Chinese Rural Feminism:
How Social Media Reshape Feminism in China

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### Approval

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<th>Yi Yang</th>
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<td>Degree:</td>
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<td>Chinese Rural Feminism: How Social Media Reshape Feminism in China</td>
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Abstract

With the development of social media in China, Chinese feminism is facing great challenges. On the one hand, social media provides a platform for feminists to discuss female issues, which has aroused wide public concern. On the other hand, the emergence of the discourse of Chinese rural feminism has put Chinese feminism under attack. As an Internet discourse, Chinese rural feminism has spread into people's daily life. Chinese rural feminism has destroyed the reputation of feminists even set back the progress of Chinese feminism because of its excessive remarks.

This paper will provide a critique of Chinese rural feminism by studying the meaning and causes of its emergence. In order to better study the discourse of Chinese rural feminism, this research will use a case study of Mimeng, one of Chinese social media, to find out the meaning of the Chinese rural feminism. After text analyzing of Mimeng’s article, this article will explore the cultural and social reasons behind the discourse of Chinese rural feminism, as well as figure out how social media plays a role in it.

Keywords: Social media; Chinese feminism; Chinese rural feminism; Mimeng
# Table of Contents

Approval ................................................................................................................................. ii  
Abstract .................................................................................................................................. iii  
Table of Contents ................................................................................................................ iv  

Chapter 1.  Introduction .............................................................................................................. 1  

Chapter 2.  Raise of social media in China .................................................................................. 3  
2.1.  The difference between traditional mass media and social media .................................. 3  
2.2.  Characteristics of social media .......................................................................................... 4  

Chapter 3.  Overview of Chinese Feminism .................................................................................. 6  

Chapter 4.  The discourse of Chinese rural feminism ................................................................. 10  

Chapter 5.  Case study of Mimeng .............................................................................................. 12  
5.1.  Mimeng’s view .................................................................................................................. 13  
5.1.1.  Positive part .................................................................................................................. 13  
5.1.2.  Negative part ............................................................................................................... 13  
5.2.  Characteristics of Chinese rural feminism .......................................................................... 15  
5.2.1.  Double-standarded ....................................................................................................... 15  
5.2.2.  Hate men. ..................................................................................................................... 16  

Chapter 6.  The social and historical reasons behind feminism ................................................. 17  
6.1.  Feminism aspect .............................................................................................................. 17  
6.2.  Woman aspect ............................................................................................................... 19  

Chapter 7.  Why social media can promote the dissemination of Chinese rural feminism .......... 22  
7.1.  Social media excessively pursue economic benefits ......................................................... 22  
7.2.  Audience lack media literacy. .......................................................................................... 23  

Chapter 8.  Conclusion ............................................................................................................. 26  

References ................................................................................................................................ 27
Chapter 1.

Introduction

The rapid development of new media technology has brought a new pattern of media communication. With the advent of the information era, traditional media can no longer meet the needs of the public, and social media has increasingly become an important channel for information dissemination. In China, Social media such as Weibo, WeChat and various short video apps provide more channels for women to express their opinions and share information on online platforms.

However, the raise of the social media has led to the emergence of new narratives that challenge the gains made by feminists in the past. One of these is particularly interesting. It is the discourse of “Chinese Rural Feminism.” This article is aim at understanding what is Chinese rural feminism and how is it produced on Chinese social media, as well as provide a critique of this discourse.

In order to find out how social media reshape Chinese feminism, this research will be divided into five chapters. In the first chapter, I plan to study what is social media, how it developed and what is its characteristics. Studying this question can provide readers with a simple understanding of social media and a prejudgment on why social media can affects feminism. The second chapter will have a overview on Chinese feminism. By learning the concepts advocated by Chinese feminism in different time periods in detail, I will try to conclude what Chinese feminism is asking for. The methodology of literary review will be used to make the argument more persuasive. This will help with the following research on how social media reshape the Chinese feminist. In the third chapter, I will discuss about the discourse of Chinese rural feminism and point out the exact direction I will talk about. The discourse of Chinese rural feminism is complicated, so it is necessary to figure out which ways is talking about. Next, in the fourth chapter, I will use the method of case study to study the case of Mimeng, one of Chinese social media which seen as a platform for Chinese rural feminism by many people, and do content analysis to study the performance of the Chinese rural feminism and its characteristics. In chapter five, I will find how Chinese rural feminism came into being from the perspective of society and culture. Then, in the following chapter, I will
study why social media has an impact on the development of Chinese rural feminism from the perspective of the profit model of social media, the media literacy of Chinese netizens. In last chapter, I will conclude what I have found from my research.
Chapter 2. Raise of social media in China

Social media are interactive computer-mediated technologies that facilitate the creation and sharing of information, ideas, career interests and other forms of expression via virtual communities and networks (Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, & Silvestre, 2011). In another word, social media is a tool and a platform for people to share their opinions, insights, experiences and opinions with each other. For example, famous social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Youtube and Instagram.

