Metaphorical Construction of Chinese Female Images in Media

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Introduction. Media is closely related to discourse. Female metaphor in the media is not a simple reflection of the objective world, but a selective and conscious construction of female image in social reality. This study explores the metaphorical construction of Chinese female images in the blessings for women on "Women's Day" through the media.

Methodology and sources. While some words similar to the meanings of "Women's Day" were selected as keywords, the researcher searched the Wechat platform for articles with the title including these keywords. Then, a total of 306 female metaphors were manually identified and selected as a corpus. With word frequency statistics of the corpus, this study sorted out the categories of Chinese female metaphors and analyzed female image constructed in the media.
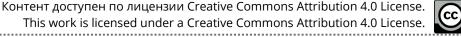
Results and discussion. It was found that the source domains of female metaphors mainly include plant, animal, daily object, fictional character, nature and environment. The female metaphors can be analyzed from the following categories: Woman is a Flower; Woman is Water; Woman is Half the Heaven; Woman is Light; Woman is a Fairy; Woman is a Book; Woman is a Tiger; Woman is a Jewel. Among them, "Woman is a Flower" is the most frequent one and dominates the female metaphors, while the beauty of "flowers" reflects the beauty of women, the blooming of "flowers" reflects the youth of women, and the aroma of "flowers" reflects the charming of women. "Woman is Water", "Woman is Half of the Heaven", "Woman is Light" are also frequent female metaphors, constructing the tenderness, high social status, unique charm and outstanding contribution of female. Other female metaphors also play a certain role in the construction of holiness, wisdom, independence, confidence, strength, precious character of female image. These metaphors construct diversified images in terms of the appearance, character, ability and value of women, and most of the women constructed are beautiful and gentle.

Conclusion. It can be seen that the construction of female image in the media becomes diversified on the one hand, on the other hand it still follows the traditional thinking pattern. The paper suggests that gender discourse in the media has been diversified and improved, but still needs to strengthen the construction of equal female image in the harmonious society.

Keywords: media, female image, metaphor, gender discourse, corpus

Оригинальная статья

Метафорическое создание китайских женских образов в СМИ

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Введение. Средства массовой информации тесно связаны с дискурсом. Женская метафора в СМИ – это не простое отражение объективного мира, а избирательное и осознанное построение женского образа в реальности социума. В данном исследовании изучается метафорическое создание китайских женских образов через СМИ.

Методология и источники. Автором была использована платформа WeChat, на которой производился поиск статей с заголовками, включающими определенные ключевые слова. В общей сложности 306 женских метафор были вручную идентифицированы и отобраны в качестве текстового корпуса. С помощью статистики частотности слов были отсортированы категории китайских женских метафор и проанализирован женский образ, сконструированный в СМИ.

Результаты и обсуждение. Автором статьи было обнаружено, что исходные домены женских метафор в основном включают растения, животных, повседневные предметы, вымышленных персонажей, природу и окружающую среду. Женские метафоры можно проанализировать в следующих категориях: «женщина – цветок», «женщина – вода», «женщина – половина неба», «женщина – свет», «женщина – фея», «женщина – книга», «женщина – тигр», «женщина – драгоценность». Среди них «женщина – цветок» является наиболее частотной и доминирует над женскими метафорами, в ней красота цветов отражает красоту женщин, цветение цветов – молодость женщин, а аромат цветов выражает очарование женщин. «Женщина – вода», «женщина – половина неба», «женщина – свет» также являются частыми женскими метафорами, конструирующими нежность, высокий социальный статус, неповторимое очарование и выдающийся вклад женщины. Другие женские метафоры тоже играют определенную роль в создании идеи святости, мудрости, независимости, уверенности, силы, драгоценного характера женского образа. Эти метафоры создают различные понятия, передающие внешность, характер, способности и ценность женщин, и большинство женских образов являются красивыми и нежными.

Заключение. Исходя из приведенных примеров становится очевидно, что построение женского образа в СМИ, с одной стороны, приобретает разнообразие, с другой – оно по-прежнему следует традиционной модели мышления. Автором предполагается, что гендерный дискурс в СМИ получил многогранность и развитие, но все еще нуждается в усилении построения равноправного женского образа в гармоничном обществе.

Ключевые слова: СМИ, женский образ, метафора, гендерный дискурс, текстовый корпус

Introduction. Female image in media has been a topic of widespread concern and received lots of criticism for a long time. In traditional media, women are often biased, stereotyped and distorted, not represented or represented at low rate and in limited content, or described in a circumscribed roles and stereotypes compared to man across multiple media in different culture

[1–4]. Gender stereotyping can be also reinforced or diminished in the discourse of the media reports. With the development of media, QQ, WeChat, Weibo, Douyin, podcast, forum and other variety of platforms have emerged nowadays and provided lots of chances for ordinary people to participate in the gender discourse. This study takes the blessings for women on "Women's Day" through the media Wechat platform as an example, aiming to demonstrate the female image constructed by female metaphor in the media.

Media, gender discourse and metaphor.

