confucius institutes, films, Olympic Games, and Shanghai World Expo in China's soft power projection have been extensively studied (Latham, 2009; Su, 2010; Hartig, 2012; Brownell, 2013; Svensson, 2013; Cichosz & Zhang, 2014). In general, as to culture, the rejuvenated time-honoured traditional values and strong national identity are deemed as key elements; as to political values, the China-specific model of development is promoted as a special attraction; as to foreign policies, China's principles of maintaining peace and harmony are viewed as appealing doctrines (Blanchard & Lu, 2012; Cao, 2014).

However, China has not restricted itself to the three areas of soft power resources in culture, political values, and foreign policy as defined by Nye (2004). It has also been engaging in various economic activities, which are also deployed as channels of soft power attraction (Lai, 2012). In Southeast Asia, China expands its influence through non-military inducements such as culture, diplomacy, foreign aid, trade, and investment (Lum, et al., 2008); in Africa, China's foreign economic policy is intensively related with its soft power initiatives (Liang, 2012); in Europe, China's growing economic might and attractiveness

provoke mixed reactions among European countries, which has an direct influence on China public diplomacy and soft power projection in this area (d'Hooghe, 2007; 2008; 2010; 2011).

China's economic attraction has been serving as one of the pillars in its soft power projection (Lai, 2012). The buzzword 'Beijing Consensus'<sup>9</sup> created by Ramo (2004) indicates the attraction of China's development model and economic success to developing countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America (Pang, 2009). Some scholars even claimed that China's economic development success became the most prominent source of its contemporary soft power practice (DeLisle, 2010). Nevertheless, not all scholars were positive about China's economic attractions. Some scholars viewed it as a moderation of China's position as a military or economic threat (Lum, et al., 2008), some contended that China's economic development did not develop into a model that is worthy of following (Liang, 2012), and some were anxious about the consequences of China's economic growth (d'Hooghe, 2010). Therefore, according to previous studies, China's economic vitality has not only generated attraction, but also suspicion in the international community.

Media institutions can serve as a buffer between China's economic development and foreign suspicions. Media and mass communication, taking advantage of advanced communication technology, can exert a quicker impact on a country's global outreach and the management of a favourable international environment (Zhang, 2010). Due to its effectiveness, media institutions serve as a vital element in a state's soft power practice (Li, 2009). The strategies of media outlets in expanding a country's soft power has been an important academic focus (Chen & Colapinto, 2010; Zeng, 2010; Zhang, 2010; Lee, 2014).

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<sup>9</sup> The term Beijing Consensus is seen as an adaptation of the term 'Washington Consensus', which holds that a free market system should develop along with liberal democratic reform (Zhao, 2009). Beijing Consensus refers to China's unique development mode under its unchanged one-party communist political environment (Zhao, 2009), while Washington Consensus is a path that insists the parallel development of market economy and political reform (Wang & Lu, 2008). Refer to Kennedy (2010) for a critical examination of the two terms.

Overall, there are massive investments on and expansions of soft power resources in China. Viewing from the perspective of the practicing country, the effective running of the soft power projection system relies on three interrelated elements, namely the infrastructure, the content, and the projecting mechanisms. The above review shows that in the case of China, multiple studies explored the infrastructure, such as the cultural exchanges, economic activities, and media construction, and the projection efforts. These studies were mainly descriptive. Several studies about China's economic attraction questioned the potential or actual influence of China's soft power practice and these falls into the domain of the measurement of soft power activities (with no specific gauge proposed) as discussed in 2.2.1.

A lack of enough attention has been put on the messages delivered through China's soft power infrastructure, for example, what China's soft power message is, how it is constructed in the Chinese sociocultural context, and what its influence is on other countries. This resonates with Entman's (2008, p. 88) critique of scholarly studies of U.S. government's using of mediated public diplomacy in promoting favourable framing of its policies in foreign news media:

Although the literature offers some fairly robust generalizations, we neither know exactly what forces, under which conditions, shape the domestic media's coverage of U.S. foreign policy, nor how that coverage interacts with other factors to shape the American public's responses... These lacunae make application of theoretical models to the even more complex communication paths linking other nations' reactions to U.S. policy a highly tentative enterprise.

Therefore, this research aims to bridge this gap by investigating China's soft power message. The above discussion shows that it is highly necessary to project China's messages and stances upon economic issues to the outside world. Accordingly, this study will unearth China's soft power message in economic issues, its construction in the Chinese sociocultural context, and its impact on other countries. Specifically, it will explore this issue under the backdrop of China's media going-global project from 2009.

## **2.3 China's Media Going-Global Project**

This part casts light on previous studies of China's media going-global project. The first two sections review literature about the external and internal factors behind this project. It particularly focuses on the discursive contradiction between the China threat theory pervasive in Western countries and China's own claim to be a responsible power. The third section synthesises the key findings and approaches in studies of media texts, construction, and impact of China's external communication, especially of the media going-global project.

### **2.3.1 External factors: Media imperialism and China threat theory**

China's launch of the media going-global project was driven by external pressure from media imperialism and the China threat theory (Hu, et al., 2013). Media imperialism brings massive information flow and values originated from Western mainstream media to the Chinese market and the China threat theory is more like a direct ideological attack on China. Accordingly, the project desires to challenge Western media giants with China's own media conglomerates and to reverse the amplification of negative perceptions of China (Hu, et al., 2013).

#### *2.3.1.1 Media imperialism*

Media imperialism developed along with technical innovations, such as satellite, which increased the global flow of information with no border barriers and resulted in the fast expansion of US programs during the Cold War period (Volkmer, 1999). Galtung and Ruge contributed to the establishment of the concept of media imperialism by pointing out the unbalanced news flow from centre to periphery countries (Galtung & Ruge, 1965). The information, infotainment, and entertainment projecting from US-led Western media to periphery countries were labelled as dominant media flows (Thussu, 2010). The UNESCO project carried out by Sreberny-Mohammadi et al. (1985) showed clearly the dominant



influence of major wire services on setting international news agenda and deciding ways of news presentation.

Oliver Boyd-Barrett defined media imperialism as:

the process whereby the ownership, structure, distribution or content of the media in any one country are singly or together subject to substantial external pressure from the media interests of any other country or countries without proportionate reciprocation of influence by the country so affected. (Boyd-Barrett, 1977, p. 117)

The definition indicates the asymmetrical influence of one media over the other (Boyd-Barrett, 1977). In each of the four modes that form the international media activities, namely the shape of the communication vehicle (e.g. technology), a set of industrial arrangements (organisation and finance), values of practice (e.g. objectivity), and media content and market penetration (Boyd-Barrett, 1977), media imperialism exerts its influence in a different manner.

Nevertheless, it is evidenced that with the proliferation of digital technologies and media privatisation and deregulation, erstwhile passive information recipients are getting more involved in the worldwide information flow. Scholars proposed the notion of contra- (subaltern) flows to refer to the private, state-sponsored or geo-cultural flows originating from the peripheral nations (Volkmer, 1999; Thussu, 2010). The launch of the Arab news network Al Jazeera, China-based English-language network CCTV 9, and the Chinese television channel Phoenix are typical examples (Thussu, 2010). Along with these newly emerging news media, the national gate-keeping policies and the local audience's behaviours all undermined, to a certain degree, the dominant influence of media imperialism (Chadha & Kavoori, 2000). This phenomenon induced some positive theses, such as the new public sphere argument which suggested that the international communication enabled diverse realities and values to co-exist in the global public platform (Volkmer, 1999; Castells, 2008).

However, scholars like Thussu (2010, p. 234) argued that the parallelism of flows and contra-flows did not necessarily result in a “diverse” or “democratic” world. This study agrees that the media imperialism is still exerting influence on the global media and communication environment and it is closely related with underlying disparity in political and economic domains. Thussu (2010) maintained that the political and economic advantages of Western countries ensured the hybridity and glocalization<sup>10</sup> of their media organizations, which led to not only the insurmountable revenues, but also the legitimacy of their expansion and deepening of hegemony. Boyd-Barrett (2010) asserted that the concentration of capital and blooming media conglomerates enhanced the colonisation of communication space. Schiller (2010) concluded that motivated by profit, the media-cultural dominance was manifested as corporate transnationalism. The contra-flows, such as China’s transnational media channels, are signs of contradictions from peripheral countries in the context of media imperialism.

#### *2.3.1.2 China threat theory and China responsibility theory*

This section focuses on studies of China threat theory and China responsibility theory, especially their research on China’s positions and identities in the Western views and areas that other countries requested China to be responsible for.

The China threat theory has a long history whose evolution can be divided into three stages (Jin, 2009). It first appeared as the term ‘Yellow Peril’ coined by German Emperor Wilhelm II to refer to the dangers from Asian people at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, and then as ‘Red Scare’ promoted by Western countries as an expression of anti-communist fear in the 1950s when the new China was founded (Jin, 2009; Ren, 2015). In the 1990s when the Cold War ended, aroused by countries like Japan and

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<sup>10</sup> A term explained by Robertson (1995) as the interplay of globalization and localization, and the Western flows have dominant positions in both procedures (Chang, 2003).

America, the China threat theory prevailed again because of China's reform and opening-up policy and its ascending economy (Ren, 2015).

In recent years, the theory repeatedly appears in Western mainstream media, such as US elite newspapers, to indicate that China's rise may pose economic/trade, military/strategic, and political/ideological threats to the regional and global stability (Zhang, 2008; Yang & Liu, 2012). It is also widely discussed in Western scholarly works and government policymaking in countries like the United States (Wu, 2007). This research does not deliberately separate the views expressed in different channels since they may have mutual influence.

From 2005, another theory about China, the China responsibility theory, seems to gain momentum. As generally accepted, it is a result of the term 'responsible stakeholder' raised by the former U.S. deputy secretary of state Robert Zoellick (2005) in a report named "Whither China: From Membership to Responsibility?" (Chen, 2009; Deng, 2009). Literally, it means that China should take responsibilities in international affairs. To take a closer examination, the theory contains the implication that China is irresponsible or China should be burdened with more responsibilities (Ma, 2007). In essence, it shares the same kernel with the China threat theory that both were advocated to condemn, restrain, and regulate China (Ma, 2007).

Among all the domains that China is progressing prominently, economy is perhaps the area that has generated most fear and suspicion from the international community (Ding, 2006; Wu, 2007). Evidence is shown in an empirical examination of the coverage of China threat in the US print media over a 15-year period (1992-2006) (Yang & Liu, 2012). The study argued that perceptions of China as an economic/trade threat remained stable with a clear uptick in recent years compared with perceptions of China as a political/ideological or a military/strategic threat (Yang & Liu, 2012).

Three major reasons contribute to the wide-ranging fear of China's economy: first, China may follow the path, left by Western dominant powers, that power transition stimulates conflict inevitably; second, China has completely different political and ideological environment in which its economy is developing, which may generate conflict potentially; third, China possesses rich resources of culture, population, and territory, which may turn out to be the foundation of its refusal to be a status quo power (Chen, 2009). What's more, Bernstein and Munro (1997, p. 19) contended that China's ambition to dominate Asia was propelled by "nationalist sentiment, a yearning to redeem the humiliations of the past, and the simple urge for international power". In a word, in the view of other countries, China was positioned as an ambitious country with strong national strength, but also as a transitional country with victimhood sentiments. These are main reasons for their China threat postulation.

According to China's positions in the view of Western countries, what are the exact economic threats seen from the Western perspective that China poses, and is likely to pose, to the world? Firstly, China's booming economy, increasing national strength, and deep-rooted victimhood ideology can result in economic manipulation, which may be the major concern among other countries (Al-Rodhan, 2007). For example, China's economic ascent has resulted in, or has the potential to continue to cause, violations of intellectual property rights and other economic frictions, a loss of manufacturing and industrial jobs in Western countries due to China's cheap labour, disadvantages for Latin American and African producers and retailers when competing with Chinese ones, the massive US trade deficits with China, unlawful Chinese government subsidies, furious energy competition, and environmental problems (Broomfield, 2003; Al-Rodhan, 2007; Breslin, 2010; Yang & Liu, 2012).

The second potential threat is much less discussed in the China threat theory. The transitional China faces uncertain internal situation, which is a threat not only to China

herself, but also to the outside world because of ripple effects (Al-Rodhan, 2007). The uncertainties include China's blurred economic future when transiting to more developed stages, potential social instability caused by immense income inequality and poverty, transformed traditional Chinese socioeconomic environment, and its heavy dependence on state-owned enterprises and under-developed private sector (Al-Rodhan, 2007).

In a word, scholars in favour of the China threat theory took China's political, social, and ideological positions into consideration, and believed that China's threats and potential threats included not only its ambition to strive for hegemony, but also the potential instability originating from China's internal issues in the era of globalisation (Al-Rodhan, 2007).

However, there are also opponents of the China threat theory. Also through an analysis of China's position and identity, some liberal optimists held contrasting opinions towards China's economic growth compared with those of the above pessimistic realists.

Externally, China is viewed as a member of the international community so that it is constrained by the global market, which may make it inclined to cooperate with other members rather than generating conflict or isolation (Roy, 1996; Broomfield, 2003; Liang, 2007; Breslin, 2010). It is evidenced that China is not likely to change the world easily and inevitably as claimed by some extreme arguments at least at this stage. For example, China showed "stubborn commitment" to the existing trade system during its accession, learning, and socialisation in the World Trade Organisation (WTO) (Scott & Wilkinson, 2013). In addition, China's participation in United Nations peacekeeping operations in Africa, which aimed to transform the host state into a liberal democracy, showed little evidence of ambitions to impose its own economic and political model (Suzuki, 2009).

Moreover, some scholars did not view China's behaviours unilaterally. Instead, they judged China's issues in a wider environment. For instance, as to the cheap labour debates, China was not the only developing nation chosen as a manufacturing factory and not the only

reason that resulted in the decline of manufacturing jobs in developed countries; as to the trade deficit that the United States sustained with China, China may not threaten the United States by dumping its holding of dollars since it would cost China's economic stability and other reasons behind the U.S. trade deficit should not be neglected (Al-Rodhan, 2007).

Internally, China was positioned as a historically benign and non-imperialistic country, which was likely to pay more attention to domestic social problems, such as the rising crime and massive environmental degradation, and it may spare little effort to aggressively pose threats to other countries (Roy, 1996).

In summary, scholars' debates on the China threat theory, especially their judgements on whether China's behaviours were threats or not, centred on their explicit or implicit discussion of China's position and identity. However, the proponents were largely supported by their positioning of China as a country with strong hard power, special political system and social structure, and firmly embedded victimhood sentiments, while the opponents largely recognised China as a member of the globalised world and a benign country in nature. The different views on China's positions added ambiguity to the controversy on China's threat and responsibility.

Following the China threat theory, the China responsibility theory, although with a less offensive face, further asks China to shoulder responsibilities in certain issues in a more eager gesture than the mere condemnation in the China threat theory. A range of Chinese and Western scholars, for example, Nye (1997), Johnston (2003), Ma (2007), Niu (2007), Jin (2009), Etzioni (2011), Yeophantong (2013), and Breslin (2013), uncovered major occasions in which politicians in Western countries, especially in the U.S. and European countries, urged China to be responsible for certain issues, particularly in economy (see Appendix 1 for major Western political articulations of China's economic responsibilities). The requirements mainly included China's stance and behaviours in environment, climate, and energy issues,

and China's monetary policies in currency exchange rate, international trade, and compliance with the WTO multilateral system. For example, former U.S. deputy secretary of state Robert Zoellick urged China to "become a responsible stakeholder" in the international system by stopping currency manipulation, designing a market-oriented exchange rate policy, and staying open to international trade (Zoellick, 2005). Consecutively, the U.S. part in the U.S.-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue asked China to engage in exchange rate reform and level trade playing fields and related the requirements with China's responsibilities (Kerry & Lew, 2014; Kerry, et al., 2014; Kerry, et al., 2015). The Commission of the European Communities, Council of the European Union, Germany chancellor Angela Merkel, and the White House all specified China's, along with other countries', responsibilities in climate change, energy policy, and environmental protection (Commission of the European Communities, 2006; Council of the European Union, 2006; Merkel, 2007; The White House, 2010).

Overall, as one of China's key initiatives in soft power practice, the media going-global project aims to reverse media imperialism and counteract the discourse of China's threats and irresponsibility as advocated by Western countries. Scholars in favour of the China threat theory positioned China in their own way. Nevertheless, although scholars disapproving the theory based their arguments on a different definition of China's positions, they could not help to reverse the theory but only added ambiguity to the topic. The following China responsibility theory voiced Western politicians' opinions towards issues which they argued that China should be responsible for. This section of literature review draws the picture of the external factors behind China's media going-global project, especially the discourse of China's economic responsibilities constructed by Western countries. In response, China claims itself as a responsible power.

### **2.3.2 Internal factor: A responsibility claim**

China is trying to portray herself as, and persuade foreign audiences that China is, a responsible power via its own voices and perspectives through news media channels. China's persuasion and attraction as a responsible power is the overarching dimension of China's soft power practice (DeLisle, 2010; Kalathil, 2011). Among a range of domains, China is most eager to demonstrate its sense of responsibility in global economic issues. Its promise as a responsible economic partner is also the core of China's doctrines of constructing a harmonious world and insisting a peaceful rise (d'Hooghe, 2010). Being economically responsible, it means that China's economic rise neither attempts to threaten the current international order nor targets at any member of the global community (Lye, 2010).

It is truly confusing to face the two terms, the China responsibility theory and China as a responsible power. However, they are intrinsically different in the following aspects. Firstly, they have different times of appearance. The China responsibility theory started to gain attraction mainly from 2005 when Zoellick (2005) raised the term responsible stakeholder. Whereas China's role as a responsible power began to take shape in the 1990s, although there are dissents about its origins. Some scholars contended that it began to spread in China in the mid-1990s as an acceptance of the language of America's (Clinton administration) speech of China policies (Shirk, 2008; Deng, 2015). One piece of evidence is China's explicit description of itself as a responsible power in the white paper of foreign affairs in 1999 (Gao, 2013). Some believed that it is an idea originating from China itself (Yeophantong, 2013). For example, in 1997, the then Chinese President Jiang Zemin firstly related China as a big power with international responsibility in a speech to the Russian State Duma (Jiang, 1997). Nevertheless, Hoo's (2013) doctoral thesis may provide the most comprehensive understanding of the origin and evolution of China's responsible great power identity, and he concluded that both the American political language and China's own social



realities contributed to the production and sustaining of China's responsible great power self-perception.

Secondly, the China responsibility theory is basically a deviant of the former China threat theory, whereas China's own claim to be a responsible power is based on China's own development objectives. However, the norms of responsibility that China is claiming to pursue are likely to have Western derivation.

In response to the Western exhortations, China not only uses the responsibility rhetoric in political, journalistic, and academic discourses, but also engages in corresponding behaviours (Cunningham, 2012). Existing studies on China's role as a responsible power and its responsibility in economy were mostly conducted from the perspective of international relations and politics (Gill, 2007; Shirk, 2008; Zhao, 2010; Yeophantong, 2013; Zhang & Austin, 2013; Deng, 2015). They tried to present China's actions in international relations and politics, and then interpret, judge, and define if they were responsible based on certain, but not universally accepted, standards. This leads to difficulties in defining whether China's actual or future movements are responsible or threatening.

Hoo (2013) concluded insightfully that most discussions "focus overwhelmingly on questions of Chinese behaviour". A sole focus on China's responsibilities, as well as China's threats, from the perspective of international relations and politics can slip into the fallacy of oversimplification easily. The rooted problem is that there is a lack of systematic investigation of the reasons behind China's behaviours within the Chinese setting, i.e. China's political ideas of responsible power. Although China voices its stances and takes on actions in the areas that are required by Western countries, it may behave in a different way. Then what is the political discourse that constrains the actions, how does China itself construct the responsibility claim (e.g. how does China position itself comparing with Western views), and how does China justify its actions?

One study made contribution to the research on China's responsible claim and construction from a political economy perspective (Cunningham, 2012). The author examined China's responsibility-related political discourse in different time periods and tried to make links with China's socio-political background and the influence from Western languages, thus obtaining postulations about China's true intentions behind the responsible power claim and behaviours (Cunningham, 2012). There is still space in uncovering the discursive reasons behind the construction of China's responsible claim. Inspired by Yeophantong's insight that "[t]he Chinese have a well-known proclivity to link history to policy" (2013, p. 333), the clarification of what the history is and what the link between history and policy is can help answer the question of policy construction.

Two studies, Hoo's (2013) doctoral thesis and Yeophantong's (2013) paper on *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* made exceptional contributions. Hoo (2013) delineated Chinese perceptions of great power identity and responsibilities and their evolutions with the method of interpretive genealogy by examining China's political documents. Hoo (2013) included sections delineating the histories of China's different perspectives on responsibility, such as the Confucian conception of responsibility in pre-modern China and China's perceptions of responsibility in the 1980s. However, Hoo's (2013) study only synthesised existing academic works and lacked a comprehensive analysis of original Chinese historical literature about the conceptions of responsibility.

Yeophantong's (2013) lengthy paper is another excellent work about China's responsible power claim. She (2013) made a progress that she traced the evolutions of the Chinese understandings of responsibility from Imperial China to post-1978 China by not only closely relating to other scholars' interpretations, but also deciphering China's original historical literature and practices. As a non-Chinese scholar, she insightfully located China's

inward-looking and outward-looking ideas of responsibility at different times, which is a valuable academic contribution (Yeophantong, 2013).

Nevertheless, this study can still be improved from several points. Firstly, the typology of China's conceptions of responsibility can be more distinctively defined. Secondly, the "timeless" (Wang, 2007, p. 65) nature of the link between China's history and policy, i.e. China's borrowing of ideas in policies from historical elements in no matter what eras, can be more comprehensively detected. Thirdly, the link can be more explicitly illustrated if there is analysis of concrete policies, especially specific policies in areas like economy.

The current study aims to, based on the above studies, address the academic gap in studying the political discourse constraining China's responsibility-related behaviours and stances. Specifically, it attempts to bridge the gap by uncovering China's historical understandings of responsibility in sociocultural terms, China's current policies concerning economic responsibilities, and the link between history and policies.

As a summary, the following Figure 2.1 synthesises the above literature review about the external and internal factors behind China's media going-global project and the gaps located.

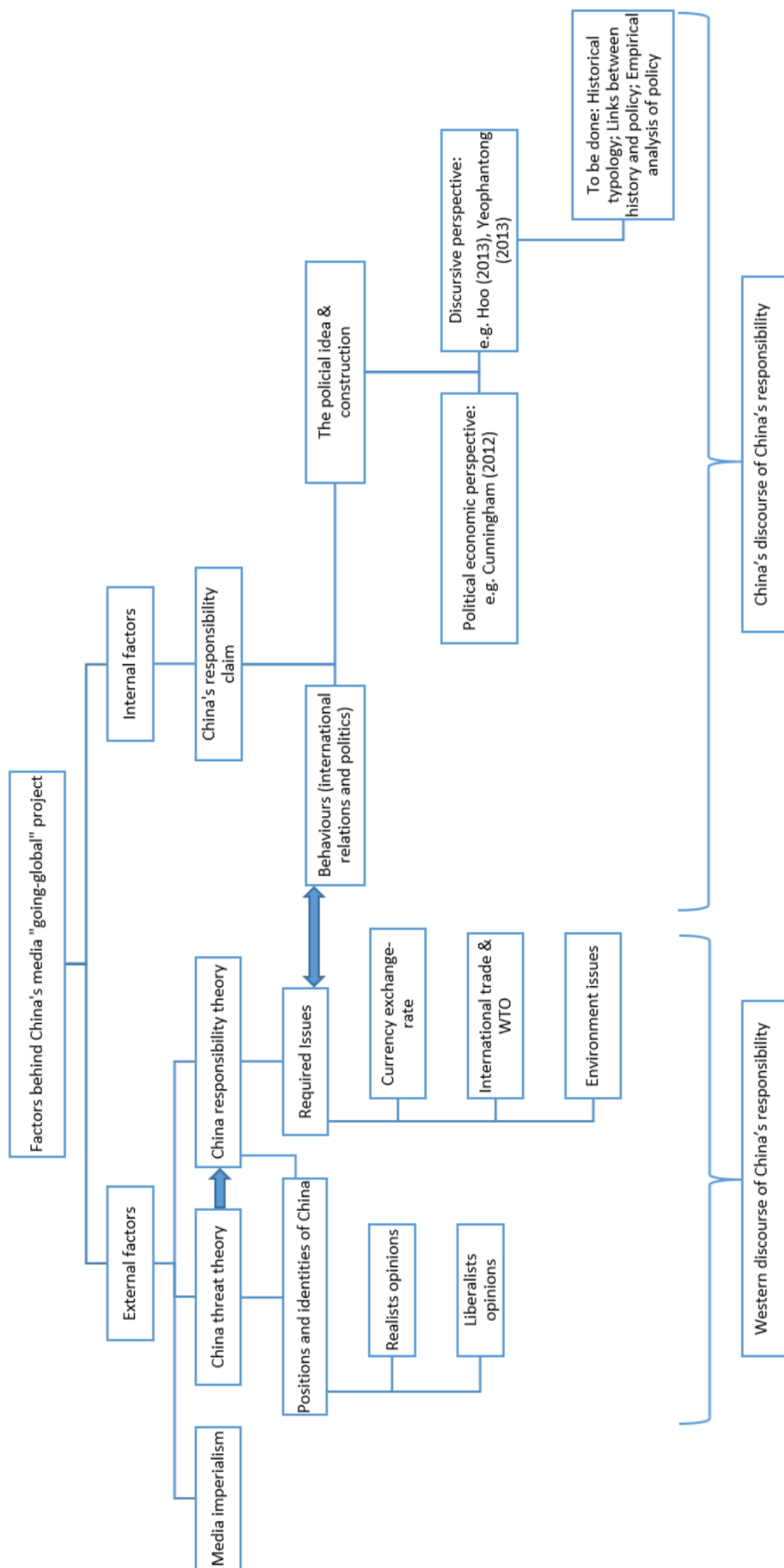


Figure 2.1. External and internal factors behind China's media going-global project and the located academic gaps.

Another point worthy of clarification is that in studies of China's claim as a responsible power, the focus was mostly on China as a political entity and little attention was paid to the responsibilities of Chinese citizens in global economic affairs. Paul Harris (2011) also stressed this empirical and academic blank in the conclusion chapter of the book *China's Responsibility for Climate Change* that too much spotlight was put on the national responsibilities defined within the political geographical boundaries instead of the exact affluent people who were directly responsible for the climate problems. This reveals, from a certain perspective, that the global perceptions of China remain on a macroscopic level. It is only forty years since China opened its door and let herself known to the outside world via the reform and opening-up policy so that a longer time is needed when the academic spotlight starts to focus on the Chinese citizens. This is an intriguing perspective for future academic study. What's more, it highlights the necessity of probing into Chinese issues, such as the current study in the discipline of media and communication, and making China understood through these academic efforts.

As aforementioned, China's responsible power claim is the core message in its soft power projection. The mediation of the political claim in China's external communication and soft power projection is also seldom investigated in the discipline of media and communication, besides a lack of academic attention on the discursive construction of the claim. The next section will review existing literature on China's media going-global project, its messages, journalistic construction, and impact.

### **2.3.3 Studies of China's media going-global project: key findings and approaches**

The global expansion of Chinese media giants, sponsored by the Chinese government, is deemed as one of the key movements of China's soft power practice (Hu, et al., 2013). They constitute an essential element of China's impression-improvement strategies (Sun, 2014). China launched the media going-global project in 2009 and emphasised the role of

transnational media institutions in delivering and branding China's national image to the world. It was reported in 2009 that China would invest 45 billion yuan<sup>11</sup> (about 4.7 billion pounds) in main media organisations (d'Hooghe, 2011), among which the state-run media giants, including China Central Television (CCTV), Xinhua News Agency, China Radio International (CRI), *China Daily*, and *People's Daily*, were the most heavily supported media outlets (Hu & Ji, 2012).

### 2.3.3.1 An overview

Previous research about China's media global expansion in general largely stated the outreach strategies of China's media, examined the influence of China's media presence in other countries, and analysed the political economy factors behind them.

The limited number of studies on the media going-global project per se also fall into these strands. For example, Sun (2014) outlined four major pathways of China's media expansion, in which the state transnational media constituted the main force. Nevertheless, Sun (2015) argued later that China's public discourses behind the going global media policy were contradictory and inconsistent. China-based scholars Hu and Ji (2012) contributed a short paper discussing the internal and external tensions in pursuing a favourable national image through this project. Similarly, Li and Sligo (2012) pointed out the institutional, industrial, and sociocultural obstacles on the way of China's media expansion.

More scholars studied the outbound efforts of individual media outlet, such as CCTV International (Zhang, 2010; Bakshi, 2011; Gorfinkel, et al., 2014; Lee, 2014), Xinhua News

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<sup>11</sup> The statement that the Chinese government would invest heavily on China's media giants is from a news report by Wu and Chen (2009). When the journalists mentioned details of China's project of media expansion, such as the total amount of investment and the respective financial support for individual media outlet, they only used "the source said" instead of a concrete name of the source. There were no other details such as the time-span of the investment in this report. Although some news articles and academic works mentioned the time-span and total number of the investment, such as \$8.7 billion (about 5.7 billion pounds) in 2009-2010 (Mustafi, 2012) and 45 billion yuan (about 4.7 billion pounds) in 2008 (Zhang, 2012), they were all based on estimation. I've found no official statement.

Agency and CNC World<sup>12</sup> (Xin, 2009; Zeng, 2010), and CRI (Chen & Colapinto, 2010). For example, Xinhua has been increasing its presence in Africa through a series of movements, including launching bureaus, formulating targeted news portfolios, offering technical and training supports, and engaging in news exchanges (Xin, 2009). CRI has established various forms of digital services, collaborated with foreign media organisations, and engaged in national image building in broadcasting Beijing Olympics and Sichuan earthquake (Chen & Colapinto, 2010).

Several studies further examined the influence of China's outbound communication, among which many studies concluded its limited influence on global information flow and foreign audiences' perceptions due to problems of production values, professionalism, credibility, and market structures (Xin, 2009; Zhang, 2010; Bakshi, 2011; Lee, 2014). One exceptional study concluded that China's transnational media CNC World succeeded in voicing China's own perspectives that were marginalised by Western media (Zeng, 2010).

Only a small amount of studies conducted media texts, production, and/or audience studies of China's media going-global project. Zeng's (2010) Master thesis is an exception that she conducted a detailed discourse analysis of the news content of CNC World. Lee's (2014) Ph.D. thesis seems to be the most comprehensive academic study of China's soft power projection through media products in South Korea and Japan. His study of media production and audience integrated analysis of materials, such as China's relevant published statistics, local documents, government documents, and local scholarly works, with fieldwork by interviewing Chinese media practitioners.

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<sup>12</sup> The channel CNC World is a direct result of China's media going-global project. It is a 24-hour global English-language news channel. Its parent organisation is Xinhua News Agency and it is owned by China Xinhua News Network Corporation. People all around the world can get access to it through Internet and other portable devices, and audience in more than 60 countries and regions can watch its live broadcasts via televisions (China Xinhua News Network Corporation, 2013).

In summary, previous studies of China's media going-global project mainly examined the expansion endeavours of mainstream media supported by the Chinese government, as well as the problems and influences. It shares similarities with the literature concerning China's overall soft power initiatives as stated in 2.2.3 that the exact messages delivered through transnational media institutions were paid scant attention. Specifically, there is space in examining the messages, their constructions, and influence. This research intends to change the status quo of academic studies on China's media going-global project by focusing on pertaining media content, construction, and impact concerning the soft power message of China-related economic responsibilities.

#### *2.3.3.2 Media texts and China's soft power messages*

Although it is commonly accepted that China widely applied transnational media institutions to disseminate messages as a strategy to obtain soft power, it is a pity that only a limited number of studies probed into what exact messages were delivered and how.

Zeng's (2010) research made a breakthrough in studying China's external communication messages. She conducted a discourse analysis of content from China's CNC World from perspectives of news headline, first read of the presenter, sources of quotations or citations, images, and commentary in seven global issues. She also compared those perspectives with China's CCTV-9 and US's CNN International. Her research findings acknowledged the role of CNC World in voicing China's opinions in major international issues. However, Zeng stopped at comparing the different ways of news presentations in the three media institutions and made no efforts in uncovering what the exact soft power messages that CNC World tried to disseminate.

The paper from Zhang (2013) took a further step that the author examined China's soft power messages, "values and norms", through an analysis of content from CCTV Africa. She focused specifically on one program *Africa Live* and its content *African News, Faces of*



*Africa*, and *Talk Africa*, and examined the news program in a thematic manner. She concluded that China tried to construct a discourse that aimed to challenge the existing US-led world order.

Several insights can be drawn from the above studies. Firstly, only through examining media content can a study make clear what messages and how that the media tries to deliver to its audiences. This can not be achieved by superficially investigating its infrastructure investments and constructions. Secondly, a research can better examine the effects of Chinese media's messages through comparing China's media representations with Western ones.

Nevertheless, the two studies did not elaborate much about the news constructions. An analysis of media messages will be more integral if combining analysis of media texts and their constructions under the influence of different factors.

#### *2.3.3.3 Construction of media texts under discursive and political economic factors and by media practitioners*

As to the construction of media texts, Shoemaker and Reese's (2014) book perhaps offered the most comprehensive guidance. They proposed a five-level hierarchy of influences model which includes, from the macro to micro, "social systems, social institutions, organizations, routines, and individuals" (Shoemaker & Reese, 2014, p. 8). Among the five levels and their subfields, the constructive influence of governmental policies and media practitioners has attracted relatively larger academic attention in studies of China's global media expansion.

*The influence of government* on media texts can occur in an either discursive or political economic way. It was commonly discussed in the latter case, for example, it was extensively elaborated in Herman and Chomsky's (1988) book *Manufacturing Consent*. Specific to the case of disseminating national foreign policies through media platforms, which is a strategy of mediated public diplomacy, Entman's (2008) cascading network

activation model also prioritised the constraint imposed by the president and administration on news frames in the case of America.

Although the interrelationship between government and media in external communication as reflected in Entman's (2008) model fits the case of the United States, it can also be applied to China whose media environment is strictly steered by the government. This can be directed to the range of literature which examined China's propaganda system, which refers to the control of communication systems by the Chinese Communist Party to publicise governments' events and indoctrinate and mobilise the public for the ultimate purpose of power legitimation (Pye, 1978; Brady, 2002). Journalism in this strand is specifically referred as Party journalism in China (Chang, 1989). Media's delivery of information to other countries as a pivotal strategy of China's public diplomacy and soft power projection is also under the governmental supervision (Edney, 2012). It highly resembles Western countries' practice in applying governmentally subsidised propaganda to explain governmental policies to the outside world and remove misunderstanding (Beeley, 1971; Jowett & O'Donnell, 2015). Entman's (2008) model, although without mentioning propaganda, can be seen as a miniature of international propaganda. Although there are trends that the Chinese government is shifting from propaganda to strategies of public relations or public diplomacy, which is in line with China's soft power practice, its progress of transformation and effectiveness were still questioned in scholarly works, especially in the discipline of public relations (Chen, 2003; Chang & Lin, 2014).

Previous studies on the role of the Chinese government in external communication, especially during the media going-global initiative, mainly put foci on the government's organisation and financing of mainstream media outlets. Research concerning the outbound efforts of China's media conglomerates could not bypass a description of the administrative

and financial support from the central government (Xin, 2009; Chen & Colapinto, 2010; Zhang, 2010; Bakshi, 2011; Gorfinkel, et al., 2014; Lee, 2014).

On the discourse level, two studies (Hayden, 2012; Lee, 2014) made a thorough exploration of China's political language about its media outreach and soft power practice. However, both studies stopped at the level of policy introduction and interpretation. They left space for future research about how exactly the political discourse influences China's external communication, for example, its production and texts, and to dig further, how the political language is constructed.

Based on above existing studies of the role of the Chinese government in external communication, this research will delve into the construction factor from the Chinese government in its media's message of China-related economic responsibilities from two perspectives. It will not only consider the direct influence of China's political guidance about media going-global project on China's media representations from a political economy perspective, but also examine the potential discursive influence of China's policies concerning China-related economic responsibilities on China's media texts. Both of China's policies and media texts will be discussed under the backdrop of China's sociocultural environment.

Similar to the above governmental policy studies, previous studies of *media practitioners* in China's outbound communication seldom probed directly into the constructive influence of media practitioners on media product, let alone why. They largely interviewed China's media practitioners for first-hand information to resolve other research questions, such as China's challenges in international communication (Lu, 2012) and China's mechanisms of soft power projection (Lee, 2014). However, neither studies put inquiries on media practitioners themselves to examine what discursive and political economic constraints they were facing and how these constraints influenced their journalistic practice.

Checking from a broader scale, existing literature devoted many efforts to uncovering the discursive and non-discursive constraints that the journalism profession faces, especially in the form of source-journalist relationship. Various studies showed the symbiotic relationship between journalists and their sources, indicating the pressures that this relationship imposed on journalism practices. For example, Sigal's work identified the mutual dependence between officials and reporters for purposes of agenda control and information access respectively (1973), Hallin's study on American media representations of Vietnam War showed that media outlets like the *New York Times* were followers of official perspectives (1986), and Butterick's research on financial journalism revealed the reliance of this industry on companies for information (2015). Herman and Chomsky invented the propaganda model which bluntly pointed out "the reliance of the media on information provided by government, business, and 'experts' funded and approved by these primary sources and agents of power" (1988, p. 2). As to correspondents based in overseas bureaus, they faced more pressures of even getting access to news sources, especially authorities, and their political slants towards this country may impact their long-term ties with the sources (Qian, 2011; Cheng & Lee, 2015).

Nevertheless, some studies questioned the generalisability of the above research findings which were largely based on British and American journalism practices. For example, although it is almost commonplace that powerful and official sources dominate media's framings of certain issues, especially controversial issues like the disease of HIV/AIDS, Williams' (1999) study revealed that non-official sources can also exert influence on media's agendas. Moreover, a study on Swedish media production procedures in the context of election campaigns concluded that the political sources may exert power in journalists' selection of media agenda, but journalists controlled most of the time the framing of news content (Stromback & Nord, 2006).

Besides the preceding debates about the interrelationship between journalists and the obvious sources, such as authorities like government or financial institutions in their home country or foreign country, some studies went deeper into the underlying discursive backdrop. For example, Stuart Hall and his colleagues from the Centre of Cultural Studies at the Birmingham University discovered that the media's reports of mugging can not be separated from the dominant ideologies, besides the influence of the voices of the powerful (2013). Manning's recent study of financial journalism and the 2008 financial crisis revealed that journalists were trapped in "received wisdom" established by "dominant political and regulatory institutions" (Manning, 2012, p. 187).

The above studies illuminate the current research on media practitioners and their involvement in China's external communication. This study will explore if the Chinese media practitioners are also constrained by authorities like the central government and are impacted by various discourses in their construction of China-related economic responsibilities, and how, in China's media system. Moreover, it will also investigate Western media practitioners and the influential factors lead to their news constructions.

Overall, a lack of academic attention was cast on media texts and constructions in China's external communication, let alone those during the media going-global project specifically. Therefore, this research will examine media texts and their constructions concerning China-related economic responsibilities during the media going-global project, aiming to contribute empirical and theoretical data to this domain. Specifically, this study will explore what messages of China-related economic responsibilities were delivered through China's transnational media institutions. As to their constructions, this study will unearth the underlying discursive factors and political economic factors, including the discursive factors of China's sociocultural discourse and political discourse, political economic factor of China's political guidance, and the direct influence of media practitioners.

Previous review showed that some studies paid attention to the influence of China's soft power projection, such as the influence of China's economic attraction and media expansion on other countries. The next section will specifically review existing studies of the standards used in examining the influence of a nation's soft power, public opinion polls and media representations.

#### *2.3.3.4 Potential influence of media texts*

The gauge of the influence of a nation's soft power practice is widely discussed in academia. Some scholars used public opinion polls as metrics while some detected the influence of a nation's discourse on other countries through their media representations.

##### *2.3.3.4.1 Public opinion polls*

Public opinion polls are regarded as effective metrics to explore the influence of soft power initiatives upon foreign publics and its changes as time goes by (Blanchard & Lu, 2012). Existing scholars and public opinion polls have measured foreign public opinions on China's overall image, China's responsibility claim, and China's economy.

##### *Opinions on China's overall image*

BBC World Service Polls, carried out by GlobeScan Incorporated<sup>13</sup> and The Program on International Policy Attitudes (PIPA)<sup>14</sup>, show that world's favourable public opinion toward China in general were not dominant after Beijing's initiative of media going-global project. From 2009 to 2014, the competition between negative views and positive views was manifested in largely similar percentages (See Figure 2.2).

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<sup>13</sup> GlobeScan Incorporated is a global public opinion and stakeholder research firm who conducts custom research and annual tracking studies on global issues (GlobeScan, 2015).

<sup>14</sup> The Program on International Policy Attitudes (PIPA) is a joint program of the Center on Policy Attitudes and the Center for International and Security Studies at the University of Maryland who undertakes research on public and political attitudes towards multiple international and foreign policy issues (Program on International Policy Attitudes, 2015).

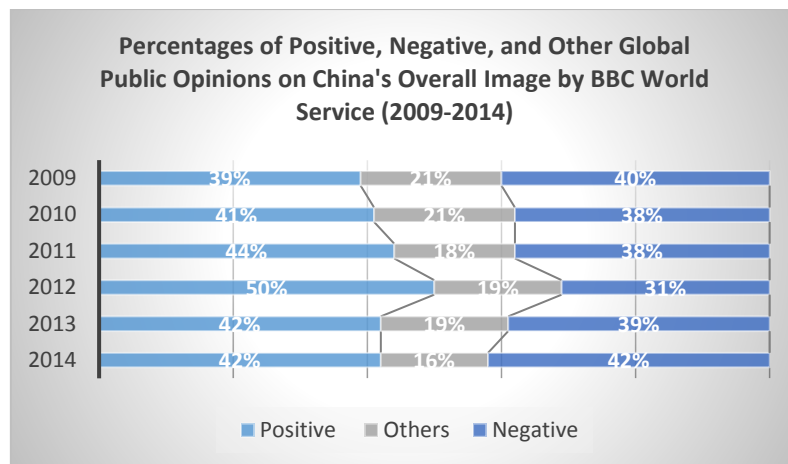


Figure 2.2. Percentages of positive, negative, and other global public opinions on China's overall image conducted by BBC World Service (2009-2014). Source: BBC World Service (2009; 2010; 2011; 2012; 2013; 2014).

Then as to country-by-country rating results, negative views toward China dominated public opinions in the United States consecutively from 2009 to 2014. In the case of the United Kingdom, opinions were largely divided and both negative and positive views were floating but not dramatically (See Figure 2.3 and 2.5).

Besides polls conducted by BBC World Service, global attitudes and trends surveys organised by Pew Research Center<sup>15</sup> also merit attention. General opinions towards China were also largely divided in the US and the UK, and the British had a more favourable view of China (See Figure 2.4 and 2.6).

Figure 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, and 2.6 synthesise the percentages of positive, negative, and other American and British public opinions of China from 2009 to 2014 conducted by BBC World Service and Pew Research Center respectively.

<sup>15</sup> Accessed through <http://www.pewglobal.org/database/indicator/24/>. The Pew Research Center is a U.S.-based nonpartisan fact tank that offers information about issues, attitudes, and trends shaping America and the world (Pew Research Center, 2015).

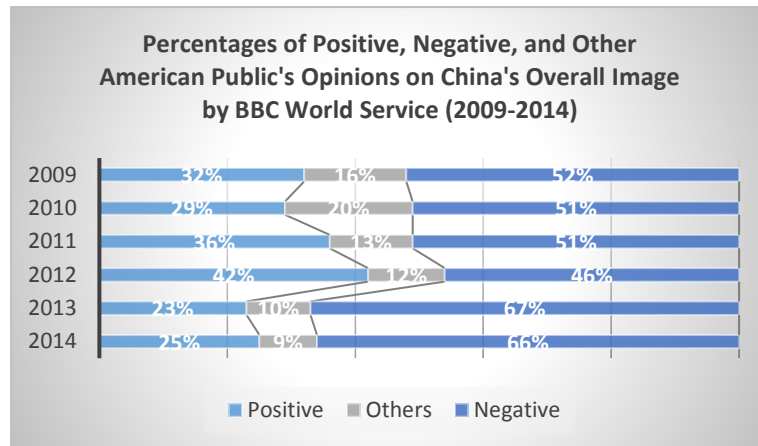


Figure 2.3. Percentages of positive, negative, and other American public's opinions on China's overall image conducted by BBC World Service (2009-2014). Source: BBC World Service (2009; 2010; 2011; 2012; 2013; 2014).

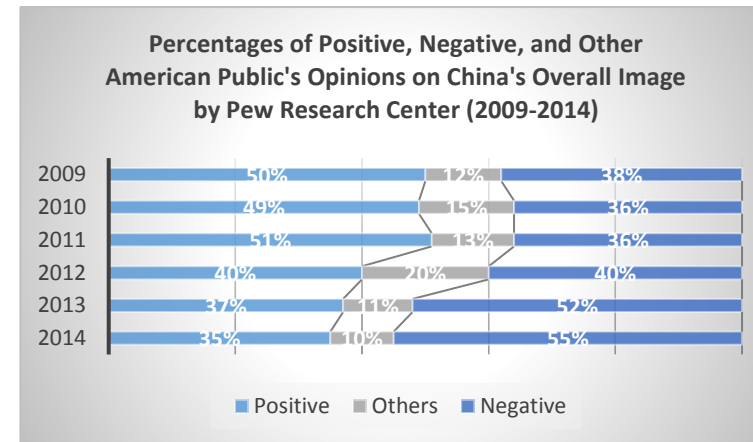


Figure 2.4. Percentages of positive, negative, and other American public's opinions on China's overall image conducted by Pew Research Center (2009-2014). Source: Pew Research Center (2016b).

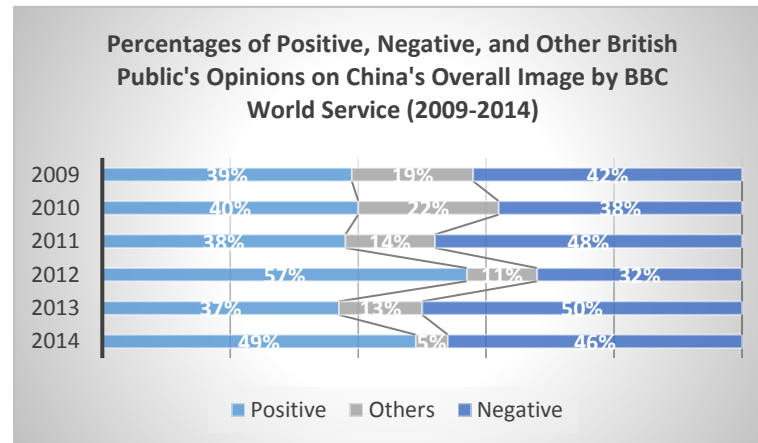


Figure 2.5. Percentages of positive, negative, and other British public's opinions on China's overall image conducted by BBC World Service (2009-2014). Source: BBC World Service (2009; 2010; 2011; 2012; 2013; 2014).

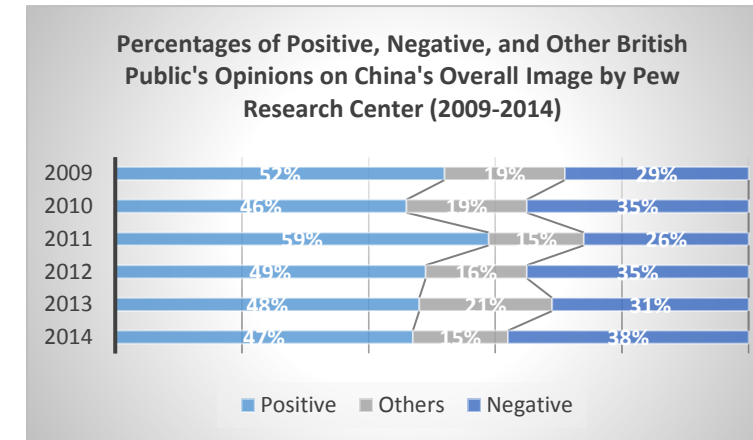


Figure 2.6. Percentages of positive, negative, and other British public's opinions on China's overall image conducted by Pew Research Center (2009-2014). Source: Pew Research Center (2016a).



