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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Shaping the World of Scholars: The Soft Power of Emperor Kangxi (1661- 1722)

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Modern scholarship has noted that the Kangxi emperor's patronage of scholars is a form of "soft power" that assisted the Qing ruler during the Kangxi reign to achieve success in conquering the minds and hearts of Han Chinese, especially those eminent scholars who remained loyal to the fallen dynasty. This "soft power" emerged after the Kangxi government had decisively quelled the revolt of the Three Feudatories (*San fan* 三藩) (1673-1681). In 1679 the *boxue hongru* 博學鴻儒 special examination signalled a significant moment in which the Kangxi emperor adopted a more diplomatic and personal approach to scholars under his rule. This paper examines several examples of scholars' presenting (*jin cheng* 進呈) their scholarly works to the emperor/government. By analysing the Kangxi emperor's tactics for fostering this particular scholarly phenomenon, this study reveals the key elements behind his successful use of soft power in shaping the intellectual milieu of the time.

康熙皇帝在平定三藩之亂（1673-1681）有望之時，開博學鴻儒科（1679）以網羅抗清的明末遺儒為清政權服務。此制科之舉標誌著康熙皇帝新文化政策之始，顯示其欲以懷柔與高壓兼施之手段，從學者鴻儒入手而達到其征服漢人民心之目的。如此懷柔政策，套之於今天的術語，即軟實力。本文圍繞康熙朝之初至鼎盛時期學者們向康熙皇帝進呈他們學術著作的現象，探討此種軟實力之實質及功效。通過以仇兆鰲（1638-1717）、萬斯同（1638-1702）和李顥（1627-1705）三個案例為中心的考察，本文展示了康熙懷柔策略的諸方面，揭示其如何收攬漢族名儒學者參與清帝國的諸項社會、文化工程，期望在思想文化這個層面上建立清朝統治的合法性，從而進一步在政治上確認、穩固大清帝國的根基。

Keywords: Kangxi Emperor, jin cheng, Qiu Zhao'ao, Wan Sitong, Li Yong

關鍵詞：進呈, 仇兆鰲, 萬斯同, 李顥

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Existing scholarship on late Ming and early Qing history has noted that the Kangxi emperor's patronage of scholars, in today's vocabulary, is a form of "soft power" that assisted the Qing ruler during the Kangxi reign to achieve success "in reconciling and combining the strengths of both indigenous and alien ruling elites" (Struve 1982, 266).¹ This form of "soft power" emerged after the Kangxi government had decisively quelled the revolt of the Three Feudatories (*San fan* 三藩) (1673–1681), with the help of loyal Chinese generals who defended the Manchu government when it was threatened by anti-Qing forces. Most Han generals and officials chose to collaborate with the Manchus in their confrontation with the Three Feudatories, which contributed significantly to Kangxi's triumph and helped legitimise Manchu rule (Wakeman 1984, 631–665; 1985, 1099, 1123–1124).

However, the legitimacy of Manchu rule could not rely solely on military power. To ensure the continuation of the dynasty, it was necessary for the Kangxi emperor to adopt a soft approach (*huairou* 懷柔) to Chinese scholars. The term *huairou* in modern Chinese means conciliation or mollification, and a policy of *huairou* refers to designated schemes designed to treat others kindly in order to win their minds and hearts.

Etymologically, the word originated from two phrases in *The Doctrine of the Mean*: "the kindly cherishing of the princes of the States" (*huai zhuhou* 懷諸侯) and the "indulgent treatment of men from a distance" (*rou yuanren* 柔遠人). Their intent was to guide the management of the relationships between *tianzi* 天子 (the Son of Heaven) and *zhuhou* 諸侯; and between the Zhou states and the non-Zhou tribes. According to Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (127–200), *yuanren* here refers to "the princes of surrounding kingdoms", such as "of the tribes that lay beyond the six *fu* 服², or feudal tenures of

¹ This paper is dedicated to Anthony (Tony) Quinn (1962–2018), Asian Languages Specialist Librarian, University Library, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand. The classical Chinese-language materials held by the university library was largely the result of Tony's painstaking efforts over many years. I am grateful to two anonymous reviewers of this article and their insightful comments and suggestions were helpful for the revision of this article. Many thanks also to Alison Hardie for her thorough and skillful copy-editing work.

² *Fu* is a general term standing for the lands outside the Zhou royal domain, referring to both *zhuhou* 諸侯 and tribal peoples which, in the Chinese sources, were termed *man yi* or *Man* 蠻, *Yi* 夷, *Rong* 戎, *Di* 狄, and the barbarians or aliens in English. Based on both ethnic distinctions and geographical distances from the central zone of the king, the concepts of the divisions and zones varied. However, according to *Zhou Li* 周禮 (Rites of Zhou) and *Shangshu*, 尚書 there were two major concepts: *jiufu* 九服 and *wufu* 五服. A concept of *jiufu* or *jiu ji* 九畿 refers to "nine zones of submission" that "extended outwards from a tenth division, that is, the central zone of the king" (Loewe &

Zhou rule” (Legge 1861, 273). The aim of *rou yuanren* was to ensure that the princes of barbarian tribes from all quarters deferred to the rule of the empire/kingdom (*sifang gui zhi* 四方歸之); and *huai zhuhou* was to uphold reverence to the ruler throughout the kingdom (*zhuhou wei zhi* 諸侯畏之) (ibid.). The word *zhi* 之 in this context refers to the ruler of the Zhou, which extended its territories by granting authority to members of the royal family and sometimes to adherents they favoured.

The tribes in *sifang* 四方 (four quarters/directions) were considered *man yi* 蠻夷 (often translated into English as the barbarians or alien peoples). It originally referred to non-Zhou peoples, but developed into a term for non-Chinese or non-Han peoples. As James Legge in a note to his translation indicates, the rule of *rou yuanren* evolved as a principle “for the treatment of foreigners by the government of China” (Legge 1861, 273, n.13). The rule of *huai zhuhou*, at the same time, became a fundamental proposition to induce acceptance of the supreme power of the emperor by all local lords/government officials.

The original *huairou* concept also spawned the idea of *hua yi zhi bian* 華夷之辨 (the distinction between *hua* (xia 夏) and *yi*, or the Sino-barbarian dichotomy) to differentiate between the Chinese and non-Chinese. According to the *Shangshu* 尚書 (Book of Documents), the monarchs’ strength of character (*de* 德) was vital in order to “exert their spiritual qualities, thereby persuading those who were distant to come into their own fold” (Loewe & Shaughnessy 1999, 994). This on the one hand asserted the superiority of the Chinese culture; on the other, however, Confucius believed that this cultural barrier could be overcome once the so-called barbarians or aliens adopted Chinese values and customs. This concept was depicted by Han Yu 韓愈 (768–824):

When Confucius composed the *Spring and Autumn* [*Annals*], if the leaders of the land adopted alien (*yi* 夷) modes of behavior he treated them as aliens; but

Shaughnessy 1999, 996). A concept of *wufu* or five zones originated in *Yu gong* 禹貢 (The Tribute of Yu) of the *Book of History* (tr. Legge 1879, 75–76) that “spells out the distances of the five, which are named *dianfu* 甸服, *houfu* 侯服, *suifu* 綏服, *yaofu* 要服, and *huangfu* 荒服. The *dianfu* is interpreted as the zone of the Son of Heaven” (Loewe & Shaughnessy, ibid). Another version was *liufu yi fan* 六服一蕃 referring to *dianfu* 甸服, *nianfu* 男服, *cailu* 采服, *weifu* 衛服, *manfu* 蠻服 and *yifu* 夷服. The term *fan* refers to the zones which were further remote and “designated as *zhen* 鎮 (under garrison) and *fan* 蕃, or 藩 (on the edge)” (Loewe & Shaughnessy, ibid).

once they had advanced into the countries of the center (*zhongguo* 中國) he treated them as he did the inhabitants of the center. (Loewe & Shaughnessy 1999, 993).

Han Yu's passage emphasises cultural identities in differentiating *hua* (*xia*) and *yi* and the reversibility of such identities. Nevertheless, according to Mencius, only the Chinese culture (*xia*) could transform the ways of *yi*, and not vice versa (Legge 1893, 2:253-254).

The Manchu rulers were conscious of the distinction between the *hua* (*xia*) and *yi*. While their military successes might have established the Manchus' supremacy in China, but "a legitimate claimant to the Mandate of Heaven" for the non-Han ruler was determined by the extent to which he served the Way (*dao* 道). As John D. Langlois (1980, 359) points out, "Culturalism could be made the servant of imperial legitimacy by a warlord-turned-emperor."³ The Kangxi emperor's new cultural policy aimed to establish an alliance with Chinese scholars in order to legitimise the cultural identity of Manchu rule.

