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THE LESSON OF RICHES: MERCANTILE CULTURE AND LOCALITY IN LATE MING HUIZHOU

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Scholarship on late imperial China's merchant culture often cites the writings of Huizhou 徽州 scholar-official Wang Daokun 汪道昆 (1525-1593) to demonstrate the triumph of mercantilism in late Ming. Throughout his career, Wang wrote numerous merchant biographies, and boldly promoted merchant social status and moral credentials. In the eyes of Wang, merchants were heroes and moral paragons: they overcame all kinds of physical and social difficulties in pursuit of success; they cherished Confucian moral values such as filial devotion, sincerity, and propriety more than the accrual of wealth; they showed mercy and generosity to people in need; and served as leaders of the people and good assistants to local officials through all kinds of crises in their places of sojourning. His praise of mercantile wealth was open and direct, often borrowing from Sima Qian's 司馬遷 famous phrase, "where there is wealth, Humanity and Propriety will follow."[1] Wang went so far as to compare merchants favourably with Confucian scholars, claiming that "a decent merchant is in no way inferior to a grand Confucian."[2]

Wang's celebration of mercantile culture (as well as some of his contemporaries, such as Zhang Juzheng 張居正, Zhang Han 張瀚, and Gui Youguang 歸有光) lends support to the thesis that beginning from the 16th century and lasting into the 18th century there was a weakening of moral absolutism and conventional social hierarchy which had placed merchants at the bottom of society, and that in the process the merchant class and the literati continued to fuse with each other.[3] On the other hand, scholars cautious about this thesis can always find plenty of evidences suggesting the strong resistance to this trend among

[1] "Pu jiang huang gong qi shi xu 浦江黃公七十序" in *Tai han ji* 太函集, *juan* 18.
[2] "Gao zheng feng zhi da fu hu bu yuan wai lang cheng gong ji zheng yi ren min shi he zhang mu zhi ming 誥贈奉直大夫戶部員外郎程公及贈宜人閔氏合葬墓志銘", in *Tai han ji, juan* 55.
[3] Yu Yingshi, "Bussiness culture", "Zhongguo jin shi zongjiao lun li 中國近世宗教倫理."

more orthodox-minded literati.[4] By juxtaposing these celebrations of mercantile culture with the entrenched anti-mercantile tradition of the Chinese literati, they raise the question as to how far China's mercantile culture really went towards undermining conventional social norms. This line of enquiry, however, shares with the thesis it questions a preoccupation with the change of traditional social structure brought about by commercialization, particularly the relationship between the emerging new wealth and the existing social elites.

An alternative approach to reading Wang's celebration of mercantile culture involves taking due account of the fact that it often revolved around discussions of his homeland Huizhou, and was joined by many other local literati discussions of the place's mercantile engagement. Instead of taking Wang's writings as observations on mercantilism and situating them in the general anti-mercantile tradition of agrarian civilization, we may read them as comments on the character of his home locality and juxtapose them with diverse literati discussions on this same issue. This way, we may explore more precisely how the rising mercantile activities changed literati local imagination.

Here a different picture emerges: the controversy over mercantile engagement often intertwined with that over Huizhou's renown as a "rich place." While most Huizhou literati in the 16th century shared Wang's recognition of merchant virtues, many of them disagreed with Wang's open celebration of Huizhou's mercantile wealth, and called for caution. Such caution was justified given occasional harassments targeting the alleged riches of Huizhou. In the 17th century the general political order deteriorated and Huizhou, due to its rich name, became the target of rampant predations by outsiders. The place's image invoked painful reflection and was blamed for these predations. What emerged from these traumas and reflections, however, was not the renunciation of mercantile engagement, but a keener attentiveness to the need to cultivate rapport with other places, in order to create a more conducive condition for the ongoing mercantile activities.

What the dynamics of this controversy reveals is that, in addition to tensions between status groups, commercialization of the late Ming also generated intensive interactions between people from different

[4] For a recent discussion on the issue of "blurring social boundary," see Finnane 2004, pp. 253-264.

places, hence brought about another type of tension - the tension between places that had heretofore been relatively insulated.[5] Recent scholarship on local history indicates that during the Song dynasty, literati elite had developed a "localist strategy" in which their career orientation shifted toward local communities of home at the cost of identification with the court. In what follows, I will use the Huihzou litearti's controversy over its fame as a "rich place" to make a case that since the 16th century, in the age of interconnected and interacting locales, literati localist strategy gained a new dimension: other places entered their local consciousness and become a constant concern.

THE CONTROVERSY OVER RICHES: TO DENY OR NOT TO DENY

It is generally agreed that the rise of Huizhou merchants' mercantile power occurred during the 16th century.[6] Roughly overlapping with this was the emergence of their mercantile image. The term "huishang 徽商" (Huizhou merchant) had become a widespread proper name no later than the second half of the sixteenth century. Literati writings during this period show a plethora of references to this group of people.[7]

Born in 1525, Wang Daokun's coming of age coincided exactly with the period when Huizhou merchants were consolidating their

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[5] As early as the late fifteenth century, Li Xian 李賢 (1408-1466), the grand secretary and compiler of *Da Ming yi tong zh* 大明一統志, had attributed the poverty of his homeland Dengzhou 鄧州 to the exploitation of shrewd and cunning merchants from elsewhere. Li Xian, "Wu xiang shuo", in *Gu rang wen ji* 古穰文集, *juan* 9. Another comment on this inter-local tension can be found in the prefecture gazetteer of Chengtian 承天, published in 1602. According to the compilers of this gazetteer, the people who held most of the land were "almost all powerful and rich people flowing to here. On the contrary, natives became their servants and hired labors." Those outsiders were mostly men of Jiangxi province, who "came to lease land for cultivation, rent houses for lodging, and in time took root here. The natives, due to heavy tax burden, always borrow money from the settlers, with double interests and their land and house as mortgage. Eventually all these became the settlers' properties". See *Chengtian fu zhi* 承天府志, 1602. *juan* 6.

[6] For discussions on the time of the rise of Huizhou merchants, see Wang Tingyuan; Fan Jinmin, "Huizhou yan shang 徽州鹽商"; Liu Hehui, "Huishang shi yu he shi 徽商始于何時".

[7] On the term "huishang," see Liu Tingyuan, "Huizhou shang bang 徽州商幫"; Wang Zhenzhong, "Ming Qing wen xian 明清文獻"; On representative literati writings on this subject, see Wang Shizhen, Wang Daokun, Gui Youguan, among others.

dominance in all businesses in which they engaged.[8] Coming from a prosperous merchant family and enjoying successful careers both as an official and literati, Wang became the most outspoken voice of the optimism and confidence of Huizhou merchants. With regard to recognizing the merits and virtues displayed by merchants, however, Wang was neither the only nor the first in 16th century Huizhou. For example, Wang Xun 汪循(*js* 1496) had written highly appreciative biographies of merchant at the beginning of the century, and evoked the same phrase from Sima Qian as Wang Daokun did at the end of the century: "where there is wealth, humanity and propriety will follow."[9] By the latter half of the century, it had become hard to find a collected works by Huizhou literati that did not include several pieces of merchant biography.[10]

What made Wang Daokun's celebration of Huizhou mercantile culture more controversial was his ostentatious display of the mercantile wealth of Huizhou. This may be illustrated by a comparison with Wang Xun, who, at the very moment he was praising the virtues displayed by merchants, solemnly cautioned that Huizhou was a resource-deficient place, where the people

> Eat only two meals of gruel a day, and never eat fish and meat… (their living standard is) less than one-tenth of (the lower Yangtze prefectures) Suzhou 蘇州, Huzhou 湖州, Changsu 常熟, and even lower than (the neighboring prefectures) Ningguo 寧國 and Chizhou 池州. Yet Huizhou was carelessly called a rich place. This is really trading bogus name for real disasters…[11] (emphasis mine)

In Wang Daokun's works, descriptions of luxurious and conspicuous spending, such as the following, were common:

> There are many big merchants in Huizhou, among them the salt merchants are the more magnificent. Ritual bells are played when they [eat] at home, horses and carriages are lined up when they take to the road. When they have spare time they invite guests for grand parties, served by

[8] On Huizhou merchants' commercial dominance in general, see Wang Tingyuan; On salt trade, the most important trade for both the imperial state and Huizhou merchants, see Fan Jinmin.
[9] "jing zhu ji xu 敬竹集序" in Wang Xun 汪循, *Ren feng wen ji* 仁峰文集, *juan* 9.
[10] For examples, look at the *wenji* or scattered writings by Wang Xun 汪循, Wu Ziyu 吳子玉, Fang Chengxun 方承訓, Fang Hongjing 方弘靜, Fang Liangshu 方良曙.
[11] "jing zhu ji xu 敬竹集序" in Wang Xun 汪循, *Ren feng wen ji* 仁峰文集, *juan* 9.

