

# ***An Analysis of the Different Consequences about the 1789 French Revolution and 1911 Chinese Revolution by Comparing Their Leaving Ideological Legacy***

**Yicheng Huang<sup>1,a</sup>, Haifan Wen<sup>2,b</sup>, Xingyu Chen<sup>3,c,\*</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>*Shanghai Highschool International Division, Shanghai, 200231, China*

<sup>2</sup>*Huitong school, Shenzhen, 518066, China*

<sup>3</sup>*University of California, Davis, Davis, 95616-5270, China*

*a. Matthew2007\_huang@outlook.com, b. luyouqi\_11@163.com, c. 939096398@qq.com*

*\*corresponding author*

**Abstract:** This paper investigates the cause of two revolutions, the French Revolution in 1789 and the Chinese Revolution in 1911. The paper analyzes the two revolutions through four perspectives: structural, actor, micro, and macro. From these perspectives, the paper compares and contrasts the two revolutions to reach the final conclusion about why the French Revolution succeeded at leaving an ideological legacy; for example, ideas from the Enlightenment influenced the French people and later led to the 1848 Revolution. Meanwhile, the Chinese Revolution of 1911 failed to establish a government influenced by liberal ideas, and the emperor was reinstated under the Yuanshikai Restoration. The remnants of the feudal society still existed until the Chinese Revolution in 1949.

**Keywords:** French Revolution, 1911 Revolution, Ideological Influence

## **1. Introduction**

The 1789 French Revolution and the 1911 Chinese Revolution had many similarities. For example, both nations had certain successes in overthrowing the former monarchy and establishing new republics, and they also suffered from severe external threats (failure in the Seven Years' War and the Sino-Japanese War), which intensified domestic conflicts before those revolutions. During the prerevolutionary era, both France and China still had feudal hierarchies, such as the Three Estates in France and the Chinese Four Class Division, which were scholar, farmer, artisan, and merchant (士农工商). In addition, both two revolutions faced the same ending by restoration: in France, it was Napoleon's coronation of as Emperor of the First French Empire, and in China, it was Yuan Shih-kai's restoration of the Empire of China in 1915. Nevertheless, in France, on the other hand, although Napoleon's campaigns died out with the defeat at Waterloo, the idea of republicanism spread throughout Europe and indirectly influenced the 1848 anti-feudal wave in Europe. On the contrary, the notion of republicanism in China did not spread far. It resonated with the students in the cities or the workers in the south and the new bourgeoisie in all parts of the country who protested against the restoration, but the peasants, who constituted the majority of the population of the Republic of China, were not reached by this new term. In this situation, compared with the transmission of ideological heritage, the French Revolution succeeded, while the 1911 Revolution did not. The United States

Archive Milestones attributed the failure of the 1911 Revolution as “the rise of warlords” and the “reforms set in place...were not nearly as sweeping as the revolutionary rhetoric had intended.” [1]. The following perspectives will mention several aspects in interpreting the reasons for these two different outcomes, such as the analysis of the spirit of law conveyed in its legal provisions, the analysis of the concept of nationalism in the two countries, the analysis of the grass-roots structure of the society, and the problem of warlords in China.

## 2. Comparison of law codes

Napoleon and Yuan Shih-kai enacted different legal systems after taking over power; for Napoleon, the enactment of his civil code was a tool to consolidate power and express the public will after the power struggle with the royalists, just like the spirit of the Declaration of Human Rights which “law is the expression of the general will. All citizens have the right to contribute personally or through their representatives to its creation. All citizens are equal in its eyes, all are equally eligible for all distinctions, positions, and public employment, according to their capacities, and without any discrimination. All citizens being equal in its eyes, all are equally eligible for all distinctions, positions and public employments, according to their capacities, and without any discrimination other than that of their virtues and their talents...” [2]. The code promulgated by Yuan Shih-kai was the first written constitution in China, but its incomplete separation from the previous system and the overstretching of presidential power led to Yuan’s restoration of the empire only a year after the promulgation of the constitution. The two codes had different contexts and led to different outcomes, one leaving a rich ideological legacy of republicanism in Europe after Napoleon's conquests and leading to a revolution against feudal monarchs in Europe in 1848. Yuan Shih-kai’s 1914 Constitution, on the other hand, did not leave the seeds of republicanism in China and led to the warlord war that began immediately after Yuan’s death. This resulted from Yuan’s ambition of centralization of power: “In hindsight, Yuan’s strategic choices in the early republic—ending the provincial assemblies and provincial autonomy and resuscitating a centralized regime—were reasonable given China’s internal and external conditions at that time.” [3].

