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前言/Foreword

Long before the #MeToo Movement, women in China have been fighting against sexual harassment in various ways, which include telling their stories as survivors on social media. When the tide of #MeToo Movement came, we answered it with a big wave.

#MeToo Movement in China Archives is combined with two sections, one in Chinese and one in English. We dedicate the compilation to all survivors who spoke out with incredible courage and those who fight for change with their actions. The Chinese section archives as much stories and opinions as we can in that wave because every single voice matters. In this English section, however, we mean to collect reports and opinions from English medias in a diachronic and selective way.

Our objectivities are:

1) to provide perspectives that are missing on Chinese medias mainly because of the tightening censorship;

2) to highlight the reports and opinions in English medias that either they complement information in the Chinese section, or they are landmarks in certain ways, for example, the first English report on #MeToo in China, or a report on #MeToo in Non-Government Organizations;

3) to portray the #MeToo Movement in China as part of the global wave of women power.

This section also includes a list that highlights 40 milestones on sexual harassment in China from 1995 to 2019. It first appeared at the “#MeToo Movement in China” exhibition in Beijing and Guangzhou between July 23rd and July 30th, 2019. We hope it will add to feminist making of our collective memory on combating sexual harassment. Audience who expect to have a historical sense of the anti-sexual harassment movement in China may find it useful in particular.

This English section is edited by Duan Jiling, with Wang Di, Zhou Yi, and Ren Yi. Ren coordinated both the Chinese and English sections of the *#MeToo Movement in China Archives*.

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事件报道/Reports

2018. 1. 6 “Will #MeToo spread in China?”

作者/Author: Gwyneth Ho & Grace Tsoi

来源/Source: BBC Chinese/ BBC 中文网

原文链接/Link: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-42577654>

On New Year’s Day, China finally had its own #MeToo moment.

Luo Xixi, an academic with a PhD from the prestigious Beihang University in Beijing, said she was sexually harassed by one of her professors when she was studying there 12 years ago.

She recounted her experience on Weibo, the Chinese equivalent of Twitter, and said she was still haunted by the experience. Her post gained more than three million views within a day, triggering a heated debate online about sexual harassment.

Shortly afterwards, Beihang University announced that the professor in question had been suspended from his duties, and that an investigation was under way. The professor has denied the allegations.

Ms Luo, who now lives in the US, told the BBC that the #MeToo movement had given her “a lot of courage”.

Millions of women and men around the world have taken part in the #MeToo movement, sharing their experiences of sexual harassment in an attempt to show the magnitude of the problem.

But the digital campaign has not been as prominent on Chinese social media until now - and even then, there haven’t been as many other people stepping forward to share their experiences.

Many Chinese feminist groups are encouraging women to follow in Ms Luo’s footsteps, but think that even if the #MeToo movement takes off it will look quite different in China.

A dearth of mechanisms

Feng Yuan, co-founder of Equality, an NGO combating gender violence in Beijing, notes that Ms Luo planned her actions carefully and shrewdly before going public.

She contacted other women who had also been sexually harassed by the same professor and gathered a lot of evidence - including recordings - before taking the case to the university.

She waited until after the university decided that the professor would be suspended before publishing her account on social media.

It is not easy for other women to follow Ms Luo’s example, Ms Feng says, as “China does not have national laws on sexual harassment. Schools and offices also lack proper mechanisms to deal with it”.

“Others revelations, not as well-planned as Luo’s, may just go unnoticed and ignored,” she said, adding “that is why those who voice out are truly exceptional.”

‘Hidden rule’

Sexual harassment victims in many countries fear they will not be believed.

On Chinese social media, sexual harassment is often dubbed the “hidden rule”.

The term reveals the widely accepted notion that women are not being harassed by sexual aggressors, but willingly comply to gain future favours.

Feminist Li Sipan says the “hidden rule” has a victim-blaming undertone, overlooking the manipulation of victims by the powerful.

It contributes to the fears many victims have that their voices will be dismissed if they speak out.

Focus on universities

In the West, the #MeToo movement started in the entertainment industry - then spread to other sectors like sports and politics. But in China, it started with universities.

Before Ms Luo spoke out, some female graduates from other universities also disclosed their experience of being sexually harassed or assaulted by professors on social media - but unlike her, they stayed anonymous.

Chinese feminist Xiao Meili is not surprised that the #MeToo movement began brewing on university campuses.

“Many young netizens are university students or have received higher education,” she says.

“Everyone has heard rumours of, or even experienced, sexual harassment at universities.”

In one survey, by the Guangzhou Gender and Sexuality Education Centre, almost 70% of university students said they had been sexually harassed.

But more than half of those students chose not to report this to the authorities - a majority said this was because reporting it would not do them any good.

“In China, the power asymmetry between professors and students is dire,” Ms Xiao says.

It is widely recognised that professors exert great power over students on Chinese campuses.

They can stop them from publishing papers, research projects and graduating - meaning that angering professors could jeopardise one’s academic career.

Many female students are exposed to verbal and physical harassment - or required to dine and drink with male professors, Li Sipan says.

Crackdown on feminists

Leta Hong Fincher, author of “Leftover Women: The Resurgence of Gender Inequality in China”, thinks the greatest obstacle to the #MeToo movement spreading in China is internet censorship.

China has been ranked the world’s “worst abuser of internet freedom” for three years by US human rights organisation, Freedom House.

“If the outrage reaches a certain point where it’s seen as somewhat destabilising, the government would not hesitate to shut it down completely,” she says.

In the past few years, there has been a large-scale crackdown on civil society in China, including lawyers, dissidents and non-governmental organisation.

Feminists have also been targeted.

In May 2015, the “feminist five” - five women campaigning against sexual harassment - were detained by Chinese authorities, shocking the international community.

“The feminist activists are very well-organised politically. There are feminist activists in different cities. They co-ordinate with each other and they have broad appeal. All those factors added up means that the Chinese authorities view them as a political threat,” says Ms Hong Fincher.

“Look at what’s been happening in America. With the #MeToo campaign, it’s bringing down powerful men virtually every day of the last few months... you can only imagine it’s absolutely terrifying for Chinese Communist Party leaders.”

2018. 1. 23 “Me Too,’ Chinese Women Say. Not So Fast, Say the Censors.”

作者/Author: Javier C. Hernández and Zoe Mou

来源/Source: New York Times/纽约时报

原文链接/Link: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/23/world/asia/china-women-me-too-censorship.html>

BEIJING — They call themselves “silence breakers,” circulate petitions demanding investigations into sexual harassment and share internet memes like clenched fists with painted nails.

But Chinese women are finding it difficult to organize a far-reaching #MeToo movement, going up against not just a male-dominated culture but also the ruling Communist Party itself.

Government censors, apparently fearing social unrest, are trying to hobble the campaign, blocking the use of phrases like “anti-sexual harassment” on social media and deleting online petitions calling for greater protections for women. And officials have warned some activists against speaking out, suggesting that they may be seen as traitors colluding with foreigners if they persist.

“So many sincere and eager voices are being muted,” said Zhang Leilei, 24, an activist in the southern city of Guangzhou who has helped circulate dozens of petitions among college students. “We are angry and shocked.”

Women are demanding investigations into bosses, teachers and co-workers. They are pressing universities to investigate harassment complaints more forcefully. And they are taking to social media to rail against sexism and denounce the lack of women in high office.

A handful of university officials have already lost their jobs in cases that have prompted national debate, including one involving a professor accused of harassing a half-dozen students over the past 15 years.

The campaign is testing the limits of a government that frowns on citizen-led movements, has a poor record of promoting women’s rights and controls all news media. While investigative reporting ignited the #MeToo movement in the United States, women in China are forced to tell their stories directly online.

“‘Me Too’ was an alarm bell for all of us,” said Sophia Huang Xueqin, 30, a journalist in southern China who started a social media platform to report sexual harassment. “We’re not brave enough to stand out as one individual. But together, we can be strong.”

Ms. Huang, who said she left her job at a national news service several years ago after being harassed by a senior colleague, said many women were ashamed to speak out because of the stigma associated with it. “It feels like we’re still in a traditional world where women are supposed to stay at home and support the family and feed the kids,” she said.

The Communist Party often embraces gender equality as a propaganda theme, noting the strides women made in the first decades of its rule. Mao famously declared that “women hold up half the sky.”

But in recent years, the government has done little to prevent a resurgence of sexism and workplace discrimination. Men dominate the party’s upper ranks, and government officials and powerful business executives are often protected from allegations of wrongdoing.

Laws on rape and harassment are vague, legal experts say, and courts do not often rule in favor of women who pursue complaints against employers. Employers rarely investigate complaints or dole out meaningful punishments.

“Most victims remain silent,” said Li Ying, a lawyer and the director of the Beijing Yuanzhong Gender Development Center, an advocacy group. “They can’t afford to lose their jobs.”

The #MeToo movement is largely limited to educated, urban women. Many have been inspired by Luo Xixi, a graduate of Beihang University, an aeronautics school in Beijing, who recently published an essay online that was read by more than three million people. Ms. Luo said she was one of seven women who had been harassed by a professor, Chen Xiaowu.

More than a decade ago, she wrote, Mr. Chen lured her off campus and tried to have sex with her, despite her pleas that he stop. He denied the allegations, but the university fired him this month, saying he had harassed several students.

In her essay, Ms. Luo urged Chinese women to “stand up bravely and say ‘No!’ “

Some have described her story as the “first step in the Long March” against sexual harassment in China. But Ms. Luo, who now lives in the United States, said the movement would need to be “mild and gentle” to avoid pushback from the government.

“Only in this way can the Chinese campaign against sexual harassment live on and develop,” she wrote in an email.

Activists say it will probably take decades to change public attitudes about harassment. At many companies, women are underpaid and relegated to menial roles. Men take co-workers as mistresses and openly remark on the appearance of female colleagues.

Fanny M. C. Cheung, a professor of psychology and vice president of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, said many women did not report harassment because Chinese culture had taught them to respect hierarchy. “People are not encouraged to speak up against superiors,” Professor Cheung said. “If you can’t change public attitudes, it’s very difficult to have a true endorsement of gender equality.”

Already, the Chinese government appears uncomfortable with the growing number of women who are going public with charges of abuse.

Xu Yalu, 28, a marketing specialist, recently took to social media to recount being groped on the street in Shanghai several times. She posted photos of the man but said the police refused to take action, telling her he was too old to be arrested. Soon she was inundated with misogynistic comments and her post was deleted by censors.

“It’s not my fault that I was sexually assaulted,” Ms. Xu said. “Why should I be afraid or ashamed of talking about it?”

Even relatively mundane calls for change have been stamped out. Censors recently deleted an online petition calling on Peking University to offer seminars on improper conduct and create committees to investigate abuse reports. And a top social media platform has intermittently blocked the use of the “MeToo China” hashtag.

Students have tried to elude the censors by using different phrases to denounce harassment and assault. But several activists have been warned by professors that they may be perceived as assisting “hostile foreign forces,” according to Xiao Meili, a graduate of the Communication University of China in Beijing.

“Spontaneously organized movements are not appreciated,” said Zheng Xi, a doctoral student at Zhejiang University who is leading a campaign to persuade city governments to post signs against harassment.

Some advocates worry that the movement may face more concerted government opposition if it grows too large. In 2015, the Beijing police detained five feminists who tried to distribute leaflets warning of sexual harassment on public transit. Legal aid centers for women have been shut down.

Many Chinese women who have come forward with stories of abuse have been scorned by friends, co-workers and relatives. But some say doing so gave them a feeling of liberation.

For seven months, Zhang Qiongwen, 22, lived with a secret. A dean at her university in southern China, Zhou Bin, abused her on several occasions, she says, masturbating in front of her and forcing her to kiss him. He threatened to prevent her and her classmates from graduating if she reported him, she says.

Ms. Zhang's friends warned her that if she reported the harassment it would ruin her reputation. Another dean, Cheng Shuijin, asked her not to go public, she recounted, saying, "The correct thing to do is to pretend nothing happened."

Haunted by the incident, Ms. Zhang began thinking of suicide. But late last year, she broke her silence, posting an essay online titled, "A Must-Read for Female Students at Our School About Protecting Yourself From Predators." Then she reported Mr. Zhou to the police.

In December, the two deans, Mr. Zhou and Mr. Cheng, were fired in connection with the case. Both men declined to comment.

"I couldn't erase such a brutal thing from my mind," Ms. Zhang said. "I didn't want my silence to enable more crimes."

2018. 1. 26 “A #MeToo Reckoning in China's Workplace Amid Wave of Accusations”

作者/Author: Javier C. Hernández and Iris Zhao

来源/Source: New York Times/纽约时报

原文链接/Link: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/26/world/asia/china-metoo.html>

BEIJING — The women recount being forced into sex by bosses and trusted co-workers. They speak of being shunned by friends and discouraged by the authorities from pressing charges. They recall being told their lives would be ruined if they spoke up.

In gripping open letters posted on social media sites, more than a dozen Chinese women have come forward in recent days with accusations of sexual assault and harassment against prominent Chinese journalists, intellectuals and charity leaders.

The outpouring of allegations has been a focus of discussions on the internet in China and given momentum to the country's fledgling #MeToo movement, which has struggled amid government censorship and a male-dominated society that often shames victims of sexual assault.

Most of the accusations were published on Weibo, China's Twitter-like service, and have since circulated widely on a variety of social platforms.

While the letters, many of them anonymous, do not appear to have been part of a coordinated campaign, they offer a collective indictment of the patriarchal culture that pervades Chinese society.

In a letter published on Wednesday, a woman accuses a well-known Chinese intellectual, Zhang Wen, of raping her after a dinner party and telling her, “You can never shake off the fate of becoming my woman.” Mr. Zhang said the sex was consensual.

In another letter published on Thursday, a former intern at CCTV, the state-owned broadcaster, says an anchor at the network, Zhu Jun, molested her in 2014 in his dressing room. When she went to the police, she says, the authorities suggested she should drop the case to avoid harming the “positive” image of Mr. Zhu and CCTV.

“This is the world we live in,” she wrote, lamenting the prevalence of harassment.

Mr. Zhu, the CCTV anchor, could not be reached for comment. The former intern who accused him of molesting her in a dressing room, who published her letter anonymously, recounted the incident in a telephone interview on Thursday. She declined to be named, citing fears for her family's safety.

Activists for gender equality say they see the burst of accusations as a sign that China's #MeToo movement, which has so far been mostly limited to university campuses, is spreading to the workplace.

“It's only the beginning of ‘Me Too’ in China,” said Li Tingting, an activist for gender equality. “The men-dominant structure is everywhere. The rape culture is still powerful.”

Once a champion of gender equality, the Chinese government has greeted the #MeToo movement cautiously. Some officials are nervous about its foreign roots and see it as a force for disruption in a society that prizes stability.

The government has deployed censors to limit the movement's spread. As the letters by the women appeared this week on social media, censors went into action, banning the English #MeToo hashtag on social media sites and deleting some letters.

Still, the accusations have prompted vigorous online debate within China, with some posted comments applauding the women for coming forward and others accusing them of seeking fame.

Several of the men denied the accusations.

In a statement on Wednesday, Mr. Zhang, the intellectual, acknowledged having sex with the woman who wrote the letter, but he described it as consensual. Several other women, including the writer Jiang Fangzhou, have since accused him of harassment.

Mr. Zhang, who has worked at China Newsweek and written for international publications, said in the statement it was common for colleagues in the media industry to hug and kiss after drinking together.

The wave of allegations this week extended beyond the media industry to the nonprofit sphere.

An advocate for hepatitis B patients, Lei Chuang, resigned on Monday from the charity he founded after a co-worker accused him of assaulting her after a hiking trip. Then, the environmentalist Feng Yongfeng resigned from his charity on Tuesday after being accused of harassing several women.

That the resignations came so swiftly was surprising in a country where accusations of abuse and harassment against women are often ignored and laws on rape and harassment are vague.

The #MeToo movement in China was initiated earlier this year on university campuses, as students circulated open letters decrying sexual misbehavior by professors and demanding better protections. There were some signs of success, with universities agreeing to do more to investigate cases of abuse and increase awareness about sexual harassment.

But the activism ran up against the country's strict limits on free speech. In April, students and professors denounced the leadership of Peking University for trying to stifle activism about sexual harassment.

Experts say it will be difficult for the #MeToo movement to take on government officials or prominent business executives, given the ruling Communist Party's tight control of civil society.

2018. 1. 30 “#MeToo in China”

作者/Author: Li Jun and Cecilia Milwertz

来源/Source: Asia Dialogue 对话亚洲

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The Chinese version of #MeToo as a social media movement started with a Wechat media account called ATSH with the letters standing for anti-sexual harassment. The account was created by freelance journalist, Huang Xueqin, on November 19, 2017. Huang exposed her experience of being sexually harassed by her superior in a media agency, declared that she would initiate a #MeToo movement in China and encouraged other women journalists to share their experiences.

As elsewhere sexual harassment is a problem in the People's Republic of China. A 2013 survey by China Labour Bulletin found that 70% of the surveyed factory workers reported that they had been sexually harassed at their workplace. In a more recent 2016 survey of 6,600 students 70% said they had been sexually harassed, while less than 4% had reported the incidents. While the problem has been addressed by women's movement activists many times in the past, the most known event internationally is probably the imprisonment of five activists in 2015. Their arrest obstructed an event they had planned for International Women's Day to address sexual harassment on public transportation in Beijing and other major cities.

Another initial action in connection with the current #MeToo movement also took place in November last year when Luo Xixi, an engineer with a PhD in computer science who graduated from Beijing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics, used a knowledge sharing community website to reveal how she was sexually assaulted 12 years ago by the well-known scholar Chen Xiaowu, while he was her supervisor at the university. Luo Xixi lives and works in Silicon Valley in the US where she was inspired and encouraged by the #MeToo campaign. She issued a complaint against Chen Xiaowu together with several other women who were the victims of sexual harassment by him. Since she is somewhat protected by her American residence status only Luo Xixi came forward with her real name.

The Beijing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics suspended Chen Xiaowu and initiated an investigation. However, when the results of the investigation had not come out after one month Luo Xixi linked up with journalist Huang Xueqin, who helped her to contact feminist NGOs in Beijing and Guangzhou. Subsequently, Luo posted an article on her Weibo account and also on ATSH. The former gained more than 5 million hits and the incident was reported by both domestic and overseas media.

On January 2, Hexi, a graduate of Xi'an International Studies University, where she also convenes a feminist group, issued a letter to her alma mater, in which she encouraged the rector to establish a mechanism on sexual harassment prevention. She offered a suggestion for such a mechanism that had been drafted by the Women Awakening Network (a Guangzhou based feminist organization) and submitted to the Ministry of Education in connection with a 2014 case of sexual harassment at a university.

This triggered a series of actions by individuals and the feminist community. The Women Awakening Network shared the draft of the mechanisms in public and encouraged people to download and submit them to their alma maters. Luo Xixi issued an open letter asking that the Beijing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics should not only punish the perpetrator but also establish sexual-harassment prevention mechanisms at the university. She appealed to the public to indicate their support by signing the letter online. Xiao Qiqi, a Chinese student at the University of British Columbia in Canada, initiated the hashtag #Metoo Zai Zhongguo, which translates as 'MeToo in China', to concentrate the posts on sexual violence in one place. The hashtag had almost 5 million hits before it was inactivated two weeks later by Weibo, which is a Chinese micro blog similar to Twitter.

On January 5 Zhang Leilei, a young feminist and activist, together with a group of other young feminists, initiated the campaign # Write to Your Alma Maters. The idea was that ten thousand people would suggest a mechanism against sexual harassment at universities across the country. They coordinated the action in which more than 8,000 people have so far written letters to 74 universities nationwide.

Like streams running together to form a river, these actions have been organized spontaneously and have come together to gain momentum. Activists have worked closely together and with the help of social media, they have communicated, inspired, and supported each other as well as mobilizing new participants to take part in the movement. At the same time their activities have been based on a long-standing consensus on the importance of addressing sexual harassment issues that is shared by the feminist community.

The letters and the mechanisms that have been suggested are based on earlier work done by feminist NGOs. In 2005, an anti-sexual harassment clause was added to Law on the Protection of Rights and Interests of Women without defining the concept of sexual harassment or any specific legal liability. In an attempt to propose a legal interpretation of this law, feminist scholars and NGOs in China published a series of papers about sexual harassment in which they drew mainly on theories and cases from North America and Europe. They also introduced the notion of employer responsibilities on sexual harassment prevention mechanisms into China. Subsequently, through intervening in sexual assault cases in workplaces and at educational institutions, feminist legal aid and communication NGOs such as Beijing Zhongze Women's Legal Consulting Services Center/ Beijing Qianqian Law Firm, Yuanzhong Gender Development Center, Women's Voice and Women Awakening Network have persistently emphasized the need to adopt mechanisms against sexual harassment. Zhongze also led pilot programs in some local companies on how to apply mechanisms on the prevention of sexual harassment.

In 2014 in the case of a prestigious scholar from Xiamen University, a famous school in South China, who sexually assaulted several postgraduates, the Women Awakening Network supported the victims and launched a campaign that gathered 256 scholars from all over the world to co-sign an open letter for the Ministry of Education. The network offered suggestions for sexual harassment prevention regulations to the National Education Department as well as to Xiamen University. This resulted in the first official document against sexual harassment being issued by the National Education Department. However, this document did not have mandatory requirements for schools to establish concrete sexual harassment prevention measures and mechanisms.

In connection with the recent rise of #MeToo in China, young feminists have streamlined the drafts from 2014 into five specific measures that should be maintained at educational institutions. They are as follows:

1. A training course on sexual harassment prevention for all staff
2. A training course on sexual harassment prevention for all students
3. An online survey on sexual harassment to be held each semester
4. A complaint channel on sexual harassment issues
5. The appointment of a department and personnel in charge of handling complaints on sexual harassment.

The response of the state is complicated. On the one hand, many articles and posts have been deleted from the social media by the Cyberspace Administration and students have been warned to stop the campaign by their political instructors at universities. On the other hand, on January 11, Beijing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics removed Chen Xiaowu from his teaching and administrative posts and on January 14, the Ministry of Education revoked Chen's status as a "Yangtze River Scholar" — a prestigious academic award given to individuals in higher education—and took back the subsidy related to this title. The university and the ministry also promised to look into setting up a system of sexual harassment prevention.

Paradoxically, support and censorship have come hand in hand. Xiao Qiqi and her colleagues received a warm response from a university based in west China in reply to their suggestion. The university praised the five specific measures and promised to set up a mechanism. On the same day, the hashtag #MeToo Zai Zhongguo which she had created was censored due to the widespread media reporting it had led to. It had been listed as a number one hot topic on public good by Weibo several times for two weeks. Now Xiao has created new hashtags such as #METOO and #米兔在中国, a MeToo homophone which translates as 'Rice Bunny in China'. Other actions include Zhang Leilei issuing a new letter on her 25th birthday to the Ministry of Education appealing for the involvement of students in the process of setting up mechanisms against sexual harassment. Meanwhile, an open letter initiated by a group of professors in the faculty of journalism and communication at Wuhan University emerged on January 21, urging the ministry to announce a schedule for issuing the prevention mechanisms.

Thus, the #MeToo movement to address sexual harassment and ensure gender equality in the People's Republic of China is moving slowly, but also steadily, forward while embedded in the complex dynamics of feminist mobilization, censorship and the state's legitimacy anxiety.

2018. 1. 30 “China’s #MeToo movement in colleges initially encouraged by authorities, then frustrated”

作者/Author: Christian Shepherd

来源/Source: Reuters 路透社

原文链接/Link: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-china-harassment-insight/chinas-metoo-movement-in-colleges-initially-encouraged-by-authorities-then-frustrated-idUSKBN1FJ33W>

BEIJING (Reuters) - After declaring they were ready to fight sexual harassment on university campuses, the Chinese authorities now appear to be seeking to contain a nascent #MeToo movement.

On Jan. 14, China’s education ministry announced it had stripped a professor at Beihang University in Beijing, who is facing sexual harassment allegations, of an academic title and said it will not tolerate activity that harms students and will look into setting up a robust mechanism to prevent sexual harassment.

A week later, more than fifty professors put their names to an online proposal calling for a detailed and strict set of rules to combat campus sexual harassment.

But a march planned that day from Beihang to the University of International Business and Economics (UIBE), another Beijing school where a professor has faced accusations of harassment, was canceled by organizers, two sources involved in its planning told Reuters.

The organizers declined to say why it was called off, but three would-be participants, who asked not to be named due to the sensitivity of the matter, said they were told by their school not to attend. Neither university would comment on the proposed march.

There has also been censorship of online postings supporting the #MeToo movement and some universities have warned students to tone down the campaign, according to women rights activists and students.

The education ministry declined to respond to phone calls and faxes seeking comment.

The authorities have been slowly acknowledging in state-media commentaries that there is a systematic problem of sexual harassment on Chinese college campuses.

On Jan. 7, the Chinese Communist Party’s paper, the People’s Daily, said that victims of sexual harassment should be shown support if they go public with allegations, and the Guangming Daily, another official party publication, said on Jan. 17 that the issue of sexual harassment in education cannot be ignored.

But while the issue of sexual harassment has become increasingly high profile on campuses in China, there have - in contrast to the United States - been few public allegations of sexual harassment in other areas of Chinese society, including politics, business and entertainment.

A third of Chinese college students say they have suffered sexual violence or sexual assault, according to data from the China Family Planning Association released in 2016, with the most common allegations being that they were harassed with sexual language and forced to kiss someone or suffered inappropriate touching.

LOCKED THE DOOR

The catalyst for a Chinese #MeToo-style movement came on Dec. 31 when Luo Xixi, a U.S.-based Chinese software engineer, published a blog post accusing Chen Xiaowu, a professor at Beihang, of sexual harassment.

Zhang Leilei (R), 25 and Xiao Meili, 28, pose in Guangzhou, China January 25, 2018. REUTERS/Staff

In her post, Luo republished an account, originally run anonymously on Chinese website Zhihu.com in October 2017, of an evening 12 years ago when she alleges Chen had driven her to a house off-campus, locked the door and tried to force himself upon her. She said he relented when she started crying and said she was a virgin.

After conducting an investigation, Beihang said Chen was found to have sexually harassed students and was removed from his positions at the university. The education ministry stripped him of a title soon after.

Beihang declined to comment further.

In an interview with the Beijing Youth Daily published on Jan. 1, Chen said he had not broken any regulations and said the accuracy of the claims against him would be determined by the investigation. He has not spoken publicly since the investigation came to its conclusion.

Reuters was unable to contact Chen for comment.

Luo told Reuters by phone that the responses of the university, state-media, the ministry and the Chinese public, have been overwhelmingly and unexpectedly positive.

She said the university initially had been slow to respond after she contacted them in October. “They would take action bit by bit, saying that they have not yet had instructions from above, that there is no relevant law and regulation, that there is no precedent to follow,” she said.

But once her named post went viral and the People’s Daily ran a commentary supporting her decision to go public, Beihang was swift to take action. “I was very satisfied with the speed of progress afterwards,” she said.

The response is very different from some by the authorities in the recent past. In 2015, authorities detained five activists, later dubbed the “Feminist Five,” who were planning to defy government warnings to demonstrate against sexual harassment on public transport for International Women’s Day. The activists were released a month later.

MOLESTATION ALLEGATION

A second recent allegation was made anonymously, also on Zhihu.com, against UIBE professor Xue Yuan who was accused by the poster of having molested a student and ripped her clothing in university dormitories.