> girls of the Wu 吳 and Yue 越 (i.e., Jiangnan 江南) region. All their guests enjoy thorough pleasures, and their parties last day and night.[12]

The course of the 16th century proved that Wang Xun's anxiety was not without reason. Cases where extra levies and taxes were imposed can be directly attributed to Huizhou's fame as a rich place. The 1566 edition of Huizhou prefecture gazetteer complained that

> Since the beginning of the Jiajing era, we were imposed with extra levies, often up to many times a year. This was really caused by the a few big merchants who accumulated wealth outside of Huizhou, and earned (Huizhou) a reputation of riches, therefore enticing the officials to assign us more burden than other prefectures. [13]

In addition to official impositions, Huizhou merchants also bore the brunt of jealousy and resentment by locals in their places of sojourn. Anecdotes attesting to this inter-local tension abound in literati writings. For example, Li Weizhen 李維楨 recorded an event that occurred during Jiajing period in his biography of the Huizhou merchant Wu Wangnan. Wu sojourned in Songjiang 松江 prefecture and accumulated considerable wealth. In the height of the *wokou* 倭寇 disturbance he hastily returned home to avoid disaster. Some Songjiang locals took advantage of his absence and set fire to his house. Wu lost all his properties in Songjiang due to this vicious arson.[14] Zhu Heling's 朱鶴齡 *Yu an xiao ji* 愚庵小集 recorded another incident in Hangzhou's Wujiang 吳江 county that took place around 1600. Due to the effective administration by a capable magistrate, the number of theft and robbery cases dropped drastically. Consequently the yamen runners and clerks found themselves lacking in opportunities to extract bribes from these cases. In response they invited bandits from the nearby Longyou 龍游 County, who entered the county seat secretly and

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[12] "wang zhang jun lun zui xu 汪長君論最序" in *Tai han ji*, vol. 2.

[13] *Huizhou fu zhi* 徽州府志, 1566, 8:206 a. A specific case of this kind was recorded by Huizhou literati Wu Ziyu 吳子玉: In 1538 the magistrate of Xiuning county proposed a new formula to convert toll tax into grain tax. Replacing the convention of every five *ding* 丁 shouldering one *shi* of grain, the new formula made it every three *ding* for the same amount of grain, with the reason that "many people of the She and Xiuning counties engage in mercantile activities (thus capable to shoulder more)." See Wu Ziyu, *Da zhang shan ren ji* 大嶂山人集, 31:5-6.

[14] Li Weizhen, "Wu mu cheng ru ren shou xu 吳母程孺人壽序" in *Da mi shan fang ji* 大泌山房集, *juan* 40.

robbed the pawnshops of Huizhou merchants, in order to "dampen their spirits."[15]

Probably because of such intermittent troubles and harassments, the voice of caution against projecting an image of affluence never disappeared throughout the century. In most cases it mixed with a sense of pride in Huizhou's mercantile achievement. A typical example of this can be found in the 1566 Huizhou prefecture gazetteer. In a section on local customs, the author announced Huizhou's mercantile success with pride, but then compared the merchants' ostentatious lifestyle in their places of business with their modest one back in Huizhou, concluding with a note of caution quoted from Wang Xun.[16]

However, the momentum of triumphant celebration of Huizhou's wealth was maintained over time. Against all the calls for caution, Fang Chengxun 方承訓, a Huizhou literati who had similar mercantile family background as Wang Daokun, still proudly proclaimed Huizhou's mercantile superiority at the turn of the 17th century:

> Huizhou lies in the middle of mountains. Its people are crowded and its land is scarce. In this sense it is far more disadvantaged than other prefectures. Yet, in terms of wealth it has always been dominant among its neighbors such as Ningguo 寧國, Chizhou 池州, Taiping 太平, and Anqing 安慶 in terms of wealth. The reason for this is nothing but that, since its agriculture is poor, its people enthusiastically devoted themselves to mercantile activities.[17]

Even in the beginning of the 17th century, when social and moral problems caused by mercantile engagement had already alarmed many Huizhou literati, the She county gazetteer of 1607 still devoted a whole chapter to the county's mercantile engagement and achievement, with a note of pride permeating the narrative.[18]

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[15] Zhu Helin, "Fu shun liu gong zhuan 富順劉公傳", in *Yu an xiao ji* 愚庵小集, *juan* 15.

[16] Similar reiteration of the caution occurred in Wu Ziyu, *Da zang shan ren ji* 大嶂山人集, *juan* 31.

[17] Fang Chengxun, "Ji biejia shi she yuan xu," in *Fu chu ji* 復初集, *juan* 22.

[18] *She xian zhi* 歙縣志 (1609), *juan* 20. See also Timothy Brook, *Confusion of pleasures*, for the depiction of the social tension caused by Huizhou's commercial engagement.

THE NEW ORDER OF LOCAL IMAGINATION

Huizhou's image as the "Model Confucian Place" (*Dong nan zhou lu* 東南鄒魯) had been well established by the 15th century through generations of literati efforts, featuring the local literati's dedication to Cheng-Zhu learning and the common people's thrift, diligence, and moral integrity.[19] Mercantile activities played little role in this image. As late as 1502, the prefecture gazetteer still characterized the local customs as "dedication to reading and farming, only occasionally undertaking some commercial activities."[20] Against this background, the impulse to celebrate wealth was a deviation from what was heretofore characteristic of the local imagination, and constituted one of the many strains assailing the old norms in Huizhou, thus causing deep anxiety among the literati.[21] Widespread mercantile activities during the 16th century might be justified by Huizhou's limited natural resources, a strategy all Huizhou literati employed. Even the recognition of virtues demonstrated by merchants could be absorbed into the conventional local image by marking them as Confucian. But high profile celebration of mercantile wealth per se was clearly at odds with the projection of this image. It was against the grain of what a "model Confucian place" stood for, and might amount to re-defining it as a mercantile place. In fact Wang Daokun went very close to this point when he proudly announced that "in our land we cherish merchants more than Confucians, wealth more than pure name".[22]

Viewed in this way, the controversy over whether or not to deny the fame of wealth could be regarded as a struggle between old elites and new wealth over the definition of Huizhou during a time of unprecedented commercial expansion. But this line of interpretation appears incomplete if we take note that among those who called for caution, the stated reason was not that the celebration of wealth undermined orthodox morality, but rather a very practical concern that

[19] Du 2006, chapter 1.
[20] *Huizhou fu zhi* 徽州府志(1502), 1:10.
[21] For example, the devotion to Zhu Xin's learning was seriously challenged by the penetration of Wang Yangming's leaning, the cherished tranquility and social harmony of the place had been disturbed by new opportunities to get rich. For the impact of Wang Yangming, see Liu Hsiang-Kwang; for the disturbance of commercialization on social harmony, see Timothy Brook, *Confusion of Pleasures*.
[22] "Pu jiang huang gong qi shi xu 浦江黃公七十序," in *Tai han ji*, *juan* 18.

in doing so they were "trading bogus name for real disasters". Disasters caused by fame were possible only if there were viewers for that fame. Behind the logic of caution was thus a concern about how Huizhou was viewed by people of other places. In this sense, the controversy over Huizhou's fame revealed a new mode of local imagination, in which other local places got implicated in the construction of Huizhou's image. This new mode can be further illustrated if we compare Huizhou's image as a mercantile place with its older image as the "model Confucian place."

