Front. Hist. China (2006) 4: 590–610
DOI 10.1007/s11462-006-0021-1

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Liu Zenghe

Conflicting viewpoints on opium prohibition: Radical changes to opium policy in the late Qing dynasty

© Higher Education Press and Springer-Verlag 2006

Abstract The ban on opium at the end of the Qing dynasty was larger and more influential than ever before. Opinions differed on opium prohibition between the court and society. The intelligentsia and government believed in a set of policies, while opium farmers and traders resisted them. Subsequent conflicts became more and more intense, especially when opium farmers began protesting the ban on planting opium. The reactions of officials and commoners towards this backlash against the opium ban were very complex. The rehabilitation plans and measures following the backlash proved ineffective, leaving a confused situation out of control.

Keywords Opium ban, Late Qing dynasty, opium farmers/traders, backlash from the opium ban

Opinions differed on opium prohibition between the court and society in the late Qing dynasty. The reactions and cognitions to the backlash against the ban were rather complex. Although this problem has no detailed records in the relevant books, we cannot ignore its importance. It is closely tied to the subsequent 1911 Revolution. The peasants' revolt due to the ban on poppy growing, and the traders' boycotts of various tax increases on both semi-finished and finished opium products made up the backlash to the opium ban. The ban was necessary since the opium problem was closely related to the prosperity of the country and new political reform. Opium was

Translated from *Wen-shi-zhe* (Journal of Literature, History & Philosophy), 2004:2

Liu Zenghe (✉)
Department of History, Jinan University, Guangzhou 510632, China
E-mail: liuzenghe99@163.net

an abomination to the court and regarded as "the disease that will destroy our country" by weakening the common people. For more than a hundred years opium was a narcotic that spoiled life and money, more harmful than even gambling or prostitution. However, the policy of banning opium gave rise to recurring turmoil in every region, and many protests against the ban took place.

By discussing the different views of the court and society over banning opium and their debates on the backlash against the opium ban, this paper aims to illustrate the dilemma faced by the Qing Dynasty in dealing with the problem of opium. It exposes the complex and tricky attitudes of local and central government officials, the middle class (especially the intelligentsia), and the lower classes towards the issue of banning opium. It highlights the problematic choices made by some scholars in dealing with the issue.

I. The government and intelligentsia

Relatively large-scale opium-banning movements took place in the last years of Emperor Daoguang's reign and that of Emperor Guangxu's reign in the Qing Dynasty. Following imperial orders, Guizhou and Shanxi provinces (well-known opium production zones) launched various actions prohibiting poppy-growing. Among all the opium-banning attempts, the one attempted during the period of political reform near the end of the dynasty was the largest and had the most far-reaching influence. This paper plans to analyze several viewpoints on these attempts and the resulting backlash.

During the late Qing, there were two different views on banning opium. One large ranging group controlled discourse and basically advocated banning opium. They stressed the positive effects of banning opium on morality, economy, official administration, and people's livelihood, etc. The other group included poppy planters, merchants who transported and marketed opium, and even some foreign opium traders. They, either for their livelihood or for tremendous profit, took a stand against the rightful banning policy. They often ran the risk of danger to make trouble, regardless of the ban on opium. Relatively speaking, the group opposed to the banning policy did not control discourse, and their proposals and appeals were usually reflected in official reports written by those who did not support their view. Traditionally, scholars refer to these two groups as the "two worlds in the opium-banning policy." Presenting apparently different views about the "two worlds," the research into the "two worlds" in the past was mostly from the perspective of "political significance." The academic views would become misleading if the academic evaluations deviate from the right way. In current

writings concerning the banning policy and the new political reform, the antagonistic tendency of the "two worlds" has "accidentally" led to a state of "aphasia", with almost no remarks about it.[1]

Initiated in 1906, the reform of the opium ban was endowed with great significance by its supporters in the court and society. It mainly focused on blocking the money drain, improving the people's health, making the country more enterprising, refreshing the nation's image, and strengthening the weak country. Society expected a great deal from this policy, which was often supported by official remarks, memorials presented to the emperor, and official communications, as well as various comments from ordinary people.[2] Although this group acknowledged the need to ban opium, its members differed in their opinions about the details. Several important local officials played great roles in voicing these opinions. with respect to evaluating Zhang Zhidong, Morrison, a correspondent of *Times* to China, commented that "all governor-generals except Zhang Zhidong opposed opium. Zhang however did so theoretically rather than actually."[3] Some people regard Zhang Zhidong as the chief spokesman for official reform. "He had always opposed opium, but he changed his tone when talking about the issue of China's modernization. In his book *Persuasion for Studies,* he said that opium could seriously destroy one's abilities, weaken one's ambition and waste money. In 1898 he concluded that Chinese people's ignorance was the reason for opium smoking and educational development was an effective remedy for opium banning. However, three years later, Zhang Zhidong made a suggestion to the emperor that opium tax could increase the state revenue, to be used for the study of modern industries from foreign countries." "Like Zhang Zhidong, who was ambivalent in treating the opium, many upper bureaucrats and influential persons had long been abominating opium's harm and meanwhile recognized the importance of the tax revenue from the opium trade." Other figures who shared "Zhang Zhidong's ambivalence" included Zeng Guofan, Li Hongzhang, Zuo Zongtang

[1] In the field of research about the opium-banning policy, the well-famed book *The History about the Changes of China's Opium-banning Acts* (written by Yu En-de; the 1934 edition, Zhonghua Press in Shanghai) has greatly influenced later books concerning the same problem. However, the book fails to display the opinions of each stratum, and it, along with the following studies of other scholars, does not pay attention to the backlash against the banning policy, either. Qin He-ping's book *Sichuan Opium Problem and the Opium–banning Action* (the 2000 edition, Sichuan National Press in Chengdu), based on the situation of Sichuan province, has discussed a lot about this kind of problem, but due to the restriction of the subject, the book does not extend the study to other areas.

[2] Liu Zenghe, "The Relationship between the Opium-banning Policy and New Political Reform in Late Qing Dynasty".

[3] Luo Huimin, ed., *Political Inside Stories of the Late Qing Dynasty,* Vol.1, (*Letters of G. Morrison*). pp.496–497.

and Wang Tao.[4] Outsiders' observation about the phenomenon in fact contains a logical cognition of "if not X then Y." The opium problem was not merely China's internal politics but had close relation with the British government; that is to say, without British cooperation, the goal of opium banning would be extremely difficult to reach. Moreover, since it had already taken shape, the "opium economy" could not be eradicated in a short time. The remarks made under this situation were in most cases only about concrete matters and therefore, they would inevitably become contradictory.