Xue has not responded publicly to the accusations. Reuters was unable to contact him for comment.

UIBE launched an investigation into the accusations and it recalled Xue from overseas to aid in the probe, according to a statement from the university.

UIBE did not respond to questions sent by Reuters.

Women’s rights activists applauded the ministry’s moves against Chen and UIBE’s investigation of Xue as a positive first step, but say they worry that online censorship and the authorities’ fears of grassroots movements causing social instability could prevent real change in dealing with sexual harassment at universities.

The ministry has not yet released regulations that provide a clear definition of sexual harassment, activists say.

Students have in recent weeks posted open letters on social media calling for better prevention of campus sexual harassment. So far, there are more than 70, with hundreds of signatures.

But Zhang Leilei, a women’s rights activist, told Reuters that some of the letters on social media calling attention to the issue have been deleted. Reuters independently confirmed this was the case.

Chinese authorities regularly censor discussion of issues that might spur collective action. The country's cyberspace regulator did not respond to a request for comment.

More than 10 universities have also summoned students to warn them against drawing too much attention to their complaints, Zhang said.

Xiao Meili, an activist whose open letter early this month calling for better sexual harassment prevention at the Communication University of China has been used as a template by others, said authorities' likely want to try to "stabilize" the movement.

"If there was no censorship, if students were not called in for talks with their teachers, then the movement would be much wider and the conversation would be deeper," she said.

One university in northern China warned student authors of an open letter not to post publicly about their demands for better harassment prevention measures as they might bring "dishonor" to the school, one of the students said, asking that their name and their school's not be used.

And an interview on harassment with Bai Benfeng, the head of Tsinghua University's postgraduate student Communist Party organization, published on Jan. 22 by a university paper, had been removed by the following day.

Bai had said that Tsinghua, a top Chinese university, had a system where a single report of unethical behavior could jeopardize a teacher's position, but that sexual harassment education was inadequate for both teachers and students.

Tsinghua did not respond to a request for comment.

2018. 2. 1 “China’s #MeToo Moment”

作者/Author: Jiayang Fan

来源/Source: New Yorker 纽约客

原文链接/Link: <https://www.newyorker.com/news/daily-comment/chinas-me-too-moment>

In 2004, Luo Xixi, a young Ph.D. student at Beihang University, in Beijing, tried to say no when her adviser asked her to drive with him to his sister’s apartment. But the adviser, a forty-five-year-old professor named Chen Xiaowu, who was a prominent academic and the managing director of the China Computer Federation, an organization of academics and experts, insisted. He wanted her to tend to his sister’s houseplants while she was away, Luo said, because it was a task that “women should be intuitively good at.” Once they got to the apartment, however, Chen locked the door and told Luo that he and his wife were incompatible in bed, because his wife was “too conservative.” He lunged at Luo, who pleaded with him to stop, and relented only when she said, through tears, that she was a virgin. Luo said that he told her that he had been testing her “moral conduct,” and warned her not to mention the incident to anyone.

Inspired by the #MeToo movement in the United States, where Luo now lives, she wrote a detailed account of her experience in an open letter that she posted under that hashtag earlier this month on Weibo, the popular Chinese social-media platform. Within a day, it received three million hits. Last fall, after allegations of abuse surfaced against Harvey Weinstein, a whisper network had formed in chat rooms on Chinese social media, where female students had anonymously put forth complaints of sexual harassment and assault against Chen. Reading those posts gave Luo the courage to go public, she wrote. Her letter drew the most attention, likely because it was signed. Several of Chen’s other former students then went on the record with their own allegations. He denied any wrongdoing, but, two weeks ago, the university reportedly dismissed him from his posts.

In the United States, the public conversation about harassment has provided catharsis, but it has also revealed the pain of disclosure. The long-delayed litany of allegations has shown that women often fear losing their financial stability, their professional standing, and what some may perceive to be the respect of their peers as much as they fear their predators. Perhaps the most revealing aspect of the investigations is not the abuse itself, which, in some cases, was long suspected, but the structures that a powerful man may erect to protect himself even as he ritualizes the abuse.

In China, where a far more determined sense of patriarchy and hierarchical order exists, that structure can reach considerably higher. “In China, if you are a Ph.D. student, it’s difficult to overstate how much your supervisor determines your fate,” a Chinese feminist activist named Liang Xiaowen, who is now attending law school in the United States, told me. “Deference to authority is paramount to your survival as a student.” Since last fall, thousands of students and alumni have written letters to some thirty universities across China, calling for the institution of firm policies regarding harassment, and Liang made the same demand in an open letter she wrote to her alma mater, the South China University of Technology. Even the official language used to describe sexual harassment, she noted, hints at moral equivocation. “They don’t call it ‘harassment’ or ‘assault’ on school documents,” Liang said. “In Chinese, the term is ‘inappropriate teacher-student relations,’ as if to suggest that the inappropriateness could be the fault of both parties. In the abstract, people are saying it is wrong, but perpetrators are not really harmed.”

Last year, after the Weinstein story broke, the state-run China Daily published an online piece stating that the virtues of Chinese culture insured a comparatively low incidence of sexual harassment. The piece met with a backlash on social media, decrying the falsity of the claim. (A survey conducted in 2017 by the Guangzhou Gender and Sexuality Education Center and the law firm Beijing Impact found that nearly seventy per cent of Chinese university students had experienced sexual harassment.) But its publication suggests a narrative that the government has a vested interest in selling to the public. “The Chinese

government has become much more sophisticated in propaganda than it used to be, but it needs to project a certain image,” Leta Hong Fincher, the author of a forthcoming book, “Betraying Big Brother: The Feminist Awakening in China,” told me. Women’s-rights groups are treated with hostility by the government, which tends to cast them as agents of Western interference.

When I spoke to Fincher, who lives in New York, she pointed out that feminist activism represents a real threat to the Chinese government, which, above all else, is concerned with maintaining social stability, to safeguard its own political legitimacy. Collective action taken on behalf of any cause is reason enough for suspicion and, sometimes, a criminal charge of subversion. “The fact that #MeToo spread so quickly in such a short period of time shows that the message of feminism has broad appeal, and that it resonates with ordinary people,” Fincher said. “Since the democracy movement of 1989, when was the last time that there was any sort of collective action across so many provinces?”

Like women in this country, women in China are grappling with how to convert the momentum of a fledgling protest into concrete action. But, unlike this country, China lacks a clear definition of sexual harassment. (A law passed in 2005 banned workplace harassment, but any concrete sense of what harassment means was left too vague for implementation to be truly effective.) In the workplace as well as in schools, there are no standardized guidelines on how to handle sexual assault. On social media, phrases like “anti-sexual harassment” have been erased, and online petitions are intermittently deleted. The use of the “MeToo China” hashtag has also been blocked, forcing members to use creative homonyms, in order to evade censors.

At the moment, the movement is primarily composed of young, educated women, living in cities or abroad. For every woman who has come forward many more remain in the shadows. Not long ago, I spoke to a Chinese woman in her mid-sixties who did not know what to make of #MeToo. Like many people of her generation, she still faithfully reads the Chinese state media and finds much of what is happening among the younger generations baffling. The woman, who has lived in New York since the nineteen-nineties, had counted herself as a member of China’s privileged class (her parents were cadre leaders during Mao’s revolutionary years), but she told me about an incident that she was still hesitant to discuss, decades after it occurred. When she was sixteen and living in Nanjing, she had a charismatic Chinese teacher who took a liking to her. “He made me the class monitor,” she said, and her classmates teased her about being the teacher’s pet.

Then, one day after school, as she was erasing the chalkboard—the duty of a class monitor—in the empty classroom, the teacher grabbed her hand. “I didn’t know what to do. I ran from the classroom,” she said, but she remembered an inexplicable feeling of guilt, as if she had forgotten the lines of a play that she had been assigned to perform. The teacher never mentioned the incident to her, but for the rest of the year he no longer praised her essays in class, as he used to. She told no one, not even family members, what had happened. “It seemed like something I dreamt up,” she said. “But what I think of most is what a classmate said to me, sometime after we graduated. She told me that, for a while, I was the envy of the class for being the teacher’s undisputed favorite. She said, ‘We all thought it was unfair that you alone were so well-liked by the teacher.’” The friend laughed and added, “You were so lucky.”

2018. 2. 7 “China’s #MeToo movement started on college campuses. It may end there”

作者/Author: Kemeng Fan

来源/Source: Los Angeles Times 洛杉矶时报

原文链接/Link: <https://www.latimes.com/world/la-fg-china-me-too-20180206-story.html>

It wasn't until her thesis advisor locked the door of his sister's Beijing apartment that Luo Xixi realized his intentions.

Chen Xiaowu had told Luo that he needed her help tending to plants. He didn't. The only thing that prevented her rape, she said, was a phone call from his wife and her own desperate cry, “I'm a virgin!”

After staying silent about the assault for more than a decade, Luo, now a Bay Area software engineer in her 30s, took inspiration from the #MeToo movement that sprang up last fall and decided to speak.

She filed a complaint with Beihang University, the aeronautics school she had attended in Beijing, and publicly accused Chen, the vice director of the graduate school, of sexual assault. Luo, in an online letter read by 3 million people, named herself as one of seven women he abused. The school stripped the administrator of his position, then fired him, and the Ministry of Education promised to set up “effective, long-term mechanisms” against sexual harassment.

Her actions ignited a national debate about appropriate behavior between professors and students. Activists branded it China's #MeToo movement; social media swelled with supportive hashtags. But the effort failed to encourage many others to voice their grievances or extend to the entertainment and business sectors, which struggle with similar issues. Instead, the young women who set out to battle sexual harassment are finding their efforts publicly heralded and privately stymied.

Many universities are ignoring online petitions. Government censors are deleting open letters. The #MeToo China hashtag has disappeared on social media, along with articles against sexual harassment.

“The deletion is a great hindrance to the movement,” said Xiao Meili, a prominent women's rights activist, whose online letter calling for more attention to sexual harassment claims vanished.

“It used to be you go onto the streets and do something, and that counts as radical. But now writing a letter is probably radical, too.”

Their cries threaten to stray beyond the bounds of acceptability for a government that runs the media and keeps a tight leash on public opinion. The Communist Party — which detained five feminists in 2015 for planning to distribute leaflets against sexual harassment — does not always see gender equality activism as compatible with its vision of a stable society.

By late January, alumni groups had written to more than 70 universities, according to Voice of Feminism, a Chinese women's rights group. Many of the letters were posted on WeChat, a social media app with more than 700 million users. They now show an empty page with a large exclamation mark and a notice that the material violated regulations.

Unlike the #MeToo movement in the U.S. — where carefully reported stories broke open a culture of abuse — the greatest recourse for women in China is online. Laws on sexual harassment are hazy and many accusers face a stigma for challenging authority in a society that values hierarchy.

“When I first read Luo's revelation, I didn't fully trust it,” said a female graduate student at Beihang, a largely male engineering school where models of fighter jets are displayed in cafe windows. “I thought it couldn't be possible that a teacher's character can be this terrible.” She declined to give her name, citing the sensitivity of the topic.

China is hardly alone in allegations of sexual misconduct within higher education. The U.S. has struggled with its own history of assault on college campuses. More than 20 students at Columbia University filed a complaint with the U.S. government in 2014 that accused the school of mishandling their claims. Other

sexual assault cases in recent years have arisen at Vanderbilt University, Florida State University and Stanford.

But the issue has gone largely unaddressed in China. Almost 70% of college students encounter sexual harassment, according to a 2017 study by the Guangzhou Gender and Sexuality Education Center, a nonprofit organization in southern China, and the Beijing Impact law firm. Among the female respondents, the rate was 75%.

“Victims don’t want to reveal their names because we often have the mentality that blames the victims,” said Pei Yuxin, an associate professor of sociology and social work at Sun Yat-sen University in Guangzhou. “Other people and the institution see them as troublemakers who smear the institution’s reputation.”

School officials — eager to protect their university or uncertain where the government draws that line of acceptability — can also act as censors.

Gu Huaying, a graduate student at Cambridge University in England, wrote a petition requesting classes on improper conduct at Peking University, her alma mater and one of China’s most storied schools. Administrators accused her of trying to “stir things up.” The letter was deleted from China’s dominant search engine.

“What are you nervous about, and panicking for?” Gu wrote in a defiant response on Weibo, China’s version of Twitter.

Despite the pressure, victims are finding some allies.

“We as college teachers are deeply angered and seriously condemn” the inappropriate behavior of colleagues, Xu Kaibin, a journalism professor at Wuhan University in central China, wrote in an online manifesto calling for greater awareness of sexual harassment on college campuses.

But the continued impediments make some women wonder whether their struggle will break open an institutional silence, and whether China’s #MeToo movement will become anything more than a name.

“It’s scary when you find that even if you do expose it, the problem won’t be solved,” said a female graduate student at Beihang University, where the petitions first started. She declined to give her name for fear of retaliation.

A top official at Tsinghua University, one of Beijing’s most elite institutions, recently sat down with a student newspaper to discuss the issue.

When asked whether the school could include information about sexual harassment on next year’s freshmen manual, he hesitated.

“I don’t think it would be appropriate,” he said. “Emphasizing sexual harassment would make the reader uncomfortable and consider our campus unsafe. After all, when we enter the school, we would want to learn positive information.”

2018. 5. 9 “The Price of Saying ‘Me Too’ in China”

作者/Author: Audrey Jijia Li

来源/Source: New York Times 纽约时报

原文链接/Link: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/09/opinion/china-metoo-yue-xin.html>

BEIJING — The central space known as the Triangle at Peking University is a historically important spot. During the Cultural Revolution, the Triangle was where staff members and students mounted “big character” propaganda posters criticizing university administrators as rightists. And it was there in April 1989 that students met to mourn the death of the reformist leader of Communist Party, Hu Yaobang, a gathering that would eventually snowball into the country’s most famous student protests.

So it was significant when posters began showing up on the bulletin board in the Triangle showing solidarity with a Peking University student named Yue Xin.

Ms. Yue was one of eight students who petitioned university officials last month to call for transparency in the investigation of a 20-year-old rape case in which the victim, a 21-year-old student, committed suicide. The man accused of assaulting her was a Peking University literature professor.

In the weeks following the petition, Ms. Yue says, she and her friends were subjected to an array of intimidation tactics from university administrators, including a late-night visit to her dormitory during which she was forced to delete all information about the case from her phone and computer. Officials also leaned on her mother to pressure Ms. Yue to back off.

“When I saw my mother crying, slapping her face, falling on her knees, and threatening to end her life, my heart was bleeding,” Ms. Yue wrote in an online post that was widely shared before officials censored it. The university also threatened to not let her graduate.

Last fall, when the sexual harassment and assault accusations against Harvey Weinstein got worldwide attention, China was — at first, at least — conspicuously quiet. Some Chinese even took the opportunity to boast. An opinion essay in the state-owned newspaper China Daily declared that the lack of similar accusations here reflected cultural differences: “Chinese men are taught to be protective of their women,” it claimed.

But it didn’t take long for Chinese women to begin to speak up, to circulate petitions demanding investigations or to write about their experiences on social media — which is when the similarities to the “Me Too” movement elsewhere ended, and the censorship began. Social media platforms blocked references to sexual harassment; online petitions were deleted. Similarly, what Ms. Yue and her friends did may have contained echoes of, or been inspired by, the worldwide awakening against abuse of women at the hands of the powerful, but what she has experienced since is particular to China.

Ms. Yue is hardly the first feminist to make the authorities nervous. In May 2017, a few months before Me Too became a hashtag, several social media users identifying themselves as Beijing Film Academy students wrote that a fellow student had been sexually abused by a professor; the posts were later censored and the users’ accounts removed. Three years ago, five women were famously detained for weeks for planning activities aimed to raise awareness of sexual assaults on public transportation in Beijing.

Battling sexual harassment and exploitation in China has long involved very real dangers. It means engaging in organizing and other activities that a regime that has sought to crack down on civil society doesn’t like. It also means raising questions of whether those with power in China regularly take advantage of those without — a deeply sensitive subject in a country where corruption runs rampant.

As a message circulating among some Peking University student chat groups in recent weeks about Ms. Yue and her petition put it: “The Peking University Party bosses perceive the whole incident as political, involving students organizing and colluding with external forces.” Calling protests the result of foreign

ideas has long been a dismissal tactic, but these Communist Party bosses are not wrong about it being political.

University campuses, and Peking University in particular, have often been at the forefront of the democracy movement here, something that has long troubled the Chinese leadership. In May 1919, to protest a provision in the Treaty of Versailles giving Japan control of Chinese territories, Peking University students demonstrated against imperialist exploitation and feudal rule in what would come to be known as the May 4 Movement. Seventy years later, students from universities all over the country once again staged pro-democracy protests, which led to the June 4 Tiananmen crackdown. The Triangle at Peking University campus was the very place where these protests were born.

In the decades that followed Tiananmen, China's students seemingly went quiet. As economic growth took off, many in the country, students included, embraced a newly cynical motto: Keep your head down and make money. More recently, a growing number of students have embraced ultranationalist, pro-authoritarian views that were indifferent to civil liberties and checks and balances on power.

And so the open display of disobedience in the name of transparency at Peking University may have come as a surprise. "We ask the gentlemen in charge of the school: What are you actually afraid of?" the posters at the Triangle read. Ms. Yue, they said, was acting in the spirit of the May 4 Movement 100 years ago, in which students summoned the courage to question the authorities and administrators protested that they simply wanted to preserve stability.

For now, the parties appear to have reached a sort of *détente*. Several days after Ms. Yue posted her letter saying she was being harassed, she announced that she had returned to the university. Her demands for transparency in the rape case remain unanswered.

But China's fledgling Me Too movement continues to achieve unexpected results: The professor accused of rape, Shen Yang, who had moved to positions at Nanjing and Shanghai Normal Universities, was fired; other men in academia have lost their jobs as a result of accusations against them. Can this movement spread beyond campuses? It's difficult to say in a heavy censorship regime. But it would not be the first time that students started an uprising.

2018. 7. 23 “Prominent Activist Accused of Sexual Assault Apologizes, Resigns”

作者/Author: Wang Yiwei

来源/Source: Sixth Tone 第六声

原文链接/Link: <http://www.sixthtone.com/news/1002664/prominent-activist-accused-of-sexual-assault-apologizes>

Lei Chuang, the founder of YiYou Charity Center, a nonprofit dedicated to the welfare of hepatitis B carriers, apologized on Monday for sexual misconduct and resigned from his position as head of the charity before later claiming the relationship was consensual.

On Monday morning, an anonymous victim posted an open letter on Chinese social app WeChat accusing Lei of sexually assaulting her in 2015. In the letter, she said Lei forced himself on her at a Beijing hotel at the end of a 19-day hiking trip from Inner Mongolia to Beijing. Lei had organized the excursion to draw attention to the need for lower-priced hepatitis B medication.

The victim said that during the trip, Lei took special care of her, telling people she was like his “little sister.” The victim — then just 20 years old — wrote that she was grateful for Lei’s attention and didn’t give any thought to his touches until it was too late.

On July 29, the victim wrote, Lei told the team that they would have to enter Beijing in small groups and asked her to accompany him. Later that night, she wrote, Lei booked them a hotel room with a single bed.

After Lei had sex with her against her will, the woman said she blamed herself. “Lei Chuang is a good guy, so it must be my problem,” she wrote. “It’s because I’m not a good girl that this kind of thing happened to me.” She said that she continued to have a relationship with Lei to in order to “rationalize” the abuse, though she described every moment with him as “painful” and “difficult to endure.”

Through a friend, the victim declined Sixth Tone’s interview request, saying she’s under too much pressure. In her letter, however, she said that she decided it was time to take a stand because she started hearing about more of Lei’s victims in 2016 and July of this year. “I know that if I don’t do anything, there will be more victims in the future,” she wrote.

The letter quickly spread through WeChat groups and on microblogging site Weibo, stoking public anger and calls for legal action.

Several hours after the post went viral on Chinese social media, Lei admitted to the woman’s accusations — including those of abuse against others — in a message posted to his public WeChat account, and said that he had stepped down as the head of YiYou Charity Center. Lei said he is also willing to take criminal responsibility for his actions, and is considering turning himself in to the authorities.

“I have to say I’m sorry to that girl,” Lei wrote in his message. “Yet I know this apology is too late, too insufficient.” In a follow-up letter shared with media on Monday, however, Lei said that his sexual relationship with the woman had been consensual.

Lei is a renowned public figure for his work to secure equal rights for hepatitis B carriers, and Sixth Tone has interviewed him for past articles on several occasions. In September 2009, Lei was the first hepatitis B carrier to be granted permission to work in China’s food service industry. He has also been an outspoken advocate against sexual harassment. Earlier this year, following a spate of sexual abuse cases at Chinese universities, Lei wrote an open letter to Zhejiang University, his alma mater, to recommend that the school establish a mechanism for handling sexual harassment claims.

Today's revelations have surprised China's equal rights campaigners. "I was shocked to hear about this," said Wei Tingting, an acquaintance of Lei and the director of the Guangzhou Gender and Sexuality Education Center. Wei told Sixth Tone that in some ways, sexual abuse at public welfare institutions is similar to sexual harassment in the workplace, but with one key difference.

"People have different expectations of us. Those in our line of work must be more vigilant, since we are advocates of anti-inequality and anti-discrimination," Wei said. "It's hard to imagine someone working [as an activist] doing something like this."

This is not the first case of sexual misconduct at a public welfare institution. In June 2016, Cao Xiaoqiang, a mentor at a nonprofit organization for college students, apologized for sexually harassing women via WeChat after eight came forward to accuse him.

Wei said that it may be harder to expose sexual harassment in the field of public welfare since advocates are typically regarded as honest and kindhearted fighters for social justice. Speaking out against such pillars of society, she explained, requires great courage.

The woman who exposed the case has been receiving psychological treatment since the abuse occurred, according to her letter. She said the only purpose of her coming forward is to stop Lei from hurting other innocent young women who are dedicated to public welfare. "He'll never know how hard it is for us to repair ourselves and start afresh," she wrote.

2018. 07. 26 “A #MeToo Reckoning in China's Workplace Amid Wave of Accusations”

作者/Author: Javier C. Hernández and Iris Zhao

来源/Source: New York Times 纽约时报

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By The campus of Peking University. Activists see a burst of accusations of sexual harassment as a sign that China's #MeToo movement, which had been mostly limited to universities, is spreading to the workplace.

The campus of Peking University. Activists see a burst of accusations of sexual harassment as a sign that China's #MeToo movement, which had been mostly limited to universities, is spreading to the workplace.

BEIJING — The women recount being forced into sex by bosses and trusted co-workers. They speak of being shunned by friends and discouraged by the authorities from pressing charges. They recall being told their lives would be ruined if they spoke up.

In gripping open letters posted on social media sites, more than a dozen Chinese women have come forward in recent days with accusations of sexual assault and harassment against prominent Chinese journalists, intellectuals and charity leaders.

The outpouring of allegations has been a focus of discussions on the internet in China and given momentum to the country's fledgling #MeToo movement, which has struggled amid government censorship and a male-dominated society that often shames victims of sexual assault.

Most of the accusations were published on Weibo, China's Twitter-like service, and have since circulated widely on a variety of social platforms.

While the letters, many of them anonymous, do not appear to have been part of a coordinated campaign, they offer a collective indictment of the patriarchal culture that pervades Chinese society.

In a letter published on Wednesday, a woman accuses a well-known Chinese intellectual, Zhang Wen, of raping her after a dinner party and telling her, “You can never shake off the fate of becoming my woman.” Mr. Zhang said the sex was consensual.

In another letter published on Thursday, a former intern at CCTV, the state-owned broadcaster, says an anchor at the network, Zhu Jun, molested her in 2014 in his dressing room. When she went to the police, she says, the authorities suggested she should drop the case to avoid harming the “positive” image of Mr. Zhu and CCTV.

“This is the world we live in,” she wrote, lamenting the prevalence of harassment.

Mr. Zhu, the CCTV anchor, could not be reached for comment. The former intern who accused him of molesting her in a dressing room, who published her letter anonymously, recounted the incident in a telephone interview on Thursday. She declined to be named, citing fears for her family's safety.

Activists for gender equality say they see the burst of accusations as a sign that China's #MeToo movement, which has so far been mostly limited to university campuses, is spreading to the workplace.

“It's only the beginning of ‘Me Too’ in China,” said Li Tingting, an activist for gender equality. “The men-dominant structure is everywhere. The rape culture is still powerful.”

Once a champion of gender equality, the Chinese government has greeted the #MeToo movement cautiously. Some officials are nervous about its foreign roots and see it as a force for disruption in a society that prizes stability.

The government has deployed censors to limit the movement's spread. As the letters by the women appeared this week on social media, censors went into action, banning the English #MeToo hashtag on social media sites and deleting some letters.

Still, the accusations have prompted vigorous online debate within China, with some posted comments applauding the women for coming forward and others accusing them of seeking fame.

Several of the men denied the accusations.

In a statement on Wednesday, Mr. Zhang, the intellectual, acknowledged having sex with the woman who wrote the letter, but he described it as consensual. Several other women, including the writer Jiang Fangzhou, have since accused him of harassment.

Mr. Zhang, who has worked at China Newsweek and written for international publications, said in the statement it was common for colleagues in the media industry to hug and kiss after drinking together.

The wave of allegations this week extended beyond the media industry to the nonprofit sphere.

An advocate for hepatitis B patients, Lei Chuang, resigned on Monday from the charity he founded after a co-worker accused him of assaulting her after a hiking trip. Then, the environmentalist Feng Yongfeng resigned from his charity on Tuesday after being accused of harassing several women.

That the resignations came so swiftly was surprising in a country where accusations of abuse and harassment against women are often ignored and laws on rape and harassment are vague.

The #MeToo movement in China was initiated earlier this year on university campuses, as students circulated open letters decrying sexual misbehavior by professors and demanding better protections. There were some signs of success, with universities agreeing to do more to investigate cases of abuse and increase awareness about sexual harassment.

But the activism ran up against the country's strict limits on free speech. In April, students and professors denounced the leadership of Peking University for trying to stifle activism about sexual harassment.

Experts say it will be difficult for the #MeToo movement to take on government officials or prominent business executives, given the ruling Communist Party's tight control of civil society.

King-wa Fu, a media scholar at the University of Hong Kong, said officials most likely feared the power of the #MeToo movement to bring many people together to target "higher authorities" like corporations, universities and the government. Still, he said he was hopeful the movement could continue to have an impact in China.

"Censorship can only stop public discussion for awhile," Professor Fu said. "When something big happens again, it will come back."

2018. 07. 30 “#MeToo in China: Movement Gathers Pace Amid Wave Of Accusations”

作者/Author: Lily Kuo

来源/Source: The Guardian 英国卫报

原文链接/Link: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jul/31/metoo-in-china-movement-gathers-pace-amid-wave-of-accusations>

More than 20 women have come out with allegations against former bosses, acquaintances, and colleagues in the last week

A Chinese anti-discrimination campaigner, an environmentalist, three journalists, an academic, two badminton coaches, and one of China's most watched television hosts. These are some of the men who have been accused of sexual misconduct in the last week, in an avalanche of cases that signal China's #MeToo moment is gaining momentum even as authorities try to suppress it.

“There is no industry where this isn't happening. These are not isolated cases,” says Yi Xiaohe, a Shanghai-based producer who has accused a well-known journalist and commentator of sexually harassing her in 2011.

