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THEIR ROLE IN CHINA ENTERPRISES**

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FEMALE CHINESE MANAGERS: THEIR ROLE IN CHINA ENTERPRISES ¹

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Reality checks of women managers in Chinese (People's Republic of China throughout this article) enterprises is, at best, difficult to determine--even more so since the unhappy events in Tiananmen Square. Statements about Chinese women in general appear frequently in the popular press, often as accompaniments to pictorial reviews. So little is known of the Chinese woman manager--in both western and Chinese cultures--that each new piece is a happy addition.

Scholarly critiques, of recent scope, suggest little writing on female managerial roles in Chinese enterprises. Statements on women in general include such disparate foci as dietary habits of elderly Chinese women (Chau, Lee, Tseng, 1990); Chinese women's conceptions of gender (Judd, 1990); descriptive profiles of female Chinese managers (Hildebrandt, Liu, 1988b); the position of women in the reformed rural economy (Ho, 1987); historical statements on the influence of exposure and foreign contacts on women and rural groups (Johnson, Parish, Lin, 1987); general statements on Chinese women's education (Chinese Women, 1987); interesting life histories of Chinese women (Sheridan, Salaff, 1984); Chinese women outside China (Lebra, Paulson, 1980; overall changes taking place since the 1949 revolution (Matthiasson, 1974); and many others unrelated to the managerial capacities of women.

While the momentum for research on Chinese female managers is slow,² statements about women as managers in other countries continues to grow. Research about other Far Eastern female managers appear for Japan (Solo, 1989; Adler, 1987; Osako, 1978; Kaminski and Paiz, 1984); Singapore, Hong Kong, and Indonesia (Hildebrandt and Edington, 1987; Crockett, 1987; Chan, 1987; Singson, 1985; Wong, 1975). Women in India are noted in a sociological study (Kapur, 1978); in the Muslim world (Beck, Keddie, 1978); Managerial women in Europe are noted in Britain (Davidson and Cooper, 1987; Hammond, 1986; Alban-Metcalf and Nicholson, 1984; Lookwood and Knowles, 1984); Germany (Antal and Kresbsbach-Gnath, 1986-1987); Italy (Olivares, 1987); France [and Canada] (Symons, 1984); Russia (Kakabadse and McWilliam, 1987; Engle, 1987).

Studies also appear, and are underway, for managerial women in Israel (Izraeli, 1986-1987); Egypt (Hildebrandt, 1990a); India (Singh, 1980); the Philippines (Ople, 1981; Longo, 1986); and Guatemala (Chinchilla, 1987).

While not gender specific, mega-overviews of both male and female managers appear for South-East Asia (Everett et al, 1984); China (Hildebrandt, Liu, 1988a, 1989; Asia (Singh, 1981); and the Chinese in Southeast Asia (Lim, Gosling, 1983).

A genesis for the following managerial information originated in 1978 when the U.S. author began profiling individual and ethnographic characteristics of selected U.S. executives and managers, and, selected Asian managers. Central in those studies were six core questions:

- What career paths do male and female executives and managers follow?
- What educational levels characterize those business leaders?
- What role does communication and language play in managerial roles and in companies?
- What are the major sociological patterns typical of business leaders?
- What are some major lifestyle characteristics of business managers?
- What are some influences which managers feel will affect the future economy and business?

Thus, since 1978 a management questionnaire was enlarged to cover other cultures and managers, including Chinese. A preliminary 32-item Mandarin instrument was administered in 1986, plus interviews, resulting in responses from 436 Chinese managers (Hildebrandt, Liu 1988a, 1989; Hildebrandt, Edington, 1987). This introductory effort produced two results: it permitted refinement and enlargement of the initial Chinese research effort and it informed the authors about some administrative problems connected with research in China.

Accordingly, the following paper describes the Chinese female manager within the contexts of the much enlarged (back-translated) questionnaire constructed by Chinese scholars in the U.S. and China. Six sections make up the subsequent discussion: a brief view of major China environments; a background statement of the 186 female managers as part of that country; a description and analysis of some party and political influences on their careers; a view of their career paths; and the role of education levels in Chinese enterprises prior to the Tiananmen Square incidents of 1989. We end with some conclusions and observations for the future. Interspersed with information in the above major categories will be information on sociological patterns and economic concerns.

MAJOR CHINA ENVIRONMENTS

It may seem presumptuous in a brief space to give a background statement on the country of China. Much is already known. We focus briefly on five environments in which the women managers described in this study fulfill their managerial roles: government/politics, economics, human resources, geography, and education.

Government/Politics

Foremost, in our opinion, are two organizational ingredients distinctive of China: its governmental structure and its Communist Party. Later we will show direct influences of these two forces on the women managers in this study. Here, it is sufficient to note that China's Constitution makes this statement:

"...China is a socialist state under the people's democratic dictatorship led by the working class and based on the alliance of workers and peasants."
(Constitution, 1982)

What that means is that centrality of control begins at the top, national level. Another way of describing the system is to call it democratic centralism: ideas are discussed by the leaders and then decisions are sent along to other branches of government. Beneath the apex, in descending order, come parallel governmental structures through states, counties, and local communities. Government intrudes on all phases of one's life.

Parallel the governmental structure is the communist party. Recently--more under the motivation of reformers-- attempts have been made to separate the party from the government. That schism is incomplete. Consequently, ideological statements, readings, concepts are part of one's personal life and are part of discussion groups at one's place of work. Membership in the party is not automatic: it demands a review process. Approximately five to six percent of the adult population are members of the party. (Barnett, 1967; Harding, 1981, 1987; Laaksonen, 1984).

Economics

Economic winds have buffeted China for centuries, severely in recent times, during the Cultural Revolution between 1966-1976. Stagnation during those ten years was considerable; contacts with the outside world were minimal; information and knowledge was self generated; agriculture remained as the core industry. Depending on its own natural resources, on its huge population, on its enterprises owned by the state, China's economy became inbred, and looked inward. A market economy did not exist, nor was one favored. In such a structure it took time, and for some, courage, to forge one's own business. Slowly, with some impetus from former reformers, collectively owned enterprises evolved, as did joint ventures, and individually owned and produced products, notably by farmers. Centrality of economic control still dominates the marketplace, affecting female and male managers quite directly.

What can also be said is that the economy is caught in the web of party and government intrusion. Freedom for an individual manager to risk a major solo decision is minimized under central economic control. But changes in areas as legal and economic are afoot, if one can measure such interest by the increasing invitations to scholars to lecture on economic and legal issues. (Balazs, 1964).

Human Resources

Human resources is not a problem in China. Its 1987 population of over 556 million males and over 524 million females (Statistical Yearbook of China, 1988 [China Stat], p. 75) overarchingly ranks it as the most populous country in the world. With that position there was, in the past, less need for or interest in modern technology which both increased the speed and efficiency of producing products. Plentiful labor got the job done, albeit slowly, but often to tolerances unacceptable to scientific instruments. Thus the abundant labor supply, although significant in itself, influenced women in two ways: it slowed their rapid assimilation into modern technology, and it penalized women--by the nature of their gender--to a period of child rearing away from the workplace and then mandated that when they returned they retire five years earlier (age 55) than their male counterparts. Equality is their right in the communist system: the size of the population worked against them (Andors, 1977, p. 28).

Geography

Without a doubt, China in terms of geography is one of the largest countries, after Russia and Canada. Its 9.6 million square kilometers positions it third in the world. Regardless, its topography denies an even distribution of population: a small percentage lives in the west, with the majority, 90%, in the east and southeast. Hence, there the

relative flatness of the terrain--as opposed to the deserts and mountains in the west--induced people and factories and enterprises and government to move eastward: toward the Pacific Ocean, there meeting a natural barrier denying frequent contacts with neighboring countries. If there were to be contacts, it was to the south and southeast. But the antiquated modes of transportation mitigated against even such directional movements.

Families as a result became more insular, more dependent on self, more of the soil. There was less need to travel in an agricultural society (Andors, 1977, p. 29). Women thus worked hard: in their home and if outside their home in factories in their immediate area. Mobility, was therefore reduced--for men as well--in part due to the insularity imposed by both inadequate transportation, and the geography which denied them a livelihood distant from their place of birth. Add to these obstacles one other perspective: there were migration restraints, denying persons movement from rural areas to the city.

Education

A natural concomitant of geography was a corresponding diminution in education. What need in an agricultural environment was there for women (and males) to be educated? Why should women, particularly, be sent away to school when the local factory was labor intensive, was centrally directed, was only marginally free to alter production schedules? In short, Western schools typically taught management techniques at higher levels of education, often highly intensive at the master's level, and often in locations distant from home. Women, and men, were for a long period slowed in their desire for an advanced education, with the corresponding result that Chinese enterprises were populated with persons who learned managerial and operations techniques on the job, or often gained some managerial skills in the military -- quite unlike the organizational and cultural structure of an enterprise. The result? Women in managerial positions are less educated than their female counterparts in highly developed countries.

Undergirding all the above structures is a traditional value system based on patrilineal dominance. A Confucian tradition of male dominance, respect for authority, the role of women as subservient, positioned women for a long time in a menial position. Age is respected, so are males as head of a hierarchical family. Women for years were thus at the mercy of a patrilinear tradition and an attitude that education and their role in industry was not a high priority. Thus many worked in a home isolated geographically from major centers of industry and commerce and at the same time received little support for an education beyond the secondary level or in rural areas received none at all. Women's momentum to progress was slowed, their move into managerial rolls was tedious, and for long denied.

