On Fire in Weibo Feminist Online Activism in China

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The year 2012 witnessed a new wave of feminism in mainland China with feminist performance art in the street and feminist online activism. Through examining three significant online activities in China since 2012, this paper explores how feminists have made the social media, especially Weibo, their new stage for feminist activities that are different from the traditional ones and that are able to provoke heated discussions among both the public and the mainstream media. Through Weibo and the other social media, grass-roots feminists have opened up a new bottom-up mode of activism different from the dominant top-down paradigm prevalent since the 1980s.

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A new chapter of the feminist movement in China has begun in the past two years.1 The year 2012 witnessed exciting changes in feminist activities, some of which included the emergence of feminist street performance art against gender inequality and sexism, and the controversial feminist online activism in Weibo.2

With "feminist phobia" prevalent in post-Mao China,3 feminists have long been stigmatised and their discussions on gender issues mostly ignored. However, since 2012, a new kind of feminist action-street performance art-conducted mainly by the "grass-roots (caogen)" young feminist activists,4 have attracted attention not only from the mass media and the general public, but also from the government. The first performance art of this kind was "Occupying Men's Room" in February 2012 in Guangzhou, which aimed to fight for more women's public toilets and also marked the beginning of the new feminist movement in China. Another two landmarks in feminist performance art were: "Shaving Bold Head Action" to fight against the sexism in college enrolment, also in February 2012 in Guangzhou, and "I Can Be Slutty, But You Cannot Harass Me" action in Shanghai to protest against the sexist statement by the municipal subway authorities in June 2012.5

It is signifi cant that the veteran feminists6 from feminist non-governmental organisations (NGO) or intellectual circles have been active in providing such young feminist activists with all kinds of support, such as offering funding, training on how to raise feminist consciousness and on how to conduct feminist street activities to attract the attention of the mass media and the public, as well as making the theoretical arguments to further the young feminist activists' actions, etc. The two important feminist NGOs to support the young feminist activists are the Media Monitor for Women Network in Beijing7 and the New Media Women Network in Guangzhou.8

Such cooperation among the feminists is also demonstrated in their use of new media.9 The young feminist activists have made the best use of social media, mainly Weibo, to share real time information about their every activity so as to attract more attention and to provoke discussions on gender issues among the general public. The veteran feminists have backed up the young feminist activists by writing comprehensive reports on their actions with clearer and more systematic feminist ideas and arguments in their influential online journals, such as Women's Voice affiliated to the Media Monitor for Women Network. In the last two years, with their use of the new media, the feminists in China have been able to make feminist activities and arguments more visible to the public.

It is under such circumstances that the new media, especially Weibo, is becoming a new stage for feminist activism. With over 500 million users-almost the same size as the population of Chinese netizens,10 Weibo has become the most important new social medium in China. Although the mass media and many levels of public participation are strictly res tricted by the government under the state policy of "Harmonious Society," in reality, the internet, especially a platform like Weibo, has offered a comparatively freer, non-hierarchical and participatory space for the general public, especially for the marginalised and the stigmatised, to conduct online activities to fight for their rights. Although Weibo is still censored by the government in China, it is believed that such censorship is not very effective after all, for its fast dissemination and large population of users have made the messages spread through it quite irrepressible. As a result, feminists have tried to transform Weibo into their new stage to conduct online activities that are even more "outrageous" than their controversial street performance art in the offline world. The three landmark feminist online activities that have

stirred up heated discussions in the mass media and among the general public are "Nudity against Domestic Violence (DV)"-feminists posting their naked pictures for petition on anti-DV;11 Ye Haiyan's protest against a headmaster's molesting of schoolgirls and Ai Xiaoming's nudity in support of Ye;12 the celebration of the 10th anniversary of The Vagina Monologues performed in China and "the Vagina Event" with about 17 female college students from the Beijing Foreign Studies University (BFSU) posting pictures online quoting what their vaginas say.13

Although feminist online activism is blossoming in Weibo in China, little scholarly attention has been paid to such a topic. Although there is an increasing scepticism about online activism as "slacktivism" (Morozov 2009), especially in the Western world, it is worth asking to what extent feminists in China are empowered by the new media. What kind of changes have they made through such online activism for themselves as well as for the feminist movement in China?