Data recorded by BBC World Service as shown in Figure 2.3 and Figure 2.5 is largely consistent with that in Figure 2.2. 2012 witnessed a substantial rise of favourable opinions toward China no matter in an overall sense or in specific countries like the US and the UK. Moreover, in 2012, both countries had the largest percentage of participants viewing China positively and the least viewing China negatively. As to global attitudes surveys conducted by Pew, American and British public had a more positive view on China in 2011 with a bigger proportion of people having a favourable opinion on China while smaller unfavourable. It may be assumed that American and British largely held positive opinions on China in 2011 and 2012.

What is similar with the surveys conducted by two institutions with different methodologies is that as to the US, public opinions deteriorated obviously in 2013 and 2014, while data on British participants showed no fixed pattern but stayed consistently around average (43% positive and 43% negative in the case of BBC World Service and 50% positive and 32% negative in Pew Research Center).

In addition to the above polls which consecutively measured people's opinions toward China in the global range, the Transatlantic Trends surveys led by the German Marshall Fund of the United States also asked American and European public about their favourability of China occasionally. The survey findings also showed divided opinions and an obvious deterioration of American opinions on China in 2013<sup>16</sup> (The German Marshall Fund of the United States, 2011; 2012; 2013).

#### *Opinions on China's responsibility*

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<sup>16</sup> In 2011, 42% Americans held favourable opinions on China, while 50% unfavourable, and 52% British held favourable opinions (The German Marshall Fund of the United States, 2011); in 2012, 52% Americans viewed China negatively (The German Marshall Fund of the United States, 2012); in 2013, the percentage of American public viewing China negatively rose to 58%, and only 32% held positive views (The German Marshall Fund of the United States, 2013).

Besides the above polls examining global public perceptions of China, I also referred to surveys specific to people's opinions towards China's image as a responsible power. Polls led by China Foreign Languages Publishing Administration Center for International Communication Studies illustrated that nearly 40% public in both developing and developed countries in 2014 believed that "China is only active in international affairs that are relevant to its own interests, and does not take enough responsibility" (Communication Strategy Research Office of the Center for International Communication, 2014).

This wide-ranging concern for China's unilateral behaviour in international affairs also showed up in a Pew Research Center survey in 2013 that 26 of 38 nations had rather negative views about China (Pew Research Center, 2013). Specifically, 60% American believed that China did not consider too much of American interests and 82% British had same opinions, while only 35% American and 14% British thought China had taken their countries into consideration in global issues (Pew Research Center, 2013). Similarly, a 2012 Pew research saw that 59% Americans did not believe that China considered other countries' interests in their foreign policy decisions (Pew Research Center, 2012).

Moreover, nearly 70% of participants thought that China had been even dodging its international responsibility in a survey conducted by Shanghai Jiao Tong University and Duke University in 2010, which was in striking contrast with China's responsible power claim (Liu, 2015).

#### *Opinions on China's economy*

After a general examination of global public opinions on China's overall image and on China's shouldering of international responsibility, then how about others' perceptions of China's growing economy?

In polls conducted by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs, we can see shifting views of Americans on China's development. From 2009 to 2014, views on the development

of China as a world power as a critical threat to US interests remained relatively stable around 40% (Smeltz, et al., 2014). This largely coincides with the findings in the above global public opinion polls in general.

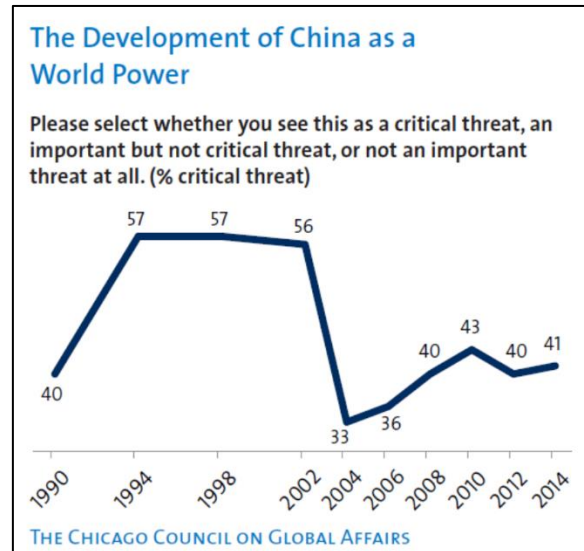
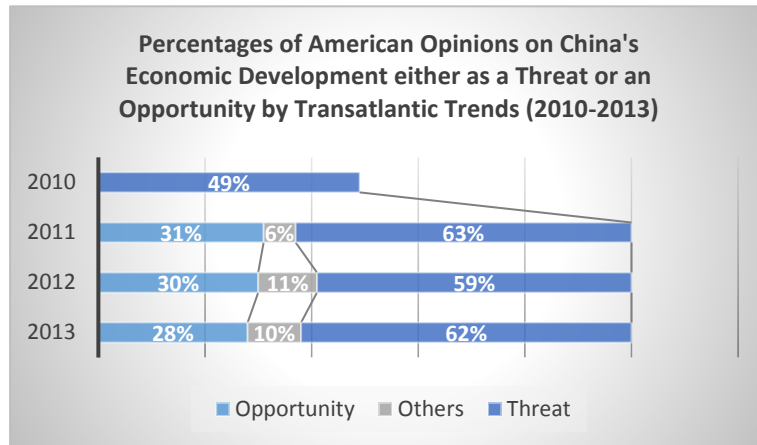
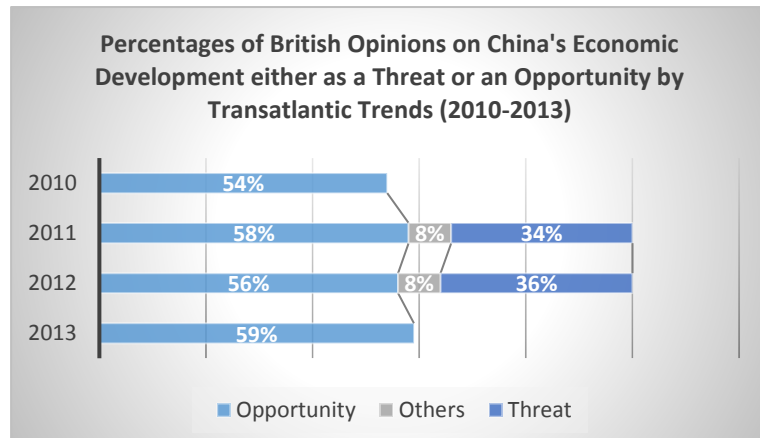


Figure 2.7. The American's opinions on the development of China as a world power from 1990 to 2014. Source: The Chicago Council on Global Affairs (Smeltz, et al., 2014)

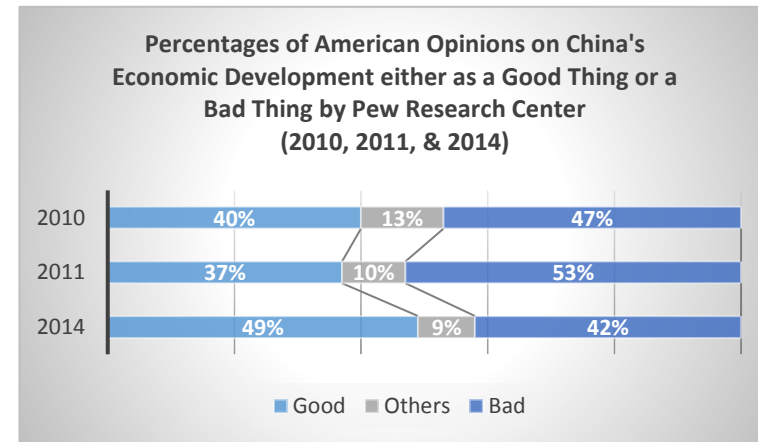
From 2010 to 2013, the Transatlantic Trends surveys also examined American and European opinions towards China's economic development either as a threat or as an opportunity (see Figure 2.8 and 2.10). Similarly, Pew Research Center also asked global participants the question that whether they viewed China's economic development as a good thing or a bad thing in specific years (See Figure 2.9 and 2.11).



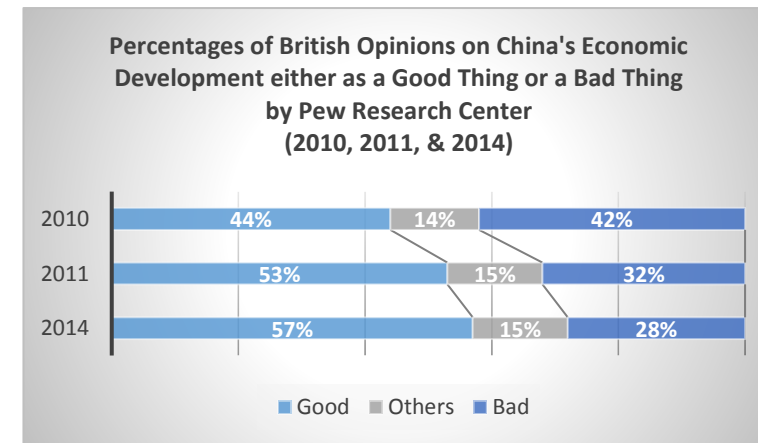
*Figure 2.8.* Percentages of American opinions on China's economic development either as a threat or an opportunity conducted by the Transatlantic Trends surveys (2010-2013). Source: Transatlantic Trends surveys (The German Marshall Fund of the United States, 2010; 2011; 2012; 2013).



*Figure 2.10.* Percentages of British opinions on China's economic development either as a threat or an opportunity conducted by the Transatlantic Trends surveys (2010-2013). Source: Transatlantic Trends surveys (The German Marshall Fund of the United States, 2010; 2011; 2012; 2013).



*Figure 2.9.* Percentages of American opinions on China's economic development either as a good thing or a bad thing conducted by the Pew Research Center (2010, 2011, and 2014). Source: Pew Research Center (2010; 2011; 2014).



*Figure 2.11.* Percentages of American opinions on China's economic development either as a good thing or a bad thing conducted by the Pew Research Center (2010, 2011, and 2014). Source: Pew Research Center (2010; 2011; 2014).

Although data are not complete and the surveys were conducted by different institutions with different methodologies, we can still detect some patterns from the figures. In the case of America, both surveys showed that American opinions turned rather negative about China's economic development in 2011, although their overall opinions on China in 2011 were promisingly favourable as recorded by BBC World Service polls. As to British opinions, they were consistently positive as shown in Transatlantic Trends surveys and steadily rising, on a positive base, in Pew Research Center surveys. Comparing the surveys within one institution, we can see that British opinions were consistently more positive than American opinions with always larger percentages of positive rates and smaller negative rates.

Overall, the above investigations of global public opinions on China's overall image, responsibility, and economic development are far from comprehensive and systematic. Nevertheless, we can still get some useful conclusions. China's overall image was largely viewed positively during 2011 and 2012, but deteriorated among American public from 2013 to 2014 while remained steadily divided among British public as always. However, existing surveys on global public opinions on China's responsibility claim in 2010, 2012, 2013, and 2014 consistently showed others' concerns and distrust. Specific to the area of economy, Americans were consistently suspicious of China's economic development with 2011 witnessing the worst trend, while British public were consistently less negative.

However, it is also obvious that some patterns across different issues are contradictory. Then why these figures? Why did global public perceive China in such a diverse way?

From a technical and methodological perspective, it may be due to the reason that capturing people's thought through public opinion polls has its own problems. For example, people's opinions may vary considerably as time goes by and a single public opinion poll can

only record people's reactions to a particular set of questions at one certain moment (Nye, 2004, p. 18). Moreover, the participants in these surveys were largely restrained by the questions asked since most questions are closed-ended which are designed for time saving purposes and no more in-depth opinions can be expressed (d'Hooghe, 2007).

Besides the above concerns, the various discursive and non-discursive factors that may influence people's values and beliefs should also be considered. Wang Hongying (2011) compared China's projected images with the American perceptions of China from 1954 to 2008 with the aid of public opinion surveys data from the Roper Center for Public Opinion Research and concluded that the factors of the objective or subjective nature of the projected national roles, whether the country's deeds went in parallel with its words, the pre-existing images, and the compatibility of the two parts' languages and cultures may contribute to the survey results. As contended by Liu (2015, p. 257), "public opinion, attitudes and perceptions of China's rise are the outcome of dynamic interactions and assemblage of factors, a synergy of material interests, ideational and emotional reactions, and values, ideologies, principles, unravelling themselves against a highly volatile, precarious and contentious geopolitical backdrop, in which the interests of nation-states and individuals became intertwined and inseparable".

Due to the unstable and vague nature of global public opinion polls, this study will not examine the influence of China's soft power initiatives through polls. Instead, it will probe into the mediated public diplomacy.

#### 2.3.3.4.2 Mediated public diplomacy

In the case of China, it is probable that their soft power projection through transnational media institutions aims to influence mainstream media representations in target countries and ultimately, their political leaders and public opinions. The process that the practicing country promotes its agendas and messages, especially its foreign policies, through

mediated channels and tries to exert influence on the *target country's mediated channels* is defined by Entman as mediated public diplomacy (Entman, 2008).

Entman's (2008) model included multiple layers of influence and actors. Different researchers applied and extended Entman's theory in different manners. For example, some concentrated on cultural congruence between projecting and receiving country and the effect of mediated public diplomacy activities among foreign audience (Fahmy, et al., 2012; Fullerton & Kendrick, 2013). Some were more interested in media content that they investigated the influence of governmental public relations campaign on foreign countries' media coverage of the practicing nation's image (Zhang & Cameron, 2003; Sheaffer & Gabay, 2009). This research focuses on the interrelationship between media institutions in practicing and receiving countries concerning their framings in the context of soft power and public diplomacy initiatives.

Among a limited amount of research on the influence of media in a practicing country on media in a receiving country in soft power movements, research by Cheng et al. (2016) casted special light on agendas and framings of China's president Xi Jinping in China's state-sponsored Xinhua News Agency and their potential influence on US news outlets in China's soft power augmentation. Using agenda building theory and a quantitative research method, the study concluded that there were no significant relationships between Xinhua and US news media in constructing Xi's image, indicating the trivial influence of China's soft power practice through media channels (Cheng, et al., 2016).

Although based on similar research intentions, the current thesis aims to probe into the potential influence of China's media discourse on foreign country's media representations from a different perspective and with a different research method. Firstly, although Cheng et al.'s (2016) study also discussed media framings as a second-level agenda-building process, it did not consider the detail of media texts but only applied a quantitative method to investigate

the affective attributes. Instead, this research plans to go deep into the media texts to detect the media framings qualitatively. Secondly, media's construction of news articles can be influenced by various factors, so is with Western media's framings of China-related issues. Therefore, the ongoing thesis intends to examine the influence of China's media discourse on Western media representations in an exploratory manner, instead of calculating their correlations.

## 2.4 Media Representation of Economic Issues

Representation<sup>17</sup> is a notion used to describe the purposeful construction of reality through language (Chandler, 2007). Meaning is produced through representation (Hall, 1997b). Representations in different forms and channels, like the mass media, about a certain object in a given period constitute a certain discourse. The content of representation includes tangible issues like people, places, objects, and events, and other abstract concepts like class, age, gender, and ethnicity (Chandler, 2014). The concept involves the products of representation and its production and reception procedures (Chandler, 2014), and the products of representation must have gone through meaning-producing practices, or the practice of representation (Hall, 1997b). Based on this explanation, media representation of

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<sup>17</sup> The use of the term representation is not universally agreed in academia, which induces two problems. Firstly, whether representation is related with purposeful construction. Even the linguist Norman Fairclough, whose studies on discourse have a strong flavour of Foucault's theories, does not use the term in a uniform way. In one work, he paralleled representation with reference, neglecting the construction dynamism behind the formulation of a representation (Fairclough, 1992b, pp. 60, 64). But in another work, he contributed a whole part discussing discourses and representations, indicating that representation can go beyond mere reference: "Discourses not only represent the world as it is (or rather is seen to be), they are also projective, imaginaries, representing possible worlds which are different from the actual world, and tied in to projects to change the world in particular directions" (Fairclough, 2004, p. 124). A similar argument was explicitly explained by Hall (2005, p. 60) that representation "implies the active work of selecting and presenting, of structuring and shaping: not merely the transmitting of an already-existing meaning, but the more active labour of *making things mean*" (emphasis in original). This study also assumes that the term representation is closely related to the constructive meaning-producing procedures, i.e. the discourse practice embedded in a discourse. Secondly, whether the term representation can be used in discourse studies other than semiotics studies. It is notable that the term representation is commonly applied in semiotics studies (Chandler, 2007). However, Stuart Hall (1997b) did not confine representation to a certain domain but assumed that the difference between semiotics studies and discourse studies lies in their different focuses on representation. Discourse studies have a more thorough concern of representation ranging from its production to the effects of the knowledge produced through discourses (Hall, 1997a, p. 6). Moreover, representation in discourse studies is an evolving concept which is subjected to the dynamic history and practice (Hall, 1997b). This study acknowledges the use of representation in semiotics studies, but will use the term from the perspective of discourse studies.



China-related economic responsibilities also includes the language in media texts, its construction, and interpretation processes.

International journalistic representations of economic issues pertaining to China, an ascending economy, have caught researchers' eyes. Most of the relevant studies cast light on the products of media representation, i.e. China's economic image portrayed in non-Chinese news media, and dissected the ideologies penetrated in these reports through methods of framing analysis and critical discourse analysis. For example, Li and Tang's (2009) study identified four dimensions of framing strategies in U.S. news coverage of Chinese product recalls, namely the problem identification, frames used, proposed solutions, and information sources. It concluded that the American perspectives outweighed Chinese sources in the U.S. media representation of Chinese products, although the Chinese government invested swiftly on public relations efforts (Li & Tang, 2009). The blame was largely directed to Chinese governments and producers even though the American producer acknowledged its sole responsibility (Li & Tang, 2009). The study showed that existing dominant ideologies and bias in Western journalism still performed in the U.S. reports of the Chinese products recall. It makes me wonder if the current Western media are still guided by these ideologies and apply these framing strategies in their articles of China-related economic responsibilities, and whether China's transnational media institutions make some difference during its media going-global project. These are also the gaps in existing studies of media representations.

Comparing with the above study which focused solely on the representation in non-Chinese media, a comparative study of media representations and framing strategies between Chinese and non-Chinese media may present the contrasts more convincingly. Yin's (2007) study compared the framing of China-U.S. trade relationship in *People's Daily* and the *New York Times* respectively, and concluded that the Chinese media framed the bilateral relation

as pure economic matter, which was quite different from the American media who related the trade relationship with human rights and China's threats.

A limited number of studies further investigated the consumption and effects of the media representation. Yin's (2007) study interviewed 12 audiences to examine their interpretations of specific media texts about China-U.S. trade relationship. The study argued that readers were not completely powerless when consuming news content, but they preferred to accept the imposing media narratives to minimise the workload of oppositional reading (Yin, 2007).

Seldom studies explored the production procedures of media representation of China's economic issues. A restrictive access to media institutions may be the main reason. Moreover, there is loophole in examining the contextualisation of representations. Shan and Wan's (2008) paper, although not focusing on China's economy, may enlighten this study that they elucidated the influence of different cultural roots in China and America on their respective news reports about China's canine regulation.

Overall, same with the body of literature on China's media going-global project, studies on media representation of China's economic issues also lack an integral exploration of its products, constructions, and potential influence. The current research will try to contribute to these areas.

## **2.5 Overall Statement**

Nye's (1990) theory of soft power and consequent discussions emphasised the importance of attraction of values among target foreign publics. However, little efforts were put on the clarification of exact value and message. This study aims to bridge this gap by examining the value and message in China's soft power projection, especially its construction and impact. The exploration centres on two aspects, the message of China-related economic responsibilities and the channel of media going-global project.

The review on the external and internal factors behind China's media going-global project shows the chaotic academic arguments on China's economic threats or responsibilities. Existing studies examined the Western discourse of China-related economic responsibilities. Scholars in favour of the China threat theory defined China's positions and identities in the international community and the corresponding responsibilities. Politicians advocating the China responsibility theory further proposed economic areas for which China should be responsible, such as environmental protection, currency and finance, and international trade. China claimed to be responsible as a counter discourse and engaged in the above areas. Previous research has spent much effort in understanding China's behaviours in the discipline of international relations and politics. However, a simple focus on China's behaviours can not make progress in explaining China's threats or responsibilities. Therefore, much needs to be done in a discursive understanding of China's claim in economic responsibilities in order to know China's discourse behind its behaviours. Moreover, there is also a lack of research on the mediation of China-related economic responsibilities in China's external communication, for example, its media texts, construction factors, and impact. Based on the located academic gaps, the current thesis mainly has three research objectives.

Firstly, clarify the discourse of China-related economic responsibilities in China's policies during China's media going-global project.

Secondly, detail analysis of media texts, construction factors, and impact concerning China-related economic responsibilities in China's mainstream media institutions during the media going-global project.

Thirdly, examine journalistic representations of China-related economic responsibilities in Western media institutions and compare them with Chinese ones to explore the potential influence of China's media discourse on Western media representations.

What bonds the three objectives is their potential interrelationships. Soft power projection is articulated by the Chinese government and promulgated by the outbound communication media outlets targeting at other countries. Its potential effect may be shown through Western media representations. This study is exploratory in nature instead of imposing any predetermined relationship on the three parts.

Therefore, this study mainly attempts to answer the following central Research Questions (RQs). Detailed sub RQs are elaborated in Chapter 3. Methodology.

RQ1 – concerning China’s policy documents:

How did China’s sociocultural conceptions of responsibility potentially influence China’s governmental policies concerning its economic responsibilities during the media going-global project?

RQ2 – concerning the media texts of Chinese media institutions:

How were China-related economic responsibilities framed in China’s transnational media institutions during China’s media going-global project?

RQ3 – concerning the media texts of Western media institutions:

How were China-related economic responsibilities framed in Western media institutions during China’s media going-global project?

RQ4 – concerning the comparison of frames in Chinese and Western media institutions (the potential influence of China’s media discourse on Western media representations):

What were the similarities and differences of frames concerning China-related economic responsibilities between Chinese and Western media institutions?

RQ5 – concerning the media practitioners in Chinese and Western media institutions:

How were Chinese and Western media practitioners potentially influenced by various factors in their representation of China-related economic responsibilities during China's media going-global project?

### **Chapter 3. Methodology**

Political articulations and relevant mediated messages do not emerge from a vacuum. They are shaped by a myriad of historical, cultural, ethical, normative, economic, and strategic factors. As an analyst, I do not take these articulations or messages at face value, but would like to assess them locally and contextually. This chapter is devoted to the description and explanation of the research methodology applied in this study.

This research adhered to a qualitative paradigm. It mainly used words to describe and analyse what exists in the textual materials, aiming to uncover their subtle meanings (Gray, et al., 2007).

It relied on a critical realism ontological position and a constructionism epistemological position, believing that on the one hand, knowledge is locally and contextually constructed, and on the other hand, knowledge can also be influenced by pre-existing factors, such as the political economic background (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Based on the above ontological and epistemological position, as well as the insights from the literature review in Chapter 2, this research relied on the assumption that the knowledge about China-related economic responsibilities as reflected in China's governmental policies and in Chinese and Western media institutions are socially constructed, which can not be separated from rules and conventions of relevant discourses and the surrounding political economic backdrop, and further sustained by pertaining discourse practices.

This chapter firstly explains the main research method in section 3.1, Norman Fairclough's (1995) framework for critical discourse analysis, as well as its understanding of discourse and the Foucauldian origin of this framework. Section 3.2 introduces the methods of thematic analysis and framing analysis to be used in following sections. Sections from 3.3 to 3.7 elaborate the methodologies applied in analysing China's sociocultural practice,

China's governmental policies, and Chinese and Western media texts and media practitioners. It's notable that I accompanied the critical discourse analysis with a discussion of the immediate political economic environment surrounding China's media global expansion in media texts analysis, whose methodology is explained in 3.5.3, and a brief discussion of the financing and organisation situations of three relevant media institutions in analysis of media practitioners, whose methodology is explained in 3.7. The coding procedures with the aid of the qualitative research software NVivo are included in 3.6. The evaluation of the discourse study is explained in 3.8, followed by a brief overall statement in 3.9.

### **3.1 Method of Critical Discourse Analysis**

Based on the research objectives, this study applied Norman Fairclough's (1995) three-dimensional framework for critical discourse analysis. Besides explaining the framework, this section also provides an overview of the term discourse and proposes an operational definition of discourse for this study. It also briefly explains the Foucauldian origin of Fairclough's framework.

#### **3.1.1 Discourse and critical discourse analysis**

The current use of the notion of discourse is heavily influenced by the French philosopher, historian, and social theorist Michel Foucault. He treated discourse "as practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak" (Foucault, 1972, p. 49). A discourse can be seen as an invisible hand which guides a certain way of thinking, speaking, and behaving towards a particular topic (Hall, 2001). Similarly, Burr (2003, p. 66) also had a vivid interpretation of the Foucauldian view of discourse that "a discourse can be thought of as a kind of frame of reference, a conceptual backcloth against which our utterances can be interpreted". Different discourses construct the particular topic in different ways, thus

forming different versions of knowledges and shaping our views of the world in different manners (Burr, 2003).

Foucault himself did not define discourse clearly. He once mentioned that discourse to him could refer to “the general domain of all statements”, or “an individualisable group of statements”, or “a regulated practice that accounts for a number of statements” (Foucault, 1972, p. 80). Although he regarded discourse as a system of representation (Hall, 1997b, p. 44), his focus was on the regulated practice (or the rules, social structure, context, other discourses) which shapes and constrains the construction of knowledge and representation and the underlying power relations.

Inheriting Foucault’s explanation of discourse, Fairclough (2004, pp. 17, 124) referred to a discourse as a particular way of representing aspects (physical, social, psychological) of the world. He expanded Foucault’s focus on the construction rules alone and took a further step by including not only the sociocultural background of representation (can be seen as a focus on the social rules and conventions), but also the concrete representation procedures (text production and consumption) and the text itself (Fairclough, 1992b; 1995). The social and cultural rules and conditions permeate the sociocultural practice, which further implicitly influences procedures of text production and consumption and ultimately the texts. The invisible symbolic power can be detected through an exploration of the dynamism of discursive influences.

Drawing from the above explanations, the current study proposes an operational definition of a discourse as *a system of representation which is constitutive of a certain version of knowledge about a particular topic in a given context and further shapes ways of thinking and behaving*. Firstly, this concept adheres to a social constructionism position by acknowledging the constructive influence of discourse on the shaping of knowledge and people’s perceptions, values, beliefs, and behaviour, which inherits Foucault’s basic thoughts



about discourse. Secondly, inspired by Fairclough's interpretation, this definition offers a more concrete insight into a somewhat floating notion of discourse. It not only considers the rules of discourse by including an examination of context, but also the representation products (a certain version of knowledge) and procedures (constitutive processes).

Based on this definition, this research does not consider the media texts as granted, static, and natural. Instead, it views them as socially constructed by various discursive factors and socially maintained by discourse practices (Burr, 2003). By considering the contextual factors and the construction practices which lead to the final representation products, i.e. media texts in this research, the invisible power relations that shape the construction of texts can be discerned. The closer examination of the relationship between the use of language and the exercise of power makes this discourse analysis critical. Adopting a critical position, the current study intends to investigate not only what the representation products of China-related economic responsibilities are, but also why they are represented in this way but not others by probing into the underlying sociocultural rules and the media production procedures.

To meet the needs of the research objectives, this study applied Norman Fairclough's (1995) framework for critical discourse analysis<sup>18</sup> which involves an integral analysis of three dimensions of a communicative event, namely the texts, discourse practice, and sociocultural practice. According to Fairclough (1995), texts are in forms of written or oral, and the analysis of texts not only includes the traditional forms of linguistic analysis, but also the textual organisation. The analysis of discourse practice involves facets of text production, consumption, and distribution (Fairclough, 1995). By sociocultural practice, it refers to the

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<sup>18</sup> Discourse study has been taken up by researchers from different disciplines, such as social theorists and linguists (Fairclough, 1995). Accordingly, there are multiple research strategies to analyse various kinds of discourses (e.g. media discourse, political discourse, and conversation discourse). They include the discourse-historical approach by Ruth Wodak and Martin Reisigl, the corpus-linguistics approach by Gerlinde Mautner, the social actors approach by Theo van Leeuwen, the dispositive analysis by Siegfried Jäger and Florentine Maier, the sociocognitive approach by Teun van Dijk, and the dialectical-relational approach by Norman Fairclough (Wodak & Meyer, 2009). The analytical frameworks for media discourse alone can mainly be divided into linguistic and sociolinguistic analysis, conversation analysis, semiotic analysis, critical analysis and social semiotics, the "social-cognitive" model, and the cultural-generic analysis (Fairclough, 1995).

wider economic, political, and cultural context in which the communicative event is happening (Fairclough, 1995). The three dimensions are interrelated that the discourse practice bridges the gap between news texts and the wider social and cultural backdrops. News text is the result of discourse practice, which is generated from and shaped by the wider social and cultural settings (Fairclough, 1992a).

This framework for critical discourse analysis is powerful in investigating the representation of China-related economic responsibilities. It has advantages in combining text analysis and social analysis. It can not only go deep into the micro element of texts to examine the final product of representation, but also distil the evolving power relations hidden in the shifting sociocultural principles and practices of the discourse, adding more social meanings to the simple analysis of the text (Hu, 2005). It is notable that the sociocultural principles in this study can be attributed to China's historical understandings of responsibility as stated in the literature review. It also stands out in analysing text and society alone respectively. In terms of analysis of texts, this path of analysis is different from semiotics which focuses on text and sign systems alone and treats representation "as a closed, rather static, system" (Hall, 1997b, p. 42). It also goes beyond ideological analysis which treats text from specific perspectives of race or gender, but has an open vision to the texts and their embedding patterns and meanings (Macdonald, 2003). As to the analysis of power relations, it does not question the notion of power itself. Instead, it assumes "the production of theoretical knowledge as a political practice" and uncovers the dynamism of power effects by inquiring the cultural politics, i.e. the social rules and practices (Barker, 2012, p. 5).

Nevertheless, this Western-originated framework may not perfectly fit into the exploration of communicative events in the case of China. As introduced in the literature review, Entman's (2008, p. 91) cascading network activation model of mediated public diplomacy illustrates the shaping influence of domestic government on the formulation of

media representation. This factor should not be ignored when studying journalistic representations by mainstream media institutions in China, where media are strictly regulated by the government. This study assumes that the journalistic construction of China-related economic responsibilities in China's mainstream media institutions can not be isolated from the influence of government. Therefore, the governmental impact on media texts and production procedures, either in a discursive or a political economic manner as aforementioned on p. 56 in Chapter 2. Literature Review, should also be considered. Moreover, it should be noted that the governmental policies are also exposed to the Chinese sociocultural background.

Therefore, this research is guided by the rationale that the norms and values embedded in the sociocultural backdrop in which the Chinese conceptions of responsibility has been nurturing, the political impact emitting from China's governmental policies, and the journalistic productions all exert potential shaping and constraining impacts on the Chinese journalistic representations of China-related economic responsibilities. Along with the power coming from the media language itself, all these factors may contribute to the generation of China's soft power. This echoes the literature review in 2.2.2 in which previous studies on the identification of media power are discussed. As to the analysis of Western media representations, as a way to detect the potential influence of China's media discourse, it is also led by the rationale that Western media representations are also constructed under the influence of various discourses, in which China's media discourse may have contributions.

### **3.1.2 The Foucauldian origin of Fairclough's framework for critical discourse analysis**

Fairclough's (1995) framework for critical discourse analysis derives from, and is also an extension of, Michel Foucault's thoughts about discourse and discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1992b). This section explains briefly the Foucauldian origin of Fairclough's framework and Fairclough's further development.

Foucault's thoughts are diverse that he once described his books as "a kind of tool box which others can rummage through to find a tool which they can use however they wish in their own area" (Foucault, 1974, cited in O'Farrell (2005, p. 50)). In his early age, Foucault focused on the constitutive nature of discourse in the construction of knowledges. In his later age, his genealogical studies brought the concept of power into the investigation of discourse. Foucault investigated marginal notions, like madness (Foucault, 1988) and sexuality (Foucault, 1990), which, in his view, were not realities but were socially and contextually constructed concepts. Fairclough's (1995) framework combines Foucault's core thoughts at different times and critically develops them.

Fairclough's framework for sociocultural practice analysis is an extension of Foucault's thoughts about the constitutive role of discourse in the construction of society and knowledges. Discourse constructs social entities and relations (Fairclough, 1992b, p. 3). One of its constructive effects is that it can contribute to "the construction of systems of knowledge and belief" (Fairclough, 1992b, p. 64), and consequently, influence ways of thinking and behaving (Hall, 1992). The underlying dynamism is that the rules and practices of a discourse can make certain knowledge possible. Therefore, the sociocultural practice analysis, which circles around other analyses in Fairclough's (1995) framework (see Figure 3.1 at the end of this section), firstly and solely focuses on the rules and conventions in the society around the communicative event in question.

However, this part of framework is vague and ambitious in its range and targets. In his book in 1992, Fairclough's (1992b) analysis of discourse as social practice involved the discussion of discourse in relation to ideology and power. Then in 1995, he (1995) expanded social practice analysis to sociocultural practice analysis by including various aspects ranging from the economics and politics of the media to the wider cultural context of communicative events. But the feature of sociocultural practice is consistent that it exerts influence on the

construction of texts by shaping directly the discourse practice (texts production and consumption) (Fairclough, 1995, p. 60). Therefore, Fairclough (1992b, p. 237) claimed that the general objective of sociocultural practice analysis is to specify “the nature of the social practice of which the discourse practice is a part, which is the basis for explaining why the discourse practice is as it is”. Inspired by this feature, this study aims to discover the main rules and conventions of the discourse of responsibility in the Chinese sociocultural setting, which may have an impact on the discourse practice of constructing China-related economic responsibilities in policies and media institutions.

The framework for discourse practice analysis is based on Foucault’s ideas about discourse and power. Discourse and power go hand in hand in Foucault’s work. “Discourse is not simply that which translates struggles or systems of domination, but is the thing for which and by which there is struggle, discourse is the power which is to be seized” (Foucault, 1981, p. 52). It is interesting that the expression of discourse in China is mostly combined with power and stated as “discourse power” (*huayu quan*) (Bandurski, 2015), which shows clearly the inseparable relationship between discourse and power. It is just because of their intimate relationship that a precise distinction between discourse and power is difficult. But inspired by another explanation that “in every society the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organised and redistributed by a certain number of procedures” (Foucault, 1981, p. 52), it can be postulated that although power is intangible, an analysis of discourse practice, i.e. the procedures, can help to uncover the embedded power relations.

Fairclough’s (1992b) rationale for discourse practice analysis was built upon a clarification of Foucault’s explanation of “discourse practice” (Foucault, 1972, p. 117). Foucault indeed pointed out the importance of practices and techniques in his discussion of power, but he vaguely defined discourse practice as “a body of anonymous, historical rules” (Foucault, 1972, p. 117). He neglected the concrete practices of meaning producing. Instead,

he focused more on the rules of formation and techniques of power, assuming that these indicators can picture straightforwardly the actual practices (Fairclough, 1992b). Fairclough (1995) proposed to probe into discourse practice by narrowly focusing on text transformation during processes of production, distribution, and consumption, which are ways to uncover the underlying power relations. In this study, the discourse practice analysis aims to analyse the constructions of media texts concerning China-related economic responsibilities both in Chinese and Western media institutions and detect the power relations embedded in the constructions.

As the outcome of sociocultural practice and discourse practice, the text as the “static” element of a communicative event also needs to be paid attention to. However, Foucault’s theories lack discursive and linguistic analysis of real texts (Fairclough, 1992b, p. 53). Fairclough’s (1995) framework includes text analysis, which effectively combines social analysis with linguistic analysis. He (1995) inherited the tradition of linguistic studies by analysing vocabulary, semantics, and grammar, as well as the textual organisation. By dissecting texts, he aimed to uncover the functions of discourse in constructing knowledge, belief, and ideology (the ideational function), and the social identities, cultural values, and social relationships between audience and message (the interpersonal function) (Fairclough, 1995, p. 17). This is in line with Foucault’s thoughts about the constructive role of a discourse. This study will also examine relevant texts in policies and media institutions to concretely explore the outcomes of various discourses’ construction of political and journalistic representations.

In summary, Fairclough’s (1995) framework of critical discourse analysis gains much nutrition from Foucault’s thoughts in different periods. Based on his (1995, p. 59) graphic illustration of three-dimensional framework, the specific framework used in the current research is synthesised in Figure 3.1.



*Figure 3.1.* A three-dimensional framework for critical discourse analysis used in the current research, the aim in each dimension, and the overall rationale.

### 3.2 Methods of Thematic Analysis and Framing Analysis

The framework for critical discourse analysis was accompanied by method of thematic analysis and method of framing analysis in analysing different dimensions.

I used the method of thematic analysis in analysing sociocultural practice (see section 3.3) and media practitioners' responses (see section 3.7). Thematic analysis is "a method for systematically identifying, organizing, and offering insight into patterns of meaning (themes) across a data set" (Braun & Clarke, 2012, p. 57). Therefore, it is widely used in analysing unstructured qualitative data. It is based on the premise that "broader assumptions, structures and/or meanings" are selectively articulated and represented in the knowledge (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 85). Accordingly, it is compatible with the current critical discourse analysis, which assumes that a discourse constrains and shapes the construction of knowledge. It is a flexible research method that can be used in an either inductive or deductive manner, or even a combination of both approaches (Braun & Clarke, 2012).

Through a thematic analysis, this research distilled the Chinese sociocultural discourse of responsibility (as represented in dominant themes). Then how did the discourse potentially influence China's governmental policies and media representations? What kind of

central organising ideas were used and what were silenced in these texts? The method of framing analysis helped to answer these questions. I used framing analysis to explore China's governmental policies (see section 3.4) and Chinese and Western media texts (see section 3.5).

Entman (1993, p. 52) perhaps created the most widely cited definition of framing, which also indicates its close relationship with the concept of discourse:

To frame is to *select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation* for the item described. (emphasis in original)

In terms of news frame, it refers to a specific view about the world constructed by media professionals. In essence, a frame can be seen as an interpretive schema (Scheufele, 2000) or a narrative structure (Edy & Meirick, 2007), and goes beyond the notion of agenda which simply refers to the salience of issues. Entman further explained how a frame functions from four aspects:

Frames, then, *define problems*-determine what a causal agent is doing with what costs and benefits, usually measured in terms of common cultural values; *diagnose causes*-identify the forces creating the problem; *make moral judgments*-evaluate causal agents and their effects; and *suggest remedies*-offer and justify treatments for the problems and predict their likely effects. (emphasis in original) (Entman, 1993, p. 52)

Based on the definitions and functions of frame, studies on news frame are mainly divided into two strands. One strand focused on the relationship between news frame and audience frame, which was called “framing setting” by Scheufele (1999, p. 116). Scholars like Entman (1993), Scheufele (2000), Chong and Druckman (2007), Edy and Meirick (2007), and Zhou and Moy (2007) contended that a media frame can exert influence on audience's interpretation of media content. Another strand focused on the relationship between news frame and the surrounding environment, which is usually discussed in studies of the construction of a news frame. Accordingly, studies in this kind were labelled as “frame



building” (Scheufele, 1999, p. 115). Scholars like Stuart Hall et al. (2013), Manning (2012), and Shan and Wan (2008) argued that a certain social context can impact journalists’ perceptions of the world, and consequently, their constructions of media products.

This study also paid attention to the construction of news frames in Chinese transnational media institutions, as well as that in Western ones, and the impact of China’s media frames on Western ones within Fairclough’s (1995) framework. As stated by Entman (1993, p. 52), “a frame in any particular text may not necessarily include all four functions”. Based on the research objectives, this research specifically focused on two functions of a frame: the problem definition function of the policy frames in China’s policies and the news frames in Chinese media institutions and the moral judgment function of the news frames in Western media institutions. It explored how China’s policies and Chinese media institutions defined (constructed) China-related economic responsibilities, and how Western media institutions morally judged China’s definitions (to detect the potential impact of China’s media frames).

### **3.3 Thematic Analysis of China’s Sociocultural Practice**

This research assumes that China’s policies and media texts concerning China-related economic responsibilities were not realities that can be taken for granted, but were constructed by discourses, which regulated ways of behaving and speaking. Situated in the Chinese setting, these texts were very likely to be affected by the Chinese understandings of responsibility in its history. Scholar Yeophantong (2013) identified that China’s historical thoughts provided a rich repertoire for its policy ideas, whose inheritance of the idea of responsibility was no exception. To be specific, the repertoire of China’s sociocultural conceptions of responsibility probably acted as an invisible and unrecognisable guide directing the current discourse practice and final representations of China-related economic responsibilities in different channels. The values contained in the discourse of responsibility

in the Chinese sociocultural backdrop may pass themselves on to the current political and journalistic texts, serving as an attraction in China's external communication with other countries.

Then how to embark on sociocultural practice analysis and how to distil China's sociocultural understandings of responsibility? According to Fairclough (1995), the sociocultural practice can be examined, from microscopic to macroscopic, through the lens of the immediate situational context, the institutional environment in which the communicative event is happening, or the extensive, yet vague, frame of social and cultural backgrounds. The current research put emphasis on the wider social and cultural backgrounds in which the Chinese understandings of responsibility was nurtured, and the analysis of the immediate situational context and the institutional environment was realised in media representation analysis (see 3.5.3). Yeophantong (2013, p. 332) found that China's current political claim of responsibility had "its deep roots in Chinese traditions of statecraft and corresponding visions of world order, with their evolution over time coloured by the country's distinctive moral, social, and political legacies". Inspired by this study, the current research distilled the norms, values, ethics, and their impacted statecraft in the Chinese society centring on the concept of responsibility in a continuum of history. It mainly investigated China's literary and political works which may constitute a comprehensive picture about China's understandings of responsibility. It aimed to provide a typology of China's sociocultural conceptions of responsibility as a repertoire for the following governmental policy analysis and media analysis.

Then how to research on the numerous Chinese literary and political works who defined responsibility? This study mainly referred to China's high school history textbooks as a guide to search China's historical thoughts in which the social conventions are embedded as expressed by well-known Chinese thinkers, philosophers, patriots, politicians, and reformers.

History is a compulsory course during China's high school education. History textbooks are regarded as a state's major ideological apparatus to transmit the approved knowledge and facts to its youth (Wang, 2008). Therefore, China's mainstream norms and conventions are very likely to be taught, inherited, disseminated, and evolved through the Chinese history textbooks.

The original Chinese-language documents to be investigated include not only literary works like poems and essays but also political works like statecraft archives. The problem of Chinese to English translation needs to be addressed. Thanks to the Chinese Text Project<sup>19</sup>, I can dig into the treasury of China's historical works with no concern of translation. This is an online free digital library with the largest database of pre-modern Chinese texts (original Chinese texts and widely cited English translations), including works from Confucianism, Daoism, and other ancient classics (Chinese Text Project, 2015). The translations used on the website are based on either copyright-expired translation from widely known Chinese-English ancient literature translators, such as James Legge, or more recent translations agreed by their authors (Chinese Text Project, 2015). It can guarantee the quality of the translations. It offers a rich repertoire to distil the Chinese conceptions of responsibility. Another useful document is Têng and Fairbank's (1979) documentary survey of China's response to the West from 1839 to 1923. Memorials, essays, and diaries left by Chinese statesmen and reformers are recorded in this book, forming a valuable material to probe into Chinese conceptions of responsibility, especially those towards external issues.

It is worth clarifying the stages of history used in this research. Since this study wants to find out the evolution of Chinese conceptions of responsibility, it should pay special attention to different stages of China's history. However, the stages are divided differently according to different perspectives. This study mainly referred to the division used by Têng

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<sup>19</sup> <http://ctext.org/>; run by Donald Sturgeon.

and Fairbank (1979) that 1839 and 1923 were deemed as the watersheds of the history before 1949 when the People's Republic of China was founded. 1839 indicates "the first arrival of the Western powers in force"<sup>20</sup> and 1923 "the first acceptance of Marxism-Leninism"<sup>21</sup> (Têng & Fairbank, 1979, p. 3). The two special years mark the dramatic social changes in China, which resulted in transformations of its culture, mainstream thoughts, and values, especially those related with China's reactions to the West. This division was useful to guide the examination of Chinese conceptions of responsibility, especially those towards external issues. Thoughts located during the time span from 1923 to 1949 were categorised to the 1839-1923 period since it was an experimental period of communism and theories and thoughts were immature to some extent.

Then how to analyse and synthesise these works? I applied the method of thematic analysis to distil the dominant themes in China's sociocultural conceptions of the notion of responsibility in an inductive manner. It is this discourse of responsibility that shapes people's understandings of and behaviours towards responsibility-related issues. Therefore, the typology of China's sociocultural philosophies of responsibility may have potential influence on China's governmental policies and China's media representations. It guided the following analysis of China's governmental policies and media representations.

However, limitations are inevitable. Since there are numerous Chinese literary and political works containing the idea of responsibility, it is impossible to locate and analyse all of them considering the limited time and resources. Moreover, the locating and selecting of archives by myself can cause partiality easily. This study tackled this problem with the criterion that the selected Chinese-language works are not obscure and are most likely to

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<sup>20</sup> In 1839, Chinese Commissioner Lin Zexu was assigned by the Qing government to destroy the opium stocks of foreign merchants (mainly British merchants) (Têng & Fairbank, 1979, p. 3).

<sup>21</sup> In 1923, Chinese revolutionary Sun Yat-sen adopted some of the methods of the Russian Communists (Têng & Fairbank, 1979, p. 3).

exert influence on the general Chinese public and other texts. Therefore, the Chinese high school history books seem to be the best guide.

Lastly, I feel necessary to explain the difference between my discussion of China's discourse of responsibility in China's sociocultural setting in a continuum of history and Foucault's (1972) explanation of discourse and history. Foucault (1972) rejected the notion of totality, system, or structure, while emphasised ruptures in history. He (1972) used the concept of episteme to describe the different discursive formations in different periods, highlighting the discontinuities of history. I also admit that the ideas of responsibility probably go through changes in China's history because of diverse social conditions. However, this study only intends to know the dominant themes in the conceptions of responsibility instead of drawing a full-scale picture, and the same with my following discussions of dominant frames in policies and media texts.

### **3.4 Framing Analysis of China's Governmental Policy**

This section introduces the methodology applied in the framing analysis of China's governmental policies, including the sampling time span, sampling population, and sampling procedures. Guided by RQ1, the construction of China's policies under the influence of China's sociocultural context, the sampling of Chinese governmental policies is described as below.

The sampling time span begins from 2009 (included) to 2014 (included), when this study started. It is worth mentioning why the year 2009 was chosen as the starting point of China's media going-global project, on which there is no consensus since no official document clearly indicates it. One report said that the going-global project of China's press and publication began from 2003 (Wang, 2012). The official announcement of the going global strategy for Chinese culture and media industries overall was issued in 2006 in China's 11<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan for State Cultural Development (Xinhua News Agency, 2006). However,

some scholars (Hu & Ji, 2012; Zhao, 2013) maintained that the going-global of media initiated from 2009, when some major movements took place, for example, CCTV's revamp of the 24-hour English-language news service CCTV News, Xinhua News Agency's launch of the 24-hour English-language television channel CNC World, and *China Daily's* expansion in overseas distribution and bureaus. Therefore, the current study also considered that China's media going-global project started from 2009.