A major factor in determining the impact of a legal text or legal reform on the ideology of subsequent generations is the extent to which such a new law abandons the morality and the system of property tenure associated with the previous political formations. In other words, whether or not the change in the law breaks away from the previous political system or morality and creates a new standard, a new system of property tenure, and a new morality. The Napoleonic Code was able to leave the seeds of the republican revolution in Europe because it severed the old patriarchal system, emancipated the child from the feudal land system, which was regarded as the property of the patriarchs, and gave him or her the basic rights as an individual, which were granted by the law, the representative of the public will. In contrast, Yuan Shih-kai’s constitution did not make a fundamental break with the bureaucratic concept of old China because his law still sustained the existence of the patriarchal bureaucratic cult, which resulted from the separation of the 1911 revolution from the grassroots. Since the so-called revolutionaries did not represent the vast majority of the society at that time, such a revolution without a foundation to lean on was not able to be expressed in the revolution, and the revolution was not able to be expressed in the revolution. Thus, the outcome of the 1911 Revolution did not leave a republican ideological legacy among the masses because the new revolutionary constitution, which lacked mass mobility, could not represent the will of the majority.

### 2.1. Napoleonic Code

Napoleon's legal reforms made a clear renunciation of the old Bourbon feudal dynasty that “All rules are designed for the individual, and the individually owned property, without mention, even by

allusion, of collective persons. It proclaims the sovereignty of the owner and the quasi-absolute liberty of contracting parties, and this liberty has as counter-balance only the responsibility of the individual in the case of violation of other's rights." [4]. The Napoleonic Code renounced the old system of ownership on this point, as could be seen from its description of the human rights of children: "If the family-council judge him capable thereof providing only he have accomplished his eighteenth year. In such case, the emancipation shall result from the resolution which shall have authorized it and from the declaration of the justice of the peace as president of the Republic. In such case, the emancipation shall result from the resolution which shall have authorized it, and from the declaration of the justice of the peace, as president of the family-council, made in the same act, that the minor is emancipated." [5]. The above legal provisions exhibited a challenge to the previous system of land ownership in feudal society. This system led to the fact that the population of the countryside was always fixed in one territory and remained largely immobile, which led to the fact that the knowledge and population of the feudal age were largely fixed in a certain stratum of society and did not move quickly, which led to the fact that the population was largely fixed in a certain stratum of society and did not move quickly. This led to the fact that knowledge and population were fixed at a certain level of society in feudal times and did not move quickly, which kept the productivity of society at a certain level due to the lack of towns and cities (no migration from the countryside). The Napoleonic Code solved this problem by establishing the human rights of children who were emancipated from the authoritarian structure of their parents. Now that they were legally or morally sound and independent, their utilitarian needs drove them to move around in the vast society and find better job opportunities instead of spending their entire lives laboring for the feudal lords or parents in the fields for the feudal lord or their patriarchs. This was seen as a kind of rebellion of capitalist society against the previous feudal system of land ownership as the power of the land to retain the population gradually disappeared with the establishment of the new laws, and vast populations were able to circulate freely between the towns and the countryside. Therefore, the industries in the urbanized areas had a supply of labor, and the capitalist industries were then able to develop more advantageously. But such reforms were not necessarily perfect, and the child labor problems that sprang from them existed simultaneously; however, it was still a cheap and better way for the capitalists to develop their capitalism so that what seems to be a very anti-moral method today was in fact advanced at that time.

## 2.2. 1914 Constitution

After analyzing how the Napoleonic Code was able to leave an ideological legacy, the same method is used to analyze why Yuan Shih-kai's Constitution was not able to leave an ideological legacy. The fundamental reason is that Yuan Shih-kai did not make a fundamental break with the old political concepts and systems; perhaps the Republic of China could have claimed to be a republic on the surface and could have used the so-called separation of powers in the form of the Senate and the Legislative Yuan; but in the final analysis, as a coup of the upper class (the majority of the revolution are bourgeoisie class), it did not take into account the opinions of the lower class when promulgating the constitution, and the form of the promulgated code and the way of its narration were still inherited from the traditional Chinese bureaucratic concepts. However, in the end, as an upper-class coup, it did not take into account the opinions of the lower classes when it enacted the constitution, and in the form and narrative of the code, it still inherited the traditional Chinese concept of bureaucracy; therefore, since the substance of the so-called revolutionary law did not show the expression of the public will (as the Declaration of Human Rights defines the purpose of the law, as mentioned above), but rather inherited the original worship of the bureaucrats, it did not make any changes or breaks with the previous political structure, and therefore could not leave behind the revolutionary ideological legacy.

