

# Political Repression, Media Propaganda and Nation Building

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## Highlights

Print media is critical in nation-building.

- Revolutionary propagandists took advantage of a retelling of the political repression and resistance two hundred years ago to fan the flames of discontent toward the Manchu-led Qing government.
- Prefectures with historical repression and resistance responded more to the anti-Manchu propaganda and produced more revolutionaries.
- After the revolution, revolutionaries strove to build a modern nation-state by organizing the Kuomintang party, army, and government.

## Introduction

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 and a half centuries later, when modern newspaper technology became available, revolutionary propagandists took advantage of a retelling of the political repression and resistance and made it into ethnic conflicts to fan the flames of discontent.

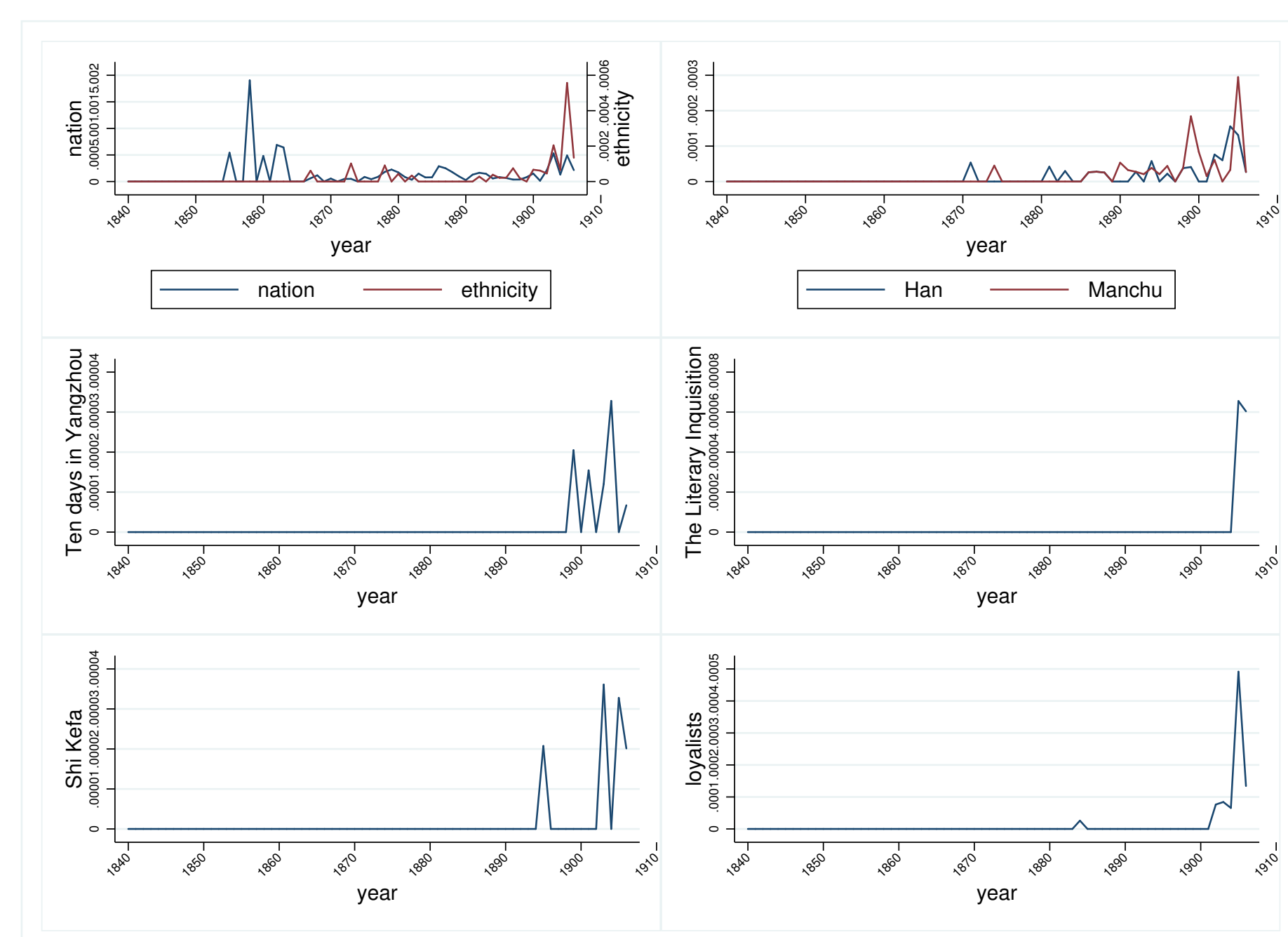


Figure 1: the frequencies of key words in the the FJLQD Database by year

## Materials

### Mid-17th century

- the Manchu's harsh repression
  - Massacre: massacres in each prefecture during the Manchu's conquest 1644-1649
  - Inquisition: literary inquisition cases in each prefecture 1661-1788
- Han people's resistance
  - Ming Martyrs: Ming martyrs in resistance against the Manchu's conquest 1644-1662
  - Ming loyalists: Ming loyalists in the early Qing period