More than 20 women have come out with allegations against former bosses, acquaintances, and colleagues this week. On Monday, the founder of a well-known charity admitted to raping a woman, a case that was followed by other allegations.

On Wednesday, a woman published a statement online accusing the journalist Zhang Wen of raping her in May. Six more women, including Yi, accused him of sexual misconduct. In a statement Zhang has denied the rape, saying it was consensual. He accused the other women who alleged he had harassed them of trying to harm his reputation and said kissing and hugging was common in the industry.

“A single spark can start a huge fire,” Yi wrote, in an open letter on Thursday. She detailed an incident she said happened in 2011 when she was a writer at China Newsweek and accepted an invitation from Zhang, an editor at the time, to share a meal. When they met, she said, he put his hand on her thigh. Zhang said in a statement that it was normal for people in media to hug and kiss each other while drinking.

“What happened that night was consensual. I didn't force the other to do what is described in the article online,” Zhang said.

Then on Thursday allegations arose against a prominent host of China's state broadcaster CCTV, who was accused of groping an intern.

Now, Yi and others are calling on other women to say “MeToo.” Since publishing her letter, she has received about 200 messages describing misconduct, harassment and abuse. A magazine in Beijing that asked readers to share their experiences said it was flooded with more than 1,700 stories in less than 24 hours. A lawyer who posted on Weibo offering free legal services to victims said he had gotten almost 30 requests in a day.

‘An awakening of women's power’

It's a sign China's #MeToo movement, which has so far been restricted to universities and is often described as fledgling, is starting to spread. “Women are starting to come out and uncover pain from the past, and fight for their own rights,” said Zhong Ying, a journalist in Beijing.

Still, even those who support it say there are limits to how far it can go. “This is an awakening of women’s power, but there is also huge push back. The voices of those who are against are the majority,” Zhong said.

At first articles and debate over allegations of sexual misconduct flowed freely online early last week. Then on Thursday, a Weibo user published a 3,000 word post, in which the writer accuses a well-known CCTV host of groping her when she was an intern on another show with him in 2014.

She had been sent to the host’s dressing room to bring him fruit when she said the TV star began talking about his influence at the state-owned network, China’s flagship broadcaster. As he spoke, he grew more animated and started to grope her. She was able to escape when one of the show’s guests came in.

“Some people think sexual harassment is not common,” she told the Guardian, asking to remain anonymous. “I wanted to let people know that I am your friend, relative, classmate, colleague, or acquaintance, and I’ve experienced sexual harassment. It’s not something new on Weibo, but something that has happened to a real person beside you.

“In Chinese society, sex-related topics are seen as forbidden, which makes it less likely for young women to know how frequent or common sexual harassment is. At the time, I was a third-year student at university. I didn’t know I should be cautious in that kind of situation.”

Soon after her post was published, the CCTV host’s name was trending on Weibo, with thousands of comments.

He could not be reached for a response. CCTV did not respond to requests for comment.

By Friday, all stories and mentions of his name were scrubbed from Chinese social media. Search terms “Me too” or “Metoo” were among the most blocked, according to Free Weibo, which tracks censored terms on the microblog.

Yi said a newspaper planning to interview her abruptly cancelled their appointment, saying they “could not report on this anymore,” according to Yi. The Wechat account for the magazine in Beijing collecting #MeToo stories was also shut down.

“When public opinion touches on some official departments, the authorities show up immediately and censor the related topics. They are not manipulating opinions, but allowing the opinions that don’t do large harm,” said the lawyer who offered his services to victims, and asked not to be named.

Discussion of #MeToo inevitably leads to debates about rights, organising among the public, and protests – all things Chinese authorities quickly clamp down on.

Censorship is not the only obstacle. Police often pressure those reporting sexual assault to drop their cases, especially in incidents that don’t involve rape. Criminal punishment for sexual harassment is rare, and in civil suits are limited to compensation and apologies, according to legal experts.

The former CCTV intern said the police persuaded her to withdraw her report, given the CCTV host’s “enormous positive influence” on society. The police also said for the sake of her parents work as public servants she should let the case go.

“Sexual harassment is not necessarily about gender, but power,” she said. “If the strong harm the weak, that is what is most unfair.”

Still, people are finding ways around these pressures. Internet users have started using dialect to evade censors, substituting a northern term for “me” in “me too”.

“Even the strictest censorship cannot stop someone from standing up and speaking out. The right of speaking always exists. The meaning of MeToo is to let more people speak out,” the former CCTV intern said.

Yi, whose public account on WeChat has not yet been censored, plans to publish the hundreds of stories readers have sent her. Zhong and a group of concerned netizens have organised a petition against Zhang.

“Women here won’t make as much as noise as they do abroad,” said Zhong. “But there will still be people who learn from this. There will be some men who inside will start thinking about their actions. It doesn’t matter men or women, this will give them more courage, and at the very least, breath to speak out.”

2018. 07. 31 “China's Sudden #MeToo Movement”

作者/Author: Mu Chunshan

来源/Source: The Diplomat 外交家

原文链接/Link: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/26/world/asia/china-metoo.html>

In the past week, accusations of sexual harassment and assault have exploded on Chinese social media.

In my view, every tiny change within China has an impact on the country's behavior toward the rest of the world. Social tolerance and the public's reaction have been increasingly taken into consideration when crafting many of China's foreign policies in recent years. Therefore, anyone paying attention to China's diplomacy must also keep a watchful eye on the changes in Chinese society. By doing so, I believe you will find a new channel to understand China's foreign policy.

That brings me to today's topic: China's #MeToo Movement.

To be honest, at first I didn't take any particular notice of this movement, which began in the United States. American female stars, including Alyssa Milano, promoted the movement as a response against Harvey Weinstein, a famous producer who has been accused of sexually assaulting women throughout his career. Surprisingly, however, China suddenly started its own #MeToo Movement this summer, and things exploded just this week. Over the past few days, more than 10 celebrities have been accused of having sexually harassed and even assaulted others. Even some of my friends were involved, which forced me to face up to the problem.

For example, well-known journalist Zhang Wen was accused of sexually assaulting a woman two months ago; he denied the charge and claimed he was framed. Later, another five women (including a famous Chinese writer) came forward and accused him of sexual harassment at different times and on different occasions on the internet, arousing widespread public concern. The accusations shook me to the core, as I had attended several events with Zhang and had previously had a good perception of him. I posted about this on social media (China's Sina Weibo) and called for a legal investigation.

To my surprise, a female friend left a message under the post, asking me where she should go to file a complaint about a matter like that. I responded by asking her, “Have you been sexually harassed or assaulted?” She answered with hesitation that she was sexually harassed by a person at a “state news agency” during her internship. It's been years since it happened and only her closest family knew about it.

Now she finally wanted to speak up — seeing so many women on the internet coming out to reveal their own experience of being sexually harassed and assaulted by “celebrities” gave her courage. I encouraged her to say it out loud so that the perpetrator would have nowhere to hide. She was hesitant to do so — maybe she just doesn't want to revisit this painful experience in the past.

Yet even as I was writing this column, a post in which a girl exposed her experience of being sexually assaulted by a famous CCTV host during her internship went viral on the internet, making another contribution to China's #MeToo Movement.

The reason I described China's #MeToo Movement as sudden is because, in the past week, there has been surprising news coming out every day. Familiar faces are now being revealed as predators.

The #MeToo Movement in China first exploded in charity circles. The one place that has long been hailed as sacred by many people turned out to be a shelter of evil people and evil practices. Just days ago, Lei Chuang, a famous philanthropist, was accused of sexually assaulting a woman who had worked with him

in 2015. He later made a statement admitting his mistake and considered turning himself in. But he said he was romantically involved with the woman at the time, which she denied. Then another woman came out and accused him of sexual assault. The Beijing police are now looking into the case.

Later, Feng Yongfeng, another philanthropist, was accused by several women of sexual harassment, assault, rape, and even death threats. Feng blamed it all on alcohol. Alcohol has become a cheap excuse for sexual harassment – Zhang Wen, the journalist mentioned above, also explained his inappropriate behavior by saying that “it’s normal for people to hug and touch each other while drinking together.” Of course, this excuse was overwhelmingly denounced by the public on the internet. Now Zhang Wen is said to be applying to emigrate to the United States and many netizens have left messages on the social media account of Beijing’s U.S. Embassy, asking them to keep an eye on this.

China’s #MeToo Movement isn’t just about female victims standing up to voice their experiences, though. Three men have revealed their experience of being sexually harassed by Zhang Jinxiong, head of a well-known homosexual charity organization in China. Ironically, it seems Zhang believes in the rule of law — he once consulted his lawyer about how Chinese law defines and punishes sexual harassment between men.

The Chinese #MeToo Movement keeps simmering, moving from the charity circle to the media sector. It’s a safe bet that there will be more “celebrities” with a dirty past exposed in the future.

In my opinion, this is an awakening movement for the Chinese people. They are waking up to protect their own rights and interests, which is not something that’s taught in school or at home. This is a voluntary social movement with a width and depth the likes of which we have not seen in decades.

Thanks to the social media boom in China, the right of speech is no longer only in the hands of state or elite-controlled TV, newspapers, and magazines. Narrative power has been dispersed to everyone’s mobile phone and tablet. It also shows that society is improving and the Chinese people are increasingly aware of — and protective of — their own rights. In the future, such awareness will drive China’s human rights approach to be more democratized and exert a subtle influence on China’s politics and economy, ultimately having a positive impact on the progress of the nation as a whole.

2018. 9. 14 “How China’s feminists launched #MeToo in a country where protest is barely possible”

作者/Author: Robyn Dixon

来源/Source: Los Angeles Times 洛杉矶时报

原文链接/Link: <https://www.latimes.com/world/la-fg-china-metoo-09142018-story.html>

Dressed in black, Li Yiyi sat on a ledge on the eighth floor of a downtown office building, staring at her cellphone as people on social media urged her to jump.

Her life had started unraveling two years before when a schoolteacher forced himself on her, kissing and fondling her as he tried to pull off her clothes. Once an ambitious, talkative 16-year-old with plans to attend a top university in China, she dropped out of school, retreated inward and settled for a job as a shop assistant. Her father tried without success to get authorities to pursue criminal charges against the teacher.

“She was a very open-minded and positive person, but she seemed to change into a completely different person after the incident happened,” said Li Yifei, her 28-year-old cousin who had raced to the building in downtown Gansu when he saw that she had posted a suicide message on social media.

When he arrived, Li Yiyi was clinging to the ledge by her hands. A fireman tried to coax her down. Instead she let go.

Li Yiyi's death in June underscored again the long road ahead for the embryonic #MeToo movement in China, where gender inequality is still deeply entrenched and social protest is swiftly stifled.

"I was so sad," Wan Miaoyan, a commercial lawyer in China who also handles sexual harassment and domestic violence cases, said of Li Yiyi's death. "But during my research on the history of setting up laws and regulations against sexual harassment around the world, there was always blood and lives lost in the process, and that is the cost.

"That is why I wish China could introduce laws so that cases like Li Yiyi's do not happen."

Employers, universities and even police are generally reluctant to get involved in sexual harassment cases in China and assailants are rarely charged and often never punished, leaving few women bold enough to speak out. When five women tried to organize multi-city protests in 2015 to focus attention on unwanted groping on buses and trains, they were arrested and jailed for more than five weeks for "picking quarrels and stirring up trouble."

Yet there is evidence of progress. A prominent Buddhist monk, a university professor, the founder of a well-known charity, an environmental activist, a famous state television host, two badminton coaches and several journalists have all been accused of sexual harassment in recent months, with the accusations spreading rapidly on Chinese social media, though state censors usually quash the messages quickly.

When censors in China banned the #MeToo hashtag, activists came up with imaginative ways to get around the ban, using the characters "rice bunny," pronounced "mi tu," to tag posts or by using the emojis for a bowl of rice and a rabbit.

Though victims are often pressured to remain silent, Wan believes public awareness of sexual harassment is growing and pressure is building in China to finally create a clear criminal law banning sexual harassment. In a 2016 online survey of 6,592 university students, 70% reported being sexually harassed. A survey of female factory workers three years earlier by a labor rights group, the Sunflower Women Workers Center in Guangzhou, found the same thing.

Wan now is handling a case she believes could mark a turning point for the #MeToo movement in China.

In December, Nanchang University, in Jiangxi province, dismissed two professors, one of whom is accused of raping a student in 2016 and the other accused of discouraging the student from reporting the incident. The professors were fired a day after details of the case began swirling on Chinese social media.

Now Wan is suing the professors and school for damages of about \$21,000 on behalf of the student, far more than the few hundred dollars awarded in the handful of successful sexual harassment cases to date.

"In some countries victims get significant compensation. Here, we're just starting," she said. "I will really put a lot of effort and thought into this case. It's really important to win. It would mean that institutions would start to take responsibility."

One of the earliest sexual harassment scandals in China emerged in 1998 after a 21-year-old student, Gao Yan, committed suicide. She'd alleged she was raped by a professor at prestigious Peking University, Shen Yang, now 62. He denied the allegations. At the time, the university quietly gave him a demerit on his employment record, a minor administrative punishment.

Two decades later, the case drew renewed anger when it surfaced on Chinese social media. In response, the professor's two current employers, Shanghai Normal University and Nanjing University, fired him.

One thing slowing the #MeToo movement in China is the lack of a clear legal definition of sexual harassment. Of the more than 50 million legal cases that were filed between 2010 and 2017, only two were brought by women alleging they were victims of sexual harassment.

The Beijing Yuanzhong Gender Development Center, which supports victims of sexual harassment and domestic violence, is now pushing for a national law to define and ban sexual harassment and

discrimination against women and, for the first time, the government is actually drafting a measure that would require employers to take steps to discourage harassment in any form. Activists, though, say that doesn't go far enough and want perpetrators to face the risk of criminal charges.

China's intolerance for activism has also likely slowed the #MeToo movement.

When a famous state TV host, Zhu Jun, was accused by a former station intern of sexual harassment in a social media post last month, censors swiftly eliminated any social media references to #MeToo or "Zhu Jun."

The intern posted that she was asked to take fruit to Zhu's room, where he attempted to molest her and boasted that he had the influence to get her a job at the station. She said her supervisor pressured her not to go to the police.

State media then were ordered to "immediately delete all information related to Zhu Jun" and "leave no area neglected," according to a notice published by California-based China Digital Times. Two days later, a notice went out warning state media not to "hype" coverage of the #MeToo movement.

Zhang Leilei, a feminist activist in Guangzhou, southern China, ran up against the limits of official tolerance last year when she and other activists crowd-funded a project to put up a billboard in the local subway protesting sexual groping.

When she was 12, Zhang said, she was riding home on the school bus when a middle-aged man pushed himself up against her so hard she couldn't pull free.

"He was just standing there and smiling and really creepy. He was not even nervous. I was really afraid." She said she was groped other times as well, once in a bookstore. Victim-blaming is so entrenched in China, she said, that it took her years to realize she was not at fault.

Now emboldened enough to fight for reform, she and other activists raised almost \$6,500 for a subway billboard that showed a female hand with bright red fingernails blocking a male's groping hand with the slogan: "Temptation is no excuse. Stop the wandering hands." Authorities said the image could cause public anxiety and rejected the design.

When the women redesigned the sign with a cat's paw and a pig foot, authorities told her that only government agencies and companies could put billboard advertisements in the subway.

So Zhang dyed her hair pink, donned a pink tutu, pink T-shirt and pink plastic slippers and photographed herself at locations across the city holding up a smaller version of the billboard and posted the images online, urging others to do the same.

"It was the only thing I had left. Whenever I went outside, I carried the billboard with me."

She said more than 100 supporters in 20 different areas of China posted her photos, enough to attract official attention.

"I intended to do it every day for a month. But after two weeks the police came to my house and told me to stop."

She said the police, who had made warning visits to her home before, asked her to leave the city for at least six months.

Instead, she moved elsewhere in the city. Police then called her parents and uncle, reporting that she was "causing trouble."

"It's difficult to be a feminist in China," she said.

The fight for change, Zhang said, will be long.

“Last year I felt really frustrated and I felt no hope,” she said. “But this year you can see the #MeToo movement is really thriving. It’s the people, especially women, who have taken this movement to the next level.”

2018. 9. 27 “China #MeToo: Why one woman is being sued by the TV star she accused”

作者/Author: Beijing bureau BBC 驻北京

来源/Source: BBC 新闻

原文链接/Link: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-45636196>

Just a few months ago, China was hit by a string of #MeToo accusations that emerged from arenas as diverse as temples, universities and television talk shows. Now, one case is set to go before China’s civil courts but it is the accuser, not the accused, who is having to defend herself.

In July, China’s entertainment world was faced with the allegation that one of the country’s biggest and most beloved TV stars had forcibly groped and kissed an intern after she took a basket of fruit to his room.

Zhu Jun, known for hosting national television extravaganzas such as the Spring Festival Gala, immediately denied the accusation and proceeded to sue her for damaging his reputation and mental wellbeing.

The woman, known by her online moniker Xianzi, was finally told on Tuesday that the case will be heard in Beijing’s Haidian district court.

She has now filed a countersuit and intends to fight the case, thus setting up China’s first #MeToo confrontation in court.

Desperation and denial

The case is a telling insight into how China is negotiating the #MeToo phenomenon that has swept the world and seen dozens of high-profile figures being publicly shamed for alleged sexual misconduct.

When 25-year-old Xianzi posted her 3,000-word account on WeChat, she wasn’t expecting a huge amount of attention. But when her friend Xu Chao re-posted it on China’s biggest social media site Sina Weibo - it immediately began to go viral.

Xu Chao is now also being sued by Zhu Jun - who also demands compensation and a public apology from her, arguing that the situation has caused him great distress.

The alleged incident is said to have taken place four years ago, but in her account Xianzi alleges that the police told her to drop the accusation because Mr Zhu was a prominent TV host and his “positive impact” on society should make her think twice.

She also alleges that the authorities went as far as contacting her parents and said she should keep quiet for their sake.

Soon after she came forward, Xianzi claimed to have received several threatening phone calls: “Believe it or not, I’ll get to your Mum,” a deep male voice said in a voice recording she posted later on Weibo.

With no other witnesses or allegations against Zhu Jun forthcoming, the case looks to be a simple case of his word against hers. But for both women this is about making a point on a public stage in China, where #MeToo has failed to make significant progress as a movement.

Xianzi told the BBC she would not change her stance: “I don’t want society to expect the perfect victim who never makes any mistakes and asks [for] no compensation.

“Many people ask #MeToo victims why you don’t make a report to the police immediately. I’m the one who did report to the police four years ago and I didn’t receive any justice. Still there are people who instruct female victims to do this... but not men. I want to correct this by standing up.”

Xu Chao had this to say: “What deeply concerns the victims is whether this injury leads to justice or nothing.”

She is pessimistic about China's ability to allow #MeToo to become a fully-fledged part of the mainstream conversation, the way it has elsewhere.

"China is a bit different. There is a gap between public opinion and legislation," she says, but adds: "I won't give up."

Mr Zhu's lawyers have consistently denied the allegations set out against him and did not respond to requests for comment from the BBC. The lawsuit demands both women apologise online and in a national newspaper and pay compensation.

It's clear that there is a high degree of sensitivity in Chinese official circles about the extent to which they should encourage or even simply tolerate #MeToo discussions. Coupled with the social and cultural pressures for women to toe the line, it means the movement has struggled here like nowhere else.

And then there's the unavoidable issue of censorship. If Chinese authorities aren't happy about what's being presented online, they can simply choose to get rid of it - as they have done in the past.

"We observed [about] a dozen Chinese women who came forward on Weibo with accusations of sexual assault," said Prof Fu King-wa, who runs Weiboscope, a censorship tracker, out of Hong Kong University's Journalism and Media Studies Centre.

"In many cases, there was an apparent link between online censorship and strong public reaction to [these] #MeToo incidents. China's censor is more likely to intervene when a personal accusation [is met with] a large scale of online reaction... and when the posts potentially [pose] higher threats to the country's political, social or moral order."

But there have been cases to buck a pessimistic outlook. Another accusation that emerged this summer pointed the finger at the abbot of China's powerful Longquan temple, who was also a political adviser to the government and the youngest person ever to hold the position of head of the Buddhist Association of China. He was to become one of China's most high profile #MeToo casualties.

An extraordinary 95-page report written by two monks accused him of sending illicit messages attempting to control the minds of nuns by claiming sex was part of their study of Buddhist doctrines.

Almost as soon as the report began to circulate on social media platforms, the authorities began censoring or deleting it. The temple accused the monks of "forging material" and "distorting facts" - but it was too late. By late August, an investigation confirmed that Xuecheng, the abbot, had sexually harassed female disciples via text messages.

He resigned to cheers that resounded across social media. The investigation had been handled by China's national religious council, and then handed onto the police and this was heralded as a big victory.

'Just forget about it, move on'

Shortly before the flurry of accusations came out a 19-year-old student from Gansu province jumped to her death because her allegation of sexual assault was not believed by her university or the local authorities.

The case caused a sensation online and one student at a different university, who wished to remain anonymous, told the BBC this is what finally prompted her to make a complaint about how she was sexually assaulted at her institution.

But support from her family was limited: "My parents don't understand why I insist on the investigation. They think I should forget about it, just move on.

"I cried the whole night after that news, I feel what she felt. I was also 19 years old when I was sexually assaulted," she said.

"It shouldn't take our lives to fight against those people."

2018. 10. 5 “Rape case shocks elite Chinese university students, raises fears of off-campus accommodation safety”

作者/Author: Laurie Chen

来源/Source: South China Morning Post/南华早报

原文链接/Link: <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/society/article/2167113/rape-case-shocks-elite-chinese-university-students-raises-fears>

Police have detained a 17-year-old male student accused of raping a female migrant worker in a Wuhan University dormitory room, in a case that has shocked the elite institution.

Police received reports of a woman heard screaming for help at Sanhuan student halls in east Wuhan, Hubei province, in central China, at around 1am on Monday. According to an official Weibo post from Luojiashan police station on Thursday, they found and arrested the suspect nearby an hour later.

A police officer confirmed to Thepaper.cn that the suspect is a student at an unnamed local vocational college while the alleged victim is also 17 years old.

Details of the incident were posted on the official Weibo page of the Wuhan University Postgraduate Students Association on Thursday evening.

According to that report, the female victim was brought to the suspect’s room in the Sanhuan dormitory and sexually assaulted there.

None of the people involved were Wuhan University students, but the institution acknowledged the incident had made students concerned about the safety of its off-campus accommodation.

The university said it was conducting an investigation into the incident and had also stepped up campus management measures in off-campus dormitories. These include regular security guard patrols, installation of access control systems and shuttle buses between the dormitories and campus.

The case started trending on social media on Wednesday, when a person, claiming to be the emergency caller and a Wuhan University student living at Sanhuan dormitory, posted an account of the events on an unofficial Weibo page dedicated to Wuhan University student life.

The unnamed student claimed that, at the time of the incident, the female dormitory security guard “sat there and did not respond” when the woman was heard screaming for help.

The security guard was also alleged to have told police it was a “minor quarrel between lovers, and the incident did not happen in the dormitory block”.

“In the past three days, I have realised that our most fundamental personal safety cannot be protected in this dormitory,” wrote the poster.

Netizens on Weibo have expressed concerns over campus safety and outrage at the security guard’s alleged behaviour.

“May the female security guard never rest easy forever,” read one top-rated commenter.

“Wuhan University students living at Sanhuan are scared to death! When will Wuhan University leaders let students return to safe accommodation?” wrote another user.

In recent months, a number of student halls at Chinese universities, including Beijing Normal University and Peking University, have installed AI facial recognition systems to screen entrants.

Although Sanhuan student halls is owned by Wuhan University and is located off-campus, it also houses a number of students from other local institutions, a Wuhan University student told Thepaper.cn.

Another Wuhan University student told reporters they would rent accommodation elsewhere despite being allocated a room at Sanhuan, and that the dormitory was known for being far from campus in “bad” surroundings.

While incidents of campus rape are increasingly being reported in China, cases involving migrant workers are rarely given media attention.

Police said that the case is under further investigation.

2018. 10. 9 “How #MeToo Is Taking on a Life of Its Own in Asia”

作者/Author: Suyin Haynes and Aria Hangyu Chen

来源/Source: Time 时代

原文链接/Link: <https://time.com/longform/me-too-asia-china-south-korea/>

It’s been eight years since Seo Ji-hyun says she was sexually harassed, but it’s still painful to recall. “For a long time, I tortured myself by blaming myself for everything,” she says, speaking to TIME on a cloudy September morning in Seoul’s trendy Apgujeong neighborhood. In 2010, Seo, a top-level prosecutor in South Korea, alleges that she was repeatedly groped at a funeral by a senior male colleague, while the country’s Justice Minister sat nearby.

Seo reported the incident to her managers shortly after, but was subjected to performance audits that she describes as unfair, and assigned to a lower level branch outside Seoul—a move she says did not match her strong track record at work. Last fall, after suffering long term health problems such as panic attacks and trouble sleeping, Seo watched as the #MeToo movement took off in Hollywood. She began to grasp how widespread sexual harassment and assault were, and realized even “world-famous actresses” had suffered as she had. “I had more confidence in believing that it wasn’t my fault,” she says.

As the reckoning spread across the U.S., Canada and parts of Europe, millions of survivors described their experiences of groping, rape, unwanted kissing, abuse and threats; others simply posted “me too” on social media. In November, Seo asked for a meeting with senior management to open an investigation into the incident, and to find the truth regarding her treatment at work in the years since she reported the incident. Frustrated by the lack of progress, Seo decided to add her voice to the rising global chorus on January 29—sharing her experience in an open letter on her workplace intranet and signing it with #MeToo at the end.

Within a few hours of posting, she says the Justice Department said her statement was false and refused to issue an apology. (The Ministry of Justice did not respond to TIME’s repeated requests for comment on the case; Seo’s alleged harasser has denied the charge, saying he was too drunk at the time to recall what happened.) That evening, Seo spoke on one of South Korea’s most influential evening news programs. “The reason I did the interview was to tell many people out there that it’s not their fault,” she says.

Her words resonated. Today, Seo’s interview is widely credited with kickstarting South Korea’s own #MeToo movement, triggering a wave of women speaking out against film directors, poets, actors, and others. Meanwhile, Ko Mi-kyung, president of Korea Women’s Hotline, an organization supporting survivors of domestic violence and sexual harassment, estimates that it received a 23% increase in the number of calls in the weeks following Seo’s interview. Those are particularly widespread problems: a 2014 U.N. report showed South Korea had the third highest rate of female murder victims in the world; and in a 2017 study, almost 80% of South Korean men surveyed by the Korean Institute of Criminology said they had physically or psychologically abused a girlfriend.

South Korea wasn’t the only country in Asia where women’s rights activists were paying attention to how the #MeToo movement on the other side of the globe was evolving. As high profile perpetrators in the West publicly apologized for their behavior and some lost positions of power, many in Asia saw a chance to reignite long-simmering movements pushing for gender equality and shape their own national conversations about gender inequality.

Like in the U.S., the movements in Asian countries have been started and sustained by ordinary citizens. But while celebrities and media figures helped make #MeToo go viral in the U.S., there have been fewer high-profile cases in Asia. “Those who are fighting are not famous people,” says Lu Pin, the founder of grassroots Chinese activist platform Feminist Voices. “It is countless grassroots people echoing each other.”