The development of social media can be traced back to sixdegrees.com in 1997 (Kirkpatrick, 2010). It is based on the theory of six degrees of separation (Liu, Lu, Zhang & Zheng, 2012), which means you can get know with any stranger by up to six people. Sixdegrees.com creates a model which establish an online friendship between users by sending home emails. However, many people disagreed with the model, leading sixdegrees.com to declare it off the market in 2000. In 2003, Friendster and MySpace came out, but then disappeared due to the relatively backward technology and fierce competition among similar products. Facebook, which emerged in 2008, has become the world's largest social media by virtue of its good interactivity and ever-improving service. (Cao, 2011)

China's social media started later than western countries. In 2000, Tencent's QQ and chat rooms appeared in China, followed by Weibo, Renren, WeChat and other social media. In 2018, The Internet society of China has released the “China Internet development report in 2018”. In this report, by the end of 2017, the number of netizens had reached 772 million, and the usage rate of WeChat, QQ, Weibo reached 87.3%, 64.4%, 40.9% respectively. This means China’s social media has great influence in China. (“China’s”, 2018)

2.1. The difference between traditional mass media and social media

Unlike traditional mass media, including newspapers, radio, television, film, social media as a consumer-generated media (CGM), appeared on the web. As a user-generated content, social media attaches great importance to the connection with online
friends, which can gather people with the same views to form a certain kind of community. The obvious differences between social media and traditional social media are as follows:

Firstly, traditional media are mostly created by organizations, institutions or governments, and their contents need to be examined before dissemination, so they are relatively authoritative. Social media is often created by individuals, with uncensored content and great freedom.

Secondly, traditional media, whether from the perspectives of equipment or content production, are usually operated by professionals. Social media is easier to access because it is cheap or free to use. Also, the popularity of the Internet and the use of mobile phones and other clients make it easier to access social media.

Thirdly, generally speaking, according to the scale of program content, traditional media usually have days, weeks or months of production time. Due to simple operation and rich template, the production time of social media is reduced to only a day, hours and minutes.

Fourthly, the content of the traditional media once published, it’s almost impossible to change, such as newspapers, radio, television, movies, etc., If you need revisions, it usually has to wait until the next version, for example, the next day the newspapers, radio, television, next time next time to edit the film version, involve more manpower and time. However, social media can constantly change and modify at any time.

2.2. Characteristics of social media

According to the differences between social media and traditional media three main characteristics can be concluded

Social media is more civilian and personalized. That is to say, everyone transforms from the information receiver in the network to the content producer, and everyone can have his own media platform to express his own opinions through social media. Social media breaks the traditional media’s control over the right to speak and provides a more open space for expression.
The operation of social media is simple. To create our own media, the entry standard is low and the operation is simple, making social media popular and developing rapidly. On social media platform, you can use layout management tools or template provided by service providers to publish text, music, pictures, video and other information on the Internet through simple registration application.

Social media has strong interaction and fast propagation. The rapid and efficient production and publication of social media works are beyond the reach of traditional TV and newspaper media. Social media can quickly spread information to the audience, who can also quickly feedback on the effect of information transmission. The distance between social media and the audience does not exist, and the power of its interaction is unmatched by any traditional media. This makes the dissemination of information not limited by time and space. At any time and at any place, we can make the information spread quickly on the network. The characteristics of cross-time and cross-region communication also enable people to find their own communities on the network, which is not limited by space and time.

Social media provides people with a larger platform to make their voices heard, and they have the right to publish information on the Internet. Various ways of expression enable the public to have a better understanding of the power of individuals.
Chapter 3. Overview of Chinese Feminism

The definition of Feminism has always been very complicated. The term feminism first appeared in France. In 1791, Olympe DE Gouges, the French Female leader, published the Rights of Woman and the Female Citizen (Olympe DE Gouges, 1791), aiming to support the legal equality and political Rights of men and women. She believed that women were born free and had equal rights with men. Since then, its meaning has been changing from time to time. One of the most popular and authoritative definitions is the one in The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Political Thought edited by British scholar David miller and his fellows. They point out "A generic term for A complex phenomenon, feminism is defined in part by contests generated over its fancy, Understood broadly. It is a concern with the social role of women in a function to men in societies past and present, animated by a conviction that "women suffer and have suffered injustices because of their sex"." (Miller, 2000, pp.152). In another word, feminism can be summarized as a social movement with the political goal of eliminating sexism and ending the oppression of women, as well as the resulting revolution in the ideological and cultural fields. Feminists are people, both women and men, who are genuinely involved in the movement's intellectual and cultural revolution.

Feminism in China began in the 20th century and coincided with the Chinese revolution. (Croll, 1978) In Chinese feudal society, patriarchy prevailed and women's status was extremely low. Women are considered to be the accessories of men, who must obey their parents before marriage and their husbands after marriage. Women can be bought and sold as commodities and are usually not allowed to participate in politics or join the army. Before marriage, women should listen to their parents and not refute their parents' teachings. After marriage, they should respect the elders of their husbands' families, educate their children and help their husbands manage their families. If their husbands die before them, they must maintain their chastity, raise their children to adulthood, and respect their children's ideas of life. Also, from the aspect of social and political status, women do not have the right and consciousness to participate in politics. The concept of gender division of labor, "The man goes out to work while the woman looks after the house" also deeply influenced women in China's feudal society. Book of Documents, One of the necessary textbooks in ancient China reviews women cannot govern, or the country will fall back. (Wang, 2011). From the aspect of education,
women have no right to education. Women were taught "a woman without talent is virtuous" since young age. In the feudal society, women were obviously disadvantaged in politics, economy, culture and education. Women are oppressed by the ruling class and by men of the same class. Although women in the upper class have certain privileges as an oppressive class, they are still under the oppression of men represented by the patriarchy. (Liang, 2013). Women are in extremely low social status and there is a great imbalance between men and women. With the improvement of productivity and the emancipation of mind, the status of women gradually changed.