In this paper, I explore these questions through my investigation of the emerging feminist online activism in China since 2012 via Weibo. In doing so, I will draw the picture of feminism in the making in China in the age of new media, showing how feminists enact their agency and creativity and carry out a new feminist politics via this internet platform. Online activism in this paper refers to "the contentious activities associated with the use of the internet and other new communication technologies" (Yang 2009: 3), which can be classified as "internet-enhanced" or "internet-based" (Vegh 2003: 71).

The three online activities I mentioned above are considered as milestones in the emerging feminist online activism, and they have been included among the Top 10 Events on Gender in China in 2012 and 2013, respectively,14 attracting great attention from both the general public and the mass media. I have collected my data mainly from two Weibo accounts-The Women's Voice,15 affiliated to Media Monitor for Women Network, and the Women's Awakening,16 affiliated to New Media Women Network. My observation lasted from February 2012 to the end of 2013. The data I have collected include the reports, comments, discussions, debates and the detailed special reports on the above three online activities from the Weibo accounts and from a few other related internet resources.

I have begun my analysis by reviewing the development of feminist activism in China since the establishment of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949 so as to lay out the historical background for my arguments about the changes the feminists have made via Weibo. Exploring the features of feminist online activism, I note that they include: the importance of the body, the diverging and converging relationship between online activities and offline activities, and its decentred nature. Through such activism, I argue, the feminists could: enact their agency and creativity in making a new genre of body politics by transforming their own bodies into a battlefield against gender and political repression; form a diversified feminist network; and establish an open coalition with the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community, all of which could not be addressed in the traditional feminist activism.

Feminist Activism in Mao and Post-Mao Eras

Since the establishment of the PRC, gender equality and protecting women have been part of state policy. The All-China Women's Federation (ACWF) was formed in April 1949 under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to implement such a policy named "women's work" (funv gongzuo). As a result, gender equality was guaranteed by the state through ensuring an equal ratio between men and women in the state-owned enterprises and state institutions. In addition, with the ACWF's "women's work" and the government's propaganda about the idea of the "iron maiden"-the proud image of the masculinised woman working as hard as her male counterparts, women were socialised into gender-equal belief and they strived for both personal and social equality. However, such implementation of "gender equality" in Mao's era has been questioned by many scholars. On the one hand, the "women's work" in that period had to conform to or be subordinated to the statist project (Wang 2005: 523). On the other, the female subjectivity is actually eliminated in masculinising women, since masculinity then becomes the universal standard (Li 1999: 270). Even Elisabeth Croll (1978), who feels otherwise optimistic about the changes in women in such a period, points out that women were forced to shoulder the invisible double burden-work in the public and in the family, with the domestic housework not acknowledged, and that women were discouraged from discussing such dilemmas.

In Mao's era, "women's work" was conducted within a socialist state discourse, aiming to improve women's productivity and to seek for political rights for the mass of the women. However, since the open up and reform policy in the 1980s, with the growth of the market economy, women in China began to reshape their gender awareness and female subjectivity from production to consumption, from political rights to personal success (Li 1999; Zhang 2000). It was also in the 1980s that "feminism" as a Western concept was introduced to China via the increasing number of translated works on the development of feminism in the Western societies by the officials from ACWF and the scholars in the universities, both of which belonged to state institutions. Although feminism was rejected as a Western bourgeois discourse and feminists were stigmatised as "freaks," heated discussions on indigenising feminism in China also took place in the intellectual circles. One key argument was about the development of corporeal feminism: to reinvent women's body, which was erased in Mao era, in the real life and in the culture of the post-Mao era (Li 1999; Dai 2001). The 1990s witnessed an upsurge of "body writing" among the female writers challenging the taboos on women's bodies and celebrating women's self-awareness and sexual desires, which were mostly marked in Lin Bai's and Chan Ran's novels.17 In this period, although the feminist activism was blossoming in different aspects, it was mainly conducted in a top- down manner. Such corporeal feminism was confined to intellectual discussions and to literature.

