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April 09, 2019

Analyzing Patriarch in Qing Clan Based on *Dream of the Red Chamber*

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An abstract of

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of Emory University in partial fulfillment

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Bachelor of Arts with Honors

East Asian Studies

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Abstract

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By Tianyang Liu

This paper is mainly about the role of patriarch in *Dream of the Red Chamber*, combined with other historical resource about Qing clan. Started with the rationality of using *Dream of the Red Chamber* as a historical resource for analyzing Qing patriarch role. Followed with the different aspects of patriarch. The patriarch in Qing clan is special and different with other dynasties.

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Analyzing Patriarch in Qing Clan Based on *Dream of The Red Chamber*

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Emory University Honor Thesis

April 4th, 2019

A Chinese clan is a patrilineal and patrilocal group of related Chinese people with a common surname sharing a common ancestor and, in many cases, an ancestral home. China, as a family-based country, has the clan system since the Song dynasty. Along with the development of the clan system, during the Qing Dynasty, the imperial government encouraged Chinese clans to take up some quasi-governmental functions such as those involving social welfare and primary education. The patriarch, as the leader of a Chinese clan, has great power, especially in the Qing dynasty. This paper mainly explores on the role that patriarch plays inside and outside the clan during Qing dynasty by mainly focusing on cases described in *Dream of The Red Chamber*, and use other literary and historical sources to provide more evidence. This essay mainly solves the following three aspects about patriarch in Qing clan: What are the decisive factors of choosing patriarch in Qing clan? What is the business and power of a patriarch? What are the limitations of a patriarch in Qing clan? By answering these three questions, we could know the selection of patriarch in Qing clan and his power and limitation.

Many scholars have done plenty of researches on Chinese kinship and the patriarchy system in China. James L. Watson argues in his article *Chinese kinship reconsidered* that “Few who have delved into the intricacies of Chinese history would deny that kinship groups have played a leading role in political and economic affairs. Lineages, clans and surname groups were found in all levels of society; members of China’s ruling elite often used the bonds of common descent to serve their own political ends.”¹ It reveals the importance of

1. James L. Watson, “Chinese Kinship Reconsidered: Anthropological Perspectives on Historical Research.” *The China Quarterly*, no. 92 (Dec., 1982): 589

family in the society especially in the political aspect. However, He mostly focuses on the clan and lineage and views this system from a more macroscopic perspective. In the Rubie Watson's article *Families in China*, she mentions the responsibilities about their offspring of an ideal father in Qing clan. She starts with the filial piety and talks about the cycle within a Chinese clan in order to maintain the clan. "Sons owed practical support to parents as well as obedience, which was performed, elaborated, and internalized in an annual cycle of regularly occurring rituals and daily actions."² In order to learn more about the inheritance of patriarchy, I also read some articles about the female status in a family, Evelyn S. Rawski argues that the families in Qing dynasty was affected by the social structure and tended to invest more on sons rather than daughters to build a lineage organization.³ However, the above researches do not have much direct relation with the patriarchy in Qing clan. There are two Chinese scholars who have done research about this. Huaan Xu states in his articles that the family structure of Qing dynasty inherited from Song and Ming dynasty, and developed in Qing dynasty. The power of family extended in Qing dynasty and had a huge influence on the social policy, economy, and culture. He mainly focused on the development of clan as a social organization, and he believes that the reasons why the power of Qing clan expanded are the growing autocracy and the conflicts between human and land resources.⁴ Erkang

2. Rubie Watson, "Families in China: Ties That Bind?" The Family Model in Chinese Art and Culture conference volume, Tang Center for Asian Art, Princeton University, November 6-7, 2004 (Draft): 2

3. Evelyn S. Rawski "The Banner Story of the Stone" in *Approaches to Teaching the Story of the Stone*, edited by Tina Lu and Andrew Schonebaum, (New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2012), 144

4. Huaan Xu 许华安. "Qingdai zongzu shili de pengzhang jiqi yuanyin tanxi" 清代宗族势力的膨胀及其原因探析 [The analyze of enlarge power of Qing clan and its reason] *Studies in Qing History 清史研究* No.4 (1992): 27

Feng in his article *The discuss about patriarch in Qing dynasty* discusses the role of patriarch mainly based on the clan regulation. He argues that the patriarch in Qing clan is produced base on selection law, and the patriarch would be limited by clan rules and congress, which results that the authority of patriarch would not be very high. However, he also believes that the clan, as a blood - based social organization, has its own patriarchal clan system character, which means that the patriarch has the power to perform despotism to some extent. At the end of the Qing dynasty, there are very few clans which have parliamentary clan congress. The main idea of Erkang Feng is that the function of clan and patriarch is changing and the patriarchal system is decreasing during Qing dynasty.

Both Huaan Xu and Erkang Feng use the solid historical resources to support their opinions, such as *Hongdong Liushi Zongpu* (洪洞刘氏宗谱) and *Wuyuan Changxi Yushi Zhengpu* (婺源长溪余氏正谱). These historical resources are definitely solid, but not much people know about these historical resources. It is hard for people to get a sense of the role of patriarch since these historical records only write down the regulations. Relating the fictional figures with these regulations could be easier to explain the role of patriarch in a Qing clan. Also using pedigree records from different places may cause the inconsistency of regulations about patriarch, because different clan will have different rules. Besides, most of these historical records are about a village or local clan, but the *Dream of The Red Chamber* offers us a description of the big official clan which is not shown in other historical records. So I choose *Dream of The Red Chamber* as my primary sources to analyze the role of patriarch in Qing dynasty.

The biggest difference between my research with other researches is that I am using *Dream of The Red Chamber* as my primary sources to analyze the role of patriarch in Qing dynasty. Huaan Xu's research about the development of the clan system offers me an insight of how the clan changed and I could compare the Qing clan's characters with previous clan systems. Erkang Feng's research mainly focuses on the clan regulations part and reveals the regulation about patriarch of clan in Qing dynasty. I agree with his opinion that the patriarch in Qing clan is chosen by the selection law, and the patriarch in Qing clan is under many limitations. However, I do not reach this idea by mainly analyzing clan regulations. I believe that in *Dream of The Red Chamber*, it reveals that the patriarch's selection is reasonable, and the patriarch has its own business to do but also has some limitations.

