



Banned Books as a State Apparatus in the Qing Dynasty: Ethnicity, Power and Concupiscence

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Abstract

This article aims to analyze one of the social phenomena during the Qing Dynasty, “Book Censorship,” an important feature in Chinese history. Three aspects of incarcerated knowledge will be analyzed—ethnic conflict, anti-political power, and the instability of social morality. Furthermore, this article will show the extent to which the campaign of banned books was employed by the Manchu as a means to be enthroned in the Dragon Empire. What the Manchu did was to ingeniously standardize the Hans’ ways of thinking via state apparatus, in terms of both subjugation and ideology.

Keywords

Banned book, Book Censorship, State apparatus, Qing Dynasty, Manchu

Introduction

A book is one of the most essential tools for transferring cultural heritage in the history of mankind. Books have always reflected human civilization. Therefore, a book is not merely a printed material filled with information. Actually, human beings in every society entrust what they consider valuable and have it recorded in a book. However, books are also dangerous, they make people think, feel, wonder and ask questions. Hence, the history of banned books has existed parallel to the emergence of books.

Book censorship is a century-old social phenomenon. It is a political reality faced by human beings in various political systems throughout history. Moreover, it has been employed as a state apparatus for controlling citizens' ways of thinking. Chinese society is a society in which writing and reading are considered widespread and revered. Those who are equipped with skills in liberal arts can elevate their social status. Thus, books have been regarded sacred and are more than a material for recording. The power of written characters in Chinese culture is incomparably paramount. Chinese people believed that books could transform the Hans to be "civilized men" different from those alien "barbarians" across the border.

However, the initial stage of book censorship began around 200 B.C. Emperor Qin Shi Huang (秦始皇) of the Qin Dynasty (221-207 B.C.)¹, unified and solidified the Chinese empire by establishing his kingdom out of trepidation that people would undermine his legitimacy. All classic works of the Hundred Schools of Thought, such as Confucianism, Taoism, as well as music, poetry, and prose, were subject to book burning by his decree. Merely books about medicine, astrology, divination and agriculture were exempted. Worse, a massacre of the intelligentsia was exercised. The purpose was to control and confine their opinions and behaviors to what the emperor desired. No matter how severe and torturing the punishment was, the Qin Dynasty only lasted 14 years. This differs from the Qing Dynasty (1644-1912 A.D.), in which book censorship was most prevalent in Chinese history, and lasted for 268 years (An & Zhang, 1991, p. 2).

This article seeks to answer the following questions: which aspect of knowledge was incarcerated in the Qing Dynasty; what factors caused the Qing Dynasty to employ the book censorship policy as a means to standardize Chinese people's opinions; and to what extent did banned books function as "seismometers" measuring the magnitude of the Qing Empire.

¹ The chronology of Chinese dynasties mentioned in this article is taken from "Chronology in Chinese History" in Xia Zhengnong et al. (Eds.), 1989, pp. 2345-2405.

Barbarians on the Dragon Throne: When the Manchu Ruled over the Han Chinese Empire

The Qing emperors belong to the Manchurian tribe that originally was a small ethnic group in the northeast of China. After a triumphant conquest in 1644 A.D., the Manchus were elected to administer the country. In the meantime, although the Ming dynasty (1368-1644 A.D.) collapsed, some armed force fled to establish a Government-in-Exile in the south that lasted 18 years. However, it was later defeated by the Qing. Chinese history has called this period “Southern Ming Era” (南明), whose capital was Nanjing.

Apart from being antagonized by the former powers, another difficulty of the Qing Dynasty had to do with how the Manchus were perceived by the Han Chinese as “barbarians” around the borderlines.

In Chinese philosophy, the universe consists of Heaven (天) and Earth (天下). And there are three living creatures on the earth: Han Chinese, Barbarians, and animals. The Chinese believed in sinocentrism. They named China the “Middle Kingdom” (中国) surrounded by barbarians on all four sides: Qiang (羌) in the west, Yi (夷) in the east, Di (狄) in the north and Man (蛮) in the south, all of whom were collectively called Hu (胡) (Ling, 2003, p. 88). Moreover, there were hierarchies of power relations in which the Chinese regarded themselves as “civilized men” who were more civilized, while reducing other ethnic groups to inferior “barbarians.”

