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Loyalty, History, and Empire

Qian Qianyi and His Korean Biographies

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INTRODUCTION

In 1650, when Ming loyalists were still resisting the ascendant Qing, a fire broke out in one of the largest private libraries in Jiangnan, the Pavilion of Scarlet Clouds (*Jiangyun ge* 絳雲樓). Its owners, Liu Rushi 柳如是 (1618–1664) and her husband Qian Qianyi 錢謙益 (1582–1664), rescued only a portion of its holdings. Its greatest casualty was a still incomplete history of the Ming dynasty (1368–1644) Qian had been writing. Like the fallen dynasty whose story it told, of it remained only fading embers.[1]

This double calamity of war and fire made the preservation and recovery of the Ming's legacy ever more urgent. Although the draft history was no more, another work survived unscathed. Qian had already sent his manuscript of a poetry anthology, the *Collected Poetry of the Successive Reigns* (*Liechao shiji* 列朝詩集) to the printers. With this collection, Qian hoped to do for the Ming what the loyalist Yuan Haowen 元好問 (1190–1257) had done for the Jin (1115–1234). Yuan had collected the poems of the Jin court in the

1. Qian connected the destruction of his library with the fall of the Ming, describing the two events together as calamities for "books and written works." For the significance of this event, see Lin 2010: 175–79.

wake of its destruction by the Mongols in an effort to preserve its literary splendor for posterity.[2] Although a self-identified Ming loyalist, Qian did not, as some of his contemporaries did, give his life to its cause; instead, he honored the Ming's legacy through literary and historiographical projects.

The *Collected Poetry* was not just a grand anthology of Ming-period poetry. It also included brief biographies of many of the poets. The compilers, Qian and his wife Liu, also included Korean poets in its final volume, dedicated to the works of figures marginal to the Ming literati world: monks, recluses, women, and foreigners.[3] Korean writers were usually identified only by name and an official title (if any) and rarely received the serious biographical treatment received by Ming poets.[4] The late Koryŏ 高麗 (918–1392) poets Chŏng Mongju 鄭夢周 (1337–1392), Yi Saek 李穡 (1328–1396), and Yi Sung'in 李崇仁 (1347–1392), however, stand out as exceptions. These men, dubbed the "Three Recluses,"[5] were remembered for their steadfast loyalty to the ailing Koryŏ dynasty (高麗 918–1392).[6] It was this loyalism that earned them a place in Qian's anthology.[7]

Qian Qianyi's biographies of Korean loyalist poets offer an opportunity to discuss biographical practices in East Asia. What motivated Qian Qianyi to include them? How did he understand, in particular, the martyrdom of the Koryŏ loyalist Chŏng Mongju, vis-à-vis his own position as a self-identified Ming loyalist? And finally, how did Qian gain access to biographical information about these figures in the first place? The answers to these questions reveal numerous intriguing parallels that revolve around several key issues. What emerges from these Korean loyalist biographies are issues of moral and political authority, the purpose of historical writing, and how Korea fit into late Ming and post-Ming imaginations of empire.

The trajectory of Qian's life, which straddled the tumultuous Ming–Qing

2. Qian 1985: 678; West 1995: 281–304.

3. Qian 1653: 51 閏集卷六, 13a–35b.

4. Two important exceptions are the woman poet Hŏ Nansŏrhŏn 徐閨雪軒 (1563–1589), and her brother, Hŏ Kyun 許筠 (1569–1618), who feature prominently in this anthology. See Choe-Wall 2003; Hwang, Jun, and Kile 2007.

5. They are so called because their literary styles (*ho* 號) share the character for reclusion, *ŭn* 隱, not because they were real recluses.

6. In this chapter, the terms "Chosŏn" and "Koryŏ" refer specifically to the dynastic states that ruled the Korean peninsula. The term "Korea" will be used when the original texts refer to or evoke a sense of transdynastic political continuity.

7. For an example of this usage, see the preface to Yi 1990, in the *Han'guk munjip chonggan* (hereafter the HMC) 3:333a–34a.

dynastic transition, resonated with those of the poets whose lives he recounted. After the fall of the Ming in 1644, Qian continued to participate in loyalist efforts, serving the Hongguang 弘光 (1645) revivalist court in Jiangnan. Although, he came to see himself as a Ming "leftover subject" (*yimin* 遺民), his surrender to the Manchu Qing in 1645 undermined his loyalist credentials in the eyes of many contemporaries. His brief stint as a minister for the Qing further damaged his reputation. Many cursed him as a turncoat and a collaborator. The eighteenth-century Qing court included him in its *Biographies of Twice-Serving Officials* (*Erchen zhuan* 貳臣傳) and portrayed him as someone who abandoned the Ming to serve the Qing. While the epithet was largely negative, the Qing acknowledged by these biographies that it owed something to these officials for their support. In any case, this state-imposed label did not settle the controversies over Qian's moral integrity.[8] Debates raged over his purported loyalist credentials well into the Republican period (1911–1949).[9] While Qian liked to think of himself as a loyalist, his most severe critics depicted him as the very embodiment of its antithesis: a turncoat. More recent scholarship has moved away from these practices of praise and blame and the categorization of aligned biographies toward fuller analyses of Qian's life story in the context of the history and historiography.[10] As Jun Fang argues for Mao Xiang, another Ming–Qing transition figure who also belonged to Qian Qianyi's social circle, individuals whose loyalty had become subjects of intense debate for later scholars because of how easily they passed from Ming loyalism to Qing collaboration often saw themselves primarily as transmitters of cultural traditions.[11]

Although brief, Qian's Korean loyalist biographies also reflected a host of political, cultural, and historical shifts. They occupied an important node in an extensive network of texts, political claims, and personae across both space and time. In this chapter, I attempt to unravel the multiple strands of meanings in these texts. By tracing the connections among them, I explore significances reverberating well beyond their immediate subject matter. At stake was nothing less than the proper role of historical writing and the locus of authority for moral judgment.

Judgments in these biographies depended on currents of knowledge that emerged from specific historical conditions. In 1592, Toyotomi Hideyoshi invaded Korea. Intended as a prelude to the conquest of Ming China, the in-

8. Lin 2010: 132–40; 142–44; 265–67.

9. See Xu Zhaowei 1981: 165–204.

10. Lin 2010: 19; Yim 1998.

11. See Jun Fang, Chapter 4 in this volume.

vasion precipitated the Imjin War of 1592–1597, which brought Chinese troops to Korean soil for the first time in centuries. The protracted conflict heightened Ming imperial interest in Korea, and brought new knowledge about Korea to the Ming.[12] The war itself gave Qian access to Korean works that would otherwise have been unavailable. A product of forces that transcended the boundaries defined by king and country, the biographies were moored to a broader arc of Ming China's relations with Chosŏn Korea. Later, the shifts in this relationship during the Ming–Qing transition moved the biographer to find new significance in Korea.

Once untangled, these threads can be rewoven to form a tapestry in which the latent interconnections among its disparate parts become explicit. The aim of this chapter, then, is not only to restore Qian Qianyi's Korean biographies to their original contexts, but also to demonstrate the cascades of significance they reveal for the history and historiography of the larger East Asian region in the late Ming and early Qing period.

LOYAL SUBJECTS

Chŏng Mongju, Yi Saek, and Yi Sung'in lived during the tumultuous last years of the Korean Koryŏ dynasty in the fourteenth century. This period witnessed the meteoric rise of Yi Sŏnggye 李成桂 (1335–1408), the future founding king (T'aejo 太祖 r. 1392–1398) of the Chosŏn dynasty 朝鮮 (1392–1910).[13] Using 970, 656, and 201 characters, respectively, for their biographies, Qian recounted how they earned their loyalist reputation by resisting Yi and attempting to protect the ailing Koryŏ royal house. In the vast oeuvre of a prolific writer like Qian, these short biographies appear rather insignificant, especially considering Qian is reputed to have written the longest biography in Chinese history, including some 39,300 characters.[14] They were nonetheless longer than many of Qian's biographical notes on Chinese poets

12. I discuss Korea and Ming empire, especially symbolic constructions of imperial authority in my dissertation. See Wang 2015.

13. The nomenclature for rulers in this chapter will largely follow the terminology Qian chooses in order to preserve the tenor and positionality of Qian's original writing. As such, Korean rulers are referred to by their personal names, while Ming rulers by either their era names or temple names.

14. See Lin 2010: 119. It was the biography of Sun Chengzong 孫承宗 (1563–1638), his patron and an important Ming official who died in battle while fighting the Qing.

in this monumental anthology of poems, and stand out among the other Korean biographies for their comparative detail. They are significant less for the information they contain (largely based on well-known Korean historical works) than the relationships they embed. As one node in a web of biographical narratives, these accounts highlight how difference pieces of life writing resonate and converse with one another across time and space. In this case, how Qian and others treated Chŏng Mongju, really the central figure in these Korean biographies, and how Qian himself was viewed after his death, expose a distinct irony that pervades how these narratives interact with one another.

To establish these men as proper loyalists, Qian's biographies invariably begin by establishing the impeccable moral and intellectual qualifications of their subjects. The three men together represented the flower of civilization in Korea. The erudite Yi Saek, received the degree of presented scholar (*jinshi* 進士) from the Mongol Yuan after passing its civil service exams. According to his biography, Yi was so talented that he could "compose a poem or essay as soon as a piece of paper [entered] his hands." He was also responsible for recognizing and cultivating the other two men featured in Qian's biographies, Chŏng Mongju and Yi Sung'in.[15] Qian described Yi Sung'in to be "naturally gifted, intelligent, and forthright," possessing talents "rare even in China."[16] Of the three, Chŏng Mongju received the most effusive praise. He not only possessed "magnanimity and boldness unsurpassed," he also wrote in a style "lofty and pure." He also put his classical learning to practice. Qian credited him with introducing Confucian mourning rites to Korea, and thus singlehandedly "transformed the customs of the Eastern Kingdom (i.e., Korea)."[17]

Qian believed that these virtues and talents naturally led them to reject the declining Yuan and pursue good relations with the rising Ming. When the early Ming still confronted the Northern Yuan 北元 (1368–1388) for control over northeast Asia, both Yi Sung'in and Chŏng Mongju remonstrated at the Koryŏ court against receiving Yuan emissaries, and they suffered exile as a result. According to Qian's account, when the Korean king wanted to dispatch envoys to reestablish relations with the Ming, almost all of his courtiers shrank in fear. Only Chŏng Mongju rose to the occasion without a hint of hesitation. In 1388, as territorial disputes with the rising Ming escalated, the Koryŏ King U 禑王 (r. 1374–1388) sent Yi Sŏnggye to invade Liaodong. Yi instead aborted the mission and returned with his troops to the capital. He

