Domestic Authority and Foreign Economic Policies in Chinese History

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Abstract

Concerns about domestic authority shape how governments conduct their foreign policies. However, this influence is often difficult to observe in highly opaque, non-democratic political systems. In the first part of the dissertation, I investigate the link between domestic authority and foreign policy in the context of diplomacy and trade in late imperial China, a period that spans the Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1644-1911) dynasties. I argue that international diplomacy can serve leaders' domestic political needs when it is highly visible to relevant audiences; conducted with counterparts held in relatively high esteem domestically; when certain diplomatic practices are historically associated with regime authority; or when diplomacy is wielded by leaders with relatively low levels of legitimacy. Using an original dataset of over 5,000 Ming and Qing tribute exchanges, I demonstrate that Chinese emperors newly in power conducted a disproportionately high volume of diplomatic activity. I find weaker evidence that this effect was more salient among low-legitimacy emperors. An accompanying case study illustrates how the Yongle Emperor deployed tribute diplomacy as a tool for domestic authority consolidation.

Turning to the trade policies of the same period, I argue that beyond leaders, other autocratic elites who participate in foreign policy making are motivated by similar authority concerns. Extant research on non-democratic trade policy has largely neglected this group

of actors. I develop a theory that predicts variation in elite policy preferences based on top-down and bottom-up authority relations with the leader and local trading communities, respectively. To assess these claims, I introduce a dataset on the maritime trade preferences of several hundred individual elite officials in late imperial China created through 10 months of archival work in Beijing and Taipei. The data suggest that coastal provincial officials became key pro-trade advocates during the Qing dynasty. The findings offer an example of how trade preferences can vary within a non-democratic regime, and how historical cases can be especially useful for empirically studying these preferences.

In the third paper, the dissertation then flips the focus from the domestic politics of Chinese foreign policy to how other states' internal politics shape their engagement with contemporary China. I argue that leaders of small developing countries can seek greater domestic authority by acquiring "prestige projects," defined as highly visible, nationally salient international development projects. After identifying a set of Chinese government-financed prestige projects using a new dataset on Chinese development finance, I show that these projects are overwhelmingly concentrated in the world's poorest and smallest countries, and that their implementation may be associated with higher public support for recipient governments. I also find that China's government supplies more prestige projects to states that increase their support for Chinese diplomatic objectives.

Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

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Introduction

This dissertation is a merger of two research agendas: one on contemporary Chinese development finance, and one on the domestic political economy of late imperial Chinese foreign economic policies. The former began in 2012 and accompanied me into graduate school, while the latter was conceived during my doctoral training. Though the three papers that comprise this dissertation are theoretically and empirically distinct, they do share a common thread: the role of domestic authority in shaping foreign economic policies. The papers also share some additional elements. For instance, two of the papers argue that the notion of visibility—in particular, to relevant domestic audiences—is an important but poorly understood feature of foreign policy, both in the context of diplomacy and development finance. As another example, two of the papers make the case that earlier historical cases (including but not limited to late imperial China) are valuable, untapped resources for theoretical and empirical research of non-democratic foreign policy making in the field of international political economy.

Finally, each of the papers engage in "myth-busting" by revisiting highly controversial areas in Chinese foreign policy through the creation of new datasets built through years of careful collection and adjudication between different primary and other sources. These datasets are preliminary and subject to further quality assurance tests. As they may be useful for researchers working on related projects, each of the datasets will be made publicly available upon completion.

The individual abstracts of each paper are included below.

Diplomacy as Domestic Authority: Ming and Qing Tribute Exchanges, 1369–1891

Diplomacy can serve leaders' domestic political needs. I argue that diplomacy is particularly useful for increasing leaders' domestic authority under certain conditions: when it is visible, performative, or otherwise conveys widely accepted symbols of authority; when it is conducted with counterparts held in relatively high esteem domestically; when it is wielded by leaders with relatively low levels of legitimacy; or when certain diplomatic practices are historically associated with regime authority. Leaders' pursuit of diplomacy as domestic authority helps explain changes in states' overall volumes of diplomacy in the short term, and also sheds light on why certain diplomatic relationships outlive their initial functions over longer periods of time. I assess these claims using an original dataset based on primary sources on tribute exchanges during the Ming and Qing dynasties. The findings demonstrate that Chinese emperors newly in power conducted a disproportionately high volume of exchanges. I find weaker evidence that this effect was more pronounced among low-legitimacy emperors. An accompanying case study illustrates how the Yongle Emperor deployed tribute diplomacy for domestic authority. The findings add to research on diplomacy, hierarchy, and empire in international relations. They also offer a fresh perspective on the nature of Chinese hegemony in early modern Asia.

Trade Preferences in a Non-Democratic Regime: Evidence from Late Imperial China

How do elites within a non-democratic government perceive international trade policy? Existing research focuses on dictators' preferences while discounting those of other elite officials, in part because individual-level preference data is typically unavailable for authoritarian political systems. I argue that officials working outside of central government institutions, such as along a country's borders or in regions disproportionately impacted by

trade policies, are more likely to report policy preferences based on the local impacts of trade. This may be due to both top-down and bottom-up authority relations: the central government may authorize more policy flexibility to these officials, whose local authority also depends on accountability to local economic actors. To assess this claim, I introduce archival data on the maritime trade preferences of individual elite officials in late imperial China. The data, accompanied by qualitative historical evidence, suggest that provincially-based officials became key pro-trade advocates during the Qing dynasty. Controlling for officials' rank, ethnicity, job type, and different emperors, coastal provincial officials were more likely to support maritime trade openness in their communications with the emperor. The findings offer an example of how trade preferences can vary within a non-democratic regime, and how historical cases can contribute to the study of authoritarian foreign policy making.

Who Pursues Prestige Projects, and Why? Evidence from Chinese Development Finance

Why do some governments pursue grandiose development projects, often in countries with urgent needs for more basic development resources? I argue that governments of small or poor countries often have strong domestic political incentives to seek and associate themselves with externally-financed "prestige projects." In terms of supply, donor governments finance prestige projects to states that increase their support for donors' diplomatic interests. This is especially attractive for emerging and other donor governments facing perceived international prestige deficits. After identifying a set of Chinese government-financed prestige projects using a new dataset, I show that these projects are concentrated in the world's poorest and smallest countries, and that their implementation may be associated with higher public support for recipient governments. I also find that China's government overwhelmingly supplies prestige projects to states that increase their support

for Chinese diplomatic objectives. Accompanying tests find no such relationships for concessional foreign aid or commercially-oriented development projects financed by China's government.

This dissertation makes extensive use of both primary and secondary Chinese sources. Across the main text and references, I use either simplified or traditional Chinese characters, depending on the nature of the text being referenced.

1 Diplomacy as Domestic Authority: Ming and Qing Tribute Exchanges, 1369–1891

1.1 Introduction

In September 1839, the First Opium War broke out after British warships attacked three Chinese junks near Hong Kong. The Qing dynasty's defeat three years later was the beginning of the end of five centuries of Chinese regional hegemony. Yet despite their vastly diminished regional power, Qing emperors continued to engage in tributary diplomacy. Tributary exchanges took the form of official, nominally hierarchical political exchanges between imperial China and various frontier and foreign political actors.[1] Only after the Qing's collapse in the early twentieth century did tribute cease to exist.

The longevity of tribute is particularly curious given its origins during the Han Dynasty (206 B.C.–220 A.D.) and historical evolution throughout imperial China. After being reinvigorated as a commercial and diplomatic institution by early Ming dynasty emperors, tribute lost many of its early Ming functions—such as regulating trade and taxation, and pacifying regional chieftains along the empire's frontiers—by the end of the 16th century. Figure 1.1 helps illustrate this shift using a new dataset on Ming and Qing tribute exchanges introduced below. Aggregate tribute exchanges declined dramatically during the latter half

[1] These exchanges were nominally hierarchical in that the visiting party would ritually submit to the authority of the Chinese emperor, often in exchange for formal investiture as well as other benefits such as gifts or the right to trade. Section 1.3 provides additional background on tribute exchanges in late imperial China.

of the Ming dynasty and into the Qing dynasty, in large part due to Qing imperial expansion into former vassal territories as well as new trade policies along the imperial frontier that obviated tribute from an economic standpoint. Despite these major changes, tribute survived until the end of the 19th century and remained especially salient with East Asian governments, as shown by Figure 1.2. This figure also highlights another curious feature of late imperial tribute: significant short-term fluctuations in the overall amount of tribute diplomacy, both within each dynasty and during the reigns of individual emperors.

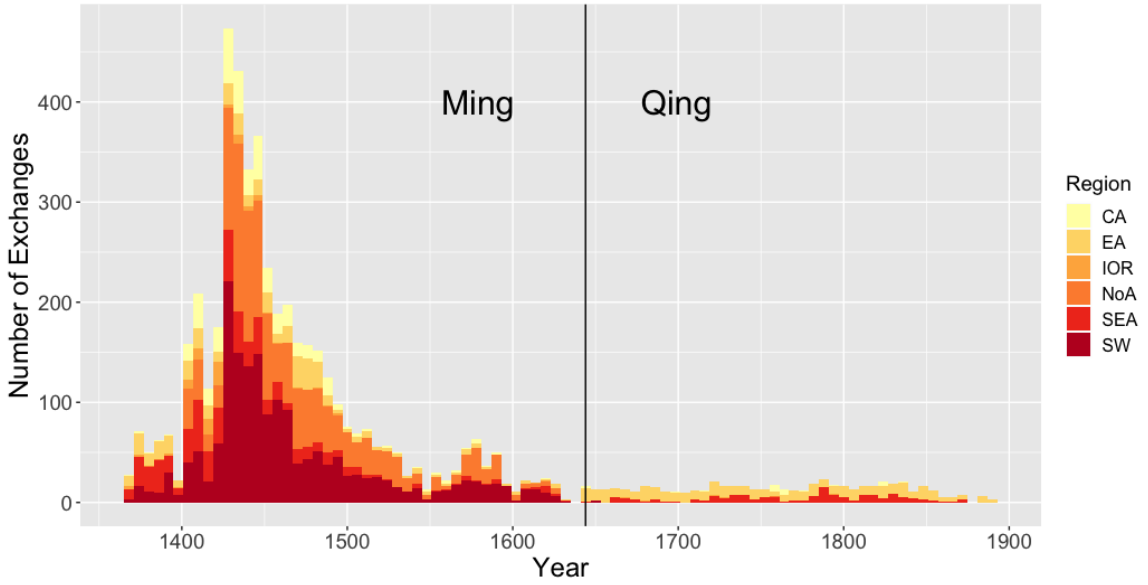

Figure 1.1: Tribute Exchanges by Region, 1369-1891

The persistent but highly uneven use of tribute by imperial Chinese leaders is puzzling: Why does a leader's overall volume of diplomacy shift over time? Why do certain forms of diplomacy continue for long periods after losing their original functions? I argue that, in addition to signaling, informational, and other strategic functions widely documented in international relations research, certain kinds of diplomacy can increase leaders' domestic political authority. This is more likely under four conditions. First, diplomacy must be visible, performative, or otherwise able to convey symbolic authority to domestic audiences.

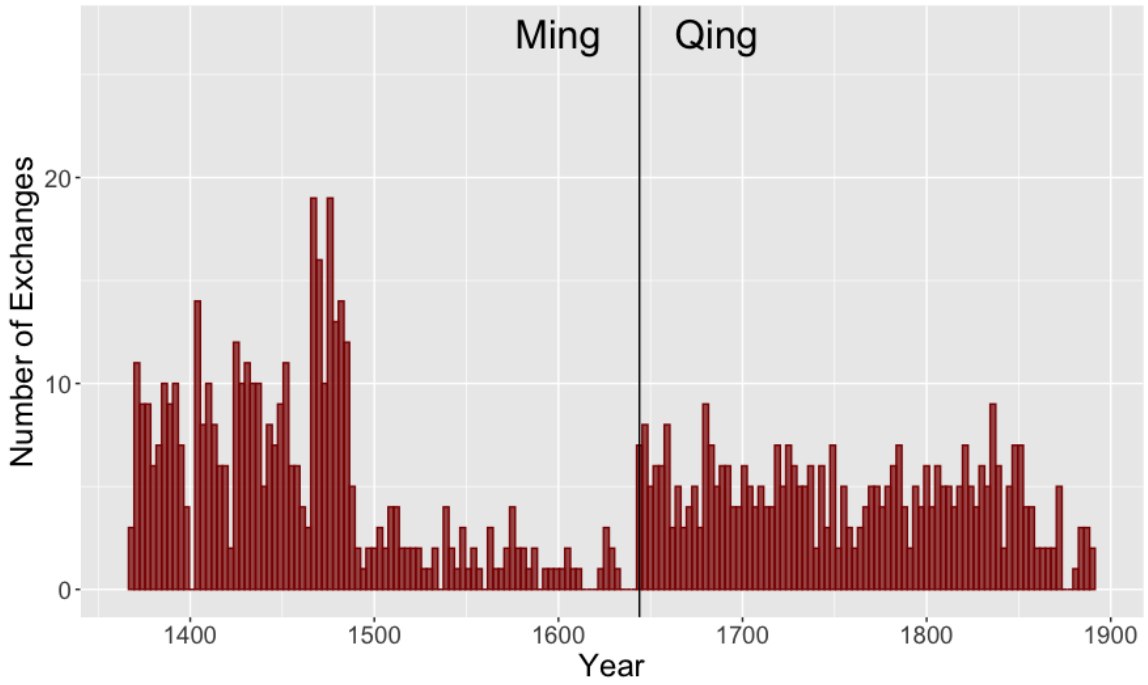

Figure 1.2: Chinese Tribute Exchanges with East Asian Governments, 1369-1891

Second, diplomacy conducted with foreign actors viewed in relatively high esteem may be more valuable for domestic authority building. Third, leaders must possess sufficient demand for using diplomatic resources for domestic political survival. Finally, diplomatic relationships or practices historically associated with regime authority are particularly useful for leaders' pursuit of domestic authority. Moreover, when leaders' capitalize on these features to bolster their domestic authority in the short-term, this behavior may help perpetuate diplomacy over longer periods of time and shed light on why some diplomatic interactions persist long after their international strategic functions are diminished or obsolete.

To assess these arguments, I introduce an original dataset of Ming and Qing tribute exchanges from 1369 to 1891. Using these data and controlling for alternative hypotheses, I test whether Chinese emperors conducted a larger share of their tribute diplomacy during periods of relatively high political need, such as during the initial years of their reign.

The results suggest that both Ming and Qing leaders were likely to "front-load" tribute exchanges in their initial years in power. I also find weaker evidence that front-loading was especially common among low-legitimacy leaders. To proxy for domestic legitimacy, I use measures of emperors' mode of entry into leadership as well as the number of male offspring of the preceding emperor (See Section 1.4). In addition to these statistical tests, I include a case study of tribute under the Yongle Emperor to illustrate ways in which Chinese emperors could adopt and adapt tribute to serve their domestic political needs.

The findings help explain both short-term variation in the aggregate volume of Chinese tribute exchanges, as well as tribute's longer-term survival as a diplomatic institution. The dataset introduced in this paper further helps to empirically assess various popular and scholarly claims made about the "tributary system" as an international institution in early modern Asia. More generally, the findings contribute to extant international relations research on diplomacy and hierarchy. In particular, the results suggest a neglected but important role for domestic political needs of heads of state in powerful states when explaining the nature and consequences of diplomatic networks and hierarchical systems.

The remainder of this paper proceeds as follows. The next section develops arguments about leaders' use of international diplomacy for domestic political authority. The following section discusses late imperial Chinese tributary relations and introduces a new dataset on Ming and Qing tribute exchanges. Next, I describe the analysis and results which include statistical tests as well as a qualitative case study. The conclusion summarizes the paper's findings and suggests some limitations and areas for future research.

1.2 Theory: Diplomacy as Domestic Authority

History offers abundant examples of diplomatic behavior that has impacted leaders' domestic political fortunes. U.S. diplomatic pressure altered the incentives of both in-

cumbent leaders and elite challengers in developing countries throughout the Cold War (Thyne 2010).[2] Diplomatic linkages to like-minded regimes can provide governments with information and best practices about handling domestic popular unrest, as was the case during the Syrian government's repression of popular protests in 2011 following earlier Arab Spring movements (Tansey, Koehler, and Schmotz 2017). Leaders of regimes under political pressure can rely on external diplomatic support from "black knights" that offsets pressure from other states or domestic actors (Hufbauer, Schott, and Elliott 1990). In early modern East Asia, smaller governments used China's tributary diplomacy to achieve their own domestic political objectives (Lee 2016b).[3] Yet existing research does not clarify the features of diplomacy that make it useful as a domestic political tool, or which types of leaders are most likely to use diplomacy in this way. I outline four conditions, none of which preclude the other, that make international diplomacy more relevant for leaders' pursuit of domestic authority.

First, certain forms of diplomacy can reinforce leaders' authority among domestic audiences because of their high visibility and performative nature. Social scientists have long noted the importance of visual theatrics in legitimating domestic and international political power, and visible forms of interstate relationships may be particularly valuable for heads of state (Geertz 1980; Redeker 2008; Death 2011; Shimazu 2014). In the case of China, "performance legitimacy" has remained a necessity for Chinese leaders in establishing and maintaining political authority within the government and throughout society (Zhao 2009).[4]

[2]More generally, certain types of diplomacy can deter domestic political conflict by mitigating the commitment problem (Regan and Aydin 2006; Walter 1997).

[3]Even earlier, during the 10th century China itself was divided into political entities that referred to each other as nations. Diplomacy was a critical political tool for the domestic political survival of various rulers of these polities, including the Wuyue Guo (Worthy Jr 1983, 18-20).

[4]Similarly, Qing dynasty officials made extensive use of visual images, which initially were tools of statecraft rather than works of art, in dealing with Buddhist political figures in inner Asia (Berger 2003).

Diplomatic exchanges between leaders are a particularly visible feature of interstate relationships, and such interactions are an important component of mutual legitimization among states.[5] For instance, exchanges can reinforce formal or informal hierarchies and status levels among states (Bacevich 2009).[6] While existing research has primarily focused on the implications of visible diplomacy for international audiences, diplomacy also sends important domestic political signals.[7] Diplomacy has long been a performative behavior visible to domestic audiences. Some of the earliest forms of international diplomacy between governments were defined by visual, performative cultural exchanges involving art and other luxury goods (Roosen 1980; Feldman 2006). Performing arts had a major influence on the development and proliferation of diplomatic practices in early modern Europe, in which elite and popular spectatorship played an important role (Welch 2017). More generally, as ritual studies scholars argue, diplomatic rituals can serve as symbols of authority and political actors' effective use of symbols can evolve into forms of actual power as these symbols are embedded into the minds of others (Bell 1992). Given its tangible and often highly observable nature, diplomacy is a visible medium through which leaders can signal their political authority to other relevant domestic actors, whether political elites or publics.[8] Higher levels of visibility make diplomacy more effective for this purpose.

Second, diplomacy with different foreign actors may have varying levels of domes-

[5]This is one reason why non-state actors seeking more formal recognition and legitimacy—such as rebel groups (Malejacq 2017), governments in exile, and religious communities (McConnell, Moreau, and Dittmer 2012)— engage in diplomatic activities.

[6]Indeed, this is one reason why both popular and expert observers consider it significant when an incumbent power like the United States meets with "rogue" states such as Cuba or North Korea (e.g. Goddard and Nexon 2018).

[7]For example, Soviet diplomacy worried American officials who believed Russia's foreign affairs offensive would enhance their legitimacy in other countries (Gould-Davies 2003). Acceptance by other states of China's major power status has been similarly analyzed (Odgaard 2013).

[8]Alternatively, because diplomatic recognition is a fundamental attribute of modern statehood, failing to secure it can result in major domestic backlash.

tic political value, and engagement with "high-status" actors may deliver larger increases in leaders' domestic authority (e.g. Kinne 2014; Duque 2018).[9] For example, Tokugawa Japan's relations with other Asian countries were an important element that was consciously deployed to legitimize the Tokugawa Bakufu political order over several decades (Toby 1977). In order to establish its domestic legitimacy in Japan, the Bakufu used diplomacy targeted at countries with similar cultural and ideological backgrounds.[10] The strategy was to use diplomacy with these states to bolster the Bakufu's appearance as the rightful government of a unified Japan, particularly in the eyes of potential elite rivals. In the context of late imperial Chinese tribute, Lee (2013) summarizes the domestic political logic of conducting diplomacy with the hegemonic Ming China from the perspective of Korean leaders: "an external validation given to one single actor from someone in a position of higher authority can be of great political value." As discussed below, the imperial Chinese government ranked vassal states according to their status (Kang 2010b; Wang 2013; Khong 2013). Confucian states within the "Sinic Zone" consisting of East and Southeast Asia were officially ranked more highly in the late imperial Chinese-envisioned universal order. As such, Chinese imperial officials may have perceived exchanges with higher-order polities as more prestigious, making them more instrumental in reinforcing the emperor's legitimate authority.

Third, diplomacy is more likely to be relevant as a domestic political tool when incumbent leaders face perceived domestic authority deficits. For example, leaders newly in power looking to establish their authority, particularly when potential challengers exist, should have strong incentives to bolster their authority through visual diplomacy relative

[9]Status is often broadly defined by international relations scholars as a positive attribute of an individual or group based on rank within a social setting (e.g. Paul, Larson, and Wohlforth 2014; Dafoe, Renshon, and Huth 2014).

[10]In the Tokugawa bakufu, the last Japanese military feudal government, "seclusion" (sakoku) was largely directed towards European states who were perceived as a threat to spread Christianity across Japanese society, while trade with Ryukyu, China, and other Asian states remained at least partially open.

to more established leaders. Similarly, another possibility is that leaders entering power through irregular or extralegal means, such as via an elite or popular uprising, may have lower baseline levels of authority among elites and fewer resources for closing the authority gap. Political scientists have documented extensively how violent or irregular entry into leadership can create instability and policy changes (e.g. Skrede Gleditsch and Ruggeri 2010; Chow and Kono 2017). Leaders who assume power via irregular mode of entry may be more inclined to leverage their new access to to the regime's existing diplomatic portfolio as a domestic stabilization tool which signals their authority to potential challengers. Yet another possibility is that even once securely in power, domestic socioeconomic events such as natural disasters or man-made failed policies may similarly spur previously well-established leaders to resort to diplomacy to re-energize their domestic authority in the face of elite or popular pressure.

Fourth, leaders may be more inclined to deploy diplomacy as a domestic authority tool when certain diplomatic relationships are historically associated with the regime's domestic legitimacy, and diplomacy allows leaders to associate themselves with historical claims to power. The vast majority of leaders inherit rather than create diplomatic relationships and networks. Altering these structures may require revising the basis of the regime's domestic political legitimacy, which may be restrictively costly and risky to successive leaders. As with other types of foreign policy behavior, diplomatic practices may become innately connected to a regime's political identity (Mitzen 2006). Strong links between diplomacy and regime identity may render diplomatic ties indivisible in the eyes of leaders, analogous to the way in which territorial claims can evolve into sacred, non-negotiable assets for leaders (e.g., Hassner 2003; Goddard 2006). Though linking their identities to foreign policies can be unintentional, regimes sometimes do this deliberately. For example, imperial Chinese regimes consistently pursued a strategy of "othering" steppe societies in order to fortify China's own identity and justify the court's exclusion of these societies from

China's hierarchical, Confucian order (MacKay 2016).

Of course, the precise ways in which leaders engage with existing diplomatic relationships depend on context-specific and institutional realities. For example, whether it makes sense for leaders of states to reinforce or reject diplomacy may depend on how leaders inherit preexisting diplomatic structures. On the one hand, perpetuating or expanding diplomatic behavior may provide a leader with increased personal legitimacy, raising the costs for others to challenge her right to rule. In contrast, a leader may perceive an increase in domestic political benefits from denouncing or opposing international diplomatic behavior that is publicly unpopular or closely linked to opposition political actors.[11] Regardless of leaders' orientation towards existing diplomatic relations, they should be more likely to emphasize their commitment (or opposition) to existing diplomatic relationships during times of heightened domestic political need. This might include pre-election campaign periods in relatively democratic political systems, or during times of popular or elite political unrest in less democratic societies.

Of course, domestic authority is unlikely to be the sole motivating factor for states' outward diplomatic behavior, even when the above features of diplomacy are present. States engage in diplomacy for a wide range of international objectives related to international cooperation, crisis management, signaling, information sharing, routine relationship maintenance, and the pursuit of status (e.g. Hall and Yarhi-Milo 2012; Kastner and Saunders 2012; Kinne 2014; Trager 2016; Lebovic and Saunders 2016). The above arguments certainly do not preclude these international functions or motivations. Rather, by focusing on intra-leader shifts in the volume of a states' diplomacy, one can arguably mitigate at least some concern that potential effects are driven by these alternative explanations.

[11]For example, Donald Trump's rhetorical and policy opposition to various U.S.-led multilateral institutions is viewed as an important channel for building domestic political support, particularly among domestic constituents who have benefited relatively little from U.S.-supported economic globalization (Norrlof 2018; Stokes 2018).

1.3 New Data on Ming and Qing Tribute Exchanges

I investigate the above arguments in the context of tribute relations during late imperial China, a nearly five-century period from the beginning of the Ming dynasty in 1368 to the fall of the Qing dynasty in 1911. Late imperial China is a useful application for several reasons. First, it spans a long time series during which both leader political incentives for diplomacy and diplomatic behavior vary substantially across and within emperor reigns. Second meticulous record keeping by imperial Chinese governments, and subsequent preservation of these records, make it possible to document China's domestic politics and tribute behavior over a long period of time while also accounting for a variety of potential alternative explanations. Third, because tribute existed independently of the Westphalian state system and was (at least nominally) hierarchical, we may treat it as such (at least from the perspective of imperial China) rather than having to infer informal hierarchical relationships from interstate behavior in other environments (e.g., Lake 2007). This is useful for testing whether leaders made more or less use of "higher status" foreign entities during periods of heightened political need.

Finally, late imperial China is a particularly ideal setting for testing domestic political motives for diplomacy alongside other competing arguments. China's tributary relations have attracted widespread attention among international relations scholars in recent years (e.g., Kang 2010a; Zhou 2011; Zhang and Buzan 2012). Tribute is a milennia-old concept that originated as early as the Han Dynasty, in part to govern central-local relations and manage trade and diplomacy with foreign polities (Li 2004). During the Ming and Qing dynasties, it similarly was used by China's imperial government to engage with various types of actors including foreign governments and peripheral chieftains and tribes, military units, and ethnic groups along the frontier. In essence, tribute exchanges were nominally hierarchical diplomatic interactions during which the Chinese emperor was recognized as

the apex of political authority. Under the pretext of this recognition, mutual political recognition occurred, gifts were exchanged, and extensive trading often took place before, during and after the exchange during which envoys were often accompanied by large delegations of officials and merchants.

Historians have been studying tribute for a century (e.g., Fairbank and Teng 1941; Fletcher 1968; Rossabi 1983), and international relations scholars have become increasingly interested with the concept over the past two decades. The nature and scope of tributary relations remain highly controversial. Several interpretations of a potential "tributary system" have emerged over time. First, some scholars perceive it as a set of loose, inconsistently applied procedures centered around economic exchange (Fairbank and Teng 1941). A second view is that tributary relations were ritualistic formalities with no real international political or economic functions.[12] Third, others assert there was never an actual tributary "system" and as such, research on the system overestimates its coherence and ignores the idiosyncrasies of tribute across time and space (e.g. Hevia 1995; Perdue 2015).[13] More recently, some international relations scholars view tribute as a hierarchical international system that helped foster regional peace (Kang 2010b; March and Olsen 1989; Kelly 2012).[14]

Important limitations and knowledge gaps remain in spite of this renewed interest in tribute. First, much of the above research treats tribute diplomacy as a relatively static concept—albeit with local idiosyncrasies and implementation gaps—across its existence

[12]Instead, the "tributary system" was fluid and entry and exit were relatively easy for East Asian states (Zhang 2015).

[13]Indeed, if the term "tributary system" is simply a "Western invention for descriptive purposes" rather than a term actually used by imperial Chinese political elites, its ability to shape international politics may be more dubious than previously believed (Mancall 1968).

[14]Some scholars suggest that past East Asian regional orders including the "tributary system" as well as Tokugawa Japan's diplomatic apparatus would outperform the Westphalia atomistic system in serving contemporary international relations (Ringmar 2012).

(Blanchard 2017). For example, Kang (2004, 175) argues that "From Japan to Siam, and for more than six centuries, this system functioned in essentially the same manner." Similarly, while recognizing tribute's variable effect on systemic stability, Zhang and Buzan (2012) argue that the "tributary system," while "flexible," was nonetheless "stable" throughout late imperial China. Yet available evidence from primary sources suggests tribute was not a stable policy over time (Wang 1968).[15] More recent accounts similarly problematize static interpretations and emphasize that Chinese relations with its neighbors were highly variable (Feng 2009).[16]

Second, Chinese domestic political motivations for tribute, despite abundant evidence for their importance, remain conceptually and empirically underdeveloped (Fletcher 1968; Andornino 2006; Khong 2013; Hui 2011). Researchers have consistently linked imperial China's outward tribute relations to the empire's internal politics (Fairbank 1953; Hevia 1995; Lee 2013; Wang 2013; Lee 2016b; Park 2017; Banks 2019). As Anderson (2013) summarizes, "Because the ultimate authority of the Chinese emperor expressed itself in the achievement of regional peace and harmony, the emperor needed the regular performance of tribute missions from each participating state to promulgate his own legitimacy." Wang (2013) further explains that "Upon assuming the throne, the first foreign policy task for founders of Chinese dynasties was to get neighboring states to send a tributary mission to China." Park (2017) goes even further and suggests that tribute was essentially a performative scheme that China's leaders used in attempting to create a coherent domestic political regime. Brook, van Praag, and Boltjes (2018) illustrate the domestic sensitivity of tribute missions by describing how attribution of tribute missions to emperors was censored, and how the Hongwu Emperor, the founder of the Ming dynasty, was concerned about his do-

[15]For example, while hierarchical features of tribute were presented domestically, foreigners were often treated as equals, especially when China was relatively weak.

[16]Indeed, Chinese-centric hierarchy varied dramatically across different periods, in part because subsequent dynasties could learn from previous ones (MacKay 2019).

mestic security after his initial attempts to attract tribute were unsuccessful. In contrast, international relations scholars have discounted this link while studying the international dynamics of tribute.