The educational background of the Kangxi emperor laid a solid foundation for this attempt. According to his own account, he began studying Confucian classics when he was only five *sui*; during the course of his study, he pondered over the texts of these classics until he fully understood the essence of their doctrines (垂世立教之精心) (Zhongguo diyi lishi dang'anguan 1984, 2.1249). This statement illustrates the personality of Kangxi who enjoyed displaying his erudition to his subjects, including his tutors who, in turn, eagerly extolled him as the patron teacher over the empire as well as the ruler of the Qing (以君道而兼师道). (Wei Yijie 2.45a). The emperor's knowledge of Confucian classics and history and his role as the patron teacher enabled him astutely to court Chinese scholars in order to ensure that Han Chinese supported Qing rule whole-heartedly.

Meanwhile, the military successes surely provided a "secure footing" for the Qing dynasty, which gave the Kangxi emperor the confidence to adopt a more diplomatic and personal approach to scholars under his rule (Struve 1982, 244). The *boxue hongru*

³ According to Langlois (1980, 356, n.2), "Culturalism is often taken as a given with respect to Chinese civilization."

博學鴻儒 (broad learning and outstanding scholarship) special examination in 1679 marked a significant step for this new cultural policy. The purpose of this special examination was to select eminent scholars to work on Ming history, an imperial project which aimed to mitigate scholars' opposition to Manchu rule.⁴

There are many scholarly works on this historical event from social, political and cultural perspectives. This study, however, focuses on the Kangxi emperor's patronage of scholarly activities by discussing the cases of scholars' presenting (*jìn chéng* 進呈) their scholarly works to the emperor.

The Chinese term for the emperor's patronage is *enyu* 恩遇. The word *en* 恩 signifies favour, and *yu* 遇 means to encounter and meet with. By the mid-Kangxi period most Han Chinese scholars, regardless of whether they had already secured a government post or were still struggling to climb the civil service examination ladder, longed for such *enyu* whereby the Kangxi emperor "happened to take note of some special accomplishment" (Struve 1979, 347). At the same time, certain prominent and wealthy Qing officials engaged in "large-scale patronage" by sponsoring scholars "who impressed them in some way" (ibid.). Both forms of *enyu* were operative in Kangxi times. For scholars who were still *buyi* 布衣 (lit. plain-clothed scholars) – not yet having obtained a degree nor been appointed by the government⁵ – their *enyu* would depend on an agent, namely one of those who had already gained the patronage of the emperor and held important government positions. Through such agents these *buyi* or officials in lower ranks could then potentially gain the opportunity to improve their social status with the ultimate goal of obtaining patronage from the emperor. Through this form of "sub-patronage" the Kangxi emperor expanded his influence within the social circle of scholars and formed a scholarly network through which the soft power of the Kangxi emperor permeated and was replicated down the social and scholarly hierarchy.

Lynn Struve, in her study of the "Three Xu" brothers, Xu Qianxue 徐乾學 (1631–1694), Xu Bingyi 徐秉義 (1633–1711), and Xu Yuanwen 徐元文 (1634–1691),

⁴ For a detailed documentation and analysis of this special examination, see Wilhelm 1951, 60–66; for a more recent study see Wang 2016.

⁵ From the Tang dynasty onward, the term has been used to refer to those literati who were not successful in the civil service examinations and consequently did not secure a post in government.

remarks that this form of patronage of scholars was “semiofficial in nature”, “operating through unofficial channels and engaging numerous intellectuals in their private employ.” Most importantly, it was “crucial to the legitim[is]ation of Ch’ing rule during the K’ang-hsi reign” (Struve 1982, 231). Li Guangdi 李光地 (1642–1718), a contemporary of the “Three Xu” brothers, was also a prominent patron of the Kangxi reign and used his position and relationship with the Kangxi emperor to offer his patronage to scholars who participated in the imperial projects which the emperor championed.

Scholars under such semiofficial patronage were often referred to in Chinese as *muyou* 幕友 or *mubin* 幕賓. They lived at a high official’s house as guests and formed his personal entourage (*mufu* 幕府).⁶ Shang Xiaoming (1999) uses the term *youmu* 游幕 to describe the means by which the Qing scholars were employed to participate in scholarly activities. The word *you* 游 stands for travelling, and there were many reasons for them to travel, such as tutoring, attending public lectures/gatherings, or finding a master to guide their studies. For example, Mei Wending 梅文鼎 (1633–1721) travelled to Beijing in 1689. It is believed that the purpose of this trip was to visit Ferdinand Verbiest (Nan Huai ren 南懷仁, 1623–1688). Unfortunately, Verbiest had recently passed away and Li Guangdi sponsored Mei because he had learned of Mei’s expertise in mathematics and astronomy through his younger brother Li Dingzheng 李鼎徵 who, a few years earlier, had published Mei’s work entitled *Fangcheng lun* 方程論 (Simultaneous linear equations), which was written in 1672. Li Guangdi asked Mei Wending to teach him and his sons mathematics. Mei thus became the *muyou* of Li Guangdi who later encouraged Mei to compile and publish *Lixue yiwèn* 曆學疑問 (Inquiry on mathematical astronomy) (c.1701). Li then facilitated the presentation of *Lixue yiwèn* to the Kangxi emperor, who was greatly interested in the work and summoned Mei to an audience in 1705. (Jami 2012, 218–9 & 2013, 19–47; Elman 2009, 41; Li & Guo 1988, 11–42; Bai 1989, 39–47).

⁶ Kenneth E. Folsom (1968) studied the *mufu* under Li Hongzhang 李鴻章 (1823–1901). The study conducted by Jonathan Porter (1972) focuses on the private bureaucracy or *mufu* that Zeng Guofan 曾國藩 (1811–1872) established through his recruitment of talent.

The Kangxi emperor would normally grant an award to the scholars who presented their works to him, showing his appreciation of their scholarship, and most importantly, rewarding their deference to Manchu rule. This article examines the scholars' *jūn cheng* from this perspective, with a focus on Qiu Zhao'ao 仇兆鰲 (also Ch'ou Chao-ao, 1638-1717),⁷ Wan Sitong 萬斯同 (1638-1702), and Li Yong 李顥 (1627-1705). This focus is largely determined by the ways that, as scholars, they represented their time, and by their interactions with scholarly communities.

Both Qiu Zhao'ao and Wan Sitong were disciples of Huang Zongxi 黃宗羲 (1610-1695) who, after the failure of the anti-Qing campaigns, returned to his home town in 1661, focusing on scholarship, lecturing, and writing. In 1668 he reopened the academy (Jishan zhengren shuyuan 戢山證人書院) of his teacher, Liu Zongzhou 劉宗周 (1578-1645), who in 1645 died of self-imposed starvation because of his grief at the fall of the Ming dynasty.⁸ This academy attracted hundreds of people who came to attend Huang's lectures, some of whom became his disciples. This solidified Huang's reputation as a well-known scholar in the South-East region, paralleling that of Li Yong in the North-West (Jiang 1969, 11a).⁹ As highly eminent scholars of the time, Li Yong and Huang Zongxi both remained loyal to the Ming dynasty by refusing to work for the Qing government. Some disciples of Huang Zongxi, such as Wan Sitong and his brother Wan Sida 萬斯大 (1633-1683), followed their teacher's example and kept their Ming loyalist (*yimin* 遺民)¹⁰ identity; however, others such as Qiu Zhao'ao chose to obtain a government position by climbing the civil service examination ladder.

Such different choices regarding their *yimin* identities were decisively reflected in the forms of *jūn cheng*. While Qiu Zhao'ao voluntarily submitted his scholarly works to

⁷ *Qing shi gao* (Draft History of the Qing) does not include any biographical information on Qiu. Hummel (1943-44, 175-176) includes a brief account of Qiu's life based on *Yinxian zhi* 鄞縣志 (1877). For a recent chronological account of Qiu's life, see Zhang 2011, 89-92, 108.

⁸ For a discussion of Huang's status as Liu Zongzhou's successor in Confucian philosophy, see Struve 2013, 306-309.

⁹ According to Quan Zuwang 全祖望 (1705-1755), Li Yong, together with Sun Qifeng 孫奇逢 (1584-1675) and Huang Zongxi, were "the 'three great Confucians' of the time: Li in the west, Sun in the north, and Huang in the south" (Birdwhistell 1996, 21).