Reinventing “China”

The “nation” is a form of invented tradition where a society would select various antecedent cultures and traditions for re-interpretation. The purpose is to create a sense of belonging, to legitimize the authority of the governing class, and to transmit the shared social ideology. (Hobsbawn & Ranger, 1983, pp. 13-14) In ancient time, China’s middle kingdom was not merely fantasized as China, but as the center of the world. Chinese rulers, no matter if Han Chinese, Mongol or Manchu, always created definitions of “China” as they desired.

The Manchu emperors realized that the concept of Han and Non-Han, comprising Qiang, Yi, Di and Man could not be employed in the Qing Dynasty. It was necessary to reinvent the concept of “China” by presenting China as a combination between Han and Non-Han. After the Qing ruled over China, they annexed Manchuria, Mongolia, Xinjiang, and Tibet to the mainland. Not only did the Qing enlarge China’s territory, but they attempted to create a new identity for China. This reinventing mission consisted of two methods, as follows:

The Ethnic Approach between Han and Non-Han.

This was executed by reinventing a new identity for China as a multiethnic state comprising Han and Non-Han tribes. This re-definition of China not only legitimized the authority of the Qing governing class, but also paved a way for the incorporation of different ethnic groups as a part of Chinese empire. In addition, the Qing Dynasty started the imperial examination system² in Xinjiang. This was to integrate local Muslims into the civil system in China.

The Cultural Approach between Confucian Communities and Non-Confucian Communities.

Should the Manchu be Chinese, they would have to accept Confucian tradition. The Manchu rulers were never concerned that the acceptance of Han culture would destroy their Manchu identity. They were well-aware that sinicization would augment their status and chances to be accepted as “Sons of Heaven” (天子). In other words, they would possess the moral right to be enthroned as an emperor of China. This could be combined with Confucian teachings that helped strengthen the sovereignty.

After the Qing united Xinjiang, confucianizing Xinjiang was rather unmanageable. This was due to the fact that Xinjiang was a Muslim domain. Therefore, it was crucial to establish China as a multicultural state. Although the Qing Dynasty came to an end in 1912 A.D., Chinese people could not return to their outdated belief that Mainland China solely belonged to the Han anymore (Zhao, 2006, p. 23).

We have often heard that some large state has employed an assimilation policy of the defeated or minority tribes to blend them into a large culture. However, the Qing Dynasty is an interesting case study because the conquerors attempted to integrate themselves in the culture of the defeated. Even names like “Great Qing” (大清) and “China” (中国) were not categorized in the same group. The first written document stating the synonymy of “Qing” and “China” appeared in 1656 A.D. during the conflict between China and Mongolia. It was stated in the Qing royal decree that the Yi tribe who used to stay in Mongolia during the Ming Dynasty would be governed by Mongolia, whereas the Yi tribe ruled by the Ming Dynasty would be citizens of China.³ Since then, the words “Qing” and “China” have continually been employed with the same meaning.

Repressive state apparatus VS Ideological state apparatus

² The imperial examination system (科举制度) was a civil service examination system in Imperial China to recruit candidates for the state bureaucracy. It consisted of three-tiered ladder from local to provincial to court exams. This examination played an important role in Chinese social and intellectual life from 650 to 1905 A.D.

³ The Manchus were regarded by the Han Chinese as Yi tribe “Barbarians from the East”.

For Chinese cultural longevity, it was not easy for the Manchu to reconstruct the nation in the blink of an eye. One of the measures employed was to control citizens' opinions. The Qing emperors realized that physical enforcement and power could temporarily restrain people, but ways of thinking could eternally bind them. Therefore, it was necessary to control their opinions. The most significant method was none other than book censorship. With the Qing prosperity, Chinese society had been completely overcome by the myth of affluence. However, in reality, behind the illusion, the Qing court standardized citizens' opinions through the banned book policy by using "Literary Inquisition" (文字狱) as a repressive state apparatus and the compilation of *The Complete Library in Four Branches of Literature* (四库全书) as an ideological state apparatus.

Incarcerated Knowledge: Ethnicity, Power and Concupiscence

According to the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* (2010), "Knowledge" (noun) means "acts, information, and skills acquired through experience or education; the theoretical or practical understanding of a subject" (p. 857) and "Incarcerate" (verb) means "imprison, confine" (p. 785). Here "incarcerated knowledge" means "the theoretical or practical understanding of a subject that is imprisoned and confined from spreading out."