In fact, "contradiction" as a phenomenon exists in both Chinese and foreign histories. Describing the complexity of the opinions about opium banning, some media said: "Since last year people have suddenly become more aware. The officials made plans for opium banning and reiterated the great harm of smoking. It is suggested to carry out rapid or slow prohibition, to stress the importance of finance or life itself, or to seek help from foreign opium traders or to depend on the court itself. Some say that it is due to long established customs, others mention the difficulty of prohibition caused by confusing registration of soldiers. The opposite ideas on opium banning can not be easily settled and still full of the court."[5] No one disapproved of the banning order, but there was divergence in views about how to prohibit opium, which led to various regulations in each province and county. The slow and rapid banning approaches coexisted for more than three years. The reason why some provinces advanced slowly was not owing to their reluctance to ban opium but for their concerns regarding the impact on the opium tax revenue.[6] In other words, the concern for financial profits restricted the actions of banning opium both in the court and in the provinces.

Non-governmental and governmental attitudes towards banning were almost identical, but their stands came from different considerations. One year before the banning order was issued, local gentry had established several opium-banning organizations and launched opium-banning activities in local places. Zhenwu Association was a non-governmental, spontaneous and reformist social organization, whose rules said, "For the sake of our army, our country and our people, we must make our race stronger; and if we want to make our race stronger, we must ban opium. No one cannot understand it."[7] From that we can see that the Zhenwu Association was aimed at building up healthy bodies for the country and blocking the outflow

[4] Thomas D. Lane, Reform, "Nationalism and Internationalism: Chinese Opium-banning Action and British Influences from 1900 to 1908."
[5] "On Establishing Anti-opium Associations in Each Province". Beijing: *Shuntian Times,* 1908-02-21.
[6] "The Official Document to British Diplomatic Minister Gray by British Consul to China Jordan." In *Collection of Diplomatic Reports*, Vol.29. p.85, 101.
[7] "The Opium-banning Rules of Zhenwu Association." *Shenbao*, Shanghai, 1905-10-28.

of money, which was fit for the new tendency at that time. An editorial in the *Public Communique* also stressed that the great harm of opium was not suitable for the qualification of the Chinese army, people, and militarism.[8] At the beginning of 1906, it was clear that the ban was related to the new political reform, and that it had been proposed to go against the officials' smoking habits so as to support the new political reform.[9] When the common people discussed implementing a new political reform to inspire the national spirit, the problem of officials' smoking was the first to be put forward. In addition, some people emphasized the tremendous benefits to be gained from the banning policy, thinking that it could "completely change the opinions of the country, and it is a key point of the new political reform," which involved international fame, the people's interests and the military strength of China. In regard to the economic interests, he thought that "In ten years we can reserve a large sum of money no less than five or six hundred million *liang*. If it is invested into the railway companies of each province, it might not be difficult to buy back the railroads built by foreigners and the mining resources beside the railways. When people become wealthy, we can pay off all the national debts; we do not need to worry about poverty any more, and commerce will certainly make progress."[10]The consensus was that opium-banning benefited all businesses and economic prosperity in particular. Lacking insight about the complicated impact of banning opium, the scholars' comments were impractical, but it really represented one opinion at that time. Indeed, opium addiction was theoretically closely linked to the national development and the national pioneering spirit, and the calamities in the late Qing Dynasty could by no means be separated from the opium problem.[11] In a situation that there was a close relationship between opium taxes and the new political reform and there existed low efficiency of compensation for the financial losses, no one could claim the action would instantly produce significant economic benefits for China.

An international opium-banning conference was convened in Shanghai in 1909, at which the intelligentsia and the court officials held similar ideas and positively evaluated the opium banning policy. An important newspaper in Wuhan, one of the opium trading centers in China, gave this evaluation on the significance of the banning policy: "Fundamental to strengthening the country, opium-banning is the most important thing in our internal politics. Furthermore, since it needs assistance from foreign countries, it

[8] "Hopes of Banning Opium in China." *The Public Communique*, Shanghai, Vol.192, 1905-10-28.
[9] "Comment on Officials' Deep Addiction of Opium Smoking." *Shenbao*, Shanghai, 1906-03-16.
[10] "The Prospects after Opium Banning ." *Shenbao*, Shanghai,1907-06-12.
[11] "The Black and Sweet Memory about the Hometown."In: Liu Tieling and Jian Zhuchao, ed., *People's rights*: Part1 (Xiesou).p.4.

is also a major point of foreign affairs. Therefore, today's conference is a turning point for China to become strong and powerful."[12] "The prohibition of *afurong* (another Chinese name for opium) can save both opium smokers and non-smokers." The newspaper continued, "Sigh! Having long been in the dark and poisonous smoke, our country men have been living as if intoxicated or in dream. Only when the smoke disappears can we see again the formerly bright world."[13] Compared with the unified understanding of the opium problem among the intelligentsia, the attitudes of the officials tended to be more complex. But the majority of officials mentioned this issue only when they encountered it in specific context, so contradictory remarks were unavoidable. Even Xu Jue, an eminent figure who advocated the banning policy, had to pay attention to strategies of the banning activity. As he remarked, "For two years I have been asking to increase taxes on local and imported opium, but I dare not touch the problem of opium banning, because if I say so, other people would think of me as pedantic and they would ignore it. If I propose to increase opium taxes, it will be favorable for the finance. Moreover, if we increase taxes, the poor smokers will reduce their opium consumption. This is one reason for me not to mention the prohibition."[14] Here, "other people would think of me as pedantic" could reflect governmental attitudes toward the opium problem. After the relationship between the opium taxes and the central or local governments was established, the governmental dependence on opium was increasingly obvious. The word "people" mentioned above refers to all kinds of officials, including those on the frontiers. As the opium taxes and government finances were becoming increasingly associated, the majority of officials certainly could not accept the banning suggestion if it was put forward suddenly. Therefore, there arose the expedient suggestion to increase taxes rather than "touch the problem." In the third year of the reign of Emperor Guangxu, Guo Songtao, a Chinese ambassador to Britain, asked the court twice to start prohibiting opium, but court officials held different opinions. Besides the public remarks, those made privately were more important. The view of Liu Kunyi generally reflected the focal points of each side. In early November, he wrote in his private letter that:

> "The opium banning proposal of Vice Minister Guo Junxian, is not practical at all. Take Guangdong for example, the Customs Bureau can obtain more than a million *liang* of the opium tax each year. How can

