



Ear to Asia podcast

Title: Traitors and treason in the collective Chinese imagination

Description:

While traitors are despised in most societies, the preferred term in China, hànjiān, is not only highly charged but also takes on ethno-centric dimensions. So how has the Chinese concept of the traitor been put to political use by China's post-dynastic governments? And what is regarded as treasonous behaviour in contemporary China? Dr Craig Smith and Dr Matthew Galway dive into the details with presenter Ali Moore. An Asia Institute podcast.

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Voiceover:

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Ali Moore:

Hello, I'm Ali Moore. This is Ear to Asia.

Craig Smith:

Still today, the idea of a traitor to the Chinese people especially one that might infringe on territorial issues, that packs a much more emotional punch than it does in other countries.

Matt Galway:

It's like you have a loyalty to this nation and to this bounded terrain and to this cultural sphere, and that if you are not standing up holding aloft our flag, our banner, then you are, in fact, a treacherous one. And that is something immoral. It is something you carry with you and must be branded with infamy both in life and in death.

Ali Moore:

In this episode, traitors and treason in the collective Chinese imagination.

Ear to Asia is the podcast from Asia Institute. The Asia research specialist at the university of Melbourne.

Traitors tend to be unpopular in all societies. However, in China, the preferred term for traitors, Hanjian, sparks a particularly high emotional charge and has done so for centuries. But especially since the onset of the second Sino-Japanese War in 1937.

While in the West, a person is labelled a traitor when they aid a foreign interest to overthrow the government or sovereign of the state to which they owe allegiance, in China, the traitor's crime



takes on a more ethnocentric dimension and connotes a violation specifically against the Han majority. Yet as history often teaches us, those who do the calling out of treachery may have their own motives. So how has the Chinese concept of the traitor being put to political use by the Chinese Communist Party and its predecessor, the Kuomintang or KMT, and what's regarded as treasonous behaviour in contemporary China? To examine how turncoats figure in the collective Chinese imagination we're joined remotely by China historians, Dr. Craig Smith from Asia Institute and Dr. Matthew Galway from the Australian national university. Welcome back, Craig. And welcome back, Matt.

Craig Smith:

Thanks Ali. It's great to be back.

Matt Galway:

Thanks Ali. Wonderful to be back.

Ali Moore:

Craig, every country tends to abhor traitors. What's unique about how China views traitors?

Craig Smith:

Well, I think one thing is this term that we're going to be talking about today, but another is China's particular history and the history of territorial loss that we could say goes back to the opium war. And throughout the 20th century, there was an emphasis on this history as a part of China's national shame. So still today, this is emotionally very, very important to the Chinese people, and therefore the idea of a traitor to the Chinese people, especially one that might infringe on territorial issues, that hacks a much more emotional punch than it does in other countries.

Ali Moore:

So let's look at this term, Hanjian. Matt, as Craig just said, it does punch a very high emotional charge and there are similar terms out there, but nothing is quite as historically and morally loaded as Hanjian.

Matt Galway:

Absolutely. Yes. So Hanjian (汉奸) emerges as a conflation of political and ethnic identities. And as Craig has mentioned, it's tied very much to the century of humiliation in contemporary time, still, but also in the past. Whereas other terms like pantu (叛徒) can mean like a traitor or a turncoat. maiguozei (卖国贼) can mean sell out of one's country, zougou (走狗) can mean flunky stooge, or literally like a running dog. And there's also er guizi (二鬼子) and jia yanguizhi (假洋鬼子) which means second devils and fake foreign devils respectively. But neither of these alternative terms is as historically and morally loaded as Hanjian, which points to a person's treacherous and un-Chinese character, right? The mens rea, rather than just the actus reus of treacherous deeds. And this is because, of course, these characters imbue the word with rich connotation, meaning beyond what their literal separate meaning connotes.



Ali Moore:

Matt, can you take us through that a bit, because am I right in saying there are sexist overtones to the structure of the character for Jian?

