

# 近似建研究

**MODERN CHINESE HISTORY STUDIES** 

2022 · 4

中国社会科学院近代史研究所主办

## 近代史研究

Modern Chinese History Studies

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### Modern Chinese History Studies

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From Belligerence to Pacification: the Opinion Orientation of Shenbao During the Sino-French War
Experiences, Witnessing and Memories: Several Ordinary Chinese during the Boxer Rebellion

This paper concentrated on three ordinary Chinese during the Boxer Rebellion in 1900, namely, Jin Sixi, Zheng Dianfang and Fu Jingtao. All of them were Chinese Christians and lived at the margin of society. As the witnesses of the chaos at the time, they unintentionally left their imprint on history. They took shelter in a foreign embassy at one time and were to various extents involved in transmitting information underground during the war. Consequently, they respectively played a role in mediation and rescuing the embassy from the siege. Their actions transcended the China versus Foreign dichotomy. As "exceptional" personal choices under very extreme circumstances, their actions indicated the failure of relevant social mechanisms. These ordinary Chinese did some extraordinary things, but they were not able 'o tell their stories on their own. All the historical records about their deeds were written by others. By piecing together all relevant historical records, researchers can re-create their full images, through which we can understand the focus of a specific time and the standpoints of different social groups. Stories of ordinary people may be the key to understanding the magnificent aspects of history.

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During the Boxer Rebellion, Mukden general Zengqi was severely criticized for unauthorizedly signing the humiliating Russia-Chinese Provisional Agreement on the Fengtian Province with the Russian army. Most researchers hold that the nature of this incident is clear and the evidences are beyond doubt. This conventional wisdom, however, is challenged since it ignores the complex negotiations under the surface and divergent responses from relevant parties. In fact, Zengqi did ask the Qing government for instructions, but Li Hongzhang deliberately refused to reply. The provisional agreement was not disclosed through foreign media until the Sino-Russian negotiations came to a head. By doing so, Li Hongzhang attempted to counter Russia's ambition of dominating Manchuria by taking advantage of the objection from other big powers. Zengqi was immediately dismissed by the Qing government, but was later reinstated under the pressure of Russia. Zengqi felt he was unjustly treated considering other governors in Manchuria who also sought reconciliations with Russia had never been punished like him. Zengqi's claim was not totally groundless, but it should not become the excuse for his immunity from punishment. Nevertheless, the failure of Li Hongzhang to give timely instructions contributed to Zengqi's decision to sign the provisional agreement without authorization. This part of history sheds light on the difficult diplomacy of the Qing government vis-a-vis Russia during the Boxer Rebellion and the complexity of politics in the late Qing Dynasty

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Medical missionaries and the western pharmaceutical companies introduced morphine into China as a cure for opium addiction in the 1870s. The proliferation of morphine and its misuse promoted a discussion on its harms. To respond to appeals from gentries after the First Sino-Japanese War (1894 – 1895), the Magistrate of Shanghai and local officials in other places issued regulations to control the use of morphine. However, morphine was imported into China by foreigners at the time, so regulating morphine became a diplomatic issue in China. After the end of the Boxer Rebellion, the policy of morphine imports control was included into the revised commercial treaties as proposed by the Qing government. However, the implementation of this policy turned out to be difficult due to the noncooperation from big powers. In addition, conflicts emerged frequently regarding morphine importation by foreign businessmen. Under such circumstances, the regulation on morphine imports control had to be revised. After marathon negotiations, the Qing government and Britain and other big powers agreed upon a new policy on morphine imports control, which took into effect in 1909. Several factors together contributed to morphine proliferation during the late Qing dynasty, including activities of medical missionaries in China, the business expansion of the western pharmaceutical companies and the narcotic drugs suppression campaign launched by the Qing government. The emergence of the morphine imports control policy and relevant negotiations between China and big powers shed light on the struggling of the Qing government in face of the hegemonic power of foreign countries

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The Jiaoji railway began collecting railway cargo donation in 1924, which invoked strong resistance by Japan. Both the central and local Chinese governments stood their ground and forced the Japaneses side to accept this tax by taking corresponding countermeasures. However, the Jiaoji Railway was later controlled by local warlords, who wantonly collected taxes from areas along the Jiaoji Railway. Collection of the Jiaoji Railway cargo donation and its abuse brought the various conflicts and contradictions after the ownership of this foreign-funded railway was taken back by China to the fore. On the one hand, the Jiaoji Railway cargo donation took place under an anti-Japanese atmosphere and was galvanized by Chinese nationalism. On the other hand, it laid bare the struggles by various political forces for their invested interests.

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