Since 1949 the status difference between men and women has declined--but not removed. And though women make up 48.4% ("The 1990," 1990) of China's vast population, only within the past 10 to 15 years have they slowly gained acceptance as leaders in both government and party. If one accepts the effect that under communism there is equality for men and women, far more women should be in the managerial category than is the case. "Combine this with a state enterprise system in which the state party has a powerful role in allocating managerial positions, and one would expect more women to be managers in China than in the West, despite a more repressive pre-communist tradition." (L. Lim, personal communication, November 7, 1990).

With that brief framework, the following information focuses on the Chinese women managers, those who overcame some of the traditional impediments and assumed higher levels of responsibility.

We specifically note that the population for the study was not entirely randomly selected, hence some conclusions are not applicable to the whole of China. Larger industrial centers predominate, due to the relative ease of collecting data in those areas.

BACKGROUND

As noted earlier, there were 150 Chinese women managers in our 1987 study (Hildebrandt, Liu 1988b) as based on a 32 item Mandarin questionnaire. Subsequently, the six major questions also quoted earlier were enlarged to 85 questions in areas as career paths, education, sociological patterns, current economic issues, recommended changes in economic reforms, and lifestyle factors. This second instrument was administered in the spring of 1989, with data on 1005 Chinese managers (819 male, 186 female) literally arriving in the authors' hands several days prior to June 1989. Occasionally, for comparative purposes, we will contrast the female manager with her male counterpart.

Background information to the enterprises in which the Chinese female managers worked is discussed in the following section.

Locations Represented

Geographically, China is a large country, composed of 23 provinces, 5 autonomous regions, and 3 municipalities, the basis of and providing leverage for the political and party structure of China. Figure 1 shows the 18 areas in which the Chinese female managers worked, with the municipality of Beijing most often represented (N 98). Such a dominant position is not unusual due to Beijing being the capital, the home for numerous state ministries, and the location of many enterprises and factories.

Shandong (in the southeastern section of China, N 40) and the province of Hebei (in the central portion, N 14) were second and third regarding geographical locations for the female managers. Both those regions include numerous textile and light industry³ enterprises, areas, in this study, where women are predominant. No women came from Taiwan, still considered a province of mainland China, nor the autonomous region of Tibet. Large, industrial centers, therefore, make up the majority of the work locations.

Insert Figure 1 about here

Hardly surprising, the male managers were more mobile: they came from 29 areas of the country, suggesting the inference that male mobility surpasses that of female managers.

Industries Represented

Female managers came from 16 different industries, the largest--almost predictably--(25.5%) from the area of textiles. Such an industry would make use of

many unskilled laborers, a category into which many women fell. Our assertion of predictability was a bit unfair because males too--in second position, 10.9%--also came from that industry. Unquestionably the textile industry was (38.3 million meters of cloth produced in 1952) and is (173 million meters produced in 1987) (China Stat, 1988, p. 15) a core industry in China and would quite naturally have a large labor force. Five other areas make up the major industries represented: Light industry (China Stat, 1988, p. 928) (19.6%); miscellaneous (9.2%); pharmaceuticals (7.1%); general commercial areas (6.5%); and nonelectrical machinery (6.5%). Petroleum, as an industrial area, had the fewest women representatives.

Enterprises by Size

Major financial indicators--at least via Chinese definitions--determining the size of Chinese enterprises depends on two criteria: the annual production capacity of the enterprise and in some instances the value of fixed assets. Based on the latter definition, and with no clarifying statement in the China Statistical Yearbook, most female managers work in enterprises with an average net value of fixed assets of 134,760,000 RMB or about \$33,690,000 US, in our opinion a medium sized enterprise.⁴

Using another measure for size, that of number of employees, suggests--in Table 1--that one-half of our sample managers work in large enterprises [our assessment] of more than 1,000 employees; just over 6% in small [our assessment] companies of less than 100 employees; and the remainder in medium sized companies. That distinction should be born in mind when viewing the following data.

Insert Table 1 about here

Employees Supervised

We tried to make clear to the managers our precise definition of supervision, namely overseeing--directly via monetary decisions--employees in their daily tasks. And even with that effort, they maintained they supervised a large number of people. That assertion, allowing for still some slippage in understanding, has their support if one accepts female managers supervising an average of 228 employees. Even though that number is half the managerial span of male Chinese managers, it represents considerable responsibility. The range of direct supervision ranged from 0 employee supervised (25.3%) to general managers of entire factories in excess of 2500 employees (7%). Female U.S. managers, in contradiction, only supervise indirectly 19.7 and 3.6 employees directly. (Hildebrandt, 1990b)

Sociological and Personal Patterns

Finally, it is interesting to note a few personal and sociological patterns of the 186 Chinese female managers, as accompaniments to their career and educational progress. Occasionally, we compare them with their U.S. counterparts (Hildebrandt, Miller, Edington, 1987).

--Their average age is 39.3 years; males were a precise 43. U.S. female managers' average age is 34.7.

- Most were middle children (42.5%). That percentage for managers being middle children is considerably higher than for U.S. female managers where 32.2% were born as middle children. A quick reason is that often the firstborn Chinese child had to work for the family while the middle child was asked to do less for the immediate family and could go on to a higher education and a subsequent managerial position. Clearly, with the imposition of a one-child limit, there is also a tendency of the younger managers (age 20-25) to be only children.
- The younger the female manager, the fewer siblings in her family. Most (26.4%) had at least 4 siblings, but few of the women aged 20-25 were in that category. Older female managers (age 50-55) had as many as 5 siblings (21.8%); 6 siblings (8.6%); and 7 siblings (5.3%). Nearly 8% had more than 8 siblings, and were predominantly over age 40. In time--due to the imposed birth measures--the number of siblings in a family should be correspondingly less.
- Marriage, as a personal lifestyle, dominates. Nine out of ten (91.4%) are married; 5.9% never married; .5% are separated, the same percentage is true for remarriages; and 1.6% are divorced. U.S. female managers show 24.5% never married and 54.2% in either their 1st through their 3rd marriage. A total of 15.1% of the U.S. female managers are currently divorced.
- No matter the level of the female manager's education, in all instances, save one--some college training--, their spouses were more highly educated. By contrast, male managers in the study in all levels of education, save one--some college training--, had spouses who were less educated.
- Their spouses work full time: 93.3% of their spouses hold permanent positions.
- They have an average of 1.2 children most of whom live with them in an average apartment (home) of 2.3 rooms. Important here is data which suggest a linear correlation between age and number of children: none of the managers aged 20-35 have more than one child. From age 35 onward--those not affected by imposed birth control measures--women had at least two children.
- Their monthly income from wages averages 126.1 RMB or \$31.5 U.S.; their male counterparts receive an average monthly wage of 142.17RMB, or \$35.5 U.S.
- Total household income, from sources as wages, bonuses, free products from place of work, averages 377.11RMB, or \$94.3 U.S a month.
- Few Chinese female managers smoke and drink: 94.8% have never smoked; .6% are ex-smokers; and only 4.5% of them now smoke. That data, for comparative purposes, is radically different from their U.S. female managerial counterparts where 55.6% have never smoked; 24.9% are ex-smokers; and 19.5% currently smoke. Almost a quarter of the Chinese female managers drink (25.5%); .7% are ex-drinkers; and 74.8% have never drunk. Respectively, U.S. female managers drink more: 56.4% drink; 1.8% are ex-drinkers; and 41.9% have never drunk.

--Regular physical exercise is infrequently practiced: 64.8% engage in little physical activity as walking briskly, running, lifting or carrying; 20.5% never engage in physical exercise; and just 14.8% engage in regular physical exercise. Respectively, U.S. female managers have the following percentages: 42% (little); 43% (none); and 15% (regularly).

In short, and as measured by Western lifestyle standards, the Chinese female managers live in homes of a smaller size; have at a younger age fewer children; receive considerably less income; and live with a spouse who also works full time. Their nuclear family is less in size than in the family where they were raised. In the above status, and in connection with their enterprise position, we do not sense dissatisfaction; quite the opposite: 80.6% are very satisfied or satisfied with their life.

POLITICAL AND PARTY INFLUENCES

All the preceding information suggests the usual pressures female managers face across cultures. We now view their careers outside the home, and attendant influences. Significant in China is this proposition: ideological and political forces impact a woman's career path as surely as does job competence.

Understanding the Party and political structure is therefore necessary in order to interpret the atmosphere in which women managers work. Female career paths through enterprises are influenced by the Chinese Communist Party. That allegation, alone, suggests that freedom of choice, of movement, of position, of lateral or vertical promotion, in a centrally controlled economy, leaves individual choice difficult to pursue.

1. The Chinese Communist Party is present at all managerial levels and impacts female career paths. In simplified form, Figure 2 illustrates the salient features of the Party system. As currently structured, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) modifies nearly every organization and employee within all organizations. Central planning begins in the standing committee or the Politburo, which in turn is responsible to the Central Committee. While de jure all power should derive from the National People's Congress, de facto most power resides in the politburo and the Central Committee of the CCP.