Media is not only a communicative channel realized by using advanced technology, but also an important way to produce, develop and spread culture in public. Many scholars began to pay attention to the social and political nature of media very early, the most representative of which are the Frankfurt school and the Birmingham School. The Frankfurt School was founded in 1923, centered on the "Social Research Center" of the University of Frankfurt in German, and its main representatives include Horkheimer, Adorno, Marcuse and so on. This school puts forward the concept of "culture industry" and holds that popular culture is an ideological tool to defend the real rule, controlled by capital and technology with the characteristics of commercialization, uniformity and compulsion, rather than a culture in the literal sense that starts from the position of the public and serves the public. In the view of Frankfurt School, media is not simply related to production, consumption and dissemination, but concerned with a repressive ideology that deprives the public of critical and negative awareness of society. The Birmingham School is a western contemporary cultural criticism and aesthetics school, which was formed around the cultural research center of the University of Birmingham in the mid-1960s. Media studies and audience studies have always been important parts in the Birmingham School. Hall, the main representative of this School, put forward the ideological "coding" of the media and the "decoding" of the audience's interpretation, which has important implications for the media study. Under the influence of Frankfurt School and Birmingham School, Fiske starts from the audience's resistance and creativity to cultural products, and believes that audiences have subjectivity, initiative and creativity, which can not only resist and influence the hegemonic power of culture, but also create their own culture by using cultural products as their own resources. At the same time, the audience can experience endless pleasure in creating and producing his or her own culture and in "avoiding" and "offending" the mainstream ideology of cultural products. The formation of media culture is mainly restricted by internal and external forces such as communicators and audiences. Contemporary media spreads the real world, creates new culture, and constructs corresponding world view for the audience [5]. It can be seen that media is not only a tool or technology for transmitting information, but also a factor closely related to politics, economy, culture and their changes, playing an important role in the construction of human society.

As an important way of informational technology, media is closely related to gender discourse and constructs the corresponding social gender in certain society. The concept of "social gender" was created in the 1970s, referring to the gender differences and behavioral characteristics formed by social culture. It is the construction of male and female identities by society, emphasizing the sociability of individuals rather than the physiological feature of individuals. Beauvoir pointed out in *The Second Sex* that a woman is not born a woman, but gradually becomes a woman, which is produced by the whole process of socialization. Media spreads and constructs gender culture and

the world view of gender in the whole society, while people also accept the social gender constructed in the media through this media. The production, dissemination and consumption of the gender discourse also construct new ideas and new forms for the female image.

Many scholars have studied and discussed the Chinese female image in gender discourse in media. When constructing female images, media tampers with female texts according to gender stereotypes and commercial manipulation principles, on the one hand introducing women into public space, on the other hand deliberately magnifies women's personal privacy as a public topic [6]. The dating show "If You Are the One" has certain discrimination against women, and does not improve the mechanism of gender inequality, but the way presented is more hidden [7]. The gender discourse in TV advertisements seems to be getting rid of the stereotypes of gender consciousness. In fact, the gender power asymmetry has not disappeared, but has become more subtle and hidden. The creative image of female independence and gender equality in TV advertisements is just a decoration [8]. In recent years, scholars' research on the media images of female scientific and technological workers also found that there are gender discrimination and stereotypes in the media image of female scientists [9]. Female police officer can be represented as a typical female professional compared with the male-dominated police force, projecting the traditional Hong Kong gender norm [10]. Under the central discourse of Phallocentrism, media as the carrier of gender culture, often put women in the position of "others", and the female images presented by them are mostly deformed, repressed or not presented at all. Female image constructed in the media represents the gender identity of women and also prompts women to hide their own personal characteristics and behaviors to meet certain social expectations. Through the social gender research paradigm, we can analyze and interpret the female images in media communication [11]. The previous studies indicate that media nowadays although symbolizes the social progress and gender discourse has been improved to some extent, the gender discourse in the media has gradually become explicit discourse and traditional gender culture still exists but in a more hidden way.

Besides gender research paradigm, some studies try to find linguistic evidence and theoretical basis of female image in media, especially the innate cognitive thought of metaphor in language [12–16]. Metaphor is not only a way of rhetoric, but also a way of thinking of human cognition. Lakoff and Johnson [17] believe that metaphor is the mapping from the source domain to the target domain, which directly or indirectly affects human thinking and is reflected in people's daily life and language expression. As Fairclough [18] believes, the dominant way of metaphor construction is to marginalize metaphorical construction from the perspective of opposing groups. It reveals the deep ideology behind the metaphor. Furthermore, Charteris-Black [19] proposed critical metaphor analysis in political, news and religious texts, and pointed out that metaphor has a deep ideological function in discourse. In terms of content, critical metaphor analysis mainly explains how metaphor loads and spreads ideology, legitimizes and rationalizes the interests of mainstream groups, and is accepted and recognized by marginal groups through the discourse characteristics of specific texts such as politics, economy, gender, race and religion. With the critical discourse analysis, Yu and Nartey [16] investigates the gender discourses of news reports in Chinese media, and reveals the underlying poor man representations of leftover men with the discursive strategies of metaphor used to construct their identities, indicating that the media perpetuates a myth of "protest masculinity". By emphasizing certain features of reality while hiding others, metaphor plays an ideological role in

different contexts [20]. Because of the limited of the corpus and participants in the empirical study, what female images is constructed by media and how is said in the media still need to be further discussed. This paper tries to explore the female image from the conceptual metaphor, providing a good reference for the female images constructed by female metaphors in the media.