Matt Galway:

So the word connotes or feelings of betrayal and spiritual chaos, that's certainly true, but per university of California scholar, Frederick Wakeman who's since deceased. Per his work, it also has this underlying theme of sexual transgression, as if someone has this moral bankruptcy or someone has morally fallen, to use an older term. So it does have this undertone that is very much sexist. And on top of that, implying that someone is involved in a treacherous elicited, kind of, sexual deviance towards the Chinese nation as a state.

Ali Moore:

And is that a more feminine overtone?

Matt Galway:

It can be. I found that in terms of its connotations, there's that underlying meaning. But, of course, the most famous historical figures who have been branded as such tend to be overwhelmingly male.

Ali Moore:

Craig, can you tell us a little bit about the history of Hanjian? And I guess the first question is when did it first appear and who was it used against?

Craig Smith:

There are three periods that I think we need to be aware of for discussion today. One is the formation of this term in the Qing dynasty, when it first came about as an ethnically charged term, and then the popularisation during the war, and then what's going on today. So it really became a concept in the Qing dynasty. So the Qing dynasty is 17th to early 20th century. If you look at a dictionary such as the hanyu da cidian (□□大□典) which is the best dictionary in Chinese, they often look back to the Song dynasty, and that's when it was used, but it wasn't really a concept. Also some scholars have said that we believe that it was used then because later Qing dynasty reprints of earlier texts use the term. In the dictionary, the first usage that you'll find is Song dynasty, somebody called Qin Hui (秦桧), and he was known for betraying a very important general in the Song dynasty called Yue Fei. Yue Fei was a hero of the people, and Qin Hui was plotting against him, had him in prison and wanted to execute him.

But when he wanted to execute him, the people were clamouring for Yue Fei's release. This, of course, did not happen, partly because Qin Hui's wife, this is interesting – a woman joins this story. We only know of Qin Hui's wife as Ms. Wong or Madam Wong. She came up with the idea to send an orange to the judge, the presiding judge with an order for execution. And because of this, the people would not know about the execution and it was successful and Yue Fei was executed. So that's the first usage of the term, but we're not sure it was actually used at that time.



Ali Moore:

And then in the Qing dynasty, when it became particularly ethnically charged, Craig, can we just unpack that a little? Because that was because of the Manchu rulers and those Han Chinese who worked with the Manchu being seen as traitors, wasn't it?

Craig Smith:

That's right. So the Qing dynasty, we have the first real rise of the term. So it becomes a real concept during this period. And the reason for that is, as you've said, the Manchu ruling elite were presiding over all of China. So at that time, the Han Chinese were still the majority of the people, but they had very little political power, especially at the beginning of the dynasty. And so those who literally and figuratively opened the gates to what we're seeing as northern barbarians, let them into Beijing, let them have power and essentially collaborated with them. This is an important term, collaboration, here.

Those were the first to be considered Hanjian. They were the first traitors to the Han people. Now, as we get later in the Qing dynasty, the political power of Han Chinese actually changes a bit, Han Chinese are allowed into increasingly more political positions in the government. Of course, still the Manchu controlled power until we have a revolution. So leading up to the 1911 revolution, people like Sun Yat-sen, who's considered the father of the nation today were clamouring for a Han Chinese country. So they wanted an ethnic nation state. And that's when we also see this term commonly used to refer to those working with the Manchu elite.

Ali Moore:

And Matt, in terms of when the term entered I guess the popular discourse, is it fair to say that it was the second Sino-Japanese war where it really came to the fore?

Matt Galway:

Well, yes. I mean, this is when it becomes this really huge common term that people are using to refer to those traitors to the nation. And it's important to note that they're in fact two different types of Hanjian in the era of the Sino-Japanese war, right? There's the educated and intellectuals, who simply wanted to get power and wealth for themselves, and the poor and uneducated whose poverty drove them to collaborate. And who's ignorance to save them from even thinking they had to justify what they were doing. There's different structures in different layers to the Hanjian as well during this period, and makes it much more complicated and much more difficult to really determine whether someone consciously wanted to betray the nation versus what they actually did out of desperation or a sense of extreme poverty. So I think that's an important thing to note as well about Hanjian and during the Sino-Japanese war.