For example, Yuan Shih-kai announced his promise about civil rights in the 1914 Constitution: “Within the limits of the statutes citizens shall have the rights of freedom of speech of writing and publication.... Within the limits of the statutes, citizens shall have the right of freedom of abode and of changing the same. shall have the right of freedom of religious belief.” [6]. The above text illustrates the point that these rights are not inherent in the narrative of the people but are given to them by the machinery of the Constitution; that is to say, the meaning of the Constitution itself has been distorted (in the light of the Declaration of Human Rights definition of the law), and it no longer represents the public will, but rather a political entity that is above the masses. The “shall have” in the law is proof of this, for it does not mean that the masses' original rights and interests are guaranteed by the Constitution, but rather that the masses did not have these rights and that it was a foreign object that intervened in the ruled masses to give such good deeds to the masses; this is the same as the ancient Chinese doctrine of patriarchal authority, which is not the same as the ancient Chinese doctrine of the “parents,” which is the same as the ancient Chinese doctrine of the “patriarchs.” This coincides with the ancient Chinese doctrine of patriarchal authority. The term “patriarchal bureaucracy” suggests that in ancient Chinese society, the state apparatus wanted the people to naturally worship bureaucrats. In other words, in the official context of the Chinese empire, bureaucrats in ancient China completely cut off the legitimacy of the people's independent struggle for their rights and struggles, which were seen as a challenge to the orthodoxy of the feudal dynasty and did not have legitimacy. In this way, the people in the culture of Confucianism and Confucianism were, for the most part, docile and unaware of the need to fight back. Hence, this kind of charity in the 1914 Constitution revealed a kind of granted rights, which could be tampered with and seized by the bureaucratic class whose power structure still exists after the revolution, so the so-called liberated civil rights will once again be divided by the bureaucrats and the warlords.

In conclusion, through synthesizing those two revolutionary legislations, the 1914 Constitution failed to leave a profound ideological impact, while the Napoleonic Code, inherited from the Declaration of the Rights of Man, the spirit of modern law (a representation of the public will), breaks away from the previous Bourbon period.

### **3. Comparison of Nationalist Ideas**

Furthermore, in addition to the divergent roles of revolutionary legislative laws between the French and Chinese revolutions, the different circumstances regarding the emergence of nationalist identity also caused a series of huge effects on the outcomes of the French Revolution in 1789 and the Chinese Revolution in 1911. In France, French nationalism, aroused from the historical identification by the vast French people and completely established after the 1789 Revolution, played a significant role in national mobilization and reconstruction, and this ideology still influenced profound French history by reshaping French society. On the contrary, nationalist identification did not emerge in the prerevolutionary Chinese society, and specific circumstances during the Qing Empire, in which the Manchu minority ruled the Han majority, caused the internal ethnic conflict in China and impacted the establishment of Chinese nationalism. In this situation, sane French nationalism facilitated the process of the French Revolution and made a further reconstruction in the vast French society, but the imperfect of the Chinese nationalist foundation harmed the influence of the 1911 Revolution in reshaping Chinese society.

#### **3.1. French Nationalism**

French nationalism had a complete establishment after the French Revolution in 1789. To face the harsh circumstances after the revolution, French nationalism played a significant role in national mobilization and social reconstruction in facing internal and external threats. However, in each

European nation such as France, the rudiment of national identification emerged from the vast society before the revolution in 1789, such as that “National sentiment and national pride are very old phenomena, traceable at least to the Middle Ages. They are rooted in a recognition of a nation’s existence, and generally involve expressions of devotion to and support for it. Such expressions can be found plentifully in medieval and Renaissance writings.” [7]. The same historical identification and devotion to homeland existed throughout the long European history, such as the Middle Ages and the period of the Renaissance, and this national identification, which included national sentiment and pride, had a profound influence on European society. Therefore, in the Kingdom of France before the 1789 Revolution, national identification existed among the vast French population, and this common identity became the basement of the French nationalist establishment during the French Revolution.

