Political Repression, Media Propaganda and Nation Building
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Highlights
- Revolutionary propagandaists took advantage of repression and resistance two hundred years ago to fan the flames of discontent toward the Manchu-led Qing government.
- 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.

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:

\[ R_{pt} = \beta \text{Share}_{t-1} \times \text{Repression}_p \]
+ \text{Share}_{t-1} \times X_p + \lambda_p + \gamma_t + \delta_{\text{new}} + \gamma_p + \epsilon_{pt} \]

Where \( R_{pt} \) is the number of revolutionaries in prefecture \( p \) and year \( t \) between 1900 and 1906. \( \text{Share}_{t-1} \) is the share of Anti-Manchu articles on newspapers one year before \( t \).

Logic Chain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>mid-17th century</th>
<th>1900-1906</th>
<th>1911-1949</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political Repression</td>
<td>Revolution</td>
<td>Nation State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Propaganda</td>
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</tbody>
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Machine Learning
Like Fonka 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:

\[ \text{share}_t = \frac{\sum_j \text{Anti-Manchu articles}_{j,t}}{\sum_j \text{articles}_{j,t}} \]

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>training set</th>
<th>test set</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>loss</td>
<td>accuracy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.1941</td>
<td>0.9265</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Results

Table 2 Main Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean (SD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>( R_{pt} )</td>
<td>6.0000 (3.0000)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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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