Once a doctrine is promulgated at the national level, that information winds its way through the state, province, county, enterprise, and work group level. Each level has its committee members, affecting women managers primarily at the enterprise and work group level.

It should not take long to envision a firm hierarchical structure where party secretaries receive and subsequently communicate higher level instructions; organize discussion cells; act as oversight groups; and enlist new members--male and female--into the Party, throughout the whole of society and in the micro-levels within an enterprise.

2. Female managers are impacted by central government operations. Power relationships, overlapping functions, and jealousies impede good interpersonal working relationships between the Party and government functions. Women are no less a part of this internecine warfare. Simplistically, the entire governmental structure can be divided into national, regional, and local, as seen in Figure 3.

At the national level sits the National People's Congress, persons selected by provinces, autonomous regions, and municipalities. Females in the current Congress make up 21.3%. That statistic is noteworthy, for in 1954 the percentage of women in top governmental positions was an even 12%. Daily government operations are handled through the State Council and numerous ministries, the latter formed according to function, as for example the Ministries of Textile, Light Industry, or Chemical. Most Chinese female managers in this study fall under the Ministry of Textile.

In turn, directives promulgated at the national level reach down into the 23 provinces, 5 autonomous regions, and the Municipalities of Beijing, Shanghai, and Tianjin. At these various levels the organizational structure almost parallels that at the national level (Jan, 1966; Richman, 1969; Laaksonen, 1988, p. 138).

Finally, and at the bottom, rests the enterprise, and factories. Whether female managers work in textiles, or are residents of towns or counties, or desire to make major changes in their enterprises, they are subservient to the concept of democratic centralism: the power resides at the top, national level. In Western parlance the females in this study would be called middle managers. But, managers at the factory and workshop level.

Insert Figure 2 about here

With the preceding as background a main distinction between Western and Chinese female managers arises: in capitalistic countries there is a thin linkage between government administration and an enterprise. In China, from the floor of a factory to the Ministry overseeing the enterprise, there is a convoluted strand of interlocking powers, each level adding, and subtracting, from the core directive formed at the very top. Female managers face overlapping pluralism: from the Party and the state government.

In such an environment it is no wonder that Chinese women managers--not so in Western democracies--offer sharp criticism, about the Party and government, as noted in the following assertion.

3. Female managers feel the party and government should be less intrusive.

Some years ago (Han, Ma, 1981; Xiao, 1981) two studies reported that nonintervention of the Party in enterprises leads to "good" performances in those enterprises. Women managers in this study, at a two-thirds level of support (66.3%), suggest that direction from the national level should be advisory. Few (21.3%) support mandatory control over their enterprise operation. Just over one out of ten (12.4%) feel there should be no direction from a central authority.

Such an erosion of managerial support was presaged by former General Secretary Zhao who during 1987 railed against Party intrusion into enterprise functioning. His thoughts bear repeating: "But one-long standing problem has not yet been completely solved: the lack of distinction between the functions of the Party and those of the government and the substitution of the Party for the government" (Zhao, 1987). Which position will become supreme is not yet played out.

Insert Figure 3 about here.

4. There is a desire for internal changes over external, national changes. Even though lacking a clear awareness of enterprise structural options, or lacking in exposure to other forms of business structure, female managers feel some changes must be carried

out internally: in their factory, or work unit. Indeed, 56.1% argue for more internal changes in structure and freedom to make decisions, whereas the other 43.9% say changes affecting autonomy must occur at the national or regional level. We hazard the inference that the women managers realize the difficulty of getting things changed at the national level, hence their majority support for internal changes.

In sum, the above observations--concerning Party and governmental influence--arise out of the women's awareness of the hierarchical ladder down which decisions move. They are not unaware of where they reside: near the bottom of the ladder. Decentralization may be occurring--and that was a goal of Zhao--but reforms in that direction appear to have slowed.

Endlessly women managers may argue the supremacy of either Party or government. But it makes no difference who wins the ideological debate, for the personality in the leadership position--Deng to the contrary--still is an influence in determining an enterprise's direction, and women's role within that enterprise.

CAREER PATHS

For many Western women, freedom of career choice is an inherent right, beginning with an undergraduate education and even on to post graduate school. Once in an organization, their movement, in great measure moves on the wheels of their individual competence. Chinese women have less of a choice; when they do, interesting conclusions may be drawn of their career paths.

1. Many women began their careers in the political/ideological area. Such a high percentage (23.5%) of women in the political/ideology first-job position would never occur in a Western capitalistic system. That a political/ideology position in the business world exists at all is foreign--at least to Westerners. Nevertheless, that area receives Chinese women manager's support as the third fastest route to rise to a position of importance.

Not clearly explainable is the low number of women who, on reflection, would begin their careers in the ideological/political area; today only 2.5% would begin there. Additionally, a major dwindling occurs from that initial position to their current position. One might guess that the political infighting, openness to abuse, and personal oral assaults may be factors.

Intriguing data occurs when viewing the number of weekly hours spent on ideological activities. Female managers spend an average of 4.5 hours a week in enterprise meetings on that subject, and, aver that they--on their own--spend an average of 6.2 hours on ideological activities. Of course those hours are still less than time spent on work-related activities, an average of eight hours a day. But, the amount of time spent on ideological concerns--even allowing for doubtful data, suggests the powerful role played by the Party in female careers.

We intrude with an interesting comparison: Chinese women managers work an average of 52.4 hours a week; other Asian women managers average 49.4 hours; and U.S. female managers average 47.4 hours a week. What must be borne in mind is that Chinese women managers work six days a week, Sunday being considered their day away from enterprise labor.

Not unexpected is the high percentage of women who enter an enterprise via the production/operations route (23.5%), identical in percentage to the ideological path. Such a course is a bit higher than U.S. female managers (12.2%), who, because of higher educations and career choices, enter business via other functional areas.

2. Chinese female managers favor career paths proceeding toward general management and finance/accounting positions. Foremost, the Chinese female managers would--if they had the option--begin their careers in the area of general management. If there is a surprise here, it is that of the ten functional areas studied (see Table 2), only general management/administration consistently rises in percentage of job function from initial job to choosing that area when starting over. Just over 17% began there (17.6%) with 24.5% suggesting they would start their careers there, if they had that opportunity.

Table 2 about here

3. There is perceptible career movement into the area of finance/accounting. Only 5.9% of the women began their careers in that area, whereas triple that number currently are in that position. Furthermore, a high percentage (14.4%) consider that area the fastest route to the top and 18.2% would, if possible, begin their careers there.

4. The area of marketing/sales receives insignificant support as a career path. Not unexpected, this relatively new functional area in China has no female manager beginning her career there, few currently in that position, and fewer still (5.%) even consider it if starting over. That 5% recognize the marketing function at all is a sign of increased business awareness.

Of female U.S. managers, simply for contrast, 14.7% begin their careers there, 12.5% are there now currently, and 20% consider it as the functional area in which they would have begun their careers.

In short, China, in a controlled economy, has less need for, less interest in, and less awareness of the marketing function when predetermined goals and production schedules, along with end users, are centrally determined. In time--if one can refer to the increasing numbers of female and male students enrolled in business courses in China--marketing as a legitimate business function will receive increasing awareness. It is: progressively, adults are enrolled in marketing courses offered by the Beijing Radio and Television University (BRTU) along with other courses on improving one's capabilities in enterprise management (Yuli, 1990).

5. Computer and Information Systems, as a functional area of interest, is minimal. Not a single woman manager began her career making use of computer and information systems expertise, or systems related thereto. Equally important, few are currently in that position (7.9%), even less consider it as a route to take them to the top (1.7%). Some (5.%) recognize it as an area in which to work if they could start their careers over.

Computer literacy is minute. In fact, female manager's possess--and also that of Chinese male managers--so little competence in computer expertise that individually they are affected as well as the enterprises in which they work. Modern technology, as measured by computer expertise, is lacking. Table 3 suggests the following conclusions.

- Whereas U.S. factories and facilities heavily use computers in design related functions, less than six percent of Chinese women have used the instrument for that function.
- The percentage of women using computers for general management decisions is no greater than design related activities; the percentage of awareness and usage is identical, at 5.5%.
- Not quite half of the women managers at least know about computers but have never used them.
- And the highest percentage (47.6%) know absolutely nothing about computers.

Further support for such little computer competence is female manager's response to this question: have you used the computer as an internal means of communication? 18.3% said they did; 81.7% did not.

If there is a positive in their overwhelming lack of computer knowledge, it is that the female managers recognize that deficiency. When combining the results of two variables together--very important and somewhat important--, a firm 76.3% of the women feel courses in computer/information systems is needful in preparing for a career in general management. Such emphatic support endorses the principle that awareness of the need outruns the capacity of the educational system to give that kind of training. Likewise, as with low awareness of marketing competence, progress is being made: since 1984 BRTU has offered a course in computer applications to over 2,000 participants; certainly some women managers were a part of that enrollment (Yuli, 1990).

Such low competence, as measured by knowledge and usage, strongly implies that at the enterprise and factory level, Chinese female managers are woefully behind their Western counterparts in using modern technology in their business tasks. And as a result of not knowing the capabilities of computers, few see the value in and offer support for computer/information systems.

Table 3 also includes the percentages for the male managers. They too are computer illiterate, over 80% never having used them for work or knew nothing about them.