15. Biography of Yi Saek in Qian 1653: 51:31a–b.

16. Biography of Yi Sung'in in Ibid., 51:17b.

17. Biography of Chŏng Mongju in Ibid., 51:13b–14b.

seized control of the government and installed a new king of Koryŏ, Ch'ang 昌王 (r. 1388–1389).[18]

Yi Sŏnggye's usurpation of power now brought him into confrontation with the three subjects of Qian's biographies. Yi controlled Koryŏ, but he refrained from seizing the throne for himself. According to Qian's account, he first had to contend with a coterie of officials, led by Chŏng Mongju and Yi Saek, who sought to stanch his growing influence. Even as "all the petty men rushed" to side with Yi Sŏnggye, Chŏng Mongju, a man "with talents fit to bring a king [to greatness]," stood by the embattled Koryŏ royal house. After Yi Sŏnggye's *coup d'état*, the Koryŏ court sent Yi Saek on an embassy to the Ming. Yi Saek worried Yi Sŏnggye would exploit his absence to seize the throne. He enacted countermeasures, demanding that Yi Sŏnggye send a son with him to China as a hostage, a proposal that earned Yi Sŏnggye's resentment. Wary of Yi Sŏnggye's growing power, Yi Saek sent a messenger to request the Ming founder Ming Taizu (明太祖 r. Hongwu 洪武, 1368–1398), to launch a military expedition to restore sovereignty to the rightful Koryŏ rulers. The Ming emperor, however, rebuffed the request, exiled his messenger, and exposed the matter to a Koryŏ envoy who supported Yi Sŏnggye. This incident gave Yi Sŏnggye the reason he needed to remove Yi Saek from office. Yi Sŏnggye now also deposed King Ch'ang and placed the prince Yo 王瑤 on the throne as the new king (1345–1394, r. Kongyang 恭讓王, 1389–1392).

The last Koryŏ monarch, feeling "isolated," hoped to eliminate Yi Sŏnggye with Chŏng Mongju's help. When Yi Sŏnggye was debilitated after a riding accident, Chŏng Mongju took the opportunity to recall Yi Saek and Yi Sung'in from exile. They then plotted to kill Yi Sŏnggye.[19] Yi Sŏnggye had feigned his illness to lure Chŏng Mongju into a trap. When the deceived Chŏng Mongju set out for Yi's residence to investigate, Yi Pangwŏn 李芳遠 (1367–1422, r. T'aejong 太宗 1401–1418) ordered his retainers to ambush and kill Chŏng on the road.[20] With Chŏng Mongju dead, Yi Sŏnggye turned his attention to Yi Saek and Yi Sung'in. He again banished Yi Saek and reduced Yi Sung'in to the status of a commoner, before finally taking the throne for himself.[21] In Qian's words, "in this manner the old ministers of the Wang

18. For Korean relations with the Ming during this time, see Kim: 2007.

19. Qian 1653: 51:31a–b; 51:17b.

20. Ibid., 51:13b–14b.

21. According to the *Veritable Records of the Chosŏn Dynasty*, Yi Sŏnggye dismissed Yi Saek and Yi Sung'in in his founding edict. His chief minister Chŏng Tojŏn was said to have slipped a line into the edict calling for their execution. Although the new king discovered it and commuted the sentence to exile, Chŏng managed to have

house (i.e., the royal family of the Koryŏ) were almost all eliminated and Sŏnggye's great design came to fruition."[22]

Of the three Koryŏ loyalists, Chŏng Mongju had inspired the most detailed treatment, likely because of his dramatic death. Though it is unlikely Qian Qianyi would have been aware of it, his portrayal of Chŏng Mongju converges with his memory in Korean popular imagination as an exemplary loyal martyr. Chŏng's apotheosis was complete by the seventeenth century when the *Haedong akpu* (海東樂府), a collection of popular songs, included a verse attributed to Chŏng. Though the provenance is likely apocryphal, the song was said to be from Chŏng's and Yi Sŏnggye's final, fateful meeting. Yi gave Chŏng Mongju an ultimatum. Expressed in a form of a vernacular song (*sijo* 時調), Yi Sŏnggye implored Chŏng to recognize the inevitability of Yi's political ascendance. He tried to dissuade Chŏng Mongju from continuing his fruitless resistance, warning him that the road he walked could lead only to death. In one of the hallmark expressions of loyalty in the Korean literary tradition, Chŏng replied with one verse:

> Though this body die
> and die and die again,
> White bones become but dust,
> a soul exists, then not,
> Still this single-hearted loyalty to my lord:
> how could it waver, ever?[23]

With these lines, Chŏng made it clear to Yi that he no intention of joining his cause. According to this version of the events, it was after singing this song that Chŏng then took his leave, only to be ambushed and killed by Yi's henchmen on the way.

The status of these figures, especially Chŏng Mongju, as paragons of loyalty in Korea tempts a particular reading of Qian Qianyi's motivations for composing these biographies. In this reading, Qian paid attention to these figures because as a self-identified Ming loyalist, he also saw reflections of

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both Yi Saek and Yi Sung'in questioned and tortured. Yi Sung'in died in the process. Yi Saek survived until 1396, but not before witnessing the death of his sons. Qian Qianyi did not seem to know of Yi Sung'in's premature death.

22. Qian 1653: 51:31a–b. For the Chosŏn persecution of the Wang royals, see Park 2015: 4–11.

23. Sim 1617, collected in *Taedong yasŭng* 5, 526–28. I have followed the translations in McCann 2000: 32–33.

his own life in those who also tried to preserve the dynasty they served in its final days. This sort of allegorical logic has long informed the reading of Qian's life. The following anecdote has played an important part in biographies of Qian. When Qing forces came to take Nanjing from the Southern Ming, Qian's wife Liu Rushi tried to convince Qian to commit suicide with her by jumping into the river Yangzi. Neither fulfilled this act of loyal martyrdom, because Qian stole away from the frigid water at the last moment, complaining of its temperature. He then opened the city gates and surrendered to the Qing. In this narrative, if he had followed his wife's advice and died, he would almost certainly have earned a reputation of a loyalist. Later accounts attribute these lines to Qian: "Wailing at the river's edge, there were no filial sons; but accompanying me in hardship, she was a worthy wife" 臨江慟哭無孝子 從行赴難有賢妻. With filiality, and by extension the father–son relationship, foundational to other moral relations, his cowardice and surrender pointed to a broader moral failure, magnified only by contrasting moral constancy of his wife.[24] For both Qian and his later biographers, the actions of his wife Liu Rushi vicariously fulfilled a moral will frustrated by Qian's personal weakness. In this reading, Qian later supported Ming loyalist activities to mend his broken reputation. These acts, together with Qian's efforts to preserve the Ming through writing, substituted for the suicide he had failed to perform.

To apply this logic to Qian's treatment of Korean loyalists, especially that of Chŏng Mongju, is to understand it as follows: if Qian could not die for his state, then perhaps, he could at least celebrate those who did die for *their* states. Describing their impeccable loyalist credentials demonstrated, at least. Qian's commitment to the ideal of loyalty, especially since his own reputation as a loyalist had been tarnished by his service to the Qing. Chŏng resisted the Chosŏn, died, and was honored for it; Qian served the Qing, lived, and was blamed for it. Such a reading, however, collapses distinct historical moments into transtemporal and antithetical stereotypes: one, the archetypal loyalist. and the other, a "twice-serving official" *par excellence*.

It is also a perspective that ignores the processes through which both Chŏng and Qian, once living historical actors, became reified images over time. Qian himself had played an important role in shaping his own image. His writings already exhibit a sense of anxiety over his posthumous image. He had wanted to cast himself as a loyalist, and to some degree, he was successful in convincing later readers, such as the Republican period sinologist

24. Xu 1981: 179–80, 181; see also Chapter 9 by Ihor Pidhainy in this volume, 335–336.

Chen Yinke 陳寅恪 (1890–1969) that he was.[25] That is not to say Qian was prescient of how his reputation would suffer at the hands of the future Qianlong emperor 乾隆 (r. 1736–1795) and committed himself to celebrating loyalists to forestall posthumous defamation as a collaborator. Concerns for reputation were nevertheless inherent to the writing of lives, whether of his own or those of others. Taking up the brush to write about an individual was a self-conscious exercise, in which the biographer's claims to moral authority were in implicit dialogue with those of others. The author need not have anticipated specific threats to his reputation to be concerned about his discursive afterlife.

The task at hand is to move beyond the categories imposed upon him by later writers. Examining how Qian viewed loyalism in these biographies allows an appreciation of subtler shades of color other than the monochromatic schemes implied by ideal models. This understanding then permits distinguishing how different ways of conceptualizing loyalty could be contested and appropriated in distinct historical contexts. Paying attention to these processes, incidentally, also reveals that Qian and Chŏng Mongju had much more in common with each other than first meets the eyes.

VISIONS OF LOYALTY

Qian's biographies do not appear to assign particular value to martyrdom as an expression of loyalty per se. As much as Qian praises the virtue and righteousness of Chŏng Mongju, death is not a requisite condition for status as a loyal subject. Qian borrows the wording of the *History of the East* 東史 (the *Abbreviated History of the Eastern Kingdom, Tongguk saryak* 東國史略), an early fifteenth-century chronicle of Korean history, to describe the loyalty of Yi Saek, who was reduced to commoner status but did not die for the loyalist cause. In Qian's words, despite their different paths, "[Yi] shared the same heart with Mongju; it did not change until the end." Qian then asks, "As for his virtue as a subject, how can it not be called loyal?"[26] If Chŏng and Yi were identical in their virtue, then dying becomes a moot point, no longer an unequivocal marker of moral superiority. The relative depreciation of martyrdom, I argue, went hand in hand with a shift of moral onus from loyal subjects to would-be rulers. The resulting moral economy operated in ways

25. Lin 2010: 12–20; Yim 1998: 23–77. Chen Yinke's name is also pronounced Chen Yinque.

26. Qian 1653: 51:31a–b: 《東史》稱: 其與夢周同心, 終始不變臣節, 可不謂忠乎。

distinct from what prevailed in official, state-centered biographical accounts. Whereas official accounts such as the high Qing *Biographies of Twice-Serving Officials* equated martyrdom with loyalty, Qian offered a vision of loyalty that could accommodate those, like himself, who chose to live.

