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Political Repression, Media Propaganda, and Nation-Building

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Abstract

Nations and nation-states are products of modernity, but they also have historical roots. In the conquest of China in the mid-17th century, the Manchu-led Qing government oppressed the Han Chinese, the native population of China. Two centuries later, when modern newspaper technology became available, revolutionary propagandists seized the opportunity to reframe the political repression as an ethnic conflict to fan the flames of discontent. Applying machine learning to analyze 0.3 million newspaper article titles, I find that prefectures characterized by repression and resistance responded to the anti-Manchu propaganda by producing more nationalist revolutionaries. Using the historical political cycle as the instrumental variable, I confirm the causal link. The proposed mechanism is the preservation of historical memories by deep cultural traits created by repression and resistance. After the 1911 Revolution, revolutionaries strove to establish a modern nation-state by organizing the Kuomintang (Nationalist) party, army, and government. The results indicate that propaganda utilizing historical repression and resistance shaped the political identity and played a pivotal role in the nation-building of modern China.

Keywords: political repression, newspapers, revolution, nation-building, China.

JEL classification Numbers: D74, N45, P00, Z1

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1 Introduction

Studies on nationalism view nations and nation-states as products of the general modernization process (Gellner 1983; Anderson 1983; Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983). For instance, the proliferation of print materials, such as newspapers, facilitated the dissemination of messages to distant audiences. As a result, social bonds within small local groups were weakened, but group identity for larger collectives, such as nations, were strengthened (Anderson 1983). In contrast, another vein in the literature focuses on the pre-modern roots of nations (Armstrong 1982; Smith 1986). This paper aims to reconcile both theories to better understand the process of nation-building. In this paper, I look at how newspapers helped to create the modern Chinese nation by leveraging the power of history.

On the eve of the 1911 Chinese Revolution, China was ruled by the Manchu-led Qing government. The Manchus, originating in Manchuria, invaded China (where the local people were known as the Han) and governed China under the name of “Qing” from 1644 to 1911 (see [Figure 1](#), also a map in [Appendix A](#)). To some extent, the Qing dynasty was a conquest dynasty like the Mughal Empire in India and the Ottoman Empire (Wittfogel and Feng 1949). At the time of the conquest in the mid-17th century, the local Han people organized long-lasting resistance but were harshly repressed by the Qing government. With the introduction of newspaper technology in the early 20th century, the historical events of two centuries prior once again became visible to the public. Newspapers enabled revolutionary propagandists to use print media as a tool for the retelling of history by framing political repression as an ethnic conflict and at the same time stoking the flames of discontent toward the Qing government.

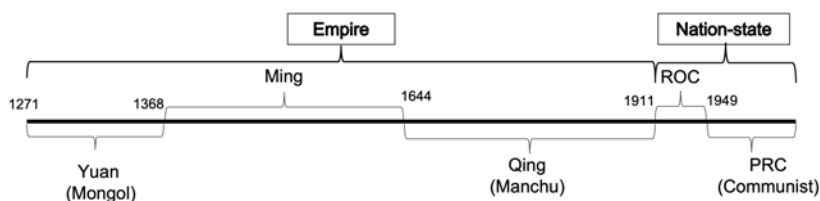


Figure 1: The dynastic changes in China from the 13th century to today

[Figure 2](#) shows a positive correlation between historical repression and resistance and the pro-

liferation of revolutionaries at the prefecture level, but a causal link needs to be examined. First, to measure the degree of historical repression and resistance, I collect prefecture-level data on leading figures in the resistance, massacres committed by the Qing troops, loyalists of the Ming empire, and instances of literary inquisition. Second, using a new newspaper database, I investigate the anti-Manchu propaganda created by revolutionaries. By evaluating 9,995 newspaper articles that were printed in traditional Chinese in vertical columns, I manually classify different ideas and narratives in the propaganda. As an alternative, I apply a machine learning model to predict the topics of the 0.3 million newspaper articles. Adopting a difference-in-difference design, I regress the number of revolutionaries on the interaction term between the prefecture-level repression and resistance measure and the time-series variable, the anti-Manchu sentiment in the propaganda. I find that prefectures with a greater history of repression and resistance were more responsive to the anti-Manchu propaganda and produced more revolutionaries.

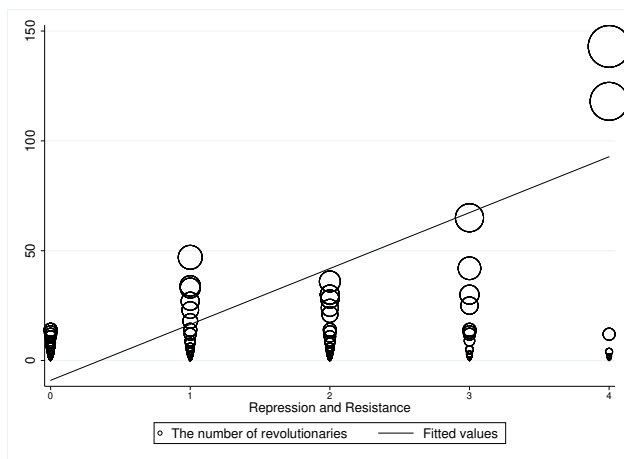


Figure 2: The correlation between historical repression and resistance and revolutionaries

Notes: The above scatter plot shows the positive correlation between historical repression and resistance and revolutionaries between 1900 and 1906. The horizontal axis is the number of events or figures in the repression or resistance in the mid-17th century, and the vertical axis the number of nationalist revolutionaries between 1900 and 1906. The hollow cycles and the fitted line are weighted by the number of revolutionaries. The regression result is shown in [Table A1](#).

Since the historical events are unlikely to have been randomly allocated among prefectures, I adopt an instrumental variable (IV) strategy based on exogenous shocks to 17th-century elites' political choices to estimate the causal effect. Specifically, I exploit variations in the changing numbers of *Jinshi* degree holders before the Manchus invaded China. Like the *grande école* in France, China had a civil exam system that was adopted in the 10th century and was designed

to recruit elites into the government. *Jinshi* was the highest qualification in the exam, and most candidates were from rich influential families that controlled local resources. I find that elites who obtained their *Jinshi* degrees later in the mid-17th century (indicating they were younger) were more likely to serve the new Qing court among different political choices. I expect that if a prefecture produced a higher number of *Jinshi* degree holders in the last few years before the Manchu's invasion, then this prefecture was less likely to organize resistance and be subject to repression. The IV results confirm the causal link.

How did this repression and resistance become significant two hundred years later? There are two possible mechanisms. The first is that areas that experienced repression and resistance preserved memories of these events through books, dramas, rituals, and secret societies. There is anecdotal evidence that some families preserved traditional clothing from the Ming dynasty for nine generations. These deep cultural traits helped elites to preserve the ethnic traditions that distinguished them from the Manchu rulers. Once anti-Manchu propaganda gained strength, those people were readily persuaded to identify as Han Chinese (Wang 2003). Examining a book-banning campaign in the 1790s, I measure the preservation of historical memories by banned books that chronicled the repression and resistance. I find that areas where a greater number of books were banned in the late 18th century responded more actively to the nationalist propaganda in the early 20th century. The second potential mechanism is that the propaganda recognized repression and resistance, inciting the local people's nationalism. I read newspapers founded by revolutionaries and kept track of incidences of repression and resistance that were mentioned in the articles. I find no evidence that the recognition of repression and resistance had a significant impact.

I conduct several robustness checks, to which current studies have alluded in accounting for the revolution participation during the study period. Alternative hypotheses include the abolition of the civil exam, anti-missionary conflicts, access to information, the influence of the Taiping Rebellion, and the Manchu-Han conflicts. I also incorporate other ideologies, such as anti-imperialism, pro-industrialization, and pro-democracy, as well as a competing ideology called constitutionalism, in the regression. The central argument of this paper remained consistent under different checks and specifications.

In the last main part of the paper, I examine the mobilization and consolidation of the nation-state building after the 1911 Revolution. I regress outcomes of nation-state building, including representatives in the first National Assembly (1913-1925), top leaders (1924-1952), student soldiers (1924-1926) and army generals (1927-1949), and senior officials (1927-1949) of the Kuomintang (KMT, also referred to as the Chinese Nationalist Party), on repression and resistance. All outcomes are positively correlated with the repression and resistance. The channel by which this correlation is established is that after 1911, as a core team, pioneering revolutionaries (1900-1906) set out to create a modern nation-state by forming the KMT party, army, and government. The results suggest that the propaganda of repression and resistance had a long-term effect on the modern nation-state building of China.

This paper relates to the literature on nation-building (Dell and Querubin 2018; Bazzi et al. 2019; Blouin and Mukand 2019; Chen and Yang 2019; Blanc and Kubo 2020; Alesina et al. 2021; Giuliano et al. 2022). These studies examined how government programs like education and ethnic policy promoted the homogenization of populations. In this sense, my research looks at the first phase of nation-building, the “invention of a nation,” which was largely rooted in racism (Anderson 1983). Empires such as the Qing empire of China, the Ottoman Empire, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Soviet Union, and possibly even Yugoslavia were overthrown by nationalist revolutions in the twentieth century, and different ethnic groups from inside of the empires founded their own nation-states.¹ In this process, nationalists mobilized historical events, such as political repression, to strengthen the national identity (Rozenas et al. 2017). The findings of this study could be used to explain how nations and nation-states formed in different regions and at different times.

This paper also adds to the growing body of knowledge about how media and propaganda mobilized social movements (Yanagizawa-Drott 2014; Adena et al. 2015; Ang 2020; Dippel and Heblich 2021; Wang 2021; Adena et al. 2021). More broadly, this paper should be included with the literature on media and politics (Gentzkow and Shapiro 2010; Gentzkow et al. 2011; Enikolopov et al. 2011; Strömberg 2015; Enikolopov et al. 2020). This paper focuses on the period when newspapers, a mature communication technology in Western countries, were first introduced to

¹China may be an exceptional case in this regard because the Han people account for the vast bulk of the population compared to its European counterparts. However, we can observe Mongolia’s independence from China, as well as nation-building efforts by the Uyghurs and the Tibetan today.

China. As a result of the “print capitalism”, Chinese readers became aware of new theories about nationalism and nations.

The paper is in agreement with the wider literature on the persistent influence of politics and culture (Voigtländer and Voth 2012). More specifically, this is the idea that past events are relevant to present socioeconomic outcomes under some conditions (Belmonte and Rochlitz 2019; Rozenas and Zhukov 2019; Cantoni et al. 2020; Fouka and Voth 2021). These studies may relate present outcomes to their roots from decades past. In this sense, only this paper and the research by Ochsner and Roesel (2019) explore the long-lasting impact of historical events that transpired centuries ago. In line with these studies, I find that hidden memories and beliefs are the basis for this persistent impact. In a novel finding, this paper stresses the role of intellectuals in both preserving historical memories and mobilizing social movements.

A recent discussion has surfaced regarding the cause of the 1911 Chinese Revolution, which brought China from the autocratic system to the republic institution. Bai and Jia (2016) argued that the revolution was a result of abolishing the exam system. Two other works (Mattingly and Chen 2022; Kung and Wang 2020) focused on the role of foreign intervention in the political transition. The literature has not explored the revolution through the lens of nation-building. As a popular slogan said, “To expel the Manchus, to revive China,” the revolution’s first task was to overturn the Manchu-led government and establish a nation-state dominated by the vast ethnic majority, the Han Chinese (Wang 1905). Returning to the late 19th-century China, along with the humiliations brought by imperial conquest by the West, Chinese elites sought a new identity to replace the norms of Confucianism and to advance the political modernization of the state (Mitter 2013). The prevailing nationalism from Western countries met this demand, and stories of political repression made it easier for audiences to understand and accept the nationalist consciousness.

The remainder of this paper is as follows. Section 2 provides the relevant historical background. Section 3 introduces the data examined in this study. The main regression findings and the instrument estimation are shown in Section 4 and the mechanism is further discussed in Section 5. Section 6 provides robustness checks. Section 7 discusses the role revolutionaries played in the further consolidation of the nation-state building. Finally, the last section concludes the paper.

2 Historical Background

This section introduces the historical setting. I begin by reviewing the repression and resistance of the mid-17th century, and then discuss how the propagandists in the early 20th century interpreted and utilized the historical stories to mobilize the revolutionary campaign.

2.1 The Manchu Conquest of China in the Mid-17th Century

China's last imperial dynasty, the Qing dynasty (1644-1911), originated in Manchuria (today North-east China) and was founded by the Manchus (see a map in [Appendix A](#)). It was preceded by the Ming dynasty (1368-1644), whose ruling groups were Han Chinese, the native ethnicity of China. When peasant rebels defeated Beijing in April 1644, the Ming emperor hung himself. As a result of the civil unrest, the Qing empire conquered China. The local Han people organized long-lasting resistance but were harshly repressed by the Qing government. The next paragraphs list two types of repression and two types of resistance in a one-to-one correspondence. The Qing government employed massacres to suppress the military resistance, while literary inquisitions were used to repress intellectuals who refused to acknowledge the legitimacy of the Manchu rulers.

Resistance: Although the Manchus defeated the peasants and occupied North China in 1644, they encountered fierce resistance in the South. The Ming officials fled to Nanjing, enthroned the royal family members as emperors, and organized resistance in hopes of restoring the Ming dynasty. For instance, Shi Kefa (1602-1645), a senior official in the Ming dynasty, served as the Minister of War for the Nanjing court and established defenses between the Huai River and Yangtze River to defend against the Manchu invasion. Despite this, Yangzhou, the last defense city north of the Yangtze River, fell in May 1645, and the Nanjing court surrendered without a fight in June. The Manchus held all of China until 1661.

Massacres: To punish the residents who resisted Manchu's rule and warn the rest of the population, the Manchus committed massacres along with their military campaigns. There were massacres in at least 18 prefectures, killing about two million Han Chinese people (Cao 2001). One of the most notorious massacres is known as the Ten Days in Yangzhou. Shi Kefa defended the city

to the death, and then the Manchu armies massacred the population in May, 1645, killing 800,000 people in ten days and subjecting many more to rape and looting.²

The Manchu government also attempted to conquer China by changing the Han people's habits and culture. Traditionally, adult Han Chinese did not cut their hair for cultural and philosophical reasons.³ In 1645, the Qing government ordered male Han Chinese to shave their foreheads and braid the rest of their hair in a queue identical to those worn by the Manchus. The Qing government adopted the slogan "Cut the hair and keep the head, or keep the hair and cut the head," and massacred people who refused to comply with this edict. Residents in Jiading revolted against the Queue Order, and the Manchu troops killed approximately 30,000 people. Three to four days later, another rebellion broke out in the city, followed by a second massacre. A month later, the Manchu committed a third massacre (Dennerline 1981).

Loyalists: With the successful execution of military operations, the Qing court transferred its focus to the political control over elites. Thousands of scholars fled to mountains, became monks in defiance of the Queue Order, or fled to Japan and Korea, refusing to serve under the Qing dynasty. They were called *yimin*, which means loyalists of a former dynasty. A number of them collected documents, compiled history books, and wrote poetry documenting the defeated Ming and Southern Ming resistance through the power of personal memory. For example, the scholar Lv Liuliang (1629-1683) was active in the anti-Manchu military movement. After the resistance failed, he became a hermit. In his books, he argued that the Manchus, as a foreign race, should not rule China (Zelin 2002). After Lv passed away, his books came to the government's attention. His corpse and that of his son were exhumed and mutilated, and all his works were forbidden.

Inquisitions: Manchu rulers were particularly persistent in molding the Han people's ideology. From 1644 to 1790, the government prosecuted Han intellectuals if they were suspected of inciting disloyalty toward the emperor or state with their writings, in what has become known as the literary

²The massacre is described in a contemporary account, *Yangzhou Shiri Ji (A Record of Ten Days in Yangzhou)*. In the book, the author documented, "Several dozen people were herded like sheep or goats. Any who lagged were flogged or killed outright. The organs of those trampled like turf under horses' hooves or people's feet were smeared in the dirt, and the crying of those still alive filled the whole outdoors." However, historians' research reveals that the estimate of 800,000 is overstated.

³See [Figure J.1](#) for the discussion on the politics of men's hair in Chinese history.

inquisition. Hundreds of scholars were killed or exiled, and some were even posthumously executed.⁴ Their publications were banned by the Qing government, and their readers were punished as well. In one instance, a scholar was executed for putting the word *zhuo* (murky) before the word *qing* (clean) in a poem because the emperor thought he was using homonyms to disparage the Qing government (Archives of the Museum of the Forbidden City 1934). Xue (2021) firstly investigated the impact of the inquisition and found that it degraded social capital in Qing China and even lowered political interest and community engagement in the modern era. Li (2022) found that the inquisition altered intellectuals' writing styles in Qing dynasty.

2.2 The Rise of Nationalism in the Early 20th Century

2.2.1 Revolutionary Propaganda

At the end of the 19th century, the anti-Manchu revolutionary movement, led by Sun Yat-sen (1866-1925), took shape in Honolulu in 1894 with its first organization, the Revive China Society. In 1903, the revolutionary movement became more organized and ideological (Gasster 1969). Five new groups were founded between 1903 and 1906; two groups merged with the Revive China Society to form the Chinese Revolutionary Alliance in 1905.⁵ Revolutionaries launched uprisings in several cities and assassinated senior officials in the Qing government. On the ideological side, to generate more interest in the revolutionary movement, revolutionaries created ethnically anti-Manchuism slogans for propaganda. The Chinese Revolutionary Alliance drafted its political manifesto: “To expel the Manchus, to revive China,” and the revolutionaries' first objective was to overthrow the Manchu-led Qing government. In a pamphlet titled *The Revolutionary Army*, the propagandists wrote, “China has been subjugated by the Manchus for 260 years! Our Han Chinese suffer cruel lives at the Manchus' hands, so everyone has the responsibility to overturn the Manchu regime.”

Figure 3 shows the number of newspapers founded each year from 1833 to 1906. Although the history of modern newspapers in China can be traced back to the 1830s, only a small number of

⁴Posthumous execution consists in the ritual mutilation of an already dead body in order to demonstrate that even in death one cannot escape punishment. See the case of Lv Liuliang above.

⁵See [Appendix J](#).

newspapers were founded between 1833 and 1897. The newspaper business experienced a small boom during the Hundred Days' Reform of 1898 and a dramatic increase in numbers after 1900.