¹⁰ The term *yimin* literally means leftover, remnant or surviving subjects. For a discussion and definition of the term, see Yim 2009, 1-3; Struve 1979, 327; Jay 1991, 5-6. For a study of Chinese literati in the Ming-Qing transition period and their views of *yimin*, see Zhao 1999.

the Kangxi emperor in order to win his favour, Li Yong's submission was rather involuntary, resulting from the emperor's demand (*suoyao* 索要). Most importantly, in order to maintain his Ming loyalist stance, he even rejected the opportunity of an audience with the Kangxi emperor in 1703. About two years later, on his fifth Southern Tour (1705), the Kangxi emperor summoned Mei Wending to an audience, which brought the emperor's patronage not only to Mei Wending himself but also to his grandson Mei Juecheng 梅穀成 (1681–1764) (Jami 2012, 251). Mei Wending's meeting with the emperor was an occasion most scholars of the time would regard as the ultimate glory in their lives. Li Yong's unyielding commitment to his integrity, however, stands out against the prevailing ethos of the scholarly world during the reign of Kangxi.

Wan Sitong is well known for his contribution to the compilation of a standard *Ming History*. As mentioned earlier, the *Boxue hongru* special examination was intended for the recruitment of eminent scholars to accomplish this imperial project. Both the literati of the Ming-Qing transition period and the Manchu rulers of the early Qing were keen to compile a history of the Ming. While literati of the time sought a historical perspective on present issues, the Manchu rulers of the early Qing appropriated history as a tool to help “acquire the imprimatur of political legitimacy” (Ng & Wang 2005, 239). The historical works of Huang Zongxi and Wan Sitong were both highly regarded. Huang compiled the *Mingru xue'an* 明儒學案 (Records of Ming scholars), presenting a historical survey of the important schools of Confucianism of the Ming dynasty.¹¹ Wan Sitong authored the *Rulin zongpai* 儒林宗派 (Confucian schools and their branches), a chronological coverage of scholar traditions from the time of Confucius to the Ming dynasty. The Qing government tried to recruit both of them for the Ming History project. Maintaining his non-cooperative stance, Huang Zongxi avoided joining the project but was ordered to submit his collection of materials relating to the *Ming History* project to the Bureau of History. Wan Sitong refused the offer initially but later consented to work on the project as a private scholar. He invested all his knowledge and energy over twenty years of his life in this official project.¹² This paper examines why and how Wan devoted himself to this official project while insisting on

¹¹ For a discussion of Huang's scholarship in history, see Struve 1988a, 479–484.

¹² For an excellent discussion of Wan's life and scholarship, see Struve 1988b, 90–100.

his Ming loyalist identity. Through these case-studies, this article engages in a critical analysis, identifying the key elements behind the success of the Kangxi emperor's soft power in shaping the intellectual milieu of the time.

Qiu Zhao'ao 仇兆鰲 and His *Du Fu's Poetry with Detailed Annotations*

In 1693 Qiu Zhao'ao presented his *Du Fu's Poetry with Detailed Annotations* (*Dushi xiangzhu* 杜詩詳註) to the Kangxi emperor, and this act raises a question regarding his attitude toward the Qing ruler, as he adopted a stance differing from that of his teacher Huang Zongxi and Huang's other disciples such as Wan Sitong who kept their Ming loyalist identity.

After obtaining a *Jinshi* degree in 1685, Qiu secured a position in the Imperial Academy. In 1693 the Kangxi emperor issued an edict emphasising a requirement for literary works to show "consistency between literary representation and behavior in real life" (Hao 2017, 210). The emperor emphasised *lunshi zhiren* 論世知人, or "knowing a person by discussing his time", and asked scholars to submit their own literary works. However, Qiu chose to present his commentary on Du Fu's poetry. In his explanation of his motive for this choice, Qiu focused on *shangyou* 尚友 (literally meaning "regard someone as a friend" and by extension "taking something such as books as friends"), emphasising the idea of "taking morality as one's friend" (*yi de wei you* 以德為友) (Satō 2009, 91-95). Qiu stated that Du Fu's poetry truly demonstrated his love for his country and his loyalty to the ruler throughout his entire life. His poetry also revealed the causes behind the decline of the Kaiyuan 開元 (713-741) and Tianbao 天寶 (742-756) eras and how the emperors in the reigns of the Qianyuan 乾元 (758-760) and Dali 大曆 (766-779) reinstated order after the chaos. Qiu asserted that his interpretation of Du Fu's poetry correlated with the emperor's instruction of "knowing a person by discussing his time" (Qiu 2007, 5: 2352).

The image of Du Fu “as a man with paradigmatic Confucian morality” (Hao 2017, 1) did not arise until the Song when the literati extolled Du Fu “for his ability to convey Confucian moral values and judgment through poetry in addition to producing a faithful account of the historical past” (ibid., 12). This mode of “life reading in the Song served as an important self-shaping strategy for the literati class in the construction of their political and cultural identity under various circumstances” (ibid.). During the Ming-Qing transition period, there were competing interpretations of Du Fu’s poetry, but the Ming loyalists’ use of commentaries on Du Fu’s poetry to “show their political loyalty to the fallen Ming” (ibid., 13) was viewed as a potential political threat to the Qing regime. Under such circumstances Qiu’s comments on Du Fu’s poetry echoed “the interpretative transparency suggested by the Kangxi [sic] in his edict” (ibid., 212), presenting “the intervention of Qing official ideology in the practice of reading Du Fu that aims to disarm potential threats imposed by Ming loyalists’ readings” (ibid., 13).

The rationale for Qiu’s submission of his interpretation of Du Fu’s poetry was that anyone who read Du Fu’s poetry would regard Du Fu as his friend; based on this pretext, Qiu’s presentation of his interpretation to the emperor was motivated by the morality presented in Du Fu’s poetry which, Qiu stated, was deeply rooted in moral principles and demonstrated his moral perfection. Qiu’s rhetoric linked Du Fu’s poems to the official ideology of the Qing government, and “adeptly expressed his loyalty to the Qing” (ibid., 209).

In 1694 Qiu requested leave from his post in the Imperial Academy and returned to his hometown Ningbo in order to devote himself to the practice of internal alchemy (*neidan* 内丹) (Pregadio, 2013, 811). Meanwhile, he continued to work on *Du Fu’s Poetry with Detailed Annotations* and printed a revised version of this work in 1702. In early 1703 during his southern tour the Kangxi emperor arrived in Hangzhou. Qiu Zhao’ao took this opportunity to submit his revised work to the emperor. Pleased with Qiu’s submission, the emperor in return sent Qiu a tablet inscribed *can xia yin nian* 餐霞引年 (lit. practising [Daoist method of breathing] at dawn and prolonging life), referring to Qiu’s practice of internal alchemy to prolong life (Zhang 2011, 91–92). One year later Qiu was again summoned to the capital for various important positions,

including a vice presidency in the Board of Civil Office and the chancellorship of the Imperial Academy (Hummel 1943-44, 176; Zhang 2011, 92).

Qiu's presentation of *Du Fu's Poetry with Detailed Annotations* to the emperor accorded with Kangxi's 1693 edict and this achieved his purpose of winning the emperor's favour. Meanwhile Qiu "tried to situate his commentaries in the interpretative tradition of Du Fu and used its affinity with Qing official ideology and the imperial power of Emperor Kangxi to reinforce the authority of his reading" (Hao 2017, 209). This may be seen as an illustrative example of the emperor's soft approach to the scholarly world of the time, demonstrating how it worked to help him to conquer the hearts and minds of Han Chinese.

In 1711 Qiu retired from office due to illness and returned to his hometown of Ningbo. The Kangxi emperor was concerned about Qiu and summoned Qiu's two sons, asking them to pass on some medicine kept in the imperial stores (*neifu* 內府) to their father. It was reported that the medicine worked magically and Qiu recovered immediately after taking it (Jin 1982, 158). Qiu made further revisions to *Du Fu's Poetry with Detailed Annotations*, and also finished compiling his annotations of *Cantong qi* 參同契 (The Seal of the Unit of the Three), an ancient treatise on Chinese alchemy, explaining the Taoist way of making the golden elixir.¹³ Once again Qiu presented this book to the Kangxi emperor. However, the emperor's gift to Qiu, a golden fan with Kangxi's hand-written inscriptions, had arrived even before his submission reached Beijing. The last two lines of the inscription were quoted from Bai Juyi's 白居易(772-846) poem *Xun Guo daoshi buyu* 尋郭道士不遇 (Seeking the Taoist Guo but failing to find him): "I wish to consult him about the *Cantong qi*; I don't know when I can come again to follow him" (欲問參同契中事, 更期何日得相從) (*Yuding Quan Tangshi*, *juan* 440, 1.11). The poem describes how Bai Juyi went to visit a Taoist Priest with the surname Guo, intending to consult him about the book *Cantong qi*. However, the priest was not in the temple. Disappointed, Bai concluded his poem by asking when

¹³ The treatise, written by Wei Boyang 魏伯陽 in about 142 A.D., was translated into English by Lu-Ch'iang Wu in 1932. Tenney L. Davis provides the Introduction and Notes to the translation. For an introduction to the author of *Cantong qi* and the knowledge of Chinese alchemy, see Wu, Wei and Davis 1932, 210-230. Pregadio (2011) offers a more recent study and translation of the book.

he could come to learn from the priest about the book *Cantong qi*.¹⁴ Jin Zhi 金埴 (1663-1740), a poet and a *buyi* scholar of the Qing, used these two lines to praise a close relationship between the Kangxi emperor and Qiu, as the word *qi* 契 can also be understood as seamless, suggesting a seamless relationship between them – the emperor was missing Qiu, wanting to consult Qiu about scholarly works and to have Qiu’s company again. Jin Zhi proclaimed that the patronage of the Kangxi emperor to Qiu was far greater than that of the emperors Bai Juyi served in the Tang dynasty (Jin 1982, 158).