Qian's terse narration of the events surrounding Chosŏn's founding conforms to the contours of standard Korean historical accounts. His version, however, differs in how it treats the roles of Yi rulers in Chŏng's death. Korean official histories, such as the *Koryŏ History* (*Koryŏsa* 高麗史) and the *T'aejo Veritable Records* (*T'aejo sillok* 太祖實錄) distance Yi Sŏnggye from Chŏng's death. In official versions, Yi's son, Pangwŏn, had arranged for Chŏng Mongju's assassination without his father's knowledge. The *Veritable Records* shows Yi Sŏnggye lamenting the injury Chŏng's death would have on their family's reputation. Claiming that the Yis were "long known for loyalty and filiality," he chastised his son and his associates for "wantonly killing high officials." Both the *History* and the *Records* rationalize the subsequent defamation of Chŏng Mongju as a traitorous official and the purge of his allies to be unfortunate acts of political "necessity." The fifteenth-century *Illustrated Guide to the Three Bonds* (*Samgang haengsil to* 三剛行實圖) upholds Chŏng Mongju's "dying for the state" as an act of exemplary loyalty, but absolves the Yi founders of responsibility for his death. In this version too, the Yi retainers acted independently, without directives from their patrons.[27] When Chŏng Mongju's death was reported to Yi Sŏnggye as a *fait accompli*, he was said to have been so "angry as to be unable to speak." The *Guide* goes further than the *History* and the *Records* to absolve even Yi Sŏnggye's son Yi Pangwŏn of responsibility for Chŏng's death. Instead, it only credits Pangwŏn with Chŏng Mongju's official rehabilitation.[28]

Like the cases in the *Ming History* discussed by Ihor Pidhainy, these Chosŏn period portrayals avoid implicating rulers directly in wrongful deaths.[29] Qian, on the other hand, had no compunction about condemning them. In his version, the Yi founders killed Chŏng Mongju and persecuted the others because of the victims' unwavering loyalty to the Koryŏ house. Yi Sŏnggye, whose rise Qian saw to be illegitimate, "assassinated" (*shi* 弑) the Koryŏ rulers and "usurped" (篡) the throne. He dissimulated through "perfidy" (*qiman* 欺謾) and "stole the state" (*qieguo* 竊國). When the Ming emperor refused to intercede on behalf of the Koryŏ loyalists, Yi Sŏnggye "ex-

27. *T'aejo sillok,* 1:34b [preface #131]; "Biography of Chŏng Mongju" in *Koryŏ sa* 1991: 117:9a–10b.

28. Sŏl 1726, 2:33a–b.

29. See Pidhainy, Chapter 9 this volume, 344–46.

ploited his fortune and borrowed the authority of the celestial state [i.e., the Ming]." With it, he "lorded it over the Easterners (the Koreans) and surreptitiously transferred the Altars of State and Grain [i.e., usurped the Korean throne.]" Violent, opportunistic, and insolent, Yi Sŏnggye stood in diametric opposition to the irreproachably loyal Chŏng Mongju. Chŏng's death, then, was not a regrettable mishap in the inevitable, glorious rise of a new ruling house. Instead, it was the result of the machinations of evil men. By emphasizing the misdeeds of the Yi founders, Qian shifted the relative balance of moral responsibility from the subject to the ruler. The praise of loyal subjects becomes a condemnation of the political violence that led to their demise, not a celebration of their martyrdom. Moral culpability for their deaths fell solely on the rulers who killed them.

Qian's characterization of the Chosŏn founders is typical of that in Ming accounts. Both the *Ming Compendium* (*Ming huidian* 明會典) and the *Imperial Ming Ancestral Injunctions* (*Huang Ming zuxun* 皇明祖訓) mark Yi Sŏnggye as a usurper, alleging that he had murdered a total of four Koryŏ kings. The Chosŏn court struggled to cleanse the record that tarnished its legitimacy. Chosŏn rulers, aware of how their ancestors were portrayed in China, lobbied the Ming to have the offending lines modified.[30] They also sought to restore the dynasty's reputation in Korea by restoring the loyalists' reputations. As Qian Qianyi noted, when Yi Pangwŏn came to power, he rehabilitated Chŏng Mongju and granted him the posthumous title of "Literary and Loyal" (*munch'ung* 文忠) to honor his "single-minded and unwavering devotion," albeit (regrettably) to the previous regime.[31] Through official recognition of the *concept* of loyalty rather than loyalty to a specific target, the court tried to reclaim its own moral standing. Posthumous titles, shrines in his honor, and, eventually in 1517, canonization in Chosŏn's Confucian shrine, helped the court reconcile Chŏng's loyalty to the previous regime with the founding of Yi dynasty.

Chŏng Mongju's status as a loyalist is further complicated by how his posthumous reputation was deployed in Chosŏn court politics. The court continued to accommodate Chŏng Mongju because of the general symbolic power of his loyalty. He had become a model for generations of Chosŏn literati. For the Chosŏn's own scholar-officials to cleave to a figure who was

30. Li Dongyang and Shen Shixing 1963: 105:1585–86.; See also *Chungjong sillok* 32:64b [1518/04/26#1]; 33:5a [1518/05/07/#4]; 33:51a [1518/06/16#1] etc.; for the continuing controversy in the Qing period. See Sun Weiguo 2009. The truth behind these allegations is complex. See Jeong 2013; Wang 2015: ch. 2.

31. Qian 1653: 51:13b–14b; *T'aejong sillok* 27:17b [1401/11/07#1].

killed in the course of the dynasty's establishment must have been a perennial reminder of the Chosŏn kingship's tarnished beginnings. The Chosŏn literati who fought for his canonization, however, did not focus on his loyalty to Koryŏ. Instead, they sought to honor him as a transmitter of the legitimate Way (Kr. *tot'ong*; Ch. *daotong* 道統) in Korea, often described in modern scholarship as "Neo-Confucian orthodoxy."[32]

The central tension in all this was the question of moral authority. Chŏng, thus repackaged, might no longer pose a direct challenge to the Yi monarchs by revealing their violent past. Delineating an orthodox transmission of the Confucian Way through Chŏng, however, also had the potential to be even more subversive. Chŏng's loyalty to Koryŏ then, was interpreted, not as devotion to a dynastic house per se, but insistence on general moral rectitude, even in defiance of extant monarchical authority. Claiming to speak for the local scholarly elite (*sarim* 士林 lit. "forest of scholars"), Chosŏn officials who rallied around Chŏng Mongju called for a "public discourse" among the learned community at large to stake out an alternative source of authority distinct from that of the court.[33] As these men started to identify themselves as a *tang* (Ch. *dang* 黨, i.e., a faction or fellowship) of like-minded gentlemen, their rhetoric became reminiscent of how men in the Song, inspired by Neo-Confucian learning, had claimed authority in the business of civilizing the world on their own terms.[34] In this manner, they were also similar to the late Ming Donglin faction with which Qian was affiliated. All of these parties believed that ultimate authority should lie with the educated and landed elite (Kr: *sadaebu*; Ch: *shidafu* 士大夫) and tried to hold monarchical power accountable to their moral guidance.[35]

Thus, Chŏng Mongju had much more in common with his biographer than their posthumous lives might at first indicate. They both occupied pivotal places in a greater transdynastic saga, where different constructions of political and moral authority were in contention. But their roles were not entirely homologous. Whereas Qian Qianyi was part of a movement to check monarchical authority in life, Chŏng Mongju became a banner of such a movement in death.

Taking their second lives as political symbols into account reveals another

32. Deuchler 1980: 21–25.

33. Cho 2010: 211–14.

34. For separate discussions of "factionalism" in Chosŏn and Song China, see Wagner 1974; Levine 2008.

35. For the Donglin, see Miller 2009: 95–112, 123; Dardess 2002; for Qian, see Lin 2010: 34, 41–67.

set of parallels. Qian, maligned in the high Qing as a "twice-serving official," was regarded as an antithesis to bona fide Ming martyrs like Shi Kefa 史可法 (1601–1645). Like Chŏng Mongju, these Ming loyalists perished, only to have their memories appropriated later by the very regime they once resisted so bitterly. In a further irony, figures like Shi Kefa were not selected for the "effectiveness" of their resistance; in the words of Frederic Wakeman, "the more futile their actions, the better examples they served."[36] That the memories of these loyal paragons could be appropriated in this manner was of course only possible because loyalty had been abstracted from devotion toward a dynasty or state to devotion to a set of moral principles.

At the same time, in the Qing and Chosŏn, rewriting acts of defiance as symbols of loyalty helped reconcile the troubling memories of these loyalists with monarchical authority. By identifying loyalist deaths with unwavering moral rectitude, the royal celebration of absolute devotion implicitly absolved the new rulers of any moral responsibility for those deaths. In this moral economy, neither the Manchus nor the Yi house could be blamed for causing the deaths of those who remained loyal to the previous regime, since it was their duty as loyal officials to die anyway. In Chŏng Mongju's case, for example, the petition that called for his rehabilitation emphasized his "unceasing" devotion to the Koryŏ house, despite his knowledge that the dynasty was doomed.[37]

Qian, on the other hand, postulates alternative relationships among loyalty, defiance, and death in his Korean biographies. He treated Yi Sŏnggye, the Chosŏn founder, as a usurper, underscoring the moral culpability of rulers themselves. This moral economy is thus subtly, but also fundamentally different from how rulers, such as Qianlong and Yi Pangwŏn, conceived it. Qian's version posits a counternarrative of loyalty that precludes the accommodation of a loyalist's death to (illegitimate) monarchical authority. Though this stance conceptually preempted the later imperial revision of Ming loyalist narratives, it did not stop Qianlong from appropriating the memories of the very Ming martyrs who defied his forbears.[38]

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36. Crossley 1999: 290–91; Wakeman 1985: 564–69, 566 n. 166; Struve 1974: 238.

37. *T'aejong sillok* 1:4b [1401/01/14#3]: 豈不知王氏危亡之勢? . . . 然猶專心所事, 不試其操, 以至殞命 . . .

38. This does not mean the Qianlong emperor took issue with Qian Qianyi because of how he treated loyalism in the Korean biographies; there is no evidence to suggest that this was the case. Instead, these distinct treatments of loyalism should warn against casually applying the absolute definitions of loyalism that the Qianlong

Each appropriation of a moral life, whether in narrative representation or in political action, has the potential to conjure up new schemes of meaning. Biographical accounts, often deployed in both contexts, then, did not exist in isolation, but in dialogue with one another through their appraisals of their subjects and the events and ideas they represented.

