

How Information Moves in Chinese Cyberspace

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China's Social Media: A Primer

The platforms:



- Mobile only
- Friend circle platform plus one-to-many “self media” distribution
- For communication and commerce
- 549M monthly active users
- Released January 2011



- Desktop or mobile
- One-to-many platform for “self-expression and social interaction”
- 175M monthly active users
- Released August 2009

The characters: Meet the Wumao



该图片由 太好啦 上传到 club.china.com

“Fiercely ignorant ... insert themselves in everything ... consider themselves spokesmen for the country.

-Baidu Tieba

**全世界淫民都知道
我只为美帝亲爹哭泣**

**什么伊朗
伊拉克
平民死了
关我屁事!**

公知哭丧团



**And the
“Public
Intellectual”**

**“Everyone knows he only
cries for American
imperialists.”**

**“What of the deaths of
innocents in Iran and Iraq;
that has nothing to do with
me!”**

Case studies

Wenzhou crash left a long shadow



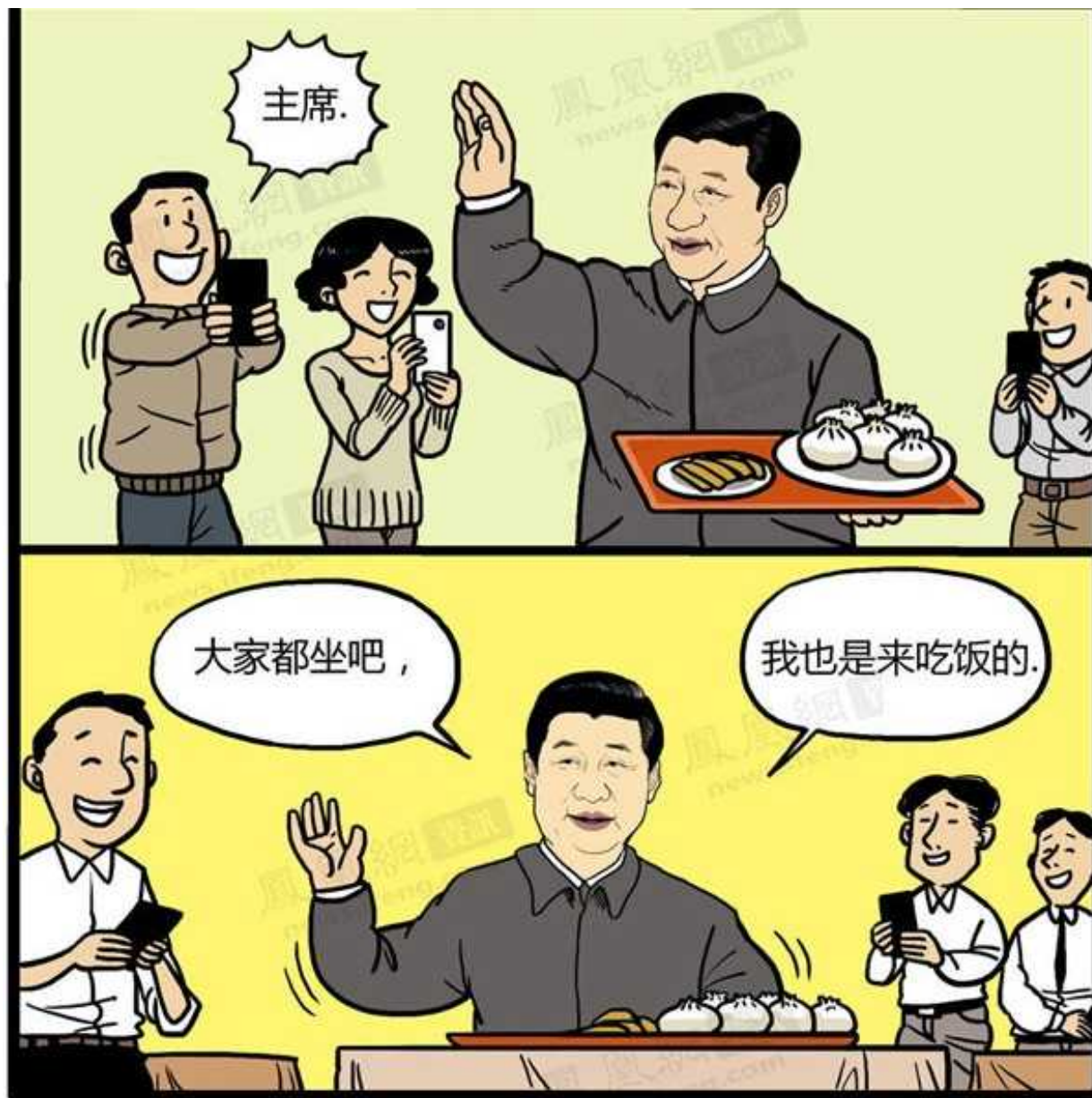
The ruined career of Yang Dacai



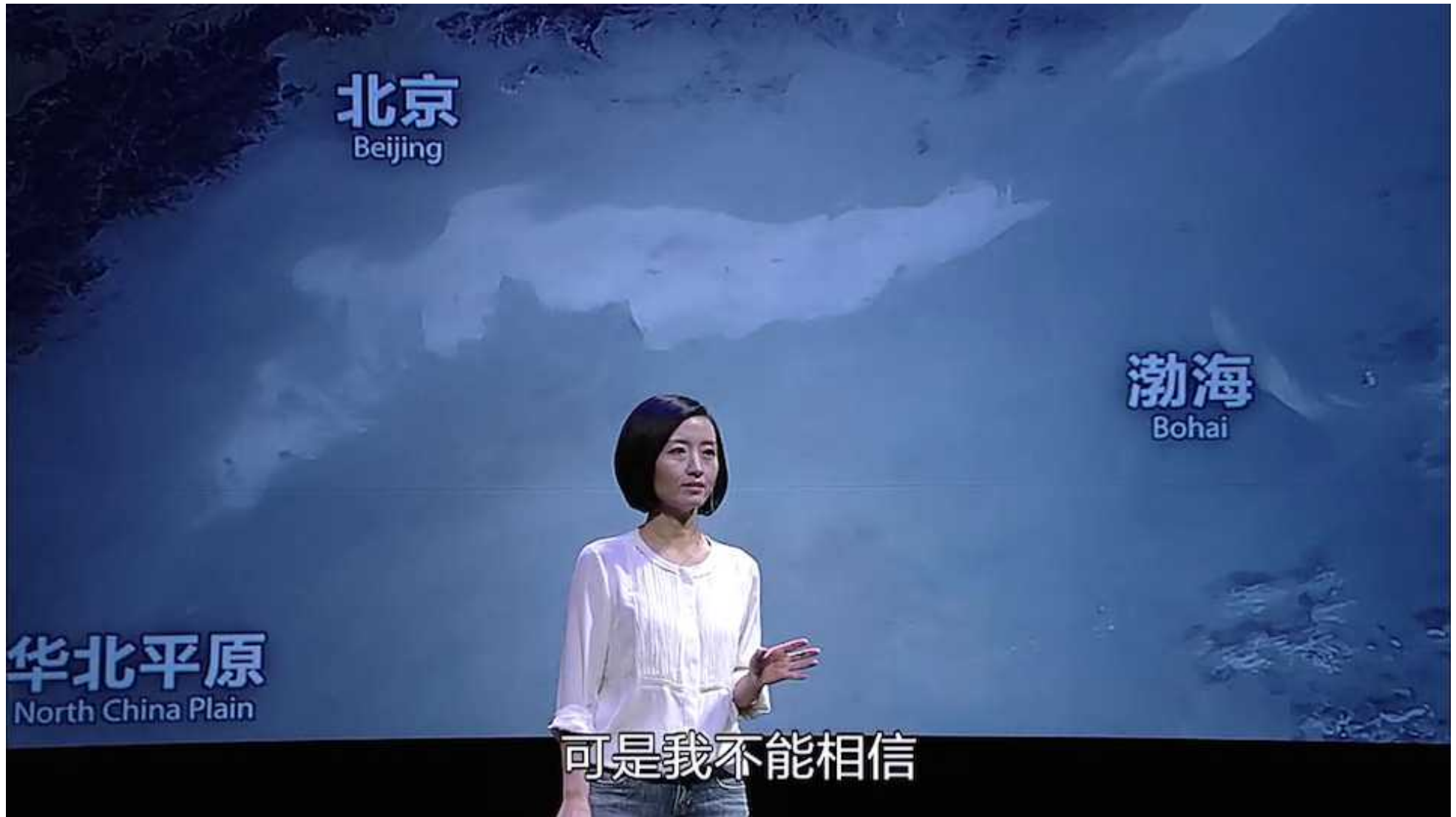
August 2013: The crackdown begins



All now calm & peppy on surface.