[12] "The Fundamental Political Task in the First Year of Xuantong." *Hankou Accounts* (newspaper), 1909-02-05.
[13] Jingzhai, "Discussion." *Hankou Accounts*, 1909-02-03.
[14] Xu Yu's "Letters to Zhao Erxun." *Collection Archives of Zhao Erxun* (Vol.26).

we collect the opium tax while prohibiting opium? Since this is used to meet all kinds of needs in Beijing and other local places, how can we do without it? If you tell the truth, it will touch the taboo. It is better to procrastinate, and maybe the court will no longer ask you about it."[15]

Some commoners made even deeper observations: "The opium tax has accounted for a large proportion of the state revenue. The opium tax can influence and even determine the interests of the country as well as the revenue of the government. If this item of tax is canceled, nothing could compensate for the loss. That is why the ban has remained silent in recent years."[16] This dilemma was fairly prevalent. The aspiration to develop the country became contradictory with the reality of tax dependence on opium. The suggestion of simply resisting opium was impractical, so it was naturally hard for the governors to adopt it. At this point, the arguments and attitudes of the "anti-opium world" were not unanimous, and many contradictory views arose. However, once the forces of political reform and the pressure from foreign countries were conflated, the significance of the banning action would be acknowledged and recommended as "the first principal task of the new political reform" by officials and intellectuals alike. In this sense, we can call it "the anti-opium world."

II. Opium farmers and traders

The situation was more complicated within the groups that resisted the ban on opium. Resistance groups were made up mostly of opium farmers and to a lesser extent local traders and operators of opium houses. Foreign opium traders did not account for a huge part of the resistance, though their numbers were substantial. The distribution of opium profits had become a main source of differentiation among these people. In spite of the ten-year plan made to prohibit opium, the Qing Dynasty had to extend it by more than seven years to forbid people from growing poppies as well as transporting and smoking opium. There were various forms of resistance from these groups, among which resistance by local traders became more and more intense.

Opium production was scattered throughout the main provinces of the country, but opium farmers were particularly concentrated in Yunnan, Guizhou, Sichuan, Hubei and Gansu. The opium ban of the Qing Dynasty began in the opium dens. The bans were largely effective within several

[15] *Posthumous Collection of Liu Kunyi*, Vol.6 . p.1831.
[16] Zhao Fengtian, *Fifty Years' Economic and Ideological History of the Late Qing Dynasty*. p.215.

months. Thereafter, the dynasty moved to the more adventurous banning policies, i.e. prohibition of growing poppies. Court officials noted that compensation for opium farmers was an important aspect of the farming opium ban. It was proposed that "we should give priority to sustaining livelihood by growing opium," otherwise 'the poor will become poorer. Kind farmers will comply in public but oppose it privately; the fierce farmers will become rascals or bandits after finding their business profitless when opium growing was prohibited. Furthermore, the residents in southwestern China are always famous for their unruliness; they will certainly stir up trouble if again pressed by poverty.'[17] This proposal was advisable because as the opium economy had formed, a staggering number of people relied on opium as a means of livelihood, paying taxes and survival. Therefore, it was not easy to compensate for the loss of income in a short time.

For many years the interests of opium farmers had become closely tied to opium. Compared with other agricultural plants, opium could earn them substantial profits, sometimes 80 percent higher than that of wheat[18]. The comparative benefits of opium were so considerable that opium farmers would resist officials' persuasion to grow other plants. The situation in Sichuan was typical because "it is inapplicable for Sichuan province to raise the tax on opium in guiding farmers to grow kapok, just as Hubei has done. Farmers' greed for opium profits and the ignorance of opium traders make the sales of opium continue to grow in Hubei. Increased taxes on opium traders will add burden to smokers, but it has no influence on farmers, so they will remain unchanged."[19]

The reason for farmers' resistance lay in that opium could pay various increased taxes besides its higher profits. In the reign of Emperor Xuantong, the number of taxes levied by some local governments in Sichuan was over ten times higher than the normal tax level of staple crops[20]. After paying all the taxes, the opium farmers in Fuling region were still able to have a surplus from opium profits, which could be used to purchase daily necessities and give friends as presents. "Most of the opium profit is used to pay taxes, treat guests or buy other necessary things. Therefore, people prefer to grow

[17] "Court Official Bei Shou's Memorial to Emperor about Prohibiting Growing Poppies and Encouraging Growing Livelihood Crops in Northwestern Frontiers." *Collection about Political Affairs in Conferences,* No.155.

[18] The sentence is said by Du Yun-qiu in the first volume of *Huangling Book*. Quoted in Qin He-ping, *Sichuan Opium Problem and the Opium-banning Action*, p.46. There is a mistake about punctuation and it is corrected here.

[19] Zhou Yong, & Liu Jingxiu, ed., *The Economic and Social Development of Modern Chongqing, 1876-1949*. pp.48–49.

[20] It is written in lesson 28 of the first volume of *Local Geography for Peizhou Primary School,* by He Shou-dian and Xiong Hong-mo. Quoted in Qin He-ping, *op. cit.,* p. 438.

poppies."[21] Likewise, as early as 1880s, Li Yongqing, the inspector of Guizhou, found that "the road conditions were inconvenient so that farmers in Guizhou province had no way to transport their grains but on foot. Since opium is portable and easy to be traded, the trades in this district are becoming more and more active''[22]. The inconvenient traffic conditions thus boosted the emergence and development of the opium economy in this province. In the reign of Emperor Xuantong, the governor-general of Yunnan and Guizhou had discovered the extremely close relationship between opium farmers and opium benefits. "Poppy growing is as popular in the remote places as areas with wide roads. At harvest season there are often many southeastern traders with large sums of money who go to Guizhou to buy and transport opium. Thus, they can get large profits, which often amount to several millions of *liang*"[23]. The governor-general also mentioned in another imperial report the significance of poppy growing for local people's livelihood and finance. Under the circumstances without any favorable policy of income compensation, the decision of quickening the prohibition timetable was undoubtedly the most important factor in the opium farmers' turmoil.[24] During the poppy banning period, the opium farmers in some places of Yunnan province resisted the policy, and even the prefecture's government had recognized the inefficiency of the compensation plan. "An investigation into this prefecture indicates that after prohibition of growing poppies, the price of crops returns to normal level. While the great harm disappears, the large profits also vanish. Farmers become desperately impoverished, and the markets get bleak at once. Many people attribute the result to the stringent banning policy of allegedly mediocre and shortsighted governors. It is a real fact that their life is so hard now. For the sake of resolving the problem, we have no choice but to plant mulberry trees and raise silkworms."[25] Since this province was the first to execute the policy of quickening the prohibition timetable, the consequences appeared more serious than in other provinces. After poppy-growing was prohibited, the shocks encountered by the farmers were described as follows: "In the past, farmers could earn over 40 million *liang* each year by growing poppies, but due to the stringent banning policy, the revenue in the last year can only reach about 10 million *liang*. As a result, the whole province of