The image as the "model Confucian Place" was largely a result of Huizhou literati's efforts to create an aura of moral autonomy for the place. In the making of this image, Huizhou was imagined as the macrocosm of the empire where the social and moral order projected by the imperial ideology was maintained at a smaller scale. What made it a model Confucian place was its persistent pursuit of the universally accepted moral and intellectual goals. Highlighted in the making of this image were the local Confucian scholars' commitment to Cheng-Zhu learning, and the praiseworthy local customs. Other places may be more or less advanced in pursuing the same goal, but they mattered little with respect to Huizhou's identity. Therefore it is no surprise that they were seldom mentioned when Huizhou's identity was discussed.[23] In the 16th century, however, the controversy over Huizhou's reputation for affluence often involved references to, or direct comparison with, other places. Those viewing it positively saw it either as a sign of Huizhou's uniqueness that differentiated it from other places, or as a sign of Huizhou merchants' superior mercantile talent over its neighbors. Those calling for caution questioned the accuracy of the fame of riches by drawing out comparison with the obviously richer places in the lower Yangtze region. In either case, other local places constituted an indispensable factor in the thinking about Huizhou's identity.

Furthermore, while the image of "model Confucian place" was projected almost exclusively by Huizhou literati, the production of Huizhou's mercantile image involved active participation of literati from other places. Mostly due to personal connections with Huizhou men, famous literati of the late Ming, such as Wang Shizhen 王世貞 and Li Weizhen 李維楨, praised the virtues displayed by Huizhou

[23] Du 2006, chapter 1.

merchants almost as lavishly as did Huizhou literati. Not sharing the latter's concern over the consequences of being renowned for wealth, these writers could highlight Huizhou's mercantile wealth and mercantile commitment with little constraint. Take Wang Shizhen for example: in the biographies and epitaphs he wrote in honour of Huizhou merchants, such phrases as "in Huizhou, people were evaluated by their wealth", "Huizhou abounds in wealthy merchants", or "Huizhou men don't hide their wealth" are found in abundance. Considering his reputation and influence on the Ming literary scene, Wang Shizhen likely enhanced the stereotype of Huizhou merchants' wealth and their devotion to commercial activities more than anyone else.[24]

The implication of other places in the making of Huizhou's image should not come as a surprise. Throughout the 16th century, in addition to merchants' commercial activities beyond Huizhou's border, there was a high wave of Huizhou literati's open-door communication with their counterparts of other places.[25] Plenty of evidence suggests that in these inter-local activities, Huizhou literati developed a strong sense of local pride and confidence. The most dramatic example is Wang

[24] For examples, see the many essays in *Yan zhou si bu gao* 弇州四部稿, *juan* 95; *xu gao 續稿*, *juan* 29, 33, 47, 69, 79, 100.

[25] Public lectures on Neo-Confucian learning flourished in Huizhou, with famous scholars such as Zhan Ruoshui 湛若水, Wang Ji 王基, Zhou Shouyi 鄒守益, and Qian Dehong 錢德洪 coming in, and the Huizhou scholars going out to study with these masters. There were several different organizational forms of philosophical discussion in sixteenth century Huizhou. The most influential one was called "Grand Meeting of Xin'an 新安大會." It consisted of literati from all six counties of the prefecture, and invited non-Huizhou scholars as the featured speaker during its semi-annual meetings that operated on a regular basis for over a hundred years between 1515 and 1621. For the Grand Meetings of Xin'an, see Shi Huang, *Zhiyang shu yuan ji* 紫陽書院記. For studies on philosophical discussions in sixteenth century Huizhou in general, see Zhou Xiaoguang, "Mingdai zhong hou qi xin xue 明代中后期心學"; Liu Hsiang-Kwang, *Education and Society*, pp. 163-180. Literati of more literary than philosophical interest also came to Huizhou. In this respect the rise of Wang Daokun's literary fame in the Longqing and early Wanli period played a crucial role. As Qian Qianyi observed, "when literary people throughout the realm seek celebrities, they either go to (visit Wang Daokun in) Huizhou, or to (visit Wang Shizhen in) Taichang." See "Wang shi lang dao kun", in Qian Qianyi, *Lie chao shi ji* 列朝詩集, *juan* 4.

Shizhen's visit to Mt. Huang 黃山.[26] According to an account of this event made in the early Qing, Wang Shizhen, the undisputed leader of Jiangnan literary circles, visited with a group of followers made up of over 100 Jiangnan literati. Wang Daokun, the leading literati of Huizhou, took the responsibility as the host, and organized the Huizhou literati to receive the Jiangnan group. Each visitor in this large group boasted a particular cultivated skill. This was taken by the Huizhou hosts as an attempt to demonstrate Jiangnan cultural superiority. To meet the challenge, the team of hosts was also carefully selected to match them, and a friendly competition in cultivated skills seemed unavoidable. The account relates a Huizhou victory, or at least the hosts' success in managing a draw with their Jiangnan guests:

> Master Wang Daokun…prepared several gardens to accommodate the Jiangnan visitors therein. Each guest was accompanied by one or two hosts that were exclusively recruited from the She County of Huizhou, for there was no need to seek help from other places. Hosts matched the guests' specific skills, thus a (Jiangnan) calligrapher was matched with a (Huizhou) calligrapher, and a painter with a painter. All skills, such as those in musical instrument, goal game, inscription, geomancy, astrology, arrow-pitching, ball-kicking, and singing, were matched. When hosts talk with guests, they did with flying colors, like water in the Yellow River that comes in great torrents and never exhaust. In competition over some skills, the guest sometimes lost to the hosts. Master Wang Shizhen was so amazed that he highly praised (the hosts) before leaving.[27]

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[26] We don't know the exact time of this visit, except that it should have happened shortly after 1576, when both Wang Shizhen and Wang Daokun were away from office and staying home. Wang Shizhen mentioned this visit to Mt. Huang very briefly in his correspondence, without specifying date. In 1587, Wang Daokun tried to schedule a visit of Wang Shizhen to visit Qiyun Mountain in Huizhou, but this plan never worked out before Wang Shizhen's death in 1590. Therefore Wang Shizhen's visit to Huizhou could not be between 1587 and 1590. Nor was it likely to be shortly before 1587, otherwise the planned visit would be too close to a previous one. Therefore most likely it happened shortly after 1576, when both men have time away from office. See Wang Shizhen's letters to Wang Daokun, in *Yan zhou si bu gao* 弇州四部稿, *juan* 119; *xu gao* 續稿, *juan* 185. Also see Wang Shizhen's letter to his brother, Wang Shimao, in *xu gao* 續稿, *juan* 189. For a year by year account of Wang Shizhen's life trajectory, see Zheng Lihua 鄭利華, *Wang Shizhen nian pu* 王世貞年譜. Interestingly there is no mentioning of his visit to Huangshan in Zheng's account, probably because Wang Shizhen himself left no record of this event.

[27] Zhang Cao, "she wen xiao yin 歙問小引", in *Zhao dai cong shu* 昭代叢書, ser. 1, *juan* 24. In another occasion during the summer of 1588, Wang Shizhen was visiting

The accuracy of details in this account being debatable, it nonetheless reflects the confidence Huizhou literati felt during the prosperous late 16th century: not only was its commercial empire expanding, even in literary and artistic cultivation it was catching up with and surpassing Jiangnan. More importantly, the prosperity arrived together with an unprecedented situation: so many other places that used to remain in the distant background in the minds of Huizhou people now entered Huizhou's day-to-day life. Against this background, the persistent impulse to play up the profile of Huizhou's mercantile wealth attested the nerve that Huzhou was gaining amidst the newly emergent network of places. In spite of the occasional troubles the name of a rich place caused, for Wang Daokun and his cohorts, interaction with other places constituted sources of confidence, causing more a sense of superiority and self-assertion than caution and anxiety.