Bai Juyi was born in a time of great political disorder and lived through the reigns of eight emperors. He became a poet when he was still a child; however, because of the socio-political chaos of the time, there were no happy poems produced during his childhood. In 800 Bai Juyi was successful in the Literary Examination, and commenced his career as a government official. Up until his death in 846 he served seven emperors. His poems not only reflected the times of his life but also voiced his political criticism which often resulted in his being posted away from the court at Chang’an.¹⁵ Jin Zhi’s comparison of the Kangxi emperor and the seven emperors Bai Juyi served therefore contains a compliment to Kangxi, suggesting that none of the emperors Bai Juyi served were as great as the Kangxi emperor and none of these emperors would treat scholar-officials as the Kangxi emperor did. What Jin Zhi expressed here perhaps reflected the sentiment of many of those literati who failed the imperial examinations and were longing for such patronage, which could change their lives.

Li Yong 李顥 (1627–1705) and His Passive Resistance to the Kangxi Emperor’s Patronage

The preceding discussion reveals the allure of the emperor’s patronage to most Han Chinese scholars, and demonstrates Kangxi’s tactics aimed at conquering the mind

¹⁴ A study of Bai Juyi and his interest in Chinese alchemy (Yoke, Chye and Parker 1974, 166) suggests that this *Guo doashi* could be Guo Xuzhou 郭虛舟, one of the Taoist alchemists Bai Juyi encountered.

¹⁵ For an early study of Bai Juyi and his poetry, see Waley 1949; also Chu Binjie 1994.

and heart of Han scholars. However, there were still non-cooperative scholars who strove to maintain their identity as Ming loyalists by refusing to serve the Qing government. Li Yong, a native of Guanzhong, Shaanxi, was one such Ming loyalist.¹⁶ As a private scholar and teacher, Li Yong repeatedly declined to be recommended to the Qing government for a post or to take any of the official examinations, including the *Boxue hongru* examination in 1679. He even turned down the offer of an audience with the Kangxi emperor in 1703, a once in a lifetime opportunity that both Qiu Zhao'ao and Mei Wending embraced. This section focuses on how the Kangxi emperor, while showing his tolerance of Li's passive resistance, astutely demanded Li Yong's works – a tactic that forced Li Yong to comply with the emperor's order of *jin cheng*.

There is no evidence that Li was ever associated with any anti-Qing activities or groups. His loyalty to the Ming may have originated from his loyalty to the Confucian tradition in which filial piety is at the core. Li's father, Li Kecong 李可从 (1599-1642), was killed in fighting with the rebel Li Zicheng 李自成 in 1642. At that time Li Yong was barely 15 years old. His mother, née Peng, despite intolerable hardship, raised him with Confucian values of loyalty, filial piety, chastity and righteousness (Li 2012, 602). Even whilst living in poverty, she refused to remarry or send Li Yong to work in the local yamen. She was determined to remain loyal to both her husband and the Ming since her husband died for the Ming dynasty. This family background and life experience deeply “conditioned and shaped his social relations, intellectual views, and political stance” (Birdwhistell 1996, 20). It is from this perspective that we may see that the dynastic change “affected his relationship to the Confucian tradition, since he could not help but see current events from the perspective of a concern about the past and the future” (ibid., 20-21).

As mentioned earlier, Li Yong was regarded as the last major figure in the Guanxue tradition. His teachings attempted to reconcile the differences between the Cheng-Zhu School and the Wang Yangming branch of Neo-Confucianism. His understanding of

¹⁶ For Li Yong's life, see Hui 2012, 45: 556–594; also Hummel 1943–44, 498–499; Wu Huaqing 1992, *juan* 1–4; Zhao Erxun 1998, *Liezhuan* 列傳 (Arrayed accounts) 267: 3357–3358; Wickes 1967, 498–499. For an introduction to Li Yong's life and scholarship, see Peterson 2016, 495–497. Birdwhistell (1996) presents an intellectual biography of Li Yong.

a genuine Confucianism emphasised practical morality “along with a form of self-cultivation that featured rigorous reflective thought and practice” (ibid.,10). He was famous not only as a great Confucian scholar but also as an exemplar of filial piety.

In late 1703 the Kangxi Emperor carried out his western inspection tour, travelling to the western region including the provinces of Shanxi and Shaanxi. Gioro-Huaxian, the Viceroy of Shaanxi, along with other high officials of the western region, met with the emperor when he arrived at Pingyao, a city of Shanxi province. The emperor asked Huaxian about Li Yong, saying that when his tour reached Shaanxi, he would summon Li Yong. This was like an imperial decree, prompting the Viceroy to send Li Yong an invitation letter, along with a certain amount of gift-money. He asked Li to be at Xi’an in order to prepare for his meeting with the emperor. The Viceroy was aware of Li’s history of passive resistance, so he sent a hand-written letter to Zhang Houfang 張侯芳, the magistrate of the county (*yi* 邑), with a specific instruction that Zhang should go to Li Yong’s house with a generous endowment and cordially invite him to go to Xi’an to wait for the emperor’s summons. Furthermore, the Viceroy considered that Li Yong lived in poverty and would hardly have any money to pay for clothing and travel expenditure, so he particularly instructed Zhang Houfang that the county should take care of these issues and allow family members to accompany Li Yong to Xi’an; all the costs incurred should be reimbursed by the provincial government. (Li 2012, 595-596).

Li Yong’s son, Shenyan 慎言, sent a letter to the Viceroy on behalf of his father, pleading:

My father, now at an age of seventy-seven years old, has been ill since last autumn, and still cannot walk. He is dying and we have already prepared for his death. Magistrate Zhang knows all about this situation (ibid., 596).

言父年已七十有七，自客秋臥病，至今不能動履，一息奄奄，後事已為早備，此張令素所深知目擊者。

Zhang Houfang was sympathetic towards Li Yong’s situation and agreed to go to Xi’an and talk to his superior. However, on the 12th day the governor Jin Fu sent another official to the county before Zhang had reached Xi’an, demanding that Li Yong leave

for Xi'an that night. The reason behind this urgent order was that the emperor would arrive there on the 15th day, so the local officials wanted to make sure that Li Yong would be there on the 13th day. Shenyan had no choice but to leave for Xi'an with the government officials, hoping that he could plead his father's illness to the Viceroy in person. Those officials would not dare let Shenyan go home until the 19th day when the emperor sent an earnest and gentle edict (*wenzhi* 温旨): Li "is old and has been ill, so there is no need to force him to come" (高年有疾，不必相強) (ibid., 597).

Apart from excusing Li Yong from meeting with him, the emperor granted Li Yong a tablet adorned with four Chinese characters in his own calligraphy: *caozhi gaojie* 操志高潔 (unimpeachable integrity)¹⁷ along with a poem by himself. Then the emperor made a request for Li Yong's works (ibid.).

As discussed in previous sections, most scholars under the Kangxi regime, regardless of whether they had already entered officialdom or were still struggling to climb the social ladder, willingly followed the edict and presented their scholarly works to the Kangxi emperor. In the case of Li Yong, however, the emperor had to ask for it. On the twenty-first day Shenyan, Li Yong's son, was taken to the emperor's temporary palace in Xi'an by the Viceroy. Shenyan expressed his gratitude to the Kangxi emperor on behalf of his father, with Zhang Houfang, the county magistrate, holding Li Yong's *Erqu ji* 二曲集 (Collected works of Erqu) and *Sishu fanshen lu* 四書反身錄 (Record of reflections on the Four Books) on his knee to the left of Shenyan.

Li Yong, unlike Qiu Zhao'ao, did not voluntarily present his works to the emperor. For years Li Yong insisted on his commoner's position, and his passive resistance worked effectively against the official pressure and threats imposed on him and his family. He had nothing to lose since his own life was the only weapon he used in his fight to maintain his Ming-loyalist stance. This was especially evident in 1678 when Li Yong was recommended for the *boxue hongru* special examination. Although Li Yong declined it on the grounds of his poor health, the government officials did not listen and forced the local yamen runners to carry a bed-ridden Yong to Xi'an. Surrounded by the local officials and yamen runners, who all pressed him to stop his resistance,

¹⁷ Hummel provides a more literal translation: "Discipline and Purpose High and Pure" (Hummel 1943-44, 499).