[21] Nixiawa Ciaofu, "The Social Situation before Sichuan Railway Protection Movement." pp.150-152.
[22] Li Yongqing, "Proposal of Prohibiting Growing Opium in Guizhou Province." In: Wang Shumin, & Wang Yanxi, ed., *Memorials and Orders of Qing Emperors Daoguang, Xianfeng, Tongzhi and Guangxu*. p.5351.
[23] Lin Manhong, *The Relationship between Financial and Economic Stability and People's Heath: Comment on Local Opium in Late Qing Dynasty(1833–1905)*.
[24] "Guizhou Inspector Pang Hongshu's Memorial for Liquidating Financial Deficit in Guizhou Province." *Official Reports Read by Emperors* (Finance).
[25] "Application and Approval for Growing Mulberry Trees and Rice in Guangxi and Zhili".

Sichuan has been plagued with dire poverty, and many people become bandits, in just one day a number of plunders are being committed in the villages "[26]. Sichuan, Guizhou, Yunnan, and other provinces all encountered troubles and almost all of them faced the problem of compensation. As various taxes became increasingly heavier and the only quick cash crop (opium) was made illegal, it was only a short time before the inevitable trend of resistance against the banning policy was begun by the opium farmers.

Opium traders, who were much more closely associated with opium profits, were another social stratum opposing the opium ban policy. By the time of the Opium War, opium traders had expanded into almost every social stratum, with soldiers, officials, royal members, eunuchs, etc. as well as ordinary businessmen being involved[27]. By 1906 the people involved in the affair were even more numerous and jumbled. Foreign opium traders from Britain and the Chinese opium factions from Chaozhou and Guangzhou were particularly famous. With the development and formation of the opium economy, the number of people involved in the business was rising and the profits to local traders, foreign traders and opium-houses were sizable. Zhang Zhongli (Chungli Chang) and Chen Zengnian claimed that "for only several years from 1907 to 1914, the profits that Shaxun Group has generated from selling opium in China were over 20 million *liang*"[28]. Being in charge of the unified taxes on local herbs in Sichuan, Cai Naihuang said in 1905 that "last year the profit rate for opium traders was 60 percent. Since I super vise the herb taxes, it is clearly investigated that Guangdong and Hu'nan opium traders are two halves among the opium tycoons."[29] Thus, it shows that opium selling could reap colossal profits. With the progress of opium-banning, the amount of imported and local opium kept decreasing, and prices soared, [30]so the trade profits were even greater. Once the Qing Dynasty speeded up the prohibition timetable, the colossal profits of opium traders must have vanished. This would lead to greater resistance.

The opium ban began with the closing of opium houses. Thus, conflicts between the government and the opium-house operators emerged first. To show dissatisfaction with the order many members of Shanghai opium

---

[26] "The Third Record: Collection about China's Current Affairs." pp.78–79.

[27] Lin Manhong, "Circulation of Silver and Opium and Regional Distribution of the Deflation of Silver and the Inflation of Coins(1808–1854)—One Spatial Influence of World Economy on China's Modern History." p.113

[28] Zhang Zhongli, Chen Zengnian, *Shaxun Group in Old China*.p.28.

[29] "Cai Naihuang's Letter to Zhao Erxun." in *Collection about Zhao Erxun*.

[30] According to the Newspaper *Beihua Bulletin* in 1916, it was considered that "Under the control of Shaxun Group, the price for each chest of opium skyrocketed from 700 *liang* before the Treaty of opium-banning to 5950 *liang* in 1913, and to 9012 *liang* in November, 1915." See Zhang Zhongli, *op. cit.,* p. 27.

houses staged rallies and asked for a delay in the timetable.[31] Because opium houses owed large amounts of taxes to the Jianning Financial Bureau officials were sent to press for liquidation. But all the opium-houses on the verge of being closed refused to pay taxes and demanded postponing the closing for another half year. More than 3000 opium-houses participated in these discussions.[32] Taking a much more unyielding attitude, the opium traders and opium-house operators in Jiangsu province resisted the government order, which increased taxes and led to the eventual closing of opium houses, by meeting to plan resistance to the order. Under foreign patronage, Guangzhou and Chaozhou Factions kept presenting memorials to the throne and demanding for delays to pay back taxes and the closure of houses.[33] Later a governmental monopoly of opium was suggested in many regions, but local opium traders opposed it. In Hunan, local opium traders did their best to fight the government's monopoly plan.[34] In order to resist the monopoly, local traders of Guangzhou and Chaozhou factions in Suzhou purposely collaborated with the British consul general of Shanghai to intervene in the monopoly activities in the province.[35] In the course of collecting taxes on local opium, Shanxi local opium traders tried to evade taxes in order to resist unified taxation. Their tactics were ingenious:

> Boil the opium with little water into paste and dry it in the sun to the extreme. Make it into a thin bar and cut it into inch-long pieces. Roll it tightly with opium leaves and then package it with a piece of paper. Now it is called an opium bar. Each bar needs about two or three *fen* (weight unit in old China) of done opium, being sold at a price ranging from ten *wen* (monetary unit for copper coins in old China) to 20 *wen* in the two mountain areas and Shaanxi province, including Pu prefecture and Xie prefecture. The sales are very large, and the opium bars are in fact the first staple for Shaanxi province.[36]

Tax evasion was the main form of opium traders' resistance to the government, but it also included open evil deeds and secret boycotts. Sichuan is a province which sternly implemented the policy of quickening

[31] "The Reasons Why the local Opium Businessmen's Demand for Postponing Opium Banning." *Shenbao*, 1907-12-28.
[32] "Opium-houses' Ridiculous Action of Holding Meetings for Discussion." *Shenbao,* 1907-04-05.
[33] "Stories about the Opium-houses' Meetings." *Shenbao,* Shanghai, 1907-04-16.
[34] "The Conflicts of Opium Sales Monopoly." *Shenbao,* Shanghai, 1907-11-20.
[35] For "British consuls demand for stopping officials from operating opium," See *Shenbao*, December 24, 1903; for "Each shop's protest against opium prohibiting", see *Shenbao,* May 1, 1910; for "It is the reason for the strike of opium houses," see *Shenbao*, March 26, 1911; for "the reactionary force against opium prohibiting by stages" , see *Shenbao,* May 5, 1911.
[36] "The Methods of Seriously Checking Opium Bars." *Shenbao,* Shanghai, 1907-02-28.