Third, existing research focuses heavily on a few East Asian governments. In doing so it neglects dozens of diplomatic relationships between China and foreign and frontier participants from other regions (MacKay 2016). Inferences about the nature and consequences of tribute have been dependent on data points from a relatively small subset of tribute entities, notably Ryukyu, Korea, Japan, Vietnam, and Siam. Some of these polities, such as Korea, were arguably far more exceptional than representative of tribute entities in terms of their cultural affinity with and geographic distance from China, as well as their exposure to other powerful governments (Hyewon 2011).

Finally, the publicly available empirical record on China's tribute relations has remained severely limited. Earlier documentation of tribute activities by historians relied primarily on lists of tribute entities and regulations about the frequency of exchange (e.g. Fairbank and Teng 1941; Li 2004, 2014). But besides case studies that focus on specific time periods or tribute partners, there is scarce empirical evidence that comprehensively tracks China's tribute behavior over time and with different entities, despite the fact that substantial official, exchange-level documentation exists for the Ming and Qing dynasties.

To help address these limitations, I introduce a new dataset on Chinese tribute exchanges during the Ming and Qing eras based on primary sources. I use a list of tribute entities primarily based on the Collected Statutes of the Ming Dynasty (大明会典) and the Collected Statutes of the Qing Dynasty (大清会典), which include lists of tributary entities and are commonly cited by historians studying tribute (Fairbank and Teng 1941; Li 2004).[17] Using these lists, data on Chinese tributary exchanges are primarily sourced

[17] See also Fairbank and Teng (1941), Wade (2004), Li (2004), and Nakajima (2018) for interpretations and reproductions of these lists. The Collected Statues outline laws and regulations of each respective dynasty.

from the Veritable Records of the Ming Dynasty (明实录) and the Veritable Records of the Qing Dynasty (清实录) for each emperor. Compiled by the imperial court, the Veritable Records are a useful starting point for collecting information on China's tribute exchanges from an official perspective. They contain more comprehensive records of tribute than other sources, including official histories such as the History of Ming (明史) as well as the Collected Statutes discussed above (Li 2004, 78).[18] Data from the Veritable Records are a starting point and are cross-checked against and supplemented with various additional resources. These include the Collected Statutes and official histories, as well as various secondary sources, mainly studies by historians who have already collected and codified tribute data for certain periods, emperors, or tributary entities.

The current version of the dataset includes 5,308 unique tribute exchanges (an average of 10.15 exchanges per year across the dataset) involving China and another tribute entity. Each verified exchange has been double-blind coded. Table 1.1 lists all of the entities captured in the dataset separated by region and subregion. Figure 1.1 in Section 1.1 plots the aggregate volume of Chinese tribute exchanges during the Ming and Qing dynasties.

The dataset has important limitations that merit discussion. One issue is that the creation of official imperial records, while often systematic and thorough, was often highly politicized. As discussed in Section 1.5, in some cases official documents were retroactively altered or destroyed for political reasons. Fortunately, while this is also the case for the Veritable Records, to the author's knowledge there is no evidence that content related to tribute was systematically targeted in this regard. Additional data crosschecks with alternative primary and secondary sources can help alleviate these concerns and reduce reliance on a single data source. Second, the dataset relies on imperial Chinese records but does not

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They were published two and six times for the Ming and Qing dynasties, respectively.

[18]The Institute of History and Philology at Academia Sinica provides digitized versions of the Veritable Records that support dynamic keyword searches. Digital versions of the Veritable Records are available here: http://hanchi.ihp.sinica.edu.tw/mql/login.html.

account for alternate official sources in other countries such as Korean or Japanese (Lee 2016a). While this may result in incomplete data on tribute exchanges in some cases, this approach nonetheless makes it more likely that missing data problems are relatively constant for different non-China tribute entities. An accompanying codebook discusses these issues in more detail and outlines detailed data collection procedures.

1.4 Analysis: Domestic Legitimacy and Tribute Diplomacy

Using these data, I investigate the above claims across several tests. First, I assess whether new emperors engaged more heavily in tribute. A second set of tests explores whether tribute with certain types of political actors, namely East Asian governments ranked more highly in China's universal political order, was more likely to occur earlier on in emperor reigns. Third, using two separate measures, I conduct a plausibility probe to examine whether less legitimate emperors were more likely to front-load tribute exchanges. Each test uses a core set of outcome and explanatory variables described below.

Dependent Variable

The main outcome is a count variable of the number of recorded tribute exchanges between China and all tribute entities in a given year.[19] Analogous measures are used for tribute exchanges with entities from different regions, including East Asia, North Asia, Southeast Asia, the Indian Ocean region, the southwest region (primarily encompassing modern day southwestern China), and Central Asia. Of course, China's borders fluctuated considerably throughout the late imperial period (and were often highly fluid), and various inner and outer tribute entities emerged and disappeared over the time series. Each entity's

[19] When an entity visits China two or more times in the same month, I condense this to one observation.

Table 1.1: List of Tribute Entities, 1369-1891

Region	Subregion	Entities
East Asia		Japan, Korea, Ryukyu
Southeast Asia	Eastern Islands	Borneo, Brunei, Kumala, Luzon, Sulu
	Java	Baihua, Java, Qianlida, Tanpa
	Malay	Jilandan (East Coast Malay), Malacca
	Mainland	Annam, Cambodia, Champa, Laos, Myanmar, Myanmar Pacification Commision, Siam, Vietnam
	Other	Ligor
	Sumatra	Aru, Dieli, Lanbang, Northern Sumatra, Samudra, Srivijaya
Indian Ocean	Arabian Peninsula	Aden, Djofar, Lasa
	East Africa	Barawa, Melinde, Mogadishu
	East India	Bengal, Xiyang
	Gujarat	Chilani
	Indian Ocean	Maldives
	Malabar	Cail, Calicut, Cochin, Coyampadi, Quilon
	Unknown	Cananore
	West Asia	Hulumosi (Persian Gulf)
Central Asia	East Turkestan	Alani, Chalish, Karakhodjo, Kashgar, Liuchen
	Hami	Chinjinmenggu (Yumen, Gansu), Hami, Handong, Handong Left Garrison, Khotan, Quxian
	Iran and West Asia	Arabia, Persia, Rum, Tabriz
	West Turkestan	Bulahan Garrison, Hadilan, Heilou, Keshimier, Khodjend,West Balkh Bukhara
	Unknown	Hasan, Kirghiz, Kuncheng (Northeast Afghanistan), Pala, Shehei, Yasi
North	Manchuria	Duoerbi River, Geji River Garrison, Haermi Garrison, Haixi Nurchens, Hushimu Garrison, Jianzhou Garrison, Jianzhou Left Guard, Jianzhou Nurchens, Jianzhou Three Garrisons, Kaolangwu Garrison, Muhula River Garrison, Mulan River Garrison, Nalaji River Garrison, Namu Garrison, Suping River Garrison, Tamasu Garrison, Tonglan Mountain Garrison, Tun River Garrison, Wuyewu Garrison, Yeren Nurchens, Yierguli Garrison, Yimi River Garrison, Youcheng Garrison, Zhetieli Mountain Garrison, Zhudong River Garrison
	Mongolia	Oirat, Urianghai, Wula River Garrison
	Northeast Asia	Alun Garrison, Chengtaowen Garrison, Feihe Garrison, Huluai Garrison, North Yi, Ouhan River Garrison, Shuangcheng Garrison, Suwen River Garrison, Wuli Garrison, Wulu Han River Garrison, Wuzhe Front Garrison, Wuzhe Garrison, Wuzhe Right Garrison
	Uriangha	Duoyan Foreign Monks, Fuyu Garrison, Taining Garrison
Southwest	Aboriginal Offices	Guangdong Chieftains, Guangdong Foreign Monks, Guangnan, Guangxi Chieftains, Guizhou Chieftains, Huguang Chieftains, Shaanxi Chieftains, Shaanxi Foreign Monks, Sichuan Chieftains, Sichuan Foreign Monks, Xifan, Yunnan Chieftains
	Amdo, Kham, and Western Sichuan	Biesisai, Dasiman Chief's Office, Dongbuhanhu, Duogansi Pacification Commission, Jiakewasi, Jinchuansi Foreign Monks, Zagu Pacification Office, Zaodao Chief's Office
	Tibet	Dabao Prince, Dacheng Prince, Hujiaowang, U-Tsang

Source: Collected Statutes of the Ming Dynasty; Collected Statutes of the Qing Dynasty.

inclusion in the dataset is limited to the period between its first and last recorded tribute exchange with the Chinese imperial court. I first use the log of the exchanges variable (as there are very few zeros in the time series dataset) in ordinary least squares (OLS) regressions. Results are substantively consistent when instead using the raw exchange count in both negative binomial and poisson regressions (See Appendix E).

Explanatory Variables

I measure leader duration in power in several ways to avoid overreliance on any specific measure. The primary measure is a straightforward variable that captures whether an emperor was in his first few years of power when an exchange occurred. I create measures of this variable for 1-, 2-, 3-, 4-, and 5-year periods. Using multiple bandwidths ensures that results are not dependent on a single range. Though one might question whether multiple years into a reign should still be considered early on in an emperor's tenure, it is important to keep in mind that tribute missions often took months to complete, including both multiple months on the road (or at sea) and often extended stays in the Chinese imperial capital. Second, as an alternative measure of Chinese emperors' time in power, I divide the current year in power when an exchange occurred by their total number of years ruled. This measure of "reign duration" enables one to account for different leadership tenure lengths, an important detail given that some emperors ruled for only a single year while others ruled for five or six decades. The measure is thus a continuous value between 0 and 1.[20] Third, as alternative measures, I also consider whether the leader was in the first half of his reign when the exchange occurred. In addition, I create a binary variable that equals "1" if a government—whether that of China or another tribute entity—experienced a leadership change resulting in a new leader during a given year.

[20]However, it is less preferred than the more straightforward early years in power measure since emperors do not know ex ante how long their reign will last.

To proxy for leader legitimacy, I rely on two variables. First, I create a binary variable that takes the value of "1" if an emperor had irregular entry into power including (but not limited to) a palace coup or civil war. In the case of late imperial China, this happened seven times (in the cases of Yongle, Jingtai, Tianshun (Zhengtong), Chenghua, Yongzheng, Jiaqing, and Guangxu). Second, I include the number of male offspring of the previous emperor as a proxy for political legitimacy.[21] As Wang (2018) argues, relative to many European governments, imperial China's liberal marriage norms resulted in a greater number of male heirs for the average head of state. This may have made China's system of primogeniture more stable by ensuring that many emperors had an abundance of male heirs, which in turn reduced the probability of deposition. In contrast, when emperors had fewer male offspring, I expect the probability of a succession struggle to be higher.[22] This also arguably made it more likely that the resulting leader will be less legitimate in the imperial court due to irregular entry or factional divisions.

Covariates

I control for several alternative factors that may have influenced the imperial government's engagement in tribute exchanges. In particular, given the close link between tributary relations and international conflict suggested by other researchers, I account for aggregate and specific types of conflict in and around China. First, I use data published by Kang, Shaw, and Fu (2016) to capture aggregate levels of Chinese international and domestic conflict. International conflicts are defined here as conflicts involving international border skirmishes that were not intended as conquest and resulted in fewer than 1,000 battle deaths, as well as interstate wars that involved conquest or other major military mo-

[21]The author thanks Shuo Chen for sharing his data on imperial Chinese emperors.

[22]This is because having more male sons increases the probability that a legal heir will be present when an emperor dies, which in turn may reduce the likelihood (or at least increase the costs for challengers) of a succession struggle. This is thus a probabilistic, indirect measure of legitimacy.

bilizations. Alternatively, I define domestic conflicts as conflicts involving maritime pirate raids (as many "wokou" were non-state Chinese actors); domestic violent conflict involving agricultural riots, rebellions, or mutiny by provincial or local officials; or dynastic regime consolidation by a new dynasty within the Chinese empire. As a second source of data on systemic conflict, I also use binary and count measures of conflict collected directly from China's Military History Editorial Committee (2003) that separates conflicts into several types including pirate attacks, domestic uprisings, conflicts with Japan, all maritime conflicts, and conflicts involving the Ming or Qing imperial army. These data are widely used in empirical social science research on late imperial China (e.g. Bai and Kung 2011; Jia 2014a,b; Sng 2014).

Second, as other scholars have emphasized, tribute exchanges were not only driven by Chinese-side factors; understanding counterpart motivations and behavior is also essential (Lee 2016b). As such, in robustness checks I include the age in years of each political entity involved in tribute to assess whether younger polities with higher demand for political consolidation were more likely to engage in tribute with China. A second control includes leadership change in particular for East Asian tribute states of Korea, Japan and Ryukyu. Unfortunately, data on non-China entity ages and new leaders are currently a work in progress so these results are not reported in this version of the paper. More generally, as discussed above, I include the region and subregion for each entity given that tribute evolved dramatically over time as a late imperial institution and involved both "inner" and "outer" entities that were likely compelled or motivated to engage in tribute for different reasons. These variables make it possible to decompose tribute into different regions and analyze each one separately.

Third, another concern is that Ming and Qing decision makers viewed tribute in fundamentally different ways which may problematize analyses that pool tribute behavior from these two empires. For example, the Ming pursued a more formal hierarchy with more

attempts at cultural persuasion through tribute, while the ethnically Manchu Qing were more coercive and expansionist (MacKay 2015). As such, I include a binary variable that indicates whether tribute behavior occurred during the Ming or Qing era, which effectively enables one to analyze Ming and Qing tributary behavior separately. Despite these concerns, overall I expect the domestic political logic outlined above to persist across both empires. While Manchu rulers of the Qing dynasty did not uniformly mimic their Han predecessors, they did derive substantial political authority from certain Chinese concepts of legitimacy (e.g. Elliott 2001).

Several other measures are taken to strengthen the below analyses. In each model I use clustered standard errors, either at the reign (emperor) or country-year level depending on the format of the data being used. In addition, for any models involving entity- or regional-level variation, I employ entity-year or entity-region fixed effects to control for unobserved factors that may bias results. Otherwise, I use Chinese emperor-level fixed effects to account for idiosyncratic factors in a given reign. Several additional models use the variables and specifications discussed in this section but lag explanatory variables such as conflict by one through five years, to account for the possibility that the effect of control variables accrues over different time horizons. Due to overdispersion of the raw count variable, all analyses are also fitted to a negative binomial model for count data. Moreover, I use time series cross-sectional analysis that explores whether non-China tribute entities were more likely to send tribute missions to China during earlier years of their history, perhaps based on a similar domestic political logic. Appendix E reports the results of these tests, which are consistent with the main results presented below.

Results

Overall the statistical results provide moderate support for the above claims. Table 1.2 presents the main results. Across each measure discussed above, the results suggest that

Table 1.2: Reign Duration and Tribute Exchanges

	Dependent Variable: Tribute Exchanges				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Fist Year	0.24^{*}				
	(0.11)				
First 2 Years		0.29^{***}			
		(0.08)			
First 3 Years			0.31^{***}		
			(0.07)		
First 4 Years				0.30^{***}	
				(0.06)	
First 5 Years					0.29^{***}
					(0.06)
Domestic Conflict	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.003	-0.0003
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
International Conflict	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.03
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Qing	-2.01^{***}	-2.02^{***}	-2.03^{***}	-2.04^{***}	-2.05^{***}
	(0.17)	(0.17)	(0.16)	(0.16)	(0.16)
Constant	3.25^{***}	3.23^{***}	3.21^{***}	3.21^{***}	3.20^{***}
	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.11)
Emperor FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	530	530	530	530	530
R^2	0.82	0.82	0.83	0.83	0.83

Notes: $^{*}p<0.05$; $^{**}p<0.01$; $^{***}p<0.001$

emperors were more likely to conduct a higher volume of tribute exchanges earlier on in their tenures. Of course, it is also possible that any adjustments to tribute behavior related to domestic leadership dynamics are not immediate, and instead develop over the first several years of a leader's tenure, particularly if leaders focus on consolidating power during their first few years in office. The normalized year in power measure helps account for this possibility by offering a continuous measure of how early or late a leader is into his or her tenure. Across each model, the coefficients for civil and international conflict generally do not appear significant. One possibility is that if Chinese tribute behavior were linked more closely to other domestic or international factors, such as violent conflict, the potential effects of these variables on tribute may not immediately set in. Appendix E provides analogous tests that employ five-year lagged control variables. The coefficient for Qing is highly significant, large, and negative, reflecting the fact that overall volumes of tribute were much lower during the Qing dynasty (see Figure 1.1).

Next, Table 1.3 presents the results of region-specific tests. At the empire level, I find no evidence that emperor front-loading of tribute exchanges was confined to "high status" East Asian tribute entities. While I find evidence that more East Asian tribute exchanges were conducted earlier on in emperor reigns, the results are similarly positive and significant for tribute with entities in China's Central, North, and Southwest frontiers. One possible way to interpret this result is that the performative act of tribute diplomacy conveyed enough domestic political authority for emperors to wield it widely rather than concentrate resources on a few key entities. In any case, these results point to an important but understudied role of non-East Asian tribute in international relations research.

As a plausibility probe to further elucidate the argument, Table 1.4 tests whether less legitimate emperors were particularly likely to front-load tribute exchanges during the early stages of their leadership tenure. I include interaction terms between the two proxies for leader legitimacy, namely mode of entry and number of sons of the previous emperor, with

Table 1.3: Reign Duration and Tribute Exchanges (by Region)

	Dependent Variable: Tribute Exchanges					
	EA	SEA	IOR	CA	NoA	SW
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
First 3 Years	0.45^{***}	0.48^{**}	0.01	0.23	1.44^{***}	1.28^{**}
	(0.13)	(0.18)	(0.10)	(0.16)	(0.36)	(0.40)
Domestic Conflict	0.04	0.05	-0.01	0.01	0.06	0.09
	(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.02)	(0.04)	(0.08)	(0.09)
International Conflict	0.02	0.01	0.003	0.28^{***}	0.45^{*}	0.22
	(0.07)	(0.09)	(0.05)	(0.08)	(0.19)	(0.21)
Qing	-2.76^{***}	-1.20^{**}	0.01	-2.39^{***}	-9.75^{***}	-8.43^{***}
	(0.32)	(0.45)	(0.25)	(0.39)	(0.89)	(1.00)
Constant	4.53^{***}	1.66^{***}	0.23	2.10^{***}	8.97^{***}	7.88^{***}
	(0.20)	(0.29)	(0.16)	(0.25)	(0.57)	(0.64)
Emperor FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	530	530	530	530	530	530
R^2	0.60	0.69	0.38	0.71	0.81	0.84

Notes: $^{*}p<0.05$; $^{**}p<0.01$; $^{***}p<0.001$

the number of tribute exchanges. If less legitimate emperors were more likely to front-load tribute, then one would expect the coefficient for the interaction of irregular entry and reign duration to be positive, while the interaction of previous emperor sons and exchanges should be negative. While the signs of the interaction terms are in line with these theoretical predictions, they do not approach conventional levels of statistical significance. This is not very surprising given the power limitations and size of the dataset. As such, the results do not definitively find an effect of emperor legitimacy on the timing of tribute exchanges using these measures. They do support a descriptive finding that suggests less legitimate emperors may have been particularly inclined to assert their new authority at home by engaging in especially high volumes of diplomatic tribute behavior.

The current version of the data does not make it possible to test several additional potential explanations for late imperial Chinese tribute behavior. First, leaders may face political backlash from powerful interest groups for not pursuing international hierarchy, particularly if hierarchy delivers important economic benefits to these groups (Snyder 1991). If this was true, one might expect patterns of regional diplomacy to follow domestic interests groups with access to the political process. Another alternative argument is that diplomacy is used more with like-minded regimes (Kleine-Ahlbrandt and Small 2008; Bader 2015; Tansey, Koehler, and Schmotz 2017). Additional covariate data is needed to account for these and a host of other potential alternative explanations.

Nonetheless, the above results provide preliminary evidence that new leader dynamics appear to have been an important short-term factor in shaping Chinese tribute engagement. Moreover, the dataset introduced above also helps provide a longer-term perspective on the evolution of tribute as a diplomatic institution. As historians have pointed out, while the Ming used tribute more comprehensively as a central policy tool involved with managing economic relations as well as taxation around the empire, the institution's overall utility declined dramatically after 1600, as measured by frequency of exchange. Only East Asian,

Table 1.4: Emperor Legitimacy and Tribute Exchanges

	Dependent Variable: Tribute Exchanges	
	(1)	(2)
Irregular Entry	-35.82^{***}	
	(1.80)	
Previous Emperor Sons		-5.10^{***}
		(0.25)
First 3 Years	3.75^{***}	4.31^{***}
	(0.86)	(1.05)
Domestic Conflict	0.24	0.24
	(0.17)	(0.17)
International Conflict	0.98^{**}	0.99^{**}
	(0.38)	(0.38)
Irregular Entry*First 3 Years	0.48	
Previous Emperor Sons*First 3 Years		-0.05
Constant	61.13^{***}	71.22^{***}
	(1.44)	(1.86)
Emperor FE	✓	✓
Observations	530	530
R^2	0.90	0.90

Notes: $^{*}p<0.05$; $^{**}p<0.01$; $^{***}p<0.001$

Southeast Asian and (to a more limited extent) Central Asian polities continued participating in tribute during the Qing dynasty (in part because many previous territories that paid tribute were usurped by the Qing empire). More generally, this long-term evolution of tribute exchange gives pause to earlier analyses that largely treat the system as a coherent institution with consistent functionality as an international system in early modern Asia.

One limitation of the above analyses is that they generally neglect the dyadic nature of tributary diplomacy between China and other entities. In a set of follow-up tests not reported in this paper (due to pending data updates), I transform the tributary data into an entity-year dataset. This enables one to test whether certain features of tribute entities also impact the frequency of tributary diplomacy. As highlighted above, in line with recent research on tribute, I expect that analogous domestic authority concerns may motivate other entities to engage in tributary activities with China. An initial test examines whether newer entities, defined by the year of tribute exchange divided by the entity's last known year of existence, conducted more exchanges and sent more tribute missions to China. A second test incorporates leadership changes in foreign entities. It does so for East Asian tributary partners to China, namely Korea, Ryukyu, and Japan, the first two of which have been the focus on much research on the "tributary system" and were two of the most prolific senders of tribute to China. I find no evidence that new leaders in these three entities conducted a disproportionate share of tribute to China, at least for these cases. The following section builds on these aggregate analyses by focusing on a single emperor's use of tribute diplomacy.

1.5 Yongle's Use of Tribute

The Ming dynasty was founded through a violent revolt against the incumbent, Mongol-ruled Yuan dynasty. As such, early Ming leaders including the dynasty's founder Zhu

Yuanzhang (Hongwu Emperor), his successor Zhu Yunwen (Jianwen Emperor), and subsequently Zhu Di (Yongle Emperor) had strong incentives to consolidate their new authority. This was particularly so for Hongwu and Yongle, each of whom seized imperial authority through violent resistance against incumbent political rulers (Zhang 2016). Yongle faced especially formidable domestic political pressure upon becoming emperor. Though he was the fourth son of Hongwu, Yongle ranked below Jianwen (Hongwu's grandson and son of Hongwu's eldest son, Zhu Biao) in the imperial line of succession based on the traditional norm of primogeniture. Hongwu's death in 1398 ignited a violent succession struggle that regressed into civil war between Jianwen, the legal heir to the throne, and Yongle (who was then known as the Prince of Yan (燕王)). The conflict is known as the Jingnan Campaign (靖难之役) and lasted from 1399-1402. It ended when Yongle captured the capital of Nanjing in 1402, marking the completion of his usurpation and beginning of his imperial reign.

This highly irregular mode of entry into leadership made Yongle vulnerable during his early years in power. He was at risk of being perceived by imperial elites as having disobeying ancient norms of political succession.[23] To counteract these pressures, Yongle initiated a multi-pronged strategy. First, he took control of the political narrative by slandering Jianwen. Specifically, he did this by openly questioning nature of the Hongwu Emperor's death, insinuating that his father's death was irregular and that Jianwen was somehow involved (Chan 2007). Second, Yongle actively engaged in historical revisionism in the form of modifying or destroying documents that contradicted his claims against Jianwen. This entailed retroactively altering official dynastic records, including certain parts of the Veritable Records of Ming Taizu (明太祖实录) to suggest that Yongle, rather than Jianwen,

[23]This is one of multiple obstacles that Yongle needed to mount as a result of pursuing revisionist policies. He also faced resistance when moving the Ming capital from Nanjing to Beijing, as the former was Hongwu's sacred palace burial ground (Li and Dong 2016).

was the legally designated heir to the throne (Chan 2007).

Third, Yongle shuffled the imperial bureaucracy to shift the distribution of elites in his favor. This was done by selectively promoting individuals loyal to him and prosecuting and executing individuals and family members loyal to Jianwen (Zhang 2014).[24] In doing so, Yongle carefully avoided mistreating founding families of the Ming dynasty, dealing with them on a case-by-case basis rather than uniformly suppressing them (Wu and Zhu 2016). Fourth, Yongle reinvigorated the imperial examination system "keju" (科举) to increase his intellectual influence on the elite educated class (Zhang 2014). Interestingly, Yongle's legitimation tactics were not limited to elite audiences. In addition to targeting at imperial bureaucrats, Yongle sought to craft an image of "gratitude awareness" (知恩图报) by publicly rewarding individuals and families who fought for him during the Jingnan Campaign (Zhang 2014).

In addition to these domestic strategies, Yongle inherited and invigorated China's network of tribute relations immediately after becoming emperor. Yongle's strategy of using tribute diplomacy to consolidate domestic authority is widely acknowledged (Wang 2005; Zhang 2014; Tang 2010; Fairey and Farrell 2018; Musgrave and Nexon 2018). For instance, Zhang (2016) argues that Yongle's investiture in the Korean King in 1403 was "largely motivated by Yongle's need for legitimacy" since Yongle achieved his status as the emperor via a violent struggle with the Jianwen Emperor, the legitimate heir to the throne." Less clear is precisely how Yongle linked tribute to his own political authority.

Several features of Yongle's tribute diplomacy help demonstrate this process. First, the Ming pursued an active tribute agenda under Yongle. He aggressively expanded the volume and scope of China's network of tribute exchanges. According to the Veritable Records, Yongle was one of the most prolific users of tribute. He averaged 26.8 tribute exchanges

[24]He also was effective at selecting and promoting skilled statesmen such as Yao Guangxiao to help craft new policies.

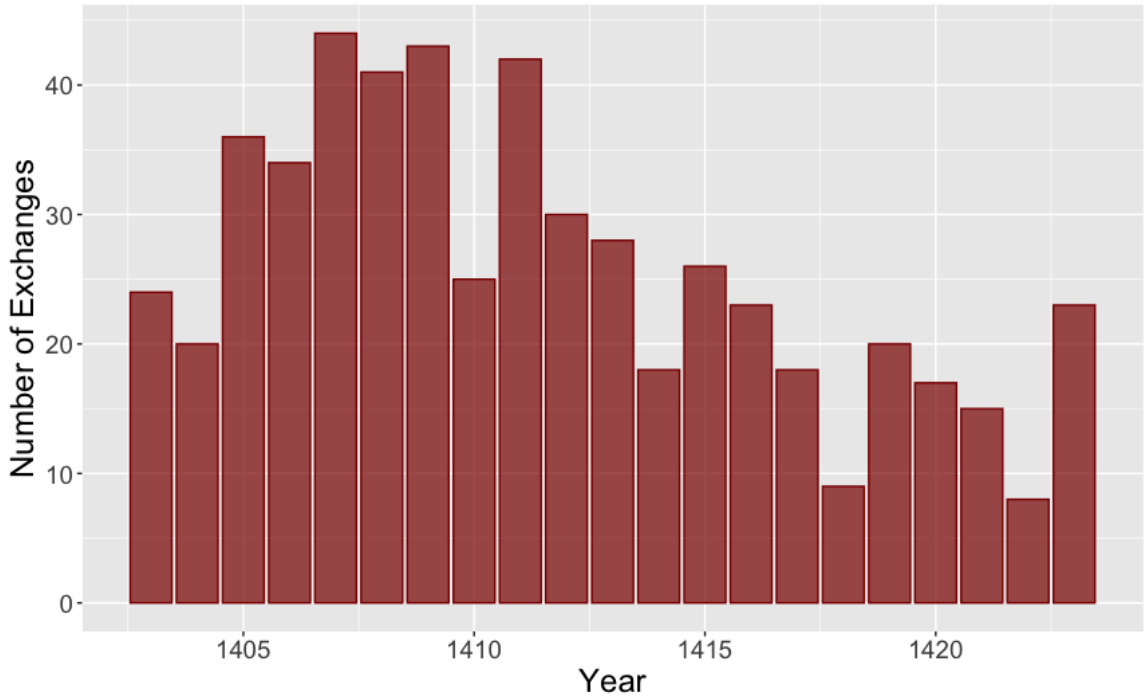

Figure 1.3: Annual Chinese Tribute Exchanges under the Yongle Emperor

per year during his reign. As Figure 1.3 illustrates, exchanges were front-loaded during the first several years of Yongle's reign. Exchanges with East Asian polities were particularly common during this period: Korea, Ryukyu, and Japan each sent annual missions between 1401 and 1411 (Nakajima 2018). In addition to soliciting routine incoming tribute visits by other governments, Yongle also briefly transformed the very nature of tribute. His notorious Treasure Fleets, in which he delegated outward tribute visits to Admiral Zheng He, are perceived by many scholars as the height and most active period of late imperial China's tribute relations. Zheng He's voyages resulted in response tribute visits by political entities from Southeast Asia, the Indian Ocean region, West Asia, Arabida, and East Africa.

Second, Yongle's tribute activities were unprecedented in their openness to a wide range of foreign and frontier actors, even compared to that of his predecessor Hongwu (Wang 2005). Yongle opened up tribute to a wider set of domestic and foreign political actors,

many of whom were previously excluded or otherwise not formally integrated into the system. Yongle engaged in tribute with East and Southeast Asian governments from Vietnam, Siam and Japan within three months of seizing the throne. But he also rapidly expanded tribute exchanges to include governments from the Indian Ocean, North and West Asia regions. Inner Asian and Northeast tribute also expanded, including the establishment of Regional Military Commissions (都司) in Manchuria, as well as the integration of Jurchen tribes belonging to Haixi, Jianzhou, and Yeren, Nuzhen into the military guard system (卫所制). Yongle bestowed nominal titles of military offices on chieftains of these tribes. The Jurchens, as well as chieftains of various Mongol tribies in Western Manchuria organized as three Uriyanghad guards (兀良哈三卫), each sent tribute annually. Yongle also granted vassal titles to leaders of the Mongols and Oirats on the Mongol Plateau (Nakajima 2018).