Some credit the U.S. movement with helping bring the conversation out into the open. “It’s no longer seen as a niche issue,” says Anna-Karin Jafors, Regional Director for U.N. Women’s Asia-Pacific

operation. Others, like Lu Pin, say activists were always looking for this opportunity—and were eager to forge their own country’s interpretation of #MeToo.

While China’s movement has borrowed the hashtag, others have used their movements to address deeply-entrenched inequalities, including access to abortion, domestic abuse and murder. In Asia, #MeToo isn’t just synonymous with sexual harassment and assault. As women across the region turn their anger into action, its manifestations have become a broader feminist rallying cry. In Japan, #WithYou has been used to express solidarity with survivors of workplace harassment; in Thailand, women voiced their frustration at being slut-shamed with #DontTellMeHowToDress; and in the Philippines, women have flooded social media and the streets in protest against President Rodrigo Duterte’s sexist comments, under the hashtag #BabaeAko (I Am Woman.)

But daring to speak out in some of these deeply patriarchal societies comes with enormous risks. In democratic South Korea, even as women take to the streets demanding justice on violence and sexual harassment, they cover their faces out of fear of backlash. In China—a repressive state where crackdowns on human rights activists and minority populations are escalating—women must contend with their posts on social media being censored and online feminist platforms being shut down.

One sexual assault survivor in Hangzhou applauds the bravery of celebrities in Hollywood who have spoken out. “Such courage makes me believe that after they speak out, they can be honest with themselves.” But the situation is different in China, she tells TIME. “A lot of people say that when a woman speaks up, or even when [rape or assault] happens, that’s the moment they die.”

In China, state hostility toward public protest means women’s rights activists cannot flood the streets. Instead, they go online. Unlike elsewhere in Asia, the government’s tight grip on freedom of information means it’s more difficult for activists to look to other countries’ movements for inspiration. That hasn’t stopped a new generation of digitally-savvy women working to amplify #MeToo stories, with the help of Virtual Private Networks [VPN] ensuring a safe, encrypted Internet connection. “Thanks to the Internet, and VPNs, their minds are not constrained by the firewall,” says Wang Zheng, Professor of Women’s Studies and History at the University of Michigan.

The movement took off on January 1, when Luo Xixi, a former student at Beihang University in Beijing, wrote an open letter on Weibo, China’s Twitter-like social media platform. Luo alleged that when she was a PhD candidate in 2004, her professor Chen Xiaowu drove her to his sister’s home and tried to force himself on her. Chen denied the allegations but 10 days later, after an investigation, he was fired and the university revoked his teaching qualifications, issuing a public statement saying they found Chen had sexually harassed students.

Luo’s post was viewed more than 3 million times in one day and sparked a series of other allegations against at least a dozen university professors. A 2017 survey carried out by Guangzhou Gender and Sexuality Education Center and Beijing Impact Law Firm on college students and graduates showed almost 75% of women reported being sexually harassed in their lifetime, with more than 40% of incidents taking place in public space on college campuses. (By comparison, in the U.S., a 2016 report from the U.S. Department of Justice found that one in five women in college experiences sexual assault.) Ripples of the movement eventually reached beyond China’s university campuses, with a flurry of allegations embroiling leading figures in China’s NGO and media sectors coming to a head in July.

The roots of today’s movement can be traced back to feminist campaigns several years earlier. Back in 2012, young women gained widespread attention for public performances, including wearing “bloodied” wedding dresses on Valentine’s Day in Beijing to draw attention to domestic violence, occupying men’s bathrooms in Guangzhou to protest inequality in public restrooms and protesting slut-shaming in Shanghai’s subway.

A turning point came in 2015, when five female activists, known widely as ‘the Feminist Five,’ were detained on charges of “provoking trouble” after planning a multi-city protest to tackle sexual harassment

on public transport. After international condemnation, authorities were forced to backtrack and released the women a month after their detention. “These political activists spent years making the ground fertile for the blossoming of the #MeToo movement in China today,” says Leta Hong Fincher, author of *Betraying Big Brother: The Feminist Awakening in China*.

That blossoming hasn’t gone unnoticed by the Chinese government. Since the detention of the Feminist Five, activists say the space for raising awareness about gender equality issues has been shrinking. In the 20th century, feminism was seen as a communist principle: women rose to official positions and worked to dismantle feudal laws that dictated systems of marriage, as well as promoting women’s literacy and equal pay.

But the younger generation of women’s rights activists works outside the system, with little resources and without the blessing of the state. In May 2017, state media pointed to “hostile forces” using “Western feminism” to interfere in the country’s affairs, a phrase that has cropped up again during this year’s wave of sexual harassment claims across the country’s social media. If the 2012 performances were planned now, says activist Xiao Yue, better known as Xiao Meili, who took part in some, “we would have been arrested before it even happened.”

Although the number of Chinese internet users has reached over 800 million, with more than 376 million monthly active users on Weibo, censors are quick to block or delete any content deemed disruptive or sensitive. A 25-year-old former CCTV intern, Xian Zi (who asked TIME not to publish her real name for fear of reprisals), alleges that high-profile TV presenter Zhu Jun molested her in a makeup room in 2014, when she was an intern at China Central Television, the country’s state television broadcaster. (His lawyer denies her allegation and CCTV has not responded to TIME’s requests for comments.)

“I wanted to share my own experiences with other girls,” she tells TIME of her decision to post about her experience on social media in July. “Even though I can’t guarantee what will happen when they speak up.” Her story was re-posted by another user on Weibo, but was censored after only two hours; in August, she found that posts on her own newly-created Weibo account were temporarily blocked from being re-posted for more than two weeks. Xian Zi also received multiple anonymous phone calls threatening to find her mother at home.

In August, Zhu Jun denied the allegations in a lawyer’s letter posted online and, soon after, filed a lawsuit against Xian Zi, as well as a friend of hers who posted the story on Weibo, and the platform itself for “reputation dispute.” (Weibo did not respond to TIME’s request for comment.) In a court document reviewed by TIME, Zhu said Xian Zi’s accusations are “made up” and “seriously not factual.” He requests public apologies and asks for the posts to be deleted online, as well as \$95,000 in compensation. On Sept. 25, Xian Zi filed a suit against Zhu on grounds of “personality infringement.”

Xian Zi is set to become one of the first people in China’s #MeToo movement to confront their alleged perpetrator in court. Her story is one of many social media posts detailing experiences of sexual harassment that have been censored. But while posts may be repeatedly deleted on social media, traces of the stories and debates can still be found online. “The waves that people created won’t disappear in vain,” says Lu Pin. Activists say there seems to be a growing awareness about sexual harassment among internet users and #MeToo activists have managed to creatively circumvent censorship in a variety of ways—distorting images, using emojis, manipulating Chinese characters and using codes sourced from Github.

Some share other women’s stories on their own social media, drawing attention to their cases and creating a kind of virtual support network. One hashtag referencing sexual harassment within China’s rock music circuit, loosely translated as #RockCircleMe2, began circulating on Weibo in July and received over 8 million views and more than 7,000 posts on the topic. A loose, decentralized web of volunteers has managed to make the movement more resistant to the tide of authoritarianism. “When the authorities know that you are an organizer, they can come to catch or harass you,” says Xiao. “But now everybody is the organizer.”

Seo, the South Korean prosecutor, has been on medical leave since her television interview in January, enjoying spending more time with her 10-year-old son. She tells TIME that she still hasn't received an apology regarding the incident or her treatment afterward. "I think that nothing has changed in the Prosecutor's Office. I've heard that they still think of me as an enemy who disgraced the Office, and that they are still not trusting my words."

Seo isn't the only woman in South Korea to face severe backlash. Lawyer Lee Eun-eui, who successfully sued her employer, Samsung, in a landmark sexual harassment lawsuit back in 2008, says 80% of her clients are claiming cases relating to workplace discrimination and harassment. Many end up being denounced as "gold-diggers," receiving a torrent of online abuse, and even being countersued by alleged perpetrators of harassment or assault. "In these scenarios, who would have the courage to speak out?" she asks, sipping iced tea after a long day in a Seoul courtroom.

South Koreans may not face the kind of restrictive censorship coming from the government in China, but many are acutely aware of the dangers of being seen to support feminist causes. Some wear face masks at rallies, wary of having their personal details leaked to the public, being fired, stalked or even the threat of acid attacks. The Inconvenient Courage group that organizes rallies in Seoul also chooses to remain anonymous. They focus on fighting the country's spy-cam porn epidemic—the well-documented problem of hidden cameras in Korea's public toilets and changing rooms. That secretly captured footage regularly makes its way to online pornography websites—leading to almost 6,500 cases reported in 2017, according to police.

Still, clad in masks or not, women are turning out in unprecedented numbers. In August, over 40,000 women attended an anti-spy-cam porn rally; later that month, 20,000 took to the streets of the capital after a top politician was acquitted on rape charges. "Women are speaking out and fighting in solidarity because they can't live like this anymore. This is a battle that we can't retreat from," Ko says.

Despite the backlash, activists and survivors in the region remain hopeful and defiant—especially as glimmers of institutional change appear. South Korean President Moon Jae-in is calling for tougher punishments on spy-cam perpetrators, and Seoul's government is launching a clean-up campaign to rid the city's public toilets of hidden cameras. China announced in August a plan for new legislation that would define and target sexual harassment in workplaces, and in September, Japan's Labor Policy Council held discussions on proposals for laws and regulations to address the same issue.

While #MeToo and its iterations have not effected much systemic or societal change in some countries across the region, South Korea and China are two places where the culture of activism remains strong. Many women in both these countries feel hopeful about change. "I think I truly feel the meaning of #MeToo," one survivor in Hangzhou tells TIME. "It connects every individual who had harm done to them and makes them no longer feel like they are lowly, isolated or helpless. Instead, they can form alliances, encourage each other and become the courage of each other."

It's still tough to predict what survivors might achieve in terms of legislative change. But in South Korea, Seo's testimony does seem to have changed perceptions about sexual harassment. In a society where a prosecutor is considered one of the most prestigious jobs, many were shocked to realize that even powerful women like Seo were vulnerable to sexual harassment and silenced. As with celebrities speaking out in Hollywood, her case exposed how pervasive the problem is. "She really shook the stereotype of sexual violence victims," says Bae Eun-kyung, Professor of Gender Studies at Seoul National University.

And in both China and South Korea, the broader cultural impact of speaking out in such challenging environments is creating a groundswell of support and solidarity. Women like Seo and Xian Zi want nothing less than to change how survivors of abuse are perceived. "South Korea has a culture of demanding that victims act like victims: they should always be in pain, and cry, and cannot be happy," Seo says. "I want to show the image of the survivor as happy and confident."

2019. 1. 4 “She’s on a #MeToo Mission in China, Battling Censors and Lawsuits”

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BEIJING — On a sleepless night last summer, her siamese cat Stare at her feet, Zhou Xiaoxuan, a 25-year-old screenwriter in Beijing, took out her cellphone and began writing furiously about the day that had haunted her for years.

In 2014, as a fresh-faced intern at China Central Television, the state-run broadcaster, she was asked to bring fruit to the dressing room of Zhu Jun, a famous anchor. It was there, she said, that Mr. Zhu began forcibly kissing and groping her. (Mr. Zhu has denied the accusations.)

Ms. Zhou’s essay about the experience, which she posted online in July, was an impassioned plea for women’s rights in China — and a daring rebuke of the status quo.

“It’s important for every girl to speak up and say what she has suffered,” she wrote in the essay, which totaled more than 3,000 Chinese characters. “We need to make sure society knows that these massacres exist.”

Soon, after a friend of a friend reposted Ms. Zhou’s essay on Sina Weibo, a microblogging site, it quickly spread across the Chinese internet and inspired women to come forward with their own stories of abuse. It became so popular that the Chinese government intervened, blocking comments and banning the state-run news media from covering her case.

Ms. Zhou was overwhelmed. In a matter of days, she had emerged as a hero of China’s fledgling #MeToo movement, a symbol of hope for young women tired of a patriarchal culture. But she had also become a target for hate, receiving hundreds of threatening messages.

Then Mr. Zhu, 54, fired back. In August, he filed a lawsuit against Ms. Zhou describing her accusations as “blatantly fabricated and viciously spread.” He asked for about \$95,000 in damages, saying Ms. Zhou had harmed his reputation and caused emotional distress.

Ms. Zhou, who is known in China by a nickname, Xianzi, thought about retreating. Instead, she became emboldened, filing a lawsuit of her own against Mr. Zhu claiming damage to her dignity. “Let’s get ready to fight,” she wrote online.

Since then, Ms. Zhou has become a leading feminist voice in China, setting out to push the limits of China’s #MeToo movement, which has struggled to gain footing in the face of censorship and reluctance by the authorities to investigate cases of sexual harassment and assault.

Ms. Zhou has helped abused women seek justice, accompanying them to police stations to file criminal reports. She has criticized the government and society at large for not doing more to protect women against domestic violence. And she has meticulously chronicled her legal battle, publishing a diary about her triumphs and setbacks.

Ms. Zhou acknowledges that women in China face many obstacles, including vaguely defined laws on rape and harassment and a culture that often blames women, not men, in cases of sexual abuse. But she says she is optimistic that attitudes will change.

“Once you light the spark that starts a fire,” she said recently at her home in east Beijing, “it will have an impact on people’s hearts.”

Growing up in Wuhan, an industrial city in central China, Ms. Zhou watched as many families in her hometown seemed to value sons over daughters, a practice going back hundreds of years. Her own

parents, worried that as a woman she might face harassment or violence, forbade her from taking public transportation until she was 13.

It was not until the summer of 2014, during her internship at China Central Television, or CCTV, that Ms. Zhou says she fell victim to China's male-dominated culture.

The internship at CCTV, working on Mr. Zhu's signature show, "Artist," was a prestigious job for Ms. Zhou, then a college junior who aspired to work in the film industry.

Mr. Zhu is CCTV royalty, a former singer, actor, dancer and clarinetist for the People's Liberation Army with an illustrious 25-year career at the network. He is best known as a host of the annual Lunar New Year gala, a program that is viewed by more than 700 million people. On "Artist," which ended in late 2017, he was famous for asking emotional questions that prompted his guests to cry.

On the day she says she was forcibly kissed and groped by Mr. Zhu, Ms. Zhou and another intern were invited to interview the famed anchor in his dressing room. When the other intern stepped out of the room, she says, Mr. Zhu turned to Ms. Zhou, grabbing her hand and telling her he could read fortunes. He then dragged her toward him and start kissing her, she says, even as she resisted. She ran out of the room when a guest arrived at the door.

Mr. Zhu's lawyers and CCTV did not respond to requests for comment. In court filings, he said Ms. Zhou's accusations were "made out of nothing and a severe misrepresentation."

Mr. Zhu is also suing Xu Chao, a friend of Ms. Zhou's who first reposted her essay and Sina Weibo, the microblogging platform that published the essay.

After the dressing room incident, Ms. Zhou ran to the police.

But the officers urged her to drop her complaints, she said, arguing that Mr. Zhu was a force for good in society and warning that she might endanger the jobs of her parents. (Her father worked as a civil servant and her mother at a state-owned firm.)

For years, Ms. Zhou stayed silent, telling only her parents and closest friends about the incident, fearing she would be misrepresented.

"People are not allowed to show their pain and wounds," she said. "Many women worry they will be seen as whining."

In July, while eating dinner with friends, she saw a #MeToo post by a childhood friend who had been assaulted. She was moved to tell her own story as a show of support to her friend and to let her male friends know that sexual misbehavior was widespread. She stayed up all night writing, posting her essay shortly after 5 a.m.

"I wanted to let my friends know, through this post, that #MeToo was very close to them," she said.

Advocates for women's rights say that Ms. Zhou's example has made it easier for other women to share their stories of abuse. While China's #MeToo movement is small, complaints by women over the past year against college professors, tech executives, religious leaders and nonprofit executives, among others, have drawn wide attention.

"More young people are willing to stand up and speak," said Huang Yizhi, a lawyer in Beijing who specializes in gender discrimination cases. "They are no longer afraid."

Ms. Zhou says she considers herself lucky, not courageous, because her case earned wide attention in the news media. Many women in China struggle to be heard, she said, noting that some victims wait in line for days at police stations, only to be ignored.

"The obstacles that other women experience is beyond my imagination," she said. "It's almost impossible for their cases to be resolved."

On her Weibo page, she offers a mix of inspirational slogans (“the light will come”) and reflections on her own struggles. In one recent post, she recounted how she disliked a photo taken by a journalist because it made her look like a powerless victim.

“I am in a cage, lacking courage, insignificant, flinching and escaping, just like this photo,” she wrote. “I hope that girls can get more protection and that when they face the camera, they can laugh openly.”

On a smoggy October day, Ms. Zhou strode into a courthouse in northwest Beijing for her first appearance in Mr. Zhu’s lawsuit. During the proceedings, she was asked to provide evidence of the assault and to recount what had happened.

After the court session ended, Ms. Zhou, nervous and frightened, said she felt so tired that she wanted to vomit.

At a sidewalk news conference, a journalist asked if she felt she was under pressure. Ms. Zhou paused for a moment, taking stock of her ordeal.

“This is something I must tackle,” she said. “I don’t have a choice.”

Albee Zhang, Iris Zhao and Luz Ding contributed research.

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2019. 1. 10 “China’s #MeToo Activists Have Transformed a Generation”

作者/Author: Simina Mistreanu

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GUANGZHOU, China—Sophia Huang’s fingers were racing over her two iPhones at a restaurant in downtown Guangzhou, southern China, as her food went cold.

Huang had just found out that the professor Chen Xiaowu, whose sexual harassment of a student ignited China’s #MeToo movement in January 2018, had been awarded the country’s most prestigious research grant. She was furiously posting on social media while at the same time texting the representatives of Chen’s university.

“He wants to resurface,” she said, eyes on her screens. “We can’t allow it.”

Huang is among a group of feminists, working mostly out of Guangzhou, who have launched and nurtured China’s #MeToo movement. A wave of righteous anger that started on campuses has breached the heavy barriers of internet and media censorship.

But for Huang and the other leaders of the movement, that has meant walking a careful line: balancing the unleashed anger and frustration of women against an authoritarian, patriarchal regime that has cracked down fiercely on any group that might threaten its power. China’s #MeToo campaign has already brought real change—but it has also imposed limits on itself to avoid spurring a reaction that could end the movement while seeking ways to leverage what power it has.

The feminist leaders are highly educated and politically adept. In order to avoid the possibility of a clampdown, they don’t mobilize crowds or stage public protests. Instead, they skillfully use social media, negotiate with the authorities, and offer support to survivors. They come up with feasible solutions that don’t challenge the state—such as proposing anti-sexual harassment legislation, on-campus prevention mechanisms, and a helpline for victims—before they even raise the problem.

“We are an unprecedented and unrepeatable generation,” said Xiao Meili, one of China’s better-known feminists, who has been active since 2011. Social movements, she said, happen “when conditions get better, and then they get worse again.”

On a chilly day in early March 2015, Wei Tingting’s cellphone rang. The woman on the phone said she was a police officer.

“Beijing is very windy, so please remember, don’t go out a lot,” she said.

“Yes, I know that,” Wei answered.

That was the end of their conversation. Wei, a chipper girl from southern China, didn’t need more. She knew that she and her fellow activists were being warned to cancel a rally, planned for March 7, just ahead of the International Women’s Day, to distribute anti-sexual harassment stickers on the Beijing subway.

The police tactic wasn’t unusual; during sensitive periods, known dissidents are often advised to “take a holiday for their health” by the police. And this was an exceptionally sensitive period—the meeting of the National People’s Congress had started in Beijing on March 5. China’s annual session of its rubber-stamp parliament is a popular time for petitioners who have suffered injustice from local officials to try to get exposure for their case—if they’re able to run the gantlet of police that shuts down the center of the city.

The police evidently decided that Wei and her comrades were unlikely to heed their warning. On March 6, the day before the planned event, police detained Wei and four other activists. They would later be known

worldwide as the Feminist Five. Their 37-day detention was seen as a brutal overreaction by Beijing and spurred an international outcry.

Wei said the police's prolonged questioning during that time was traumatic. But when she got out, she was inspired by the overwhelming support she had received from inside China and from abroad. China had started to grow a feminist movement, nurtured by organizations such as Feminist Voices, which held events in universities and had built a powerful online presence.

In 2016, Wei moved to Guangzhou, where she lives with her partner in an apartment by the Pearl River. She established a new organization, the Guangzhou Gender and Sexuality Education Center, and she said she has been trying to "somehow work with the government" instead of "burning the house down" or being seen as an enemy of the authorities.

She still criticizes Beijing, but her timing and messages are more careful. One of her new goals is grounding her fight against sexual harassment in research. While there's been some research on sexual violence in China, official statistics are missing or incomplete, a gap that Wei set out to fill. By putting numbers together, she could make an impact in the media, such as when a study her organization released in 2017 found that nearly 70 percent of college students who responded had experienced sexual violence or harassment. The study was quoted in the nationalist tabloid *Global Times*, and Wei was invited to speak about sexual harassment on a program aired by the state broadcaster CGTN during the parliamentary session.

In Guangzhou, Wei met Sophia Huang, an investigative journalist. As #MeToo rattled Hollywood in October 2017, Huang, who had been sexually harassed by a former senior colleague at the China News Service, decided China needed its own moment of reckoning. She posted pictures of herself holding a sign with the #MeToo hashtag on the social messaging service WeChat. She tried to get friends to join and share their stories but found that women were either embarrassed to speak out or were pressured by their families to keep silent.

Inspired by Wei's dedication to finding data, Huang set to work on a survey about sexual harassment among female Chinese journalists—which attracted the attention of international media.

Meanwhile, in California, Luo Xixi, a software engineer, was watching reports about #MeToo every morning on Fox News.

The news gnawed at her because it reminded her of an experience from years before at Beihang University in Beijing. Luo said her former Ph.D. thesis advisor, Chen Xiaowu, a professor of computer science, drove her to his sister's apartment so she could "tend to the plants." Once there, he locked the door and attempted to rape her. Luo said the only thing that saved her was that she screamed, "I'm a virgin!"

For more than a decade after that, Luo kept quiet.

"Maybe my silence caused other girls to become victims too," Luo said. "I said, 'No, I have to step out. It's not too late.'"

In fact, other survivors of Chen's abuse had gravitated toward one another. Luo gathered them in a WeChat group called Hard Candy, named after the 2005 movie in which a teenage female vigilante punishes sexual abusers. She collected their evidence and, in October 2017, presented it to Beihang. The school stonewalled her, Luo said. (Beihang declined to answer questions for this story.) "Every day I would ask for progress," Luo said. "Every day they tried to [use up] my patience. They expected me to back out."

In November, Luo contacted Huang after reading about her #MeToo work. Together, they kept pressing Beihang—to no avail.

On Jan. 1, 2018, Luo published a first-person account of Chen's alleged abuse at the same time as Huang posted a story detailing Luo's experiences. The accounts went viral. Beihang representatives, who knew the story was coming, immediately suspended Chen and announced an investigation. Huang followed up with a letter asking Beihang to set up an anti-sexual harassment mechanism. The petition gathered more than 3,000 signatures in a couple of days.

Enter Zhang Leilei, another Guangzhou feminist activist, who had previously managed to infuriate authorities by turning herself into a living billboard against sexual harassment on public transportation. Zhang asked legions of her followers on Chinese social media to draft letters to their own universities.

She provided a template with five demands: sexual harassment prevention training for staff, classes for students, a channel accepting harassment reports, a biannual survey, and a department that could handle complaints.

More than 8,000 students signed petitions to 16 universities in a few days.

Within two weeks of Luo publishing her Weibo post, Beihang sacked Chen, and China's Education Ministry came out with a rare statement pledging zero tolerance toward professors' sexual misconduct and promising to fight sexual harassment on campuses. With the government on board, all the immediate responses to Luo's story escaped censorship. Chen is reportedly still without a job, and the rapport Huang had built with his university led to his name being removed, months later, from the research grant list. The women's careful organizing and swift follow-up essentially unleashed China's #MeToo movement.

A flood of stories followed. Feminist leaders were deluged with messages from women who had experienced harassment but didn't know who to talk to. Huang and Wei tried to help survivors by connecting them with pro bono lawyers and psychologists.

One such case was Renee Ren, a student at China University of Petroleum who reached out to Huang and Wei and decided to sue police in the coastal city of Qingdao in April 2018 over their handling of her on-campus rape investigation. Her unusual defiance unleashed a series of abuses by her university, including holding Ren and her parents locked in a hotel room for six days during a political summit in the city. When I visited her campus this summer, university leaders refused to talk to me, and a propaganda official called security on me.

In late May, Ren slit her wrists in an attempt to kill herself. She was hospitalized. Back in Guangzhou, Huang lay awake for two nights. She asked a volunteer psychologist and a social worker to visit Ren at the hospital. Police stopped them from seeing Ren and instead interrogated them for hours at the local station.

In June, a 19-year-old in northwestern Gansu province jumped to her death from the eighth floor of a department store. The teenager, Li Yiyi, said she had been sexually harassed by a schoolteacher. Her death was especially jarring because people on social media encouraged her to jump while onlookers booed her and clapped when she did it.

Just as the weight of these women's stories was becoming too heavy, July brought a spate of prominent cases.

In the span of a few days, more than two dozen women brought sexual misconduct allegations against powerful men, including the heads of NGOs, a famous TV host, a magazine writer, two badminton coaches, and an influential Buddhist monk.

Many of the men attempted to brush off the accusations. Zhu Jun, a former presenter of China's most-watched show, the Spring Festival Gala, who was accused of groping an intern, sued her for "spreading rumors." And Zhang Wen, a magazine columnist who allegedly raped a woman while she was drunk, replied in a social media post: "It's very natural for men and women to have intimate physical contact such as cuddling and kissing after drinking." That prompted other women, including a well-known writer, to accuse him of sexual misconduct.

There were small victories. In the NGO world, Lei Chuang, the prominent head of a nonprofit for people with hepatitis B, immediately stepped down after being accused of sexually assaulting a woman.

The accusations against him reverberated across the NGO community and pushed people to act. In a couple of days, more than 100 nonprofits signed a petition pledging to build anti-sexual harassment mechanisms. Censors scrubbed the petition—which suggested that organizations hold anti-sexual harassment workshops every year, include the topic in employment papers, and set up a system for handling complaints—from Wei’s organization’s website. But the impact was felt: China’s nonprofits were becoming the first sector of society to adopt across-the-board anti-sexual harassment measures.

Tai Feng, who runs a helpline out of Guangzhou for gender discrimination in the workplace, said because Chinese NGOs are largely powerless, they are also more open to change. Tai’s helpline has become inundated by sexual harassment-related inquiries, so she has started drafting a booklet that details, step by step, what to do and whom to contact after experiencing harassment.

The mobilization of tens of thousands of young Chinese in a few days, and eventually millions more, might look sudden. But it was not surprising, Zhang said. People had read similar stories in previous years, such as abuse allegations at Xiamen University, Sichuan Fine Arts Institute, and Beijing Film Academy. At the time, they were all censored after an initial period of exposure.

“People remember, and people get really angry, and it’s not something you can put pressure on, and they’ll forget,” Zhang said. “So the Chinese #MeToo movement is not only against sexual harassment. It’s also about fighting against this pressure, fighting against censorship.”