The sampling population can be defined as all Chinese governmental policies concerning China-related economic responsibilities released during 2009 to 2014. However, it goes beyond my capability to dig out every pertinent policy expressed by both Chinese central government and local governments. Instead, this research used a nonprobability sampling method, specifically, a purposive sampling method, by focusing on relevant policies released on the official website of The Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China<sup>22</sup> (Gray, et al., 2007; Riffe, et al., 2014). This website is a portal that houses the most comprehensive information about governmental affairs at different levels, serving as a proxy for the Chinese government (The Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China, 2006). It is an important part of China's e-government strategies, aiming at informing the Chinese public of important issues and acting as a platform for the interaction between the public and the Chinese government (The Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China, 2006).

Although this website has an English version, it is not well-built for a keyword search. Instead, this study located documents through the Chinese version, and searched official translations of the Chinese-language documents in the English version website. The documents were located by searching with the keyword "a responsible great power" (负责任大国, *fu zeren daguo*) in the search box on the main page of the website in a restricted time

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<sup>22</sup> <http://www.gov.cn/>

span from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2009 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2014. 1994 pieces of documents were searched out, but only 133 pieces were kept. Although this research only focuses on China-related economic responsibilities in specific areas of environmental protection, currency and finance, and international trade, it is not achievable to retrieve documents specifying on these aspects through a mere keyword search. It is because that the three aspects contain many branches and the searching service in the website is not advanced enough. Moreover, some articulations of responsibility are general and all-inclusive, within which may contain responsibility in the above three areas. Therefore, the only way to select documents is checking piece by piece.

Complying with the criterion qualitative sampling strategy (Miles & Huberman, 1994), I kept documents meeting the three standards: (1) The notion of responsibility was either closely or loosely connected with the three specific issues in environmental protection, currency and finance, and international trade. The issue of environmental protection refers to China-relevant issues concerning climate, energy, pollution, desertification, and animal protection, and the occasions can be about regulations, technology, negotiations, and industry, and so on. The issue of currency and finance refers to issues pertaining to China's currency-related policies and reforms. International trade means issues about China's stances and behaviours in free trade areas and zones, international trade agreements and systems, and bilateral and multilateral trade cooperation, and so on. (2) The notion of responsibility was used as one should accomplish its duties. A special case was that the duty itself referred to accept or handle its fault, culpability, or nonfeasance, which has already happened. (3) In the article, the Chinese government or the leadership at no matter central or local level, or a specific group within which China is a member (e.g. the BASIC countries- China, India, Brazil, and South Africa), was deemed as either the bearer of economic responsibilities or the one who asked others to take on responsibilities, and articulated responsibility in a first-

person tone. This study did not consider the policies' difference in length and functions in terms of communication.

Altogether, the selected documents included addresses delivered by major political leaders in different occasions domestically and internationally towards specific groups of audiences (e.g. Chinese president Xi Jinping's address at the National Congress of Brazil and Chinese premier Li Keqiang's address at the Ninth East Asia Summit), published remarks by major political leaders and Ministries and Commissions in Chinese and Western media institutions and on the official website of Ministries and Commissions (e.g. Chinese foreign minister Wang Yi's remark on *New Europe*), official documents from Ministries and Commissions, dialogues (with complete transcripts) between political leaders and other people, interviews (with complete transcripts) with political leaders by media institutions, joint statements between the Chinese and other countries' governments, and major press conferences (with complete transcripts) hosted by Ministries and Commissions. A list of the names (original Chinese names and English translations) and release dates of the documents were recorded in Appendix 2.

### **3.5 Framing Analysis of Chinese and Western Media Texts Accompanied by A**

#### **Political Economy Perspective**

This section explains in detail the selection of Chinese and Western media institutions, the sampling procedures, and the accompanied political economy perspective.

#### **3.5.1 A selection of Chinese and Western media institutions**

This part of media texts analysis aimed to figure out what the Chinese and Western journalistic representations of China-related economic responsibilities were and how they were framed and constructed, especially in the case of Chinese media institutions, during China's media going-global project. Therefore, the sampling population should consider all



media content concerning China-related economic responsibilities in all Chinese and Western media institutions.

Nevertheless, sampling in qualitative studies is meant to be purposive (Miles & Huberman, 1994). To make this study purposive and manageable, I used the same method of nonprobability purposive sampling as the one used in policy sampling (Gray, et al., 2007; Riffe, et al., 2014). This study sampled relevant news articles produced by three content sources, namely the China-based Xinhua News Agency, the US-based *The Wall Street Journal*, and the UK-based *Financial Times*. The research findings based on the three cases may be applied to other Chinese or Western media institutions focusing on China-related economic responsibilities (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

As to the China case, this research used news texts retrieved from the China Focus column of Xinhua News Agency<sup>23</sup>. It is based on the following reasons. Xinhua News Agency is the official and largest state news agency in China and has long been serving as “a government bureaucracy and a political and ideological apparatus for the ruling Chinese Communist Party (CCP)” (Hong, 2011, p. 377). As to its influence, “it functions as an official news authority which was and to a large extent still is responsible for setting the general tone for other media outlets to cover politically sensitive events” (Xin, 2006, p. 7). As China has

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<sup>23</sup> As a direct result of China’s media going-global project, CNC World may be the best case to examine China’s soft power projection. However, its online archive is incomplete and I’ve experienced multiple difficulties trying to access the channel’s internal database. I finally decided not to use it for the following reasons. Thanks to my internships in Xinhua, I’ve contacted about fifteen acquaintances working in Xinhua, including those working in CNC, but no one was willing to offer help due to the regulation of Xinhua since passing information to others in a foreign country could be very sensitive. I’ve also contacted the person who is in charge of the website of CNC World. Since the two programs, World News and China Report have four and two editions respectively every day, ideally there will be four and two updates on their website, but only one of both is recorded on the website. The manager of the website responded that it was because of lack of enough human resource. As to the missing of transcripts, she gave the answer that it was because of regulation. I’ve also asked if there are ways to get access to the previous news videos and transcripts through their internal database. She replied that even their working staff had to gain the permission from the department leaders or channel leaders, who never replied my request. I also got in contact with the president of Xinhua London Bureau in person, who said that CNC World was in its nascent stage when its major managers were still probing its future development. The president said that it may not be proper to be studied at this stage since it has produced little influence among foreign audiences yet.

been pursuing wider and deeper influence on the global arena, especially in the facet of soft power projection, Xinhua News Agency acts as a pioneer of this worldwide strategic endeavour (Hong, 2011).

Among different services provided by Xinhua, Xinhua General News Service is an authoritative English-language source for information on Chinese government affairs, economic performance, and Chinese views on world affairs (LexisNexis, 2015b). It targets at foreign readers (Xinhua News Agency, 2015). Furthermore, in Xinhua General News Service, the China Focus column, launched in 2002 by the Department of Chinese News for Overseas Services, is the first one that is dedicated to introducing China's current affairs to overseas audiences and building a positive image of China in the international arena (All-China Journalists Association, 2008; China Press and Publishing Website, 2008). To enhance the effectiveness of the media's external communication, this column insists on three principles, namely being close to China's factual development, keeping track of foreign audiences' demand for China-related information, and satisfying foreign audiences' reading and thinking habit (China Press and Publishing Website, 2008). It serves as the most prominent news product in Xinhua to introduce China to the world (All-China Journalists Association, 2008).

Among Western business media outlets, *WSJ* and *FT* are two major competitors<sup>24</sup> (Select Committee on Communications, 2008). They were selected based on the following considerations. Firstly, they may have greater focus on China and its economy. Both newspapers focus extensively on business, financial, and economic issues happening around the world. It is probable that there are larger numbers of articles, covered in a Western way,

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<sup>24</sup> It is notable that *FT*'s editor Lionel Barber admitted himself that the *WSJ* was the number one competitor for *FT* (Select Committee on Communications, 2008).

about China-related economic responsibilities in the two media outlets. A research by Sparks (2010) confirmed the substantial attention from the British *FT* on China.

Secondly, they may set Western political and public agendas and frames and may be the target of China's mediated public diplomacy. Both are respectable English-language elite daily newspapers enjoying a large readership from both print and electronic subscriptions. The *WSJ* is America's largest newspaper measured by total circulation<sup>25</sup> (News Corp, 2017b) comparing with all other American newspapers including the ones specialised in business (Alliance for Audited Media, 2013). The *FT* also has a massive daily circulation (720,000) in the UK (Pearson, 2014). What's more, they are the top two economy news outlets measured by readership habits among senior corporate and financial decision makers in the world's largest financial institutions (Global Capital Markets, 2011).

### **3.5.2 Sampling procedures**

Although I prioritise the answering of RQ2 and RQ3, I also consider whether the sample size is manageable for a qualitative discourse study if it includes all relevant news articles from 2009 to 2014 in the three media institutions.

First, what news articles are relevant? Obviously, all articles concerning China-related economic responsibilities in the three areas are relevant. I used different complete databases for the keyword searching within the time span from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2009 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2014: Nexis UK for Xinhua News Agency (source: Xinhua General News Service) and *FT* (source: Financial Times (London) – older than 30 days<sup>26</sup>) and ProQuest for *WSJ* (source: Wall Street

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<sup>25</sup> According to *WSJ*, its Global Edition, including The Wall Street Journal, the Asia Edition of The Wall Street Journal, and the Europe Edition of The Wall Street Journal, has a global circulation of 1,302,564 in 2016 (The Wall Street Journal, 2017).

<sup>26</sup> According to the source information described by LexisNexis (2015a), there may be up to 3 UK editions of *Financial Times* that are marked London Edition 1, London Edition 2 and London Edition 3. There are 2 US editions (USA Edition 1 and USA Edition 2), 2 European editions (Europe Edition 1 and Europe Edition 2) and 1 edition from Asia (Japan Edition 1) covering Tokyo and Hong Kong. This database is based on the first London edition plus additional unique content from the later London editions and non-UK editions. The current research used relevant news texts in whichever edition searched out in this database since they all manifest the stance of *FT*.

Journal, Eastern edition database<sup>27</sup>). Keywords used for Xinhua samples were “China Focus and responsible, responsibly, or responsibility”, for *FT* and *WSJ* samples were “China and responsible, responsibly, or responsibility”. I sifted through the located news articles with the same qualitative sampling strategy and standards (1) and (2) as those used in policy sampling (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The only difference is that I also included news articles with the notion of responsibility that was articulated by different sources with different tones since I would like to know how China’s political discourse influenced all journalistic representations of China-related economic responsibilities. This study did not abandon opinion articles (e.g. comments, insights, letters to the editor) since both normal news stories and opinion articles can construct China-related economic responsibilities. The numbers of the kept news items released from 2009 to 2014 in the three media institutions are recorded in Figure 3.2.

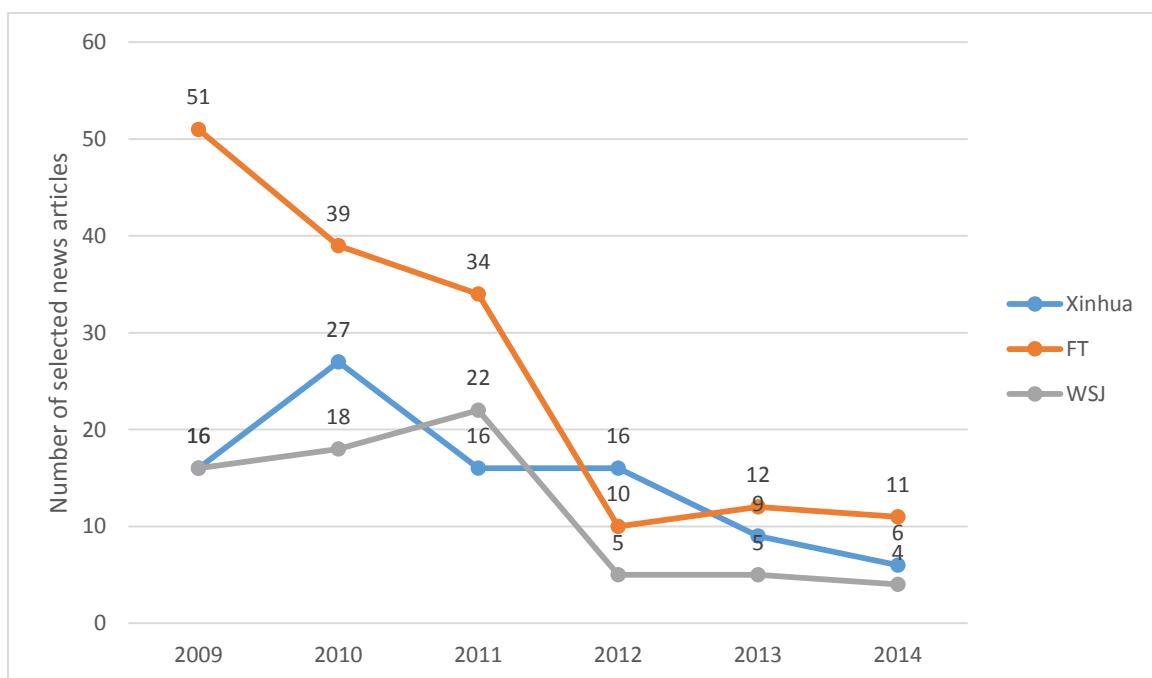


Figure 3.2. Samples from Xinhua News Agency, *WSJ*, and *FT* from 2009 to 2014: year of publication and number of samples.

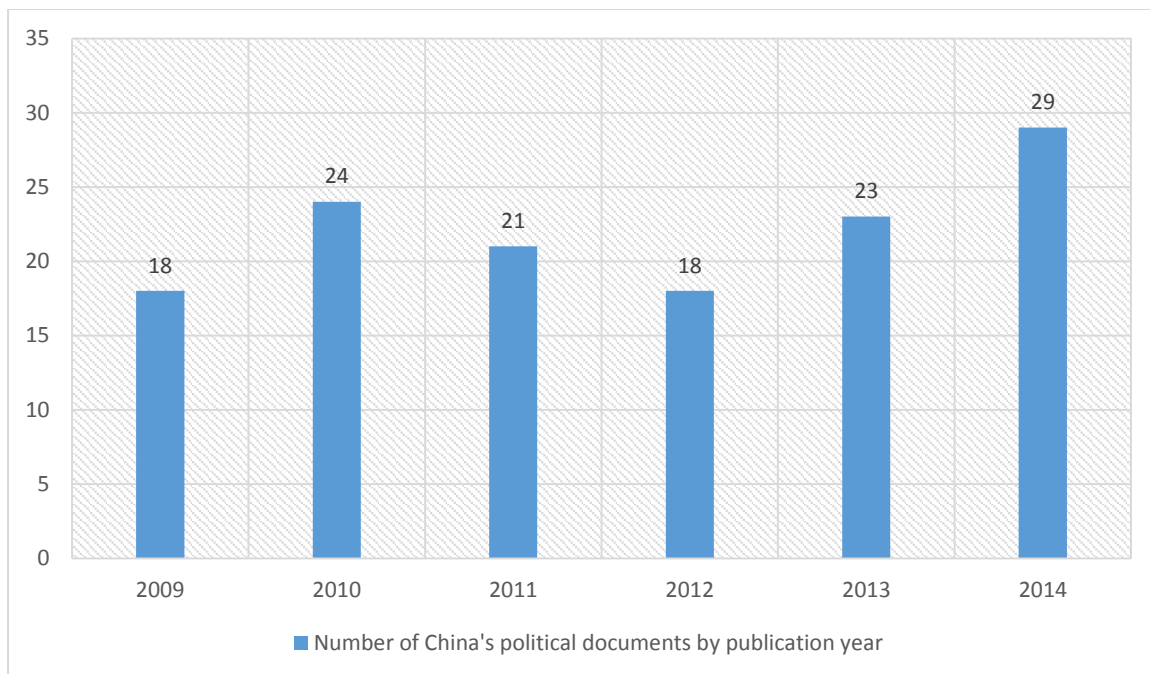
<sup>27</sup> According to the information offered on the official website, this newspaper comprises The Wall Street Journal, the Asia Edition of The Wall Street Journal, and the Europe Edition of The Wall Street Journal (The Wall Street Journal, 2017). What’s more, the U.S. edition consists of the Eastern, Central, and Western editions (The Wall Street Journal, 2017). The current research used news texts from the U.S. Eastern edition, which is the most common edition and the only available one in the database ProQuest.

Secondly, does it have to include all news articles in all the six years, which sums up to 317? Obviously, the total number goes beyond a modest size of samples needed by a qualitative discourse study. Going back to the standard of qualitative studies sampling, which is to be purposive (Miles & Huberman, 1994), I redesigned the sampling strategy, aiming to effectively fulfil the objectives of this study: the dominant frames of China-related economic responsibilities in Chinese and Western media institutions during China's media going-global. In another word, the research findings of the dominant frames better can be applied to other contexts. How about samples in several featured years?

Then which years? When did China's media, as well as Western ones, most likely develop dominant frames? We can see from Figure 3.2 that the three media institutions do not share the same years when the peaks and bottoms of numbers of articles appear, even though they all largely go through a downside trend. It can be assumed that they had different agendas in each year among the six years. A selection of individual years merely according to the numbers of news articles can not guarantee that the comparison between Chinese and Western media institutions is convincing. Back to the research intentions again, this study mainly attempts to examine the frame constructions of China's media and China's frame influence on Western media. Therefore, it is proper to select years when China probably devoted more efforts to constructing its discourse and disseminating its messages on the one hand, and when Western countries paid more attention to China-related issues on the other hand. Among the six years, the year 2010 witnessed China's host of Shanghai Expo (May 1, 2010-October 31, 2010) and 2014 Beijing APEC (November 5, 2014-November 11, 2014). Both events were international in scope so that they may be taken advantage by the Chinese government to deliver its values. What's more, since wide-ranging attention was cast upon this country, it is probable that mainstream media in Western countries had more responses to

China's messages. In addition, sampling periods in existing literature were also based on influential real-world events (Cheng, et al., 2016).

To confirm my postulation, I used numbers of political documents that I've collected for governmental policy analysis. Figure 3.3 shows numbers of China's political documents concerning China-related economic responsibilities by publication year from 2009 to 2014. The visual outcomes show clearly the peaks and troughs of the distribution of the political articulation by the Chinese government. Specifically, it uncovers whether the articulation was paid more attention during 2010 and 2014.



*Figure 3.3.* Number of documents concerning China-related economic responsibilities by publication year (2009-2014) on the official website of the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China.

Figure 3.3 shows that documents released in 2010 when Shanghai Expo was held and in 2014 when Beijing APEC was held outnumbered those released in other four years. It is now safer to conclude that the articulation of China-related economic responsibilities was paid more attention, although not in a sharp advantage, by the Chinese government during the two years. Therefore, there is a higher possibility that it exerted more influence on frames in Chinese mainstream media, who set tones for news articles in these kinds. Based on the

above reasons, it is worth exploring Chinese and Western media representations of China-related economic responsibilities in 2010 and 2014 specifically.

However, there remains a question that whether I should use samples released during the exact days of the two events or the ones in the two whole years. Once again, I used numbers of Chinese governmental policies as a guide. Figure 3.4 presents the number of China's political documents by publication date in 2010 and 2014.

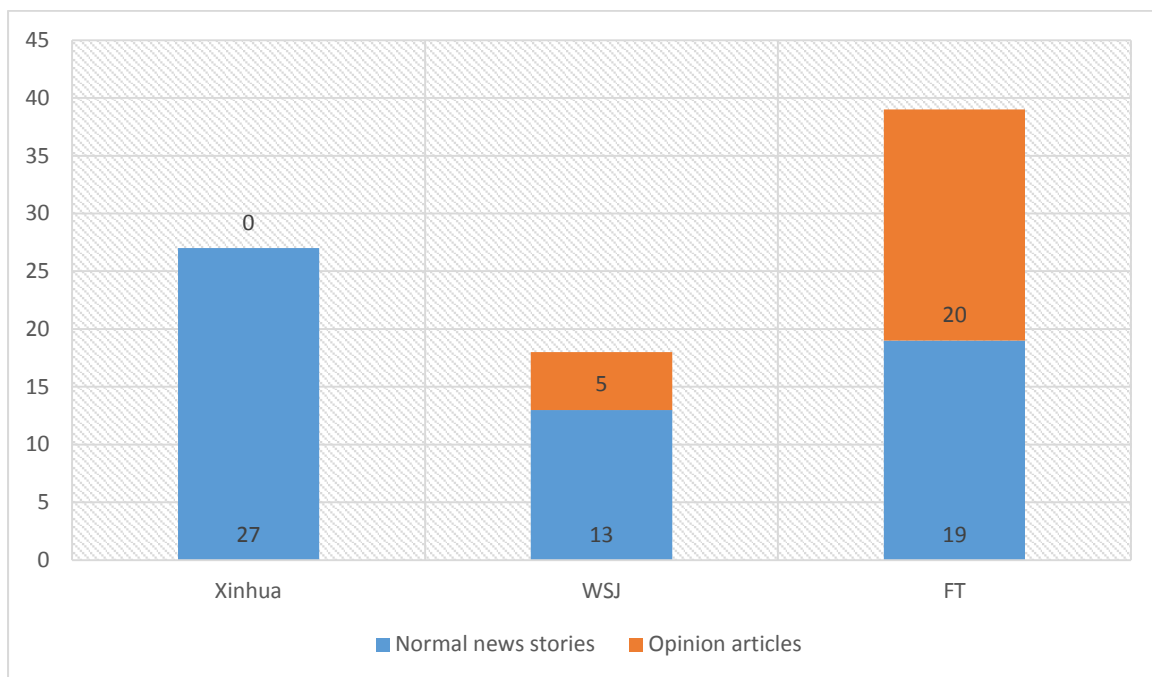


*Figure 3.4.* Number of documents concerning China-related economic responsibilities by publication date in 2010 and 2014 on the official website of the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China.

It can be seen from Figure 3.4 that the peaks, 8 documents in January 2014 and 6 documents in November and December 2010, do not appear within the time spans of the 2010 Shanghai Expo and the 2014 Beijing APEC. The 6 documents in November and December 2010 follow the closing of Shanghai Expo while the 8 documents in January 2014 appear far ahead of the beginning of Beijing APEC. It can be postulated that the Chinese government's strategy of disseminating China-related economic responsibilities is a slowly moving course that may be complicatedly designed. Accordingly, an analysis of relevant

media articles in the two years may be more fruitful than a mere focus on those released in the exact days of the two events.

Finally, a total number of 105 news articles from Xinhua (33), *FT* (50), and *WSJ* (22) are selected as samples (see Appendix 3 for their basic information: release data, title, and type). Figure 3.5 and Figure 3.6 present numbers of sampled news stories and opinion articles in the three media institutions in 2010 and 2014.



*Figure 3.5.* Numbers of normal news stories and opinion articles concerning China-related economic responsibilities in Xinhua, *WSJ*, and *FT* in 2010.



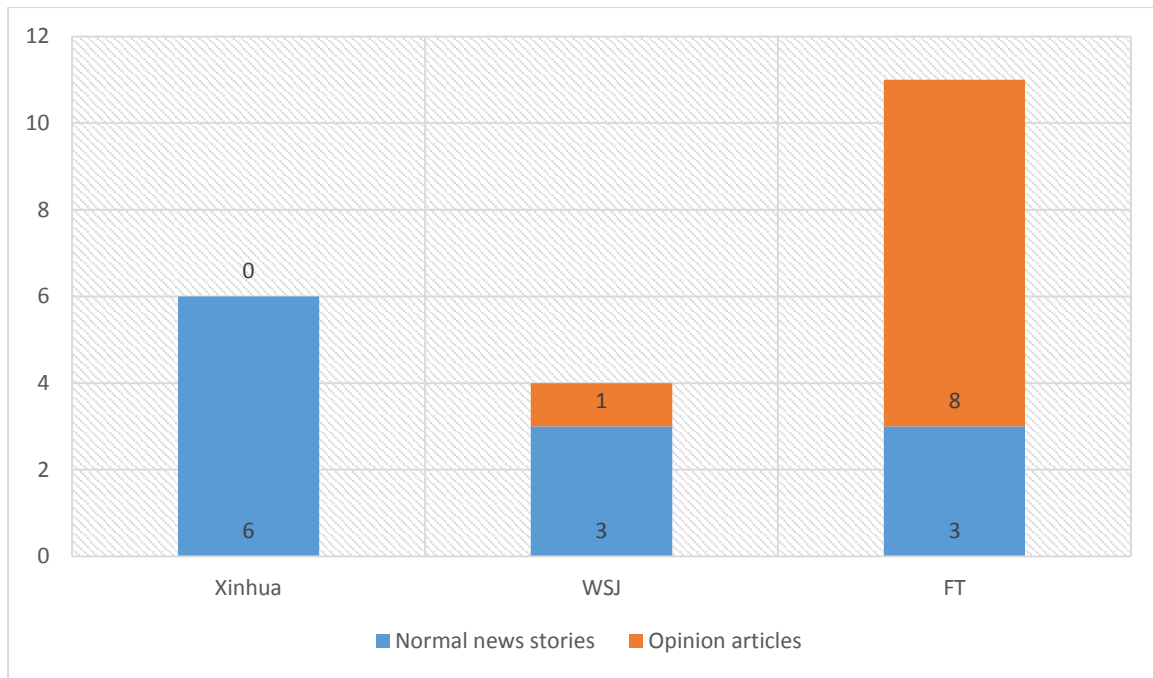


Figure 3.6. Numbers of normal news stories and opinion articles concerning China-related economic responsibilities in Xinhua, *WSJ*, and *FT* in 2014.

Based on the above sampling procedures, RQ2, RQ3, and RQ4 can be detailed as follows:

RQ2a: How were China-related economic responsibilities framed in Xinhua News Agency during 2010, a special year when Shanghai Expo was held?

RQ2b: How were China-related economic responsibilities framed in Xinhua News Agency during 2014, a special year when Beijing APEC was held?

RQ3a: How were China-related economic responsibilities framed in *WSJ* during 2010, a special year when Shanghai Expo was held?

RQ3b: How were China-related economic responsibilities framed in *FT* during 2010, a special year when Shanghai Expo was held?

RQ3c: How were China-related economic responsibilities framed in *WSJ* during 2014, a special year when Beijing APEC was held?

RQ3d: How were China-related economic responsibilities framed in *FT* during 2014, a special year when Beijing APEC was held?

RQ4a: What were the similarities and differences of frames concerning China-related economic responsibilities between Xinhua News Agency, *WSJ*, and *FT* during 2010, a special year when Shanghai Expo was held?

RQ4b: What were the similarities and differences of frames concerning China-related economic responsibilities between Xinhua News Agency, *WSJ*, and *FT* during 2014, a special year when Beijing APEC was held?

### **3.5.3 A political economy perspective**

Besides the textual analysis, this research also intended to introduce the immediate political guidance about China's media going-global project, aiming to set the situational and institutional scene for media texts analysis. It also realised a political economic understanding of the potential construction factors from the Chinese government behind China's media representations as discussed in Chapter 2. Literature Review.

This study synthesised documents concerning China's media going-global project by the Chinese government and politicians, which were scattered in previous academic works. It mainly focused on documents by key figures, such as former president Hu Jintao who initiated soft power practice, Zhao Qizheng who served as the former minister of China's State Council Information Office (SCIO), and Li Changchun who was the member of the Standing Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee Political Bureau and former chief of public relations. Both of Zhao and Li engaged in China's external communication.

It also examined a series of documents by China's General Administration of Press and Publication (GAPP), who regulates China's media and works under the direct control of China's Central Propaganda Department (Brady & Wang, 2009). The documents mainly included *Guidelines for Deepening Press and Publication System Reform* (GAPP, 2009), *Guidelines for Deepening Development of Press and Publication Industry* (GAPP, 2010),

*Development Plan for Press and Publication during the 12th Five-Year* (GAPP, 2011b), *Development Plan for the Going-Global Initiative of Press and Publication Industry during the 12th Five-Year* (GAPP, 2011a), and *Several Guidelines for Quickening the Going-Global Initiative of China's Press and Publication Industry* (GAPP, 2012). Among these documents, the *Development Plan for the Going-Global Initiative of Press and Publication Industry during the 12th Five-Year* (GAPP, 2011a) was the first document that the Chinese government ever designed and released for the going global initiative of China's press and publication (Wei, 2011).

### **3.6 Coding and Tool for Policy Analysis and Media Texts Analysis**

The unit of analysis for policies and media texts is individual policy and news article respectively. To gain an analytic and theoretical insight of policies and news texts (Gibbs, 2007) and to effectively answer the research questions, I coded the materials. Qualitative coding is a process of defining what the data are about by categorising the data into short names, which are called codes (or indices, categories) (Kathy, 2006; Gibbs, 2007). I firstly familiarised myself with the data and then determined the codebook.

The first set of codes were China-related economic issues. They were applied to China's policies and Chinese and Western media texts. According to the literature review, the Western political circle exhorted China to be economically responsible in three major issues: environmental protection, currency and finance, and international trade. Therefore, I designed three nodes to code issues. Their definitions were same with those used in retrieving China's governmental policies and Chinese and Western media texts. The content with loose connection between the responsibility claim and the three issues were also coded.

The second set of codes were core themes in China's sociocultural discourse of responsibility. They were applied to China's policies and Chinese media texts. Since this study mainly attempts to examine the potential influence of China's sociocultural discourse

on China's governmental policies, and their combined impact on media texts delivered by its transnational media institutions, the codes were designed according to the repertoire of China's sociocultural discourse of responsibility. This was discussed at the end of Chapter 4, an analysis of China's sociocultural discourse of responsibility.

The third set of codes were different perspectives of construction of China-related economic responsibilities in three media institutions. They were designed exclusively for Chinese and Western media texts analysis. There were three major perspectives (three main nodes): (1) China's view on its own responsibilities both in domestic and international issues; (2) China's view on other countries', mainly developed countries', responsibilities; (3) other countries', mainly developed countries', view on China's responsibilities.

In particular, I designed the journalistic construction of the notion of responsibility as *duties to deal with faults* as a sub-code of the three major codes. I singled it out because framing strategies can be more directly detected in this way of construction. For example, a direct quote from a Xinhua news article "developed countries should take responsibility for their cumulative emissions and current high per capita emissions" ("China Focus: China Vows," 2010) showed directly that Xinhua framed the notion of responsibility as pursuing justice. Then in a 2014 *WSJ* news article, the content "Mr. Obama singled out fast-growing emerging economies that are responsible for a growing share of emissions" directly counteracted China's pursuit of justice by framing China as the origin of fault (Mauldin & Sparshott, 2014).

In this study, I used the computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software NVivo as an assistant to apply codes (nodes in NVivo) to the samples (Gibbs, 2007). I used it to locate content in policies or news texts talking about China-related economic responsibilities and allocate the content to the three (or two) sets of codes. After coding all the samples, I can easily see how China-related economic responsibilities were constructed in different texts

through the references of nodes. This helped me not only analyse the data in an analytic and organised way, but also transfer my findings in a clear manner.

### **3.7 Thematic Analysis of Interviews with Media Practitioners**

An adequate critical discourse analysis of communicative events should also include analysis of social practice which exerts shaping and transforming forces (Fairclough, 1998). This study also pursued a practice-oriented approach and tried to explore media practitioners' construction of media representations in the three media institutions. It was also accompanied by a brief introduction of the institutional environment surrounding the media practitioners, aiming to provide the financing and organisational background of the following analysis of media practitioners.

In his analysis of discourse practice, Fairclough (1995) involved a wide range of activities including media production, consumption, and distribution. Based on the research objectives, this study mainly focused on media production. The key focus was to uncover the reasons, especially various discourses, that lead to Chinese and Western journalistic constructions of China-related economic responsibilities. Therefore, this part of media practitioners study attempted to answer the following research questions:

RQ5a: How were media practitioners in Xinhua News Agency potentially influenced by sociocultural and political discourses and other factors in their representations of China-related economic responsibilities during China's media going-global project from 2009 to 2014?

RQ5b: How were media practitioners in *WSJ* potentially influenced by China's media discourse of China-related economic responsibilities and other factors in their journalistic representations during China's media going-global project from 2009 to 2014?

RQ5c: How were media practitioners in *FT* potentially influenced by China's media discourse of China-related economic responsibilities and other factors in their journalistic representations during China's media going-global project from 2009 to 2014?

To answer the questions, it needed to uncover the journalists' personal experiences and perceptions. The best way is to qualitatively interview relevant media professionals to get the "non-publicly available knowledge" (Bruun, 2016, p. 135).

Before the interview, the project first applied for ethics approval from the Ethics Committee of Bangor University. The fieldwork strictly complied with principles of autonomy and privacy protection, which was made clear in the consent form. The rights, values, decisions, and actions of the respondents were respected (Wimmer & Dominick, 2000). What's more, in what ways that the respondents' privacy was maintained and who will have access to their personal information and responses were also negotiated (Wimmer & Dominick, 2000). Participants were asked to sign the consent form before any data collection.

This research applied both face-to-face interviews and virtual interviews (including email exchanges, telephone interviews, and online interviews) due to the needs of the participants, such as their geological locations and personal habits (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Both methods have their own strengths. For example, face-to-face interview can be seen as a live discussion in which the expression and gesture interactions helped me to obtain wanted, and even unanticipated, answers. The virtual interview bypassed the geographical limits, allowed participants more time and freedom to reflect and respond, saved trouble in choosing interview location, and saved efforts in transcription especially in email and WeChat<sup>28</sup> interviews (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

The best candidates for participants should be those who were the authors of the sampled news articles since they were directly related with the journalistic constructions.

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<sup>28</sup> A social media application widely used among Chinese consumers.

Nevertheless, due to the different nature of the three media institutions, I made some adjustments in my participant recruitment. In the case of Xinhua, it has strict regulation about employees' participation in interviews, especially asked by people in overseas countries. Therefore, I can only obtain information concerning Chinese media practitioners' experience in external communication through personal relationships and their further introductions of other relevant participants. Altogether, I gained interview permission from four people who are working directly for China's external communication or know Xinhua's practice well. I interviewed one of them through telephone, one email, one WeChat, and one face-to-face.

As to *WSJ* and *FT*, there were more than 20 practitioners contributed to *WSJ* samples and more than 30 to *FT* samples. I planned to interview those who contributed more than one news articles to the samples since they may work in the Asian and China branch for a long time and have more experience in relevant journalistic constructions. However, my contact with practitioners in *WSJ* received no reply. I had to use public materials by *WSJ*'s editor-in-chief Gerard Baker. In terms of *FT*, I only secured a face-to-face interview with Stephens Philips, who further introduced me to Martin Wolf and both waived their anonymity. I also used public materials by *FT*'s worldwide editor Lionel Barber. See Appendix 4 for the semi-structured interview protocol (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

In this part, I paid special attention to several issues in order to get the most of the interviews. I am fully aware that a successful interview relies on firstly gaining access to the media practitioners and secondly getting the participants to write down (or say) their own opinions. Journalists, editors, and managers in a media institution usually command a large amount of information and resources. Therefore, it is hard to reach them since they are restrictedly constrained by multiple gatekeepers, such as the media industry standards and their own companies' working principles (Mikecz, 2012). What's more, I am very likely to receive the "public relations" kind of responses from the media practitioners since their

personal views, especially the negative ones, can be harmful to their companies' reputation (Mikecz, 2012). I tackled these problems from the following aspects.

Firstly, I got myself well prepared. I crafted a semi-structured interview guide. It has the strength that it gives freedom to participants to reply what they want, which enables me to obtain in-depth answers (Braun & Clarke, 2013). The interview guide was designed with a less academic tone, showing my sincerity to communicate with the participants (Mikecz, 2012). I also piloted them with friends. Furthermore, I increased my knowledgeability and enhanced my positionality by familiarising with the backgrounds (education, writing styles, characteristics, and hobbies) of specific media practitioners via their reports and social media outputs (Mikecz, 2012). These procedures helped me to build rapport with the participants and minimise the power imbalances between me and the media practitioners.

Secondly, before the interviews, I stated clearly and succinctly the basic information of my research and the aim of this interview, and also sent my own educational information and appropriate credentials in order to build trust with them (Mikecz, 2012).

Several other issues should be noted here. I am also aware that my own perspective and knowledge in this research may influence the quality of the study findings in forms of the framing of interview questions, ways of conducting interviews, and the final data analysis. I made use of reflexivity to consider the selection of research tools and my own feelings in the whole research process (Braun & Clarke, 2013). In addition, biases caused by the respondents' own selective memory or emotions should also be paid attention to (Mikecz, 2012). To minimise the influence of this problem, I asked the respondents to review the preliminary findings before any publication (Mikecz, 2012).

I applied the method of thematic analysis to analyse media practitioners' responses (Braun & Clarke, 2006). I intended to locate the dominant themes in their answers. It is both inductive and deductive. Firstly, I focused on the influence of different discourses, as well as



other factors, on their journalistic constructions in their answers. Specifically, as to Chinese media practitioners, the discourses might be China's sociocultural conceptions of responsibility and China's governmental policies, as well as China's political guidance. As to Western media practitioners, I paid special attention to China's discourses, especially its media discourse. These themes were pre-determined so that the analysis was deductive. However, I was also open to other themes derived from the responses and accepting an inductive perspective.

### **3.8 Evaluation of Discourse Study**

This research is based on the premise that knowledge is contextually constructed by discourses. Therefore, there is no absolute reality or truth about China-related economic responsibilities, and the representations and perceptions analysed in this study were only "situated, contingent and partial" (Taylor, 2001, p. 319). This poses the problem about the evaluation of this social constructionism work: how to make sure that the research findings are of good quality, but not a result of inappropriate research procedures, or out of the researcher's imagination, or could not contribute to social science research of the same kind?

Apparently, the traditional measuring criteria of reliability and validity which are universally applied by positivism<sup>29</sup> scholars do not fit into this social constructionism research. This study adheres to the following principles as introduced in several works (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Wood & Kroger, 2000; Taylor, 2001; Burr, 2003; Corbin & Strauss, 2015).

Firstly, this study paid attention to the following aspects to make sure that the research procedures are not problematic. It was coherent in the application of the major

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<sup>29</sup> Positivism is another epistemological perspective which tries to use scientific methods to obtain valid knowledge about the objective reality (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Different researchers understand the criteria of reliability and validity in different ways. Scholar Vivien Burr (2003, p. 158) interpreted them in a concise fashion: "Reliability is the requirement that the research findings are repeatable, and therefore not simply a product of fleeting, localised events and validity is the requirement that the scientist's description of the world matches what is really there, independent of our ideas and talk about it".

research method of critical discourse analysis and Fairclough's (1995) three-dimensional framework. It also introduced in detail the sampling rationales and procedures and the analysing processes in each dimension. The basic information of data used in each dimension was recorded for the convenience of readers' checking and assessment. I, as the researcher, also used reflexivity to clarify my background and status in this research.

Secondly, this research closely related itself to the strand of critical discourse studies. Its contribution to the development of this domain in terms of theory and empirical data was based on existing findings. It embraced creativity, but avoided the danger of pure imagination.

Thirdly, although this thesis analysed issues specific to China and in a certain period during the media going-global project, it also paid special attention to transferability of this study (Miles & Huberman, 1994). I also examined samples from two additional years to see whether the insights I've generated from this qualitative research were transferable to other contexts, e.g. other time periods. It ensured that this research is valuable in this discipline and is necessary to be probed into.

Lastly, I want to clarify my position as a researcher in this study. As introduced at the beginning of this chapter, this study adopted a constructionist perspective, believing in the constitutive role of discourse in shaping representation and knowledge of our world. However, discourse is powerful in shaping people's perceptions of the world, which induces the question that how the researcher, seemingly vulnerable in front of discourses, could get to know the discourse as an individual standing out of discourses. To free the researcher from this paradoxical assumption, this research adopted psychology scholar Vivien Burr's (2003, p. 125) dialectical view about social constructionism regarding the relationship between discourse and the researcher:

The alternative view, that we both actively produce and manipulate, *and* are products of discourse allows us the possibility of personal and social change through our

capacity to identify, understand and resist the discourses to which we are subject (emphasis in original).

That is to say, I accept that I am living with the discourses and even influenced by them with unawareness. Nevertheless, I stick to the above procedures to identify and understand the discourses and their interrelationships, and also minimise my personal influence on this project.

### **3.9 Overall Statement**

In summary, this study was based on a critical realism ontological and constructionism epistemological position. It mainly employed Norman Fairclough's (1995) three-dimensional framework for critical discourse analysis. This framework inherits the Foucauldian thoughts about discourse which was believed to be decisive in ordering ideas and constructing knowledge, during which procedures the invisible power relations are operative (Foucault, 1972; 1981). Nevertheless, this framework is also based on critiques of Foucault's explanations of discourse, for example, his vague definition of discourse practice and neglect of specific texts (Fairclough, 1992). Overall, the integration of the three dimensions of sociocultural practice, discourse practice, and texts in Fairclough's (1995) framework seamlessly brings together the language studies and the social and cultural studies. This feature makes it suitable and powerful to resolve the research questions in this thesis. The application of the framework was further accompanied by methods of thematic analysis and framing analysis in analysing sociocultural context, policies, media texts, and interviewees' responses. The brief introduction of China's political instructions of media global expansion in media texts analysis and the financing and organisation situations of Xinhua News Agency, *WSJ*, and *FT* in media practice analysis set the scene for a comprehensive understanding of a communicative event.

The thematic analysis of China's sociocultural understandings of responsibility in a continuum of history served as the foundation for the whole thesis. It provided a conceptual backcloth (Burr, 2003) for discourse practice analysis and texts analysis. It tried to distil China's dominant themes concerning responsibility from its literary and political works.

The Chinese governmental policy analysis focused on 133 documents recorded on the official website of The Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China. They included addresses, published remarks, and interview transcripts by China's major political leaders and Ministries and Commissions. It intended to answer RQ1 by examining the links between China's current policies and China's history.

The media texts analysis casted light on 105 news articles from the China-based Xinhua News Agency, the US-based *WSJ*, and the UK-based *FT* released during 2010 and 2014. It aimed to explore the construction of media frames in China's Xinhua under the influence of various discourses, as well as the immediate political instructions, and the potential impact of China's media frames on Western ones (RQ2, RQ3, and RQ4).

The discourse practice analysis probed into the personal experiences and perceptions of relevant Chinese and Western media practitioners in their journalistic productions through qualitative interviewing. It specifically tried to uncover the discursive, as well as the non-discursive, factors that might influence their journalistic practices. The thematic analysis of their responses answered RQ5.

## **Chapter 4. Thematic Analysis of China's Sociocultural Practice: Chinese Sociocultural Conceptions of Responsibility**

This chapter is devoted to elucidating China's sociocultural understandings of responsibility in a continuum of history. It not only explores the conceptions in moral and legal levels, but also in practical level, especially relevant statecraft towards domestic and external issues. It finds that the dominant sociocultural values concerning responsibility in the Chinese society are basically lubricant for the normal social order. The thematic analysis of China's literary and political works concludes that responsibility-related traits of benevolence, righteousness, propriety, intelligence, and trustfulness are overwhelming values in China's long history. Moreover, the allocation of responsibility is guided by the thoughts of positioning. These philosophies exert substantial influence on, and is further developed in, China's statecraft in different periods towards domestic and external issues. This chapter ends with a typology of the Chinese sociocultural conceptions of responsibility. This conceptual repertoire is an application of Fairclough's (1995) framework in the special case of China. It will pave way for the following governmental policy analysis and media analysis.

### **4.1 Responsibility as Morality**

In China, the sense of responsibility is a self-discipline, which requires individuals to act "in accordance with both the formal and informal rules governing society and its institutions, such that compliance with established norms and values amounts to an observable outcome of responsible behaviour" (Yeophantong, 2013, p. 334). The overarching norms and values in the continuum of China's history can be located in five traits, namely benevolence (仁, *ren*), righteousness (义, *yi*), propriety (礼, *li*), intelligence (智, *zhi*), and trustfulness (信, *xin*). These traits are named as "Five Relationships" ("五常", *wuchang*). They serve as the core principles of China's Confucianism. Although the ancient Confucian thoughts have gone through ups and downs in the long river of history, for example, they

were heavily criticised and even abandoned during the New Culture Movement<sup>30</sup> in the middle 1910s and 1920s for a short time, the five traits are inherited and are still deemed as the core value system of the current Chinese society. One of the evidences is that in the 2012 18<sup>th</sup> National Congress of China, a set of core values of socialism<sup>31</sup> was proposed (Feng, 2016), whose requirements for the Chinese nation, society, and its public were closely related with the five relationships. Moreover, the Chinese government also spared no efforts to disseminate the core values through channels of policy and media outlets (Feng, 2016). Therefore, it is safe to conclude that the five relationships of benevolence, righteousness, propriety, intelligence, and trustfulness may be the common thread that run through the various societal formations of the Chinese history. They may impact the Chinese social practices in different aspects.

First, people who carry out their responsibilities should have a sense of benevolence intrinsically. When other people asked Confucius, a world-known Chinese philosopher in the Spring and Autumn period, what benevolence was, he answered that “It is to love all men”<sup>32</sup> (Legge, 1861, p. 124)<sup>33</sup>. Family is the centre for public not only in ancient China but also in the current Chinese society. However, being benevolent, people should not only love their

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<sup>30</sup> The New Culture Movement was started by China’s intellectuals in 1915, a time when the Western powers invaded China and the Chinese imperial rule lingered on with its last breath of life. This movement was deemed as a “cultural renaissance” in China (Hummel, 1930). During this movement, the ancient Confucian culture was heavily criticised and Western ideas of science and democracy flooded in.

<sup>31</sup> The core values of socialism consist of three levels. For the level of nation, it includes prosperity, democracy, civility, and harmony; for the level of society, freedom, equality, justice, and rule of law; for the level of citizens, patriotism, kindness, dedication, and integrity (Feng, 2016).

<sup>32</sup> All the directly and indirectly cited works are explained in footnotes in simplified Chinese characters according exactly to how they were originally written in traditional Chinese characters for the convenience of readers. The original full texts (Chinese and according English translation) are recorded in the footnotes if they are not directly cited in the thesis. The original text in this case is “樊迟问仁。子曰：爱人。” (Fan Ch’e asked about benevolence. The Master said, “It is to love all men.”)

<sup>33</sup> Most of the Chinese literary works cited in this thesis were originally written in *wenyan wen*, a Chinese language form different from the current mandarin Chinese. They were written with traditional Chinese characters and with no punctuation. Some of the works, for instance, *The Analects* (<论语>), have no specific authors but are collective works by philosophers, their students, and later generations. In these cases, this study only mentions the translators in the in-text citation.

family members, but also “overflow in love to all, and cultivate the friendship of the good”<sup>34</sup> (Legge, 1861, p. 4). Then as a country, it should not only care about its own fate and its people but also treat other countries and other publics equally. There is equal importance between a country’s own interest and the general interest of the whole humankind.

Second, a responsible man should be righteous. This can be explained from two facets: firstly, being friendly and helpful, and secondly, being just and impartial.

As to the element of friendship, it is often discussed along with another concept, benefit. The dialectical relation between righteousness and benefit formulates one of the doctrines of being responsible. Mencius, a Chinese philosopher after Confucius living in the Warring States period, stated that “I like life, and I also like righteousness. If I cannot keep the two together, I will let life go, and choose righteousness”<sup>35</sup> (Legge, Mengzi: Gaozi I, n.d.). Then in the case of a country, the sense of responsibility requires it to help its friends when they are at risk and maintain their benefit even at the cost of its own benefit. This shares many similarities with the trait of benevolence.

Then as to the element of justice, it means that standards should be universal to all and there should not exist preferential treatment. Confucius stressed that “The superior man holds righteousness to be of highest importance” (Legge, 1861, p. 193). Not only the civil servants should act according to standards, people in daily lives should also comply with criteria: “A man in a superior situation, having valour without righteousness, will be guilty of insubordination; one of the lower people having valour without righteousness, will commit robbery”<sup>36</sup> (Legge, 1861, p. 193).

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<sup>34</sup> 子曰：“弟子入则孝，出则悌，谨而信，泛爱众而亲仁。” (The Master said, “A youth, when at home, should be filial, and, abroad, respectful to his elders. He should be earnest and trustful. He should overflow in love to all, and cultivate the friendship of the good.”)

