

Media Presentation Before and After "The July 7 Incident of 1937" Based on the Data of the Traitor-elimination Reports*

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Abstract—Starting from the research on Shen Bao, a very popular newspaper at that time, this paper analyzes the types of reports before and after the July 7 Incident. Based on the reports on it throughout the year of 1937, a multi-dimensional and multi-level exploration is made on the quantity, length, theme and standpoints of reports before and after the incident as presented on media, from the representative point of "traitor elimination", in order to know about the changes in the newspaper media, learn from past experiences, explore relatively universal laws, and promote the development of contemporary news reporting both in methods and means. By means of literature looking, mathematical statistics and comparative analysis, the following points are concluded: after the incident, the quantity of traitor-elimination reports was increased, the length of report was reduced, the layout was paid more attention to, the report theme was changed from folk individuals to folk individuals and government paralleled topics; and when print media became the mainstream media, the standpoint of the newspaper office was transformed from describing an event to consciously propagating and expressing folk emotions, calling for positive anti-Japanese action and having obvious purpose of mobilization by driving public opinion. Furthermore, the term "message-related index" is proposed and can be promoted as a new concept for research on other incident reports.

Keywords—the Incident; traitor-elimination reports; media presentation; comparative analysis; report form

I. INTRODUCTION

Compared with the period of the Republic of China when traditional media prevailed and newspaper industry boomed, the medium work nowadays has many spaces for learning and further improvement. Therefore, it is necessary to research the reports on representative newspapers in the Republic of China, especially the reporting methods, methods and contents in the context of important events.

This paper focuses on the "Shen Bao" that reflects the social reality, and selects traitor-elimination report that has distinct characteristics of the times, and compares it with the

same type of reports before the "The July 7 Incident of 1937 (hereinafter referred to as the Incident)". More than 160 traitor-elimination reports are collected from Shen Bao in the whole year of 1937 to make a multi-dimensional and multi-angle comparison.

This topic angle and orientation has not been involved yet and has a large research space. By searching the status quo of the search, it is shown that there are many researches on the Incident itself but few comparative researches on the influence on certain aspect before and after the Incident. This topic selects the angle of traitor-elimination report which both related to the destiny of the country and to the people's livelihood. Exploring its media presentation in terms of the quantity, length, layout and standpoint of the reports has outstanding research value.

Under this premise, the general law is summarized and the innovation point lies in that in the media analysis on a particular topic or series of news, the important influence of social environment and an event can be qualitatively judged according to the percentage of messages in all of such news in a certain period of time. The larger and denser the proportion of the messages becomes, the more urgent it would be in time for the reporter to describe it in detail. In such case, most reporters may select the way to quickly deliver concise and effective content in time, showing the urgency of the event. In response to this phenomenon, this paper puts forward a new concept of "message-related index".

II. CHANGES IN THE QUANTITY AND RELEVANT DATA OF "TRAITOR-ELIMINATION REPORTS" BEFORE AND AFTER THE INCIDENT

A. Data Analysis

Before and after the Incident, a total of 167 traitor-elimination reports are published on Shen Bao (including the main issue, the supplement, and the supplement) in 1937. Taking the day of July 7, 1937 when the Incident happened as the dividing line, there are 29 traitor-elimination reports within 187 days before the Incident, and 140 reports within 177 days upon and after the Incident. From the data, the gap between the quantity of reports before and after the Incident

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is great and the quantity is obviously increased after the Incident ("Fig. 1"). After the Incident, the average quantity of traitor-elimination reports/day on Shen Bao is sharply increased from 0.17 reports /day to 0.83 reports /day.

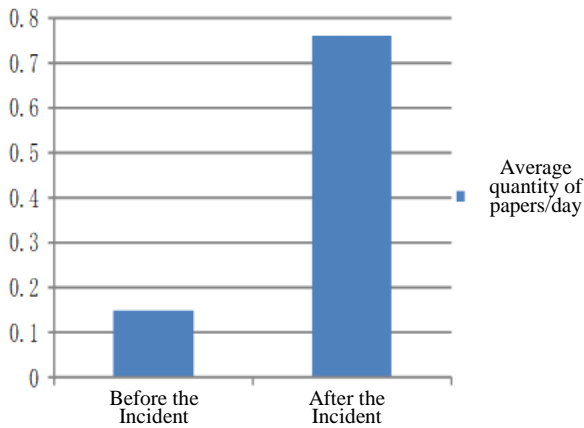


Fig. 1. The average quantity of traitor-elimination reports/day before and after the Incident.