FAME OF RICHES AS THE SOURCE OF DISASTER

With the 16th century giving way to the 17th, the tide that had bolstered Huizhou's fortune and boosted its assertiveness waned, while forces working against it gathered momentum. On the one hand, mention of harassment on Huizhou sojourners in literati writings became more frequent in time, and case-by-case hostilities against Huizhou merchants were transforming into stereotypes about their greed, aggression and fondness for litigation.[28] On the other hand, the decay of

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a Buddhist monastery with two Huizhou literati Fang Hongjing 方弘靜 and Zhan Jingfeng 詹景風. The abbot showed them an undated ancient painting, entitled "Shengyuan Pavilion." By perusing its artistic style, Zhan ventured to identify it as a piece of the Five Dynasties. A moment later, the learned Wang recalled a historical event during the Five Dynasties period that perfectly explains the title of the painting, and thus confirmed Zhan's judgment. Fang, the most senior among the three, was elated by this display of talents, and claimed: "people always talk about the sharp eyes (in connoisseurship) of Jiangnan man, now it is our Huizhou man who has it." See Zhan Jingfeng, *Dong tu xuan lan bian* 东图玄览编. Quoted by Wang Zhengzhou, "xie yang chan zhao hui zhou meng 斜陽殘照徽州夢" in *Huizhou cao feng 徽州朝奉*, Fujian ren min chu ban she, 1994.

[28] Mostly this stereotype was conveyed in the flourishing vernacular novels where Huizhou merchant featured prominently. For brief discussion of Huizhou merchants' image in late Ming vernacular novels, see Liu Yanqin, "wenxue de Huishang yu lishi de Huishang". But it was not limited hereby. Non-fictional writings joined this trend in spreading the negative images of Huizhou merchants. For these hearsays, see the collected works of Xie Zhaozhe 謝肇淛, Wang Shixing 王士性, Gu Yanwu 顧炎武,

Ming political order accelerated, frequently resulting in lawlessness at the local level. In this circumstance, Huizhou's fame-related problems turned from mere nuisances to disasters.

Devils at the Doorway: Eunuch Abuse and Huizhou Wealth

The first wave of disaster came in the notorious *kuangshui* 礦稅 campaign even before the sixteenth century came to an end.[29] The damage of *kuangshui* was unevenly distributed over the realm, with the wealthier places bearing more of the brunt. As a renowned place of mercantile wealth, Huizhou's plight was particularly severe. Just as Li Weizhen observed, "when eunuchs went out to collect taxes, their perpetrations inundated all the realm, yet on Huizhou their ferocity doubled."[30] Li told the story of a merchant Wang who ran business in Yangzhou. Realizing he could not avoid losing his property, Wang wisely chose to donate generously to the state treasury and in return was granted an official title, hence "saved his family from the disaster".[31] But not all Huizhou merchants had the same wit and luck. Contemporary records indicate that some of the more prominent

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and Wei Xueyi 魏學洢. Some literati even consciously misplaced all kinds of nasty deeds and malefactions under the name of Huishang. One illustrating example was the modification of a passage from an early sixteenth century book *Sung gu shu* 淞故述 when it was copied into a late sixteenth century book Y*un jian za shi* 云間雜識. The passage in the former book tells the sarcastic story of a high official from Songjiang who retired and carried home huge amount of wealth he embezzled from office. One day an old man came to visit and show great gratitude to him. Asked why, the old man explained that local wealth of Songjiang had all been grabbed away by the "guanfu 官府" (government), and now the high official should be given credit for bringing them back. But in the latter book, the author replaced the word "guanfu" with "huishang 徽商", while all else was copied verbatim. See Wang Zhenzhong, "Ming-Qing wenxian 明清文獻"

[29] In Chinese historiography *kuangshui* refers to the practice of the emperor using eunuchs as tax collectors and mining intendants to extract more wealth for his personal purse directly from society. It was condemned as an abnormal and unethical disturbance of the state functions. It was devastating not only because of the irregular imposition of heavier taxes and more cumbersome labor levies, but also because in the chaos that followed, local rascals usually tendered allegiance to *kuangshui* eunuchs and bullied local people in the name of *kuangshui*. For a brief summary of this event, see the chronicle of Wangli emperor's reign in *Ming shi*, and Timothy Brook, "Communication and Commerce" p. 676.

[30] Li Weizhen, "Wang nei shi jia zhuan," in *Da mi shan fang ji* 大泌山房集, *juan* 69.

[31] Ibidem.

Huizhou merchants in Yangzhou "immediately lost both their properties and lives".[32]

Predations on Huizhou itself went on side by side with those on sojourning Huizhou merchants. Some of them were directly related to the *kuangshui* practice, others by greedy officials and stuffs in the tide of wealth gouging triggered by the *Kuangzhui*. In either case, the immediate affect was the coming of unwelcome outsiders glaring desirously at Huizhou's alleged wealth. A memorial sent by the regional inspector Chen Weizhi in 1600 vividly illuminates this local fear of outside predators. In response to the impending increase of property tax, Chen first protested over the *kuangshui* burden on the poor mountainous places such as Huizhou, and realistically proposed that "if the court is determined to follow the vicious advice of mean men, and adopt the strategy of draining the pond to get all the fish, let it be that Huizhou offer to provide 6,000 taels, and Anqing 安慶 offer 5,000 taels. But do not send people down here to disturb the people."[33] Jin Sheng 金聲, the Huizhou literati who lived a generation later than the *kuangshui* atrocity, recorded the local memories of it:

> Unfortunately the place has a fake name of wealth. Corrupt staffs, cunning clerks, vicious rascals from the street, and even literati of other places who got their appointments through bribery in the court and ready to get (their investment) back from the local people, all came with their tails waging and their mouths open…[34]

Kuangshui was called off at the death of the Wanli emperor, but a new wave came only a few years later during the Tianqi reign, with doubled vehemence and destruction. This time the havoc was wrecked from the new power centre in the Court, the clique around Wei Zhongxian 魏忠賢. The initial target was the rich merchant Wu Yangchun 吳養春, but the damage spread much wider.

The Wu clan was one of the richest and most powerful in Huizhou, owning lucrative business of salt trade in Lianghuai 兩淮, Liangzhe 兩浙, and Changlu 長盧 salt districts, as well as large amount of lumber

[32] *Ming Shi lu*, shengzhong, *juan* 347 (萬曆二十八年五月).
[33] *Ming shi lu*, Shenzhong, *juan* 344 (萬曆二十八年二月)
[34] Jin Sheng, "Cong jiang nan zang lu hou yong mu ci ji 重建南漳魯侯永慕祠記" in *Jin tai shi wen ji* 金太史文集, *juan* 5.

resources in Mt. Huang.[35] In 1625 one of the servants of the Wu lineage went to Beijing and filed a case against his master in the eunuch office Dongchang 東廠, charging him of "accumulating millions in wealth" and being "rich but evil." Excited with this big prey, Wei Zhongxian quickly fabricated evidence against Wu Yangchun, and got permission from the emperor to arrest Wu and confiscate his properties for the palace construction project.[36] Wu Yangchun was soon arrested, delivered to Beijing and died in prison.[37] The alleged wealth under Wu's name, needing to be forwarded to Beijing, was assigned to the care of Wei's protégé Lu Xiawen 呂下問, a secretary of the ministry of public works.

The way Lu conducted this mission revealed his conviction that great wealth must be hidden in Huizhou. For the wealth Wu was said to have accumulated, Lu held Wu's relatives accountable. The worth of Wu's tree farms had been determined in Beijing, and Lu's official task in this respect was to sell it and forward the proceeds to Beijing. But Lu secretly raised the amount at his arrival, and then forced rich local families to buy the tree farms indiscriminately.[38] Lu's vicious operation was so horrible that in spring 1627, several months into his operation, the stirred local society burst out into riot. Thousands of angry local men gathered in the prefecture seat and stormed the yamen.

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[35] In the early Wanli period, Yangchun's grandfather Wu Shouli 吳守禮, in whose hand the Wus' wealth had reached a new level, had donated hundreds of thousand silvers for the defense in the north border. During the Ming state's war in Korean around 1598, Wu Yangchun donated 300,000 silvers to the campaign. As a return, Yangchen and five other members of his family were granted official titles. Inside Huizhou, the Wus had very good connections with local officials. For example, in 1612, the prefect of Huizhou was impeached for accepting bribery from Wu Yangchun and helping him usurping the tree farms in Mt. Huang. See *Ming shi lu*,shenzhong, *juan* 478 (萬曆三十九年七月). The official gazette (*jingbao*) of the Tianqi era also accused the Wu clan for being so evil that they continued to occupy the tree farms of Mt. Huang even after half of them had been officially confiscated by the authorities at the end of Wanli reign. More infuriatingly, according to the gazette, when the Tianqi court ordered the application of Mt. Huang lumber resources in the construction project of the palace, the Wus "dare to send their servants to the capital, trying to derail the edict (with their bribery)." See Cheng Yansheng, 9a-9b.