Table 3 about here.

EDUCATIONAL PREPARATION

Related to career paths within Chinese industry is the educational preparation of the Chinese woman manager. Up front this generalization may be stated: she falls behind her Asian and U.S. female managerial counterparts. Of course progress has occurred. For example in 1986 47,900 of the students in institutions of higher learning in China were women; one year later that figure had increased to 64,700, a phenomenal increase. (China Stat, 1988, p. 793)

Data are unavailable as to the percentage of women graduating in 1987, the latest year of tabulated information. However, of the 532,000 students graduating from institutions of higher education, at least 25-30% would have been female. Again, that

percentage may appear low to Western thinking, but over the years there has been an increase of women attending college, suggesting that slowly, albeit glacially slow, women began to take courses, attend college, and weave themselves into the fabric of managerial responsibility.

With that as a prologue, there are specific conclusions applicable to the current educational preparation of Chinese female managers.

1. Chinese female managers are less educated than their Asian and U.S. counterparts. Such a conclusion could have been inferred earlier when viewing their miniscule competence in computers, a competence often gained in college or in special adult classes. Warner (1985) writes that at least two-thirds of both female and male managers had few qualifications beyond middle school, and those which did heavily represented engineering backgrounds. (Burstein, 1983; Butterfield, 1987).

Contrastingly, 56.8% of representative female Asian managers (Hildebrandt, Edington, 1987) and 73.6% of U.S. female managers (Hildebrandt, Miller, Edington, 1987) received an undergraduate degree. Again it was former General Secretary Zhao who presciently, at the Sixth National Peoples' Congress, saw the need for improving the educational level of not only managers but the whole of China:

[all] cadres engaged in economic work [should] conscientiously learn economic management and modern science and technology...[In addition] all enterprises and institutions should train their employees in a planned way. To obtain practical results the content and requirements of such training should vary with the posts and ages of employees. From now on, in recruiting workers and staff members, the enterprises must provide pre-job training for candidates and enlist those who have done well in examination. This is to ensure the quality of workers and staff, labour-discipline, production-safety and good condition of equipment in factories and mines." (Warner, 1985, p. 75).

Our data base attempted to determine the female manager's field of study, but a severe coding problem made specifics impossible. Again looking at the number of total undergraduates from institutions of higher learning, from 1983 to 1987 there was an increase of over 40,000 graduates in the area of economics and finance, the traditional business curriculum in China. Similar growth also occurred in the field of engineering and other areas, suggesting an awareness of the importance of education in other areas as well. (*China Stat*, 1988, p. 784).

Post-graduate education for the Chinese female managers is virtually nil. Only one female manager possessed an advanced degree, or .6% of the total. By contrast, 7.7% of her male colleagues had a post-graduate education. Again, those percentages are significantly below female counterparts in other Asian countries and the U.S. There, respectively, the percentages are 8.1% and 28.1%.

Comparative data for undergraduate and post-graduate education levels are found in Table 4.

Insert Table 4 about here

2. Management proficiencies not learned in higher education are being learned in short-term or continuing education programs. One has only to review Western

professors' resumes to recognize that lectures to Chinese managers, in China, is no longer occasional. A lack in modern management methods may be missing in female managerial preparation, but since 1979 the progress in training managers and others in management methods via the China Enterprise Management Association (CEMA) has been extraordinary. That organization, and others--including many universities--has openly invited, even after Tiananmen Square, experts ranging from business law to physical fitness. For example, a recent professor spent 20 sessions on topics ranging from Anglo-American law to shareholders, corporations--securities law, and that in a country with few lawyers (Cameron, 1990).

Two things are occurring: there is an increase in the number of female and male graduates from institutions of higher learning; and, there is an increase in the percentage of women attending seminars on specific business topics. A full three-quarters of the female managers (78%) in our study attended general management courses beyond their formal schooling. As of 1987 there were 74 colleges of economics and finance in the whole of China, seven of them in Beijing alone. (China Stat, 1988, p. 795). Furthermore, we infer that women managers are also attending TV universities, worker's high schools, peasant's high schools, cadre's management colleges, independent correspondence colleges, and evening courses. A recent count suggests that in Beijing there are over 1600 adult education classes administered by the Beijing Adult Education Bureau (Yuli, 1990). What gives the preceding generalizations credibility is that both the oldest female managers (50-55) and the youngest (20-25) had the highest computer competence: the younger gaining expertise in institutions of higher education and the older managers receiving their expertise in some form of continuing education.

As was stated earlier, women firmly support finance and accounting as an area in which to begin their careers. Matching that personal support is their actual attendance in courses in that area: 48% have participated in courses beyond collegiate schooling on that topic.

One surprise occurs. Just over two-thirds of the women managers have attended classes in marketing/sales (37%)--and that in an environment of centralized control. A quick inference is that the increasing number of foreign joint ventures exposes them to the pressures of getting their enterprise products accepted at an international level, or at least introduces them to the necessity for understanding the process in working with joint venture firms.

In descending order from the above top three seminar courses taken beyond formal schooling are: psychology, 29%; written communication, 28%; behavioral science, 23%; public relations, 11%; and oral communication, 5.4%.

3. English is the foremost foreign language used in their managerial relationships. An outgrowth of the above management and functional course learning is language training: those offered through the CEMA, colleges, and private language training. Our questionnaire was unable to determine the extent of short-course foreign language learning. But we have other data. Notably, Chinese women managers--if they possess any language facility--have some expertise in English. It is the dominant foreign language, with varying degrees of capacity.

As many persons competent in a second language attest, reading in a foreign tongue is easier than speaking and writing. Chinese agree: 36.6% of the female managers read in English; 18.3% write; and 11.3% indicate they speak in English. Respectively, Chinese male data are 50.3%; 27%; and 16.6%.

Insert figure 4 about here

Interesting correlations occur between age and language expertise. Figure 4 needs this introduction, from a foreign language professor:

In the early 1950s, I was transferred to the Ministry of Education from the Harbin Foreign Language Training School in Heilongjiang Province. At that time, there was an upsurge of interest in studying Russian. Soon afterwards, the National Steering Committee for Russian Teaching was established under the Ministry of Education. (Fu, 1966)

Figure 4 also permits some conclusions based on three languages, as related to the following assertion: "over the past half century, however, foreign languages have been treated as barometers of the international political climate rather than as communication tools." ("China Diversifies," 1985, p. 9).

Accepting the previous assertion means that current political relationships favor the West and hence English will be preeminent. Conversely, when Russia as a country was favored, the Russian language should show growth. Therefore in 1950 during the Korean war when relations chilled with the U.S., English, though relatively still high, began a decline, lasting until 1955 when a precipitous increase occurred, and as warming relations between the two countries continued. As relations with Russia warmed, proficiency and interest in Russian grew, only to begin a decline around 1970. Japanese, as a language for female managers, was never strong over the past 40 years; it will be interesting to assess whether the Japanese language will increase in importance as economic ties between China and Japan increase. (Hildebrandt, Liu, 1990). Complete data for several languages is in Table 5.

Unless U.S. political relationships with China deteriorate, English will continue to be China's principal foreign language. Indeed, it is possible that over 50 million ("China Diversifies," 1985, P. 10) Chinese learn English as early as age 10, and can thereafter take nine years of English language study, concluding with English departments of institutions of higher education. Indeed, English has become a major part of high tech industries and even if the political climate with the U.S. was altered, the English language would still be interwoven with enterprise activities and even be a necessary qualification for enterprise promotion (Pride, Liu, 1988; Hildebrandt, Liu, 1990).

Insert Table 5 about here

Female managers indicate they know two other languages though at a lesser mastery: Japanese and French. Just 7.5% of the females read Japanese; 4.3% write it; and only 1.6% write it. For French the data are 1.1%; .5%; and .5%; respectively.

It is our proposition that English and Japanese familiarity will continue, as China forges commercial links between itself and outside countries. English continues to receive recognition, dominantly over other languages. For instance, since 1988 Radio Canada International and McGill University have broadcast an English-language radio program called Everyday English (Xia, 1990). Over 300,000 people were listeners, many of whom attended live sessions at the broadcast studios. In sum, opportunities to study English will increase, and along with that a corresponding increase in female understanding of that language.

4. Few female managers have studied abroad. That assertion is not unusual in isolation; it only becomes so when noting that a surprising 5% of U.S. female managers (Hildebrandt, Miller, Edington, 1987) worked and studied abroad, whereas no Chinese manager in our study had that opportunity. When the Chinese females did leave their country, they primarily visited Japan (6.5%); the U.S. (5.4%); Western Europe (4.8%); and Hong Kong, (7%). As a sign of indifferent relations between Russia and China, none of them visited Russia and only one studied there.

5. Chinese female managers recommend different courses for young people preparing themselves for general management business careers. It is expected that in a centrally controlled society ranking and ordering of courses will be different than those of the West. Perhaps a Biblical assertion is in order: the last shall be first. This is true for the immediately following conclusion.

--Communication, oral and written, is of insignificant importance to Chinese women managers.

For years the capstone of U.S. females course recommendations has been communication, oral and written. Chinese females rank communication courses next to last, only business law being ranked lower. Briefly, such a low ranking is not unusual in a strict hierarchical system: there is less need to argue, offer a different point of view, amend something previously adopted. Directives, plans, resolutions come from above, only to be implemented at lower levels.