A new wave of feminist activism began in mainland China with the introduction of the concept of the NGO after the Fourth United Nations (UN) Conference on Women (FUNCW) held in Beijing in 1995. While the ACWF has been questioned as a univocal representation of Chinese women and as putting state ideology before feminism (Judd 2002; Wang 2005), the emerging feminist NGOs have been considered as posing a challenge to the ACWF, with diversified women's voices and new spaces for feminist activities beyond the statist project (Hsiung etal 2001; Milwertz 2002; Wesoky 2002). However, the feminist NGOs gradually leaned towards cooperation with the ACWF and the state with their new orientation of "demanding state and public recognition of women's legitimate rights in all spheres of life, as well as enhancing state and public awareness of the effects of gender hierarchy" (Wang 2010: 102).

As a result, feminists in such NGOs have developed an entangled triangular relationship with the ACWF and the state and they have gained their legitimacy and autonomy within such a relationship accordingly. Their feminist activities are conducted in a wider range, whereas they are also constrained to the p olitically correct issues which means conformity to the state ideology which is still patriarchal (Wang 2010:117). As a result, the feminist activism within such a triangular relationship is still conducted in a top-down manner, with the grass-roots feminists rarely seen, not to mention their activities. In addition, sensitive topics such as nudity and lesbian sexuality have long been ignored in such feminist activism as "political incorrect."

Another kind of feminist activism in the same period in China since the 1990s is the establishment of research centres/ institutions on women/gender studies and the increasing courses on feminism and gender in universities are all over China. The professors of such institutions and courses are often members of or have close bonding with the feminist NGOs. As a result, it is commonly seen that feminist activities are conducted by the college girls, such as feminist saloons, 16 Days of Activism against DV, etc. However, most of such feminist activities have been conducted by a small group of college girls within the campus only, not open to the public.

So although there have been changes in feminist activism from seeking political rights in the Mao era to pursuing personal success in the post-Mao era, such activism rarely challenges the government. While feminist activism in the Mao era tried to mobilise the mass of women, its effects beyond the settings related to the state institutions, such as in private business and the domestic field, were questionable. While feminist activism in the post-Mao era seems to switch its focus to the opposite direction, it has also been criticised by a number of feminists, such as Ai Xiaoming, as "seldom cooperating with grassroots women and other parties, and confining its main frontier to the campus, the academia and the intellectual circle rather than being confronted with the general public and society."18

Feminist Activism: Online and Offline

The emergence of grass-roots feminists is attributed to the development of internet in mainland China. While the grass-roots feminists have few resources, they are able to establish their online organisations with much less cost and at the same time avoid government surveillance. Also, the cyberspace is the most accessible arena for public engagement and the grass-roots feminists could mobilise more women to participate via the internet.

In the past few years, the new media, especially Weibo, has become more and more important for the feminists, because of its immediate information sharing and wide range of interaction. As a matter of fact, the young feminist activists have been labelled by the mass media as feminists 2.0 and the new wave of feminist activism led by them as feminist activism 2.0.19 These young activists are especially good at making the best use of the social media, especially Weibo for self-promotion of their feminist activities and for interaction with more people in discussing feminist issues.

The emergence of such grass-roots feminists, especially the young feminist activists, has stimulated new cooperation between them and the veteran NGO feminists. But in fact, such bonding originated from the earlier feminist activism-the gender courses set up by the female professors, who are themselves veteran feminists or closely associated with them. Most of the young feminist activists have been enlightened by those gender courses and gradually identifi ed themselves as feminists. While the veteran feminists offer their help at the back end, such as offering funding and training, the young feminist activists focus on conducting the feminist actions in public, both online and offline.