The government was profoundly uncomfortable with the movement from the start. The almost exclusively male leadership of the Communist Party is sensitive to anything that threatens to agitate society and question its legitimacy. So after the government’s initial support of the cause, by pledging to act after Chen’s case, a crackdown ensued. Petitions were removed, social media censored, and hashtags such as #MeToo in China disabled on Weibo, a popular but heavily controlled Twitterlike platform.

That sparked new creativity from the movement, using skills internet users have honed by long experience in dealing with censors. They switched from text to images, running an arms race against the authorities’ image filtering techniques; employed QR codes to send users to petitions quickly before they were taken down by the authorities; and used emoticons to convey punning messages. A bowl of rice (mi) and a rabbit (tu) became the new symbol.

In March 2018, Weibo and WeChat, the ubiquitous social media platform, suspended the accounts of the influential platform Feminist Voices. Police started approaching family members and former colleagues of the Guangzhou activists with questions about their work and “friendly advice” to halt it.

But at the same time, the women were maintaining the weak line of communication they had opened with the authorities through avenues such as state media. They worked with lawyers and members of a parliamentary advisory committee, who submitted proposals to address sexual harassment at the National People’s Congress in March—a symbolically significant move even if one unlikely to bear fruit immediately. Prior legal advances, such as disability discrimination laws or anti-domestic violence measures, have often taken a decade or more to move from their first tentative proposals to actual laws on the books—and even then sometimes remain unenforced.

When the government announced in August that it was adding a provision on sexual harassment to the new civil code draft, activists and lawyers saw it as a major symbolic win but little more than that. The country has yet to prosecute a single person for sexual harassment because the law is lacking, though it’s been almost two decades since the first cases rocked public opinion, said Guo Jianmei, an award-winning women’s rights lawyer whose legal aid center was shuttered by authorities in 2016. Prosecutions for rape or sexual assault are often hampered in China, demanding physical evidence and requiring a “perfect

victim” in a system that often blames the accuser. Guo now leads the Beijing Qianqian Law Firm, which represents women and children who have suffered abuse.

She said real change will likely not stem from legislation, even if China does end up adopting an anti-sexual harassment law. Some Chinese laws are purposefully written vaguely so that they are difficult to enforce because the government prioritizes stability and economic growth over civil rights.

Other practical measures have also been short on the ground. There has been no follow-up to the Education Ministry’s crackdown pledges in January 2018. And among universities that have promised to establish anti-sexual harassment mechanisms, the duty has been taken on by the schools’ Communist Party cells, which are blocking students’ participation, according to sources. Peking, Tsinghua, and Beihang universities turned down interview requests for this story.

Yet even the government’s occasional responses to the feminists’ demands were very impressive, said Leta Hong Fincher, the author of *Betraying Big Brother: The Feminist Awakening in China*. The government isn’t sympathetic to the cause, she said, but it is responsive to public opinion.

The success, however limited, of the movement is all the more remarkable given the chill that has settled on civil society in China under President Xi Jinping. NGOs have been shuttered, student activists and human rights lawyers arrested en masse, online speech massively curbed, and a million or more members of ethnic minorities dispatched to internment camps.

Some of the activism from past years carried out by feminists including Xiao Meili—such as protesting in Beijing’s Tiananmen Square or walking from Beijing to Guangzhou to raise awareness of sexual violence—would be unimaginable now.

The feminists have avoided confronting the state directly. Instead of staging public protests, for instance, they have pursued direct talks with university reps and other officials. They are helping to publicize survivors’ sympathetic stories in the media, which on the one hand promotes the movement and on the other emboldens others to step forward. They sometimes mobilize online audiences, but they do so carefully and always with a constructive tone: They demand anti-sexual harassment mechanisms, for example, instead of leaders’ resignation. They avoid associating their work with politics. That has meant some compromises—it’s impossible, for instance, to talk about the culture of sexual abuse within some of China’s most powerful institutions. But it allows the movement to survive at a time when others have been stamped out.

“For people who don’t understand China, it can be hard to appreciate how extraordinary it is that something like #MeToo has caught on so broadly across the country,” Hong Fincher said. “And that’s a testament to the extreme commitment, passion, and determination of these young feminist activists.”

And even as legal change seems far off, the movement has given voice to a generation of women. Luo Xixi’s partial victory against Chen inspired others to speak. Lu Pin, the founder of the banned Feminist Voices platform, who now lives in the United States, said young Chinese women are now far more likely than before to see feminism as a frame for understanding their problems.

But even the evasive strategies may not hold off the authorities, as the case of one young activist shows. Yue Xin, a student at the prestigious Peking University, joined the #MeToo movement in April 2018, when she requested that her school disclose the details of a 20-year-old investigation into a sexual misconduct case involving a professor that resulted into a student’s suicide. In July, she refocused her efforts on workers’ protests in southern China, joined by a group of young Marxists. Police detained them in August, and while most of the activists have since been released, Yue remains missing.

In December, Wei’s organization, the Guangzhou Gender and Sexuality Education Center, announced it was closing down under pressure from authorities. By now, the women are used to the ebbs and flows of the movement. Meanwhile, the chance of serious legal action is still very small.

Lu Xiaoquan of the Beijing Qianqian Law Firm echoes others when he says the correct strategy right now is to press organizations that face some, if limited, pressure from public opinion to adopt prevention mechanisms. Businesses and universities could follow the example of NGOs—but that will require enough space for survivors to be able to speak out and receive support.

In the meantime, a nascent network attempting to connect sexual assault and harassment victims with activists, lawyers, and psychologists has been quietly taking shape, on the backs of hundreds of volunteers—many of them based abroad—in recent months. Activists hope this will be the next stage—but they are also keeping the details deliberately quiet.

“We’ve sown a seed,” Lu said. “But there’s no such thing as a promising future.”

2019.3.25 “Censored on WeChat: #MeToo in China”

作者/Author: the team of WeChatscope*

来源/Source: Global Voices/全球之声

原文链接/Link: <https://globalvoices.org/2019/03/25/censored-on-wechat-metoo-in-china/#>

* WeChatscope is a research initiative led by Dr. King-wa Fu at The University of Hong Kong

With more than 1.0825 billion individual users, along with more than 20 million registered public accounts, WeChat has the largest number of domestic users and the most extensive coverage of any social media service in China. As such, it has become a chief component of China’s rigorous censorship regime.

In 2017, our team at the University of Hong Kong built a technical web “scraping” system for studying censorship on WeChat’s publicly accessible pages. Throughout 2018, we tracked more than 4,000 public accounts covering daily news and preserved censored posts in a publicly accessible database, WeChatscope. This article is the sixth in a partnership series with Global Voices.

Around the world, #MeToo was one of the most popular hashtags on Twitter in 2018. The global campaign took on different dimensions in dozens of countries, including China. Our data set indicates that online allegations of sexual misconduct were one of most heavily censored topics on WeChat in 2018.

The campaign first emerged on social media in China in October 2017, mostly in the form of reports about revelations among actors and film producers in Hollywood. But similar to what happened in other countries, after these stories made the rounds online for a few weeks, local people began to speak up about their own experiences.

In November 2017, female reporter Sophia Huang began investigating allegations of sexual harassment that appeared in the media. She used the hashtag #MeToo and launched an anti-sexual harassment platform on WeChat to conduct a survey and compile sexual harassment cases.

The first high-profile #MeToo exposé in China to make international news was reported on Weibo on New Year’s day of 2018 by Luo Xixi, a former student at the Beijing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics.

Luo, who had moved to the United States, revealed how she had been sexually harassed by University professor Chen Xiaowu 12 years prior. Her story, which included the hashtag ‘#Wo Ye Shi’ (#我也是, “#MeToo”), went viral within two days. After almost two weeks of investigation, Chen was sacked by the school. The Ministry of Education also stripped Chen of his academic title as Yangtze River Scholar.

The incident triggered a series of campaigns and petitions in several universities calling for school administrators to establish official policies against sexual misconduct. Feminist activists also started using #MeToo and #Wo Ye Shi as campaign hashtags on social media. Within two weeks, these tags became popular topics on Weibo but were disabled from automatically generating a topic page in February. A new term, “rice bunny”, which sounds similar to “me too” when spoken in Chinese, was used as a replacement hashtag to get around the censors.

When Chinese feminists attempted to take the campaign forward for International Women’s Day on March 8, 2018, they were blocked by Chinese censors. The feminist campaign hashtag “#38antiharassment” was blocked. The hashtag #Metoo or #Wo Ye Shi was allowed to be used but only to discuss sexual harassment campaigns in other countries like South Korea.

Campus #MeToo campaign labelled as a ‘political movement’

One month later, in early April, the Chinese #MeToo campaign resurfaced when Li Youyou, an alumna of Peking University, published a post accusing Nanjing University literature professor Shen Yang of sexual misconduct against Gao Yan, a fellow classmate of Li’s who died by suicide in 1998.

Shen Yang denied the accusation but the school decided to terminate the 60-year-old professor's contract for "violating teaching ethics". Coincidentally, Shen is also a Yangtze River Scholar.

Shortly thereafter, eight university students from Peking University wrote an open letter to school authorities, asking them to release information about their investigation into Gao Yan's death.

This relatively small collective action elicited a strong response from university authorities who attempted to threaten the students with further action. But this backfired when one of the students, Yue Xin, wrote another open letter, exposing how the school had harassed and intimidated the students. Although Yue's letter was quickly censored, fellow students took screenshots of her letter and circulated them online. Soon, posters appeared on campus expressing support for the #MeToo student activists.

According to China Digital Times, a message circulated in various WeChat groups at Peking University alleging that the school's Communist Party committee was concerned about the incident. The committee apparently saw the students' response as a form of activism, or as a political movement in collusion with external forces, and thus presenting a threat to the broader political establishment.

During this time, a search of Yue Xin on WeChatscope's database generated zero results. This may have been a sampling error, but more likely it indicates that the term "Yue Xin" was marked as a politically sensitive term and had been completely censored on WeChat's public domain.

Even though the death of Gao Yan had taken place 20 years ago, posts mentioning the incident were more frequently removed on WeChat than other individual cases because the keywords related to it were flagged for being part of a "political movement".

A few examples of posts censored on WeChat that were linked to the Gao Yan incident at the Peking University. The first post, "Peking University students Xu Fan and Wang Ao back from 1995 urge Yangtze River scholar Shen Yang not to lie anymore" (北京大学 95 级徐芑、王敖请长江学者沈阳不要再说谎了) was a public appeal made by two university alumni and published on April 5, 2018. WeChat took the post down on the same day.

The second post, "The resistance and redemption of Gao Yan incident" (高岩事件中的反抗与救赎) is an investigative piece interviewing Gao Yan's parents and Li Youyou. The report probed into the power relations between teachers and students in a university institution. It was published and also removed on April 8.

The third piece is "Please pay attention to the suicide of Gao Yan 20 years ago and the campus sexual harassment policy" (关注 | 20 年前的高岩自杀事件 迟到的校园反性骚扰制度). The commentary, published and removed on April 9 also challenged the absence of policy in dealing with campus sexual harassment cases.

Individual stories continue to circulate on social media

Despite the clampdown, individual stories about sexual harassment still continue to circulate on social media. According to BBC's estimation, between June to August 2018, around 30 public figures from education, media and NGO sectors have been accused of sexual violence in China.

The most explosive story was told by 25-year-old Zhou Xiaoxuan about how she was sexually harassed by Zhu Jun, a prominent TV host back in 2014. Her 3000-word story was first shared among friends in a chatroom. One of her friends, an environmental activist named Xu Chao, had her permission to share the story on Weibo and in two hours it went viral. In the next few days, the term "Zhu Jun" appeared on Weibo's hot search list.

Though Zhu is closely associated with the China Central Television, public discussion of the case was subjected to less censorship than the Peking University incident. In WeChatscope's database, we retrieved

one censored post, “New development regarding Zhu Jun’s incident. Will people still believe teacher Zhu Jun is innocent?” (朱军事件有了新情况 · 有多少人还相信朱军老师是清白的?), with a rhetorical question in the headline which may have led readers to believe that Zhu is guilty without any doubt, and was published and deleted on November 12.

Zhu has denied the accusations and threatened to sue Zhou for defamation, in an ongoing legal dispute that continues to attract public attention. Zhou is now attempting to bring the country’s first-ever civil sexual harassment lawsuit against Zhu.

Our data supports the argument that Chinese censors are blocking content that challenges authorities and advocates for change, even when it does not explicitly touch upon political issues. But it also shows that the #MeToo campaign in China, and other content with similar messages, have managed to find space on Chinese social media. Every now and then, new cases flash on the internet and some attract widespread public attention.

When a person shares their story and it strikes a chord with others, it can be shared by tens of thousands of individual users in a matter of hours. Despite efforts to censor these kinds of messages, these outbursts of sharing have had a significant impact on Chinese university campuses.

2019. 5. 3 “Stand together’: support surges in China for student accusing JD.com tycoon of rape”

作者/Author: Simina Mistreanu

来源/Source: The Guardian/卫报

原文链接/Link: <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2019/may/03/china-richard-liu-rape-civil-lawsuit-support-surges-for-student>

China’s internet users have rallied behind a student who is pursuing a civil case against billionaire retail tycoon Richard Liu, who she accuses of rape.

Twenty-one-year-old University of Minnesota student Liu Jingyao, who has agreed to be named, has accused the JD.com chief executive of getting her drunk at a dinner and later raping her in her apartment in the US. The company – which is China’s second-largest e-commerce site and has been included in the suit – has dismissed the claim as “meritless” and said it would defend itself vigorously.

Liu was arrested on suspicion of sexual misconduct in August last year. In December, US prosecutors dropped the charge, citing “profound evidentiary problems”.

The fresh lawsuit against Liu, who is said to be worth \$7.5bn by Forbes, was filed in Minnesota and has sparked an outpouring of support, with two hashtags on Weibo gathering more than 15m views within days: #HereForJingyao and #IAmNotAPerfectVictimEither (#woyebushiwanmeishouhaizhe).

“I don’t want to analyze Jingyao, whether her actions and her personality were ‘normal’,” a Weibo user wrote. “I only hope more women can ... stand together.”

“Rape culture emphasises a ‘perfect victim’,” one Weibo user wrote. “The logic is, you have to dress well, bite your tongue and die rather than be raped ... No, I’m not the perfect victim you want! Why am I bullied and blamed for being imperfect?”

The surge in support also coincides with the emergence last week of videos showing Jingyao and Liu drinking together at a business dinner in Minneapolis and walking arm-in-arm to her apartment building. A lawyer for Richard Liu told the Associated Press the clips dispelled the “misinformation” circulated about his client’s alleged abuse.

Social media users have circulated an online petition in support of Liu Jingyao – who is not related to Richard Liu – which had gathered more than 1,000 signatures as of Wednesday. The petition is hosted on a Google Doc but most Chinese do not have VPNs to access Google.

Reports of attempts at censorship have emerged. Messaging app WeChat reportedly started clamping down on the conversation, an act reminiscent of the online censorship facing China’s fledgling #MeToo movement.

“Yesterday, my public [WeChat] account was permanently banned because of an article collecting signatures in support of Jingyao,” Chen Chun, a user going by the name Camus on the social media platform Douban told the Guardian on Wednesday.

Six other public WeChat accounts which have reportedly posted messages in support of Jingyao were closed, according to Douban user Emma. The accounts generally focused on topics related to women’s rights and social justice.

Since the rise of #MeToo, people’s awareness of sexual harassment has risen, and Chinese women have learned to believe testimonies of those like Liu Jingyao, said Sophia Huang, a women’s rights activist in Guangzhou.

Liu Jingyao, a business administration student at Tsinghua University in Beijing, was in the US as part of her course at the time of the alleged incident in August 2018. Richard Liu was attending a business doctoral program at the University of Minnesota, for which Liu Jingyao was a volunteer. He was briefly arrested on suspicion of criminal sexual conduct but in December prosecutors declined to press criminal

charges, citing “profound evidentiary problems” that would make it unlikely to prove the assault “beyond a reasonable doubt”.

JD.com said in a statement after Liu’s arrest that Liu, whose Chinese name is Liu Qiangdong, was falsely accused. “During a business trip to the United States, Mr Liu was questioned by police in Minnesota in relation to an unsubstantiated accusation,” the company said. “The local police quickly determined there was no substance to the claim against Mr Liu, and he was subsequently able to resume his business activities as originally planned,” it said.

评论文章/Opinions

2018. 01.18 “China’s ‘MeToo’ movement signals a shift in sexual attitudes”

作者/Author: Yang Wanli, Cao Yin and Wang Keju

来源/Source: 中国日报 /China Daily

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China’s ‘MeToo’ movement signals a shift in sexual attitudes

Experts say gender equality is gaining ground among the younger generation.

The #MeToo movement in the United States, which has exposed alleged widespread sexual assault and harassment in Hollywood, reached a crescendo on Jan 7 when TV host and philanthropist Oprah Winfrey gave a rousing speech at the Golden Globes ceremony in Los Angeles.

“I want all the girls watching here now to know that a new day is on the horizon,” she said, as the star-studded crowd erupted in applause.

Thousands of miles away, that message also resonated in China. Women quickly began to speak out about sexual harassment, but rather than celebrities leading the chorus of disapproval as in the West, the movement is centered on college campuses.

Luo Qianqian is being credited as the first Chinese woman to evoke the spirit of #MeToo. Early this month, she accused Chen Xiaowu, a professor at Beihang University in Beijing, of sexual assault when he was her doctoral adviser in 2005.

She then contacted fellow alumni who had endured similar experiences, and provided evidence to the college’s disciplinary watchdog, including damning audio recordings. As a result, Chen was fired last week.

Other women quickly followed suit. Within days, three more cases had been brought to public attention, all involving female college students who claimed to have been sexually assaulted or harassed by lecturers.

The most recent allegations were made anonymously by a graduate of the University of International Business and Economics in Beijing, who said the strength shown by Luo and the other women had inspired her to speak out.

She alleged that a male professor sexually assaulted her in his office. To back up her claims, she posted text messages exchanged between the two in the wake of the alleged assault online.

A study released in 2014 by the All-China Women’s Federation suggested that the problem is worryingly prevalent in China. The federation surveyed 1,200 female students at 15 universities; in response, 50 percent said they had been subjected to sexual misconduct, either physical or verbal, while 23 percent described the situation as “severe”.

In most cases, the aggressor was male, usually a classmate, though 9 percent of respondents claimed they had suffered at the hands of lecturers or college officials.

According to research released in March by the Guangzhou Gender and Sexuality Education Center, an NGO in Guangdong province, 70 percent of college students and graduates claimed to have been sexually harassed - again, verbally or physically - with women accounting for 75 percent of the victims.

The findings were based on 7,000 responses to online questionnaires.

However, campuses are just one of the places where sexual harassment frequently occurs, according to Lyu Xiaoquan, executive director of the Beijing Qianqian Law Firm, which specializes in the legal protection of women's rights.

"In the past two decades, we've seen a rising number of complaints relating to incidents in the workplace, but the majority still relate to public incidents, such as casual molestation (opportunistic assault on public transportation, for example)," he said.

According to Lyu, his firm handles eight to 10 sexual harassment cases a year, but many more women consult the firm's lawyers seeking help: "We estimate that probably seven times the number of cases we see go unreported."

Beating stigma

Many experts hope the #MeToo movement will change the situation and also help to remove the stigma often attached to women who speak out against sexual abuse.

Cai Yiping, a campaigner for economic and gender equality in Beijing, said women have remained silent about sexual harassment for decades for fear of not being taken seriously or being blamed for the man's behavior.

Harassment often happens in environments where the balance of power is unequal, according to Cai. "A boss can decide an employee's future; a professor can stop a student from publishing a paper or from graduating; and men have a greater say than women in a male-dominated society," she said.

"There's often an undertone of 'blame the victim', which overlooks the manipulative behavior of the person in power. Plus, many victims fear their allegations will be dismissed. Some women don't even see that the way they are being treated is wrong; they believe it's an unspoken rule they must simply accept."

Some experts believe younger women are now in a prime position to bring about changes in gender equality.

Unlike earlier generations, who tended to care more about other people's feelings, young women today focus more on how they define and value themselves, and have greater legal awareness, according to Chen Wei, from the Yingke Law Firm in Beijing, who specializes in laws related to domestic disputes and the protection of women.

Jiang Yue, a law professor at Xiamen University in Fujian province, echoed Chen's view.

"Most of the women speaking out now are well-educated. With their greater knowledge and broader horizons, they are brave enough to break with social norms and speak for themselves. Also, public opinion toward the issue has become more supportive in recent years, which has become a crucial driving force," she said.

Cai's research shows that many whistleblowers are from one-child families. That suggests that the old three-decade-long family planning policy that prohibited most couples from having more than one child played a key role in breaking the tradition whereby boys were valued more highly than girls, and also contributed to awareness of gender equality among younger women.

"Many victims dare to speak out after graduation because college life will just become a memory. However, for women who encounter sexual harassment or assault in the workplace, the cost of fighting for their rights can be much higher, so they need a better protection mechanism," she said.

Future challenges

Luo Qianqian exposed Chen Xiaowu by sharing her story on Sina Weibo. Her post received more than 3 million hits in a single day, instantly triggering a nationwide debate.

On Jan 11, Beihang University said an investigation had found Chen guilty of misconduct. He was removed as vice-president of the Graduate School and his teaching credentials were revoked.

On Sunday, the Ministry of Education announced that Chen had been removed from the list of Changjiang Scholars, the highest academic award for individuals in China, and ordered to repay the stipends that came with it.

The ministry also said it would not tolerate any behavior that contravenes the professional ethics of teachers or harms students. It pledged to work with other government bodies to build an effective, long-term mechanism to prevent further cases.

"The result was a surprise to me," Luo said this week, speaking on the phone from her home in the United States.

"From the beginning, I stuck to the belief that all our efforts and the evidence we had collected deserved an answer. I'm proud of Beihang. It demonstrated the unity of knowledge and behavior it taught us."

While many people have applauded Luo's bravery and the outcome, others believe it will be hard to replicate, because many people who allege assault give confused or contradictory accounts, which means their stories are dismissed or ignored.

A male student at Beihang's School of Reliability and Systems Engineering, who preferred to remain anonymous, said the system often discourages people from lodging official complaints.

"It seems the only way for victims to obtain justice is to display their wounds on the internet and attract media attention. There should be an effective system to protect their rights and interests without repercussions," he said.

According to thepaper.cn, a news portal in Shanghai, on Monday, students from more than 40 universities nationwide, including Peking and Tsinghua, China's most prestigious seats of learning, publicly urged the establishment of a mechanism to deal with, and prevent, sexual assault in colleges.

Legal recognition

In 2005, the Law on the Protection of Women's Rights and Interests was amended to prohibit sexual harassment of women, and also empowered them to lodge complaints with relevant organizations. It was the first time the issue of sexual harassment and assault had specifically been addressed by Chinese law.

In 2014, the Ministry of Education published the “Seven Red Lines”, a guideline that prohibits sexual harassment of students, improper relationships between students and lecturers, and other activities that run counter to professional ethics.

“But still, a better mechanism should be established. It should provide a secret channel for complaints and a support group to help victims overcome the physical and psychological damage they have suffered,” said Lyu of the Beijing Qianqian Law Firm.

Fang Gang, director of the Institute of Sexuality and Gender Studies at Beijing Forestry University, said any such mechanism must protect the legal rights of both parties in cases of alleged sexual harassment, especially while investigations are ongoing.

“Many similar reports have been disseminated online or through social media, with the accused person’s personal details being unveiled to the public while the name of the accuser is withheld. Even if the allegations are found to be untrue, the accused person’s reputation and career could be ruined.

Last week, Luo and more than 100 Beihang students and alumni decided to send an open letter to the head of the university.

In addition to calling for a ban on intimate relations between teachers and students who share educational relationships, they suggested training courses should be established to provide greater awareness of ways of preventing sexual harassment.

They also called for the formation of an independent body to ensure that investigations are conducted fairly.

Lyu, the lawyer said, “Six large (Chinese) businesses have already started pilot programs to formulate their own anti-sexual harassment regulations, and about 200 to 300 companies in the textile industry have joined anti-harassment campaigns.

“I hope this grassroots movement will become a force for change in society, and ensure that sexual harassment becomes a high-cost ‘mistake’ that people will not dare to make.”

2018. 2. 1 “China Is Attempting To Muzzle #MeToo”

作者/Author: Leta Hong Fincher

来源/Source: NPR / (美国) 全国公共广播电台

原文链接/Link: <https://www.npr.org/sections/parallels/2018/02/01/582167268/china-is-attempting-to-muzzle-metoo>

When Xiao Meili entered her freshman year at the Communication University of China in 2008, she was inundated with sexist messages that made her feel bad about herself.

“In high school, we were never allowed to wear makeup, then when we started university, all of a sudden, becoming a ‘pretty woman’ became a very important responsibility,” said Xiao. “I tried hard but it was just impossible for me to live up to all these ridiculous standards placed on women.”

Ten years later, Xiao has become a prominent feminist activist and one of many Chinese women who have seized on the momentum of the global #MeToo movement against sexual harassment to call for change at home.

As the #MeToo campaign spreads from one university to another in China, it is demonstrating the extraordinary resilience of a feminist movement that has posed a unique challenge to China’s male-dominated, authoritarian regime. For the first time since the founding of the People’s Republic in 1949, organized feminist activists, independent of the ruling Communist Party, have tapped into a broad discontent among Chinese women and developed a level of influence over public opinion that is unusual for any social movement in China.

Article continues after sponsor message

Ever since authorities arrested five young women — known as China’s “Feminist Five” — in 2015 for planning to commemorate International Women’s Day by handing out stickers about sexual harassment, the Communist Party has tried to stamp out the feminist movement. Almost a year ago, censors temporarily banned Feminist Voices, the most influential feminist website and social media account in China, ostensibly because it had posted an article about a planned women’s strike in the United States protesting President Trump on International Women’s Day.

The founding editor of Feminist Voices, Lu Pin, believed the 30-day ban was meant to send a warning to the growing number of vocal Chinese feminists online.

“Chinese women feel very unequal every day of their lives, and the government cannot make women oblivious to the deep injustice they feel,” says Lu. “The feminist movement is about building a community to address women’s everyday concerns.”

Despite the authorities’ sustained persecution of women’s rights activists in recent years, the feminist resistance may yet have the potential to become China’s most transformative movement in the long run — provided that any social movement is allowed to exist in the repressive political environment. Feminist activists have cultivated a closely networked community of supporters numbering in the thousands, revolving around university students and graduates in different cities across China. Some of them have become effective organizers, capable of mobilizing citizens around issues that resonate deeply with ordinary Chinese women, such as pervasive gender discrimination and sexual harassment on public transportation, in the workplace and in schools. Even as authorities harass the most prominent feminists, local governments sometimes respond to the activists’ demands, for example, by displaying anti-sexual harassment ads on subways in cities like Shenzhen and Beijing.

As record numbers of Chinese women attend university, both in China and abroad, they are beginning to challenge widespread sexism and unequal treatment. Since the government abolished its one-child policy at the beginning of 2016, it has aggressively promoted a new two-child policy, urging women to marry and have children as soon as possible, to address its demographic crises of a severely aging population, falling birth rates and a shrinking workforce.

But women in China's rapidly expanding middle class are increasingly recoiling from the intense pressure of heterosexual marriage and child-rearing pushed by sexist Chinese state propaganda, as gender inequality in wealth and status has widened along with breakneck economic growth.