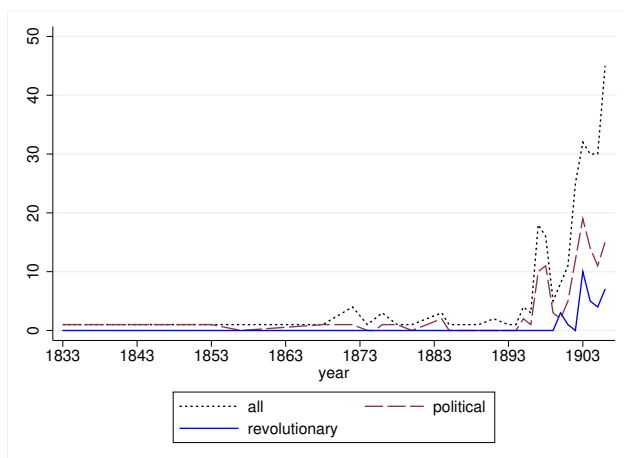


Figure 3: The number of newly founded newspapers in China 1833-1906

Notes: The figure above shows the number of newly founded newspapers in China from 1833 to 1906. The blue line indicates the number of newspapers founded by revolutionaries and the red dashed one is the number of newspapers focusing on politics. The black dotted line refers to the number of all newspapers. The source is The Late Qing Dynasty Periodical Full-text Database.

As the newspaper industry matured and readers' numbers increased, the propagandists borrowed modern theories about ethnicity and nation from Western countries and claimed that Manchus were foreigners who colonized China. The Manchus and the Han people had different ancestries, dialects, homelands, habits, religions, and temperaments. As a ruling class enjoying political privilege, the Manchus refused to mix with the majority Han people. Unless the Manchu government was overturned, China would not terminate the autocratic system (Wang 1905).⁶ The propagandists wrote articles and pamphlets to express their views and used historical repression and resistance to arouse the Han people's anti-Manchu sentiment. Figure 4 plots the prevalence of keywords related to nation, ethnicity, repression, and resistance in newspaper headlines between 1833 and 1906. The data suggest that, beginning in the early 20th century, the propaganda machine echoed memories of historical repression and resistance.

Was the propaganda effective in mobilizing the anti-Manchu campaign? Qiu Ao (1879-1970), a revolutionary from the Hunan province, said that he had read books written by Wang Fuzhi (1619-1692), a Ming loyalist who also lived in the Hunan province. Later, he learned of the massacres and

⁶Wang's theory was largely based on the book *The Theory of the State* by Johann Kaspar Bluntschli (1808-1881).

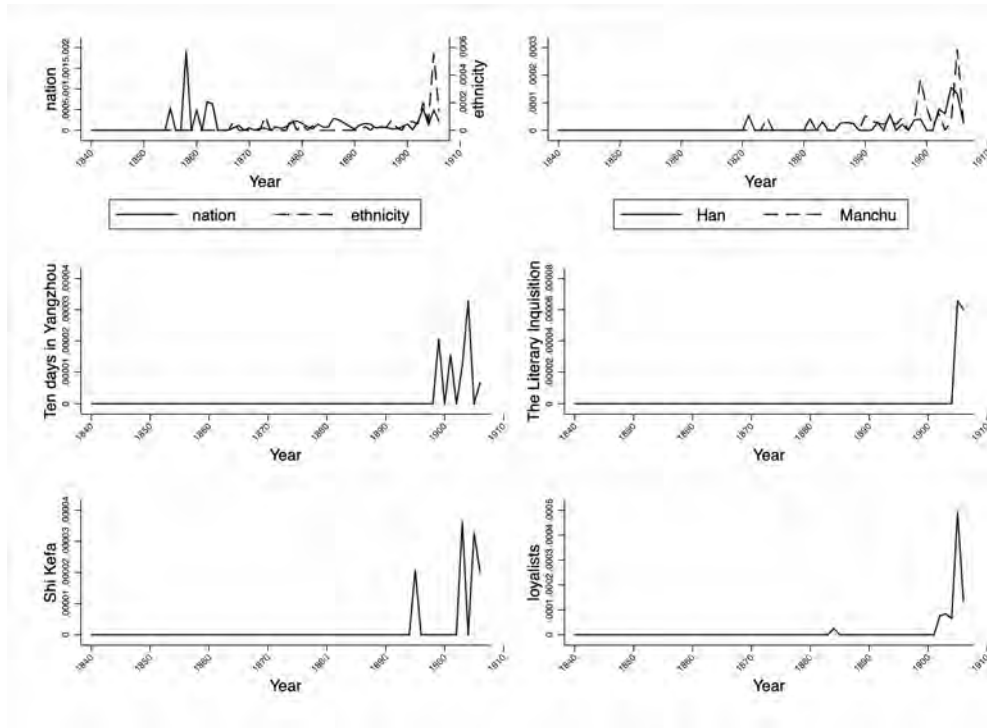


Figure 4: The frequencies of keywords in the Full-text of Journals in the Late Qing Dynasty Database by year

Notes: The figure above shows the shares of headlines containing related key words in the The Full-text of Journals in the Late Qing Dynasty Database. The upper-left one plots the frequency of the word “nation” as well as that of the word “ethnicity”. The word nation is translated as “民族” in Chinese, and the word ethnicity is translated as “种族”. The upper-right one shows the frequencies of the word “Manchu” and that of “Han”. I search the word “满人” and “汉人” in the database, which refer to Manchu people and Han people. The middle-left is for the the word “ten days in Yangzhou” by searching “扬州十日”, which refers to the Yangzhou massacre. The middle-right is the frequency of the word “the literary inquisition” (by searching “文字狱”) and the name “吕留良” who was a well-known victim of the literary inquisition. The bottom-left one is the frequency of the martyr “Shi Kefa (史可法)” by directly searching his name as well as his official title “shi gebu (史阁部)”. The bottom-right one is the frequency of three famous Ming loyalists’ names and their courtesy names. They are Gu Yanwu (顾炎武, 1613-1682, also Gu Tinglin, 顾亭林), Huang Zongxi (黄宗羲, 1610-1695, also Huang Lizhou, 黄梨洲) and Wang Fuzi (王夫之, also Wang Chuanshan, 王船山).

the literary inquisition from pamphlets issued by revolutionary propagandists. From these readings, he developed an anti-Manchu attitude. While studying in Japan in 1904, he met revolutionaries there and joined them (Qiu 1981). In summary, the propaganda influenced the Han Chinese people to view themselves as the representatives of China by distinguishing them from the Manchus (Wang 2013).

2.2.2 Write, Print, and Circulate

It is worth pointing out that the revolutionaries exploited a retelling of the history to fan the flames of discontent. Most of the massacres in the mid-17th century were carried out by troops whose leaders were Han Chinese, rather than Manchus, though it was still a Manchu order.⁷ Emperors might use literary inquisitions to suppress their enemies whether Manchu or Han and were not focused on the ethnic identity or culture of the Han population in particular.⁸ And some Ming loyalists refused to serve the Qing due to their Confucianist values, rather than any thought of ethnicity.⁹ Alternatively, the Qing government abolished the ban on Manchu-Han intermarriage in 1901 and stressed that the government never discriminated against Han Chinese. However, in the propaganda, revolutionaries claimed that the Manchu court committed all crimes against the ethnic Han people two hundred years before. Additionally, the propagandists claimed that China had ceased to exist two hundred years prior and that Qing was not China.¹⁰ In such cases, historical repression in the 17th century was exaggerated and reshaped into a new story about ethnic conflicts.

The propagandists adopted multiple strategies to sell their ideas, including printing newspapers and pamphlets, organizing conferences, making speeches, and rewriting classical operas. Compared to speeches and conferences, it was cheaper and safer to distribute such “illegal” information via printed materials.¹¹ Moreover, only a few pamphlets were dispersed widely. Newspapers may therefore have been the most important means of spreading propaganda.

Revolutionaries faced huge risks in selling their ideas and engaging in other “illegal” activities. Foreign intervention, as well as the presence of treaty ports, churches, and missionaries, helped to preserve their safety. Tokyo and Shanghai served as the two print hubs for the revolutionary propaganda, allowing the propagandists to escape the supervision of the Qing authorities. Thirty

⁷Li Chengdong (?-1649), who commanded the Jiading massacre, and Shang Kexi (1604-1676), who carried out the Guangzhou massacre were all Han Chinese.

⁸In the case of Wang Jingqi (1672-1726), he was executed because he was a follower of emperor Yongzheng’s enemy Nian Gengyao (1680-1726). Besides, we could also see that a Manchu official, Echang (1691-1755), was killed because he was involved into a literary inquisition case.

⁹Among Ming loyalists, Wang Fuzhi and Lv Liuliang stressed the ethnic differences between the Manchus and the Han, while Huang Zongxi and Gu Yanwu did not.

¹⁰Although this argument remains controversial, most Chinese and Western historians recognize that the Qing dynasty is a Chinese dynasty.

¹¹The price of *Min Bao*, the official newspaper of the Revolutionary Alliance, was 0.2 Spanish dollar. More than 10,000 copies were printed each month.

newspapers were established during the study period by revolutionaries, with 13 being located in Tokyo and 11 in Shanghai.¹² Additionally, these two cities offered revolutionaries access to sophisticated imported printers.

Because the Qing empire threatened the leaders of revolutionary groups with arrest, many of them fled to Japan during this period. Japanese elites also provided significant financial and organizational resources to revolutionaries.¹³ As a result, Chinese students in Japan became the target consumers of the newspapers. Students even brought forbidden materials from Japan back to China (Lu 1934).

As a treaty port, Shanghai had legal extraterritorial status (Keller and Shiue 2021). Although it occasionally requested that newspapers be censored by the treaty port authority, the Qing government was powerless to stop these revolutionary newspapers.¹⁴ In 1904 and 1905, more than a hundred revolutionary publications debuted in Shanghai (Li 1956). Revolutionaries attempted to send newspapers through the postal service from abroad, but sometimes the government discovered this and prohibited the distribution. Instead, revolutionaries built underground bases and disseminated newspapers using their personal networks.

3 Data

The summary statistics of all variables are presented in [Appendix B](#).

¹²The rest were: Yokohama, Anqing, Jinhua, and Suzhou for 1 newspaper respectively, and Hong Kong for 2.

¹³Revolutionaries received financial aids from Japanese elites who supported Pan-Asianism. These Japanese elites, including Ryōhei Uchida (1873-1937), Tōten Miyazaki (1871-1922), Hirayama Shu (1870-1940), and Tōyama Mitsuru (1855-1944), helped Sun Yat-sen to organize the Revolutionary Alliance, and even joined uprisings in China.

¹⁴In the well-known Su Bao case of 1903, the Qing government wanted Shanghai treaty port to execute propagandist Zhang Taiyan (1869-1936) for treason; however, the court only sentenced him to three years jail for defamation. In contrast, without protection of the treaty ports, press freedom was harshly restricted. For instance, a journalist in Beijing, Shen Jin (1872-1903), was hanged in 1903 after leaking information about the Qing government's plan to sign a secret treaty with Russia.

3.1 Dependent Variable

The primary dependent variable is the number of members of six revolutionary groups in each prefecture and year between 1900 and 1906, which comes from Chang (1975) and Luo (1958). This period from 1900-1906 is when the revolution spread in China and among overseas Chinese.¹⁵ Chang (1975) gives the origins of the members of five revolutionary groups, and Luo (1958) provides the roster of the largest group, the Chinese Revolutionary Alliance. In total, there are 1,277 recorded revolutionaries with origins from 152 prefectures (Figure 5).

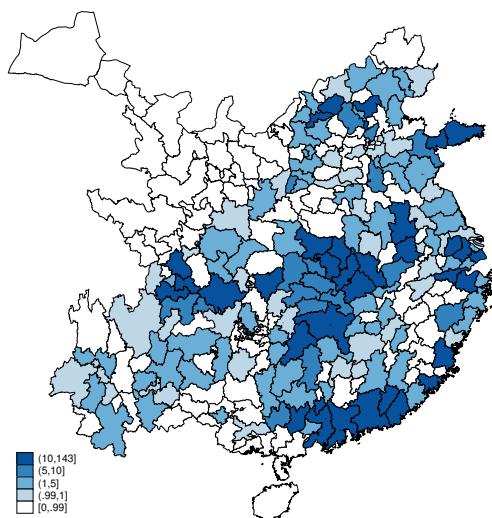


Figure 5: The distribution of revolutionaries, 1900-1906

3.2 Repression and Resistance

The first type of repression is massacre. Information about massacres is taken from research done by Cao (2001), which is based on official records of the Qing court, *Qing Shi Lu*. The second type of repression is literary inquisition. Based on research done at the Qing Imperial Archives in the 1930s, historians compiled 86 cases of the literary inquisition (Archives of the Museum of the Forbidden City 1934). The first type of resistance involves the “martyrs” of the Ming dynasty in

¹⁵1906 is chosen as the last year since the roster of the biggest group, *the Chinese Revolutionary Alliance*, is no longer complete after that year.

resistance against the Manchus' conquest.¹⁶ Qu Dajun (1630-1696) wrote a book to commemorate 385 leading figures who fought the Manchu invasion. The second type of resistance is that of Ming loyalists in the early Qing period. Sun (1912) collected the stories of approximately 520 Ming loyalists as well as their origins.¹⁷

I convert all four measures into dummies and sum them to produce a general index of the repression and resistance. **Figure 6** illustrates the regional distribution of the comprehensive index.

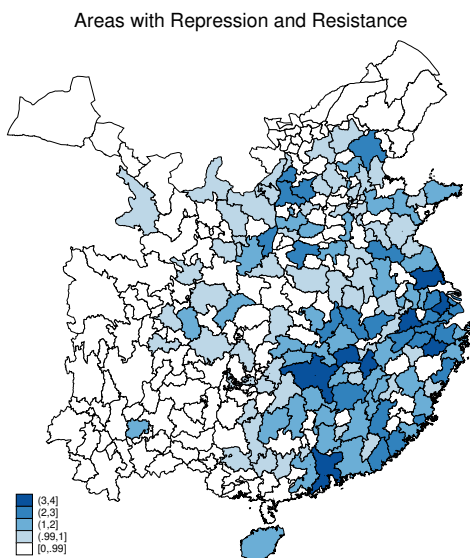


Figure 6: The distribution of repression and resistance

Notes: The above map shows the distribution of repression and resistance at prefecture level. zero means that there were no events in the prefecture. The value one to four refers to how many types of events happened in a prefecture.

3.3 The Anti-Manchu Propaganda in Newspapers

The newspaper articles are derived from the Full-text of Journals in the Late Qing Dynasty Database, which collects roughly 2.7 million articles from 300 newspapers published between 1853 and 1911. The database contains a brief description of each journal, including the head office,

¹⁶“Martyrs” here mean leading figures who died in the battles against the Manchu’s invasion. Although the Qing government forbade books from discussing these “martyrs,”; later in 1766 emperor Qianlong ordered officials to write a book to honor these Ming martyrs and praise their loyalty.

¹⁷The sample selection problem rises if the historical events were compiled or edited by revolutionaries. Among four main sources, the work of Cao (2001) and Archives of the Museum of the Forbidden City (1934) were all based on archives of the Qing court. Qu Dajun compiled his book in the 1690s. Only Sun (1912) can bring such correlation. Because of this, the correlation problem of coding is not an issue. I also provide results using alternative measures in [Appendix D.3](#).

founders, and topics.¹⁸ For the purpose of this study, the database contains 315,725 articles from 136 newspapers published between 1899 and 1906.¹⁹

The Share of Anti-Manchu Articles The database contains 9995 articles from 19 newspapers that were founded by revolutionaries. Following the method of Baker et al. (2016), I read all 9,995 articles and selected articles with an anti-Manchu sentiment using keywords and topics. The detailed criteria are as follows: 1) contains the word “Manchu” or “Han” and identifies the Manchus as different from Han Chinese; 2) mentions massacres in the early Qing period; 3) introduces the literary inquisition; 4) involves leading figures who fought against the Manchu’s conquest; 5) discusses Ming loyalists; 6) discusses other topics aimed at arousing the anti-Manchu sentiment.²⁰ Like Fouka and Voth (2021), I use the average share of anti-Manchu items to measure the anti-Manchu sentiment. I first calculate the percentage of anti-Manchu articles in newspaper j for year t and then use the average to construct the year-level index.²¹

$$share_t = \frac{1}{J} \sum_{j=1}^J \frac{\#anti_Manchu_articles_{j,t}}{\#articles_{j,t}}$$

Index from Machine Learning Two methodological issues call into question the validity of the anti-Manchu sentiment. One is the method’s subjectivity, and another is the possibility that propagandists published their articles in different newspapers. To alleviate these concerns, I employ machine learning to process all 0.3 million articles and identify articles containing anti-Manchu sentiment. The full text of items in the database are not in the digital version, therefore, I analyze the article titles instead. [Appendix C](#) introduces the machine learning models adopted here and it suggests that article titles work well to predict article context, with an accuracy rate of around 93%.

¹⁸Articles are in Chinese traditional characters in a vertical direction, which is contained in a PDF document. The current technology cannot not convert these texts into digital format using optical character recognition. Therefore, it is difficult to search for keywords or analyze the entire text of each article.

¹⁹I exclude newspapers founded by governments and churches, pictorials, professional newspapers, and newspapers written in English, and thus 136 among 211 newspapers are left.

²⁰Other topics include heroes and loyalists of Song dynasty who fought against foreign invasions such as Yue Fei (1103-1142) and Wen Tianxiang (1236-1283), the first emperor of Ming dynasty Zhu Yuanzhang (1328-1398) who ended the Mongol-led Yuan dynasty, and traitors to the Ming dynasty like Wu Sangui (1612-1678) and Hong Chengchou (1593-1665).

²¹From the database, it is not known where a newspaper circulated.

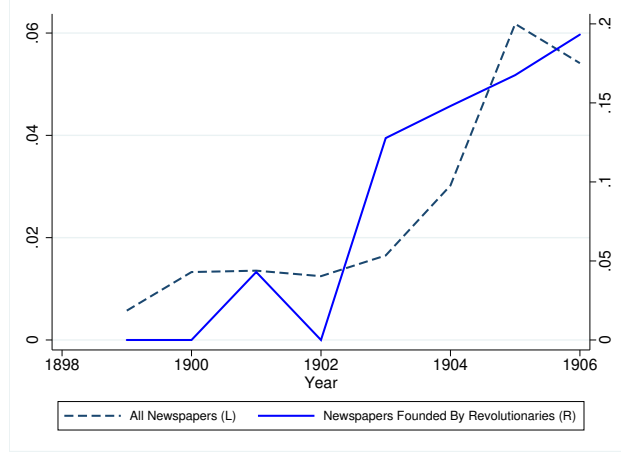


Figure 7: Index of the anti-Manchu sentiment

Notes: The left-hand y-axis is for the index from machine learning (dashed line), and the right-hand y-axis is for the index from 19 newspapers founded by revolutionaries (solid line).

After the trained model identifies 1,976 articles with an anti-Manchu sentiment, I include all newspapers and calculate the average share of anti-Manchu items. Figure 7 shows the time trends of both indices. The share of anti-Manchu articles in the 19 revolutionary newspapers surged in 1903, which aligns with the literature (Gasster 1969). However, the upturn of the index generated using machine learning happened after 1903. This difference might be because the anti-Manchu movement began in Japan, and it took time to spread to China.²²

3.4 Additional Variables

The main control variables are drawn from various sources. First, I control for demographic and geographical factors such as the population in 1880, area size, coast area, main rivers, basin Herfindahl-Hirschman Index and climate shocks.²³ Second, state capacity as measured by the land tax per capita in 1820 is included. Social capital is also considered, such as the language fragmentation index.²⁴ Additionally, I include human capital measures, including *Jinshi* density and newspaper

²²Nine of the 19 newspapers founded by the revolutionaries were based in Japan. But for all newspapers, most were located in China.