[36] Cheng Yansheng, 8b-10a.

[37] Cheng Yansheng, p.18b.

[38] *Ming shi lu*, Xizhong, *juan* 74 (天啟六年九月)

In response to the extreme situation in Huizhou, the court recalled Lu and replaced him with Xu Zhiji 許志吉, a Huizhou native who was chosen because of a memoir he sent to the throne shortly before the riot. From an insider's perspective, Xu admitted the existence of Huizhou merchants' wealth and apologized for their lavish way of life. Yet following this Xu immediately pointed out the misunderstandings held by most outsiders: actually this wealth was scattered in places where the merchants sojourned. Thus, although "Huizhou's name of wealth was known all under the heaven, really there was no wealth in Huizhou."[39] Xu's conduct of the mission to appropriate Wu's wealth was no less hated in Huizhou. Nevertheless, his analysis of the situation reflects the degree to which Huizhou's rich name had become a liability by the beginning of the 17th century.

Mid-century Ordeal: A Place Choked at the Throat

Ferocious as they were, eunuch predations on Huizhou were still conducted under a cloak of legitimacy and ultimately controlled by the central authority. During the Congzhen reign period (1627-1644), in the midst of the total disintegration of the social and political order, there came an even more devastating predation, also enticed by Huizhou's renown of riches, but displaying more lawlessness and causing disasters on much larger scale.

The Congzhen reign was characterized by a general crisis of the Ming order. In addition to hopeless governmental dysfunction, there was the devastating bandit problem in north and central China as well as rampant urban and rural riots in the southeast. Compounding these, the interruption in the silver inflow from Japan and the Philippines toward the end of the 1630s caused silver deflation and economic stagnation.[40] This general crisis struck at the economic core of the Ming empire, where most of Huizhou merchants' businesses were located. As a result, many Huizhou merchants had to close their business and go home, creating serious problems of food shortage in Huizhou.[41] This problem was made particularly acute by severe multi-year crop failures, which, combined with silver shortage, led to rocketing grain prices and widespread hoarding and speculation in grain. Thus toward the end of

[39] See Cheng Yansheng, pp. 14b-17a.
[40] See Atwell 1988, pp. 621-632.
[41] Jin Shen, "Yu She lin shou 與歙令守", in *Jin tai shi wen ji*, *juan* 3.

the Ming, Huizhou faced the problem of subsistence as did many other places. However, in this struggle for survival, it was badly equipped in terms of both its reputation and its geographical location.

For centuries the grain-deficient Huizhou had depended on outside supplies transported through two rivers: the Xin'an River linking with Zhejiang, and the Rao River linking with Jiangxi.[42] This gave the prefectures and counties of Zhejiang and Jiangxi along these two rivers a special kind of control over Huizhou. In normal times, grain merchants were able to sail against the current and bring rice to Huizhou, and in the reverse directions Huizhou products such as lumber and tea were shipped out. In the mid-seventeenth century general crisis, however, these places tightened the rope, and blocked the traffic of grain, particularly along the Rao River.[43]

The prefecture next to Huizhou down the Rao River was Jiangxi's Raozhou 饒州 prefecture. Here, not only were grain boats prevented from leaving, but also grain merchants were detained and extorted heavily before they were let go. More seriously, the blocking and robbery of Huizhou-bound grain shipments by the local people were tolerated and even supported by the local officials in Raozhou.[44] In 1640, Huizhou literati Jin Sheng (1589-1645), who retired from official career a few years before, coordinated a series of petitions to address this crisis.

The first effort was a letter Jin wrote to the Huizhou prefect Tang Liangyi 唐良醫, who happened to be a native of Jiangxi. Jin pleaded with Tang to send official request to prefects and county magistrates in his native Jiangxi, so that grain boats may be allowed a safe passage.[45] At the same time, direct petition was sent to the prefect of Raozhou, in which Jin explained that the grain going through Raozhou was only a small amount, bought from Huguan rather than Raozhou, and therefore

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[42] See Zurndorfer 1989, pp. 126-128. See also Luo Yuan 羅愿, *Xin'an zhi* 新安志, 1:5b.

[43] As for the blocking of grain traffic along the Xin'an River, see the story of merchant Yao Tan 姚檀, in *She Xian zhi* 歙縣志(1771) *juan* 13. When the block of grain traffic was blocked along the Xin'an River, Yao was able to negotiate as a private person, and had some grain went through.

[44] Jin Shen, "Yu jun tai shou 與郡太守", in *Jin tai shi wen ji*, *juan* 3; "Yu Xu an tai 與徐按臺", in *Jin Tai shi wen ji*, *juan* 3; Wang wei, memorial, in *Xiuning xian zhi* 休寧縣志 (1693) *juan* 7.

[45] Jin Shen, "Yu jun tai shou 與郡太守", in *Jin tai shi wen ji*, *juan* 3.

not undermining Raozhou's grain security. In addition, Jin compared Raozhou to the throat of Xiuning 休寧, and implored the Raozhou prefect to think of "all under heaven as one family", and show some mercy to the starving people in Huizhou.[46]

Despite efforts by the Huizhou prefect and the intervention by the regional inspector, the situation did not improve much. Soon the regional inspector had to issue special passports to Huizhou grain merchants, and negotiate with his counterpart in Jiangxi province for these passports to be honoured.[47] This complicated coordination across provincial borders obviously did not work. In 1641, Jin Sheng again petitioned, this time directly to the regional inspector and pleaded with huim that he ask for pressure to be put on Raozhou from the court, not only to lift the blockade, but also to punish those guilty of the rampant robberies of Huizhou merchants. Nothing worked. Blockages and robbing from Huizhou merchants in Raozhou went on even worse than before. In 1642, cases of Huizhou merchants being killed in Raozhou were reported. In desperation, the local elites of Huizhou resorted to their countrymen serving in Beijing, who in turn petitioned the case directly to the throne in the fall of 1643, asking for a systematic solution to the problem of grain blockage along both the Xin'an and the Rao rivers.[48] The court itself was trapped in great troubles and practically incapable to exert any real influence on the situation at the ground level. Left to the mercy of fate, Huizhou suffered serious famine, with cannibalism reported even in the less severely impacted She County.[49]

The situation Huizhou faced at the end of the Ming was actually one in which the desperate struggle for food and the paralysis of imperial political order came at the same time. In this circumstance, local places were left to themselves to handle inter-local relations, and Huizhou's rich name provided ready excuses for others to make it a target. In several cases, when the looted Huizhou merchants in Raozhou reported the cases to Raozhou local officials, they were told that "those are poor people with no provisions for life; they are just borrowing from you

[46] Jin Sheng, "Yu Rao tai shou 與饒太守", in *Jin tai shi wen ji*, *juan* 3.
[47] Jin Sheng, "Yu Xu an tai 與徐按臺"(1641) in *Jin tai shi wen ji*, *juan* 3.
[48] Wang Wei 汪衛, memorial, in *Xiuning xian zhi* 休寧縣志(1693), *juan*. 7.
[49] See the account of major local famines and devastations in *She xian zhi* 歙縣志 (1690), *juan*14.

merchants for a relief."[50] In the desperate competition for resources for survival between Raozhou and Huizhou, even the Huizhou prefect Tang Liangyi's background as a Jiangxi man was capitalized on by the Raozhou prefect, who warned Tang not to put his temporary duty toward Huizhou ahead of his permanent duty toward his homeland. To dissipate Tang's sense of duty toward Huizhou, the Raozhou prefect almost jokingly remarked that "Raozhou is unfortunate to be poor, and Huizhou is fortunate to be rich. It does not hurt to cut into the rich and add to the poor."[51]