In ancient times, incarcerated knowledge was based on "paranoia and trepidation." It was rooted in a fear of losing authority and power, like political power, economic power, or power to control society. This type of fear could lead to different methods of execution, such as banning, destruction, law-suit, etc. There are three main aspects of incarcerated knowledge in the Qing Dynasty.

Conflict of Ethnicity

The genesis of the nation reflects how ethnicity is clearly represented. China has defined its identity within the context of ethnic relations, which was integrated with nationhood, the differentiation between Han and Non-Han like Qiang, Yi, Di and Man, the hierarchies among center and margin, civilization and barbarianism. We can see that the definition of the Han's identity was grounded in their difference to the Non-Han. Thus, it is easy to lead to the tendency of violence employment.

In general, the change of power relations tends to be a factor that causes violence. When the Qing ruled over the empire, political power over mainland China differed from other previous dynasties, excluding the Yuan Mongol (1271-1368 A.D.). That is to say, the change of power relations did not apply to merely the political aspect, but to the ethnic issue as well. Furthermore, the conquerors were those who once were designated as mere "barbarians" in

Han culture. The Qing Dynasty exploited the notion of ethnicity to legitimize violence employment by exercising the literary inquisition among the Hans. This action reflects how the Qing systematically discriminated against the Hans and barred them from the space of moral responsibility.

Anti-political Power

Violence in any state erupts most during a political turning point. This is because during that period there are political uncertainties, alteration of power balance, and social fluctuation. Furthermore, this is the time when regulations and political organizations are still unstable. Books in this category are always filled with details leading to suspicion towards or lack of confidence in the state power.

The Instability of Social Morality

The censorship of books in this category stems from the idea that people lacked the moral power and judgment to be entrusted with certain information.

Those famous Chinese banned books whose details deal with the conflict of ethnicity, the anti-political power and the instability of social morality are as follows (An & Zhang, 1991, pp. 648-714).

Nanshan Literary Collection (南山集)⁴ by Dai Mingshi 戴名世 (1653-1713 A.D.), who is an honest and loyal official in the Qing court. After Dai learned that the Kangxi Emperor 康熙帝 (1661-1722 A.D.) exercised an appeasement policy to reduce ethnic conflict, a scholar like him in Chinese culture preferred to write a historical work. This is because the status of historians were revered as truth recorders of the society. Therefore he authored *Ming History* (明史), recording historical events of the government in-exile in the Southern Ming period. In addition, the book mentioned the incident when the Qing executed sons of the last emperor of the Ming Dynasty, the Chongzhen Emperor 崇禎帝 (1628-1644 A.D.).

Dream of the Red Chamber (红楼梦), also known by its alternative title *The Story of the Stone* (石头记), was composed by Cao Xueqin 曹雪芹 (1716-1764 A.D.). Cao's father had a close relationship with the Qing court. He used to be a royal representative in charge of the textile business and silk manufacturing of the court. Therefore, Cao spent his childhood among the noble class. When he turned 11, his father was decommissioned and his property was confiscated. Cao then had a difficult time growing up. Originally, he intended to write

⁴ Nanshan (南山) is the name of Dai Mingshi's hometown. It is in Anhui Province in present day.

Dream of the Red Chamber only to share among his relatives and as leisurely reading. It was not meant to be officially published. Unexpectedly, it turned out that there were so many readers who wanted to read his novel, up to the point that some were copied for sale in temple fairs in Beijing. Cao Xueqin passed away having written merely 80 chapters.

Later many readers demanded the finale version of this novel. Gao'E 高鹗 (1738-1815 A.D.) then composed 40 chapters more, thus there were 120 chapters in total. Gao passed the imperial examination and became a *jinshi* candidate (进士)⁵. Later he was appointed as a drafter and examiner of official archives in the Qing court. His novel was published for the first time in 1790, 26 years after Cao Xueqin had passed away. Its publication originated when a high official in Shanghai travelled to Beijing and bought it to have it published in Shanghai. As a result, *Dream of the Red Chamber* was well-known nationwide during the 19th century.

Dream of the Red Chamber is a tragic love story between Jia Baoyu (贾宝玉) and Lin Daiyu (林黛玉). Jia Baoyu is a son of the Jias who were a representation of the noble family during the Qing Dynasty. The Jias entrust their hope onto their son by wishing him to pass the imperial examination and hold a high-rank position in the palace. Unfortunately, they had to confront despair. Jia Baoyu acts against his family's will. He skips classes and opposes Confucianism. In the meantime, the female lead Lin Daiyu, whose mother is Jia Baoyu's relative, sympathizes with him and supports his actions against tradition.