<sup>35</sup> 孟子曰：“...生，亦我所欲也；义，亦我所欲也，二者不可得兼，舍生而取义者也...”

<sup>36</sup> (Along with the last direct citation) 子曰：“君子义以为上。君子有勇而无义为乱，小人有勇而无义为盗。”

Altogether, “righteousness is the accordance of actions with what is right”<sup>37</sup> according to Confucius (Legge, 1861, p. 269), no matter it is about helpfulness or justice. When it comes to a country, it should do what is deemed as right, either being helpful or impartial, both inside and outside of the country, and that is one of the requirements of being responsible.

Third, when dealing with responsibilities, people should stick to proper propriety. Early in *Book of Poetry* (<诗经>), the oldest existing collection of Chinese poetry, there is a poem says that “Look at a rat, - it has its skin; But a man should be without dignity of demeanour. If a man has no dignity of demeanour, What should he but die?”<sup>38</sup> (Legge, Book of Poetry, n.d.) With a metaphor, it equalises demeanour with life and death, thus emphasising the vital importance of demeanour, or propriety. Then how to achieve a high standard of propriety? Confucius once told his student Yan Yuan that “Look not at what is contrary to propriety; listen not to what is contrary to propriety; speak not what is contrary to propriety; make no movement which is contrary to propriety”<sup>39</sup> (Legge, 1861, p. 114). In this way, people can refrain their wrongful desire, sentiment, and movement, and restrict themselves to the confinement of morality that is commonly accepted. It is a concept with a larger sense of confinement than the former concept of righteousness and justice, within which the requirement of complying with standards and criteria is also included in the concept of propriety. With perfect propriety, people can enjoy a harmonious interpersonal relationship. Similarly, good propriety can pave the way for a country in dealing with both domestic and international affairs.

Fourth, to accomplish the responsibilities efficiently, people should be intelligent enough. Confucius once pointed out the significance of being intelligent: “The wise are free

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<sup>37</sup> 子曰: “...义者宜也...”

<sup>38</sup> 相鼠有皮, 人而无仪; 人而无仪, 不死何为!

<sup>39</sup> 子曰: “非礼勿视, 非礼勿听, 非礼勿言, 非礼勿动。”



from perplexities; the virtuous from anxiety; and the bold from fear”<sup>40</sup> (Legge, 1861, p. 89). Then what is intelligence and how to obtain it? The concept of “inner Saint and outer King”, an idea explained by several ancient Chinese thinkers, may be the core of intelligence. Zhuang Zhou, an influential Chinese philosopher in the Warring States period, first mentioned this idea, although vaguely and mysteriously, that the origin of the things that give birth to the Sage and give perfection to the King is the One, or Dao<sup>41</sup> (Legge, Zhuangzi, n.d.). More philosophers, such as Confucius and Mencius, further explicated the idea. In Confucius’s statement, “The student, having completed his learning, should apply himself to be an officer”<sup>42</sup> (Legge, 1861, p. 208). It means that the premise of being an officer who is capable of serving, and being responsible to, the country and the people should be armed with enough knowledge, morality, and ethics. Then according to Mencius, “All men have a mind which cannot bear to see the sufferings of others. The ancient kings had this commiserating mind, and they, as a matter of course, had likewise a commiserating government”<sup>43</sup> (Legge, Mengzi: Gong Sun Chou I, n.d.). Different from Confucius who emphasised the importance of knowledge, morality, and ethics in taking on responsibilities, Mencius pointed out the vitality of the innate goodness as the foundation of ruling a kingdom. Altogether, intelligence, as one of the traits of being responsible, is an encompassing idea that it requires an individual or a country to be fully equipped with knowledge and virtues, which are premises for a person or a nation to know not only itself, i.e. inner Saint, but also the outside situation, i.e. outer King, and proceed for any judgement and actions.

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<sup>40</sup> 子曰：“知者不惑，仁者不忧，勇者不惧。”

<sup>41</sup> 天下之治方术者多矣，皆以其有为不可加矣。古之所谓道术者，果恶乎在？曰：“无乎不在。”曰：“神何由降？明何由出？”“圣有所生，王有所成，皆原于一。” (The methods employed in the regulation of the world are many; and (the employers of them) think each that the efficiency of his own method leaves nothing to be added to it. But where is what was called of old ‘the method of the Dao?’ We must reply, ‘It is everywhere.’ But then whence does the spiritual in it come down? and whence does the intelligence in it come forth? There is that which gives birth to the Sage, and that which gives his perfection to the King: the origin of both is the One.)

<sup>42</sup> 子夏曰：“...学而优则仕。” (Zi Xia said, “...The student, having completed his learning, should apply himself to be an officer.”)

<sup>43</sup> 孟子曰：“人皆有不忍人之心。先王有不忍人之心，斯有不忍人之政矣...”

Fifth, people who carry out their responsibilities should be trustful. Trustfulness was deemed as the pillar of being a noble person according to China's ancient philosophers. In Confucius' words, "I do not know how a man without truthfulness is to get on"<sup>44</sup> (Legge, 1861, p. 17). Mencius further related trustfulness to sincerity, an element of inner goodness that Mencius always advocated (Legge, Li Lou I, n.d.). He said that "Never has there been one possessed of complete sincerity, who did not move others. Never has there been one who had not sincerity who was able to move others"<sup>45</sup> (Legge, Li Lou I, n.d.). In order to be true and sincere to his words, a person should try his best to complete the tasks either by himself with resolution, or by cooperating with others.

A common element among the five traits is that there is no fixed standard for achieving or not. If an individual or a nation does not carry out these responsibilities, it can only result in moral condemnation, but not legal penalties.

## **4.2 Responsibility as Legal Requirements**

The criteria of what a country or a person should and/or must do can mainly be divided into two strands: morality and legal requirements. This is also the division in defining responsibility. The Chinese society has been running under the two standards and witnessed their complicated relations in different time periods.

In terms of viewing responsibility as legal requirements, the thoughts from the School of Legalism in the Warring States period perhaps exert the most long-lasting influence on the social norms and practices in the Chinese society. It is expressed in the legalism thoughts about the dialectical relationship between words, actions, and effects. Han Feizi, another influential Chinese philosopher living in the Warring States period, stated that "rewards from emperors are given to statesmen who have completed their missions which achieve

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<sup>44</sup> 子曰：“人而无信，不知其可也...”

<sup>45</sup> 孟子曰：“...至诚而不动者，未之有也；不诚，未有能动者也。”

corresponding effects and which meet the requirements of their own suggestions, and punishments from emperors are given to statesmen who have not achieved satisfied outcomes”<sup>46</sup> (Han, n.d.). Although it seems that the emperors’ decisions functioned as the laws and regulations, this statement indicates clearly that responsibilities of certain people (the statesmen in this case) are no longer treated as mere voluntary deeds. They are required to carry out (actions) exactly what they have said (words) and obtain the outcomes (effects) corresponding with their actions. This wisdom can still be applied to the modern legal society. If people agree to be bound by certain laws and regulations (words), they should implement what they are required to do (actions) and achieve the required outcomes (effects). No actions and actions failing to achieve required outcomes can both result in punishments.

Nevertheless, the role of laws and regulations in the operation of the Chinese society sometimes can not compete with that of moralities and virtues. For example, Confucius believed that “If the people be led by laws, and uniformity sought to be given them by punishments, they will try to avoid the punishment, but have no sense of shame. If they be led by virtue, and uniformity sought to be given them by the rules of propriety, they will have the sense of shame, and moreover will become good”<sup>47</sup> (Legge, 1861, p. 10). As observed by Têng and Fairbank (1979, p. 4), the ethical orders, rather than legal requirements, were dominant in the Chinese society. The Western values of law supremacy did not overturn the Chinese value system even though they got a chance to flood in after 1839 (Têng & Fairbank, 1979, p. 4).

### **4.3 Responsibility in Domestic Issues**

The Chinese sociocultural conceptions of responsibility either as moral standards or as legal requirements penetrate, and is further developed in, China’s statecraft in domestic

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<sup>46</sup> ...功当其事, 事当其言则赏; 功不当其事, 事不当其言则诛...

<sup>47</sup> 子曰: “道之以政, 齐之以刑, 民免而无耻; 道之以德, 齐之以礼, 有耻且格。”

and external issues. This section will discuss China's statecraft concerning responsibility in domestic issues. Specifically, it will explore the self-positioning thought in the allocation of responsibility, the responsibility for the country and the governing class and for the public.

#### **4.3.1 Positioning and responsibility**

Responsibility-related statecraft towards China's domestic issues is largely influenced by the idea of positioning. The following statement is one of the examples in Chinese ancient literature.

The Master said, "He who is not in any particular office has nothing to do with plans for the administration of its duties."<sup>48</sup> (Legge, 1861, p. 77)

It states precisely the relationship between responsibility and a person's position. The right responsibility that people should take on can be measured against people's right position (Chan, 2013). This is explained as the rectification of names in the Confucian culture, which means "Every 'name' (i.e. social position) implied a certain responsibility that must be fulfilled" (Yeophantong, 2013, p. 335). For example, a man at home should take on his responsibility as a father, a son, or a husband, but not as an employee of a company. Whereas when he is at the office, he should be responsible for his duties required by his occupation, but not the ones he should fulfil in his family life.

The idea of positioning is even regarded as the crux of China's Confucian culture by Yeophantong (2013, p. 335). It induces me to think again the academic and political debates about China's economic development as threats or not in the Western China threat theory and China responsibility theory and in China's own responsible power claim. As analysed in Chapter 2. Literature Review, the chaos can mainly be attributed to the different positions, identities, and standards that scholars or politicians assigned to China. This thesis aims to explore China's own thoughts behind its behaviours. Its ancient philosophy about positioning

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<sup>48</sup> 子曰: "不在其位, 不谋其政."

and responsibility may potentially influence China's political arguments. This will be discussed in following chapters.

Chinese ancient literature is rich in the expression of responsibility according to different positions of the bearers of responsibility, such as the country and its governing class and the public.

#### **4.3.2 The country and the governing class**

The ideas of responsibility are frequently used by ancient emperors and their advisers. Since the main theme of ancient China is chaos which is caused by wars between the public and the governors and between Chinese dynasties in different times and foreign nations, responsibility is advocated as always being prepared for any eventualities. During Shang Dynasty and Zhou Dynasty, the Chinese divination book *Book of Changes* (<易经>) stated clearly that a country should be armed with crisis awareness, and only in this way can we understand the nature and the causes of the anxieties and calamities, and manage them and avoid their harm in an appropriate manner<sup>49</sup> (Legge, *Book of Changes*: Xi Ci II, n.d.). A similar statement also appears in books of Mencius. He claimed that “life springs from sorrow and calamity, and death from ease and pleasure”<sup>50</sup> (Legge, *Mengzi*: Gaozi II, n.d.). In a word, as governors in a state or country, their way to behave responsibly is that they should always be intelligent enough to get a clear understanding of the situations of the country itself and the surroundings, especially staying alert to dangers, ruin, and disorder although in a safe and secure environment.

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<sup>49</sup> 子曰：“危者，安其位者也；亡者，保其存者也；乱者，有其治者也。是故，君子安而不忘危，存而不忘亡，治而不忘乱；是以身安而国家可保也……” (The Master said: “He who keeps danger in mind is he who will rest safe in his seat; he who keeps ruin in mind is he who will preserve his interests secure; he who sets the danger of disorder before him is he who will maintain the state of order. Therefore the superior man, when resting in safety, does not forget that danger may come; when in a state of security, he does not forget the possibility of ruin; and when all is in a state of order, he does not forget that disorder may come. Thus his person is kept safe, and his states and all their clans can be preserved……”)

<sup>50</sup> 孟子曰：“…然后知生于忧患而死于安乐也。” (Mencius said, “...From these things we see how life springs from sorrow and calamity, and death from ease and pleasure.”)

Some loyal advisors also expressed their concerns for the running and maintaining of their country. Early in the Warring States period, the Chinese poet and minister Qu Yuan said in a poem that he sighed and wiped away tears only because he saw his people in grief and fears<sup>51</sup> (Qu, n.d.). Similarly, Fan Zhongyan, a politician and literary figure in China's Northern Song Dynasty, once wrote that the minds with true humanity were the first to worry the worries of All under Heaven, and the last to enjoy its joys<sup>52</sup> (Pines, 2009). As concluded by Têng and Fairbank (1979, p. 3), Chinese officials "were vitally concerned with the fate of China, its civilization, and way of life".

Then what should be done to fulfil the governors' and politicians' responsibilities in securing the national fate and protecting the public? First and foremost, the national independence is what must be striven for. It is expressed in multiple literary and political works. For example, the article "Call to Youth" written by Chen Duxiu, the editor of the journal *New Youth* which was the main forum for advanced Chinese intellectuals to promote new thoughts during the New Culture Movement, called upon the Chinese youth to take on their responsibility to fight for independence (Ch'en, 1979)<sup>53</sup>. He propelled individuals in China to strive for emancipation, get rid of slavery, and thus obtain an independent and free personality (Ch'en, 1979). People's emancipation would finally lead to the national independence. On the foundation of independence, the Chinese nation should further strengthen itself by promoting its development in different domains, such as technology and culture. In the same document, Chen (1979) argued that the Chinese should embrace the idea

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<sup>51</sup> 长太息以掩涕兮，哀民生之多艰。(Long did I sigh to hold back tears; saddened I am by the grief of my people.)

<sup>52</sup> ...然则何时而乐耶? 其必曰: "先天下之忧而忧, 后天下之乐而乐"乎。(...so when did they enjoy? It must be said: they were the first to worry the worries of All under Heaven, and the last to enjoy its joys.)

<sup>53</sup> The Chinese names in this thesis are translated according to the Chinese phonetic alphabet commonly taught and used in China. In some in-text citations, the names appear as the way translated by Têng and Fairbank (1979) for the sake of being coherent to the original. These occasions are pointed out and the according Chinese phonetic alphabet is provided. Ch'en Tu-hsiu is Chen Duxiu in Chinese phonetic alphabet.

of being scientific<sup>54</sup>, instead of being imaginative. Chen (1979) believed that only science can save the uncivilised Chinese people from imagination and superstition.

### 4.3.3 The public

The responsibilities that the public should take on are decided according to their different positions in social life. They can mainly be divided into the following aspects. People should fulfil duties not only to people who have higher positions, but also to those whose positions are in parallel with, or lower than, themselves.

Responsibilities for the public in the above aspects can be traced in their family lives and social lives. For example, in family life, members of the royal and princely families were inculcated to carry out “filial piety and fraternal duty, harmony and friendship, and kindly consideration” (Legge, Liji: Wen Wang Shi Zi, n.d.), and at the same time, they were also required to know “the righteousness that should prevail between father and son, and the order to be observed between elders and juniors”<sup>55</sup> (Legge, Liji: Wen Wang Shi Zi, n.d.).

Then in social life, people should be responsible to those inferior to them. For instance, the noble souls should take on responsibilities to educate the public to devote to the social goods. A famous quotation from Confucius’ *The Analects* says that “The relation between superiors and inferiors, is like that between the wind and grass. The grass must bend, when the wind blows across it”<sup>56</sup> (Legge, 1861, p. 123). Meanwhile, people should also obey the will of the Heaven, love universally, and benefit others (Mei, n.d.). Only on condition that

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<sup>54</sup> Science and democracy were the two leading appeals during the New Culture Movement.

<sup>55</sup> (Along with the last direct citation) 庶子之正于公族者, 教之以孝弟, 睦友, 子爱, 明父子之义, 长幼之序. (The Shu-zi, who had the direction of the (other) members of the royal and princely families, inculcated on them filial piety and fraternal duty, harmony and friendship, and kindly consideration; illustrating the righteousness that should prevail between father and son, and the order to be observed between elders and juniors.)

<sup>56</sup> 孔子对曰: “...君子之德风, 小人之德草. 草上之风, 必偃.”

people revered Heaven in the highest sphere, worshipped the spirits in the middle sphere, and loved the people in the lower sphere can they obtain rewards<sup>57</sup> (Mei, n.d.).

Although these expressions are coloured by superstition and feudal ethics and rites, they contain a similar meaning that the public should obey the rules, fulfil their corresponding duties, and care about vulnerable groups. These are the requirements for carrying out responsibilities corresponding to their public positions.

#### **4.4 Responsibility in External Issues**

China's expression of responsibility towards external issues mostly points to the country as the bearer. Although in some cases, e.g. in Chen's (1979) "Call to Youth", there were calls upon the Chinese citizens to take on external responsibilities, they were mainly a strategy to offer advice to the government instead. The country's responsibility in external issues goes through dramatic changes due to China's evolving connection with the rest of the world.

The understanding of responsibility towards external issues in ancient times was inward-looking (Yeophantong, 2013) and was dominated by the "ethnocentric and China-centered" philosophy (Têng & Fairbank, 1979, p. 3). During ancient periods, China largely positioned itself as the centre of the universe due to a lack of geographical knowledge. Even during the turbulent period from 1839 to 1923, the reformations were also primarily based on the deeply rooted China-centred ideology as expressed in terms like 'All-under-Heaven' ('天下', *Tian Xia*) (Têng & Fairbank, 1979, p. 3). This philosophy has long-lasting influence even on nowadays. The term 'Middle Kingdom', a literary translation of the Chinese characters of "China" ("中国", *zhong guo*, in which *zhong* means central and *guo* means state), is still widely known and used (Mancall, 1963).

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<sup>57</sup> 子墨子言曰：“...然则禹汤文武其得赏何以也？”子墨子言曰：“其事上尊天，中事鬼神，下爱人...” (Mozi said: ...How did Yu, Tang, Wen, and Wu obtain their reward? Mozi said: In the highest sphere they revered Heaven, in the middle sphere they worshipped the spirits, and in the lower sphere they loved the people....)



Governed by this thinking, ancient Chinese believed that their culture and society had no rival in the world (Mancall, 1963; Cranmer-Byng, 1973). The self-centred position and the unawareness of the outside world led to the perception that its external responsibility was to govern and harmonise the world with goodwill but no intention of war (Yeophantong, 2013). This idea was explicitly expressed in the philosophy of Confucianism that “Let the superior man never fail reverentially to order his own conduct, and let him be respectful to others and observant of propriety - then all within the four seas will be his brothers”<sup>58</sup> (Legge, 1861, p. 117).

The year 1839 witnessed China’s first military confrontation with Western countries. It was a turning point of the Chinese society, whose traditional culture and values underwent dramatic changes, especially in the form of China’s response to the West. From then on, several new dominant themes regarding China’s responsible movements towards external issues can be located in China’s historical documents. The strongest call in this period should be connecting with the world, especially with Western countries, and learning knowledge and technologies from them. As expressed by Chen (1979), China should put an end to its isolationist ideology and become cosmopolitan by learning Western science and embracing their utilitarian culture. This is closely related with responsibilities towards domestic issues for the governors and politicians.

Firstly, accepting and adopting Western knowledge and science is a national responsibility continuously called upon by China’s statesmen. Chinese scholar Feng Guifen asserted that Western studies can be learned and applied on the base of Chinese studies (Feng, 1979)<sup>59</sup>. He urged that China should promote foreign language training, translations, and study of Western mathematics and sciences (Feng, 1979). In the next few decades,

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<sup>58</sup> 子夏曰: “...君子敬而无失, 与人恭而有礼. 四海之内, 皆兄弟也...”

<sup>59</sup> Feng Kuei-fen is Feng Guifen in Chinese phonetic alphabet.

institutions for linguistic and scientific studies were established, students were sent to the United States and Europe for training, the old ways of examinations were reformed, and the freedom of education and thought was promoted (Têng & Fairbank, 1979).

Secondly, China should learn advanced technologies from Westerners. Around the 1860s when Chinese statesmen realised the urgency of strengthening China's national capacity, Feng Guifen contended that "What we then have to learn from the barbarians is only the one thing, solid ships and effective guns" (Feng, 1979, p. 53). Following calls alike, the Shanghai Arsenal and the Foochow Shipyard were founded in succession and steamships and railroads were constructed as a process of industrialisation, regardless of their final destinies (Têng & Fairbank, 1979).

These revolutionary and thought-provoking calls for connecting with the West are closely interrelated with the expressions of responsibility on domestic issues. Being open to advanced Western knowledge and technology can ideally result in the ascending of domestic national power.

Besides saving China from scientific and technological inferiority, other expressions of responsibility towards external issues in this period included the enhancement of China's political status in international relations. In the 1920s, China participated in the World War I, indicating China's pursuing of autonomous position in international affairs (Yeophantong, 2013). However, it could not change China's marginal status due to the weakness of the Chinese government. The 1919 populist-based May Fourth Movement witnessed the massive protests against the partial treatment of China as defined by the Treaty of Versailles. It showed China's, basically its public's, intentions to voice its interests and agendas in international issues and fight against, if capable, the imperialist (Yeophantong, 2013).

Then in 1949, a communist new China put an end, to some extent, to the turbulent Chinese history. The Chinese conceptions of responsibility towards external issues from then

on can mainly be interpreted from the Chinese leaders' thoughts. The Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, proposed in the 1950s by China's first premier Zhou Enlai, have been acting as the common thread running through the statecraft under different leaderships since the new China, although different period put emphasis on different aspects of the principles due to the demands of national development. One piece of evidence is China's current leadership's interpretation of the principles, for example, president Xi Jinping's (2014) new elaboration of the principles on the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the initiation of the principles in 2014. The principles are closely related with the Chinese conceptions of responsibility and are guiding the national reactions to responsibility-related issues.

The main theme of responsibility towards external issues during the initiation of the new China was "the building of a new type of just and equitable international relations" (Xi, 2014), especially through the expression of mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty, mutual non-aggression, and mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs in the principles. In the political domain, shortly after the founding of the People's Republic of China, there were still hostile sentiments towards imperial countries like the United States (Lu, 2011), which was probably a result of China's long-lasting experience of being colonised. At that time, bringing changes to the existing system which was dominated by Western countries along with other developing countries was the priority of the new regime (Yeophantong, 2013). Meanwhile, the new China presented strong intentions of self-protection of national independence, which resonated with Chen's (1979) argument several decades ago.

These precautionary sentiments were gradually, and seemingly, attenuated by the desperate need to engage in cross-border collaborations from the Deng Xiaoping period (Lu, 2011). It was deemed as a necessity to enhance the national power, mostly hard power, and keep a foothold in the world. The calls for equality and cooperation for mutual benefit and

peaceful coexistence, the other two aspects of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, were gaining increasing political attention. Successive Chinese presidents all expressed their concerns about collaborating with the world in different domains, especially in economy (Jiang, 1994; Kong, 2007; Shi, 2007; Zheng, 2010; Gao, 2014). Under the guidance of these highest-level strategies, China not only endeavours to attract foreign capitals by establishing areas like Shenzhen Special Economic Zone and Shanghai Free Trade Zone, but also promotes the enterprises going-global initiative to expand China's investment overseas. China's recent push of the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21<sup>st</sup>-century Maritime Silk Road manifests its desire of international collaboration and cooperation. These recent procedures constitute a part of China's peaceful development and harmonious world blueprint.

Overall, the Chinese sociocultural conceptions of responsibility can mainly be divided into two parts, responsibility as morality and responsibility as legal requirements. The ideas of responsibility also penetrate, and is further developed in, the real-world practice in the Chinese society, especially its statecraft. Specifically, responsibility in domestic issues is decided by the position of the bearer. For the country and the governing class, their responsibility should be securing the national fate and protecting its public. Then responsibilities for the public should be obeying the superior, fulfilling corresponding duties, and caring about the inferior. Responsibility in external issues has gone through changes because of China's different perceptions of the world. It shifts from an inward-looking to an outward-looking version of responsibility.

#### **4.5 Typology of Chinese Sociocultural Conceptions of Responsibility**

Based on the above thematic analysis, this section will synthesise the findings in the form of a typology. It will also connect the discussion of responsibility as morality and legal requirements (4.1) with the discussion of responsibility in statecraft (4.2). Table 4.1. synthesises the conceptions of responsibility either as moral virtues or as legal requirements

in the Chinese society. Table 4.2. displays the practical instances towards both domestic and external issues and their legacies and developments of China's sociocultural conceptions of responsibility as synthesised in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1.

*China's Sociocultural Conceptions of Responsibility either as Morality or as Legal Requirements*

	General meanings
Responsibility as morality	Benevolence: caring not only the interests of oneself, but also those of others
	Righteousness: helping those in need and behaving according to standards
	Propriety: behaving within a certain confinement
	Intelligence: possessing enough knowledge and virtues for any judgement and actions
	Trustfulness: being true and sincere to finish his tasks with resolution and collaborative spirits
Responsibility as legal requirement	Acting and achieving required outcomes according to promises

Table 4.2.

*China's Sociocultural Conceptions of Responsibility in Practical Perspective: Domestic Issues and External Issues*

Types of issues	Bearer of responsibility (position of the bearer)	Practical instances of being responsible	Inheritance of dominant values explicated in Table 4.1.
Domestic issues	The country and the governing class	Having a clear estimation of internal and external situations	Being intelligent to judge and deal with situations
		Ensuring the national independence and stability and its people's well-being	Loving all people

	The public	Strengthening the country with science and culture	Enriching itself with knowledge
		Respecting higher authority and obeying their order	Behaving according to propriety
		Fulfilling corresponding duties	
		Caring people in inferior positions	Loving all people
External issues	The country as a whole	<b>Inward-looking philosophy:</b> Governing and harmonising the world with goodwill but no intention of war	Loving all people
		<b>Outward-looking philosophy (post-1839):</b> Accepting and adopting Western knowledge and science and learning advanced Western technologies	Enriching itself with knowledge
		Striving for a membership in the international society as an autonomous entity	Fighting for justice
		<b>Outward-looking philosophy (post-1949):</b> Bringing changes to the existing system along with other developing countries	Fighting for justice
		Building a harmonious China and a harmonious world by wide-ranging collaboration	Loving all people, Being sincere in development

Combining the dominant values concerning the notion of responsibility in the Chinese society in Table 4.1 and their penetration and development in China's practice, especially in statecraft, in Table 4.2, this chapter draws a conceptual backcloth of China's sociocultural conceptions of responsibility. Based on this repertoire, I developed a set of codes concerning China's sociocultural discourse of responsibility. They not only included China's

sociocultural values relevant with the notion of responsibility, namely benevolence, righteousness (including kindness and justice), propriety, intelligence, sincerity (including resolution and cooperative spirits), and fulfilment of legal requirements, but also the practical instances of being responsible towards domestic and external issues. The latter half of codes may be duplicated with the former half, but only the most obvious codes will be used in coding China's policies (Chapter 5) and China's media texts (Chapter 6). This repertoire will help to see how the Chinese sociocultural conceptions of responsibility potentially influences the construction of China-related economic responsibilities in the two channels.

## **Chapter 5. Framing Analysis of China's Governmental Policies Concerning China-Related Economic Responsibilities**

China's governmental policies have a deep root in China's own history (Wang, 2007; Yeophantong, 2013). As stated by Wang (2007, p. 65), "the Chinese...have always been keen to use historical analogies in their policy analyses...Chinese practice...sought the most helpful and relevant examples to support their current cause or guide their choice of policy". Guided by Fairclough's (1995) framework for critical discourse analysis, the former chapter provides a rich repertoire of China's sociocultural conceptions of the idea of responsibility in a continuum of history. Based on the sociocultural legacies, this chapter intends to answer RQ1 by examining how the ideas and philosophies of China's sociocultural understandings of responsibility potentially influence the construction of China's current policies concerning China-related economic responsibilities during the media going-global project from 2009 to 2014. The research findings in this chapter hope to bridge the academic gap in a discursive understanding of China's responsible power claim behind its behaviours.

This chapter examines 133 political documents concerning China-related economic responsibilities released during 2009 to 2014. They were retrieved from the official website of The Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China. This chapter is committed to a framing analysis, which is situated within the whole framework for critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1995). It specifically explores the problem definition function (Entman, 1993, p. 52) of the policy frames by examining how China's governmental policies defined China-related economic responsibilities under the potential influence of the Chinese sociocultural setting.

This chapter finds that China's governmental policies concerning environmental protection were framed as being sincere in this campaign and pursuing justice in duties' allocation in the international range. As to those about currency and finance, the frames of maintaining stability and pursuing justice were obvious. Policies regarding international trade



were framed as being cooperative and pursuing justice. These frames were further potentially influenced by China's self-positioning as a developing country.

It needs to be clarified that this chapter of policy analysis, along with the analysis of framings in media channels in the following chapter, is only devoted to examining pertaining representations and their constructions. This research intends not to judge whether China's articulations or actions are responsible or not. It assumes that knowledge is an evolving concept which is subject to discourses and the underlying power relations.

Following the introduction, this chapter presents an overview of the coding results of the policies. Then it elaborates the obvious inheritance of China's sociocultural discourse in China's political articulation concerning China-related economic responsibilities in three aspects: environmental protection, currency and finance, and international trade. Besides the obvious inheritance, this chapter also analyses the implicit, yet probably decisive, influence of positioning on China's political discourse, followed by a discussion of the research findings.

## **5.1 An Overview of Coding Results of China's Policies**

Table 5.1 illustrates the coding results of China's governmental policies in NVivo. I coded all the 133 documents. I firstly coded them according to the three specific issues (environmental protection, currency and finance, and international trade), and then applied the nodes of elements in China's sociocultural discourse of responsibility (as discussed in Chapter 4) to the same content. One application of a node to content is called a reference in NVivo. Besides the number of reference, the table also includes the percentage of the number of reference of a specific responsibility-related issue in the total number and the percentage of the number of reference of a specific value in the total number for clarity.

Table 5.1

*Coding Results of China's Governmental Policies Concerning China-Related Economic Responsibilities during 2009-2014*

Type of responsibility-related content	Issue and number of reference (with percentage)	Theme in sociocultural discourse and number of reference (with percentage)
Close connection between responsibility claim and issues	Environmental protection: 83 (29.5%)	Sincerity: 69 (75.8%)
		Justice: 22 (24.2%)
	Currency and finance: 35 (12.5%)	Stability: 27 (57.4%)
		Justice: 20 (42.6%)
	International trade: 33 (11.7%)	Cooperation: 31 (63.3%)
		Justice: 18 (36.7%)
Loose connection between responsibility claim and issues	130 (46.3%)	
Total	281	

The coding results of China's governmental policies show their obvious inheritance of China's sociocultural discourse of responsibility in political articulations about issues of environmental protection, currency and finance, and international trade. Specifically, the values of sincerity and justice dominated the policies closely connecting China's responsibility claim with environmental protection. The value of sincerity included resolution and cooperative intentions in this case. As to currency and finance, the policies highlighted the calling for stability, which was an ultimate objective that China's historical statecraft aimed for, and made pursuing justice a dominant strategy for maintaining stability. Then in terms of international trade, the policies embraced the values of cooperation and justice in a combination. In a word, China-related economic responsibilities in China's governmental

policies were constructed in congruence with different elements of China's sociocultural discourse of responsibility according to different issues.

It needs to be noted that although I only referred to the dominant themes in China's sociocultural discourse of responsibility manifested in frames of China's policies, it is undeniable that the policies also had inheritance of other elements. For example, in pursuing a stable currency, it was aiming for a stable economic and social development and a better life for the public. It echoed with the value of benevolence, which asks the nation to overflow love to all people. Then the bilateral and multilateral cooperation in international trade indicated that China adhered to propriety, i.e. treaties and regulations, and aspired to obtain advanced knowledge and technology. Nevertheless, I chose not to code the data based on my own interpretation, but stayed true to the original data and coded them according to their most obvious meanings. This principle was also applied in next chapter of media texts coding.

## **5.2 Obvious Inheritance of Sociocultural Discourse in Policies**

This section elucidates the obvious inheritance of China's sociocultural discourse of responsibility in China's governmental policies in three aspects: environmental protection, currency and finance, and international trade.

### **5.2.1 Environmental Protection: Sincerity and Justice**

The framing of China's policies concerning environmental protection revealed two dominant themes in China's sociocultural discourse of responsibility: sincerity and justice. On the one hand, the Chinese government defined the tackling of environmental problems as being determined and cooperative. On the other hand, it also firmly pursued justice in expressing its responsibilities in the international platform.

The trait of sincerity is one of the requirements for people or a nation in China's sociocultural discourse of responsibility. It requires the bearer to deal with problems with determination and cooperative spirits. Facing severe domestic and international problems in

environmental protection, China's political articulation highlighted sincerity, especially its resolution and cooperative intentions.

Firstly, since a healthy environment was a guarantee for national development and people's interests, dealing with domestic environmental problems was articulated as the primary concern of a responsible Chinese government. At the World Economic Forum in 2014, premier Li Keqiang (2014a) stated clearly China's determinate stance in tackling environmental issues from the central government level:

The Chinese economy, now heading toward further growth, is being weighed down by increasing resources and environmental constraints. It is imperative for us to enhance energy conservation and environmental protection. Tackling climate change is not only our binding international obligation as a major responsible country, but also the pressing need for our own development. There is no turning back in China's commitment to a sound eco-system. We have declared war on pollution and earnestly fulfilled our due international responsibilities. We are studying the action targets on greenhouse gas emissions control, including the peak of CO<sub>2</sub> emission, the carbon emission intensity reduction and the increase in the share of non-fossil energy by 2030 and beyond. We have the resolve, the will and the capability to pursue green, circular and low-carbon development. We will keep focusing on scientific and technological innovation and make hard and unremitting efforts to step up environmental management, boost the development of energy conservation and environment protection sectors, fulfil the task of energy conservation and emissions reduction, and work with other countries to effectively address global climate change. (Li, 2014a)

In his speech, phrases like “no turning back”, “declared war on pollution”, “the resolve, the will and the capability to”, and “make hard and unremitting efforts to” conveyed China's sincerity and determination in environmental protection to its audience.

Furthermore, echoing the war rhetoric, Chinese officials proposed the notion of ecological civilisation and its construction and mentioned it 243 times (2 times in 2009, 7 in 2010, 3 in 2011, 105 in 2012, 85 in 2013, 41 in 2014, including those in titles) in the selected policies. The Ministry of Environmental Protection elaborated measures which included optimising industrial structure, technological innovation, administrative regulations, public involvement, and participation in international negotiation and cooperation (Zhou, 2012).

Secondly, besides managing domestic problems with devoted efforts, Chinese officials also made clear that China would engage in the international environmental protection campaign. Its political articulation included complying with relevant international agreements and fulfilling assigned duties under the regime defined by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Kyoto Protocol<sup>60</sup>. As promised by Li Keqiang (2014) at the 9<sup>th</sup> East Asia Summit, “Based on its own needs and to honour its due responsibility as a major developing country, China will work hard to address climate change and deliver on its commitments in meeting the targets of energy conservation and emissions reduction”. China’s policies also claimed responsibility in other aspects of environmental protection. For example, in terms of combating desertification, China, as one of the contracting parties, respected the binding role of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification<sup>61</sup> according to the statement by China’s State Forestry Administration (2014). In a political commentary regarding China’s actions in protecting wild animals, the Minister of the State Forestry Administration (2013) introduced that they complied with treaties like the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Thirdly, in addition to being cooperative and trustful in abiding by treaties, the Chinese leadership also expressed their willingness to integrate with the international community when engaging in environmental protection, which resonated with Li Keqiang’s words in 2014 (Li, 2014a). Bilateral and multilateral cooperation was deemed as necessary and responsible strategies. For example, in terms of China’s energy policy, China self-defined as “an active and responsible participant in international energy cooperation” in the white paper China’s Energy Policy 2012 (Information Office of the State Council, 2012). As

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<sup>60</sup> The UNFCCC “sets an overall framework for intergovernmental efforts to tackle the challenge posed by climate change” (UNFCCC, 2016b), and the Kyoto Protocol, linked to the UNFCCC, sets internationally binding emission reduction targets for its Parties (UNFCCC, 2016a).

<sup>61</sup> This is the sole legally binding international agreement dedicated to sustainable land management issues with 195 states and the European Union as members (Treaties Office Database, 2008).

stated in this document, China has “established bilateral dialogue and cooperative mechanisms” with a range of countries and regions “regarding oil, natural gas, coal, electric power, renewable energy, technology, equipment and energy policy”; moreover, “China is also a member of or important participant in many multilateral organizations and mechanisms” (Information Office of the State Council, 2012).

Nevertheless, the policies also defined environmental protection as pursuing justice. It is slightly different from China’s sociocultural discourse of responsibility which deems justice as a trait that a decent person should possess. In the case of China’s policies, they largely called for developed countries to be fair and equitable in environmental protection, in addition to disciplining China itself to be just and impartial.

One of the prominent examples is China’s articulation of the principle of common but differentiated responsibility (CBDR) in environmental issues. This principle acts as the core of the functioning of the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol. As introduced by the Centre for International Sustainable Development Law (2002), the principle means that in the domain of environmental protection, States have a common responsibility, but their own circumstances should be considered, particularly each State’s contribution to the evolution of a particular problem and its ability to prevent, reduce, and control the threat. This vague definition leaves space for different interpretations for different countries with different conditions.

On the one hand, policies concerning the CBDR principle revealed China’s compliance with the *common* duties required in common agreements as I’ve analysed above. On the other hand, the political discourse also spared no effort to define *differentiated* (Wen, 2009; Jia, 2010; Information Office of the State Council, 2011b; Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2011; Wen, 2012a). The 2011 document “China’s Policies and Actions for Addressing Climate Change” explicated China’s view on this principle and its international environmental protection duties:

China sticks to the principle of “common but differentiated responsibilities”. Developed countries should be responsible for their accumulative emissions during their 200 years of industrialisation, which is the main reason for the current global warming. Therefore, they should take the lead in shouldering the historical responsibilities to substantially reduce emissions. With regard to capabilities, developed countries have substantial economic strength and advanced low-carbon technologies. In contrast, developing countries lack the financial strength and technologies to address climate change, and face multiple arduous tasks of developing their economies, fighting poverty, and addressing climate change. Therefore, developed countries should, on the one hand, take the lead in reducing emissions substantially, and on the other hand, provide financial support and transfer technologies to developing countries. Developing countries, while developing their economies and fighting poverty, should actively adopt measures to adapt to and mitigate climate change in accordance with their actual situations. (Information Office of the State Council, 2011b)

China’s emphasis on *differentiated* duties can be interpreted from two parts. The policy pointed bluntly to the developed countries as the origin of faults in “accumulative emissions during their 200 years of industrialisation”. Meanwhile, the policy prioritised domestic development for developing countries. This definition of environmental protection as pursuing justice in the case of China, a developing country from the perspective of the policy, echoes Honkonen’s (2009) study that “States tend to emphasize different elements of the CBDR principle and use the principle to suit their own (often self-interested) purposes” (p. 259) since the principle itself “does not have a strictly fixed content or clear legal status” (p. 258).

Apart from defining *differentiated* in the CBDR principle, China’s political articulation also revealed the pursuit of justice in proposing new regulations and systems. It constantly mentioned its constructive role in global environmental protection issues and closely related it with its responsibility claim. For instance, the Chinese government described itself as being constructive in the intergovernmental climate change negotiations:

The Chinese government attaches great importance to the issue of global climate change. With a high sense of responsibility, it has proactively and constructively participated in international negotiations to address climate change, strengthened multi-level negotiations and dialogues with other countries in the area of climate change, striving to promote consensus among all parties on the issue of climate

change and make positive contributions to building a fair and reasonable international mechanism for addressing climate change. (Information Office of the State Council, 2011)

This articulation explicitly delivered China's pursuit of fairness and equity through expressions like "proactively and constructively", "striving to promote consensus", and "building a fair and reasonable international mechanism". Similarly, the State Forestry Administration pointed out that China intended to propose new mechanisms and schemes for global forest protection with the aim to fully reflect China's interests (Zhao, 2014), implicating the unfair treatment that China ever endured.

### **5.2.2 Currency and Finance: Stability and Justice**

As to currency and finance, the notion of responsibility in relevant China's policies were mainly framed as maintaining stability and pursuing justice. Stability is an objective that a responsible nation should always put in priority in China's sociocultural discourse of responsibility. Similarly, China's policies highlighted the importance of maintaining a stable currency in its national economic and societal stability. China's pursuit of justice in the international financial system, another definition dominated China's policies concerning currency and finance, aimed to contribute to its currency stability according to policies. In a word, the policies defined responsibility as the strategy of pursuing justice and as the outcome of maintaining stability.

The stability of the Renminbi (RMB) exchange rate can exert immediate influence to not only China's domestic but also the global-range economic status. China's stick to a basically stable currency exchange rate, as articulated in policies, would stabilise China's domestic development and contribute to the world's economic recovery and financial stability, especially in the era when the world was severely buffeted by the 2008 financial crisis. Moreover, its exchange rate reform was also framed as a stability-oriented movement.



Some policies related the basically stable exchange rate policy with the responsibility claim. For example, former foreign minister Yang Jiechi (2010) defined China's contribution to the world's development through its own development as being responsible, within which China's maintaining of a stable currency was a special effort:

China's development has brought benefits to the world... In the height of the financial crisis, we kept the RMB exchange rate basically stable, facilitated the establishment of the Asian foreign exchange reserve pool totalling 120 billion US dollars, and signed currency swap agreements worth 650 billion RMB yuan. (Yang, 2010)

Some political articulations defined responsibility as maintaining stability in the case of exchange rate reform and formation mechanism. The Chinese leadership firmly believed in the positive consequence of China's market-oriented exchange rate reform to both domestic development and global economic recovery. For example,

Being a big responsible country, China has adopted an active and responsible approach in coping with the international financial crisis. China has managed its own affairs well and restored the Chinese economy to stability and achieved a steady and fairly fast growth in the shortest time possible... We have deepened the reform of the RMB exchange rate formation mechanism for a more flexible exchange rate... These figures demonstrate that China is an important engine for world economic growth and has played a crucial role in driving global economic recovery. (Wen, 2012b)

Nevertheless, China's currency stability also intimately connected with the international financial environment. The 2008 global financial crisis exposed multiple shortcomings latent in the global financial system. Pertaining political documents in China highlighted the necessity of reforming global financial system through mutual and institutional cooperation. Moreover, China's political leaders also directly urged developed countries to be responsible in financial policies. In these cases, China's political articulation framed responsibility as pursuing justice and fairness.

Some articulations of responsibility were constructed as pursuing justice in content regarding reforming financial system through mutual collaboration and institutional efforts. For instance, in the joint declaration on the establishment of a comprehensive strategic

partnership between Germany and China, both countries expressed their commitment to the reform of the international financial and monetary system:

By pursuing responsible economic and fiscal policies, Germany and China contribute to the stability of global economic and financial relations. Both countries wish to enhance their coordination in fiscal and financial matters and to contribute to the reform of the international financial and monetary system. Both sides agree to conduct a regular high-level financial dialogue. Both sides emphasise the importance of signing a new, up to date bilateral double taxation agreement. Germany welcomes the renminbi's growing importance in the international financial and monetary system. (Xinhua News Agency, 2014b)

A similar call for joint efforts was also raised by Liu Xiaoming (2011), the Chinese ambassador to the UK, in his commentary for *The Daily Telegraph*: “China and the UK... both call on the international community to step up macroeconomic policy co-ordination and reform international economic and financial governance structures.”

Besides the above joint efforts, the Chinese leadership also urged the involvement of other community members in international institutions and organisations to reform the financial system. At the first summit meeting of BRIC in 2009, the former Chinese president Hu Jintao (2009) summoned leaders in the BRIC group to commit themselves to reforming the current international financial system as one of their responsibilities to speed up socio-economic development and enhance people's living standard. In that occasion, Hu Jintao (2009) elaborated the target of the reform which was to build a “fair, equitable, inclusive and well-managed” international financial order. Specifically, he contended that

BRIC countries should jointly promote schemes for reforming the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank in order to enhance the developing countries' representativeness and right to speak and objectively reflect the world's economic changes. BRIC countries should also improve the international financial supervision mechanism and ensure the effective participation of the developing countries in world financial supervision organizations such as the Financial Stability Board. (Hu, 2009)

In addition to reforming the international financial system through mutual and institutional efforts, China's political leaders also directly urged developed countries to take

responsible financial policies. For example, former Chinese premier Wen Jiabao (2011) once contended that “The major developed economies should adopt responsible and effective fiscal and monetary policies, properly handle debt issues, ensure the safety and stable operation of investment in the market, and maintain confidence of investors around the world.” More directly, former foreign minister Yang Jiechi (2011) called on the U.S. to take responsible monetary policy as a contribution to the world’s economic recovery and stability.

### **5.2.3 International Trade: Cooperation and Justice**

Responsibilities in international trade in China’s governmental policies were mainly framed as two interrelated themes of cooperation and pursuing justice. In policies, the Chinese leadership embraced the idea of cooperation, a notion started to take shape in the post-Mao China when opening up to the outside world was the main guideline (Deng, 2008). It echoed the research findings by Scott and Wilkinson (2013) who contended that China showed “stubborn commitment” to the existing trade system during its accession, learning, and socialisation in the WTO. Meanwhile, relevant policies also revealed China’s pursuit of justice in fighting against protectionism and protecting the multilateral trading system.

For example, Li Keqiang’s (2014c) speech for the 44<sup>th</sup> World Economic Forum Annual Meeting in Davos showed China’s stance in international trade which was to firmly uphold cooperation and strive for justice. This was deemed as China’s responsible gestures in reshaping the world economy and maintaining a peaceful development path:

To reshape the world economy, it is important to establish and perfect an open, cooperative, and win-win global economic and trade system. The international community should continue to work towards diversity, openness, inclusiveness and mutual benefit, and uphold the post-World War II international political order and the peaceful world environment. It should enable the multilateral trading framework, with the World Trade Organisation at the centre, to play a more positive role. It should explore regional trade arrangements in various forms, and resolutely reject trade and investment protectionism. (Li, 2014c)

One of the most conspicuous movements guided by China's cooperative intentions and protection of multilateralism in international trade was its establishment of free trade areas, including bilateral and multilateral cooperation, and free trade zones.

Externally, the Chinese government prioritised the launch of the Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP), which was deemed as a part of China's responsibilities in domestic and global economic growth:

By promoting the FTAAP, we have worked relentlessly to ensure a right direction for regional cooperation in the Asia-Pacific... The effort goes a long way toward ensuring mutual inclusiveness and reinforcement of the existing cooperation arrangements in the region. (Wang, 2014a)

It also proactively participated in the creation of other regional free trade agreements, such as the ASEAN-China Free Trade Area (General Administration of Customs, 2010) and the later more advanced Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership in East and Southeast Asia (Li, 2014b). Altogether, as introduced by China's Ministry of Commerce (2013), China engaged in the construction of 18 free trade areas, covering as many as 31 countries and regions.

Since these efforts aimed at regional economic integration, bilateral and multilateral cooperation was deemed as the necessary manoeuvres. Thus, the Chinese leadership expressed their cooperative intentions with neighbour countries in building free trade areas in different occasions. For example, China's president Xi Jinping (2014) remarked at the Indian Council of World Affairs that in order to fulfil China and India's joint responsibilities in Asia, "We need to foster a regional consensus on cooperation and work with relevant countries to step up economic integration and connectivity in the region, speed up the building of the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor and complete negotiations on the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership at an early date".

An interesting phenomenon was that although China was not included in the US-dominated trade agreements like the Trans-Pacific Partnership and the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, it remained to pose cooperative gestures to the signatories of these agreements.

For example, Li Keqiang (2013) wrote that “as responsible great powers, China and Germany support free trade, fight against protectionism, and strengthen international cooperation, which are beneficial to mutual interests and worlds’ peace, stability, and development” in a commentary for the German newspaper *Die Zeit*.