Until the revolution of 1911, a war to overthrow the feudal rule of China, there appeared an army organized by women independently (Edwards & Louise, 2008), and women's ability began to be concerned. Although these female armies were later disbanded by the government, these female heroes inspired more women to join the revolution. (Edwards & Louise. 2008.)

In 1919, during the New Culture Movement, a social movement to emancipate the Chinese people's minds, feminism was introduced into China. Some male thinkers, politicians and writers in China have begun to call attention to gender issues. For example, Li Dazhao, an early Marxist leader in China, opposed the traditional view of women that "a woman without talent is virtuous", and thought that "half of the country's women do not study or work. Isn't this a great loss to the intelligence or productivity of the people? Everyone has the right to education. Women can naturally enjoy equal educational opportunities with men. Education for women is even more special." (Li, 2006) Chen Duxiu, a Chinese politician, considered it a barbaric custom to couple two people who did not know each other and had no love foundation (Ren, 2009). He thinks men and women should also have the freedom to divorce. In addition, Chen also claimed women's equal right to participate in the political power, the right to vote and the right to inherit property. Lu Xun, a famous Chinese writer, believed that to emancipate the society, one must emancipate people's minds, and to emancipate women, one must first awaken women themselves (Chien, 1995). He encouraged women to chase for independence. Under their influence, educated women of the upper and middle class began to ask for the rights and interests of the women's movement actively. They founded publications, organized groups, attacked ethics, and discussed women's issues. At the same time, they also organized discussions on fighting for social openness, educational equality, women's economic independence, freedom of marriage, the right to
participate in politics and so on. This makes Chinese women's thinking get to an unprecedented liberation step.

In the 1930s and 1940s, women played an important role, during “The Chinese War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression” and the “Liberation war of Chinese people”. There are many outstanding female politicians such as Song Qingling and Song Meiling, and there are also many brave heroines, Zhao Yiman and Liu Hulan. In the memorial hall of the victory of the war of resistance against Japanese aggression, you can see the women's participation in the war, many women volunteered to form rescue teams, comfort teams, laundry teams, to raise supplies for the army, actively do military shoes, military clothing, military socks, care for the wounded, to raise supplies, and many of them sacrificed themselves in the process of covering cadres, information transmission, reconnaissance of the enemy. Thanks to the contributions made by Chinese women in the war, the status of Chinese women has been greatly improved. "Chinese feminism does not only emphasize the individual liberation of women, nor is it directly opposed to the country, nation, society and male groups. Instead, it can form an alliance with men and integrate individuals into the tide of revolutionary groups to save the nation and save the survival " (Cheng and Zhao, 2015)

When the People's Republic of China was founded in 1949, chairman Mao Zedong called for "women holding up half the sky", which led to a significant increase in women's participation in the labor force and their excellent performance in many occupations traditionally only suitable for men (Jin, 2006). Women's excellent performance at work will lead to their economic and political advancement.

And at last, in 2012, gender equality was written into Chinese constitution as a basic state policy. More issues on woman were being noticed. In recent years, women were asking for the equality which exists officially but not in practice. For example, feminism in workplace can be represented by women demanding for breaking down the invisible barriers of promotion. A survey of gender equality in the workplace in 2014 conducted by Bain Capital, a trusted strategy consultancy, found that China has one of the highest female employment rates in the world, at 73 percent, ahead of many developed countries 66 percent in Australia, 67 percent in Britain and 62 percent in the United States. However, the percentage of Chinese women at the position of executives is very low, with men 15 times more likely to be CEOs than women. Many women have
launched discussions on the Internet to fight against discrimination in employment. In fact, equal employment of men and women is the basic principle of the Chinese constitution. However, women are not satisfied with equality in the text, and they begin to question the equality between men and women that exists officially but does not exist in practice.

With the development of the Internet and the popularity of social media, more and more women have channels to make their voices heard. Especially in the era of new media, women are able to express their views on more open platforms, and their right to speak is relatively increased, which leads to greater development of feminism. The characteristics of social media itself make it possible through the Internet. For example, using Weibo, WeChat, etc. to publish their own ideas and express their opinions. The emergence of social media breaks the traditional control mode of discourse power and enables women to independently participate in information dissemination, thus improving women's social status. As long as women have a mobile phone or computer with Internet access and writing ability, they can spread information anytime and anywhere, which means that women have the opportunity to speak freely in the social media environment, and women have the same right as men to participate in discourse expression. At this stage more women's problems began to be taken seriously. For example, in 2015, the CCTV Spring Festival gala was protested by feminists because of "discrimination against women". An online petition to protest against the show's discrimination against women has garnered 1,300 signatures and has been supported by China Daily, a state-run newspaper, and some well-known social media. The attention of these women's issues and the proposal of gender equality relationship have greatly promoted the process of Chinese feminism. This makes it very important for feminism to have a positive image.