the prohibition timetable. In January 1910, the governor-general Zhao Erxun decided to transport all the crude opium out of the province, which triggered dissatisfaction and panic among opium traders in several provinces, who submitted a joint memorial asking for a delay of the transporting date.[37] After discussions, Zhao Erxun replied the next day by allowing a three-month delay. Because quickening the prohibition timetable had made opium prices soar,[38] many local opium traders borrowed a great deal of money to make the last speculation. Now the stern order of transporting opium out had the local traders complaining. On hearing the news that the Sichuan governor-general had announced a three-month delay, "they are so grateful and the market remains the same." Actually, local opium traders did not follow the order. Thus, the province had to establish a public guild of crude opium, which was used to store purchased crude opium and allowed the owners to bring them away freely after paying taxes. As a result, large purchases of crude opium led to severe shortage and outflow of silver and cloth capital. [39]1911 was a critical year for opium banning, when local traders collaborated with the foreign opium traders and British consuls to China, who had become an umbrella of opium traders. with the British support, large unrests took place as the Qing Dynasty perched precariously.

The opium smokers' reaction was more complicated, ranging from public compliance with orders to private opposition. In other words, the smokers straddled the two "worlds" and were difficult to differentiate. With regards to the "two worlds", it can be concluded that there were apparently opposite attitudes towards the banning policy. Despite the officials and intellectuals' optimistic prediction about the bright prospects of opium banning and their ardent support, their decisions were influenced by moral and realistic demands. They were even coerced by external forces. On the other hand, the opium farmers and traders closely connected with the opium benefits and tried to protect their established interests. Under the stagnant economic situation at the end of the Qing Dynasty, once their established interests were confronted by the ban, they did not hesitate to antagonize the government, and many rebellions emerged.

[37] "The Telegram from Chongqing General Commercial Guild(May 9)." *Collection about Zhao Erxun,* Vol.62, No.317.
[38] The Telegram from Chongqing General Commercial Guild (May 13). *Collection about Zhao Erxun,* Vol.62, No.317.
[39] Zhou Yong, & Liu Jingxiu, ed., *The Economic and Social Development of Modern Chongqing, 1876-1949*. p.316, 323.

III. The state of ferment and the reaction of the court and common people

At the beginning of 1890, Chinese ambassador to Britain Xue Fucheng claimed that the opium-ban should not be implemented hastily, "because the matter is of critical importance and we dare not touch it until we get an appropriate opportunity"[40]. Therefore, we can appreciate how difficult it was to make a decision on the issue. The phrase "we dare not touch it" contains many implications. After the implementation of the ban, various setbacks appeared like compensation and the obstacles that opium traders and farmers made. After 1906, both opium traders and farmers produced a great many obstacles to the ban and continuously made tumult where they could. This reached a climax after 1910. Using relevant materials,[41] we are going to explore the annual frequency and regional distribution of the trouble-makers, make comparison between the poppy planters' turmoil and the opium traders' one, and list some reasons for these troubles.

Due to each province's rectification of opium taxes before 1906, every region had increased taxes on opium and boycotts had begun. After 1906 the turmoil produced by the increased opium taxes was more serious. Meanwhile, with the opium growing and smoking prohibition being implemented, the uproars made by opium-house operators, opium traders and farmers gradually increased in number, frequency and scale. If we regard the Shanghai Opium-banning Conference in 1909 as a turning point, then before it protests were mostly about the opium taxes of the Qing Dynasty, and those after it were against the prohibition of poppy growing.

According to the media and various official records, from 1906 to 1911 when the 1911 Revolution broke out, the incidents against the opium-banning action in the whole country amounted to 67 times, [42]among which were three in 1906 and 1908 respectively, 14 in 1907, six in 1909, 27 in 1910, and 14 in the first half of 1911. The reason for the fewer uproars in 1906 and 1908 was that the two trouble sources, prohibition of growing poppies and

[40] Ding Fenglin, Wang Xinzhi, ed., *Anthology of Xue Fucheng*. p.440.

[41] The materials found mainly come from the article "The Chronology of the Grass-Roots Rebellions in Late Qing Dynasty" by Zhang Zhenhe and Ding Yunying in the third and fourth issues of *Materials of Modern History* in 1982. According to the newspapers and magazines such as *The Reign of Emperor Xuantong*, *Oriental Magazine, Times*, *Hui Bao,*and *Da Gong Bao,* which serve one of the main sources of my materials, the two writers collected many materials about the backlash against the opium banning policy in the years from 1902 to 1911. Besides, the influential newspapers in the late Qing Danasty like *Shenbao* and *Shengjing Times* also have a large number of reports concerning the backlash against the opium banning policy, and the paper is going to make an analysis according to this part of materials.

[42] Some relevant statistics are not complete. According to reports of newspapers, some small-scaled protests or those like that have not been recorded, and the real number of uproars of opium farmers and traders opposing the government's banning action is larger than these statistics. Various prohibiting policy make opium smokers difficult to buy fully-done opium and thus, there are also records of this stratum's uproars against the government. But this kind of incidents has not been collected, either.

opium tax increase, were not too prominent, and the banning action was less intense. The year 1909 was the transitional year when the banning policy turned to a high tide, and the number of uproars obviously began to rise. The climax of the banning policy emerged from 1910 to 1911, during which tumults were on a sharp increase because the radical way of increasing taxes had been extensively used in the process of poppy-growing prohibition and tax rectification.