The continuous misfortune brought about by Huizhou's rich name over all these years explains the local people's paranoiac response to the last wave of predation they encountered in the Ming dynasty. In 1643, before the controversy over grain blockage with Raozhou was over, a group of undisciplined troops arrived at the border of Huizhou. These were troops called by the notorious Ma Shiying 馬士英, then serving as the governor of Fengyang 鳳陽 region, from his home province Guizhou 貴州 to help pacify the chaotic situation around Fengyang. Strangely, instead of marching along the regular route to Fengyang, the Guizhou troops took a detour and marched toward Huizhou. Convinced that the Guizhou troops were coming to plunder, the indignant Huizhou elites quickly mobilized the *xiangyue*-based militia under the leadership of Jin Sheng.[52]

The militia easily destroyed the Guizhou troops that made it to Huizhou's border.[53] Their preemptive move, however, provoked a fierce round of finger-pointing in the court, where Ma Shiying blamed Jin Shen for the loss his troops, and Jin Sheng took pains to expose the "real" motivation of the troops' abnormal marching route, that is, their desire for Huizhou's alleged wealth. Clearly, to Huizhou elites such as Jin Sheng, the fame of riches had completely become a source of misery. Endless troubles and disasters over half a century had taught

[50] Wang Wei, memorial, in *Xiuning xian zhi* (1693), *juan* 7.
[51] Jin Sheng, "Yu Xu an tai 與徐按臺", in *Jin tai shi wen ji*, *juan* 3.
[52] Jin Sheng, "chu wen ti chan bei chen shou yu shi mo shu 初聞題參備陳守御始末書" in *Jin tai shi wen ji*, *juan* 2.
[53] In fact, before the Guizhou troops reached Huizhou, they were defeated and dispersed by local militia in Leping county of Jiangxi province, obviously due to the slackened discipline of the soldiers. The troops that arrived on Huizhou's border were the dissipated bands of the troops. For a detailed account of this event, see Zhao Jishi 趙吉士, "Qian bing shi mo 黔兵始末," in his *Ji yuan ji suo ji* 寄園記所記, *juan* 11.

them painful enough lessons to see the other side of the image they had blindly and enthusiastically created before. It was in parallel to this process of the accumulating predations that we see the most radical repudiation of this fame.

THE MID-17TH CENTURY REFLECTION

The most outspoken voice in denying Huizhou's "false name" was Jin Sheng. As the local leader during Huizhou's most excoriating trials in the last years of the Ming, Jin's reflections on Huizhou's image are unsurprisingly relentless, and sometimes spill over to target at the place's entire mercantile culture in general. What emerged from his painful reflections, however, was not a renunciation of mercantile activity, but rather a call for better inter-local relationship to facilitate these activities, and a sharpened sensitivity to the cultivation of Huizhou's image.

The Reflection on Huizhou's Mercantile Culture

The mood that permeated Jin's evaluation of Huizhou's wealth was invariably one of pity and wretchedness. Resembling the modesty of Wang Xun at the beginning of the 16th century, Jin was ready to admit Huizhou's relative inferiority in material conditions of life. Comparing Huizhou with the lower Yangtze region, he maintained that: "in our land people wear old and plain clothes with not even two-tenths the level of elegance and ornament in Wu and Yue. Most people eat gruel except in the richest families; some of them have dry food once every ten days, some eat meat once a month; so our food is not even comparable to one-tenth of that in Wu and Yue."[54] Sometimes the reevaluation of Huizhou's affluence was formulated as if specifically addressing the potential outsider-predators. In a letter to the regional inspector, Jin claimed that even the money which merchants carried around as capital for their business was borrowed at a high interest rate. "It was so unfortunate that the money that just went through their hands was mistaken as their own. Really it was just like land for peasants in other places," Jin contested, "taking away their money is comparable to having peasants' land swallowed by the sea. Even worse, this money is

[54] Jin Sheng, "Song jun si li 送郡司理," in *Jin tai shi wen ji, juan* 3.

like land they did not own but rented from others. Once robbed away, and unable to repay the debt, their whole lives were doomed."[55]

In parallel to this pessimism, the sense of local pride and confidence characteristic of the time of Wang Daokun began to decline. In a letter written in the darkest days of 1642, even the shabby neighbor Raozhou appeared better off: "it is people's misfortune to be born in Huizhou, and Huizhou's misfortune to be the neighbor of Raozhou. It is our misfortune that the prefect of Raozhou glared at its neighbor not as human beings but as meat; it is our misfortune that the prefect of Huizhou is constrained by the prefect of Raozhou."[56]

This overall pessimism also characterized Jin's view of Huizhou's mercantile culture in general. Heroism and virtues often attributed to merchants by the late sixteenth century literati had disappeared almost completely, replaced by harsh criticism of mercantile influence on Huizhou's local customs. Mercantile engagement, the distinctive feature of Huizhou that had been a source of pride and self-assertion turned into one of embarrassment and lamentation. For example, in 1632, Jin expressed dissatisfaction with the phenomenon that in Huizhou mercantile career was given priority over scholarly pursuit in people's consideration for marriage.[57] Even Huizhou literati were found guilty of being susceptible to mercantile influence. In an essay written in 1638, Jin Sheng lamented that:

> In Huizhou the cunning and the insincere are sent out for business, leaving learning to the slow and the incapable…thus the writings of our land are often looked down upon by people of elsewhere. If our literati are lucky enough to enter civil service, they always hold an official position as treasurer, minding even the tiniest profit, and calculating relentlessly. Thus people from all under the heaven ridicule the literati of our land as under the influence of merchants."[58]

Despite his lamentations on the mercantile influence on Huizhou, however, Jin never denied the necessity of its mercantile engagement. Instead, he followed the steps of his sixteenth century predecessors and

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[55] Jin Sheng, "Yu Xu an tai 與徐按臺" in *Jin tai shi wen ji, Juan* 3.
[56] Jin Sheng, "Yu Xu an tai 與徐按臺", in *Jin tai shi wen ji, Juan* 3.
[57] Ibidem.
[58] Jin Shen, "shou ming zhi Huan tai weng liu xun biao xu 壽明之黃太翁六旬表序". In *Jin tai shi wen ji, juan* 2.

took pains to justify it in terms of the place's resource deficiency.[59] Therefore, we should not simply take Jin's reflections as an attack on mercantile culture per se. Behind his grudges against mercantilism, the concern was rather Huizhou's relationship with other places: on the one hand, although the pessimistic reevaluation of Huizhou's fame of riches was related to the hard times of the Ming-Qing transition, what made the times especially hard and directly provoked Jin's reflections was the harsh treatment Huizhou received from other places; on the other hand, even the critical view of mercantile influence on Huizhou's literati culture implied a comparative dimension with other places, and focused on how people of such places viewed Huizhou, rather than focusing simply on a decline of conventional social and moral order. In this sense, Jin's critique of Huizhou's mercantile culture also constituted a reflection on the place's identity, a reflection that heavily implicated other places, and continued the mode of local imagination his sixteenth century predecessors started. Different from his predecessors, however, after the disasters and traumas, Jin's understanding of Huizhou's relationship with other places was keener.

Local places Re-imagined

Having traveled and sojourned extensively with his merchant father during his youth, Jin Sheng certainly understood Huizhou's mercantile reality.[60] The responsibility as local leader in the efforts to save Huizhou during the dynasty's fall also required practical attitudes. Thus, amidst the excoriating pains caused by the place's mercantile image, Jin was always determined to take all necessary actions towards improving the commercial environment for his fellow Huizhou men.

His overall approach in this regard was the advocating of friendly inter-local relationship in the service of commercial activities: that a place should be understood as part of a bigger whole instead of a unit of itself and for itself. This idea was articulated in various occasions during and after the grain crisis. In a letter written in 1649 to a personal friend, Jin criticized what he saw as the narrow localist orientations permeating officialdom: "all prefectures and counties draw boundaries of

[59] Jin Sheng, "Yu She ling jun 與歙令君", *Jin tai shi wen ji, juan* 3; "Yu Xu an tai 與徐按臺". In *Jin tai shi wen ji, juan3.*

[60] Jin Sheng, "Wei zhu sheng he Lu Qinghai ke zui shi xu 聞諸生賀盧青海課最詩序" in *Jin tai shi wen ji, juan* 4.

themselves and care about only their own people."[61] During the middle of the grain-blocking crisis, Jin's petitions to the prefects of both Raozhou and Huizhou addressed the same issue, pleading with them to think about the "all under heaven as one family" and show some mercy to Huizhou merchants.