²³The Herfindahl-Hirschman index measures the fragmentation of basins.

²⁴The language fragmentation index is calculated by the ethnolinguistic fragmentation from Alesina and LaFerrara (2005). I draw on data from Bai and Jia (2016).

density.²⁵

4 Empirical Analysis

Figure 2 and Table A1 have shown a positive correlation between revolutionaries and historical repression and resistance, but how can we link one variable from two hundred years ago to another? In this section, I first include data to test if areas exposed to historical repression and resistance responded more actively to the anti-Manchu propaganda. Second, I provide some qualitative evidence that the anti-Manchu propaganda ultimately resulted in the genocide of the Manchus. Finally, I design an instrumental variable based on political cycles in the 17th century to repression and resistance, and I show that the main result is causal.

4.1 Main Result

How much more remarkable was the increase in revolutionary participation in areas with historical repression and resistance following exposure to anti-Manchu propaganda? I adopt a generalized difference-in-differences approach; the specification is as follows:

$$R_{pt} = \beta \text{Repression}_p * \text{Share}_{t-1} + X_p * \gamma_t + R_{p,t-1} + \delta_{prov} * \gamma_t + \lambda_p + \gamma_t + \epsilon_{pt}$$

Where R_{pt} is the number of revolutionaries in prefecture p and year t , and Share_{t-1} is the share of anti-Manchu articles on newspapers one year before year t . To avoid reverse causality, I choose $t - 1$ because most of the newspapers that published anti-Manchu articles were founded by people who had joined the revolutionary groups.²⁶ Repression_p refers to the index of historical repression and resistance. X_p includes prefecture-level control variables listed in Section 3.4. The specification also includes the prefecture fixed effect λ_p and year fixed effect γ_t . To control for provincial-specific trends, I add the interaction of the province fixed effect and year fixed effect $\delta_{prov} * \gamma_t$. I also control

²⁵The circulation of newspapers remains unknown, and thus I count the number of newspapers based on headquarters.

²⁶For example, *Min Bao*, was the official newspaper of the Chinese Revolutionary Alliance.

for the lagged term $R_{p,t-1}$ when all control variables are added.

The main result is shown in [Table 1](#). In Columns 1-3, I adopt the anti-Manchu sentiment index based on the 19 revolutionary newspapers while replacing it with the index produced by machine learning in Columns 4-6. Prefecture fixed effect and year fixed effect are included in Columns 1 and 4, whereas province-specific trends are further included in Columns 2 and 5. In Columns 3 and 6, I add interactions between a set of controls and the year fixed effect. Column 3 implies that, relative to prefectures without the repression and resistance, a prefecture with average exposure to the repression and resistance experienced an increase of 0.33 revolutionaries impacted by the propaganda. The effect of using the machine learning-based index in Column (6) is 0.38.

Table 1: Main Results

	<i>revolutionaries</i> (mean: 0.68)					
	19 newspapers founded by revolutionaries			all newspapers (machine learning)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
<i>Repression</i> × <i>Share</i> _{<i>t</i>-1}	6.422** (2.654)	8.825*** (3.047)	5.309*** (1.989)	26.62** (10.37)	37.73*** (12.21)	19.46** (8.819)
Prefecture FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Year FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<i>Province</i> × <i>Year FE</i>	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
<i>Controls</i> × <i>Year FE</i>	N	N	Y	N	N	Y
<i>L.revolutionaries</i>	N	N	Y	N	N	Y
Observations	1,925	1,925	1,799	1,925	1,925	1,799
R-squared	0.123	0.271	0.406	0.127	0.279	0.404
Number of prefectures	275	275	257	275	275	257

Notes: The dependent variable is the number of revolutionaries in a prefecture in one year. *Share*_{*t*-1} is the share of anti-Manchu articles one year before year *t*. The controls include population in 1880, area size, coast area, main rivers, Basin HHI, climate shocks, tax per capita in 1820, language fragmentation, *Jinshi* density and newspaper density. **p*<0.1; ***p*<0.05; ****p*<0.01. Standard Errors are controlled at the prefecture level.

To ensure that the conclusion is solid, I conduct a few checks on the main result in [Appendix D](#). First, although how the newspapers were distributed remains unknown, I put an attempt to account for regional variations in the propaganda measure by multiplying *Share*_{*p,t*-1} by the number of post offices, the reverse of the distance to Shanghai, the lagged number of revolutionaries, and the number of Chinese students studying in Japan ([Appendix D.1](#)). I find that personal networks and post offices may be the dissemination pathways for these newspapers. Second, since I employ dynamic panel data and the unobserved panel-level effects are correlated with the lags of the dependent variable, I thus adopt the Arellano - Bond estimator ([Appendix D.2](#)). Third, for the

measurement error problem, I provide results using alternative measures of repression and resistance as well as the propaganda ([Appendix D.3](#)).²⁷ Fourth, I extend the study period to 1894, when the first group was founded ([Appendix D.4](#)). Lastly, I separate the repression and resistance measure into four continuous variables and find that the result for resistance is significant while that for repression measure is not ([Appendix D.5](#)). I explain that the distinction comes about because literary works about resistance were well preserved since they were not as frequently subject to censorship. The pattern strengthens the argument for the main mechanism and will be discussed further in [Appendix F.5](#).

4.2 Qualitative Evidence

The anti-Manchu propaganda was also used to inspire uprisings during the 1911 Revolution. In the wake of the victory of the revolution in Wuchang, mass killings of the Manchu civilians began across Chinese cities. This included what happened at Wuchang, where some 10,000 Manchus were butchered, and in Xi'an, with the slaughter of 20,000 Manchus (Rhoads 2000). The revolutionaries proclaimed, “Now to seek our revenge, we rightly ought to exterminate Manchus with all our might and so dissipate our compatriots’ pent-up hatred.” To inspire the uprising, the revolutionaries cited historical repression. They circulated flyers warning that the Manchu authorities would massacre the Han people if the revolution failed, just as they had done two hundred years ago (Jia 2011).

4.3 Instrumental Variable Estimation

4.3.1 Change in *Jinshis* as the Instrumental Variable

The historical events were unlikely to have been randomly allocated among prefectures. People in some locations, for example, may have been more loyal to the Han-Chinese authorities, as seen by their violent resistance in the mid-17th century and active participation in revolution in the early 20th century. As a result, the omitted variable is one problem concerning endogeneity, and

²⁷One concern about the measurement error is that sources like inquisition were collected from official archives. To alleviate this, I adopt other sources compiled by independent scholars. See [Appendix D.3](#).

an instrumental variable is required.

Like the *grande école* in France, China had a civil exam system that was designed to select elites for its administration since the 10th century. *Jinshi* was the the highest qualification in the exam, and the degree holders were promised they would be nominated to a position in the government (Chen et al. 2020).²⁸ When reading the stories of repression and resistance, I find that senior intellectuals, specifically *Jinshi* degree holders, played a key role in the conflicts of the mid-17th century.²⁹ The regional distribution of *Jinshis*, on the other hand, may be endogenous and strongly correlated with several confounding variables, including human capital and elite culture. As a result, I trace each *Jinshi*'s political choices and check for systematic patterns.

In the book *The Great Enterprises* (Wakeman 1985), historian Frederic Wakeman compared *Jinshis*' political choices in the fall of Beijing to peasant rebellions in April 1644. He wrote, “Recent degree-graduates who had not yet had an opportunity to hold office for very long were the most likely to join the rebel regime.” Figure 8 (a) supports Wakeman’s statement. When Beijing fell in 1644, the young *Jinshi* cohort (1628 - 1643) was more likely to surrender to the rebellion regime.

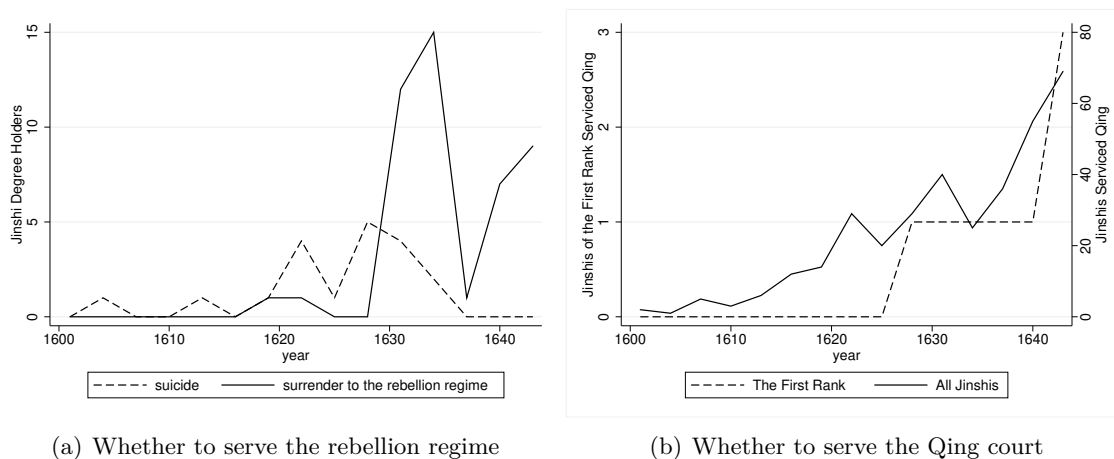


Figure 8: *Jinshis*' political choices around 1644

Notes: In (a), to suicide means that the *Jinshi* kept loyalty to the Ming dynasty. In (b), the first rank means the top three candidates in the exam.

²⁸See Ho (1962) for detailed discussion about the civil exam system and its function.

²⁹For instance, Shi Kefa, who received *Jinshi* in 1628, organized Yangzhou’s defense. Qu Shisi (1590-1651), who obtained his *Jinshi* degree in 1616, served for the Southern Ming’s Yongli court and led the military resistance against the Manchus.

Since most *Jinshi* degree holders were from wealthy families and controlled local resources (Ho 1962), their political decisions impacted whether a region organized resistance and consequently experienced repression. Based on Wakeman’s observation, was the young cohort more likely to give up resistance and serve the Qing court? And did they bring less repression to their hometowns? To answer this question, I draw on biographies of 1,417 *Jinshis* who received degrees between 1601 and 1643, and collate their characteristics and political choices.³⁰ Figure 8 (b) shows that *Jinshis* were more likely to work for the Qing court if they received their degrees later.³¹ In Appendix E.1, I regress a dummy variable on whether to serve the Qing court on the exam year, and find that the argument is statistically significant. In Appendix E.2, I also check the incentives making young *Jinshis* more likely to serve the Qing court. I find that age, a proxy of *Jinshi*’s lifelong concern with career, was the driving force.

If a prefecture produced more *Jinshis* in the last few years before the Manchu’s invasion, those *Jinshis* were more likely to surrender to the new regime; correspondingly, there would be less resistance and repression in this prefecture.³² Based on this, I formulate the instrumental variable as the difference between *Jinshis* from the reign of the last emperor (1628-1643) and that from the early period (1601-1625), $\Delta Jinshi_p = \sum_{t=1628}^{1643} Jinshi_{pt} - \sum_{t=1601}^{1625} Jinshi_{pt}$. The IV design’s logic chain is shown in Figure 9.

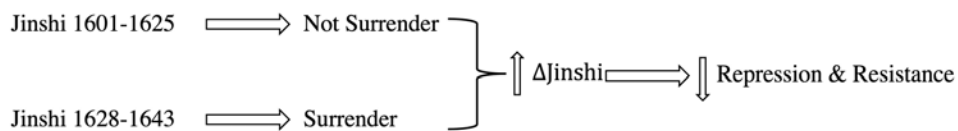


Figure 9: The logic chain of the IV design

The table below confirms that the IV is negatively correlated with the repression and resistance measures.

³⁰In the final 44 years of Ming dynasty, the government nominated 5,104 *Jinshis*. From biographies on Wiki, I can only know that 1,417 of them were still alive in 1644.

³¹Given each exam year, around 300 candidates would be nominated as *Jinshis*, a high number means a higher ratio.

³²Some *Jinshis* participated in the conflicts while they were in their hometowns. For instance, Chen Zizhuang (1596-1647), who earned his *Jinshi* degree in 1619, was responsible for organizing the resistance in his hometown Guangzhou. Some *Jinshis* weren’t in their hometowns, yet they had the power to influence the locals.

	Repression	Massacre	Inquisition	ln(martyrs+1)	ln(loyalists+1)
$\Delta Jinshi$	-0.29	-0.16	-0.25	-0.28	-0.35

4.3.2 Exclusion Restrictions

A unique advantage of the IV is that the variation resulting from political cycles is exogenous to *Jinshis*' political choices later in 1644. By regressing the repression and resistance to change in *Jinshis* every 25 years over two centuries from 1500 to 1695, I find that the correlation between change in *Jinshis* and the repression and resistance measure is negative only for the IV, while it shows a positive correlation in the early or late period (Figure 10). Furthermore, it seems that the coefficients fluctuates up and down on a regular basis, which means that for every 25 years change in *jinshis* reversed (Appendix E.3). A possible explanation for this is political cycles. Once a new faction controlled the central government, they might nominate more candidates from their hometowns.³³

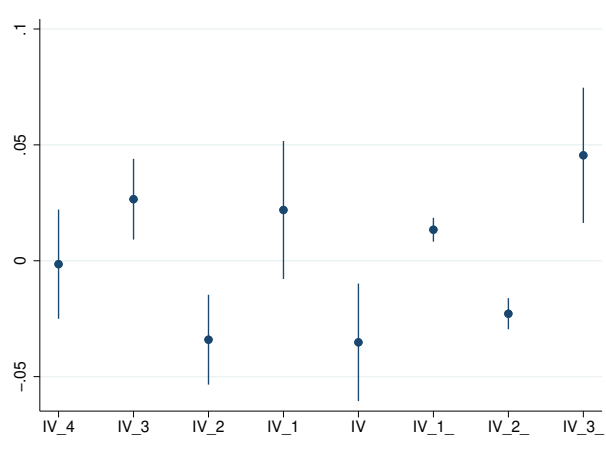


Figure 10: Correlation between $\Delta Jinshi$ and *repression*

Notes: Here I regressed change in *Jinshis* for every 25 years on the repression and resistance measure. I controlled the province fixed effect. $IV_4 = \sum_{1525}^{1549} Jinshi - \sum_{1500}^{1524} Jinshi$, $IV_3 = \sum_{1550}^{1574} Jinshi - \sum_{1525}^{1549} Jinshi$, $IV_2 = \sum_{1575}^{1599} Jinshi - \sum_{1550}^{1574} Jinshi$, $IV_1 = \sum_{1600}^{1627} Jinshi - \sum_{1575}^{1599} Jinshi$, $IV_1_ = \sum_{1645}^{1669} Jinshi - \sum_{1628}^{1644} Jinshi$, $IV_2_ = \sum_{1670}^{1694} Jinshi - \sum_{1645}^{1669} Jinshi$, $IV_2 = \sum_{1695}^{1719} Jinshi - \sum_{1670}^{1694} Jinshi$.

A concern regarding the exclusion restriction of the IV is that in the final years of the Ming

³³Keller et al. (2022) confirms that the regional concentration of *Jinshi* flow is highly correlated with political cycles, namely, tenures of emperors.

dynasty, elites in certain areas became less supportive of the Ming empire, did not take the exam, and consequently produced fewer *Jinshis*. If that is the case, the IV may have been related to other omitted variables like loyalty culture, which correlates with the independent variable and the outcome variable. For two reasons, this may not be a major issue. First, before the year 1644, the Manchu's invasion was unanticipated. To climb the social ladder, it might have been a unique approach to take the exam and earn a degree. Second, I reject this hypothesis in [Appendix E.1](#) by demonstrating that, after controlling for the prefecture fixed effect, the results show the young cohort was more likely to surrender to the Qing court.

While the IV is pre-determined and exogenous to the conflicts in 1644, I confirm that it is not correlated with other omitted variables. In the [Appendix E.3](#), I regress several variables, including weather conditions, drought and plague in the late Ming period, and the number of post stations, on the IV. Those factors are thought to contribute to the outbreak of the peasant rebellions that overturned the Ming empire and afterwards had an impact on the Ming-Qing warfare. All the factors seem to have been unrelated to the IV. In addition, the IV has no relationship with whether a prefecture had ever been attacked by a peasant uprising, the depopulation brought on by natural disasters and war, the distance to princedoms that would organize resistance, or the distance to Nanjing which served as the second capital of the Ming empire and the capital of South Ming.

4.3.3 Instrumented Results

In [Table 2](#), I present the results using change in *Jinshis* as an IV for the repression and resistance. Column 1 displays the result from [Table 1](#) for comparison. The reduced-form result is in Column 2. Columns 3 and 4 present the findings from the first stage and the second stage. The first stage is strong, with an F-statistic of 57.23 (or 55.11 in Panel B) that is significantly higher than the rule-of-thumb cutoff. The propaganda's estimated effect using IV is larger than the OLS estimate. The IV estimate supports the claim that the link is causal.

Table 2: IV estimation

VARIABLES	Table 1	Reduce Form	First Stage	IV
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	<i>revolutionaries</i>	<i>revolutionaries</i>	<i>Repression</i> \times <i>Share</i> _{<i>t</i>-1}}	<i>revolutionaries</i>
Panel A. 19 revolutionary newspapers				
<i>Repression</i> \times <i>Share</i> _{<i>t</i>-1}}	5.309*** (1.989)			13.41* (7.908)
Δ <i>Jinshi</i> \times <i>Share</i> _{<i>t</i>-1}}		-0.327* (0.179)	-0.0244** (0.0104)	
R-squared	0.406	0.398	0.731	0.378
F-stat				57.23
Panel B. all newspapers (machine learning)				
<i>Repression</i> \times <i>Share</i> _{<i>t</i>-1}}	19.46** (8.600)			69.62* (39.13)
Δ <i>Jinshi</i> \times <i>Share</i> _{<i>t</i>-1}}		-1.657** (0.823)	-0.0238** (0.0103)	
R-squared	0.404	0.400	0.734	0.337
F-stat				55.11
Prefecture FE	Y	Y	Y	Y
Year FE	Y	Y	Y	Y
<i>Province</i> \times <i>Year</i> FE	Y	Y	Y	Y
<i>Controls</i> \times <i>Year</i> FE	Y	Y	Y	Y
<i>L.revolutionaries</i>	Y	Y	Y	Y
Observations	1,799	1,799	1,799	1,799
Number of pref	257	257	257	257

5 Mechanism

5.1 Deep Culture

Why did areas with historical repression and resistance respond more actively to the anti-Manchu propaganda? A possible explanation is that these locations preserved memories of repression and resistance via books, folktales, dramas, rituals, and secret societies.³⁴

Books: Although the Qing government sought to control collective memory through book bans and literary inquisitions, private collectors still secretly preserved literature on these sensitive issues. The banned book depicting the Yangzhou massacre, *A Record of Ten Days in Yangzhou*, was reprinted during Daoguang’s reign 1821-1850 (Wang 2013). Another instance in 1867 saw top official Zeng Guofan (1811-1872) and his staff discussing about the massacres and questioning

³⁴The historical drama *The Peach Blossom Fan* (Taohuashan) published in 1699 retelled for common theatre-goers a romantic love-story but also documented the collapse of the Ming dynasty, as well as repression and resistance such as Shi Kefa’s defence in Yangzhou and the Yangzhou Massacre.

the legitimacy of the Qing empire. The evidence suggests that books documenting repression and resistance survived under the harsh censorship campaign for over one hundred years.