According to "Fig. 2", the number of quantity of reports/day is changed from the previous one. By analyzing the photocopy of Shen Bao, it can be seen that within the 187 days before the incident, 26 days of the issue had traitor-elimination reports, and most of the reports are single-day report; however after the Incident, the days of the issue having the report and the quantity of the reports/day increased sharply and changed from no report, to one report/day, two reports/day and even to 9 reports/day. Taking the Incident as the watershed, after the Incident, the proportion of the quantity of reports/day was increased greatly from 1% to 23%.

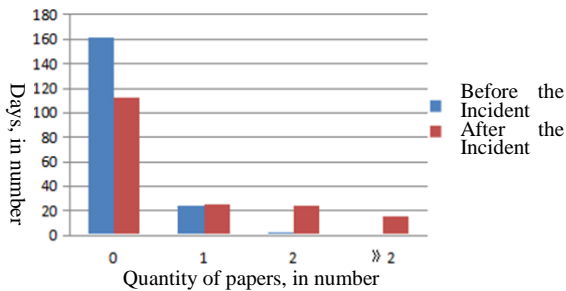


Fig. 2. A statistics of the quantity of the reports/day before and after the Incident.

"Fig. 3" shows the change trend of the monthly quantity of such reports on the 1937 Shen Bao, and forms a complete data of the report quantity, together with the previous points.

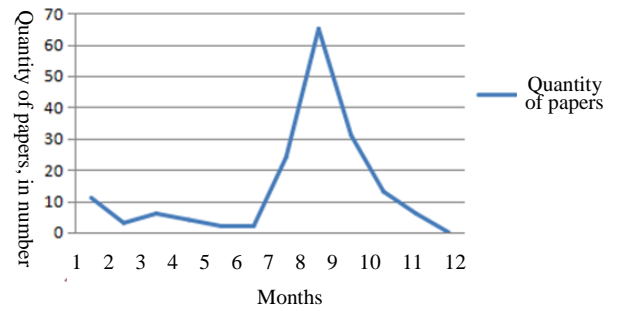


Fig. 3. Statistical chart of the quantity of the reports/month in 1937.

B. Specific Exploration

After getting to know the detailed change course of the reports before and after the Incident based on the above data, it can be seen that those changes are related to the importance that the newspaper office, the government and the society attached to traitor elimination and relevant to the specific increase course of the quantity of such report on media.

In the second half of 1937, the quantity of traitor-elimination reports was nearly five times of that in the first half of the year. This is undoubtedly due to the occurrence of the Incident.

One of the testimonies about the current situation comes from "The July 7 Incident of 1937" published by Central Party History Press [2]: "In June 1937, among military and political dignitaries in Tokyo, Japan, at almost the same latitude as Peking, such a message passes silently as: On the evening of Tanabata, North China will repeat the same incident as the Willow Lake. In order to clarify this message, a special meeting was held in Peking on June 26, 1937". On July 6, "いまい たけお went to the home of Chen Zigeng, the former Prime Minister of the State Council of the Republic of China, for the banquet. Knowing his attendance, Shi Yousan, the commander of the Guardian of East China, also came without being invited and seemed to ask for something". According to the message spread later, Shi Yousan appeared very nervous; when talking about the conflict between the Japanese and Chinese armed forces in Lugouqiao, いまい たけお said, "I don't know and this event will never happen" and asked the source of the message. Shi Yousan did not disclose the source; but it seems not a pure coincidence by overviewing the history. On June 20th and 29th, 1937, Shen Bao respectively published a traitor-elimination report both in the time not more than 5 days before and after the disclosure of the message. [1]