After the French Revolution in 1789, under the internal and external threat, a strong ideology became more and more crucial in mobilizing the whole French society, such as the theory by French elites: “French elites came to see a nation not simply as a natural community, but as a spiritual one, bound together by shared values, shared laws, and by a host of what we would now call shared cultural practices, including the same language.” [7]. French religious scholars, such as abbé Sieyès, pointed out his declaration about the concept of French nationalism that ““all the parts of France into a single body, and all the peoples who divide it into a single Nation’.” [7]. That theory emphasized the common identity in values, laws, cultural practices, and language between all peoples under the same recognition of France, and those identifications also united the various peoples into a single frame and consensus, which was French nationalism. In this way, French nationalism could become a crucial role during the difficult circumstances after the 1789 Revolution, such as interacting with the external warfare that “And so the French nation-building process could extend to territories newly conquered by the revolutionary armies just as easily as to territories that had belonged to France for centuries.” [7]. In conclusion, French nationalism not only played a significant role in uniting and mobilizing the whole of French society but also encouraged external combat between France and other foreign powers. French nationalism, shaped by the former national identity and foundered after the 1789 Revolution, played a profound role in French history.

### 3.2. Chinese Nationalism

Compared with the French circumstance, which held the French national identification from the long French history before the 1789 Revolution, the vast Chinese society did not have their national identification before the 1911 Revolution. Liang Qichao, a Chinese nationalist and reformer during the period of the late Qing Dynasty, pointed out his perspective on the circumstances of Chinese society “Our character is that of clansmen rather than citizens. Chinese social organization is based on family and clan as the unit rather than on the individual, what is called “regulating one’s family before ruling the country.”” [8]. Rather than the common identification of nationality, Chinese society was formed and managed by the unit of clanship. In this situation, in the Chinese feudal society during the Qing Dynasty, the vast Chinese population had more identification with the role of family members instead of the whole Chinese integrity, so the Chinese society did not have strong social mobilization in pushing the upcoming 1911 Revolution and profound influence in reshaping the Chinese society like the French Revolution. As Liang thought, the notion of freedom and republicanism, which was the fundamental idea of the 1911 Revolution, was not realized in Chinese society under the situation of lacking nationalism: “Freedom, constitutionalism, and republicanism would be like hempen clothes in winter or furs in summer; it is not that they are not beautiful, they are just not suitable for us.” [8]. Therefore, absencing Chinese nationalism became a severe problem in Chinese society during the period of prerevolution, and creating a common Chinese national identification became an important work for the Chinese revolutionists.



Nevertheless, the complex situation of the Qing Empire's rulership resulted in a series of internal conflicts and hindered the establishment of Chinese nationalism. To overthrow the feudal society under Qing Dynasty, using nationalism to mobilize the vast Chinese population was crucial for launching the revolution. However, the Qing Empire, the last dynasty of the Chinese Empire, was ruled by the Manchu Monarchy, which was the minority ethnic and governed the majority Han ethnic, and other ethnics, such as Mongolian and Hui ethnic, still governed by the rulership of Qing dynasty, so the common national identity faced a confusing problem, which considered the Chinese nationalism as Han ethnic or the whole ethnics under the rule of Qing Empire. At the beginning of the 1911 Revolution, Sun Yat-sen, a Chinese revolutionist and founding father of the Republic of China, considered the self-identification of Han ethnic as Chinese nationalism for mobilizing the majority population in China. The Fundamentals of National Reconstruction, which was Sun's declaration of founding the Chinese Republic, pointed out the Chinese national identification through the long Chinese history "Thus the Mongol rule of China (A.D. 1260-1333), lasting for nearly a hundred years, was finally overthrown by Tai Tsu of the Ming Dynasty and his loyal followers. So in our own time, was the Manchu yoke thrown off by the Chinese? Nationalistic ideas in China did not come from a foreign source; they were inherited from our remote forefathers." [9]. In his statement, the Mongolian and Manchu was external conqueror in invading and occupying Chinese civilization, and the Tai Tsu of the Ming Dynasty, who was a Han ethnical monarch, was the orthodox Chinese leader of the Chinese civilization. Therefore, to instigate and mobilize the Han ethnic, which was the majority population in the Qing Empire, Sun claimed Chinese nationalism as the Han identification and made them recall their humiliation of the Manchu occupation.