History books helped to preserve memories of repression and resistance and may have influenced local culture. The case of the Ming loyalist Wang Fuzhi suggests that Wang's family made efforts to preserve his works and reprinted his books in 1839 (Platt 2007). Wang's works influenced elites in his hometown, Hunan province. Zeng Guofan, also from Hunan, funded the large-scale reprint of Wang's books in 1865. Wang's theory of ethnicity and legitimacy was popularized through this reprinting activity, which was even praised by revolutionaries in 1906.

Historical memories can also be preserved through inter-family transmission. The leading propagandist, Zhang Taiyang (1869-1936), wrote in his autobiography that his anti-Manchu theory began to shape when his grandfather first taught him the story of literary inquisitions which were documented in a book, *Donghualu*.

Rituals: According to Zhang Taiyan's autobiography, since it was forbidden to wear Ming-style clothing while they were alive, his forefathers wore it when they passed away. His clan maintained this tradition for nine generations after establishing it in the mid-17th century. In another instance, a family retained an article of Ming-style clothing for two hundred years (Wang 2003).

The preservation of history books and the Ming clothing does not necessarily imply that these families always held the anti-Manchu sentiments. [Appendix F.1](#) shows that the repression and resistance did not produce an area that was difficult for the Qing government to control. Later generations may have even worked for the Qing court to further their professional ambitions and safeguard their families' interests (He 1991). And average citizens might not have been aware of the distinction between the Manchus and Han.³⁵ As a result, deep cultural traits such as books and rituals helped local elites to preserve the ethnic traditions that distinguished them from the Manchus. Once anti-Manchu propaganda gained strength, those people were readily persuaded to identify as Han Chinese (Wang 2003).

³⁵After the success of the 1911 Revolution, when the republic government demanded that every male citizen cut the braids that had been forcibly ordered by the Qing court since 1644, many people resisted. This example implies that Han commoners did not have a clear ethnic consciousness between the Manchus and the Han.

How might we gauge how well the historical memories have been preserved? Systematic evidence of rituals and dramas may no longer exist. In 1782, the Qing government completed a book-collection project, *Siku Quanshu* (the Complete Library of the Four Treasuries), which aimed to collect all important books. In this project, the emperor ordered editors to compile a list of books that should be banned, including some writings by Ming loyalists as well as publications by scholars who lived in the 18th century.³⁶ These publications provided historical documents of the Manchu invasion, together with repression and resistance ([Appendix F.2](#)). If these publications were still being written, retained, or printed in the 18th century, we can assume that the authors' hometowns preserved related historical memories. To assess the variance in historical memories, I gather information from *Siku Quanshu* about banned books and the hometowns of authors.³⁷ Panels A and Panel B of [Table 3](#) demonstrate that the impact of propaganda is noticeably stronger in regions with a greater number of banned books and banned-book authors.

Secret Societies: In pre-modern communities, religion was one of the main sources of broader collective identity (Gat 2012). Identified by the state as heterodox, religious secret societies played a role in preserving historical memories among commoners. One of the secret societies, Tiandihui (The Heaven and Earth Society), founded in 1761, was a fraternal organization and historically, a secretive folk religious sect in the vein of the Ming loyalists. Members of Tiandihui vowed to devote themselves to the mission of “Fan Qing Fu Ming (Destroy the Qing, restore the Ming)” ([Appendix F.3](#)). Throughout the 19th century, Tiandihui trained its members and launched 85 uprisings in southeast China. In 1904, the top revolutionary leader Sun Yat-sen began to collaborate with the society.

I collate secret societies' activities during the Qing dynasty from Liu and Li (2006) and construct a prefecture-level measure. Panels C and D show that the results for secret societies and the Tiandihui are not significant. Given that the revolutionaries throughout the studied period were

³⁶This is a different measure from the Ming loyalists. Some of the authors of these forbidden works may not be Ming loyalists, and a proportion of them were born in the eighteenth century. And unlike the Ming loyalists who lived in the period around 1644, these publications might circulate for centuries (see [Figure F.2](#)).

³⁷One concern is that because these books have been banned since 1782, readers may not have had access to them between that year and 1900. This casts doubt on the efficacy of the preservation of historical memories. Fortunately, the source I use (The Committee for the Compilation of the Banned Books in the Four Treasuries 1997) only includes banned books that the printed copies still exist today. Therefore, if we can access these banned publications, so should someone who lived between 1782 and 1900.

elites, it makes sense that literary works played a greater role in preserving historical memories (more evidence in [Appendix F.4](#)).

Table 3: The effect of preservation

	<i>revolutionaries</i>					
	19 newspapers founded by revolutionaries			all newspapers (machine learning)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Panel A Books						
$\ln(\text{Banned books} + 1) \times \text{Share}_{t-1}$	9.215** (4.335)	12.60*** (4.691)	8.092** (3.279)	40.41** (17.63)	56.53*** (19.20)	35.04** (15.37)
R-squared	0.120	0.272	0.409	0.128	0.286	0.412
Panel B Authors						
$\ln(\text{Authors} + 1) \times \text{Share}_{t-1}$	11.27** (5.581)	15.83** (6.166)	10.47** (4.394)	48.17** (21.78)	68.76*** (24.05)	42.25** (18.73)
R-squared	0.122	0.276	0.411	0.128	0.287	0.411
Panel C Secret Societies						
$\text{Secret society} \times \text{Share}_{t-1}$	1.937 (1.212)	2.629* (1.428)	1.321* (0.781)	10.50* (6.281)	13.47* (7.211)	6.232 (4.434)
R-squared	0.092	0.233	0.397	0.099	0.240	0.397
Panel D The Heaven and Earth Society						
$\text{Tiandihui} \times \text{Share}_{t-1}$	0.775 (2.097)	1.618 (2.395)	1.178 (1.268)	7.540 (11.73)	10.42 (13.18)	5.760 (8.492)
R-squared	0.085	0.224	0.395	0.088	0.227	0.396
Prefecture FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Year FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<i>Province * Year FE</i>	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
<i>Controls * Year FE</i>	N	N	Y	N	N	Y
<i>L.revolutionaries</i>	N	N	Y	N	N	Y
Observations	1,925	1,925	1,799	1,925	1,925	1,799
Number of pref	275	275	257	275	275	257

5.2 Recognition of Repression and Resistance by the Propaganda Machine

A second possible explanation is that the newspapers revealed the hidden historical truth to readers, and then fanned the flame of discontent among elites from areas had experienced repression and resistance. Did the recognition of repression and resistance in the newspapers help local elites to recall historical memories? To address this question, I count mentions of repression and resistance in newspapers, define the events appeared in newspapers as the “recognized” repression and resistance, and then run the main specification. [Appendix F.6](#) shows that only a proportion of historical events were discussed in newspapers compared to the full sample.

Table 4 presents the findings. Panel A demonstrates that prefectures with more “recognized” repression and resistance did not produce significantly more revolutionaries as a result of the propaganda. In Panel B, I use the original repression and resistance measure but keep only prefectures that were mentioned in newspapers, which means repression and resistance from “recognized” prefectures. Again, the coefficients are insignificant in Panel B. The findings imply that the recognition of repression and resistance by the propaganda machine has little effect on revolution mobilization. To put it another way, local elites may have previously been aware of these historical events and did not need newspapers to inform them that the Qing government oppressed the Han populace 200 years previously. The outcome supports the argument for a deep culture mechanism.

Table 4: The effect of recognition by newspapers

	<i>revolutionaries</i>					
	19 newspapers founded by revolutionaries			all newspapers (machine learning)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Panel A						
<i>Recognized Repression</i> \times <i>Share</i> _{<i>t</i>-1}	4.212 (3.274)	5.865* (3.420)	2.708 (3.474)	23.86 (18.44)	32.59 (20.35)	16.84 (20.16)
R-squared	0.090	0.230	0.396	0.096	0.238	0.397
Panel B						
<i>Repression (recognized pref)</i> \times <i>Share</i> _{<i>t</i>-1}	2.143 (1.698)	3.486* (1.955)	1.143 (1.995)	11.32 (9.250)	18.35* (10.92)	5.462 (10.64)
R-squared	0.088	0.228	0.395	0.090	0.233	0.395
Prefecture FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Year FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<i>Province * Year FE</i>	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
<i>Controls * Year FE</i>	N	N	Y	N	N	Y
<i>L.revolutionaries</i>	N	N	Y	N	N	Y
Observations	1,925	1,925	1,799	1,925	1,925	1,799
Number of pref	275	275	257	275	275	257

6 Robustness Checks

6.1 Alternative Hypotheses

Another main concern on the main findings is that the propaganda might be concurrent with other shocks. To alleviate this concern, I incorporate other explanatory factors in the specification. Alternative hypotheses include the abolition of the exam system, anti-missionary conflict, access

to information, the influence of the Taiping Rebellion, and Manchu-Han conflicts. In this section, I will discuss only three main alternative hypotheses. The rest will be included in [Appendix G](#).

6.1.1 The Abolition of the Exam System

The exam system, which gave commoners a chance to ascend the social ladder, was one of the most important institutions in Chinese history (Elman 2000). The Qing government abruptly terminated the exam system in 1905 so that it could swiftly adopt a modern education system. Bai and Jia (2016) pointed out that abolishing the exam system resulted in commoners joining the revolutionary campaign to change their social status. They found that the greater the exam quota in a prefecture prior to abolishing the exam, the greater the prefecture's participation in the revolutionary groups between 1905 and 1906.

To test if the exam quotas hypothesis negates the effect of repression and resistance, I use two different specifications. First, in Panel A of [Table 5](#), I add an interaction term between the exam quota per capita and the anti-Manchu sentiment.³⁸ Further, in Panel B, I include an interaction term between the post-1905 dummy and quotas per capita, which is the same as the primary specification in Bai and Jia (2016). After adding all controls, the coefficients of the interaction between repression and resistance and the anti-Manchu index remain significantly positive in both panels.

6.1.2 Access to Information

Another hypothesis is that individuals educated in foreign schools or living in cities influenced by foreign cultures were more likely to be exposed to revolution ideology. I adopt six variables to measure foreign impact and modern technology: treaty ports, post agencies, telegraph stations, distance to Shanghai, modern firms, and Chinese students in Japan.

According to [Table 6](#), only modern firms and Chinese students in Japan have a significantly positive effect on revolutionary participation, along with propaganda. However, the impact of

³⁸I draw on the exam quotas data from Bai and Jia (2016).

Table 5: Alternative hypothesis: the abolition of the exam system

	<i>revolutionaries</i>					
	19 newspapers founded by revolutionaries			all newspapers (machine learning)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Panel A						
$\overline{Repression * Share_{t-1}}$	6.425** (2.667)	8.719*** (3.073)	5.092** (2.010)	26.55** (10.41)	37.17*** (12.23)	18.50** (8.552)
$\ln(\frac{quota}{pop}) * Share_{t-1}$	-6.012*** (1.807)	-4.096** (1.804)	3.344* (1.988)	-23.42*** (7.718)	-16.46** (8.075)	15.47 (9.763)
R-squared	0.138	0.279	0.407	0.141	0.286	0.406
Panel B						
$\overline{Repression * Share_{t-1}}$	3.817 (2.520)	5.918** (2.843)	5.014** (1.983)	15.80 (9.725)	25.82** (11.08)	18.19** (8.479)
$\ln(\frac{quota}{pop}) * post05$	-0.0666 (0.237)	0.470 (0.309)	0.897** (0.381)	-0.105 (0.242)	0.408 (0.298)	0.901** (0.368)
R-squared	0.167	0.309	0.409	0.168	0.313	0.408
Prefecture FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Year FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<i>Province * Year FE</i>	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
<i>Controls * FE</i>	N	N	Y	N	N	Y
<i>L.revolutionaries</i>	N	N	Y	N	N	Y
Observations	1,834	1,834	1,799	1,834	1,834	1,799
Number of prefid	262	262	257	262	262	257

treaty ports, post agencies, telegraph stations, and the distance to Shanghai is negligible. The fact that nearly all leaders of the revolutionary campaign were in Japan at that time and Tokyo served as a base for the propaganda explains this result. In addition, the propaganda relied on modern printing techniques, which helps to explain why its effect was stronger in prefectures with more modern firms. Across all specifications, the coefficients of the interaction between repression and resistance and the anti-Manchu sentiment remain robust.

6.1.3 Manchu-Han Conflicts

All throughout the Qing dynasty, the Manchus enjoyed political, economic, social, and legal privileges. First, a disproportionate number of positions in the government, including key positions, were reserved for Manchus. Second, the Manchu commoners did not need to work but received a stipend from the government. Third, the Han and Manchus lived in separate communities and self-segregated from one other. Manchu-Han marriage was also forbidden by the Qing government

Table 6: Alternative hypothesis: access to information

VARIABLES	<i>revolutionaries</i>							
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Panel A. 19 revolutionary newspapers								
<i>Repression * Share_{t-1}</i>	5.310*** (1.988)	5.310*** (1.987)	5.297*** (1.991)	6.832** (2.835)	6.834** (2.794)	6.453** (2.787)	4.004** (1.890)	3.856** (1.795)
<i>Treaty * Share_{t-1}</i>	2.114 (4.996)							-2.496 (4.875)
<i>Post of fice * Share_{t-1}</i>		0.0835 (5.434)						-2.287 (5.610)
<i>Telegraph * Share_{t-1}</i>			7.136 (8.512)					3.970 (6.503)
<i>Japan students * Share_{t-1}</i>				11.26** (5.113)				6.491** (2.967)
<i>Dis_Shanghai * Share_{t-1}</i>					0.00143 (0.00876)			0.00145 (0.00704)
<i>Urbanization * Share_{t-1}</i>						-1.939* (1.065)		-1.028 (0.756)
<i>ln(firm + 1) * Share_{t-1}</i>							0.740*** (0.117)	0.751*** (0.107)
R-squared	0.407	0.406	0.407	0.348	0.343	0.348	0.426	0.430
Panel A. all newspapers (machine learning)								
<i>Repression * Share_{t-1}</i>	19.49** (8.553)	19.36** (8.607)	19.43** (8.602)	26.95** (11.39)	27.69** (11.41)	25.79** (11.37)	12.88* (7.048)	12.28* (6.892)
<i>Treaty * Share_{t-1}</i>	17.04 (24.01)							-5.379 (20.27)
<i>Post of fice * Share_{t-1}</i>		-20.08 (26.05)						-29.83 (25.58)
<i>Telegraph * Share_{t-1}</i>			21.19 (41.46)					10.57 (30.24)
<i>Japan students * Share_{t-1}</i>				46.08** (20.58)				27.70** (12.31)
<i>Dis_Shanghai * Share_{t-1}</i>					0.0243 (0.0364)			0.0235 (0.0285)
<i>Urbanization * Share_{t-1}</i>						-8.338* (4.564)		-4.319 (3.340)
<i>ln(firm + 1) * Share_{t-1}</i>							3.435*** (0.657)	3.467*** (0.582)
R-squared	0.405	0.405	0.405	0.349	0.344	0.349	0.439	0.445
Prefecture FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Year FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<i>Province * YearFE</i>	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<i>Controls * YearFE</i>	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<i>L.revolutionaries</i>	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Observations	1,799	1,799	1,799	1,799	1,799	1,799	1,799	1,799
Number of prefid	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257

(Rhoads 2000). Fourth, the Manchus had special privileges when caught in a judicial dispute (Liu 2019).

It is possible to hypothesize that during the 250 years of Manchu rule, continuous tensions between the Han people and Manchus served as a catalyst for revolution, particularly during periods when anti-Manchu propaganda inflamed Han nationalism. Conflicts between the Manchus and Han

are not accessible today. Instead, I use the banner garrisons and the banner people (the core group were Manchus) in each prefecture as a proxy for the broader Manchu - Han conflict (Fu 1796). This is because only when the Manchus lived in a prefecture could there be disputes with the Han people.

In [Table 7](#), I show that the coefficients of interactions between the Manchu-Han conflict measures and the anti-Manchu index are not significant, which implies that neither the Manchu-Han conflicts nor the Manchus' presence affected revolution participation. Again, the coefficients of the main variable of interest stay significantly positive.

Table 7: Alternative hypothesis: Manchu-Han conflicts

	<i>revolutionaries</i>			
	19 newspapers founded by revolutionaries		all newspapers (machine learning)	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
<i>Repression * Share_{t-1}</i>	5.375*** (2.014)	5.323*** (1.999)	19.60** (8.658)	19.41** (8.522)
<i>Banner garrisons * Share_{t-1}</i>	-0.997 (0.710)		-2.030 (3.940)	
<i>ln(Banners + 1) * Share_{t-1}</i>		-0.366 (0.662)		1.325 (3.321)
Prefecture FE	Y	Y	Y	Y
Year FE	Y	Y	Y	Y
<i>Province * Year FE</i>	Y	Y	Y	Y
<i>Controls * Year FE</i>	Y	Y	Y	Y
<i>L.revolutionaries</i>	Y	Y	Y	Y
Observations	1,799	1,799	1,799	1,799
R-squared	0.407	0.407	0.404	0.405
Number of pref	257	257	257	257

6.2 Other Sentiments in the Propaganda

In the propaganda, revolutionaries also adopted other stances to question the legitimacy of the Qing government, including anti-imperialism, pro-industrialization, and pro-democracy. In the meantime, another elite faction known as the constitutionalists hoped to achieve constitutional reform by following the Meiji Restoration in Japan in the hopes of helping the Manchu monarchy maintain power. Revolutionaries were forced to compete with constitutionalists for influence in and money from overseas Chinese communities.