In a situation where the lack of friendly relations with its neighbors was jeopardizing the very subsistence of Huizhou, Jin Sheng's plea for the breaking down of local barriers can be accounted for by the sense of urgency to survive the crisis. Yet his universalistic orientation was not merely a rhetorical device to solve the crisis of the moment, but one based on his true realization that Huizhou's commercial activities involved many other places as well. In 1642, a Huizhou merchant returned home from Jianyang in Fujian and related the story of the Jianyang magistrate's care for the local people. Such praise for a local official showing mercy on the people under his jurisdiction again provoked Jin's complaint against narrow localism. An essay written to comment on this event amounted to a redefinition of the virtue of local officials:

> A gentleman is called incorruptible not because there is nothing he can grab; he is called caring for the people not because the people are not exposed to bullying. Rather, he (is called a gentleman) because he has mercy, therefore he refrains from grabbing wealth even when there is chance to do so, refrains from bullying on people even they are helpless. Why necessarily ask if the people are natives or sojourners under my jurisdiction, and differentiate them into 'my people' and 'not my people'? His great justice will not discriminate against sojourners and exclude them from his care. Therefore, the magistrate's incorruptible and caring rule in Jianyang must go beyond the narrow idea of taking Jianyang people as 'my people' before he can be so called a caring magistrate, otherwise he is subject to the charge of currying favor and courting fame. Should he really live up to this standard, who of the all under heaven is not his people? Although only the magistrate of Jianyang, his heart will truly contain the all under heaven[62]

Expecting a Confucian scholar to hold the "all under heaven" in his mind was a common Confucian moral aspiration. Yet calling a local official to disregard the difference between local places and take people

[61] Jin Sheng, "Fu he er yi 復何二伊", in *Jin tai shi wen ji*, *juan* 3.
[62] Jin Sheng, "Jianyang ling Huang hou sheng ci bei ji 建陽令黃侯生詞碑記", in *Jin tai shi wen ji*, *juan* 5.

from other places also as ‘my people’ in administrating a locale had to be explained in this situation of expanding commercial interaction in which local boundaries no longer constituted the limit to people’s scope of activity. In this sense, Jin Sheng’s call for indiscriminate treatment of people all under the heaven actually pointed to the universal openness for commercial activities.[63] This same dream was expressed again in 1645 when the Huizhou prefect Tang Liangyi, who had displayed the desired universalism in coordinating communication and defense with several neighboring prefectures, was promoted to a surveillance position in charge of a larger area. Jin wrote a warm celebrative essay and expressed his dream that should Tang continue his good work and help restore peace in the realm, “people of our land would happily seek our living in Hebei, Shangdong, Shanxi and Shannxi, just as we did in the good old days.”[64]

Being raised in response to Huizhou’s recurring troubles with other places, this call for openness no doubt indicated a sharpened sensitivity to inter-local relations. This sensitivity was also illustrated by several undertakings of the Huizhou elites in the middle of the grain crisis. In 1641, when the negotiations across the provincial border with Raozhou local authority yield little progress, Jin Sheng asked the regional inspector to push the court for a reshuffling of jurisdictions among surveillance agents, so that the inspector over the Huizhou-Ningguo 徽寧 region of South Zhili could also cover the Raozhou prefecture of Jianxi as well as the Yanzhou prefecture of Zhejiang (where the grain transportation along the Xin’an River passed through), thus facilitating the coordination across provincial borders.[65] The regional inspector accepted this proposal and did memorialize the court. When it failed to produce any effect in the court, Huizhou elites mobilized their countrymen serving in Beijing to submit the reshuffling proposal directly to the throne.[66]

None of these attempts worked. For some local elites to manipulate institutional adjustment at the empire level, the failure should not come

[63] It was obviously different from the universalism in Confucian classics. Weather or not we should call it trans-localism is open to debate.
[64] Jin Sheng, “Tang tai zun zuo hui ning fu xian xu 唐太尊左徽寧副憲序” in *Jin tai shi wen ji*, *juan* 4.
[65] Jin Sheng, “Yu Xu an jun 與徐按臺”, *Jin tai shi wen ji*, *juan* 3.
[66] Wang Wei, memorial, in *Xiuning xian zhi* (1693) *juan* 7.

as surprise. But the consciousness revealed therein was clear nonetheless: relationship with other places was crucial for the well being of Huizhou. If institutional reshuffling was beyond Huizhou men's control, some precaution to protect their image in the eyes of other places was certainly attainable. In 1641 the vice magistrate of Xiuning decided to quit his frustrating official career and return home in Sichuan. In a miserable financial condition, he had to sell his books and clothes to support his home trip on foot. Jin Sheng posted public letter to the local community pleading people to extend some help. Jin took pains to explain that Xiuning's image would suffer if they let a former local official go like this. "It is a six thousand *li* trip between Huizhou and Sichuan. What would people who see this think about the *shi dafu* in Xiuning? What would they think about the people in Xiuning?"[67]

CONCLUSION

From Wang Wei's Caution to Wang Daokun's heroism, and then to Jin Shen's trauma-generated morning, the Huizhou literati's attitude toward their mercantile culture went through dramatic changes in the span of 150 years. Beneath these drastic changes, however, was the constant comparison they made between Huizhou and other places, and the persistent belief that Huzhou depends on mercantile activities for its survival. In light of this, the changing attitude regarding Huizhou's rich name should be viewed as the challenging process of a mercantile place learning to find an appropriate position for itself as it entered the un-chartered waters of a network of places.

To be a mercantile place in late imperial China, where people were recognized by their local origins as much as anything else, required good relationships with other places. Obviously, it took Huizhou a long time and a dear price to learn this truth. The unrestrained celebrations of mercantile wealth in Wang Daokun's generation might have been innocent in intent, but in the light of the mid-17th century disasters, it appeared a naïve and simplistic way to project Huizhou's image. Yet the extremity of suffering also served to sharpen Huizhou literati's consciousness of the importance of inter-local relationships, thus

[67] Jin Sheng, "Gao yi ren song he er yi xu 告邑人送何二伊序", in *Jin tai shi wen ji*, *juan* 4.

revealing its simple truth, which had been neglected in times of prosperity. Therefore, it was not accidental that the call for friendliness between local places and the special caution to protect Huizhou's image in the eyes of others, were all made in a time when Huizhou men's confidence in its superiority had dropped to its lowest point.

The efforts of Jin Sheng and other Huizhou local elites did not solve the pressing problem of grain-blocking immediately. In 1644 the Ming dynasty collapsed. One year later, Jin Sheng himself died a martyr of the Ming dynasty. But in the Qing dynasty, the naive and sometimes unabashed celebrations of Huizhou's wealth and commercial success, characteristic of the late sixteenth century, never returned to prominence in literati discourses of their homeland.[68] In this sense, we must admit that Huizhou literati learned a lesson of riches.

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[68] Huizhou literati's view of its mercantile culture during the Qing deserves a separate paper. My observation here is based on several sources I gleaned on this issue. For example, the late 17th century literati writings, such as *She wen* 歙問 by Hong Shu-an, *Wan qing ge wen ji* 萬青閣文集 by Zhao Jishi, and *Yi qing tang ji* 怡清堂集 by Zhang Xikong 張習孔, as well as the Kangxi era local gazetteers, all displayed a renewed enthusiasm in highlighting Huizhou's image as "model Confucian place", and constant cautions to keep a distance with the fame of a rich place. The 18th century witness many occasions where Huizhou merchants played high profile in cultivating mutual good wills with many other places, including both their sojourning cities and the homeland of other merchant groups. See Ye Weiming 業為銘, *She xian jin shi zhi*.