Scholarly attention has been paid to the online activism in China as a contention to the government (Yang 2006; 2009). Studies on Weibo focus on exploring to what extent it reaches the new public sphere for the grass-roots activists (Jiang and Yan 2010; Guan 2013). The current research on the internet from a gendered perspective is mainly concerned about women's everyday use of it (Khun 2008), such as the re-establishment of female subjectivity online, the phenomenon of online dating, etc. However, very few of the above studies have paid attention to the relationship between feminist activities and the new media, especially Weibo, not to mention the changes the feminists have made via such online activism.

Nudity against Domestic Violence

On 7 November 2012, feminists launched a petition calling for 10,000 signatures to facilitate legislation against DV in China, and signatures were collected both online and offline. On 13 November, when the heat of such a petition was dying out, one of the famous young feminist activists, Xiao Meili, posted a picture of herself with the slogan "Shameful to commit domestic violence; Pride in having fl at chest" inscribed on her naked chest so as to re-attract people's attention to the petition. On top of the picture, "Anti-DV Law" was written in red, followed by "Legislation" in the middle and "Collecting Signature for Petition" at the bottom. Such a picture was crazily retweeted in Weibo and quite a few young feminist activists, lesbian activists and even gay activists followed Xiao and posted similar pictures in Weibo to support such an action. It is interesting that Xiao mixed up the messages with nudity, fl at chest and anti-DV. It is even more interesting that although the participants in the online activism basically followed Xiao's pattern of the photo highlighting the anti-DV theme, most of them added messages about all kinds of taboos regarding the female body and queer identity. For instance, in another photo, Li Maizi, another famous young feminist activist, showed her armpit hair with words reading, "Love for armpit hair; DV is a crime." As for male participants, the gay activist Billy wore a bra in a very girly posture with the slogan, "I can be sissy; you cannot hit me." Another photo from the bisexual lesbian activist Yan in Hangzhou also read, "I love men. I love women. I love whoever I love. It is not the reason for DV."20

This was the first feminist online activism in China highlighting feminists' own nudity and connecting such "controversial" nudity with the political correct issue-anti-DV. As a result, it attracted the great attention from the mass media and provoked heated discussions among the public, mainly on the confusing relationship between the nudity and DV. Yet such online activism also gained support from the veteran feminists with their more detailed explanations for such relationships and their debates with the angry netizens. There was a whole series of special reports organised by Women's Voice issued in Weibo.21 Although this online activity was meant to

enhance the petition for the legislation of anti-DV, it seemed to open up a new space for these young feminist activists to make a corporeal connection with all kinds of feminist issues, which is different from the corporeal feminism discussed above, which was either within intellectual arguments or embodied in the literary writing.

Protests against Sexual Harassment

In May 2013, a primary school headmaster in Wanning took four school girls to a hotel and molested them. Although the sensational case aroused public attention, the investigation did not go smoothly. The parents were condemned by a section of the media for their daughters' inappropriate lifestyles and they were also threatened by some local officers who pressurised them to withdraw the lawsuits.

It was under such circumstances that Ye Haiyan, who is a sex worker and a famous grass-roots feminist in China, went to the school in Wanning to protest and posted in Weibo her picture showing her standing in front of the school, holding a sign: "Headmaster, ask me to go to hotel with you, let go of the children. Contact number 12338." The number is actually the public hotline for women's protection. Her sarcastic yet creative protest was supported by a large number of netizens, who in a short time flooded Weibo with protests basically following Ye's pattern. This activism engaged a much wider range of netizens than usual, including police officers and straight men.

Not long after that, Ye was arrested for her online activism. 22 The young feminist activists immediately initiated an online petition in Weibo to ask for the netizens' signatures to press the police to release Ye, and the famous feminist and scholar Ai Xiao ming showed her support by conducting her own online activism.