To determine whether other sentiments in the revolutionary propaganda drive the results, I add

Table 8: Other sentiments in the propaganda

VARIABLES	<i>revolutionaries</i>							
	19 newspapers founded by revolutionaries				all newspapers (machine learning)			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
<i>Repression * anti – Manchu</i> _{<i>t</i>-1}	6.300** (2.979)	6.675** (2.981)	5.265*** (1.980)	6.252** (3.118)	16.22* (8.239)	18.66** (8.651)	20.10** (8.930)	15.27* (8.928)
<i>Repression * anti – imperialism</i> _{<i>t</i>-1}	-1.565 (2.688)				16.97** (7.097)			
<i>Repression * industrialization</i> _{<i>t</i>-1}		-8.377 (10.81)				29.07 (26.58)		
<i>Repression * democracy</i> _{<i>t</i>-1}			-0.994** (0.440)				-19.40 (17.83)	
<i>Repression * constitutionalism</i> _{<i>t</i>-1}				-0.0705 (0.157)				0.144 (0.104)
Prefecture FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Year FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<i>Province * Year FE</i>	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<i>Controls * FE</i>	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<i>L.revolutionaries</i>	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Observations	1,799	1,799	1,799	1,799	1,799	1,799	1,799	1,799
R-squared	0.407	0.407	0.407	0.406	0.408	0.406	0.405	0.406
Number of prefid	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257

the interactions between these indices and the repression and resistance measure.³⁹ Table 8 shows that the interactions between other sentiments and the repression measure have no robust effect on revolutionaries. Additionally, I use the number of newspapers founded by constitutionalists to measure the competing propaganda. In Column 4 and 8, I do not find any significant relationship between constitutionalists' propaganda and revolutionaries.

7 Consolidation After The 1911 Revolution

Based on the results shown above, revolutionaries were mobilized by the anti-Manchu propaganda and dedicated themselves to overthrowing the Manchu-led Qing government. This section examines the role of revolutionaries motivated by nationalism during the republic area (1911-1949). It is commonly accepted that revolutionaries created the KMT (Kuomintang, also referred to as the Chinese Nationalist Party) and aimed to create a republican nation-state. Appendix H provides a thorough overview of the historical context of the period after 1911.

I regress several outcomes of nation-state building, including KMT representatives in the first

³⁹The method used to construct the anti-Manchu index is used to create indices of other sentiments.

Table 9: The role of revolutionaries during the republic area (1911-1949)

VARIABLES	1st National assembly		Party leaders	Army		Government
	(1)	(2)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
	KMT	non-KMT	KMT central committee	student soldier	army general	KMT officials
<hr/>						
Panel. A						
<i>Repression</i>	0.475*** (0.143)	0.013 (0.104)	0.575*** (0.191)	8.600*** (2.821)	5.674*** (2.046)	5.080*** (1.557)
R-squared	0.515	0.463	0.423	0.473	0.450	0.541
<hr/>						
Panel.B						
<i>Revolutionaries</i>	0.064*** (0.008)	-0.001 (0.007)	0.105*** (0.018)	1.357** (0.631)	1.298*** (0.374)	1.053*** (0.073)
R-squared	0.614	0.463	0.671	0.609	0.715	0.861
Controls	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Province FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Observations	257	257	257	257	257	257

Notes: Control variables are the same as that in the main regression, but I used newspapers in 1911. I draw on the data of KMT representatives and non-KMT representatives from Bai and Jia (2016). The list of KMT central committee members is from Liu (2014). The source of student soldiers is the website of alumni association of the Huangpu Military Academy. The data of army generals comes from Liu (1993). The data of KMT officials is from Liu (1995). *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

National Assembly (1913-1925), KMT central committee members (1924-1952), student soldiers in the Whampoa Military Academy (1924-1926), army generals (1927-1949), and high-ranking KMT officials (1927-1949), on the measure of repression and resistance. In Panel A of [Table 9](#), I show that the measure of repression and resistance has a positive correlation with all outcomes. Additionally, as a placebo test in Column 2, representatives of other parties in the first National Assembly (1913-1925) were not related to the repression and resistance measure, which suggests that they differed ideologically from KMT members.

How should we understand the correlation? A possible explanation is that revolutionaries in the late Qing period began their careers from anti-Manchu nationalism; after the 1911 Revolution, they worked to create a republic nation-state while adhering to nationalist ideology. I regress these outcomes on the number of revolutionaries between 1900 and 1906. The results are shown in Panel B. It is not surprising that there is a robust positive relationship between revolutionaries in 1900-1906 and outcomes of nation-state building. The results suggest that the anti-Manchu propaganda of repression and resistance had a long-term effect on the nation-state building of modern China, though the KMT had abandoned the Han Chinese nationalism and embraced the Chinese nationalism to unite minorities.

8 Conclusion

This paper investigates how newspapers helped create the modern Chinese nation by exploring the historical roots. In the mid-17th century, the Manchu-led Qing government conquered China. The local Han people organized long-lasting resistance but were subject to harsh repression. These violent conflicts had a persistent influence. Chinese elites secretly preserved their history in books, folktales, dramas, rituals, and secret societies. In 1728, an intellectual attempted to use these historical stories to mobilize uprisings but failed.⁴⁰ In numerous cases, however, deep cultural traits such as books helped local elites to preserve the ethnic traditions that distinguished them from the Manchus. Coming into the early 20th century, utilizing modern newspaper techniques, revolutionary propagandists retold the repression to fan the flames of discontent toward the Qing government and claimed that the Qing regime was not legitimate. I find that areas exposed to historical repression and resistance responded more actively to the propaganda and produced more revolutionaries. This can be explained by the influence of ethnic traditions such as literary works.

Though this paper discusses only the case of modern China, the findings can be used to explain nation-building in other regions in history and today. Rozenas et al. (2017) reveals that communities that were more exposed to Stalin’s violence in Western Ukraine in the 1940s are less likely to vote for pro-Russian parties today. In another instance, the KMT tried to establish its rule in Taiwan after WWII, violently suppressing local protests for political participation and killing about 20,000 civilians. Today, the repression is propagandized by the ruling Democratic Progressive Party, which frames it as an ethnic conflict between native Taiwanese and those from mainland China, calling for the “Taiwanese consciousness” to fight the “Chinese consciousness” among Taiwanese people.

⁴⁰Zeng Jing (1679-1735), who was motivated by the works of Ming loyalist Lv Liuliang, attempted to overturn the Qing government by persuading a military officer; however, he was reported by this officer and finally was killed.

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A A Map of East Asia in the Mid-17th Century



Figure A.1: States in the East Asia in the mid-17th century

Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ming_divisions.png

Table A1: The correlation between revolutionaries 1900-1906 and historical repression and resistance

VARIABLES	revolutionaries 1900-1906		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
<i>Repression</i>	4.521*** (1.596)	5.517*** (2.012)	3.916** (1.799)
<i>ProvinceFE</i>	N	Y	Y
<i>Controls</i>	N	N	Y
Observations	275	275	257
R-squared	0.137	0.285	0.343

Notes: The dependent variable is the number of revolutionaries in a prefecture between 1900 and 1906. The controls include population in 1880, area size, coast area, main rivers, Basin HHI, climate shocks, tax per capita in 1820, language fragmentation, Jinshi density and newspaper density. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01. Standard Errors are controlled at the prefecture level.

B Summary Statistics

Table B1: Summary statistics

	Variables	Obs	Mean	SD	Min	Max
	Revolutionaries	1925	0.68	3.201	0	48
Repression & Resistance	Repression	275	0.89	1.112	0	4
	Massacre	275	0.09	0.362	0	3
	Inquisition	275	0.31	0.686	0	5
	ln(Martyrs+1)	275	0.39	0.699	0	3.970
	ln(Loyalists+1)	275	0.44	0.832	0	3.850
	$\Delta Jinshi$	275	-2.255	6.889	-34	30
	“Recognized” Repression	275	0.244	0.641	0	4
Propaganda	Anti-Manchu	7	0.069	0.076	0	0.168
	Anti-Manchu (ML)	7	0.022	0.019	0.006	0.062
	Anti-imperialism	7	0.044	0.066	0	0.156
	Anti-imperialism (ML)	7	0.024	0.015	0.009	0.048
	Pro-industrialization	7	0.012	0.0188	0	0.050
	Pro-industrialization (ML)	7	0.003	0.005	0.000	0.013
	Pro-democracy	7	0.046	0.095	0	0.258
Pro-democracy (ML)	7	0.003	0.004	0	0.010	
Additional Variables	lnpop	267	13.59	1.112	9.718	15.739
	lnSize	275	9.31	0.824	6.685	12.166
	Coast	275	0.14	0.346	0	1
	Main River	275	0.60	0.490	0	1
	Tax Per Capita 1820	257	0.08	0.083	0.000	0.672
	Basin HHI	262	0.61	0.243	0.161	1
	Language Fragmentation	262	0.09	0.164	0	0.699
	Climate Shock	262	0.06	0.092	-0.268	0.477
	<i>Jinshi</i> Per 1000	267	0.08	0.112	0	1.048
	Newspaper Per 1000	1869	0.00	0.002	0	0.050
	Banned Books	275	1.338	4.461	0	41
	Authors of Banned Books	275	0.844	2.485	0	21
	Secret Society	275	0.88	1.628	0	14
	Tiandihui	275	0.30	1.120	0	9
	Quota Per 1000	262	0.14	0.141	.009	1.704
	Treaty Port	275	0.11	0.312	0	1
	Post Agency Per 100 Thousand	267	0.12	0.259	0	3.448
	Telegraph Station Per 100 Thousand	267	0.04	0.091	0	0.801
	Students in Japan Per 100 Thousand	267	0.12	0.301	0	1.848
	Banner Garrison	275	0.16	0.828	0	11
$ln(1 + banners)$	275	0.66	2.140	0	9.182	
Other Outcomes	KMT Representatives	262	1.65	1.963	0	15
	Non-KMT Representatives	262	1.03	1.357	0	6
	KMT Central Committee	275	0.95	2.156	0	23
	Student Soldiers	275	16.52	36.407	0	423
	Army Generals	275	15.63	26.473	0	296
	KMT Officials	275	10.68	19.303	0	193

Notes: ML means machine learning.

C Machine Learning

Propagandists might well have their works published in other newspapers. I list two articles that introduced Ming martyrs and loyalists in [Table C1](#). These two newspapers, *Youxi Shijie* and *Shibao*, were neither founded by revolutionaries nor ever expressed their interests on this topic. As a result, it's necessary to analyze all newspaper articles in the database.

Table C1: The propaganda on newspapers which were not founded by revolutionaries

Article	Newspaper	Year
读张苍水诗:[诗词]	游戏世界(杭州)	1900
采王船山成说证中国有尚武之民族(续)	时报	1904

Recursive neural networks (RNN) and long-short-term memory networks (LSTM) are two widely used frontier neural network models for the task of text categorization. The RNN method is a generalization of feedforward neural networks that has internal memory. RNN is recurrent as it performs the same function for every input of data, while the current information's output depends on the past computation. After the output is produced, it is copied and sent back into the recurrent network. It considers the current input, as well as the outcome that it learned from previous inputs, for making a decision. However, as the gap between the relevant information and the place it's needed becomes wider, RNN cannot learn to connect the information (long-term dependencies). Long Short Term Memory networks are a special type of RNN designed explicitly to avoid the long-term dependency problem (Hochreiter and Schmidhuber 1997). I compared the accuracy of the two models and adopt the model with higher precision, which is the LSTM model.

The whole process is as follows. I first employ the Word2Vec model and separate each article title into short texts as vectors. Second, I randomly split the embedded matrix into two parts: 80% training and the rest testing; Thirdly, an LSTM model is used for sentiment classification. Fourth, I use the trained model to predict each item's category in the training set and the test set to get loss and accuracy rates. The accuracy rate is 93.26% in the training set and 92.65% in the test set. Finally, the trained model is used to predict whether an article title among the 0.3 million items contains anti-Manchu sentiment.

Table C2: The result of LSTM

	loss	accuracy
training set	0.1606	0.9326
test set	0.1941	0.9265

D Robustness

D.1 The Propaganda Measure With Regional Variance

In [Table D1](#), I introduce regional variation in the propaganda measure by multiplying $Share_{p,t-1}$ by the reverse of distance to Shanghai, the number of post offices, the lagged number of revolutionaries, and Chinese students studying in Japan. The coefficient of the triple interaction for post system is significant in the first five columns, and that for the lagged number of revolutionaries is significant in column 6-10. Qualitative study shows that revolutionaries employed both methods to disseminate newspapers.

Table D1: Main Result: introduce regional variation in the propaganda measure

VARIABLES	<i>revolutionaries</i>									
	19 revolutionary newspapers					all newspapers				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
<i>Repression</i>										
$\times Share_{t-1}$	5.472**	-0.319	3.615**	0.006	-2.040	18.61*	-3.653	6.067	-2.008	-9.030
	(2.153)	(1.549)	(1.399)	(2.070)	(2.361)	(9.513)	(7.482)	(5.279)	(8.968)	(9.197)
$\times \frac{1}{dis\ to\ Shanghai}$	-66.54				-5.838	346.2				641.5
	(202.1)				(235.6)	(885.1)				(921.0)
$\times post\ agencies$		1.910***			1.045**		8.058***			1.905
		(0.714)			(0.464)		(3.089)			(2.129)
$\times L.revolutionaries$			0.756**		0.369			3.443***		2.609***
			(0.315)		(0.313)			(0.738)		(0.952)
$\times \ln(JP\ students)$				4.982**	3.249				17.03**	8.971
				(2.486)	(2.081)				(8.125)	(5.447)
Prefecture FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Year FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<i>Province * Year FE</i>	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<i>Controls * Year FE</i>	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<i>L.revolutionaries</i>	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Observations	1,799	1,799	1,799	1,799	1,799	1,799	1,799	1,799	1,799	1,799
R-squared	0.406	0.434	0.428	0.435	0.451	0.405	0.436	0.457	0.432	0.466
Number of prefid	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257

D.2 Arellano-Bond Estimation

Table D2: Main Result: Arellano-Bond estimation

	<i>revolutionaries</i>					
	19 newspapers founded by revolutionaries			all newspapers (machine learning)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
$Repression \times Share_{t-1}$	4.315*** (1.140)	7.529*** (1.336)	7.086*** (1.629)	23.60*** (3.469)	39.45*** (4.115)	27.55*** (4.932)
Prefecture FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Year FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<i>Province * Year FE</i>	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
<i>Controls * Year FE</i>	N	N	Y	N	N	Y
Observations	1,375	1,375	1,289	1,375	1,375	1,289
Number of pref	275	275	257	275	275	257

D.3 Measurement Error

In terms of measurement error of repression and resistance, I’ve found additional sources to replace the existing measures (Table D3). For massacres, I use battles between Ming and Qing troops instead. For Ming martyrs, I use an official document by Shu (1775), which lists martyrs defending to death in the Ming-Qing transition. I substitute Sun’s (1912) source for loyalists with Xie and Fan’s (1995), which includes more Ming loyalists. I replace the archive source with Zhang and Du (1991) for inquisition. Table D4 shows that the main results are unaffected by alternative measures.

Table D3: Comparison of the repression and resistance measures

Measure	Source	Type	Alternative Measure	Type
Massacre	Cao (2001)	Official	The Editing Committee of China’s Military History (1985)	Various
Inquisition	Archives of the Museum of the Forbidden City (1934)	Official	Zhang and Du (1991)	Various
Martyrs	Qu (1690s)	Independent	Shu (1775)	Official
Loyalists	Sun (1912)	Independent	Xie and Fan (1995)	Independent

Notes: “Independent” refers to independent studies. “Official” means that it’s an official source. And “Various” means that the document may include both sources.

Table D4: Main Result: alternative measure of repression and resistance

	<i>revolutionaries</i>					
	19 newspapers founded by revolutionaries			all newspapers (machine learning)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Panel A. Repression: replace massacres with battles						
<i>Repression * Share_{t-1}</i>	6.183*** (2.184)	8.127*** (2.304)	4.952*** (1.562)	25.62*** (8.781)	34.85*** (9.669)	17.40** (7.133)
R-squared	0.129	0.275	0.406	0.133	0.284	0.403
Panel B. Repression: replace martyrs (Qu) with martyrs (Shu)						
<i>Repression * Share_{t-1}</i>	6.623** (2.895)	8.121*** (3.074)	4.710** (2.065)	27.64** (11.39)	35.12*** (12.54)	17.43* (9.149)
R-squared	0.123	0.263	0.404	0.127	0.271	0.402
Panel C. Repression: replace loyalists (Sun) with loyalists (Xie & Fan)						
<i>Repression * Share_{t-1}</i>	6.035** (2.464)	8.645*** (3.083)	5.002** (2.014)	24.91** (9.664)	36.28*** (11.92)	17.42** (7.759)
R-squared	0.120	0.271	0.405	0.123	0.277	0.402
Panel D. Repression: replace inquisitions (Archive) with inquisitions (Zhang & Du)						
<i>Repression * Share_{t-1}</i>	5.558** (2.428)	7.847*** (2.858)	4.445** (1.840)	23.52** (9.488)	34.47*** (11.52)	17.54** (7.992)
R-squared	0.116	0.263	0.403	0.120	0.272	0.403
Prefecture FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Year FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<i>Province * Year FE</i>	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
<i>Controls * Year FE</i>	N	N	Y	N	N	Y
<i>L.revolutionaries</i>	N	N	Y	N	N	Y
Observations	1,925	1,925	1,799	1,925	1,925	1,799
Number of pref	275	275	257	275	275	257

One might be concerned that newspaper circulation in the early 20th century was low, for example, even newspapers printed in Shanghai or Tokyo one year before could not flow into inland China in one year. There is evidence that revolutionaries in China reprinted back issues of the newspapers from Japan. To deal with this issue, I calculate the accumulative index by assuming that newspapers several years before might also be used for propaganda. [Table D5](#) shows the results. After adopting the accumulative index, the coefficients remain significantly positive.

D.4 Longer Period

I focus on the period between 1900 and 1906 for two reasons. First, the anti-Manchu articles appeared in the database after 1900. Additionally, it seems that 1903 was the year when the anti-

Table D5: Main Result: alternative measure of the anti-Manchu sentiment (accumulative index)

	<i>Dependent variable: revolutionaries</i>					
	19 newspapers founded by revolutionaries			all newspapers (machine learning)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
<i>Repression * acc Share_{t-1}</i>	2.390*** (0.911)	3.312*** (1.069)	1.805** (0.748)	10.98*** (4.115)	14.90*** (4.850)	8.048** (3.406)
Prefecture FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Year FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<i>Province * Year FE</i>	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
<i>Controls * Year FE</i>	N	N	Y	N	N	Y
<i>L.revolutionaries</i>	N	N	Y	N	N	Y
Observations	1,925	1,925	1,799	1,925	1,925	1,799
R-squared	0.135	0.287	0.407	0.135	0.284	0.407
Number of pref	275	275	257	275	275	257

Notes: The dependent variable is the number of revolutionaries in a prefecture in one year. *acc Share_{t-1}* is the accumulative share of anti-Manchu articles one year before year t. The equation $acc\ Share_t = \sum_{1899}^t share_t$ was used to calculate the accumulative index. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01.

Manchu sentiment exploded, providing the balance between years before and after the treatment. This limitation shortens the number of years for the estimations. To deal with this concern, I trace the number of revolutionaries to 1894. As shown in [Table D6](#), the effect of anti-Manchu propaganda is much stronger in prefectures with political repression and resistance.