Similarly, the then Chinese vice president Xi Jinping (2012) also called for mutual efforts in promoting free trade in China and America at the opening session of the China-U.S. economic and trade cooperation forum. For China, he said that:

China has fully implemented its WTO commitments. We have made tremendous efforts to revise laws and regulations, substantially lower the threshold for foreign investment, liberalise access to foreign trade operations and oppose protectionism in various forms... We will continue to expand the opening up of China’s economy, and encourage all companies in China, foreign-invested ones included, to engage in fair competition and pursue innovation in the Chinese market. (Xi, 2012b)

For America, he maintained that:

We hope that the United States will continue to offer a fair and convenient environment for Chinese enterprises investing in America, adopt an objective and sensible approach to investment by Chinese enterprises, and make sure that political factors do not interfere with economic cooperation. (Xi, 2012b)

In addition, Liu Xiaoming (2011) and Li Keqiang (2010) acknowledged and urged more efforts devoted by China and Britain to promoting free trade and opposing trade protectionism, which were deemed as responsibilities of the two countries for world’s affairs.

Internally, the Chinese government fully backed the development of free trade zones, especially the Shanghai Free Trade Zone (SFTZ). Although there were not as many articulations as those of the free trade areas in the selected political documents, China’s

statements in building free trade areas should be paid equal attention to since they were essential parts of China's efforts to promote free trade. Foreign minister Wang Yi (2014) introduced SFTZ as an experimental platform for the facilitation of inward and outward investment. Specifically, as introduced by Li Keqiang at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting of the New Champions 2014, the free trade zones were the domestic testing ground for China's reforms in economic structures and practices in areas like the pre-establishment treatment rules and the negative list models, a responsible measure in promoting free trade (Xinhua News Agency, 2014a). Although China's endeavours in building free trade zones were still at the pilot stage, different political leaders held a promising attitude towards its potential benefits to China's transformation and upgrading of economic structure. For example, the Ministry of Commerce (2013) explained that the ongoing administrative reforms in the zone would be beneficial for the deepening of China's reform and opening up program, and further enhancing international free trade as a responsible country.

#### **5.2.4 Summary**

In this section, I summarise the above analysis of framings of the notion of responsibility in three issues of environmental protection, currency and finance, and international trade in China's governmental policies during the media going-global project under the backdrop of China's sociocultural setting. I use Table 5.2 to synthesise the frames, i.e. definitions of responsibility, and the specific instances according to the three issues.

Table 5.2

*Frames in China's Governmental Policies Concerning China-Related Economic Responsibilities According to Issues and Specific Instances*

Issue	Frame in policy (Definition of responsibility)	Specific instance
Environmental protection	Being sincere	Domestic issues: war on pollution, ecological civilisation
		International issues: compliance with treaties
		International issues: integration with international community
	Pursuing justice	Defining <i>differentiated</i> in CBDR
		Proposing new regulations and systems
Currency and finance	Maintaining stability	Stable RMB exchange rate
		Market-oriented exchange rate reform
	Pursuing justice	Reforming financial system through bilateral and multilateral efforts
		Urging developed countries to be responsible in currency policy
International trade	Being cooperative and pursuing justice	Building free trade areas and promoting bilateral and multilateral cooperation
		Building free trade zones

### 5.3 Self-Positioning as A Developing Country: An Implicit Guiding Thought

The above analysis shows that the framings of responsibility in different issues in China's policies were potentially influenced by different elements in China's sociocultural conceptions of responsibility. To take a further look, the inheritance may also be guided by China's sociocultural philosophy of positioning, specifically, China's self-positioning as a developing country prioritising domestic development.

This positioning was explicitly expressed by the Chinese leadership. For example, Wen Jiabao defined China's responsibility as dealing with China's own affairs effectively and leaving no troubles to others in an interview about China's economic situations and future schemes in 2009, when the world was still recovering from the global financial crisis (Xinhua News Agency, 2009). This viewpoint was again emphasised by Xi Jinping that "for China, the biggest developing country in the world, the most important way to be responsible to the world is to manage its own affairs well" at the opening ceremony of the World Peace Forum in 2012 (Xi, 2012a). The content from China's Peaceful Development white paper in 2011 more comprehensively elaborated the connection between China's responsibility claim and the developing country self-positioning:

For China, the most populous developing country, to run itself well is the most important fulfilment of its international responsibility. As a responsible member of the international community, China abides by international law and the generally recognised principles governing international relations, and eagerly fulfils its international responsibility. China has actively participated in reforming international systems, formulating international rules and addressing global issues. It supports the development of other developing countries, and works to safeguard world peace and stability. As countries vary in national conditions and are in different stages of development, they should match responsibility with rights in accordance with their national strength. They should play a constructive role by fulfilling their due international responsibility in accordance with their own capability and on the basis of aligning their own interests with the common interests of mankind. For its part, China will assume more international responsibility as its comprehensive strength increases. (Information Office of the State Council of The People's Republic of China, 2011a)

In the above political articulations, there were still visible signs of "self-reliance" (*zi li geng sheng*) and "working hard to strengthen the country" (*fa fen tu qiang*), dominant statecraft highlighted by China's former president Mao Zedong, and "bide our time and build our capabilities" (*tao guang yang hui*), diplomatic strategy raised in the Deng Xiaoping era (Yeophantong, 2013). This self-positioning as a humble and conservative developing country contrasted with realists' arguments in international politics and relations who positioned



China either as an ambitious country with strong national strength, or as a transitional country with victimhood sentiments (Bernstein & Munro, 1997; Chen, 2009).

The self-positioning may further impact China's framings of responsibility in economy-related policies. It legitimised the political articulations, which in return reinforced the self-positioning.

Two frames, searching for cooperation and pursuing justice, stood out in the problem definitions of responsibility in China's governmental policies. They especially revealed the potential influence of China's self-positioning as a developing country on China's policies.

The frame of being cooperative was applied to construct the notion of responsibility in environmental protection in instances of complying with international agreements and cooperating with other international community members. It was also used in policies concerning China's responsibilities in international trade in examples of cooperating with other countries to build free trade areas and zones. Even in striving for fairness in currency and finance issues, China's policies also called for joint efforts with countries like Germany and Britain and with BRIC members.

China's compliance with existing treaties and norms and proactive stance in cooperation as articulated in its policies were largely in line with the insights of the opponents of the China threat theory as identified in the literature review who maintained that China intended not to isolate itself from the commonly agreed international norms (Roy, 1996; Broomfield, 2003; Liang, 2007; Breslin, 2010). Nevertheless, the difference between this research and previous studies is that in my view, China's compliance and cooperative stance may be decided by the deeply-rooted self-positioning as a developing country, which may outweigh its membership role in the international community in other scholars' view. The direct reason may be that the compliance can save China from legal punishment and international criticism. The deeper rationale was probably that a developing country needs

cooperative spirits for the purpose of national development. The nation's obedience, trustfulness, and sincerity can earn itself a better reputation and more opportunities. They were ultimately aiming for China's economic structural optimising and national development. This was especially obvious in the political articulations about the pilot project of free trade zones.

The other dominant frame in constructing responsibility was pursuing justice. In policies, the Chinese government actively promoted its policy agendas and aspired to have its interests considered in the updated and new orders. For example, in environmental protection, China aspired to protect its national interests by sticking to differentiated responsibilities and constructing a more equitable environmental protection system. As to currency and finance, it framed responsibility as calling for reform of current international financial system and urging other countries to be responsible in currency policies. Then in terms of international trade, it firmly fought against trade and investment protectionism and embraced multilateralism trading system.

This pursuing justice used in framing responsibility is slightly different from that in China's sociocultural values which requires people to be righteous and fair themselves. In the policies, China pursued justice by imposing requirements on others. Nevertheless, China's sociocultural discourse of responsibility is about guiding the development of self-discipline, that is, what *I* should do to keep a normal social running. The Chinese society promotes the idea of minding your own business, but not imposing your opinionated instructions on others, let alone requirements. For example, the Chinese proverb advises that "Each person should sweep the snow from his own doorsteps and should not fret about the frost on his neighbour's roof"<sup>62</sup>. They dislike condescending people who regard themselves as infallible. A quote

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<sup>62</sup> "各人自扫门前雪, 莫管他人瓦上霜."

from *Mengzi* says that “The evil of men is that they like to be teachers of others”<sup>63</sup> (Legge, *Mengzi*: Li Lou I, n.d.).

Is this framing in China’s policies new to the Chinese sociocultural discourse of responsibility? I assume that this manner of framing also has its conceptual backcloth. It probably inherited the revolutionary legacy in the Chinese history. Through the examination of China’s historical statecraft, we can detect the theme of pursuing justice in the 1920s. At that time, China publicly voiced its interests and agendas in international issues and fought against the imperialist. The theme also dominated China’s Mao period when a new China strove for a place in the after-war era whose orders and systems were largely defined by imperial countries. However, different from the nationalist sentiment as asserted by Bernstein and Munro (1997), the revolutionary stance in China’s current policies was more amiable. Guided by a self-positioning as a developing country, these calling for justice was more about protecting its national interests and striving for a decent status in the international platform.

In brief, under the potential impact of a self-positioning as a developing country prioritising domestic development, China’s policies framed responsibility as pursuing cooperation which can facilitate domestic development and fighting for justice which can ensure a better global status and external development environment.

Yeophantong defined China’s self-positioning as a “paradoxical duality of China’s identity”, specifically, China as a rising great power but also tempered by limited capabilities and resources (2013, p. 347). For example, in terms of environmental protection, Yeophantong contended that

China’s participation in the climate change regime is likewise riddled with tensions stemming from this duality inherent in its international identity. Although the PRC has become more ‘proactive’ in addressing global climate change in recent years, its engagement remains constrained by adherence to developing-country status and insistence on the right of industrializing countries to develop. (2013, p. 347)

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<sup>63</sup> 孟子曰: “人之患在好为人师。”

However, as analysed above, I think that China's self-defined identity may not be so paradoxical. Instead of positioning itself paradoxically as either a rising great power or a developing country, the analysis shows that China's policies prioritised its developing-country identity. This stubborn positioning of itself potentially influenced its stances and behaviours. Therefore, both of its devotion in global climate change and its insistence on equity can be deemed as necessities for a developing country's domestic development and national interests, which was guided by the developing-country self-positioning.

#### **5.4 Discussion**

This chapter explores the framings of China's policies concerning China-related economic responsibilities under the Chinese sociocultural backdrop. It does not restrict the study of China's responsible power claim to international relations and politics by merely measuring China's stances and behaviours against a certain standard, which may not be universally agreed. Instead, it distils the ideas of China-related economic responsibilities in China's political statements behind China's behaviours. It is based on, and also extends, Hoo's (2013) and Yeophantong's (2013) efforts in examining the influence of China's historical understandings of responsibility on the origin and evolution of China's responsible power identity. Based on the repertoire of China's sociocultural conceptions of responsibility obtained through an investigation of China's historical literature and statecraft in Chapter 4, this chapter examines specific Chinese governmental policies concerning China-related economic responsibilities in three aspects: environmental protection, currency, and international trade.

In conclusion, there is an inheritance of China's sociocultural conceptions of responsibility in China's current political articulations, displaying a "timeless" (Wang, 2007, p. 65) manner. Specifically, the policies framed responsibility in (1) environmental protection

as being sincere, resolute, and cooperative in dealing with domestic and international environmental problems, and pursuing justice by defining environmental protection missions and regulations, (2) currency and finance as striving for financial, economic, and national stability, and pursuing justice by reforming international financial system and urging other countries as a strategy to maintain stability, (3) international trade as being cooperative in building free trade areas and zones, and pursuing justice by protecting multilateralism. These framings may probably be guided by China's stubborn self-positioning as a developing country.

Nevertheless, China's policies concerning China-related economic responsibilities were vague and general in language. The coding results show that the number of references of responsibility in content loosely connecting the responsibility claim with the three specific issues is about the same as those in content with close connections, accounting for 46.3% of the total number of responsibility-related references. Hoo (2013, p. 171) delivered an interesting insight concerning this phenomenon:

For the Clinton and Bush governments, there was essentially a continuation of the policy to seek China to act more "responsibly" in international society. ... Washington never explicitly specified what it thought these responsibilities should be, but it was apparent from American statements that these related to China's contributions towards regional and international security, and its conformity to the major norms of the extant global order... At the official level, Chinese leaders continued to embellish their statements with RGP<sup>64</sup> references, but qualitatively, these did not go beyond general assertions or claims.

Harris (2011) found in his research that China's self-conceptions of its position differed dramatically with the Western views. This may be the main reason for the conflicts between China and some other countries over China's responsibilities in issues of environmental protection, currency and finance, and international trade. The next chapter will

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<sup>64</sup> RGP refers to responsible great power in Hoo (2013).

explore different views on China-related economic responsibilities in Chinese and Western media institutions through a critical discourse analysis of their media texts.

## **Chapter 6. Media Representation of China-Related Economic Responsibilities: Media Texts and Frames in Chinese and Western Media Institutions**

This chapter mainly aims to answer research questions 2a and 2b concerning how the China-related economic responsibilities were framed in Xinhua News Agency during 2010 and 2014, 3a, 3b, 3c, and 3d concerning how they were framed in *FT* and *WSJ* respectively during 2010 and 2014, and 4a and 4b concerning the similarities and differences of frames in the three media institutions, which were an indication of the potential influence of China's media discourse on Western media institutions. This study concentrates on the two specific years because 2010 witnessed China's host of Shanghai Expo and 2014 Beijing APEC. Both events were international in scope so that the Chinese government may devote more efforts to constructing and disseminating its discourse of economic responsibilities in the two years and Western countries may focus more on China-related economic issues.

Altogether, this chapter examines 105 news articles from the three media institutions. Samples from Xinhua are all normal hard news stories, *WSJ* normal news stories and commentaries, and *FT* normal news stories and opinion articles in diverse formats. The samples focus on the three China-related issues of environmental protection, currency and finance, and international trade. They all have different perspectives to construct China-related economic responsibilities: (1) China's view on its own responsibilities both in domestic and international issues, (2) China's view on other countries', mainly developed countries', responsibilities, (3) other countries', mainly developed countries', view on China's responsibilities.

The framing analysis in this chapter obtains three major findings. Firstly, as to Xinhua's construction of China-related economic responsibilities, it shared many similarities with China's political discourse of China-related economic responsibilities and its sociocultural discourse of responsibility. Explicitly, Xinhua constructed responsibility in environmental protection as being sincere and pursuing justice, in currency and finance as

maintaining stability and pursuing justice, and in international trade as pursuing cooperation and justice. Implicitly, Xinhua's journalistic representations were probably constrained by China's self-positioning as a developing country. The journalistic practice was operating under China's governmental guidance which aimed to obtain the power of discourse in the international communication environment.

The second conclusion concerns the journalistic representations in *WSJ* and *FT*. In the case of the US-based *WSJ*, it seemed that it was aware of China's media discourse. However, it tended to deny and challenge China's discourses with its own discourse. It framed a mighty but uncertain and mysterious China who was reluctant to accept its duties or handle its faults. In terms of the UK-based *FT*, it largely offered a platform for diverse opinions from both developing and developed countries and left readers space to make judgments. This leads to the third conclusion that the potential influence of China's media discourse on representations in Western media institutions was limited.

This chapter firstly introduces the immediate situational and institutional environment surrounding China's media going-global initiative. Then it illustrates the coding results of media texts from the three media institutions in NVivo. The main body of this chapter is devoted to a framing analysis of media texts from both Chinese and Western media institutions in three areas: environmental protection, currency and finance, and international trade. It also checks the transferability of the research results by additionally analysing samples from two other years (2012 and 2016). This chapter ends with a final discussion that summarises and interprets the major findings of this chapter.

## **6.1 Immediate Situational and Institutional Environment of Media Going-Global**

This section aims to offer an insight into the immediate situational context and institutional environment surrounding China's media going-global project. In so doing, it will set the scene for the following analysis of media representations in the China case and



provide some explanations of the media construction factors from a political economic perspective. It focuses on relevant documents released by the Chinese government, especially the GAPP, and articulated by politicians.

The idea of strengthening China's media industry to compete with western media groups and reverse negative global public opinions was initiated in January 2002 (Bandurski, 2007). It was then articulated as "making media big and strong" (Bandurski, 2007). It included "the building of various media groups, such as newspaper groups, publishing groups, circulation groups and radio and television groups", and "bringing dispersed publications into united publishing groups, improving business management, increasing the move toward technology and new media, and adjustment of ownership structures, including possibly introduction of stock ownership, etcetera" (Bandurski, 2007).

This idea gained its momentum when the former Chinese president Hu Jintao stressed the importance of enhancing culture as China's soft power at the 17<sup>th</sup> National Congress of the CPC in 2007 (Cao, 2014). Following this call, the former chief of public relations Li Changchun (also a member of the Standing Committee of the CPC Central Committee Political Bureau) urged the building up of mass media and the Internet as "publicity brigades" (Xinhua News Agency, 2007b). After a year, he acknowledged the importance of establishing new international television broadcasters (Li, 2008).

In multiple occasions, China's political leaders explained China's motivations behinds these initiatives, which were to counteract the media imperialism and the China threat theory. This echoes existing scholarly findings (Hu, et al., 2013). For example, Li Changchun once elaborated that the decision was driven by the belief that "Preventing giant foreign media agencies from monopolising the right of voice, enabling foreign people to hear the voice of China and popularising actual and outstanding Chinese culture is of vital importance in

enhancing China's soft power"<sup>65</sup> (Hayden, 2012, p. 181). Similarly, an article by Xinhua News Agency explained that the enlargement and strengthening of influential mainstream news media can help to form the power to influence international opinion commensurate with China's international status (Xinhua News Agency, 2007a).

From 2009, several documents relevant with China's outbound communication were released in succession by GAPP. Most of the guidelines, similar with the above political instructions, dealt with the expansion of media institutions and products in the overseas market, largely repeating and reinforcing what was articulated during the "making media big and strong" period after 2002.

The infrastructure construction of China's transnational media institutions, which seems to be the priority since 2002, may potentially reverse the media imperialism, at least from numbers. Then how about its content, i.e. its discourse battle with the China threat theses?

In order to reverse unfavourable global perceptions, the former minister of China's SCIO Zhao Qizheng prioritised the delivering of some specific content through these news channels, including the human rights issue, the Tibetan and Taiwan issues, the religion problems, the Falun Gong cult question, and China threat theses (Zhao, 2004). Moreover, issues like China's "cultural traditions, social development, and internal and external policies" were also significant elements of the messages (Zhao, 2011).

Besides merely explaining China to the outside world, the Chinese leadership also believed that China's media outlets should be quick and comprehensive in reporting some major international issues, especially emergencies, and better with China's own perspectives (Li, 2010; Peng, 2010). This strategy is usually called obtaining the power of discourse

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<sup>65</sup> The original text by Li Changchun could not be tracked because of the unclear reference in Hayden's (2012, p. 212) book.

(*huayu quan*) in China. It generally refers to China's aspiration of a more prominent and influential voice in the global platform. It shares a rather similar kernel with the notion of soft power, which is to change others' thoughts and behaviours in favour of its own political intentions through rhetoric instead of weapons. Although Cunningham (2012) translates *huayu quan* as "freedom of discourse", I am more inclined to translate it as power of discourse since it indicates China's intention to influence others instead of merely introducing itself to them with no restrictions.

Under this backdrop, the Chinese government may devote efforts to external communication trying to construct and disseminate influential discourses, for example, China's discourse of China-related economic responsibilities. The following sections will explore China's journalistic representations of China-related economic responsibilities, as well as the Western ones.

## **6.2 An Overview of Coding Results of Media Texts in Three Media Institutions**

This overview of coding results of media texts is more complicated than the one in Chapter 5 of China's governmental policies.

The first part is about the coding of media texts containing the word "responsibility", "responsible", or "responsibly" in different issues, namely environmental protection, currency and finance, international trade, or only general issues in which the word itself was loosely connected with specific issues.

The second part of coding concerns different perspectives of journalistic constructions of China-related economic responsibilities, namely (1) China's view on its own domestic and international responsibilities, (2) China's view on other countries' responsibilities, and (3) other countries' view on China's responsibilities.

The third part is exclusively for coding of samples from Xinhua. It coded the notion of responsibility as different elements of China's sociocultural discourse of responsibility

where the word was closely connected with the three specific issues. It aims to answer research questions 2a and 2b about the framing of China-related economic responsibilities in China's Xinhua, specifically, its journalistic definitions of responsibility.

Xinhua's framings are used as the basis for comparison. This study focuses on the moral judgment function of frames in Western media. Specifically, it will analyse Western media's positive, negative, neutral, or no moral judgment of China-related economic responsibilities. Positive moral judgment means the news articles supported its representation of China-related economic responsibilities with other information or opinions, negative means challenged or denied the representation, neutral means no judgment but balanced the representation with information or opinions from the other side, and no judgment means no moral evaluation and no supporting or challenging facts or opinions. It helps to answer research questions 3a, 3b, 3c, and 3d concerning how the two Western media institutions framed (morally judged) China-related economic responsibilities in different issues through different perspectives, and research questions 4a and 4b about the potential influence of China's media discourse, which may be influenced by China's sociocultural and political values, on Western media representations.

Table 6.1 summarises the coding result of 33 news articles from China's Xinhua News Agency in NVivo, Table 6.2 22 articles from USA-based *WSJ*, and Table 6.3 50 articles from UK-based *FT*. The tables record numbers of references of specific or general issues in relevant media texts, numbers of references of themes in China's sociocultural discourse of responsibility in responsibility-related content with close connection with specific issues (the case of Xinhua in Table 6.1), and numbers of references of different perspectives of journalistic construction. To present the results clearer, the tables also include the percentage of the number of reference of a specific responsibility-related issue in the total

number, as well as the percentage of the number of reference of a specific value in the total number in the case of Xinhua in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1

*Coding Results of Xinhua's Media Texts Concerning China-Related Economic Responsibilities in 2010 and 2014*

Type of responsibility-related content	Issue and number of reference (with percentage)	Theme in sociocultural discourse and number of reference (with percentage)	Perspective		
			China's view on China	China's view on others	Others' view on China
Close connection between responsibility claim and issues	Environmental protection: 25 (50%)	Sincerity: 8 (32%)	6	2	0
		Justice: 16 (64%)	0	12	4
		No specific value: 1 (4%)	1	0	0
	Currency and finance: 5 (10%)	Stability: 1 (20%)	1	0	0
		Justice: 4 (80%)	0	3	1
	International trade: 4 (8%)	Cooperation: 4 (80%)	3	1	0
		Justice: 1 (20%)	1	0	0
Loose connection between responsibility claim and issues	16 (32%)		4	0	12
Total	50		16	18	17

Table 6.2

*Coding Results of WSJ's Media Texts Concerning China-Related Economic Responsibilities in 2010 and 2014*

Type of responsibility-related content	Issue and number of reference (with percentage)	Perspective		
		China's view on China	China's view on others	Others' view on China
Close connection between responsibility claim and issues	Environmental protection: 9 (36%)	3	1	5
	Currency and finance: 9 (36%)	3	1	5
	International trade: 2 (8%)	0	1	1
Loose connection between responsibility claim and issues	5 (20%)	1	1	3
Total	25	7	4	14

Table 6.3

*Coding Results of FT's Media Texts Concerning China-Related Economic Responsibilities in 2010 and 2014*

Type of responsibility-related content	Issue and number of reference (with percentage)	Perspective		
		China's view on China	China's view on others	Others' view on China
Close connection between responsibility claim and issues	Environmental protection: 9 (13.8%)	2	2	5
	Currency and finance: 27 (41.5%)	4	5	18
	International trade: 0	0	0	0
Loose connection between responsibility claim and issues	29 (44.6%)	9	1	19
Total	65	15	8	42

Guided by the coding results in Table 6.1, 6.2, and 6.3, the following sections will explain in detail the framings and constructions of China-related economic responsibilities in environmental protection, currency and finance, and international trade in China's Xinhua, US-based *WSJ*, and UK-based *FT*. They will provide insight into to discursive constructions of China's journalistic representations, and their influence, if there were any, on Western countries' journalistic representations.

### 6.3 Environmental Protection

In this section, the analysis shows that Xinhua's journalistic representations of China-related economic responsibilities in environmental protection revealed China's sociocultural and political values of sincerity and justice. In the case of *WSJ*, it seemed that it was aware of

China's discourses, but it constructed its own discourse centring on China's economic capacity and challenged China's discourses. Since the conflicts mainly resided between China and the U.S., *FT* largely adopted a balanced manner and a neutral tone to represent China-related environmental debates.

### **6.3.1 Xinhua**

Similar with China's political discourse, Xinhua's representations of environmental protection also framed responsibility as sincerity and determination and pursuit of justice.

Representations of China's view on its domestic duties included explication of needs in environmental issues and detailed governmental duties, for instance, its progression in law construction about water and soil preservation ("China Focus: Chinese Top Legislature," 2010), a movement in line with the political discourse of ecological civilisation construction from the perspective of administrative regulations. The responsibility was defined in a governmental source- the revised Law on Water and Soil Conservation, and the bearer of responsibilities was specified to "China's water authorities, other government agencies including departments of forestry, agriculture, land and resources", targeting at the severe soil and water losses and their threats to the environment and people's lives ("China Focus: Chinese Top Legislature," 2010).

Xinhua's coverage of China's view on its international duties consisted of its view on what it has already done and what it is about to do, both of which centred on China's self-identification as being responsible. As to its previous actions, Xinhua quoted former Chinese vice president Xi Jinping's words that "We have joined global actions to tackle climate change with the utmost resolve and a most active attitude, and have acted in line with the United Nations' principle of common but differentiated responsibilities" ("China Focus: China 'Active, Serious'," 2010). Moreover, Xinhua reported that China defended its governmental subsidies for clean energy industry against the condemnation from America



who deemed China's actions as the cause of job losses in the U.S. (Zhu, 2010). The report quoted an NGO source arguing the necessity of governmental support: "It's what China must do, being a responsible citizen in the global community. Also, the development of the industry in China would provide immense market opportunities for the world" (Zhu, 2010).

Then as to its future promises, in a report about climate talks in Mexico, a Chinese governmental source introduced China's greenhouse gas emissions cutting plans and promised that "The Chinese government is responsible. We will make every effort to achieve the target", indicating a tough future but a resolute attitude ("China Focus: China Eyes," 2010).

Besides the above aspects, Xinhua also represented China's calling for common endeavours. For example, one report directly quoted Xi Jinping's words that "Every country has a stake in dealing with climate change and every country has a responsibility for the safety of our planet" in the 2010 Boao Forum for Asia meeting ("China Focus: China 'Active, Serious,'" 2010). Once more, a report about Tianjin UN climate talks indirectly quoted a governmental source saying that "Parties at the talks should rebuild mutual trust and improve sense of responsibility as climate change is a global issue affecting every country" ("China Focus: China Calls," 2010).

Nevertheless, Xinhua's reports also constructed responsibility as pursuing justice and equity.

The most prominent representations were constructed from the perspective of China's view on other countries' responsibilities. It was composed of two aspects. The first aspect was China's defining of *differentiated* in the principle of CBDR from aspects of emission reduction amounts, funds and technological support, and regulations.

Firstly, the targets of emission cuts should be differentiated between developed and developing countries. For example, a report indirectly quoted statements by Xie Zhenhua

(vice minister of the National Development and Reform Commission), a key figure who represented China in international climate negotiations, that the restrictions some developed countries put on developing nations in emission reductions run against the principle of equality and the CBDR (“China Focus: China Eyes,” 2010). Instead, in regards to the dilemma that “rich and poor countries still divided over responsibilities for emission cuts”, China was covered that it “wants a substantial rise in emissions cuts targets by developed countries, and reaffirmed a division of obligations between the rich and poor nations” (Liu & Fu, 2010). Similarly, Xie in another occasion was covered to reiterate the principle of CBDR and urge the developed countries to act first (“China Focus: China Vows,” 2010).

Then as to funds and technological support, a report indirectly cited China’s state councillor Dai Bingguo’s words that by following the principle of CBDR, “The developed countries should set the targets to take the lead in reducing the greenhouse gases emissions and the arrangements should be made to provide adequate financial and technological support to developing countries” (“China Focus: New Round,” 2010). Similarly, through the voice of an Indian official, a report again presented that developed countries have differentiated responsibility in the aspect of providing “new and additional” funds to developing countries (“China Focus: BASIC Members,” 2010).

When it comes to regulations, one report pointed out that China and other developing countries insisted on the Kyoto Protocol, in addition to the UNFCCC, in order to regulate the “differentiated” missions between developing and developed countries through common agreements (Shang & Shao, 2010). Apart from an expression of mere expectation, this report also denied developed countries’ view on their own duties. It quoted a source from a research community contending that “A main problem now is that the United States and some other developed countries are trying to cancel the Kyoto Protocol and play down their responsibilities. They want to discuss the responsibilities with the developing countries only

under the UNFCCC. And this will blur the differences between developing and developed countries” (Shang & Shao, 2010).

The second aspect was China’s direct condemnation of developed countries, in which the notion of responsibility was constructed as handling faults already happened and developed countries were deemed as the origin of faults.

For example, a news quoted Xie Zhenhua’s comment that “developed countries should take responsibility for their cumulative emissions and current high per capita emissions”, emphasising China’s position on Cancun conference that the emissions cut targets should be differentiated between countries (“China Focus: China Vows,” 2010). Moreover, an Indian official was quoted to condemn developed countries for being “directly responsible for the lack of progress in the United Nations talks on climate change and ‘we are victims of climate change’” (“China Focus: BASIC Members,” 2010).

Besides framing responsibility from the perspective of China’s view on other countries’ responsibilities, Xinhua’s representations of other countries’ view on China’s responsibilities were also guided by the theme of justice and equity. Xinhua’s reports largely tended to apply a defending tone by presenting China’s actual situations in face with condemnation or urges from developed countries in environmental protection problems.

For instance, as a response to US’s condemnation that “China’s ‘massive’ subsidies were responsible for job losses in the United States and market share reductions of U.S. companies”, a report quoted a source from an independent British renewable energy consultancy firm who denied the logics of this statement with facts that “U.S. suppliers in the supply chain are benefiting from China’s large renewable energy market” (Zhu, 2010). The report further introduced, through an indirect quote of the source, that “the U.S. company, American Superconductor, has been supplying a large amount of power electronics to wind turbines installed in China, but due to the gap in technology and products, Chinese turbine

suppliers have not made much progress in selling the products in the United States” (Zhu, 2010).

Some reports did not cover other countries’ condemnation on China explicitly, but presented their view on China’s shouldering of responsibilities with a slightly blaming tone, that is, China has not done enough in fulfilling duties. Once again, Xinhua defended China with the same method of stating China’s realities. For example, commenting on the International Energy Agency report who made China the top energy consumer, a report quoted a government think tank source saying that “That would be a totally different story if some institutions use the excuse to press China to shoulder more responsibilities on emission reductions than it should” (“China Focus: China Dismisses,” 2010). Instead, the news reported that China’s National Energy Administration dismissed the report and presented “China’s relentless efforts to cut energy use and emissions, notably the country’s aggressive expansion of new energy development” (“China Focus: China Dismisses,” 2010).

Nonetheless, in regards to others’ view on China’s responsibilities, one report did not cite others’ condemnations or urges, but quoted indirectly others’ sympathy for developing countries: “The growth of the developing countries do have an increasing opportunity to contribute to mitigation in a global effort, which is not to say that they should pay for that mitigation”, and “there would be a ‘common but differentiated responsibilities’ for developing and developed countries” (Shang & Shao, 2010).

Xinhua’s journalistic representations of responsibility as sincerity and justice were consistent between 2010 and 2014, although 2014 witnessed a sharp drop of relevant reports in number and a vaguer construction of sincerity and justice.

On the one hand, it mentioned China’s sincerity and resolution in environmental protection from both domestic and international perspectives. Domestically, a report about the Eco Forum Global Annual Conference Guiyang 2014 quoted a letter from Chinese

premier Li Keqiang that “The theme of this year’s forum emphasizes the role of China’s reform in the green drive as well as the common responsibility borne by the government, enterprises and the public”, although providing no details about the content and requirements of the common responsibility (“China Focus: Int’l Eco Forum,” 2014). Externally, in Summer Davos, the Chinese premier was indirectly quoted that “To address climate change and fulfilling its due international responsibilities, the Chinese government is now contemplating emission targets for 2030” as China had declared a war on pollution (“China Focus: Firmer Execution,” 2014).

On the other hand, it also addressed China’s insistence on justice in its interpretation of the CBDR principle, as well as in other aspects. At this time, the media representations still put more ink on *differentiated*. Xinhua introduced a plan approved by China’s central government which “calls for deepened international cooperation under the principles of ‘common but differentiated responsibilities,’ equity and respective capability” (“China Focus: China Approves,” 2014). Furthermore, it indirectly quoted Xie Zhenhua’s comments that “Xie called for a new global protocol on climate change to adhere to the principles of fairness and common but differentiated responsibilities, referring to the responsibilities of developed and developing countries in reducing their carbon footprints respective to their developmental abilities” (“China Focus: China Approves,” 2014). The expressions of “equity”, “respective capability”, “new global protocol”, and “fairness” indicated that the report strongly called for justice which is congruent with those in the 2010 reports.

Besides defining responsibility as pursuing justice in the CBDR principle, Xinhua also applied a similar definition in representing China’s view on other countries’ duties in other aspects. For example, in reporting China’s first rare earth products exchange, it indirectly quoted opinions from an official of the Chinese Society of Rare Earths saying that “foreign countries should respect China’s stance and shoulder common responsibility to

establish a diversified global rare earth supply system that would benefit everyone” (“China Focus: China’s First,” 2014).

In summary, Xinhua’s representations of China-related responsibilities in environmental protection were in high congruence with China’s political discourse and its sociocultural discourse of responsibility that they highlighted sincerity, determination, and resolution on the one hand, and justice, equity, and fairness on the other hand.

### **6.3.2 WSJ**

The *WSJ* had prominent tendencies to silence China’s efforts in environmental protection and deny China’s understandings of justice and equity. It depicted an economically powerful China who was reluctant to admit its duties and deal with its faults. It seemed that its representations were based on the premise that the media institution was fully aware of China’s media discourse. The frames were consistent between 2010 and 2014.

First, *WSJ* challenged China’s understandings of its own international obligations both in hard news stories and commentary. It tended to drag readers’ attention to China’s current emissions, which deflected readers from China’s rhetoric on developed countries’ previous faults, and supported their arguments with facts about China’s economic capacity.

For example, in regards to China’s dismissing of International Energy Agency’s figure which showed China as the largest energy consumer in 2009, *WSJ* interpreted it in a hard news as “China’s reluctance to accept the mantle of world’s top energy consumer also reflects unease with its growing global influence – and the responsibilities that could come with it, such as greater calls for it to limit its energy use” (Oster & Swartz, 2010). The news negatively evaluated China’s own view on its responsibilities. Unlike Xinhua’s coverage of the same issue in which it specified China’s efforts in decreasing energy consumption to defend itself against the unfavourable situation (“China Focus: China Dismisses,” 2010), the *WSJ* report focused on “China’s rapid economic growth”, which made China’s own

calculation of energy consumption, a defending action, trivial and indifferent (Oster & Swartz, 2010).

Then in a commentary, it presented China's rhetoric about its freeing of itself from heavy carbon emission targets: "China...still developing and require higher rates of economic growth. Moreover, they aren't responsible for previous emissions, and on a per capita basis U.S. emissions are much higher", indicating other countries, such as the U.S., should tackle with their previous problems (Lazear, 2014). However, the commentary did not fully support this argument. Once again, it had a negative evaluation of China's rhetoric. It pointed out "the reality of carbon growth" by presenting China's current emissions and ascending economy, implying that China's shouldering of environmental responsibilities was inevitable (Lazear, 2014).

Secondly, it also questioned China's view on other countries' responsibilities. Similar with Xinhua's representation, *WSJ* also covered China's condemnation of other countries in environmental protection by pointing bluntly to the origin of fault. It also highlighted the fairness theme strongly required by developing countries, especially China, which coincided with Xinhua's reports. For instance, before the Cancun meeting on global warming, a *WSJ* world news report predicted the challenge of the meeting that "Developing economies such as China and India say rich countries such as the U.S. should bear the heavier burden of reducing emissions since they have a historical responsibility for carbon already in the atmosphere" (Oster, 2010). However, unlike Xinhua's report which supported China's stance by contrasting developed countries' due responsibilities with China's own proactive measures in dealing with climate problems ("China Focus: China Vows," 2010), *WSJ* challenged developing countries' call by emphasising that "emerging countries such as China, which in 2007 surpassed the U.S. as the world's biggest emitter, must do more" (Oster, 2010). This news negatively evaluated China's stance in viewing others' responsibilities.

Thirdly, the media outlet continued to challenge China's discourse by representing other countries' view on China's responsibilities in environmental protection, specifically, other countries' urges of China to take on due actions and moreover, condemnations of China for faults.

In terms of urges, a hard news report questioned China's plans in environmental protection by inquiring "what responsibility to take for climate-change issues" since the country anointed a new leader Xi Jinping "at a pivotal time for China as its economic and military might grows", indicating a positive judgment of others' urge of China (Page, 2010).

Besides mere urges, a commentary proposed measures. In regards to global climate negotiations, the commentary predicted that China would be deft in using tricks to ward off the imposed responsibilities by defending itself with the collective situation of the developing countries bloc (Levi, 2010). Instead of wasting time on China, the author suggested that the U.S. should devote more efforts to lobbying other countries and isolating China, a way to "put more pressure on Beijing to accede to U.S. preferences" and "make others more likely to blame China, rather than the U.S., if the talks failed" (Levi, 2010). It once again acknowledged others' urges of China.

Apart from urges, some news reports and commentary framed other countries' condemnation on China. For example, a 2010 commentary regarding global environmental protection explicitly pointed out that the origins of fault were the relatively few nations, namely the U.S. and China, since they "are responsible for the vast majority of emissions" (Nordhaus & Shellenberger, 2010). Once again, the commentary used numbers to demonstrate that the few nations "have the resources to do something about it", i.e. their responsibilities: the two nations "produce more than 40% of the world's emissions" in the range of U.N., and "accounted for 80% of total global carbon emissions – as well as 85% of global GDP, 80% of world trade and two-thirds of world population" in the range of the G-20



countries (Nordhaus & Shellenberger, 2010). The commentary positively judged others' view on China's fault.

But in a 2014 hard news report, the notion of responsibility was neutrally judged. On the one hand, Mr. Obama was represented that not only pointed directly to the major origin of emissions: "Mr. Obama singled out fast-growing emerging economies that are responsible for a growing share of emissions," within which China was obviously included, but also urged China to take on its leadership in climate problems: "President Barack Obama on Tuesday said the U.S. and China have a special responsibility as the largest carbon-dioxide emitters to lead a new effort to curb emissions" (Mauldin & Sparshott, 2014). On the other hand, China was covered in the news arguing that the international responsibilities should be "commensurate with our national conditions" (Mauldin & Sparshott, 2014). Different views were presented with no obvious inclination.

### **6.3.3 FT**

In *FT*, there were no obvious frames in representing China-related responsibilities in environmental protection. It covered the conflicts between developing and developed countries and represented polarised opinions both in hard news stories and opinion articles.

In covering China's view on its own international duties, an analysis on China's Shanghai Expo put no judgment on China's responsible power claim. It presented a Chinese scholar's view that "By hosting the show, China is finally shouldering its responsibility to the environment" without further questioning or denial (Waldmeir, 2010). It was quite different from the *WSJ* articles in which China's own understandings of its international responsibilities were followed by Western countries' queries and challenges.

A comment on China's view on its international duties in environmental protection by former Australian prime minister Kevin Rudd (2014) called for all countries to engage in this green campaign. Instead of dismissing China's rhetoric, this comment acknowledged China's

stance and successive actions in global warming: “China once saw a warming planet as a problem for the west, which created the phenomenon in the first place. Now, as a rising power, it sees that it too has a responsibility to deal with climate change” (Rudd, 2014). In addition, it also acknowledged efforts from America, and the driving force both countries brought along for other countries in dealing with climate issues (Rudd, 2014).

A positive judgment of China’s view on other countries’ responsibilities appeared in a comment by Holslag (2010). It acknowledged China’s efforts that “Since the 2009 talks in Copenhagen, Beijing has both acted as ringleader of a heterogeneous grouping of developing nations and pushed vehemently for more assistance to poorer countries, technology transfer and common but diversified responsibilities” (Holslag, 2010). The comment did not view China’s movements negatively because since Chinese diplomats were deft in exploiting existing world order to “defend China’s vital interests and political norms”, and “The more China recognises that the rules of international organisations are not stacked against it, the more it will be inclined to engage” (Holslag, 2010).

In representing other countries’ view on China’s responsibilities, *FT* also applied mixed frames.

Some articles represented other countries’ urges but neutrally judged them. An opinion article about the Lima global climate deal directly pointed out that “The relative poverty of emerging economies does not absolve them of responsibility, especially not fast-growing countries such as India and China. This is certainly the case for the latter, which now has per capita greenhouse gas emissions that are higher than the EU” (“The Long Road,” 2014). However, the article mentioned that the problems unresolved also included what the responsibility referred to: “The draft text talks about nations having ‘common and differentiated’ responsibilities, and promises that cuts will respect ‘different national circumstances’. For such a critical issue, this is worryingly vague” (“The Long Road,” 2014).

Some judged others' urges positively. A letter to the editor dismissed China's call for differentiated responsibilities (Veening, 2014). However, it did not point to China alone, but proposed a common call to all the mankind: "all actors (governments, enterprises, consumers) have the same responsibilities, namely to do whatever they can to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to make and keep this planet healthy for ourselves and those, also in the animal and plant kingdom, that come after us" (Veening, 2014).

Some covered other countries' condemnations, but balanced them with other facts. A 2014 opinion article in the Lex column presented China's dilemma in energy consumption: on the one hand, China was reportedly being "responsible for 30 per cent of the world's carbon dioxide output", and on the other hand, it faced a promising, yet challenging, future of nuclear energy development ("The Nuclear Option," 2014). The article neutrally represented China's responsibilities.

Another article balanced the condemnation with information from the perspective of developed countries. Although industrialised countries, as reported in a hard news article, accused China of its huge emissions that "the world's main emerging economies are responsible for nearly 40 per cent of global emissions. China is the world's biggest emitter, while India is rising up the table fast", the report balanced the views with facts that "green campaigners blamed the US and the European Union for the frustration of the talks" and with quotes that "Developed nations...tried to force developing countries to accept a weak and unfair agreement" (Harvey, 2010).

#### **6.3.4 Summary**

As to environmental protection, Xinhua's representations of China-related responsibilities shared high similarity with China's political discourse that they both highlighted the themes of being sincere and pursuing justice in constructing the notion of responsibility.

- (A) Xinhua framed responsibility as being sincere in representing:
  - (a) its resolution in dealing with domestic needs of environmental protection;
  - (b) its self-defining responsible role in international environmental protection missions;
  - (c) its calling for common efforts around the globe.
- (B) It also framed responsibility as pursuing justice in covering:
  - (a) China's defining of *differentiated* in the principle of CBDR from strands of emission reduction targets, financial and technological assistance, and protocols;
  - (b) China's direct condemnation or urging of developed countries in historic emissions and slow climate negotiations;
  - (c) China's defence against other countries' urging or condemnations with an introduction of China's realities, and other countries' sympathy on China.

The problem definition function of frames was consistent in Xinhua's hard news articles published in 2010 and 2014.

However, Xinhua's framings of China-related responsibilities in environmental protection were not well received by *WSJ*. Instead, they met sheer challenges. Table 6.4 illustrates the analysis results of the moral judgment function of frames used by *WSJ*. It records numbers of positive, negative, neutral and no moral judgments of China-related responsibilities in three perspectives.

Table 6.4

*Numbers of Positive, Negative, Neutral, and No Moral Judgments of China-Related Responsibilities in Environmental Protection in Three Perspectives by WSJ in 2010 and 2014*

	Positive	Negative	Neutral	No	Total
China's view on China	0	2	1	0	3
China's view on others	0	1	0	0	1
Others' view on China	3	0	2	0	5
Total	3	3	3	0	9

Therefore, it can be concluded that *WSJ*'s hard news and commentaries represented:

(a) disapproval of China's interpretations of its own international duties (n=2), as well as neutral moral judgment (n=1);

(b) inquiries about China's condemnation of other countries (n=1);

(c) acknowledgement of other countries' urges and condemnations of China (n=3), as well as neutral moral judgment of others' views (n=2).

The unfavourable framings applied a similar strategy that they highlighted China's current emissions and economic capacity. They constructed a mighty China who was reluctant to accept its duties and admit its faults. Interestingly, in constructing (a) and (b), *WSJ* also represented China's pushing away of the imposed duties and China's calling for other countries to deal with historic emissions. It was probable that *WSJ* was aware of China's media discourse.

In the case of *FT*, it adopted mixed frames in representing China-related environmental responsibilities. See Table 6.5 for the analysis results.

Table 6.5

*Numbers of Positive, Negative, Neutral, and No Moral Judgments of China-Related Responsibilities in Environmental Protection in Three Perspectives by FT in 2010 and 2014*

	Positive	Negative	Neutral	No	Total
China's view on China	1	0	0	1	2
China's view on others	1	1	0	0	2
Others' view on China	1	0	4	0	5
Total	3	1	4	1	9

As shown above, in constructing

(a) China's view on its own international duties, *FT* did not challenge China's views as what *WSJ* did, but acknowledged (n=1) or made no moral judgment (n=1) on China's views;

(b) China's view on other countries' responsibilities, *FT* had mixed judgments that both positive and negative moral evaluation appeared once;

(c) other countries' view on China's responsibilities, both opinion articles and hard news stories balanced other countries' condemnations and urges with facts and opinions from different perspectives, creating a neutral moral judgment (n=4). Moreover, an opinion article also acknowledged others' urges of China (n=1) and called for common duties from all mankind.

#### **6.4 Currency and Finance**

In representing China-related currency and finance issues, Xinhua framed responsibility as maintaining stability and pursuing justice, which were in line with China's political discourse and sociocultural discourse of responsibility. Once again, *WSJ* challenged China's responsibility discourse in its hard news stories and commentaries. Nevertheless, its editorial adopted a neutral sense in representing the currency disputes between China and the

U.S. *FT* represented China-related currency and finance issues in diverse frames, and several articles calmly probed into the underlying reasons. It is notable that the China-related currency and finance issue was seldom mentioned in either of the three media institutions in 2014.

#### **6.4.1 Xinhua**

Stability was the guideline in China's dealing with currency and finance issues as represented in Xinhua's reports in 2010. It was the ultimate objective that China's currency and finance policies and behaviours aimed for. It was in line with China's pursuit of a stable society in its statecraft in the continuum of history. To achieve this purpose, Xinhua's representations also revealed China's strategy of pursuing justice.

Firstly, Xinhua represented China's view on its international duties, i.e. a self-identification as being responsible in keeping a stable currency policy. For example, a report discussed China's insistence on a "basically stable" currency policy and fought against the U.S. call for a stronger yuan through the opinion of a National People's Congress deputy, claiming that "China plays a leading role in global economic recovery, any drastic policy change will not only impair China's economy, but also the global recovery, which is not a responsible way" (Liu, 2010).

Secondly, Xinhua framed responsibility as pursuing justice in its coverage of China's view on other countries' responsibilities. Some reports covered China's urges of the U.S. to take on responsible actions in currency policy. For example, a report condemned the U.S. through sources that "issuance of banknotes in a reckless manner was in fact a disguised form of currency manipulation" and may impact the "financial stability" ("China Focus: U.S. Told," 2010). It cited a Chinese senior official's words that China urged the U.S. to "take a responsible attitude" in currency policy ("China Focus: U.S. Told," 2010).

Some reports constructed the notion of responsibility as duties to handle faults, which took a further step compared with mere urges. In a report about the US's second round of quantitative easing, a movement being reportedly criticised by the executive vice-chair of the Future World Foundation that "it is threatening the financial stability of countries like China", the news directly quoted a government-based research community source contending that "Countries should join together to restrain America's irresponsible behavior of issuing excessive amounts of money" (Jiang & Guo, 2010).