Overall, Chinese feminism has made great progress after long pursuit of equality between men and women. Because of the continuous development of feminism in China and the efforts of Chinese feminists to achieve gender equality, Chinese feminism achieves positive goals for women and has a positive social image.
Chapter 4. The discourse of Chinese rural feminism

With the rise of social media, the gains of feminism have been challenged. Attention is highly valued on the Internet, and in order to attract people’s attention, some influential female netizens have done things that have created problems for feminists. Although these women consider themselves to be feminists and to speak for women but they have been labelled ‘Chinese Rural Feminists” by some actors online.

Social media provide a platform for people to discuss. Feminism has become a hot topic of discussion online, and content related to feminism often able to get a certain degree of attention. Attention is highly valued on the Internet, therefore, some social media in order to attract people’s attention, some influential female netizens have done things that have created problems for feminists. They view spreading feminism as a marketing tool to get profit, which makes the feminism distortions and ultra-expression in the social media age. In order to pursue personal interests, many self-proclaimed feminists put out misinformation about feminism, promoting marketized vision of relationship between men and woman, which exaggerated the inequality between men and women, and damaged the image of Chinese feminism. Although these women consider themselves to be feminists and to speak for women but they have been labelled ‘Chinese Rural Feminists” by some actors online.

Chinese rural feminism is born in the current highly networked social environment and is very common on social media, but it is not included in the dictionary. Before the popularity of the Internet, the term "Chinese rural feminism" did not exist. The so-called "Chinese rural feminism" has nothing to do with rural area. It because that in China, the rural has a strong negative meaning, which means shortsightedness and backwardness. So, Chinese rural feminism tries to suggest that Chinese feminism is seriously flawed.

On the BBS of Baidu, one of China's largest search engines, one of the most widely accepted explanations holds that the most essential difference between feminism and Chinese rural feminism is that feminism aims at and female independent and equality between men and women, while rural feminism pursues rights which benefit to them. (Du,2017) Chinese rural feminism is an elegant egoist who wants only the profit
from feminism. In order to achieve the goal of unilateral egoism. Chinese rural feminism may even tend to shape an extreme patriarchal society and use feminism as a weapon to parasitize in a better patriarchal society.

In other words, Chinese Rural Feminism is an insult or criticism. It is used in various different ways. Sometimes it is used to critique feminist activists, or to critique feminism in general. Nowadays, Chinese rural feminism has such a pejorative meaning that when there is a controversy about feminism on the Internet, once one side is called "Chinese rural feminism", then all the public opinion will turn to criticize that so-called "Chinese rural feminism". But today I will focus on the use of Chinese Rural Feminism to critique particular types of online activities carried out by women for women in China. In order to better understand Chinese rural feminism, I will use the Mimeng as an example.
Chapter 5. Case study of Mimeng

Mimeng is an internet personality and has a Wechat account which called "the leader of Chinese Feminist” by netizens ("Divorce is not failure but courage” ,2018). According to Mimeng’s speech on 2018 New Ranking Conference, Mimeng has over 14 million followers, ( “The secret of Mimeng” ,2018 ) and among which 85% are female readers. The content it product has a big impact on Chinese women. Therefore, Doing research on Mimeng's article is of great significance to the study of Chinese rural feminism.

Of the 960 titles, 113 included titles about men, while only 76 included titles for women. In the case of female-related title, women tend to be described in a positive way. You can see from these title (Zhang, 2019) : “There is a kind of superman called working woman”.” Woman in the workplace: don’t dare to get married, don’t dare to have children”, “Workplace don't believe in tears. If you really want to cry, then go home”, “ Women dress up to please men? ridiculous! ”, “I can buy the lipstick, could you please give me the love? ” However, as for male-related titles, the majority of words characterizing men are negative, such as describing them as “terrible”, “horrible”, or playboys. Here are some male-related titles from Mimeng: " Dad, thank you for favoring boys over girls. And now I earn 50,000 yuan a month" (This is a kind of sarcastic), “How handsome the blogger in Douyin is, and how ugly my boyfriend is”, “ The pictures taken by men are even more horrible than men, Not doing housework is a man's most terrible disease in marriage”, “Horrible! I saw my boyfriend take a selfie!!”, “The man I love should have chastity”, “ You can clearly see that men are related to some negative words”. “In the eyes of the Mimeng, men are worthy of being criticized”. They have many affairs or they can be critiqued from other aspect such like aesthetics, romance and appearance.

These titles show a kind of relationship between men and women which is unbalanced. It can be seen in the Mimeng’s article, that Mimeng have different attitude on men and women. On the one hand, she recognizes the status of women and encourage women to pursue themselves, this is her positive part. However, on the other hand, she promotes the status of women at the expense of men. That makes her criticized from time to time.
5.1. Mimeng’s view

5.1.1. Positive part

Mimeng encourages women, to "be themselves" in both workplace and family. On March 8, 2017, in the article "Women in the workplace: don't dare marry, don't dare give birth" (Mimeng, 2017a), Mimeng once again highlighted the plight of working women. Due to workplace pressure, "more and more working women are afraid to have children." In response, Mimeng's advice to women is that "the only thing that really works is to be strong enough to have bargaining power in the workplace." “Before you have children, you need to establish your irreplaceability in the workplace. Keep learning and don't get out of touch with society during childbirth. Find your niche and swallow your pride when you return to work. Mimeng believes that women need to fight hard to be strong in order to cope with market competition and a less optimistic employment environment. she tells the women be a mother is not the opposite side of being a succeed women in career.