Table D6: Main Result: longer period 1894-1906

	<i>Dependent variable: revolutionaries</i>					
	19 newspapers founded by revolutionaries			all newspapers (machine learning)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
<i>Repression * Share_{t-1}</i>	6.112** (2.474)	7.877*** (2.839)	4.825** (2.072)	22.70*** (8.473)	29.66*** (9.755)	16.48** (7.273)
Prefecture FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Year FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<i>Province * Year FE</i>	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
<i>Controls * Year FE</i>	N	N	Y	N	N	Y
<i>L.revolutionaries</i>	N	N	Y	N	N	Y
Observations	3,575	3,575	3,449	3,575	3,575	3,449
R-squared	0.086	0.206	0.316	0.087	0.208	0.315
Number of pref	275	275	275	275	275	275

Notes: Before 1900, the index of anti-Manchu sentiment is 0 since no newspapers were founded by revolutionaries at that time period.

D.5 Measuring Repression and Resistance By Continuous Variables

Here, I run the main specification using continuous variables of repression and resistance. The first variable is the number of massacres in each prefecture during the Manchu's conquest (1644-1649). A massacre is defined as a large-scale killing committed by the Qing troops against residents of a conquered city. The second variable is the number of literary inquisition cases in each prefecture between 1661 and 1788. The third one is the logged number of Ming martyrs in resistance against the Manchus' conquest. A final measure is the logged number of Ming loyalists in the early Qing period from Sun (1912). The regional distribution of these four events is depicted in [Figure D.2](#).

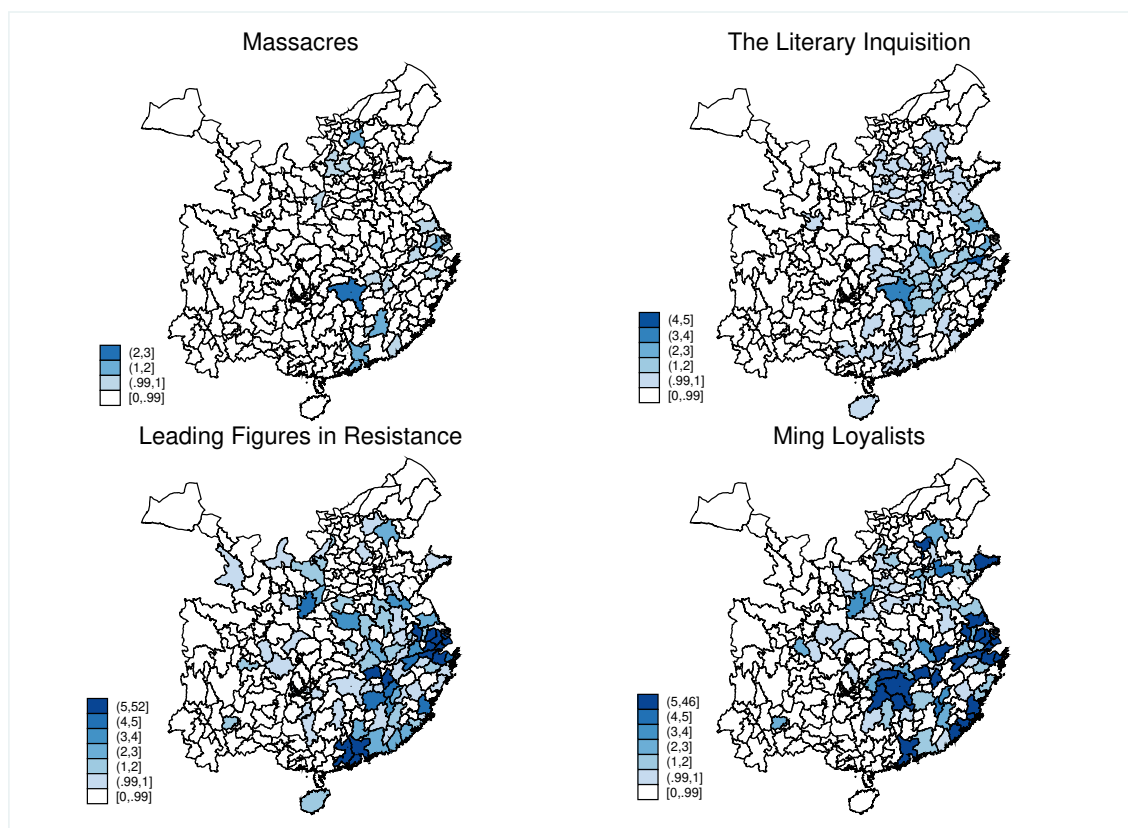


Figure D.2: Distribution of Repression and Resistance

Notes: For the number of martyrs and loyalists depicted on the map, I do not employ a log transformation.

Panel A and B of [Table D7](#) show that coefficients of repression measures are not significant or robust, while panel C and D demonstrate that the resistance has a strong positive effect on revolution participation. The results imply that the main conclusion is driven by the resistance

measure. How should we interpret this difference? The reason could be because the repression measures come from official records, and locals might have forgotten about them over the past 200 years. In the newspapers, I find that propagandists only frequently mentioned three massacres—the ones in Yangzhou, Jiading, and Jiangyin. The mechanism section shows that the main channel why the historical repression and resistance worked for the early 20th century resulted from deep culture or historical memories. Only a few repression-related incidents were recorded by independent scholars and remembered by civilians. However, the resistance were documented by the works of Ming loyalists, and later generations continued to write about this topic.

The second reason might be that resistance was less sensitive to the Qing government, and thus suffered less censorship. In 1776, emperor Qianlong commanded officials to compile a book called *Qin Ding Sheng Chao Xun Jie Zhu Chen Lu*, to honor Ming martyrs, including those who defended the Manchu's invasion. The emperor thought that it had been 130 years since the Manchu took over China, therefore to mourn Ming martyrs would not only assist to keep the authorities faithful to him but also not pose any dangers. Consequently, it was far safer for intellectuals to write Ming martyrs and loyalists than to write anything about massacres and inquisitions, and stories of resistance were preserved.

Table D7: Main Result: using continuous variables of repression and resistance

	<i>revolutionaries</i>					
	19 newspapers founded by revolutionaries			all newspapers (machine learning)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Panel A. Massacre						
$\overline{Massacre * Share_{t-1}}$	22.83 (16.59)	25.27 (15.77)	17.35 (12.17)	91.41 (57.45)	100.6* (55.22)	68.71* (41.17)
R-squared	0.136	0.279	0.416	0.137	0.279	0.416
Panel B. Inquisition						
$\overline{Inquisition * Share_{t-1}}$	12.18* (7.245)	13.07* (7.209)	8.975 (5.495)	43.86* (26.48)	48.62* (26.19)	25.29 (19.03)
R-squared	0.137	0.271	0.411	0.128	0.265	0.403
Panel C. Martyr						
$\overline{Ln(1 + Martyrs) * Share_{t-1}}$	6.132** (2.814)	10.49*** (3.234)	6.051** (2.737)	34.10** (15.26)	55.07*** (17.42)	35.38** (16.90)
R-squared	0.098	0.250	0.400	0.112	0.270	0.407
Panel D. Loyalist						
$\overline{Ln(1 + Loyalists) * Share_{t-1}}$	7.422** (3.516)	10.67*** (3.802)	6.349** (2.614)	31.79** (13.73)	47.74*** (15.68)	25.30** (12.23)
R-squared	0.113	0.261	0.403	0.118	0.272	0.403
Prefecture FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Year FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<i>Province * Year FE</i>	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
<i>Controls * Year FE</i>	N	N	Y	N	N	Y
<i>L.revolutionaries</i>	N	N	Y	N	N	Y
Observations	1,925	1,925	1,799	1,925	1,925	1,799
Number of pref	275	275	257	275	275	257

E Instrumental Variable Estimation

E.1 Political Choices Made by *Jinshis* in 1644

In [Table E1](#), I regress dummy variables regarding *Jinshis*' political choices on the exam year. These choices include to serve the new Qing court, to serve the South Ming courts (Hongguang 1644-1645, Longwu 1645-1646, and Yongli 1623-1662), to defend the Manchu's invasion, and to serve the peasant rebellion. In the first two columns, I discover that the coefficient of exam year is significantly positive, which suggests that *Jinshis* were more inclined to submit to the Qing court if they obtained their degrees later. However, There is no relationship between the exam year and other political choices.

Table E1: Political choices made by *Jinshis* in 1644

VARIABLES	serve Qing		serve South Ming		defend Ming to death		serve peasant rebellion	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Exam Year	0.002** (0.001)	0.002** (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)	0.002 (0.001)	0.0001 (0.001)	0.0003 (0.001)	0.0003 (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)
Controls	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y
Prefecture FE	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y
Observations	1,417	1,415	1,414	1,413	1,413	1,412	1,414	1,413
R-squared	0.003	0.313	0.001	0.276	0.000	0.118	0.000	0.191

Notes: The dependent variable is equal to 1 if a *Jinshi* made corresponding decision. The independent variable is the exam year. The control variables are rank in the exam, faction ties (Donglin Dang-a party of scholars and officials who attempted to combat the moral laxity; Yan Dang-a party of followers to court eunuch Wei Zhongxian; or non-affiliates), and whether a *Jinshi* surrendered to peasant rebellion. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01.

E.2 Why Did Young *Jinshis* Choose to Serve the Qing Court?

Why did *Jinshis* who received degrees later choose to surrender to the new Qing court? There might be three hypotheses. First off, joining the new court would have far greater political and economic benefits for younger people than for older people. Based Wakeman's observation, while younger officials could still advance in their careers, older ones had reached the peak. Second, some *Jinshis* were not nominated for positions in the Ming government in 1644; as a result, if they joined the Qing court, they were given positions. For instance, Feng Quan (1595-1672), used to serve as co-minister of Rites in Ming, but was dismissed by emperor Chongzhen. He joined the Qing court

in 1644 and was appointed minister of Rites shortly after. Third, low-ranked officials aspired to go up the career ladder. [Figure E.1](#) confirms the correlation between the exam year and these three factors.

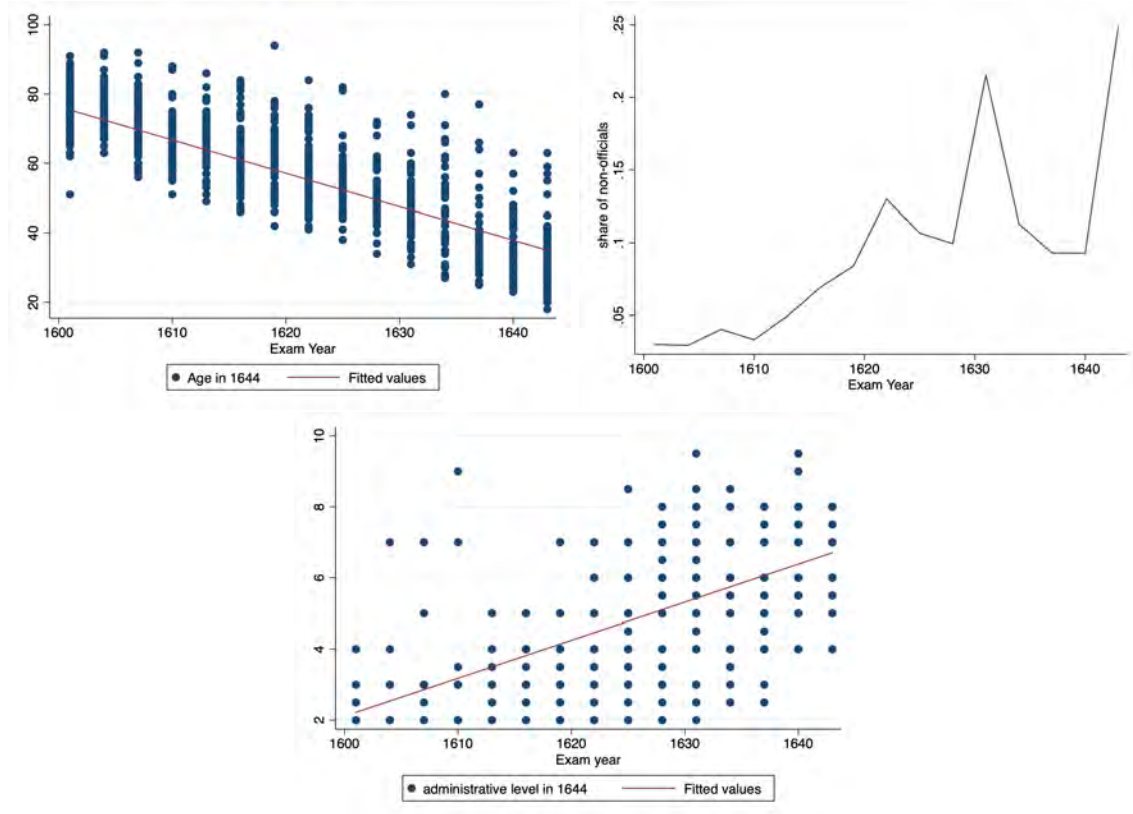


Figure E.1: age & the share of non-officials & administrative level based on exam year

Notes: The subfigure in the upper left illustrates the age of *Jinshis* in 1644 based on the exam year, demonstrating the strict positive correlation between exam year and birth year. The upper right one shows that a higher proportion of *Jinshis* from the young cohort were not nominated for any positions in the administration in 1644. The below one shows that the young cohort remained in low-ranked positions in government. 9.5 refers to the lowest level *Zong Jiu Pin*, and 1 is the top level *Zheng Yi Pin*. I calculate each official's administrative rank using their positions.

In [Table E2](#) I regress the dummy variable about whether to join the Qing court on three factors—age, whether a *Jinshi* held office, and his administrative level in 1644. The first two columns confirm that young cohort were more likely to surrender. Coefficients in Columns 3-4 are significantly negative, implying that the political choice was not driven by outsiders of the Ming court. In the last two columns, I find that low-ranked officials, rather than senior officials were less likely to surrender. As a result, hypotheses about non-officials and administrative ranks are denied, and age is the main factor in *Jinshis'* political choices.

Table E2: The incentives why young *Jinshis* chose to serve the Qing court

VARIABLES	serve the Qing court					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Age in 1644	-0.004*** (0.001)	-0.005*** (0.001)				
Non-Officials			-0.090*** (0.024)	-0.075*** (0.023)		
Administrative Level in 1644					-0.031*** (0.009)	-0.021** (0.009)
Controls	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y
Prefecture FE	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y
Observations	467	466	1,417	1,415	900	899
R-squared	0.017	0.464	0.010	0.314	0.013	0.391

Notes: The control variables are the exam rank, faction ties (Donglin Dang, Yandang, or none), and whether a *Jinshi* surrendered to peasant rebellion. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01.

E.3 Exclusion Restrictions

Table E3 shows the correlation matrix of change in *Jinshis*. The numbers below the diagonal confirm that change in *Jinshis* was negatively correlated with each other, implying political cycles.

Table E3: Correlation matrix of change in *Jinshis*

	IV_4	IV_3	IV_2	IV_1	IV	IV_1_	IV_2_	IV_3_
IV_4	1							
IV_3	-0.014	1						
IV_2	-0.028	-0.289	1					
IV_1	-0.190	0.017	-0.307	1				
IV	-0.139	-0.398	0.236	-0.269	1			
IV_1_	0.028	0.057	-0.139	0.079	-0.133	1		
IV_2_	-0.042	-0.179	0.186	-0.182	0.107	-0.845	1	
IV_3_	0.117	0.040	-0.278	0.268	0.012	0.035	-0.241	1

Notes: $IV_4 = \sum_{1525}^{1549} Jinshi - \sum_{1500}^{1524} Jinshi$, $IV_3 = \sum_{1550}^{1574} Jinshi - \sum_{1525}^{1549} Jinshi$, $IV_2 = \sum_{1575}^{1599} Jinshi - \sum_{1550}^{1574} Jinshi$, $IV_1 = \sum_{1600}^{1627} Jinshi - \sum_{1575}^{1599} Jinshi$, $IV_1_ = \sum_{1645}^{1669} Jinshi - \sum_{1628}^{1644} Jinshi$, $IV_2_ = \sum_{1670}^{1694} Jinshi - \sum_{1645}^{1669} Jinshi$, $IV_3_ = \sum_{1695}^{1719} Jinshi - \sum_{1670}^{1694} Jinshi$.

In Table E4, I regress several variables on the instrument. The first group is thought to contribute to the outbreak of the peasant rebellions which overturned the Ming government and afterwards had an impact on the Ming-Qing warfare. The first is the average of the weather index between 1637 and 1644, a period of peasant uprising and widespread starvation. The second factor is the variation in weather, measured by the standard deviation of the weather index. The weather data comes from State Meteorological Society (1981). The following two factors are drought (Cao

Table E4: Exclusion restrictions

VARIABLES	(1) weather	(2) s.d weather	(3) drought	(4) plague	(5) post stations
$\Delta Jinshi$	-0.003 (0.003)	0.0003 (0.002)	0.006 (0.011)	0.002 (0.004)	-0.001 (0.037)
Province FE	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
Observations	257	257	257	257	257
R-squared	0.755	0.406	0.141	0.383	0.337
VARIABLES	farmer rebellion	depopulation	dis to princedoms	dis to Nanjing	
$\Delta Jinshi$	-0.001 (0.0108)	0.029 (0.257)	-0.554 (0.627)	-0.904 (1.390)	
Province FE	Y	N	Y	Y	
Observations	257	257	257	257	
R-squared	0.306	0.110	0.766	0.927	

Notes: Variation in drought and population loss comes from province level.

2000) and plague (Cao 1997). The fifth one is the number of post stations in Ming (Yang 2006). Li Zicheng (1606-1645), the rebellious peasants' leader who overturned the Ming court finally, worked as a postman. However, when the post stations were abolished by Emperor Chongzhen in 1629, Li Zicheng lost his job and decided to join the uprising.

The second panel directly examines the correlation between the instrument and measures related with repression and resistance. The first variable is the number of battles between the Ming troops and peasant rebels (The Editing Committee of China's Military History 1985). The second is the percentage of population loss caused by conflicts and natural disasters (Cao 2000). The final two are distance to princedoms and Nanjing, which served as bases of resistance against the Manchu's invasion around 1644. It appears that there is no correlation between all factors and the instrumental variable.

F Mechanism

F.1 Persistent Resistance?

The question that concerns the understanding of the result is whether repression and resistance led Han Chinese people to resist the Qing government's rule over the entire 265 years. This would suggest that the nationalism propaganda in the late Qing played a weaker role in mobilizing revolutionary participation. I conduct two tests to alleviate this concern. The first is to examine if measures of the repression and resistance are related to rebellions in the Qing dynasty. The second is to use the Boxer Rebellion to test if the uprising in 1899 had already reflected the revival of nationalism.