--International business, as course preparation for general management, receives inconsequential support.

That allegation is sanctioned when we realize that few female managers have significant awareness of their product's technological and marketing prominence within and outside of China. Just 3.1% are very aware of their industry within China while 34.6%, also within China, have some awareness of their product's technological and production situation.

If there is little awareness of their product within their own country, or slight comprehension of what parallel enterprises and factories are doing, it follows that even less awareness is present on a global level. Such is the case. Less than two percent (1.3%) of the women are very well informed of their product's technological and production situation in the world; 18.8% know something. The rest are little or very little informed, and 11.% know nothing at all of their product's position beyond China.

Similar low product knowledge pertains to the marketing of their product worldwide: 15.3% know nothing of world marketing of their product; 1.3% are well informed; and the remainder fall into the category of possessing little information.

But an interesting--seeming contradiction--occurs when a different question is asked: what kind of relationship do they wish with a foreign enterprise? Laying aside a low awareness of their product worldwide, they, out of nine choices, support a joint venture relationship, above all others. Just over a third (35.2%) indicate that choice.

What the above statistics suggest is that Chinese female managers have a marginal grasp of global business affairs, and to some extent even within their own country. Yet, they sense a need for and involvement with foreign enterprises. As China

becomes more global in outlook that desire by women managers, and males, should increase.

--Accounting and human resource management courses are ranked first and second as good preparation for careers in general management.

We are not surprised at the first named course; it permits an understanding of the financial and internal workings of an enterprise. Somewhat surprising is their second recommendation. U.S. female managers position personnel matters fifth. Our inference is that Chinese women--in their role as managers of employees--desire to know more of the interpersonal skills needed to work with and motivate workers.

--Business law or the legal environment is the lowest ranked course area as preparation for general management.

It is difficult to get precision when speaking of law in China inasmuch as available data (China Stat, 1988, p. 787ff.) joins together politics and law regarding graduates and number of schools. In 1987 there were 5,216 professors teaching in those two areas; 12,639 graduates from institutions of higher education; and 25 colleges of politics and law. Conceivably, some of those students were women. But at the moment women female managers sense little need for or understanding of law as part of their training.

That attitude may be culturally supported. In women's daily interchanges outside of work they sought to fulfill agreements as best they could, habitually based on a deep sense of obligation. Not to do so was a loss of face. Therefore, what is the need for legalisms when heretofore codifications were not needed? One could argue that at the enterprise level there would be laws affecting business relationships. Here too there was and is--in a country still developing--little contract law, a fact soon realized in negotiations between Western companies and China. And say what we wish about China's lack of gender discrimination, women would not have played a significant role in legal discussions. Thus they were not habitually involved in legal matters: the result was an unawareness of the legal strands needed to tie together internal linkages, and even less understanding of the heavy legalistic infrastructure of Western companies. Table 6 offers the complete data for all recommended courses.

Insert Table 6 about here

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DISCUSSION

There are hazards in predicting future progress of Chinese female managers. However, some of the clues in the preceding information suggest the following expectations.

1. Given that China is a centrally planned economy, given that the tenets of Confucianism still pervades many avenues of life, given that parallel communication channels--party and government--exist, it will take years to dislodge, or even amend, the principle of subservience to authority. Responsibility, authority, and subservience are not unknown to Chinese women managers, borne for years on the Confucian ideas wherein the family system was supreme. Women were subservient to their spouses; they took for granted that the patrilineal tradition pervaded their lives. Women's status, for years, was subordinate.

Once a woman entered the workplace, often in the more menial tasks associated with production operations, her heritage of subservience, brought over from her home, was not easily dislodged. She followed orders. Then she became a manager: her enduring heritage soon came into conflict with the demands of her position. Accepting control from above and yet having to make decisions on her own created dissonance. Hence, her appraisal of communication as an insignificant part of her managerial preparation suggests a lingering nod toward her heritage where she listened, accepted, followed. As a manager she reached a position of authority, and that new power was something uncommon.

Women managers became part of a channel, receiving directive statements from higher authorities which permitted some individual interpretation: on the political and government level. Both communication avenues did two things: carrying messages of ideological concepts to her, and those messages sought to marry the enterprise closely, through her and her subordinates, to the centrality of governmental purposes formed layers above.

Thus female dissonance may be due to two cultural forces: one, she is pulled in the direction of recognizing the Confucian tradition and its value system of less recognition to women, and two, on the other hand being aware of the Maoist principle that women should be equal in the Communist system. Add to those forces and the inbred cultural value of relationships based on strong personal affiliation instead of contractual relationships and her dissonance is amplified.

In the first instance she must challenge a system born of years, not easily dislodged, not given to popular support, and probably not supported by the majority of women in positions similar to hers. Her instincts may shout that she is as capable as her male counterparts, but erasing--or at least amending--the hierarchical system of male superiority demands that she and her female counterparts influence both tradition and their roles within that value system. Undoubtedly, that hierarchical system, and inbred tradition, was more characteristic of the rural rather than the urban areas.

Conversely, the principle of equality under Communism, suggests that she may possess more autonomy, permitting her to move to positions of authority if her credentials are equal to that of the males. That is the ideal; reality is different. Indeed, if the principle of perfect equality between the genders were alive there would be as many female managers as males. Such is not the case, regardless of the Maoist locution that "women hold up half the sky."

If one plays out the above two cultural forces it follows that considerable time must pass before female--and male--attitudinal changes will occur to reach equality in managerial positions. Male managers do not face those two opposing issues; their lot is easier--so too in other Western countries where women, at least in principle--did not have as much chauvinist baggage characteristic of Confucian ideology.

In general, the role of females in Chinese enterprises demands both a competence in their managerial position and an ability to accept an enduring tradition.

There is a positive. Her personal dissonance will not paralyze her in the Chinese enterprise. She will have opportunities to interpret the myriad of doctrines emanating from ministries far above her in the hierarchy. Surely her remoteness from the seat of power will offer risks in amending decisions. But with her improving acceptance in the world of work she will make decisions on the local level, for the good of her enterprise.

2. Ideology as a role in Chinese enterprises will continue to cycle its way through Chinese society and business. There will be continued competition between ideology as an entrance criterion into the managerial ranks, and, women's managerial competence. Our study data suggest that the women managers devote considerable time, individually and within groups, to ideological study; it permeates both their personal and work environment. Thus the question: which will win out, ideology or individual job competence? Three possibilities may occur. First, if ideology wins and is given added momentum in the party, choices of which route to follow--ideology or personal competence--will produce continuing conflict, and women will walk a personal tightrope with unpalatable options.

A brief historical perspective is in order before reviewing the other options, as an ideological portent for the future. From the beginning of the 20th century, Chinese female and male intellectuals traveled, became educated, and intermingled with other cultures outside China. There they saw that women were accorded more recognition, politically, economically, and individually. Those attitudes, and awareness of the role of women, were brought back to China, where those pioneers of the Chinese women's movement found it difficult to enlist women in supporting a further emancipation of Chinese women. Why? Chinese women were less educated, were hampered in reading the statements of the returning travelers, and were impacted by the enduring Confucian principles of male superiority. Nonetheless, the status of Chinese women slowly began to rise.

Further impetus for the status of women occurred during the Maoist Revolution after the Communist Party took over mainland China. Among its many principles was the idea that all should work, all should make a contribution to society. Thus women began to contribute outside the home. Additionally, there arose the principle of equal pay for equal work, leading to the axiom that women hold up half the sky in politics, economics, culture, and many other areas of society. As important in getting women into the workplace were amendments to the marriage law, giving her more equality of status in the home and the ability to remove herself from an undesirable marriage. In short, her stature as an individual received a momentum that in time would increase even more under the next step, the Cultural Revolution.

There, under the impetus of Mao's wife--as part of the Gang of Four--attempts were made to give women more leverage and status, which to some observers was a subsidiary ploy to give Mao's wife increasing power to subsequently become head of

China. Adamant quotas were fixed by the Communist Party: women were to receive positions of prominence at most levels of government and industry. Therefore, more women entered the heretofore closed territory, namely that of the enterprise. What did these women possess in the way of managerial and technical skills? Very little. What did she possess? She possessed the ability to understand and a willingness to promote the principles of communist ideology: she could teach others about a concept, an idea, a point of view--desired by the Party--, which in only a minor way prepared her for managerial and technical supervision. It may be argued that for some her entrance into the managerial world was in some way a reward for Party loyalty. Indeed, the 23.5% of the women managers in this study entered the enterprise via a side door, in place of the front door of exemplary managerial competence.

Subsequent to the Cultural Revolution quotas for women were abolished, and under Zhao attempts were made to decrease the influence of the party. Today, there appears to be no dimming of the power of the party, at least at the moment. Thus a second option of business principles, economic awareness, technical brilliance completely replacing party ideology is unlikely, less so in light of the incidents of Tiananmen Square. Hence, women managers will continue to populate managerial positions, knowing that an ideological passion, perhaps even mandated by a woman steeped in ideology, may at times take precedence over her own managerial decisions affecting the productivity of her enterprise, or unit.

Option number three is even less unlikely: women refusing subservience to ideological strictures and demanding recognition of their managerial and technical competence. While such a move would place women closer to Western managerial practices, such an unlikely event foretells a continuation of the importance of ideology, and women's capitulation within that system.