Faced with the dilemma of career and family for modern women, Mimeng like most feminists, advocates that women should keep fighting for themselves. What Mimeng expresses to women through his articles is their needs to be brave and chase their dream. In this regard, Mimeng does have something to be agreed with.

5.1.2. Negative part

However, on the negative side, she argues that Chinese men are not as good as Chinese women. It can be seen from the title (Zhang, 2019) below: “Such stingy men don't even deserve to wash girls' feet." “When my boyfriend gave me a red envelope, I slapped him in the face” “A man never apologizes. He should kneel down.” These views are somewhat extreme in their presentation and actually create an unequal relationship between men and women.

In her article,“My husband can't catch up with me”(Mimeng, 2018b). She argues, these days, everything is changing, such as houses, cars, industries, ideas. Women should change another husband, too. " In Mimeng’s article, she thought if there are no common words in marriage, that must because men don't care about their families; if
family economic condition is bad, that must because husband playing video games instead of working hard. Also, in order to maintain stable marriage, men should try to satisfy their wife through his own actions and words. (Mimeng, 2018a). These views devalue the status of men, and arise a great discussion. Many women applause while many other people think it is groundless. When you read the article carefully, Mimeng does not provide any proof to support her argument that Chinese men are not good enough for Chinese women. In fact, the happiness of a family is related to both the wife and husband, and the family wealth should be created by all family members. The reason why there are still many women willing to believe the views of Mimeng is that Mimeng caters to the psychology of female readers who want to get family status and makes female readers feel that they are pursuing women's rights by creating an illusion of women being superior. That is why Mimeng's readers are willing to agree with her emotional writing.

Also, Mimeng links the value of men to their ability to make money, and spend it on women. However, women don’t have to spend a lot of money on men. Mimeng tells her followers that a man loves you as much as he is willing to spend money on you (Mimeng, 2017b), while a woman needs to be in charge of the family finances and not leave too much money to her husband. Because if a man has money, he will betray his wife.

This idea is particularly troubling because it allows Mimeng’s followers to think of themselves as somehow feminist, even as they subscribe to patriarchal thinking. This is because this view is essentially an admission that men are inherently superior to women and should be kind to them. On the Internet, women's rights are changed into an excuse for women to seize power and avoid obligations, which was never expected by feminists when they fought for rights in the past. In fact, Chinese women lose the right to bargain with men as long as they enjoy the benefits what men offer. Moreover, there is nothing to blame if women like the care and the money from their husband. However, it is obvious that Chinese rural feminists are not satisfied with this. At the beginning, they argue that men should provide women with a good material life; Shortly afterwards, they argue that men without material foundation have no right to marry; What's more, they argue that women don't need to work because they have to take care of the families and their children. Chinese rural feminism gradually changed from “fighting for women's legal
rights” to “fighting for women's privileges”. If the idea that men have certain privileges is called radical patriarchy, we can also say that these ideas that women have certain privileges are radical feminism.

Mimeng’s followers accept Mimeng’s ideas, and are influenced by them.

The highest number of individual articles reading was 14.7 million and even the “likes” on the comments under her article can up to 161,000. So, it can be seen great influences on her readers. Due to its bad effect on the society, People Daily, one of Chinese national newspapers, critiqued the content Mimeng produces as a process of spiritual pyramid scheme. (“comment on Mimeng”, 2019). Mimeng was imitated by many other similar accounts, such as Ayawawa and Hugo.

In total, what do people mean when they use the term Chinese rural feminism to describe Mimeng and her followers? They are suggesting that some Chinese women only ask for the rights or benefits that women have gained through feminism, but don't fulfill their obligations as a citizen to society. Some people will use the term Chinese rural feminism to describe these women.

5.2. Characteristics of Chinese rural feminism

When doing research on the Mimeng’s article, we can find that there are several common characteristics of Chinese rural feminism.

5.2.1. Double-standarded

Chinese rural feminists combine the rights and obligations system of both China and the Western values, and only ask for their rights which gained from the feminism but not the social responsibility. For example, domestic violence as a barbaric behaviour is illegal, no matter who takes the means of domestic violence can not be forgiven. However, Mimeng has a different attitude towards domestic violence carried out by men and women. Jiang Jinfu, a famous Chinese actor accused of domestic violence, Mimeng published an article （Mimeng, 2018c）saying that women are not as bad as domestic violence itself. However, when Zhang Yuqi, a famous actress in China was sent into the police station because of beating her husband. Mimeng wrote an article （Mimeng,
2018d to support Zhang Yuqi, viewing that "domestic violence is wrong, except Zhang Yuqi", her for the new era of women who dare to resist. Chinese rural feminists firmly hold a belief that women deserve more rights which means all shortcomings and mistakes made by women should be unconditionally forgiven by men, otherwise it is disrespect and discrimination against women. Instead, Chinese Rural Feminists will blame men for the same shortcomings or mistakes.