Methodology and sources. This study aims to explore the construction of Chinese female images in the Wechat media from the corpus of female metaphor. Corpus collects a large number of real language materials, which is an important resource commonly used in linguistic research. It is also one of the most reliable and interpretation methods to extract and identify language expressions from natural corpora. Charteris-Black [19] also points out that corpus is the most effective method, dividing words used as metaphorical meanings into metaphorical keywords, measuring the frequency of occurrence of these keywords, and then calculating the frequency of occurrence of a certain type of conceptual metaphor through keyword quantity and occurrence statistics, so as to find out the most common conceptual metaphors in the corpus. This study takes the blessings for women on "Women's Day" through the media Wechat platform as corpus. The media describes and presents the gender ideals of women's roles [21]. Although there are many ways and means of gender discourse in the media, the female images in literary works, movies, paintings and other texts have received extensive attention, while various blessings words express the society's expectation of ideal women in future.

There are several steps. First of all, the researcher used words with similar meanings related to blessing for women on "Women's Day" as keywords in searching the corpus. In the study of corpus metaphor, the key is how to retrieve, extract and recognize lexical metaphors from the corpus. Stefanowitsch [22, pp. 2–6] proposed seven approaches to metaphor research based on corpora: 1) manual query; 2) Search the vocabulary in the source domain; 3) Search the vocabulary in the target domain; 4) Search both source domain and target domain; 5) Search through "metaphorical markers"; 6) Retrieval based on semantic domain annotation corpus; 7) Retrieval based on concept mapping annotation corpus. It can be seen that corpus-based conceptual metaphor research first needs to determine the origin domain or target domain. The usual approach is to find the most common origin domain and target domain in the corpus, and it is very time-consuming and laborious to search and identify all metaphors in the corpus [23, p. 27]. This study chose some words similar to the meanings of blessing for women on "Women's Day", such as "三八节祝福语" (March Eighth Blessings), "三八妇女节祝福语" (March Eighth Women's Day Blessings), "女人节祝福语" (Women's Day Blessings) and "国际劳动妇女节祝福语" (International Women's Day Blessings) as the keywords, and searched the Wechat platform for articles with these keywords in the title. Then, the researcher manually identified and selected a total of 171 blessings for women on "Women's Day" containing female metaphors. Each article contains at least one or more types of female metaphors. In the end, a total of 306 female metaphors, totaling 11,937 words, were collected as a corpus. The main goal of metaphor research of corpus is to realize the description of linguistic metaphor by discovering the usage rules and patterns of linguistic metaphor and the ideology hidden behind metaphor [24]. Finally, with word frequency statistics of the corpus, this study analyzed the categories of Chinese female metaphors and found out female Image constructed by these female metaphors in the media.

Results and discussion.

The overall categories of female metaphors in the media.

As can be seen from Table 1, female metaphors are mainly divided into five parts: plant, animal, daily object, fictional character, nature and environment. The types of female metaphors are as follows: 1) Woman is a Flower; 2) Woman is Water; 3) Woman is Half of the Heaven; 4) Woman is Light; 5) Woman is a Fairy; 6) Woman is a Book; 7) Woman is a Tiger; 8) Woman is a Jewel.

Table 1. Female Metaphors in the Media

Categories	Source domain
Plant	花, 玫瑰花, 百合花, 桃花, 牡丹, 兰花, 莲花, 芙蓉, 太阳花, 仙人掌, 柳, 果 (flower, rose, lily, peach blossom, peony, orchid, lotus, hibiscus, sunflower, cactus, willow, fruit)
Animal	虎, 蜜蜂, 黄莺, 羊, 小鸟 (tiger, bee, warbler, sheep, bird)
Daily object	书, 诗, 歌, 画, 艺术品, 珍品, 玉, 宝, 夜明珠, 美酒, 棉花 (book, poem, song, painting, art, treasure, jade, treasures, luminous pearl, wine, cotton)
Fictional characters	天使, 天仙, 神仙, 仙子, 女神, 使者, 玉帝, 魔鬼, 女皇, 公主, 智者, 主人, 太后, 小怪兽, 白骨精, 蛇妖 (angel, celestial fairy, immortal fairy, fairy, goddess, herald, God, devil, queen, princess, wise man, master, queen' mother, little monster, white bone demon, snake demon)
Nature and environment	天, 地, 半边天, 宇宙, 地球, 太阳, 月亮, 星, 山, 水, 海, 港, 光, 雨, 雪, 风, 三月天, 溪流, 清泉, 小溪 (heaven, the earth, half the heaven, universe, globe, sun, moon, stars, mountain, water, sea, harbor, light, rain, snow, wind, weather in March, stream, spring, brook)

Table 2 reports the total number of keywords, frequency of occurrence and the resonance value of the source domain in these eight metaphors. Among them, the metaphor of "Woman is a Flower" has the highest frequency and dominates the whole female metaphor. In addition, higher frequency of female metaphors are "Woman is Water", "Woman is Half of the heaven", "Woman is Light". Although Fairy, Book, Tiger and Jewel are not high frequent metaphorical source domain, they have also become an important part of female metaphor in the media, and have played a certain role in the construction of female image.