Ali Moore:

A study of Hanjian during the war in many ways undermines that idea that there was a united front against the Japanese, doesn't it?

Matt Galway:

It certainly does. Yeah. I mean, what's really important in noting about the Sino-Japanese war in the United Front is that the communist party and the Kuomintang both worked together out of a sense



of urgency and a sense of need to defend the nation against Japanese imperialism and its spread from Eastern China, westward and southward. But the fact of the matter is both of them were jockeying for power at the time. And when it was more beneficial for one side to kind of stand down and let their supposed allies take a hit for them and then move in and take advantage of a now weakened victor, which in many cases was the Japanese, then that was more beneficial. And there were people right at the centre of this orchestrating or at least spreading intel on when that would be most advantageous, certainly on the Communist Party side.

Ali Moore:

It's about Wang Jingwei, who's often regarded as the ultimate Hanjian?

Matt Galway:

Well, Wang Jingwei (汪精卫) remains a very polarising and controversial figure, right? He's someone who was a rising star within the Kuomintang. Many had him earmarked to be Sun Yat-sen successor. And he ended up not being, and it ended up being Chiang Kai-shek. And during the war, he's right at the epicentre of the reorganised government in Nanking. And he's very prolific, he's writing extensively contributing to journals and he's in many ways an intellectual figure, this major leader. But at the same time, he's also at the centre of collaboration, right? He's, kind of, the most famous example of a Hanjian because of his alleged and in some cases, real, in many cases, real collaboration with the Japanese.

Ali Moore:

Craig, can I ask you, did Wang Jingwei deserve the label of the ultimate Hanjian?

Craig Smith:

I suppose what really happened to Wang Jingwei was he chose the wrong side. Now, at that time in Chinese history, the Chinese people really could not choose their future. And Wang Jingwei wanted to turn that around. So thinking about the way he looked at things for a few minutes, when Wang Jingwei was critical of Mao Zedong and Chiang Kai-shek and the competing factions that he was trying to deal with, he said, well, the communist party, the Hanjian, because they're working with foreign aggressors, they're working with the Soviets, they're working with the Russians. And then looking at Chiang Kai-shek, he said, "They're working with the Americans."

So Wang and mostly his subordinates at this time, they said, there's actually two kinds of imperialism that are encroaching on China today. There's white imperialism, and Chiang Kai-shek is working with those guys, and then there's red imperialism and Mao and the CCP are working with those guys. One kind of way of looking at this is that because Wang Jingwei chose to work with the Japanese, he didn't really want to, to be honest. He wanted a peace movement, is today is seen as the Hanjian, the great traitor to the Chinese people. So it's understandable from a historical perspective, but looking back and trying to understand it from his perspective, it's a pretty complicated thing, actually.



Ali Moore:

That was an incredibly complicated time. Craig, what actually happened to those who were considered to be collaborators with the Japanese under both the Kuomintang, and also under the Communist Party, what happened to these people?

Craig Smith:

Well, there were trials right across China after the war. And a lot of people were executed. A lot of people were put in prison, sometimes for a very long period. Of course, you had two competing governments after that. So you have the Kuomintang and you have the Communist Party. And they often had different ideas on who was a Hanjian. So for instance, Zhou Zuoren (周作人), who was the brother of Lu Xun (鲁迅), who was China's most famous writer in the early 20th century, Zhou Zuoren was an intellectual legend himself. And he was considered a great Hanjian for being the Minister of Education under the Japanese government in Beijing. But he always tried to argue that actually he was doing it for China.