Yong lay in bed and ignored them. Li Yindu 李因篤 (1631–1692), one of the fifty scholars who were admitted to the *boxue hongru*, came to bid farewell to Yong prior to his departure for the special examination. Seeing those who surrounded Yong were cold and intimidating, Li Yindu became concerned that Yong's resistance would bring misfortune to him, so he tried to persuade Yong to give in. Other people, who loved Yong and shared the same concerns about his life and safety, all echoed Li Yindu's advice. However, Yong closed his eyes without responding to any such advice or concerns, and commenced a hunger strike. (Li 2012, 586)

The Viceroy, however, placed more pressure on Yong and even threatened to charge him with resisting the imperial order (*kangzhi* 抗旨). Li Yindu, fearing for Yong's life, cried and begged Yong to be cooperative. Yong replied with a smile:

All human beings are mortal. I am only concerned with whether or not it is a worthy death. It would be the right place if I have to die today (ibid.).

人生終有一死，惟患死不得所耳。今日乃吾死所也。

He then began to make arrangements with his son and disciples for affairs after his death. Upon entrusting his will, he was determined to die and even stopped drinking water. On the fifth day the Viceroy, worrying that Li Yong would die on him, made an appeal to the Court on Yong's behalf whilst sending other officials to Yong's bedside to comfort him. Only under such circumstances did Yong end his hunger strike. In the end Li Yong was able to evade taking the *boxue hongru* examination. For this he gained the reputation of "iron man" (*tiehan* 鐵漢) (ibid.).

Gu Yanwu 顧炎武 (1613–1682), one of the most famous Ming loyalists and historians, wrote a poem to express his admiration for his friend. In this poem, Gu eulogised Li Yong by using a historical reference to Li Ye 李業 (style name Juyou 巨游), an official and scholar of the Eastern Han Dynasty (25–220 AD). Li Ye refused to serve Wang Mang 王莽 (r. 9–23 AD), and later Gongsun Shu 公孫述 (d. 36 AD) on account of illness. Shu sent his official, Yin Rong, to coerce Li into submission by giving him two options: either accepting the post or taking poison. Li took the poison. Shu was surprised and ashamed of killing a man with integrity, so he sent his envoy to Li Ye's

funeral and offered a gift of cloth to his son, but his son refused to accept it (Crespigny 2006, 434, 981). Gu praised Li Yong:

He is the scholar who knows where his loyalty belongs (讀書通大義),
His integrity stands above all righteous scholar-officials (立節冠清流).¹⁸

In a letter to his friend Li Zilan 李紫瀾, Gu said that the Viceroy changed his attitude and went on to make a plea on behalf of Li Yong because he was informed of the case of Li Ye and he feared that Li Yong would die on him. With this historical reference, Gu Yanwu regarded Li Yong as a man holding an unyielding commitment to his cause who “would not bend to threats” (*weiwu buneng qu* 威武不能屈): he “was pressured to [serve the government] by higher officials. He was even carried to a place near to Xi’an. Although bed-ridden, he had no choice but to hold a knife and vow to end his own life” (為上官逼迫，昇至進郊，至臥操白刃，誓欲自裁).¹⁹

The word *bipo* 逼迫 vividly describes the great pains that Li Yong and other Ming loyalists, such as Fu Shan 傅山 (1607-1684), Wang Hongzhuan 王宏撰 (1622-1702), and Xu Ye 徐夜 (1611-1683), endured to avoid being recommended (Peterson 1951, 237-238). Like Li Yong, they were all friends of Gu Yanwu (Chen & Zhu 2000, 162-163). Gu himself also held an unyielding attitude and threatened to kill himself in his response to Xiong Cili’s 熊賜履 (1635-1709) attempt to recommend him for the Ming History project (Chen & Zhu, *ibid.*; Peterson 1951, 233-234). He also refused to have his name submitted to the court for the *boxue hongru* examination (Chen & Zhu, *ibid.*; Peterson, *ibid.*, 236). Gu Yanwu, Li Yong and other Ming loyalists all valued their moral integrity (*jie* 節 or *qijie* 氣節) and reputation for virtue above their lives.²⁰

¹⁸ This poem, quoted in Hui Longsi 惠龍嗣 (2012, 586), is collected in Gu 1976, 418.

¹⁹ Gu 1976, 67-68, and Hui Longsi (2012, 586) quoted this letter in his biographical record of Li Yong.

²⁰ For an account of how well-known scholars, including Gu Yanwu and Li Yong, responded to the recommendations, see Peterson 2016, 573-579.

Wan Sitong and the Ming History Project

Compared with Li Yong and Qiu Zhao'ao, Wan Sitong was born into a prestigious family with an ancestral line of eleven generations who had been prominent largely due to their distinguished military service to the Ming dynasty from its founding year through to the career of Wan Bangfu 萬邦孚 (1544 – 1628), Sitong's grandfather. However, Wan Tai 萬泰 (1598-1657), Sitong's father, decided to focus on literature and history instead of pursuing a military career. (Liu 1936, 1b-3a). Like Huang Zongxi, Wan Tai was one of the devoted disciples of Liu Zongzhou, but neither followed the example of their teacher who committed suicide as a means of demonstrating his loyalty to the Ming court. Instead, they joined the anti-Qing force to fight the invasion of the Manchus in Zhejiang province, and both of them offered to work for the temporary Ming government at Shaoxing in 1645 (Liu 1936, 3a; Chen and Fang 1988, 333-34; 1991, 31-36; Hummel 1943-44, 352, 612, 614; Quan 1969, 4a-b).

When the Manchus took over Beijing, Sitong was only seven *sui*. Due to the political turmoil and the change of dynasty, the Wan family were forced into hiding on Yulin 榆林 mountain in Fenghua 奉化. According to Wan Sitong's own recollection (Wan 1936, 1.3a -b), they had to run between rocky mountain valleys during the day and rest at night with the fear of jackals and tigers (晝行巖壑間，夜宿豺虎際). At Yulin they lived in caves for more than three years (穴居逾三年) and were often short of grain. In 1649 the Qing government held a population census, aiming to identify the Ming loyalists and their families. Wan Tai had no choice but to take the family back to the city where they had previously lived, but their old residence had been ruined. As a result, they had to resettle in a village at Xigao 西皋 where they started farming. At that time, Wan Sitong was about 12 *sui*, but he went to work in the field with his brothers, and gradually became "a lad from a farmer's house" (*tianshe'er* 田舍儿) (ibid., 3b; Liu 1936, 3a-b). Under such trying circumstances, Wan Sitong's education, as the youngest son of Wan Tai, was neglected and Wan Tai was concerned about his future. However Wan Sitong devoted himself to the study of Confucian classics and history, surprising his family with the knowledge he had acquired through his self-study

(Liu 1936, 3b). In 1654 Sitong and his brothers, following Wan Tai's instruction, all went to study under Huang Zongxi (Chen and Fang 1988, 336).

Like Li Yong, Sitong never sat for the civil service examinations. Similar to most *buyi* scholars in early Qing, he made a living by tutoring in private houses (*guanke* 館課). In 1675 some of his classmates and friends, including Qiu Zhao'ao and his nephew, Wan Yan 萬言 (1637-1705), succeeded in the civil service examinations, but Sitong was adamant that he would not change his stance as a Ming loyalist. In 1678 he was recommended for the *boxue hongru* special examination, but he turned it down in order to uphold his loyalty to the Ming. By that time Sitong was well known for his scholarship in historiography, and celebrated scholars of the time were all eager to meet him and read his works (Yang 1936, 3b). The Three Xu brothers returned home that year to mourn their mother's death. They invited Sitong to their home at Kunshan, to help in compiling the ancient Chinese rituals of mourning. Sitong accepted the invitation and started working on the project *Duli tongkao* 讀禮通考 (Complete study of mourning rites). In 1679, shortly after he became the house guest of Xu Qianxue at Kunshan, the project of compiling the standard *Ming History* commenced, and Xu Yuanwen, as the head of this government project, invited Sitong and his nephew Wan Yan to go to Beijing with him. (Chen and Fang 1988, 342; Yan 2014, 931). Sitong declined the offer at first but later accepted this invitation with a strict condition that he would not take an official position in the Bureau for compiling the *Ming History*; instead he preferred to work at Xu Yuanwen's residence in Beijing. He also insisted that he would not take any salary from the government nor claim authorship. Under such conditions he participated in the project as a *buyi* scholar, and more importantly, as a Ming loyalist (Chen and Fang 1988, 343; Hummel 1943-44, 613).