In terms of regional distribution, the provinces involved were apparently more than those before the banning action. Because most of the provinces that grew poppies and consumed opium were concentrated in South China, the sources of uproars were mainly concentrated in the southern provinces. Interestingly the six provinces of Yunnan, Guizhou, Sichuan, Henan, Shaanxi and Gansu, where poppy growing was most intense, saw 18 uproars, which only constituted 26% of all the uproars, not a large proportion. The reason lay in the relatively appropriate banning measures and approaches in those places, but the people's tameness might be another factor which cannot be ignored. Comparatively, most uproars emerged in Jiangsu and Zhejiang, with the former having 19 uproars, over 28% of the whole, and the latter having 8 times, nearly 11%. The two provinces differed in their basic conditions. Jiangsu was a large opium-smoking province and its local finance was closely associated with opium taxes. Therefore, there were more boycotts by the opium traders against governmental measures of increasing taxes. At the same time, the governmental banning means and the officials' performance were rude in Zhejiang, and people in Wenzhou and Taizhou were intrepid, which was often noticed by the media.[43] Thus, their uproars were mainly incarnated in the opium farmers' resistance against the prohibition of growing poppies. Other provinces had different situations, but the turmoil caused by the prohibition of growing poppies was wide spread. To resist the government, opium farmers often resorted to weapons or combined actions among villages. The majority was of a large scale and thousands of boycotts by farmers against uprooting poppies were witnessed. The local governments also drastically cracked down on the uproars everywhere with military force, the last resort in executing the poppy-prohibiting policy. Opium traders' anti-government movements were mainly concentrated in cities and towns, being often expressed in protests and strikes rather than military confrontations after their failed negotiations with the government. Because the two strata employed different methods of protest, the government used different measures. Thus, the consequences

[43] Ge Qing-hua's book, *The Research on Modern People's Migration in the Adjoining Region of Jiangsu, Zhejiang and Anhui* (p.305, the 2002 edition, Shanghai Social Science Press) has a clear presentation about local people's fierceness.

were strikingly different. After the crackdown on opium farmers, many protesters involved were either shot or seriously injured, paying too high a cost because not only were the poppies banned, their bodies were also ruined. In contrast, because opium traders adopted a moderate protest style, they just lost their ordinary economic interests, and their safety was not at risk.

After making the decision to launch the banning policy in 1906, the general view of the court and the common people was to employ a gradual opium-banning method, by which opium would be eradicated gradually in ten years, [44]with nine years for eliminating all planted poppies and the last year for an overall check, and no radical method had been worked out. The opening of the Opium-banning Conference in Shanghai was the turning point for the process of prohibition, becanse foreign pressure was a main reason to accelerate the banning policy. It was commented that "what has been obtained with some progress recently is just the matter of opium banning. In fact, it is forced by foreign pressure."[45] The countries which participated in the Shanghai conference paid too much attention to China's banning action. Furthermore, Britain used both soft and hard means, that is to say, once China achieved the established banning goal, its prince would pay a congratulatory visit to China, otherwise the British would demand China repay four times of their losses during these years.[46] From then on, taking the opportunity that Xi Liang, the governor-general of Yunnan and Guizhou provinces, asked for speeding up the banning timetable, each province decided successively to quicken the steps of the prohibition of growing poppies. With the absence of any successful compensation measure for the possible losses, to recklessly prohibit growing poppies and even uproot poppy seedlings meant cutting the main financial source of opium

[44] "Collections about Opium-banning Methods Proposed in Conferences." *Shenbao,* Shanghai, 1906-11-01.

[45] "Comments on the Achievements of Prohibiting Opium." *Shenbao,* Shanghai, 1911-02-28.

[46] In the summer of 1908, British envoys to China presented a note to Chinese Diplomatic Ministry that "According to investigations and reports of the consuls to China, the sales of imported opium have increased because the opium-banning act is not strict. Thereafter foreign opium imported from India will decrease year by year. If the banning policy can not reach the expected goal after ten years, China must pay for the loss each year in accordance with the greatest loss for the imported foreign opium, disregarding that we have not made a treaty for punishment." Japanese deputy envoys also presented a note to Chinese government that "the unfavorable situation of opium prohibition is mostly due to the government's negligence. China must reiterate the banning policy in case China's finance might not bear the compensation for the losses demanded by Britain, if opium can not be prohibited after ten years. After knowing the matter, the ministers in charge of opium-banning decided that from the next year (1909), every province must prohibit growing poppies and carry out the coercive order. He sent a telegraph to the Governor-general, Duan Fang, and asked him to pass on the order to the consuls of each country, which strictly asked residents in the concessions to get the opium smoking licenses. (See "The Records of Opium Banning", in the newspaper *Shanghai Diplomacy*, No. 221, September 20, 1908). But afterwards British consul general to Hankou denied the matter of compensation for losses. See " Do not make rumors and please give quick correction." (Wu Jianjie, ed., *Collection of Materials on Hubei Consultation Bureau.* Wuhan: Wuhan University Press, 1911, pp. 309–310.)

farmers. Therefore, conflicts between the government and farmers were inevitable, and the hostility between the two sides emerged. Since taxes on local and imported opium had much to do with various tasks of the new political reform, the central and local governments would never give up any chance of extorting money from the people, and the opium taxes were not reduced with the beginning of the banning action. The local government's opium prohibiting measure by increasing taxes on opium products and operating licenses was fully implemented, which led to more and more resistance from opium traders. With the continuous rise of opium price, the scramble for opium profits between the government and opium traders tended to become fierce. Each type of extortion made by the government often resulted in traders' protests, strikes and demonstrations. Such incidents were increasingly growing, which culminated in a new climax after 1909. Thus, the hostile state between the government and opium traders took shape.

The court's reactions and attitudes towards the backlash against the opium ban were contradictory. It wanted to not only speed up the banning policy but also tried to counteract the farmer's resistance. There were many difficulties in carrying out the opium ban. In the spring of 1910, there appeared a confrontation between the opium farmers and the government in Wenshui county, Shanxi province. As the army intervened, many people were killed, created a well-known tragedy in the opium-banning history of the Qing Dynasty. A relevant imperial decree said, 'the court is determined to carry out the ban. The turmoil in the province results first from local governments' inappropriate checks, but the military officers are also responsible for their carelessness in dealing with the matter. Therefore, they must be disciplined. As for the mob that breaks the bans on poppies, evades taxes and dares to protest in crowds against the government, they must be severely punished. We should make unremitting efforts in the opium-ban thereafter"[47]. The court's strategy seemed to impose impartial punishments on the two groups. In May 1910, the minister in charge of the opium ban sent a telegram to each province's senior officials, requiring them to implement the banning policy "mainly by persuasion rather than threat." "Recently the investigations into opium banning have triggered great conflicts in many provinces. Besides the case of the barbarous folkway, the extortion cases cannot be ignored. All subordinate departments responsible for opium banning must be admonished to be cautious and not to trigger any turmoil again." [48]In fact, how difficult it was to efficiently implement the