The Rationality of Using *Dream of The Red Chamber* as a Historical Resource for Patriarch
Analysis

Fictions are sometimes considered to be invalid historical evidence. However, *Dream of The Red Chamber* is an exception from this category. Many scholars are doing all kinds of research based on *Dream of The Red Chamber*. Some scholars start by focusing on its literature aspects. For example, Huan Saussy analyzed the *Dream of The Red Chamber* with world literature. He talks about the translation of *Dream of The Red Chamber* as a part of the core survey of world literature.⁵ Other scholars choose cultural aspects to research based on

5. Haun Saussy "Story of the Stone and World Literature" in *Approaches to Teaching the Story of the Stone*, edited by Tina Lu and Andrew Schonebaum, (New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2012), 477

Dream of The Red Chamber. For example, Dore J. Levy does his research about the garden culture based on *Dream of The Red Chamber*.⁶ Ziyang Shi focuses on the clothing custom in *Dream of The Red Chamber*.⁷ Xuejun Pan uses one specific chapter in *Dream of The Red Chamber* to analyze the *li* culture of Qing dynasty.⁸ Only a few scholars such as Evelyn S. Rawski did historical research about the banner system based on *Dream of The Red Chamber*.⁹ Rawski uses the family background of the author of *Dream of The Red Chamber* to support her research. She believes that “The novel describes attributes and activities typical of a bannerman family.”¹⁰ She uses this novel as a base for historical research by relating its author’s personal life with the description of the banner family in this book. Dr. Guangdi Qu uses *Dream of The Red Chamber* to analyze the bureaucratic system in Qing dynasty. She admits that the description of the bureaucratic system in *Dream of The Red Chamber* has been greatly hidden by the author. Guangdi Qu uses the character and plot in *Dream of The Red Chamber* as an introduction and she cites a lot of other historical resources

6. Levy, Dore J. “The Garden and Garden Culture in *The Story of the Stone*” in *Approaches to Teaching the Story of the Stone*, edited by Tina Lu and Andrew Schonebaum, (New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2012), 115

7. Ziyang Shi 史子言. “Touguo honglougong jiedu qingdai fushi wenhua” 透过《红楼梦》解读清代服饰文化 [From the *The Red Chamber* to analyze the clothing culture in Qing dynasty] *Literature life 文艺生活* No.2 (2017)

8. Xuejun Pan 潘学军. “Honglougong chuxi jizongci liyi wenxue miaoxie yanjiu shuping” 红楼梦除夕祭宗祠礼仪文学描写研究述评 [Analyze of literature description of Lunar New Year’s Eve sacrificial ceremony in *The Red Chamber*] *Honglougong Xuekan 红楼梦学刊* Vol.5 (2017): 314-343

9. Evelyn S. Rawski “The Banner Story of the Stone” in *Approaches to Teaching the Story of the Stone*, edited by Tina Lu and Andrew Schonebaum, (New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2012), 144

10. Evelyn S. Rawski “The Banner Story of the Stone” in *Approaches to Teaching the Story of the Stone*, edited by Tina Lu and Andrew Schonebaum, (New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2012), 147

to support her research about the bureaucratic system in Qing dynasty.¹¹ These scholars either only focus on this book's literature and cultural research, or not using this book as the primary sources. Only Evelyn S. Rawski builds her research based on *Dream of The Red Chamber*.

However, I am going to solve the problem of using *Dream of The Red Chamber* by applying three methodological assumptions. First, *Dream of The Red Chamber* is always regarded as a documentary fiction which means it reflects history more than other types of fictions such as romantic fictions. Secondly, the descriptions about details of lifestyles, family member relationships, and clan regulations, should be closer to the reality than dramatic plots. Thirdly, since fiction reflects history but can hardly be viewed as a representation of actual events, evidence must be drawn from other sources to enhance analysis.

Dream of The Red Chamber (or *The Story of the Stone*) is listed as the first of the four classic Chinese classics, which generally considered as written by the Qing Dynasty writer Cao Xueqin (曹雪芹). This story of an extended family centres on its women and their relationships along with the rise and fall of four big families - Jia, Wang, Shi, and Xue.

Dream of The Red Chamber is a great novel with no doubt, but the problem is that can this be regarded as a historical reference for studying family life in mid-Qing dynasty. Many readers consider *Dream of The Red Chamber* as a social novel or as thinly disguised autobiography and are convinced that it conveys much of the historical reality of upper-class Chinese life in

11. Guangdi Qu 曲广娣. "Honglouloumeng yu qingdai guanzhi" 红楼梦与清代官制. [*The Red Chamber and the official system of Qing dynasty*] *Shantou University Journal (Humanities & Social Sciences Bimonthly)* 汕头大学学报 Vol.31 No.6 (2015): 21-29

the eighteenth century. Charlotte Furth in her article states that “Beginning with the teahouse gossip between Jia Yu-cun and an acquaintance in chapter 2, followed up in chapter 3 with the description of the orphan heroine Lin Dai-yu’s arrival at the Jia mansion to take up residence with her maternal grandmother, readers are introduced to a family embedded in a social world as densely realized as any from the pen of Charles Dickens, Honore de Balzac, or Jane Austen.”¹² Meanwhile, other scholars such as Wu Shih-Ch’ang believes that “...it is, after all, a fiction, or the story of the “Chia” (fictitious) family and the “true facts are hidden” (Chen-shih yin), these clues, unless correlated, are deceptive than reliable.”¹³ However, Wu Shih-Ch’ang argues about the correlation between life in *Dream of The Red Chamber* and the author’s real life. Due to the lack of available materials concerning the author’s family and his life, the question still remains today. However, the life depicted in *Dream of The Red Chamber* does not have to be the life which the author personally experienced. As long as the scenes and relationships depicted in the novel fit eighteenth-century Qing dynasty, the descriptions of the patriarch could be used as a proof. Famous Chinese literati Lu Xun puts *Dream of The Red Chamber* into the category of social novels (世情小说).¹⁴ The novel based on family life is the authenticity of Lu Xun's thoughts of social novels. Such novels

12. Charlotte Furth, “Five Questions for a New Reader of *The Story of the Stone*: A Historian’s Primer for Volume 1,” in *Approaches to Teaching the Story of the Stone*, ed. Tina Lu and Andrew Schonebaum (New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2012), 84.

13. Shih-Ch’ang Wu, *On The Red Chamber Dream: a critical study of two annotated manuscripts of the XVIIIth Century* (Great Britain: Oxford University Press, 1961) 114.

14. Yannan Hu, 胡衍南. *Honglouloumeng hou – Qingdai zhongqi shiqing xiaoshuo yanjiu* 红楼梦后 – 清代中期世情小说研究 [After Dream of the Red Chamber – Research of the social novel in Mid Qing dynasty]. (Taiwan: Wunan dangdai xueshu yekan 五南当代学术业刊 [Five south contemporary academic journal], 2017), 152

place the main plot events in the family life, and gradually develop the relationships and contradictions between the characters. However, the daily activities of the family can radiate to many levels in the society, and thus reveal the social relations of the characters, the intricacies of the events. So in order to develop the plot, authors of social novels have to have a good understanding and description of family life especially the relationships between different characters. Such relationships including the description of a patriarch inside a clan. In conclusion, I think the description of the patriarch in *Dream of The Red Chamber* could be used as a reliable historical resource and I could do my research base on this masterpiece.