This novel reflects the decadence of Chinese nobility and the downfall of feudalism in China. This was the reason why the court feared that the readers of *Dream of the Red Chamber* would imitate behaviors discussed in the novel and rebel against valuable traditions of the society.

***Water Margin* (水浒传)** was composed by Shi Nai'an 施耐庵 (1296-1370 A.D.), one of the renowned writers at the beginning of the Ming Dynasty. *Water Margin* deals with the fighting of heroes who have been oppressed and never received justice from the governing class in the Song Dynasty. Consequently, they gather on the Liang Mt. and rebel against the Song. These heroes come from different social classes, such as defamed court officials, priests, and rascals, led by Song Jiang (宋江). Like the American Robin Hood, these heroes uphold a principle focusing on helping destitute people and plundering the rich to support the poor. They are an archetype of honesty, righteousness, and blood-brother like unity. Therefore, the Qing court worried that people would imitate these heroes' behaviors by gathering their strength in the woods and rebelling against the state power.

⁵ Jinshi (进士), literally means "advanced scholar", was the one who had successfully completed the triennial court examination. And then would be assigned by the ministry of personnel to active-duty post as vacancy occurred. See Xia Zhengnong et al. (Eds), 1989, p. 1172.

***The Story of Western Chamber* (西厢记)** is a play composed by Wang Shifu 王实甫 (1260-1336 A.D.) during the Yuan Dynasty. Its plot derives from a short story in the Tang Dynasty entitled *The Story of Yingying* (莺莺传) by Yuan Zhen (元稹). In this story, the male lead is a young scholar who resides and studies in a temple. There is a widow and her gorgeous daughter living nearby. This scholar helped the widow to cope with a burglary and thus fell in love with her daughter. At first, the widow opposes their love. This is due to the fact that the freedom to love like this was not widespread during that time.

In ancient Chinese tradition, the two issues that mattered the most in a man's life included passing the imperial examination, which was the highest dream, and marriage based on social and economic appropriateness, not on love. However, the marital pattern changed. Young couples yearned for more freedom to love and opposed traditional marriage. Thus, the Qing court feared that this play would influence young people to cling to love as their last resort, and that this would eventually affect social stability.

***The Carnal Prayer Mat* (肉蒲团)** authored by Li Yu 李渔 (1610-1680 A.D.) is a notorious erotic novel during the Ming and Qing Dynasties. It was reprinted several times. When this scandalous novel emerged in the book circle, people from every class or clan desired to read it. It has been said that even the blind attempted to hire a good storyteller to read this novel once in their lifetime.

The Carnal Prayer Mat deals with a scholar named Wei Yangsheng (未央生) and six ladies. Wei indulges in women and sex. A monk called "Budai Heshang" (布袋和尚) once urges him to give up on his philandering ways and follow the path of Buddhism. For he knows that letting this wealthy, intelligent and handsome scholar continue to spend his life obsessed with sex would cause many women to suffer. Nonetheless, the monk's well-intentioned suggestions are turned down by the scholar Wei.

The essence of this novel targets the art of the inner chamber and teaches how obsession with eroticism can cause humans to incessantly fall into a whirlpool of lust. Consequently, the Qing court realized that this illicit story could threaten morality and jeopardize the family institution, which was considered the fundamental unit of the society.

***The Plum in the Golden Vase* (金瓶梅)** is a Ming novel composed by a writer under the pseudonym Lanling Xiaoxiao Sheng (兰陵笑笑生) or "The Scoffing Scholar of Lanling". His identity is unknown because many novelists did not disclose their identities in Chinese tradition. However, it was found that Lanling is a place in Shandong province and the language used in the novel is mixed with Shandong dialect. Therefore, the author was presumably a native of Shandong. A main episode of the novel is taken from an episode

dealing with a faithful husband named Wu Song and his adulterous wife Pan Jinlian in *Water Margin*.