And although his trial, after the war, was a very big ordeal and he was imprisoned. He was released a few years later and managed to live out his days. And I think a lot of Hanjian are like that, especially the more important ones, a lot of them did survive. A lot of them ended up moving to other countries, Southeast Asia. Some of them moved to the United States. They moved all over the world, and it can be problems today for their children, for their grandchildren. So now we have a lot of people are politically accused when it turns out that their grandparents or their parents actually worked with the Japanese – they collaborated.

Ali Moore:

I will turn to what's happened to descendants a little later. But Matt, tell us about Yuan Shu, a spy for all sides, it seemed. Was he also considered Hanjian?

Matt Galway:

He was, Yuan Shu (袁殊) was a very mysterious figure, because as you said, he had many allegiances, as many as five major organisations where the target of his infiltration during his career as an intelligence officer and spy. He participated in the Northern Expedition in 1926. I studied journalism in Japan where he first encountered leftist radical works. He returns to China, goes underground as a communist. Because of his fluency in Japanese, he serves as a Japan specialist for the Kuomintang, the KMT as well as the CCP. And sometimes simultaneously his spy career begins really early thirties and he mingles with very important figures. Some of whom also branded as Hanjian. It is through these connections that he's able to infiltrate the Japanese foreign ministry. During this time he develops a reputation as very much a five face spy. Unfortunately for him because of his association with those who of course were branded as collaborators, as Hanjian he too is branded as such.

So according to many posthumous sources, he received this derisive title for his involvement with one figure, Pan Hannian (潘□年), who was also branded as a Hanjian and a traitor and who died in prison. And per Yuan Shu's own son's account in his book *wo de fu□袁殊* (我的父□袁殊), My father, Yuan Shu, when she was in 1965, pronounced a Kuomintang agent and Japanese agent at the same time. And then also as a Hanjian and sentenced to 12 years in prison. And he would spend an additional eight years in prison after that because of the outbreak of the cultural revolution. That's the long story Yuan Shu.



Ali Moore:

Is he well known as a very prominent Hanjian?

Matt Galway:

Not nearly as much as others, that's for sure. He's remembered more for his espionage work and his ability to infiltrate so many different organisations. And of course, once upon his release, he was declared rehabilitated, Pun Han Yen was posthumously rehabilitated because of course he died in prison. So I think the public record remembers Yuan Shu a little bit more favourably for his role in collecting intelligence and he's remembered less so these days as a traitor or Hanjian. But certainly during those times he was very publicly known for his... Or at least more publicly known for his work with the Japanese.

Ali Moore:

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I'm Ali Moore, and I'm with guests, Dr. Matthew Galway and Dr. Craig Smith. And we're discussing how China's narrative on traitors has evolved over the nation's history. Craig, you were saying that often the Kuomintang and the Communist Party had different approaches to who they considered Hanjian. To what extent and how differently did the two shape the label and the concept in the war, and the immediate post-war period?

Craig Smith:

Well, during the war, of course, the Kuomintang and the CCP were allies and they both focused their attention on Wang Jingwei and the collaborationist government. Remember this was a huge government, loads of people involved, thousands and thousands intellectuals politicians, it really divided the existing government. So there were plenty of targets at the time. So really both parties, the Kuomintang and Chongqing (重慶) and the CCP and Yan'an, (延安) they labelled a Wang Jingwei government as the Hanjian, and really kind of crystallised the concept as those working with the Japanese. After the war, it becomes a little bit more complicated because both sides started accusing each other of being Hanjian. But we see the concept dwindle away for a while after the war, because it was already understood at this point, that Hanjian meant you were a collaborator. You were one that was working with the Japanese .

Ali Moore:

And Matt, I suppose we should point out that the second Sino-Japanese war one, it obviously is something that happened. It started in 1937. It happened a long time ago, but it's still incredibly important isn't it, in the popular imagination of China? And it's a very popular subject today of books and films and TV productions.