What the above three options suggest is that the political system grants women entrance into an enterprise. But as our data endorse, once there, she seeks promotions to other areas of the operation, but without the guarantee that there will be a promotion.

In sum, while slight glimmers of discontent at the intrusion of the party into economic practices continue, under the current philosophy, some women managers will continue to opt for Party, and ideological tenets which accompany that model. Any future leap forward will be centrally instituted, not entirely by women managers, but by philosophic/theological tenets which overreach economic and business concerns. The fact that fewer women today would start their careers in the political/ideology area suggests (1) an awareness of the importance of possessing functional managerial tools and (2) a realization that the ideological door has narrowed, under the influence of economic and political reforms initiated under Zhao.

3. For years only a small elite group of women were educated and permitted to work outside the home, essentially denying their gender managerial and technical competence for years to come. One may turn to the beginning of the 20th century when women's rights slowly began to emerge (Sheridan, Salaff, 1984), but for the most part those early feminine stirrings related to remove themselves from the constraints of the home and pursue an education or a spouse of their choice. What also slowed women's entry into the world of education was a lack of a universally acknowledged principle of equality, as was more the case in the U.S. in its Declaration of Independence or in France's Rights of Man. China had no such document or principle for women to cluster

around. Those women who sought freedoms beyond the home and in the workplace were often on their own.

Progress for educational pursuits was slow, more so in rural than urban areas. In the former the family still prize the boys, for they would continue to contribute to the home; a girl could marry and leave, so, why have her educated? Then too, families have to pay for schooling, as much as \$13US to send a young woman to school for a year. In a peasant home that amount is staggering. Add the additional impasse of a high drop-out rate for girls at an early age and it follows that fewer women from the rural areas will achieve positions of prominence (Kristof, 1990). Urban areas are more hospitable to young girls: there a mandate that all children attend school makes their entrance easier, and ensures an educational base which may eventually lead to a more significant position.

A sharp retreat from the momentum to educate females, and males, occurred during the Cultural Revolution. During that time persons with a desire to study, to become educated were also pressured to be reeducated into the principles of Communist ideology: via the ordinary peasants in rural areas, by workers in factories, and by soldiers in the military. A usual accompaniment was to also learn the hardships of physical labor. Detachment of intellectuals from the masses was desirable, with negative consequences for women, and males, in the enterprise: the resulting hiatus in managerial training imperiled managerial talent for years. Thus it comes as no surprise that women--(1) initially denied an education, (2) sent off to work the land if they possessed an education--would have little knowledge of basic managerial topics taken for granted in the West. Additionally, child rearing took them from work; educational avenues were restrained during the Cultural Revolution; early retirement forced them from the workplace; few courses on managing managers prepared them for their position.

Positive changes are afoot. Our sense of the women managers is that they consider education a prerogative, no longer limited to the privileged, to the males, to the wealthy. They seem to support pragmatic values in education; practical courses--in place of heavy indoctrination courses--are desired; human resource management--a highly desirable course for the women managers--is sensed to prepare them for motivating and directing employees; English is their language of choice: learned either in school, at their enterprise, or even via radio and TV. They do not approach their role as did their predecessors in the early 1900s, who often sought a personal independence; today, there is still a latent desire for that independence, but also a seeming willingness to work within the system.

Given the current favorable attitude toward education in China--males and females--, there is no doubt that female managerial excellence will increase. Major strides have been made from a period of denying women any education to granting more of them that opportunity. Despair is absent. In its place is a sincere desire to taste, sample, learn, participate--in programs which prepare them for positions of responsibility.

4. Upward career progress for women managers is not guaranteed, regardless of their competence in ideology or managerial adequacy. We see four impediments: first, mobility within the enterprise is easier to achieve than attaining a promotion outside to another related or unrelated enterprise. Bureaucratic and governmental hurdles of changing their geographic location is difficult. With ease they could move from a larger city to a smaller one. But the obverse is virtually impossible. Beijing, Shanghai fragment at the seams, as do other large cities. Thus women managers may possess competence, but their career path is filled with nettles: size limitations of the community

where her expertise is needed, and as important, the approval of her enterprise to release her to another location. If she possesses competence in English, the opportunity to leave is even less.

Second, in most instances her education is less than that of her spouse. In that regard she is a prisoner of her gender, where, according to tradition, the husband oversees her through life. Her position--even in her own home--slows her movement toward an improved status conferred through a higher education.

A third impediment arises. Male employees, regardless of the principle of a classless society, may resist a power structure headed by a woman. If some enterprises are reflections of the family-type structure, both she and her male colleagues will continue to find it difficult to mask years of tradition. Maybe that's why there is so much hunger on the part of the female managers to increase the level of their education; to release them from the shackles of second position, and at least give them the possibility of better opportunities.

Last, if the momentum toward openness begun around 1978 continues, such an attitude will widen the economic and managerial horizons of the women managers. Now, they travel little. But as their enterprise explores joint venture relationships, as they link their outmoded technology with developed nations, as they return from managerial seminars abroad or within China, as they enlarge their educational backgrounds, as they grasp the economic vehicles ridden by Western nations to economic success, they too will join their footprints with others in a more global society. Such intercourse will occur slowly. But the fact that changes are occurring should improve her chances equal to that of her female peers around the world.

Is there despair in the faces of the Chinese woman manager? Hardly. She has made inordinate progress in a tightly controlled country. Is she behind her peers in other countries? Yes. But, her awakening willingness to improve her lot is a testament to resilience, however long it may take.

Notes

¹Some of the following information is incremental to information found in a previous article on Chinese women (Hildebrandt, Liu, 1988b). We also pause to acknowledge the indirect support given by Professor Oiva Laaksonen, late of the Helsinki School of Economics. His support of our research in China lead to fruitful discussions and interpretations. Linda Lim, Lecturer in International Business, School of Business, University of Michigan, and Interim Director, Center for International Business Education, also suggested significant changes in the initial manuscript, as did Tom Roehl, Visiting Assistant Professor of International Business, University of Michigan.

²Only those who have attempted research in China know the scholarly hurdles which must be overcome. Our statement in the text is not criticism, rather implies that to gather data, and retrieve it in a form quickly transferable to the computer, is difficult. Our burdens were no less than other scholars.

³Light Industry refers to industry which produces consumer goods and hand tools. It consists of two categories, depending on the materials used:

- 1) Industries using farm products as raw materials. These are branches of light industry which directly or indirectly use farm products as basic raw materials, including the manufacture of food and beverages, tobacco processing, textile, clothing, fur and leather manufacture, paper making, printing, etc.
- 2) Industries using non-farm products as raw materials. These are branches of light industry which use manufactured goods as raw materials, including the manufacture of cultural and educational articles, crafts and arts products, chemical pharmaceuticals, chemical fibres, chemicals, glassware and metal products for daily use, hand tools, medical instruments, and the manufacture of cultural and office machinery.

⁴We realize the bare figure of \$33 million is meaningless without some criterion as to what that figure means. Although the China Statistical Yearbook (China Stat., 1988, p. 269) suggests that industrial enterprises are categorized as small, medium, and large, there is no indication as to the parameters for each of those categories. Additionally, the number of industrial enterprises which fall into the small-large ranking is precise: small, 483,708; medium, 6,957; and large, 2,908. We have used our own criteria--as based on number of employees--to suggest that less than 100 is small; medium 100-500; and large, over 1000 employees.

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Employees	Percentage
Less than 100	6.4
100-500	25.1
500-1,000	18.7
1,000-2,500	19.9
2,500-5,000	14.6
5,000-10,000	14.0
Over 10,000	<u>1.2</u>
	100.0*

*Rounding will sometimes result in percentages greater or less than 100%.

Functions	First Job	Current Job	Fastest Route Up	If Starting Over
Production/Operations	23.5%	17.0%	18.6%	10.1%
Political/Ideology	23.5	8.5	17.8	2.5
General Management/ Administration	17.6	21.2	20.3	24.5
Research & Development	11.8	11.5	6.8	17.0
Other	11.8	7.9	4.2	5.7
Finance/Accounting	5.9	18.2	14.4	18.2
Personnel/Labor Relations	5.9	6.1	5.9	6.9
Computer/Information Systems	--	1.8	1.7	5.0
Law	--	--	0.8	4.4
Marketing/Sales	--	7.9	8.5	5.0

	Females	Males
Design Related	5.5%	5.8%
General Management	5.5	13.2
Never Used in Work	41.5	48.3
Know Nothing About Computers	47.6	32.8

Level of Education	Chinese	Asian	U.S.
Less than H.S.	3.3%	1.8%	4.0%
H.S. Graduate	34.4	20.7	--
Some College	33.9	18.9	22.4
Undergraduate Degree	27.8	56.8	73.6
Post-Graduate Degree	.6	8.1	28.1

More usual in Western countries is the term Graduate Degree. Educators in China prefer Post-Graduate Degree, hence in this table and throughout the article we use the preferred Chinese designation.