The Plum in the Golden Vase, consisting of 100 chapters, centers on Ximen Qing (西門庆), a wealthy, powerful yet immoral merchant. If he wants any man's wives, he would try his utmost to take them without feeling any guilt. This novel takes its name from the three central female characters —Jinlian (金蓮), Ping'er (瓶兒) and Chunmei (春梅). Here *jin*, *ping* and *mei* literally mean gold, vase and plum blossom, thus "Plum in the Golden Vase". This novel reflects decadent society in the Ming Dynasty. Moreover, it comprises a surprising number of titillating and bizarre sexual intercourse scenes. Consequently, this novel was banned because the Qing court feared that it would destroy the morality of the people.

Literary Inquisition: Repressive State Apparatus

"Literary Inquisition" (文字狱) (literally "imprisonment due to writings" or "speech crime") refers to official persecution of intellectuals or those who are involved in writing and publishing activities, causing them to be imprisoned or executed in Imperial China. Some ancient Chinese governments were strict about language used in literary works. Once found deficient, that work would be considered a state crime. The Qing court was well-aware that it was necessary for them to control the Hans and prevent them from rebelling against the Manchu government by employing the Literary Inquisition Law.

Literary inquisition was practiced during the three most prosperous eras of the Qing Dynasty—Emperor Kangxi⁶ (1662-1722 A.D.), Emperor Yongzheng 雍正帝 (1723-1735 A.D.), and Emperor Qianlong 乾隆帝(1736-1795 A.D.). Most of the crimes dealt with punishment of writers who wrote anti-Qing literature and tried to revive Ming. Its purpose was to eradicate an ideology of nationalism of the Hans and to strengthen the Manchu governance. The literary inquisition consists of three processes—investigation (访书), prohibition (禁书) and inquisition (文字狱).

Tabooed characters in the Qing Dynasty include 1) Lu 虜 (prisoner of war), a word that the Han used insultingly to label other ethnic groups⁷ 2) Rong 戎 (soldier), an ethnic tribe in the west of China 3) Hu 胡 (disturbance), a word that the Han used to label barbarians in the north and west 4) Yi 夷 (murder), an ethnic group in the east of China 5) Di 狄

⁶ Chinese people tend to call the Qing Emperors by their reign titles. For instance, Emperor Kangxi was Emperor Qing Shengzu, whose name was Aisin Jueluo Xuanye and whose reign was Kangxi.

⁷ Words in parentheses listed behind tabooed characters No.1-6 are current meanings. One can see that the majority of words that the Hans called other ethnic groups carry negative meanings. See Wu Jingrong et al., (Eds), (1979, p. 973).

(barbarian), an ethnic group in the north of China 6) Qiu 酋, (chieftain of bandits) 7) Wei 伪 bogus, illicit
8) Zei 贼 thief, a threat to the nation 9) Que 阙 error, but when pronouncing it in the fourth tone “què” meaning “imperial palace” and 10) Han 汉 Han Chinese who were the majority population in mainland China.

Different levels of punishment were employed, such as execution, imprisonment, decommission, flogging, and banishment, depending upon status of writers, distributors, or owners. For severe cases, the law stated: 1) a living person was penalized with *Lingchi* (凌迟) crime or decapitation 2) the deceased were penalized with *Lushi* (戮尸) crime or corpse destruction 3) male relatives above 15 years of age were penalized with *Zhanjue* (斩绝) crime or execution and 4) male relatives under 15 years of age and female relatives were enslaved to the noble families who committed good deeds to the country (功臣之家之奴).

Generally, there were three types of punishment: 1) punishment as revenge 2) punishment as deterrence and 3) punishment as a way towards reformation. The literary inquisition fits the punishment as deterrence pattern with two main purposes: 1) To deter a culprit from repeatedly committing a crime and to scare them with the punishment that would reduce the same crime 2) To deter those involved from not committing crimes, for a wrongdoer saw its consequences. The punishment for deterrence, in other words, was prevention from committing the same crime again. There were three features for punishment that can deter the culprit—swiftness, certainty and austerity or severity. One can see that the literary inquisition in the Qing Dynasty emerged to threaten and deter any actions that would jeopardize the ethnic power and political power of the Manchus. Furthermore, the punishment tended to be swift, certain, and severe.