SUBTLE WORDS: THE ART OF PRAISE AND BLAME

Qian Qianyi and Chŏng Mongju were intertwined by the issue of loyalty, at the very center of which lies the relationship between the official and his ruler. Political upheaval, however, could disrupt this relationship. Periods of dynastic crisis, such as the Koryŏ–Chosŏn transition of 1392, Jianwen-Yongle wars of 1398–1402, or the Ming–Qing transition of 1644, undermined the sanctity of monarchical authority, calling into question the proper role of the official. State-sponsored historiography often sought to preserve the monarchy's moral legitimacy by avoiding direct implication of the victors of these conflicts of any wrongdoing, if not exonerating them altogether. These moves, however, leave unresolved one major problem. How should the individuals who perished because they remained loyal to the losing be understood? Such figures are inherently volatile, for appraising their actions always has the potential to lead to alternative readings of the same events, potentially escalating into direct challenge to the moral legitimacy of the victor.

For Qian, history writing was one way to exercise claims to moral authority. For him, the ultimate source of moral authority did not rest with the state, but rather with the historian and his duty to represent faithfully the events of the period and to overturn political injustices. The historian's voice in these biographies can rectify the failings of previous historical writing, cast blame onto unscrupulous Yi rulers, and exalt the virtues of loyal subjects who resisted them. In the meantime, Qian affirms the superiority of his knowledge to that of official historiographers and converts his erudition into claims of moral authority. Qian's particular moral economy of loyalism needs to be understood in the context of his stance on the purpose of historical writing.

For Qian, good history had the power to correct past wrongs. In this vein,

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emperor was so eager to impose on the experiences of Qian Qianyi and his contemporaries. As Jun Fang argues in Chapter 4 in this volume, the personal and political decisions made by individuals during the Ming–Qing transition were informed by a whole series of mitigating and contingent factors, often defying the simplistic historiographical interventions of posterity. See also Lin 2010: 221–37.

he found the Korean *History of the East* praiseworthy for truthfully documenting the lives of these Koryŏ loyalists, a stance in line with the long-standing view that history's "primary concern" was the "recording of exemplary lives."[39] By "recording the matters involving Mongju's refusal to submit to Yi Sŏnggye," the unnamed Korean historian redeemed Korea in his eyes. Although he had reverently referred to the Chosŏn founders by their posthumous temple names, Qian understood that he, being a "Chosŏn subject," had to be deferential and discreet. Thanks to the history's treatment of Chŏng Mongju, the "truth" was in the end "not obscured."[40]

Qian celebrated the Korean historian's treatment of Chŏng Mongju because he conceptualized a source of moral authority that existed outside of the dynastic state. These "good men," referring either to Chŏng and his cohort or to the historians who preserved their legacy, received their moral inspiration from the teachings of the legendary Jizi (Kr. Kija 箕子). He, a Shang prince, once criticized the "bad last ruler" of the Shang, who retaliated by imprisoning him. When the Zhou destroyed the Shang, he was finally released. The Zhou granted Korea to Jizi as a fief and the prince brought "civilization" to the peninsula.[41] Qian's account intersperses three different terms to refer to Korea: "Eastern Kingdom" (*dongguo/tong'guk* 東國), the dynasty Chosŏn (Ch. *Chaoxian* 朝鮮), and the "Koreans" (*liren* 麗人 lit. People of Koryŏ). These were not wholly synonymous terms used alternatively for stylistic reasons alone, but different terms with various meanings. They pointed to a transdynastic ontology that reached back to the days of Jizi. Qian suggested a narrative of moral and cultural transmission that could supersede the allegiance a subject owed to his ruler. The Korean historian, then, wrote according to a moral code more hallowed and more ancient than any single Korean dynastic state.

The presence of moral authority, and by extension, political authority in this line of transmission complicates the task of the historian. On the one

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39. Moloughney 1992: 1, 6–12.

40. Qian 1653: 51:13b–14b: 東國之史出朝鮮臣子之手，尊成桂父子曰："太祖"、"太宗"，曲爲隱辟，而夢周不附成桂之事，謹而書之，不沒其實。

41. See Yim 1998: 78–80; "King Zhou was licentious and profligate; Jizi remonstrated, but he did not listen" (紂為淫泆，箕子諫，不聽), from Sima 1981: v. 38, 1609. "[The king] released Jizi from prison. Jizi could not bear having been set free by the Zhou and so left to Chaoxian. King Wu heard this and so enfeoffed him with the [lands] of Chaoxian. 釋箕子囚。箕子不忍周之釋，走之朝鮮。武王聞之，因以朝鮮封之。From *Shangshu da zhuan* in Ruan Yuan and Lu Xuanxun 1965: Hongfan di liu 洪範第六, 167-1.

hand there was the very political question of what is to be done with the legitimacy of a ruler who conquered or usurped his way to power. On the other, there was the task of sorting out individuals whose allegiances did not always converge with the direction of political fortune. The life of Yi Saek brings Qian to confront this historiographical conundrum in his biography. Yi Sŏnggye deposed the Koryŏ rulers King U and King Ch'ang on the pretext that they were really descendants of a monk Sin Ton 辛旽 (1322–1371), and therefore not legitimate scions of the Koryŏ ruling family. The supposedly exemplary loyal official Yi Saek, however, had supported their initial accession. According to Qian, the *History of the East* resolves this apparent contradiction by explaining that Yi Saek followed the precedent provided by the restoration of the Sima 司馬 rulers of the Jin (266–420) house under Yuandi 元帝 (r. 318–323). Despite rumors that Yuandi was the issue of an illicit liaison between a military officer Niu Jin 牛金 (fl. 250) and a concubine of the Jin ruler Wudi 晉武帝 (r. 266–290), court officials still picked Yuandi as the successor. In periods of dynastic upheaval, the extenuating political circumstances allowed no other choice. The state had to be preserved, even if it meant sanctioning the corruption of the royal line by a pretender.[42]

Qian was not satisfied with this explanation. For him, the key to resolving this apparent discrepancy was identifying the intent of the account of Yi Saek's life in the *History of the East* in its employment of "subtle words" (*weici* 微辭).[43] An age-old technique, Confucius had used it to draw attention to uncomfortable truths when he documented the political unrest that plagued the reigns of Duke Ding 魯定公 (509–495 BCE) and Duke Ai of Lu 魯哀公 (494–467 BCE) in his *Spring and Autumn Annals*.[44] Now, the Korean historian raised controversies surrounding the actual pedigree of the late Koryŏ rulers,[45] not to identify blemishes in Yi Saek's integrity, but to point out the crimes of Yi Sŏnggye. As Qian writes, the "Yi clan [i.e., the Chosŏn rulers] have seized power for many years now" and were in control of both the country and the

42. Qian 1653: 51: 31a–b:成桂之放弒，以辛氏爲口實，而《東史》亦曰：宋儒謂元帝本非馬宗，東晉大臣以國勢有歸，不得已而安之。稽于立辛不敢異議亦此故也。

43. Ibid., 51:31a–b: 定哀多微詞，《東史》有焉。

44. "Subtle words" played an important role in Qian's understanding of historical writing for social criticism. Through a "rhetoric of subtlety," a historian may offer pointed political criticism without spelling out exactly what is being criticized. See Yim 1998: 23–24, 35–39, 39–52. For the significance of this rhetorical technique in the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, see Nylan 2001: 262–66.

45. See Jeong 2013: 335–60.

"national discourse," their subjects could not speak out openly against them.[46] With the Chosŏn dynasty in control of "national discourse," the *History of the East* could not speak of these crimes directly, but it did assure its readers of Yi Saek's moral integrity, suggesting that it was impossible for a loyal official like Yi to have supported an illegitimate royal line. The logical conclusion was that the Chosŏn founders had fabricated these charges of illegitimacy. Through this oblique technique, the Korean historian fulfilled his responsibility to good historical writing by censuring moral failings, even of one's own rulers.

Qian's praise of the nameless Korean historian contrasts with his criticism of Ming official historiography. The Korean histories were worthy of emulation, validating a classical idea that when proper standards were no longer maintained in China, one may "learn of them from the barbarians of the four [directions] (*si yi* 四夷)."[47] Qian takes the Ming *Veritable Records* to task for reproducing Yi Sŏnggye's portrayal of Chosŏn's founding. In its version of the events, Yi was a loyal official who tried to protect the Koryŏ royal family. Chŏng Mongju was portrayed as a villain. It was he who misled the Koryŏ rulers and tried to instigate an invasion of the Ming border region of Liaodong. Yi Sŏnggye, however, prevented these plans from coming into fruition. Chŏng Mongju resented Yi for thwarting him and sought to kill him. The *Veritable Records* thus reversed the moral roles of these two historical figures. For this oversight, Qian Qianyi blamed the Ming's "official historians," who copied verbatim "the words transmitted by [Yi] Sŏnggye."[48]

Armed with the *History of the East,* Qian brings to bear an erudition superior to what the compilers of the Ming dynasty's own "veritable" records had possessed. He discounts the possibility that Chŏng could have plotted an invasion of Liaodong, because he had demonstrated a commitment to pursuing good relations with the Ming. Chŏng Mongju had wanted to kill Yi Sŏnggye only because the latter "planned to usurp the throne."[49] Yi Sŏnggye had therefore used him as a scapegoat:

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46. Qian 1653: 51:31a–b.: 李氏專政有年，國論在手。竊國二百餘年，皆其臣子，悠悠千古，誰與辯牛馬之是非乎？

47. Ibid., 51:31a–b.: 學在四夷詎不然乎. See, for example, the "Bianwu" 辯誣 in *Kongzi jiayu* 孔子家語 where it is stated, "When the Son of Heaven fails in administration, one may still learn from the four barbarians" 天子失官 學在四夷.

48. Qian 1653: 51:31a–b: 《洪武實錄》祓朝鮮史云：“成桂既立，其國都評議司奏言：“禑犯遼陽，成桂力阻之，鄭夢周實主其議，以故深怨成桂，瑤立，從臾瑤殺成桂，及鄭道傳等國人奉安妃命命，放瑤而立成桂。” 此成桂來告之辭，史官按而書之者也。

49. Ibid., 以東國史參考之，王顓既弒，夢周以諫阻北使被放，再朝京師深

> Since [Yi] killed Mongju and stole the state, he made an excuse of the invasion of Liao to shift blame to Mongju as a way to exculpate himself. The official historians believed these perfidious [words] and wrote them down. Is this not a cause for grievance?[50]

The correction of this "grievance" caused by poor historiography became the express purpose of Qian's biography of Chŏng:

> The reason I selected him for praise is so the credulous historians of the Celestial Court do not transmit the perfidious words of regicides and traitors, and become the laughing stock of foreign vassals, thereby causing [such] loyal and righteous subjects to suffer [slander] in the Nine Palaces [i.e., in death].[51]

An audience familiar with Chŏng's pristine posthumous reputation in Korea may feel that Qian's exoneration was unnecessary. Qian nevertheless believed his work had to counteract two sources of distortion. The Yi usurpers thwarted the plans of loyal subjects in life, and now they continued to tarnish those subjects' reputations in death through their "perfidious words." "Credulous" Ming historians abetted the Yi founders in their attempts to deceive posterity and dishonor a loyal official. Qian did not write this biography to reassert a received truth, but to challenge the authority of extant historical works. Reclaiming the honor of "righteous" subjects like Chŏng Mongju and the resolution of their grievances required his exoneration, achieved by using the informal biography to correct official historical records.