Development of Clan Before *Dream of The Red Chamber*

First of all, in order to start my research about patriarch in Qing clan based on *Dream of The Red Chamber*, we have to know what is clan (*zongzu* 宗族) in Chinese history. People with blood relations are relatives, but whether they become a clan depends on whether they are organized. This organization was embodied in the ancestral temple of worshipping ancestors in ancient times. However, people of different social groups have different rules of ancestor worship and clan organization. The lower the social level, the smaller the power of ancestor worship, and the less stable the clan organization is. In fact, there was not a formal strong clan organization until the Northern Song dynasty. In the early period of China's feudal society, the central government's management controlled over the society relying mainly on a relatively direct administrative rule. Since the Song Dynasty, the direct control of the central administration had obviously been greatly weakened. Many scholars tried to

reorganize the social orders and one of their strategies was creating a stronger social organization - clan. When famous scholar - Fan Zhongyan became an official and saved some money, he brought a thousand acres of land which is called "Righteousness village" (义庄). "Buying ten acres of land to my clan, in order those poor people do not have to worry about their life."¹⁵ These lands are called "righteousness field". (义田) The intention of building "righteousness field" was collecting relatives. "Starting the "righteousness field", calculating the number of people inside clan, and offering them money monthly based on the fields."¹⁶ Other than Fan Zhongyan, many scholars also promoted the formation of clan. Zhang Zai promoted the law of the clan, "Officials protect their own family, the loyalty and righteousness will be built, since the loyalty and righteousness built, the regime will be stable" and famous *li* thoughts scholar - Cheng Yi also said that "when the clan law established, people will respect their ancestor and pay attention to their origin; since people start to pay attention to their origin, the government will respect itself".¹⁷ Other famous Song scholars including Su Xun and Ouyang Xiu promoted the importance of pedigree. They believed that the pedigree of a clan could make people know the importance of respecting ancestors and connecting with relatives. In the vigorous propaganda of the *li* philosophers

15. Rigen Wang 王日根, "Yitian jiqi zai fengjian shehui zhonghouqi zhi shehui gongneng qianxi" 义田及其在封建社会中后期之社会功能浅析 [Analyzing the social function of righteousness field in the late part of feudal society] *Sociology Research 社会学研究* No.6 (1992): 91

16. Huaan Xu 许华安, "Qingdai zongzu shili de pengzhang jiqi yuanyin tanxi" 清代宗族势力的膨胀及其原因探析 [The analyze of enlarge power of Qing clan and its reason] *Studies in Qing History 清史研究* No.4 (1992): 22

17. Rigen Wang 王日根, "Yitian jiqi zai fengjian shehui zhonghouqi zhi shehui gongneng qianxi" 义田及其在封建社会中后期之社会功能浅析 [Analyzing the social function of righteousness field in the late part of feudal society] *Sociology Research 社会学研究* No.6 (1992): 91

and the active practice of the bureaucrats, under the development of “righteousness field” as the economic foundation, combined with the ancient clan methods, the new large family organization form had been further developed. Since then, the clan system had been developed.

However, before the middle of the Ming Dynasty, the establishment of ancestral halls and the restoration of genealogy were limited to the houses of the officials and scholars. Normal peasants memorized and sacrificed their ancestors at their own houses, and they could only sacrifice their ancestors limited to four generations, which means they could not get in touch with relatives more than four generations. In 1532, the ritual leading official Xiayan wrote to the emperor Jiajing and asked the allowance of peasants to establish a family temple and sacrifice their ancestors. The phenomenon of the people's temple began to appear, but the proportion was still small.

After Ming dynasty, the Qing Empire conquered the central plain and brought their concept of the clan. The Qing Empire was established by Manchus - the seminomadic tribes inhabiting China's northeast frontier. Unlike the farming civilization, the nomadic civilization had a more flexible and unstable life. They divided the clan based on kinship which is much like the Chinese clan system, but more powerful. When Qing conquerors relocated from peripheral, mountainous Manchuria to the populous, fertile land of China, they realized that without a powerful state system managing these resources to service the center, their original kinship-based system would result in decentralization. As the conquest of China eventually took shape, however, Qing state-makers realized that without an additional layer of Manchu patrimonial control, the Chinese bureaucratic state- however

effectively it monitored administration and taxation - would become unwieldy and unmanageable, hostile to foreign rulers like themselves.¹⁸ Thus, Manchu governors created the bannerman system to balance the influence of traditional Chinese administration. “It denoted the subjects of the Aisin Gioro clan, the imperial clan of the Qing state; previously these subjects had been Jianzhou Jurchens, Haixi Jurchens, Mongols, Koreans, or “Wildman”, the unacculturated hunting Jurchens of the Amur hinterlands.”¹⁹ By applying the bannerman system, the clan, the traditional means of social consolidation, political organization and cultural transmission in the Northeast, very naturally became one of the elemental unifying concepts in the new Manchu polity. Jinjun Zhang analyzes the function of Jiangnan clan in Qing dynasty, and he believes that “Jiangnan clan played an important role in such aspects as the advocacy of the policy of paying clanish and national taxes, the cooperation with the royal government in some large-scale irrigation rehabilitation projects, the ideological control of culture and education, and thus helped to maintain the traditional social order at the basic level.”²⁰ “The clan has its own ethical system and order, and the purpose of the clan is the same as the purpose of Qing government – stabilizing its own regime. “The adjustment of the social order by the ethical system of the clan in the Qing Dynasty was mainly manifested by maintaining the internal ethical order of the clan. The

18. Pamela Kyle Crossley, *“Historical and Magic Unity”: The Real and Ideal Clan in Manchu Identity*. (Michigan: University Microfilms International, 1983), vii

19. Pamela Kyle Crossley, *“Historical and Magic Unity”: The Real and Ideal Clan in Manchu Identity*. (Michigan: University Microfilms International, 1983), vii

20. Jinjun Zhang 张金俊. “Qingdai Jiangnan zongzu zai xiangcun shehui kongzhi zhong de zuoyong” 清代江南宗族在乡村社会控制中的作用 [The function of Jiangnan clan on local social control in Qing dynasty] *Journal of Anhui Normal University (Hum. & Soc.Sci.)* 安徽师范大学学报 (人文社会科学版) Vol.34 No.3 (May 2006): 353

regulations about the clan ethical relationship are about 37% among all the Qing clan regulations.”²¹ This shows Qing clan’s emphasis on the ethical system. The most vital function of the ethical system is stabilizing the clan. Qing government realized the use of the ethical system and the importance of clan, so the Qing governor offered more power to local clan and wanted the local clan to help them stabilize the regime.

As I have mentioned in the previous part, in Song dynasty, scholars mentioned the theory of using clan as part of the administration. In the Ming dynasty, many clans were actually regarded as part of the local governments. However, this function of the clan was not accepted by the Ming government. After the Manchus marched to Beijing and established the Qing dynasty, the Qing government paid much attention to the function of the clan as local government. In the 9th year of Kangxi, Kangxi announced Sixteen Maxims, in which the first two maxims were “Highly esteem filial piety and brotherly submission to give due weight to social relations” and “Behave generously toward your clan to promote harmony and peace”. (敦孝弟以重人伦，笃宗族以昭雍睦) The word - clan - first appeared in the official document and was emphasized by the Kangxi emperor.