Social media's power is still there.

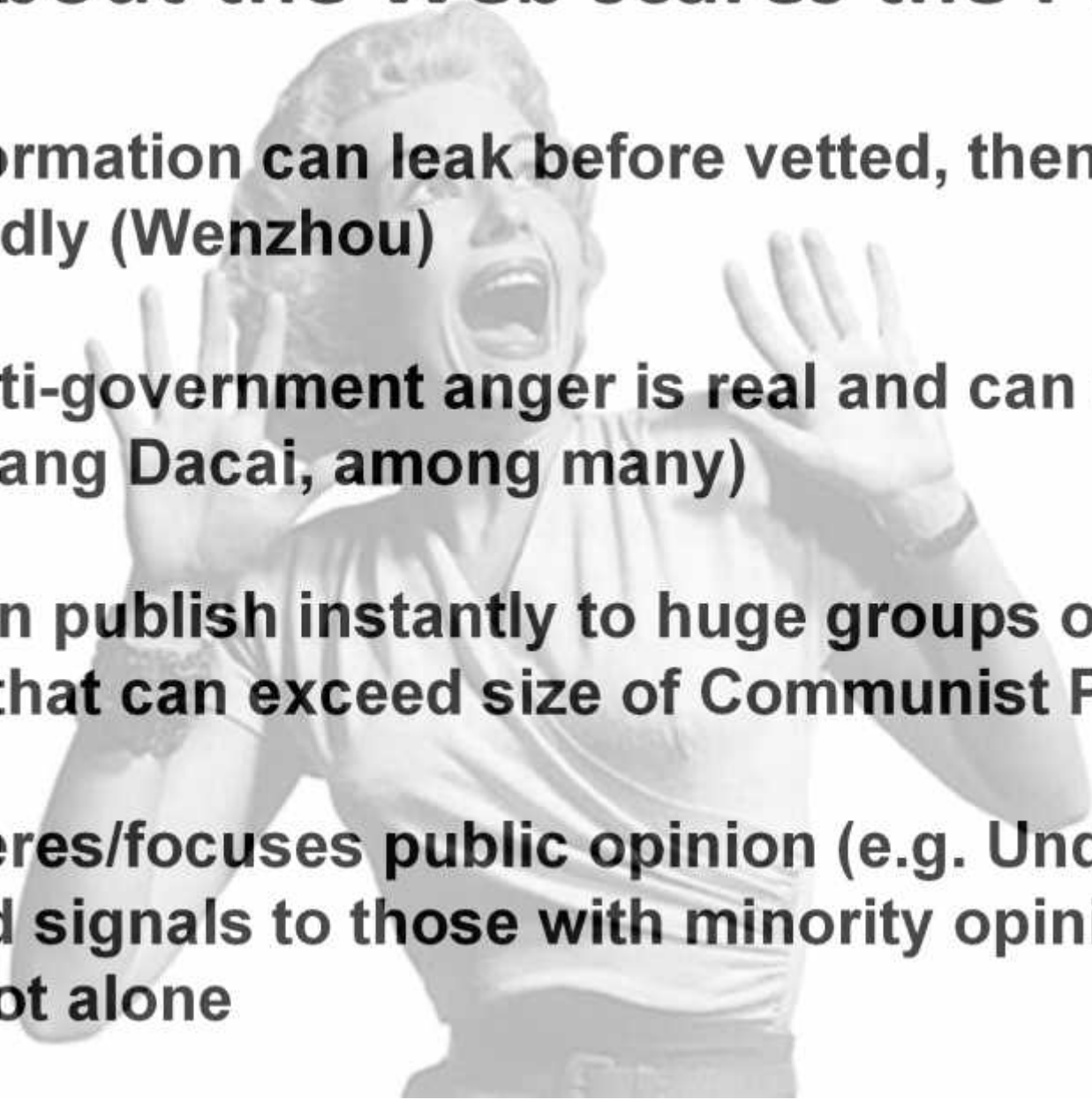


**Meaning govt must constantly
channel public opinion.**



What about the Web scares the Party?

- News/information can leak before vetted, then spread wildly (Wenzhou)
- Online anti-government anger is real and can ruin careers (Yang Dacai, among many)
- Big Vs can publish instantly to huge groups of followers that can exceed size of Communist Party
- Web coheres/focuses public opinion (e.g. Under the Dome) and signals to those with minority opinions they are not alone



The Internet: A silent battleground



Thank You

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