On July 6, Chen Zigeng hosted a banquet and invited いまい たけお. Shi Yousan failed to get affirmation from いまい たけお and revealed that according to informant, China and Japan would fire on Lugou Bridge at 3 pm. One day later, traitor-elimination report appeared on the newspaper. At 22 o'clock in the evening, the Incident broke out. On July 9, the authorities of Hebei and Chahar reached a ceasefire agreement with the Japanese Army in North China for the first time. On July 11, they reached an agreement again and

two traitor-elimination reports were published. At the interview in Lushan on July 17, Chiang Kai-shek said that "Lugouqiao Incident has reached the baseline of concession" [3], "Once the war is open, everyone, no matter in north and south China, no matter young and old, has the responsibility to defend Chinese land and resist the war with the determination to sacrifice everything; only in this way can it be possible to win the final victory." [4] On July 19, the third peace talks failed, and two traitor-elimination reports were again published on Shen Bao, which is much relevant to the interview and the strong impact from the failed peace talks. [1]

From July 25 to August 1, a small peak of the quantity of such reports was formed. Roscoe said that "news is a social product reflecting the social reality that produces news". The change in the situation can be reflected through traitor-elimination reports. The contrast event is consistent with the change in the quantity of relevant reports.

Through analysis on the date coincidence rate, the change in the quantity of such reports all happened before and after the change of the specific process of the Incident. Combined with the previous data, it can be mutually inferred that when the situation changed, Japanese army's tendency was known, or the authorities took countermeasures, the cases would all be reflected clearly through the quantity of traitor-elimination reports. In August 1937, the quantity of such reports was increased sharply. [1]

Hence, it can be seen that at first there were not many relevant reports due to the relatively stable situation of the society; with wars fired here and there, the quantity of such reports reached the peak within July and August; later the political situation became tighter, Shanghai was more turbulent and, followed by, the quantity of such reports was decreased day by day. In November, Shanghai fell and Shen Bao once was suspended for a period of time; after the newspaper office was controlled by Japanese, traitor-elimination report was no longer published on Shen Bao, and the time was highly consistent, indicating the inevitable connection between social events and the quantity of such reports.

III. CHANGE IN LENGTH OF TRAITOR-ELIMINATION REPORT AFTER THE INCIDENT

By observation, it is found that there is a change in the proportion of different length of such report on Shen Bao before and after the Incident. Before the Incident, the ratios of messages, middle-size news and long-size news are respectively 31%, 38% and 31%; after the Incident, the corresponding proportions were 67%, 26% and 7% respectively, as shown in "Fig. 4" and "Fig. 5". A significant proportional difference is presented. By comparison, it is known that the quantity of messages changed the most.

In terms of message, the proportion is increased from 31% before to more than double of it after the Incident; in terms of middle and long sized news, the proportion is reduced to half of the original proportion. The purpose of the message is to briefly convey the essence of an event in urgent and important case, and is somewhat different from

middle and long sized news in nature; so the latter two are combined to compare with the former one. As can be seen from "Fig. 4" and "Fig. 5", the structure of such report changed in nature before and after the Incident.

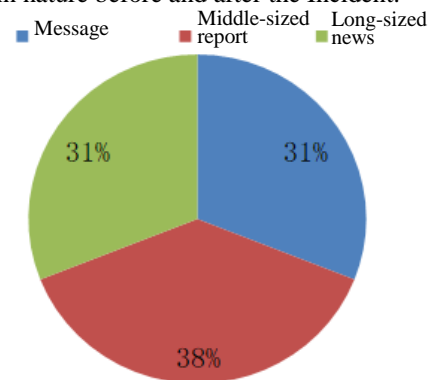


Fig. 4. The proportion of different length of traitor-elimination reports before the Incident.

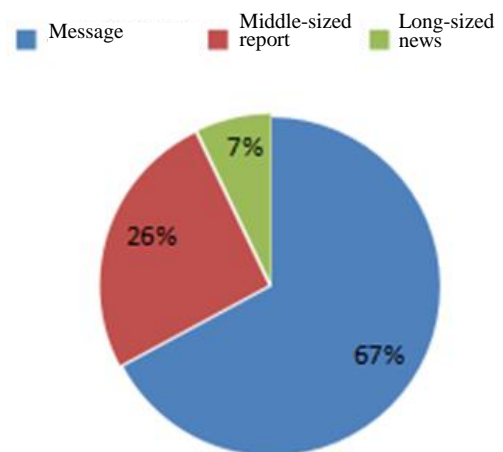


Fig. 5. The proportion of different length of traitor-elimination reports after the Incident.