One might argue that although Wan Sitong insisted on his *buyi* position and *yimin* stance, he was after all under the Xu brothers' patronage which, as mentioned earlier, was semi-official in nature. This may indicate that Wan Sitong softened his attitude toward Qing rule. However, as Quan Zuwang pointed out, Wan Sitong agreed to participate in the project because he decided to "serve his old country by undertaking the compilation of its history"; in so doing he kept his identity as a Ming *yimin* (蓋先生欲以遺民自居, 而即以任故國之史事報故國) (Quan 1977, 28.355). The word *guguo*

故國 here may be translated as “native land”, “old country” or “former dynasty”, but in the context of the compilation of a history of Ming, it surely refers to the Ming dynasty.

Some scholars viewed Wan’s participation in the Ming History project as a compromise made by Huang Zongxi with the Qing government (Wang Lijian 2016, 56).²¹ It is well-known to students of Chinese history that Huang Zongxi fought against the Manchus in the early Qing period. Like Wan Tai, in 1649 Huang was threatened by the Qing government which forced those who had joined anti-Qing forces to give up their resistance, otherwise their family members would be implicated. Huang Zongxi was concerned about the safety of his mother who at the time still lived at their old residence. He had no choice but to leave the resistance force in 1650 under a false name (Huang Houbing 1969, 29a-b; Quan 1969, 4b). After returning home and resuming his scholarly pursuits, Huang Zongxi, like many Ming loyalists of the time, adopted a non-cooperative stance by focusing only on his scholarship, teaching, and organisation of public lectures.²² In 1677 Ye Fang’ai 葉方霽 (1629–1682), chancellor of the Hanlin Academy and vice-president of the Board of Ceremonies of the time, tried to persuade Huang Zongxi to work for the Qing government, but Huang declined. In 1678, Ye recommended Huang Zongxi to the Kangxi emperor for the *boxue hongru* examination, but once again Huang managed to elude it thanks to his disciple Chen Xigu 陈锡嘏 (1634–1687), who appealed to the emperor on behalf of his teacher. In 1679, both Ye Fang’ai and Xu Yuanwen invited Huang Zongxi to take part in the Ming History project, but he once again turned down the offer, with the excuse that he had to look after his aged mother. This time Huang Zongxi was not so successful, as he was forced to make a significant compromise: allowing his son Huang Baijia 黄百家 (1643–1709) and disciples such as Wan Sitong and Wan Yan to work on the Ming History project (Huang Houbing 1969, 37; Huang 1936, 462). Since Huang Zongxi was reluctant to participate in the project in person on the grounds of his age and health condition, in 1680 the Ministry of Personnel ordered the local officials to copy

²¹ For a general account of the doubts about Huang Zongxi’s Ming *yimin* identity, see Liu & Wang 2010, 148–155.

²² For a thorough discussion of *jiang jing hui* 講經會 (Public lectures on Confucian classics) in the early Qing period, see Wang 2015, 78–175.

his collection of books and materials relevant to the Ming History project and submit them to the Bureau (*Da Qing Shengzu Ren [Kangxi] huangdi shilu* 2.1179).²³

Wan Sitong's participation in the Ming History project was encouraged by Huang Zongxi: "The task of identifying the virtuous and the treacherous of the Ming dynasty is now entrusted to a commoner" 一代賢奸托布衣 (Huang 1991, 4:84). However, he advised Wan Sitong not to engage in the project in an official capacity (Huang 1936, 462).

Wan Sitong echoed the view of Huang Zongxi. He was deeply concerned that there had been no books on the 293-year history of the Ming dynasty, and that this hiatus would leave later generations lacking in information related to Ming history (Liu 1936, 4a). Apart from this concern, Wan Sitong also had a strong personal reason: he linked his participation in the project to his ancestors' meritorious services to the Ming dynasty:

In the past, four of my ancestors died for the Ming. I am now compiling a Ming history. Is this not a service to the Ming? My ancestors had no difficulty in sacrificing their lives for the Ming; as a great grandson and great great grandson, how could I not devote myself to collecting historical pieces of the Ming? Otherwise, I would not be able to face my ancestors when I am six feet under. (Liu 1936, 4a)

昔吾先世四代死王事，今此非王事乎？祖不難以身殉，為其曾玄乃不能盡心網羅以備殘略，死尚可以見吾先人地下乎？

Clearly Wan Sitong regarded his engagement in the Ming history project as a service equivalent to his ancestors' sacrifices to the Ming. Inspired by this lofty ideal, Wan Sitong, as a commoner and *yimin*, accepted the challenge of working on the colossal project for over twenty years. He felt helpless over the dynastic change but hoped that he could at least use his knowledge to compile a Ming history so as to comfort his ancestors in heaven (今鼎遷社改無可為力者，惟持此志上告歷祖在天耳) (Liu 1936, 3a). He worked tirelessly on the project until his death, and this inspiration or

²³ For a specific study of Huang's large book collection, see Campbell 2006/2007, 1-24.

will (*zhi* 志) supported him in enduring (*yin ren* 隱忍) the separation from his family for such a long period (Liu 1936, 4a).

Wan Sitong's devotion to the Ming History project was also linked to his historiographical principles. He distrusted the official history project which, in his opinion, could be rushed and handled by many people who might not select materials with careful scrutiny, while neglecting the local contexts of the time when coming to describe a historical event or fact. As a result, such an official history project would only produce a piecemeal history which, Wan was deeply concerned, would fail to provide a clear record of historical periods between peace and disorder, nor identify the virtuous and the treacherous (使一代治亂賢奸之跡暗昧而不明) (Fang 1983, 332). With his determination to avoid such flaws in the Ming History project, he virtually changed the nature of this official project by undertaking the collection and sorting of material, compiling and editing the documents all in his own hand. In his mind, the sacrifice he made was similar to his ancestors' service to the Ming dynasty. From this perspective, we may say that Wan Sitong effectively made a unique *jìn cheng* to his ancestors. Furthermore, he took this project as the duty of a Ming *yimin* for future generations to remember the past rather than as his submission to the Qing government. In this sense his hard work to preserve the history of the Ming dynasty was an act of cultural loyalty rather than political loyalty.²⁴

The Power of the Kangxi Emperor's Soft Approach

For Ming loyalists like Huang Zongxi, Li Yong, and Wan Sitong, who valued their reputation and integrity more than their own lives, it was becoming increasingly difficult to maintain their Ming-loyalist identity under the Kangxi emperor's soft power.²⁵ In the case of Li Yong, local officials had tried hard to coerce him to be cooperative with the government but all had failed. The emperor did not want to persecute a true

²⁴ Here I borrow the point made by Peter K. Bol on Yuan Haowen's 元好问 (1190–1257) letter to Yelü Chucai 耶律楚材 (1190–1244). See Bol 1987, 525.

²⁵ For a discussion of the difficulty in upholding the Ming loyalist stance in the Kangxi reign, see Zhao 2010, 28–54.

talent of the time and a great man of integrity, so he arranged for a plaque with his inscription to be placed on the wall of Li's house to symbolise their meeting. The emperor's praise of Li Yong's integrity turned Li's passive resistance into a high moral virtue endorsed by the Qing ruler. The emperor's plaque demonstrated not only his respect for a great scholar and a virtuous man, but also his tolerance of Li Yong's passive-resistance, which formed part of the Kangxi emperor's soft approach to the remaining Ming loyalists.

Before requesting Li Yong's works, the Kangxi emperor had already learned of his scholarship through the recommendations sent to him by local officials. After receiving two of Li Yong's books, he sent them to scholar-officials in his Southern Study (*nán shūfāng* 南書房) for an assessment of their content and value. They subsequently reported to the emperor that Li Yong's scholarship focused on understanding the substance of classical learning (*míngtǐ* 明體) and then applying it to social life and one's moral cultivation (*shìyòng* 適用). They also informed the emperor that Li Yong's *Fanshen lu* was "truly useful to the study of Zhu Xi's commentary on the *Four Books*, and would make a great contribution to the learning of the sages" (真堪羽翼朱註，有功於聖賢之學). His advocacy of *huìguo zìxīn* 悔過自新 - to repent one's fault and make a fresh start - encouraged everyone to put what they learned from the Classics into practice. It was the opinion of these scholar-officials that if everyone followed Li Yong's teaching and practice, then they could each become a gentleman (*jūnzǐ* 君子), and the whole of society would assume a peace and order commensurate with conditions under the rule of Tang Yao and Yu Shun, the legendary sage-kings (Li 2012, 597-598).

This scholarly evaluation of Li Yong's learning effectively aligned it with official ideology which, by promoting the principles of the Cheng-Zhu School of Neo-Confucianism (*lǐxué* 理學), emphasised "personal practice of the principles" rather than just empty talk. In Kangxi's own exposition, the true practitioner of *lǐxué* was "someone who says nothing about *lǐxué* but conducts all things in compliance with the principles" (Gong 2007, 2). The learning of Li Yong provided the emperor with a perfect example that he could use to shape the scholarly exposition of Neo-Confucianism into the official ideology of his regime. At the same time, the scrutiny of Li Yong's works ordered

by the emperor was a reminder to literati that censorship was always available to ensure their compliance with the official ideology.