After overthrowing the Manchu monarchy and foundering the Republic of China, to face the harsh circumstances and ethnic conflict, Sun became moderate to the question about Chinese nationalism and negotiated with the Manchu decedents. In this situation, Sun enlarged the spectrum of the concept of Chinese nationalism by including Manchu and other ethnics into a common national identification by pointing this declaration: "Upon this legacy is based my principle of nationalism, and where necessary, I have developed it, amplified it and improved upon it. No vengeance has been inflicted on the Manchus and we have endeavored of live side by side with them on an equal footing. This is the nationalistic policy toward the races within our national boundaries." [9]. After the 1911 Revolution, to mitigate the ethnic conflict, rather than encouraging the majority Han ethnic to revenge the Manchu ethnic by arousing humiliating memories about the conquered and occupied history, Sun urged an equal position for all ethnics under the Republic of China and claimed all of them as a universal identification, which was Chinese nationalism. However, this new concept of nationalist creation was confused with the former revolutionary slogan, which encouraged the majority Han ethnic to fight against the minority Manchu rulership. Therefore, the internal ethnic conflict caused the establishment of Chinese nationalism inconsistent between the prerevolutionary era and the period of reconstruction after the 1911 Revolution, so the new concept of Chinese national identification, which was totally different from the former one, needed more time to accept and recognize by the vast of Chinese society.

In conclusion, unlike the role of French nationalism, which facilitated the national mobilization and reconstructed French society after the 1789 Revolution, Chinese nationalism after the national foundation could not profoundly reshape Chinese society immediately and mobilized the vast Chinese population to face the internal and external challenges during the post-revolutionary circumstance, so the newborn Chinese nationalism did not have capability to reconstruct and improve the vast rural level, let alone solving the severe problem about warlords, who had capability in launching a series of cruel civil wars.

#### 4. Literacy, Gentry, and Societal Mobilization

As the common saying “Knowledge is power,” knowing means that others will not easily manipulate them. In the case of feudal societies, local rulers like landlords in Europe and gentries in ancient China often used their ability to read, also known as literacy, to fool and secure power from the peasants. As in a feudal society, the illiterate peasant population’s only source of information was the words of such local rulers. However, liberal ideals like republicanism, natural rights, and democracy would never come from such a source, as such ideas undermine their interests and power. Therefore, in both pre-French revolution France and the pre-1911 revolution China, the only way for people to access such enlightenment ideals is through reading. Thus, during a process that transformed an Old Regime into a modern republic, literacy was essential for mobilizing a population. It has been estimated that the functional literacy rate in China in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was between 10 and 15%. [10]. While on the eve of the French Revolution, 47% of the French male population and 27% of the French female population were literate [11].

The low literacy rate in China can be attributed to the logogram nature of the Chinese script, as it reduces the efficiency of the moveable block-type printing press (e.g., Gutenberg Press). In Europe, the invention of the Gutenberg press dramatically reduces the cost of book production, making books affordable to the general population and significantly increasing the literacy of Europe. However, in China, despite inventing a movable type printing press 400 years before the invention of the Gutenberg press, the literacy rate remains low. This is because the logogram script of the Chinese meant that the moveable printing press was much more expensive for the Chinese than for alphabetic scripts. Being literate in Chinese meant they could understand 3500+ distinct Chinese characters, translating to a 3500 distinct moveable block for the press [12]. Meanwhile, French (based on the Latin script) only has 26 alphabets, translating to 26 distinct moveable blocks. Even if accents and punctuation are included, only 41 moveable blocks are needed, tallying the total number of distinct moveable blocks to 67. To make matters worse, Chinese characters are far more complicated than Latin alphabets. Thus, the average cost for a single moveable block in Chinese was more expensive than that in French, making the total cost of such press in Chinese even more costly.

Therefore, the Chinese script dramatically increases the cost of the moveable printing press. Thus, unlike the Gutenberg press in Europe, the spread of moveable block-type printing press remains limited in China, reducing the output of books and keeping books unaffordable for most people in feudal Chinese society. In 1910 China, it was estimated that Beijing, the political and economic center of China, had a density of 2519.66 people per printing press. While its French counterpart, Paris, has a density of 1485.3.

**Methodology:** The methodology we used to calculate the concentration of printing shops is by dividing the population of Beijing and Paris around the time of the evolution by the estimated value of the number of printing presses in the cities. However, due to the lack of data on the Beijing side, the average amount of presses per bookshop can only be estimated based on a bold assumption. Despite there being accurate data on the number of printing shops in 1910 Beijing and pre-revolution Paris, the results of the concentration will be biased as the French Royal Government employed strict quota on the number of printing shops, leading to a rise in average printers per print shop [13]. Meanwhile, Qing China never implemented such quotas. Thus, because of the quota implemented, although the concentration of printing shops in Paris was lower than those in Beijing, the concentration of printing presses might not have been. Since the amount of printing presses determines the level of book output, comparing the concentration of printing shops in the two cities might overestimate the prevalence of books in 1910 Beijing. However, Cynthia Brokaw, a specialist in Late Imperial China, and her book *“Commerce in Culture: The Sibao Book Trade in the Qing and Republican Periods”*, it give us an obscure number on the average printing press per shop in China at