[47] Liu Jinzao, *Collection of Qing Bibliographies: Vol.55, Solicitation 27*. Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1936. p.8102.
[48] "Stern Orders to Investigate the Disturbance against the Banning Action." *Da Gong Bao*, Tianjin, 1910-05-14.

policy of quickening the prohibition timetable was unimaginable for the court. Being required not only to reach the opium-banning goal but also to cause no turmoil, not to mention choosing the military means of crackdown, local senior officials were indeed confronted with a difficult problem. Under the circumstances of a continuous increase of opium prices and profits, the difficulty in carrying out the banning policy can be imagined.[49] The tumultuous situations caused by official's inadequate work could indeed be witnessed everywhere. In most cases, however, every local government was able to give prior persuasions and spread wide the propaganda for the banning policy. Supervised by the government, voluntary banning steps made by opium traders and opium farmers had also been carried out in each province. The intrinsic factors leading to the emergence of uproars such as the connection between people and opium benefits, the exact season and opportunity of implementing the banning policy, regional folkways, and the consistent attitude of the government cannot be overlooked. If these problems could not be overcome in a short time, the backlash against the banning policy would appear subsequently.

The fierce character of the people and their dependence on the opium trade made it difficult for local officials to find good resolutions, which was why the government chose military means. In view of the tremendous resistance in the province, the inspector of Zhejiang wrote an official letter, saying that "once there is a rebellion, it is allowed to dispatch an army to crack it down, and one or two officials can accompany its commander to check the expenditure. The entire police force should be sent to Wenzhou and Taizhou to eradicate the opium seedlings." Since people in the two places furiously opposed the banning policy, the inspector made an exhortation as follows: "All the local governments and militias in Wenzhou and Taizhou Prefectures must join together with their subordinate counties in uprooting all the opium seedlings on schedule."[50] Although the military forces were used to support the ban, there were still numerous uproars in this province. The ban was full of blood and cruelty, particularly during its last phase. Thus, Zhejiang became the province which witnessed the largest number of trouble-makers.

Despite the ruthlessness of the crackdown, the intelligentsia still appealed to the court to not give up because of the troubles and called the stern method "the key to the ban".[51] The attitudes of the intelligentsia were very complex. Generally, they criticized the opium farmers' boycotts against the banning policy and thought that their continued resistance forced the

[49] "The Opium Treaty is Abandoned." *Shenbao*, Shanghai,1911-01-07.
[50] Ma Mozhen, ed., *Materials about Chinese Opium-banning History*.p.540.
[51] "Read all the Imperial Reports to Emperors." *Shenbao*, Shanghai: 1911-05-11.

government to search continually for forbidden products and supervise the farmers' conducts. In response to the Shanxi massacre it was commented that "the reason why the newspapers have blamed officials is not due to their opium prohibiting, but due to their cruel killing and plunder." An observer analyzed: "By now, the opium smokers who have not fully given up smoking have all become brazen to the extreme. By hook or by crook they try to elude the government. The wilier their tricks are, the greater the harm will be. Those who are responsible for the ban have to engage in searches. That is why there appears to be harassment."[52] To be sure, commentators also condemned local officials for recklessly uprooting poppies and plundering money from farmers. Someone gave a special comment on this: "They must uproot the opium seedlings. However, they let their lasciviousness and plunder have their own way to such an extent that even old women's trousers have been removed and young girls have been humiliated. If there is still no backlash in such a situation, it would really be unknown to all the countries of the world."[53] Still some argued that the reason for the turmoil against the ban is not due to officials' recklessness but by reason of "the exorbitant taxes collected by the local governments". This remark seemingly indicates that the author concerned himself with the opium trader's troubles. With regards to the opium smokers' resistance against the prohibition of poppy growing though, he made a severe condemnation. The commentator expressed his understanding of the radical actions by the government, recognizing that in the process of prohibiting poppy production, the most effective way was the drastic checks on the forbidden opium and thus harassment could not be avoided. "Searching, outlawing and uprooting seedlings are all the needed steps for those engaged in the ban." Otherwise, their work was perfunctory.[54] What the intelligentsia criticized were some trouble-making cases, but the court's opium ban was always advocated by all, a rare exception in the late Qing Dynasty.

As a beneficial policy vigorously executed by the Qing dynasty, opium-banning had met the needs of moral purification and social progress. The court's abandonment of its dependence on opium taxes and resolve in prohibiting opium displayed its dogged determination to cure social maladies. The opium ban was the foundation of new political reform. The intellectuals vested the ban with many positive meanings, connecting them with the country's prosperity, national development and eradication of the nation's deep-rooted bad habits. The reasons for the resistance against the banning

[52] "Comments on Current Affairs, Part One." *Shenbao*, 1910-05-24; "Comment on Recent Disturbance against the Banning Action." *Shengjing Times,* Fengtian:,1910-08-11.
[53] "Comments on Current Affairs, Part One." *Shenbao,* Shangha, 1910-05-03.
[54] "Comments on Prospects of Opium Banning." Shengjing Times, Fengtian, 1910-05-19.

policy were more complex, in which comparative benefits, compensation for crop loss, officials' recklessness, and fierce folkways were key elements. As far as one can see, the backlash seems to be the grass-root "uprisings" against the court. Modern scholars interested in revolution or dynastic corruptions often equate the backlash against the ban with other types of grass-roots protests. They regard the incidents as subjective political factors leading to the overthrow the Qing dynasty and thus proving the inevitability of the 1911 Revolution. If we make a careful study, however, the backlash just reveals that the "correct" policy of the court triggered the equally "justifiable" resistance during this period. To sweepingly assert its rightfulness in overthrowing the dynasty or even its revolutionary nature would overlook other equally significant historical meanings. Then the explanation of history must deviate from real facts. Since some articles or studies have assumed too much political responsibility, their criticism often loses the real value of academic studies.

References

"Application and Approval for Growing Mulberry Trees and Rice in Guangxi and Zhili," in Part one of the Materials about Yunnan Prohibition of Growing Opium and Persuasion to Plant Mulberry and Cotton in Late Qing Dynasty. *Yunnan Historical Archives*, 1991, (4): 59–60.

"The Black and Sweet Memory about the Hometown." In: Liu Tieling and Jian Zhuchao, ed., *People's rights*: Part 1 (Xiesou). April, 1914; Shen Yunlong, ed., *Materials about China's Modern History*, Sequel No.55. Taibei: Wenhai Press, 1974.

"Cai Naihuang's Letter to Zhao Erxun." in *Collection about Zhao Erxun,* Beijing: the First National Historical Archives of China, Vol. 81, No. 418.