More and more young Chinese women are identifying as feminists. And, in recent weeks, thousands of female — and also some male — students and alumni in China have defied heavy Internet censorship to sign #MeToo petitions at dozens of universities, demanding action against sexual harassment.

Feminist activist Xiao launched a #MeToo petition addressed to her alma mater: "Given the severity of sexual harassment at institutions, we feel obliged to be vocal. It's imperative that Chinese colleges construct a mechanism to prevent sexual harassment on campus," said her petition to Beijing's Communication University of China.

It was deleted by censors soon after she posted it on the social media platform Weibo and the group messaging app WeChat. A week later, several women who signed Xiao's petition said that a professor had questioned them about why they were taking part in the #MeToo movement and whether they were influenced by "hostile foreign forces."

This line of questioning is not new. Last May, the website of the People's Daily — the official mouthpiece of the Chinese Communist Party — published an announcement warning that "Western hostile forces" were using "Western feminism" to interfere in China's handling of women's affairs. The vice president of the All-China Women's Federation, Song Xiuyan, was quoted as saying that Party officials working on women's issues were in the midst of a "serious political struggle" and urgently needed to follow President Xi Jinping's instruction to guard against Western ideological infiltration.

As International Women's Day (and the anniversary of the arrest of the Feminist Five) on March 8 approaches this year, feminist activists may face another crackdown in an attempt to prevent the #MeToo movement from spreading any further. Already, calls for an end to sexual harassment have begun to expand beyond China's university-educated women to factory women.

An anonymous female assembly-line worker who suffered routine sexual harassment at Foxconn, Apple's main supplier for Asia, published an essay last month on a Chinese women's labor rights website demanding that her employer set up proper channels of recourse for victims like herself. "We call for more men to pay attention to the situation of their sisters," she wrote in the essay, translated by SupChina.

Some students in Beijing had planned a march against sexual harassment on university campuses, but canceled it after receiving warnings from their school, according to Reuters. Still, feminist activist Lu says it will be extremely hard to silence all the women who want to speak out.

"Once women experience a feminist awakening and stop believing Communist Party propaganda," she says, "they can never go back."

2018. 3. 20 “What Is the Significance of China's #MeToo Movement? A ChinaFile Conversation”

作者/Author: Aaron Halegua et. al.

来源/Source: ChinaFile/中参馆

原文链接/Link: <http://www.chinafile.com/conversation/what-significance-of-chinas-metoo-movement>

As the #MeToo movement has swept America, it has also made waves in greater China. On the mainland, the most widely publicized incident involved Luo Xixi's allegation in a January 2018 Weibo post that her professor at Beihang University, Chen Xiaowu, sexually harassed her over a decade ago. The allegation led to Chen's dismissal. Since then, Chinese women have organized at least 70 open letters to universities and have posted some of their stories of sexual harassment on social media, with the #MeToo hashtag attracting over 4.5 million hits on Weibo. The government has tried to suppress some of this, blocking the #MeToo hashtag and deleting posts, and China's social media movement has had difficulty moving “offline,” as it has outside of China. Nonetheless, some Chinese officials have acknowledged that sexual harassment is a problem and are discussing how universities and government agencies should respond. Hong Kong women have similarly been taking to social media to air their grievances.

The following conversation, organized by Aaron Halegua, a lawyer and research fellow at NYU School of Law, addresses the significance of the #MeToo movement from a variety of perspectives, including its impact on sexual harassment litigation and worker protections; implications for youth, feminist, and LGBTQ movements; the role of public interest lawyers in social movements; and the push for gender equality in Hong Kong. —The Editors

Comments

Aaron Halegua

China amended its Women's Protection Law in 2005 to outlaw sexual harassment and permit victims to sue in court. In 2012, a national regulation protecting female workers obligated employers to prohibit and prevent sexual harassment in the workplace. But these provisions are vague, providing little guidance to courts or lawyers on questions such as: How much harassment gives rise to legal liability? If the harassment is by a coworker, when is the employer liable? If there is harassment, what remedies are available?

Facing this opacity, few victims have sued employers for sexual harassment. Where they have, the results are not encouraging. In what is often considered China's first sexual harassment case, a woman complained that her boss repeatedly touched her body while promising her a better job, invited her to his hotel room, and withheld her bonus when she complained. The Xi'an court dismissed the claim, citing a lack of direct evidence and difficulty confirming her allegations.

In my review of nearly 20 sexual harassment cases, there were many in which courts, like the one above, have found the victim's evidence insufficient. One reason for this is the significant emphasis that the Chinese legal system places on physical evidence as opposed to oral testimony. In other cases, courts find that the victim failed to demonstrate the “harassment” was unwelcome or nonconsensual. In 2005, Xinhua reported that only 10 sexual harassment cases were filed since 2001 and only one plaintiff prevailed.

Even in cases where the plaintiff wins, compensation is paltry. In the earliest known successful case, in which the victim's supervisor kissed and molested her without consent and then repeatedly sent inappropriate text messages, the court awarded an apology and 2,000 renminbi (under \$300) for emotional distress. A Hainan court ordered compensation of 1 renminbi to three men who were fondled and kissed by an advisor to their employer. In an unusual instance where the court awarded over 100,000 renminbi (\$15,000), the unwelcome sexual advances were found to be the cause of the victim's schizophrenia.

The cases highlight the many obstacles that dissuade victims from suing. One manager lobbied a female employee to withdraw her complaint to the police about a coworker repeatedly ejaculating into her teacup. Not surprisingly, retaliation against complaining victims is also common, including forced resignations, dismissals, or retaliatory harassment. When a lawsuit is filed, employers have brought countersuits alleging defamation or requested a court-ordered psychological evaluation of the victim.

Although victims may not fare well in court, not all employers are simply permitting sexual harassment to occur without consequence. In a 2013 case, Walmart fired an employee after several female workers alleged that he rubbed his cheek against theirs, touched their shoulders, and sent harassing WeChat messages. The terminated employee sued Walmart, denying his behavior and claiming that he was fired without sufficient cause. The court agreed, explaining that only one alleged victim testified and it was unclear who controlled the WeChat account, and therefore ordered Walmart to compensate the fired employee. In such cases, courts are reluctant to credit the victims' oral testimony or to conclude that sexual harassment occurred. Nonetheless, these employers are dismissing alleged harassers, even if they may need to compensate them later.

In the United States, many believe that litigation has failed to provide victims with a meaningful remedy, but the #MeToo movement may inspire some changes to the laws governing sexual harassment. Similarly, in China, there is hope that #MeToo will provide the political push for the government to adopt measures that make litigation a more meaningful mechanism for remedying sexual harassment.

Kevin Lin

“Loudly telling dirty jokes, ridiculing female colleagues about their looks and figures, using the excuse of ‘giving direction’ to make unnecessary body contact in factory workshops, this kind of ‘sexual harassment culture’ is prevalent.” As the #MeToo movement took hold in China, a Foxconn worker described her experience for the feminist website Jianjiaobuluo (尖椒部落). “If a sexually harassed woman worker protests, she is likely to be accused of being ‘too sensitive’ and ‘unable to take a joke.’”

Sexual harassment is a labor rights issue because it so often occurs in the workplace. While journalists were among the first to popularize the #MeToo movement, the Foxconn worker's story is a reminder that women in blue-collar jobs also regularly experience sexual harassment. A 2013 survey by an organization for female workers, Xiangyanghua (向阳花), showed that an astonishing 70 percent of the 134 female factory worker respondents experienced sexual harassment. And, women in these jobs, due to their more marginalized social status, may have fewer avenues to fight back than professional women.

So what can be done to combat sexual harassment in the workplace? The Foxconn worker's article makes several concrete proposals, such as breaking the taboo of discussing sexual harassment, providing anti-harassment trainings, and establishing grievance procedures to investigate complaints. These necessary measures on their own do not guarantee protection, at least not without employees actively demanding accountability. Mobilization in the public sphere as well as the workplace remains essential to drive social change.

Such efforts should be supported by stronger legal mechanisms. Although China has had “Special Rules on the Labor Protection of Female Employees” in place since 2012 to prevent sexual harassment, workers rarely see its enforcement. The lack of an explicit provision in the labor laws, or in labor contracts (if workers even have one at all), means women lack even minimal legal protection. There is a call at the global level for the International Labour Organization (ILO) to adopt a convention concerning gender-based violence in the workplace, which countries would then be asked to adopt. China should use this proposal as a guidepost for advancing its own national laws and policies.

This moment also presents an interesting opportunity for the feminist and labor movements to connect and share strategies. Civil society organizations in both movements wrestle with the interplay of gender and work. Further, both have struggled to keep their operations going in light of pressure from authorities. The female worker labor group that conducted the aforementioned survey, Xiangyanghua, was forced to

close down in 2015, allegedly because it assisted workers in strikes. The labor movement might benefit from learning more about the use of strategic public and media activities and policy advocacy; the feminist movement may draw lessons on labor mobilizing and giving voice to not only professional but also factory and retail workers. Such partnerships, while recognizing differences, could be a powerful force in pushing for some of the legal, policy, and workplace reforms necessary to combat sexual harassment.

Sophia Huang Xueqin

The #MeToo movement finally echoed loud in China when Luo Xixi, a Ph.D. graduate from Beihang University, made a public allegation on January 1 that her professor Chen Xiaowu had sexually harassed her and seven others over the past 12 years. More sexual harassment accusations against professors and other authority figures are also showing up. Over 8,000 students and alumni have signed petitions demanding anti-sexual harassment mechanisms on campuses.

The notion that “women hold up half the sky” was promoted more than 50 years ago, over 50 percent of students in universities are female, and China’s female labor force participation rate is around 60 percent. However, the reality tells a different story. The pay gap between men and women is still huge, discrimination in jobs is everywhere, and the glass ceiling still exists, especially in corporate executive and leadership positions. Looking at the all-male line-up of the Politburo Standing Committee, the fact is clear: men will usher China into the so-called new era.

The #MeToo movement reveals the reality that the right to “hold up half the sky” is granted by men. Deep down, sexual harassment is about gender discrimination and unequal access to power and resources. Luo Xixi’s allegation is an awakening of female consciousness, and the message is delivered: if you want your voice to be heard, and your position as a victim to change, take action and speak out, but not too loudly.

Many sexual harassment cases on campuses have been exposed, but none of them has achieved what Luo’s case has. Chen Xiaowu, the perpetrator, was stripped of his positions and titles. Even more significantly, the Ministry of Education has agreed to introduce anti-sexual harassment mechanisms on campuses.

Apart from the global #MeToo movement, Luo has been smart in her approach to Chinese authorities and the media. She has consistently communicated with the authorities in a mild but determined manner, collaborating with the disciplinary committee to collect evidence. Simultaneously, she has reached out to journalists and used social media for help and advice. She has received overwhelming support from media and feminist advocates. It’s easy to criticize and scold, but it’s not as easy to voice constructive suggestions. Providing useful information to the authorities (such as suggesting a sexual harassment prevention mechanism), engaging in a reasonable discussion about sexual harassment and equal rights on social media, and submitting proposals to address sexual harassment by three members of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference all have pushed the government to respond and take real action. Providing constructive advice is more useful than making sharp criticism, especially in China where authorities and people value face and image.

Credit for #MeToo in China also goes to a growing feminist awakening over recent years. However, the closure in March of Feminist Voices and ATSH, social media that gave voice to sexual harassment accusations and equal rights issues, means a new approach needs to be found.

Lü Pin

From early January to the Spring Festival, over 8,000 students and alumni signed petitions demanding their schools implement policies to prevent sexual harassment. How has the #MeToo movement in China mobilized so many within the same harsh environment where many other social movements have been suppressed? The primary reason is the incredible courage, wisdom, and ability of a young generation

enraged by the prevalence of gender inequality and repression, which has nurtured an unyielding determination for change.

The indignation of the generation born after the late '80s stems from the day-to-day conflicts experienced within a system that subordinates women to men, despite their equal levels of education and other qualifications. This indignation is the lifeblood of the social movement. But Chinese society is rife with inchoate indignities. Repression has undoubtedly had a chilling effect on speaking out, giving rise to fear among many before and after they decide to resist. However, these young people are less fearful than older generations—not out of naivete, but because their mentality and material resources are not yet beholden to any particular establishment.

It has been clear to the core initiators of this movement that their campaign must be center-less, flexible, creative, and swift. Rather than expecting a single person to contact thousands of supporters on her own, the movement saw leaders rise up of their own accord to organize groups of classmates and alumni at 70 different universities. This networked guerrilla movement was much more effective than a centrally planned and executed campaign would have been at addressing censorship concerns and at allowing members to exercise individual initiative. Those within the movement also were skillful in their use of Internet technology to avoid surveillance. For instance, they used QR codes to lead potential supporters to the petitions as quickly as possible because censors would delete petitions within hours or even minutes.

The young people involved in the movement were also savvy about tailoring the presentation of their identity and interests. The motivations of students combating sexual harassment could not be easily smeared. Further, identifying themselves as “conscientious and innocent youth” also allowed for the mobilization of a large population, even transcending national boundaries—more than 300 overseas Chinese students and scholars signed a petition in support of further advocacy at the end of the January. The momentum on this issue in the U.S. has also lent a degree of legitimacy to the efforts in China, although the demands and methods have been somewhat different in the Chinese context.

Now that the Ministry of Education and some universities have promised to establish mechanisms to prevent sexual harassment, the #MeToo movement has made real progress toward its goals—a truly extraordinary achievement within the current climate for grassroots action in China. Ultimately, credit for this success should be ascribed to the growing popularity of feminism over recent years in response to the aspirations of young women in China. The Chinese government has failed to deter girls from believing in feminist ideals despite constant crackdowns on feminist activism and campaigns to stigmatize feminism. At the heart of this popularity is a resilient community of self-organized feminists poised to channel widespread anger at the unequal status of women into social and political change at any given opportunity, just as we are witnessing now with the #MeToo movement.

Di Wang

There has been a dearth of #MeTooInChina posts explicitly describing LGBTQ experiences. Does this mean that LGBTQ people are excluded from #MeTooInChina organizing, and moreover, China's anti-sexual harassment movement generally? The answer is complicated.

On the one hand, LGBTQ people in China are experiencing sexual harassment just as are heterosexual or cisgender people, and possibly even worse. But, the LGBTQ invisibility in China's public space is deep-seated. According to UNDP and the Beijing LGBT Center's national survey in 2018, only around 5 percent of LGBTQ people in China choose to come out at work, at school, or within their religious communities. The lack of explicit LGBTQ narratives shared in the #MeTooInChina campaign indicates that while the general public in China has become more open to criticizing sexual harassment, it has not yet provided a supportive space in which survivors are comfortable disclosing their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

Nonetheless, queer women have played central roles in the feminist anti-sexual harassment movement. Standing on a long history of feminist resistance, a new generation of younger feminist activists emerged

in 2012, and combating sexual harassment has always been part of their agenda. This new wave initiated campaigns like the “I can be slutty, but you can’t harass me” performance on the Shanghai metro in 2012 and Meili’s 1,200 mile trek against campus sexual abuse in 2013-2014. In all these campaigns, queer women were at the front lines. Similarly, there were three queer activists amongst the Feminist Five, a group of women detained in 2015 for planning to distribute anti-sexual harassment stickers.

The reason why queer women are so present in the Chinese feminist movement, according to Zhang Leilei, a #MeTooInChina campaign organizer, is that this movement provided a small but critical space in which people “are more welcome to experiment and to explore alternative ways of life,” and that provided her “with political frameworks to reflect on my queer experience.” Indeed, queer (self-)presentation has been very visible in this movement. For the month of March, 2017, Leilei committed to personally wearing a billboard protesting sexual harassment, and called for other Chinese people to do the same. Leilei also planned to wear pink short hair, a T-shirt, a pink puff skirt, and a pair of pink slippers along with her billboard, intending to disrupt what is considered an “appropriate” dress code for women.

While explicit coming-out stories are largely still absent from #MeTooInChina, the movement has been strongly influenced and supported by the continued contributions of the Feminist Five, Leilei, Meili, and many other queer activists that have been fighting against sexual harassment. Chinese feminist activism has provided spaces and tools for young people to critically reflect on their personal politics and to voice their political demands, which include queer women and other LGBTQ-identified people. By talking to Leilei and Meili, two leading young feminist activists, I can see their confidence in their queer tactics and their long-term visions for both feminist societies and queer lives.

Yizhi Huang

Sexual harassment is not only a social problem but also a legal issue. The prevention and treatment of sexual harassment is the legal responsibility of schools and employers, and the #MeToo movement necessarily involves promoting accountability. What role can lawyers, especially public interest lawyers, play in this movement?

It is said that Dr. Luo, who complained to her university about what she suffered as a student, had initially consulted with a lawyer and considered litigation; but, she chose an alternate approach. Indeed, lawyers did not play a significant role in what developed into a movement involving thousands of young people requesting that their universities establish mechanisms to prevent sexual harassment. It was only one month after Luo’s report, when the joint letter actions were drawing to a close, that 13 lawyers issued a statement against sexual harassment and stated their willingness to provide legal aid for victims. This is quite different than the role played by lawyers on this issue in earlier years.

In 2012, a collective action of lawyers on sexual harassment was prompted when the Shanghai Metro’s official Weibo account issued a post requiring women to dress appropriately in order to avoid sexual harassment. Starting in Shanghai, many lawyers used “open government information” provisions to request disclosures of measures the public transport authorities took to prevent sexual harassment and later jointly proposed the establishment of a mechanism to prevent sexual harassment. Also in 2012, public interest lawyers were part of a broader advocacy campaign that resulted in the amendment of a national regulation on the protection of women that made employers responsible for preventing sexual harassment. So why in the #MeToo movement have lawyers played a less active role?

This is related to the setbacks suffered by all of civil society in recent years. Some legal advocacy NGOs have been forced to close, and taking joint actions on public issues has become more sensitive. Further, in November 2016, the Ministry of Justice restricted lawyers from engaging in “public participation” or signing onto joint letters. Lawyers who coordinate or provide a platform for such public actions will face particularly significant legal risks.

Of course, representing clients in litigation is another, perhaps safer way that lawyers can participate. However, at least so far, victims have not come forward seeking to file lawsuits. This is another reason why lawyers cannot be seen.

From the very beginning, however, China's #MeToo movement has sought to design and establish mechanisms that impose legal responsibility on perpetrators of sexual harassment. This process will need to involve lawyers, and so there still may be a role to play. Moreover, if such mechanisms are created and able to provide victims with meaningful remedies, more people may call on lawyers to help them use litigation to remedy the injustice they suffered.

Xyza Cruz Bacani

The ripple effect of the #MeToo movement in the West caused Hong Kong, a usually silent observer, to start speaking. A city under colonial rule for a long time and still searching for its identity, its silence on many issues is understandable. Although a very Western city, Hong Kong has Eastern traditional values in terms of the treatment of women, gender stereotypes, ingrained patriarchy and sexism, and sexual abuse. But no one spoke out loudly on these issues until the #MeToo movement in the West; the emergence of high-profile cases caused women to find their voices and yell loudly.

The uncensored social media that the city still enjoys, as compared to mainland China, has become a vehicle for these brave women to come out and tell their stories. A local Hong Kong athlete spoke out about being abused by her coach and the city outpoured its support. It also encouraged other women to speak out.

According to the local non-governmental organization (NGO) Rain Lily, one in seven women in Hong Kong has experienced sexual harassment at work. Due to a variety of factors, migrants and ethnic minorities usually keep quiet about the assaults they suffer. One factor that plays a big part is the fear of victim shaming; another is the fear of retaliation, such as losing their jobs or being branded as trouble-makers. It's easier for these women to switch jobs than to lodge a complaint.

The #MeToo movement mobilized government agencies and NGOs in the city, but is it enough to protect the women of Hong Kong society, where they are still very much underrepresented? The city is working towards equality, hence having a female Chief Executive, but there have still only been baby steps towards creating a workplace for women that is safe and where they are not paid less than their male counterparts.

Men in Hong Kong should not be excluded and they should not be scared of these conversations because we need them more than ever as allies. Encourage them to speak out rather than be silent observers, or worse, cast doubts over the movement. The backlash from men also started to creep onto social media, with some saying that the movement is just a trend that Hong Kong women adopted from the West.

The #MeToo movement is important in a city with a large gender pay gap and where the higher ratio of women to men in the population is seen as problematic. We need to encourage women to speak out, include everyone in the conversation, find solutions, and—most importantly—take action. Talk is cheap, especially for the victims and survivors. We should start acting now so that we avoid the dreaded question of: “#MeToo, but what now?”

2018. 4. 23 “#MeToo Meets China's Censors and Students Learn a Tough Lesson”

作者/Author: Te-Ping Chen

来源/Source: The Wall Street Journal/华尔街时报

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BEIJING-A decades-old case of alleged rape and suicide at a prestigious university is giving China a #MeToo moment-and showing the constraints confronted by social movements in the authoritarian-ruled country.

Since the rape allegation against a professor resurfaced earlier this month, a rolling wave of calls for action has followed, with three professors at another university in Beijing being accused of sexual harassment and a teaching assistant at a third Beijing university being accused of rape.

The proliferating student action is an indication of the simmering interest-and pent-up anger-surrounding sexual harassment in China.

Government officials-and students say university officials-have reacted swiftly to tamp down #MeToo discussions, with censors deleting posts by those seeking to share their experiences. Students say those who have publicly called for more information about the decades-old case have been summoned into meetings with teachers, quizzed about their associates and told to stop speaking out.

So far, the #MeToo debate appears to be limited to universities. In recent months, hundreds of students and alumni from dozens of schools have signed letters petitioning universities to address sexual harassment. According to a 2016 survey by the nonprofit China Family Planning Association, more than 30% of male and female university students say they've experienced sexual harassment or sexual violence.

No similar #MeToo movement has taken hold in business, the media or other fields, as it has in the U.S.-a situation Chinese and foreign experts largely attribute to government control.

“The obstacles for anybody going public in China are exponentially higher than for somebody in the U.S. Then add all the factors that inhibit women in other countries, like fear of retribution and jeopardizing their career,” said Leta Hong Fincher, author of forthcoming book “Betraying Big Brother: The Feminist Awakening in China.”

The government's handling of the fledgling #MeToo effort in China is in keeping with how it deals with other social issues. While accounts of sexual harassment have been censored online, the government isn't necessarily opposed to efforts to fight harassment. In 2015, for example, even as Beijing censored a popular online documentary about pollution to control public outrage, it was also pushing ambitious plans to fight smog .

In 2014, the Education Ministry called for more efforts to strengthen teacher morality in classrooms, and specifically forbade sexual harassment or improper relations with students. Earlier this year, after fallout from a different sexual-harassment case, the ministry said it had zero tolerance for such behavior and that it was working on long-term mechanisms to combat it.

Last week, in a rare instance of public protest in Beijing, scores of Renmin University students gathered outside a classroom where a professor-accused of sexual harassment by a former student-was teaching, demanding that the school and professor respond to the allegation.

One participating student said unidentified men blocked the students from entering the classroom, but they waited for hours until the professor emerged. “Some students shouted, ‘Grab hands! Don't let him go!’” the student recalled.

After Renmin University released a statement saying it would investigate the reports of misconduct, the 70-odd students dispersed. The school later published rules on its website that prohibit sexual harassment and teachers from having “improper relations” with students. The school declined a request for comment.

“It’s very rare, what’s happening at all these university campuses,” said Ms. Hong Fincher. “It’s pretty astonishing.”

The government, fearing instability, is quick to clamp down on any signs of collective mobilization. A Peking University student who has taken part in calls for action said university officials “wanted to know if I’d been organizing with others.” Others have had their parents contacted by school authorities and been accused by teachers of colluding with people overseas.

Spurring China’s #MeToo moment is renewed interest in the 1998 death of Peking University student Gao Yan, who was allegedly raped by one of her professors and then committed suicide. In an interview earlier this month, the then-dean of the university’s Chinese studies department said the university was celebrating its 100th anniversary at the time, and the incident wasn’t openly discussed.

Twenty years later, as China observed a traditional holiday for remembering the dead, friends began sharing Ms. Gao’s tale online. In one widely circulated essay, a former classmate of Ms. Gao’s described herself as having been inspired by people in the U.S. and elsewhere who have reported similar cases.

The story quickly went viral and drew millions of views, with many readers indignant over the school’s handling of the case, including—as the university later confirmed in a statement—that the professor involved received only a disciplinary warning.

On a recent Saturday, Deng Yuhao, a senior mathematics major at Peking University, said on social media that he planned to ask the university to release more information.

Shortly afterward, two advisers from his department and a third involved in internet monitoring called him in, according to an online account of what occurred. They asked him to remove the post, saying it might cause “out-of-control” effects. The five-hour meeting ended at 3:30 a.m. after Mr. Deng agreed. The advisers and Mr. Deng posted the online statement to a campus message board to explain Mr. Deng’s long absence, which had spread quickly on social media.

Peking University didn’t respond to a request for comment. Addressing Ms. Gao’s case, the university said in a statement April 8 that it would reflect on “the lessons of historical experience” and promised to do more to protect students. The statement said the university had issued the disciplinary warning against the professor after police determined in 1998 that he had behaved improperly toward Ms. Gao.

Nanjing University in eastern China, where the accused professor was working this year, terminated his employment this month, citing the Gao incident. The professor didn’t respond to a request for comment. Earlier this month, Chinese media reports said the professor denied the charges as “malicious slander.”

Following the outcry over Ms. Gao’s case, allegations accusing a Tsinghua University teaching assistant of raping a student also surfaced this month. The university didn’t respond to a request for comment.

In the short term, said Li Jing, associate professor of sociology at Zhejiang University, a viral online conversation can be censored. “But many women these days are highly educated and aware of gender issues,” she said. “In the long term, sexual harassment must be addressed.”

2018. 9. 17 “Is #MeToo changing China?”

作者/Author: Yaqiu Wang

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Chinese women have been fighting for equality for a long time. In October 1911, a group of revolutionaries in southern China overthrew the Qing Dynasty, ending the imperial system and founding the Republic of China. Among the revolutionaries was a group of women’s rights activists. But when the Provisional Constitution was passed in March 1912, there was no mention of sex or gender. It said, “citizens of the Republic of China shall be equal before the law, without distinction of race, class or religion.”

“During the armed uprisings women . . . risked both their lives and their properties . . . just like the men. How is it that now the revolution has been achieved but women’s interests are not taken into account?” a feminist cried upon learning women would not be granted equal voting rights when the new electoral laws were announced in December 1912.

Today’s feminists in China know from long experience to be wary of men’s claims that they support equal rights, whether they are government officials or liberal intellectuals and activists.

The #MeToo movement in China has sent shock waves through progressive circles as some of the men accused of sexual assault and harassment are prominent intellectuals and activists who have long advocated for equal rights. High-profile men accused of abusive behavior include anti-discrimination activist Lei Chuang, environmentalist Feng Yongfeng and journalist Xiong Peiyun. Lei and Feng admitted to the accusations, while Xiong denied them.

Zhang Wen, a well-known journalist accused of rape and harassment by several women, attacked his accusers for “being divorced” and “having had many boyfriends.” He also threatened to sue those who made allegations against him.

Like much of Chinese society, some male intellectuals and activists habitually call their female colleagues “beauties” or “goddesses” and post photos of scantily clad young women on social media. In campaigns to raise money for families of detained activists, organizer Rou Tangseng used photos of women’s bare legs to attract donations. I was once called “goddess” by a male activist when I criticized the Chinese government’s detention of political dissidents — but the same person called me “an ugly woman no man wants” when I raised the issue of gender discrimination in Chinese society.