Matt Galway:

Absolutely. I mean, it's often the imagery of Mao will rise in any kind of either posturing or war of words or even mobilisation in terms of ships and the like between China and Japan. So there's that public memory in China of Japan's aggression. So anytime during the Abe years, for instance, the debates over the Diaoyu Islands or the Senkaku Islands, there were protests in China with people holding Mao images, as if to remind everyone of Mao's heroic resistance, the CCP primarily, their heroic resistance against Japanese imperialism. But in the realm of cultural production, you have these wonderful stories that have emerged and film such as *Guizi laile* (鬼子来了) or *Devils On The Doorstep*, where it's very, very rich and layered characters that tackle the issue of Hanjian during the second Sino-Japanese war specifically. In one case you have the character of a Chinese translator/interpreter Dong, who aids a captured Japanese Sergeant Kosaburo Hanaya, and then after the war Dong is executed for what he did in his capacity as a translator/interpreter, that's just kind of one of the examples of the treatment of a Hanjian after the war.

Ali Moore:

If you look at, I suppose, the portrayal of Hanjian in books and films as part of these war commemorations, to what extent is that to the advantage of the Communist Party? Because it shows the background of legitimacy to the CCP, the wartime resistance, the fight against the Hanjian.

Matt Galway:

Absolutely. Yes. So the Chinese State, like any Chinese State before the rise of the CCP is indeed a nationalist one. And their foundation myth relies upon this history of heroic resistance against Japanese imperialism and also the resistance against traitors from within, right? And this continues in a different forum during the Mao years, this idea to identify and eliminate counter-revolutionaries. So it is still important and you have more layered movies like *Lust, Caution*, by Ang Lee (李安), that look at just how complex people who would be branded as traitors were. The different motivations, pushing and pulling people into what they're doing. And as I've mentioned earlier, that there are in fact two major Hanjian during this time. And it's more layered than that, but those are the two main categories, people who are compelled to do so out of necessity and people who do so out of, as Craig said so poignantly, they've just chosen the wrong side.

Ali Moore:

Craig, what about Hanjian today in China? I mean, clearly, as we've just said, it's part of the commemorations of the second Sino-Japanese War. But, who's regarded as Hanjian today? Who uses the term?

Craig Smith:

It's still surprisingly comes up a lot. And of course it's such an emotionally loaded term because you have the war, which is one of the most emotional subjects in China still today. And then you have these films and this literature that's been building upon this emotional baggage. So today you can imagine what people are labelled as Hanjian. People who are supportive of democracy movements in Hong Kong, people who are supportive of the government in Taiwan, anybody who works with the Americans. So, just about a month ago, Mike Pompeo appeared with Miles Yu (余茂春), who is a historian of Chinese descent. Actually, I think he was born in China, and he's now a professor in



United States, is professor of history. And appearing on stage with Mike Pompeo, and he was critical of the Chinese government, made it just incredibly easy to identify him as a Hanjian in the news.

Ali Moore:

I have seen it argued that it's become a catch-all slur for one's political opponents, and particularly in the online space. Do you think that's a fair description, a catchall slur?

Craig Smith:

There's a catchall slur. It definitely has to be related to this idea of working with or supporting foreign elements or those elements that would choose to divide China. So it keeps coming back to this all important category of territory. So in China still today, understandings of territory are incredibly important. And the idea of territorial integrity is very important to the Chinese people. So obviously that's why Hong Kong and Taiwan are key elements. And Tsai Ing-wen (蔡英文), the current president of Taiwan, is regularly called a Hanjian, for her work in, what a lot of people would see is dividing China, that she's seen as an independence advocate in Taiwan, and incredibly popular these days.

Ali Moore:

When you talk about it in that territorial context, does it carry a connotations of being a traitor against the Han Chinese or just against broader China? Has the term taken on a broader meaning in today's context?