Third, tribute under Yongle was flexible during this expansion. Given that diplomacy was governed by rigid norms regarding tribute rituals, bending these rules would in theory be politically risky. For Yongle, it allowed him to conduct more tribute with more polities. During the first few years of his reign, Yongle often compromised with foreign political leaders by allowing tribute exchanges that were clearly not backed by actual ideological buy-in into China's hierarchical order (Fletcher 1968). For example, leaders of Tibetan monk groups perceived Ming political leaders as potential religious patrons rather than their sovereign rulers, yet Yongle invited leaders of main sects of Tibetan Budhhism and granted them status as religious princes within the Chinese order (Nakajima 2018). Another example is Arughtai, a Mongolian noble who was defeated by the Ming during in 1410 after a Mongolian military assault and presented Yongle with horses as a tribute in defeat (Zhang 2016). This nominal submission was useful for visually presenting superiority within the Ming court even if foreign counterparts did not buy into this hierarchy outside of it. Of course, Yongle was one of many emperors who permitted flexibility within the "trib-

utary system" (Waley-Cohen 2006; Anderson 2013; Chan 2019).[25] His openness to form suggests that ideological persuasion of foreign rulers was far less important than expanding tribute exchanges as well as adhering to rituals that reinforced Yongle's domestic position as a rightful ruler.

Fourth, for Yongle and other emperors, tribute exchanges were highly visible to domestic audiences due to the nature of imperial Chinese politics. Properly adhering to various rituals was an essential Confucian value seen as necessary to preserve harmony and prevent disorder. This was most important for the emperor, who was located at the apex of Chinese power. Essentially all tangible forms of emperors' behavior and lifestyle were carefully regulated, including his edicts, writing, seals, ritual behavior, and residences (Schram 1987). Tribute to the emperor was a central and visible form of ritual, and elite bureaucrats cared deeply that tribute, which consisted of envoys kowtowing to the emperor, was performed accurately in order to effectively affirm the political authority of the emperor (Mancall 1968, 64). Chinese leaders' persistent reliance on this traditional ritual and its links to historical authority (such as imperial China's claim to the Central Plains region) bound them to this practice (Park 2017).[26]

Beyond their connection to domestic authority, Yongle's tribute exchanges also had important geopolitical motivations. Some of Yongle's expansionist tribute activities were designed to contain vassal polities, particularly in the north, and were an evolution of the "weakening the vassals" (削藩) policy pursued by the Jianwen Emperor and during earlier periods of Chinese history (Tang 2010).[27] Nonetheless, the unprecedented activism, level

[25] Qing emperors, for example, were often highly flexible on the specific form of tribute diplomacy beyond Confucian East Asia (Crossley 2000).

[26] This later created frictions between the diplomatic practices of China and those of the British Empire (Teng and Fairbank 1979; Hevia 1995; Banks 2019).

[27] In the process of consolidating his imperial authority via tribute, Yongle also restored the defensive functions of the northern Military Commissions (都司) and Guards (卫所) (Tang 2010).

of openness, flexibility, and performative nature of tribute diplomacy under Yongle help underscore these exchanges' importance for the emperor's domestic authority. Yongle was inherently constrained by preexisting tribute practices, a longstanding institutional feature of imperial Chinese outward relations, and elected to inherit and adapt the institution for his own political security (Wang 2005).

1.6 Conclusion

This paper has suggested a thus far ignored but potentially important source of change in how governments leverage their international diplomatic relationships. Diplomacy can be particularly effective for leaders aiming to increase their domestic authority when diplomatic exchanges are highly visible, conducted with high-profile partners, or embedded in a regime's historical claims to power. Leaders face variable levels of domestic threats to their authority, some of which may stem from inexperience, irregular mode of entry into leadership, or socioeconomic or governance crises that incentivize them to use diplomacy to bolster their authority. Analysis of a new dataset on Ming and Qing tribute exchanges reveals important variation in overall levels of tribute diplomacy within individual emperor reigns as well as over longer periods of time. Across a range of tests I find that emperors were more likely to invest in tribute exchanges during their early years in power.

The findings speak to broader debates in international relations. One particularly interesting point of entry is the research agenda on hierarchy. Both historical and contemporary world politics are rife with formal and informal asymmetric orders that structure relations between governments (Ashley 1988; Lake 2007, 2010; Mattern and Zarakol 2016; McConaughey, Musgrave, and Nexon 2018).[28] So far, this body of research has focused on

[28]Hierarchy is defined in one prominent study as "the extent of the authority exercised by the ruler over the ruled" (Lake 2009a, 9). Of course, material and ideational imbalances between states have also been well-recognized realities of international relations theories emphasizing systemic anarchy (Barder 2017). For

several primary objectives.[29] First, scholars have explored the *origins* of hierarchy as an ordering principle (Boswell 1989; Jung and Lake 2011; Gunitsky 2014), as well as the basic nature of hierarchical authority (Kang 2010a; Kelly 2012; MacDonald 2014; Phillips 2017). Second, scholars categorize *different types* of hierarchical relationships based on the nature of authority ties between governments (Lake 1996, 2007, 2009a; McConaughey, Musgrave, and Nexon 2018; MacDonald and Lake 2008) or the different strategies used to operate hierarchical orders (Nexon and Wright 2007; Cooley 2005). Third, scholars have explored *consequences* of hierarchy, relative to anarchy, for systemic openness, peace, and prosperity (Weber 2000; Mitchener and Weidenmier 2008; Lake 2009c; Hollander 2008; Ikenberry 2009; Kang 2010a; McDonald 2015; Grynaviski and Hsieh 2015; Beardsley et al. Forthcoming).

Curiously absent from the extant literature are the internal politics of powerful governments that create and operate international hierarchies. Though several scholars explore how domestic politics shape the nature and effectiveness of international hierarchies, most of this research focuses on peripheral rather than core states (Cooley and Nexon 2011; Cooley 2012; Jamal 2012; Lake 2013; Lee 2016a; Nexon and Neumann 2018).[30] In contrast, few studies assess how hegemonic domestic politics affect international hierarchy, and what little evidence is available overwhelmingly focuses on a few Western cases. For example, work on historical and contemporary Western empire argues that interest groups influence imperial foreign policies to secure international economic and other gains (Snyder 1991;

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instance, both hegemonic stability theory and power transition theory are rooted in unequal relationships and asymmetric power between states.

[29]These research avenues scale historical and contemporary international relations. In addition, scholars examine how pre-modern forms of hierarchy can be adapted to analyze contemporary instances of formal or informal hierarchy (Dunne 2003; Nexon and Wright 2007; MacDonald 2009a,b; Gartzke and Rohner 2011; Cooley and Nexon 2013).

[30]For example, researchers have examined U.S. hegemonic legitimacy in other countries Lake (2013) and how citizens in different Middle East countries factor American hegemony into their policy views (Jamal 2012; Zimmermann 2016).

Christensen and Snyder 1990; Frieden 1994; Bacevich 2009; Lake 2017).[31] More recently, Musgrave (2019) explores how higher levels of political polarization in the U.S. can reduce hegemonic commitments to liberal order.[32] This study contributes to this broader literature by focusing on the domestic, leader-level incentives to use hierarchical resources for domestic political gain. It is also an example of using empirical evidence from non-Western cases to augment existing theories predominantly based on evidence from Transatlantic cases (Hui 2005; Johnston 2012).

Moreover, the findings also contribute to a growing body of research on tribute and hierarchy in early modern East Asia. Much of this work to date has focused on the nature of Chinese tributary relations, as well as their implications for other Asian polities and for international order more generally. One potential implication is that, to the extent that certain forms of tributary behavior by China were influenced by leaders' domestic political concerns, the potential international effects of these exchanges may be smaller than others have suggested. Relevant debates in international relations have thus far often centered on whether tribute (and Chinese hegemony more generally) was "benign" or "coercive" in nature. This discussion is of course important, but may fail to capture important domestic motivations of China's government during periods of political sensitivity that shape its outward behavior. While other scholars have noted similar processes when articulating the domestic political logic for peripheral states to participate in tribute exchanges with China, to this point China's own internal court politics have received little systematic attention.

Another major aim of this paper is to strengthen the empirical foundations of our understanding of the "tributary system" by introducing a novel dataset that tracks actual tributary

[31] Moreover, within asymmetric alliances of states, the way in which preponderant states signal support for their allies depends on expectations about the domestic ramifications of doing so (McManus and Yarhi-Milo 2017).

[32] Other scholars instead demonstrate how forms of international cooperation enabled through international structures—though not explicitly hierarchical—empower or constrain certain domestic groups in powerful states (Putnam 1988; Davis 2004; Dai 2005; Grynaviski and Hsieh 2015).

behavior between China and other inner and outer polities over late imperial China. As these data are refined and as new sources of data become available for other covariates, scholars can more rigorously test competing claims about the nature and consequences of tribute for regional order in East Asia.[33] The dataset introduced herein complements other recent approaches to tracking early modern Asia's international relations (e.g. Kang, Shaw, and Fu 2016).

Of course, this research also has important limitations that should be addressed in future versions. First, future analyses can afford more agency to political actors other than the imperial Chinese government in explaining the frequency of tribute exchanges. Even if important, emperor authority concerns were certainly not the only motivating factor for these exchanges. For instance, some of the exchanges during emperors' early years in power might be the result of foreign governments sending tribute envoys to obtain information on the imperial calendar (Clark 1998). More generally, more granular data on each of the entities with which Ming or Qing rulers conducted tribute diplomacy could enable one to more sharply test for the domestic political motivations of these polities. For example, future analyses can incorporate data on leadership changes in each of these entities to see if similar domestic political authority dynamics were at play for certain types of tribute. Second, in its current form the analysis is limited in ruling out potential alternative explanations for fluctuations in Chinese tribute exchanges over time. For example, important political economy variables, such as China's own treasury and monetary reserves, likely influenced the regime's short-term ability to finance a high volume of tribute visits from other entities. Third, were domestic audiences the only potential targets that Chinese emperors had in mind when engaging in tribute and other highly visible forms of political behavior. For ex-

[33] Scholars cite a "sinocentric bias" in East Asian history, yet identifying and publishing data on China's behavior is still an important step in understanding the international politics of this era (Feng 2009). Moreover, many recent analyses of tribute are focused more on the motivations and behavior of peripheral states than China.

ample, the Qianlong Emperor had portraits displayed in imperial government buildings in part to display tribute exchanges and military campaigns to visiting tribute envoys (Chang 2015). Finally, archival work can help further validate whether different Chinese emperors explicitly designed and planned tribute exchanges with the domestic political motivation described in this paper in mind.

2 | Trade Preferences in a Non-Democractic Regime: Evidence from Late Imperial China

2.1 Introduction

> "...thanks to the maritime prohibition, they have not yet got too much gunpower. If we allow merchants to trade with them...we are handing our weapons to our opponents."
>
> **Feng Zhang (冯璋), Ming Scholar, 1538**

> "...land in Southeastern China is limited, but the population is large...The only way to resolve the [rice shortage] problem is to open the ocean so that surpluses from trade can supplement the insufficiency in farming, and both the rich and the poor will benefit."
>
> **Gao Qizhuo (高其倬), Governor General of Fujian, 1721**

As the above excerpts suggest, Ming and Qing political elites often possessed diverse views on maritime trade related to both economic and political concerns. Why did some officials support open ocean trade while others opposed it? What factors were most important in shaping trade individual preferences? Building on existing research, this study adds to the historical record of trade preferences and policies in late imperial China, a period that spans the Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1644-1911) dynasties.

In doing so, it also addresses a broader puzzle related to trade policy making in non-democratic governments. Do elites within the same regime differ in their preferences for foreign economic policy? If so, why? Non-democratic trade policy remains an active research agenda (Haggard 1990; Milner and Mukherjee 2017), and many studies assume that leaders' need for political survival above all else shapes their trade policies (Milner

and Kubota 2005; Hankla and Kuthy 2013; Kono 2015; Wu 2015; Chow and Kono 2017). Much of this work relies on assumptions from selectorate theory, in which autocratic elite preferences within a regime are taken to be homogeneous (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003; Gallagher and Hanson 2015).[1] As a result, international political economy research on non-democratic trade and other foreign policies tends to look for answers across governments rather than within them.

But what of the preferences of other individuals within a non-democratic government? Few studies consider how autocratic elites other than the leader herself perceive trade policies. A major obstacle to this type of inquiry is that contemporary authoritarian regimes are typically highly opaque, which creates serious data constraints for researchers. But precisely because authoritarian regimes tend to have relatively small winning coalitions, the preferences of elite bureaucrats may be particularly consequential for policy outcomes.

Late imperial China's trade policies may offer a useful window into the "black box" of autocratic trade policy.[2] Its trade policies were highly volatile compared to those of other major powers in world history, and maritime trade policies during this period were particularly erratic: seaborne trade was repeatedly banned then opened by the imperial government (Chao 2005; Wang and Ducruet 2013).[3] For example, according to the official records from

[1]Extant research also suggests that autocrats face a basic challenge when making trade and other foreign economic policies: economic liberalization can simultaneously induce both stabilizing and threatening dynamics for the regime (e.g. Miller and Peters 2018; Kaire 2019).

[2]Of course, this does not assume that evidence from imperial China is directly relevant for all non-democratic regimes, which differ immensely in their selectorate composition as well as in key institutional ways that have potential implications for the nature and scope of commercial influence on foreign economic policy (Geddes 1999). Nor do I assume that findings from imperial China are directly relevant for contemporary Chinese politics, or for modern nation states more generally. After all, while a topic of unsettled debate, the point in time at which China became a modern nation state was likely not until the end of late imperial China, if not decades later (Crossley 2005).

[3]The Veritable Records collectively include at least two dozen instances of bans on trade, some of which are partial bans in which trade was outlawed in a certain region, with certain foreign parters, or for certain commodities. Analogous bans and restrictions were chronically enacted and subsequently lifted on trade flows along the empire's continental frontiers (Perdue 2009b). Moreover, trade policy oscillation in late imperial China had historical precedent. Throughout the preceding Song (960-1279) and Yuan (1279-1368)

the Ming and Qing dynasties, ocean trade was banned on two dozen instances, but was prohibited for just 25% of the Ming Dynasty and 15% of the Qing dynasty (Liu 2012), or a total of about 99 out of 472 available years.[4] Records on tariff levels and other regulations similarly reveal high levels of policy oscillation. This volatility is especially notable given popular accounts that label late imperial China's trade policies as overwhelmingly autarkic.[5] Appendix C provides a brief overview on maritime trade policies during the late imperial period.

Behind these official policies, Ming and Qing officials engaged in intense debates about the promise and pitfalls of maritime trade. Fortunately, much of this discourse was preserved in Chinese archives and has been meticulously documented by historians writing in both English and Chinese (Chin-Keong 1983; Deng 1997; Wan 2000; Chao 2005; Lin 2006; Li 2010; Zhao 2013; Po 2018). To date, however, few studies have systematically explored the nature of individual elite trade preferences during this period. As discussed below, a significant amount of elite political documents stored in archives have thus far not been integrated into scholarly research. As such, while existing studies illuminate several potential explanations for Chinese maritime policies, the empirical record remains partial and inconclusive.

This paper begins to help fill this gap by collecting and standardizing archival data on

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dynasties, China's outward commercial trade flows—and the imperial regime's policies that attempted to govern them—were also inconsistent.

[4]These calculations do not include years during the Qing Dynasty after 1839, since China's ports were forcibly opened after the Opium Wars. Though the Opium Wars opened up Chinese maritime trade to an unprecedented degree, China was trading extensively before the 19th century (Keller, Li, and Shiue 2011; Keller, Santiago, and Shiue 2016).

[5]Popular commentary often groups Ming and Qing trade policies under the umbrella of isolationism. For instance, see Noah Smith, "What the Collapse of the Ming Dynasty Can Tell Us about American Decline," *The Week*, March 6, 2014, http://theweek.com/articles/450002/what-collapse-ming-dynasty-tell-about-american-decline; and Sebastien Roblin, "The War That Made Asia: How the Opium War Crushed China," *The National Interest*, February 17, 2017, http://nationalinterest.org/blog/the-buzz/the-war-made-asia-how-the-opium-war-crushed-china-19476.

hundreds of late imperial officials' trade policy preferences. In doing so, it also incorporates new evidence from late imperial China into the study of non-democratic trade policies. In contrast to extant research on authoritarian trade policies, I focus on intra- rather than inter-regime policy variation. I argue in the context of late imperial China, that one potential source of variation in trade preferences was the diverse nature of elites' sources of political authority. Officials working outside of central government institutions, such as along a country's borders or in regions disproportionately impacted by trade policies, were more likely to form policy preferences based on the local impacts of trade. This is due to both top-down and bottom-up authority relations: the central government may have authorized more policy flexibility to these officials, whose local authority also depended on local economic accountability. In contrast, centrally-located bureaucrats were typically more insulated from the direct effects of trade policies and instead tended to formulate preferences through a broader lens of imperial authority during the Qing.

The archival data used to scrutinize these claims reveal that many late imperial elites had coherent preferences regarding maritime trade policy, and that elite views were not simply dominated by conservative, autarkic ideas about the costs and benefits of trade. Instead, they were diverse and often in conflict with each other. Focusing the empirical analysis on the Qing dynasty (as Ming-era data are currently too sparse for systematic examination), I find that elites serving in provincial or other local bureaucratic roles were disproportionately likely to support maritime trade openness relative to their centrally-located counterparts. This finding is consistent after accounting for officials' rank, career experiences, ethnicity, hometowns, military experience, and levels of education. The evidence offers an example of how trade preferences can vary within a non-democratic regime and how subnational officials can potentially influence foreign policies. They also demonstrate the potential for historical research to supplement data gaps in the study of contemporary

authoritarian foreign policy.[6]

The remainder of the paper proceeds as follows. The next section makes the case for studying non-democratic elite preferences and develops an argument to explain variation in late imperial maritime trade preferences. Section 2.3 discusses late imperial China as an empirical application and describes a new dataset on elite trade preferences. Section 2.4 uses simple statistical analyses to test claims about elite preference divergence. The conclusion summarizes the findings and situates them in broader discussions about non-democratic international economic policies. It also lays out several future avenues for theoretical and empirical inquiry.

2.2 Theory

In this section I first make the case for focusing on elites' trade policy preferences within a single non-democratic government, and discuss why late imperial China offers a useful application for this type of research. I then develop an argument about how the diverse nature of Qing elites' authority influenced their trade policy preferences.

Non-Democratic Elite Trade Policy Preferences

Existing political science research on non-democratic foreign policy relies heavily on assumptions about leader incentives based on the selectorate theory framework (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003).[7] Central to this framework is the ability of members of the winning coalition to remove or otherwise punish a leader if he or she deviates from the winning coalition's desired policies. Using this framework, studies of non-democratic trade policy

[6] As discussed in Section 2.3, the approach used in this study to collect data could potentially be expanded to more comprehensively record elite preferences across the Ming and Qing dynasties.

[7] For a longer discussion of authoritarian governments and selectorate theory, see Gallagher and Hanson (2015).

have largely focused on variation across different regimes and countries (Mansfield, Milner, and Rosendorff 2000, 2002; Milner and Kubota 2005; Hankla and Kuthy 2013). As in other policy domains, different policies are largely due to governments' differently-sized selectorates and winning coalitions, as well as the general character of these groups (e.g. Weeks 2008). In contrast, few studies examine authoritarian trade policies within a single regime over time (Wu 2015; Chow and Kono 2017). Focusing overwhelmingly on leaders' political survival neglects a potentially important source of variation: the preferences of other elite autocratic officials who provide policy inputs. I focus on these actors and broadly define elites as high-level officials that have communication access to the leader.

In doing so, I make two additional assumptions that link policies, leaders, and other regime elites. First, I assume that decision makers in a regime possess imperfect information about the expected effects of a given foreign economic policy, and that this uncertainty necessitates the collection of policy inputs. Uncertainty about policy outcomes that have not yet occurred is a universal reality for politicians.[8] Similarly, that leaders seek politically useful information in their surrounding environment is a well-known feature of contemporary authoritarian governance.[9] Autocratic leaders are especially likely to turn to their immediate subordinates for policy inputs. Regime elites, many of whom have specialized knowledge and resources relative to other domestic actors and are handpicked by the leader, are often valuable and accessible information sources.

[8]For example, decision maker uncertainty about the consequences of a given policy resulting from incomplete information is a common assumption in extant models on political lobbying (Downs 1957; Austen-Smith and Banks 1988; Potters and Winden 1992; Austen-Smith 1993; Rasmusen 1993; Lohmann 1995; Bennedsen and Feldmann 2006). Similarly, whether trade is politically destabilizing is a subjective judgement that is made differently by leaders.

[9]For example, there is a large body of evidence for contemporary authoritarian responsiveness to citizen demands, largely based on the need for political survival (Bueno de Mesquita and Downs 2005; Magaloni 2008). Non-state actors make extensive use of informal institutions to advocate for policy change and influence decision makers (Tsai 2007). Dictators may allow limited political competition to gather information about potential military or civilian threats to their power (Magaloni and Kricheli 2010). Political institutions are designed to extract information from citizens to sustain regime authority, such as "input institutions" in authoritarian regimes (Nathan 2003).

Second, I assume that authoritarian elites often have and express heterogeneous trade policy preferences. On the one hand, non-democratic leaders typically select elites with similar ideologies to maintain political cohesion (Svolik 2012). They also value both loyalty and competence in appointing elite subordinates (Li and Zhou 2005; Shih, Adolph, and Liu 2012; Landry, Lü, and Duan 2018). Any of these factors could incentivize appointed elites to report relatively homogeneous preferences in line with those of the leader or a status quo policy. On the other hand, authoritarian political selection does not guarantee uniform preferences on certain policy issues, and to the extent that leaders appoint certain officials to gather diverse sources of information and policy inputs, preferences are likely to diverge considerably.

That non-democratic elites have heterogeneous preferences, whether for trade or other policies, is certainly not a new claim (e.g. Shirk 1993; Roeder 1993; Malesky 2009). Elite preferences and understandings regarding foreign trade differed markedly, for example, among English policymakers during the mercantilist era (Pincus 2012). Shifts in the influence of elite factions with different policy preferences—namely the demise of the radically-minded Gang of Four following Mao's death—is a well-known explanation for China's 1978 economic opening (Naughton 2006). Similarly, China's accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO) occurred after intense debates among elites with different preferences (e.g. Fewsmith 2001).[10] Beyond China, battles between factions with different preferred trade policies help explain Argentina's inconsistent policies during much of the 20th century (Galiani and Somaini 2018). Similarly, outside of authoritarian governments, the idea that elites clash over foreign economic policy is not controversial.[11] The challenge, then, is

[10] In the contemporary period, the uneven effects of globalization have shaped the interests and preferences of elites differently within China (Zweig 2002; Shih 2008). Steinberg and Shih (2012) demonstrate how Chinese officials' preferences for monetary policy depend on subnational economic performance and career incentives.

[11] Such battles have indeed often been the norm, not the exception. Centuries-old debates over the merits of free trade and open foreign economic policies in the United States and other Western democracies serve as

not recognizing that elite trade policy preferences diverge, but demonstrating how and why they vary. Because individual-level preferences are often not publicly observable within contemporary non-democratic regimes, systematically cataloging them is a difficult task.

Elite Trade Preferences in Late Imperial China

Utilizing historical cases might offer an important supplement to help fill this gap. Late imperial China in particular provides a valuable opportunity to study individual elite preferences in a non-democratic political system. Historians of this period have long studied elite ideas about outward economic and other foreign policies (e.g. Von Glahn 1996; Brook 1998; Mosca 2013). For example, Lin (2006) examines the emergence of intellectual rifts among Chinese scholar elites to explain the evolution of late Qing monetary policies. In contrast, despite being the most resilient authoritarian regime in world history, imperial China remains woefully under-incorporated within the study of international political economy (e.g. Chin, Pearson, and Yong 2013; Perry 2015; Helleiner and Wang 2018).[12]

Late imperial China may be particularly useful for studying trade and other foreign policies for multiple reasons. First, its maritime trade policies experienced numerous shifts, including several major policy reversals. As detailed in Section 2.3, individual elite preferences were similarly highly uneven. Second, meticulously preserved archival data in Beijing and Taipei offers a trove of relevant primary sources from the Ming, and especially the Qing, imperial governments. Given the highly opaque nature of most non-democratic governments, access to internal Qing dynasty government records provides a unique opportunity to capture the content of elite trade policy debates in an authoritarian political

examples (Frieden 1988; Goldstein and Keohane 1993; Bailey, Goldstein, and Weingast 1997; Irwin 1998).

[12]Most international relations research that incorporates empirical evidence from Chinese history falls primarily in the realm of security studies (Johnston 1998; Hui 2005; Wang 2010). For example, a growing body of literature uses imperial Chinese tribute relations to study international hierarchy, diplomacy, and interstate war (Kang 2010a; Zhang 2015; Zhou 2011; Zhang and Buzan 2012; Perdue 2015).

system. Third, late imperial China arguably serves as a "tough test" for hypotheses about intra-regime preferences—and the expression of those preferences–because both the Ming and Qing were hereditary monarchies, a highly undemocratic and centralized form of government in which leader authority was sacred and near absolute. If intra-elite preferences meaningfully vary, they might be both more detectable and consequential in more competitive, less personalist authoritarian governments. Yet as the below analysis reveals, vigorous debate among late imperial elites over the merits of open maritime trade was common, and often explicitly encouraged or even required by emperors (Chang 1989).[13]

What factors shaped late imperial elites' maritime trade policy preferences? I argue that an important bifurcation emerged between centrally- and peripherally-located elite bureaucrats. Namely, though all elite officials were motivated by career incentives and a desire to maintain their political authority, officials serving in central and provincial (or other local administrative levels) derived this authority from different sets of bureaucratic responsibilities, which often led them to prefer different maritime trade policies. Provincial and other local officials were accountable to both the central government and the regions over which they governed, resulting in both top-down and bottom-up authority concerns. In contrast, central officials were typically expected to pursue the mandate of their respective agency which, regardless of its own particular focus, tended to assess trade policies from an empire-wide perspective that discounted the local impacts of trade. Below I describe each of these dynamics in more detail.

At the provincial level, Qing elites (as defined above) most often included governors (巡抚), lieutenant governors (布政使), and provincial judges (按察使). In addition, immediately above the provincial level was another layer of inter-provincial administration in

[13]For example, the Jiajing emperor encouraged the use of personal memorials to the throne in order to pluralize trade policy debates in the mid 16th century. According to Li (2010, 101), Jiajing demanded "every official of rank 4 and above, those in supervising departments of the six ministries and the governors of all the thirteen administrative regions to send in memorials expressing their opinions."

which two or three provinces were grouped into a viceroy led by a governor general (总督). Each of these officials in the Qing Dynasty, particularly governors and governor-generals, had a diverse set of political, economic, social, and military responsibilities at the subnational level. For example, governors came to be responsible for provincial treasury expenditures, tax relief and grain assistance during natural disasters, provincial examinations, logistical support to military garrisons (and eventually command of these garrisons), local engineering projects, and criminal and judicial proceedings (Guy 2017, 5) . As Guy (2017, 47) summarizes, "governors became the middlemen that the Ming had so conspicuously lacked between local and central government, and between military and civilian authority." This sweeping menu of tasks within the province may have predisposed regional officials to more open trade policy preferences for several reasons.

First, elites working in the provinces, and particularly those along the coast, were responsible for managing areas that were directly involved with maritime trade. Maritime trade was an important source of income for many coastal communities throughout late imperial China (and earlier periods). In 1684, there were already over 100 ports along China's coast in which international trade had been occurring, and major cities such as Guangzhou served as nodes in extensive international trading networks (Huang 1986). Due to geographic and structural factors such as the cost of overland trade throughout southeastern China, many coastal communities relied on overseas trade for the majority of their income (e.g. Tian 1985; Xu 1998).[14] Intuitively, elites tasked with generating both revenue and welfare at the provincial level may have been more open to maritime trade as it provided additional sources of income and staple foods for traders and the local populace, respectively. Failure to secure stable levels of welfare could be dangerous for provincial and local

[14]Studies on individual Chinese ports suggest that many of China's largest maritime commercial centers remained active even during years in which commercial trade was banned. This was true for both Guangdong (Wu 1980; Li 1982) and Fujian (Han and Jinming 1990).

officials. For example, "grain seizures" in the form of popular protests to forcibly take grain from government stores were common in coastal provinces during the Qing and had the potential to escalate into larger civil disruptions (Wong 1997).[15]

Second, their geographic location also meant that officials working in provincial or other regional positions were often personally exposed to these local commercial interests. It was more likely that non-central officials encountered opportunities to benefit from open maritime trade personally. Historians have found abundant evidence that maritime trade became a channel through which local officials could personally profit from their authority, often by accepting bribes or directly establishing maritime trading ventures (e.g. Zhang 2009).

Finally, precisely because elites working in coastal provinces were tasked with managing frontier affairs, they were naturally expected to report local information and make policy proposals based off these observations. This provided them with the authority to question incumbent trade bans and other policies set by the emperor without incurring major costs. In particular, the Qing's system of secret palace memorials initiated by the Kangxi Emperor and fully realized by the Yongzheng Emperor, in which provincial and other local officials could send information via memorials to the emperor directly, was an institutional channel partially designed to for emperors to collect a wider range of unfettered information (Wu 1967). One result may have been more detailed, genuine expression of preferences by provincial officials on the issue of trade policy.

The ability to challenge imperial policies was a particularly important feature of provincial governance. Within authoritarian political systems, preference expression can be very costly to the extent one's preferences conflict with those of the leader. As such, once in place, a policy may be especially sticky if it has symbolic value—either in terms of

[15] As such, despite having no direct role in politics, local commercial actors could potentially influence elite trade preferences by co-opting elites.

legitimacy or identity—to the regime. Maritime trade in late imperial China was no exception. Laws governing trade, transportation, and other maritime policies were sacred at times: Multiple emperors enshrined their maritime trade policies as ancestral law, including Hongwu and Kangxi (Wang 1986; Chen 2003). If anything, this ideological foundation created inertia and discouraged policy change. Conservative-minded officials were able to lean on Hongwu's precedent to push for ban in 16th century, over 100 years later. Ancestral precedence, more generally, was a recurring reason given by anti-trade elites throughout the late imperial period (Chen 1997). In contrast, officials could be punished—sometimes dismissed from office or even executed—for their trade policy views and attempts at reform that challenged the status quo (Zhao 2013).