Now something new is emerging from #MeToo: Some liberal intellectual men who in the past have not paid much attention to women’s rights issues have called for self-reflection and support of women’s rights.

“I have had many moments of drunk and indecent behavior,” wrote the political commentator Mo Zhixu. “If I am exposed, I would understand, this is not only about some moral image issues. My past behavior, in fact, is a great mockery of my pursuit of rights, freedom, equality and democracy. If I cannot face this with honesty, it would only render my pursuit a joke.”

Writer Zhao Chu explains that as a person who deeply cares about rights, he must support the #MeToo movement: “Even if . . . [it] means I, as a man, must change my behavior and way of thinking, even if this kind of change is very difficult.”

Feminist writer Li Sipan exclaimed that “a miracle has happened” when she saw on social media many pro-feminism messages posted by those she thought were her “ordinary straight male” friends.

This change has been driven by the many Chinese women online — often young and educated — who bravely speak up, telling their stories, articulating feminist ideas and vigorously debating well-known male intellectuals, all amid pervasive government censorship.

Don't expect a similar awakening any time soon among the political elite. After President Xi Jinping formally assumed power in 2013, the government tightened its grip on civil society, including feminists. In March 2015, authorities detained five women's rights activists for a month after they planned to distribute stickers with anti-sexual harassment messages on public buses. This March, Chinese social media platforms Weibo and WeChat permanently suspended the accounts of Feminist Voices, a women's rights publication.

In June, Ren Liping, a student at China University of Petroleum, was held for six days in a hotel room by university authorities after she protested against the university and the police for mishandling her allegations of sexual abuse. Ren had accused an ex-boyfriend of raping her on campus.

“The younger generation of women's rights activists . . . has a stronger sense of independent personhood,” said the feminist and literary professor Ai Xiaoming. “Such independent personhood has instilled . . . vigor to the current women's rights movement in China.”

While the space for civil society activism of any kind is narrowing in China today, feminists have courageously and creatively followed the path of their feminist forbears from over 100 years ago. Their twin targets of an authoritarian state and patriarchal society ignore them at their peril.

2018. 9. 17 “Liang Xiaowen: Chinese Feminist Activist on #MeTooInChina”

作者/Author: Chinese Feminist Collective

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This interview was conducted by Robin Morgan at Women’s Media Center, transcribed by Liang Xiaowen and edited by D.D. Wang and Winnie Shen at Chinese Feminist Collective.

Robin: We’ve all read about tightening of speech on feminism in China. As the #MeToo movement reached China, China shut it down. Literally. Weibo, which is their Facebook and has a huge population, is not allowed to use the term “feminist.” Feminist websites completely shut down. Pressure has been put on students, where much of the grassroots activism began, to stop their activism, their complaints against professors for sexual harassment and sexual assault, to cease all such activity, under threat of not [allowed] graduating, under threat of expulsion, and parents become involved, universities bring them in to add to the pressure [to students] at home. In addition, there is a “Troll Army” that attacks such people online for their feminism, hewing to the government line — an interesting position for so-called trolls. So, there has been general repression over feminism and specifically, over #MeToo, and it reached to a point where some of the protesters, organizers were in jailed.

One of them, however, is currently in the United States and is able and willing to speak freely. Liang Xiaowen, a Chinese feminist activist from Guangzhou. She co-founded a grassroots organization for feminists in China. After graduation, she worked as a legal project manager of a feminist activist group. To the women in China who we know listen to this podcast we’re with you. To the women and the rest of the world hearing this podcast, we read about and hear about the work that Chinese feminists are trying to do in a repressive context. But, this is a rare time when we actually get to hear their own voices, or at least one of them. And it is with great delight that I welcome Liang Xiaowen.

Very good to have you here and you are one of the courageous women. [omitted] Talk about - [your work] and then I want to get on to the #MeToo movement and the women’s status in China.

Xiaowen: [...] I was born and raised as the only child in the family. Gender equality is actually in our policy. So, all my life I never knew women are still unequal in this world. After I met this group of feminist activists, I found out women are actually suffering from inequality, and that’s when I started to join feminist movement. I became a volunteer with a group of feminist activists who are mostly in their 20s. The first campaign we did and I joined was occupying the men’s room in 2012. In that campaign we occupied the men’s room and claimed more room for women, because women are always standing in line this campaign went viral in China.

Robin: You should know we did that in here in 1968, on the way to the Miss America pageant because we had buses taking us there to demonstrate. We stopped at a rest stop and you know there was this huge line of women and there was nobody waiting in front of the men’s room. So we liberated the Men’s room. One woman guarded it while the other women went in. This was wonderful!

Xiaowen: Yes. We actually did learn from campaigns from other countries’ feminist movements and we added on our own ingredients to localize [these campaigns]. But after I joined that campaign, I still didn’t identify myself as a feminist activist. [It was] because once identifying myself as a feminist, it did not sound very good. It sounded like I’m a man-hater. I didn’t want people to feel like I’m a man-hater. I wanted people to feel I’m a people person. I identified myself a gender equality advocate because it sounded more gentle and more welcoming to people and then I participated in more campaigns and I did more work. We stood on streets using performance art to attract people’s attention. So, we basically used our bodies as an installation art because China doesn’t really allow public demonstration. This is our way to getting to it.

Robin: So, you're doing it through art because that is allowed?

Xiaowen: Yes. We don't call it demonstration. It is art. In one campaign about anti-sexual harassment, a photo of me doing this art was published in a lot of websites and a lot of people commented on this photo saying that I was so ugly that no one would sexually harass me.

Robin: You know they say the same thing all over the world. It like they all read the same "secret book."

Xiaowen: Exactly! Also, when I was doing a campaign about anti-domestic violence, people said that I was so ugly, no wonder I got beaten up.

Robin: Oh, they are such idiots! They are such idiots... go on.

Xiaowen: They also accused me of being a feminist.

Robin: (Laughing)

Xiaowen: So, back then I didn't identify myself as a feminist, I felt so weird because everything I did was not extreme at all; it was not radical; it was simply emphasizing...

Robin: Common sense!

Xiaowen: Yes, common sense and gender equality. But they still accused me of being a feminist. At that point, I was so angry. I felt like I was so fed up with all these personal attacks that I said why not? If everything I did when I was advocating for gender equality and you said I was a feminist, then maybe a feminist is who I am.

Robin: Oh, good for you.

Xiaowen: So, finally I identified myself as a feminist, I felt empowered and I am immune from all these personal attacks. It's like every time a woman stands out in the public and claims her rights, people will attack her. But once I identified myself as a feminist, I didn't care about these attacks anymore so that's how I became a feminist.

Robin: I went the same route for what it's worth. I'm an old woman, 150,000 years old now. At first I was nervous about using the word feminist because it sounded 19th century and old fashioned. Instead I called myself in the '60s, a women's liberationist, because we were imitating China. We were imitating speak-bitterness meetings and creating consciousness-raising. It seemed so revolutionary, we didn't understand we were the real revolutionaries, even the men of the left turned against us. I thought finally, well, if I am going to be blamed for it, I might as well call myself a feminist. It's a very honorable word. I know there is a whole furor over the #MeToo movement in China and they shut down Weibo, which is like your Facebook. They've arrested some women a few years ago. Tell us about that and the repression that has shut down any demonstrations about sexual harassment. First of all, there are no sexual harassment laws, are there?

Xiaowen: There aren't specific laws about sexual harassment but there are laws, like employee protection. There will be one specific provision saying that employers are not allowed to sexually harass women, their employees, but [there is] no punishment, penalty, and there is no specific definition about sexual harassment.

Robin: So it was not enforceable at all. It might as well not exist. And the crackdown, they say you are all agents of the West or you're "all man-haters". And the women who were arrested, they were detained, talk about that.

Xiaowen: Around March 7th or 8th, 2015, five of my colleagues were arrested because they planned to carry out an activity in five cities nationwide to hand out stickers about anti-sexual harassment. But right before this activity, my colleagues were detained. And, not only my colleagues, but also ten to twenty people [volunteers] were also being questioned by the police officers. They [my five colleagues] were detained for 37 days.

Robin: Wow, 37 days! I was just about to ask how many hours! Were they formally charged with anything?

Xiaowen: No, they were never formally charged so they were accused of — so they were detained in the name of causing public disorder. They never found enough evidence to formally charge my colleagues. After 37 days, they were released on bail.

Robin: [Omitted discussion about women scholars and women in power in this movement] We read about the fact that the #MeToo movement is going underground using codewords online like rice bunny because it sounds like “mi tu” because they [censors] have shut down all mentions of #MeToo. Tell us how you’re getting around that.

Xiaowen: It was inspired by the #MeToo movement in the US . There was one woman who stood out and said she was sexually harassed by her supervisor when she was pursuing her doctorate so this open letter brought public outrage. Two students in China wrote open letters to their alma mater, asking their schools to build an anti-sexual harassment mechanism and these two students also appealed to the public, appealed to other students to ask them to write the same letter to their own alma maters. I joined that movement too. I wrote a letter to my alma mater and asked my school to build this mechanism and about 70 students joined this letter within a week.

Robin: That was to South China University of Technology?

Xiaowen: Yes, and that was in January. Apart from my school, there were, in total, 94 schools who joined this campaign. Students from 94 schools joined this campaign. In total, there were more than 8,000 students who joined this campaign.

Robin: Wow, that is fantastic. What was the response?

Xiaowen: I was not in China, I was in the US [at that time] so I haven’t heard of a reply yet but we did send this letter to our Education Ministry and we’re still waiting for a reply. As for each of the [94] schools, they have different replies but mainly, they were vague. But a lot of schools haven’t replied yet. Some of the students — I didn’t connect with them directly — but I heard, this is all what I heard, I heard that some of the students were being talked to — they haven’t graduated yet. That’s why we ask our participants to write letters to their alma maters because they have already graduated so they won’t be threatened by their university. They were still some students who joined this campaign even though they hadn’t graduated yet and I did hear that their school’s counselors talked to them and asked them to not join. This was in January and in February, about 200 students and schools from outside China, mainly students who are studying or teaching overseas. We wrote a letter to the Education Ministry asking them to build a [anti-sexual harassment] mechanism that we all asked for. But it was not until April — I think there’s something big going on right now in China — because there was a lot of students who heard about the campaign and a lot of students revealing their sexual harassment cases that are going on in China.

Robin: Yes, people gain strength from each other. The more [#MeToo stories] there are, the easier it is for people to join. Although, the more the government would get alarmed. [omitted] How can women from other countries be helpful and supportive, without playing into the hands of the authorities saying, “Ah! See, you’re just pawns in the hands of the West.” How can women be sensitized to be supportive? What do you need from the women who are listening to this program, not only in the States but around the world? What would be helpful?

Xiaowen: Thank you for this question. I am really touched and I really needed that. So, right now, because of the censorship, people in China can never get access to Twitter or Facebook so no one knows what’s going on in the outside world. Also, Feminist Voices, the largest and most influential feminist alternative media in China was permanently banned. Basically, right now, feminist activists in China don’t have a large platform to post their ideas, news or campaigns about feminism activism because this platform has been banned. We are trying to build a bridge between China and the U.S. about Chinese

feminist movement. We use our Twitter (@FeministChina) and Facebook (@FreeChineseFeminists) to tell the world about Chinese feminist movement. We also receive a lot of support from all over the world. We then send back these support to activists in China, to let people in China that people all over the world are watching and supporting them

Robin: [omitted] Women can then establish sisterhood across national boundaries and patriarchal boundaries. I wish you all the possible best!

2018. 10. 10 “One Year of #MeToo: How the Movement Eludes Government Surveillance in China”

作者/Author: Han Zhang

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Xianzi was a college junior interning at CCTV, China’s national television network, when she found herself sitting alone backstage with the famous talk-show host Zhu Jun. With the door to his dressing room ajar, Zhu started asking her questions, she recalls. Did she hope to settle in Beijing? Did she dream of working at this TV network? He grabbed her hand. He said he could tell fortunes. Then he dragged her toward him with one hand and reached under her long cotton dress with the other, as she gripped the armrests of her chair. He forcibly kissed her on the lips before someone knocked on the door. Without a word, she left the room, wiping her mouth with the back of her hand.

She reported the incident to authorities, but both the police and one of her college mentors dissuaded her from pursuing the case. She said that the police asked her to consider Zhu’s “positive influence on society,” and even warned her not to press on for the sake of her parents. Xianzi, which is not her real name, let the matter dissipate. (Zhu has denied the allegations.)

Four years later, as #MeToo was hitting a chord in China, Xianzi, now twenty-five, came across a childhood friend’s post on social media about her own sexual assault. The post brought Xianzi back to those five minutes in Zhu Jun’s dressing room. Xianzi stayed up all night writing down her thoughts, and posted them to the messaging app WeChat just after 5 A.M. on July 26th. “I was once numb to things like this,” she wrote. “But in the past year, the feminist movement started little fires all over the place, giving me guidance. By tonight, I’ve seen so many women coming out about what they went through. I think it’s time for me to record mine. To tell you something about the world we live in.”

A friend of a friend reposted her article on Weibo—the Chinese Twitter—and it was reposted more than ten thousand times before censors took it down. Through another wave of sharing and reposting, it eventually reached the mainstream media in China (though not CCTV), as well as English-language outlets such as the Times and the Guardian.

Since midsummer, dozens of Chinese women like Xianzi, from many different walks of life, have come forward to share their experiences of sexual assault and harassment on WeChat and Weibo. Among the accused have been men from the worlds of academia, N.G.O.s, pop music, and even the head of the government-run national Buddhist association, Xuecheng, who resigned as a result of the allegations. Taken together, the posts depict sexual assault as virtually omnipresent: it happens in offices, on school field trips, at work meetings and group dinners, to young women seeking an education, a career, or just living their lives.

The first #MeToo wave in China came at the start of 2018, when a woman living in the U.S. named Luo Xixi accused her former professor, Chen Xiaowu, of sexual misconduct on Weibo. (He denied any wrongdoing but was reportedly fired.) She was likely the first woman to come forward publicly, using her real name. A handful of other stories followed, flashing across the Internet and then fading out. But it was Xianzi’s story that helped #MeToo reach a critical mass: usage of the phrase “sexual harassment” on WeChat surpassed thirty million in late July; earlier in the year, the same phrase bobbed under a million most of the time.

“By telling the stories in first person, the victims stepped up to own this movement,” a founder of 074 Hotline, a group that helps women fight violations at work, said. (“074” reads like “zero discrimination” in Mandarin.)

Just as the groundwork for #MeToo in North America had already been laid for decades—the American activist Tarana Burke first coined the phrase “Me Too” back in 2006—feminists in China have been

working toward a moment like this for some time. In 2012, the Weibo account of the Shanghai subway system warned young women to dress modestly if they wished to avoid harassment on their commute. In response, several women staged a subway protest and coined a memorable slogan: “I can be slutty, but you can’t get dirty.” The protest went viral on Weibo, made international news, and set off a public debate on sexual harassment.

But China has come down hard on such advocacy since 2014. Three years ago, as part of a larger crackdown on dissidents, five Chinese feminist activists were arrested and detained for planning to hand out stickers and flyers raising awareness of sexual harassment on public transport, inspiring the international “Free the Five” campaign. Some of the detained protesters were linked to Weizhiming, a Hangzhou-based N.G.O. that organized against gender-based discrimination, violence, and harassment; the organization was forced to shut down later that year. In 2016, China passed a law giving the government wide latitude to monitor and control the work of N.G.O.s. On Weibo, any and all iterations of #MeToo—whether in dialect or using homonyms or emojis—are censored. Groups formed to advocate for women’s rights avoid words such as “organizing” and “action” to describe their work. A demonstration such as the Women’s March is out of the question.

As a result, feminist activists in China are now mostly operating underground; they are a tightly knit group, whose members travel to meet up and refer to each other as colleagues, but they have few public, official organizations. #MeToo gives them hope. The decentralized nature of the movement, which perpetuates itself through a chain reaction of online testimonies, makes it more difficult for the government to act against it. “#MeToo is not organized by a group of people,” Feng Yuan, the founder of Weiping (“For Equality”), an N.G.O. in Beijing that advocates against gender violence, told me. “It is people who were violated making their voice heard, and no one knows where the next one will be. No one can stop it.”

“It’s not that we failed before and succeeded this time,” Zheng Churan, one of the five activists detained over stickers, said. “Gradually, we changed people’s minds. And now it reached a critical point. More and more people are joining and reacting to this topic.” Last year, Zheng was evicted from her apartment after the police applied pressure on her landlord, alleging that she was “making trouble” by producing T-shirts with feminist messages on them. (This police tactic is a common one: the person who first posted Xianzi’s account to Weibo was likewise threatened with eviction if she did not take the post down.)

But, for many women, the burden of keeping their struggle private outweighs the risks of speaking out. A twenty-one-year-old woman who alleges that she was assaulted by a music-festival executive says that she struggled with clinical depression after the incident, and even considered suicide. (The executive denies the allegations.) “I’m prepared to die,” she wrote in a letter posted to Weibo on July 29th, three days after Xianzi’s post went up. “But before that I want to fight.”

A number of self-organized grassroots networks have sprouted up to provide resources and rapport for women through social media and chat groups, where censorship is easier to elude. Many organizers use the encrypted app Signal to chat and GitHub to share files; they don’t do many media interviews and often conceal their identities. The groups provide advice, hook women up with legal support, or point them toward mental-health counselling. Mostly, they listen.

“When a victim wants to tell her story, maybe she wants to deal with the harasser, or deal with the institutions involved. Maybe she wants to report to the police or even take it to court. This is not a process one can go through alone,” Lu Ping, a longtime women’s-rights advocate, said. “She would need someone to help her, to emotionally support her, and to provide her with ideas, resources and company. She needs a whole team.” At the end of the summer, a guidebook aimed at arming women with knowledge of their rights and options related to harassment started to circulate online. In addition to detailed step-by-step suggestions, it provides a list of women’s-rights groups and even some tips on how to report assaults to police and how to talk to journalists.

Although Xianzi was at first taken aback by the public interest in her case, she decided to fight. When Zhu's lawyer issued a public letter rejecting her allegations and threatening to sue for defamation, Xianzi and her friends replied by saying that they looked forward to bringing her case to court. China enacted a bare-bones law against sexual harassment in 2005, but Xianzi does not plan to use this statute in her case against Zhu (who is now suing Xianzi for damaging his "reputation and mental well-being"). Instead, she intends to sue on the grounds of "personality rights," arguing that Zhu's alleged actions constituted an assault on her personal dignity.

"There are elements in this society that are supposed to protect you. But they don't. That is what gets me," Xianzi told me. "It's like breathing in the smog—the air is polluted, but you have to breathe it anyway." She wrote her post simply to stand in support of her friend, but now she has achieved more than that. "It was a time that I felt we were all in this with each other," she said, "that all women's fates were vibrating together."

2018. 10. 22 “#MeToo movement in China: Powerful yet fragile”

作者/Author: Maria Repnikova & Weile Zhou

来源/Source: AlJazeera 半岛电视台

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Since last January, China has been experiencing a firestorm against sexual predation that reached universities, media outlets, sports teams, NGOs and even religious temples. More than 20 liberal intellectuals, media personalities and activists have now been accused of sexual misconduct, and several publicly shamed university professors have been dismissed. China's Ministry of Education has pledged to implement institutional mechanisms to prevent sexual harassment at universities and the country's top legislative is considering adding protections against sexual harassment into the civil code.

In a one-party state where feminist activism and public sphere more broadly are increasingly under tight control from the top, this movement demonstrates the endurance of citizen power through social media story-sharing, anti-censorship strategies, and collaboration between victims, media, lawyers, and civil society.

The Chinese #MeToo movement participants have creatively spread discussions on sexual harassment cases on social media and saved censored information through screenshots and blockchains. When the hashtag #MeToo was identified by state censors, Chinese netizens started to use other, less immediately recognisable hashtags such as “Woyeshi” (Chinese version of #MeToo) and #Mitu (#RiceBunny, a homophonic of “Me too” in Chinese) with emojis of cute cartoon rabbits eating rice. On another top social media app, WeChat, movement participants spread screenshots of victims' sexual harassment stories, media investigations and commentaries, at times even posting the images upside down to confuse the filtering system.

In addition to social media strategies, activists also employ various encryption technologies to circumvent censorship. For example, the supporters of Peking University student Yue Xin used blockchain, a public open-source technology that holds Bitcoin transaction data, to save her censored open letter about the official intimidation she faced for requesting information about a 20-year-old rape case involving another graduate. Yue's supporters embedded the letter into the blockchain on the computing platform, Ethereum, which can keep transaction metadata of the cryptocurrency, Ether, from any alteration, and generate copies within the network. The letter is now permanently saved and can be accessed by people who look up Bitcoin transactions.

A new media outlet, Matters, also saved detailed information of each sexual harassment case on their blockchain-based website. And several anonymous activists used this technology to build a website called “Snowflakes” to encourage victims to share their suffering by creating virtual snowflakes on the map that represent wounds caused by sexual assault. In providing legal support and mental health counselling, many grassroots groups also use encrypted messaging app Signal and open-source web hosting service GitHub.

Other than technological aptitude, cross-group collaboration between journalists, lawyers, victims and social media activists, a practice that defined much of Chinese activism for the past two decades, has also played a crucial role in propelling the Chinese MeToo movement.

The university sphere is a good example. In January, former Beihang University graduate Luo Xixi got support from an independent investigative reporter, Huang Xueqin, and a human rights lawyer, Wan Miaoyan, in preparing her public disclosure of sexual harassment by her former adviser, Chen Xiaowu. Huang rephrased the initial post to make it more evidence-based and helped Luo filter media interview requests. Wan Miaoyan applied her legal expertise to use this case as a wake-up call to institute new

systemic mechanisms to address all sexual harassment cases at universities. As a result of this collaboration and a public outpour of support for Luo's case, Beihang University fired Chen and pledged to consider establishing the anti-sexual harassment mechanism - making it the first of Chinese universities to consider such measures.

The university sector is not the only one that came under the limelight of cross-sector mobilisation. Since July, courageous victims and outspoken outlets like the Beijing News, China Newsweek, the Paper, Caixin Media, the Portrait Magazine (Renwu Zazhi) continued to expose a series of sexual harassment cases involving activist Lei Chuang, environmentalist Feng Yongfeng, media practitioner Zhang Wen, famous CCTV host Zhu Jun, and high-ranking monk Xuecheng, among others. Victims first disclosed their stories on social media, and media outlets verified the facts and kept the public updated by interviewing informed sources and checking documents, identifying patterns of sexual harassment, and investigating the systematic forces behind the individual cases.

Other than helping expose abuse, civil society collaboration facilitated post-trauma healing and prevention training. NGOMeToo, NGOCN and Orange Umbrella, among other grassroots groups have offered psychological and legal support for sexually harassed women, organised anti-sexual harassment seminars, and shared self-protection strategies. Through their joint efforts, the fight against sexual harassment evolved from individual requests for fair treatment into a public reflection on its power dynamics, attracting party and state's attention to its regulatory loopholes.

While the Chinese MeToo movement manifests the perseverance of China's societal struggle against officially endorsed patriarchal norms, the movement also exposes fragilities in bottom-up mobilisation. First, the state's response, as expected, has featured unyielding coercion. The state censored the majority of posts with the hashtag #MeToo, temporarily blocked some victims' Weibo accounts, and permanently shut down Weibo and WeChat accounts of Feminists' Voices, an NGO that promotes gender equality. Second, while public awareness about sexual harassment is rising, it is still primarily centred in elites circles. Anti-sexual harassment debates most often spread among well-informed elite intellectual groups, while the general public is more attentive to issues like vaccine scandals that carry more tangible and immediate implications on their daily lives. Moreover, many people, even liberal intellectuals, push back on this movement as potentially disruptive of social order and exaggerating of the influence of male-dominated power dynamics. A famous public intellectual and politics professor, Liu Yu, for instance, has warned that this movement might trigger false claims of sexual harassment and advised participants to try legal approaches before voicing concerns on social media. And a media practitioner, Zhang Wen, publicly accused of starting non-consensual sexual relationships with his female co-workers, responded that it is culturally appropriate for Chinese people to hug and kiss when drinking at large social gatherings. These implicit and explicit denials and justifications by China's prominent intellectuals signal that Chinese society has still a long way to go in building a systemic gender equality agenda.

Even when collective action has worked, the measures taken are still fairly limited. While most of the exposed institutions fired the accused individuals, for instance, some have also tried to downplay the issue and bypass systemic responsibility. When the Sun Yat-sen University decided to dismiss one professor facing allegations of sexual misconduct, the university attributed the punishment to his "violation of the teachers' code of conduct" instead of "sexual harassment." Most importantly, anti-harassment measures advocated by universities focus solely on the punitive regulations rather than on pre-emptive initiatives in overhauling gender norms that are at the heart of this scandal.

Nonetheless, even such limited responses should be celebrated in a society that's undergoing a political crackdown. The seeds of activism planted in the pre-Xi era continue to grow, albeit, often obstructed by a sensitive state, an indifferent public and misogynist elites.

2018. 12. 6 “#MeToo in China: ‘If we lose, there might be no more women speaking out for years’”

作者/Author: Yuan Yang

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In China, people being interviewed often lower their voices when discussing politics, even in private. Not ‘Xianzi’. At her apartment in Beijing, the 25-year-old screenwriter speaks without hesitation about her role in the country’s fast-growing #MeToo movement. Though she sits with an erect posture, elbows wedged against the chair arms, she seems completely at ease, dressed in a huge luxe-fleece jumper and pyjama bottoms.

#MeToo was late to begin in China but exploded on social media in 2018. The movement has already exposed several professors at China’s top universities, as well as leading to the resignation of Shi Xuecheng, a monk who headed China’s Buddhist Association. As in the west, the campaign seeks to expose those wielding their power through sexual harassment. But people speaking up here also face the threat of censorship and even persecution from the state.

Xianzi, who wishes to be known by her nickname, not only spoke out against one of her country’s highest-profile alleged perpetrators, state media TV host Zhu Jun; she is also the first accuser to take her case to court in a civil lawsuit claiming infringement of personal dignity.

At the same time, she is battling a defamation case launched by Zhu, who has denied her allegation. When I ask if she was concerned her actions were politically risky, Xianzi says the thought didn’t occur to her. “Many people said I was brave but in reality you could just say I’m rather ignorant,” she says.

#MeToo started to go viral in China early in the year. Xianzi recalls how, on hearing that a university student in her hometown of Wuhan killed himself after suffering abuse by his supervisor, she burst into tears. But it wasn’t until July that she wrote about herself.

In the small hours of a sleepless night she alleged that, when she was an undergraduate student intern at the prestigious China Central Television (CCTV) in 2014, Zhu had pulled her towards him against her will and started groping and kissing her in a dressing room. According to Xianzi, Zhu only stopped when someone else entered. When she went to the police, officers told her that as one of CCTV’s star hosts, Zhu had an enormously “positive effect on society” and persuaded her to drop the case.

Xianzi wanted to share her story with only friends on WeChat (similar to Facebook), as a way of showing support for another woman who had recently shared her story of being raped. But her post was reposted to Sina Weibo, China’s Twitter-like microblogging platform, by a friend of a friend that Xianzi did not even know at the time.