Craig Smith:

That's a really crucial question, isn't it? And yes it has. So I think to a great degree, it means a traitor to China, but when you do see it used, it's almost inevitably Han Chinese. So a really good example of this is if it's a somebody, a traitor to China, especially on territorial issues, then the Dalai Lama should be considered a Hanjian. But people generally don't use that term to refer to the Dalai Lama. They refer it to Han Chinese that support him, that meet with him, that advocate any of his views. So there is still that connection to Han Chinese.

Ali Moore:

Matt, how do you see the line being drawn in China between I guess, political opponents or political pariahs and outright traitors? How clear is the line, if you like?

Matt Galway:

It can be pretty blurred. I think of two specific instances that come to mind, much more contemporary than say the Mao years or even the Deng years. But one instance about a decade ago was when this very prolific social scientist historian Yang Shumian was at a book signing for the release of his book Kangxi dadi (康熙大帝) or the Kangxi Emperor, and it was in Wuxi, in Eastern China. And this guy had become a household name because of his popular lectures that were broadcast on the CCTV. And he was leaning down to sign a copy of his book. And then this man named Huang Haiqin goes up and just slaps him across the face. And as he's being pulled away by the authorities, he yells, "Hanjian. Hanjian." before the crowd. The reason behind Yuan doing so was



that he argued that this particular scholar was white washing the brutal and barbaric nature of the Manchus when they were ruling over China.

So it can even be in the academic sphere related to this idea that someone who is even writing about China's history under the Manchus or others could be a Hanjian. And he was condemned roundly and the intellectual community for this, but he found many supporters online for his act, calling him a brave warrior and defender of Chinese integrity. And then more recently in 2016, the suspension of Ren Zhiqiang's (任志强) CCP membership over some of his label posts online and social media platform. It's very common in China today. And it was very widely lauded by China's new leftists, many of its leftist academics and some public figures because they believed that he was corrupt. And that in fact, he was an example of Hanjian. And because of his corruption, he was in fact a traitor to the CCP and a traitor to the nation.

So it does have a very elastic meaning. It can mean someone who's betrayed in their duty to tell history a certain way and to acknowledge X, Y, and Z about the historical past. And it could also be in reference to what one does in their capacity as a prolific figure as a CCP party member. And then as Craig said as well, it can be thrown around rather cavalierly in reference to important figures in Taiwan and Hong Kong.

Ali Moore:

And Matt, is it used by the leadership, the political leadership in China?

Matt Galway:

I haven't seen it in my own readings of materials produced by the CCP in recent times. And it was very rarely used, as Craig had already mentioned, back during the Mao years, because of course the shift had gone towards identifying and eliminating class enemies. But it does pop up from time to time online and whether or not that is someone parroting what they hear a local officials say, I'm not entirely sure, but I cannot say authoritatively that a major CCP figures are actively using it in popular discourse today.

Craig Smith:

If I can just jump in there, the reason that I think it's not used by a lot of elite, especially the party elite or it's very seldom used is because it is such a problematic term. And understandings of China today, that kind of national unity is so important that people would be very careful about using a term that is only really only should be relevant to 96% of the population. So it is still a Han chauvinistic term in some ways. And so I think it's smart to avoid using it when it marginalises the other 55 ethnicities in China.

Ali Moore:

But Craig, as we talked about much earlier, it is still used, isn't it, against descendants of Hanjian.

Craig Smith:

Yeah, definitely. It's still used against descendants of Hanjian, especially in the political arena. And really I found it so amazing that last year it was used in Taiwan to argue against Tsai Ing-wen who of course is president today. Now, her father, Tsai Chieh-sheng (蔡杰生), he was alive during the Japanese colonial period. And he did go over to mainland China and worked as a mechanic. And he



took classes there. He ended up being a car repairman, but at this point he worked on aeroplanes and he worked on military vehicles for the Japanese Army. So the Kuomintang Taiwan try to use that and say, hey, look, her father was actually one of these Hanjian, this didn't work at all. Especially in Taiwan trying to pull that stuff these days doesn't work. Tsai Ing-wen, basically was able to largely ignore this discourse and she had a landslide victory.