To be sure, the shortcomings of official history did not necessarily implicate the Ming dynasty or its rulers. Qian Qianyi related a case where Hongwu refused the appeals for aid from Koryŏ loyalists against the usurping Yi Sŏnggye. The Ming ruler left Koryŏ to its own devices, because as "a faraway land occupied by the eastern barbarians, it could not be controlled by the Central State" (*Zhongguo* 中國, i.e., China). Here, Qian did not blame Hongwu's *laissez-faire* policy for the deaths of the Koryŏ loyalists. The problem was these events could not have happened as they did. According to Qian,

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荷倭遇，寧有主謀犯遼之事？攻遼之役，成桂實在行于夢周，何與夢周之欲殺成桂，爲其謀篡也，非爲其阻攻遼也。夢周不死，成桂篡必不成。

50. Ibid., 既殺夢周以竊國，又藉口攻遼，委罪夢周，以自解免。史官信其欺謾，按而書之，不亦冤乎？

51. Ibid., 余故表而出之，無使天朝信史，傳弒逆之謾辭，以貽譏外藩，且使忠義之陪臣，負痛於九京也。

Hongwu, far from ignoring Yi Sŏnggye's usurpation, kept a clear eye on the moral failures of the Yi house, reminding his descendants in his *Ancestral Injunctions* that the Chosŏn founder Yi Sŏnggye had murdered four of the former Koryŏ rulers. Qian again concluded that the fault was with the "official historians," who were so "bound up by their documents," that they failed to see the Ming emperor's "original intent" and did not make "proper emendations in their carelessness."[52] In other words, given the Ming emperor's recognition of Yi's crimes, he would have aided these loyalists, but now the historical records even misrepresented the emperor's intentions.

Qian's efforts to defend the Hongwu emperor necessarily raises some questions. If Qian could praise a Korean historian for exalting individuals who resisted his own dynasty and allow him the moral legitimacy to challenge his own rulers, does that mean Qian allowed himself a similar historiographical space? Could he, a Ming subject, use history to challenge the monarchs of the dynasty to whom he owed his loyalty?

Qian Qianyi's treatment of a poem by Yi Pangwŏn included in the *Collected Poetry* offers a clue.[53] Qian lambasted Pangwŏn for presenting the poem to the Yongle emperor to commemorate the imperial accession. The Yongle emperor had acquired the throne through civil war, wresting control of the dynasty from his nephew, the Jianwen emperor 建文 (r. 1398–1402). With this context in mind, Qian Qianyi's reference to the "leviathan" in the cryptic line "Not yet slain is the leviathan; spirits yet run high" 未戮鯨鯢氣尚驕 seems to be a thinly veiled reference to the Jianwen emperor.[54] He con-

52. Ibid., 51:13b–14b: 祖訓》固曰：“自洪武六年至二十八年，李旦首尾凡弒王氏四王，姑待之然。”則成桂之弒夢周之冤，聖祖蓋已灼見本末。史官拘牽簡牘，漫不舉正，亦豈聖祖之本意？

53. In line with biographies of Koryŏ loyalists, he condemns the Chosŏn king for his hand in Chŏng Mongju's death. In fact, this point makes up the entirety of this short stub of a biography. This poem does not appear in any Korean sources and the attribution to Yi Pangwŏn might be apocryphal. Ibid., 51:19a.

54. The actual meaning of "leviathan" *jingni* 鯨鯢 is somewhat obscure. Classical texts seem to indicate that it is a reference to "evil ministers," thereby implying it referred to the Jianwen officials whom the Yongle emperor accused of misleading his nephew. If that is the case, it seems that Qian Qianyi and Shen Maoshang have both misread the poem. The *locus classicus*, the entry on the twelfth year of Duke Xuan 宣公十二年 of the *Zuo Commentaries*, reads, "In antiquity, when wise kings chastised recalcitrant [vassals], they only removed their *jingni*, but [let the vassals retain] their fiefs. Even that he considered to be a great slaughter" 古者明王伐不敬，取其鯨鯢而封之，以為大戮. It seemed that Yi Pangwŏn might have meant that the Yongle em-

demned Yi and his father for their duplicity; they had not only "assassinated the four rulers of the Wang house and killed its loyal ministers to steal the state," but were now complicit in the Yongle emperor's usurpation.[55]

Even though Qian had been more than willing to blame Chosŏn monarchs for the deaths of loyalists, he was still reluctant to challenge openly the moral qualifications of the Ming founders. Qian treats the execution of Jianwen's loyal officials after the Yongle's usurpation in a similarly indirect way. In his biographical treatment of the Jianwen martyrs, such as Fang Xiaoru 方孝孺 (1357–1402), Qian claims their unswerving loyalty was demonstrated by their death for Jianwen, but he conspicuously omits discussion of Yongle's role in their deaths.[56]

Qian Qianyi's treatment of the Jianwen-Yongle affair, one of the most persistent political controversies during the Ming, followed the conventions of late Ming literati practice. The Yongle emperor had justified his rebellion as a means to eliminate "evil" ministers from his nephew's side. Despite these limited pretensions, his court moved further to expurgate the entire Jianwen reign from the historical record after he seized the throne. Jianwen's loyal ministers who died at the hands of Yongle were not exonerated by the state until well into the Wanli reign 萬曆 (1573–1620). The eventual acknowledgment of these martyrs resulted from a process of accommodation and contention between local authority represented by the gentry and dynastic authority embodied in the ruler. Public commemoration of the Jianwen martyrs ultimately required the elision of Yongle's role in their deaths. Thus both Qian and the Korean compiler of the *History of the Eastern Kingdom* shied away from criticizing the ancestors of their own rulers. The texts they wrote appear to seek a reconciliation between royal authority and those who resisted it. This form of reconciliation, however, did not deny the independent moral authority of historiographical writing. Far from it. As Peter Ditmanson argues, the "reconciliation of Yongle with the dead martyrs" occurred on "lite-

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peror spared even evil ministers in a show of magnanimity. That said, *jingni* 鯨鯢 also acquired association with the slaughter of innocents. Li Ling 李陵 (–74 BCE), in his famous letter to Su Wu 蘇武 (–60 BCE), wrote "My wife and children were innocent, but together they were [killed] as fish and newts (*jingni*)" 妻子無辜 並為鯨鯢. *Chunqiu Zuozhuan zhushu* v. 23, in. Ruan Yuan and Lu Xuanxun 1965: 398; Xiao Tong and Li Shan 1986: v. 41, 1848.

55. Qian 1653: 51:18a 吳人慎懋賞曰：“朝鮮乃箕子之國，然世遠教衰，三仁之風泯矣。悲夫！慎生評芳遠此詩，以其有“未戮鯨鯢”之句而深非之也。芳遠父子，弒王氏四君，殺忠臣而竊其國，其爲此也，吾無議焉。爾殺父而啓其衿他人之兄，不已迂乎？

56. Qian 1957: v. 5. 148–49.

rati terms," leaving imperial authority "irrelevan[t] and impoten[t] ... in the face of the moral authority of [such] men."[57] Qian's oblique treatment of the Yongle emperor usurpation, then, might have been his own version of Confucius's use of "subtle words."

Late Ming literati challenged imperial authority in various contexts, whether in discourse or political action, asserting their sovereignty over the affairs of government and moral authority against the claims of their monarchs. The fall of the Ming, however, altered the relationship between the gentry and the state. In a great historical irony, the very same literati who "killed the Ming" through partisanship and resistance to monarchical authority were now, as Harry Miller describes it, "[dying] gloriously, to defend its corpse" as self-identified loyalists. For Qian Qianyi, who had once found himself among those scholarly ranks, the destruction of the Ming made censure of its long-dead rulers less meaningful, and counterproductive to the project of commemoration. Like Ming loyalists who "did not really die to serve the Ming state as much as they died to avoid serving the Qing (Manchu) state," if Qian lifted his brush against monarchical authority, it would not have been against the moribund Ming, but against the ascendant Qing.[58] By documenting the Ming's destruction and preserving the Ming's literary achievements, Qian Qianyi and other self-identified loyalists claimed political authority not necessarily through overt, armed resistance, but through writing.

In the late eighteenth century, Qian Qianyi, dead for over a hundred years, famously became the target of an extended campaign by the Qianlong emperor to purge his writings. Printing blocks of Qian's works were destroyed, and Qian's writings, including the *Poetry Compilation of the Successive Reigns* came to be listed among the "banned books." Certainly, Qian's unforgiving identification of the Manchus as incorrigible "*yi*" 夷, or barbarians, must have irked the ruler, even though Qianlong's father Yongzheng had tried to repurpose the term by pointing out that even the Zhou, once considered *yi* by the Shang, could still become masters and transmitters of civilization.[59]

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57. Ditmanson 2007: 144–55, 158; Elman 1993: 23–68.

58. Miller 2009: 158–63.

59. Liu 2004: esp. 31–68 has shown that the term *yi* did not always carry the negative valences ascribed to it when the word "barbarian" is used as its English equivalent. Nevertheless, for the late Ming and Chosŏn context, the term *yi* was laden with pejorative connotations, ones that Qing Yongzheng emperor sought to revise. For Chosŏn Korean elites who prided themselves on cultural accomplishments that rivaled the Chinese, terms such as *yi* could be cause for offense. I retain the *yi*-as-barbarian

With one denunciation after another, the emperor's peculiar vendetta against this long-dead figure seems disproportionate to the temporal power at the ruler's disposal, unless we consider the magnitude of Qian's scholarly reputation. What threatened Qianlong was less, perhaps, Qian Qianyi's apparent half-hearted loyalism or even his anti-Manchu attitudes, but his discount of imperial authority in general, which had permeated early Qing learned circles. For a ruler who wished to commandeer all things cultural, Qian's authority in historiography and literature was the one thing he could not countenance. As Chi-hung Yim describes it, "While Qianlong [strove], in every manner, to proclaim himself the supreme judge of these issues, he found Qian still contesting his hegemony silently in his grave." For the court's grand project, the *Complete Library of the Four Branches* (*Siku quanshu* 四庫全書), to succeed in making Qianlong master of all knowledge, it had to appropriate, displace, or eliminate potential challengers.[60]

Claims of historical authority in these biographies apportioned a discursive space in which proper historiography was also imbued with a *moral* authority distinct from, and thus able to transcend, the prerogatives of the state. These sorts of claims, which Qian implies he shared with the anonymous Korean historian, of course, were not limited to Qian's writing, but occupied an important place in the East Asian historical tradition. In particular, the Song commentator on the *Spring and Autumn Annals,* Hu Anguo 胡安國 (1074–1138), saw the foundational inspiration for this mode of historical writing in Confucius himself. According to Peter Bol, Hu believed that the text "showed that Confucius had claimed authority over politics" by "[appropriating] the right of the ruler as 'son of heaven' to pass judgment over right and wrong." Hu's influential commentaries remained the standard interpretation for the civil service examination curriculum from the Yuan until 1793.[61] The endurance and centrality of the idea that history embodied a moral authority beyond the state in Confucian orthodoxy did not, however, mean it could be taken for granted. Literati like Qian Qianyi continued to assert it in their writ-

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usage throughout this chapter because it would have been how Qian and his Korean contemporaries would have interpreted the term.