When the time comes to Yongzheng period, the government published some new regulations about the *baojia* (保甲) system, which is a community-based system of law enforcement and civil control. This system was invented by Wang Anshi in the Song dynasty, and the *baojia* is the title of local administrator. In the new regulations, the government issued that “If there are more than one hundred people from the same clan in the village, the

21.Xulong Li 李绪龙. “Lun Qingdai shehui zhixu de weichi” 论清代社会秩序的维持 [The maintain of Qing social order] *Journal of Chaohu College* 巢湖学院学报 No.5 Vol.7 (2005): 39

baojia cannot inspect and supervise. Instead, choose the person who has both morality and reputation in a clan, to be the *zuzheng* (族正). If there are criminal gangs, they have to report it. If they do not report, they will be punished the same as other *baojia*.”²² The *zuzheng* was different from the patriarch, but in fact, the *zuzheng* and patriarch were always the same man, or shared the same power. Recognizing the right of the *zuzheng*, actually equalled to recognizing the clan organization as a primary organization which assisted the local government and maintained the local order. This was unprecedented in the Song, Yuan, Ming and Shunzhi and Kangxi period in the early Qing Dynasty. In response to this, the powers of the patriarch had been determined by law. During the Qianlong period, the Qing court also practised the “*zuzheng* system” in the provinces of Fujian and Guizhou, and *zuzheng* became the link between the clan and the local government. When it came to Jiajing and Daoguang, the degree of autonomy of clan in some places was already quite high. The power of clan increased a lot in Qing dynasty, and the great events within the clan often depended on the patriarch.

The Determination of Patriarch in Qing Clan

Since the patriarch holds such power in Qing clan, it must be selected carefully and there were many conditions to be considered in order to choose the most proper person to be

22. Huaan Xu 许华安, “Qingdai zongzu shili de pengzhang jiqi yuanyin tanxi” 清代宗族势力的膨胀及其原因探析 [The analyze of enlarge power of Qing clan and its reason] *Studies in Qing History* 清史研究 No.4 (1992): 22

the patriarch. When time goes back to Zhou dynasty, the selection of patriarch was pretty straightforward. The first son who had direct blood relationship of the main lineage which means the one who inherits the title had the right to be the next patriarch. This system, *zongzi* (宗子) system, was only based on the blood relationship and the age of sons. However, in Qing dynasty, this system completely broke down. The patriarch should not only lead the clan but also get involved in the local administrative affairs. If choosing the patriarch only based on the *zongzi* system, the chosen patriarch may be poor, not knowledgeable, or could not gain respect from other clan members. Even if the one who has the title and the blood relationship become the patriarch, he could not control and manage the clan business. There may be some clan members from other wing-lineages who are rich, distinguished, and who are officials or has a high reputation. These people were more suitable for the patriarch position compared to the one who inherits the title and the blood relationship. In fact, the one who inherited the title and the blood relationship usually led the clan's sacrifice ceremony, but did not has the power as patriarch. Since the patriarch could not only be determined by the blood relationship during Qing dynasty, the ethic and social level became the decisive factor of choosing patriarch in Qing clan. Erkang Feng in his article *The discuss about patriarch in Qing dynasty* argues that the main factor of choosing patriarch is the moral value, but the talents, blood relationship should also be considered.²³ He draws his conclusion from various clan regulations. It is shown that even the influence of blood relationship has been weakened a lot compared to Zhou dynasty, the blood relationship

23. Erkang Feng 冯尔康, "Qingdai zongzu zuzhang shulun," 清代宗族族长述论 [The summary and analysis of clan patriarch in Qing dynasty] *Jianghai Xuekan* 江海学刊, No.5 (2008): 145

matters in the selection of patriarch in Qing clan. However, Erkang Feng mentions the position as patriarch assistant in his research. This person is chosen to help patriarch to manage the clan. The decisive factors of choosing assistant are the moral value, ability and richness.²⁴ In this case, the blood relationship is not considered at all.

In order to decide the patriarch, the clan members will gather together on a specific day and discuss the selection of the patriarch. Participants in the selection of ethnic groups are quite extensive. There are leaders of lineages, the elderly, those who have studied well and earned the title. So these wide-ranging participants should reflect the willingness of most clan members on the selection of the patriarch. According to the regulation of Yan clan in Lanzhou, “All the leaders of lineages, the elderly, and young clan members, come together to the ancestral hall and discuss the patriarch’s selection. If there is someone who fits the regulation of choosing patriarch, then (clan members) could recommend him.”²⁵ As a conclusion, the patriarch is determined by the recommendation.

Dream of The Red Chamber is mainly about the Jia clan. There are two major lineages in Jia clan. One is the Ningguo Mansion (宁国府), the other is the Rongguo Mansion (荣国府). Ningguo Mansion is created by the elder brother - Jia Yan, and the Rongguo Mansion is created by the younger brother – Jia Yuan. Even when *Dream of The Red Chamber* starts, the Rongguo Mansion is much more flourished compared to Ningguo

24. Erkang Feng 冯尔康, “Qingdai zongzu zuzhang shulun,” 清代宗族族长述论 [The summary and analysis of clan patriarch in Qing dynasty] *Jianghai Xuekan* 江海学刊, No.5 (2008): 145

25. Erkang Feng 冯尔康, “Qingdai zongzu zuzhang shulun,” 清代宗族族长述论 [The summary and analysis of clan patriarch in Qing dynasty] *Jianghai Xuekan* 江海学刊, No.5 (2008): 146

Mansion, and the Jia Zheng (贾政) is regarded as the patriarch of Jia clan, the Ningguo Mansion is the main lineage in Jia clan and the patriarch - Jia Zhen (贾珍) - of Ningguo Mansion still has the power to lead the sacrifice ceremony. In Chapter 53, the ancestral sacrifice is carried out on New Year's Eve in the Ningguo Mansion. "Over in the Ning mansion, Cousin Zhen had opened up the Hall of the Ancestors and set his people to work sweeping it, setting the vessels out in readiness for the New Year sacrifice."²⁶ The ancestral temple is in the Ningguo Mansion and the father of Jia Zhen who is the previous patriarch, leads the sacrifice. Jia Zhen's father - Jia Jing (贾敬) - become a Daoist priest and stays outside the Jia clan. Jia Jing is definitely not qualified as a patriarch. However, when he comes back for the ancestral sacrifice, he still has the power to lead sacrifice, because he is the eldest son of the eldest house.

However, when we talk about the actual patriarch of Jia clan in *Dream of The Red Chamber*, it usually refers to the Jia Zheng family. Jia Zheng is the second son of Rongguo Mansion. The reason why he becomes the actual patriarch of Jia clan, is that he has good character and morality compared to Jia Zhen, the first son of Ningguo Manion, and Jia She (贾赦), the first son of Rongguo Mansion.