On 30 May 2013, Ai Xiaoming posted her nude picture in her blog, with a scissor in her hand symbolising castration, and the words on her bare chest reading: "Ask me to go to hotel with you; let go of Ye Haiyan." The picture was retweeted repeatedly on Weibo the moment it was posted online. A heated discussion on Ai's action was stirred up immediately, with some admiring her bravery and some questioning her morality. Such an online activity also attracted attention from the mainstream online media. In June, Ai's letter explaining her action was issued in the online journal Co-China with the title "Who Is Afraid of the Female Body"23 and the article was shared quickly in Weibo. Later on, the Lady.163.com published a long and exclusive interview with Ai giving more details of her arguments of female's nudity as resistance in the authoritarian context.24

Ai's nudity-based activism surprisingly responded to the earlier "Nudity against DV" beyond her main purpose. Yet her picture and her statements gave the best articulation between nudity, bodily autonomy and resistance against gender and political repression, which had not yet clearly been explained in the earlier online activity. As Ai stated in Co-China, female bodies have been disciplined to be docile, depoliticised to be sexual objects, whereas she aimed to re-politicise the female body as a weapon against the male gaze and state surveillance and to regain the female's bodily autonomy by demonstrating her "ugly" and "abnormal" female body as a fat, old one with the saggy breasts that have fed her child.25

The Vagina Event

The year 2013 ushered in the 10th anniversary of The Vagina Monologues performed in China. Since Ai Xiaoming's first Chinese version of The Vagina Monologues in 2003, the play has been localised and revised in many different versions and performed all over China during the past 10 years.26 Young people, many of who are among the young feminist activists and also members of the LGBT communities, have established their own troupes and rewritten the play with Chinese women's special experiences. The most significant changes in the three famous indigenised versions in 2013 in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou are the newly added scenes concerning LGBT issues. As a result, such a feminist play in China has extended beyond the gender binary to challenge heteronormativity.

Among the positive and celebratory atmosphere, in November 2013, 17 female students in BFSU posted their pictures holding signs saying "My vagina says-,"such as for example, "My vagina says: 'virginity is bullshit.'" Those students were actually quoting from the Vagina Monologues which they had enacted in their universities, and such action had aimed to promote their play in the social media. However, such online photos immediately exploded in Weibo. It became one of the heated topics in the Weibo Topic Ranking List and the number of tweets exceeded 50,000 the moment the picture was posted. It provoked much more controversial debate both online and offline and attracted much wider attention from the mass media than the earlier online activities; however, most of the comments were condemnations of those college girls' sluttiness and immorality.

The young feminists again initiated the online activism right away to call for netizens' support in copying those girls' action- posting their pictures with signs saying: My Vagina says.On the other hand, when some veteran feminists posted articles online to explain the relationships between vagina, women's bodily and sexual autonomy, the gender inequality and the patriarchal discourse in China in confiscating and objectifying women's body, it provoked two other "surprising" discussions: the women's rights versus the human rights; and the conflicts between the grass-roots and intellectual feminists.27 On 2 December 2013, a conference was held by the Media Monitor for Women Network, inviting the three famous troupes of the Vagina Monologues and active feminists to share their experiences and to discuss "the Vagina Event." Interestingly, many of the participants of the conference were also involved in the first two online activities.

Features of Feminist Online Activism

Three features of the feminist online activism in Weibo are- the significant role of the body, the divergence and convergence between online activities and the offline ones, and its decentred nature. I argue that the online feminists could enact their agency and creativity in establishing a new genre of body politics in visualising their own nudity as resistance against the gender and political repression,

which could not be realised in the real life because of the state's surveillance. They could build a diversified feminist network beyond the triangular relationship mentioned above; and establish an open coalition with the LGBT community, that has been avoided in the "traditional feminist activism" as "political incorrectness."

