ABSTRACT
To gain insight into the implications of institutional affiliation for inequality in historical China, we examine differences in the demographic behavior and social outcomes between the main and collateral lines of the Qing imperial lineage. The former consisted of direct descendants of Takeshi, grandfather of the Qing founder Huang Taiji, while the latter consisted of descendants of Takeshi’s uncles and brothers. State regulations mandated differences in privileges and opportunities between the two lines, but previous examinations of inequality in the lineage focused only on differences within the Zongshi. By analysis of a newly expanded dataset constructed from the most recent edition of the \textit{Aixinjueluo Genealogy} that also includes Jueluo records, we compare the quality of data, socioeconomic attainment, and demographic behavior of the Zongshi and Jueluo. The result is a complex picture of inequality between the two lines that reflects differences in their treatment by the state.

Keywords: imperial lineage, Zongshi, Jueluo, data quality, socioeconomic and demographic outcomes

Introduction
Throughout Chinese history, it has been a common practice for the state to define groups of elite with different levels of entitlements. Such state-mandated inequality is embedded in a long tradition of institutions that redistribute political and economical resources to maintain elite status. The most prominent and best documented examples of such populations and institutions in imperial China are the imperial lineage and the Office of the Imperial Lineage who are well documented for at least the last thousand years (Chafee 1999). This paper examines the implications of such state-mandated inequality within one such elite
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population by comparing socioeconomic and demographic outcomes of two distinct branches of the Qing imperial lineage, the Zongshi, or so-called Main Line, who were descended from Takeshi, the grandfather of the Qing founder Huang Taiji, and the Jueluo, or the collateral lines, who were descendents of Takeshi's brothers and uncles.

Comparisons of the Zongshi and Jueluo, qualitative or quantitative, are rare. Historians typically mention the Jueluo in passing as a counterpart to the Zongshi and note that they received less favorable treatment both in terms of money and career opportunities (Jing1993; Rawski 1998). One of the few direct examinations of which we are aware is Hu Xiangyu (2010), which compares legal cases for members of the two lines. Almost nothing is known about the demographic behavior and social attainment of the Jueluo because previous relevant work on the Qing imperial lineage focused almost exclusively on the Zongshi, as they alone had their social and demographic data entered in machine readable form (Lee, Campbell, and Wang 1993; Lee and Guo 1994; Lai 1997). Published studies of the Zongshi examined their infant and child mortality (Lee, Campbell, and Wang 1993), fertility (Wang, Lee and Campbell 1995), adoption (Wang and Lee 1998), and marriage (Lee and Wang 2000; Lee, Wang, and Ruan 2001), but were unable to make comparisons with the Jueluo.

We divide the paper into four parts. In part one, we provide background on the institutional contexts of the Zongshi and Jueluo, emphasizing differences that should have implications for their social and demographic outcomes. In part two, we introduce the dataset, which is based on a more recent edition of the genealogy than Lee, Campbell, and Wang (1993) and which also includes newly entered data for the Jueluo. In part three, we present results on data completeness, and also trends and patterns in socioeconomic and demographic outcomes in the Zongshi and Jueluo. These results illuminate strengths and weaknesses of the expanded database as a source for analysis, and yield preliminary findings on differences in the social and demographic outcomes of the Zongshi and Jueluo. We conclude in part four with a summary of key results and an assessment of their implications for our understanding of the imperial lineage.

Our paper contributes to the study of stratification in China by highlighting the importance of the differentiated treatment of the kin of the emperors. We provide another example of how population categorization, in this case according to degree of relationship to the dynastic founder, and consequent differential treatment led to different socioeconomic and demographic outcomes. These results are valid for about 80,000 men in these two lineage branches and by implication for equal size populations of their daughters and wives, perhaps a quarter million people in all who comprised part of the pinnacle of the Qing social elite.

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1 Chen (2009) elaborates this idea by analyzing inequality in land distribution in 120 villages from Shuangcheng County in northeast China.