

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN WEIBO DISCUSSION AND XINHUA COVERAGE OF THE CHINESE BOYCOTT OF THE JAPANESE GOODS

Wen Yan

Prof. Randall D. Smith, Committee Chair

ABSTRACT

Through the textual analysis and a comparison study of 100 Weibo posts and ten Xinhua articles covering the Chinese boycott of Japanese goods, this research came to the conclusion that the two media platforms presented distinctively different discourses through the boycott.

Compared to Xinhua's coverage, Weibo developed the boycott into a long-term and multi-faceted issue. While Xinhua mainly depicted the Chinese boycott of the Japanese goods as a political leverage, Weibo's discussion brought in extra information beyond the boycott and exhibited a plethora of opinions and views on the issue. The Weibo discourse of the boycott included the recall of the historical feud between China and Japan during the World War II, the questioning of the efficiency of the boycott as a resolution to the Diaoyu Islands dispute, the acknowledgment of China's disadvantages in the product quality competing with Japan as well as the assurance of the advanced societal development of Japan. All of them received little attention from the state news agency.