### Early 20th century

- the Full-text of Journals in the late Qing Database

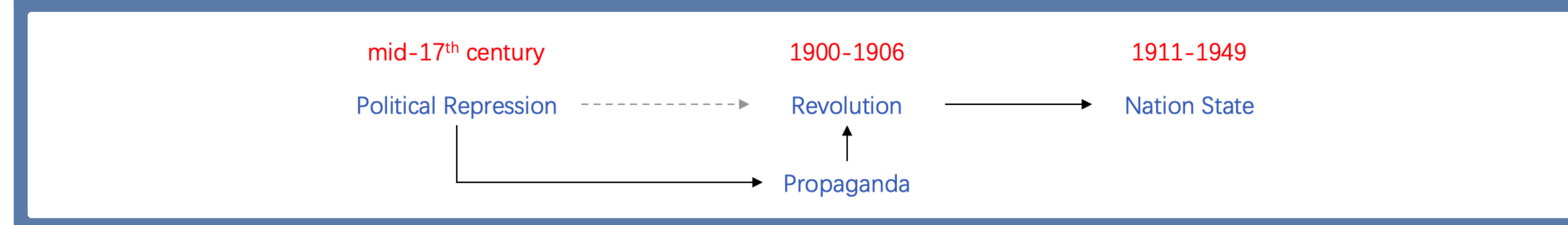
## Methods

How much more remarkable was the increase of revolutionary participation in areas with historical repression and resistance following exposure to anti-Manchu propaganda? The Difference-in-Difference empirical strategy is as follows,

$$R_{pt} = \beta Share_{t-1} * Repression_p + Share_{t-1} * X_p + \lambda_p + \gamma_t + \delta_{prov} * \gamma_t + \epsilon_{pt}$$

Where  $R_{pt}$  is the number of revolutionaries in prefecture  $p$  and year  $t$  between 1900 and 1906.  $Share_{t-1}$  is the share of Anti-Manchu articles on newspapers one year before year  $t$ .

## Logic Chain



## Machine Learning

Like Fouka and Voth (2016), I used the average share of anti-Manchu items to measure the anti-Manchu sentiment. I first calculated the percentage of anti-Manchu articles in newspaper  $j$  for year  $t$  and then took an average to arrive at the year level index.

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

I randomly split the embedded matrix into two parts: 80% training and the rest testing; and an LSTM model was used for sentiment classification.

Table 1: Results of Machine Learning

	loss	accuracy
training set	0.1606	0.9326
test set	0.1941	0.9265

## Results

Table 2: Main Results

	revolutionaries (mean: 0.68)					
	19 newspapers founded by revolutionaries			all newspapers (deep learning)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
$Repression * Share_{t-1}$	2.088*** (0.801)	5.421*** (1.124)	3.010*** (1.068)			
$Repression * DeepShare_{t-1}$				8.011* (4.246)	23.201*** (5.711)	11.555** (5.324)
Prefecture FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Year FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
$Province * YearFE$	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
$Controls * Share_{t-1}$	N	N	Y	N	N	Y
Observations	1,799	1,799	1,799	1,799	1,799	1,799

The interaction term between the measure of repression and resistance and the anti-Manchu share explains 27%-39% of the mean of revolutionaries.

## Discussion: A nation-state

After the 1911 Revolution, revolutionaries strove to establish a modern nation-state by organizing:

- KMT party representatives in the national assembly (1913-1925)
- KMT central committee members (1924-1952)
- KMT army generals (1927-1949)
- KMT senior officials in its government (1927-1949)

## Conclusion

The anti-Manchu propaganda successfully mobilized people to join the revolutionary groups.

Different from the existing literature that emphasizes destructive aspects of historical roots in social conflicts, this paper explores the constructive aspects of historical events in modern China's nation-building.

## References

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