Jia Zhen, who becomes the so-called patriarch of Jia clan after his father leaving the clan, has really bad characters. He does a lot of bad things including gambling, obscenity, and he does not earn any titles or gains a good reputation except the inherited title. He does not want to take any responsibilities as a patriarch; meanwhile, the only thing he wants to do is

26. Xueqin Cao, *The Story of the Stone Volume 2*, trans. David Hawkes. (Great Britain: Richard Clay (The Chaucer Press) Ltd, 1977), 557

having fun. “At first they played only for drinks, but soon they were playing gradually encroached on the time devoted to archery; betting became more open; and finally, with the formal opening of a “bank” some three or four months previously, regular, organized gambling for heavy stakes had become a daily routine.”²⁷ When Jia Zhen’s father Jia Jing dies, sisters of Jia Zhen’s wife come and help with the ceremony. However, Jia Zhen does not grieve his father’s death at all, “As long as there were visitors around, convention obliged Cousin Zhen and Jia Rong to remain inappropriately grief-stricken attitude beside the coffin, ... but as soon as the last guest had gone, they were off like a shot to enjoy the society of their young female relations inside.”²⁸ Jia Zhen sees that the sisters of his wife are beautiful, and he teases with them along with his son Jia Rong. Even after the second sister marries to Jia Lian as his concubine, he covets the third sister of his wife. When the leading tenant farmer of Jia clan comes and serves during the Spring festival, Jia Zhen shows his voracity, “I’d reckoned on your bringing me at least five thousand taels. What am I supposed to do with an amount like this?”²⁹ He does not care about the wretched harvest year but keeps pushing the tenant farmer of Jia clan. Jia Zhen does not follow the moral values of Chinese traditional society and he is definitely not qualified for a patriarch.

As for Jia She, he is the same unqualified for the patriarch as his nephew - Jia Zhen.

Jia She has a lot of concubines and after getting all these young girls, he still manages to

27. Xueqin Cao, *The Story of the Stone Volume 3*, trans. David Hawkes. (Great Britain: Richard Clay (The Chaucer Press) Ltd, 1977), 492

28. Xueqin Cao, *The Story of the Stone Volume 3*, trans. David Hawkes. (Great Britain: Richard Clay (The Chaucer Press) Ltd, 1977), 248-249

29. Xueqin Cao, *The Story of the Stone Volume 2*, trans. David Hawkes. (Great Britain: Richard Clay (The Chaucer Press) Ltd, 1977), 563

force a maid of his mother to become his concubine. Jia She is not only excessive indulgence in lewdness himself, but also connives his son to do the same thing. Jia She even gives more maids to his son to indulge his son. Jia She is also a voracious person. In order to get 5000 taels, he forces his daughter – Yingchun (迎春) - to married to a bad man - Sun Shaozu (孙绍祖). Sun is an alcoholic, prurient, and he is addicted to gambling. Sun treats Yingchun really bad and he even tells Yingchun that “Don’t put on the lady wife act with me, my girl! You’re no better than a bought slave – payment in kind for the five thousand taels your old man owes me – and if you’re not very careful I shall give you a good beating and send you to sleep with the maids”³⁰ Jia She could “sell” his daughter for 5000 taels, so there is no way that he could be a strong and wise patriarch.

For comparison, Jia Zheng is a totally different character. Even before this character comes out in *Dream of The Red Chamber*, someone criticizes him that “The second son, Jia Zheng, has been mad keen on study ever since he was a lad. He is a very upright sort of person, straight as a die. He would have sat for the examinations, ... and (emperor) on seeing Jia Zheng he gave him the post of Supernumerary Executive Officers, ... From there he has now risen to the post of Under Secretary.”³¹ Others praise him that “Jia Zheng, is an Under Secretary in the Ministry of Works. He takes very much after his late grandfather: a modest, generous man, quite without the arrogance of the pampered aristocrat.”³² In summary, what

30. Xueqin Cao, *The Story of the Stone Volume 3*, trans. David Hawkes. (Great Britain: Richard Clay (The Chaucer Press) Ltd, 1977), 611

31. Xueqin Cao, *The Story of the Stone Volume 1*, trans. David Hawkes. (Great Britain: Richard Clay (The Chaucer Press) Ltd, 1977), 75

32. Xueqin Cao, *The Story of the Stone Volume 1*, trans. David Hawkes. (Great Britain: Richard Clay (The Chaucer Press) Ltd, 1977), 85

we have seen is such a man: since childhood, he has been very fond of reading, and he is kind and courteous, cares about talented people, helps the weak, and has a generous and elegant style as an elder. Jia Zheng not only has higher noble character compared to Jia Zhen and Jia She, but also has higher social status. As mentioned before, he earns an actual title and works for the government. More than that, his daughter –Yuanchun (元春) - is a highest-ranking imperial concubine who is the backbone of Jia clan. In other word, the whole clan relies on Yuanchun. As Yuanchun's father, Jia Zheng has much higher status than other people in Jia clan. Besides his honorable daughter, Jia Zheng's wife also has higher social status than Jia She's wife. *Dream of The Red Chamber* is mainly about Jia clan, but it also mentions the life about the other three big clans. Jia Zheng's wife madam Wang (王夫人) is from one of these clans, which means the Jia clan and Wang clan closely connected through this couple - Jia Zheng and Madam Wang. The strong background of Madam Wang offered Jia Zheng more power in Jia clan.

As a conclusion, Jia Zheng has higher social status and has noble virtue. He is the one who could leads the Jia clan and support the Jia clan. Even though Jia Zhen is the nominal patriarch who lead the sacrifice, Jia Zheng is the actual patriarch of Jia clan. In Qing dynasty, the *zongzi* system was no longer followed by clans. Instead, Qing clan picked up patriarch based on their moral and reputation, which is a much more reasonable choice.

Patriarch Business in Qing Clan

As I have mentioned previously, the patriarch of Qing clan had more power as part of the local administrative system. The Qing government gave some power to the patriarch so that the patriarch would help officials to control their own clan members. By giving the power to the patriarch, the government stabilized the local. Patriarch in Qing clan had to take responsibilities about leading sacrifice ceremony, lecturing clan members, mediation of disputes, and managing the clan property.