60. Yim 1998: 249–80, esp. 260.

61. Bol 2008: 130. When it came to "subtle words," the Qianlong emperor had found Hu's methodology of reading the *Spring and Autumn* for "praise and blame" to be inconsistent and problematic. This and Hu's emphasis on "repelling the barbarians" ultimately led to the text's elimination from the curriculum. I thank Ziyao Ma for this insight. See Kang 2010: 309–20.

ing, staking out their own claims for moral and political authority, often with emperors and the dynastic state as rival claimants.

NOSTALGIA FOR EMPIRE: KOREA IN QIAN'S WRITINGS

In the case of Qian's Korean biographies, the historiographical authority, and by extension the moral power it conferred, issued from a specific erudition. Providing Qian with the information he needed to write these biographies were the diverse tomes in the Pavilion of Scarlet Clouds. Informed about Korea through these works, Qian could imagine Chosŏn as an integral part of a Ming imperial order. Once the Ming had fallen to the Manchu Qing, however, Chosŏn Korea came to symbolize what had been lost with the Ming's destruction. His interest in Korean loyalists was intimately tied to his own nostalgia for the Ming's lost empire.

The diversity of Qian's library holdings depended on a particular configuration of the channels of knowledge exchange in early seventeenth-century East Asia. To illustrate this point, Qian could not have critiqued the Ming *Veritable Records* without having had access to them in the first place. Unlike in Korea where the *Veritable Records* were held closely by the court, in China copies became available to private historians by the mid-fifteenth century.[62] Indeed, Qian once had his own editions of the *Records* derived from copies smuggled out from the palace, unsurprising given that the catalog of his destroyed library shows its holdings ran the gamut of contemporary knowledge, rivaling even imperial collections.[63] The bibliography also lists titles about foreign and faraway places, including Korea, which were the source base for the Korean section of his anthology. Although there is now no way to ascertain the precise editions Qian used, extant versions of many of these books could not have dated any earlier than the sixteenth century because they cover events in that century. This timing coincided with the Imjin War of 1592–1598, when the Ming intervened militarily to defend Chosŏn Korea from an invasion by the Japanese.[64]

62. Sun Weiguo 2009; McDermott 2006: 99, 115–49.

63. Qian 17th century: v. 1–4.

64. The Japanese warlord Toyotomi Hideyoshi 豊臣秀吉(1536–1598) had recently unified Japan and hoped to conquer Korea and Ming China. Ming intervention, though requested by the Chosŏn court, was beset with problems. Qian Qianyi was evidently aware of some of the problems that plagued the Ming intervention. In a biography of two Ming officers who went to Korea, he mentions the practice of Ming

Table. 1. Titles Related to Korea in the *Jiangyungge shumu*, and Likely Source of Publication

Titles under "Geography" (地理類) in vol. 1	Period and place of publication or origin
Grand Horizon of the Lands and Territories of the Eastern Kingdom (*Tongguk chiyŏ sŭngnam* 東國地輿勝覽) [sic: 東國輿地勝覽]	Chosŏn, mid 15th century
Illustrated Descriptions of Korean and Japan (*Chaoxian riben tushuo* 朝鮮日本圖說	(?)
Abbreviated History of Eastern Kingdom (*Tongguk saryak* 東國史略)	Chosŏn, early 15th century
Record of Zhang Ning's Envoy Mission (*Zhang Fangzhou fengshi lu* 張芳州奉使錄)	Ming, 1460
A Record of Chosŏn (*Chaoxian jishi* 朝鮮紀事)	Ming, 1450
Rhapsody of Chosŏn (*Chaoxian fu* 朝鮮賦)	Ming/Chosŏn, 1488
Annals of Chosŏn (*Chaoxian shiji* 朝鮮世紀)	Ming, early 17th century
Illustrated Record of an Embassy to Koryŏ from the Xuanhe Reign (*Xuanhe fengshi Gaoli tujing* 宣和奉使高麗圖經)	Song, ~1123.
General Records of the Four Barbarians (*Siyi guangji* 四夷廣記)	Ming, early 17th century
Translation Glossary for the Chosŏn Hostel (*Chaoxian guan yiyu* 朝鮮館譯語)	Ming, 1549 [?]
Map of the Eight Provinces of Chosŏn (*Chaoxian badao tu* 朝鮮八道圖)	Chosŏn, ?
Under "Narratives" (典故類) in vol. 3	
The Three Great Campaigns of the Wanli Reign (*Sanda zhengkao* 三大政考 [sic: 萬曆三大征考])	Ming, 1601
The Senior Minister's P'yŏngyang Record (*[Liangchao] Pingrang lu* [兩朝]平壤錄)	Ming, 1606
Three Communiqués from Chosŏn (*Chaoxian sanzi lu* 朝鮮三咨錄)	Ming, 1642
Under "Anthologies" (詩總集類)	
Selections of Poems from Chosŏn (*Chaoxian shixuan* 朝鮮詩選)	Ming/ Chosŏn, post–Imjin War

The war made Chosŏn Korea a matter of strategic importance and the Ming took greater interest in Korean affairs. The Ming military brought back a wealth of new knowledge about the Korean peninsula. According to Qian's preface to the Korean section of his anthology, the war made the acquisition of the poems possible. He read them in the *Selected Poems from Chosŏn* (*Chaoxian shixuan* 朝鮮詩選), compiled by a Ming officer, Wu Mingji 吳明濟 (fl. 1592), during his military service in Korea. Though widespread destruction made acquiring Korean books difficult, Wu had enlisted the aid of Hŏ Kyun, a Chosŏn official, who recited hundreds of Korean poems to him from memory.[65]

The *Selected Poems* supplied Qian with many of the verses in his anthology. It was not, however, Qian's only source.[66] The biographical information in Qian's work derived not from Wu Mingji's text but instead the *Abbreviated History of the Eastern Kingdom*, which Qian referred to the as *History of the East*. Qian could identify it as a Chosŏn work from its use of temple names (*miaohao* 廟號) to refer to early Chosŏn rulers, Yi Sŏnggye and Yi Pangwŏn, as kings T'aejo (Ch: Taizu 太祖) and T'aejong (Ch: Taizong 太宗), respectively.[67] The Korean court long concealed the existence of these titles from the Ming because they were in theory exclusive imperial prerogatives, and Korean independent use of these titles could have been construed as subversive.[68] When a Ming official finally discovered their existence during the Imjin War, he accused Chosŏn of flouting imperial authority.[69] The Chosŏn

soldiers killing Koreans in order to sever their heads to present as war bounty. See "Dongzheng ershi lu" 東征二士錄 and "Shang Gaoyang shixiang shu" 上高陽師相書 in Qian 1985: 806–10.

65. There are some unresolved bibliographical puzzles surrounding the *Chaoxian shi xuan*, including divergent attributions of authorship, location of printing and content. There were multiple version of Korean poetry anthologies by the same, or similar, titles circulating in Ming China after the Imjin War. One apparently genuine edition attributed to Wu Mingji has been located. Qi Qingfu ed., Wu Mingji 1999: preface, 2–9.

66. This channel accounts for only a portion of the transmission, since Qian's anthology contains numerous poems not included in Wu Mingji's collection. Furthermore, it is possible that Qian possessed a version of the *Selected Poems* containing biographical notes; the only extant edition of Wu Mingji's text does not. See Wu Mingji 1999: 34–35.

67. Qian 1653: 51:13b–14b.

68. See *Sejo sillok*:46:14a [1468/04/30#2], *Yejong sillok* 3:1b [1469/01/02#2].

69. For Ding's memorial, see *Sŏnjo sillok* 104:16a [1598/09/21#3]: 書又僭稱太

court tried to deflect the accusation by explaining that "[its] subjects and people have continued erroneous traditions and secretly use these honorifics ... and [they] do not know to change" the practice.[70] In time, the practice was tacitly accepted by the imperial court in Beijing. The *History of the East* was included in the annotated bibliography of the *Siku quanshu* project. Its compilers shared Qian's positive evaluation of the work, noted the Korean use of temple names, and surprisingly gave the author no grief for it.[71]

Although neither Qian nor the compilers of the *Siku quanshu* could identify the author of the text, the *Siku* version is a copy of a widely circulated historical text written by the early Chosŏn official Kwŏn Kŭn 權近 (1352–1409).[72] A contemporary of the figures in Qian's biography, Kwŏn was also a close acquaintance. He was a student of Yi Saek and Chŏng Mongju. Along with Yi Saek and Yi Sung'in, he suffered demotion and exile during Yi Sŏnggye's rise to power.[73] Unlike his colleagues, Kwŏn was eventually able to win the good graces of the new Chosŏn rulers. After Yi Sung'in died under torture in 1392, the fledgling court enlisted Kwŏn Kŭn to compile his collected works.[74] Kwŏn later became even more influential during the reign of Yi Pangwŏn. After his accession in 1400, Kwŏn became one of his most important officials and used his influence to rehabilitate his teacher and friend, Chŏng Mongju.[75] Kwŏn Kŭn's own partisan interests informed the *Abbreviated History of the Eastern Kingdom*. His sympathetic portrayals of his colleagues and teachers Yi Saek, Chŏng Mongju, and Yi Sung'in in turn influenced Qian's biographies. Now, Kwŏn spoke again through Qian's authorial voice, reviving a partisan struggle that took place two centuries before.