Ali Moore:

So Craig, why does it pack less of a punch in Taiwan?

Craig Smith:

So one of the reasons that this discourse is not as strong in Taiwan is because most of the population was under Japanese rule until 1945. So if you were under Japanese rule, you were working with the Japanese government, you were maybe in the Japanese military. So to use the idea of a collaborator with the Japanese government to attack people means you would be attacking a huge proportion of the population. And obviously, that's not a good idea if you're trying to get elected, even the president of the Republic of China on Taiwan Lee Teng-hui (李登輝), he served in the Japanese army, when he was very young and ended up becoming president from 1988 to the year 2000 and was quite a popular president.

Ali Moore:

But in China on the mainland, going back, I guess to our very first question, it's a rather different way that China views traitors?

Craig Smith:

That's right. So in China, it still has this historical connection and it still has this territorial connection, neither of which are really the important things in Taiwan discourse today. So it is very different. And that's why people in mainland China, especially on the internet, we'll use this term to talk about people like Jimmy Lai, who's been in the news a lot recently and is currently under arrest for promoting ideas of democracy and for fighting for an independent media in Hong Kong.

Ali Moore:

And Matt, is that how you see it, in many ways, by looking at the term, it highlights the unique nature of how China does view trade?

Matt Galway:

There are certainly similarities with Hanjian to say the French term *collaborateur*, right, which is as defined by Jean-Paul Sartre, the pretty prolific existentialist philosopher that the collaborator has an inherent character trait, right? That the trait has deep, psychological and social roots. And that those who are the collaborator type or the Hanjian type remain latent in ordinary times. But in war time, they show their real character and infest the nation like a pathogen. So there is that aspect as well.

But I think with Hanjian, as Craig's pointed out, and I think that's an important aspect of it. It's not just that part of it has a gendered quality to it, but it also has this idea of trespassing, right? Jian (奸) itself, as a transitive verb, it can mean at once, treacherous, success or cunning, but it can also mean to trespass and to violate. That just triggers, not only that historic humiliation that China



experienced from the Opium Wars up until of course the establishment of the PRC, but also on that... Again, that importance of territorial integrity, this bounded space that exists, and that is China, and that can, per the CCP leaders and theorists, that can also be very much the Sino sphere, including Hong Kong and Taiwan.

Matt Galway:

It's like you have a loyalty to this nation and to this bounded terrain and to this cultural sphere. And that if you are not standing up holding a loft, our flag, our banner, then you are in fact a treacherous one, and that is something moral. It is deep rooted. It is something that you carry with you and must be branded with infamy both in life and in death.

Craig Smith:

This idea of being unfaithful is at the centre of this term, because the term Hanjian, which the original character for Jian (姦) was simply three women. So it means you're sleeping around.

Ali Moore:

It is a fascinating conversation. Who knew so much could be packed into two characters and one term that has survived through the ages. Both of you, thank you so much for your insights.

Craig Smith:

Great. Thanks very much, Ali.

Matt Galway:

Thank you so much, Ali. Great to be here.

Ali Moore:

I've been China historians, Dr. Craig Smith from Asia Institute and Dr. Matthew Galway from the Australian National University. Ear to Asia is brought to you by Asia Institute of the University of Melbourne. You can find more information about this and all our other episodes at the Asia Institute website. Be sure to keep up with every episode of Ear to Asia, by following us on the Apple podcast app, Stitcher, Spotify, or SoundCloud. If you like the show, please rate and review it on Apple podcasts. Every positive review helps new listeners find the show. And please help us by spreading the word on social media. This episode was recorded under COVID safe conditions on the 5th of March, 2021. Producers were Kelvin Param and Eric van Bommel of profactual.com. Ear to Asia is licenced under Creative Commons. Copyright 2021, the University of Melbourne. I'm Ali Moore. Thanks for your company.