Table 2. Resonance Value of Source Domain

Female metaphor	Total number of keywords	Frequency of occurrence	Resonance value of source domain
Woman is a Flower	35	149	5215
Woman is Water	20	39	780
Woman is Half of the Heaven	16	46	736
Woman is Light	17	42	714
Woman is a Fairy	14	38	532
Woman is a Book	14	35	490
Woman is a Tiger	13	30	390
Woman is a Jewel	12	19	228

Woman is a Flower.

(1) 愿你如花朵般青春永驻, 永远靓丽! (May you be young and beautiful like a flower forever!)

(2) 女人如花, 艳丽整个世界. 母亲是太阳花, 带来温暖; 妻子是兰花, 带来安宁; 恋人是玫瑰花, 带来激情; 女儿是桃花, 带来灿烂. (Women are like flowers, gorgeous in the whole world. Mother is the sun flower with warmth; wife is orchid with peace; lovers are roses with passion; daughter is peach blossom with brilliance.)

Table 3 shows the keywords and frequency of occurrence of this metaphor as well as the resonance value of the source domain. Woman is often conceptualized as a variety of flowers in nature. Flowers are the most common plants in human life, and their beautiful and fragrant characteristics have always been rooted in human cognition. In the course of historical development, people often highlights the appearance of women in the female gender discourse, so the flower metaphor is the most frequent of female metaphor in the corpus. From the life circle aspect, the plant generally goes through seeding, germination, growth, flowering, fruit and wither, similar to the life cycle of human being. Both plants and human beings obey the laws of nature, and the process of plant growth and change has become the source of some abstract concepts. For example, "Sowing" and "Sprouting" are often used to map the beginning of life, and "Growing" represents the growth of human being, "Blossom" often symbolizes the mature of man and woman, "Wither" often symbolizes the death of old man. During the growth of plant in nature, the flowers are bright, beautiful, fragrant, charming, and especially loved by people, similar to the young and mature lady. It is natural for the flower metaphor becomes the most frequent of female metaphor in the corpus. In Table 3, the words "come into bloom", "be in full bloom", "burst into bloom", "be in bud" show the beauty when the flowers bloom, while "fragrant", "floral scent", "Strong fragrance", "faint aroma" highlight the charming aroma of flowers. The corpus (1) describes "The woman is like a flower," emphasizing the beauty and youth of women, while (2) focuses on the use of a variety of flowers to describe women, although women have different personalities, but all have the characteristic of flowers. In Chinese, women are often compared to flowers, such as "女人花" (woman as flower), "貌美如花" (beautiful as flower), "娇艳如花" (delicate as flower), "一生如花" (as flower in one's life), and so on. In the female metaphor of "Woman is a Flower", the media uses the familiar concept of "flower" to represent woman, and maps the characteristics of the source domain "flower" to woman. The beauty of "flowers" reflects the beauty of women, the blooming of "flowers" reflects the youth of women, and the aroma of "flowers" reflects the charming of women. These characteristics construct the attractive image of women.

Table 3. The Keywords of Female Metaphor "Woman is a Flower"

Metaphor keywords	Frequency	Metaphor keywords	Frequency	Metaphor keywords	Frequency
花 (flower)	71	枝 (branch)	3	鲜花 (flower)	2
玫瑰 (rose)	6	百花 (various flowers)	2	暗香 (faint aroma)	1
桃花 (peach blossom)	4	凋零 (wither and fall)	2	春花 (flower in spring)	1
花朵 (blossom)	4	馥郁 (strong fragrance)	2	芳香 (fragrance)	1
女人花 (women as flower)	4	花丛 (flowers in clusters)	2	含苞欲放 (in bud)	1
开花 (come into bloom)	4	花蕾 (bud)	2	花圃 (parterre)	1
盛开 (in full bloom)	4	卉 (ou)	2	花园 (garden)	1
芬芳 (fragrance)	3	花儿 (flower)	2	牡丹 (peony)	1
芙蓉 (rose hibiscus)	3	兰花 (orchid)	2	飘香 (fragrance)	1
花香 (floral scent)	3	莲花 (lotus)	2	太阳花 (sunflower)	1
玫瑰花 (rose flower)	3	怒放 (in full bloom)	2	枝头 (branch)	1
绽放 (burst into bloom)	3	香 (fragrance)	2		
Resonance value of source domain: 5215					

Woman is Water.

(3) 好女人是<u>水</u>, 柔情绵绵; 好女人是<u>港</u>, 安全可靠. (A good woman is water, being gentle; A good woman is a port, being reliable.)

(4) 女人像<u>水</u>, 而柔情的你更像<u>溪流</u>, 潺潺地把我围绕. (Woman is like water, and you are more like a stream, gurgling around me.)