As it spread across the internet, her story was swiftly censored on government orders. But it survived. That evening, a lawyer contacted Xianzi to offer help, and she realised she could still fight what she alleges happened to her. “You really need to have others to help you,” she says, explaining why she decided to pursue her case.

She thought of appealing against the police’s inaction and taking the matter to higher courts, but now believes this is not the best tactic for most women. “If you go down this route,” she says, “you’ll be asked to give many statements, which in itself can be psychologically hurtful.” She adds that the majority of police officers conducting interviews are male, often with little empathy for victims of sexual violence.

Though “indecent assault” is a crime in China, it is vaguely defined (as is rape), and brought to court so rarely that it may as well be legal. A study by the community group Beijing Yuanzhong Gender Development Center found that of the 50 million publicly available criminal judgments made between 2010-2017, only 34 mentioned sexual harassment.

Instead she opted for a civil lawsuit, which keeps more control in the complainant's hands when it comes to matters such as gathering evidence. In this, Xianzi tells me she has been helped by a team that includes the person who first reposted her story on Weibo, an investigative journalist called Xu Chao. This has been crucial in generating a strategy and "tactics" — a word Xianzi often uses — to help navigate a landscape where there is often no direct route to justice for survivors of sexual assault.

Her team has encountered the sort of institutionalised sexism found in many countries. The police who initially handled Xianzi's case told her that as a woman, her reputation could be damaged by people finding out about the alleged assault. But the sexism she faced had added Chinese characteristics. "Your parents are Communist party members; this will damage their careers," the police said.

Xu Chao, who has more experience with handling political risk, told Xianzi it was "a miracle" the two hadn't been arrested for "picking quarrels and raising trouble", a catch-all criminal charge for activists. Others are not so lucky: Yue Xin, a Peking University graduate and activist who publicly questioned her university's handling of a #MeToo case, has been missing since her arrest in August.

Among China's #MeToo movement, Xianzi stands out, not only because her case and her advocacy are well known, but also because of her ability to withstand pressure. Zhu Jun is contesting Xianzi's case against him and his lawyers have issued a statement saying it is "not true" he sexually harassed Xianzi. Zhu's law firm declined to comment further when contacted by the FT, and refused to put us in touch with his lawyers. We could not reach Zhu personally.

Meanwhile, many #MeToo cases on campuses have been silenced by a renewed Communist party move to quell student unrest. Ren Xiaoxiao (not her real name), a student at China Petroleum University in Shandong province, who had taken the unprecedented move of suing the police station for not handling her allegation of rape, was fiercely active on social media but has now been detained.

Some argue that under the party's male-dominated authoritarian rule, liberation for women is not possible. Xianzi is quick to dismiss this line of argument. "When you have so many victims speaking to you every day, you realise... talking about ideologies is a luxury."

Difficult trade-offs are unavoidable. When I ask her about those who criticise #MeToo for subjecting alleged perpetrators to trial by social media, she pauses, then says, "I really like Woody Allen." (She is also obsessed with British comedy series *Yes Minister* and *Fleabag*.) She adds: "Human civilisation hasn't reached the stage where we can judge people in the court of public opinion. But when it comes to sexual harassment, the judicial route is similarly unfair."

She draws a parallel with the "trolley problem" — would you stop a runaway train from killing a thousand innocents by switching its track and killing one instead? For her, this is not an abstract question, but the way she frames the consequences of her actions. "If we lose [Zhu Jun's lawsuit], there might not be any more women speaking out about their experiences for many years. Xu Chao and I are very focused on action and results."

China's authoritarian regime makes any form of grass-roots organising dangerous. Xu Chao was told that she should consider stopping her investigation into a petrochemical spill in Quangang, a small port in southern China, because this might make her a politically sensitive figure and jeopardise Xianzi's lawsuit. "Do you have to judge whether the people of Quangang are less important than the women of China?" Xianzi muses.

She also worries that her Zhu Jun post led to #MeToo being censored en masse for a period of time, on social media and in the news. "I deeply regretted that my story had led to others not being able to publish theirs," she says.

What will determine whether the trade-offs were worth it? The outcome, Xianzi says, without hesitation. "Many people said I was right to report Zhu Jun. But if I lose [the lawsuit], then I should wholly disavow [the decision to speak out]... because it won't have improved anything for other women."

Uncertainty over what happens to the movement if she is unsuccessful is the only time she allows doubt to creep in. “I am really very scared of losing,” she says, quieter than before.

“I comfort myself by saying this is a process of accumulation,” she adds. “Maybe at the start there will be many people who speak out and lose...but cases will build up and change the judicial process.”

Ultimately, she thinks legal reform may be the only route to improving the rights of women in China. She and other feminist groups have been working on submitting improvements to China’s “civil code”, an overreaching document governing civil law, to include specific provisions on sexual harassment in the workplace.

“I’m pretty optimistic,” she says. “This wave of women speaking out has made more and more women realise that our rights need to be protected. Nobody can stop the sound. This is history moving forwards, and nobody can turn back the wheel.”

Memorabilia on Anti-Sexual Harassment in China (1995-2019)

Source: #MeToo in China Exhibition (2019.7.23-30, Beijing, Guangzhou)

中国反性骚扰大事记(1995-2019)

来源: 中国米兔展 (2019.7.23-30, 北京, 广州)

1.

1995年, 唐灿发表《性骚扰在中国的存在》, 北京、上海、长沙等地的169名女性和40名男性受访者报告, 84%的女性遭遇过12种性骚扰形式中的至少一种, 63%遭遇过两次以上, 90%的女性知道身边有别的女性遭遇过性骚扰。

In 1995, Tang Can published *The existence of sexual harassment in China*. The survey revealed that 84% of women had encountered at least one of 12 forms of sexual harassment. 63% of women have experienced harassment more than twice, and 90% of women know that other women have experienced sexual harassment.

2.

1998-1999年, 时任全国人大常委会委员陈癸尊首倡《中华人民共和国反性骚扰法》立法建议。

From 1998 to 1999, Chen Guizun, a member of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, was the first to advocate the legislative proposal of *Anti-Sexual Harassment Law of the People's Republic of China*.

3.

2001年6月, 中国报道首例性骚扰诉讼。西安国企员工童女士起诉其上司持续对她进行性骚扰, 要求赔礼道歉。但法院认为“证据不足”予以驳回。

In June 2001, a sexual harassment lawsuit was firstly reported in China. Ms. Tong, a staff member of a state-owned enterprise in Xi'an, sued her superiors for continuing sexual harassment, and she demanded an apology. The case was rejected by the court because of "insufficient evidence."

4.

2001年11月10日, 中央一台“新闻调查”节目在黄金时间首播关于性骚扰的专题节目。此前后, 性骚扰议题被各种主流媒体相继报道。

On Nov.10, 2001, "News Investigation" program of CCTV-1 premiered a special program on sexual harassment in prime time. Since then, the issue of sexual harassment has been reported by various mainstream media.

5.

2001年12月27日, 海南判决首例男性间同性猥亵案, 三名受害人各获所要求的一元赔偿。

On Dec.27, 2001, the first male same-sex indecency case was sentenced in Hainan Province. Each of the three victims received 1 RMB compensation they requested.

6.

2002年, 贵州某供电局职工诉上司性骚扰, 被一、二法院认定性骚扰, 并获精神损害赔偿。

In 2002, an employee of a power supply bureau in Guizhou sued the superior for sexual harassment and

was affirmed by the court. The victim was compensated for mental damages.

7.

2005 年 12 月,《中华人民共和国妇女权益保障法》修订并实施,新增“禁止对妇女实施性骚扰。受害妇女有权向单位和有关机关投诉。”(第四十条规)性骚扰就此成为法律名词。

In Dec. 2005, *Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Women's Rights and Interests* was amended and implemented. “Prohibition of sexual harassment against women. Women victims have the right to complain to the work units and relevant authorities” (Article 40) was added. Sexual harassment has become a legal term since then.

8.

2007 年,北京众泽妇女法律咨询服务开始探索职场性骚扰防治。其合作企业包括通用电气(中国)公司、河北省衡水市老白干酿酒(集团)有限公司、北京翠微大厦、北京西郊宾馆、唯美度国际美容连锁集团有限公司、中山火炬城建开发有限公司和河北制药集团有限公司。

In 2007, Beijing Zhongze Women's Legal Advisory Service Center began to explore sexual harassment prevention and treatment in the workplace.

9.

2008 年 3 月,“反对家庭暴力网络”起草的《关于人民法院审理性骚扰案件的若干规定(专家建议稿)》提交给全国人大和政协会议。

In March 2008, *Provisions on the trial of sexual harassment cases by the people's courts (Expert Advisory Draft)*, drafted by -Domestic Violence Network, an women rights NGO, was submitted to the National People's Congress and the CPPCC meeting.

10.

2009 年,广州女员工起诉日籍主管性骚扰胜诉,法院直接依《妇女权益保障法》认定性骚扰侵犯人格,并判决赔偿。

In 2009, a female employee in Guangzhou sued her Japanese supervisor for sexual harassment and won the case. Directly based on *Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Women's Rights and Interest*. The court affirmed that the sexual harassment violated her right of personality and ordered the Japanese supervisor to pay a compensation.

10.

2009 年 5 月,湖北女服务员邓玉娇将强求性服务的官员刺死。邓玉娇得到舆论一边倒的支持,尽管许多言论把她作为“捍卫贞操”的“烈女”,但妇女组织指出事关妇女权益,呼吁重视工作场所中对妇女的性骚扰。



2009年5月24日，一名女性在北京以行为艺术声援邓玉娇。她身裹白布、躺在地上，旁边写着几个大字：“谁都可能成为邓玉娇”。

In May 2009, a waitress in Hubei province named Deng Yujiao stabbed a local official who coercively demanded for sexual service. Deng Yujiao received strong public support, though she was portrayed as a "paragon of chastity" who defended her virginity. However, some feminists from women organizations pointed out that it is more about women's rights and called for attention to the sexual harassment issues women face in the workplace.

11.

2012年4月18日，国务院颁布《女职工劳动保护特别规定》，在众多妇女的倡导下，国家首次在劳动政策里规定了性骚扰及用人单位的责任。

On Apr. 18, 2012, the State Council promulgated *Special Provisions on Labor Protection for Female Employees*. After the advocacy of many women, the State first stipulated sexual harassment and the responsibility of employers in the labor policy.

12.

2012年6月，“我可以骚你不能扰”的口号，由青年女权行动者叫响。她们对上海地铁第二运营公司责备受害者的宣传防性骚扰方式的抗议，以这个口号和相关行为艺术而风靡全国。



In June 2012, in protests against the victim-shaming speech by Shanghai Metro, young feminist activists shout out the slogan “I can be slutty, yet you can’t harass me,” which became widely known nationwide afterwards.

13.

2013年1月1日起施行的《深圳经济特区性别平等促进条例》，将男性纳入职场性骚扰的保护范围。

Shenzhen Special Economic Zone Gender Equality Promotion Regulations, which came into effect on Jan.1, 2013, included men in the protection of sexual harassment in the workplace.

14.

2013年9月，24岁的肖美丽在首届女权学校结业仪式后开始了“美丽的女权徒步”，从北京出发前往广州，历时170天，走过2000多公里，沿途在各地开展反对校园性侵害的宣传、讲座、交流和申请信息公开活动。



In Sept. 2013, 24-year-old activist Xiao Meili launched a feminist march at the closing ceremony of the first Feminist School held in Beijing. She walked over 2,000 kilometers for 170 days from Beijing to Guangzhou. Along the way, she carried out campaigns against sexual assaults on campus by giving lectures, and applying for the disclosure of government information on this issue.

15.

2014年7月，受害者举报厦门大学教授吴春明利用发表论文、保研等机会，诱奸及性骚扰女生。200多名国内外高校教师、学者和学生分别向厦门大学和教育部发出公开信。教师节前夕，教育部出台“红七条”，性骚扰被明文禁止。



In July 2014, Wu Chunming, a professor at Xiamen University, was reported for seducing and sexually harassing his female students. More than 200 domestic and oversea university teachers, scholars and students signed on the open letter to Xiamen University and the Ministry of Education. On the eve of Teacher's Day, the Ministry of Education issued a regulation in which sexual harassment was expressly prohibited.

16.

2015年“三八”国际妇女节前夕，全球政府和民间组织在联合国纽约总部回顾评估北京世妇会会20周年之际，一些进行反对性骚扰活动的青年女权行动者分别在北京、杭州、广州被警察带走，其中李婷婷、王曼、韦婷婷、武嵘嵘、郑楚然5人被刑事拘留37天，被称为“女权五姐妹”事件。



On the eve of the International Women's Day in 2015, as well as the 20th anniversary of the 1995 Beijing World Conference on Women organized by UN, some feminist activists who planned to launch anti-sexual harassment campaigns were taken away by the police separately in Beijing, Hangzhou and Guangzhou. Among them, Li Tingting, Wang Man, Wei Tingting, Wu Rongrong and Zheng Churan were detained for 37 days. This case was then named as "Chinese Feminist Five".

17.

2016 年，高校校园性骚扰的另一种表现得到进一步关注。一场“反三七过三八”的活动在网上得到开展，两天便获得 1.7 亿的点击量。



In 2016, sexual harassment in colleges received further attention. A campaign on protesting sexualization and sexual harassment of female students was launched online and received 170 million hits within two days.

18.

2016年8月29日，北京师范大学本科生康宸玮发表有关校园性骚扰的调研报告《沉默的铁狮》，其中包括为核实该校某教授性骚扰行为而进行的“暗访行动”。数天内这篇文章累计阅读量近9万，几个月后，该教授受到处分。

On Aug.29, 2016, Kang Chenwei, an undergraduate student from Beijing Normal University published a research report on sexual harassment on campus, which included an “unannounced visit” to verify the sexual harassment by a professor in school. In a few days, this article received 90,000 hits. A few months later, the professor was punished.

19.

2017年3月，广州性别教育中心发布《中国大学在校和毕业生遭遇性骚扰状况调查》，数据来自全国6000多受访者。该报告的数据在2018年反性骚扰讨论中被广泛引用。

游泳课，游泳老师借教学在我全身漂浮在水里时（头在水里，身体背朝天花板）把手伸进了我的泳衣，摸到了我的胸，还有另一个敏感部位。当时非常的害怕，也觉得很痛苦。不敢给任何人说。……不知道该报告给谁，学校没有明文说明什么部门管理此事。根本就不知道找谁，自己在学校心理咨询网站求助留言，但是没有人回复和反馈。

——女，23岁，天津某大学，本科



在回答为什么选择沉默/忍耐，2086名受访者中近一半人不知如何应对性骚扰

In March 2017, Guangzhou Gender Education Center released “A Survey of Sexual Harassment of University Students and Graduates in China.” The survey is based on the responses from more than 6,000 participants across the country. The survey was widely quoted in the discussion in the #MeToo movement since 2018.

20.

2017年5月，女权行动者张累累在广州发起“我是广告牌，行走反骚扰”活动。由于在地铁刊登反

性骚扰广告未获工商管理部门批准，她决定每天都身背广告牌出行来替代。不久，警察登门要求她停止活动并搬离广州。



In May 2017, feminist activist Zhang Leilei launched an anti-sexual harassment campaign, in which she carries a billboard every day to draw attention from the public. Soon, the campaign was stopped by the police and she was asked to move out of Guangzhou, where she was living.

21.

2018年1月1日，中国#MeToo浪潮初起。北京航空航天大学博士毕业生罗茜茜实名公布该校教授、长江学者陈小武12年来持续性骚扰门下女学生，成为中国2018年#MeToo第一案。文章当日阅读量达五百万，校方公开回应罗茜茜。随后，一封呼吁信获得北航数千名校友和在校生的响应。陈小武被停止教职，“长江学者”称号以及奖金被撤回。

Jan.1st, 2018 marked the beginning of #MeToo movement in China. Luo Xixi, a graduate of Beijing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics publicly accused her former advisor, who has been sexually harassing his female students for 12 years. This became the first case of #MeToo movement in China.

22.

2018年1月，以青年为主体的倡议者相继向所毕业的高校校长寄信，要求建立反性骚扰机制。至少有94所高校、超过万名校友和在校生参与联署。教育部在新闻发布会上表示将研究建立高校预防性骚扰长效机制。

In Jan.2018, feminist activists launched a petition to their Alma Maters, calling for the establishment of anti-sexual harassment mechanisms in colleges. At least 94 universities, over 10,000 alumni and current students signed the petition. The Ministry of Education subsequently announced that it would investigate and consider a long-term mechanism for preventing sexual harassment on campus.

23.

2018 年三八妇女节前夕，独立记者黄雪琴发布《中国女记者性骚扰调查报告》，发现超过 80% 的女记者曾遭遇性骚扰，50% 以上的人保持沉默，只有 3% 的记者向主管部门投诉。

On the eve of International Women’s Day, 2018, independent journalist Huang Xueqin released an investigation named “Report on Sexual Harassment of Chinese Female Journalists,” which shows that more than 80% of the female journalists experienced sexual harassment; more than 50% of them remained silent; and only 3% filed complaints.

24.

2018 年 3 月 9 日，反性骚扰呼声高涨之际，合计拥有 25 万读者的女权媒体平台“女权之声”在微信、微博遭双双被封禁，账号不得恢复。

On Mar.9, 2018, the social media accounts of *Feminist Voices*, the most influential feminist media platform in China with over 250,000 followers were shut down by both WeChat and Weibo, and the accounts cannot possibly be restored.

25.

2018 年 3 月 26 日，武汉理工大学硕士研究生陶崇园坠楼自杀身亡事件引发举国关注，很多评论者指出，其导师王攀让学生叫其“爸爸”，为其按摩等行为涉嫌性骚扰。

On Mar. 26, 2018, the death of Tao Chongyuan, a graduate student of Wuhan University of Technology, drawn great concern nationwide. Many commentators believe that many of his advisor’s behaviors, such as asking his students to give him massage and call him “dad,” are suspected to be sexual harassment.

26.

2018 年 4 月，清明节之际北京大学校友王敖、李悠悠、徐芄等人发文纪念去世 20 年的同学高岩，指高岩之死与教师沈阳的不当性行为和其后对待她的方式有关。北大在校生岳昕等人向学校申请公开 20 年前相关会议记录，加快步伐出台防治性骚扰机制。

In April 2018, several alumni of Beijing University published a commemoration of Gao Yan, a student who died 20 years ago. They pointed out the death of Gao Yan is caused by her professor Shen Yang, who sexually assaulted her.

27.

2018 年 6 月，甘肃庆阳六中 19 岁高三女生李奕奕跳楼身亡，遗书中写到班主任吴永厚老师自 2016 年 7 月以来多次对自己用嘴巴“测体温”、脱衣摸胸、企图强暴等事实。引发全国关注，8 月，吴永厚被检察机关提起公诉。

In June 2018, Li Yiyi, a 19-year-old high school girl committed suicide after being sexually harassed by a teacher. The case raised national attention, and the teacher was prosecuted 2 months later.

28.

2018 年 7 月初，中山大学四名女生举报教授张鹏性骚扰，张鹏之后被解除教职。

In early July 2018, four students from Sun Yat-sen University accused professor Zhang Peng of sexual harassment. Zhang Peng was then dismissed from his teaching position.

29.

2018年7月23日，花花（化名）在社交媒体发文公布曾遭亿友公益创始人、知名公益人雷闯性侵。此前后一周之内，议事规则倡导者袁天鹏、环保公益人冯永锋、知名社工刘猛、免费午餐项目负责人邓飞、资深媒体人章文、作家张弛、彩虹中国创办人张锦雄、央视主持人朱军等22人被举报性骚扰或性侵。中国的#MeToo浪潮达到高峰，冲击到公益圈、文化界，其后并蔓延到至宗教和政经界人士。并引发了#me too 是否是大字报的激烈争辩。2018年8-11月，王敖、弦子、王琪、邹思聪等性骚扰的举报者被反告“名誉侵权”，#MeToo浪潮受到挫折，举报者纷纷成为被告。

On July 23rd, 2018, Huahua (pseudonym) accused that Lei Chuang, a well-known NGOer for his establishments in public welfare, sexually assaulted her. In the following week, 22 more people in NGO and media circle were accused for sexual harassment or sexual assault. China's #MeToo movement reached its peak, while the debates it triggered also became heated, particularly around if or not it is an analogue of the big-character posters (大字报,dàzìbào,), which were widely used as a tool to attack people during the cultural revolution. From August to November 2018, several accusers of sexual harassment were countersued for "reputation infringement". The #MeToo movement faced setback.

30.

2018年8月初，杭州市西湖区人民检察院、杭州西湖区教育局联合会签《关于建立校园性骚扰未成年人处置制度的意见》。在全国首创校园反性骚扰机制，明确了定义，规定发现性骚扰6小时内报告、24小时内先行开展调查或者直接向公安机关报案。

In August 2018, Hangzhou launched the first anti-sexual harassment mechanism on campus in China.

31.

2018年8月27日，民法典草案由全国人大征求公众意见，其中对性骚扰的受害者从妇女扩到到任何性别，具体规定为：违背他人意愿，以言语、行动或者利用从属关系等方式对他人实施性骚扰的，受害人可以依法请求行为人承担民事责任。用人单位应当在工作场所采取合理的预防、投诉、处置等措施，预防和制止性骚扰行为。

On Aug. 27,2018, terms regarding sexual harassment were included in the draft Civil Code, which indicate that if sexually harassed by the actors violating their will, no matter in the forms of words or actions, or making use of the affiliation etc., the victims may ask the actors to take civil responsibility according to the law. The employers shall adopt reasonable means to prevent and stop sexual harassments in workplace.

32.

2019年8月31日晚，明州大学中国留学生 Jingyao Liu 披露了被知名企业家刘强东性侵的遭遇。经友人报案后刘强东旋即短暂被捕，12月，美国当地检察官办公室宣布不予起诉。2019年4月，Jingyao Liu 提起民事诉讼。该案件从2019年9月至今在不断成为中文社交媒体和新闻媒体的热点关注，引发了参与人群最为广泛、观点对立十分尖锐的激烈讨论。女权小伙伴在线上发起了#HereForJingyao 和#我也不是完美受害者#活动声援受害者。

In August 2018, Liu Qiangdong, a billionaire and the CEO of JD.com was arrested in Minnesota, US, for sexual assaulting a female college student. After He was not prosecuted and released by the authority, the student filed a civil lawsuit. The case sparked a most heated discussion on social media in China.

In Apr. 2019, Liu Qiangdong's sexual assault case received public attention again. Feminists in China launched # HereForJingyao and #IamNotAPerfectVictimEither campaign to support the victim.

33.

2018年9月1日，广东率先在全省中小学、中职学校全面开展性别平等教育，包括破除性别刻板印象、防治性骚扰等内容。

On Sept.1, 2018, Guangdong took the lead in carrying out comprehensive gender equality education in primary and secondary schools and secondary vocational schools throughout the province, including breaking the gender stereotype and preventing sexual harassment.

34.

2018年9月，女权行动者张累累为呼吁建立职场反性骚扰机制，给全国五百强寄信。

In Sept. 2018, feminist activist Zhang Leilei sent letters to China's top 500 enterprises calling for the establishment of an anti-sexual harassment mechanism in the workplace.

35.

2018年10月，最高人民检察院向教育部发送了高检建【2018】1号检察建议书，就加强校园安全管理、预防性侵害幼儿园儿童和中小学学生违法犯罪的发生提出建议。

In Oct. 2018, the Supreme People's Procuratorate issued a procuratorial proposal to the Ministry of Education to make recommendations on strengthening safety management on campuses and preventing sexual abuse against kindergarten children and primary and secondary school students.

36.

2019年10月5日孙世华律师披露她于9月20日在去派出所为当事人咨询时遭遇警察强迫要求脱衣检查达20分钟。现场视频证实了孙律师的投诉。此后，其他女性维权人士和女律师披露了自己遭遇脱衣检查、侮辱性语言和性威胁的经历。至此，国家执法人员的性骚扰问题浮出水面，但孙世华律师进行依法维权的各种努力至今未果。

On October 5th, a lawyer named Sun Shihua revealed that she was forced to take off all her clothes and get examined by the police for 20 minutes when she went to the local police station representing a client earlier on September 20th. The surveillance videos at the scene endorsed Sun's complaint. Hereafter, other female human rights defenders and lawyers also disclosed that they have experienced being forced to get examined naked, verbally insulted and threatened by the police. It was until then the issue of sexual harassment conducted by the state law-enforcement personnel surfaced, but lawyer Sun's effort of protecting her rights is still unsuccessful.

37.

2018年11月，教育部印发高校、中小学和幼儿园教师职业行为十项准则，对于有虐待、猥亵、性骚扰等严重侵害学生行为的，一经查实，要撤销其所获荣誉、称号，清除出教师队伍，任何学校不得再聘任，落实学校主体责任。

In Nov. 2018, the Ministry of Education issued 10 guidelines of professional behaviors for teachers in colleges, primary and secondary schools and kindergartens. Those who commit serious violations against students, such as abuse, indecency, sexual harassment, etc. cannot be hired as teachers.

38.

2018 年 12 月，最高人民法院新增“性骚扰损害责任纠纷”为民事案件的案由，从 2019 年开始生效，结束了“性骚扰”以一般人格权或其他案由进行诉讼的历史。

In Dec. 2018, the Supreme People's Court added "sexual harassment damage liability dispute" as a civil cause of action. Cases of Sexual harassment no longer need to use the general personality rights as the cause of action.

39.

2019 年 1 月 16 日，“受害者集体”向北京工友之家的内部投诉得到公开回复。投诉发生在数月前，内容为前核心管理人员贾志伟性侵性骚扰多名志愿者和员工，要求机构公开反思当年查处不妥，并着手建立防治机制。对工友之家在微信公号上回复，受害者集体以“我们不满意”为评价，并披露了更多信息。此后，工友之家负责人孙恒、王德智先后公开发表个人的反思和道歉，前资助机构也发表声明，表明对性骚扰等性别暴力的零容忍。

After a victims-collective filed a complaint with Beijing Workers' Home (BWH) about the sexual harassment behavior of Jia Zhiwei, one of its former core administrative staff, the institution promised the public a thorough investigation on this case and the establishment of a mechanism of preventing sexual harassment. On January 16th, 2019, 100 days after that promise was made, the victims collective finally received a response published by BWH on its WeChat account, but the collective was not satisfied by its content. As a result, the victims collective revealed more information about the case. Hereafter, the heads of BMH Sun Heng and Wang Dezhi announced their personal reflections and apologies; its former sponsor also released a statement indicating that they have a zero tolerance of sexual harassment and gender-based violence.

40.

2019 年 7 月，首个以“性骚扰”为案由的诉讼一审判决公布。社工机构女职工在 2018 年 7 月的 #MeToo 浪潮中公布并状告业界“大佬”刘猛性骚扰。2019 年 6 月 11 日成都一法院做出的判决认定刘猛性骚扰成立，但驳回原告精神损害赔偿的诉求，以及对第二被告、当事人所在机构为处理不力而承担责任的诉讼请求。

In July 2019, the first case using "sexual harassment" as the cause of action won. In the summer of 2018, a female social worker openly accused Liu Meng, a famous figure in the social work circle, for sexual harassment and filed a lawsuit against him amongst the wave of #MeToo Movement. On June 11th, the first courthouse in Chengdu found Liu Meng guilty for sexual harassment but did not support the accuser's appeal for holding Liu's institution accountable for its incompetency on dealing with sexual harassment issues in workplace.