The most important and symbolic business about patriarch is leading the ancestral sacrifice ceremony. Qing clan is a group of people, who share the same origin, gather and live together. Thus, honoring the common ancestor is the most nuclear and representative power of a patriarch. The patriarch in Qing clan not only has the power to lead the ancestral sacrifice ceremony, but also needs to take the responsibility to ensure that the sacrifice ceremony is held on time and maintain the rule of sacrifice ceremony while it is processing. In Chapter 53, the nominal patriarch Jia Zhen leads the ancestral sacrifice in the New Year Eve. However, there are many times of ancestral sacrifice ceremony every year according to Chinese tradition. For example, the ancestral sacrifice ceremony will also be held in the Mid-autumn festival. “It was fifteenth, one of the two days in each month on which offerings have to be made to the ancestors. (Jia Zhen) Entering the ancestral temple with the other male members of the family, he took the opportunity of looking around inside it very carefully.”³³ Even Jia Zhen does not care and control the clan business, he as the eldest son of the main lineage has to take the responsibility of leading the ancestral sacrifice ceremony. As for the

33. Xueqin Cao, *The Story of the Stone Volume 3*, trans. David Hawkes. (Great Britain: Richard Clay (The Chaucer Press) Ltd, 1977), 498

keeping of sacrifice ceremony rules, there is not much description in *Dream of The Red Chamber*. According to other historical resources, there were many rules about sacrifice ceremony in Qing clan. For example, the patriarch should check if the offerings are followed the tradition. If the offerings are not rich or clean, the patriarch would be punished. “If there is a person who does not worship the temple and does not worship the tomb, the patriarch will punish him for forgiveness; if there are people who do not follow the rituals, drink and swear at each other in the sacrifice ceremony, the patriarch immediately punishes them.”³⁴ So the first business of patriarch in Qing clan is taking care of the sacrifice ceremony and maintaining the disciplines of sacrifice ceremony.

The second major affairs of patriarch in Qing clan is lecturing clan members. The patriarch usually teaches the tribes with patriarchal ethics, preaches the imperial decree, the ancestral and the sage life motto, and gives people enlightenment. “In Hunan province, Kuang clan collects all the younger generation on the fifteenth day of the first month. The patriarch will preach to them about the family rules and family training.”³⁵ Since the clan becomes more tight compared to the previous dynasties, the patriarch has to take the responsibility of the clan. If the clan members do something illegal, the whole clan’s reputation will be affected. In fact, one of the major reasons why the Jia clan fails at the end of *Dream of The Red Chamber* is corruption and waste from the young generation. Thus,

34. Erkang Feng 冯尔康, “Qingdai zongzu zuzhang shulun,” 清代宗族族长述论 [The summary and analysis of clan patriarch in Qing dynasty] *Jianghai Xuekan* 江海学刊, No.5 (2008): 147

35. Erkang Feng 冯尔康, “Qingdai zongzu zuzhang shulun,” 清代宗族族长述论 [The summary and analysis of clan patriarch in Qing dynasty] *Jianghai Xuekan* 江海学刊, No.5 (2008): 147

lecturing clan members is a vital business of patriarch. In *Dream of The Red Chamber*, most description of Jia Zheng is about how he lectures his son - Jia Baoyu (贾宝玉). Jia Zheng wants Jia Baoyu to read more Confucian classics books, but Baoyu loves poems, lyrics and arts. So almost every time when Jia Zheng meets Jia Baoyu, he asks and urges Baoyu to read more classic books. In Chapter 84, Jia Zheng tests what Baoyu learns about essay-writing, because he worries Baoyu about “If only he can do well enough to scrape through his exam, then she (Grandmother Jia) will have something to proud of, a return for all her love, and he will have something to offer in the event of his marriage.”³⁶ Not only Jia Baoyu, but Jia Zheng also lectures young man from other lineages. Almost every time when he sees some young kids, he would lecture them to follow the sage saying and traditional values. He is the patriarch of Jia clan and the main thing he cares about is maintaining the clan’s glory. If the clan members do not behaved properly, it will bring disasters to the clan. For example, in Chapter 33, Baoyu hangs out with an actor belonged to Prince Zhong-shun. However, this actor leaves Zhong-shun’s house secretly and the officer believes that Jia Baoyu hides this actor, so the officer from Prince Zhong-shun’s house comes to ask Jia Zheng. Jia Zheng is furious about this, “Miserable scum! It is not enough, apparently, that you should neglect your studies when you are at home. It seems that you must needs go perpetrating enormities outside. This Bijou I have been hearing about is under the patronage of His Royal highness the Prince of Zhong-shun. How could you have the unspeakable effrontery to commit an act of enticement on his person – involving me, incidentally, in the consequences of your wrong-

36. Xueqin Cao, *The Story of the Stone Volume 4*, trans. David Hawkes. (Great Britain: Richard Clay (The Chaucer Press) Ltd, 1977), 97

doing.”³⁷ Jia Zheng is not only angry about Baoyu hanging out with the actor, which is not doing proper business from Jia Zheng’s perspective, but also mad about the potential damage that Baoyu would bring to the whole clan. By lecturing the young generation, the clan could keep its glory and not incur the scourge for the whole clan.

As the leader and representative of the clan, patriarch should mediate disputes inside clan. The contradictions between clan members in *Dream of The Red Chamber* are normally minor matters. Most of these matters are mediated by Wang Xifeng (王熙凤) who plays the role as the assistant of patriarch in the Jia clan. When the fights between members could not be mediated by the lower leader, it would be sent to the patriarch and ask him to make the final decision. Normally, the fights between clan members would be solved inside clan and would not be sent to the government. “The clan rules of Zhang clan at Ningjin: When there is a contradiction between clan members, it should be mediated inside the clan, and should not be sent to the office. Even if the clan member is right, if the clan member submits the indictment to the government, he would be regarded as a violation of clan rules”³⁸ For example, when the maid of Lady Wang commits suicide, Jia Zheng’s first thought is that “Such a thing has never before happened in our family. Our family has always been lenient and considerate in its treatment of inferiors. It is one of our traditions. I suppose it is because I have been too neglectful of household matters during these last few years. ... What a

37. Xueqin Cao, *The Story of the Stone Volume 2*, trans. David Hawkes. (Great Britain: Richard Clay (The Chaucer Press) Ltd, 1977), 143-144

38. Erkang Feng 冯尔康, “Qingdai zongzu zuzhang shulun,” 清代宗族族长述论 [The summary and analysis of clan patriarch in Qing dynasty] *Jianghai Xuekan* 江海学刊, No.5 (2008): 147

terrible disgrace to our ancestors if this should get about!”³⁹ What he cares first are clan reputation and ancestors glory, and he does not want the outsiders to know this. Jia Zheng listens to others’ saying and believes that Baoyu rapes this maid. He immediately brings Baoyu in and almost beats Baoyu to death. He loves his son - Baoyu - but in order to perform patriarch’s duty, Jia Zheng has to punish Baoyu. After Jia Zheng’s mother stopped him, Jia Zheng said: “What I did to the boy I did for the honor of the family.”⁴⁰ The clan’s reputation is more than everything, and all fights and contradictions should be limited inside the clan. Patriarch would send clan members to the government only when the clan members do not accept the decision from patriarch.