The data on rebellions from 1681 to 1899 is drawn on a book entitled *Chronology of Warfare in Dynastic China* (The Editing Committee of China's Military History 1985).⁴¹ The book contains information on all China warfare, including both internal conflicts and external military activities. The data source has been widely used by economic studies such as Bai and Kung (2011) and Jia (2014). Among 411 warfare in the Qing period, I identify 74 uprisings and collect information on the revolts' locations. In [Table F1](#), I do not find a positive relationship between the measure of repression and resistance and rebellions between 1681 and 1899.

The Boxer rebellion provides another test closer to the study period. The data comes from the Boxer Protocol (1901), a treaty signed between the Qing government and the Eight-Nation Alliance that provided military forces to put down the Boxer rebellion. It lists prefectures that the boxer rebellion killed foreigners and missionaries as evidence to punish the local people. This treaty provides a dummy variable to measure the locations of the Boxer Rebellion at prefecture level. The boxer rebellion aimed to help the Qing government fight against imperialism, foreigners, and Christians, so it had no correlation with the debate on Han people's nationalism against the Manchus. Columns 6 to 10 show that the repression and resistance measures are not positively correlated with the Boxer Rebellion.

⁴¹I choose a starting year of 1681 instead of 1644 since that year marked the Qing court put down the Revolt of the Three Feudatories, which indicated the Qing regime was strengthened.

Table F1: Persistent resistance?

VARIABLES	Incidence of rebellions 1681-1899					Incidence of the Boxer Rebellion 1899-1900				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
<i>Repression</i>	-0.054 (0.041)					0.015 (0.018)				
<i>Massacre</i>		-0.023 (0.095)					-0.0157 (0.040)			
<i>Inquisition</i>			-0.115 (0.071)					0.037 (0.024)		
$\ln(1 + \text{Martyrs})$				0.017 (0.061)					-0.052* (0.028)	
$\ln(1 + \text{Loyalists})$					0.101 (0.076)					0.004 (0.027)
Controls	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Province FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Observations	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257
R-squared	0.214	0.210	0.220	0.211	0.218	0.411	0.410	0.414	0.416	0.409

Notes: The dependent variables are the number of rebellions between 1681 and 1899, or whether this prefecture had Boxer Rebellion activities. Controls include population in 1880, area size, coast area, main rivers, Basin HHI, climate shocks, tax per capita in 1820, language fragmentation, *Jinshi* density and newspaper density in 1899. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01.

The tests above demonstrate that though the Manchus committed a number of heinous crimes against the Han Chinese, particularly in their conquest of China in the mid-17th century, the historical repression and resistance did not produce an area that was difficult to control during the 250 years.

F.2 Books

Below is an example of the banned book from *Siku Quanshu*. This book, *Jia Shen Chuan Xin Lu*, documents that the South Ming's representative Zuo Maodi (1601-1645) went to Beijing for the negotiation with the Manchu court, but finally was killed.

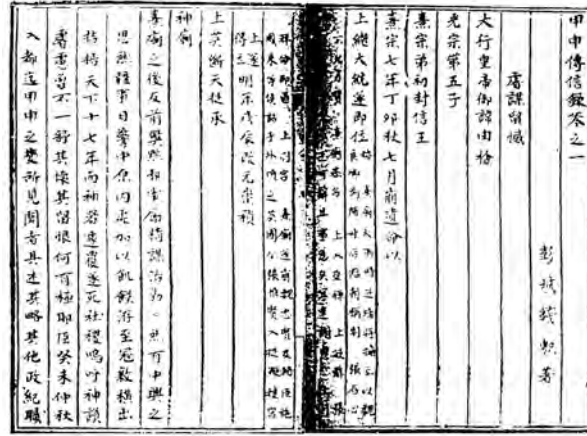


Figure F.1: One of the banned books, *Jia Shen Chuan Xin Lu*

The *Siku Quanshu* lists 1054 banned books, with 402 were written by scholars in the Qing dynasty. It also provides the information about print years of 86 books. **Figure F.2** shows that these sensitive books were preserved and printed over the first 150 years of the Qing era.

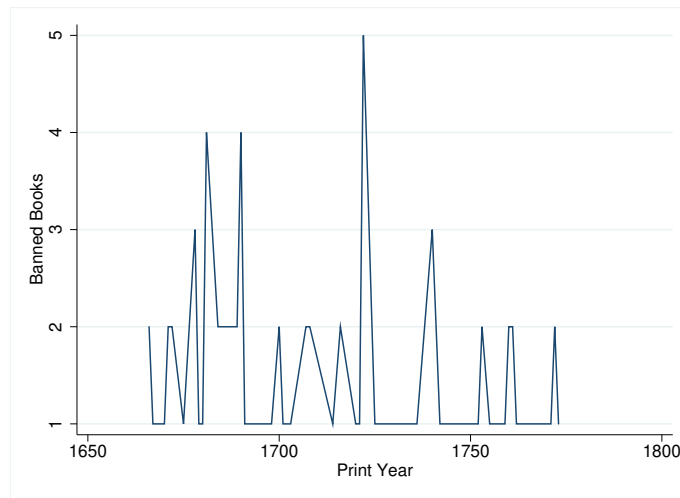


Figure F.2: 86 banned books based on print years

Figure F.3 depicts the regional distribution of banned books (a, left) and their authors (b, right). These literary works appear to have been widely distributed throughout prefectures.

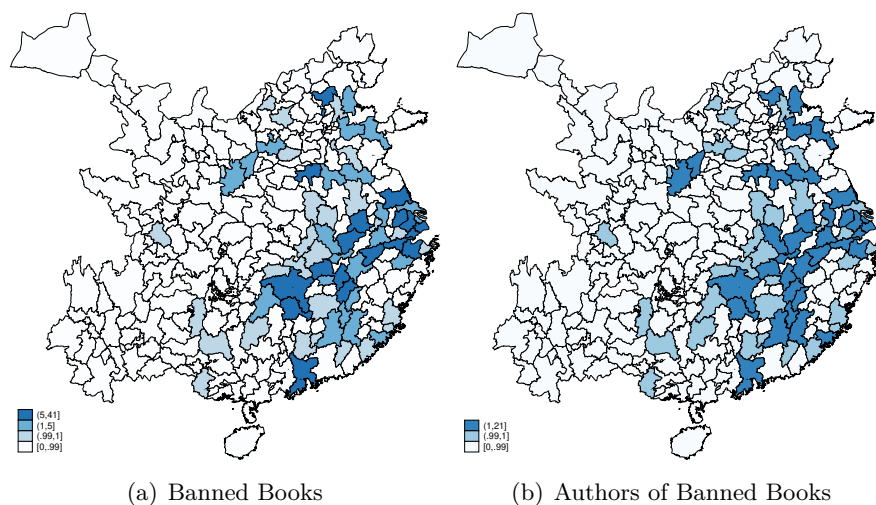


Figure F.3: Regional distribution of banned books and authors

F.3 Secret Societies

Figure F.4 shows the number of investigated cases involving secret societies and *Tiandihui* each year. Based on archives works, Liu and Zhang (2006) compiled cases that the Qing government had investigated into and in which secret societies were involved. I quantify the impact of secret societies' activities using the number of cases. According to Figure F.4, secret societies continued to exist during the Qing dynasty, and the *Tiandihui* thrived between 1790 and 1840. After several uprisings of the the *Tiandihui* were suppressed, members fled abroad and formed branches, notably in the United States, Canada, Singapore, and Australia. Later in the 1911 Revolution, secret societies provided financial and military support to revolutionaries.

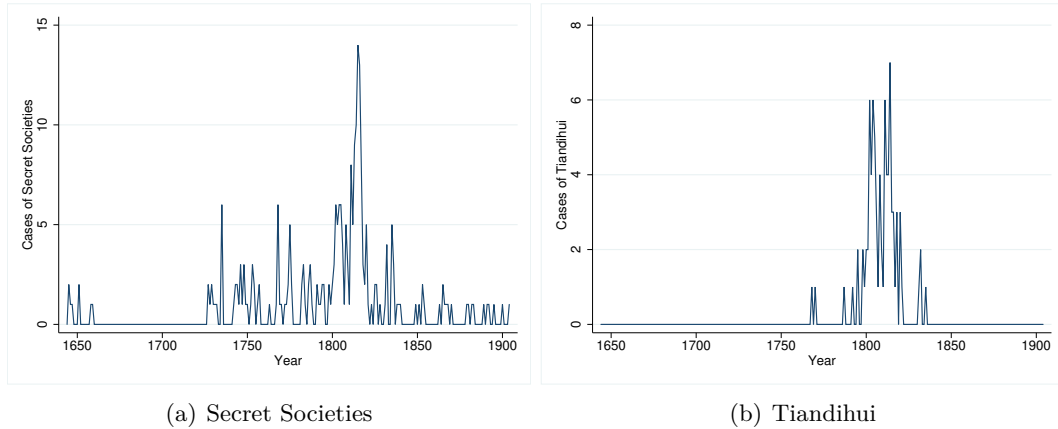


Figure F.4: Time trend of investigated cases involving secret societies and *Tiandihui*

Figure F.5 depicts the regional distribution of secret societies' activities (a, left) and *Tiandihui*'s activities (b, right) throughout the Qing dynasty. Secret societies did exist throughout China's prefectures, but *Tiandihui*'s activities were centered in the south coastline region.

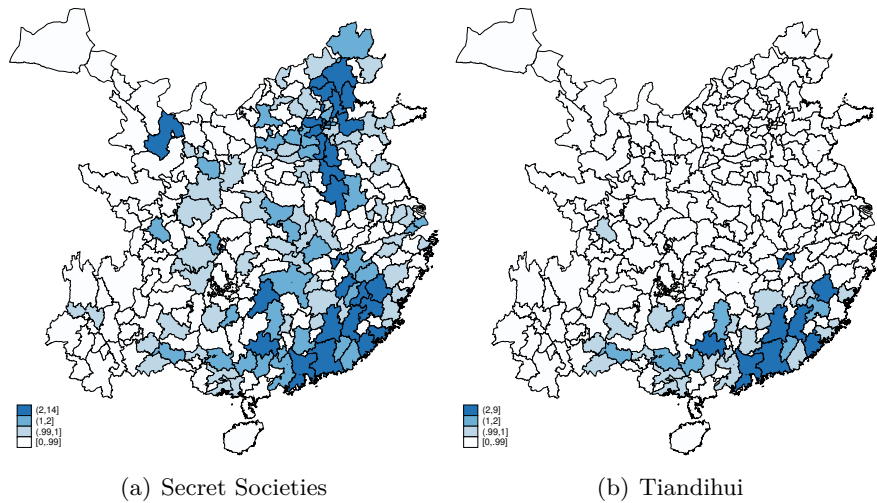


Figure F.5: Regional distribution of secret societies and *Tiandihui*

Tiandihui (The Society of Heaven and Earth) originated in China's Fujian province in 1761. The society was established with the goal of overthrowing the Manchu-ruled Qing government (1644-1912) and restoring the Han-ethnic Chinese Ming dynasty (1368-1644). Figure F.6 shows a censor of joss sticks of the *Tiandihui*, which was placed on the initiation altars of secret societies.



Figure F.6: A censer of joss sticks of the Tiandihui

Notes: The phrase means “Destroy the Qing, restore the Ming” . Source: Lim (1999).

F.4 Correlation Between Ways of Preserving Historical Memories and The Repression and Resistance

Figure F.7 demonstrates that regions that experienced repression and resistance also produced more books that discussed those topics. However, there isn't a very significant correlation with secret societies. This pattern supports the argument that literary works served as repositories for historical memory rather than secret societies.

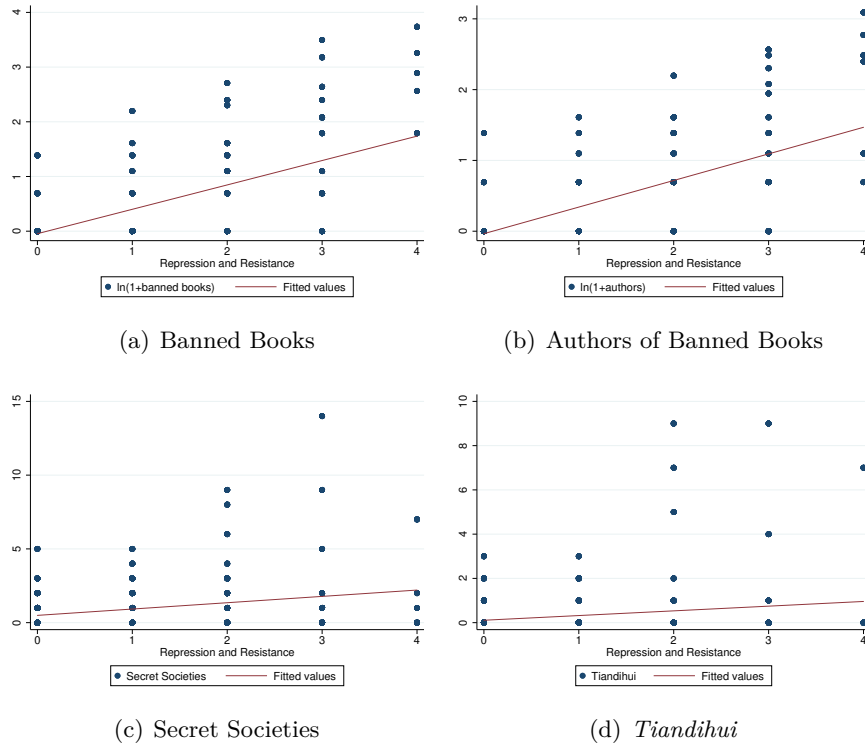


Figure F.7: Correlation between possible ways of preserving historical memories and the repression and resistance

F.5 Evidence From Decomposed Measure of Repression and Resistance

Figure F.8 and Figure F.9 show the correlation between different measures of repression and resistance and the banned books. The patterns confirm the argument above that resistance was more likely to be preserved by literary works. The results also support that the main mechanism of the persistent effect is deep culture and historical memory. Areas with resistance produced more books documented the historical stories, and thus the persistent effect on revolutionary participation was significant and stronger.

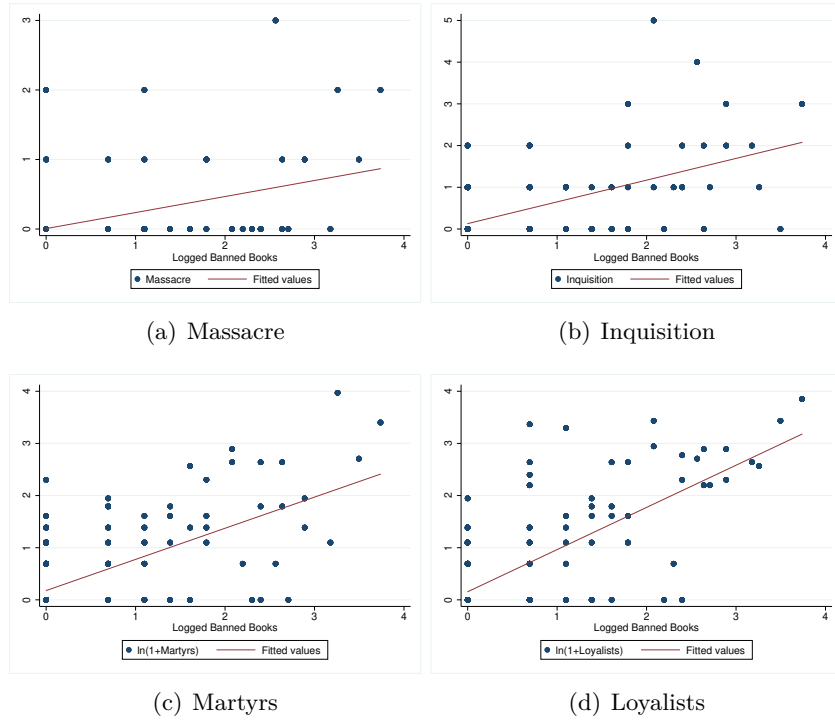


Figure F.8: Correlation between banned books and the repression and resistance

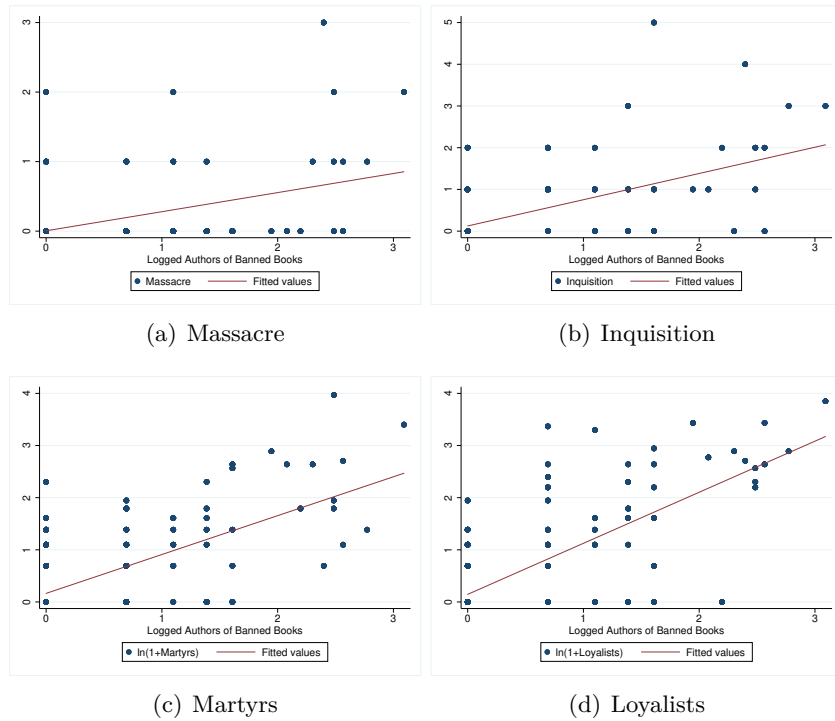


Figure F.9: Correlation between authors of banned books and the repression and resistance

F.6 Recognition of Repression and Resistance by the Propaganda Machine

Figure F.10 (left) shows the regional distribution of repression and resistance that were mentioned in newspapers. And Figure F.10 (right) shows the distribution of all repression and resistance from prefectures that were mentioned in newspapers. Compared to the full sample of repression and resistance, the newspapers only introduced a small portion of the historical events to readers, which is confirmed in the scatter plot Figure F.11.