the time. In Sibao, print shops were embedded in the home; each shop included two large printing rooms [14]. Photographs taken revealed that the printing rooms are relatively small [14]. Estimating by eyesight, each room can accommodate a maximum of two printing presses. Consequently, the average number of printing presses per shop should be around 4. Assuming that the average media per print shop in Beijing was similar to the average press per print shop in Sibao, the concentration of printing press in the capitals of Bourbon, France, and Qing China before the revolution was calculated. Specifics of the data are shown above in the table 1.

Table 1: Comparison of the Difference in Concentration of Press Between Beijing and Paris before their Respective Revolutions.

	Beijing	Paris
Printshops	112(Qing) [14]	36(1777) [13]
Printers per Printshop	4 (Estimated)	9.8(1769) [13]
Population	1128808 (1910) [15]	524,000 (1789) [16]
Concentration of Press	2519.66 people/press	1485.3 people/press

With such concentration, the printing shops cannot produce enough books, reducing Chinese books to affordable levels for the general public. Access to books is necessary for the Chinese population to be literate and understand enlightenment ideals, preventing them from mobilizing for social movements.

The Chinese grammatical rules further exacerbated the poor literacy rate of China. In the early 20th century, China had two grammatical rules: colloquial Chinese and literary Chinese. Colloquial Chinese (白话文), was used in day-to-day conversations and lower-class written works like novels and account books. Meanwhile, literary Chinese, also known as Classical Chinese (文言文), is a heavily condensed version of Chinese used predominantly in upper-class literature and formal paper works. It functions more like a form of art rather than a practical tool. The relation of the two languages can be best described as European vernaculars and Latin. Hu Shi, the former ambassador of the U.S. for the Republic of China and the president of Peking University, criticized classical Chinese as a “dead language,” a language that is “no longer auditorily intelligible even among the scholarly class except when the phrases are familiar, or when the listener has already some idea as to what the speaker is going to say.” [17]. Such a grammar system not only distances upper-class literature and the government’s policies from the peasants and the merchants. Even if the lower class of Chinese feudal society (i.e., merchants, peasants, artisans) was functionally literate, the barrier of literary Chinese meant that they still could not interpret the book's meaning. What magnifies the problem is that the imperial examination was based entirely on literary Chinese texts (Four Books and Five Classics), meaning that the inability to understand literary Chinese prevents one from becoming a scholar (士) or government official, forcing them to specialize in other occupations, like artisanship, farming, and merchanting. Brokaw described this phenomenon in his book:

*a future merchant ... might begin with the “classic” primers Sanzi Jing and Qianzi Wen, and move on, if his family’s resources allowed, to the Four Books, but then be diverted into the completely different educational track of apprenticeship in a merchant house. In the later case, his later training has almost nothing to do with his early education, and notwithstanding that education, he might well end up, as Dukes suggests, able to write business letters but incapable of reading ‘even a simple book at sight’. [14]*

The same logic can be applied to artisans and farmers, as a(n) artisan/ farmer might also start with classical primers. Still, due to the inability to understand literary Chinese or afford a tutor to teach it,



they had to end up as artisans/farmers. As time passed, even if they had a book in literary Chinese and were once literate, they would become illiterate again without practice.

Not only was illiteracy a barrier to social reformation, but the existence of local leaders like the gentry also hindered the population's mobilization. Gentries are those who passed the imperial examination and were installed at the local level by the imperial court to ensure its control on the local level; in turn, they receive privileges known as "fame (功名)." Their purpose is similar to the proprietary upper class in French society. Theda Skocpol, a Professor of Government and Sociology at Harvard University, in her book *States and Social Revolutions*, compared and contrasted the role of gentries in the proprietary upper class. However, it mainly focuses on how the similarities of the two classes led to the revolution in both countries but fails to attribute the difference in outcome—as China fragmented into provinces controlled by warlords, while France remained a unified state throughout 1789-1812.