5.2.2. Hate men.

Chinese rural feminists automatically extend the shortcomings of individual men as the "inferiority" of male groups, thus putting men and women on the opposite side. Mimeng often uses storytelling to write article, starting with stories, and drawing conclusions. In many cases, she starts with one or more bad guys and ends up concluding that men are all bad. Although Mimeng does not use accurate data and the truth of the stories she tells is difficult to verify, there still some women who have the similar experience who will comments below the article. This undoubtedly intensifies the reliability of the Mimeng’s argument and leads to large amounts of girls who have not experienced such situations begin to hate men. And this hostility to men spreads through the Internet and affecting women's cognition of men. This makes people who believe in Chinese rural feminism think themselves feminism by opposing men and women.
Chapter 6. The social and historical reasons behind feminism

Chinese rural feminism emerged on the Internet, but they have profound social reasons. First of all, from the perspective of feminism, the Chinese feminists after gaining a certain progress, women's appeal for the pursuit of women's rights decreases, thus leading to a series of regressive phenomenon of women's rights, Chinese rural feminism emerged under such circumstances. Chinese rural feminism is a kind of radical behavior which conducted by some women in order to attract public attention. Secondly, from the perspective of women themselves, due to the deep-rooted influence of patriarchal thinking, Chinese women have been oppressed for a long time in history. Even in the present society, there still exists invisible gender discrimination, which leads to women's dissatisfaction with reality. The freedom of speech on the Internet allows women to have more opportunities to speak. However, dissatisfaction in reality makes women show some extreme behaviors when expressing themselves. And the overreaction of this kind of self-defense can be shown as the demand that women should have a higher status than men.

6.1. Feminism aspect

In his dialectics of nature, Engels points out development caused by contradiction or negation of negation -- the spiral form of development. (Marx & Engels, 1947) In content, the process of negation of negation is a process of self-development and self-perfection. In form, it is spiraling upward or undulating. It is advancing and developing in general, but the process is tortuous.

Throughout the history of the development of western feminism, we can find that the progress of feminism is not achieved at one time but has experienced a process of striving, retrogression and re-striving for many times. Western feminism originated after the French Bourgeois Revolution and the Enlightenment. With the development of capitalism, women began to object to aristocratic privileges and ask for civil rights and political rights. They believed that there was no difference between men and women in intelligence and ability and therefore men and women should be equal in education and legislation. The most important goal in the first feminism is to strive for equal value of
family labor and social labor and equal value of political rights. Shortly afterwards the suffrage victory in 1920, feminists witnessed a shrinking of the political gains they had made during the suffrage struggle, accompanied by a widespread cultural backlash against their movement (Faupel & Werum, 2011). From the beginning of the 20th century to the 1960s, the world experienced two world wars, men were on the front, women were in charge of filling the vacant jobs of men. But when the war was over, the man came back from the war and the woman had to go home. Gradually, women were being isolated by the society from the perspective of politics, economics and law making (Knuttila, 2008). This caused great dissatisfaction among women and led to a second wave of feminism. At this stage, feminism mainly demanded the equality of women and men and the material status of women from the aspects of economic and class struggle. Compared with first-wave feminism, second-wave feminism has a broader concern: sexuality, family, the workplace, reproductive rights, de facto inequalities, and official legal inequalities. And women began to demand women's "liberation" in the aspect of "sex". The third-wave feminism was often seen as an extension of the second wave. (Mackinnon, 2017)

Some people think the third-wave feminism is unnecessary because it pushed the pendulum too far in women's favor (Rowe-Finkbeiner, 2004). And even arise debate on whether feminism was asking for creating gender equality or just punishing white, middle-class males. We can see that the relationship between men and women is not static. People fight for feminism and then obtain certain rights for women. However, with the progress of the movement, the relationship between men and women is no longer equal. Whether men have higher status than women or women have higher status than men, both results will trigger a new round of movement.

In today's China, we can see that compared with earlier years, China's feminism has made great progress, but in recent years, due to the decline of feminist movement, gender inequality has begun to increase. According to a survey of the gender gap index conducted by the World Economic Forum ("Gender gap report" ,2018), men and women are sampled from four aspects: "Economic participation ability", "right to education", "health and life expectancy" and "political participation". The closer the score is to 1.0, the more equal it is. Data from the report shows that China's gender equality index were in general increasing before 2013 and declining from 2013 to 2018.
In addition, according to the first, second and third surveys on the status of Chinese women (“Third surveys”), in 1990, the income of women working in urban areas was 77.5% of that of men. However, this figure dropped to 70.1% in 1999. By the year of 2010, women in urban areas earned only 67.3% of that of men. These statistics shows a reversal of gender equality in China. Therefore, Chinese rural feminism is actually the alienation of women's demand for equality between men and women. Such radicalization is the extreme resistance of women after they have been treated unfairly for a long time. From this point of view, Chinese rural feminism is the product of social phenomenon. The repetition of feminist movement is generated by the constant change of women's status in society. Chinese rural feminism is an overreaction of feminist movement. However, we can see patriarchy in the Chinese rural feminism, which is related to the characteristics of Chinese women.

When the movement of pursuing women's rights was combined with the long-standing patriarchal ideology, Chinese rural feminism came into being.