In addition, "Woman is Water" is also a common conceptual metaphor in gender discourse, and this metaphor has a high frequency in the media. As the main element of liquid, water is the source of life and the foundation of all things in the world. This cognitive model can be reflected in both ancient Greek philosophy and fairy tales. The western philosopher Thales believed that water is the origin of all things in the universe, that life comes from water, and that the origin of the world is water. In one of the four Chinese classics *Journey to the West*, the author mentions the Alphabet River, referring that anyone who has a sip of the the water in the river can give birth to life. From the scientific point of view, water is the basic material of living organisms, clean, flowing and changeable. Water is a daily necessity and always used to understand many other concepts. The keywords and frequency of occurrence are shown in Table 4. As can be seen from Table 4, the keywords of this metaphor mainly include the types of water, such as harbor, sea, brook, stream, spring, and the fluidity of water, such as flow, overflow, murmur, run, drain away. Based on people's personal experience with water, the characteristics of "water" in the source domain are naturally mapped to women through female metaphors. In the corpus (3), "Woman is Water" accentuates the fluidity of water, giving a sharp contrast to the stillness of mountains, implicating relationship between men as mountain and women as water; corpus (4) "Woman is Water" also shows the fluidity of water. The flow of water vividly reflects the tenderness of women. In daily language, there are many such expressions, such as, "女人似水" (Women are like water), "女人是水做的" (Women are made from water), "柔情似水" (gentle as water), "像溪水般温柔" (gentle as brook) and so on. The media constructs the image of tenderness through water metaphor.

Table 4. The Keywords of Female Metaphor "Woman is Water"

Metaphor keywords	Frequency	Metaphor keywords	Frequency	Metaphor keywords	Frequency
水 (water)	11	春水 (water in spring)	1	清水 (clean water)	1
港 (port)	3	潺潺 (murmur)	1	小溪 (brook)	1
海 (sea)	3	流 (flow)	1	泉涌 (gush)	1
溪水 (stream)	3	流去 (flow away)	1	溪流 (stream flowing)	1
流淌 (flow)	2	流水 (flowing water)	1	涨 (rise)	1
清凉 (cool)	2	润 (embellish)	1	滋润 (moisten)	1
溢 (overflow)	2	清泉 (clean spring)	1		
Resonance value of source domain: 780					

Woman is Half of the Heaven.

(5) <u>半边天</u>, 家里转, 洗衣做饭不停闲; <u>半边天</u>, 地里转, 大活小活, 都能干, <u>半边天</u>, 单位转, 大事小事, 都能办. (Woman is half of the heaven, washing and cooking at home; Woman is half of the heaven, working on the earth and doing everything; Woman is half of the heaven, working outside, and dealing with every deeds.)

(6) 头顶半边天, 双手把钱赚, 头脑灵活, 眼界宽, 志有千里, 胸怀广, 新时代花木兰不只是个传说. (Woman is half of the heaven, making money, with flexible thought, wide vision, big ambition and broad mind, just as the legend Hua Mulan in the new era.)

In the heaven and earth, "heaven" is located in the high altitude above the ground, has been worshiped and yearned by people. "女娲" (Goddess Nvwa) patches the heaven, providing the possibility for Chinese women compared to half of the heaven. "Half of the Heaven" literally refers to a part of the heaven, and is often used to describe the great power of women who can work as men in the new society. "Woman is Half of the Heaven" has also become a common female metaphor, and the frequency in the media blessings is also very high. The keywords and frequency of occurrence are shown in Table 5. The words "stand up" and "hold up" in Table 5 highlight the important status of women in society. The corpus (5) and (6) emphasize the responsibilities undertaken by women in daily life, including the household work and other deeds in the society through female metaphor. In Chinese, "女人是天" (Woman is the heaven), "男人的半边天" (Woman is half of the heaven as man), "谁说女儿不如男, 妇女也顶半边天" (It is not true that women are inferior to men, and in fact women also hold half of the heaven) and so on have gradually become common usages in daily life, expressing the role played by women are the same as men in daily life and work. Through the female metaphor "Woman is Half of the Heaven", the media constructs the social status of women as men in the new era.

Table 5. The Keywords of Female Metaphor "Woman is Half of the heaven"

Metaphor keywords	Frequency	Metaphor keywords	Frequency	Metaphor keywords	Frequency
半边天 (half of the heaven)	22	翻天 (shake the heaven)	1	支配 (govern)	1
顶 (stand up)	8	坚不可摧 (impregnable)	1	指挥 (conduct)	1
撑起 (hold up)	3	扛 (carry)	1	掌管 (take charge of)	1
崩塌 (crumble)	1	乾坤 (heaven and earth)	1	掌握 (grasp)	1
担当 (responsibility)	1	捅破 (pierce)	1		
巅峰 (peak)	1	一手遮天 (cover the whole world)	1		
Resonance value of source domain: 736					

Woman is Light.

(7) 你们像一缕阳光, 送来无限的温暖. (You are like a ray of sunshine, with infinite warmth.)

(8) 在我心目中, 您就是光芒, 照亮我的一生. 如果你是太阳, 那我就是您照耀下的花朵. (In my mind, you are the light, lighting up my life. If you are the sun, then I am your shining flower.)