In contrast, central officials did not possess the combination of top-down and bottom-up incentives that shaped provincial officials' reported preferences. In discussing centrally-based officials, I include a diverse set of political actors situated in the imperial capital. They included imperial officials working in the inner and out courts, the Grand Secretariat (内阁) and Grand Council (军机处), the Six Boards (六部)—Personnel, Revenue, Rites, War, Punishments, and Works—and various central educational institutions such as the Hanlin Academy (翰林院). Of course, enormous differences existed between these central institutions and their mandates, some of which likely resulted in different postures toward trade policy.[16] In general, however, elites situated in the central imperial bureaucracy were more likely to report preferred policies based on the perspective of their governmental unit, the mandate of which was often more aligned with the overarching objectives of the central government than those of particular provinces.

Moreover, compared to their provincial counterparts, government officials working in

[16] As an intuitive example, during the late 17th century the Board of Rites was highly resistant to permitting private trade, instead preferring a continuation of official tribute-regulated trade, while officials at the Board of Revenue were more open to private trade since it constituted an additional stream of government income (Schottenhammer 2010).

the central bureaucracy were typically less directly exposed to the local consequences of the empire's trade policies (Zheng 2011, 81). Instead, during much of the Qing they were often institutionally at odds with their provincial counterparts: The relationship between provincial and board officials was highly contentious at times. For instance, Guy (2017, 166) explains that throughout the 18th century, the Six Boards "served as a check on the authority of territorial officials, giving rise to opposition between the governors and the boards." The War, Revenue and Punishments boards were actually institutionally organized into offices for each province. In short, central and peripheral officials differed fundamentally in both their governance responsibilities and access to local information about the socioeconomic effects of trade. Moreover, whether through personal economic or political incentives, officials along the coastal periphery were more exposed to the effects of trade policies than their centrally-located counterparts, and more likely to support open maritime trade upon which local communities depended.

2.3 Data

To test the above claims, I examine the maritime trade policy preferences of late imperial Chinese bureaucrats using a new dataset based on archival research in Beijing and Taipei. Though not yet complete, the dataset currently includes 484 archival documents from over 400 different officials. Considerably more data are available for the Qing dynasty, and thus the below analysis is limited to the Qing period (though results are unchanged when including Ming-era officials). The majority of documents included in this dataset are written communications known as "memorials" (奏). Memorials were an institutionalized form of correspondence sent from bureaucrats to the imperial court and, ultimately, the emperor. These relatively well-preserved documents offer rare insights into late imperial Chinese elite politics (Wilkinson 2000). Memorials were produced at both central

and provincial and county levels of administration and passed to the emperor through bureaucratic channels or sometimes directly (depending on the emperor and memorial type). Initially, memorials were circulated among imperial court advisors before being presented to the emperor. The Kangxi Emperor (r. 1661-1722) created a "memorial to the throne" (奏折) system in the late 17th century that instead routed memorials directly to the emperor. His successor, the Yongzheng Emperor, fully realized this new system (Elliott 2001). The memorials analyzed in this dataset are vital sources of information on elite trade policy inputs since other, more well-known primary sources (such as the Veritable Records) only contain a small fraction of these archival documents (Liu et al. 1974; Zhuang 1979).

Historians of China have been using memorials as primary sources for decades. Social scientists have also relied on memorials to study various phenomena in late imperial China including weather conditions (Ge et al. 2005), food and commodity prices (Li and Dray-Novey 1999), civil protests (Hung 2013), disaster relief activities (Shiue 2004), and lawmaking (Park and Antony 1993). Researchers have also used memorials to trace the development of political ideas, including those related to various foreign economic and security policies (e.g. Lin 2006; Li 2010; Mosca 2013; Zhao 2013; Po 2018).[17]

The dataset draws on memorials accessed from three archives beginning in 2017: the First Historical Archives (FHA) of China (中国第一历史档案馆) in Beijing, the Grand Secretariat Archives (GSA; 內閣大庫檔案) in Taipei, and the National Palace Museum (NPM) Library (國立故宮博物院圖書文獻館) in Taipei.[18] I also supplement archival

[17]Some of this work also highlights analogous debates in domestic policies related to trade. In her study of domestic grain trade, Dunstan (2006) investigates how Qing officials perceived domestic grain trade as well as the role of the government in regulating trade. Through heavy use of memorials, she shows that policy debates were not dominated by traditional Confucian norms or scriptures. Instead, provincial and other bureaucrats possessed a plurality of policy opinions regarding the issue of domestic grain trade within the Qing empire.

[18]Both the GSA and NPM have already fully or partially digitized and made publicly available their contents. In contrast, FHA requires users to access data on site in Beijing. FHA has restrictive quotas on exporting documents, and only permitted an individual to export 20 documents per research project as of 2018.

memorials with other official sources. One such resource is the "Collection of Essays on Statecraft" (经世文编) for both the Ming and Qing dynasties.[19] As relevant memorial documents are identified, I use a consistent set of procedures to codify each official's reported trade policy preference whenever there is sufficient information to do so. An accompanying codebook details how trade-relevant memorials are identified and coded in each of the three archives.

When coding individual preferences in archival documents, I also capture all of the stated reasons behind each official's preferred policy in order to understand the various social, economic, and political factors that informed individual preferences. I then merge these data with information on each official's personal and career background (see Section 2.4 below). Figure 2.1 plots the coded trade policy documents over time. It demonstrates that despite not having a comprehensive sample of policy debates, the current dataset makes it clear that elite maritime trade policy discussions existed throughout much of the late imperial period.

The data collection strategy and resulting dataset used in this paper have important limitations that merit discussion. First, the data are not comprehensive. Likely hundreds (if not thousands) of imperial officials serving in central and peripheral appointments weighed in on maritime trade policy, either through memorials or other written correspondence, but are not included in the current dataset.[20] If anything, however, this is strong rationale for future research that expands the dataset to make it more comprehensive. Doing so would enable researchers to investigate not only differences across individual elites, but also changes in the overall content and volume of imperial debates over time.

Second, even if the methodology was able to capture all relevant data across these

[19]Statecraft writing was monopolized by elites until the late 18th century (Mosca 2013). The Qing version was completed in 1826 and focuses mostly on maritime statecraft. However, these sources are not fully integrated into this version of the dataset.

[20]Nor do these data capture oral discussions between officials.

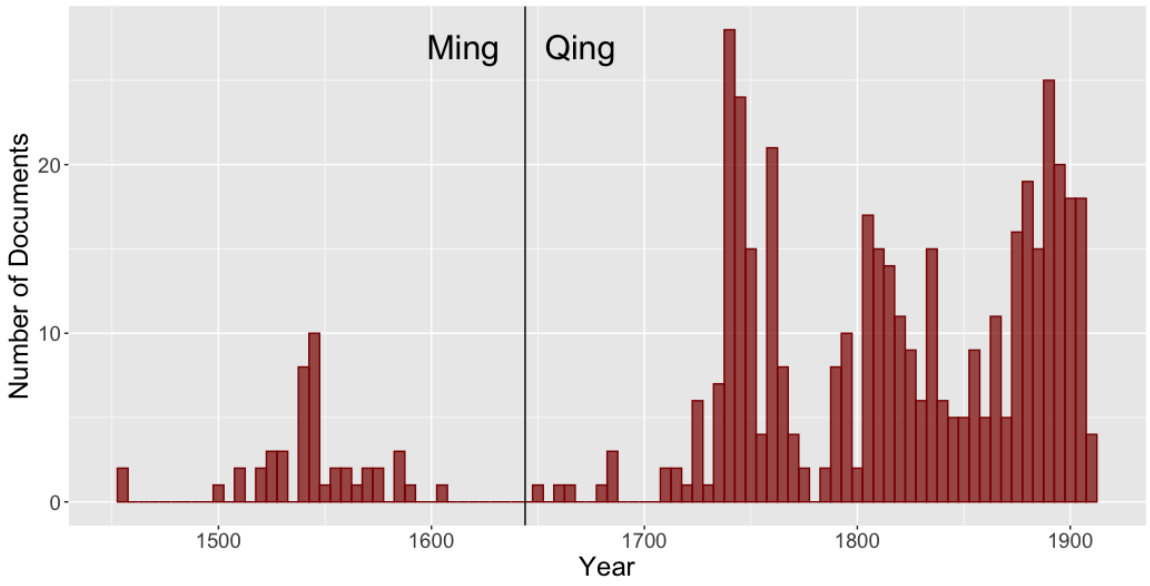

Figure 2.1: Maritime Trade-Related Documents Identified, 1454–1911

archives, it cannot address more fundamental missing data problems related to the preservation of Ming and Qing maritime trade policy documents.[21] This is especially true for Qing documents originally written in Manchu and not translated into Chinese (Elliott 2001).[22] Similarly, I focus on Chinese-language documents and do not use archival or other data with foreign trading partners such as Japan or Korea. Moreover, the First Historical Archives remains in possession of a significant amount of memorials and other sources that have not yet been included in the publicly available archives system.[23]

Third, the vast majority of memorial documents that have survived to the present day are from the Qing period, while only a fraction of memorials are from the Ming. The

[21] However, despite several turbulent periods in 20th century Chinese history, the archives generally appear to have been consistently preserved (Bartlett 1981).

[22] Fortunately, the vast majority of Manchu-language documents have already been translated. Moreover, because all documents—including Chinese- and Manchu-language—are searchable via the archival catalogs using Chinese, one can quantify the share of potentially relevant documents only in Manchu.

[23] They continue to publish new materials and periodically announce updates on their website.

empirical record is thus much richer for the Qing Dynasty. Finally, more work is needed to supplement records stored in these central archives with local sources, particularly for provincially-based officials. While a useful starting point, centrally-located documents were not the only important channels for idea transmission within the imperial government. Private scholars and other non-bureaucratic actors contributed to Qing debates on a variety of outward policy issues outside of the memorial system (e.g. Mosca 2013).

These constraints notwithstanding, the current dataset offers a useful proof of concept. To the author's knowledge, the dataset used in this paper is the largest and most systematic collection of late imperial elite views toward maritime trade policy to date. Moreover, as mentioned above, with more resources it could be scaled to potentially cover every known Ming and Qing official who commented on maritime or other outward trade policies through official and unofficial channels.

Within the dataset, there is sufficient information to code maritime trade preferences for 216 late imperial bureaucrats. Figure 2.2 plots these preferences over time and shows that pro- and anti-trade preferences were relatively well-balanced across the late imperial period. This conforms with earlier work by historians suggesting pro- and anti-trade elite coalitions were often at odds over imperial trade policies. For instance, elites in favor of banning maritime trade won a narrow policy victory over pro-trade officials mostly from coastal provinces over a protracted period between 1430-1510 following admiral Zheng He's overseas tribute expeditions. Decades later, pro-trade elites successfully promoted the opening of maritime trade. A third conflict occurred about a century later, when the Kangxi Emperor was gradually convinced by coastal provincial governors to fully open maritime trade (Deng 1999).[24]

Beyond general preferences toward trade, the dataset also includes the arguments made

[24]Many of these debates are captured in the Veritable Records of the Ming and Qing dynasties (Chang 1989; Deng 1999; Chao 2005; Li 2010).

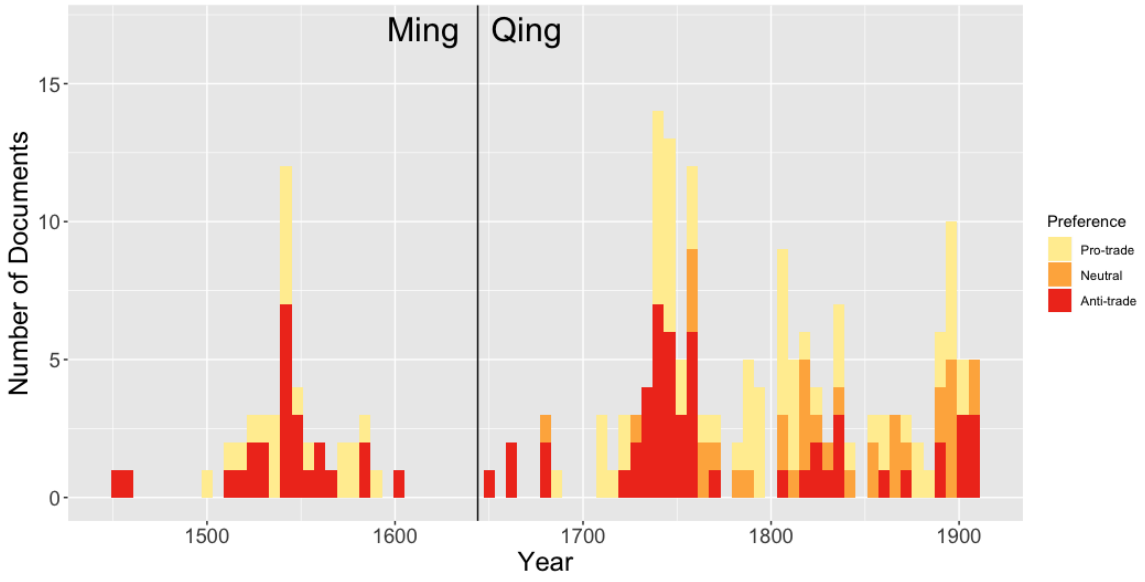

Figure 2.2: Elite Official Maritime Trade Preferences, 1454–1911

by Qing officials to justify their preferred policies. Table E.2 reports the most-cited reasons for trade policies, and demonstrates that the logic employed by imperial elites when debating economic policies was diverse. For some, benefits of greater trade openness were clear. More merchant trade would afford the central government greater access to monopolistic revenues, both from customs revenue and domestic monopolistic profits from reselling imported goods at artificially high prices. More open maritime trade policies, argued others, would discourage smuggling and shore up regime legitimacy in the eyes of the people. Relaxed trade policies could also make it easier for Chinese migrants in Southeatst Asia and elsewhere to return to China and provide remittances. These individuals could also provide more information about potential trade partners as well as adversaries to China. Finally, greater outward trade flows could also enable China to improve its shipbuilding technologies.

In contrast, opponents of open trade saw merit in strict bans against maritime commerce. Many ban proponents similarly valued monopolistic profits, but believed the best

Table 2.1: Top Reported Reasons for Trade Preferences

	Reason	Count
1	Economic welfare	98
2	Food security	70
3	Merchant revenue	64
4	Threat from foreign non-state actor	62
5	Government revenue	53
6	Domestic unrest	37
7	Threat from foreign country	18

way to ensure these spoils was to ban private trade, and thus squeeze out private profits, rather than encourage them. Others were more concerned with coastal security and guarding against potential attacks, as well as potentially pernicious contact between Chinese and foreign peoples (Wang 1968). Debate often arose from discrepancies in fundamental understandings about the expected effects of trade policies. As Chang (1989) points out, "Different opinions were derived from different assumptions about the overall effects of trade." One example is the relationship between trade policy and government silver coffers. Elites differed in how they perceived trade policies impacting the security of the regime's silver reserves (Lin 2006). Some saw trade as a dangerous gateway for silver outflows, while others thought the state should intervene less in monetary politics, much less sacrifice the benefits of open trade as a means for stable silver reserves.

Arguments for and against trade captured in the dataset reflect these broader issues. Table E.2 presents a simple regression table that shows which reasons were positively and negatively correlated with support for open trade. Often times elite inputs were based on straightforward economic calculation. For instance, in 1737 Lun Dali (伦达礼), a Manchu provincial judge based in Fujian, wrote a palace memorial to the Qianlong Emperor asking him to reopen maritime trade. Lun had previously worked in the central government within the Board of Punishments. His argument for trade openness was that Fujian was unable to produce sufficient rice for its own population, and depended heavily on imported rice, both

from other provinces in the empire as well as from abroad:

> "The province of Fujian is mountainous and has few fields. Upriver counties such as Yanjian and Shaoding produce just enough rice to feed their populations, whereas in downriver areas such as Fuzhou, Xinghua, Zhangzhou, and Quanzhou rice production is scarce and often insufficient, despite rice assistance from Taiwan. Last year witnessed various natural disasters which led to starvation amongst the population."[25]

In contrast, a central government-based imperial censor named Shen Jinglan (沈景兰) submitted a memorial against open rice trade in 1752. Shen was particularly concerned with "merchant profiteers" (奸商) and, like Lun, appeared to be most concerned with food security and general social stability. Though, Shen's memorial made a more direct connection to the imperial economy as a whole:

> "As many coastal people depend on fishing for their livelihood, many boats go out to sea. Although it is illegal to stock these boats with rice or alcohol, but monitoring of this ban is often lax resulting in fishing boats also being rice boats. This is a problem that makes grain very expensive...local searching and confiscation is not only lax but also prone to bribery. From this it is clear that these measures do not deter merchants' desire for profiteering. The weak ban on smuggling has caused grain prices to skyrocket and made the people's grain supply extremely difficult. This is of vital importance to the national economy and people's livelihood and will not be a small matter if we do not set strict punishments to make clear the consequences."[26]

Similarly, Jiang Pu (蒋溥) authored a memorial as Vice Minister of the Board of Rites in 1742 in which he argued against open maritime grain trade in the name of the population's food supply.

> "It has always been clearly prohibited to privately sell grain from the mainland in the outer seas. An imperial edict orders governor-generals and governors of every coastal province to stringently prohibit and monitor...grain prices on the outer seas are more expensive than on the mainland, and scoundrels are rushing to this activity and disregarding the law. In many places cargo ships are smuggling out to sea..."[27]

Beyond grain trade, elite officials similarly debated the merits of open maritime trade more generally. Trade policies regarding other strategic commodities such as silver elicited

[25] Source: FHA.

[26] Source: FHA.

[27] Source: FHA.

similar contention. Vice Minister of the Board of Revenue Su Leng'e (苏楞额) submitted a memorial in 1814 calling for a ban on maritime silver trade. Like many imperial bureaucrats in the early 19th century, Su was concerned about aggregate outflows of silver and the draining of the Qing's currency reserves. In contrast, Cheng Zuluo (程祖洛), as Governor-General of Minzhe, produced a memorial to the throne in 1835 advising against a maritime ban on foreign silver. Cheng was primarily concerned with the local economic damage caused by the ban for commercial merchants:

> "If one bans maritime trade in silver, merchants will have no resources transact on the oceans and obstacles will be numerous. In addition, foreign silver has been in use for a long time and many mariners have long been carrying it for daily use. If a trade is immediately banned the concern is that military officials will abuse it as an excuse to search and disrupt [merchants]." [28]

In short, the dataset contains a diverse set of officials concerned with various aspects of maritime trade policy. Below I focus on the subset of officials who communicated clear preferences for or against open maritime trade.

2.4 Analysis

I use the aforementioned data to conduct statistical analyses regarding the trade preferences of late imperial Chinese bureaucrats. As emphasized above, analysis is limited to the Qing dynasty because Ming records are too scarce for meaningful analysis.

Dependent Variable

The primary outcome of interest captures an official's general preference toward maritime trade policy. I operationalize this in two ways. First, I use a three-point scale measure that codes an official's preference as "more openness," "neutral," or "more closedness."

[28] Source: FHA.

Openess and closedness should not be interpreted as equivalent or comparable to the contemporary notions of trade liberalization and protection, respectively. Rather, they represent general postures towards maritime trade. Second, I subset the data to instances only in which there is adequate information to codify a preference as "more openness" or "more closedness" and use a binary measure for more openness. As discussed above, I also coded the reasons behind each general preference coding for each individual in the dataset. This was meant to serve as both a quality assurance check and to enable additional analyses about how different officials perceive trade policies, as well as which factors drive which preferences. Appendix E reports the correlates between various preference reasons and support for maritime trade openness.

Explanatory Variable

To test whether the geographic nature of an official's position influences trade policy preferences, I use a variable that measures each official's bureaucratic title at the time a preference was reported. In order to do so, I codified each official's entire known public service record. These supplementary data were created by combining multiple sources. First, most archival records include the author's official title. I then cross-check these archival data with existing databases on Qing dynasty officials, including the China Biographical Database Project (CBDB) and China Government Employee Database Qing (中国历史官员量化数据库[清代]) (Bol and Ge 2005; Campbell, Chen, and Lee 2019), and also create a record of each official's career trajectory including every position held, the duration of each position, and the rank of each position (see below). Supplementary internet searches use public records of Qing bureaucrats to fill in missing data on officials' career details not found in these databases..

The primary measure for bureaucratic position is a binary variable that is coded as

"1" if an official was serving in a central government position at the time of reporting a preference. As discussed in Section 2.2, these positions in the dataset include individuals serving in the imperial courts; any of the central imperial institutions (e.g. Grand Secretariat or Grand Council); any one of the Six Boards; the Hanlin Academy; and other central educational institutions. It also includes family members of the emperor working in the imperial court. As an alternative measure, I construct a variable that instead takes a value of "1" if an individual is serving in a coastal province at the time of reporting. This variable includes viceroy-, provincial-, and local-level officials. Finally, I use a measure that is identical to the first measure but also includes imperial censors working in provinces as centrally-mandated officials, since their bureaucratic responsibilities often involved imperial oversight of provincial officials and more closely resembled the duties of officials physically working in the capital.

Covariates

A number of other factors might influence Qing elites' reported trade preferences. These include elites' bureaucratic rank, ethnicity, long-term career trajectory, education, military experience, and family and regional background.

Rank

The data also include each official's rank within the imperial government (Hucker 1985). As Table 2.2 illustrates, the data reveal that trade debates were not limited to officials of highest rank. Instead, a wide variety of imperial officials at the central and provincial level participated in trade policy debates. The below analyses include this variable to account for the possibility that more highly-ranked officials were more likely to voice certain types of preferences than lower-ranked officials. For example, one possibility is that higher-

ranked officials had higher baseline levels of political authority and were more comfortable voicing preferences against a status quo policy.

Table 2.2: Distribution of Imperial Ranks of Individuals in Dataset

Imperial Rank	1A	1B	2A	2B	3A	4B	5A	5B	6A	7A
Number of Officials	1	22	67	41	5	5	7	15	11	13

Ethnicity

As an ethnically Manchu dynasty, the Qing faced the complex question of how to integrate Han officials, many of whom possessed rich provincial and local knowledge, into the imperial government. Qing emperors concerned with general political stability often traded off in hiring ethnically Manchu officials seen as being loyal and Han officials, many of whom were viewed as being more competent at the provincial level because of their linguistic, cultural, and institutional knowledge (Xi 2019). Earlier historical accounts of late imperial maritime trade policy have suggested that ethnicity was an important factor in separating out different views on trade. For instance, Kangxi's desire to improve relations with the Han appear to have influenced his decision to support private overseas trade (Zhao 2013, 157). One study argues that "conservative, mostly Han Chinese officials, and Manchus who possessed a more open attitude towards foreign trade" clashed over the empire's trade policies (Schottenhammer 2010). As such, I include a variable that records each official's ethnicity.

Other Considerations

Another possibility is that officials' long-term career experiences, rather than their position at a given time, are more consequential for policy preferences. For instance, officials whose careers are concentrated in provinces might prefer more open trade policies if their

local experiences have made them more emotionally or materially embedded into commercial communities that depend on trade. Alternatively, those who spend more of their career in central government institutions may develop hardened views against open trade if they are more detached from local interests, or if they repeatedly observe negative externalities for the regime caused by open trade. This explanation is somewhat difficult to envision in the context of the Qing given its bureaucratic rotation system that ensured officials rotated between a variety of official posts (Guy 2017).[29] Nonetheless, to test for this possibility, in an alternative test I include a variable that captures the share of an official's career spent in central government positions up until a trade preference is reported. This variable ranges between 0 and 1.

Another potentially important factor relates to the rise of merchants in late imperial officialdom, and the extent to which officials' coastal or merchant backgrounds informed their trade preferences. Merchants struggled against Confucianist anti-merchant norms throughout much of imperial Chinese history. They were widely perceived by Qing officials as scheming and aggressively profit-driven (Dunstan 2006). The best outcome for many merchant families was to become wealthy and secure opportunities for their children to become scholar literati and, eventually, government officials (Wang 1990). During the late imperial period, a market for civil servants formed in coastal regions and and elite families were able to purchase bureaucratic positions for family members (Elman 1991). A new class of merchants gradually entered elite politics and merchant areas came to dominate local imperial examinations (Wang 2001). Many of these merchants hailed from coastal regions and had deep understanding of maritime commercial cultures that persisted in these local economies, and were both an asset and liability for stability-oriented emperors in the capital (Guy 2017). As such, I include a binary variable that is coded as "1" if an

[29]However, the degree of rotation varied across different officials. For example, Manchu governors and governor-generals tended to have longer tenures than their Han counterparts (Rhoads 2000).

individual's hometown was in a coastal province. This is not a direct or particularly sharp test. More data collection on the family and economic backgrounds of each official could enrich the analysis.

Relatedly, education levels might also inform trade policy preferences. However, many officials hailing from merchant families did not hold the highest imperial degree (known as the "jinshi" (进士)), and instead obtained lower-level, locally elite degrees. As such, education levels hardly vary in the elite sample analyzed in this paper; almost all included individuals were jinshi holders.[30] I also include a binary variable for military experience. Results are consistent across each alternative test. Table D.1 presents descriptive statistics for each variable used in the analysis.

Regression Analysis

Given the limited sample size and the preliminary nature of the dataset, the below results are meant as suggestive rather than conclusive. The analysis begins with ordinary least squares (OLS) regressions in which standard errors are clustered at the emperor level. Initially I run the model with no controls. Next I add in the above covariates to control for alternative explanations. I also add in emperor-level fixed effects. However, as the sample size is already limited, doing so causes the results to depend on an extremely low amount of observations for which there exists within-emperor variation in career experiences and preferences. These models are then re-run using a logit model (for the binary measure of the outcome).

Table 2.3 presents the main results for Qing bureaucrats. The results suggest that, for the sample of individuals included in the study, holding a centrally-located position in the Qing bureaucracy was strongly and negatively associated with support for open maritime

[30]This includes most of the Manchu officials in the sample who, beginning in the late 18th century, gained wide access to central imperial exams (Rawski 1998).

trade. This result holds across the various specifications and is robust to inclusion of overall career experience, ethnicity, military experience, imperial bureaucratic rank, education, and hometown. Other correlations generally do not hold up across these tests, though the coefficient for Han Chinese remains positive and significant across each test, suggesting that ethnically Han officials in the sample were relatively supportive of open maritime trade.

Table 2.3: Central Office and Support for Maritime Trade Openness

	Outcome: Support for Trade Openness			
	Ordinal			Dummy
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Central	-0.75^{***} (0.17)	-0.82^{***} (0.20)	-0.93^{***} (0.21)	-0.64^{***} (0.13)
Han		0.49^{***} (0.16)	0.39^{**} (0.17)	0.22^{**} (0.10)
Military		0.36^{*} (0.19)	0.23 (0.20)	0.17 (0.12)
Rank		0.05^{*} (0.03)	0.06^{*} (0.03)	0.03 (0.02)
Constant	2.03^{***} (0.07)	1.09^{***} (0.40)	1.43^{***} (0.50)	0.21 (0.30)
Emperor FE			✓	✓
Observations	158	130	130	101
R^2	0.11	0.18	0.26	0.36

Notes: $^{*}p<0.05$; $^{**}p<0.01$; $^{***}p<0.001$

In addition to the central-local distinction, I also consider whether officials based specifically in coastal regions were more or less in favor of open maritime trade. Qing coastal provinces included Shandong, Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Fujian, and Guangdong. Coastal viceroys included Liangjiang, Minzhe, and Liangguang.[31] One would expect the opposite results as above since, according to the above argument, officials stationed in coastal areas were more likely to support maritime trade openness. Table 2.4 presents the results and suggests that a positive association existed between coastal office and support for maritime trade, though the results are somewhat weaker and not consistently significant.

[31] Figure D.1 provides a map of Qing administrative regions circa 1820.

Table 2.4: Coastal Office and Support for Maritime Trade Openness

	Outcome: Support for Trade Openness			
	Ordinal			Dummy
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Coastal	0.12 (0.15)	0.27 (0.17)	0.34^{*} (0.19)	0.17 (0.12)
Han		0.44^{***} (0.17)	0.36^{**} (0.18)	0.23^{**} (0.12)
Military		0.37^{*} (0.20)	0.26 (0.22)	0.18 (0.13)
Rank		0.06 (0.03)	0.07^{*} (0.04)	0.04^{*} (0.02)
Constant	1.82^{***} (0.12)	0.78^{*} (0.45)	0.91 (0.57)	-0.13 (0.35)
Emperor FE			✓	✓
Observations	158	130	130	101
R^2	0.004	0.08	0.16	0.21

Notes: $^{*}p<0.05$; $^{**}p<0.01$; $^{***}p<0.001$

2.5 Conclusion

Despite its reputation for autarky, late imperial China's trade policies were highly volatile, including those along its maritime frontier. Behind these policies existed large cohorts of elite imperial officials who possessed diverse trade policy preferences and voiced their opinions to the emperor. Building on earlier historical studies, in this paper I argue that one important source of variation in elite preferences was related to individuals' positions

in the imperial bureaucracy. Centrally-located elites were prone to opposing maritime trade given their relatively low exposure to the socioeconomic impacts of trade, imperial-centric policy scopes, and general risk aversion to policies that might challenge the status quo. In contrast, provincially-based officials were mandated to incorporate local socioeconomic conditions into their policy recommendations and were also more personally accountable to subnational commercial communities dependent on trade, and thus more likely to support maritime trade openness.

To investigate this potential cleavage, this paper introduces new data from archives in Beijing and Taipei on Ming and Qing imperial elites working in central and local government posts. An analysis of Qing elites suggests that officials stationed outside of the capital were indeed more likely to appeal to the emperor for an open maritime trade policy. These data do not represent a comprehensive accounting of all late imperial elites, but they do suggest that late imperial elites had significantly diverse preferences and that such preferences may have been linked to elites' position in the government.