The critical difference differentiating gentries from French landlords is their power on the local level, while the French proprietary upper class remains influential on the imperial level. As an old Chinese saying, "Emperor power does not go to the countryside," suggests, gentries had complete authority and power at the local level in feudal China. Skocpol described such differences when she was comparing and contrasting the Old-Regime crisis of France and China:

*In eighteenth-century France, an increasingly sodally solidary proprietary upper class, its wealth swollen by inflating rents and appropriations backed by the monarchical state, could express its political aspirations through the parlements and other corporate bodies entwined with the autocratic royal administration. In late-traditional China, the gentry augmented and guaranteed its rentier prosperity by achieving, in the wake of the mid-nineteenth-century rebellions, de facto control over large sectors of the Imperial administration. [18]*

In addition, gentries own social solid mobilization on the local level. In the Chinese countryside at the time, due to the despise of merchants, those with wealth but not educated were often despised by those who were both educated and possessed wealth. Yet, the rich and uneducated landlords didn't want to be associated with the poor. Therefore, wealth alone cannot make a person enjoy a status in rural society. Only gentries familiar with Confucian classics can have a strong community cohesion in villagers' minds. The power of gentries on the local level was further strengthened by the difficulties in transportation and, thus, communication [18]. Such problems meant that Chinese villages remained self-sufficient and autonomous, granting local government officials and gentries more power. Under an illiterate society, gentries' influence over the local communities of feudal China meant they could control whether the population could be mobilized for the social revolution. But due to their interests, gentries will always side with the feudal court.

By the Oxford definition, a revolution is a forcible overthrow of a government or social order in favor of a new system. If the 1911 Revolution succeeded, they would not install old feudal government officials strongly aligned with Confucianism beliefs, but rather, by enlightenment ideals, the people of the local community should elect their government officials. Furthermore, their privilege *gōng míng* 功名 was given by the imperial court. Overthrowing the imperial court without replacing it with another meant that such privileges would be removed from society. Therefore, the revolution's success meant the downfall of the gentry, as they would lose all their power and privileges. Even worse, the power vacuum created by the process meant that gentries would likely face retaliation and direct assault from the peasants due to their oppressive behaviors. For example, after the 1949 Revolution, the Land Reform Movement killed many feudal landlords and gentries. Thus, to secure their interests, power, and even lives, gentries will oppose the revolution, preventing those under his control from being mobilized, reducing the mobilization capacity of Chinese society pre-1911 revolution. By contrast, the heavy tax imposed on the French peasants caused dissatisfaction with the

Bourbon monarch. Thus, when the French Revolution eventually occurred, it led to direct assaults on them, removing them such that they never became a problem in the revolution.

## 5. Warlords

After Yuan Shi Kai's death, regional military leaders immediately took over the power vacuum it created, fragmenting the short-lived republic into a series of warlord-controlled states. The rise of warlords was detrimental to the revolution, as it no longer puts power at the hands of the revolutionaries but at the hands of military commanders. According to the Oxford Dictionary, a warlord is a military commander, especially an aggressive regional commander with individual autonomy. Consequently, by definition, French rulers like Napoleon were also warlords. While Napoleon was a man of enlightenment, ultimately pushing reforms within France, Chinese Warlords in the 1910s devastated the development of enlightenment ideals in China.

Chinese Warlords ruled absolutely and in the form of a dictator, making their opinion on enlightenment ideals important. Whether to support or oppose it is only between his thoughts. However, "most warlords were conservative men, strongly attuned to traditional values." [19]. Therefore, liberal ideals like republicanism and democracy will not be supported and often oppressed by those in power during the warlord era. For example, during the March 18 Massacre, the Fengtian clique opened fire and massacred protesters participating in an anti-warlord student demonstration in Beijing, China.

In addition, "since a place could be taken over by another warlord, and the warlord faced territory insecurity and shorter reign, he would have favored more short-term policies." [20]. Therefore, liberal ideas like separation of power and democracy would not be supported by warlords. These policies were measured to prevent the government's tyranny but hindered the government's efficiency. Thus, during wartime, warlords would have "favored more short-term policies" like a dictatorship to ensure the efficiency of commands and secure control over the state and the military.