6.2. Woman aspect

Chinese rural feminism is essentially the product of feminist alienation. They subconsciously "weakened" and "materialized" themselves, using women's rights as an excuse to acquire the privileges in a patriarchal society. Such groups often have hidden and deep-rooted patriarchal thoughts, and under the impact of feminist thoughts, they have alienated feminism into egoism that overtakes men. Therefore, what they pursue is not gender equality, and what they pay attention to is not the vulnerable groups of women, but the egoism disguised by the belief of feminism. There must be profound reasons for any unreasonable phenomenon, and here are some of the reasons why rural feminism has emerged in China.

From the perspective of economic independence, though women can have their own careers, in reality, the situation is not so optimistic. On the one hand, women face sexism in the workplace which hold them back from promotion. On the other hand, successful women are often labeled as "easy girl" or "she-devil", and suffer from malicious words and even be excluded from the marriage market. Sexism in the workplace has become a barrier to women's independence, especially the economic independence. Women's liberation means more responsibility, which is based on
economic independence. Ideologically, under the impact of feminism, women yearn for independence; In reality, women face an "invisible barrier" to financial independence. In this case, some women are unable to bear the cost of "self-liberation", so they evade obligations and seize rights at the same time. In fact, the emergence of Chinese rural feminism reflects some women's worries about economic independence. This radical feminism demands that men need money to prove how much they love women, which in fact caters to a female psychology: work can be independent, but not financially!

From the perspective of culture, gender is biological and cultural, but gender stereotypes are rooted in culture. Although patriarchy is no longer the mainstream thought, it still permeates every aspect of life. For women, on the one hand, the long-term patriarchy makes women worship men. On the other hand, with the continuous development of feminism, women gain more and more rights and have more opportunities for self-selection and self-realization. Therefore, under the fierce collision between traditional culture and modern culture, some women who lack of discrimination cannot adapt to the impact of multiple cultures, and their values are distorted. While worshipping patriarchy, they express their self-repressed emotions in a way of hating men, equating opposition to patriarchy with opposition to men. Also, they want to pursue the rights of women in feminism, and at the same time they insist on the supremacy of individuals, and don't want to undertake the same obligations as men.

From the perspective of psychology, with the development of society, feminism is making continuous progress. Under the impact of feminism, the patriarchal thought which had been rooted in women's ideology for a long time began to disintegrate. In this process, influenced by feminist achievements such as "women's independence" and "equality between men and women", women's social status keeps rising. This let women feel satisfied and confident. However, although many women do not think of themselves as vulnerable groups on the ideological level, it is difficult to get rid of such roles in reality. This in turn leads to self-abasement, as well as anxiety and insecurity. Based on this strong sense of insecurity, they try to rely on the dominant group of men, and even "objectify" themselves to meet the needs of men. This kind of self-abasement and confidence has caused self-splitting and self-alienation, which has led to the emergence of deformed feminism - Chinese rural feminism.
To sum up, the disappointment and depression experienced by women under the sexism is alienated as "Chinese rural feminism", which will do great harm to both women and men. As a matter of fact, Chinese rural feminism is a kind of invisible bondage for women, hindering their liberation and freedom and pushing the real feminism to the bottomless abyss.
Chapter 7. Why social media can promote the dissemination of Chinese rural feminism

What worse, the raise of social media undoubtedly accelerates the spread of Chinese rural feminism. Social media has even become a place where Chinese rural feminist promote their theory. Many social platforms produce content about Chinese rural feminism, which has a great impact on the society and is changing Chinese feminism. The Internet is not only the place where Chinese rural feminism was born, but also provides a platform for the dissemination of Chinese rural feminism. This makes us reflect why does this tendency to take up only benefits of feminism, but not the social responsibilities emerge and develop in social media era. When we discuss this question, we can think about it from the view of the social media practitioner and the audience.

7.1. Social media excessively pursue economic benefits.

Social media has become a channel for many people to get information due to its fast spread speed, novel ideas, abundant contents and convenient operation. Although social media has more autonomy and flexibility than traditional media, in order to make profit, it still needs to increase its click rate and cater to the needs of businesses. Business and market are the economic basis for the development of social media, which have a great impact on the content production of social media. Advertisers make a financial profit by posting paid ads on some well-known social media platforms to attract customers. Social media's main source of income is advertising revenue and sales of goods, both of which have a necessary requirement: a large number of fans. The standard to measure advertising fee depends on the number of fans of social media and the continuous reading of the article. Mimeng's 14 million followers allowed her to charge 800,000 for an advertisement. On the afternoon of April 21, 2016, an advertisement on Papi Jiang, the most famous Internet celebrity of 2016, sold for 22 million yuan. Under such circumstances, in order to attract fans' attention for their own economic interests, some social media deliberately exaggerate the facts and attract readers with exaggerated headlines and radical contents, regardless of the facts.
There is nothing to blame for social media workers' pursuit of economic benefits. Because this is the basis for the survival of social media workers and growth of social media. However, social media cannot foster more just societies when their primary goals are growth and profit. (Baym, 2015)

