

Chinese scholars wrote *biji* (jottings or thoughts), which often were not published until after the writers' deaths, when they were collected and published as part of the "collected works" of the author. Feminist author Qiu Jin jotted her thoughts on the role of women in traditional culture, which were published in 1960.

We, the two hundred million women of China, are the most unfairly treated objects on earth. If we have a decent father, then we will be all right at the time of our birth; but if he is crude by nature, or an unreasonable man, he will immediately start spewing out phrases like "Oh what an ill-omened day, here's another useless one."



Sun Yat-sen, seated in the center, is photographed with members of the Revolutionary Alliance, which he established in Tokyo in 1905.

became aware of Qiu Jin's plans and arrested and beheaded her. To rebel and fail was obviously a bloody business. The assassination of Enming frightened all Manchu officials, especially because at the same time, Sun Yat-sen was setting in motion several (in the end, unsuccessful) mini-rebellions in south China. Before his execution, Xu made this statement to authorities, which appeared in a Chinese newspaper in 1907.

The Manchus have enslaved us Han for nearly three hundred years. On the surface they seem to be implementing constitutionalism, but that's only to ensnare people's minds. In reality they are upholding the centralization of authority so as to enhance their power. The Manchus' presumption is that if there is constitutionalism, then revolution will be impossible. . . . If constitutionalism means centralization, the more constitutionalism there is the faster the Han people will die. . . . I have harbored anti-Manchu feelings for more than ten years. Only today have I achieved my goal. My intention was to kill Enming, then to kill Duanfang, Tieliang, and Liangbi, so as to avenge the Han people. . . . You say that the governor was a good official, that

he treated me very well. Granted! But since my goal is to oppose the Manchus, I cannot be concerned with whether a particular Manchu official was a good official or a bad official. As for his treating me well, that was the private kindness of an individual person. My killing of the governor, on the other hand, expressed the universal principle of anti-Manchism.

Not all revolutionary activities were focused on launching uprisings or on terrorist attacks and assassinations. As the first decade of the twentieth century neared its end, street dem-

onstrations in many cities called for the immediate establishment of a constitution with representative assemblies at the national, provincial, and local levels. Before her death, the Empress Dowager had set forth a calendar that envisioned a fully operating constitutional system by 1917. But once provisional provincial assemblies met in 1909, the pressure on the Qing government to telescope the process increased. But the regents of the new emperor made political blunder after political blunder, riling up more and more Chinese. Also rising were fears that imperialist



The man holding a writing brush exhorts, "Awake quickly! Awake quickly!! Let all you brothers rouse your spirits." This cartoon, which appeared on May 16, 1909, in the Shanghai newspaper *Minhu Bao* [The People's Cry], suggests that the written word was the powerful key to mobilizing the Chinese people.

powers were waiting in the wings to snatch parts of China from the fumbling grasp of the Manchus, whose ineffective rule seemed to many to threaten the dismantling of the Chinese nation.

In this memoir, Liu Jingshan, a student at the Shanxi Military Primary School, describes patriotic activities to save China, activities that inevitably took on an anti-Manchu tone. Liu's description indicates the importance of the new school system (initiated by the Manchus) in the growing revolutionary anti-Manchu fervor.

In 1911, when I was eighteen, the rumor was afloat that the Powers were about to divide China, and this naturally accelerated the tendency toward revolution. Patriots among my classmates set up one "save-the-nation" organization after another. . . . We organized a society for martial arts and practiced in preparation for hand-to-hand fighting. In late March [late April in the Gregorian calendar], we asked our classmates to make donations to reprint a "save-the-nation" leaflet for the Revolutionary Alliance. It said that the powers had designated their territories [for seizure]—northern Manchuria, Mongolia, and Xinjiang to Russia; southern Manchuria and Fujian to Japan; Shandong to Germany; the Yangtze [Yangzi] basin

The Anti-U.S. Boycott of 1905

One of the earliest examples of mass nationalism was the Chinese boycott of trade with the United States. Long-term reasons included the racist anti-Chinese immigration policies existing from the 1880s; a more immediate cause was the humiliating ill-treatment of Chinese who visited the United States for the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair—required, for example, to wear their passports around their necks.

to Britain, etc., . . . with only [the province of] Zhili left to the Qing empire. The leaflet appealed to the people to rise up and save their country. On Sunday morning, our classmates distributed the leaflets to the street, sent them to colleges and special schools, and mailed them to all the middle and senior primary schools of each prefecture, district, and county. Suddenly, there was massive unrest across the country. College and special-school students held assemblies and planned strikes, creating chaos everywhere.

The reactionary Shanxi authorities held an emergency meeting at the governor's official residence and decided to stop mail, confiscate leaflets, and ban strikes to suppress the revolutionary activities. They criticized and threatened the military students saying that the Revolutionary Party members worked out the plan, spread false rumors, and distributed leaflets to incite people.

Students at various colleges and schools criticized the[se] reactionary Shanxi authorities as traitors because they did not direct or support the patriotic movement of these students, but instead, suppressed and destroyed it. The students turned from opposing the powers to overthrowing the Qing dynasty.