There were more than 70 cases of the literary inquisition during Emperor Kangxi, Emperor Yongzheng and Emperor Qianlong's reigns. Each case consists of at least 10 and up to thousands of victims (Wang, 1992, p. 322). Notorious persecutions during the Qing Dynasty include:

The “Case of Monk Han Ke” (释函可案 1647 A.D.) was the first literary crime during the Qing Dynasty. It occurred during the fourth year of the Shunzhi 顺治帝 (1643-1661 A.D.) reign. Monk Han Ke, formerly known as Han Zonglai (韩宗騷), a son of Han Rizuan (韩日缵) who was Director of the Department of Rites in Guangdong province during the Ming Dynasty. After his father passed away, Han Zonglai's family became destitute. He then ordained in Lushan.

In the second year of the Kangxi reign, Monk Han Ke began a four year pilgrimage in Nanjing. While returning to his hometown Guangdong, he was captured and accused of possessing a letter written by King Fu (福王), a leader of Government in-exile of the Southern

Ming. This letter was written to Ruan Dacheng (阮大铖), a corrupt official of the late Ming Dynasty. Moreover, a book manuscript entitled *The Record of Change* (变记) was found. Eventually, Monk Han Ke was banished to Shenyang, a city in eastern China.

The “Case of the History of the Ming Dynasty” (明史案 1661 A.D.) was a charge brought against Zhuang Tinglong (庄廷鑑), a native of Wujiang. Zhuang’s family was wealthy. But unfortunately, during his childhood he suffered from a serious illness which caused him blindness. However, after learning that the renowned historian Zuo Qiu (左丘) was also blind, Zhuang desired to be a famous historian in China too.

At the same time, a former minister named Zhu Guozhen (朱国珍), who was interested in Ming history, wrote two history books. One of his unfinished books was about Ming history and entitled *A Sketch of History* (史概), and the other *Ming Annals* (明书), was completed but not published. Later Zhuang Tinglong spent a large sum of money to buy both manuscripts and invited other scholars to help with revision, addition and alteration. He renamed the book *Brief Account of the Ming Annals* (明书辑略). After compiling *Brief Account of the Ming Annals*, Zhuang passed away. His father, Zhuang Yuncheng (庄允成), had printed and distributed the book.

In the seventeenth year of the Shunzhi reign, *Brief Account of the Ming Annals* was sold nationwide. However, some people reported to the court after finding the book contained a number of inappropriate references to the Ming Dynasty, as well as texts considered taboo and defamatory to the Qing Dynasty. The incentives leading these messengers to report the possession of prohibited books are greed in rewards and ambition in career.

Later the Qing court sent officials to investigate and penalize Zhuang Yuncheng. His male descendants who were above 15 years of age were all punished, whereas those who were involved in the revision and compilation of the *Brief Account of the Ming Annals* were eradicated and charged with conspiracy.

The “Case of Nanshan Literary Collection” (南山集案 1711 A.D.), a charge brought against Dai Mingshi, and the “Case of *Periodicals of Yunnan and Guizhou Provinces*” (滇黔纪闻), brought against Fang Xiaobiao (方孝标). These two figures were loyal officials of the Qing court. Dai happened to write about the history of the Ming Dynasty and mentioned that the turning point of power happened when the Ming emperor’s princes was murdered .

Three years prior to the publication of *Nanshan Literary Collection*, the Qing court happened to execute Prince Cihuan (慈焕) of the Emperor Chongzhen 崇祯帝(1627-1644 A.D.) of the Ming Dynasty. At the end of the Ming Dynasty when Li Zicheng 李自成 (1606-

1645 A.D.)⁸ invaded the Ming palace, he captured Prince Cihuan but did not execute him. Later, when the Manchu attacked the Ming palace, Prince Cihuan escaped to Fengyang and vigilantly made his living by being teacher. Eventually he was captured with his three sons and a grandson, while his wife, daughter and daughter-in-law committed suicide.

In the *Nanshan Literary Collection*, there is a part praising Fang Xiaobiao's *Periodicals of Yunnan and Guizhou Provinces* for well writing the history of the Southern Ming. As a result, Fang's work was forbidden. Since Fang had already passed away, he was sentenced to the punishment of *Lushi* (戮尸), crime or corpse destruction. His son was banished to a backcountry in Heilongjiang. As for Dai Mingshi, he was executed and his family, along with his relatives, were penalized accordingly.

The “Case of Examination Questions” (试题案 1728 A.D.), a charge brought against Cha Siting (查嗣庭), a *xiucai* (秀才) candidate⁹ who was commissioned by the Director of Protocol. In the fifth year of the Yongzheng reign, Cha traveled to act as an examination committee court official in Jiangxi. Later, when the court found that his examination questions dealt with political satire and criticism, the emperor sent officials to search his house. It so happened that there were two diaries filled with foul language against the Qing court. Cha then was charged with immorality, mutiny, and disrespect. He was imprisoned and died there. All of his literary works were registered illegal.