Feminism itself, as a topic of great concern, is a good source of content. However, in order to make their article more attractive, many social media produce some radical content or extreme words. Thus, Chinese rural feminism as a highly controversial topic is often used as material for writing. It is true that radical feminists have the right to express their opinions freely, but more social media practitioners do not recognize Chinese pastoral feminism from the bottom of their hearts. Some Chinese rural feminists disguised themselves as feminists, creating contradictions, hyping and highlighting the emotions of feminists, in order to please female audiences and cater to their reading preferences. Ultimately, social media is concerned with how to attract the consumption power of a large group of female consumers. They just follow the trend or create buzz to get more economic benefits. This not only violates the professional ethics of social media practitioners, but also has a negative impact on the society. Under the influence of consumerism, social media writers pursue the maximization of interests, and hardly consider the negative impact of the values spread by social media on the audience and the society. Facing the huge amount of advertising revenue, social media is caught in the conflict between adhering to social responsibility and pursuing economic benefits.

7.2. Audience lack media literacy.

As for the audience, social media provide a platform for people to communicate and discuss. However, at meanwhile, social media also provide the means for misinformation or misinterpretations to be spread and magnified, or corrected or debated. (Hopkinson, Hart, Jenkins & Smyth, 2015) The information on the Internet varies greatly, therefore, media literacy is greatly needed.

Media literacy, i.e. the ability of an individual to analyze, evaluate and create information for various types of the media by means of using different literary genres and forms, is one of the ways to protect children and the youth from the unfavourable impact of commercialization. Media literacy is the ability of an individual to understand how the
mass media work, how they create and arrange their messages, and how these messages are then conveyed to their audiences. (Šramová, 2014) According to the media education research center of the United States, media literacy refers to people's ability to choose, understand, question, evaluate, respond critically and create and produce media information.(reference) We can see that selective acceptance of information and critical thinking are important links in media literacy.

Information on the Internet is very complex, so it is very important for the audience to selectively accept information. The media environment is undergoing rapid and profound changes and playing an increasingly prominent role in the society. The Internet has become an important platform for people to express their personal views and participate in public affairs, and online public opinion plays an increasingly important role in influencing social decision-making. In the new media era, if people lack the ability to identify information, they can easily be controlled by the media. Faced with the radical feminism advocated by social media, many audiences are limited by the ability of discrimination and cannot accurately distinguish between feminism and Chinese rural feminism. Without distinguishing the truth and falsehood of the information, all the information was accepted and forwarded by others to form and spread again, which expanded the camp of Chinese rural feminists and worsens the situation of Chinese feminism. Only when people have a high level of media literacy ability, can they actively control all kinds of media information, and make a comprehensive interpretation and correct choice of information.

In addition, the lack of critical thinking can cause audiences to be easily affected by emotions. Critical thinking is the first line of defense when information cannot always be trusted, because it guides a person to hold beliefs that are consistent with available evidence. (Stanovich & West, 2000). Therefore, an individual with high level of media literacy level is expected to be more successful in consciously using internet as a knowledge literate person. (Yildiz, & Saritepeci, 2019)

However, sometimes people are willing to share the content that you disagree with or find appalling in order to establish and maintain friends or followership in social media, even though they put aside their moral convictions and beliefs. (Kvalnes, 2019)In the context of consumerism, in order to attract readers, most articles published by social media have distinct personal feelings and prejudices. The lack of media literacy can
easily make the audience become emotional and irrational. This explains why many people who consciously believe in Chinese rural feminism are only influenced by hatred without knowing that the rural feminism they pursue is actually radical feminism, not real feminism. However, feminism created by social media cannot really solve the problem of gender inequality. On the contrary, it may lead to gender antagonism and increase the unequal relationship between men and women. In the current research, how an individual navigates the news in the social media environment and his or her knowledge about the news production was linked to how critically the individual engages with real-life news (Lai, Kong, Song, Deng, Kang & Hu, 2019). Therefore, the lack of critical thinking has allowed Chinese rural feminism, which obviously contains extreme emotions, to spread on the Internet.
Chapter 8. Conclusion

Through the research of this article, it can be concluded that with the development of Internet and social media, the current development of Chinese feminism is encountering difficulties due to the emergence of negative behaviors that are sometimes critiqued as forms of “Chinese rural feminism.” After understanding the discourse of Chinese Rural Feminism, we can have a better understanding on this group and find out the causes of “Chinese rural feminism. This is of great significance to the healthy development of Chinese feminism.

There’s still some limitation in my research. As a Chinese Internet term, the discourse of “Chinese rural feminism” rarely appears in Chinese academic papers. Therefore, I met many difficulties in translating the term and giving the definition to the discourse. Firstly, as for the translation, because Chinese rural feminism has not appeared in any foreign literature, and few authoritative websites have used Chinese rural feminism as a certain term. Therefore, I translate Chinese rural feminism from its Chinese name and its literal meaning. Secondly, due to the lack of relevant literature, the definition of Chinese rural feminism is summarized from the most recognized definitions on Chinese websites and the case analysis in this article. Therefore, it may be somewhat incomplete and subjective. This limitation will be constantly improved in my future research.

To sum up, the Chinese rural women's great influence on Chinese women's rights, and even put Chinese feminism under attack. In order to promote the healthy development of Chinese feminism, measures need to be taken. So, my next step for the research in this area will be addressing this online phenomenon and suggesting countermeasures.
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