Thirdly, the theme of justice was also used to counteract other countries' view on China's responsibilities, e.g. US's condemnation on China for loss of jobs. For instance, a report interviewed American Nobel Laureate economist James Heckman who contended that "It is easy to attack China, and so many people in the US will say it is the Chinese who are responsible for the lack of jobs, but they don't look at the deep structural questions", which referred to the US's ineffective economic policies, such as "soft money policy and its consumption patterns" ("China Focus: US Economists," 2010). Another interviewee, Gary Becker, also a Nobel Laureate economist, was indirectly quoted saying that "it was the U.S. who should take significant responsibility for its problems" instead of pushing China since "If China dumps a lot of U.S. dollars, that would be unwise, because that would create a currency crisis in the currency market" ("China Focus: US Economists," 2010). Once again, the report highlighted the necessity of currency stability through the voice of renowned economists.

#### **6.4.2 WSJ**

In terms of China-related currency and finance issues, *WSJ* also tended to challenge China's discourse of stability and justice with its own representations both in hard news stories and commentaries. It constructed a manipulative and uncertain image of China.



Its challenging tone showed up in some of its representations of China's view on its own international duties. For example, as to China's purchases of Japanese government bonds, China's State Administration of Foreign Exchange was quoted in a hard news article saying that "As a responsible long-term investor, China maintains a diversification strategy for the investment of its foreign-exchange reserves" (Tachikawa, et al., 2010). However, the news ended with doubt from the Japanese government questioning China's real intentions, adding a negative moral evaluation with a direct quote from a Japanese official.

Unlike this news reports, two other hard news stories did not make moral judgement about China's foreign exchange reserve purchases but only presented China's self-identification as "a 'responsible investor' in Treasuries" in gold purchase (Back, 2010), or as "a responsible long-term investor" in investing in the European market and "stick to the principle of a diversified portfolio" (Fletcher, 2010).

Besides mere inquiries and doubts, *WSJ* also countered China's discourse by representing urges from other countries and international institutions and positively evaluated others' urges. Regarding the currency dispute between China and the U.S., Germany was covered, through the voice of German economy minister, to urge China to shift its exchange rate policy and avoid damages to trade in a hard news: "China bears a lot of responsibility for ensuring that it doesn't come to an escalation" (Thomas, 2010). Even in the currency dispute between South Korea and Japan, China was surprisingly included in Japanese official's criticism in another report that "I want South Korea and China to take responsible actions within common rules" since they believed that the two countries were "creating artificially low currency rates" and generating unfair competition (Ramstad, 2010).

Nevertheless, one news report gave voice to a Chinese source when representing other countries' urges, but did not construct the notion of responsibility with inclination. In respond to the situation that "Big countries ask China to play a more active role and be more

responsible”, chairman of China Construction Bank Corp was directly cited saying that “But if you ask China to do more, you have to give China more recognition” (Dinny, 2010). The report did not judge China’s views.

Echoing urges from individual countries, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) also reportedly called for due responsibilities from China. In line with U.S. Treasury’s prodding of China to appreciate currency, the IMF managing director was directly quoted in a report saying that “If you want to have more say in the IMF, then you have to take more responsibility for the system” (Davis, 2010). The premise was that China was gaining “growing importance in the world economy” and its role in the IMF “should be tied to its willingness to let its currency appreciate” (Davis, 2010). Same as above urges, this report also positively judged IMF’s requirements.

After China responded to the urges with the announcement of allowing its currency’s value to rise, a *WSJ* commentary was still tough in representing other countries’ view on China’s currency. It contended that “the steps suggest a certain maturing of China’s view of its role in global affairs -- and a more deft touch by the Obama administration in coaxing Beijing into playing that role responsibly”, a change of previous actions in which “China’s artificially low currency widely seen as favoring its exports at the expense of economic recovery in the rest of the industrialized world” (Seib, 2010). The commentary positively judged the US’s urges of China.

Nevertheless, an editorial represented China’s view on US’ responsibilities in keeping a stable currency policy. It directly quoted words from China’s ambassador to the WTO that “We are very much concerned about how the U.S. would take practical and responsible measures to prevent the dollar glut and maintain the stability of the currency” (“Beggars the World,” 2010). Moreover, the editorial did not evaluate China’s view on other’s responsibilities.

### 6.4.3 **FT**

In regards to China-related currency and finance issues, *FT* applied different frames. It represented China's self-identification as being responsible in exchange-rate policy, China's calling for other countries to take on responsible currency policy, China's challenging of Western countries' condemnations, Western countries' unease with China for its policy in foreign exchange reserves, and the disputes between China and other countries, largely the U.S., without favouring one side.

Some articles represented China's view on its own responsibilities. One hard news story supported China's view on its previous duties. It quoted indirectly from Wen Jiaobao that "China had always been highly responsible on the issue of the exchange rate and the issue should be seen in a historical perspective", followed by no denial (Morris, 2010). Instead, the story supported China's responsible claim. Wen again reportedly used the theme of stability to defend China's currency policy: "his country still faced great difficulties and there was no basis for a drastic appreciation" and "The main reason for the US trade deficit with China is not the renminbi exchange rate but the structure of trade and investment between the two countries" (Morris, 2010).

Compared with *WSJ*'s articles which seldom represented China's calling for actions from other countries, *FT* placed a report concerning China's voices in the first section of front page in its London Edition. This report cited two direct quotes from a statement by China's State Administration of Foreign Exchange: "But the State Administration of Foreign Exchange, which administers China's \$2,450bn (£1,612bn) in reserves, the largest in the world, also called on Washington and other governments to pursue 'responsible' economic policies", and "China has been calling for the US to genuinely take measures to protect investors' interests and confidence as a responsible large nation" (Dyer, 2010). But the report made no judgment on China's statements.

Some articles represented others' view on China's responsibilities. In a letter to the editor written by the head of Press and Public Affairs of Chinese Embassy in London, the author urged that "Both surplus and deficit countries need to shoulder their due responsibilities" and fought against the condemnations that "China is largely responsible for the global economic imbalance" (Dai, 2010). The letter negatively judged others' view on China's faults and positively embraced China's view on others' duties.

The above frames highly resembled those in Xinhua. There were also articles applying similar frames with those in *WSJ*.

Some articles framed China's view on its own responsibilities from a developed country's perspective who questioned China's intentions. They negatively judged China's behaviours. Concerning China's purchase of US bonds, Yi Gang, China's director of the State Administration of Foreign Exchange, was directly quoted saying that "We are a responsible investor and in the process of these investments we can definitely achieve a mutually beneficial result" (Anderlini, 2010). However, China's movements in US bonds purchase still induced American speculation that "Beijing might be cutting its holdings to signal political displeasure with Washington" (Anderlini, 2010). Similarly, although China's State Administration of Foreign Exchange assured Europe that "China is a responsible and long-term investor in the investment of foreign exchange reserves and we will always follow the principle of diversification", a source from the Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ was quoted saying that "We remain sceptical that those trends will continue in the years ahead as the euro faces both an existential and sovereign debt crisis" (Garnham, 2010).

Besides mere doubts, some articles, in representing others' view on China's responsibilities, urged and even proposed sanctions towards China. They positively supported the requirements imposed on China.

For example, Magnus (2010) urged in a comment that “China’s creditor status necessitates that it also takes responsibility for fixing global imbalances, especially as the west has been increasing its savings”.

Moreover, Arvind Subramanian (2010) wrote in a comment that “Only a wider coalition, comprising all countries affected by China’s undervalued exchange rate, stands any chance of impressing upon China the consequences of its policy and reminding it of its international responsibilities as a large, systemically important trader”. This statement positively judged others’ view on China, outweighing the author’s mentioning of China’s stance in exchange rate issue that it asked “countries on the other side of the imbalance – namely, the large current account deficit-running countries – should carry the greatest responsibility for pursuing irresponsible macroeconomic and regulatory policies that led to ‘excessive consumption’” (Subramanian, 2010).

Similarly, a comment by Crook (2010) denied China’s own view of its growing international responsibilities and believed that the global recognition of China did not yield any fruitful results. Instead, the author proposed that “Stronger IMF surveillance over currencies - especially if tied to WTO-sanctioned penalties - should work alongside more intrusive surveillance of fiscal policy. That is a concession China could be granted in return for behaving more responsibly on exchange rates” (Crook, 2010). It negatively viewed China’s stance and positively judged others’ urges of China.

Besides the above frames inclined to either China or developed countries, some hard news stories and opinion articles adopted a balanced manner in representing other countries’ view on China’s responsibilities. They tended to equally cover the disputes between China and other countries, largely the U.S., without favouring one side. These articles neutrally judged China-related responsibilities.

For example, a hard news story about the dispute over renminbi presented the “ambiguities between different parts of government and within business communities in both countries over both aims and tactics”, and a call from the US business community that “China has grown in importance and needs to play a responsible role in moving to a market-based exchange rate” was merely one of the many opinions and divisions (Beattie & Anderlini, 2010).

In another hard news report, the managing director of the IMF urged China that “the bigger you become, the more responsibility you get and you cannot go on being a free rider” on the one hand, and said “We strongly share the view that a solid, strong dollar vis-à-vis the other major floating currency ... is very important” on the other hand (Harding & Atkins, 2010).

Similarly, an opinion article from the Global Insight column also commented on the currency dispute and trade tensions between China and the U.S. in a balanced manner (Beattie, 2010). This article, from a British perspective, was more like an observer saying that “what we have seen so far is a fairly routine management of trade tensions” (Beattie, 2010). It vividly resembled US’s intentional naming of China as a currency manipulator with “the old Robin Williams stand-up routine about an unarmed British policeman trying to apprehend a fleeing suspect: ‘Stop! Or...I’ll shout stop again!’” (Beattie, 2010).

Some hard news stories balanced other countries’ urges with China’s stance, creating a neutral judgment. In one article, China was reportedly urged by Japan to “act responsibly on exchange rates” and “act responsibly within common rules”, and by Germany that “China bears a lot of the responsibility for avoiding an escalation” (“Japan Presses Beijing,” 2010). But the news also presented China’s movement and stance (“Japan Presses Beijing,” 2010). Similar reporting and frames also appeared in the same-day Asia edition (Dickie, et al., 2010).

While one opinion article interpreted the disputes from the America side. In a comment by Stephen Roach, chairman of Morgan Stanley Asia, although he proposed that “Just as responsible global citizenship requires America to address its savings deficiency, the world has every reason to expect the same from China in reducing its surplus saving”, he reckoned the so-called China’s manipulated currency by America as a political scapegoating and the real problem lied in the structural imbalances in the global economy which required a multilateral, instead of bilateral, remedy (Roach, 2010).

After China made changes to its exchange rate as a response to others’ urges, some articles, in representing others’ view on China’s responsibilities, still viewed this issue in a balanced manner and neutrally judged China-related responsibilities.

Some hard news stories and opinion articles interpreted China’s actions from the perspective of China. For example, a news report about Boao Forum balanced US’s calling that “rising economic powers should assume global responsibilities compatible with their growing influence” with China’s argument that “the values of its currency has a limited effect on trade flows” (Mitchell & Ho, 2010). Moreover, an article from its renowned Lex Column interpreted China’s announcement of designing a more flexible exchange rate as “to demonstrate that Beijing is a responsible, if reluctant, world citizen” since “it hopes to gain some political capital by doing it anyway” (“China, America’s Flexible Friend,” 2010).

Apart from the above frames, some articles made no judgment on China-related responsibilities in currency and finance.

For example, one comment made no judgment on others’ view on China’s responsibilities. It recorded an editorial from China’s *People’s Daily* which said that Washington’s “manipulation of the renminbi valuation issue, spreading the theory that China was responsible for the financial crisis” was because it “has by no means clarified its thinking and calmed down its feelings about how to deal with a rapidly developing China”, and

“When it comes to our national interests, China has no room to manoeuvre” (Hille, 2010).

But the author did not deliver opinions on Western condemnations of China.

Similarly, two hard news stories did not evaluate Japan’s urges of China to appreciate currency (Whipp, 2010a; 2010b).

It was notable that in 2014, neither of the three media institutions covered China-related currency issues.

#### **6.4.4 Summary**

Xinhua’s representations of China-related responsibilities in currency and finance issues in 2010 were also in high congruence with China’s political discourse, as well as its sociocultural discourse of responsibility. Specifically, Xinhua constructed the notion of responsibility as striving for stability, with pursuing justice as one of the prominent strategies. For example, it represented that

(a) China identified its own basically stable currency policy as being responsible to China’s and world’s economy;

(b) China directly condemned America’s irresponsible currency policy and urged it to be responsible for finance stability;

(c) China counteracted US’s condemnations on China about currency manipulation with opinions towards US’s own economic structural problems.

Nevertheless, *WSJ* once again challenged China’s discourse of stability and justice both in hard news stories and commentaries in 2010. Table 6.6 records the analysis results of positive, negative, neutral, and no moral judgments of China-related responsibilities in currency and finance in different perspectives by *WSJ*.



Table 6.6

*Numbers of Positive, Negative, Neutral, and No Moral Judgments of China-Related Responsibilities in Currency and Finance in Three Perspectives by WSJ in 2010 and 2014*

	Positive	Negative	Neutral	No	Total
China's view on China	0	1	0	2	3
China's view on others	0	0	0	1	1
Others' view on China	4	0	0	1	5
Total	4	1	0	4	9

As we can see from Table 6.6, *WSJ* framed an uncertain China who was reluctant to accept its responsibilities from the following perspectives:

(a) framing China's view on its own responsibilities with no judgment (n=2), as well as doubting China's self-identification as a responsible long-term investor in foreign exchange reserves (n=1);

(b) framing China's view on other countries' responsibilities with no specific evaluation (n=1);

(c) positively judging others' urges of China to appreciate currency for the sake of trade balance (n=4), as well as not judging specifically (n=1).

Then as to *FT*, it adopted mixed frames in 2010. The analysis results are recorded in Table 6.7.

Table 6.7

*Numbers of Positive, Negative, Neutral, and No Moral Judgments of China-Related Responsibilities in Currency and Finance in Three Perspectives by FT in 2010 and 2014*

	Positive	Negative	Neutral	No	Total
China's view on China	1	3	0	0	4
China's view on others	1	2	0	2	5
Others' view on China	3	1	11	3	18
Total	5	6	11	5	27

Table 6.7 illustrates that in *FT*, China-related responsibilities in currency and finance were constructed as follows:

(a) There were negative moral judgments of China's self-identification as being responsible in maintaining a stable currency policy (n=3), as well as positive evaluation (n=1);

(b) China's calling for other countries, especially the U.S., to protect currency and finance stability were met with negative (n=2) and no (n=2) moral judgments, as well as positive one (n=1);

(c) Other countries' views on China's responsibilities were largely neutrally constructed (n=11) by equally presenting the disputes from both sides and calmly delving into the underlying reasons from different perspectives before and after China's appreciation without favouring one side. In addition, there were also positive evaluations of others' urges of and sanctions on China (n=3) and some made no judgments (n=3). One opinion article made negative judgment on others' requirements on China.

It was notable that neither of the three media institutions mentioned China-related currency and finance issues in 2014.

## **6.5 International Trade**

The issue of international trade was one of foci in Xinhua, although not as prominent as the above two aspects, but seldom represented in *WSJ* or *FT*. Xinhua's coverage resonated with China's sociocultural and political values of cooperation and justice. While in the cases of *WSJ* and *FT*, emphasis was more likely to be put on currency when discussing the interrelated trade and currency tensions.

### **6.5.1 Xinhua**

Cooperation and sincerity underlie Xinhua's construction of China-related responsibilities in international trade issues, accompanied by an adherence to fighting protectionism.

The themes were used in framing China's view on its international responsibilities both in what it had already done and what it was about to do. One report indirectly quoted words from a government-based institution researcher saying that "China sent purchasing groups to the European Union and the U.S. when the world was stranded in the global financial crisis, showing China is a responsible player in the global economy" (Jiang & Guo, 2010). This cooperative movement echoed the view from the vice president of the Council of the Americas and Americas Society that "It was a 'positive step' for China to launch various measures to increase imports and promote balanced trade" (Jiang & Guo, 2010). It further reinforced the quoted opinion that "Free trade experts agreed that all countries should fight protectionism amid the slowdown in the global economic recovery" (Jiang & Guo, 2010).

Another report used figures from China's General Administration of Customs to demonstrate China's responsible actions in promoting international trade and maintaining trade balance: "The March deficit stemmed mainly from the fast growth of imports by China amid its efforts to increase imports against the backdrop of the global economic downturn",

and “China’s efforts (to expand imports) helped with the recovery of world economy and demonstrated its role as a responsible country” (Chen, et al., 2010).

A self-identification of being responsible also appeared in representing China’s promises in international trade. For example, one news covered China vice president’s promise to optimise foreign investment structures by a series of innovative measures including “approaching negotiations to join the ‘WTO Government Procurement Agreement’ with a responsible attitude” (“China Focus: China Strives,” 2010). The prerequisite of China’s cooperative stance was succinctly concluded by Xi in the report that “Obtaining ‘financial resources’ and ‘intellectual resources’ through foreign investment has been an important part of China’s opening-up policy for the past 30 years and more” (“China Focus: China Strives,” 2010).

Moreover, the appealing for cooperation was also revealed in covering China’s view on other countries’ responsibilities. In a report introducing the negotiations of the trilateral free trade agreement between China, Japan, and the Republic of Korea, the notion of responsibility appeared in an indirect quote from China’s former vice premier Zeng Peiyan that “being a responsible partner” was expected in forming a community of common destiny, despite the fact that there were historical, economic, and political disputes among the three countries (“China Focus: FTA Anticipated,” 2014).

### **6.5.2 WSJ and FT**

Although the issue of promoting international trade and complying with multilateralism as required by WTO was frequently raised by western politicians, it was seldom explicitly covered by *WSJ* and *FT* during 2010 and 2014.

One of the exceptions was a 2010 *WSJ* commentary written by China’s vice minister of commerce Zhong Shan, who stated that “As long as we approach the China-U.S. commercial relationship in a responsible manner we will definitely be able to make it more

stable and sound” (Zhong, 2010). He specified the joint responsibilities shared by China and the U.S., but did not make judgments on them (Zhong, 2010). The other was a 2014 *WSJ* hard news story in which China’s role in world’s economy was directly acknowledged: “For years, developing economies led by China were responsible for eye-popping growth that lured investment from wealthier countries and helped to lift hundreds of millions of workers out of poverty” (Mauldin, 2014).

More foci were cast upon the contradictions about currency between China and the U.S. in the two media outlets.

### **6.5.3 Summary**

Compared with the above two issues, international trade was much less covered in the three media institutions, among which *WSJ* and *FT* seldom devoted attention. Xinhua’s several articles about international trade constructed the notion of responsibility in a similar way with those by China’s policies and in China’s sociocultural values. Xinhua framed responsibility as pursuing cooperation and justice in representations about (a) China’s view on its own international duties in increasing imports, facilitating foreign investment, and fighting against protectionism, (b) China’s calling for cooperation in building free trade areas. In Western media samples, there were only two exceptions from *WSJ*, whose framings could not be clearly detected. Emphasis was more likely to be put on currency when talking about the interrelated currency and trade issues in *WSJ* and *FT*.

## **6.6 Self-Positioning as A Developing Country and Xinhua’s Representation**

Besides the obvious congruence between Xinhua’s representations and China’s political discourse and China’s sociocultural discourse of responsibility, China’s self-positioning philosophy may also permeate Xinhua’s representations. Specifically, Xinhua’s framings were probably under the influence of China’s self-positioning as a developing country.

As I've discussed in Chapter 5 about China's political articulations, China's leadership conservatively and stubbornly self-positioned as a developing country, instead of exposing its economic strength too much. I postulated that this self-positioning thought may implicitly influence the framings of China-related economic responsibilities in China's governmental policies. The searching for cooperation and pursuing of justice, both of which aimed for domestic development and protecting national interests, indicated the impact of the thought of self-positioning as a developing country.

Similarly, media texts and frames from Xinhua also revealed the potential influence of China's self-positioning as a developing country. A prominent example comes from a Xinhua 2010 news article titled "China Focus: Chinese Experts Lash Out at 'China Responsibility' Theories", which said that:

Analysts said Thursday that various "China responsibility" theories are unreasonable and misguided, stressing that China could only accept its due responsibilities according to its own national conditions.

...

Some politicians and media agencies have exaggerated China's power and influences in addressing global economic issues amid the global economic downturn, Ji said. China will be labeled as irresponsible if it does not meet their requirements or standards, Ji added.

...

Analysts stressed China should keep sober-minded in shouldering international responsibilities as it is still a developing country with 40 million people living under China's poverty line (below 1,300 yuan of annual income).

China should learn to say "no" to stressful requirements from some countries, such as one-off appreciation of the yuan and special carbon emission reduction amounts for China, Ji said. ("China Focus: Chinese Experts," 2010).

Although this self-positioning thought was implicit in influencing Xinhua's representations, it was probably the major driving force behind the way Xinhua framed China-related economic responsibilities as analysed above. It once again showed the potential multi-layered impact of China's sociocultural discourse on current texts.

## **6.7 Checking the Transferability of Above Analysis Results**

To self-check the transferability of the above analysis results, in this section, I analysed relevant media texts released by the three media institutions in 2012 and 2016 with the exact procedures used before.

I chose samples from 2012 because it situates right in the middle of 2010 and 2014 from which years I retrieved the above samples. It can test if the media framings in 2012 were same with, or adding diversity to, those in one year before and one year after. 2016 is beyond the time span for sampling in this research and near the end of this PhD. Although it detaches from the 2009-2014 governmental context, its media texts and framings, along with those in 2012, can test if Xinhua's framings are consistent within a wider Chinese sociocultural backdrop. Moreover, 2016 witnessed China's host of G20 Hangzhou Summit on 4-5 September. It is likely that the Chinese government took this advantage to disseminate its responsible power messages. Both years' samples can also test if Western framings were still either challenging (in the case of *WSJ*) or mixed (in the case of *FT*). The comparisons of Chinese and Western media frames can test if China's media discourse still yielded limited influence on Western media representations.

Altogether, I will analyse 16 news articles from Xinhua, 5 from *WSJ*, and 10 from *FT* retrieved from 2012, and 11 from Xinhua, 2 from *WSJ*, and 7 from *FT* retrieved from 2016.

6.7.1 presents the media frames and their comparisons in 2012 and 6.7.2 2016.

### **6.7.1 Media frames and comparisons in 2012**

Applying the same coding procedures as recorded in 6.2, I also coded samples released in 2012 by the three media institutions. The coding results of Xinhua samples are illustrated in Table 6.8, *WSJ* in Table 6.9, and *FT* in Table 6.10. I did not include percentages in these tables as those in the former sections since the numbers of references are too small to cause confusion.

Table 6.8

*Coding Results of Xinhua's Media Texts Concerning China-Related Economic Responsibilities in 2012*

Type of responsibility-related content	Issue and number of reference	Theme in sociocultural discourse and number of reference	Perspective		
			China's view on China	China's view on others	Others' view on China
Close connection between responsibility claim and issues	Environmental protection: 8	Sincerity: 4	4	0	0
		Justice: 5	0	4	1
	Currency and finance: 2	Stability: 2	2	0	0
		Justice: 0	0	0	0
	International trade: 0	Cooperation: 0	0	0	0
		Justice: 0	0	0	0
Loose connection between responsibility claim and issues	10		6	2	2
Total	20		12	6	3



Table 6.9

*Coding Results of WSJ's Media Texts Concerning China-Related Economic Responsibilities in 2012*

Type of responsibility-related content	Issue and number of reference	Perspective		
		China's view on China	China's view on others	Others' view on China
Close connection between responsibility claim and issues	Environmental protection: 0	0	0	0
	Currency and finance: 4	0	3	1
	International trade: 0	0	0	0
Loose connection between responsibility claim and issues	2	0	0	2
Total	6	0	3	3

Table 6.10

*Coding Results of FT's Media Texts Concerning China-Related Economic Responsibilities in 2012*

Type of responsibility-related content	Issue and number of reference	Perspective		
		China's view on China	China's view on others	Others' view on China
Close connection between responsibility claim and issues	Environmental protection: 2	2	0	0
	Currency and finance: 0	0	0	0
	International trade: 0	0	0	0
Loose connection between responsibility claim and issues	9	3	0	6
Total	11	5	0	6

The following sub-sections will briefly present the analysis results, specifically, the media frames towards three China-related economic issues in the three media institutions and their comparisons, without providing examples from samples.

#### *6.7.1.1 Environmental protection*

As we can see from Table 6.8, Xinhua's representations of China-related responsibilities in environmental protection were in congruence with the above research findings that it also framed responsibility as being sincere and pursuing justice. Specifically, it highlighted sincerity in representing China's view on its own domestic and international responsibilities, and justice in calling for others' actions and challenging others' view on China's responsibilities.

In the case of *WSJ* (Table 6.9), the media institution did not mention China-related responsibilities in environmental protection in 2012. While *FT* constructed this issue in two references, but none of them had specific moral judgment on China's own view of responsibility (Table 6.10 and 6.11).

Table 6.11

*Numbers of Positive, Negative, Neutral, and No Moral Judgments of China-Related Responsibilities in Environmental Protection in Three Perspectives by FT in 2012*

	Positive	Negative	Neutral	No	Total
China's view on China	0	0	0	2	2
China's view on others	0	0	0	0	0
Others' view on China	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0	2	2

#### 6.7.1.2 Currency and finance

In terms of currency and finance, Table 6.8 shows that Xinhua framed responsibility as maintaining stability and did not pay much attention to the value of justice. *FT* had no reference of China-related responsibilities in currency and finance (Table 6.10). While *WSJ* either represented China's view on others' responsibility in currency and finance with no evaluation, or negatively viewed China's requirement on others and positively judged others' requirement on China (Table 6.9 and 6.12).

Table 6.12

*Numbers of Positive, Negative, Neutral, and No Moral Judgments of China-Related Responsibilities in Currency and Finance in Three Perspectives by WSJ in 2012*

	Positive	Negative	Neutral	No	Total
China's view on China	0	0	0	0	0
China's view on others	0	1	0	2	3
Others' view on China	1	0	0	0	1
Total	1	1	0	2	4

#### 6.7.1.3 International trade

None of the three media institutions put China-related responsibilities in international trade as their news agenda in 2012.

### 6.7.2 Media frames and comparisons in 2016

This section illustrates the coding results of relevant media texts released in 2016 by Xinhua (Table 6.13), *WSJ* (Table 6.14), and *FT* (Table 6.15).

Table 6.13

*Coding Results of Xinhua's Media Texts Concerning China-Related Economic Responsibilities in 2016*

Type of responsibility-related content	Issues and number of references	Themes in sociocultural discourse and number of references	Perspectives		
			China's view on China	China's view on others	Others' view on China
Close connection between responsibility claim and issues	Environmental protection: 6	Sincerity: 6	5	1	0
		Justice: 0	0	0	0
	Currency and finance: 0	Stability: 0	0	0	0
		Justice: 0	0	0	0
	International trade: 1	Cooperation: 0	0	0	0
		Justice: 1	0	1	0
Loose connection between responsibility claim and issues	6		4	1	1
Total	13		9	3	1

Table 6.14

*Coding Results of WSJ's Media Texts Concerning China-Related Economic Responsibilities in 2016*

Type of responsibility-related content	Issues and number of references	Perspectives		
		China's view on China	China's view on others	Others' view on China
Close connection between responsibility claim and issues	Environmental protection: 0	0	0	0
	Currency and finance: 0	0	0	0
	International trade: 1	0	0	1
Loose connection between responsibility claim and issues	1	0	0	1
Total	2	0	0	2

Table 6.15

*Coding Results of FT's Media Texts Concerning China-Related Economic Responsibilities in 2016*

Type of responsibility-related content	Issues and number of references	Perspectives		
		China's view on China	China's view on others	Others' view on China
Close connection between responsibility claim and issues	Environmental protection: 2	0	1	1
	Currency and finance: 1	0	0	1
	International trade: 2	0	0	2
Loose connection between responsibility claim and issues	5	2	1	2
Total	10	2	2	6

The analysis results of media frames used in representing different issues in the three media institutions and their comparisons will be introduced in the following sub-sections.

#### *6.7.2.1 Environmental protection*

In 2016, Xinhua framed responsibility as being sincere by representing China's resolution and concrete measures in fulfilling its own responsibilities and China's calling for shared responsibilities (Table 6.13). This resonated with the previous findings. Nevertheless, it seldom constructed responsibility as pursuing justice as found before.

*WSJ* once again did not put news agenda on China-related responsibilities in environmental protection (Table 6.14). While *FT* positively judged others' urges of China and negatively evaluated China's calling for justice in one commentary (Table 6.15 and 6.16).

Table 6.16

*Numbers of Positive, Negative, Neutral, and No Moral Judgments of China-Related Responsibilities in Environmental Protection in Three Perspectives by FT in 2016*

	Positive	Negative	Neutral	No	Total
China's view on China	0	0	0	0	0
China's view on others	0	1	0	0	1
Others' view on China	1	0	0	0	1
Total	1	1	0	0	2

#### 6.7.2.2 Currency and finance

Surprisingly, China's Xinhua did not mention China-related responsibilities in currency and finance in 2016 (Table 6.13). Neither did *WSJ* (Table 6.14). In the only reference by *FT*, it positively judged others' calling for China to act responsibly (Table 6.15 and 6.17).

Table 6.17

*Numbers of Positive, Negative, Neutral, and No Moral Judgments of China-Related Responsibilities in Currency and Finance in Three Perspectives by FT in 2016*

	Positive	Negative	Neutral	No	Total
China's view on China	0	0	0	0	0
China's view on others	0	0	0	0	0
Others' view on China	1	0	0	0	1
Total	1	0	0	0	1

#### 6.7.2.3 International trade

In the aspect of international trade, Xinhua framed responsibility as pursuing justice and equity in the international trading system by calling for shared movements (Table 6.13). *WSJ* positively judged others' condemnation on China's role in international trade imbalance



in a commentary (Table 6.18). Concerning others' view on China's behaviours, *FT* gave no or neutral moral judgment (Table 6.19).

Table 6.18

*Numbers of Positive, Negative, Neutral, and No Moral Judgments of China-Related Responsibilities in International Trade in Three Perspectives by WSJ in 2016*

	Positive	Negative	Neutral	No	Total
China's view on China	0	0	0	0	0
China's view on others	0	0	0	0	0
Others' view on China	1	0	0	0	1
Total	1	0	0	0	1

Table 6.19

*Numbers of Positive, Negative, Neutral, and No Moral Judgments of China-Related Responsibilities in International Trade in Three Perspectives by FT in 2016*

	Positive	Negative	Neutral	No	Total
China's view on China	0	0	0	0	0
China's view on others	0	0	0	0	0
Others' view on China	0	0	1	1	2
Total	0	0	1	1	2

### 6.7.3 **Summary**

Sections 6.7.1 and 6.7.2 briefly introduce the analysis results of relevant news articles released in 2012 and 2016 by Xinhua, *WSJ*, and *FT*. It aims to self-check the transferability of the research findings from analysing the 2010 and 2014 samples from the same three media institutions. The analysis results coincide with the former findings, although the samples were much smaller in quantity.

In environmental protection issues, Xinhua framed responsibility as being sincere and pursuing justice in 2012 and as being sincere in 2016, which were consistent with the ways of construction in 2010 and 2014. *WSJ* did not put news agenda on China-related responsibilities in environmental issues in 2012 and 2016. *FT* had no judgment on this issue in 2012 and inclined to developed countries' views in a commentary in 2016.

In currency and finance issues, Xinhua framed responsibility as maintaining stability in 2012, and paid no attention to this issue in 2016. *WSJ* had no judgment on China's view on others and inclined to developed countries' view in 2012, while paid no attention to this issue in 2016. *FT* had no reference of this issue in 2012, while inclined to others' view on China in 2016.

In international trade issues, neither of the three media institutions mentioned this issue in 2012. While in 2016, Xinhua once again constructed responsibility as pursuing justice, *WSJ* inclined to others' view on China, and *FT* made no or neutral judgment on others' view on China.

Although the number of samples is quite limited in this section, it found out that the framings in the three media institutions were in congruence with those in 2010 and 2014 respectively. It is safe to conclude that the three media institutions were consistent in their respective manners of framings of China-related economic responsibilities from 2009 onwards. Moreover, it indicates that China's media discourse yielded limited influence on Western countries' media representations, although it has several years to develop.

## **6.8 Discussion**

This chapter examines the media framings of China-related economic responsibilities in China-based Xinhua News Agency in 2010 and 2014 from a social constructionist perspective, and those in US-based *WSJ* and UK-based *FT* respectively. Through comparison of media frames, this chapter also offers insight into the potential impact of China's media

discourse on representations in Western mainstream media institutions. It also self-checks the research findings with an additional examination of 2012 and 2016 samples from the three media institutions. It concludes that Xinhua's framings of China-related economic responsibilities were consistent from 2009 onwards and they were in congruence with China's political discourse of China-related economic responsibilities and sociocultural discourse of responsibility. Nevertheless, *WSJ* and *FT* also had their own consistent ways of constructions, shaping contrast with Xinhua's representations and indicating the trivial influence of China's media discourse on Western media products.

This chapter contributes rich data and insights to studies of mediated China's soft power messages, China-related economic responsibilities to be specific, in the discipline of media, journalism, and communication. It elucidates the exact messages that Xinhua represented in issues of environmental protection, currency and finance, and international trade, which were the messages that were disseminated to audience in other countries.

More importantly, it explores Xinhua's framings, i.e. the discursive constructions of Xinhua's journalistic representations. The research findings show that Xinhua's journalistic representations were in congruence with China's political discourse of China-related economic responsibilities. The findings resonate strongly with Entman's (2008) cascading network activation model which assumes the governmental influence on the dissemination of national foreign policies through media platforms. This study extends this model with rich empirical data from both governmental policies and media texts in the case of China. In addition, it makes breakthrough in studies of China's external communication during the media going-global project by investigating the discursive influence of governmental policies on media representations. It makes changes to the academia status quo which mainly focuses on the political economy of China's external communication. This chapter also introduces

briefly the immediate situational and institutional environment of China's media going-global project and makes it complementary to media texts analysis.

Xinhua's journalistic representations also inherited China's sociocultural discourse of responsibility in a multi-layered manner. They not only framed the notion of responsibility explicitly as being sincere, maintaining stability, promoting cooperation, and pursuing justice, but also implicitly complied with the self-positioning philosophy. These findings add social meanings to studies of media texts.

What's more, this chapter also examines the potential influence of China's media discourse on representations in Western mainstream media institutions. Through comparison of different media frames, this research finds that China's soft power practice through disseminating values via external communication yielded limited influence on Western media representations. This finding echoes existing literature about the influence of China's soft power practice. Although this research does not delve into the reasons from perspectives of production values, professionalism, credibility, and market structures like previous studies (Xin, 2009; Zhang, 2010; Bakshi, 2011; Lee, 2014), it tries to unearth the rooted problem which is usually neglected, i.e. the disseminated messages and their constructions.

## **Chapter 7. Media Practitioners and Their Journalistic Representations of China-Related Economic Responsibilities: A Thematic Analysis**

Hall contended that “It is by our use of things, and what we say, think and feel about them- how we represent them- that we *give them a meaning*” (emphasis in original) (Hall, 1997a, p. 3). This is in line with Fairclough’s (1998) view that social practice can exert shaping and transforming forces on communicative events. Complying with Fairclough’s (1995) framework for critical discourse analysis, this chapter aims to answer research questions 5a, 5b, and 5c concerning the journalistic representation procedures by Chinese and Western media practitioners, especially the discursive factors, as well as other factors, that they were potentially impacted during their practice.

To answer these research questions, I need to uncover the personal experiences of relevant media practitioners. Therefore, I used qualitative interviewing as my main research method.

After briefly introducing the financial and organisational background of the three media institutions of China’s Xinhua News Agency, USA’s *WSJ*, and UK’s *FT*, I present the thematic analysis of interviews with Chinese and Western media practitioners, followed by a discussion of the research findings.

### **7.1 Introductions of Three Media Institutions: Financing and Organisation**

This section briefly introduces the financing and organisation of the three media institutions. It intends to present the immediate working environment of Chinese and Western media practitioners.

#### **7.1.1 Xinhua News Agency**

Xinhua News Agency is the only official Chinese news agency. It is an institution working under the direct regulation of China’s State Council, which is the chief administrative authority in China. According to Xin Xin, an expert in studies of Xinhua and

also a former Xinhua journalist, the Chinese central government acts as “sponsor, supervisor, news source and subscriber simultaneously” in relation to Xinhua (Xin, 2006, p. 129).

Xin’s (2006) doctoral thesis revealed thoroughly the supervision role of government on Xinhua. Specifically, the operation of the three major divisions of Xinhua Beijing headquarter, namely the news sector, business sector, and administrative sector, can not be separated from the Party (Xin, 2006). Furthermore, Xinhua also makes intrinsic its role as a transmitter of governmental policies to the people (Chang, 1989). Although the agency has gone through transformations since China initiated a reform policy in 1978, it is still primarily a political and ideological vehicle of the Party (Hong, 2011).

Along with the supervision role, the central governmental departments and officials are also the major news source for Xinhua’s news reports, especially political and economic news articles (Xin, 2006).

Xinhua’s outreach in the world also follows closely the needs and lines of the Party (Xin, 2006). Xinhua started international news service from the World War II when the Party needed more information about the war and initiated global expansion from the late 1940s when a new China was founded and the Party needed to involve itself in the international community (Xin, 2006). Moreover, its following movements, including establishing overseas bureaus, engaging in international news environment, and reconsidering international news reports style, were all under the instructions of central governmental leaders (Xin, 2006).

In addition to the overseas infrastructure constructions, Xinhua’s news selection, especially news about foreign affairs and international relations, is also under strict governmental supervision. Apart from gatekeeping from editors and heads inside of Xinhua, some governmental departments also involve in Xinhua’s news selection, including “the Propaganda Department of the Central Committee of the Party, the State Council, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and many other governmental divisions” (Xin, 2006, p. 119). In

particular, “The Propaganda Department of the Central Committee of the Party regularly gave Xinhua all kinds of guidance to decide what and how to cover events”, and “News on Foreign affairs was a subject of ‘supervision’ by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs” (Xin, 2006, p. 119).

Nevertheless, Xinhua is not a unique case in China. As explained by Xin, “Xinhua just like any Chinese press organization had to obey regulatory rules made by administrative departments of the central government, such as The General Administration of Press and Publication (GAPP)” and the Central Propaganda Department acts “as the general designer and supervisor for all Chinese media” (2006, pp. 130-131).

A similar finding also appeared in Brady and Wang’s study of China’s propaganda that the Chinese media is still under strict supervision of the Party’s Central Propaganda Department: “Editors and journalists are instructed via closed door meetings, classified bulletins, and in times of crisis, fax, email or phone call as to what they can and cannot reveal in the public sphere” (Brady & Wang, 2009, p. 776).

### **7.1.2 The Wall Street Journal**

The *WSJ* is an elite business newspaper run by Dow Jones & Company, which has been owned by Rupert Murdoch’s News Corporation empire since 2007. The newspaper (print edition) has a global audience of 6.3 million (The Wall Street Journal, 2017) and its website *WSJ.com* has a global audience of 16.9 million (The Wall Street Journal, 2016), mainly aiming at influential businessmen, leaders, and consumers. Its website readership demographics shows that wealthy highly-educated middle-age people are the main readers (The Wall Street Journal, 2016).

After the split of the News Corporation in 2013, the newspaper, along with its owner the Dow Jones & Company, has been run by the present News Corp. The new News Corp is a New York-based multinational mass media company. According to its own introduction,

“News Corp is a global diversified media and information services company focused on creating and distributing authoritative and engaging content to consumers and businesses throughout the world” (News Corp, 2017a).

In searching for more consumers and profits, multinational media firm tends to expand without the barrier of borders, which also result in concentration of media ownership (Doyle, 2002). This phenomenon generates wide concern about the pluralism of media content, which refers to “sustaining representation within a given society for different political viewpoints and forms of cultural expression” (Doyle, 2002, p. 14). Ownership concentration may cause imbalances in voice representations by media, i.e. “over-representation of certain political opinions or forms of cultural output (those favoured by powerful media owners, whether on commercial or ideological grounds) and to exclusion of others” (Doyle, 2002, p. 26), even though media pluralism is also constrained by other variables.

In the case of *WSJ*, although the newspaper underwent ownership changes, its publisher reassured its readers their professionalism in “A Report to Our Readers” right after the takeover: “Readers can rely on this: The same standards of accuracy, fairness and authority will apply to this publication, regardless of ownership” (Crovitz, 2007). The report also rejected the idea that the conservative political stance of its owner will impact the honest journalism (Crovitz, 2007). Moreover, the editorial independence was also allegedly guaranteed by the owners, the Bancroft and Murdoch families (Crovitz, 2007).

Nevertheless, the newspaper’s own statement contradicts with scholarly findings. A research by Wagner and Collins (2014) found that *WSJ*’s change of ownership exerted influence on the newspaper:

The *WSJ* has become, and is likely to continue to be, a much more conservative paper on the editorial side than it has been over the past several decades—a time during which paper developed a reputation as a conservative news source....the *WSJ*’s change in ownership could have consequences on the tone and slant of the paper’s



news reporting, what the *WSJ*'s own columnists write in their op-eds, and how the paper's readers evaluate and behave toward political candidates and issues. (p. 768)

### **7.1.3 Financial Times**

*FT* claims itself as “a business publication recognised internationally for its authority, integrity and accuracy” who is committed to “quality, independent journalism” and “continue to report both sides of the story, and to feature a range of views on its pages” (Nikkei, 2017). It mainly focuses on business, finance, and politics in the global range and aims at elites working in business, governments, and education domains (Financial Times, 2017). The newspaper claimed that it reached over 2 million readers (print and digital) every day and they were influential business decision-makers and policymakers and wealthy consumers (Financial Times, 2015).

As to its ownership, *FT* was initially owned by the British company Pearson PLC since 1957. On 30 November 2015, the Japanese company Nikkei Inc. completed its acquisition of *FT* and became the new official owner.

Pearson undergoes shifts in expertise from its founding as a construction business, to manage multinational publishing and education industries, and to focus exclusively on education after selling the *FT* to the Nikkei Inc. (Cowdrey, 2016; Milliot, 2016; Pearson, 2017). Nevertheless, the business decisions of Pearson were declared to be separated from *FT*'s “without fear and without favour” editorial independence (Edgecliffe-Johnson, 2015). Pearson's chief executive John Fallon also contended that Pearson “has been a marvellously hands-off owner” (Martinson, 2015). Moreover, in a report by the Select Committee on Communications of the House of Lords in 2008, the *FT* editor Lionel Barber confirmed that the newspaper had independent editorial, which was maintained by the media's practice and tradition (Select Committee on Communications, 2008, pp. 92-100).

The influence of Pearson's ownership on *FT*'s editorial independence seems to be seldom questioned, but suspicions were largely pointed to its new owner Nikkei (Doctor,

2015; Martinson, 2015). Some researchers have already identified changes in the newspaper's stance towards China-related and Japan-related issues after the takeover (Zhu & Sha, 2016).

## **7.2 Analysis of Chinese Media Practitioners**

The analysis of Chinese media practitioners will try to answer research question 5a concerning the potential influence of discursive and non-discursive factors on Chinese media professionals when they constructed China-related economic responsibilities. It will particularly focus on the potential influence of China's sociocultural discourse of responsibility, China's political discourse of China-related economic responsibilities, and China's governmental instructions, as well as other factors.

### **7.2.1 Governmental influence**

Interviews with Chinese media practitioners show that they are working in close relation with the Chinese government, although some pointed out the interrelationship directly and some expressed in a more implicit manner.

In general, the interviews indicate that China's media practitioners comply strictly with the Chinese government and its policies. Journalist B and journalist C from major Chinese mainstream media institutions pointed out directly the governmental restrictions on Chinese media organisations, which coincided with existing literature on China's propaganda media system.

Our media is the government mouthpiece. Our reports are in congruence with the governmental policies. Our media is not exceptional in China. If you are running a media in China, you have to comply with the Chinese media environment and be on the same path with the Chinese government. Although we have reports about the negative aspects of the Chinese society, they can not be detrimental to the government. (personal communication with journalist B, 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 2016)

Our primary request is to follow the CPC's instructions. The Publicity Department of CPC Central Committee frequently sends us instructions, for instance, the tone to report China's economic situation. There was a little incident that one intern in our institution once took pictures of the instructions from central government and posted them in one of the social media platforms. Some media outlets in other countries

wanted to interview us for this post. It had passive influence on our institution. Therefore, we have restricted regulations about taking interviews about our working environment from outsiders. You work inside of the system so you have to be very careful. (personal communication with journalist C, 22<sup>nd</sup> December, 2016)

The unconditional compliance can be seen from their range of reports, reliance on governmental sources and interviewees, and the overall tone in external communication.

Journalist A from a major Chinese media institution introduced Xinhua's China Focus column, a tailored media product for China's external communication:

China Focus is one of the columns run by Xinhua's external services. It has focus on China's economic issues. Officials are often interviewed to introduce and interpret China's major economic events. For example, on the days of the establishment of Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, the media institution interviewed China's officials and experts about why the bank was founded, how to run it, and its transparency. Xinhua uses opinions from officials and experts to alleviate suspicions about China's economic development from other countries.

China Focus also reports China's societal, cultural, and political issues, such as China's anti-corruption and environmental protection. For example, last year, Beijing issued its first-ever red alert for air pollution (smog), which indicated that China paid special attention to its environmental issues. Xinhua reported the official acknowledgement of China's public health problems and explained them from perspectives of transportation, city planning, population, and winter heating. (personal communication with journalist A, 15<sup>th</sup> June, 2016)

Then as to reports on economy specifically, the journalist's introduction also made intimate links between the Chinese government and the media outlet:

The economy desk in Xinhua's Department of Domestic News for Overseas Service focuses on China's economy in the following aspects. First, the situation and development of China's economy, for example, China's economic data, downward pressure, and economic reform (supply-side reform). Second, China's economic policies, such as the plan of revitalising the old northeast industrial bases. Third, interpretations of China's economic situation and public strategies and policies, for example, why the revitalisation plan targets China's northeast area and what it means to China's and global economy. Fourth, commentaries. For example, as to Europe's refusal to grant China market economy status, Xinhua wrote commentaries to clarify China's stance and voice China's own opinions. (personal communication with journalist A, 15<sup>th</sup> June, 2016)

Moreover, according to journalist A, the media also relies heavily on governmental sources.

The media institution assigns specific journalists to connect with major Chinese administrations, such as National Development and Reform Commission and National Bureau of Statistics of the People's Republic of China. This is same with other news agencies, such as Associated Press and Reuters. The journalists attend the press conferences hosted by these administrations and refer to the data and information released by them on their official websites, for instance, the GDP in the first half of this year. Even the foreign journalists based in the Chinese branches of their media institutions refer to the same information.

Besides the above sources, their journalists also go to major forums, activities, seminars, and press conferences, such as Boao Forum, Davos World Economic Forum, China Canton Fair, and China-ASEAN Exposition. They also interview leaders of China's major corporations. They take every chance to introduce China's economic reform to the outside world.

What is unique of this media institution is that it is often authorised by the Chinese government to exclusively release China's most important official documents, such as Report on the Work of the Government every year. (personal communication with journalist A, 15<sup>th</sup> June, 2016)

Besides relying on the Chinese government for news agendas and information sources, the interviews show that Chinese media institutions also follow the government in external communication, which resonates with Xin's (2006) findings. Nevertheless, it is interesting that some responses from the participants imply that Chinese media started to introspect on blindly following the government's instructions.

We seldom mention the project of media going-global in recent years. Now we are reflecting on what we've done in the past few years. I think we need to adjust the policies. We've made big strides before, for example, we've set branches in Marseilles, Malta, and Iceland. However, it turns out that these investments are not necessary. (personal communication with journalist A, 15<sup>th</sup> June, 2016)

Answering in a more open way, journalist B made more personal comments on China's external communication.

The CNC World is a direct result of China's media global expansion policy. It is definitely a vanity project. It becomes a joke inside of the media institution. Its staff are being marginalised now. Their leaders are reluctant to invest in the running and managing of its platforms, such as its website and its archives. That is why you could

not search their entire programs on their public website or get accessed to their archives through the employee interface. (personal communication with journalist B, 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 2016)

### **7.2.2 Sociocultural influence**

Apart from the obvious influence coming from the Chinese government, a revolutionary and patriotic sentiment emerging from the participants' responses indicates the ever-lasting influence of China's sociocultural discourse of pursuing justice.