If the Body Could Speak

Nudity is nothing new in the art forms in China or in feminist protests in the world, such as FEMEN's nudity demonstrations in Russia since 2008. However, in the earlier feminist activism in the Mao and post-Mao eras, the connection of the feminists' own nudity and feminist advocacy was not imaginable. Through the new media, especially Weibo, feminists are able to enact a new kind of agency to facilitate a corporeal feminism through re-politicising their own bodies in subverting both the gender inequality embodied in all kinds of taboos on women's bodies and the political repression against feminist action.

In an interview, Xiao Meili,28 who started "Nudity against DV," confessed that her first idea of posting her nudity in Weibo was based on her bet with others whether such nudity would be censored by the state or not. Since the censorship was not exercised, such a testing proved that Weibo could offer a new space for feminists' radical activities, which are not allowed in the offline life under the state surveillance. Xiao's connection of nudity, fl at chest and DV was creative in opening up discussion on all kinds of possible violence against women's bodies within a patriarchal discourse even beyond DV. As a feminist commented online,

The logic behind DV and discrimination against women's fl at chest is the same: men's control over women's bodies. The difference is: the former is explicit, whereas the latter is implicit, with men's violence internalised and naturalised in the process of women's formation of subjectivity. Women's body is a battleground. The bodily autonomy is not only shown in anti-DV, but also in pride of the fl at chest.29

Through such online activism in Weibo, on the one hand, feminists aimed to break the taboos regarding female bodies and to provoke unprecedented debates on women's bodily autonomy. On the other hand, the young feminist activists felt that they had achieved a sort of self-liberation through exposing their fl awed bodies. As Xiao stated, "I have completely accepted my body after the online activity."30

For feminists, "the women's body as battleground" not only applies to the fight against gender inequality, but also to the critique of political repression. As Ai Xiaoming said in supporting Ye Haiyan through her own nude protest, Ye as a feminist, held a peaceful protest against the molestation of schoolgirls on her own, yet still got arrested; therefore, her own body and the internet were the only weapons available to her to fight against such injustice in the non-democratic and feminist- unfriendly context. She emphasised that it was only the demonstration of her nudity that was powerful enough to show her anger and to fight back against the state's patriarchal violence.31

Feminists made their bodies speak loud and clear against disciplining women's bodies. Feminists also demonstrated their creativity in such online activism in making the messages diversifi ed. Take the first case for example, when the theme focused on anti-DV, feminists also came up with different taboos on female bodies that they tried to attack, such as Xiao Meili's fl at chest and Li Maizi's armpit hair. In the second case, while Ai adopted Ye's pattern of online activism to support her and to protest, she also took the new form of nudity to show her anger and held a pair of scissors to symbolise castrating the headmaster as well as the state patriarchal power. In such online activism, feminists demonstrated both their agency and creativity in establishing a new genre of body politics, in which they transformed the female bodies from playground into battleground. Through such visualisation of their nudity with their creative fighting manifestos inscribed on their chests, they succeeded in making their bodies speak, reclaiming their bodily autonomy, and re-politicising their bodies for resistance.

Online and Offline Activism

While the above online activities aimed to facilitate the offline ones, such as in the cases of the "Nudity against DV" with its purpose for the petition of collecting signatures for legislation of anti-DV and Ai Xiaoming's nudity to call for Ye's release, they seemed to diverge from the original themes, drawing the public's attention to a separate issue, and therefore, opening up another unexpected battlefield for discussions on female's bodily autonomy. In addition, the two online activities seemed to be connected in a retrospective manner. Although the "Nudity against DV" petition was considered a failure and it seemed to disappear from online space, it was responded to later by Ai's nudity. Ai's and other feminists' discussions on "the Vagina Event" extended the previous discussions on the earlier two online activities from women's bodily autonomy to their sexual autonomy. As a result, the three online activities converged in a non-linear relationship. They had seemed independent from each other and aimed for different feminist issues from their own beginning, yet all ending up in responding to and reinforcing each other on women's bodily and sexual autonomy. Feminist online activism seemed like ripples, extending the dialogues from one online activity to the other and all together forming the subversion against the hegemonic discourse on women's body and sexualities.