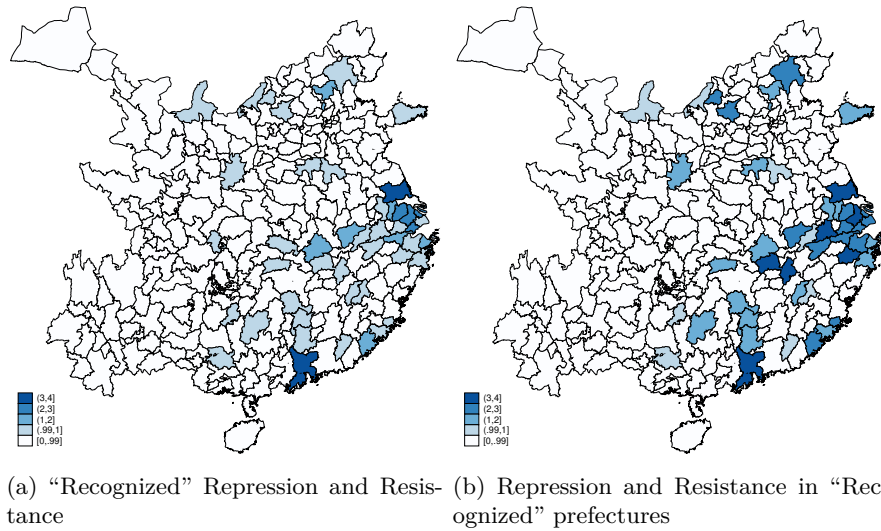


Figure F.10: Distribution of repression and resistance recognized by newspapers

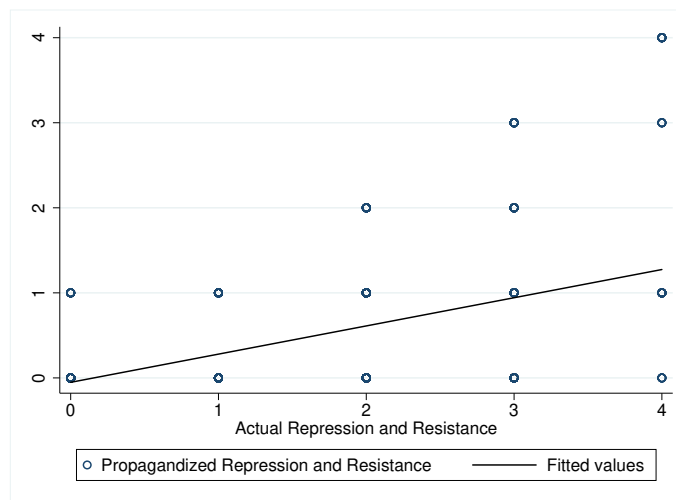


Figure F.11: Actual vs propagandized repression and resistance

G Alternative Hypotheses

G.1 Missionary Conflicts

According to Mattingly and Chen (2022), if a prefecture had experienced conflict with missionaries, about 20 percentage points were more likely to have produced a founding member of Chinese Revolutionary Alliance. The mechanism undertaken in the mobilization is that local elites fan anti-foreign and anti-Qing sentiment to drive out missionaries that threaten their power.

I collect 362 anti-missionary incidents between 1840 and 1899 from Zhang and Liu (1987). Two different specifications are considered to see if this competing hypothesis challenges the validity of my argument in [Table G1](#). First, in Panel A, I include an interaction between anti-missionary incidents and the anti-Manchu index. Next, in Panel B, I add a series of interaction terms between year dummies and anti-missionary conflicts.

According to Panel B, it appears that anti-missionary incidents did not influence revolution participation before 1905. The result of anti-missionary activities was not stable in 1905, while remaining positive in 1906. In both panels, coefficients of the variable of interests, the interaction between the measure of repression and resistance and the anti-Manchu sentiment, remain significantly positive.

Table G1: Alternative hypothesis: anti-missionary incidents

	<i>revolutionaries</i>					
	19 newspapers founded by revolutionaries			all newspapers (machine learning)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Panel A						
<i>Repression * Share_{t-1}</i>	5.551** (2.680)	7.931*** (2.977)	5.192*** (1.962)	21.44** (10.05)	32.21*** (11.40)	18.66** (8.150)
<i>Mission conflicts * Share_{t-1}</i>	1.485** (0.604)	1.514*** (0.522)	0.966* (0.558)	8.836*** (3.166)	9.340*** (2.720)	6.982** (2.755)
R-squared	0.136	0.282	0.410	0.155	0.306	0.418
Panel B						
<i>Repression * Share_{t-1}</i>	5.551** (2.683)	7.931*** (2.981)	5.172*** (1.941)	21.44** (10.06)	32.21*** (11.42)	18.46** (7.987)
<i>Mission conflicts * 1901</i>	-0.129 (0.108)	-0.139 (0.113)	-0.112 (0.0933)	-0.143 (0.115)	-0.157 (0.120)	-0.114 (0.0958)
<i>Mission conflicts * 1902</i>	-0.119 (0.0887)	-0.130 (0.0908)	-0.0409 (0.0386)	-0.113 (0.0865)	-0.123 (0.0887)	-0.0405 (0.0386)
<i>Mission conflicts * 1903</i>	0.134 (0.0961)	0.119 (0.101)	0.141 (0.0927)	0.121 (0.0927)	0.103 (0.0975)	0.139 (0.0909)
<i>Mission conflicts * 1904</i>	-0.163 (0.125)	-0.171 (0.128)	-0.168 (0.109)	-0.121 (0.108)	-0.123 (0.113)	-0.161 (0.102)
<i>Mission conflicts * 1905</i>	0.217*** (0.0833)	0.160** (0.0809)	0.145* (0.0849)	0.244*** (0.0832)	0.188** (0.0809)	0.149* (0.0854)
<i>Mission conflicts * 1906</i>	0.415** (0.171)	0.455*** (0.148)	0.330** (0.148)	0.391** (0.178)	0.421*** (0.153)	0.328** (0.149)
R-squared	0.172	0.315	0.429	0.170	0.317	0.427
Prefecture FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Year FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<i>Province * Year FE</i>	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
<i>Controls * Year FE</i>	N	N	Y	N	N	Y
<i>L.revolutionaries</i>	N	N	Y	N	N	Y
Observations	1,925	1,925	1,799	1,925	1,925	1,799
Number of pref	275	275	257	275	275	257

G.2 The Taiping Rebellion

Another possible channel that might challenge the main argument of this paper is that the Taiping rebellion between 1851 and 1864 fostered irreparable hostilities between Han Chinese and Manchus based on ethnic identity. It was claimed by the Taiping propagandists that the Manchus were the representatives of Satan, and the Taipings were the representatives of God (Crossley 1999). After capturing Nanjing, Taiping soldiers massacred roughly 40,000 Manchu people. Additionally, Sun Yat-sen and other revolutionary leaders were inspired by the Taiping Rebellion and some surviving

Taiping veterans even joined the Revive China Society (Jen 1973).

I find little evidence that influenced by the anti-Manchu propaganda, prefectures even occupied by the Taiping armies produced more revolutionaries. This pattern derives from the fact that most revolutionaries in the sample were social elites rather than commoners.

Table G2: Alternative hypothesis: the influence of Taiping Rebellion

	<i>revolutionaries</i>	
	19 revolutionary newspapers	all newspapers
	(1)	(3)
<i>Repression * Share_{t-1}</i>	5.037** (1.955)	18.64** (8.386)
<i>Taiping Rebellion * Share_{t-1}</i>	7.323 (6.016)	23.13 (26.34)
Prefecture FE	Y	Y
Year FE	Y	Y
<i>Province * Year FE</i>	Y	Y
<i>Controls * Year FE</i>	Y	Y
<i>L.revolutionaries</i>	Y	Y
Observations	1,799	1,799
R-squared	0.408	0.405
Number of pref	257	257

H After the 1911 Revolution

After the success of the 1911 Revolution, in 1912, revolutionaries founded the Kuomintang party (KMT, Chinese Nationalist Party) to participate in the first national assembly election, the first nationwide election in Chinese history.⁴² The KMT won 269 of the 596 seats in the House and 123 of the 274 seats in the Senate. Since the KMT won an overwhelming majority, its executive leader Song Jiaoren (1882-1913) was expected to become premier, but he was assassinated on March 20, 1913. The president Yuan Shikai was suspected of the crime. The President then dissolved KMT, expelled adherents of the KMT from the parliament. This event indicated that the parliamentary democracy sought by the revolutionaries was a complete failure. The KMT top leader Sun Yat-sen led a faction to rebel against the president Yuan. However, the Second Revolution (July-September, 1913) failed within two months.

Sun Yat-sen resurrected the KMT as the Nationalist Party of China in 1919 in Guangzhou. Among the 24 members of the first KMT standing committee, 19 had previously been members of *the Chinese Revolutionary Alliance*, and 14 joined it in 1905 or 1906. Additionally, the Whampoa Military Academy was established in Guangzhou in 1924 to augment the military capabilities of the Northern Expedition. Graduates of Whampoa Military Academy (1924-1926) became high-ranking military officers of the KMT government later.

The KMT and its Guangzhou government accepted aid from the Soviet Union in 1923 after being denied recognition by Western powers. During the first party congress in Guangzhou in 1924, the KMT adopted Sun's political theory, which included *the Three Principles of the People*—nationalism, democracy, and the well-being of the people. After three years, supported by its own army of the Military Academy, the KMT conquered the southern half of China in nine months with Soviet supplies. In 1927, the KMT established a national government in Nanjing, which ruled China until it was overthrown by the Communist party in 1949.⁴³

⁴²During the 1911 Revolution, the revolutionaries were faced with depleted finances, so they had to compromise with the Qing court in the north. Yuan Shikai (1859-1916), a minister of the Qing court, took advantage of this opportunity to seize power and became the first president of the Republic of China (1912-1916). The revolutionaries at this time pursued parliamentary democracy to check the power of the president.

⁴³Though the KMT government aimed to reunify China, the country remained de facto divided into several realms controlled by military leaders. The border provinces in the north and the west were out of the KMT's control in most periods.

Though revolutionaries had already given up the anti-Manchu (or Pro-Han) slogan and embraced the concept of Chinese nationalism to unite non-Han ethnicities after the revolution's success, most of the core KMT members joined revolutionary groups early.⁴⁴ Their early careers were built on the narrow Han (Anti-Manchu) nationalism.

qualitative evidence

After the 1911 Revolution, revolutionaries or the KMT adopted nationalism to establish the official narrative of history. In 1937, the KMT government issued a list of forty national heroes. Among these forty historical figures, six were Ming heroes in the resistance against the Manchu's invasion in the mid-17th century, and there were no Manchus. The list suggests that the KMT still insisted on its Nationalism definition.

⁴⁴The Chinese nationalism regards non-Han ethnicities including Manchus, Mongols, Hui people, Tibetans, and other races as also being Chinese.

I Newspapers

I.1 Introduction to the Newspaper Database



Figure I.1: the Full-text of Journals in the Late Qing Database

Source: <https://www.cnbkys.com/>.

Table II: The 19 newspapers founded by revolutionaries

Newspaper	Headquarter	Founded	Closed
国民报	Tokyo, Japan	1901	1901
广益丛报	Chongqing, China	1903	1912
国民日日报	Shanghai, China	1903	1904
湖北学生界 (汉声)	Tokyo, Japan	1903	1903
江苏	Tokyo, Japan	1903	1904
觉民	Shanghai, China	1903	1904
浙江潮	Tokyo, Japan	1903	1903
中国白话报	Shanghai, China	1903	1904
安徽俗话报	Anqing, China	1904	1905
白话	Tokyo, Japan	1904	1904
二十世纪大舞台	Shanghai, China	1904	1904
国粹学报	Shanghai, China	1905	1912
民报	Tokyo, Japan	1905	1908
醒狮	Tokyo, Japan	1905	1905
洞庭波	Tokyo, Japan	1906	1906
复报	Shanghai, China	1906	1907
竞业旬报	Shanghai, China	1906	1909
雁来红丛报	Suzhou, China	1906	1906
云南	Tokyo, Japan	1906	1911

I.2 Newspaper Articles About Repression and Resistance

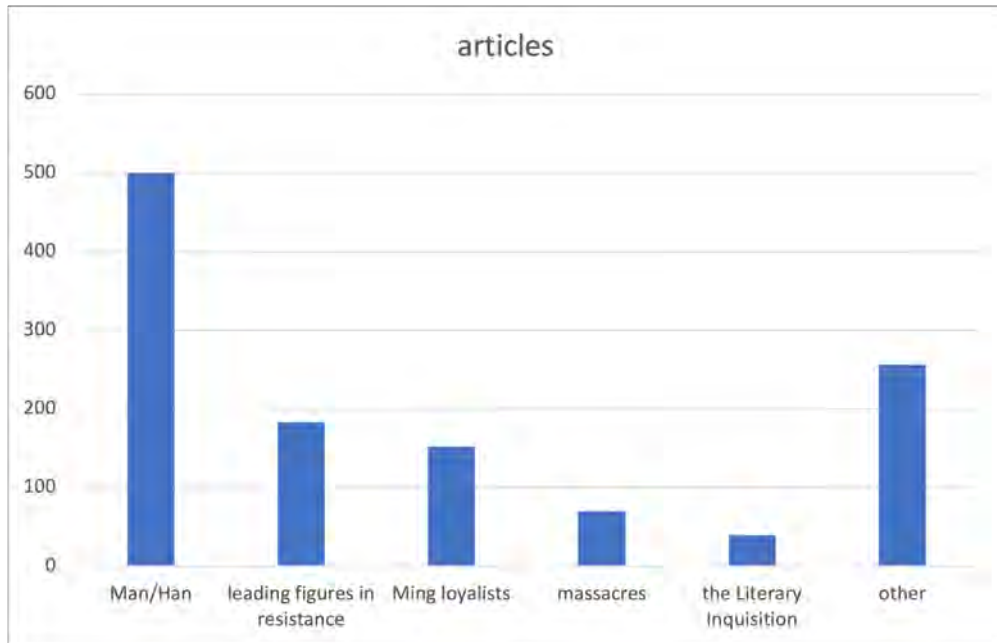


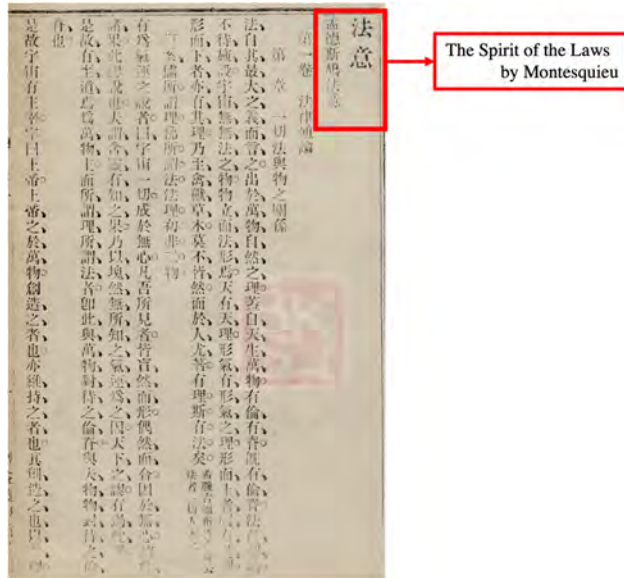
Figure I.3: 908 anti-Manchu articles among 9,995 articles from 19 newspapers founded by revolutionaries

Notes: The figure above shows the distribution of the types of anti-Manchu articles. The first bar on the left gives the number of articles that contained the word “Manchu” or “Han”, and claimed that the Manchus were not Chinese. The next four bars show the number of articles that discussed corresponding topics. The last bar, other, refers to other topics that aimed to arouse the anti-Manchu sentiment. Other topics include martyrs and loyalists of Song dynasty who fought against foreign invasions such as Yuefei (1103-1142) and Wen Tianxiang (1236-1283), the first emperor of Ming dynasty Zhu Yuanzhang (1328-1398) who ended the Mongol-led Yuan dynasty, and traitors to the Ming dynasty like Wu Sangui (1612-1678) and Hong Chengchou (1593-1665).

I.3 Newspaper Articles On Other Sentiments



(a) article on anti-imperialism
北京政府賣人, 安徽俗話報, 1904.



(b) The Spirit of Laws by Montesquieu
法意, 廣益叢報, 1906.

Figure I.4: Newspaper articles on other sentiments

J Miscellaneous Objects

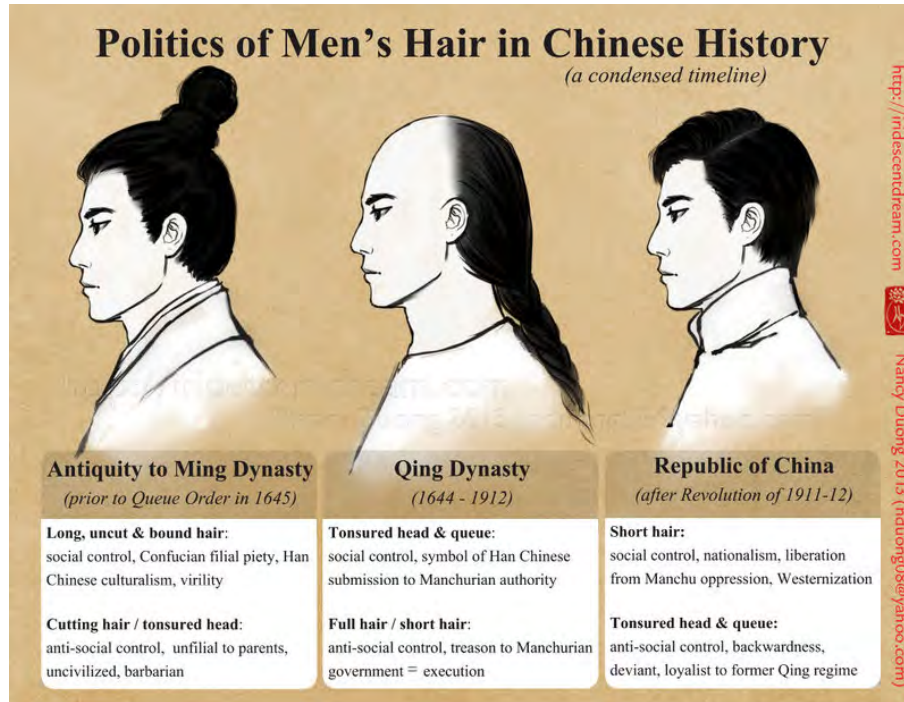


Figure J.1: Politics of men's hair in Chinese history

Source: <https://nannaia.tumblr.com/post/58470045079/politics-of-mens-hair-in-chinese-history-a>.

Table J1: The Revolutionary Groups between 1894 and 1906

Revolutionary Group	Time of Establishment	Origin
(i) <i>Xingzhonghui</i> (The Revive China Society)	November 1894	Honolulu, Hawaii
(ii) <i>Junguomin Jiaoyuhui</i> (The Society of National Military Education)	May 1903	Tokyo, Japan
(iii) <i>Huaxinghui</i> (The China Rise Society)	April 1903	Changsha, China
(iv) <i>Guangfuhui</i> (The Restoration Society)	October 1904	Shanghai, China
(v) <i>Tongmenghui</i> (The Chinese Revolutionary Alliance)	August 1905	Tokyo, Japan
(vi) <i>Rizhihui</i> (The Society for Daily Improvement)	January 1906	Wuhan, China

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