Beyond late imperial China, the findings are relevant for the study of foreign economic policies of non-democracies, an agenda that has thus far focused on cross-regime rather than within-regime variation. More generally, evidence from earlier periods of Chinese history can enrich broader research agendas on non-democratic governments in international political economy. Despite the economic ascent of China and other non-Western economies over the past several decades, there remains little consensus about domestic dynamics of foreign economic policy making in these societies (Lake 2009b; Keohane 2009).[32] One obstacle to research in this area is incorporating these economies into extant IPE theories

[32] As David Lake has written, "Interest aggregation in non-democratic or newly democratic states remains an important area for future research" (Lake 2009b). Robert Keohane has similarly remarked, with specific reference to China, that by neglecting to account for China in future research, "we would be staging Hamlet without the Prince" (Keohane 2009).

and frameworks.[33]

Researchers have made important progress in this regard, primarily by working within the framework of selectorate theory to the study of non-democratic foreign economic policy. Others have focused more generally on interest group influence policies across a range of Chinese domestic and foreign economic policy issue areas in contemporary China (Wang 2003a; Bell and Feng 2007; Kennedy and Kennedy 2009; Ye 2014). Yet historical studies of China and other non-democracies remain underutilized in this context given the difficulty of accessing elite political debates in contemporary authoritarian regimes. This paper provides one example of how earlier periods of history can help address contemporary research questions.

In demonstrating the diverse nature of authoritarian elite trade preferences, this study also points to multiple future directions for theoretical inquiry. First, future work could incorporate autocratic elite preferences into a broader conceptual framework that accounts for changes in the institutions that aggregate preferences. One particularly interesting phenomenon in late imperial China was the initiation of governance reforms by certain emperors, motivated by domestic authority concerns, that may have shifted the relative weight of different imperial elites in accessing the emperor and sharing policy inputs. For instance, in attempting to consolidate political power, the Yongzheng Emperor created a system of small, inner court groups that bypassed the outer court bureaucracy, and in doing so created entirely new channels of access to himself (Bartlett 1991). Broad governance reforms may have had important top-down consequences, whether intentional or unintentional, for

[33]For example, open economy politics (OEP), a bottom-up approach focusing on actors, interests and aggregation institutions, originated through the study of Western, democratic economies with clearly defined interest aggregation functions. Despite its parsimonious approach, OEP applications to less democratic economies are limited by the fact that 1) institutions are often less formal and observable and 2) political economy processes in many of these societies are not purely bottom-up. Meanwhile, earlier IPE approaches, such as "first wave" IPE scholarship from the 1970's and 1980's that emphasize state-level interests, encounter the opposite issue: ignoring how domestic interests and influence are filtered upward into national policies.

which sets of bureaucratic elites could potentially shape trade policy.[34]

Future research can also prioritize the bottom-up dynamics which occurred in stride with top-down shifts and introduced new individuals into elite officialdom. In particular, the rise of coastal merchants at different points during the Ming and Qing dynasties infused new ideas about the nature and effects of international trade—both maritime and terrestrial—into elite policy discourse. This likely influenced the degree to which elite policy making took into account local commercial interests along the empire's frontier. In future work, a comprehensive conceptual framework could more fully capture these varying levels of top-down and bottom-up authority concerns that shaped imperial officials' trade preferences, as well as the choice to communicate those preference rather than pursue other strategies in response to undesired central policies.

In addition to these theoretical possibilities, the consequences of Ming and Qing outward economic policies were extraordinary for China and the world economy, making it imperative to enrich our empirical understanding of them. Strong emphasis by many European states on outward economic expansion, often manifested in consistent government support for colonial and other mercantile enterprises, is a prominent explanation for why many economies in the West and the New World became enormously prosperous relative to the rest of the world in the 19th century (Pomeranz 2001). In contrast, autarkic outward economic policies such as sea bans proved deleterious to late imperial China's economy and long-term interests (Kung and Ma 2014).[35] What the Chinese and world economies

[34]In addition, institutional arrangements resulting form these shifts likely produced different degrees of preference plurality. Moreover, top-down political reforms may have also influenced the nature of political communication between elite bureaucrats and the leadership. Changing institutional structures led to significant variation in the extent to which elite officials had the ability to question incumbent policies.

[35]Explanations for Chinese introversion are numerous. Compared to European states, China lacked synergy between militarism, industrialism and capitalism. This may be related to extended peace in East Asia for much of late imperial China (Kang 2010a), as well as China's long-term economic vulnerability Arrighi (2009). Others suggest that a lack of interstate rivalry relative to continental Europe limited expansionist desires for during the late imperial period (Sugihara 1996; Perdue 2009b; Arrighi 2009). When the empire did expand, Chinese expansionary activity led to investment in, rather than extraction from, frontier regions

would have looked like if late imperial China charted a different course, one involving a more proactive and consistent outward trade policy driven by either elite ideas about trade or commercial actors with more consistent policy influence, is an important counterfactual.[36]

As such, important empirical limitations to this initial study also merit further research. A primary constraint, as discussed above, is that the dataset is not a comprehensive accounting of every known Ming and Qing bureaucrat's economic preferences. Future work could drastically expand the dataset to include every known Qing (and many Ming) officials who commented on maritime or other outward trade policies across archives in China and Taiwan; digital archives; other primary sources commonly used by historians; and additional secondary sources. Comprehensive data would make it possible to test arguments related to institutional and personnel shifts within the imperial government discussed above (Chen 1997). Similarly, one could use a similar data collection methodology to study terrestrial trade, for which imperial policies evolved and varied widely across the empire (Lin 1983; Zhang 1985; Zuo and Jie 1987; Guo 1989; Wang 2001; Deng 2005). Finally, a particularly useful data exercise would be to expand beyond central archival sources to personal memoirs of individual elites as well as local sources in the provinces.

(Wong 1997). Wong (1997) points out that European monarchs and capitalists had shared interests in outward expansion, while late imperial Chinese leaders were relatively financially secure during the 16th-18th centuries and could rely less on new forms of financing such as the expansion of overseas trade.

[36]Importantly, a different course was always possible and had historical precedent. For much of the Southern Song (1127-1279) dynasty, customs duties collected from maritime trade, much of which was with non-Chinese partners, accounted for over 20% of government revenues (Von Glahn 2016). The imperial government valued customs revenue and developed an detailed tax collection system involving flat taxes (抽解) of 10-20%, restrictions that certain items be strictly state-run (禁榷), and government purchases of private goods that were then resold domestically for considerable profits (博买). For much of the Song and Yuan periods, private Chinese merchants enjoyed considerable freedom to export goods and voyage outward, and simply had to apply at a customs office (市舶司). Yuan leaders consolidated China's customs system from seven to three ports (Guangzhou, Ningbo and Quanzhou). They also established the government reselling program and were more export oriented (Chao 2005).

3 | Who Pursues Prestige Projects, and Why? Evidence from Chinese Development Finance

3.1 Introduction

> "For many of the underdeveloped nations the steel mill, the highway, the airline, the modern weapons, perform a function that is not primarily economic or military, but psychological and political. They are sought as the outward show of modernity and power. They perform a function similar to that which the cathedral performed for the medieval city and the feudal castle or the monarch's palace for the absolute state."
>
> **Hans Morgenthau, 1962**

On March 12, 2009, Costa Rica's government held a groundbreaking ceremony near the center of San José for a new national stadium. The 35,000-seat capacity arena, funded with over $100 million in Chinese foreign aid, was completed in March 2011 and became the new home of the national football team. It also checked important political boxes for Costa Rica's government. First, it enabled the incumbent leadership to deliver an otherwise unavailable, national project that would be highly visible to Costa Rican and international audiences. As in most countries, soccer is by far the most popular sport in Costa Rica. However, much of the country's domestic infrastructure, including its sports facilities (the previous national stadium was built in 1924), has remained underfunded. Despite being perhaps the most economically and politically stable country in Central America, Costa Rica would have been unable to finance the stadium without external assistance: This would have required 1.2% of the national budget as the economy was contracting in the

wake of the Global Financial Crisis.

Second, Costa Rica's government seized on several key moments to brand the stadium as a visible achievement of both the nation and the incumbent leadership. At the groundbreaking ceremony, then-President and National Liberation Party (NLP) leader Oscar Arias noted that Costa Rica was getting "a stadium that will be the heart of our country." (Williams 2011a). At the opening ceremony two years later, President Laura Chinchilla, who was also Arias's NLP successor, emphasized that the stadium "serves as recognition for former President Arias." (Williams 2011b).

In financing the project, China's government also recognized political opportunity. The stadium was the "crown jewel" of a larger package of development finance offered as Costa Rica severed diplomatic relations with Taiwan. The origins of the stadium agreement reportedly date to late 2007, just a few months after Arias renounced diplomatic ties with Taipei (Fidler and Thomson 2008). The stadium is emblematic of the People's Republic of China (PRC)'s longstanding strategy of using overseas aid projects to buy political allegiance and cement its international status as the legitimate ruler of China (Kao 1988; Copper 2016).

The Costa Rica stadium case illustrates how and why some governments pursue "prestige projects," which I define below as highly visible, nationally salient international development projects. Hundreds of these projects have surfaced across developing countries in recent years. Funded primarily by the governments of China, India, Qatar, Russia, Saudi Arabia and other "emerging donors," prestige projects defy traditional typologies of development assistance and can include convention centers, arts and entertainment venues, government buildings, sports stadiums, as well as more commercially-oriented national projects such as airports, harbors, railways, and hydropower dams. A conservative estimate suggests that China's government alone has committed over $15 billion (2010 USD) worth of prestige projects worldwide since 2000. This uptick notwithstanding, prestige

projects are not a new phenomenon in international politics. Prestige has been linked to aid since the Marshall Plan, and a diverse set of democratic and non-democratic donors have financed prestige projects throughout the postwar era.[1]

However, prestige projects are allocated unevenly across recipient and donor countries. What explains their supply and demand?[2] I argue that governments with low "prestige capacity"—or the ability to marshal domestic resources for national prestige-seeking—possess strong incentives to pursue prestige but lack alternative channels for doing so. Leaders of these countries acquire externally-financed prestige projects and associate them with their own rule, attempting to claim credit for national achievements and leverage individuals' sense of national pride for domestic political support. From the perspective of donor governments, prestige projects send relatively clear signals of political support to recipient governments. Since low-capacity recipients have few other means of reciprocity, donors are more likely to allocate prestige projects to recipient governments that increase their diplomatic support of donors' political interests. Prestige financing thus tends to be most attractive for "emerging," "rising," or other donors facing perceived international prestige deficits.

I develop and test these arguments in several steps. First, I put forward an original definition of prestige projects and apply it to a new dataset of Chinese development finance projects. Second, I show that prestige projects flow overwhelmingly to states with low domestic prestige capacity, measured by a range of indicators. I also demonstrate that Chinese government-financed prestige projects are allocated more to states that abandon diplomatic recognition of Taiwan and increase their diplomatic alignment with China on

[1]Earlier research explicitly analyzed prestige projects. For instance, Morgenthau (1962, 303) included "prestige foreign aid," or assistance designed to increase the prestige of the recipient nation both at home and abroad, in his seminal typology of foreign assistance.

[2]I refer to "supply" and "demand" as shorthand to discuss which governments finance and seek prestige projects, respectively. That is, I do not use these terms in their strict economic sense, as commodity market pricing mechanisms.

important votes in the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). Third, as a supplementary test I also analyze the potential effects of prestige projects on individual political attitudes in order to further illuminate the politic logic of these projects. After merging these project-level data with global public opinion surveys and exploiting precise information about projects' start and end dates, I find evidence that the groundbreaking of prestige projects is positively associated with higher levels of domestic government approval at the national level. Importantly, across all of these tests, I find no similar patterns for other types of Chinese development projects including official development assistance (ODA) and less concessional, commercially-oriented other official flows (OOF). Collectively, this evidence suggests a distinct political logic for the supply and demand of prestige projects.

These findings add to a larger research agenda on the role of prestige in international relations that has thus far focused on the foreign security policies of major powers (Paul, Larson, and Wohlforth 2014; Dafoe, Renshon, and Huth 2014). They also shed light on the role of rising powers and emerging donors in international development. The remainder of the paper proceeds as follows. The next section defines prestige projects and develops hypotheses for their demand and supply. I then discuss an original dataset used to measure and analyze prestige projects. The following two sections investigate prestige project allocation and potential public opinon effects of these projects. A conclusion summarizes the main findings and outlines avenues for future research.

3.2 Prestige Projects, Recipients, and Donors

Why do recipient and donor governments pursue conspicuous but economically questionable development projects? Existing political economy research demonstrates that donors allocate projects based on a range of economic, political, and security interests (e.g. Maizels and Nissanke 1984; Meernik, Krueger, and Poe 1998; Burnside and Dollar

2000; Dreher, Sturm, and Vreeland 2009; Milner and Tingley 2010). Recipient governments also use development projects for their own economic and political objectives (e.g. Bueno de Mesquita and Smith 2009; Licht 2010; Ahmed 2012; Jablonski 2014). Other work has examined how project-specific features such as sector (e.g. economic or military) and financing vehicle (e.g. grant or loan) affect the strategic utility of projects for both donors and recipients (e.g. Poe and Meernik 1995; Dube and Naidu 2015; Bermeo 2016; Dreher et al. 2018). However, the potential role of prestige is largely absent from these discussions: Despite its prominent role in international relations theory, we know surprisingly little about how prestige may affect the allocation of development finance (Morgenthau 1962; Orr 1990; Rix 1993; Lake 2009a; Cooley and Nexon 2013).[3]

A Definition of Prestige Projects

Prestige is a fundamental and ubiquitous motivation in social relationships including those between states (Wegener 1992; Anderson, Hildreth, and Howland 2015; Wood 2013).[4] From interstate conflict to membership in international institutions, available evidence suggests that states care deeply about prestige (Hafner-Burton and Montgomery 2006; Lebow 2010; Glaser 2018; Gilady 2018).[5] In line with earlier international relations research, I define prestige as favorable public recognition of an actor by others (Markey 1999; O'Neill 2006; Paul, Larson, and Wohlforth 2014; Dafoe, Renshon, and Huth 2014).

Prestige projects are defined herein as international development projects with high

[3]Though, other scholars have examined how reputational concerns affect aid recipients' behavior (David-Barrett and Okamura 2016; Carnegie and Dolan 2019).

[4]Prestige belongs to a broader family of social concepts including, status, reputation, and honor. The difference between prestige and status, a related concept, is somewhat ambiguous in international relations research (Renshon 2017; Khong 2019). One possible distinction is that unlike status, prestige is not necessarily hierarchical (Dafoe, Renshon, and Huth 2014; Paul, Larson, and Wohlforth 2014, 1).

[5]Prestige is both a "net concept" and a social variable that depends on others' perceptions, and thus prestige-driven behavior is hardly guaranteed to succeed (O'Neill 2006; Wood 2013; Mercer 2017).

visibility and national salience within developing countries. High visibility requires tangible and large or tactfully-located project sites. Most prestige projects are located in capital cities or other populous areas. Beyond physical presence, high visibility also entails heightened publicity around project milestones, such as projects' initial announcement, groundbreaking, and completion dates. Coverage of these events often involves grandiose ribbon-cutting ceremonies and speeches by leaders (Menga 2015, 485). Visibility—both physical and public—enables recipient governments to expose larger audiences to prestige projects and the government-crafted narratives that surround them. In addition, prestige projects are nationally salient. Recipient governments frame these development projects in national terms, often linking them to national identity, development, and modernity.

I make several additional assumptions about prestige projects. First, prestige projects are inherently social: relative to other development projects, they are intended to enhance domestic perceptions of the recipient government. Second, this does not imply that these projects are driven only by prestige motives: prestige may be an end in itself as well as a means to more instrumental outcomes, such as economic growth or domestic political authority (Gilpin 1983).[6] Third, for recipient and donor governments, prestige seeking via these projects may be linked to domestic or international audiences, or both, an issue taken up in more detail below (e.g., Pu and Schweller 2014). Fourth, prestige projects refer to international development projects involving recipient and donor governments. Scholars have documented various types of domestically-financed development projects, such as "megaprojects," that often share similar features with prestige projects (Loftman and Nevin 1995, 1996; Flyvbjerg 2014). I exclude these projects in order to focus on the supply and demand of international prestige development projects. Table 3.1 provides stylized examples of prestige and other development projects. Finally, for reasons discussed be-

[6]Maximizing status, prestige, or other social rewards can result in greater material benefits; enhance one's reputation to achieve better payoffs in other domains; and simply serve as an end in itself (Johnston 2001).

low in Section 3.3, when operationalizing this definition I exclude very large commercial projects (such as transportation infrastructure projects) that possess high visibility and national salience but are likely heavily motivated by donor or recipient commercial interests.

Table 3.1: International Development Projects in Terms of Visibility and National Salience

	High visibility	**Low visibility**
National salience	Prestige projects (e.g. national stadium; parliament building; international convention center)	Transactional projects (e.g. sovereign debt relief); Vague projects (e.g. economic development pledge)
Local salience	Small projects (e.g. rural school); Large projects (e.g. regional highway)	Small projects (e.g. medical teams); Large projects (e.g. shoe factory)

Demand

Having defined prestige projects, I now turn to the question of which types of governments are most likely to desire them. Governments of powerful countries sometimes pursue prestige through conspicuous investments in national initiatives such as nuclear weapons (O'Neill 2006), aircraft carriers (Pu and Schweller 2014; Fordham 2019), space programs (Musgrave and Nexon 2018), or the hosting of major international events (Broudehoux 2007; Ying, Kolstad, and Yang 2013). Similarly, governments of less developed countries have historically sought prestige by investing in national railroads (van der Westhuizen 2007), highways (Jeon 2010), hydropower dams (Biswas and Tortajada 2001; Kaika 2006), stadiums (Ren 2008; Will 2012), or even entire cities (Kong 2007). Prestige development projects offer an additional channel for "conspicuous consumption" aimed at enhancing national or international recognition (Veblen 1899).

However, developing country governments clearly vary in their penchant for prestige projects. What explains this uneven demand? I argue that prestige projects have a unique ability to deliver national symbolic utility, particularly in highly impoverished and small

countries, and thus leaders of these states possess strong political incentives to pursue and associate themselves with these projects. Below I describe each of these arguments.

First, prestige projects can potentially provide "symbolic utility," or value that increases one's sense of self-regard while not necessarily improving material welfare, to leaders and citizens (Khalil 2000; Van Kempen 2003).[7] In particular, prestige projects that engage national identity or narratives of national status, progress, or modernity may enhance individuals' self-esteem via feelings of national pride.[8] Other development projects may also provide symbolic utility, but lack the visibility or national salience needed to do so at scale.

Second, as a recipient government's overall prestige capacity decreases, the marginal symbolic returns of prestige projects should be larger for individuals in these countries. Prestige capacity here refers to the ability to marshal resources needed to finance prestige-seeking at scale (i.e. the national level).[9] The extent to which prestige projects are able to generate national-level pride or other benefits is likely highly uneven across countries. For states that lack basic markers of modern nation states such as government ministries, national airlines, large-scale infrastructure projects, or even adherence with certain international standards or indicators (e.g. Finnemore 1993; Meyer et al. 1997; Kelley and Simmons 2019), prestige projects offer unique forms of national-level "symbolic capital" compared to other aid projects (Bourdieu 1987). As such, individuals in low-capacity countries may, on average, derive more national pride from these projects.[10] Individuals might inherently

[7]Importantly, individual utility from prestige projects need not only be symbolic. Nor must individuals who prefer more symbolic utility prefer less functional utility. Rather, like many goods, prestige projects are typically "composite" in that they can provide both substantive and symbolic utility (Khalil 2000). For example, a highly symbolic project with little tangible short-term economic utility might also be valued by a forward-looking individual as a means to more future material utility.

[8]Pride is often defined as "an emotion generated by appraisals that one is responsible for a socially valued outcome or for being a socially valued person" (Mascolo and Fischer 1995).

[9]This is a more narrow concept than state capacity. Others have conceptualized and measured domestic capacity more broadly in terms of physical infrastructure development as well as institutional development (e.g. Gray 2014). In Section 3.4 I discuss a number of measurement approaches for this variable.

[10]Of course, potential effects of prestige projects on national pride likely accrue unevenly across different

value these projects or interpret them as signals of present or future material gains. Alternatively, prestige projects could prompt citizens to positively evaluate their nation relative to neighboring groups (Frank 1985) or as a member of the international system, as low-capacity recipients typically have lower regional and international recognition (Evans and Kelley 2002; Malcolm 2001). Regardless of the precise mechanism, symbolic benefits of prestige projects should be magnified in low prestige capacity countries that lack preexisting prestige markers, and for which the added value of a prestige project is thus relatively high.

In contrast, externally-financed prestige projects are on average less valuable for individuals in higher prestige capacity states. What constitutes prestige, and how one obtains it (e.g. through demonstrating competence or warmth), is heavily dependent on local environments (Fiske et al. 2002; Torelli et al. 2014). Higher-capacity countries already possess many of the trappings of modern nation states or, if not, are simply more likely to have the ability to finance prestige initiatives without external assistance. Citizens of these countries may derive fewer benefits from prestige projects, and thus the potential domestic political value of these projects may be marginal or even net negative.

Third, leaders of low prestige capacity countries thus have strong political incentives to pursue prestige projects.[11] Perceived prestige deficits are likely to be more severe for these states and can reflect poorly on the leadership (Wood 2014). Prestige development projects offer otherwise unavailable opportunities to increase national prestige as well as support

individuals (Bornman 2006). For example, members of privileged ethnic groups may derive more utility from national projects. Relatedly, Van Hilvoorde, Elling, and Stokvis (2010) suggest international sporting successes only enhance the utility of individuals who already feel a strong sense of belonging to the state.

[11]Like their citizens, leaders may derive symbolic or other utility from prestige projects in addition to the instrumental political value of these projects emphasized here. Different leaders likely vary in their preferences for prestige conditional on personalities, cultural backgrounds, life experiences or other individual-level factors (Markey 1999; Byman and Pollack 2001; Horowitz and Stam 2014). Their ability to pursue these preferences similarly varies substantially due to institutional constraints (Geddes 1999; Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003). I take up the issue of regime type in Section 3.4. These sources of variation notwithstanding, I assume that on average leaders of low-capacity countries have greater instrumental use for prestige projects.

for incumbent governments (Death 2011).[12] Previous research demonstrates that recipient politicians use development projects to improve their domestic approval (Dietrich and Winters 2015; Guiteras and Mobarak 2016; Blair and Roessler 2018; Briggs 2019; Winters, Dietrich, and Mahmud 2018). Thus far, this evidence points to highly localized outcomes around project implementation sites. However, unlike the vast majority of international development projects, prestige projects by definition are nationally salient and visible to individuals situated in areas beyond local project sites. As such, even if an individual is not physically exposed to a prestige project, he or she is likely aware of the project's existence and public profile.

In particular, incumbent governments are likely to associate with prestige projects around key milestones, namely a project's groundbreaking or completion. Existing evidence suggests that completing development projects benefits incumbent political leaders (Briggs 2012; Weghorst and Lindberg 2013; Williams 2017), and these effects appear particularly salient for visible projects with tangible site locations (Marx 2018). Mayors and other local politicians derive political gains from holding project completion ceremonies (Cruz and Schneider 2017). As national projects, prestige projects create strong incentives for incumbent governments to seize upon key milestones. Project visibility peaks around these milestones, and recipient governments have greater control over prestige project visibility in terms of timing and content. As such, leaders may use visible ceremonies to associate prestige projects with broad national narratives as well as their own political achievements.

To the extent citizens positively associate prestige projects with national pride and the incumbent leadership, they may reward national leaders with higher levels of support. This recognition may be especially likely to accrue in the short run and around key project

[12]Of course, development finance is not the only channel for pursuing this strategy. For example, diplomatic exchange between leaders, an implicit process of mutual legitimization among states, can provide governments with similar benefits (Lee 2016a; Malejacq 2017).

milestones crafted by the national government.[13] In contrast, prestige and other development projects often create significant socioeconomic, political, and environmental externalities after their completion that may affect corruption, environmental conditions, inequality, or other outcomes, complicating the longer-term attitudinal effects of these projects (e.g. Broudehoux 2007).[14] To the extent these consequences harm the interests of government constituencies, prestige projects could ultimately result in lower net levels of prestige.[15]

Supply

If developing country politicians derive political benefits from prestige projects, then why do donor governments supply them? Donors have employed prestige development finance since the inception of modern foreign assistance. Both the Soviet Union and People's Republic of China (PRC) extensively financed prestige projects during the Cold War (Unger 2018; Chakrabarti 1982; Kilby 2017; Bartke 1989). Democratic donors such as Israel, Japan, and the UK have also financed a diverse set of prestige projects (Sugihara and Allan 1993; Levin 2015; Musa 2013; Ledger 2019). In the contemporary era, other than China, India's government is an important supplier of these projects.[16] Saudi Arabia,

[13] An alternative argument is that prestige projects will have no effects on citizens' political attitudes, or may even backfire if citizens instead perceive high-visibility projects as wasteful relative to more development-oriented activities. If so, project milestones could instead result in lower levels of net domestic prestige for recipient governments.

[14] Similarly, megaprojects are historically vulnerable to corruption given their high levels of government involvement, financial size, and degree of financial and operational complexity (Steinberg 1987; Locatelli et al. 2017).

[15] Politicians may also have incentives to situate prestige project milestones within important political windows so as to maximize potential prestige gains. For example, for countries with popular national elections, prestige projects are a potentially useful resource upon which incumbent national governments can attempt to draw upon during the lead up to elections (Faye and Niehaus 2012). Alternatively, depending on regime type, leaders may wish to associate broader national identity with their regime's political authority and thus situate prestige projects close to nationally meaningful events such as independence days, national days, or other official dates commemorating state history and identity (Lentz 2013).

[16] The Parliament Building and Salma Dam projects in Afghanistan offer prominent recent examples (Malone, Mohan, and Raghavan 2015; Nagheeby and Warner 2018).

Qatar, and other Arab donors have also financed numerous prestige projects across Middle Eastern countries (Rouis 2010; Waldmeier 2017).

However, similar to demand, the supply of prestige projects is highly variable across donors. What explains this supply-side variation? I argue that prestige projects have distinct attributes that make them an effective tool for eliciting diplomatic support from recipient countries; that recipients with low prestige capacity are most likely to provide this type of political support; and that donors with perceived international prestige deficits have arguably the strongest incentives to supply these projects.

Prestige projects have several unique features relevant for signaling donor support and transmitting expectations of reciprocity (Mauss 1967; Hattori 2001). First, by definition, prestige projects possess relatively weaker commercial and other motives that might otherwise cloud a donor government's political intent. Second, prestige projects are highly concessional and are usually gift-like in nature, placing minimal financial burdens on recipient governments. Third, as prestige projects are overwhelmingly located in capitals or other urban areas where the state is typically more powerful, and involve little or no transfer of fungible resources, they produce minimal risk of incentivizing opposition groups or rebels to challenge the incumbent government, particularly if the current leadership establishes an association with the project (Findley et al. 2011). Fourth, prestige projects, compared to other large, visible commercial projects, may produce less political risk for incumbent governments resulting from unfinished or abandoned projects (Williams 2017). Finally, donor governments are often willing to let recipient governments dictate important features of these projects' visibility, including the timing of project milestones as well as projects' architectural design (Ding and Xue 2015; Chang and Xue Forthcoming).

As such, prestige projects signal relatively unambiguous support from donor to recipient governments. But how do recipient governments respond to this support? Because these projects typically flow to low prestige capacity countries, reciprocity often takes the

form of diplomatic support. Lower-capacity states by definition have limited means of material reciprocity.[17] As such, donors are more likely to finance prestige projects to recipient governments that can increase their current support of the donor's international political interests.

However, if donors can simply purchase greater diplomatic support by funding prestige projects, why do only some donor governments pursue this strategy? I argue that donors with perceived international prestige deficits, or gaps between states' expected and actual levels of prestige (Wood 2014; Renshon 2016), will have stronger incentives to provide prestige projects because they attach a relatively large premium to the diplomatic support received in return. This intuition links to broader claims that rising powers' international standing develops more slowly than their objective capabilities (Gilpin 1983; Lebow 2008; Allan, Vucetic, and Hopf 2018; Goddard 2018). Diplomacy, which provides a host of informational, economic, and political benefits to governments, also serves as a basic form of social recognition of a state or its policies.[18] As such, states have consistently used diplomatic activities to increase their international prestige (Barston 2014; Kinne 2014). Incentives to employ diplomacy as a source of prestige may be particularly strong for states with perceived prestige deficits. For example, emerging powers often have difficulty rising up the international status ladder and may be especially interested in securing greater prestige via diplomatic support (Duque 2018).[19]

[17] In some cases, recipients situated in geostrategically valuable areas may possess the ability to make unique military concessions to donors. In general, however, the value of bilaterial military or economic concessions made by these states is limited.

[18] Again, symbolic utility in the form of international prestige is not a substitute for material utility. The two may co-exist, and symbolic utility may be desired in part for the expectation that it will lead to greater levels of future material utility.

[19] An alternative donor-side argument might posit that prestige projects primarily target "hearts and minds" among recipient or donor publics. While I do not rule out this possibility, I argue that these audiences are of secondary importance to donors (Wang 2003b; Pu and Schweller 2014; Gilady 2018). As emphasized above, recipient governments primarily craft prestige project narratives for their own political agendas, and it seems less likely that donors pursue these projects primarily to influence individual-level opinions in severely

Before proceeding, I briefly consider an alternative explanation for prestige project supply and demand: recipient- or donor-side commercial interests. Rather than attempts at national or international recognition, are these projects simply another channel for recipient politicians to reward members of their winning coalition or other key constituents? The nature of prestige projects arguably makes this unlikely. First, it is theoretically unclear why recipient politicians would choose highly visible projects rather than ask for less visible transfers if their primary objective was private goods provision. Second, because prestige projects are typically provided in kind, recipient governments are generally unable to reroute project resources. For example, Chinese-financed prestige projects are typically "complete projects" (成套项目) for which the donor provides all financing and construction (SCIO 2011; Chang and Xue Forthcoming).

As such, might donor-side commercial interests instead drive project allocation? This also seems unlikely since, as illustrated in Appendix F, Chinese-financed prestige projects are initially conceived by national governments (and are often requested by recipient governments). Only later do they involve competitive or semi-competitive bidding between multiple firms, suggesting that specific commercial actors do not drive initial project allocation. Moreover, as defined in this paper, prestige projects are typically financially smaller (and thus less lucrative) than more commercially-oriented development projects. The data introduced below reveal that the average prestige project size is $52.95 million (2010 USD), while the average size of a more commercially-oriented OOF project is $401.7 million.[20] Nonetheless, I investigate these and other alternative explanations below and in Appendix F.

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under-developed countries. While donor governments might hope to spotlight their prestige development projects at home or abroad to enhance their image, this too is arguably a supplementary consideration.