In *Dream of The Red Chamber*, the four big clans have a high degree of authority; they are rich and prosperous, and they enjoy a luxurious life. The houses of Jia clan occupy a large half of the street. There are many people lived with Jia clan. Only the Rongguo Mansion has more than 300 people. With such a large family, their daily consumption is bound to be very large, so where does their money come from? As a clan, the Jia clan gets a huge income by the occupation of a large amount of land and labor. Jinjun Zhang argues that the clan fields are the foundation of clan economy. “The clan landlord mobilizes the power of the entire ethnic group in the name of the clan, which is public property, and is inviolable, and tries to maintain the clan’s ownership of the clan. Under the name of the publicly - owned, all clan members will protect clan field as a public property of the clan.”⁴¹ Whether the clan has a public property,

39. Xueqin Cao, *The Story of the Stone Volume 2*, trans. David Hawkes. (Great Britain: Richard Clay (The Chaucer Press) Ltd, 1977), 145

40. Xueqin Cao, *The Story of the Stone Volume 2*, trans. David Hawkes. (Great Britain: Richard Clay (The Chaucer Press) Ltd, 1977), 151

41. Jinjun Zhang 张金俊. “Qingdai Jiangnan zongzu zai xiangcun shehui kongzhi zhong de

or whether it is good or not, it is related to the clan's major events including sacrifices ceremony and the construction. Therefore, the management, maintenance and expansion of the public property are important duties of the patriarch. The clan members could not supervise the land and labor directly, so they dispatch someone to be the leader of the tenant farmer. This tenant farmer leader is the representative of the landlord's private estate. On behalf of the Jia clan, this man manages the rural land and harvest. The leader of the tenant farmer is much like the second landlords who rule the local farmers. The leader achieves the economic benefits of the landlords through labor rent, physical rent and currency rent. In Chapter 53, the leader of tenant farmer - Wu Jinxiao (乌进孝) - comes to Jia Zhen before the New Year, and brings many servings. Obviously, every autumn and winter, it is the moment when Jia clan's economy is largely increasing. The granges in all places have to pay rent, and the land rents could be physical, currency, etc., all of which are processed by people who are appointed by the clan in order to carry out supervision, management, collection, and payment of the manor affairs. Labor rents are often carried out on farms by long-term workers, short-term workers, and slaves. Another form of labor rent is to serve as a servant and a maid in the clan.

The patriarch as the leader of the clan, has a lot of business to deal with. The ultimate purpose of the patriarch is maintaining and expanding the clan. The sacrifice ceremony is the core of a clan, which has to be led by patriarch. The patriarch should also lecture clan members and mediate the fights between clan members. Thus, the clan would maintain a good and harmonious atmosphere. The patriarch should also manage and care about the clan

zuoyong” 清代江南宗族在乡村社会控制中的作用 [The function of Jiangnan clan on local social control in Qing dynasty] *Journal of Anhui Normal University (Hum. & Soc.Sci.)* 安徽师范大学学报 (人文社会科学版) Vol.34 No.3 (May 2006): 355

property because that is the main income of the whole clan. The clan needs money for the daily expense, supporting kids for education, and many other uses. In fact, patriarch in Qing clan has a lot more business to care including compiling genealogy, dealing with the relationship with other clans. It varies based on different locations and different culture. In *Dream of The Red Chamber*, the four businesses above are the major things that a patriarch should do.

The Limitations of Patriarch in Qing Clan

The patriarch in Qing clan has a lot of power but it also has limitations. Patriarch could not do whatever he wants. In the affairs of the clan, the patriarch has the most right to say and make decisions, but before he exercises his power, he needs to follow the rules of the clan and the ancestral saying. Many Qing clans have a clan congress, which is formed by the leader of different lineages or the clan members. If the patriarch's decision is different from the congress' decision, the patriarch should not violate the decision. Except for limitations from the clan rules and clan congress, sometimes the patriarch would have some pressure from his parents who would make some opposite decisions, but in order to follow the filial piety, the patriarch could not fight against his parents. The patriarch is not the emperor of a nation. Being as a patriarch in Qing clan means that he has some power, but also means that he has some limitations.

Qing clan has strict principles about how the patriarch acts and behaves. It is mainly about being integrity, fairness, not fear of the strong and not bullying the weak. If patriarch

violates these rules, there could be some punishment and even replacement. There is not much description of the patriarch violation in *Dream of The Red Chamber*. However, in many other historical resources, there are some rules about the request of the patriarch. Erkang Feng argues in his article that the clan should preserve the authority of the patriarch but it should also limit the power of patriarch.⁴² In Shaoxing Wu clan rules, it asks patriarch to “follow his own duty and do his own work. Do not be voracious; do not be unfair; suppress the strong and take pity on weak; monitor the clan culture and follow the sacrifice ceremony.”⁴³ In the Dongguang Ma clan rules, it requires that “The patriarchs and other leading people must be impartial. If there is an injustice, no matter how high or young they are, all clan members could accuse them. If there is a big injustice, they will be replaced by other selected people”.⁴⁴ Zhidi Jiaohe Li clan requires patriarch that “The patriarch must have good morality, ... The patriarch must strictly obey the clan rules. Only by following these rules, can the patriarch restrain and lecture clan members. ... Patriarch must not do something wrong depending on his position. Once the clan members violate clan rules, he should be punished based on the fact. The patriarch should not decide only based on his own thoughts.”⁴⁵ From all these principles, almost all clans require the patriarch in Qing clan to

42. Erkang Feng 冯尔康, “Qingdai zongzu zuzhang shulun,” 清代宗族族长述论 [The summary and analysis of clan patriarch in Qing dynasty] *Jianghai Xuekan* 江海学刊, No.5 (2008): 149

43. Erkang Feng 冯尔康, “Qingdai zongzu zuzhang shulun,” 清代宗族族长述论 [The summary and analysis of clan patriarch in Qing dynasty] *Jianghai Xuekan* 江海学刊, No.5 (2008): 149

44. Erkang Feng 冯尔康, “Qingdai zongzu zuzhang shulun,” 清代宗族族长述论 [The summary and analysis of clan patriarch in Qing dynasty] *Jianghai Xuekan* 江海学刊, No.5 (2008): 149

45. Erkang Feng 冯尔康, “Qingdai zongzu zuzhang shulun,” 清代宗族族长述论 [The summary and analysis of clan patriarch in Qing dynasty] *Jianghai Xuekan* 江海学刊, No.5

be fair and to care about the whole clan. Otherwise, the patriarch would be replaced. The clan made provisions requiring the patriarch to behave in a good manner, to be self-disciplined, and to be exemplary. The purpose of such a norm is to use the right person, who could be a respectable leader so that the patriarch can handle the clan affairs properly.