The historical background affects the presentation of the report, and the external form of the report also reflects the situation including the times and social background. Looking at the events in China and foreign countries throughout the year, it can be seen that before and after the deterioration of Sino-Japanese relationship, the length of traitor-elimination report was shortened and short and intensive messages were published specially. This indicates that the length of the report is directly related to the tension degree of the social background and the progress of the war. After 5 relevant messages were published on Shen Bao in the first ten days of November of 1937, the newspaper office was controlled by Japanese and the traitor-elimination report was suspended.

By analysis, it is known that the proportion of traitor-elimination report in message form was increased before and after the Incident throughout the whole year of 1937, as shown in "Fig. 6". Since June 1937, the proportion of such messages had begun to rise; meanwhile, international conflicts had intensified, and domestic Sino-Japanese conflicts had also risen. By July, the Incident broke out and

the proportion of such messages reached a climax. As the international political situation and Chinese battlefield became more and more tense, the proportion of traitor-elimination report in message form gradually exceeded that of middle and long sized reports. Because the news report is more specific than message from the perspective of describing a fact and has more complete plot to meet the readers' need for acquiring the details; however, message is to tell readers the elements of the news such as the time, place, characters, event, process and result of an event so that readers can quickly know about the most general information of the event; therefore, the form of the report is naturally inextricably linked to the tension or importance of the social background and event background.

Therefore, the general law applicable to other types of reports can be derived: namely "in the media analysis on a particular topic or series of news, the important influence of social environment and an event can be qualitatively judged according to the percentage of messages in all of such news in a certain period of time. The larger the proportion of the messages becomes, the more urgent it would be in time for the reporter to describe it in detail. In such case, most reporters may select the way to quickly deliver concise and effective content in time, showing the urgency of the event". This concept can be called "message-related index".

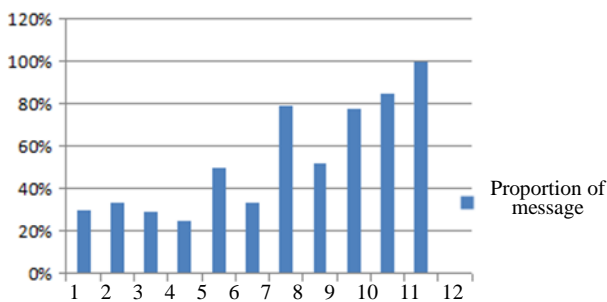


Fig. 6. Statistical chart of the proportion of traitor-elimination reports in message form.

IV. ANALYSIS ON THE LAYOUT OF TRAITOR-ELIMINATION REPORT BEFORE AND AFTER THE INCIDENT

According to all the traitor-elimination reports of published on Shen Bao in 1937, a statistics was made on the layout of all the reports in the year, and the result was that before the Incident, the relevant reports were mostly concentrated on the page about local news. Upon the incident, the contradictions between China and Japan were intensifying and the layout was gradually migrated.

According to analysis and summary, with respect to all the traitor-elimination reports in 1937, one such report was published around the 9th page. Until the "July 7 Incident", such report was shifted from the 9th and 10th pages to the 4th to 6th pages, and the quantity of such reports was gradually increasing, the importance of traitor elimination was constantly increasing, and even large-scale continuous reports were made on traitor elimination news. On the whole, most of the reports were concentrated in the 1st to 6th page.

This indicates that the domestic situation had already been very tense and the urgency of eradicating traitors was clear at a glance. Hence in the issue in the middle of the month, such report was presented in the page and position for displaying major Chinese news, and traitor-elimination reports were most concentrated in the 1st and 2nd pages. By mid-October 1937, the layout of such report was moved to latter pages to reserve space for displaying the battle status sent from the frontier. [5] After analysis, it is found that the front pages of Shen Bao were mostly occupied by the information about front enemy attack and the battle situation. After the newspaper was controlled by Japanese, such report was interrupted.

As can be seen from those data, the layout actually reflects the fact that with the constant deterioration of Chinese political, military, and social environments, the governmental authorities, law enforcement agencies, and reporters of Shen Bao all paid more attention to the issue of traitor elimination, and the importance of traitor elimination changed positively with the degree of urgency in time. In other words, the authorities' attitudes toward traitor elimination and anti-Japanese action were further obtained through statistics.