Light is basic thing human can perceive in nature, bringing warmth, comfort, happiness and many other positive experience. The metaphor of "Woman is Light" has always been embodied in the process of people's historical and cultural development. In the history of western philosophy, Plato mentions "The light of the cave", "The light of the sun" and "The eye" in the Republic, where he describes the reflection of the prisoner from the fire at the mouth of the cave, slowly to the blinding fire, and then to the dazzling sunlight, and finally to the clear scene, and demonstrates his core concept of truth in a vivid interpretation. "Woman is Light" is also a relatively common female metaphor in daily language, and it also appears more frequently in media blessings. Its

keywords and frequency of occurrence are shown in Table 6. As can be seen from Table 6, the keywords of this metaphor mainly include the main body of light, such as "sunshine", "sun", "spring", "stars", "starlight", "planet", and the characteristics of light, such as "splendid", "bright", "radiant", "cloudless", "beaming". On the basis of human cognition, the feature of the source domain "light" is mapped to the character of women through female metaphor. Corpus (7) the "warmth" of "a ray of sunshine" is mapped to the warmth brought by women to human beings; corpus (8) the function of "light" and "sunshine" is mapped to women's ability of promoting human growth. In everyday language, sunshine is an important source domain of female metaphor, such as "像阳光般活泼" (as lively as the sunshine), "尽展媚力阳光耀" (as bright as the sunshine), "你是灿烂的阳光" (You are the shining sun) and so on. The media constructs the unique charm and outstanding contribution of women through the female metaphor "Woman is Light".

Table 6. The Keywords of Female Metaphor "Woman is Light"

Metaphor keywords	Frequency	Metaphor keywords	Frequency	Metaphor keywords	Frequency
灿烂 (splendid)	10	晴朗 (cloudless)	2	明媚 (bright)	1
阳光 (sunshine)	6	闪烁 (flicker)	2	星 (star)	1
光芒 (light)	4	星辰 (star-shine)	2	星光 (starlight)	1
太阳 (sun)	3	灿然 (bright)	1	星球 (planet)	1
四射 (radiant)	3	粲然 (beaming)	1	朝阳 (rising sun)	1
春光 (light in spring)	2	光彩 (luster)	1		
Resonance value of source domain: 714					

Woman is a Fairy.

(9) 下班回家花枝展, 上街靓妆<u>貌似仙</u>. 三八妇女节愿你: 事业爱情花正艳, 美丽犹如大姑娘. (You are as beautiful as the flower when you come home after work, as the fairy when you go to the street. You are a beautiful lady and I give my best wish for your career and love on Women's Day.)

(10) 我的眼里, 你善良如出, 你的心永远<u>如天使</u>般圣洁. (In my eyes, you are good, and your heart is always as holy as an angel.)

In the development of human history, fairy is a fictional figure that people pursue spiritual needs. The fairy is extremely beautiful, transcendent, holy and far from real life, and has a unique charm that no woman on earth can compare with. In the corpus, the metaphor "Woman is a Fairy" appears frequently, and its keywords and frequency of occurrence are shown in Table 7. It can be seen that the keywords of this metaphor mainly include some fictional characters, such as fairies, angels, Goddesses, celestial being, etc., and the keywords of its characteristics mainly include otherworldly and holiness. On the basis of human cognition, the feature of the source domain "fairy" is mapped to the woman through female metaphor. The corpus (9) emphasizes the beauty of women through the appearance of fairies, and the corpus (10) describes the holiness of women through the characteristics of angels. In Chinese, "Woman is a Fairy" is an important type of the female metaphor, such as "花仙子" (flower fairies), "神仙姐姐" (fairy sister), "快乐天使" (happy angel), "美若天仙" (beautiful as a fairy), "仙子下凡" (fairies descend to the earth), and so on. The media conceptualizes women with beauty and holiness through the metaphor of "Woman is a Fairy".

Table 7. The Keywords of Female Metaphor "Woman is a Fairy"

Metaphor keywords	Frequency	Metaphor keywords	Frequency	Metaphor keywords	Frequency
仙子 (fairy)	7	圣洁 (holy)	2	宫殿 (palace)	1
天使 (angel)	6	使者 (herald)	2	上帝 (God)	1
脱俗 (otherworldly)	5	天堂 (paradise)	2	天仙 (fairy)	1
女神 (Goddesses)	4	玉帝 (Emperor)	2	下凡 (descend to the earth)	1
神仙 (celestial being)	3	殿堂 (palace hall)	1		
Resonance value of source domain：532					

Woman is a Book.

(11) 美丽的女人是杂志书, 赏心悦目; 智慧的女人是励志书, 催人进步; 善良的女人是名著, 让人拜读. (Beautiful woman is a magazine, pleasing to the eye; wise woman is an inspirational book, urging people to progress; kind woman is a masterpiece, making people read.)

(12) 一个女人是一本书, 每一本书都有人读, 总有一个对书有更深理解和共鸣的人, 愿女人这本书都有理解和共鸣的人, 使女人每一天都像过妇女节一样幸福快乐! (A woman is a book. Every book can be read, and there is always someone who has a deeper understanding and resonance of the book. Wish the woman understood by others just as a book understood by some people, happy every day just as the women's day!)

Book is an important source of knowledge. With the progress of society, human beings have a deeper understanding of the importance of books. "Woman is a Book" has also become an important part of female metaphors, with a high number of keywords and frequencies in the blessings of women in the media, as shown in Table 8. It can be seen that the keywords of the metaphor of "Woman is a Book" mainly focus on the special style, such as poetry, poetic sentiment, poetic book, Tang poetry and so on. In Chinese, the metaphor of "Woman is a Book" appears in more corpus, such as, "女人如诗, 迷人隽永" (Women are like poems, charming and meaningful), "女人如诗, 典雅脱俗" (Women are like poems, elegant and otherworldly). In addition to the poems, the characteristics of the source domain "book" are mapped to women through female metaphor in human cognition. The corpus (11) reflects the beauty, wisdom and kindness of women through the feature of knowledge in the book, but the ultimate blessing is still "eternal youth". The corpus (12) reflects the object of the book, the woman as an object that needs to be understood and resonated with. In the media, through the metaphor of "Woman is a Book", women's intellectual ability and unique charm for people to appreciate are constructed.