However, Wang Fuzhi 王夫之 (1619–1692), a Ming *yimin* scholar and thinker who was regarded as highly as Huang Zongxi and Gu Yanwu, questioned the legitimacy of Manchu rule in his famous *Du Tongjian lun* 讀通鑒論 (On the *Comprehensive Mirror*). Wang commenced writing this work when he was around 60 *sui* and it took him about ten years to complete it. His anti-Qing sentiments were embedded in his comments on the alien rulers of the past. He said that there were *zhitong* 治統 (the lineage of rule) and *daotong* 道統 (the lineage of Dao), in which the former referred to the seat of the Son of Heaven (*tianzi zhi wei* 天子之位) while the latter to Confucian teaching (*shengren zhi jiao* 聖人之教). He equated the alien rulers (*yi di*) to mean men and thieves, and accused them of stealing the seat of the Son of Heaven. He predicted that such thieves would not be able to rule for long as Heaven would punish them. Also, they might have stolen Chinese culture with the help of corrupt scholars, but they would never become sagacious rulers (以文致之為聖賢) because they could not acquire the essence of Chinese civilisation (Wang 1971, 242). Wang Fuzhi further commented that while a dynastic government could be destroyed, and the lineage of a royal family could become extinct, the Way of Confucianism would not vanish, as it was This Way of Ours (*si dao* 斯道) (ibid., 295).

The Kangxi emperor proclaimed the legitimacy of Manchu rule, arguing that he achieved a unity of *zhitong* and *daotong* through the promotion of Confucian tradition. In 1677 his preface to *Rijiang Sishu jieyi* 日講四書解義 (The daily exposition of the Four Books) stated that he, being both ruler and teacher (*yijun yishi* 亦君亦師), acted sagaciously to ensure the unity of the *daotong* (promoting Confucian teaching) and *zhitong* (Qing rule). He further claimed that the book elucidating the *Four Books* was intended to promote Confucian teaching in society, an effort he made in order to emulate the sage kings of antiquity (*Da Qing Shengzu Ren [Kangxi] huangdi shilu* 2.948).

It appears that the views of Wang Fuzhi and the emperor were diametrically opposed to each other, reflecting the tension between the Ming loyalists' denial of the legitimacy

of Qing rule and the early Qing court's image of the emperor as the legitimate son of Heaven (Kong 2009, 189–197). The promotion of Confucian tradition, nevertheless, represented a common ground where both parties advocated the lineage of the Way – Confucian teaching – and emphasised the importance of the continuity of Chinese civilisation. The Kangxi emperor's praise of Li Yong's scholarship reflected his endeavour to construct a self-image as *yi jun yi shi*, perhaps perceived as analogous to the sage king Shun 舜 and King Wen of Zhou 周文王 who, according to Mencius, “got their wish, and carried their principles into practice throughout the Middle Kingdom” (得志行於中國), despite their barbarian background (Legge 1893, 316–317).

After the 1679 *boxue hongru* special examination, there were more Chinese scholars who eagerly acknowledged the Kangxi emperor's accomplishment in upholding Chinese tradition. Apart from Qiu Zhao'ao, others, such as Quan Zuwang, Huang Zongxi's self-appointed follower, extolled the virtues of the Kangxi emperor who “made every effort to promote Confucian scholarship” (表章儒術,不遺餘力) (Quan 1969, 5b). The evidence he used to support this acclaim was the case of Huang Zongxi. In 1690 when Huang was already 81 *sui*, the emperor expressed his wish to have Huang Zongxi in Beijing as one of his advisors. Xu Qianxue indicated that it would be unlikely that Huang would make a trip to Beijing because of his age and poor health. Xu also informed the emperor that his brother Xu Yuanwen had previously put the same request to Huang, who had turned it down on the same grounds. (Huang Houbing 1969, 39b). Quan Zuwang described a similar account to this but emphasised the emperor's eagerness to recruit talented scholars. According to his narration, the Kangxi emperor and his high officials were all eager to have Huang Zongxi in Beijing, and the emperor even promised that Huang would be allowed to come and go freely:

He [Huang] may be summoned to Beijing. I won't ask him to undertake any tasks. If he later wants to go home, I shall order the officials to escort him home.

可召之京。朕不授以事。如欲歸，當遣官送之。(Quan 1969, 5b)

Upon learning that Huang would not come, the emperor sighed that “it is so difficult to get a talented person” (上因嘆得人之難如此) (ibid.).

In his narration, Quan exalted the Kangxi emperor's soft approach to Confucian scholars of the time, despite their anti-Qing government background. A worthy point here is Quan Zuwang's comment that Huang Zongxi, as a surviving subject of the Ming dynasty (*shengguo yichen* 勝國遺臣), escaped narrowly from death many times (*bin jiusi zhi yu* 瀕九死之餘) but at the age of 81 *sui* he ultimately obtained the emperor's recognition as a great Confucian scholar (*daru* 大儒), while still maintaining his integrity as a Ming loyalist (*zhong bao wan jie* 終保完節) (*ibid.*).

Quan's comment suggests that under the Kangxi emperor's soft power it was difficult for Huang Zongxi to insist on his non-cooperative position. As mentioned earlier, some scholars questioned Huang Zongxi's *yimin* integrity when he approved his son and disciples working on the Ming History project. From the above account we may see that under the pressure of being constantly pursued by the government, Huang had no alternative but to compromise with his pursuers. Moreover, Huang Zongxi had a lofty reason for the compromise he made, as he believed that "making a clear and correct record of the right and wrong in the history of the Ming is what a commoner could do to serve his old country" 一代是非，能定自吾輩之手，勿使淆亂，白衣從事亦所以報故國也 (Huang 1936, 462).

Indeed, many scholars in the Ming-Qing transition period were keen to pursue the truths of the past in order to understand their present problems. Ming loyalist scholars, such as Huang Zongxi, Wan Sitong, Gu Yanwu, and Wang Fuzhi, all made valuable contributions to this particular intellectual accomplishment (Ng & Wang 2005, 223-38; Cao 2014, 266-81). The case of Zhuang Tinglong 莊廷鑑 (?- 1655), also known as the Ming History case (1661-1663), which occurred at the beginning of the Kangxi era, however, dampened this scholarly enthusiasm (Hummel 1943-44, 205-206; Cao 2014, 272-274). After the Qing rulers gained more confidence in their claim to legitimacy and felt the need to make an official version of Ming history, an edict in 1665 encouraged the submission of private materials to the Bureau of the *Ming History*. Whereas the case of Zhuang Tinglong still cast a shadow over Chinese scholars, the *boxue hongru* special examination and the reopening of the Ming History project would have softened many Chinese scholars' attitudes to Qing rule. Huang Zongxi's compromise with the Qing government in regard to his son's and disciples'

participation in the Ming History project may have reflected this historical context in which the Kangxi emperor successfully presented himself as the great custodian and protector of Chinese cultural tradition by displaying his strong interests in Confucian classics and history. It was under such circumstances that Huang Zongxi and Wan Sitong were motivated to make their contributions to a true history of their *guguo*.

Nevertheless, this seemingly relaxed atmosphere does not mean that scholars such as Wan Sitong had the freedom to write what they believed was a true history. In 1687 Wan Sitong recommended Liu Xianting 劉獻廷 (1648-1695) for the project of *Da Qing yitong zhi* 大清一統志 (Gazetteer of the Great Unified Qing Empire). Also, Huang Baijia, Huang Zongxi's son, arrived in Beijing to join the *Ming History* project. Liu invited Wan Sitong, Dai Mingshi 戴名世 (1653-1713), and others to work together with him on a history of the Southern Ming, which they could not do within the official *Ming History* project. Wan Sitong agreed to this proposal and planned to go to Suzhou with Liu after the departure of Xu Qianxue, the former head of the Bureau. However, he was invited by Wang Hongxu 王鴻緒 (1645-1723) and Chen Tingjing 陳廷敬 (1638-1712), the new directors of the Bureau, to continue his work on the existing project.

After he moved to Wang Hongxu's residence, however, Wan was distressed and longed for home (先生不自得，抑抑思歸) (Liu 1936, 1a). This was partly due to his mourning for Liu Xianting who died at home in 1695, and because the materials Liu had collected for the project of the Southern Ming were all lost. Wan was worried that the information related to the history of the Southern Ming would disappear with the death of old Ming *yimin* and therefore asked his disciple Wen Ruilin 溫睿臨 (*juren* 1705) to collect such information, intending to carry forward this project after he returned home.²⁶ His distress was also caused by his disagreement with Wang Hongxu regarding the recording of historical facts. Wan Sitong insisted on recording them truthfully (*shixin* 事信) which, as a principle, was agreed upon by the former director

²⁶ Wen later completed *Nanjiang yishi* 南疆譯史 (Elucidation of the history of the southern regions).