V. THE NEWSPAPER OFFICE'S STANDPOINT ON TRAITOR-ELIMINATION REPORT BEFORE AND AFTER THE INCIDENT

By analyzing the subject and standpoint of the report on the Shen Bao in 1937, the following conclusions are obtained: first, the subject of the report was mainly the governmental authorities before and after the outbreak of the Incident, and there was only a few reports on traitor-elimination activity initiated by folk people, only accounting for 5% or so; second, all the standpoints of the reports before the Incident were official standpoints, indicating that the government would never tolerate this matter and would strictly crack down on it; and all that after the Incident are combination of official standpoints and folk standpoints, gradually showing the public's attitude and response to traitor elimination; and the traitor-elimination reports and other anti-Japanese related reports of Shen Bao newspaper office turned to be positive. In order to explore the office's specific attitude, this research sorts out a large amount of historical documents and literatures, and analyzes the customary running concept and main force of Shen Bao newspaper.

First of all, Shen Bao inherited the "historian newspaper running concept" [6], insisted on using the spirit of the history governance to run the newspaper, truthfully recording history, being not yield or fear and giving priority to news; hence, the standpoint of Shen Bao at the moment can be initially judged.

Secondly, at around 1937, the upper level of Shen Bao was led by the chairman of the board of directors, Shi Yongzhen, and followed by the manager, editor-in-chief and some main writers such as Ma Yinliang, Yu Songhua, Wu Tegong, Zhang Yunhe, Zhang Shutong and et al; all of them had patriotic opinions and standpoints; hence the office's attitude can be seen from this staffing structure: [7] The idea

is to advocate patriotism and give priority to news. They all took a patriotic stance, entered Shen Bao during the Anti-Japanese War and continuously publish editorials and articles to declaim against the Japan's Puppet Regime and aggression against China. After the September 18th Incident in 1931, Shen Bao turned to having the patriotic anti-Japanese standpoint, expressed the will of people, insisted on reporting news first, and pointed out existing problems with fair arguments. [8]

After the Incident, Shen Bao strengthened the battle status reports, political reports, and relevant commentaries and speeches in all-round aspect while focusing on practical matters. Under this environment, a large number of traitor-elimination reports were published on Shen Bao to declaim against a group of traitors in China; during this period, Shen Bao clearly advocated to "sacrifice and resist to the end". [9] Moreover, the office tried to save papers, remove irrelevant supplemental texts and advertisements, to reserve space for publishing anti-Japanese information, and continuously published a large number of reports to reveal the shame consequence of traitors, and the entertainment pages were all suspended.

In summary, with the occurrence of the Incident, Shen Bao insisted on the principle of persisting in patriotism and publishing news first; and its attitude was changed from the former objectively reporting Sino-Japanese conflict and not concealing the facts and truths, to actively publishing traitor-elimination reports and calling for anti-Japanese action; its initiative consciousness was qualitatively improved.

VI. CONCLUSION

Over a research on the photocopy of Shen Bao and analysis on relevant historical data collected, the following results are obtained:

First, the increase in the quantity of traitor-elimination reports is directly related to the Incident; the Incident is the direct cause of the large increase in the number of the reports; and the change in social reality would have an impact on the quantity. Second, due to the tension of the event and the social background environment, the proportion of traitor-elimination reports published in form of message was increased and the report paid more attention to the efficiency and journalism. This trend of data change can directly reflect the social status to certain extent. Third, the layout reflects that with the changes in the Chinese political, military, and social environment and the urgency of time, the governmental authorities and Shen Bao paid more attention to eliminate traitors and further changed their attitudes toward traitor elimination and anti-Japanese action. Fourth, after the Incident, the attitude of Shen Bao newspaper office was changed from reporting in an objective non-concealed way to active anti-Japanese attitude and giving priority to the topics of patriotism and news; the office's standpoint became more initiative and conscious to mobilize the public.

To sum up, the special topic of traitor-elimination report is to promote a special point to general point and further a new concept of message-related index with universal application value can be proposed. This concept can be

applied scientifically to reporting other special events and special topics to form a new analytical perspective.

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