Table 8. The Keywords of Female Metaphor "Woman is a Book"

Metaphor keywords	Frequency	Metaphor keywords	Frequency	Metaphor keywords	Frequency
书 (book)	14	饱读 (be well-read)	1	书本 (book)	1
诗 (poem)	6	名著 (masterwork)	1	唐诗 (Tang poetry)	1
读 (read)	3	诗篇 (poem)	1	杂志 (magazine)	1
文字 (words)	2	诗情 (poetic sentiment)	1	作诗 (make poem)	1
拜读 (have the honour to read)	1	诗书 (poetic books)	1		
Resonance value of source domain: 490					

Woman is a Tiger.

(13) 妇女节里你要舞，风风火火就如虎. (You have to dance on Women's Day, as prestigious as tiger.)

(14) 你是老虎我变猫，快乐是今天我的目标. (You are the tiger while I am the cat, your happiness is my goal today.)

Tiger is one of the fierce animals in the natural world, and human beings have a very specific understanding of of tiger and conceptualize the tiger as the king of beasts. As the pronunciation of "tiger" (lao hu) and "woman" (fu nv) in Chinese is similar, "tigress" often becomes a title for women in daily life, and the metaphor of "Woman is a Tiger" appears frequently in the blessings of women in the media, and its keywords and times are shown in Table 9. It can be seen that the keywords of the metaphor of "Woman is a Tiger" mainly focuses on the words "tiger" and "tigress". In human cognition, the characteristics of "tiger" in the source domain are mapped to women through female metaphor. The corpus (13) describes the female's "hot and furious" feature through the characteristic of the tiger's fast behavior. The corpus (14) emphasizes the irritable character of women through the object of the tiger. Under the influence of the metaphor of "Woman is a Tiger", women are given the characteristics of tigers, and their language and behavior are aggressive and strong. In the media, this character is positive, highlighting men's tolerance and love for women, and also constructing women's independence, confidence and powerful temperament.

Table 9. The Keywords of Female Metaphor "Woman is a Tiger"

Metaphor keywords	Frequency	Metaphor keywords	Frequency	Metaphor keywords	Frequency
虎 (tiger)	16	抵挡 (hold off)	1	折服 (subdue)	1
老虎 (tiger)	2	惧 (fear)	1	征服 (conquer)	1
母老虎 (tigress)	2	威风 (power and prestige)	1	趾高气扬 (arrogant)	1
八面威风 (prestigious all round the world)	1	袭击 (assault)	1		
逼人 (threatening)	1	赛过 (win)	1		
Resonance value of source domain: 390					

Woman is a Jewel.

(15) 老婆是玉, 老婆是宝, 时时要对老婆好. (The wife is jade, the wife is treasure, and husband always needs to care their wife.)

(16) 女人如宝, 碧玉天成. (A woman is like a treasure, like a natural jasper.)

Jewelry is considered to be priceless, pure and flawless. Because of these the most prominent recognition of the concept of jewelry, the female metaphor "Woman is a Jewel" often appears in media, and its keywords and frequency are shown in Table 10. Among them, the keywords "jade" and "treasure" appear more frequently, and similar words include "jasper", "crystal", "pearl", "priceless treasure", "luminous pearl", "apple of the eye", and so on. In human mind, the source domain "jewels" are priceless, and this feature is mapped to women through female metaphor, in terms of the keywords "precious", "bright", "flawless", "priceless". In corpus (15) and (16), the preciousness of "treasure", "jade" and "jasper" are mapped to the preciousness of women, who are endowed with priceless characteristics that make people love and cherish. In the media, "Woman is a Jewel" effectively highlights men's love for women, and also constructs the precious character of women.

Table 10. The Keywords of Female Metaphor "Woman is a Jewel"

Metaphor keywords	Frequency	Metaphor keywords	Frequency	Metaphor keywords	Frequency
玉 (jade)	5	碧玉 (jasper)	1	无价之宝 (priceless treasure)	1
宝 (treasure)	4	璀璨 (bright)	1	夜明珠 (luminous pearl)	1
宝贝 (treasure)	1	水晶 (crystal)	1	掌上明珠 (apple of the eye)	1
宝贵 (precious)	1	无暇 (flawless)	1	珍品 (pearl)	1
Resonance value of source domain: 228					

The female image is a combination of self-cognition and other-cognition, which is constructed by society, and the media plays a decisive role in the construction and dissemination of female image. Metaphor is not a simple mapping of the objective world, but a selective and conscious construction of social reality. The study of female metaphor reflects the subordinate status and weak status of women in society [25]. Metaphor is a discourse strategy, strengthening the female reproductive system behavior, constructing and maintaining the status of dominant patriarchal hegemony [26]. In the social reality, people unconsciously believe that women should have certain image, and this cognitive thinking is connected with the specific source domain in daily life through the encoding of media. The mapping between the source domain and the target domain produces various female metaphors, and these metaphors are constantly decoded, once again solidifying people's cognition of female images in the social reality.