Except for the limitation from clan rules, the patriarch in Qing clan has to be restrained by the clan member congress. The clan congress is a common phenomenon in Qing clan life and objective existence. The patriarch and leaders of each lineage are the members of clan congress, but other normal clan members could also attend the meeting, especially those members who are involved in the discussed clan affairs. Every lineage has its own right to speak, and the patriarch should not decide on his own. All the major affairs including building the ancestral hall, compiling genealogy, constructing ancestral graveyard, and etc., should be discussed and decided by the clan congress. Thus the decision will represent the willing both patriarch and clan members, and this is easier for the patriarch to carry out these decisions. According to ancestral rules from Zheng clan in Fuliang, all the clan business should be decided by the public, that is “put all the clan business to the public, no matter how small the business is.”⁴⁶ The clan congress is hosted by the patriarch and attended by clan members. Because the clan members have their own thoughts and benefits, they would bring their opinions and want to accomplish their thoughts. The patriarch has to concern common clan members’ request and negotiates with clan members; otherwise, the

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46. Erkang Feng 冯尔康, “Qingdai zongzu zuzhang shulun,” 清代宗族族长述论 [The summary and analysis of clan patriarch in Qing dynasty] *Jianghai Xuekan* 江海学刊, No.5 (2008): 149

decision could not be carried out. In order to get things done, the patriarch has to negotiate with clan members. Each of them has to compromise and reach a consensus so that the wishes of the clan members and the patriarchs can be realized. This is a win-win situation. This coordination is a kind of restriction on the power of the patriarch.

The limitation of patriarch from clan congress not only because the patriarch should balance the clan and clan member, but also because the patriarch is paid by clan members in a certain sense. Some clans will offer patriarch some salary as the payback of managing the clan business. Other than the limitation from clan congress and clan rules, sometimes patriarch would be restricted by some cultural traditions. For example, sometimes as the patriarch, his authority would be challenged by his parents. The patriarch is asked to be moral and follow sage sayings which including the filial piety from Confucianism. Other than a patriarch, he is also a son, and when his parents have some requests different from the clan rules, it is a dilemma for the patriarch to make his decision. Such conflicts are described a lot in *Dream of The Red Chamber*.

In *Dream of The Red Chamber*, Jia Zheng is a really good son who respects and loves his mother Lady Dowager also known as Grandmother Jia (贾母). However, the conflicts between Jia Zheng and Lady Dowager are mainly about Jia Baoyu. Lady Dowager loves and spoils Baoyu, while Jia Zheng treats Baoyu strictly. Most of the time that Jia Zheng follows his mother's instructions and does not dare to fight against her decision, but when Jia Baoyu violates the law and clan rules, the fights happen and Jia Zheng as the patriarch needs to make his own decision. Once, one of Lady Wang's maids commits suicide and Jia Zheng listens to others' saying and believes that Baoyu rapes this maid. According to the clan rules,

this incident should not be known by outsiders and Baoyu should gain his own punishment. Jia Zheng gets furious about this and he almost beats Baoyu to death. Jia Zheng is really angry about what Baoyu does, but when the Lady Dowager shows up, he immediately “bowed down before her and his face assumed the semblance of a smile” and Lady Dowager is angry about Jia Zheng and says that “unfortunately I’ve never had a good son who cares for me”, which make Jia Zheng “wounded in his most sensitive spot, and fell on his knees before her.”⁴⁷ There are many descriptions of how Jia Zheng complies his mother and how filial he is. As a father and a patriarch, Jia Zheng has to punish Baoyu, but he should first investigate and present the result to the whole clan before carrying out the punishment. The reason why he is furious and beats Baoyu immediately after listening to some sayings is that Jia Zheng is afraid of the discourage from Lady Dowager. He is facing the pressure from his mother when his mother’s instructions are opposite with his patriarch’s responsibilities. Patriarch in Qing clan has to behave properly and follows the sage’s saying, but when the filial piety meets the patriarch’s responsibilities, it is really a dilemma for the patriarch.

When time goes to Qing dynasty, the clan is recognized by the government and is used as a method to stabilize the local regime. The patriarch in Qing clan has some power and business but also under some limitations. Many Qing clan rules have clear requirements and restrictions of the patriarch. The patriarch should behave properly and fairly in order to maintain its authority. Patriarch in Qing clan also under the limitation from clan member congress, which is formed by lineage leaders and other clan members. This congress

47. Xueqin Cao, *The Story of the Stone Volume 2*, trans. David Hawkes. (Great Britain: Richard Clay (The Chaucer Press) Ltd, 1977), 151

proposes the wills from other clan members and supervises the patriarch. If the patriarch does not consider the normal clan members' requests, the decision would not be carried out. If the patriarch does not behave fairly and properly, he would be punished even impeached by the clan member congress. Other than the clan rules and clan congress, sometimes the traditional values bring some problem to the patriarch. Other than a patriarch, he is also a son, a husband, and a father. All these social relationships bring limitations to the patriarch, and the patriarch's decision would always be affected by these people around him. The patriarch in Qing clan has greater power but comes with greater responsibility and restrictions.

Conclusion

Chinese culture advocates and emphasizes the idea of family, which could be traced back to more than 2000 years ago. The ideas of blood relationship and common ancestors form the original clan and generally make the clan more sophisticated. At first, clan was a basic social group with small amount of people. Later, the government found the function of clan as stabilizing the local, and promoted the idea of clan. It is really special that the Qing government officially admitted the existence of clan and used this social organization as part of the local regime. From my own perspective, the clan in Qing dynasty serves as a "small nation" and the patriarch is pretty much like the emperor of that nation. By leading the sacrifice ceremony, the patriarch builds his own authority and ensures his sovereign position through this spiritual and consecrate ceremony. Also, patriarch in Qing clan has the power to verdict and mediate the fights between clan members. It is not allowed, according to the clan

rules, to let outsiders know the fights happened inside clan, which means that the patriarch in Qing clan carries the role of judge. Besides the sacrifice ceremony and the power to verdict, the patriarch in Qing clan controls the clan property. Patriarch needs to manage the clan property and try to make more money for the clan. He also has the responsibility to preach clan members so that the glory and reputation of clan will remain. In order to choose a good patriarch who could lead the clan, Qing clan starts to choose the patriarch not only based on the blood relationship, but also on his own character, property, and reputation. This selection ensures the future of clan to some extent. However, the moral value of patriarch is not enough for the limitation of patriarch. Qing clan makes many clan rules about limitation of patriarch and the clan member congress is also created to restrict the power of patriarch. Other than those limitations from outside, sometimes, the patriarch in Qing clan will face the dilemma between private and personal asks from parents and the benefits for the whole clan. The patriarch in Qing clan has more power compared to previous dynasties, but he also has more limitations.

There are many other aspects about patriarch and clan. In the future, I want to do more research about Qing clan including the organization of clan and the formation of clan member congress. I want to know more about how Qing clan forms which could be related to a big debate about the definition of Qing dynasty. Because of the different origin of governor, some scholars believe that Qing dynasty is a non-Chinese dynasty. The clan culture or the family culture is really unique and vital in Chinese culture. I believe that the research about Qing clan could help us to get some understanding about the definition of Qing dynasty and develops some ideas.

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