Xu Qianxue. However, Wang Hongxu would rather sacrifice historical truths for the sake of avoiding taboo (Zhang 2009, 63-65).

Wang Hongxu's approach of selectively recording history was understandable. Like all government officials and scholars, he had every reason to be fearful of the potential consequences of his decisions. The case of Dai Mingshi in 1711 illustrates the danger of writing a history that was undesirable to the government. Dai was accused of denying Manchu authority by expressing his interest in collecting the records of the Southern Ming courts and in writing a true history of that period (Hummel 1943-44, 701-702; He 1987; Durand 1992). This interest subsequently cost Dai his life. As mentioned above, Wan Sitong actually shared this interest with Dai Mingshi. This case also suggests that while the Kangxi emperor adopted a soft approach toward the Chinese scholarly community, any challenge to the authority of Manchu rule would not be tolerated.

Apart from the threat of literary inquisition, the members of the *Ming History* Bureau had to contend with the Kangxi emperor's constant interference with the project – he often directly involved himself in the editorial process and loved to make substantial changes to existing documents. In so doing the emperor presented himself as an erudite scholar of Confucian classics and history while exerting his authority over this scholarly project, through which he ensured his control over the writing of Ming history and advanced his version of history (Ng & Wang 2009, 241; He 1998, 155-184).

The Kangxi emperor's soft power and its impact on the intellectual milieu of the time can also be illustrated by his patronage of the study of mathematics and astronomy. The encounter between the emperor and Mei Wending facilitated a new scholarly trend that changed the status of mathematical and astronomical studies from a largely neglected field of study to a fashionable area for intellectual inquiry (Bai 1995, 36-73). At the same time, the Kangxi emperor endeavoured to reconstruct the knowledge of mathematics he had learned from the Jesuits. In 1712 Mei Juecheng replaced the Jesuit scientists and became Court Mathematician. Later the emperor established the Mengyangzhai 蒙養齋 (Studio for the Cultivation of Youth) where Mei Juecheng together with a team of scholars worked on the imperial project *Collected Basic Principles of Mathematics* (*Shuli jingyun* 數理精蘊). It is noticeable that no Jesuits were involved in this project (Elman 2005, 179-80). Furthermore, the *Collected Basic*

Principles of Mathematics was prefaced with the claim of Chinese origins for Western learning (*xixue zhongyuan* 西學中源). Willard Peterson examines how Kangxi's patronage of Li Guangdi and Li's patronage of Mei Wending contributed to the formation of this idea, showing "What had been the new knowledge of mathematics and astronomy was codified in the encyclopaedic compilations" of the imperial projects such as the *Collected Basic Principles of Mathematics* (Peterson 2002, 387–88). In other words, the Kangxi emperor's patronage of mathematical and astronomical studies and encyclopaedic compilations ensured imperial control of the study and diffusion of Western learning (Jami 2002, 28–49 & 2007, 163; Jami & Han 2003, 88–110). He surely achieved his intentions.

In 1687 Wan Sitong met Mei Wending in Beijing and they remained friends until 1693 when Mei left Beijing for his hometown. Wan wrote "Song Mei Dingjiu nanhuan xu" 送梅定九南還序 (Farewell to Mei Wending returning home) to express his admiration for Mei, who was equipped with both traditional Chinese and Western knowledge of mathematics and astronomy. In Wan's view, Mei's work revealed that much of the so-called new knowledge that westerners boasted of actually originated in traditional Chinese knowledge. However, Wan acknowledged what was unique in Western knowledge, which complemented what was lacking in traditional Chinese knowledge (Wan 1936, 7.19b). Wan Sitong's account provides us with a glimpse of how scholars like Mei Wending helped disseminate the emperor's ideology amongst a circle of scholars who then led the intelligentsia and developed the scholarly norm that moulded academic activities and guided scholarly intellectual inquiry.

Conclusion

Liang Qichao contended that in 1672–1673, instead of continuing to coerce people into submission, the Kangxi emperor adopted a conciliatory approach to Han Chinese, especially toward scholars (Liang 1924/1989, 15–16). Modern scholarship by and large has agreed that the 1679 *boxue hongru* special examination was a landmark in the Kangxi emperor's new cultural policy. By that time the emperor was confident of maintaining his rule, due to triumphant military campaigns and the social stability that

the Qing had gradually achieved. Under such circumstances, most scholars accepted the legitimacy of Qing rule and craved a *jīn cheng* opportunity or an audience with the emperor; however, a few Ming loyalists, such as Li Yong, chose to use passive resistance to maintain their moral integrity. Such resistance no longer posed a threat to Qing rule as it had already secured its footing. Therefore, there was no need to suppress such Ming loyalists as the emperor had done with the Three Feudatories (Xiao 1972, 774). The Kangxi emperor now focused on conquering the minds and hearts of the Chinese, especially of influential scholars from the Ming dynasty.

The *jīn cheng* phenomenon discussed in this paper illustrates the tactics the Kangxi emperor employed to engage diversified groups of Han Chinese scholars in his imperial, social, and cultural projects, aiming to restore peace and establish cultural legitimacy and thus stabilise Qing political rule. In this context, the scholarship of Li Yong and Qiu Zhao'ao, although quite different, was incorporated into the official ideology to serve Kangxi's regime. Kangxi's endorsement of Li Yong's moral integrity, and his disregard for Huang Zongxi's anti-Qing background, cleverly moulded a Ming-loyalist persistence into the moral behaviour that the Kangxi government highly recommended. The emperor was willing to utilise Ming loyalists such as Li Yong, Huang Zongxi, and Wan Sitong because their deeds and writings, to a certain extent, endorsed the idea of a civil order above personal gain or immediate career interests, which helped promote the central and civil authority of Qing rule. This, together with the emperor's patronage of mathematical and astronomical studies and encyclopaedic compilations, became an integral part of a well-engineered plan to strengthen the Kangxi emperor's control of the scholarly world of the time. From this perspective, we may say that the soft power of the Kangxi Emperor achieved what could not be accomplished through coercion (*bīpò*). This aspect of Kangxi's soft power evolved as a new strategy in the mid-Qianlong period. While the Kangxi emperor's soft approach successfully transformed the Ming-loyalist stance into moral integrity, the Qianlong emperor in 1775 initiated a campaign to commend the self-sacrifice of Southern Ming loyalists in order to further the imperial policy of promoting Neo-Confucian ideology and absolute loyalty in society.²⁷

²⁷ Chan (2000) presents an excellent study of the Qianlong emperor's project to commend late-Ming loyalists.

Semi-official patronage played a significant role in helping the Kangxi emperor entice reputable Chinese scholars to work for the Qing government. Those in high government positions, such as the Xu brothers and Li Guangdi, had to satisfy the emperor's interests by encouraging, supporting, and even nurturing scholars like Mei Wending and Wan Sitong who, as private scholars, were pivotal to the imperial projects. Such government officials rendered their service to the emperor by recommending well-established scholars and their works to the emperor who, in turn, rewarded them with imperial favour. More importantly, their semi-official patronage functioned as a middle ground where Ming loyalists such as Huang Zongxi and Wan Sitong could participate in imperial projects either willingly or involuntarily, while still maintaining their identity as Ming loyalists.

Hence the scholarly *jīn cheng* in the Kangxi era represented a new relationship between the emperor and literati, in which a patronage system operated in order to establish and reinforce the cultural and ideological legitimacy of the Qing reign. As argued throughout this article, however, government censorship and literary inquisitions were paired with the emperor's *huairou* of Chinese scholars. One may compare Kangxi's cultural policy with Qianlong's literary inquisition through the *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書 (Complete Library of the Four Treasuries) project between 1772 and 1793. The *Siku* project invoked a nation-wide book collection which enabled the government to purge anti-Manchu literature (Guy 1987). This blatant censorship appears to be the antithesis of the soft approach adopted by the Kangxi emperor, the grandfather of Qianlong. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that the *huairou* strategy employed by the Kangxi emperor does not equate to the modern use of the term 'soft censorship', or 'indirect government censorship', which refers to official actions intended to influence or manipulate media outlets and public opinion. Such actions may include, for example, the manipulation of media coverage by government agencies through financial means such as the allocation or withdrawal of government media spending. The use of financial instruments in this manner can effectively evoke pervasive self-censorship that ensures media coverage supports government policies, while maintaining a facade of media freedom. The soft approach adopted by the Kangxi emperor, however, while less restrictive, served to ensure that the success and standing of scholars within society at the time was ultimately governed by the emperor.

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