The “Case of Lü Liuliang” (吕留良案 1728 A.D.), a charge brought against a *xiucai* candidate named Lü Liuliang. After the Ming Dynasty tumbled down, Lü did not want to serve the Manchu emperors. He decided to ordain and write anti-Manchu books. None of his books were published. It so happened that a Hunan native named Zeng Jing (曾静) was interested in Lü's books and later used them as teaching materials. Later someone reported to the court, and consequently Zeng was sentenced to death. When Lü had passed away, his corpse was destroyed. Lü's family had its property confiscated and they were banished and enslaved. This was one of the most serious cases because its content not only touched upon anti-political power, but it also dealt with anti-ethnic power.

The “Case of Su Newspaper” (苏报案 1903 A.D.) occurred in the Guangxu 光绪 (1875-1908 A.D.) reign and was considered the last literary inquisition case of the Qing Dynasty. Su Newspaper was the name of daily newspaper during the late Qing. Its business

⁸ Li Zicheng (李自成) was a Chinese rebel leader who overthrew the Ming Dynasty in 1644. He established the Dashun Dynasty and ruled over China briefly before his death a year later.

⁹ Xiucai (秀才), literally means “distinguished talent”, was the one who passed the imperial examination at the local level in the Ming and Qing Dynasties. Xiucai enjoyed some officially sanctioned social privileges such as exemption from statute labour, access into local government facilities.

started in Shanghai in 1896. At the beginning, Hu Zhang's (胡璋) Japanese wife was an owner, along with Zou Yue (邹悦) as editor-in-chief. The company was registered at the Japanese Consulate in Shanghai. Its main purpose was to spread news. Later in 1900, Hu Zhang's Japanese wife could not continue running the business. The business was transferred to Chen Fan (陈范), who later invited Wang Wenpu (汪文浦) to be an editor-in-chief. After that Wang campaigned and transmitted the idea of royal organization and constitution establishment.

In 1902 Chen Fan became interested in the revolution process which caused a major shift of Su Newspaper's standpoint. Students' nationalism movement and other revolutionary activities were supported and sponsored publicly. Moreover, members of educational organizations and nationalism associations were asked to publish critiques about social affairs.

In 1903 those critiques became more and more intense. On May 24, 1903 Chen Fan invited a member of the nationalism association named Zhang Shizhao (章士钊) to be an editor-in-chief. Not long after, Zhang published several articles about anti-state power and support for the political change ("Alas! Country-less Man" (哀哉无国之民), "Massacre-ism" (杀人主义), etc.). Later Zou Rong's (邹容) work entitled "Revolutionary Armed Forced" (革命军) was published. It urged the Chinese people to overthrow authoritarian governance and establish the Republic of China. Furthermore, Zhang Binglin's (章炳麟) article entitled "Refuting Critique on Kang Youwei's Revolutionary Perception" (驳康有为论革命书) was published.

As a result, the Qing court was intensely worried. The officials were sent to Shanghai to talk with a land lease administrator about ceasing the operation of Su Newspaper. Chen Fan and Zhang Shizhao fled, but Zhang Binglin, Zou Rong and six others were captured. Zhang Binglin was sentenced to two years in prison. On July 7, 1903 Su Newspaper officially ceased its operation. Not long after, revolution spread all over China and the Qing Dynasty was overthrown.

Within the 268 years of the Qing governance, there were more than 160 cases of literary inquisition (Wang, 1992, p. 301). This proves that the Qing court employed literary inquisition as a repressive state apparatus to eradicate political enemies or unwanted citizens. Consequently, China became a profoundly violent society. This type of severity was camouflaged within various social structures. One after another Chinese intellectuals' lives were snatched away due to the literary inquisition policy.

Complete Library in Four Branches of Literature: Ideological State Apparatus

China has a long tradition of book collecting among the upper class, especially in terms of book preservation in the imperial palace. Whoever was enthroned to be an emperor of China would command compilation, copying, alteration, or addition of books in the imperial library. They even employed a policy for rewarding book owners who handed in their private book collections. This was because book collecting was a means in which one could express his “civilization” and it was like a “life extension” of various forms of knowledge.