In addition, through such online activism, a new diversified feminist network for feminist activism, different from the triangular relationship among the state, the ACWF and the feminist NGOs, is being built and expanded as well, between the young feminist activists in different places all over China, between young feminist activists and the veteran feminists, between the intellectual feminists and the grass-roots feminists. For example, in all the three online activities, while the online activity was initiated by one feminist in Weibo, it was immediately followed and supported by the other young feminist activists in other geographical locations in China. In the first and third cases, while the young feminist activists initiated the controversial online activities, the veteran feminists retweeted their activities, wrote articles and debated with netizens to back up the young feminist activists. In the second case, when Ye, a grass-roots feminist was arrested, Ai and many other feminists tried to help her in different ways. In addition, feminists' later online activities also responded to the earlier ones, with all kinds of feminists involved. Such as in the second case, while Ai's nudity formed the echo to the first one, a loose support network has been formed between Ai, Ye Haiyan, the veteran feminists who

supported Ye and the grassroots young feminist activists in an indirect and non-linear relationship. In the third case, while most of the participants were also involved in the first two instances of activism, again a loose but diversifi ed network involved different feminists, grass-roots feminists, young feminist activists, veteran feminists, feminist professors, and feminist experts of all kinds.

Decentred Online Activism-Coalitional Politics

"Decentred" here is in two senses: for the participants and for the themes of the online activities. The online activism was actually leaderless and non-programmatic in all three online activities, and therefore, feminists were able to mobilise any concerned citizens without any fixed identity. In this way, an open alliance was formed and deformed based on the temporarily shared political concerns between feminists and the non-feminist participants with different identities. In addition, the original themes were also diversified in many aspects, especially from the gender dimension to the queer identities and desires. Therefore, it seemed that a definitetelos was not set up among those feminist online activities and an open assemblage was allowed for all kinds of convergence and divergence. For instance, in the first case, while its theme was about anti-DV, it took the form of nudity, which redirected the discussions onto women's bodily autonomy. Some of the participants also decentered the theme and reoriented it to the LGBT identities, such as the gay man and the bisexual a ctivist mentioned above. In the last case, the discussions on feminists' bodily and sexual autonomy were also made dniverse by the debates on the women's rights versus the human rights and the conflicts of classes within feminists. With its "decentred" characteristic, in each online activity, the feminists were able to establish open coalitions in mobilising the participants with different identities to join in their activities and sharing a common political agenda.

It seems, therefore, that coalitional politics in China has been made possible in feminist online activism, especially the coalition between feminists and LGBT activists, mainly the lesbian activists. In the first case, more than half of the nude pictures with slogans were posted by the LGBT members, most of them lesbians. In the third case of the Chinese versions of The Vagina Monologues, many of the members in the three troupes were gay and lesbian activists and their experiences were transcribed into the play and performed by the LGBT activists. Such a coalitional politics is part of the new wave of feminist activism, different from the traditional feminist activism in post-Mao era, in which LGBT issues and lesbian activists were excluded.

The new feminist movement in China, including the emerging feminist online activism, is an exciting and vital picture in which a new feminist politics, decentred, yet more diversified and subversive, is being made. However, there are still a lot of problems in such a new feminist activism. The conflict of different classes within feminists is still a thorny one. The discourse on feminism in China is still made by the elites, because although the young feminist activists are at the grassroots in a general sense, most of them are college students or graduates, still connected to the university and the intellectuals. The patriarchal discourse is still powerful and the misogynist culture is still prevalent in both real life and the virtual world in Weibo and in the internet. In the end, Weibo might not be autopian public sphere. However, a movement is about the moment. It is definitely an exciting moment worth-recording, a moment that shows feminists' creativity and bravery for conducting online activism via Weibo and opening up a new chapter of the feminist movement in China. However we see it, there is no doubt that feminist online activism is on fire in Weibo in China.

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