[20]The average non-prestige project commitment (including all OOF, ODA and "vague" projects which lack sufficient information to code as ODA or OOF projects) is $127.3 million. The average ODA project commitment is worth $39.91 million. These are potentially low estimates as projects with missing data on financial values may be smaller on average in terms of financial value.

3.3 Data on Chinese Government-Financed Prestige Projects

I assess the above claims using newly available data on Chinese government-financed development projects. Contemporary China is a useful application for testing theories about prestige projects. Though not a "new" donor, China's government reemerged as a major provider of development finance in the late 1990s (Brautigam 2009; Dreher and Fuchs 2015). Simultaneously, China's government has been pursuing greater international prestige commensurate with its growing material power (Kim 1992; Deng 2008; Larson and Shevchenko 2010; Schweller and Pu 2011; Fung 2019). Below I demonstrate that its provision of prestige and other development projects is large and spatially diffuse, offering variation in project allocation both across and within countries over time.

Nonetheless, measuring prestige-based behavior is difficult because actors' true intent, as well as the beliefs of their intended targets, are typically not observable. One strategy to help isolate prestige from other motivations is to focus on observable features relatively unique to prestige-seeking behavior (Paul, Larson, and Wohlforth 2014). For example, observational measures of prestige-related phenomena in international relations have typically relied on proxy variables, such as states' diplomatic links to other states (e.g. Neumayer 2008; Kinne 2014; Duque 2018). I use a similar approach in measuring prestige projects. The primary measure used in this paper is a narrow subset of project types widely believed to possess relatively high levels of prestige-based motives. This includes stadiums and other large sports facilities, convention and exhibition centers, various government buildings, hospitals, schools, performing arts venues, museums, parks, and hotels that are national in scope. In line with the above definition, prestige projects must also possess high

visibility and be a national-level project.[21]

This measure is intentionally narrow to isolate projects with relatively high prestige content. It thus does not provide exhaustive coverage of prestige projects as it excludes many "composite" projects that meet the above definition of prestige projects but likely include both significant prestige and other material motivations. Specifically, I exclude industrial parks, bridges, railroads, harbors and ports, airports, and hydropower projects even though the extant literature—and public statements from political leaders—strongly suggest these projects otherwise fit the definition of a prestige project. Focusing on a smaller set of less composite projects is more useful for trying to separate prestige motives from more instrumental ones that likely drive the allocation of large economic projects. However, to avoid dependence on a single measure, in robustness tests I employ two additional measures that capture a broader range of national, high-visibility projects (See Appendix G).

China's government does not publish sufficiently detailed information on its overseas development finance projects. As such, I measure prestige projects using AidData's Global Chinese Official Finance Dataset (version 1.0) (Dreher et al. 2017), a dataset developed with several colleagues. These data capture commitments of foreign aid-like projects that would qualify as Official Development Assistance (ODA) using OECD reporting standards, as well as other state-financed projects that do not qualify as ODA, from 2000–2014 (for details see Strange et al. (2017)). Using these data, I identify 211 prestige projects worth roughly $15 billion (2010 USD), or about 20% of China's ODA-like financing during the same period, across 69 countries.[22]

[21] I exclude subsequent donations of equipment to preexisting prestige projects; humanitarian and disaster relief assistance; Confucius Institutes or other Chinese cultural centers; housing projects; apartments for civil servants; and any type of project that is on the above list but is not national in scope, such as local schools or hospitals.

[22] A team of research assistants performed five rounds of prestige project coding, including an initial round of double-blind coding, to ensure that only projects that clearly meet the above criteria were codified as

Table 3.2 provides a breakdown of prestige projects by type. Government buildings and stadiums were the most prominent types of prestige projects. This set of projects accords with existing accounts of Chinese-financed prestige projects. For example, scholars have noted that China's prestige projects overseas include a "new government office building, a sports stadium or a conference centre" (Brautigam 2011), as well as "research centres, stadiums, large farms and large infrastructure projects" (Swedlund 2017). It also generally conforms with broader definitions of prestige projects that include convention halls and centers, marketplaces, office complexes, and parks (Harvey 1988). Figure D.1 maps the global distribution of Chinese government-financed prestige projects as well as other Chinese official finance projects. In Appendix F, I provide details on three example prestige projects. Table F.1 provides a list of countries that received Chinese-financed prestige projects during the study period.

Table 3.2: Distribution of Chinese-financed Prestige Projects by Type, 2000–2014

Type	**No. Projects**
Government building	85
Sports facility	49
School	28
Convention center	21
Hospital	11
Performing arts	7
Hotel	4
Museum	3
Other	2
Garden	1

prestige projects.

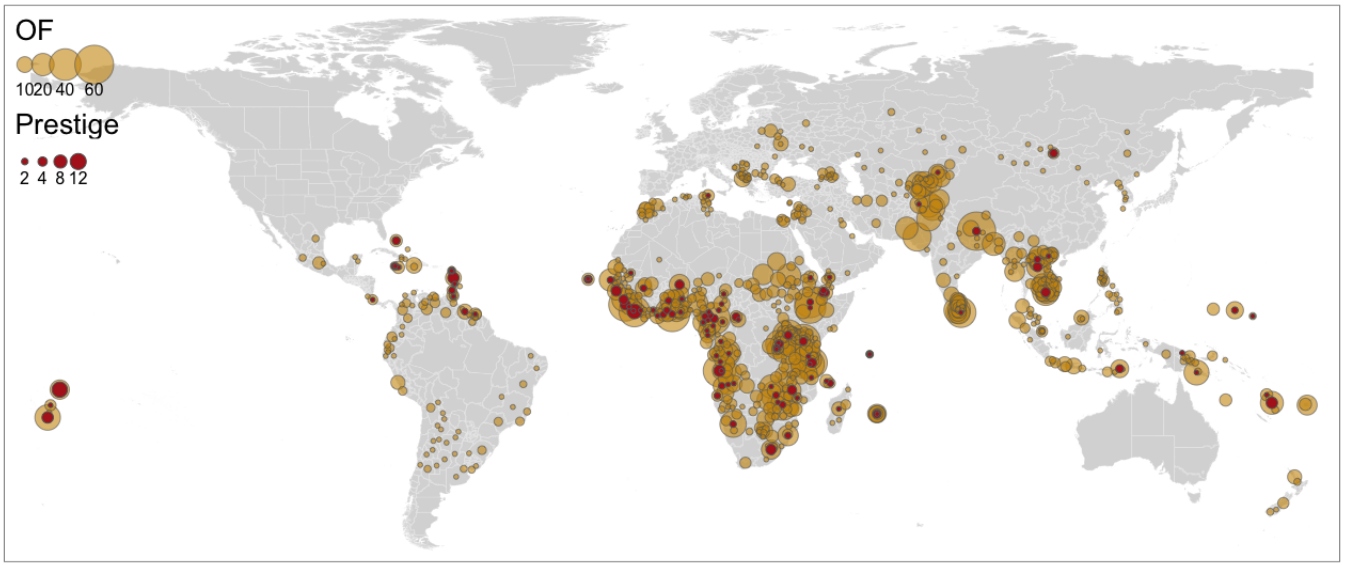


Figure 3.1: Chinese-financed Prestige Projects by Country, 2000–2014

3.4 Prestige Project Allocation

Using these data, I investigate the above arguments about the supply and demand of Chinese-financed prestige projects worldwide. While governments' true intent behind development projects is typically not observable, project allocation offers a useful, indirect measure of donor and recipient intent. Each analysis is benchmarked with analogous tests for other types of Chinese development projects.

I first test whether countries with lower prestige capacity demand and acquire more prestige projects. To measure capacity I first use GDP per capita (World Bank 2017). GDP is preferable to alternative metrics such as gross national income (GNI) here since I am interested more in a government's production ability, and since GDP per capita is typically used to compare levels of development across different countries. In alternative specifications, I instead proxy for domestic prestige capacity with measures of GDP, state capacity in terms of national tax revenue, and national power (Singer et al. 1972; Hendrix 2010; Beckley 2018).

Cross-national allocation of prestige projects is potentially confounded by a number of factors. As such, I include a set of economic and political covariates traditionally associated with development finance provision.[23] To account for trade relationships that might influence project allocation, I include the logged annual value of China's trade with each recipient country (Barbieri, Keshk, and Pollins 2008).[24] Second, given popular claims that Chinese "aid" to developing countries is primarily driven by natural resource extraction,

[23] Additionally, I include variables commonly included in regressions on aid allocation such as population, persons affected by disasters, and English language (World Bank 2017; OFDA/CRED 2018; Mayer and Zignago 2011). Because donors typically increase their humanitarian aid to disaster-afflicted areas, I include the logged total number of persons affected by disasters in a recipient country in a given year. I also account for the possibility that China's government provides more projects to English-speaking countries (or that data are more complete for English-speaking recipients).

[24] Trade salience (the ratio of a country's trade with China to its total trade), exports, and imports are used as alternative measures.

I include recipients' dependence on natural resource revenue.[25] Third, I include debt-to-GDP ratios as a measure of each state's creditworthiness, especially since China provides large amounts of loan-based finance, the allocation of which may depend on donor perceptions about states' repayment capabilities (Abbas et al. 2010).[26] Finally, I account for recipients' control of corruption (Kaufmann, Kraay, and Mastruzzi 2009). More corrupt governments might disproportionately seek prestige and other large development projects if these projects offer greater potential rents. Alternatively, to the extent corruption lowers average return on investment, higher corruption might deter donors from placing prestige projects in certain countries.

I also account for political factors that may shape project allocation. First, recipients who maintain diplomatic relations with Taiwan are much less likely to receive Chinese-financed projects, and I thus include a measure for Taiwan recognition (Rich 2009, extended by author). Second, democratic institutions might influence the allocation of Chinese development projects. For example, China may prefer to provide more development finance to less democratic states with institutions similar to its own or, alternatively, may prefer to finance larger commercial projects in more democratically stable environments. I thus include an index that combines states' degree of political rights and civil liberties as defined by Freedom House.[27] Alternatively, recipient regime type may drive demand for prestige projects. For example, leaders of highly personalistic regimes could have stronger desires for these projects and face fewer constraints in pursuing them. Another possibility is that leaders of authoritarian regimes use these projects to placate members of the winning coalition. To account for these possibilities, in alternative specifications I control for

[25] Alternatively, I use a binary variable coded as 1 if a country was a crude petroleum producer in the year before the start of the study period (See Easterly and Levine 2003).

[26] In an alternate specification I also control for annual FDI outflows from China to other countries.

[27] Alternatively, I employ revised combined polity scores (polity2) from the Polity IV project (Marshall and Jaggers 2002).

regime type by using measures that capture different kinds of democracies and autocracies (Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland 2010; Bjørnskov and Rode 2019).

Third, I include American foreign aid commitments, both in terms of ODA and total official finance, to account for the possibility that China's development finance is driven by major power competition.[28] Fourth, in case China provides more prestige projects to countries that align their foreign policy stances with its own, I include recipient countries' UNGA voting behavior vis-à-vis China (Bailey, Strezhnev, and Voeten 2017).[29] Finally, I include a measure of recipient states' temporary membership on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), as donors may provide more financing to temporary members (Dreher, Sturm, and Vreeland 2009). The below equation summarizes this approach:

$$Prestige_{i,t} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 Capacity_{i,t-1} + \beta_2 Commercial_{i,t-1} + \beta_3 Political_{i,t-1} + \alpha_t + \varepsilon_{it}$$

Where $Prestige_{i,t}$ is recipient country i's annual receipt of prestige finance in year t; $Capacity_{i,t-1}$ is recipient country i's annual domestic prestige capacity; $Commercial_{i,t-1}$ and $Political_{i,t-1}$ are vectors of country-year control variables; α_t represents year fixed effects; and ε_{it} is the error term. Unlike other recent studies on Chinese development finance, I do not use an instrumental variables strategy at the cross-national level. Available evidence suggests that concessional Chinese development finance projects improve short-term economic growth in developing countries, so reverse causality whereby Chinese prestige projects cause lower growth seems unlikely (Dreher et al. 2017).

Table G.1 in the appendix provides an overview of each measure used in the analysis. All monetary variables are normalized to constant 2010 USD millions. In the primary

[28] As a second measure, I also control for aggregate development flows from OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) members. I use the residuals of a regression of DAC aid commitments on the covariates discussed above, as in Dreher et al. (2012, 2018).

[29] I follow Kilby (2009)'s approach of using the relative distances between states' voting on all resolutions and "key" resolutions as defined by the U.S. State Department for a given year. Additionally, I use the overall percentage of vote congruence in a given year, and also consider only human rights votes (Flores-Macias and Kreps 2013).

analyses, all explanatory variables are lagged by one year.[30] Standard errors are clustered at the country level. The main specification uses a linear model and includes year fixed effects. Country fixed effects are excluded as I am primarily interested in testing for variation in prestige project allocation across countries, though Appendix F shows that including them does not change the substantive results.[31]

On the supply side, because data on prestige projects is only available for a single donor, I use similar models as above, but focus more on within-country changes in the supply of prestige projects as the capacity of recipients is fairly stable during the study period. In particular, I test two specific possibilities in the case of China. First, I examine whether switching diplomatic recognition from the Republic of China (Taiwan) to the PRC increases prestige project supply. Second, I test whether increased alignment on key UNGA votes yields a greater supply of prestige projects for recipient countries in future periods. These tests include country fixed effects to capture potential variation in project supply and recipients' diplomatic behavior over time. Though this approach is limited by the lack of detailed information on other donors' prestige projects, nonetheless, I am able to test whether donor motivations behind prestige projects are meaningfully different from those that influence the allocation of other projects.

The results of these analyses suggest a negative and significant association between prestige capacity and project allocation. Table 3.3 displays the results of a test for the allocation of projects across countries. Chinese government-financed prestige projects appear to flow disproportionately to countries with lower GDP per capita, GDP, state capacity, and national power. This lends support to the notion that prestige projects are most attractive for low prestige capacity countries. Analogous tests for other types of Chinese government-

[30] An exception is the variable for persons affected by disasters (See Dreher et al. 2018).

[31] In a separate test using ethnolinguistic fractionalization (ELF) indices, I examine whether leaders of more or less ethnically homogeneous societies pursue more prestige projects (La Porta et al. 1999). Results are null, and this variable is excluded from other specifications due to large amounts of missingness.

financed development projects (Table G.2) suggest that prestige projects follow a unique allocation pattern relative to ODA and OOF projects (Dreher et al. 2018). Moreover, as various tests in Appendix G illustrate, the results for prestige projects are strongest, whereas those for non-prestige flows are less consistent using alternative specifications and variable measures. In short, lower capacity recipient countries appear more likely than other developing countries to acquire prestige projects.

Table 3.3: Cross-national Allocation of Chinese Prestige Projects, 2000–2014

	Dependent Variable: Prestige Project (2010 USD Commitments)			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Prestige Capacity				
GDP per capita	-0.20^{***} (0.05)			
GDP		-0.19^{***} (0.05)		
Tax revenue			-0.09^{*} (0.04)	
National power				-0.10^{***} (0.02)
Commercial Factors				
Trade w/ China	0.09^{**} (0.03)	0.08^{*} (0.03)	0.08^{*} (0.03)	0.09^{**} (0.03)
Natural resources	0.001 (0.002)	0.001 (0.002)	−0.0004 (0.004)	0.001 (0.002)
Debt to GDP	−0.0002 (0.001)	−0.0002 (0.001)	0.0001 (0.001)	−0.0002 (0.001)
Control of corruption	0.001 (0.06)	−0.001 (0.06)	-0.14^{*} (0.06)	0.003 (0.06)
Political Factors				
Taiwan	-0.27^{**} (0.10)	-0.26^{*} (0.10)	−0.14 (0.16)	-0.27^{**} (0.10)
Democracy	−0.01 (0.01)	−0.01 (0.01)	−0.01 (0.01)	−0.01 (0.01)
US OF	0.02 (0.01)	0.02 (0.01)	0.02 (0.01)	0.02 (0.01)
UNGA voting	0.003 (0.08)	0.003 (0.07)	−0.01 (0.09)	0.003 (0.08)
UNSC	0.05 (0.11)	0.05 (0.11)	0.07 (0.12)	0.06 (0.11)
Observations	1,561	1,580	996	1,561
Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
R^2	0.07	0.06	0.06	0.07

Notes: Coefficients for the variables population, language and peoples affected by disasters are omitted from this table. $^{*}p<0.05$; $^{**}p<0.01$; $^{***}p<0.001$

To avoid dependence on any particular measures or specifications, I conduct a wide range of robustness checks detailed in Appendix G. The main results presented here are persistent across these alternative tests. For example, Table G.3 shows that the inclusion of

country fixed effects does not change the core findings. Moreover, I test for the allocation of development projects using a binary variable for the presence of a prestige project rather than the financial value of project commitments, and find similar results (Table G.4).[32] A separate potential concern is that certain types of prestige projects may be driving any potential results. Table G.5 illustrates that decomposing prestige projects into individual types generally does not alter the results (nor does focusing only on "public use" prestige projects wherein government buildings are excluded). Next, using alternative, broader measures of prestige projects produces generally similar results (See Table G.6). Alternatively, one might be concerned that the association between prestige capacity and prestige projects is largely driven by tiny island or other small countries. Table G.7 presents results of an analysis that excludes countries with less than 500,000 inhabitants, and helps ease this concern as results remain consistent. A separate potential concern is that a high occurrence of zeros in the time series cross sectional data might jeopardize the allocation analysis if many countries never receive a prestige project. I take several measures to mitigate this concern such as using poisson, negative binomial, and zero-inflated negative binomial models to test allocation with a count variable of projects. The results are unchanged.

These tests also offer little support for the alternative argument that prestige projects are primarily vehicles for corruption. Prestige projects do not flow heavily to countries with weak control over corruption. In contrast, it appears that large, commercially-oriented Chinese state-financed projects (OOF) are concentrated more heavily in more corrupt countries. This suggests that the corruption motive, if present, is perhaps stronger for larger commercial projects. Nor do recipients' regime type or political institutions appear to

[32]Dollar values are preferable in that they account for projects' financial size, but project counts are also useful as approximately 40% of Chinese-financed projects are missing information about their financial commitment size. This issue is far less severe for prestige projects, as 85% of these projects have detailed financial commitment amounts. I also use measures of prestige salience measured as the ratio of prestige financing to 1) recipient GDP and 2) total Chinese official finance and find consistent results (see Table G.8).

meaningfully influence the allocation of prestige projects. Tests using alternative measures suggest that prestige projects are not systematically more or less likely to flow to certain kinds of regimes. That prestige projects have proliferated across a wide variety of political systems suggests that these projects are not simply "pet projects" of dictators or otherwise less-constrained leaders. As national landmarks, in many cases these projects remain long after the tenure of specific political leaders. In addition, details on three example projects discussed in Appendix F further enforce these null findings and also provide little evidence for donor-side rent seeking as the primary driver of project allocation.

Table 3.4: Chinese Development Projects Abroad and Diplomatic Prestige

	Dependent Variable:			
	Prestige	ODA	OOF	OF
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Diplomatic Prestige				
Switch to PRC	1.684* (0.857)	−0.334 (0.175)	0.005 (0.257)	−0.462* (0.200)
Key UN voting	0.628* (0.311)	0.120 (0.444)	0.148 (0.399)	−0.116 (0.613)
Prestige Capacity				
GDP per Capita	−0.531* (0.233)	0.263 (0.396)	0.261 (0.465)	0.690 (0.537)
Controls				
Trade w/ China	0.126* (0.059)	−0.003 (0.089)	0.139 (0.079)	0.162 (0.107)
Natural resources	0.0004 (0.006)	0.002 (0.010)	−0.011 (0.009)	−0.007 (0.010)
Debt to GDP	−0.0003 (0.001)	0.002 (0.001)	0.002 (0.001)	0.004* (0.001)
Control of corruption	0.023 (0.122)	0.307 (0.177)	−0.024 (0.209)	0.040 (0.216)
Democracy	−0.033 (0.024)	0.012 (0.040)	0.007 (0.042)	0.021 (0.058)
US OF	0.017 (0.041)	−0.010 (0.063)	0.037 (0.100)	0.023 (0.093)
UNSC	0.045 (0.123)	−0.054 (0.118)	0.344 (0.221)	0.156 (0.246)
Observations	1,568	1,568	1,568	1,568
Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
Country FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
R^2	0.181	0.158	0.264	0.167

*Notes: Coefficients for the variables population, language and peoples affected by disasters are omitted from this table. *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001*

On the supply side, I present the results of tests for whether China allocates prestige projects in response to greater diplomatic support. Table 3.4 provides support for this

claim. It illustrates that when controlling for both country and year fixed effects, relative to other non-prestige development projects, prestige projects financed by China flow disproportionately to low prestige capacity states that increase their diplomatic support for China. First, states that abandon diplomatic recognition of Taiwan in favor of the PRC appear to oftentimes be rewarded with a prestige project in the following year. Figure 3.2 illustrates that, controlling for a range of covariates, the predicted probability of a state receiving a prestige project in a given year increases from 6% to 33% following diplomatic abandonment of Taiwan. Second, adjusting one's diplomatic posture to align more with China on "important" issues determined by the U.S. State Department and for which China and the U.S. often vote differently, also has a positive and significant effect on the likelihood of receiving a prestige project commitment.

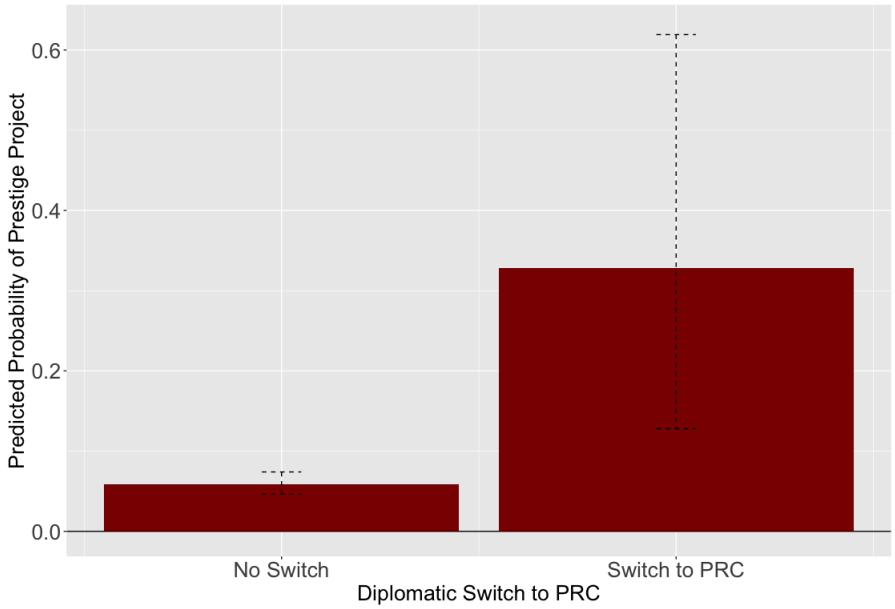


Figure 3.2: Predicted Probability of Receiving a Prestige Project for Diplomatic Switchers

3.5 Prestige Projects and Public Opinion

To further probe the political logic of prestige projects, I also test for potential effects of these projects on public attitudes toward recipient governments. Specifically, I investigate whether prestige projects have national-level effects on public opinion relative to other development projects, and are thereby more attractive for national leaders who are otherwise unable to finance such initiatives. I use global, respondent-level public opinion survey data from the Gallup World Poll (Gallup 2018). These data have been collected by Gallup since 2006 in over 140 countries and are commonly used by social scientists in examining cross-national public opinion (e.g. Deaton 2008). In particular, I focus on the following question as an outcome of interest: "Do you approve or disapprove of the job performance of the leadership of this country?" I merge these data with a recently updated Chinese official finance dataset that includes subnational, georeferenced project locations (Bluhm et al. 2020). The merged dataset covers nine years between 2006 and 2014 across 127 countries, and captures prestige projects in 66 countries.

Identifying potential effects of development projects on individual attitudes is problematic because project allocation is not random. For example, prestige projects are heavily concentrated capital cities and other areas where individual views on politics are not necessarily representative of the country as a whole. Similarly, the temporal allocation of prestige projects may be non-random.

To help mitigate this problem, I collected detailed information on the timing (including the exact day) of prestige project milestones that enables one to isolate individuals exposed to project milestones just before or just after being surveyed by Gallup. Exposure here refers simply to whether an individual resided in a country around the time of a prestige project milestone. Intuitively, this approach helps control for endogenous project allocation, and any potential effect of exposure to a prestige project should only register with

individuals who provided survey responses after exposure. I was able to codify day-level data for 74% of groundbreaking dates and 78% of completion dates for prestige projects included in the georeferenced dataset, which ensures that results are not dependent on a smaller set of potentially unrepresentative projects.[33]

Unfortunately, this is only a partial solution as the dates of Chinese development projects and Gallup polling windows do not overlap sufficiently to examine narrow time periods. Many countries contain no individuals exposed to a project before or after an interview within a reasonable time frame. An ideal strategy would be to conduct a longitudinal survey that for a given country includes many survey responses just before and after a project milestone. This would support a Regression Discontinuity in Time (RDiT) approach where the milestone date would serve as the running variable (Hausman and Rapson 2018). Treatment would begin at this date and include a narrow bandwidth of time. This strategy is obviously not financially or operationally feasible at a global scale. A separate working paper on Chinese-financed development projects and local public opinion adopts this strategy for a subset of countries that contain respondents interviewed just before and after project milestones (Wellner et al. 2020).

As such, in this paper I use two alternative strategies that utilize precise timing of project milestones. First, I simply compare attitudes of individuals surveyed just before and after project milestones for countries that contain these types of individuals. This approach assumes that individuals exposed to projects post- and pre- survey are similar in terms of country- and individual-level attributes. As Tables H.6 and H.7 illustrate, this limited sample of individuals is fairly well-balanced across individual-level covariates. Though, individuals in either group are located in diverse countries as evidenced in Table 3.2. I apply this approach and include country and region fixed effects in order to control for

[33]In contrast, the dataset includes only 25% and 20% of groundbreaking and completion dates for non-prestige projects.

unobserved confounding at these levels.

Second, I make use of the larger Gallup survey dataset (of nearly 1 million respondents) and include three groups of individuals: those exposed to a milestone just before being surveyed, those exposed just after being surveyed, and those not exposed, that is, individuals whose survey date did not fall within a specified number of days prior to or after a milestone. I then compare the coefficients for the post- and pre-survey variables. This approach builds on recent studies on the effects of Chinese development finance on local corruption in Africa (Isaksson and Kotsadam 2018; Isaksson 2019). Using this strategy, I focus on prestige project groundbreaking and completion dates as milestones.[34] Tables H.3 and H.4 shows that these individuals are fairly similar to the Gallup sample average across individual covariates and type of political system in country of origin, with the major exception that individuals exposed to prestige project milestones come from much poorer countries and rural regions within these countries. To ensure that results are not dependent on a particular specification, I test for effects with thresholds of 180 and 365 days. I include country and year fixed effects (separate tests also include regional fixed effects). Primary analyses use fixed effects linear models, though I also use logit models as alternative specifications. Standard errors are clustered by country. The primary model is thus:

$$Approval_{ict} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 PreInterview_{ict} + \beta_2 PostInterview_{ict} + \beta_3 X_i + \alpha_c + \delta_t + \varepsilon_{ict}$$

Where $Approval_{ict}$ is individual i in country c in year t's assessment of the national government; recipient country i's annual receipt of prestige finance; $PreInterview_{ict}$ is the pre-interview variable (e.g. exposure to a prestige project within 90 days before the interview); $PostInterview_{ict}$ is the post-interview variable (e.g. interview within 90 days before

[34]Unfortunately, project commitment dates are considerably more difficult to track using open sources and this information is unavailable for most Chinese-financed development projects. I thus do not include analyses using commitment dates.

exposure to a prestige project); X_i represents a battery of individual-level covariates; α_c and δ_t are country and year fixed effects; and ε_{ict} is the error term.

I employ several placebo tests to probe the validity of this strategy. First, I test whether prestige projects have local rather than national effects on recipient public opinion by examining project exposure at first-order administrative (ADM1) regions. If prestige projects are found to have local- rather than national-level effects on political attitudes, this would cast doubt over the political utility of these projects at the national level. Second, I test whether ODA projects, and non-prestige development projects more generally, have national-level public opinion effects. These projects possess lower levels of visibility and national salience, and their potential effects on public opinion should be local rather than national.

Across a range of tests, I find partial support for the hypothesis that prestige projects are associated with greater short-term domestic approval of the national government. Table 3.5 presents the results of a test for citizens' approval of their home government. Exposure to prestige project groundbreaking is associated with increased citizen approval of the national government (columns 1 and 2). This finding holds for windows of 90, 180 and 365 days. Data are especially poorly balanced and different exposure groups lack common support at the 90-day window, and thus results are omitted. Results are similarly positive and consistent when using the approach described above which only considers individuals exposed to project milestones and includes country, region and year fixed effects (See Table H.8).

In contrast, prestige project completion appears to have no short-term effect on public opinion towards the national government (columns 3 and 4). There are numerous potential empirical and theoretical reasons for this null finding. Empirically, data precision for completion dates is relatively poor: end dates in the TUFF dataset include some construction completion dates as well as opening ceremonies. However, these milestones are often qualitatively different. For example, opening ceremonies might not be held until months after

the end of construction. Theoretically, citizens may only "reward" or "punish" governments once for a given prestige project, and this effect may accrue after the project's start date. Another possibility is that leaders have less control over project completion dates and thus tend to invest in visibility-enhancing activities more around project groundbreaking dates. Finally, focusing on groundbreaking instead of completion arguably offers a cleaner test of the argument since potential externalities should only begin to accrue after project implementation begins.

Table 3.5: National Exposure to Prestige Projects and Attitudes towards National Government

	Dependent Variable: Approval of National Government			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Groundbreaking				
Pre-Interview (365)	0.05** (0.02)			
Post-Interview	−0.02 (0.05)			
Pre-Interview (180)		0.04* (0.02)		
Post-Interview		−0.02 (0.05)		
Completion				
Pre-Interview (365)			0.001 (0.03)	
Post-Interview			−0.05 (0.03)	
Pre-Interview (180)				−0.04 (0.07)
Post-Interview				−0.03 (0.03)
Observations	623,877	623,877	623,877	623,877
Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
Country FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
R^2	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13

*Notes: Coefficients for the variables gender, income, education, age, and urban residency are omitted from this table. *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001*

Multiple placebo tests offer support for these findings. Table H.1 presents the results of a test for potential public opinion effects of prestige projects at the ADM1 rather than national level. As this test compares individuals in exposed to project milestones before and

after surveys within the same country but in different regions, significant results would suggest that any potential effects of prestige project commencement or completion on political attitudes were confined to local regions. The results are uniformly null. Next, Table H.2 demonstrates that non-prestige projects, in this case ODA projects, appear to have no significant effects on public opinion at the national level, a finding that lends support to the notion that prestige projects are distinctly national in scope.