Ending Traditions

The binding of five- or six-year-old girls' feet began as a fad in the Song dynasty (960–1279), mimicking the practices of a court ballerina. The foot was bound tightly with the toes bent (and broken) under the instep, so that the foot would ideally be only about three inches long. This produced a type of walking that seemed seductive to many men, and, in China's patriarchal society, the custom had the added benefit of hobbling women to keep them from gallivanting around. Small feet were considered to be a valuable asset for marriage. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, reformist societies to abolish foot binding emerged. As one of China's first feminists, Qiu Jin took a strong stand against the custom. Here she muses on the practice and its prime justification.

Before many years have passed, without anyone's bothering to ask if it's right or wrong, they take out a pair of snow-white bands and bind them around our feet, tightening them with strips of white cotton; even when we go to bed at night we are not allowed to loosen them the least bit, with the result that the flesh peels away and the bones buckle under. The sole purpose of this is just to ensure that our relatives, friends, and neighbors will say, "At the so-and-so's the girls have small feet."



The bound foot of a Chinese woman was ideally no more than three inches long. Here her tiny shoe lies at the foot of the stool. The foot-binding process disfigured and hobbled a woman for life.

When military rebellion erupted into revolution in the fall of 1911, it was almost by accident. Revolutionaries, preparing for an uprising in the central Chinese city of Wuchang, made the mistake of dropping glowing cigarette ashes into gunpowder. The explosions gave them away; but they decided to act anyway because they already faced certain death if caught. Largely because much of the city's military force was upriver in Sichuan province putting down a disturbance involving railroad rights' recovery, the rebellion flared into civil war. But because Sun Yat-sen was away on a fundraising trip, leadership fell to a military man who was not even a revolutionary. Nevertheless, the revolutionaries swept to a series of rapid military victories in south and central China.

The court called on longtime civil and military official Yuan Shikai, whom they had dismissed three years earlier. Yuan bided his time to see which side would more likely emerge the victor. He eventually

The British in China During the Revolution

Revolutionary troops chose to walk beside the railroad tracks between Shanghai and Nanjing rather than ride the British-controlled trains because they feared that destruction of railroad property would bring the British into the civil war with political and economic demands or worse.

According to the imperialist nations, treaty agreements reigned supreme in every circumstance. Thus, when a northern Chinese province was suffering a devastating famine, the British insisted on continuing to export soybeans, citing a 1906 agreement that forbade Chinese to involve themselves in the trade by halting it or even slowing it down.

Mandate of Heaven

Since the beginning of the imperial system, the emperor was thought to hold power through a mandate from Heaven, an impersonal force in the universe. So long as he ruled with benevolence for the people, he could continue to rule. But if he was perceived as failing to do so—and that reality would produce natural disasters—then the people who spoke for Heaven could overthrow the emperor and give the mandate to someone else. That idea is clearly expressed in the abdication announcement.

worked to bring the dynasty's abdication. Revolutionary act followed revolutionary act, obliterating the old world and giving birth to a new one. After the Qing court abdicated, they were allowed to continue living in their palace, the Forbidden City. Yuan Shikai became president of the Republic of China. Sun Yat-sen, in contrast, served as the relatively unimportant national director of railroads. The abdication edict, issued by the court on February 12, 1912, marked the end of 2,000 years of imperial rule in China.

As a consequence of the uprising of the Republican Army, to which the different provinces immediately responded, the Empire seethed like a boiling cauldron and the people were plunged into utter misery. Yuan Shikai was, therefore, especially commanded some time ago to dispatch commissioners to confer with the representatives of the Republican Army on the general situation and to discuss matters pertaining to the convening of a National Assembly for the decision of the suitable mode of settlement. . . . Separated as the South and North are by great distances, the unwillingness of either side to yield to the other can result only in the continued interruption of trade and the prolongation of hostilities, for, so long as the form of government is undecided, the Nation can have no peace. It is now evident that the hearts of the majority of the people are in favor of a republican form of government: the provinces of the South were the first to espouse the cause, and the generals of the North have since pledged their support. From the preference of the people's hearts, the Will of Heaven can be discerned. How could We then dare to oppose the will of the millions for the glory of one Family! Therefore, observing the tendencies of the age on one hand and studying the opinions of the people on the other, We and His Majesty the Emperor hereby vest the sovereignty in the People and decide in favor of a republican form of constitutional government. Thus we would gratify on the one hand the desires of the whole nation who, tired of anarchy, are desirous of peace, and on the other hand would follow, in the footsteps of the Ancient Sages who regarded the Throne as the sacred trust of the Nation.

Now Yuan Shikai was elected by the provisional parliament to be the Premier. During this period of transference of government from the old to the new, there should be some means of uniting the South and the North. Let Yuan Shikai organize with full powers a provisional republican government and confer with the

Republican Army as to the methods of union, thus assuring peace to the people and tranquility to the Empire, and forming to one Great Republic of China by the union as heretofore, of the five peoples, namely, Manchus, Chinese, Mongols, Mohammedans, and Tibetans together with their territory in its integrity. We and His Majesty the Emperor, thus enabled to live in retirement, free from responsibilities and cares, . . . shall enjoy without interruption the courteous treatment of the Nation and see with Our own eyes the consummation of an illustrious government. Is not this highly advisable.