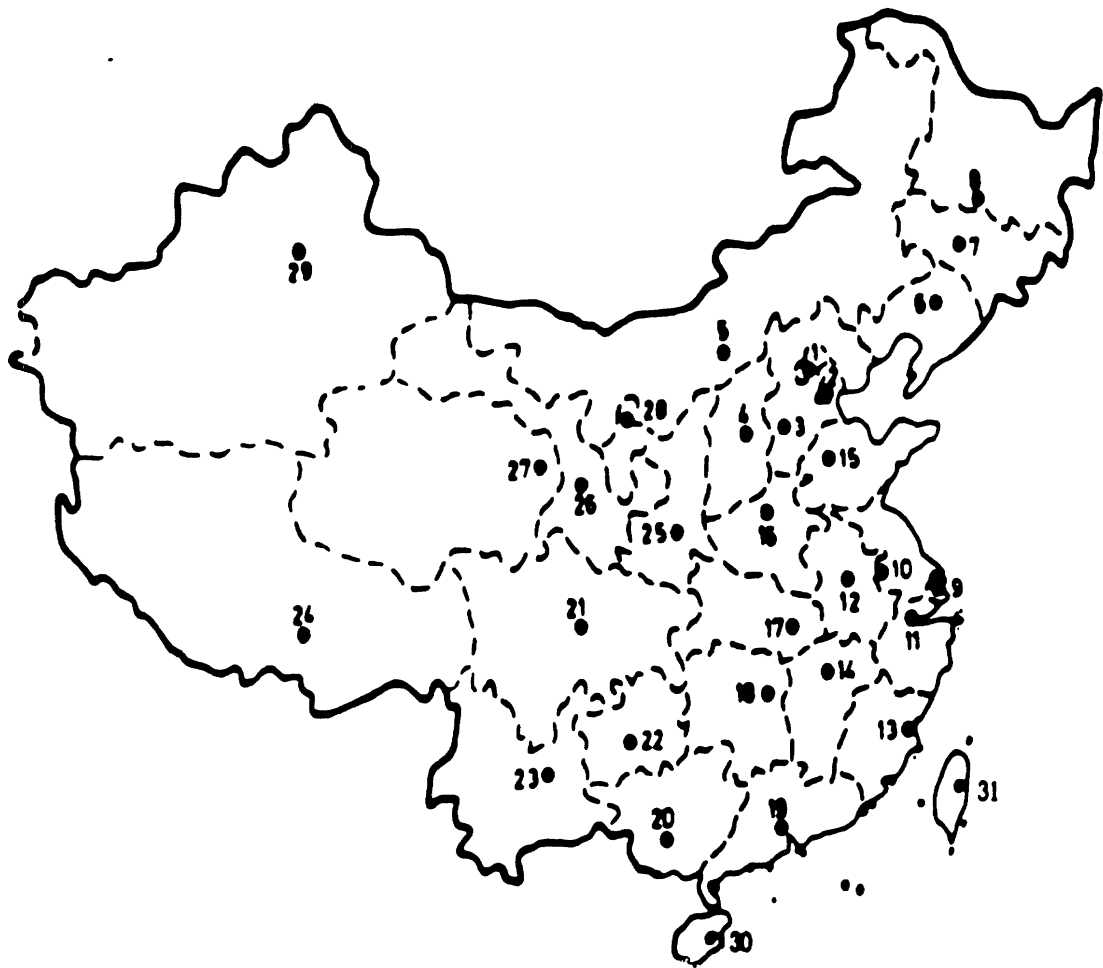
Table 5. Language Competence

Age Groups	Language Competence of Female Chinese Managers					
	English		Russian		Japanese	
	Competent	Noncompetent	Competent	Noncompetent	Competent	Noncompetent
20-25	50.0%	50.0%	16.6%	83.3%	0.0%	100%
26-30	33.3	66.6	13.3	86.6	6.6	93.3
31-35	39.3	60.6	18.1	81.8	9.0	90.9
36-40	25.4	74.5	14.5	85.4	3.6	96.3
41-45	62.1	37.8	24.3	75.6	5.4	94.5
46-50	13.6	86.3	13.6	86.3	9.0	90.9
51-55	31.2	68.7	6.2	93.7	6.2	93.7

Table 6. Courses as Preparation for Careers in General Management

	Female Chinese Managers		Female U.S. Managers	
	Mean	Very Important	Mean	Very Important
Accounting	1.58	53.1%	1.79	33.2%
Personnel/Industrial Relations	1.78	38.8	1.69	45.5
Finance	1.82	36.9	1.70	44.0
Computer/Information Systems	1.98	27.6	1.43	62.3
Production/Operations	2.03	32.0	1.99	28.5
Advertising/Sales Promotion	2.03	20.8	2.30	13.1
Statistics	2.10	26.0	2.21	18.8
Marketing	2.22	17.6	1.81	36.3
Business Economics/Public Policy	2.34	13.8	1.79	38.3
Business Policy/Planning	2.37	14.3	1.51	56.6
International Business	2.50	11.9	2.53	9.0
Business Communication--Oral	2.50	9.0	1.14	87.8
Business Communication--Written	2.55	8.4	1.17	85.5
Business Law	2.63	8.3	1.94	30.8

Respondents were given a choice of ranking the values of the various courses, from 1-high to 5-low. The category "Very Important" had a value of 1, the highest ranking.



	Females		Males			Females		Males	
	N	%	N	%		N	%	N	%
Provinces					Provinces				
3. Hebei	14	7.6	44	5.4	17. Hubei	2	1.1	13	1.6
4. Shanxi	1	.5	14	1.7	18. Hunan	1	.5	8	1
6. Jilin	1	.5	14	1.7	19. Guangdong	2	1.1	13	1.6
7. Liaoning	2	1.1	32	3.9	21. Sichuan	3	1.6	46	5.7
8. Heilongjiang	3	1.6	22	2.7	22. Guizhou	--	--	8	1
10. Jiangsu	2	1.1	30	3.7	23. Yunnan	--	--	5	.6
11. Zhejiang	--	--	6	.7	25. Shaanxi	--	--	10	1.2
12. Anhui	--	--	11	1.4	26. Gansu	1	.5	8	1
13. Fujian	3	1.6	23	2.8	27. Qinghai	--	--	8	1
14. Jinagxi	2	1.1	10	1.2	30. Hainan	--	--	3	.4
15. Shandong	40	21.7	134	16.5	31. Taiwan	--	--	--	--
16. Henan	5	2.7	82	10.1					
Municipalities					Autonomous Regions				
1. Beijing	98	53.3	243	29.9	5. Inner Mongolia	--	--	5	.6
2. Tianjin	--	--	5	.6	20. Guangxi	--	--	4	.5
9. Shanghai	2	1.1	10	1.2	24. Tibet	--	--	--	--
					28. Ningxia	--	--	2	.2
					29. Xinjiang	2	1.1	1	.1

Figure 1. Provinces, Autonomous Regions, and Municipalities of China. Male managers are included to suggest their increased mobility over that of their female counterparts.