While on the measures taken on merchants, the policies that government officials of the warlord enacted were more similar to the ways of the old feudal government rather than the economic measures suggested by Adam Smith. According to Diana Lary, a professor emerita of Chinese History at the University of British Columbia, and her book *Warlord Soldiers 1911-1937*, she described the warlord's harassment of Chinese merchants:

*Merchants and other hapless sellers would be forced to accept the money at its face value, often making an involuntary gift of the goods or services being 'sold'. Some of the paper money was of such poor quality that there was barely a pretense of making a sale...This form of theft-through-purchase carried an additional insult when the soldier demanded 'change' for a purchase in real money» using large paper bills to make small purchases and taking the change in sound metal currency...Another form of indirect theft was the enforced discounting of purchases in all stores in a locality through 'agreement' between the army command and the local merchants' guild...Soldiers routinely stole services as well as goods - meals in restaurants, rides in rickshaws, train trips, visits to prostitutes, entertainment. [21]*

Within a capitalistic economy, there should be limited to no government intervention in the economy. Therefore, the warlord's harassments were strictly against the philosophy of liberal economics and ideas but rather a continuation of those of old Chinese feudal society's government officials. Merchants were placed at the bottom of the hierarchy within the four class divisions. Thus, they were often terrorized by government officials for their wealth. For example, Shen Wansan, one of the wealthiest men at the beginning of the Ming dynasty, was killed for his wealth by the emperor Hong Wu. [22]. On the subject of economy, warlords chose to continue their feudal predecessors rather than reform into a capitalist economy.

Ultimately, the rise of warlords was a disruption in terms of the 1911 Revolution. The rise of conservative military commanders hinders the development of enlightenment ideals and liberal economics but instead focuses on short-term policies so that they can defeat their bordered enemy. Meanwhile, for the majority of the French Revolution, France remained a centralized and unified state under the control of the government in Paris, allowing reforms to be enacted. However, the theory of warlord as the sole explanation of the failure of the 1911 Revolution needs to be revised, as this approach failed to explain what led to the creation of such fragmented warlord states.

## 6. Conclusion

Rather than proposing a series of loosely connected theories, this paper utilized Thompson's four-factors-analyzing method [23] in comparing and categorizing (Table 2):

Table 2: The 4 Differences between the 1911 Revolution and the French Revolution of 1789

	State Established	Society
<b>Structural</b>	Nationalism	Literacy Rate, Gentry and Societal Mobilization
<b>Actor</b>	Yuan Shih-kai vs Napoleon	Warlord vs Centralized State

Then, linking the 4 (Table 3):

Table 3: Linkage between the 4 Factors

Nationalism		Societal Mobilization
Complicated Nationalism reduces the legitimacy of the government, reducing a government's ability to reform	Weak Government contrasts with strong decentralized power, ultimately leads to the revolution's failure.	The central Chinese government lacks control over local regions due to the low societal mobilization, leading to the rise of the warlords.
Leadership		Warlords

Through reviewing the 1789 French Revolution and 1911 Chinese Revolution, the social structure caused a huge influence on the revolutionary legislation in those two countries and the shape of national identification, and those series of impacts also resulted in two divergent consequences of those revolutions. The emergence of French nationalism unifies the people, replacing the old feudal ties, empowering the government, and allowing new revolutionary legislation to be passed down. This legislation in France ensured the position of the newborn capitalist class and reshaped the concept of French people in the whole society, ultimately creating a strong and united liberal government under Napoleon. In comparison, the complicated nationalism problem of Hans and Manchus reduces the government's legitimacy and its ability to unite the population, leading to a "middle ground" legislation established to win support from local leaders like gentries. Thus, the 1911 Revolution failed to completely dismantle the Chinese feudal social structure, so the Chinese revolutionary legislation in 1915 deviated from the notion of the 1911 Revolution. In the meantime, China's inability to mobilize the majority of the population due to low literacy rate and gentries meant that the revolution is a top-down one. Gentries in order to secure their interest, allied with conservative military leaders, allowing military leaders to govern and control their territory, leading to the formation of warlords [24]. For example, when the nationalists started as a warlord in Guangdong, they installed gentries in the provincial level of government [24]. While in the French Revolution,

the high literacy rate meant that a large degree of the population understood the cause, making the revolution a bottom-up one. The Storming of Bastille and the Women's March on Versailles are all great examples of how the common people of Paris voluntarily mobilized for the revolutionary cause and resisted the upper class, such as the 1st and 2nd Estates, while such events were rare in 1910s China. Furthermore, the September Massacre and other direct assaults on local leaders decimated the French 1st and 2nd Estate population, removing the problem of the Gentry that China faced during its revolution.

Ultimately, the revisionist legislation and the decentralized government of China in the 1910s contrasted with radical reforms and the centralized state of France in the French Revolution. Such characteristics of the French Revolution allowed France to pass and execute reforms efficiently and decimate the old feudal order to the point that some considered it too far. The decentralized state and revisionist legislation allowed elements of the feudal order, like gentries to survive until 1949.

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