For example, a strong anti-West sentiment and patriotism appeared in journalist A's and D's answers.

Our external communication becomes more confident and more open. In the past, we feared that others may say bad things about China, for example, scandals about Tibet unrest and Wenchuan earthquake. But now, there are no forbidden areas in our external communication. We do not reject to report because the issue is negative. If you are truly strong, you will not hide the facts. But we do not report in an exaggerative or biased manner. We admit that China's systems have many problems and we do not refrain from them. But we can not report without uncovering the reasons behind the incidents in Xinjiang and Tibet. The wording, examples, and news structures used by some Western reports depicted a nearly collapsing China, which is too extreme. (personal communication with journalist A, 15<sup>th</sup> June, 2016)

Journalist D's responses were much more sentimental:

Our media is an independent media, not a copycat of Western media agencies. (personal communication with journalist D, 22<sup>nd</sup> December, 2016)

Nevertheless, the sentiment was less obviously expressed in journalist C's answers.

I often check China-related reports in foreign media institutions, such as The Associated Press, Reuters, and Agence France-Presse. I usually browse their reports and see what areas they are focusing on. Sometimes reports from other countries cover China-related issues in a partial way. We have certain departments who will write articles to respond to the partial coverage. (personal communication with journalist C, 22<sup>nd</sup> December, 2016)

### **7.2.3 News-making professionalism**

The Chinese participants were very cautious about questions concerning the influential factors behind their journalistic constructions. Although their answers revealed the explicit influence of government on their practice, they largely claimed to adhere to news

making professionalism. Some journalists firmly believed in the professionalism of their practice, although there were contradictory elements in their responses, while some had reservations and reflections.

For example, interview with journalist A showed his insistence on objectivity and independence.

The media institution has a wide range of interviewees, including professionals from China Academy of Social Science, China's universities, private institutions, and investment banking institutions. We adopt a balanced standard in using their opinions that both positive and negative ones are used in our reports. (personal communication with journalist A, 15<sup>th</sup> June, 2016)

Journalist D's answers were similar with A's.

I choose interviewees according to the subject of my story. The interviewees include people from all walks of life. I don't have the pressures you listed (author: administrative pressure or lobbyists). If I came across any of these topics, I report it as it is. (personal communication with journalist D, 22<sup>nd</sup> December, 2016)

Specifically, when asking about the coverage of economic conflicts between China and other countries, especially the United States, journalist D also prioritised their professionalism, although D's following answers contradicted professional journalism practice.

As a journalist, I always try my best to cover these kinds of conflicts as objective and balanced as I can. Personally, I think these conflicts are normal frictions which are not special for China and U.S. and will never play decisive role in bilateral economic and trade ties. I don't agree with them (author: the China threat and irresponsible theories). China is a responsible country, playing a constructive role in international affairs. (personal communication with journalist D, 22<sup>nd</sup> December, 2016)

Moreover, journalist A and journalist D also emphasised the Western-reader-oriented practice in their journalistic experiences.

This media institution has special news products targeting non-Chinese speaking countries. In their news production procedures, they hire non-Chinese experts (they are employed as experts but not journalists), usually experienced news reporters used to serve Western news agencies, to hone the already finished news reports written by Chinese journalists from aspects of language, structure, and news consumption habits

of foreign readers before the final news release. (personal communication with journalist A, 15<sup>th</sup> June, 2016)

As to the background information, I try my best to make Western readers understand what is going on in China. (personal communication with journalist D, 22<sup>nd</sup> December, 2016)

More defensive responses came from journalist D who denied that there were fixed patterns in China's overseas communication.

I don't see the media has such patterns in covering China-related currency and finance issues. Truth is the life of the news.

I don't see there is such "slant".

I feel that your questions should be answered by researchers or experts. They could not be answered by journalists. You seem to have fixed perceptions of our media and your interview may only seek to get support from interviewees. To be honest, I myself can not agree with your perceptions. I feel like that your perceptions of our media institution still stay at the stage when we were several decades ago. Or maybe your questions were based on second-hand materials? Nowadays, we are an international media institution. I don't know how many English and Chinese news articles you've read among the thousands of articles that we release every day. I suggest that you should enlarge your samples, make balanced selections of samples, and design neutral interview questions. I personally do not think that I should be your interviewee. (personal communication with journalist D, 22<sup>nd</sup> December, 2016)

Nevertheless, some participants took reflections on their journalistic practice.

For instance, journalist B admitted the constraints that they face in their daily practice. For example, although they wanted to comply with journalism professionalism, they also had to admit that some interviewees have been already influenced by certain discourses.

As long as the person agrees to be interviewed, they are very likely to say positive things about China. For example, in the U.S., economists hold diverse opinions toward issues like China-U.S. currency disputes and trade imbalances. If they agree to take your interviews, they are very likely to hold positive opinions toward China. (personal communication with journalist B, 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 2016)

#### **7.2.4 News-making convention: A safeguard**

According to the research results in Chapter 6, China's mainstream media institutions had specific frames to represent China-related economic responsibilities. Writing reports with

these frames may become a news-making convention, i.e. the “right” way to do their jobs.

The existing frames may also become a safeguard for media practitioners in charge of relevant news articles, which are sensitive politically.

The only thing that we rely on for a report is facts and interviews. Nevertheless, it is impossible to be independent in choosing facts and background information, interviewing, and writing the reports. We actually do not think too much about why we write the reports in this way instead of other ways. Moreover, we separate our personal thoughts with our work. (personal communication with journalist B, 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 2016)

Moreover, journalist A’s response also echoed B’s answers.

We have a large archive of news articles released by our institution. We usually refer to the archive for background information and ways of reporting. (personal communication with journalist A, 15<sup>th</sup> June, 2016)

The above interviews resonate with Sigal’s unfailing insights about this phenomenon:

The conventions of newsmaking authenticate the news that they publish, as well as legitimating their procedures for obtaining it. So long as newsmen follow the same routines, espousing the same professional values and using each other as their standards of comparison, newsmaking will tend to be insular and self-reinforcing. But that insularity and self-reinforcement is precisely what newsmen need. It provides them with a modicum of certitude that enables them to act in an otherwise uncertain environment. The very routines and conventions that newsmen use to cope with uncertainty, though, are exploited by their sources either to insert information into the news or to propagandize. (Sigal, 1973, p. 181)

### **7.3 Analysis of *WSJ* Media Practitioners: News-Making Professionalism**

This section intends to answer research question 5b regarding the practice of *WSJ* media practitioners, especially their working experience in reporting China-related economic responsibilities. My contact with *WSJ* media practitioners yielded no reply. Luckily, *WSJ* editor-in-chief Gerard Baker talked frequently about their newspaper in public so that I could understand *WSJ*’s journalism practice through these materials.

In an interview by the UNC School of Media and Journalism Dean Susan King, Gerard Baker insisted on *WSJ*’s news-making professionalism, especially the paper’s objectivity (Baker, 2014). He contended that the paper’s established reputation through the



125-year journey was based on “reliable, objective, fair, accurate journalism”, which led to readers’ trust in their news reports (Baker, 2014). He admitted that their editorial page was conservative, but on the news pages, “we always believe that the right thing to do is to maintain a straight line with news, to maintain objectivity”, and “we do not take political line in our reporting, whether it is on politics, culture, or business, or any of the aspect of our reporting” (Baker, 2014).

More specifically, as to issues like the ObamaCare and what is going on in China, “we report that objectively so that readers get views they want as reflected in the opinion pages, they are also being exposed to more objective style of reporting in the news pages” (Baker, 2014). Moreover, in another occasion, Baker defended their news reporting quality by saying that

Our journalism these last few years has been peerless. We’ve held governments, people and companies accountable for their actions, overreach and misdeeds. We’ve chronicled the complex and changing nature of the global economy with more sophistication than anyone. We have produced memorable and stirring reporting on the most important political, diplomatic and social trends of our time. And we’ve entertained readers with the most intelligent and insightful coverage of everything from fashion to art to sport. Our readers are the best judges of the quality of our journalism and we strive every day to meet their demanding standards (Staff, 2014).

In regards to the national critique of Rupert Murdoch’s potential personal influence on the newspaper’s reporting, Baker responded that they would “absolutely maintain the objectivity of the news pages of the *Journal*” (Baker, 2014).

#### **7.4 Analysis of *FT* Media Practitioners: News-Making Professionalism**

This section aims to answer research question 5c concerning *FT* media professionals’ personal experience in covering China-related issues by analysing interview data with *FT* media practitioners.

Similar with *WSJ* Gerard Baker's responses, *FT* commentators and editors also emphasised their news-making professionalism during face-to-face and email interviews and in their public expressions.

Specifically, its commentators laid stress on their opinion independence and personal judgements.

*FT* commentator Martin Wolf responded the reasons for his cautious and dialectical views about the conflictual arguments concerning China-related economic responsibilities and China's positions.

Briefly, I think the critiques of other countries (author: on China's behaviours and stances in global economic issues) are sometimes right and sometimes wrong and sometimes of uncertain validity. The same applies to the views of the Chinese authorities. So it depends on the topic and the circumstances. I cannot possibly describe the evolution of my views on the many and varied topics (trade policy, financial policy, monetary policy, exchange rate policy, policy towards foreign direct investment, policy on exchange controls, etc.) over the past quarter of a century. Similarly, my view has evolved with the role of China. Today, I would start from the twin facts that China is an economic superpower, but also a developing country. It would take a lengthy essay to explain what I now feel about all the challenges China confronts in the world economy.

I have no particular sources (author: to make the above judgements). I always start with the data and read material that seems relevant to understanding the data. I am mostly interested in analyses by economists and other experts. But I always make up my own mind.

Despite my title (author: *FT* chief economics commentator and the associate editor), I have no role in determining our coverage. (personal communication with Martin Wolf, 6<sup>th</sup> February, 2017)

Similarly, *FT* commentator Philip Stephens contended that his judgement of current geopolitics is also based on a wide range of sources. He believed that the tensions between China and industrialised countries are inevitable and not specific to the case of China since history shows that there is always tension between established and rising powers. As to the Western exhortations, Philip continued that it is reasonable for the rest of the world to have pressure on China, but not reasonable to expect that China's full integration into the current

free trading system can happen overnight. These insights are the result of his broad contact with different sources within and outside of China. According to Philip, he went to China for different conferences, such as the Xiangshan Forum organised by the Chinese Association for Military Science and the annual Stockholm China Forum in different cities. He talked with people from the Chinese People's Liberation Army, the CPC, and the Chinese government, and Chinese scholars from different universities. Besides these sources, he also frequently contacted British and American diplomats and businessmen, as well as those from other countries. When asking about public relations companies, he replied that maybe there are such companies coming to their newspaper, but he never got in contact with them himself. Moreover, Philip insisted that the information drew from these sources were judged by himself instead of complying with the editor's decisions: "There are clear divisions of responsibilities between the editorial line and the view of the *FT* and the views of the columnists. They are not always the same. The columnists are free to make their own views" (personal communication, 6<sup>th</sup> February, 2017).

When asked about his reference to Chinese mainstream media, Philip responded that he only searched Chinese media from time to time to look at positions of Chinese government on some issues. He maintained that "China has no soft power", questioning the number of willing allies of the Chinese government. Nevertheless, since the U.S. is losing all its soft power, Philip contended that China has its opportunity to build up its soft power (personal communication, 6<sup>th</sup> February, 2017).

Philip's answers implied the trivial influence of China's transnational media channels, along with other governmental and public soft power practices, in delivering soft power messages. Although *FT* and Xinhua had similar patterns in constructing China-related economic responsibilities as analysed in Chapter 6, it is proper to conclude that *FT*'s media

representations may be influenced by China's overall discourse of economic responsibilities to a certain extent, but not necessarily by China's media discourse alone.

Besides columnists, *FT*'s worldwide editor Lionel Barber, who controls both the news pages and the editorial page, also stressed the newspaper's professionalism, specifically, the editorial independence and news impartiality, experienced journalists, information accuracy, and reliable judgment on news importance (Select Committee on Communications, 2008).

In Lionel Barber's public answers to the Select Committee on Communications of the House of Lords in 10<sup>th</sup> October 2007, he claimed that the decisions about the newspaper's editorial lines in critical issues, such as election, the Iraq War, and the European Union, and the front page, were "taken in concert with informed colleagues" and "in conjunction with the senior team". They included "the deputy editor, the managing editor, who is responsible for budgets and personnel, and the news editor". He also maintained that the editorial policy was never influenced by advertisers. In this way that they kept news impartiality.

Barber also spoke high of their working staff. He stated that "We have a global network of journalists and they are very experienced. Many of them have been working for the *Financial Times* 10, 15, 20 years and they are very good". Their working routine is that "informed, experienced journalists judge what is newsworthy and explain facts and explain the news".

As to their reports, Barber emphasised the accuracy. Barber was confident with their newspaper that "We offer relevant, concise, authoritative, accurate information with plenty of context", shaping sheer contrast with the "some rather troubling instances of inaccuracy even amongst the best papers" in the US market.

He also believed that their judgement on the importance of news, i.e. "the selection of news and the presentation of news", was reliable and made them special from other newspapers. According to him, the newspaper targeted niche readers, including "an audience

of sophisticated wealthy readers around the world” and “people around the world in business, finance and public affairs who make decisions”. Regarding the concerns that comment can pervade news, Lionel responded that “I think the question of trust in our judgment on what is important is sacrosanct, so we do not allow comment to intrude in the news, or if I do see it or hear about it, it is removed”.

## **7.5 Discussion**

Media practitioners from the three media institutions all stressed their news-making professionalism, especially their insistence on news values like truth, reality, objectivity, independence, and accuracy. Then comes the questions: Why were their coverage of China-related economic responsibilities different? Should not all the coverage be identical since they all reported the same issue?

Norman Fairclough’s (1995) framework for critical discourse analysis offers a valuable social constructionist perspective (Burr, 2003) to explain the above inquiries. Media professionals are working within a certain sociocultural backdrop instead of working in vacuum (Fairclough, 1995). Therefore, their coverage of any communicative event may be influenced by a specific sociocultural context. The final news articles are not copies of the events, but are constructions.

In this research, the exposure of Chinese media practitioners to various discourses during their journalistic practice was more explicitly reflected in interviews. The most obvious influence came from the Chinese government whose guidance and policies acted as the driving force of China’s journalistic constructions. It offers explanation to the congruence in framings of China-related economic responsibilities between China’s governmental policies and Xinhua’s media texts. Besides governmental influence, journalists’ personal anti-Western sentiment surprisingly resonated with the pattern of pursuing justice framed in Xinhua’s news reports, which implies the penetrating influence of China’s sociocultural

values. Although some Chinese journalists insisted on their news-making professionalism, several of them took reflections on their practice and admitted that they may be swayed in their journalism practice. Nevertheless, both of those who are and are not aware of the “disturbance” were protected, and even numbed, by news-making professionalism and conventions, which are specific to the Chinese environment.

Analysis of *WSJ* and *FT* media practitioners yielded less fruitful insights compared with that of Chinese ones. Media practitioners from both institutions firmly defended their news-making professionalism. *WSJ*’s practitioners did not indicate the potential influence of China’s discourses on their journalism practice, as well as other political economic factors, such as media ownership. They insisted on their own definitions of professionalism and news values, which are, grounded in this research, not universal but socially and contextually constructed.

*FT*’s professionals responded their contact with Chinese sources. Moreover, the analysis in last chapter shows that some media frames used by *FT* resembled those by Xinhua. They indicate that this newspaper’s representations of China-related economic responsibilities may be influenced by China’s overall discourse. As to other factors, *FT* also steered itself away and stubbornly insisted on their own view of professionalism.

This chapter reaches the conclusion that media practitioners in three media institutions based in different countries may be influenced by different discourses during their journalistic representations of the same issue of China-related economic responsibilities. This conclusion was reflected in the finding that the media practitioners were guided by different versions of news-making professionalism, which was born in different sociocultural background. In another word, the claim by both the Chinese and Western media practitioners that they committed to reporting the realities of China-related economic responsibilities was problematic. Echoing Latham’s (2009) query into Chinese and Western media’s discursive

battle on a 'real' China' and a 'real' Beijing Olympics Games, the different versions of representations of China-related economic responsibilities can also be concluded that they "are not neutral statements of fact, but claims, counterclaims, justifications and accusations exchanged with a variety of aims and intentions in a range of sites of mediated dispute" (p. 37), although most of the participants in this research did not respond their awareness of the discursive constraints explicitly.

Does this mean that cultural congruence is impossible and the acceptance of China's values in foreign countries is beyond imagination? From the above research, I can only conclude that this is a long path, which could not be simply achieved by delivering messages through media channels and aiming to influence other countries' media representations. The underlying differences in sociocultural contexts are the rooted issue.

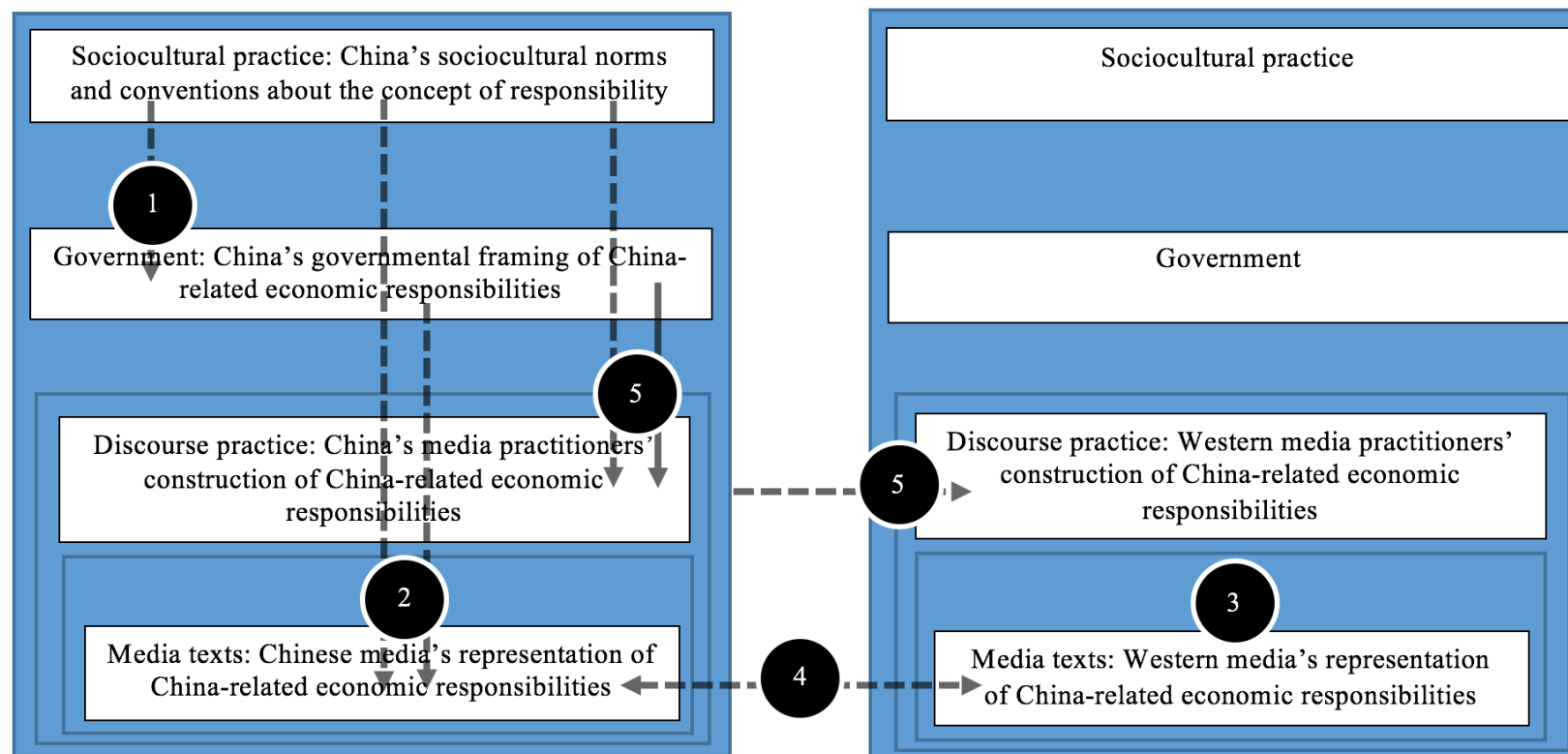
## **Chapter 8. Discussion and Conclusion**

This chapter synthesises the main findings of this study, presents its contributions to academia theoretically and methodologically and to the media and government practice, and proposes topics for future research.

### **8.1 Summary of Findings**

This project was set out to investigate the flowing path of China's soft power messages, specifically, China's journalistic construction of China-related economic responsibilities and its implications on Western media representations of the same issues. Building on Fairclough's (1995) framework for critical discourse analysis and Entman's (2008, p. 91) cascading network activation model of mediated public diplomacy, the basic structure of the empirical analysis is illustrated in Figure 8.1. I will summarise the major findings with the aid of this figure and weave the findings together.





*Figure 8.1.* A synthesis of main findings of this study (interrelationships between discourses and representations) based on Fairclough's (1995) framework for critical discourse analysis and Entman's (2008, p. 91) cascading network activation model of mediated public diplomacy.

Note: The main research questions one to five are labelled in black-filled circles and the research findings to the research questions are illustrated as arrows indicating the one-dimensional influence. The figure uses dotted arrows to illustrate the potential influence and solid arrows the affirmatory influence.

Based on a Foucauldian discourse theory and a social constructionist perspective, the thesis prepares for the following empirical analysis of policies, media texts, and practitioners a Chinese sociocultural background, or “a kind of frame of reference, a conceptual backcloth against which our utterances can be interpreted” (Burr, 2003, p. 66) (see Chapter 4). In this backcloth, I synthesised a typology of Chinese sociocultural discourse of responsibility. The Chinese society requires individuals to have virtues of benevolence, righteousness, propriety, intelligence, and trustfulness, which are only conventionally regulated, and to fulfil legally binding duties and achieve required outcomes. These moral conventions and legal requirements permeate China’s statecraft towards domestic and external issues and its people’s daily lives. The overriding philosophy behind “who should take on what kinds of responsibility” is positioning, i.e. “Every ‘name’ (i.e. social position) implied a certain responsibility that must be fulfilled” (Yeophantong, 2013, p. 335).

Relying on the above conceptual map of the notion of responsibility in the Chinese sociocultural context, I’ve explored the following research questions and obtained interesting findings.

#### *1. China’s governmental policies and frames in the Chinese sociocultural context:*

This study mainly focused on the problem definition function of frames in China’s governmental policies. China’s policies were rich in constructing China-related economic responsibilities and they were obviously related to China’s sociocultural discourse of responsibility. Specifically, in terms of (1) environmental protection issues, it framed responsibility as sincerity and justice, (2) currency and finance issues, it highlighted stability and justice, and (3) international trade issues, it stressed cooperation and justice. The reasons for this manner of political framing can be attributed to China’s steadfast self-positioning as a developing country whose priority is self-development.

#### *2. Media texts and frames in China-based Xinhua News Agency:*

This study mainly focused on the problem definition function of Xinhua's media frames. They were explored through two aspects: Xinhua's representation of China-related economic responsibilities in the three aforementioned issues via different perspectives as different themes in China's sociocultural discourse of responsibility. The perspectives included (1) China's view on its own domestic and international responsibilities, (2) China's view on other countries' responsibilities, and (3) other countries' view on China's responsibilities. The analysis showed congruence between China's journalistic constructions and China's governmental policies, as well as China's sociocultural discourse of responsibility. It indicates the potential influence of China's governmental and sociocultural discourses on its media discourse.

### *3. Media texts and frames in US-based WSJ and UK-based FT:*

This study mainly focused on the moral judgment function of Western media's frames. They were also probed through two aspects: their positive, negative, neutral or no moral judgement of China-related economic responsibilities via different perspectives (same as above).

I will summarise the research findings in an issue-specific way. In framing China-related responsibilities in environmental protection, *WSJ* mostly acknowledged others' urges and condemnations of China and had negative moral judgments of China's stances and behaviours which were conversely constructed by Xinhua. It framed an economically powerful China who was shirking more duties and refraining from faults caused to environment. *FT* largely adopted neutral moral judgements of relevant issues, which left space for readers to decide how to judge them.

Then as to currency and finance, *WSJ* largely positively judged others' urges of China to appreciate currency. It framed an unfathomable China who should shoulder more

responsibilities. *FT* largely applied neutral judgments, as well as positive, negative, and no judgements in a mixed manner.

In terms of international trade, *WSJ* only contributed two samples and *FT* none in the 2010 and 2014 samples. It implied that the two Western media institutions did not even view China-related responsibilities in international trade as important news agenda in 2010 and 2014, let alone framing them in particular ways, even though Western political leaders frequently mentioned it.

#### *4. A comparison of media frames in Chinese and Western media institutions:*

This research question aims to uncover the potential influence of China's media discourse on Western media representations. It gets the conclusion that Xinhua's discourse may yield trivial influence on *WSJ*'s and *FT*'s journalistic representations, although the latter two Western media institutions may be aware of Xinhua's discourse.

#### *5. Discursive and non-discursive influential factors that Chinese and Western media practitioners were exposed to in practice:*

Several Chinese media practitioners explicitly confirmed the influence of the Chinese governmental instructions and discourses on their journalistic practice, and implicitly indicated China's sociocultural influence. One *FT* media professional indicated the impact of China's overall discourse on his column. Nearly all Chinese and Western media practitioners emphasised their news-making professionalism, especially objectivity and impartiality. However, this can not explain the research findings that different media institutions framed China-related economic responsibilities in different ways. It can be assumed that they viewed journalist's professionalism in different ways, which are nurtured in specific national and organisational contexts.

Overall, Figure 8.1 illustrates Chinese mainstream transnational media's construction of China-related economic responsibilities in a multi-layered manner: media texts were

directly produced by media practitioners, who were explicitly influenced by the Chinese government, and both of which were potentially influenced by China's sociocultural context. It also presents the potential impact of China's discourse on Western media's representations, although the former did not make much difference to the latter according to the research findings. These research findings make theoretical and methodological contributions to existing studies on this subject.

## **8.2 Implications for Theory and Methodology**

### **8.2.1 Theoretical implications**

As I've stated in Chapter 1. Introduction, this PhD project centres on two issues: one is message, i.e. the discourse of China-related economic responsibilities, two is channel, i.e. the Chinese and Western media institutions related with this discourse. The two issues were explored under the background of China's image branding and soft power projection in the global range, especially its media going-global project. Therefore, the research findings contribute to studies of the two issues in this specific context respectively.

Existing studies on China's soft power message of China-related economic responsibilities lack enough exploration through a discursive perspective. The current study, building on studies by Hoo (2013) and Yeophantong (2013), further probes areas including the historical typology of China's sociocultural understanding of the concept of responsibility (Chapter 4) and the links between China's historical philosophy and its current governmental policies (Chapter 5). My discursive study of China's responsible power claim complements studies by scholars, such as Cunningham (2012), grounded in the political economy strand. It helps to draw a comprehensive picture of China's political idea and construction, and provide reasons behind China's behaviours which are widely debated in the discipline of international relations and politics. My analysis of China's sociocultural thoughts and governmental

policies paves the way for following analysis of the mediation of China-related economic responsibilities.

This research also contributes empirical data and theoretical insights to studies of China's external communication, especially its media going-global initiative. An integral understanding of a communicative event consists of analysis of its texts, the texts' construction, and implication. Previous studies on China's media going-global project leave much space for detailed and comprehensive investigation of the three aspects. Therefore, this thesis explores the three elements and their interrelationships. It also forms an overall examination of Chinese media's representation of economic issues.

Firstly, building on existing media texts studies (Zeng, 2010; Zhang, 2013), this research details the exact messages and frames that China's Xinhua News Agency represented concerning China-related economic responsibilities, as well as those represented by USA's *WSJ* and UK's *FT* (Chapter 6).

Secondly, this study also explores multi-layered constructive factors, mostly discursive, behind China's media texts. Those factors include China's governmental instructions and policies and media practitioners, as well as China's sociocultural elements (Chapter 6 and 7). It confirms the governing and constraining influence of China's government on its soft power messages through media texts analysis and interviews, complementing existing studies on China's governmental sponsorship on and guidance of external communication from a mere media production perspective. Moreover, this study makes a breakthrough in exploring interrelationships between different constructive elements behind China's soft power messages.

Thirdly, this study's investigation of the potential influence of China's media discourse on Western media representations resonates with Cheng et al.'s (2016) research which also concludes a trivial influence (Chapter 6). Nevertheless, this research applies a

qualitative method and examines the relationship in an exploratory way, which complements Cheng et al.'s (2016) paper whose research intention is similar with mine but adopted a quantitative method. As to the reasons for the trivial influence, this study postulates, especially based on the interview in Chapter 7, that it may be due to the incompatibility of Chinese and Western sociocultural understandings of the notion of responsibility. The difference in Chinese and Western sociocultural contexts may exert substantial influence on media practitioners' self-perceptions of this concept and responsibility-related issues, which may impact their definitions of professionalism and media practice. It would be intriguing to comprehensively probe into the underlying reasons for the trivial influence.

### **8.2.2 Methodological implications**

This study is based on, and extends, Norman Fairclough's (1995) framework for critical discourse analysis. As I've stated in Chapter 3, Fairclough's (1995) definition of sociocultural practice is vague as it refers to the wider economic, political, and cultural context in which the communicative event is happening. It seems reasonable that discourse practice, such as media practitioners' production of media texts, is definitely under the influence of the wider sociocultural practice. Nevertheless, we can not be sure which elements of the sociocultural practice exert influence on discourse practice and how. It indicates that the interrelationship between sociocultural practice and discourse practice is not as obvious as the one between discourse practice and media texts. This study explores the interrelationship between the three dimensions through texts analysis and interviews. It finds out the potential influence of China's sociocultural context on China's discourse practice in an exploratory way.

The second extension is case-specific. An investigation of China's media practice could not be separated from the Chinese government, especially those relating with China's external communication as a part of its soft power projection. Therefore, I extend the existing

framework by adding an investigation of China's governmental policies, which were designed under the backdrop of China's sociocultural context and had potential influence on China's media production and products.

### **8.3 Implications for Media and Government Practice**

The research findings not only contribute original knowledge to theory and methodology, but also evoke thoughts about China's media and government practice empirically. It induces a reconsideration of how to conceive, construct, and convey the idea of soft power.

This research shows that in China, the government has strict instructions on agendas and framings of external media communication content and relevant media practitioners stick to self-censorship (see Chapter 6 and 7). However, the research findings about the potential influence of China's media discourse on Western media representations are not positive, indicating a limited effect of China's soft power projection through transnational media institutions (see Chapter 6). The analysis of Chinese and Western media practitioners offers an assumption that the discrepancies in sociocultural contexts between different societies may be the rooted problem (see Chapter 7).

As I've introduced in Chapter 1, practitioners in Chinese Confucius Institutes believed that pure academic and cultural exchanges would be better received by other countries rather than designing these activities as political movements and labelling them as power strategies (Paradise, 2009). Similarly, the governmental controlled 2008 Beijing Olympics and its deliberately disseminated messages induced suspicions from non-Chinese audience (Liu, 2015).

Similarly, as to soft power projection through transnational media channels, the research findings in this study may enlighten current Chinese journalistic practice. Based on Figure 8.1, I assume that other countries, especially their mainstream media institutions, may



receive China's media messages better if Chinese media break off governmental, as well as sociocultural, chains and report what non-Chinese readers want to know about China. This requires Chinese media practitioners to have a better understanding of cultural congruence (Entman, 2008). It means a clearer perception of their roles as journalists working in China's media system and sociocultural background, a deeper understanding of receiving country's sociocultural context and their specific media practices and environment, as well as non-Chinese readers' news consumption habits. It is obvious that this is never a one-dimensional effort. Their employers, the media institutions, should also reconsider the discourse practice by making adjustment to organisational and financing procedures. Moreover, the Chinese government may obtain a more promising outcome by giving more autonomy to its transnational media institutions.

#### **8.4 Future Research**

China's responsible power claim could be fruitfully studied from different disciplines and perspectives. The current thesis mainly contributes an insight of media representations of China-related economic responsibilities, its construction, and impact to this vast map. Future research may also consider the following inquiries.

Firstly, considering the theory of cultural congruence (Entman, 2008), it may be intriguing to delve into the norms, values, and conventions concerning the concept of responsibility in the Western world, besides this study's focus on China's conception of responsibility. It may illuminate the underlying sociocultural reasons behind Western news media's construction of the concept of responsibility. It may further explain the discrepancies of media representations of China-related economic responsibilities between Chinese and Western media institutions. Moreover, it may also have policy implications for China's soft power projection by showing in what ways that China's soft power messages should be

constructed to cater for receiving country's values and enhance effectiveness of soft power practices.

Secondly, this research mainly focuses on soft power projection, especially its messages, and devotes little attention to China's hard power practices. Therefore, future research may investigate the complementarity of China's soft power projection and hard power initiatives by examining China's economic and political movements behind the responsible power claim. It could compare China's rhetoric with its actual movements to make clear how the Chinese government manages the two kinds of power resources. It may also provide more potential reasons to explain the influence of China's soft power discourses on Western news media and public.

Thirdly, in his analysis of China's responsibilities in climate change, Harris (2011) proposed that the defining of responsibilities should shift its focus from the political boundaries to the exact people who are directly responsible for the climate problems, such as China's newly emerging middle and upper classes. Similarly, studies of economic responsibilities may also be productive if the focus is put on the Chinese citizens, such as the Chinese entrepreneurs who are engaging in overseas business and their representations in media. In addition, China's political responsibilities and cultural responsibilities could also be researched through this perspective.

Fourthly, the statistical illustration of the distribution of China's political documents concerning China-related economic responsibilities by date (see Figure 3.4 in p. 102) shows that China's dissemination of this proposition is a slowly moving process. During the years when international activities were hosted by the Chinese government, the documents were more intensively distributed on the official online portal. However, relevant documents were not distinctly released during the exact dates of the international activities in terms of quantity. Therefore, it can be postulated that the mechanism of China's dissemination of a

certain political claim may be controlled by some strategies, which may take multiple factors into consideration. It would be interesting to examine the dissemination strategies of China's responsible power claim by the Chinese government within a longer time scale by analysing second-hand materials and interviewing top figures. It could help to understand China's political trends and foreign policies, which form a significant part in the world's politics and international relations. It can also help to explore China's external communication messages.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1: List of Major Western Political Articulations of China-Related Economic Responsibilities

Basic information of occasions (time, addresser, and document title)	Articulations concerning China-related economic responsibilities	Specific requirements
1994, William Perry, The Sino-U.S. relationship and its impact on world peace (Perry, 1994)	<p>“The challenge facing us today is to ensure that this region’s stability and prosperity are strengthened for future generations. The United States and China share a special responsibility for making this happen.”</p> <p>“There are four principal reasons why the United States and China share a special responsibility to secure the present and future stability in the West Pacific.”</p>	Not clear
1995, Bill Clinton, Meeting with the then Chinese President Jiang Zemin (Lake, 1996; Nye, 1997; Deng, 2015)	“We welcome China to the great power table. But great powers also have great responsibilities.”	Not clear
1995, William Perry, U.S. strategy: engage China, not contain it (Perry, 1995)	<p>“We believe that engagement is the best strategy to ensure that as China increases its power, it does so as a responsible member of the international community.”</p> <p>“Our policy accepts China at its word when it says that it wants to become a responsible world power, but it also requires that China act like one.”</p>	Not clear
1996, Anthony Lake, Remarks by Anthony Lake, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs to the Japan-America Society (Lake, 1996)	“We welcome China to the great power table. But great powers also have great responsibilities.”	Integrating China into the global trading system (WTO), bringing down barriers to foreign products, protecting intellectual property, maintaining market openness and transparency, living by economic rules, and participating in the setting of global economic rules
1997, Stanley O. Roth, U.S.-China relations on the eve of the summit (Roth, 1997)	<p>“We want China to take its place as an active and responsible member of the international community.”</p> <p>“In recent years, China has increasingly assumed the responsibilities that one expects of a</p>	U.S.- China bilateral collaboration in energy policy, energy and environment issue, science for sustainable development, and commercial cooperation, market access, joining and abiding by the rules of multilateral institutions (WTO), supporting UN reforms,

	great power and a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council.”	upholding and enforcing international agreements
2001, James A. Kelly, The future of U.S.- China relations (Kelly, 2001)	<p>“China’s own interests -- and its responsibility for the promotion of global peace, security, and prosperity -- should guide the leadership in Beijing to uphold international standards in policy areas ranging from human rights to nonproliferation. China must live up to its global obligations as would any other country in the world.”</p> <p>“We encourage China to make responsible choices that reflect its stature in and obligations to the community of nations.”</p>	Removing protectionist barriers, greater trade openness and fewer government controls on international trade, meeting WTO standards, and market-oriented economic reform
2005, Robert Zoellick, Whither China: From membership to responsibility? (Zoellick, 2005)	<p>“To answer that question, it is time to take our policy beyond opening doors to China’s membership into the international system: We need to urge China to become a <i>responsible stakeholder</i> in that system.”</p> <p>“For example, a responsible major global player shouldn’t tolerate rampant theft of intellectual property and counterfeiting, both of which strike at the heart of America’s knowledge economy.”</p> <p>“In its foreign policy, China has many opportunities to be a responsible stakeholder.”</p> <p>“We now need to encourage China to become a responsible stakeholder in the international system. As a responsible stakeholder, China would be more than just a member – it would work with us to sustain the international system that has enabled its success.”</p>	Adjusting to the international rules, tackling with piracy, counterfeiting and protecting intellectual property, stopping currency manipulation, maintaining an open (not protective) and competitive market, moving away from mercantilism and protectionist, living up to commitments in markets of services, agriculture, and certain manufactured goods, designing a market-oriented exchange rate policy and permitting markets to adjust to imbalances, working with market strategies in maintaining energy security, working with US to sustain the international system
2006, Commission of the European Communities, EU-China: Closer partners, growing responsibilities (Commission of the European Communities, 2006)	“The EU’s fundamental approach to China must remain one of engagement and partnership. But with a closer strategic partnership, mutual responsibilities increase. The partnership should meet both sides’ interests and the EU and China need to work together as they assume more active and responsible international	A sustainable development (energy security, climate change and environment protection, employment, and sustainable economic growth), staying within the international trading system

	<p>roles, supporting and contributing to a strong and effective multilateral system.”</p> <p>...</p>	
<p>2006, Council of the European Union, Council conclusions on EU-China strategic partnership (Council of the European Union, 2006)</p>	<p>“The EU and China have important international commitments and responsibilities, and must both work hard to deliver them, in the interest of wider international security and stability and to strengthen an effective, fair, just and rules-based multilateral international system, with the United Nations at its centre.”</p>	<p>Strengthening the multilateral international system, environmental protection</p>
<p>2007, Angela Merkel, Opening Address by Angela Merkel, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, at the World Economic Forum on 24 January 2007 in Davos (Merkel, 2007)</p>	<p>“When I say all this I am aware that the tasks facing us are truly massive. Therefore we must realize that only a unified G8 approach can help persuade the emerging economies, with their dynamic economic growth, to join us in our shared global responsibility. Any other approach will fail. Therefore my aim is for Germany's G8 Summit, in Heiligendamm in June, to place special emphasis on new forms of dialogue with the major emerging economies, i.e. Brazil, China, India, Mexico and South Africa.”</p>	<p>Climate protection and energy issue (energy supply security, energy research, environmental technologies innovation, a healthy energy market, effective energy policy, energy efficiency, and a climate regime that includes all major greenhouse gas emitters), free and fair world trade, stabilising financial markets, healthy global, cross-border and domestic investment, reducing global imbalances through efforts in exchange rates, minimizing the international capital market's systematic risks while increasing their transparency, supporting innovation, and protecting intellectual property</p>
<p>2010, The White House, National Security Strategy report (The White House, 2010)</p>	<p>“We welcome a China that takes on a responsible leadership role in working with the United States and the international community to advance priorities like economic recovery, confronting climate change, and nonproliferation.”</p>	<p>Engaging in economic recovery and confronting climate change</p>
<p>2014, John Kerry and Jack Lew, Interview with Wang Guan of CCTV (Kerry &amp; Lew, 2014)</p>	<p>“We're the – China and the United States are the world's two largest economies. We have special responsibilities, both in terms of our own economies and the global economy, and that's why the discussions that we're going to be having at the S&amp;ED in a week are so important, because we need to be able to work well together and to make sure that there is a U.S.-China relationship that's good for the global economy.”</p>	<p>Levelling playing field, exchange rate information transparency, market-determined exchange rate, climate change, energy issue, living up to trade standards, open markets, and intellectual property protection</p>

	<p>“Great powers have responsibilities, and economic great powers – one of the two largest economies in the world, China in particular has a lot of responsibility, as do we.”</p> <p>...</p>	
<p>2014, John Kerry, Wang Yang, Jacob Lew, and Yang Jiechi, Remarks at the Sixth Round of the U.S.-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue (Kerry, et al., 2014)</p>	<p>“We welcome the emergence of a peaceful, stable, prosperous China that contributes to the stability and the development of the region, and that chooses to play a responsible role in world affairs.”</p> <p>...</p>	<p>A consumption-driven and market-based economy, climate change and clean energy, a level playing field, research and innovation, intellectual property protection, open markets, a more stable global financial system, growing in ways consistent with international rules and norms, market-oriented economic and financial reform, and a market-determined exchange rate</p>
<p>2015, John Kerry, Joe Biden, Liu Yandong, Wang Yang, Jack Lew, Yang Jiechi, The U.S.- China Strategic and Economic Dialogue/Consultation on People-to-People Exchange (Kerry, et al., 2015)</p>	<p>“And I believe that the future of China’s success and global influence is directly tied to the extent to which it acts as a responsible stakeholder.”</p> <p>...</p>	<p>Fair and healthy competition, intellectual property protection, reforming the economy, climate and energy issues, enhancing financial sector reform and stability, upholding standards in the international economic system, opening trade and investment, exchange rate reform, updating previous international rules for environment and labours and global financial institutions</p>

## Appendix 2: List of China's Political Documents Concerning China-Related Economic Responsibilities on China's Central Government Online Portal (2009-2014)<sup>66</sup>

Year of release	Date of release	Name of the document (Chinese) <sup>67</sup>	Name of the document (English translation)
2014	2014-12-31	外交部长王毅瞭望撰文: 中国特色大国外交 2014 风生水起	Foreign Minister Wang Yi: Major-country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics is progressing greatly in 2014 ( <i>Outlook Weekly</i> )
	2014-12-24	外交部部长出席 2014 年国际形势与中国外交研讨会: 盘点 2014: 中国外交丰收之年	Foreign Minister Wang Yi attended the 2014 International Situation and China's Diplomacy Symposium: China's rich harvest in diplomacy in 2014
	2014-11-21	林业局: 努力开创防沙治沙新局面	China's State Forestry Administration: Make progress in the prevention and control of desertification
	2014-11-14	李克强在第九届东亚峰会上的发言(全文)	Remarks by H.E. Li Keqiang, Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China at the Ninth East Asia Summit (full text)
	2014-10-29	外交部部长王毅: 北京 APEC 中国准备好了!	Foreign Minister Wang Yi: Beijing is ready for APEC!
	2014-10-16	李克强在联合国粮农组织的演讲(全文)	Li Keqiang's speech at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (full text)
	2014-09-29	商务部: 把践行群众路线贯穿对外开放工作始终	Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China: Run the Mass Line through the Opening-up
	2014-09-19	习近平在印度世界事务委员会的演讲(全文): 携手追寻民族复兴之梦	Address by H.E. Xi Jinping, President of the People's Republic of China, at the Indian Council of World Affairs: In joint pursuit of a dream of national renewal
	2014-09-11	李克强: 在第八届夏季达沃斯论坛上的致辞: 紧紧依靠改革创新 增强经济发展新动力	Address by H.E. Li Keqiang, Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting of the New Champions 2014: Creating new dynamism through reform and innovation
	2014-09-10	李克强与出席夏季达沃斯论坛的中外企业家代表对话交流实录	Transcript of the dialogue between Li Keqiang, Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, and Chinese and foreign entrepreneurs at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting of the New Champions 2014
	2014-09-04	李源潮在纪念中美建交 35 周年招待会上的致辞(全文)	Li Yuanchao's speech at the reception of the 35th Anniversary of Sino-US Diplomatic Relations (full text)

<sup>66</sup> The list was arranged chronologically from the most recent to the last.

<sup>67</sup> Some of the policy documents recorded on the website do not include the titles of the exact documents that were addressed or written by the political leaders. In those occasions, the exact documents titles were added in the Chinese section and the according English translations.