"Collections about Opium-banning Methods Proposed in Conferences." *Shenbao,* Shanghai, 1906-11-01.

"Comments on the Achievements of Prohibiting Opium." *Shenbao,* Shanghai, 1911-02-28.

"Comment on Officials' Deep Addiction of Opium Smoking." *Shenbao*, Shanghai, 1906-03-16.

"Comments on Current Affairs, Part One." *Shenbao*, 1910-05-24; "Comment on Recent Disturbance against the Banning Action." *Shengjing Times,* Fengtian:,1910-08-11.

"Comments on Current Affairs, Part One." *Shenbao,* Shangha, 1910-05-03.

"Comments on Prospects of Opium Banning." Shengjing Times, Fengtian, 1910-05-19.

"The Conflicts of Opium Sales Monopoly." *Shenbao,* Shanghai, 1907-11-20.

"Court Official Bei Shou's Memorial to Emperor about Prohibiting Growing Poppies and Encouraging Growing Livelihood Crops in Northwestern Frontiers." *Collection about Political Affairs in Conferences,* No.155. Beijing: the First National Historical Archives of China.

Ding Fenglin, Wang Xinzhi, ed. 1987. *Anthology of Xue Fucheng*. Shanghai: Shanghai People's Press.

"The Fundamental Political Task in the First Year of Xuantong." *Hankou Accounts* (newspaper), Hankou, 1909-02-05.

"Guizhou Inspector Pang Hongshu's Memorial for Liquidating Financial Deficit in Guizhou Province." *Official Reports Read by Emperors* (Finance), Beijing: the First National Historical Archives of China, Film No.64, Archives No.00478.

"Hopes of Banning Opium in China ." *The Public Communique*, Shanghai, Vol.192, 1905-10-28.

Jingzhai, "Discussion." *Hankou Accounts* (newspaper), Hankou, 1909-02-03.

Lane, Thomas D. Reform, "Nationalism and Internationalism: Chinese Opium –banning Action and British Influences from 1900 to 1908." In *Foreign Studies on Chinese Modern History*. Beijing: China Social Science Press, 1994, (25): 1–44.

Li Yongqing. 1969. "Proposal of Prohibiting Growing Opium in Guizhou Province." Wang Shumin, & Wang Yanxi, ed., *Memorials and Orders of Qing Emperors Daoguang, Xianfeng, Tongzhi and Guangxu*, In Shen Yunlong, ed., *Collected Essays on China's Modern History*: No.331. Taibei: Wenhai Press.

Lin Manhong, 1993. "Circulation of Silver and Opium and Regional Distribution of the Deflation of Silver and the Inflation of Coins(1808–1854)—One Spatial Influence of World Economy on China's Modern History." *Collection for Contemporary History Research in Central Research Academy,* Vol.22. Taibei: Modern History Research in Central Research Academy.

Lin Manhong, 1999. *The Relationship between Financial and Economic Stability and People's Heath: Comment on Local Opium in Late Qing Dynasty(1833–1905)*. Social and Economical History Group of Modern History Institution in Taiwan Central Research Academy, ed., *Finance and Modern History*. Taibei: Modern History Institution in Central Research Academy.

Liu Jinzao. 1936. *Collection of Qing Bibliographies: Vol.55, Solicitation 27*. Shanghai: Commercial Press.

Liu Zenghe. 2003. "The Relationship between the Opium-banning Policy and New Political Reform in the Late Qing Dynasty." *Journal of Historical Science*, 2003, (8): 46–53.

Luo Huimin, ed. 1986. *Political Inside Stories of the Late Qing Dynasty,* Vol.1, (*Letters of G. Morrison*). Translated by Liu Guiliang, Shanghai: Knowledge Press.

Ma Mozhen, ed. 1998. *Materials about Chinese Opium-banning History*. Tianjin: Tianjin People's Press.

"The Methods of Seriously Checking Opium Bars." *Shenbao,* Shanghai, 1907-02-28.

Nixiawa Ciaofu. 1983. "The Social Situation before Sichuan Railway Protection Movement." Translated by Qiu Yuanying, *Materials about Xinhai Revolution*: Part 5. Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company.

"On Establishing Anti-opium Associations in Each Province." Beijing: *Shuntian Times,* 1908-02-21.

"Opium-houses' Ridiculous Action of Holding Meetings for Discussion." *Shenbao,* Shanghai, 1907-04-05.

"The Official Document to British Diplomatic Minister Gray by British Consul to China Jordan." In *Collection of Diplomatic Reports*, Vol.29. Taibei: Guangwen Press. 1964.

"The Opium-banning Rules of Zhenwu Association." *Shenbao*, Shanghai, 1905-10-28.

"The Opium Treaty is Abandoned." *Shenbao*, Shanghai,1911-01-07.

Posthumous Collection of Liu Kunyi, Vol.6 . Beijing: China Press, 1959.

"The Prospects after Opium Banning ." *Shenbao*, Shanghai,1907-06-12.

"Read all the Imperial Reports to Emperors." *Shenbao*, Shanghai: 1911-05-11.

"The Reasons Why the local Opium Businessmen's Demand for Postponing Opium Banning." *Shenbao*, Shanghai, 1907-12-28.

"Stern Orders to Investigate the Disturbance against the Banning Action." *Dagong bao*, Tianjin, 1910-05-14.

"Stories about the Opium-houses' Meetings." *Shenbao,* Shanghai, 1907-04-16.

"The Telegram from Chongqing General Commercial Guild(May 9)." *Collection about Zhao Erxun,* Vol.62, No.317, Beijing: the First National Historical Archives of China.

The Telegram from Chongqing General Commercial Guild (May 13). *Collection about Zhao Erxun,* Vol.62, No.317, Beijing: The First House for Historical Archives.

"The Third Record: Collection about China's Current Affairs." *Oriental Magazine*, Vol.7, No.3, Shanghai, 1910-05-04.

Xu Yu's "Letters to Zhao Erxun." *Collection Archives of Zhao Erxun* (Vol.26), Beijing: the First National Historical Archives of China. No.160.

Zhang Zhongli, Chen Zengnian, *Shaxun Group in Old China*. Beijing: People's Press, 1985.

Zhao Fengtian, 1967. *Fifty Years' Economic and Ideological History of the Late Qing Dynasty*. Taibei: Chongwen Press.

Zhou Yong & Liu Jingxiu, ed. 1987. *The Economic and Social Development of Modern Chongqing*, *1876-1949*. Chengdu: Sichuan University Press.