In summary, both sets of tests provide moderate support for the above arguments on the supply and demand of prestige projects. Several tests reported in the appendix highlight the robustness of these findings and underscore the distinct allocation and features of prestige projects relative to other development activities.[35] Of course, evidence from cross-national tests on its own cannot dispositively establish or dismiss causal links between prestige capacity and prestige projects. Rather, combined with additional evidence on the unique role of prestige projects for national public opinion, the cumulative results of these tests should offer reasonable confidence about the distinct supply and demand logics of prestige projects. It is encouraging that only prestige projects appear to register any type of national-level attitudinal effects, as this comports with the notion that these projects have unique national political utility for governments of low prestige capacity states. Finally, several specific details about a handful of example prestige projects in Appendix F provide additional supplementary evidence for these tests.

3.6 Conclusion

Morgenthau (1962) offered a prescient starting point for understanding the political logic of prestige projects and, more generally, the role of prestige in international devel-

[35]Besides the tests reported in the appendix, I conduct additional tests of robustness such as the inclusion of alternative lags as well as alternative variable measures listed in Table G.1. The results are consistent.

opment. However, subsequent progress has been limited: for several decades, policymakers and scholars have simply dismissed prestige projects as unproductive, irrational forms of behavior. The critical international reception of many contemporary Chinese-financed projects reflects this tendency: government buildings, stadiums, hydropower plants, transportation infrastructure, and other highly visible overseas development projects, many of which are part of China's massive and controversial Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), have been labeled as "white elephants" that do not contribute to development. Rather, they pose grave risks for governance, debt sustainability, environmental conditions, and norms that underpin the incumbent international development regime (Naím 2007). While these narratives may be accurate in some cases, they do little to explain the uneven proliferation of prestige projects in the Global South.

This paper offers a novel definition of prestige projects and a political explanation for their allocation from the perspective of recipient and donor governments. It suggests that the former attempt to leverage prestige projects for domestic prestige (in the form of popular approval), while the latter supply them to attain greater diplomatic support, often in issue areas related to donors' own quest for international prestige.[36] Analyzing original data on Chinese-financed development projects, I find that prestige projects are heavily concentrated in low prestige capacity countries and are more likely to flow to governments who adjust their diplomatic behavior in favor of donor countries. Further, prestige projects appear to be unique in their ability to engage national audiences in low-capacity developing

[36]Prestige projects are one of several ways in which donor governments can pursue prestige through development finance. To lessen perceived prestige deficits, donors could alternatively create entirely new development finance or other economic institutions (Lincoln 2004; Yang 2016; Chen Forthcoming; Stuenkel 2014). Alternatively, prestige-seeking donors may focus on publicizing bundles of projects that collectively generate headlines for massive aid pledges to one or more countries. For example, Japan actively publicized its growing foreign assistance programs in the 1970s and 1980s, including multi-billion dollar pledges by Japanese leaders before and after international summits and diplomatic visits (Yasutomo 1989). Finally, donors may attempt to generate prestige by creating new metrics and definitions. One example is Norway's efforts to promote the concept of aid as a percentage of GDP (van der Veen 2011; Wohlforth et al. 2018). These strategies are not mutually exclusive.

countries.

Of course, important theoretical and empirical limitations can be addressed in future work. For example, more research is needed to understand the nature of citizens' reactions to prestige projects. To what extent do citizens actually associate prestige projects with incumbent rulers, and do changes in attitudes stem from national pride or, alternatively, updated assessments of government authority or competence? Does this transmission mechanism vary across political regime types? In a follow-up study, I am addressing these questions using a field experiment that randomly varies which individuals within a low-capacity recipient country are exposed to prestige features (such as national salience) for a given development project. I then measure whether information about prestige projects affects citizen attitudes toward the project, as well as toward the host and donor government. The study also includes a placebo test that conducts the same experiment on a foreign government-financed prestige project in the United States. Pre-testing for these surveys is currently underway and the experiment will be fielded in March 2020. Complementary experimental surveys of donor publics in China, India, and the United States gauge donor citizen preferences for prestige versus non-prestige finance abroad.

Moreover, more granular information on Chinese-government financed development projects, particularly non-prestige projects, is needed to strengthen the validity of the above analysis on project allocation. Another working paper currently in progress addresses this data bottleneck and will provide additional milestone dates data for non-prestige projects in the AidData TUFF dataset (Wellner et al. 2020). Finally, though China is likely the largest current financier of prestige projects, future research could collect data on prestige projects financed by other countries. A similar approach could catalog earlier instances of Chinese-financed prestige projects before 2000.

These challenges notwithstanding, the findings of this study have important implications for broader international relations research. First, research on prestige and status

often focuses on the foreign security policies of major powers (e.g., Dafoe and Caughey 2016; Renshon 2017). But there is also abundant evidence that concerns for prestige motivate states' international economic behavior (e.g., Simmons and Elkins 2004; Carnegie and Samii 2019). This paper contributes to the literature by offering an explanation for prestige seeking in the Global South. Second, it also demonstrates how states can cooperate to seek prestige rather than invest in it unilaterally. In particular, I document a symbiotic process in which cooperation between two governments is a prerequisite for the emergence of prestige-driven development projects. A donor typically funds and constructs these projects, and a recipient government creates and manages the visibility of projects domestically.

Third, this study builds on existing research on aid and public opinion which has focused on highly localized, subnational outcomes.[37] Future work in this area might benefit from incorporating variation in development project visibility and national salience. In particular, prestige projects will likely continue to proliferate in the coming years. Development finance is an increasingly popular foreign policy tool: the number of bilateral aid donors has reached an all time high and evidence suggests that an important driver of this uptick relates to new donors' "desire to legitimise one's reputation as an advanced and influential state" (Gulrajani and Swiss 2017; Fuchs and Müller 2018). On the demand side, recipient governments will continue to attempt to leverage external development finance into nationally-relevant, high-visibility prestige projects.

Finally, this paper contributes to debates about the implications of the rise of China and other emerging powers in the international system (Johnston 2019), particularly in

[37]In focusing on relatively narrow temporal windows and providing granular data on project timing, my approach builds on earlier work on foreign aid and national-level public opinion which has difficulty establishing relationships between these variables given the multitude of factors at the individual-, region- and national-level that might confound potential associations (Goldsmith, Horiuchi, and Wood 2014; Tokdemir 2017).

the global development arena (Woods 2008). The findings suggest that understanding the nature and consequences of China's foreign economic policies requires careful decomposition of different types of government-sponsored activities. They also underscore the role of prestige in China's foreign relations, including its provision of development finance. The BRI and the newly created China International Development Cooperation Agency (国家国际发展合作署) both emphasize the link between development finance and China's international image and diplomatic influence. While China's government has publicly eschewed using aid for overseas "vanity projects" (形象工程), this paper shows that prestige financing remains an important tool for China and other emerging donors.[38] Future research can provide more theoretical and empirical innovations to study how the pursuit of prestige shapes the external behavior of emerging powers.

[38]Figure F.4 illustrates that the supply of Chinese government-financed prestige projects has remained relatively stable. Similarly, China's government maintained a steady supply of prestige project financing during the Deng Xiaoping era, a period during which Chinese development finance was scaled back considerably (Strange 2019).

A Appendix to Chapter 1: Descriptive Statistics

Table A.1: Descriptive Statistics for Variables Used in Regression Analysis

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Exchange	533	9.95	16.10	0.00	98.00
Reign Duration	533	0.52	0.29	0.02	1.00
Sons	533	11.17	10.88	0.00	35.00
Irregular Entry	533	0.29	0.45	0.00	1.00
Domestic Conflict	533	1.04	1.70	0.00	19.00
International Conflict	533	0.46	0.71	0.00	4.00
Pirate Attack	533	0.10	0.49	0.00	8.00
Uprising	533	0.72	1.16	0.00	10.00
Japan Conflict	533	0.03	0.29	0.00	5.00
Maritime Conflict	533	0.07	0.26	0.00	2.00
Imperial Military Action	400	0.47	0.76	0.00	5.00

B | Appendix to Chapter 1: Additional Tests

Table B.1: Reign Duration and Tribute Exchanges (Negative Binomial)

	Dependent Variable: Tribute Exchanges				
	Exchange				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
First Year	0.28*				
	(0.13)				
First 2 Years		0.33***			
		(0.09)			
First 3 Years			0.36***		
			(0.08)		
First 4 Years				0.35***	
				(0.07)	
First 5 Years					0.33***
					(0.07)
Domestic Conflict	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.01
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
International Conflict	0.02	0.03	0.04	0.03	0.04
	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)
Qing	−2.27***	−2.29***	−2.31***	−2.33***	−2.34***
	(0.20)	(0.20)	(0.20)	(0.20)	(0.20)
Constant	3.23***	3.21***	3.18***	3.18***	3.17***
	(0.12)	(0.12)	(0.12)	(0.12)	(0.12)
Emperor FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	530	530	530	530	530

*Notes: *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001*

Table B.2: Reign Duration and Tribute Exchanges (by Region, Ming only)

	Dependent Variable: Tribute Exchanges					
	EA	SEA	IOR	CA	NoA	SW
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
First 3 Years	0.48**	0.51	−0.03	0.33	2.55***	2.28**
	(0.19)	(0.29)	(0.19)	(0.28)	(0.66)	(0.74)
Domestic Conflict	0.04	0.10	−0.02	0.01	0.15	0.19
	(0.05)	(0.08)	(0.05)	(0.08)	(0.18)	(0.20)
International Conflict	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.35**	0.63*	0.32
	(0.08)	(0.13)	(0.08)	(0.13)	(0.30)	(0.33)
Constant	4.52***	1.58***	0.24	2.02***	8.56***	7.54***
	(0.23)	(0.37)	(0.23)	(0.36)	(0.82)	(0.92)
Emperor FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	273	273	273	273	273	273
R^2	0.68	0.70	0.36	0.68	0.77	0.80

*Notes: *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001*

Table B.3: Reign Duration and Tribute Exchanges (OLS, 1- and 5-Year Lags)

	Dependent Variable: Tribute Exchanges							
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Reign Duration	−0.45***				−0.46***			
	(0.07)				(0.07)			
Year of Reign		−0.01***				−0.01***		
		(0.002)				(0.002)		
First 3 Years of Reign			0.29***				0.31***	
			(0.06)				(0.07)	
First Half of Reign				0.23***				0.24***
				(0.04)				(0.04)
Domestic Conflict (t-1)	−0.001	0.003	0.001	0.001				
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.01)				
International Conflict (t-1)	−0.0003	0.01	0.001	0.001				
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)				
Domestic Conflict (t-5)					−0.02	−0.02	−0.01	−0.02
					(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
International Conflict (t-5)					−0.06	−0.07	−0.07*	−0.06
					(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Qing	−2.00***	−2.05***	−2.03***	−2.00***	−2.02***	−2.08***	−2.06***	−2.03***
	(0.16)	(0.16)	(0.16)	(0.16)	(0.16)	(0.16)	(0.16)	(0.16)
Constant	3.52***	3.38***	3.25***	3.17***	3.61***	3.49***	3.32***	3.26***
	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.11)
Emperor FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	532	532	532	532	528	528	528	528
R^2	0.83	0.83	0.82	0.83	0.83	0.83	0.83	0.83

*Notes: *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001*

Table B.4: Reign Duration and Tribute Exchanges (OLS, Alternative Conflict Measures)

	Dependent Variable: Tributary Exchanges			
	LExchange			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Reign Duration	-0.54^{***}			
	(0.08)			
Year of Reign		-0.01^{***}		
		(0.002)		
First 3 Years of Reign			0.28^{***}	
			(0.07)	
First Half of Reign				0.28^{***}
				(0.05)
Domestic Uprising (t-3)	0.03	0.04	0.04	0.03
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
Imperial Military (t-3)	-0.03	-0.04	-0.01	-0.04
	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)
Pirate Attack (t-3)	-0.06	-0.06	-0.11^{*}	-0.07
	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)
Maritime Conflict (t-3)	0.02	0.03	0.04	0.01
	(0.08)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.09)
Japan Conflict (t-3)	-0.05	-0.07	-0.09	-0.06
	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.08)
Qing	-1.89^{***}	-1.96^{***}	-1.96^{***}	-1.87^{***}
	(0.19)	(0.19)	(0.19)	(0.19)
Constant	3.55^{***}	3.41^{***}	3.21^{***}	3.14^{***}
	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.10)	(0.10)
Emperor FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	399	399	399	399
R^2	0.84	0.84	0.83	0.84

Notes: $^{*}p<0.05$; $^{**}p<0.01$; $^{***}p<0.001$

C | Appendix to Chapter 2: Primer on Late Imperial Maritime Trade

Though enormous political and socioeconomic changes occurred during late imperial China, including a transition from the ethnically Han Ming dynasty to the Manchu-ruled Qing in 1644, scholars have also noted important continuities across this period. For example, agriculture remained the primary pillar of the economy (Perkins 1969), government taxation was low relative to Japan and various European states (Sng 2014), and the empire faced diverse threats along its vast frontiers (e.g. Perdue 2009a; Mosca 2013; Po 2018). The empire's stance on maritime trade was not such an example, and outward trade policies were highly unstable: as illustrated in Figure C.1, beginning in the Song dynasty, the imperial government fundamentally reversed maritime trade policies on numerous occasions (Chao 2005; Wang and Ducruet 2013).[1]

Closure of outward maritime trade often came in the form of "sea bans" (海禁). In this paper I refer to sea bans as imperial policies that explicitly prohibited, or severely restricted, commercial maritime imports or exports with non-Chinese peoples, though these policies often also had profound implications for maritime trade between Qing provinces.[2] Trade

[1]Trade policy oscillation in late imperial China had historical precedent. Throughout the preceding Song (960-1279) and Yuan (1279-1368) dynasties, China's outward commercial trade flows—and the imperial regime's policies that attempted to govern them—were also inconsistent.

[2]Bans were sometimes called "Foreign bans" (洋禁). I use "sea ban," "maritime ban," and "trade ban" interchangeably. Scholar often refer to bans as symbolic examples of imperial China's policy of economic autarky known as "Locking the country" (闭关锁国).

bans differed in their specific conditions, such as what regions and types of trade were subject to restrictions, as well as their duration and degree of government enforcement.[3] Following policy reversals, Chinese outward trade volumes similarly ebbed and flowed, both in macroeconomic terms as well as across different areas of the empire. In addition to these major policy shifts, frequent adjustments—often specific to certain subnational regions, commodities, or other dimensions of trade—were made during and between bans. Analogous bans and restrictions were chronically enacted and subsequently lifted on trade flows along the empire's continental frontiers (Perdue 2009b).

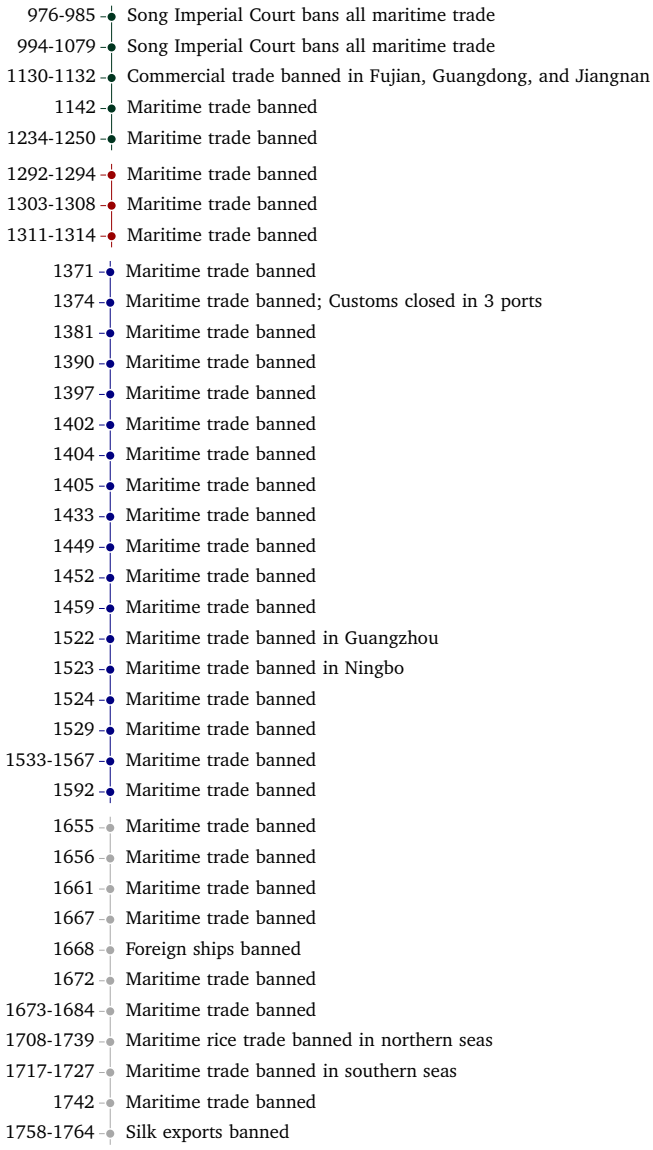
For over two decades in the late twentieth century, historians debated the extent to which late imperial trade policies were "open" or "closed" (Chen 2002). The most common approach has been to decompose Ming and Qing trade policies into three periods each, ranging from 20-100 years (Wan 2000). Wan (2000)'s book on late imperial maritime trade policies carves trade policies of the Ming and Qing into 6 periods, the shortest lasting 32 years and the longest lasting roughly 140 years. She summarizes Ming trade policies as relatively open and Qing policies as closed. Wan (1995) had also sliced early Ming policies between periods of formation (1368-1384), effective implementation (1384-1433), and adjustment and transition (1433-1509). Wang (2001) similarly splits Qing maritime trade policies into three periods: maritime ban, openness, and closed. Chinese historians often note that the spirit of the sea ban remained in the minds of Qing strategists long after its extinction (Wang 1983; Huang 2000). Others point out that while trade was certainly geographically restricted, the Qing by no means pursued a closed door policy after 1755 (Guo 1982).[5] While these categorizations provide more detail than simply labeling a dynasty's policy as "open" or "closed," they too present a rather static image of trade policies. Dur-

[3]For example, some bans were accompanied by aggressive enforcement tactics such as closing maritime customs offices and burning commercial vessels that were found illegally smuggling. Other bans involved little or no enforcement.[4] A few bans lasted only a year or two, while others persisted for decades.

[5]Wan (1995) and Lai and Li (1980) similarly slice policies into three periods.

ing and since these debates, scholars have marshaled a rich stock of evidence that China's actual policies governing seaborne trade were more nuanced than a binary categorization allows. The consensus is that late imperial trade policies changed often and were highly multidimensional. That the sea ban was a stylized summary of Ming (Wan 2009; Szonyi 2017) and Qing (Xu and Long 1992; Huang 1986; Wan 2000) trade policies, and often times not an accurate one, is well recognized among researchers.

Extant research in history and political science provides clues, but no definitive answers, for the consistent variation across Ming and Qing maritime trade policies. Historians have conducted extremely insightful analyses on both the Ming and Qing that forcefully debunk the popular myth of late imperial Chinese autarky. For example, Li (2010) demonstrates that the Ming's gradual maritime opening was merely one component of a larger changes in Ming foreign policy. Chao (2005) attributes Ming trade bans to a combination of factors including changing levels of security threats on the frontiers of the empire and regime financial concerns regarding currency outflows and fiscal security. Wan (2000)'s voluminous study is one of the few attempts to tackle both Ming and Qing maritme trade, carving a four-hundred year period into several discrete trade policy eras. In a meticulous study of Qing ocean strategy, Zhao (2013) documents how the Qing maritime opening beginning in 1684 helped produce an Asian international trading system distinct from Western processes of globalization. Po (2018) also contributes to the empirical record on Qing maritime trade policies with his study on the empire's broader maritime engagement.



Source: Veritable Records; Various secondary literature cited in this section.

Figure C.1: Purported Maritime Bans in China, Song through Qing Dynasties

D | Appendix to Chapter 2: Descriptive Statistics

Source: Pryaltonian / CC BY-SA (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0). Note that provincial and viceroy boundaries depicted in the map are as of 1820.

Figure D.1: Depiction of Qing Provinces and Viceroys

Table D.1: Descriptive Statistics for Covariates in Primary Analyses

	Min	Max	Mean	Sd	Var	Median
Central Position	0.00	1.00	0.18	0.38	0.15	0.00
Coastal Position	0.00	1.00	0.64	0.48	0.23	1.00
Military	0.00	1.00	0.19	0.39	0.15	0.00
Ethnicity	0.00	1.00	0.63	0.48	0.23	1.00
Rank	4.00	13.00	10.94	2.42	5.88	12.00

E | Appendix to Chapter 2: Additional Tests

Table E.1: Central Office and Support for Maritime Trade Openness (Logit)

	Outcome: Support for Trade Openness	
	(1)	(2)
Central Position	-2.48^{***} (0.77)	-3.20^{***} (1.10)
Han Chinese		1.45^{***} (0.52)
Military		1.06^{*} (0.59)
Rank		0.14 (0.10)
Constant	0.08 (0.20)	-2.55^{**} (1.23)
Emperor FE		
Observations	122	101

Notes: $^{*}p<0.05$; $^{**}p<0.01$; $^{***}p<0.001$

Table E.2: Reasons for Maritime Trade Policy Preferences

	Outcome: Support for Trade Openness
Domestic Unrest	-0.46^{**} (0.19)
Foreign Threat	0.04 (0.22)
Non-State Threat	-0.11 (0.18)
Merchant Revenue	-0.55^{***} (0.18)
Government Revenue	0.24 (0.17)
Food Security	0.36^{**} (0.15)
Economic Welfare	-0.11 (0.17)
Constant	2.09^{***} (0.12)
Observations	158
R^2	0.21
Adjusted R^2	0.17

Notes: $^{*}p<0.05$; $^{**}p<0.01$; $^{***}p<0.001$

F | Appendix to Chapter 3: Additional Details on Prestige Projects

Examples of Prestige Projects

Case Selection

In this section I briefly detail three projects financed by China's government in recent years that are generally representative prestige projects as defined in this paper. These example projects are designed to 1) further examine project details relevant for intermediate observable implications of the above arguments; and 2) scrutinize alternative explanations for the allocation of prestige projects related to commercial interests and recipient political institutions.

I selected example projects based on multiple criteria. First, I chose projects in three different recipient political systems in different regions of the world: a stable democracy (Costa Rica); a fragile democracy (Burundi); and a non-democratic regime (Laos). This sampling thus provides a window into project allocation across diverse regime types and localities. Second, I detail three different types of projects: a national stadium, a presidential palace, and a national conference center. Third, I chose examples for which sufficient English- and Chinese-language secondary sources were available.

These cases are meant to be illustrative examples rather than rigorous tests. Though, they also enable one to examine several intermediate observable implications of the argu-

ments outlined in Section 2.2. For example, prestige projects should aesthetically reflect the national identity of the recipient country (as opposed to the donor country). Second, project milestones and related public ceremonies should be centered on recipient national pride, and should also involve incumbent leaders associating their authority with these national projects. Third, and relatedly, recipient governments should deploy or encourage national and international media coverage of these milestones. Fourth, donor governments should derive international diplomatic benefits related to the supply of these projects.

Certain details about the below example projects are also relevant when considering alternative explanations for the supply of prestige projects. As discussed above, one possibility is that prestige projects are primarily allocated based on recipient- and/or donor-side private commercial interests. For example, corrupt regimes may allocate parts of these projects (such as construction contracts) to politically important firms, or may simply divert resources earmarked for projects toward private goods provision. On the donor side, if prestige projects in particular are used by donor governments to provide rents to important political actors, then one would expect the bidding process for prestige project contracts to be relatively noncompetitive.

In general, each of the three projects provides evidence that prestige projects are aesthetically designed with recipient nationhood in mind. Second, while not extensively detailed below, each project was highly publicized by the recipient and donor governments during various project milestones. Third, while information is publicly unavailable in some cases, available evidence suggests that these projects offer minimal opportunities for corruption. On the recipient side, all three projects were provided without the transfer of resources to recipient governments or firms. On the donor side, project bidding appears to be competitive, at least in these cases. Moreover, the emphasis on completing quality projects punctually and under budget suggests that many prestige projects are not channels for transferring resources to be rerouted for private goods distribution. There is also an

emphasis on project functionality in all three cases. China's government often performs upgrades and maintenance years after facilities are put into use.

Project 1: National Stadium of Costa Rica

As outlined in the introduction, China's government gifted Costa Rica its new national stadium (哥斯达黎加国家体育场), a major national project which was reportedly first negotiated in late 2007. Construction began in 2009 and the stadium opened in March 2011. The stadium reportedly cost a total of $110 million (540 million CNY) and was built on the grounds of the previous stadium, adjacent to La Sabana Metropolitan Park in downtown San José, the largest urban park in Costa Rica. More recently, in late 2018 the governments of China and Costa signed an agreement for China's government to assist in upgrades related to the stadium's fire protection, security systems, and emergency electricity supply (ECCO 2018).

The stadium was clearly designed to aesthetically appeal to Costa Rican nationhood. The use of national symbols and metaphors has more generally been a common feature of China's "stadium diplomacy" over the past several decades (Chang and Xue Forthcoming). Costa Rica's national stadium was designed to visually reflect the country's unique position as a coastal nation with a large number of active volcanoes. The stadium has an "ocean sail" (海之帆) design that evokes sail boats, and includes a 300-meter steel arch that resembles part of a sailboat when viewed from the side. In contrast, from an overhead view, the stadium resembles a volcanic crater (Chang and Xue Forthcoming). Figure F.1 shows the inside of the stadium.

Beyond its design, details about the stadium project generally accord with above arguments about the supply and demand of prestige projects. As discussed in the introduction, Costa Rica's incumbent leadership made active use of the stadium's groundbreaking and completion ceremonies. In doing so the government associated its own achievements with

the national stadium. Additionally, the project was highly visible from a publicity standpoint, with major Costa Rican media coverage around the groundbreaking and opening of the stadium which involved speeches focused on Costa Rican national development and the leadership's achievements. Also alluded to above, the stadium was committed by China's government as a foreign assistance project along with a larger package of projects shortly after Costa Rica's government announced its adherence to the One China Policy and cessation of diplomatic ties with the Republic of China. Besides the Taiwan issue, Costa Rica's government was one of the first Central American countries to recognize China's market economy status and, more recently, to join China's Belt and Road Initiative.

Source: CSADI

Figure F.1: National Stadium of Costa Rica

In contrast, details surrounding the project's construction suggest that resource transfers or other types of corruption were not important motivating factors. The stadium was a "complete project" donated by China's government. All design and construction work was carried out by Chinese firms, and Costa Rica's government did not actually receive funds or other resources for the project that could be transferred to domestic construction or other firms (or diverted as a form of political corruption). On the donor side, China's government, namely the Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM), oversaw a bidding competition between

six Chinese design firms invited to propose designs for the project. The government's decision process was closed to each of the six bidders. In an interview, the project lead for the winning bid submitted by Central South Architectural Design Institute (中南建筑设计院), or CSADI, suggested that his team was able to win the bid because they proposed a design that reflected local society and culture, and because they were able to produce a realistic work plan using a tight budget. Similarly, six Chinese construction firms bid for the construction contract. Anhui Foreign Economic Construction Group (中国安徽外经建设集团公司) received the bid over competitors including China State Construction Engineering Corporation (中国建筑工程总公司) , Beijing Construction Engineering Group (北京建工集团), and Shanghai Construction Group (上海建工) (MOFCOM 2008).

Project 2: Burundi Presidential Palace

China's government agreed to build a new presidential palace for Burundi's government (布隆迪总统府), one of the most prominent Chinese-financed projects in the country. Construction began on November 25, 2015, and primary external construction operations were completed roughly 10 months later on September 30, 2016, while interior work was mostly finished in mid 2018 (Wang 2017). The building was officially handed over to the Burundian government on February 14, 2019. It sits in the Gasenyi area just north of Bujumbura, the largest city (and former capital) of Burundi (Nininahazwe 2018). The palace reportedly cost 150 million CNY ($22 million) to construct (Akwei 2019).

From the government of Burundi's perspective, the palace is a landmark structure for a severely resource-constrained bureaucracy. Securing a basic marker of the nation state appears to have been a major concern for Burundi's leadership: The previous presidential palace was a building that had been leased from the National Social Security Academy over forty years ago, and for which the government never obtained property rights (Wang 2017). Few details about the logic of the building's aesthetic design are publicly available,

however, as suggested by project stakeholders' accounts as well as the buildings exterior design displayed in Figure F.2, the palace was meant to be a highly modern government office. The palace includes approximately 10,000 square meters of office space designed to house the offices of the president, two vice presidents and a work team, and includes modern amenities throughout (Akwei 2019).

The palace project suggests that at least some prestige projects are not motivated by short-term electoral or other political goals. Burundi's government began requesting assistance for the presidential palace as early as 2009. China's government announced its commitment for the palace in September 2013, with plans for 2014 construction, suggesting that construction was not initially linked to short-term political stability for Nkurunziza after the elections in 2015 (Yu 2013; Xinhua News Agency 2013).[1] Nonetheless, recent news suggests the leadership views the palace as having important national political value. President Nkurunziza renamed the palace (along with the national airport) to "remind Burundians of their history," a move that analysts suggest was also done to obfuscate contributions to national development made by the minority Tutsi community (Wang 2019).

From the donor perspective, Burundi and China have maintained stable diplomatic relations since 1963 and Burundi has generally been supportive of recent major Chinese diplomatic initiatives. For example, like many other African states, Burundi has signed on the China's Belt and Road Initiative. Burundi, though completely landlocked, was also one of 68 countries that diplomatically supported China during the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague's ruling over the Philippines' claims against China's maritime territorial

[1]Burundi democratized after the conclusion of an extremely bloody and prolonged civil war between majority Hutus and minority Tutsis in 2005, though in recent years these earlier democratic gains have increasingly been threatened by authoritarian tactics employed by the government of President Pierre Nkurunziza, who has remained in office since 2005. Nation-wide unrest broke out in April 2015 after Nkurunziza announced plans to run for reelection, resulting in dozens of deaths and flows of thousands of refugees to neighboring states. In May an opposition general announced over the radio that Nkurunziza hasd been ousted, though the leader survived the coup attempt.