2014-08-02	林业局局长: 充分发挥生态林业民生林业强大功能	Minister of the State Forestry Administration: Give full play to the functions of ecological forestry and forestry construction for people's livelihood
2014-07-17	习近平在巴西国会的演讲(全文): 弘扬传统友好 共谱合作新篇	Address by H.E. Xi Jinping, President of the People's Republic of China, at National Congress of Brazil: Carry forward traditional friendship and jointly open up new chapter of cooperation
2014-07-11	杨洁篪在第六轮中美战略与经济对话联合记者会上的讲话	Remarks by Yang Jiechi at the joint press conference of the Sixth Round of the U.S.-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue
2014-06-20	李克强在英国智库的演讲全文: 共建包容发展的美好世界	Inclusive Development: A Better World for All—Speech by H.E. Li Keqiang, Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, to British Think Tanks
2014-06-03	习近平: 让工程科技造福人类 创造未来	Speech by Xi Jinping: Let Engineering Science and Technology Create a Better Future for Humankind
2014-05-20	财政部副部长: 坚定推进国际经济治理体系改革	Vice Finance Minister Zhu Guangyao: Firmly push forward the reform of the international economic governance system
2014-04-25	外交部长王毅接受巴西<圣保罗页报>采访	Foreign Minister Wang Yi interviewed by Brazilian <i>Folha de Sao Paulo</i>
2014-03-31	周生贤: 向污染宣战要打好三大战役	Minister of Environmental Protection Zhou Shengxian: China must win three battles of dealing with pollution
2014-03-29	中德关于建立中德全方位战略伙伴关系的联合声明(全文)	Joint declaration on the establishment of a comprehensive strategic partnership between Germany and China (full text)
2014-03-14	政府工作报告(全文)	Report on the work of the government (full text)
2014-01-25	王毅出席世经论坛年会期间接受中方媒体联合采访	Interview with Foreign Minister Wang Yi during the World Economic Forum annual meeting
2014-01-25	外交部部长王毅在世经论坛2014年年会上演讲全文: 中国新发展 世界新机遇	Speech by Foreign Minister Wang Yi at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2014: New Development in China, New Opportunities for the World
2014-01-22	李克强: 在改革开放与合作中重塑世界经济	Premier Li Keqiang: Reconstruct the world economy by reforming, opening up, and cooperating
2014-01-17	王毅在纪念中法建交 50 周年新闻发布会上的讲话	Remarks by Wang Yi at the press conference of the 50th Anniversary of Sino-French Diplomatic Relations
2014-01-13	王毅发表署名文章: 中国的发展让世界更精彩	Wang Yi's signed article on <i>New Europe</i> : China's Development Makes for a Better World



	2014-01-08	牛盾: 在加强多边贸易体制中维护好农业发展环境	Niu Dun: Maintain a good environment for agriculture development by strengthening the multilateral trade system
	2014-01-01	外交部副部长刘振民谈亚洲形势和周边外交: 锐意进取, 唱响亚洲合作主旋律	Vice Foreign Minister Liu Zhenmin's Comments on Asian Situation and Neighbourhood Diplomacy: Forging Ahead with Determination, Playing the Main Melody of Asian Cooperation
	2014-01-01	外交部部长王毅: 继往开来构建中美新型大国关系	Speech by Foreign Minister Wang Yi in commemoration of the 35th Anniversary of the Establishment of China-US Diplomatic Relations: Build on Past Progress to Develop a New Model of Major-country Relations Between China and the United States
2013	2013-12-16	王毅: 2013 年外交开局亮点纷呈 2014 年将全面开拓 (开启中国外交新征程—王毅外长在“新起点 新理念 新实践—2013 中国与世界”研讨会上的演讲)	Address by Foreign Minister Wang Yi at the Symposium “New Starting Point, New Thinking and New Practice 2013: China and the World”: Embark on a New Journey of China's Diplomacy
	2013-12-16	张高丽: 大力推进生态文明 努力建设美丽中国	Zhang Gaoli: Vigorously promote ecological civilisation progress and work hard to build a beautiful China
	2013-12-11	环境保护部就国家级自然保护区调整管理规定答问	Responses to adjustments of regulations of China's national nature reserve by Ministry of Environmental Protection of the People's Republic of China
	2013-12-06	关于加强中美经济关系的联合情况说明(全文)	Joint Fact Sheet on Strengthening U.S.-China Economic Relations (full text)
	2013-12-04	商务部召开“自贸区建设”专题新闻发布会	The Ministry of Commerce holds the special press conference on China's construction of free trade areas
	2013-11-22	王毅作专题报告: 坚定不移走和平发展道路, 为实现中华民族伟大复兴营造良好国际环境	Special report by Foreign Minister Wang Yi: Firmly follow the path of peaceful development and maintain a sound international environment for the great renewal of the Chinese nation
	2013-11-02	李克强在 21 世纪理事会北京会议开幕式上的演讲: 变化世界中的中国	Speech by Li Keqiang at the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Council Beijing Conference: China in the changing world
	2013-10-17	商务部举行发布会通报 1-9 月份我国商务运行情况	Ministry of Commerce hosted press conference to present China's commerce situation during January to September
	2013-10-08	习近平在亚太经合组织工商领导人峰会上的演讲(全文): 深化改革开放 共创美好亚太	Speech by H.E. Xi Jinping, President of the People's Republic of China at the APEC CEO Summit (full text): Deepen Reform and Opening up and Work Together for a Better Asia Pacific

2013-09-21	如何构建中美新型关系—王毅在布鲁金斯学会演讲	Speech by Foreign Minister Wang Yi at the Brookings Institution: Toward a New Model of Major-Country Relations Between China and the United States
2013-09-12	李克强在第七届夏季达沃斯论坛上的致辞(全文): 以改革创新驱动中国经济长期持续健康发展	Speech by Li Keqiang at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting of the New Champions 2013 (full text): The Chinese Economy: Reform and Innovation for Sustained and Healthy Development
2013-09-10	王毅: 坚持正确义利观 积极发挥负责任大国作用	Foreign Minister Wang Yi: Pursue a correct viewpoint on righteousness and benefit and being active in playing the role as a responsible great power
2013-09-04	国家主席习近平接受五国媒体联合采访	Chinese President Xi Jinping's interview with five media institutions
2013-07-12	杨洁篪在中美战略与经济对话开幕式上讲话(全文) (第五轮中美战略与经济对话联合开幕式致辞)	Speech by Yang Jiechi at the joint opening ceremony of the Fifth Round of Sino-US Strategic and Economic Dialogue (full text)
2013-07-10	杨洁篪: 谱写中美跨越太平洋合作的新篇章 (<华盛顿邮报>署名文章)	Yang Jiechi's signed article on <i>Washington Post</i> : U.S., China can forge a more cooperative relationship
2013-06-13	我常驻 WTO 大使易小准: 帮助最不发达国家登上多边舞台	Remarks by Yi Xiaozhun, China's permanent representative to the World Trade Organization: Help the least developed countries to involve in multilateral system
2013-06-05	林业局局长赵树丛: 保护野生动物 增进人类福祉	Minister of the State Forestry Administration Zhao Shucong: Protect wild animals for the benefit of the people
2013-05-24	李克强在德国<时代>周报发表署名文章: 百尺竿头更进一步	Commentary by Chinese Premier Li Keqiang for the German newspaper <i>Die Zeit</i> : Strive for greater progress in Sino-German relations
2013-03-23	中俄合作共赢 深化全面战略协作伙伴关系的联合声明	Joint Statement of the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation on the win-win cooperation and deepen the comprehensive strategic partnership of cooperation
2013-03-20	习近平在人民大会堂接受金砖国家媒体联合采访	Xi Jinping's joint interview with media institutions from BRICS countries at the Great Hall of the People
2013-03-09	外交部部长杨洁篪就中国外交政策和对外关系答问	Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi responded about China's foreign policies and international relations
2013-02-25	外交部国际司司长陈旭就中国多边外交与网友交流	Chen Xu, Director of International Organizations and Conferences Department in Ministry of Foreign Affairs, exchanged views with netizens

	2013-01-28	吴邦国在亚太议会论坛第 21 届年会上的主旨发言: 坚持和平发展 促进合作共赢	Keynote Speech by Wu Bangguo, Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of China, at the 21st Annual Meeting of the Asia Pacific Parliamentary Forum: Pursue peaceful development and promote win-win cooperation
2012	2012-12-31	胡锦涛发表新年贺词: 携手促进世界和平与共同发展	President Hu Jintao Delivered New Year Message Entitled "Jointly Promote World Peace and Development"
	2012-12-28	外交部副部长张志军在第八届“蓝厅论坛”上演讲: 坚持和平发展 推动合作共赢	Speech by Vice Foreign Minister Zhang Zhijun at the 8 <sup>th</sup> Lanting Forum: Promoting mutually beneficial cooperation through commitment to peaceful development
	2012-12-13	李克强在中国环境与发展国际合作年会上的讲话: 建设一个生态文明的现代化中国	Speech by Premier Li Keqiang at the Annual General Meeting of the China Council for International Cooperation on Environment and Development: Build a modernised China enjoying ecological progress
	2012-12-03	周生贤: 建设美丽中国走向社会主义生态文明新时代	Minister of Environmental Protection Zhou Shengxian: Entering a new era of socialist ecological civilisation and build a beautiful China
	2012-11-28	贾庆林在中国意大利工商晚宴上的演讲(全文)	Speech by Jia Qinglin at China-Italy Business Dinner (full text)
	2012-11-05	温家宝在亚欧首脑会议上的主旨发言(全文): 共同担负起促进世界经济稳定增长的重任	Speech by H.E. Wen Jiabao, Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, at the ASEM Summit (full text): Take up the heavy responsibility of promoting steady global economic growth together
	2012-10-24	<中国的能源政策(2012)>白皮书	White Paper: China's Energy Policy 2012
	2012-10-21	李长春在孟加拉国友好人士招待会上的讲话(全文): 深化互利务实合作 世代传承中孟友好	Speech by Li Changchun at the reception of Bangladesh friends (full text): Deepen win-win and practical cooperation and pass on the Sino-Bangladesh friendship
	2012-08-21	国务院关于印发节能减排“十二五”规划的通知	Notice from the State Council about the 12 <sup>th</sup> Five-year Plan of energy-saving and emission-reduction
	2012-07-07	习近平在“世界和平论坛”开幕式上的致辞(全文): 携手合作共同维护世界和平与安全	Address by the Vice President Xi Jinping of the People's Republic of China at the opening ceremony of the World Peace Forum: Work together to maintain world peace and security
	2012-06-21	温家宝在联合国可持续发展大会上的演讲(全文): 共同谱写人类可持续发展新篇章	Address by Premier Wen Jiabao at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (full text): Work together to write a new chapter in promoting sustainable development for mankind
	2012-06-14	林业局局长赵树丛: 遏制土地退化 促进绿色增长	Minister of the State Forestry Administration Zhao Shucong: Control land deterioration and promote the increasing of green land

	2012-04-30	国务院副总理李克强在莫斯科大学的演讲(全文): 顺应世界发展大势 深化中俄战略合作	Remarks by Li Keqiang, Vice Premier of People's Republic of China, at Moscow State University (full text): Follow the Trend of World Development to Deepen China-Russia Strategic Cooperation
	2012-02-18	习近平演讲: 着眼长远 携手开创中美合作新局面	Speech by Chinese Vice President Xi Jinping at the opening session of the China-U.S. economic and trade cooperation forum: Taking a long-term perspective and working together for new progress in China-U.S. cooperation
	2012-02-07	崔天凯在<上海公报>发表40周年纪念活动的讲话: 坚定不移推进中美合作伙伴关系	Speech by Cui Tiankai, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to the United States, at the ceremony of the 40 <sup>th</sup> year of the publication of Joint Communiqué of the United States of America and the People's Republic of China: Firmly push forward Sino-U.S. cooperative partnership
	2012-01-16	温家宝总理在世界未来能源峰会上的讲话(全文): 中国坚定走绿色和可持续发展道路	Address by H.E. Wen Jiabao, Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, at the World Future Energy Summit (full text): A China Committed to Green and Sustainable Development
	2012-01-08	专访: 外交部长助理刘振民谈亚洲形势与周边外交	Exclusive interview with Liu Zhenmin, Assistant Foreign Minister, about Asian situation and neighbourhood diplomacy
	2012-01-03	服务大局 开拓进取——杨洁篪谈2011年中国外交	Yang Jiechi's comments on China's diplomacy in 2011: Serving the Nation with Vigorous Steps
2011	2011-12-19	2011年国际形势和中国外交——访外交部长杨洁篪	Interview with Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi about Global situation and China's diplomacy in 2011
	2011-11-22	<中国应对气候变化的政策与行动(2011)>白皮书	White paper: China's Policies and Actions for Addressing Climate Change 2011
	2011-11-16	李克强副总理在国合会2011年年会开幕式上的讲话: 在转型创新中实现经济平稳较快发展	Speech by Li Keqiang at the opening ceremony of 2011 China Council for International Cooperation on Environment and Development Annual Meeting: Pursue steady and relatively fast economic development through transformation and innovation
	2011-11-14	专访环境保护部部长 国合会执行副主席周生贤: 架起环境与发展国际合作高层对话的桥梁	Exclusive interview with Zhou Shengxian, Minister of Environmental Protection and Vice Chairman of China Council for International Cooperation on Environment and Development: Bridge the dialogue among top leaders about global environment and development cooperation
	2011-10-25	贾庆林在希腊工商界欢迎晚宴上的讲话(全文): 深化务实合作 促进互利共赢	Speech by Jia Qinglin at the evening reception of Greek industry and commerce (full text): Deepen result-oriented cooperation and promote mutual benefit
	2011-09-15	温家宝在夏季达沃斯论坛开幕式和企业家座谈会答问	Wen Jiabao discussed with entrepreneurs at the opening ceremony of Summer Davos Forum

2011-09-14	温家宝: 实现更长时期 更高水平 更好质量的发展 (在 2011 年夏季达沃斯论坛上的致辞)	Speech by Wen Jiabao, Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting of New Champions 2011: Promote sound, sustainable and quality development
2011-09-14	李勇在第十八届亚太会计师联合会大会上主题演讲: 加强合作 促进发展 实现共赢	Keynote speech by Li Yong at the 18 <sup>th</sup> conference of the Confederation of Asian and Pacific Accountants: Strengthen cooperation, enhance development, and fulfil win-win outcomes
2011-09-09	外交部公布第 66 届联合国大会中方立场文件	Ministry of Foreign Affairs Revealed Position Paper of the People's Republic of China at the 66th Session of the United Nations General Assembly
2011-09-06	国务院新闻办发表<中国的和平发展>白皮书(全文)	The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China revealed the White Paper: China's Peaceful Development (full text)
2011-08-05	外交部长杨洁篪接受波兰通讯社等媒体书面采访	Written interview with Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi by Polish Press Agency and other media institutions
2011-07-16	温家宝<求是>文章: 关于科技工作的几个问题	Wen Jiabao: About China's Science Development ( <i>Qiushi</i> )
2011-06-28	国务院总理温家宝在英国皇家学会的演讲(全文): 未来中国的走向	The Path to China's Future (full text): Speech by Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao at the Royal Society of Britain
2011-03-21	杨洁篪在第十二届中国发展高层论坛年会上演讲: 携手谱写共同发展新篇章	Speech by Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi at China Development Forum 2011: Write together a new chapter of common development
2011-03-20	商务部部长在“2011 年中国发展高层论坛”发表演讲	Speech by Chen Deming, Chinese Commerce Minister, at China Development Forum 2011
2011-03-15	温家宝在十一届人大四次会议上所作政府工作报告	Wen Jiabao delivered Report of the Work of the Government at the Fourth Session of the Tenth National People's Congress
2011-02-16	杨洁篪撰文: 努力开拓中国特色公共外交新局面	Yang Jiechi: Vigorously open a new era for public diplomacy with Chinese characteristics
2011-01-14	外交部副部长崔天凯在第二届“蓝厅论坛”的演讲: 新时期中美关系的主旋律	Speech by Vice Foreign Minister Cui Tiankai at the Second “Lanting Forum of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs”: China- U.S. relations in the new era
2011-01-10	田力普<求是>杂志发表文章: 发展知识产权事业 促进经济社会发展	Commissioner of China's State Intellectual Property Office Tian Lipu: Develop the intellectual property industry and enhance the social and economic development ( <i>Qiushi</i> )
2011-01-07	驻英国大使在<每日电讯报>发表文章: 煦风东来	Chinese Ambassador to the UK Liu Xiaoming: A warm wind is blowing in from the East ( <i>The Daily Telegraph</i> )

	2011-01-06	李克强 6 日在柏林出席中德工商界晚宴并发表演讲: 加深相互理解 实现合作共赢	Speech by Li Keqiang at the Berlin Sino-Germany industry and commerce evening reception: Deepen mutual understanding and fulfil win-win cooperation
2010	2010-12-30	林业局: 继续实施天保工程 维护国家生态安全	State Forestry Administration: Continue to implement Natural Forest Protection Project and maintain national ecological security
	2010-12-20	外交部部长接受专访谈 2010 年国际形势与中国外交	Exclusive interview with Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi about 2010 global situation and China's diplomacy
	2010-12-17	温家宝总理在印度世界事务委员会的演讲(全文): 共铸东方文明新辉煌	Working Together for New Glories of the Oriental Civilization: Address by H.E. Wen Jiabao, Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, at the Indian Council of World Affairs (full text)
	2010-12-16	<中华人民共和国和印度共和国联合公报>全文	Joint Communiqué of the Republic of India and the People's Republic of China (full text)
	2010-12-06	中国国务委员戴秉国: 坚持走和平发展道路	Chinese State Councilor Dai Bingguo: Adhere to the path of peaceful development
	2010-12-01	外交部部长杨洁篪在首届“蓝厅论坛”上的讲话: 用信心与合作共筑亚太未来	Shape the Future of Asia Pacific with Confidence and Cooperation: Address by Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi at the First “Lanting Forum”
	2010-11-12	李克强在中英工商峰会开幕式上的致辞(全文): 增进共识, 深化合作, 把中英经贸关系提升到新水平	Speech by Chinese Vice Premier Li Keqiang at the opening ceremony of the UK-China Business Summit (full text): Expand common ground and deepen cooperation for a higher level of Sino-British trade relations
	2010-11-11	马德伦: 加大金融对中国经济结构调整的支持力度	Ma Delun: Further support the role of finance in China's economic structural adjustment
	2010-11-10	贾庆林在哈萨克斯坦国立欧亚大学的演讲(全文): 永做好邻居好朋友好伙伴	Speech by Jia Qinglin at Kazakhstan L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University (full text): Be good neighbours, good friends and good partners forever
	2010-11-10	新闻办副主任在第四届中美互联网论坛的主旨演讲: 促进共同发展 共享互联网未来	Joining hands for a shared future in Internet expansion--Keynote Speech at the Fourth China-US Internet Industry Forum by Qian Xiaoqian, Vice Minister of the State Council Information Office
	2010-11-05	中国和法国关于加强全面战略伙伴关系的联合声明	Joint Statement about Strengthening Sino-France Comprehensive Strategic Partnership
	2010-11-01	外交部长杨洁篪接受<人民日报>专访谈世博外交	Exclusive interview with Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi about China's World Expo Diplomacy by <i>People's Daily</i>
	2010-10-29	海关总署: “十一五”我国对外开放实现互利共赢	General Administration of Customs: China's opening up program achieved mutual benefits and win-win outcomes during the 11 <sup>th</sup> Five-Year plan

	2010-10-08	陈德铭发表署名文章<努力开创援外工作新局面>	Signed article by Chen Deming on <i>Qiushi</i> : Vigorously open a new area for aiding foreign countries
	2010-09-13	温家宝在 2010 年夏季达沃斯论坛上的讲话(全文): 巩固向好势头 推动持续增长	Address by H.E. Wen Jiabao, Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting of the New Champions 2010 (full text): Consolidate the Upward Momentum and Promote Sustained Growth
	2010-06-01	新闻办主任: 抓住难得历史机遇 塑造良好国家形象	Minister of the State Council Information Office: Seize the valuable historic opportunity to shape a favourable national image
	2010-05-25	环境保护部部长: 保护生物多样性 创造发展新优势	Minister of Environmental Protection: Protect the biological diversity and create new advantages in development
	2010-05-24	李长春在中欧政党高层论坛开幕式上的讲话(全文): 加强政党对话 推动共同发展	Speech by Li Changchun at the opening ceremony of China-Europe High-level Political Parties Forum (full text): Strengthen dialogue between political parties and enhance joint development
	2010-04-01	林业局局长: 发展林业是应对气候变化的战略选择	Minister of the State Forestry Administration: Develop forestry industry is a strategy to deal with climate change
	2010-03-22	杨洁篪在第十届中国发展高层论坛年会上的演讲: 深化理解共识 促进合作发展	Speech by Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi at China Development Forum 2010: Pursue development through greater understanding and cooperation
	2010-02-25	习近平在 2010 经济全球化与工会国际论坛上致辞	Speech by Xi Jinping at the 2010 International Forum on Economic Globalisation and Trade Unions
	2010-01-31	李克强在 2010 年世界经济论坛年会上发表特别致辞: 合作包容 共创未来 促进世界经济健康复苏和持续发展	Special Message by H.E. Li Keqiang, Vice Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2010: Build a Common Future Through Cooperation and Inclusiveness and Promote Sound Recovery and Sustained Development of the World Economy
	2010-01-18	杨洁篪在东亚—拉美合作论坛第四届外长会上讲话: 加强亚拉合作, 促进共同发展	Towards Greater Cooperation and Common Development Between East Asia and Latin America—Remarks at the Fourth Foreign Ministers' Meeting of the Forum for East Asia-Latin America Cooperation by H. E. Yang Jiechi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China
	2010-01-04	商务部: 维护多边贸易体制 营造有利外部经贸环境	Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China: Protect the multilateral trading system and build a favourable external trading environment
2009	2009-12-28	温家宝就经济形势和明年经济工作接受新华社专访	Exclusive interview with Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao on economic situation and China's economic plans next year by Xinhua News Agency

2009-12-21	外交部新年招待会在京举行 杨洁篪接受媒体采访	Interview with Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi at the New Year Reception hosted by Ministry of Foreign Affairs
2009-12-08	新闻办主任王晨出席中阿媒体座谈会晚宴并致辞	Speech by Wang Chen, Minister of the State Council Information Office, at the evening reception of media institutions from China and League of Arab States
2009-12-03	陈德铭就多哈回合谈判 世界经济形势等接受采访	Interview with Chen Deming, Chinese Commerce Minister, about the Doha Development Round and the global economic situation by Reuters and International Herald Tribune
2009-11-30	外交部长杨洁篪在东京接受日本广播协会采访实录	Transcript of interview with Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi by NHK at Tokyo
2009-11-27	中国全国政协主席贾庆林在巴西国会的演讲(全文): 深化互利合作 携手开创未来	Speech by Jia Qinglin, Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, at Brazilian National Congress (full text): Deepen mutually beneficial cooperation and jointly build a prosperous future
2009-11-23	国务院总理温家宝: 让科技引领中国可持续发展	Wen Jiabao, Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China: Make science as the leader of China's sustainable development
2009-11-16	习近平: 在 2009 欧亚经济论坛开幕式上的致辞: 深化区域合作 共促经济复苏	Speech by Xi Jinping at the opening ceremony of 2009 Euro-Asia Economic Forum: Deepen regional cooperation and jointly push forward economic recovery
2009-11-12	温家宝在上海世博国际论坛开幕式上的致辞(全文): 弘扬世博理念, 推动共同发展	Speech by Wen Jiabao at the opening ceremony of Shanghai Expo international forum (full text): Carry forward Expo ideas and promote common development
2009-11-05	商务部副部长署名文章谈中国与南太三国经贸合作 (深化经贸合作 促进共同发展——中国与澳大利亚, 新西兰和巴布亚新几内亚经贸合作)	Signed article by Yi Xiaozhun, Vice Commerce Minister, on <i>People's Daily</i> : Deepen economic and trade cooperation and promote common development—China's economic and trade cooperation with Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea
2009-09-24	胡锦涛在第 64 届联大一般性辩论时的讲话(全文): 同舟共济 共创未来	Statement by H.E. Hu Jintao, President of the People's Republic of China, at the General Debate of the 64 <sup>th</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly: Unite as one and work for a bright future
2009-06-17	胡锦涛在“金砖四国”领导人会晤时的讲话(全文)	Remarks by H.E. Hu Jintao, President of the People's Republic of China, at the BRIC Summit (full text)
2009-05-21	温家宝与欧盟领导人共同会见记者时的讲话(全文)	Speech by Wen Jiabao at the press conference with European Union leaders (full transcript)
2009-04-16	国务院发展研究中心主任谈中国应对国际金融危机	Director of Development Research Center of the State Council discussed China's responses to global financial crisis



	2009-03-22	李克强在第十届中国发展高层论坛上的致辞(全文): 加强合作共克时艰 深化改革推动发展	Speech by Li Keqiang at the 10 <sup>th</sup> China Development Forum: Strengthen cooperation to jointly deal with difficulties and deepen reform to promote development
	2009-03-04	陈德铭就中国贸易投资促进团访欧等接受 BBC 专访	Interview with Chinese Commerce Minister Chen Deming about the Chinese Trade and Investment Promotion Missions' visit to Europe by BBC
	2009-02-03	温家宝在剑桥大学演讲:<用发展的眼光看中国>	Speech by Wen Jiaobao at Cambridge University: See China in the Light of Her Development
	2009-01-29	温家宝在世界经济论坛年会上的特别致辞(全文): 坚定信心 加强合作 推动世界经济新一轮增长	Strengthen Confidence and Work Together for a New Round of World Economic Growth: Special Message by H.E. Wen Jiabao, Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2009

**Appendix 3: List of Basic Information of Sampled News Texts from Xinhua News Agency, *WSJ*, and *FT*, and Codebook Used in Media Texts Analysis (2010, 2012, 2014, 2016)**

Note: ✓ means the sample is cited in the thesis.

**Xinhua 2010**

Basic information of news	Issue	China's view on China	Values	China's view on others	Values	Others' view on China	Values
Feb 17, Wildlife vs. human life?	Environment	Domestic: explicit need & calling for duty	Others				
Feb 27, Bracing for 'most complicated' year	Others-loose connection	International: what will be done					
Mar 12, China tells Obama stronger yuan	✓ Currency and finance	International: argue for what has done	Stability				
Mar 16, China, Britain inaugurate strategic dialogue	Others-loose connection					Duty	
Apr 10, China 'active, serious' in tackling climate	✓ Environment			Duty: expecting actions	Sincerity		
	✓ Environment	International: argue for what has done	Sincerity				

Apr 10, China reports first monthly trade deficit	✓ International trade	International: argue for what had done	Cooperation				
Jul 20, China dismisses IEA analysis	✓ Environment					Duty	Justice
Aug 19, Chinese experts lash out at 'China'	Others-loose connection					Duty; Fault	
	Others-loose connection	International: what will be done					
	Others-loose connection					Fault	
	Others-loose connection					Duty; Fault	
	Others-loose connection					Duty; Fault	
	Others-loose connection					Duty; Fault	
	Others-loose connection					Duty	
Sep 1, China urges 'balanced understanding'	Others-loose connection					Duty	
Sep 7, China strives to build more open	✓ International trade	International: what will be done	Cooperation				

Sep 7, Sustainability key to global economic health	Others-loose connection					Duty	
Sep 12, 2010 Summer Davos	Others-loose connection					Duty	
Sep 15, US economists oppose imposing	✓ Currency and finance					Fault	Justice
Oct 4, China: a developing nation with growing pains	Others-loose connection					Duty	
Oct 4, China eyes some agreements despite divergence at UN	✓ Environment			Duty: expecting actions	Justice		
	✓ Environment	International: what will be done	Sincerity				
Oct 4, New round of UN climate talks open in China	✓ Environment			Duty: expecting actions	Justice		
Oct 7, China calls for compromise	✓ Environment			Duty: expecting actions	Sincerity		
Oct 9, Climate talks in Tianjin end with divisions	✓ Environment			Duty: expecting actions	Justice		
	✓ Environment					Fault	Justice

Oct 11, BASIC members urge developed countries	✓ Environment			Duty: expecting actions	Justice		
Oct 15, China to launch new round of reform	Others-loose connection	Domestic: vague need & vague duty					
Oct 18, From Tianjin to Cancun: seeking common	✓ Environment			Duty: expecting actions	Justice		
	✓ Environment			Duty: expecting actions	Justice		
	✓ Environment					Duty	Justice
Nov 4, US. Barking up wrong tree	✓ Environment					Fault	Justice
	✓ Environment	International: argue for what has done	Sincerity				
Nov 5, U.S. told to 'explain' new monetary policy	✓ Currency and finance			Duty: expecting actions	Justice		
	✓ Currency and finance			Duty: expecting actions	Justice		
Nov 6, China 'unswervingly pursues' peaceful	Others-loose connection					Duty	

Nov 10, Experts call for G20 transformation	✓ Currency and finance			Fault	Justice		
	✓ International trade	International: argue for what has done	Cooperation; Justice				
Nov 23, China vows to 'effectively control' emissions	✓ Environment			Duty: expecting actions	Justice		
	✓ Environment			Fault	Justice		
Dec 25, Chinese top legislature amends law	✓ Environment	Domestic: explicit need & explicit duty	Sincerity				

### **Xinhua 2012**

Basic information of news	Issue	China's view on China	Values	China's view on others	Values	Others' view on China	Values
Jan 1, Chinese president's new year address	Others-loose connection	International: argue for what has done					
Jan 7, China ends financial meeting	Currency and finance	Domestic: explicit need & explicit duty	Stability				
Mar 12, China to continue diversifying	Currency and finance	International: what will be done	Stability				

Mar 13, China explores possibilities	Environment	International: what will be done	Sincerity	Duty: expecting actions	Justice		
May 3, China-U.S. dialogue highlights will	Others-loose connection			Duty: expecting actions			
May 13, China, Japan, ROK announce plan	Others-loose connection			Duty: expecting actions			
Jun 20, China vows stricter rare earth regulation	Environment	International: what will be done	Sincerity				
Jul 12, Stronger China-Africa relations	Others-loose connection					Duty	
Aug 27, China's legislature to amend law	Environment	Domestic: explicit need & explicit duty	Sincerity				
Nov 4, Americans in China expect better	Others-loose connection					Duty	
Nov 8, CPC advocates building	Environment	Domestic: explicit need & explicit duty	Sincerity				
Nov 15, Grabbing history's relay baton	Others-loose connection	Domestic: vague need & vague duty					
	Others-loose connection	Domestic: vague need & vague duty					

	Others-loose connection	Domestic: explicit need & explicit duty					
	Others-loose connection	Domestic: explicit need & explicit duty					
Nov 21, China expects Doha climate	Environment			Duty: expecting actions	Justice		
Nov 21, China vows emissions	Environment			Duty: expecting actions	Justice		
Dec 5, China releases air pollution	Environment			Duty: expecting actions	Justice		
	Environment					Duty	Justice
Dec 31, China to continue reform	Others-loose connection	International: what will be done					

### **Xinhua 2014**

Basic information of news	Issue	China's view on China	Values	China's view on others	Values	Others' view on China	Values
Mar 28, China's first rare earth products	✓ Environment			Duty: expecting actions	Justice		



Apr 22, FTA anticipated to ease NE Asian	✓ International trade			Duty: expecting actions	Cooperation		
Jul 11, Int'l eco forum seeks greener growth	✓ Environment	Domestic: vague need & vague duty	Sincerity				
Sep 11, Firmer execution urged in China's green	✓ Environment	International: what will be done	Sincerity				
Sep 19, China approves plan to combat climate	✓ Environment			Duty: expecting actions	Justice		
	✓ Environment			Duty: expecting actions	Justice		
	✓ Environment			Duty: expecting actions	Justice		
Dec 30, China stresses quality of reform	Others-loose connection	Domestic: vague need & vague duty					

### **Xinhua 2016**

Basic information of news	Issue	China's view on China	Values	China's view on others	Values	Others' view on China	Values
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Feb 15, Polluters feel heat from	Environment	Domestic: explicit need & explicit duty	Sincerity				
Feb 26, China adopts first law	Environment	International: argue for what has already done	Sincerity				
Apr 30, China makes requirements on	Others-loose connection			Duty: expecting actions			
	Others-loose connection					Duty	
Jun 13, China, Germany pledge	International trade			Duty: expecting actions	Justice		
Jun 27, Premier expresses confidence	Others-loose connection	Domestic: explicit need & explicit duty					
Jun 28, 'A to Z' of China's diplomacy	Environment			Duty: expecting actions	Sincerity		
Aug 24, Respect, protect nature	Environment	Domestic: explicit need & explicit duty	Sincerity				
	Environment	Domestic: explicit need & explicit duty	Sincerity				
Aug 30, G20 summit reveals	Others-loose connection	International: what will be done					

Sep 3, Joint document deposit highlights	Environment	International: what will be done	Sincerity				
Oct 1, China more confident	Others-loose connection	International: what has already done					
Oct 15, CPC, overseas parties arrive at	Others-loose connection	Domestic: explicit need & explicit duty					

### **The Wall Street Journal 2010**

Basic information of articles	Issues	China's view on China	Frame	China's view on others	Frame	Others' view on China	Frame
Jan 28, World economic forum: New China-U.S. dynamic is at center of discussions- news	Others-loose connection	International: what to do					
Mar 10, World news: Beijing cools to gold, reassures on Treasurys- news	✓ Currency and finance	International: what to do	No				
Mar 26, U.S.-China trade is win-win game- commentary	✓ International trade			Shared duties	No		
May 25, China's Hu pledges exchange-rate reform- news	Others-loose connection			Shared duties			

Jun 22, U.S. news-capital journal: China recasts-commentary	✓ Currency and finance					Duty	Urges-Positive
Jul 7, China buys Japan debt to diversify- news	✓ Currency and finance	International: what to do	Challenge-Negative				
Jul 17, World news: Wen pledges to back euro- news	✓ Currency and finance	International: what to do	No				
Jul 21, World news: Beijing disputes IEA data on energy-news	✓ Environment	International: what to do	Urges-Negative				
Aug 16, China output tops Japan- news	Others- loose connection					Duty	
	Others- loose connection					Duty	
Oct 1, Beggar the world-editorial	✓ Currency and finance			Duty: expecting actions	No		
Oct 8, Currencies in turmoil: Short list- news	✓ Currency and finance					Duty	Urges-Positive
Oct 14, World news: Germany cautions Beijing-news	✓ Currency and finance					Duty	Urges-Positive
Oct 15, World news: Japan, Korea tussle over won- news	✓ Currency and finance					Duty	Urges-Positive

Oct 19, China anoints its next leader-news	✓ Environment					Duty	Urges-Positive
Oct 23, World news: U.S. envoy - news	✓ Environment			Fault	Challenge-Negative		
Nov 17, China's call for more clout- news	✓ Currency and finance					Duty	No
Nov 29, How to change the global energy conversation-commentary	✓ Environment					Fault	Urges-Positive
Nov 29, The key to Cancun-commentary	✓ Environment					Duty	Urges-Positive

### **The Wall Street Journal 2012**

Basic information of articles	Issues	China's view on China	Frame	China's view on others	Frame	Others' view on China	Frame
Feb 9, China still has a yen for Japan's debt- commentary	Currency and finance					Fault	Positive
Feb 15, World news: China's Xi starts his wooing of U.S.-news	Others-loose connection					Duty	
Feb 25, Canada's Carney, ahead of G-20- news	Others-loose connection					Duty	

Apr 3, China bank chief cautions- news	Currency and finance			Duty: expecting actions	No		
	Currency and finance			Duty: expecting actions	No		
Oct 1, U.S. news- the outlook: Fed's move is likely- commentary	Currency and finance			Duty: expecting actions	Negative		

### **The Wall Street Journal 2014**

Basic information of news articles	Issues	China's view on China	Frames	China's view on others	Frames	Others' view on China	Frames
Jun 11, World news: World bank projects- news	✓ International trade					Duty	Acknowledge-Positive
Jul 10, World news: Beijing urges- news	Others-loose connection					Duty	
Sep 3, The climate change agenda- commentary	✓ Environment	International: what had already done	Challenge-Negative				
Sep 24, U.S. news: Obama promises- news	✓ Environment					Duty	Urges-Neutral
	✓ Environment					Fault	Condemnation-Neutral

	✓ Environment	International: what to do	Neutral				
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### **The Wall Street Journal 2016**

Basic information of articles	Issues	China's view on China	Frame	China's view on others	Frame	Others' view on China	Frame
Mar 30, Politics & ideas: why trade critics- commentary	International trade					Fault	Positive
Dec 20, Review-books of the year: the eagle and the dragon-book review	Others-loose connection					Duty	

### **Financial Times 2010**

Basic information of news articles	Issue	China's view on China	Frames	China's view on others	Frames	Others' view on China	Frames
Jan 11, Madeleine Albright Former secretary- view from the top	Others-loose connection					Duty	
Jan 18, Brics without straw- leader	Others-loose connection					Duty	
Jan 27, Relations with US come under- news	Others-loose connection					Duty	

	Others-loose connection					Duty	
Jan 28, China will not be-comment	Others-loose connection					Duty	
Jan 29, Vice-premier defends China- news	Others-loose connection	International: what had already done					
Feb 4, It is the poor-comment	✓ Currency and finance			Fault	Challenge-Negative		
	✓ Currency and finance			Fault	Challenge-Negative		
	✓ Currency and finance					Duty	Urges-Positive
Feb 11, Keeping its distance- news	Others-loose connection					Duty	
	Others-loose connection	International: what has already done					
Mar 10, China still keen to purchase- news	✓ Currency and finance	International: what has already done	Challenge-Negative				
Mar 15, Skirmishes do not herald- global insight	✓ Currency and finance					Fault	Balanced-Neutral
Mar 30, Blaming China will not solve- comment	✓ Currency and finance					Duty	Balanced-Neutral



Apr 6, Battlelines are blurred- news	✓ Currency and finance					Duty	Balanced-Neutral
Apr 12, US pressure for renminbi- news	✓ Currency and finance					Duty	Balanced-Neutral
Apr 14, Bismarck holds lessons for - comment	Others-loose connection					Duty	
Apr 23, World Bank unit- news	Others-loose connection					Duty	
Apr 23, China to receive- news	Others-loose connection					Duty	
Apr 29, Futuristic yet fruitful- analysis	✓ Environment	International: what has already done	No				
May 24, No wonder China- letters to the editor	Others-loose connection	International: what to do					
May 28, Beijing helps- news	✓ Currency and finance	International: what to do	Challenge-Negative				
Jun 17, China and America- comment	Others-loose connection					Duty	
	Others-loose connection	International: what to do					
Jun 21, China, America's flexible friend-lex	✓ Currency and finance					Duty	Balanced-Neutral

Jun 22, We need more from China- comment	✓ Currency and finance					Duty	Urges-Positive
Jul 8, China rules out-news	✓ Currency and finance			Duty: expecting actions	No		
	✓ Currency and finance			Duty: expecting actions	No		
Jul 23, Message from Delhi-comment	Others-loose connection			Duty: expecting actions			
Jul 30, An anti-US blast-comment	✓ Currency and finance					Fault	No
Aug 4, The west must start living up-comment	Others-loose connection					Duty	
Aug 7, Hopes of early global warming-news	✓ Environment					Fault	Balanced-Neutral
Aug 17, Rise of China's economy-news	Others-loose connection					Duty	
	Others-loose connection					Duty	
	✓ Currency and finance					Fault	Challenge-Negative

Sep 16, Blaming China exaggerates- letter to the editor	✓ Currency and finance			Duty: expecting actions	Positive		
Sep 24, Obama avoids war of words-news	✓ Currency and finance	International: what has already done	Positive				
Oct 11, Time to get tough-comment	✓ Currency and finance	International: what to do	Challenge-Negative				
	✓ Currency and finance					Duty	Urges-Positive
Oct 14, Japan presses Beijing-news	✓ Currency and finance					Duty	Urges-Neutral
	✓ Currency and finance					Duty	Urges-Neutral
	✓ Currency and finance					Duty	Urges-Neutral
Oct 14, Growing tension troubles Seoul-news	✓ Currency and finance					Duty	Urges-Neutral
	✓ Currency and finance					Duty	Urges-Neutral
Oct 16, Japan turns up currency-news	✓ Currency and finance					Duty	Urges-No

Oct 20, Japanese ministers-news	✓ Currency and finance					Duty	Urges-No
Nov 10, Obama calls for G20-news	Others-loose connection					Duty	
Nov 20, Bernanke answers-news	✓ Currency and finance					Duty	Balanced-Neutral
Nov 26, Why the west should not demonise China-comment	Others-loose connection					Duty	
Dec 13, China learns to play- comment	✓ Environment			Duty: expecting actions	Positive		
Dec 17, On the way to a new global balance-comment	Others-loose connection					Duty	

### **Financial Times 2012**

Basic information of news articles	Issue	China's view on China	Frames	China's view on others	Frames	Others' view on China	Frames
Feb 17, Beijing disputes US right-world news	Others-loose connection	International: what will be done					
Feb 20, The US can learn- book review	Others-loose connection	International: what will be done					

Jun 2, Chinese medicine runs out for ailing Europe- The long view	Others-loose connection					Duty	
Jun 8, Beijing cuts rates-news	Others-loose connection					Duty	
Jun 8, Europe should stop squabbling- comment	Others-loose connection	International: what has already done					
Jun 23, Divisions mar Rio-world news	Environment	International: what will be done	No				
Jun 23, Splits to fore as Rio summit-world news	Environment	International: what will be done	No				
Jul 20, China into Africa-Leader	Others-loose connection					Duty	
Aug 10, Foreign policy divides-world news	Others-loose connection					Duty	
	Others-loose connection					Duty	
Dec 28, Asian prosperity-Leader	Others-loose connection					Duty	

### **Financial Time 2014**

Basic information of news articles	Issue	China's view on China	Frames	China's view on others	Frames	Others' view on China	Frames
Mar 26, China's struggle for a new economy-comment	Others-loose connection	Domestic: explicit need & explicit duty					
May 2, China fought against data-news	Others-loose connection	International: what to do					
Jun 6, What Xi and Putin-comment	Others-loose connection					Duty	
Jun 11, China faces dilemma on growth-news	Others-loose connection	Domestic: explicit need & explicit duty					
	Others-loose connection	Domestic: explicit need & explicit duty					
Jun 14, Victoria's reply to China-letters to the editor	Others-loose connection					Duty	
Jun 28, FT diary- life and arts	Others-loose connection					Duty	
Nov 14, Xi and Obama have shown leadership-comment	✓ Environment	International: what to do	Positive				
Nov 14, Obama and Xi stick to- news	Others-loose connection	International: what to do					

Nov 26, The nuclear option-lex column	✓ Environment					Fault	Balanced-Neutral
Dec 2, We all have the same responsibilities-letters to the editor	✓ Environment			Duty: expecting actions	Negative		
	✓ Environment					Duty	Balanced-Positive
Dec 16, The long road from Lima-leader	✓ Environment					Duty	Neutral
	✓ Environment					Duty	Neutral

### **Financial Times 2016**

Basic information of news articles	Issue	China's view on China	Frames	China's view on others	Frames	Others' view on China	Frames
Jan 7, The American world order is a suit- opinion	Others-loose connection	International: what will be done					
	Others-loose connection					Duty	
Apr 5, IMF warns on China markets- world news	Currency and finance					Duty	Positive
May 11, Obama swoops on China over- world news	International trade					Fault	No

Sep 3, No cause for complacency about- Leader	Others-loose connection	International: what will be done					
	Others-loose connection			Duty: expecting actions			
Sep 5, G20 takes up global inequity- world news	Others-loose connection					Duty	
Dec 1, China's leaders emerge from- comment	Environment					Duty	Positive
	Environment			Duty: expecting actions	Negative		
Dec 13, Beijing challenges EU and US- world news	International trade					Fault	Neutral



## Appendix 4: The Interview Protocol for Analysis of Media Practitioners

### First-stage: Informal telephone discussion with Chinese media practitioner

#### Questions:

1. Could you briefly introduce the China Focus column in your Overseas Department, for example, what kinds of reports it often includes, who contributes to this column, and who is in charge of this column?
2. Are there any adjustments in your department in recent years, especially after the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, for example, arranging more journalists?
3. Could you briefly introduce the news coverage process from the selection of a topic to the final publishing, for example, the people included and the procedures went through, in your department?
4. As a channel to introduce China to other countries, what aspects of China's economy do you and your department often choose to cover in your reports?
5. What are the channels that you and your department get to know China's economic policies in the central government level? How do you interpret these political statements yourself? How do you relate these policies to your reports?
6. What kinds of interviewees, for example, economists, do you often interview to obtain their opinions about China's economy? What kinds of opinions do you often include in your reports?
7. What other sources do you often refer to in your reports?
8. What are your expectations about the English readers' response to the economic reports in the China Focus column? Do you have any readership surveys about your column or about your News Agency regularly?
9. Could you briefly introduce the changes of the reports produced by your department that you've noticed, especially after the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, for example, more focus on certain areas or a change of tone?

### Second-stage: Email, face-to-face, or online interviews with Chinese and Western media practitioners

#### Questions for Chinese media practitioners:

1. Xinhua covered a range of economic conflicts between other countries (e.g. the U.S.) and China, for example, disagreements on emission targets, disputes about RMB exchange rate and international trade imbalances. What do you think of these conflicts?
2. In regards to the above conflicts, there are critiques contending that China is the main reason that it does not act responsibly and thus poses threats to other countries. What do you think of the critiques?
3. As to environmental issues, I've observed that Xinhua consistently highlighted China's **resolution** in dealing with environmental problems and pursuit of **justice** in defending its interests in global climate talks. What do you think were the reasons that led to these two dominant patterns in Xinhua's coverage of China's responsibility in environmental issues?
4. In terms of China's currency and finance issues, Xinhua's reports focused on China's insistence on a **stable** currency policy. At the same time, it pointed out the reckless and irresponsible financial policies in countries like the U.S., and this stance of striving for **justice** was seen as an important strategy to maintain the stability of

global currency and finance. Why do you think did Xinhua adopt such patterns to report China's responsibility in currency and finance issues?

5. It is notable that Xinhua did not cover China's responsibility in currency and finance issues in 2014. What do you think were the reasons for the silence?
6. I've noticed that Xinhua also covered China's responsibilities in international trade. It emphasised China's seeking for **cooperation** and pursuit of **justice** by fighting against protectionism. Actually, during the same time periods, Western mainstream business media outlets like *Financial Times* and *The Wall Street Journal* seldom mentioned China's responsibility in international trade issues. What do you think were the reasons that Xinhua still paid attention to China's responsibility in international trade issues regardless of Western media's ignorance during these periods? Why did Xinhua cover China's responsibility in international trade in these patterns?
7. How do you usually choose your interviewees when covering China's economy issues? How about the background information of the economic events you report?
8. What pressures do you have in covering China's economic issues, especially China's economic relations with the rest of the world, which are sensitive in nature, e.g. administrative factors, domestic or foreign lobbyist?
9. Overall, what do you think is Xinhua's slant, if there is any, in covering China's responsibilities in global economic issues? Specifically, what is the slant about China's stance in treating its **own responsibilities** in economic issues? How about China's view on **other countries' responsibilities**? And how about other countries', especially industrialised countries like the U.S.'s, **opinions on China's responsibilities** in economic issues?

#### Questions for *WSJ* media practitioners:

1. *WSJ* covered a range of economic conflicts between other countries (e.g. the U.S.) and China, for example, disagreements on emission targets, disputes about RMB exchange rate and international trade imbalances. What do you think of these conflicts?
2. In regards to the above conflicts, there are critiques contending that China is the main reason that it does not act responsibly and thus poses threats to other countries. What do you think of the critiques?
3. As to environmental issues, I've observed that *WSJ* tended to question China's view on fairness in allocating emission targets and urge China to take on more environmental responsibilities. It largely depicted an economically mighty China who was reluctant to admit and deal with its environmental problems. What do you think are the reasons that led to these patterns in *WSJ*'s coverage?
4. In terms of China's currency and finance issues, *WSJ* not only challenged China's insistence on a stable currency policy, but also reported other countries' urges of China to act responsibly in currency. It gave readers an impression that China was manipulative and uncertain in currency and finance. Why do you think did *WSJ* report China's currency issues in this manner?
5. It is notable that your newspaper did not cover China's currency and finance issues in 2014. What do you think were the reasons for the silence?
6. I've noticed that *WSJ* did not pay much attention to China's responsibilities in international trade, although some Western politicians frequently urged China to act responsibly in international trade. What do you think were the reasons for the rare attention on this issue?

7. How do you usually choose your interviewees when covering China's economy issues? How about the background information of the economic events you report?
8. What pressures did you have in covering China-related economic issues, e.g. administrative factors, domestic or foreign lobbyist?
9. Overall, what do you think is your newspaper's slant, if there is any, in covering China-related economic responsibilities in global economic issues? Specifically, what is the slant about China's own stance in treating its responsibilities in economic issues? How about China's view on other countries' responsibilities? And how about other countries', especially industrialised countries like the U.S.'s, opinions on China's responsibilities in economic issues?

### Questions for *FT* media practitioners:

1. *FT* covered a range of economic conflicts between other countries (e.g. the U.S.) and China, for example, disagreements on emission targets, disputes about RMB exchange rate and international trade imbalances. What do you think of these conflicts?
2. In regards to the above conflicts, there are critiques contending that China is the main reason that it does not act responsibly and thus poses threats to other countries. What do you think of the critiques?
3. As to environmental issues, I've observed that *FT* consistently covered the conflicts between China and industrialised countries in a neutral tone. It tended to provide balanced information and opinions in covering not only China's own view on its environmental duties, but also other countries' view on China's duties. What do you think are the reasons that led to these patterns in *FT*'s coverage?
4. In terms of China-related currency and finance issues, *FT* took different stances. It sometimes gave more voice to China who defended its own currency policies, which resembled coverage in China's mainstream media institutions, like China's Xinhua News Agency. However, sometimes it reported other countries' doubts about China's currency policy, which was in a similar way with Western countries' media coverage, for examples, those by *The Wall Street Journal*. Nevertheless, there were also articles covering and commenting these issues in a balanced manner. Why do you think did *FT* take so complicated stances in reporting China-related currency issues?
5. It is notable that your newspaper did not cover China-related currency and finance issues in 2014. What do you think were the reasons for the silence?
6. I've noticed that *FT* did not pay much attention to China-related responsibilities in international trade, although some Western politicians frequently urged China to act responsibly in international trade. What do you think were the reasons for the rare attention on this issue?
7. How do you usually choose your interviewees when covering China-related economic issues? How about the background information of the economic events you report?
8. What pressures do usually you have in covering China-related economic issues, e.g. administrative factors, domestic or foreign lobbyist?
9. Overall, what do you think is your newspaper's slant, if there is any, in covering China-related responsibilities in global economic issues? Specifically, what is the slant about China's own stance in treating its responsibilities in economic issues? How about China's view on other countries' responsibilities? And how about other countries', especially industrialised countries like the U.S.'s, opinions on China's responsibilities in economic issues?

Note: The above questions are only a protocol. Questions can be differently designed according to interviewee's experience in order to enhance rapport.