The Complete Library in Four Branches of Literature (四库全书) (hereafter *The Complete Library*) is an unprecedented collection of Chinese classic books from the ancient times until the Qing Dynasty. Its compilation started in 1773 by Emperor Qianlong’s imperial decree and was completed in 1787. *The Complete Library* is divided into four parts, in reference to the imperial library divisions: Part 1: Jing (经) deals with Confucian classics, Part 2: Shi (史) deals with history, Part 3: Zi (子) deals with other renowned Chinese philosophers like Hanfeizi (韩非子), Laozi (老子), and Zhuangzi (庄子), Part 4: Ji (集) is a miscellaneous section that consists of literary anthologies, such as prose, poetry, and texts about medicine, astrology, divination and agriculture etc.

The aforementioned tradition of book categorization stemmed from the nationalism ideology of Confucianism during the Han Dynasty. In ancient times China did not categorize books in terms of science like the west. Rather they were categorized and classified in terms of significance, in which social and cultural function was a pivotal part (Jiang, 2007, p. 1).

The massive project of *The Complete Library* employed approximately 360 philosophers, intellectuals from the royal academy, and court officials, as well as 3,800 officials who helped in its recording, copying, deletion and revision. A royal academician named Ji Xiaolan (纪晓岚) was appointed to be in charge of this project. He classified 3,460 different fields of knowledge, compiled them into 79,339 fascicles, (Nienhauser, 1986, p. 248) and categorized them into four sets which were preserved in four main imperial libraries: 1) Wenyuan Ge Library (文渊阁) in Beijing Imperial Palace (北京皇宫) 2) Wenyuan Ge Library (文源阁) located in Yuanming Yuan Summer Palace (圆明园) in Beijing 3) Wenjin Ge Library (文津阁) located in Chengde Summer Palace (承德) in Hebei Province and 4) Wensu Ge Library (文溯阁) located in Fengtian Imperial Palace (奉天) in Shenyang, Liaoning Province. These four sets of books were only accessible to members of the royal family and high officials.

Later Emperor Qianlong commanded three more copies and had them preserved in three other libraries in the south: 1) Wenlan Ge Library (文澜阁) in Hangzhou 2) Wenzong Ge Library (文宗阁) in Zhenjiang and 3) Wenhui Ge Library (文汇阁) in Yangzhou. However, these three sets were designed for commoners with imperial permission.

The compilation process of *the Complete Library* included a thorough examination. If any works contained contents about anti-Qing governance, they would be destroyed. This also happened with petitions filed by officials during the late Ming Dynasty that dishonored the Qing ancestors. Furthermore, some sensitive contents were deleted and altered. People said that during the compilation, burnt books exceeded preserved ones. That is to say, the imperial decree of this compilation project was “non-censorship” of the “censored ones”.

The compilation of *the Complete Library* transformed a lived culture in one specific period of time to be a recorded culture meant to be reproduced continually. *The Complete Library* was then a part of the tradition of selection, one of the most powerful tools for integration that reflected a careful selection process. This meticulous method showed how certain values of past events were selected to support some current social disciplines, for a purpose of past-present linkage and legitimacy of its continuation. Thus, *the Complete Library* was regarded as an ideological apparatus of the Qing court to guarantee the reproduction of power relations that the Manchu rulers desired. While the repressive apparatus involves violence, the ideological one can control ways of thinking via education, family, religion, arts and literature that later gradually infiltrate and ingrain concepts and beliefs beneficial to state power and governance.

Conclusion

The literary inquisition has long been a part of the political culture of human beings. It is the most effective tool to control citizens' ways of thinking. The Qing Dynasty did not merely expand China's territory, but 268 years of its governance reflected their power, and it could not exist without such a strong state foundation. As a result, the Qing Dynasty was equipped with a high potential to employ the repressive apparatus to eradicate unwanted citizens, and to exercise the ideological apparatus to effectively control their people. The Qing Empire could block dreams of the Hans by blocking those paths that were unacceptable among the Manchu.

Moreover, one can see that what is banned in one era can be revered in the other. Thus, knowledge is not what we can know. Rather, it is a matter of “power” in each moment in time within a specific society to pin down “what is knowledge and what is not.” Knowledge, therefore, has no neutrality. It has been cultivated from surrounding facts, situations, and events. Those with authority often monopolize their knowledge and cast it as the most correct.

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