Qian's interest in Korean loyalism was also intertwined with Korea's place on the Ming's imperial horizons. One of the best represented Korean poets in the *Liechao shiji* was Yi Tal 李達 (1539–1612), author of the *Son'gok sijip* 蓀穀詩集.[76] Yi's name and identity was unknown to Qian. In lieu of a

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祖、世祖、列祖聖上、敢與天朝之稱祖、尊上等...況其舞文, 眥辱中國先代帝王, 卽其一序, 已自概見, 朝鮮君臣輕藐中國, 已非一日。See Ledyard 1988: 94–100.

70. Yi Chŏngwi 1991: v. 21 in HMC 69:466a–c: 至於稱祖一事，蓋以臣民襲舊承訛，猥加尊稱。相沿而不知改。

71. See the title *Chaoxian shilue* (朝鮮史略) in the *Siku quanshu tiyao* 1979, Part 2 (史部), v. 22.

72. For an extant Korean edition, see Kwŏn Kŭn 1800?

73. *T'aejo sillok*: 1:29a [preface #111]; 1:43a [1392/07/28#3].

74. Ibid., 1:54a [1392/08/23#2].

75. Deuchler 1980: 15–18.

76. For the poem Qian cites, see Yi Tal 1991: v. 1 in HMC 61:6c–d.

biography, Qian wrote a short introduction to the thirty-six poems he included in his anthology, but from one of Yi's poems Qian inferred that he was a Korean official active in the Wanli period. The poem in question "eulogized" the Ming army for its role in the "restoration of the vassal state," Korea, during the Imjin War. For Qian, Korean gratitude for the Ming's recapturing of Chosŏn territory from the Japanese invaders also authenticated the moral stature of the "sagely Ming."[77] By the early seventeenth century, the Ming's "restoration" (*fuguo* 複國) of Chosŏn became a morally laden ideological fulcrum of Ming–Korea relations. The Ming asked Chosŏn to recompense this "grace of restitution" (*zai zao zhi en* 再造之恩) by rendering military assistance to the Ming in its war with the Jurchen (later the Manchus).[78] When the Ming lost ground to the Jurchen, Chosŏn officials and scholars refused negotiations with the Jurchen, citing a sense of moral duty to the Ming. The Chosŏn continued to support Ming anti-Jurchen efforts, including provisioning the troops of the Ming officer Mao Wenlong 毛文龍 (1576–1629), stationed in an island near the mouth of the Yalu River. That support continued until Mao's death in 1629.[79] Incidentally, it was also Mao Wenlong who had sent the *Son'gok sijip* to Qian. War, this time with the Jurchen, once again provided a window of opportunity for Korean texts to travel to the Ming.[80]

When Qian wrote his appraisal of the *Son'gok sijip*, the Ming was no more. Writing that "thinking back on the past now really can stir one to tears," he connected the Korean anthology to a poem he had written in prison in 1637, which illustrates why the expressions of gratitude to the Ming in the *Son'gok sijip* elicited in him such a strong emotional reaction.[81] While imprisoned, Qian had learned of Chosŏn's surrender to the Manchu ruler Hong Taiji (Ch: Huang Taiji 皇太極 r. Qing Taizu 清太祖 1626–1643) in the spring of 1637, writing the lines "the Eastern Country [Korea] was no longer the Coun-

77. Qian 1653: 51:28b: 知其爲萬曆間陪臣，當神廟興複屬國之後，而作詩以誦也。

78. This discourse of "restoration" was present in both Chosŏn and Ming writings at the time. Sun Weiguo 2007: 61; Hŏ T'aegu 2009: 7–9, 35–36, 160–65, 177. For Chosŏn-Ming cooperation and the role of repayment, see Park 2011: 56–57.

79. Mao was executed by a rival Ming general, Yuan Chonghuan. For Mao Wenlong's activities and his death, see Rawski 2012: 238–40; Mote 2003: 794.

80. Qian 1653: 51:28b: 天啓中，毛總兵文龍守皮島，屬訪求東國書籍，以此集見寄。

81. Ibid., 51:28b: 崇禎丁丑，余獄中有詩曰："東國已非箕子國，高駢今作下句駸！"俯仰今昔可爲流涕。

try of Jizi; High Gouli[82] [i.e., Koguryŏ] had now become Low Gouli"[83] to lament that development. Chosŏn's shift of allegiance disgraced its association with the sage Jizi, who remained loyal to the Shang even after its destruction by the Zhou. This change had momentous implications. The Ming and Chosŏn relied on one another like "lips and teeth"; the destruction of one brought danger to the other. Despite Korea's importance to the Ming's empire, "when the rebellious caitiffs [the Manchus] swallowed up Korea and stole our vassal," the Ming court "ignored it and did not respond." The events of 1637 represented a double tragedy. While the Chosŏn surrender signaled the end of a Ming–Chosŏn relationship once consecrated in blood, the Ming's failure to preserve Korea's allegiance imperiled its own survival.

These sentiments must have resonated in the Ming bureaucracy, which had come to see Chosŏn as an integral player in its ongoing war with the Manchus. Chosŏn's status as a Ming "vassal" also went beyond the realm of political symbolism once the Ming envisioned military coordination with it as a viable strategy for defeating the Manchus.[84] In 1633, the Ming military

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82. In Qian's poem "High" (*Gao*) gouli refers to the Korean state of Koguryŏ (高句麗 trad. 37 BCE–668), which intermittently paid tribute to various imperial dynasties. When Koguryŏ refused to send envoys to recognize the regime of Wang Mang (王莽 r. 8–23), he reacted by figuratively demoting Koguryŏ from "High" Gouli to "Low" (Xia) gouli (下句麗). "Biography of Wang Mang" 王莽傳 in Ban Gu, *Han Shu* v. 99, 4130.

83. The poem, titled "Miscellaneous Poems Written in Jail. #11 of 30," 三韓殘破似遼西，並海緣邊盡鼓鼙。along with Qian's original comment appended at the end, reads as follows:

The Three Hans [i.e., Korea] has been destroyed, just like Liaoxi,
All along the coastal frontier are the sounds of wardrums.
The Eastern Country is no longer the land of Jizi,
High Koguryŏ has now been made Low.
The Central Efflorescence (中華) might not yet worry of cold teeth;
[But] when the caitiff hordes are here, what good is regret?
Do not depend on the three narrow roads to Juyong Pass,
Send me to block Hangu stronghold, and not a speck of mud shall pass.
三韓殘破似遼西 並海緣邊盡鼓鼙。東國已非箕子國，高驪今作下句驪。中華未必憂寒齒，群虜何當悔噬臍？莫倚居庸三路險，請封函谷一丸泥。（逆虜吞併高麗，奪我屬國，中朝置之不問。）See Qian Qianyi 1985: 12, 393–94.

84. Jiang Yueguang 姜曰廣 (1583–1648), a fellow Donglin partisan who later died a Ming martyr, went to Chosŏn in 1626 shortly after the fall of Lüshun (in Liaoxi) to the Jurchens. Although Jiang went to announce the birth of a Ming crown prince,

officer Cheng Long 程龍 (fl. 1633) went to Chosŏn to "assuage the island denizens [i.e., foreign peoples] and join forces with vassal states" 安島衆 聯屬國.[85] In the autumn of 1636, the Ming ruler sent another proclamation to the same effect, promising that a "two-pronged attack" could "punish the iniquities" of the Manchus. He exhorted the Chosŏn king, "steady in faith and loyalty" to join up with Ming forces to achieve a victory that would "bring glory to generations of [his] posterity."[86] Such a day never came. The Ming envoy who proclaimed this edict was the last one ever to set foot on Korean soil. One month after his departure, Hong Taiji invaded Chosŏn, and permanently severed the Ming court from its former tributary state and military ally.

It was no wonder then that tears flowed from his eyes when Qian remembered his earlier poem. Its closing lines had warned that it would be too late for regrets once the "caitiff hordes" were at the gates, and now, with his warnings unheeded, the Ming empire lay in ruins. The poem thus connected the Korean anthology to what Qian considered to have been the unfolding of a historical tragedy. During the Imjin War the Ming had saved Chosŏn from the Japanese, but now, as the Ming faced its own existential crisis, Chosŏn was unable to come to its defense or even safeguard itself from the Manchu incursions. In retrospect, the loss of Chosŏn as a vassal forewarned the Ming's own eventual demise.

The fall of Chosŏn Korea, long imagined as China's (and thus the Ming's) most loyal vassal, now seemed likely to become a synecdoche for the Ming as a whole. The entire story of the dynasty's waxing and waning was compressed into one charged kernel, Korea, and anything associated with that kernel would remind one of the whole story of the Ming's rise and fall. As it happened, Qian came across another book in his collection, a fifteenth-century Korean edition of Liu Zongyuan's 柳宗元 (773–819) collected works that did exactly that. In writing a bibliographical note for it, Qian began with

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the Jurchen threat loomed heavily in his conversations with King Injo (仁祖 1623–1649). *Injo sillok* 13:5b [1626/06/13#2]; 13:7a [1626/06/14#7]; Lin 2010: 132. The Ming court had considered the proposals of Xu Guangqi 徐光啟 (1562–1633), who offered to go to Chosŏn as a viceroy to oversee training of Chosŏn's military. These efforts, often high-handed and intrusive, faced significant resistance in Chosŏn. This active imperial intervention after the Imjin War catalyzed significant upheaval in the Chosŏn court. See Xu Guangqi 1963: v. 3, 111; Kye 2006: 42–55, 198–218.

85. *Injo sillok*: 28:51a [1633/10/27#2].