The female metaphor of gender discourse implies the cognition of women in the media, which constructs the corresponding female image through continuous encoding and decoding. From the above analysis, it can be seen that in the blessing corpus of women on "Women's Day" in Wechat media, the Chinese female image has also diversified, and a large number of eight metaphors such as "Woman is a Flower", "Woman is Water", "Woman is Half of the heaven", "Woman is Light", "Woman is a Fairy", "Woman is a Book", "Woman is a Tiger" and "Woman is a Jewel" have been used. Among them, "Woman is a Flower" dominates the metaphorical corpus of women in the whole blessing. Women are defined as "beautiful as flowers", and the image of ideal women's charming appearance is deeply in the cognitive thinking of the public. In "Woman is Water", the feminine gentle and tender image stands out. "Woman is Light" highlights the female image that women shine on others and dedicate themselves; the metaphor of "Woman is Half of the heaven" emphasizes the contribution of women to society the same as the man in the new era, and outlines the independent and confident image of women in her housework and social work. "Woman is a Fairy" portrays women as a perfect image of beauty in appearance and purity in heart. The metaphor of "Woman is a Book" highlights the public's appreciation of women and shows the unique wisdom of women. The metaphor of "Woman is a Tiger" emphasizes the strong and powerful image of women in the new era. "Woman is a Jewel" shows the precious, priceless and cherished image of women. It is obvious to see the diversified characteristic and charming of woman nowadays and the big improvement of the construction of female image in media.

However, these female metaphors in the media also have a certain dominance in the construction of female images, reflecting the ideological nature of media culture. In the high frequent metaphors, flowers and fairies both highlight the beauty of women's appearance, while water and light emphasize the gentleness of women, constructing the "beauty" and "gentleness" as main images of women. According to the analysis above, beauty became the most prominent

image of ideal female. On "Women's Day", the blessing words of "beautiful", "youth", "as beautiful as flowers", "charming," "enchanting" expressed the public's high requirements for women's the appearance, while the blessing words of "gentleness" also indicate the public's high requirement for women's temperament, while other words such as "virtuous", "brave", "ambiguous" are as important as "gentle" for women. The gender discourse of media, constructs women with "beautiful", "youthful" and "gentle" identities through female metaphors "Woman is a Flowers" and "Woman is Water" and the fact that women's beauty, youth and gentleness to others are the criteria for judging the value of women in the media. This is closely related to the deep-rooted gender role-setting in popular culture. On the whole, the female beauty appearance and gentle temperament dominate the characteristics of the female image in the media. Some studies have pointed out that there are visible victims and invisible creators in the production of female images in contemporary popular culture [27]. The female image is not objective, fair and equal in the gender discourse system, but the product of the manipulation and dominance of the media in the male gender discourse system.

Of course, since the media provides a wide range of platform, people are free to express themselves through the media in public according to their own will. Some corpus also shows that people are trying to resist the women's characteristics of "being beautiful as flowers" and "playing the role of caring husband and rearing children"which dominate in the blessing for women on "Women's Day" through the media Wechat platform. For example, one of the blessings message "Woman (wife) is responsible for earning money to support the family, you (husband) are responsible for being beautiful as the flower" projects the women's characteristics of "being beautiful as flowers" into men's "being handsome as flowers" in a humorous way, subverting the gender roles of men and women in the society through the media. In the process of the transformation of the dominant gender discourse in the media, the public also get some pleasure. However, since this kind of female metaphor is still in a very small proportion in the media, it is difficult to change the mainstream ideology of the image of women. Women have gradually accepted this female image that the women should be "beautiful" and "gentle" as a natural and reasonable norm of the society. Because the media often has the important summoning power, these blessing words reprint and spread unceasingly in the public, and the media unceasingly molds, disseminates and constructs the female image in human's cognition. In this process of normalization and rationalization, the media fosters the formation of social gender and also imperceptibly weakens and hinders women's self-development.

It can be seen that female metaphors in media show diverse female images such as appearance, temperament, ability and value on the one hand, and female metaphors also indicate the domination of "beauty" and "gentleness" in the female images in the gender discourse. These metaphors repeatedly appear and reinforce each other in media, making the female images constructed by media diversified and dominant, and solidifying them in the psychological model of the public. It is true that while media provides the platform for gender discourse, gender discourse in the media nowadays has been diversified greatly improved and diversified, but it also becomes more implicit and shows the gender culture in a hidden way.

Conclusion. By analyzing the female metaphor in the blessing of women on "Women's Day" on Wechat platform, this study explores the Chinese female image constructed by metaphor in the

media. Through the mapping of Flower, Water, Half of the heaven, Light, Fairy, Book, Tiger, Jewel and other source areas, the media enables women to obtain and construct diversified female images in terms of appearance, temperament, ability and value in the gender discourse. It can be seen that the construction of gender discourse in the media becomes diversified on the one hand, on the other hand it still follows the traditional mode of thinking. It is necessary to further strengthen the guidance of media, expand the participation of the public, respect individual differences rather than gender differences, so as to construct an equal female image and promote the growth of women and the harmonious development of society. Of course, due to different historical cultures and emotional experiences, people may have different mechanisms for highlighting female image. The future study can further explore the female image constructed by metaphor in specific social and cultural contexts.

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