Source: Face2Face Africa

Figure F.2: Burundi Presidential Palace

claims in the South China Sea.[2] Of course, this is not to suggest that any public statements or documents by either government explicitly link any of this behavior to the palace or other specific projects.

Publicly available information on the project's financial details and construction, while limited, suggests that recipient- or donor-side corruption were unlikely to be primary motives for the palace project. As with Costa Rica's national stadium, Burundi's presidential palace was a complete project financed and implemented by Chinese government agencies and firms. Available evidence suggests that MOFCOM's standard bidding procedures were used. The building was designed by Beijing Institute of Architectural Design (北京市建筑设计研究院), constructed by contractor Hunan Construction Engineering Group (湖南省建筑工程集团), and supervised by Tianjin Development Zone Construction Engineering

[2]AMTI Leadership, 'Arbitration Support Tracker', Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative.

Supervision Company (天津开发区建设工程监理公司) (Wang 2017). Zeng Qiang, the project lead from Hunan Construction Engineering Group, emphasized during an interview that unlike in the case of Costa Rica—in which domestic environmental standards were higher—his team was able to construct the entire presidential palace using Chinese standards for exterior and interior construction including air conditioning, fire safety, and security systems.[3]

Project 3: Laos International Conference Center

In 2011 China's government agreed to construct an international conference center for the government of Laos, one of only a handful of incumbent communist governments worldwide, as a foreign assistance project.[4] Construction began on December 31, 2011, with an initial projected completion date of October 30, 2012, but was instead finished 20 days ahead of schedule on October 8 (Zhu 2012). The Lao International Conference Center (老挝国际会议中心) is located in Vientiane and is locally referred to as the national conference center. The project, according to China's government, was provided as a non-repayable gift from China's government (Xinhua News Agency 2012). While details on the initial overall cost are opaque, according to China's consulate general in Vientiane, expenses for recent upgrades alone were over $10 million (78 million CNY), which is being used to construct 20-, 80-, and 1000-person banquet halls (Consulate-General 2017). It covers an area of seven hectares and contains 25,000 square meters of building space able to accommodate 3,000 people (Xinhua News Agency 2012).

Laotian cultural and architectural elements are visually embedded within the confer-

[3]Zeng also mentioned that the constriction of the palace created 300 local jobs, and that 100% of construction work was performed by Burundian workers (Wang 2017).

[4]Officially the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR), Laos has been a non-democracy since its independence in 1953 and today has a single-party, socialist political system.

Source: China State Construction Engineering Corporation

Figure F.3: Laos International Conference Center

ence center's design.[5] According to the project's Chinese executive director, the conference center was aesthetically designed primarily to reflect Lao culture and embody a modern architectural style. For example, it makes extensive use of glass curtain doors and modern lighting fixtures, and was also designed to for Laos' government to use for at least 30 years without becoming architecturally dated. Figure F.3 displays a projected image of the center. The structure is over 30 meters high at certain points. A MOFCOM representative emphasized that an important consideration for providing the project was the weakened state of Laos' domestic infrastructure (Yin 2012). Moreover, a major short term objective was to complete the project in time for Laos' government to host the 9th Asia-Europe Meeting Summit (ASEM) in November 2012.

As with the previous two example projects, the conference center was provided as a complete project and thus the government of Laos did not receive any fungible resources

[5]The building also contains some elements of Chinese culture, for example, in the design of certain windows and doors.

for its construction. On the Chinese side, publicly available information does not clarify the degree of competitiveness in bidding for the project's design and construction rights. The project was initially agreed upon in August 2011. China State Construction (中国建筑) was awarded the bid to construct the center as a contractor by MOFCOM in September 2011 (CSCEC 2011). After being notified of its successful bid and MOFCOM's invitation to construct the project, it sent a 50-person team to Vientiane for preparation work (Yin 2012). China IPPR International Engineering (中国中元国际工程) was contracted to design the project in 2011 and sent a work team to survey later that year (IPPR 2011). China IPPR subsequently successfully bid for a design contract for the extension of the conference center, including a new banquet hall, in 2017 (CCBuild 2017). China's government had already provided initial updates to the center in 2014, which were overseen by MOFCOM and designed to enhance the functionality of the building.

Additional Descriptive Statistics on Prestige Projects

Table F.1: Chinese-financed Prestige Projects by Country, 2000–2014

Country	No. Projects	Country	No. Projects
Samoa	9	Zambia	3
Liberia	8	Zimbabwe	3
Dominica	7	Burundi	2
Ghana	7	Costa Rica	2
Laos	7	Djibouti	2
Guinea-Bissau	6	Grenada	2
Mozambique	6	Guyana	2
Tonga	6	Maldives	2
Uganda	6	Mauritius	2
Vanuatu	6	Micronesia	2
Côte D'Ivoire	5	Mongolia	2
Lesotho	5	Seychelles	2
Malawi	5	Trinidad & Tobago	2
Rwanda	5	Yemen	2
Angola	4	Afghanistan	1
Cambodia	4	Algeria	1
Cameroon	4	Bangladesh	1
Cape Verde	4	Belarus	1
Namibia	4	Benin	1
Nepal	4	Botswana	1
Niger	4	Central African Republic	1
Sierra Leone	4	Chad	1
Tanzania	4	Comoros	1
Antigua & Barbuda	3	Republic of Congo	1
Bahamas	3	Egypt	1
East Timor	3	Eritrea	1
Equatorial Guinea	3	Ethiopia	1
Gabon	3	Kyrgyz Republic	1
Guinea	3	Madagascar	1
Jamaica	3	Morocco	1
Kenya	3	St. Lucia	1
Mali	3	Sudan	1
Papua New Guinea	3	Suriname	1
Senegal	3	Tunisia	1
Sri Lanka	3		

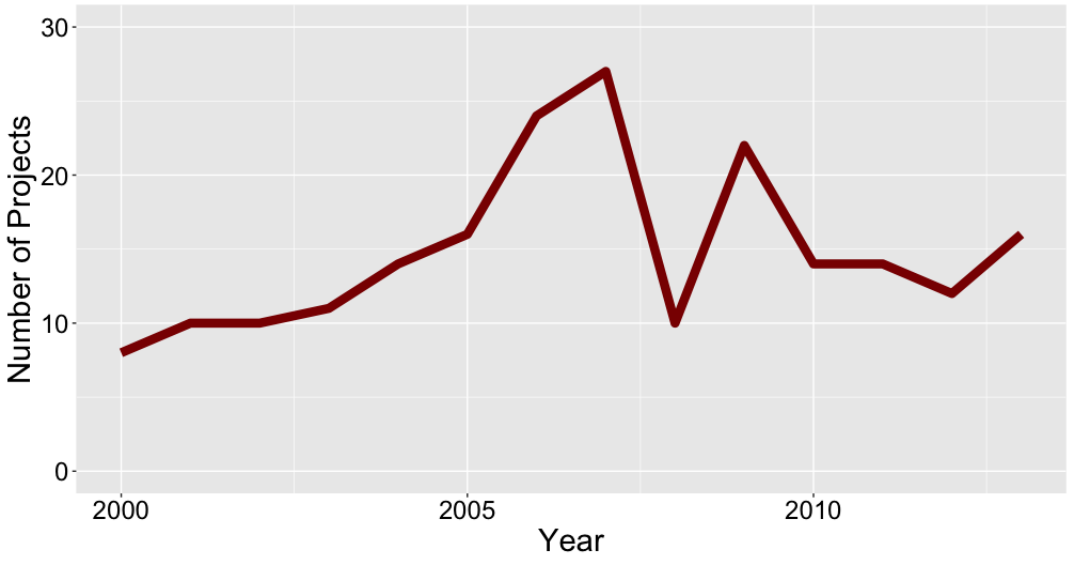


Figure F.4: Chinese-financed Prestige Projects by Year, 2000–2014

G | Appendix to Chapter 3: Additional Tests of Project Allocation

Table G.1: List of Variables and Data Sources

Variable	Measure	Source
Prestige projects	Value (logged 2010 USD)	See Section 3.3; Dreher et al. (2017);
	1 = prestige project	Bluhm et al. (2020)
	1 = prestige project (alt. measure #1)	
	1 = prestige project (alt. measure #2)	
	Value (logged 2010 USD)	
Prestige capacity	GDP per capita (logged 2010 USD)	World Bank (2017)
	GDP (logged 2010 USD)	World Bank (2017)
	State capacity (tax revenue)	World Bank (2017)
	GDP per capita*GDP	World Bank (2017); See Beckley (2018)
UNGA voting	"Friend" of China	Bailey, Strezhnev, and Voeten (2017);
	Percentage of "important" same votes	See Kilby (2009)
	Percentage of same votes	
	Percentage of same human rights votes	
	Absolute ideal point distance	
UNSC	1 = UNSC membership	Dreher, Sturm, and Vreeland (2009)
Taiwan recognition	1 = diplomatic relations with Taiwan	Rich (2009, extended by author)
	1 = new diplomatic relations with PRC	
US aid	US OF (logged 2010 USD)	OECD (2019)
Trade	Total trade w/ PRC (logged 2010 USD)	Barbieri, Keshk, and Pollins (2008)
	Chinese imports (logged 2010 USD)	
	Chinese exports (logged 2010 USD)	
	Salience (China trade / total trade)	
US Trade	Total trade w/ US (logged 2010 USD)	
	US imports (logged 2010 USD)	
	US exports (logged 2010 USD)	
	Salience (US trade / total trade)	
Natural resources	Natural resources rents (% GDP)	World Bank (2017)
	1 = produced oil in 1999	British Geological Survey (2016)
Debt-to-GDP	Ratio of debt to GDP	Abbas et al. (2010)
Political institutions	Level of democracy (sum of political rights and civil liberties scores)	Freedom House (2018)
	Polity 2 scores	Marshall and Jaggers (2002)
	Regime type	Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland (2010); Bjørnskov and Rode (2019)
Corruption	Control of corruption index (-2.5—2.5)	Kaufmann, Kraay, and Mastruzzi (2009)
Population	Population (logged)	World Bank (2017)
Disasters	Total affected by disasters (logged)	OFDA/CRED (2018)
English language	1= first official language is English	Mayer and Zignago (2011)
Election dates	Date of national (executive or legislative) election	Scartascini, Cruz, and Keefer (2018)
Ethnic fractionalization	Average of five indices	La Porta et al. (1999)

Notes: The first measure listed is used for primary analyses, while others are used in alternative tests.

Table G.2: Cross-national Allocation of Various Chinese Development Flows

	Dependent Variable: Commitment Amount (2010 USD)			
	Prestige	ODA	OOF	OF
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
GDP per capita	-0.204^{***} (0.049)	-0.167^{*} (0.072)	0.067 (0.089)	0.033 (0.108)
Population	-0.152^{***} (0.043)	-0.113 (0.061)	0.008 (0.071)	-0.035 (0.088)
Trade w/ China	0.086^{**} (0.032)	0.049 (0.051)	0.138^{*} (0.067)	0.044 (0.071)
Natural resources	0.001 (0.002)	-0.005 (0.004)	-0.009 (0.006)	-0.007 (0.006)
Debt to GDP	-0.0002 (0.001)	-0.00002 (0.001)	-0.0004 (0.001)	-0.0001 (0.001)
Control of corruption	0.001 (0.055)	-0.072 (0.069)	-0.432^{***} (0.122)	-0.266^{*} (0.133)
Taiwan	-0.272^{**} (0.101)	-0.517^{***} (0.114)	-0.019 (0.220)	-0.472^{**} (0.180)
Democracy	-0.014 (0.011)	0.007 (0.013)	0.016 (0.029)	0.012 (0.026)
US OF	0.016 (0.014)	0.031 (0.018)	0.032 (0.040)	0.029 (0.041)
UNGA voting	0.003 (0.075)	-0.006 (0.111)	0.180 (0.171)	-0.187 (0.147)
UNSC	0.054 (0.109)	-0.083 (0.127)	0.341 (0.233)	0.105 (0.251)
Observations	1,561	1,561	1,561	1,561
Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
R^2	0.065	0.045	0.086	0.027

Notes: Coefficients for the variables language and peoples affected by disasters are omitted from this table. $^{*}p<0.05$; $^{**}p<0.01$; $^{***}p<0.001$

Table G.3: Cross-National Project Allocation (w/ Country Fixed Effects)

	Dependent Variable: Commitment Amount (2010 USD)			
	Prestige	ODA	OOF	OF
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
GDP per capita	−0.531* (0.263)	0.097 (0.462)	0.328 (0.550)	0.436 (0.570)
Population	−0.484 (0.378)	−0.909 (0.675)	0.274 (0.956)	−1.295 (1.019)
Trade w/ China	0.141* (0.060)	0.001 (0.093)	0.147 (0.081)	0.180 (0.109)
Natural resources	−0.0005 (0.006)	0.002 (0.010)	−0.012 (0.009)	−0.007 (0.010)
Debt to GDP	−0.0002 (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)	0.002 (0.001)	0.003* (0.001)
Control of corruption	−0.020 (0.130)	0.265 (0.177)	−0.053 (0.209)	−0.032 (0.232)
Taiwan	−0.374 (0.278)	−0.052 (0.167)	0.456 (0.269)	0.310 (0.207)
Democracy	−0.025 (0.024)	0.010 (0.042)	0.008 (0.043)	0.021 (0.059)
US OF	0.003 (0.039)	−0.016 (0.062)	0.033 (0.098)	0.016 (0.093)
UNGA voting	0.048 (0.088)	0.001 (0.117)	0.015 (0.170)	−0.181 (0.158)
UNSC	0.038 (0.118)	−0.051 (0.116)	0.349 (0.222)	0.166 (0.245)
Observations	1,561	1,561	1,561	1,561
Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
Country FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
R^2	0.170	0.159	0.265	0.169

Notes: Coefficients for the variables language and peoples affected by disasters are omitted from this table.
$^{*}p<0.05$; $^{**}p<0.01$; $^{***}p<0.001$

Table G.4: Prestige Capacity and Prestige Projects (Binary Project Measure)

	Dependent Variable: Prestige Project			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
GDP per capita	-0.07^{***} (0.01)			
GDP		-0.07^{***} (0.01)		
Tax revenue			-0.03^{*} (0.01)	
National power				-0.04^{***} (0.01)
Trade w/ China	0.02^{**} (0.01)	0.02^{*} (0.01)	0.03^{**} (0.01)	0.02^{*} (0.01)
Natural resources	0.0002 (0.001)	0.0000 (0.001)	-0.001 (0.001)	0.0001 (0.001)
Debt to GDP	-0.0000 (0.0002)	-0.0001 (0.0002)	0.0000 (0.0002)	-0.0001 (0.0002)
Control of corruption	0.002 (0.02)	-0.001 (0.02)	-0.05^{**} (0.02)	0.003 (0.02)
Taiwan	-0.10^{**} (0.04)	-0.10^{**} (0.04)	-0.07 (0.05)	-0.10^{**} (0.04)
Democracy	-0.004 (0.004)	-0.004 (0.004)	-0.003 (0.004)	-0.004 (0.004)
US OF	0.004 (0.004)	0.01 (0.004)	0.01^{*} (0.004)	0.004 (0.004)
UNGA voting	0.01 (0.02)	0.01 (0.02)	0.002 (0.03)	0.01 (0.02)
UNSC	0.005 (0.03)	0.004 (0.03)	-0.001 (0.03)	0.01 (0.03)
Observations	1,561	1,580	996	1,561
Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
R^2	0.09	0.09	0.08	0.09

Notes: Coefficients for the variables language and peoples affected by disasters are omitted from this table. $^{*}p<0.05$; $^{**}p<0.01$; $^{***}p<0.001$

Table G.5: Allocation of Different Types of Prestige Projects (Binary)

	Dependent Variable:			
	Gov't building	Sports	School	Convention
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
GDP per capita	-0.041^{***} (0.011)	-0.017^{**} (0.006)	-0.024^{**} (0.008)	-0.008 (0.005)
Population	-0.020^{*} (0.009)	-0.016^{**} (0.006)	-0.023^{**} (0.008)	-0.008^{*} (0.004)
Trade w/ China	0.010 (0.008)	0.009 (0.005)	0.014^{*} (0.006)	0.005^{*} (0.003)
Natural resource	-0.00004 (0.001)	-0.0001 (0.0003)	0.0005 (0.0004)	-0.0001 (0.0002)
Debt to GDP	-0.00003 (0.0002)	0.00001 (0.0001)	-0.00001 (0.0001)	0.0001 (0.0001)
Control of corruption	0.008 (0.016)	-0.001 (0.006)	0.003 (0.006)	-0.004 (0.006)
Taiwan	-0.068^{***} (0.015)	0.007 (0.024)	-0.016 (0.013)	-0.021^{**} (0.007)
Democracy	0.001 (0.003)	-0.001 (0.002)	-0.003^{*} (0.001)	-0.001 (0.001)
US OF	-0.001 (0.003)	0.002 (0.002)	0.003 (0.002)	0.002 (0.001)
UNGA voting	0.012 (0.017)	-0.022^{*} (0.009)	0.010 (0.011)	0.010 (0.011)
UNSC	0.008 (0.018)	0.010 (0.017)	0.005 (0.011)	-0.008^{**} (0.003)
Observations	1,561	1,561	1,561	1,561
Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
R^2	0.054	0.034	0.048	0.019

Notes: Coefficients for the variables language and peoples affected by disasters are omitted from this table. $^{*}p<0.05$; $^{**}p<0.01$; $^{***}p<0.001$

Table G.6: Cross-national Allocation of Prestige Projects (Alternative Prestige Measure)

	Dependent Variable: Commitment Amount (2010 USD)			
	Prestige Finance (visible and .5% of GDP), 2010 USD commitments			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
GDP per capita	-0.44^{***} (0.11)			
GDP		-0.38^{***} (0.11)		
Tax revenue			-0.26^{*} (0.12)	
National power				-0.22^{***} (0.06)
Trade w/ China	0.25^{***} (0.07)	0.21^{**} (0.08)	0.16 (0.10)	0.25^{**} (0.08)
Natural resources	-0.01 (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)	-0.002 (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)
Debt to GDP	-0.002 (0.001)	-0.002 (0.001)	-0.002 (0.002)	-0.002 (0.001)
Control of corruption	-0.16 (0.14)	-0.15 (0.14)	-0.19 (0.18)	-0.16 (0.14)
Taiwan	-0.49^{*} (0.24)	-0.45 (0.23)	-0.47 (0.26)	-0.48^{*} (0.24)
Democracy	0.05 (0.03)	0.05 (0.03)	0.06 (0.04)	0.05 (0.03)
US OF	0.05 (0.03)	0.05 (0.03)	0.06 (0.03)	0.05 (0.03)
UNGA voting	-0.11 (0.17)	-0.12 (0.17)	-0.07 (0.24)	-0.11 (0.17)
UNSC	0.03 (0.18)	0.02 (0.17)	-0.02 (0.20)	0.03 (0.18)
Observations	1,561	1,580	996	1,561
Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
R^2	0.11	0.10	0.13	0.11

Notes: First, data are subset to all projects that account for at least .5% of a recipient economy's gross domestic product (GDP) in the year in which the project was committed. Each project then receives a visibility score between 0 and 4. A score of "0" refers to a project with no physical project site, such as a debt relief or otherwise vague project agreement. "4" represents international-level visibility (e.g. a transnational railroad); "3" national visibility (e.g. a national stadium); "2" regional visibility (e.g. a highway between two cities in a province); "1" local visibility (e.g. a school in a township). Projects that meet the financial value threshold and have a visibility score of at least "1" are included as prestige projects. Second, the same technique is used but for projects equal to or greater than .25% of a recipient's GDP. Intuitively, these two measures account for any large projects that are both visible and nationally salient (given their economic size in the recipient country). However, these measures are noisy given that large development projects are highly composite and not always both highly visible and nationally salient. Coefficients for the variables population, language and peoples affected by disasters are omitted from this table. $^{*}p<0.05$; $^{**}p<0.01$; $^{***}p<0.001$.

Table G.7: Allocation of Prestige Projects (Countries with Population > 500k)

	Dependent Variable: Commitment Amount (2010 USD)			
	Prestige	ODA	OOF	OF
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
GDP per capita	−0.189*** (0.053)	−0.139 (0.078)	0.043 (0.099)	0.045 (0.118)
Population	−0.112* (0.048)	−0.095 (0.073)	0.035 (0.084)	0.006 (0.107)
Trade w/ China	0.066 (0.037)	0.035 (0.058)	0.160* (0.080)	0.040 (0.082)
Natural resources	0.002 (0.003)	−0.004 (0.004)	−0.009 (0.006)	−0.006 (0.007)
Debt to GDP	0.0002 (0.001)	0.0002 (0.001)	−0.001 (0.001)	0.00004 (0.001)
Control of corruption	0.012 (0.057)	−0.105 (0.074)	−0.459*** (0.132)	−0.300* (0.143)
Taiwan	−0.275* (0.112)	−0.598*** (0.104)	−0.210 (0.246)	−0.583** (0.203)
Democracy	−0.007 (0.012)	0.002 (0.015)	0.026 (0.032)	0.019 (0.029)
US OF	0.006 (0.013)	0.020 (0.018)	0.034 (0.040)	0.017 (0.041)
UNGA voting	−0.010 (0.082)	0.016 (0.121)	0.144 (0.186)	−0.219 (0.162)
UNSC	0.056 (0.110)	−0.091 (0.129)	0.336 (0.233)	0.107 (0.249)
Observations	1,372	1,372	1,372	1,372
Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
R^2	0.065	0.043	0.085	0.041

*Notes: Coefficients for the variables language and peoples affected by disasters are omitted from this table. *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001*

Table G.8: Allocation of Prestige Projects (Project Salience)

	Dependent Variable: Project Salience					
	Prestige (% GDP)	Prestige (% OF)	ODA (% GDP)	ODA (% OF)	OOF (% GDP)	OOF (% OF)
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
GDP per capita	−0.001* (0.001)	−0.02* (0.01)	−0.002* (0.001)	−0.14*** (0.02)	−0.001 (0.001)	0.15*** (0.02)
Population	−0.002* (0.001)	−0.03** (0.01)	−0.001* (0.001)	−0.12*** (0.02)	−0.001** (0.001)	0.13*** (0.02)
Trade w/ China	0.001 (0.000)	0.01 (0.01)	0.000 (0.001)	0.02 (0.02)	0.001** (0.000)	−0.03 (0.02)
Natural resources	−0.000 (0.000)	−0.000 (0.001)	−0.000 (0.000)	−0.001 (0.001)	−0.000 (0.000)	0.001 (0.001)
Debt to GDP	0.000 (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)	−0.000 (0.000)	−0.000 (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)
Control of corruption	−0.000 (0.000)	0.002 (0.01)	0.000 (0.001)	−0.01 (0.03)	−0.002* (0.001)	0.01 (0.03)
Taiwan	−0.002 (0.002)	0.04 (0.07)	−0.003 (0.002)	−0.05 (0.10)	−0.001 (0.001)	0.04 (0.07)
Democracy	−0.000* (0.000)	−0.01* (0.003)	0.000 (0.000)	0.001 (0.01)	0.000* (0.000)	−0.004 (0.01)
US OF	0.000 (0.000)	0.000 (0.004)	−0.000 (0.000)	0.05*** (0.01)	−0.000 (0.000)	−0.06*** (0.01)
UNGA	0.001 (0.001)	0.02 (0.02)	0.000 (0.001)	−0.001 (0.04)	−0.002 (0.001)	0.03 (0.03)
UNSC	0.000 (0.000)	−0.003 (0.01)	0.000 (0.000)	−0.03 (0.05)	0.000 (0.001)	0.05 (0.05)
Observations	1,560	1,039	1,560	1,039	1,560	1,039
R^2	0.05	0.10	0.04	0.36	0.04	0.41
Note:						*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

*Notes: Coefficients for the variables language and peoples affected by disasters are omitted from this table. *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001*

H | Appendix to Chapter 3: Additional Public Opinion Tests

Table H.1: Regional (ADM1) Exposure to Prestige Projects and Attitudes towards National Government

	Dependent Variable: Approval of National Government			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Groundbreaking				
Pre-Interview (365)	−0.003 (0.14)			
Post-Interview	0.05 (0.10)			
Pre-Interview (180)		−0.03 (0.16)		
Post-Interview		−0.06 (0.03)		
Completion				
Pre-Interview (365)			−0.02 (0.05)	
Post-Interview			−0.01 (0.05)	
Pre-Interview (180)				−0.03 (0.05)
Post-Interview				−0.02 (0.05)
Observations	607,901	607,901	607,901	607,901
Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
Region FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
R^2	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03

Notes: Coefficients for the variables gender, income, education, age, and urban residency are omitted from this table. $^{*}p<0.05$; $^{**}p<0.01$; $^{***}p<0.001$

Table H.2: National Exposure to ODA Projects and Attitudes towards National Government

	Dependent Variable: Approval of National Government			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Groundbreaking				
Pre-Interview (365)	0.04 (0.05)			
Post-Interview	−0.04 (0.03)			
Pre-Interview(180)		0.01 (0.06)		
Post-Interview		−0.08*** (0.02)		
Completion				
Pre-Interview (365)			−0.01 (0.03)	
Post-Interview			−0.02 (0.03)	
Pre-Interview (180)				−0.03 (0.04)
Post-Interview				−0.04 (0.03)
Observations	623,877	623,877	623,877	623,877
R^2	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13

*Notes: Coefficients for the variables gender, income, education, age, and urban residency are omitted from this table. *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001*

Table H.3: Balance Table (Groundbreaking Dates, 365-day Windows)

	Exposure	N	Missing	Mean	SD
V-Dem	0	800614	149415	0.31	0.20
(Liberal democracy)	1	6000	1000	0.24	0.13
	2	10948	0	0.39	0.19
GDP per capita	0	804008	146021	3827.29	3378.40
	1	6000	1000	946.68	232.55
	2	10948	0	1835.34	1679.80
Female	0	947877	2152	0.53	0.50
	1	7000	0	0.54	0.50
	2	10948	0	0.48	0.50
Income (log)	0	857830	92199	8.09	4.05
	1	7000	0	7.66	3.13
	2	7012	3936	8.39	2.77
Age	0	944112	5917	38.39	16.58
	1	6999	1	33.77	14.42
	2	10940	8	34.66	14.84
Urban	0	918985	31044	0.30	0.46
	1	6000	1000	0.16	0.36
	2	10946	2	0.21	0.41

Notes: Exposure = "1" if individual is exposed to project milestone before interview, and "2" if he or she is exposed afterwards.

Table H.4: Balance Table (Groundbreaking Dates, 180-day Windows)

	Exposure	N	Missing	Mean	SD
V-Dem	0	805235	149415	0.31	0.20
(Liberal democracy)	1	5000	1000	0.27	0.12
	2	7327	0	0.44	0.18
GDP per capita	0	808629	146021	3814.82	3374.82
	1	5000	1000	962.42	251.82
	2	7327	0	1823.91	1667.73
Female	0	952498	2152	0.53	0.50
	1	6000	0	0.55	0.50
	2	7327	0	0.48	0.50
Income (log)	0	860515	94135	8.09	4.05
	1	6000	0	7.56	3.34
	2	5327	2000	8.30	2.64
Age	0	948733	5917	38.37	16.58
	1	5999	1	34.21	14.57
	2	7319	8	34.27	14.61
Urban	0	923606	31044	0.30	0.46
	1	5000	1000	0.13	0.34
	2	7325	2	0.18	0.38

Notes: Exposure = "1" if individual is exposed to project milestone before interview, and "2" if he or she is exposed afterwards.

Table H.5: Countries Included in Pre- and Post-interview Samples, Groundbreaking (180 Days)

Pre-interview	**Post-interview**
Cambodia, Chad, Liberia, Rwanda, Tanzania, Yemen, Zambia	Senegal, Zambia, Ghana, Laos, Liberia, Mozambique, Sierra Leone Tunisia, Niger, Algeria

Table H.6: Balance Table (Groundbreaking Dates, 365-day Windows), Excluding Untreated Individuals

	Exposure	N	Missing	Mean	SD
Female	0	10948	0	0.48	0.50
	1	7000	0	0.54	0.50
Income (log)	0	7012	3936	8.39	2.77
	1	7000	0	7.66	3.13
Age	0	10940	8	34.66	14.84
	1	6999	1	33.77	14.42
Urban	0	10946	2	0.21	0.41
	1	6000	1000	0.16	0.36

Notes: Exposure = "1" if individual is exposed to project milestone before interview, and "2" if he or she is exposed afterwards.

Table H.7: Balance Table (Groundbreaking Dates, 180-day Windows), Excluding Untreated Individuals

	Exposure	N	Missing	Mean	SD
Female	0	7327	0	0.48	0.50
	1	6000	0	0.55	0.50
Income (log)	0	5327	2000	8.30	2.64
	1	6000	0	7.56	3.34
Age	0	7319	8	34.27	14.61
	1	5999	1	34.21	14.57
Urban	0	7325	2	0.18	0.38
	1	5000	1000	0.13	0.34

Notes: Exposure = "1" if individual is exposed to project milestone before interview, and "0" if he or she is exposed afterwards.

Table H.8: Public Opinion Analysis Excluding Never-Exposed Individuals

	Dependent Variable: Approval of National Government			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Exposure				
Groundbreaking (365 days)	0.11 (0.10)			
Groundbreaking (180 days)		0.22** (0.08)		
Completion (365 days)			0.06 (0.05)	
Completion (180 days)				−0.01 (0.05)
Individual-level Controls				
Female	0.04** (0.01)	0.03* (0.01)	0.03*** (0.01)	0.01* (0.005)
Income (log)	−0.003 (0.002)	−0.003 (0.002)	−0.001 (0.002)	0.001 (0.003)
Education	−0.03 (0.02)	−0.04** (0.01)	−0.02 (0.03)	−0.03 (0.03)
Age	−0.0002 (0.002)	−0.002 (0.002)	−0.002 (0.002)	−0.0000 (0.002)
Age^2	0.0000 (0.0000)	0.0000 (0.0000)	0.0000 (0.0000)	0.0000 (0.0000)
Urban	−0.07* (0.03)	−0.08* (0.03)	0.03 (0.04)	0.003 (0.04)
Observations	10,674	9,006	20,170	11,354
R^2	0.12	0.15	0.08	0.08

*Notes: *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001*

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