86. Ibid., 33:15a [1636/09/01#1]: 已勑沿海各將, 整勵舟師, 連絡掎角, 設奇制勝, 撻伐用張。王其益篤忠良, 奮揚武略, 叶謀合力, 共建殊勳, 永清遼海之波, 懋樹落屏之烈, 克光世守, 佇錫崇褒。

the usual details of provenance and the quality of the compilation. He found it a praiseworthy book, commissioned by the Chosŏn king to encourage learning among the country's scholars. Qian's bibliographical entry then takes a marked turn when it discusses the use of Ming reign eras (*nianhao* 年號) in the book's paratexts:

> Its intent to obey the proper lunations 正朔 [of the Ming imperial calendar] and the "Great Unity" 大一統 is starkly visible in its lines! It is probably because, even though the Yi family had taken over the country through usurpation and assassination, Jizi's transformation and teachings yet remained and the civilization and mandate of the Ming's imperial family has spread far, even to the barbarians of the north and the south (*manmo* 蠻貊). Not even the [accomplishments of the] Tang and Song could be compared to [what the Ming had achieved]![87]

Even though the descendants of the Yi usurpers now ruled Chosŏn, the country had redeemed itself by acknowledging the Ming as the font of civilization. The reception of Ming influence by peoples along its frontier like the Koreans, evinced in their use of Ming reign titles and their acceptance of grand unity, made the Ming superior even to its Tang and Song predecessors, accomplishing what they could not. With the fall of the Ming, however, that great achievement had come to naught:

> Alas! Heaven has fallen; the earth has tilted. The eight frontiers have crumbled away. Koguryŏ [i.e., Korea] no longer shares in this dream of unified culture 同文夢. As I caress his book with my hands, my tears fall down in streams.[88]

Thus, Qian chose to interpret the fall of the Ming and Chosŏn to the Qing as analogous to the fall of the Shang to the Zhou. Whereas the legendary ruler of ancient Korea, Jizi, remained loyal to the Shang, Chosŏn had abandoned the Ming. This historical analogy only went so far, however. In the classical texts, the Zhou did not just destroy the Shang, but also inherited its mantle as legitimate rulers. The Qing tried to evoke this legacy, portraying itself to be the new Zhou to former Ming subjects. Hong Taiji's decision to withdraw

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87. Qian 1996: 46: 1527–28: 跋之前後，敬書正統戊午夏、正統四年冬十一月。尊正朔大一統之意，肅然著見於簡牘。蓋李氏雖篡弑得國，箕子之風教故在。而明皇家文命誕敷，施及蠻貊，信非唐宋所可比倫也。

88. Ibid., 嗚呼！天傾地戾，八表分崩，高句麗久不作同文夢矣。摩挲此本，潸然隕涕。

from Chosŏn, instead of annexing it, and the subsequent Qing rulers' willingness to retain Chosŏn as an independent vassal (as the Zhou had done for Jizi) were other ways to evoke the Zhou legacy and claim correspondence to the classical past. Qian and other loyalists, including Shi Kefa, however, refused to acknowledge the correspondences put forth by the Qing. Rather than accept the Qing, they sought a dynastic restoration.[89] In Qian's eyes the fall of the Ming and the surrender of the Chosŏn to the Qing was the end of an expansive cultural unity that the Ming once held together. The book of Liu Zongyuan had become a painful reminder of an irretrievable past. In his view and that of many Koreans, the fall of Korea to Manchu "barbarians" shattered the utopian "dream" of a world unified by culture, now as broken as the dynasty that once held it together.

POSTSCRIPT

What did it matter that Qian Qianyi had written biographies of Koreans? What relevance could these "foreign" poets, found in the last volume of a massive collection, have in the remembrance of the Ming? One might say they were tangible evidence of the Ming's literary and cultural influence; they were included as paraphernalia to honor the Ming, not as objects of honor themselves. Even if one were to take this dismissive view of these poets and insist on the marginality of Korea in the consciousness of late Ming literati, the vivid associations of Korea, as a symbol of culture and loyalty, evoked in the late Ming cannot be discounted. When Qian and his contemporaries thought of Korea, however occasionally, its resonances were clarion.

Biography, as a practice, could connect individuals separated by wide swaths of time and space. If writing about others means claiming the power to give meaning to their lives, then biographers have to write against those from the past who already made claims about them and they must anticipate the contentions of challengers in the future. Every stroke of moral judgment, then, has a potential to beget another. In this way, biographies tend to proliferate, especially when they deal with volatile issues. Loyalty, because it touched on fundamental questions of how a moral life can be lived when confronted with dynastic upheaval and political violence, was one of these issues.

In the eighteenth century, the scholars of the Chosŏn court compiled their own biographies of Ming loyalists to countervail the Qing court's attempts to appropriate the Ming past, even as those scholars reproduced many of the

89. Des Forges 2005: 73–112, esp. 75–80.

value judgments embedded in the Qianlong period biographies.[90] Despite the Qianlong emperor's condemnation of Qian Qianyi's works, Chosŏn writers consulted his *Collected Poetry of Successive Reigns* and his own literary compositions in those compilations.[91] In these gestures, Qian would have found solace. Had he known that the Chosŏn court, even after its surrender to the Qing, continued to use the Ming calendar in defiance of their presumed Manchu Qing overlords, cursing them behind their backs, he might not have been so despondent when he leafed through his Chosŏn edition of Liu Zongyuan's collected works.[92]

In Korea, his own *Collected Poetry* was used to document the history Qian had held dear, but the success of his writing could not rescue his name from ignominy. Even as Chosŏn scholars relied on Qian's scholarship, they excluded him from among the ranks of Ming loyalists. Qian's reputation in eighteenth-century Chosŏn was rather mixed. For example, the Korean traveler Pak Chiwŏn 朴趾源 (1737–1805) compared him to the infamous Wu Sangui 吳三桂 (1612–1678) in his famous *Rehe Diary* (*Yŏrha ilgi* 熱河日記):

> [Qian] Qianyi and [Wu] Sangui both surrendered to the caitiffs and could do nothing about it in their old age. One [i.e., Wu] claimed a righteous cause [i.e., reviving the Ming] but he had already usurped [imperial] titles [for himself]; the other [i.e., Qian] put his intentions in writing, but he had already lost his virtue. Though they hoped [by doing these things] to cleverly escape the condemnation of future generations, who could believe in [their sincerity]?[93]

In Pak's reckoning, Qian Qianyi's attempt to follow in the footsteps of Yuan Haowen in the Jin period, who tried to preserve Jin culture in the Yuan period, and worked to preserve Ming literature in the Qing period, had failed.

Though Qian's writing could not cleanse his blemished virtue among his Korean critics, the inclusion of Korean poems and biographies in the *Col-*

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90. Bohnet 2008: 287–94.

91. For example, Sŏng Haeŭng 成海應 (1760–1839) lists Qian's writings, including the *Liechao shiji* first among the sources he consulted for his *Imperial Ming Loyalist Biographies Hwang Myŏng yumin chŏn* 皇明遺民傳. See Sŏng 2001: v. 37 in HMC v. 274:303a.

92. Haboush 2005: 115–41.

93. *Yŏrha ilgi*, collected in Pak 2001: v. 14, in HMC 252:285c: 謙益三桂，俱以降虜。白頭无聊，一則雖托義舉而號先僭；一則寓意著書而大節已虧。雖欲巧逃後世之誅貶，人孰信之？

lected Poetry still mattered greatly to Qian's Chosŏn readers.[93] When the official and scholar of ritual Hwang Kyŏngwŏn 黃景源 (1709–1787), himself an author of a set of biographies of loyalists, wrote a piece celebrating Chŏng Mongju, he found the inclusion of Chŏng's poetry in Qian's anthology to be cause for honor.[95] Not all Chosŏn writers approved of Qian's selection of Korean poetry. One early eighteenth-century writer, Sin Pang 申昉 (1686–1736), who deplored the perennial challenge Korean authors faced in becoming recognized in China, felt that the *Collected Poetry* had actually misrepresented Chosŏn's literary tradition. In Sin's reckoning, "over half of the great masters of [our] country were omitted." These omissions were especially vexing, because Qian added insult to injury by belittling Chosŏn's literary attainment. Sin denounced the inveterate condescension of the Chinese gentry as "especially laughable" and "truly lamentable."[96]

One of Qian's most avid Korean readers was the erudite Yi Tŏngmu 李德懋 (1741–1793), a Chosŏn royal librarian who eagerly purchased Chinese books during his many travels to Beijing. In his perusal of Chinese books, he found that literary anthologies that included Chosŏn poems, like Qian's, were often riddled with mistakes. Yi, like Sin, was frustrated with what he found to be a deep-seated Chinese condescension toward Korea.[97] When Yi read Qian's postface to the Korean edition of Liu Zongyuan's collected works, he reacted as follows:

> In Qian's postface ... he intensely praised [the text]'s reverence for the Ming calendar and the righteousness [sic] of "Great Unity." Here, one can see the essentially vainglorious character of the Chinese.[98]

Wrapped up in this dream of universal empire, the Ming literati harbored sentiments that their Korean readers saw to be evidence of insufferable arrogance. Yi Tŏngmu, nevertheless, like many of his contemporaries, did in fact still use the Ming calendar as late as the eighteenth century. He was offended

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94. Yi 1995: v. 28 in HMC 181:450d–451a; 455c–d; Yi Segu (李世龜 1646–1700) noticed a copy of the *Liechao shiji* kept in the archives of the Office of Special Advisers (*Hongmungwan* 弘文館) at the Chosŏn court. See Yi 2007: v. 12 in HMC b48:427a.

95. "Ch'ŏngjŏnggi" 淸亭記 in Hwang 1790: v. 10 in HMC 224:203c–204b.

96. Sin 2008: v. 8 in HMC b66:565d–566b; also 568b.

97. Yi 1995: v. 19 in HMC 257:268d.

98. Ibid., v. 56 in HMC 258:532d: 錢謙益跋高麗板柳文，深許其尊正朔大一統之義。此則可見中原人虛懷本色。

not so much by Qian's zealous approval of Chosŏn's observance of Ming suzerainty as by his attribution of Korea's civilization entirely to the power of Ming influence. In including Koreans among "barbarians of the north and south," Qian appeared to deny Koreans any agency in their own cultural attainments. For Yi and for other members of the Korean elite who were sensitive to the pejorative implications of the term *yi* 夷 as "barbarian" and therefore, uncultured, such statements could have only made them more resentful of Ming pretensions.[99]

This reading of Qian's Korean biographies has attempted to situate them in a particular historical context and to draw some of the lines that connected them to broader political and intellectual concerns. Packed with many layers of signification, these biographies were both artifacts of specific historical times and places and vehicles for asserting claims to power over politics and history. The biographies of Korean poets in the *Collected Poetry* occupy an axial position vis-à-vis the many narratives they tie together through the issues, personas, and historical events they describe across time and space. The question of loyalism tangles together the lives of Koryŏ loyalists with Ming martyrs and Qing collaborators, and through them the Yi founders and the Manchu rulers. The problem of political authority brings together other pairs of murderous despots and defiant martyrs: the Yongle emperor and Fang Xiaoru; King T'aejong and Chŏng Mongju, locked together in historical time and revived in discourse, well after their deaths, in struggles over moral authority between court and gentry.

The biography, then, by bringing together figures who occupied disparate realms of history, operates in a historical mode that is, in one sense, also ahistorical, as it throws to the wind all our modernist warnings against the perils of anachronism. This chapter contends, however, that appreciating this anachronistic mode is necessary for understanding how a biography worked and how it exerted its power. A biography is not a single, discrete narrative about an individual, but is one node in a matrix populated by many such texts. A biography, as such, should not be read alone, but instead, against that broader context: connected to other narratives, and in cacophonous conversation with one another. Once read this way, new streams of significance flow forth and pour over the barriers set by space and time.

99. Liu 2004: esp. ch. 2.