Central Government Organization

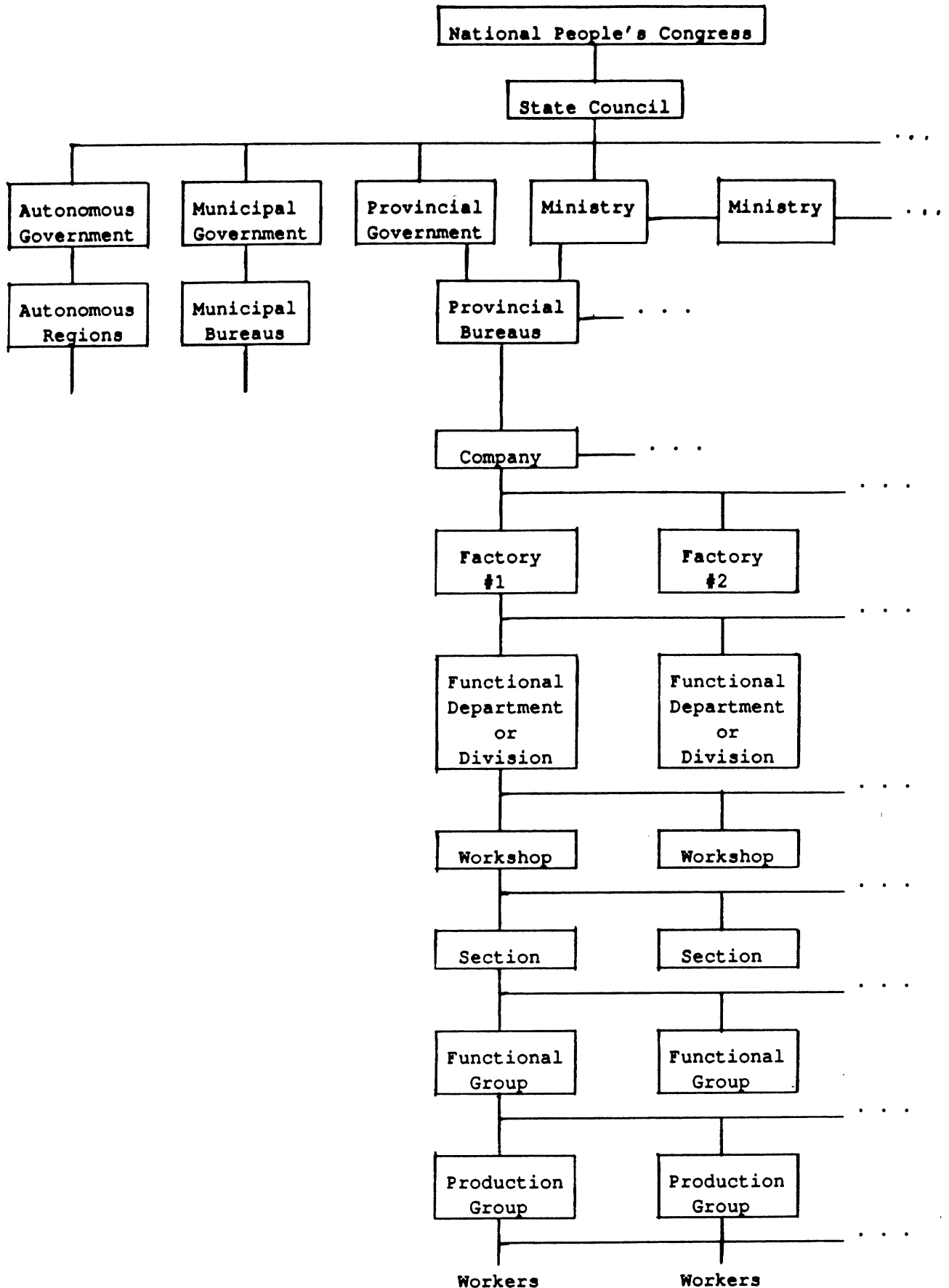


Figure 2. Central Government Structure

Chinese Communist Party

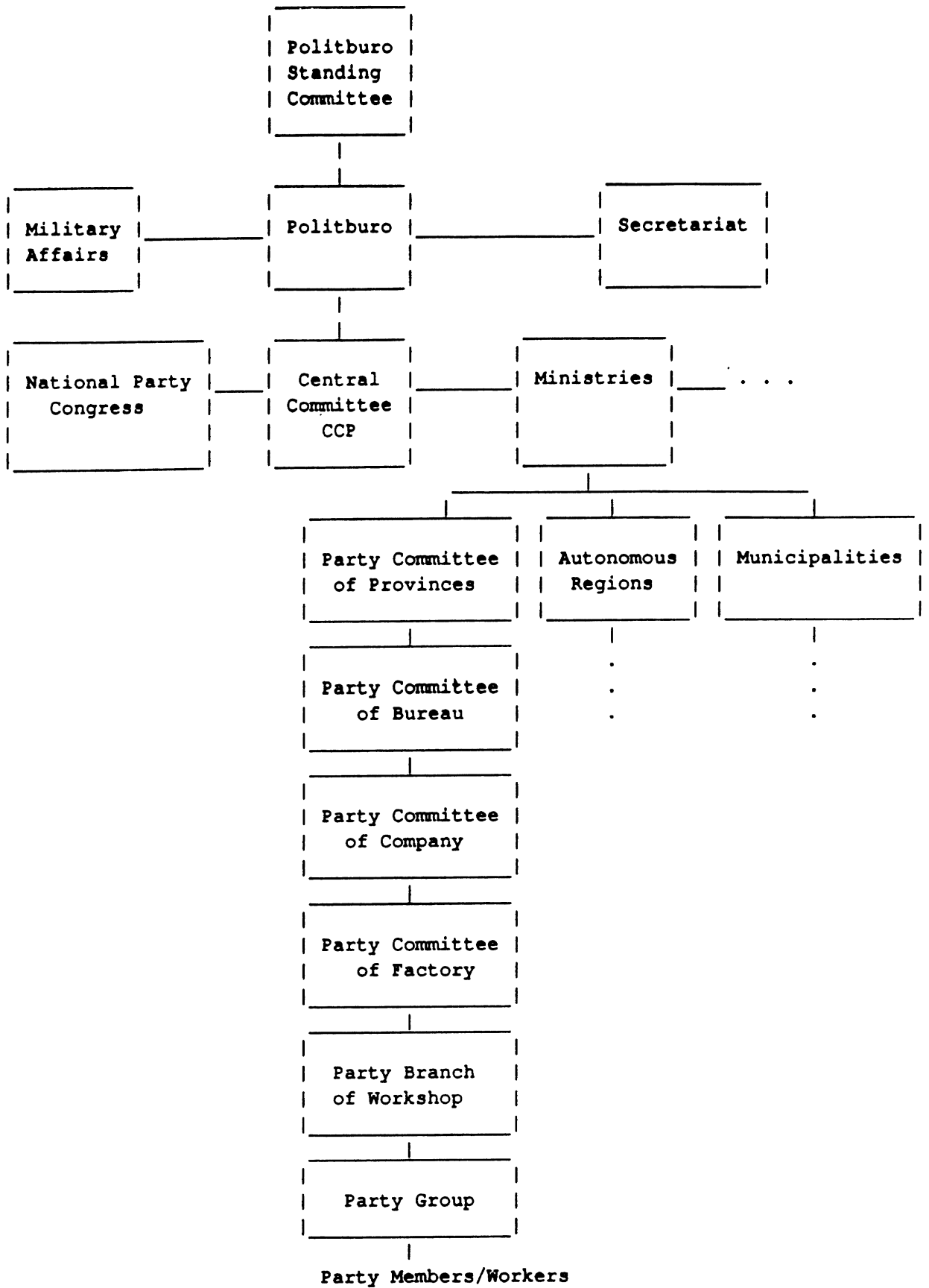


Figure 3. Chinese Communist Party Structure

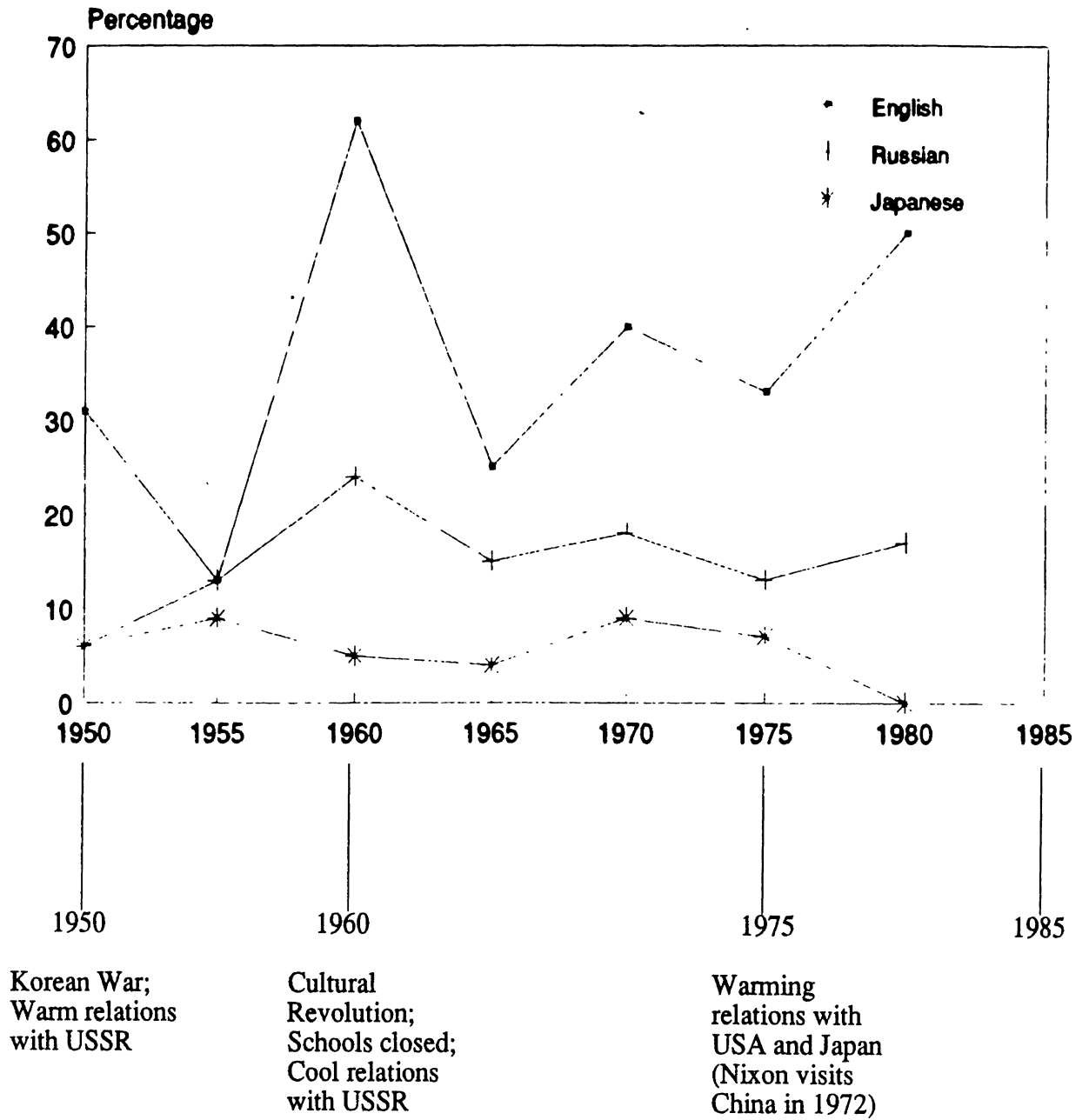


Figure 4. Female Managers' Language Competence and Political Climate

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