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LOCAL AND TRANS-LOCAL ACTIVISM IN COMMEMORATING THE MARTYRS OF 1402

PETER DITMANSON

The second half of the fifteenth century and the early part of the sixteenth century in China was an important formative period in the emergence (or re-emergence) of locally focused Confucian activism. This essay explores aspects of this process through an examination of the rediscovery and commemoration of the loyalists who died in the usurpation of the Ming throne in 1402, an ongoing research project of mine.[1] The process of venerating these loyalists began sporadically in the mid-fifteenth century and became thoroughly ubiquitous by the mid-sixteenth century. Commemorating these martyrs was, on the one hand, an intensely localized form of activism, as communities sought to venerate their own as local worthies. On the other hand, the evolution of the meaning and significance of these martyrs was a process that transcended local boundaries and local communities.

Local activism in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries has been the subject of numerous recent studies that have shed considerable light on different facets of this process. This period saw the dramatic increase in the construction of schools, academies and other local institutions.[2] In his study of Guangdong in this period, Wing-kai To argued that this period saw the *literati* re-assertion of a Neo-Confucian moral vision as part of an emerging local identity.[3] Peter Bol has argued that this era saw the expanded re-definition of local identity that resembles part of a larger pattern of increasing efforts by local *literati* to impose their moral vision upon their local community. In this pattern, which he has traced back to the late Tang, activism at the local level corresponds to the vacuum created by a decreasing engagement by the central government in the local political and moral order. Bol argues further that the essential shift occurred in a pattern from the Song-Yuan periods to the middle and late Ming. Literati in the earlier period saw the cultural legacy and moral authority of their local

[1] Ditmanson 2007.
[2] See, for example, Meskill 1982, p. 28 ff.
[3] To 1998.

community as part of a "coherent whole" that was consistent with the prevailing Neo-Confucian values and the unifying moral claims of the imperial court. Late Ming literati, by contrast, promoted their localities as nodes of a unique and diverse configuration of values and cultural traditions.[4] David Faure has argued that as Guangdong local and regional identity developed in this period, communities underwent a process of assimilation into the larger Ming socio-political order that "merged the locality with the state."[5]

Sarah Schneewind's studies present a similar portrait of increased *literati* moralist activism in this period, but with an important difference. Her work has focused upon locally assigned administrators, prefects and magistrates, who worked to reform their jurisdictions according to expectations that seemed to become broadly standardized during this period: the building of schools and the destruction of shrines. Schneewind has focused upon officials assigned to local-level administration in localities not their own, a window, she argues, on "the process of Ming state-building at the local level."[6] This difference points to an important challenge in our understanding of the mid-Ming activism: the fact that in the processes of activism and developing identity in this period, *both* groups—local scholar-elites and locally assigned administrators—participated in local activist projects and reforms in greater intensity. This nexus of activism between these two categories of elites linked communities together in a series of trans-local networks that effectively bypassed the imperial court.

This process is illustrated clearly in the evolving commemoration of the Jianwen martyrs in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. On the one hand, this process was, by its very nature, detached from the imperial court, the throne of which held the descendent of the Yongle Emperor (r. 1402-1425), the usurper of 1402. Hence the identification and honoring of those who died was a diffused and de-centered process that took place in localities across the empire one by one. On the other hand, the official suppression of the historical narrative of the Jianwen reign (1399-1402) and the usurpation left a void of information that required a broad exchange of knowledge from local community to local

[4] Bol 2003.
[5] Faure 1996, p. 46.
[6] Schneewind 1999.

community. The imperative to venerate local worthies trumped fears or concerns about offending the sensibilities of the imperial court.

THE USURPATION OF 1402 AND THE OFFICIAL NARRATIVE

In 1402, the Yongle Emperor ascended the throne after a bloody civil war that led to the destruction of Nanjing and the death of his nephew, the Jianwen Emperor. A large number of loyalists to the young emperor lost their lives either in the war or in the purges that took place immediately afterward. At Yongle's orders, the *Veritable Records* and other official documents were written to obliterate the Jianwen years, officially incorporating them as years 32 through 35 of the reign of the Ming founder, the Hongwu emperor (r. 1368-1398). During the Yongle reign, the names of the leading loyalists of the Jianwen reign, men like Fang Xiaoru 方孝孺 (1357-1402), Lian Zining 練子寧 (d.1402), Huang Zicheng 黃子澄 (d.1402) and Qi Tai 齊泰(d.1402), became taboo at court and their writings were officially banned along with those of other loyalists.

After Yongle's death in 1425, under the direction of the two succeeding emperors, Hongxi 洪熙 (r. 1425-6) and Xuande 宣德 (r. 1426-35) and the leading court officials Yang Shiqi 楊士奇 (1365-1444) and others, the court consolidated its official position on the usurpation. On the one hand, the court firmly maintained the righteousness of the "Quelling Disturbance" (*jingnan* 靖難) and condemned the leading "evil ministers" (*jianchen* 奸臣) who were believed to have instigated Yongle's intervention. On the other hand, in the *Veritable Records* and in other documents, the court tentatively portrayed Yongle and his descendants as sympathetic to those who had died serving Jianwen. In 1425, the Hongxi emperor was said to have claimed that "Fang Xiaoru and his peers were loyal ministers," and he issued a general amnesty to the family members and associates of the loyalists. Those exiled were allowed to return and their property was restored to them.[7]

Following the declaration of amnesty by the Hongxi emperor, the court adopted a passive reticence on the issues of the usurpation, offering no further declarations for another century. Memorials submitted from the 1490s onward calling for the restoration of the Jianwen records and the honoring of the loyalists were largely ignored. The official court

[7] Ditmanson 2007, pp. 110-21. See also Chan 2006.

narrative of the usurpation, then, became something of a non-narrative. The straddled position of the moral usurpation and the forgiven loyalists was a clear indication of a larger story that remained untold.

EARLY LOCAL INITIATIVES

In the wake of the violent civil war and the information vacuum in the central government, localities around the empire were left with relics and stories of their own. These places were the hometowns of Jianwen loyalists, several of whom had scholarly, literary and political achievements of which the locals were furtively proud. Other places were sites of battles that magistrates and other officials had loyally defended. In some of these sites, the bodies of the fallen were buried in simple graves or simply hidden from the authorities. The writings of the martyrs of 1402, proscribed by the imperial court, were nervously secreted away in private collections. Even by the late fifteenth century, county and prefectural administrators reported that the local elders still told stories about those from their hometown who died in 1402.

From the beginning, local figures had taken steps to hide or bury the dead after the battles of the usurpation and to stow away objects from the usurpation. In Guangde 廣德 in Anhui, a Daoist monk, Sheng Xinian 盛希年 hid the remains of the Hanlin compiler Wang Shuying 王叔英 (d.1402), who died defending the departmental capital there.[8] The remains were hidden in a temple complex on Cishan 祠山 mountain near the prefectural capital. In Putian 莆田 in Fujian, the clothing and caps of two martyrs, Chen Yanhui 陳彥回 and Chen Jizhi 陳繼之 were kept in a hall in the county yamen.[9] The remains of Fang Xiaoru perhaps the most important officials at the Jianwen court, were taken from Nanjing and hidden away by his disciple Wang Tu 王稌 at nearby Jubaoshan 聚寶山 in Jiangning Prefecture 江寧府.[10] Fang's prescribed writings were preserved in a few households, despite the threat of prosecution. A local townsman Zhang Pu 章普, a *jinshi* of 1404, had kept a copy of Fang's works because "they illuminated the way of the former kings."[11] After the Minister of Rites, Chen Di 陳迪,

[8] ZhouYing 1986, 3:3b
[9] Hao Yulin 1986, 62:50a.
[10] He Shen 1986, 52:8b.
[11] He was executed for this after his colleague, Yang Shan 楊善 (1384-1458), betrayed him. Zhang Tingyu 1974, 171:4567-8. He Shen 1986, 230:18a.

was executed at Nanjing, his remains were secretly taken by his servants back to his native place in Xuancheng 宣城 in Ninguo Prefecture 寧國府 (in modern Zhejiang) for burial.[12] In some cases, *sub rosa* attempts were apparently made to honor these dead. The 1735 Zhejiang gazetteer claims that a shrine was built for Fang Xiaoru and his father at his ancestral home near Ninghai 寧海 in Taizhou Prefecture 台州 (modern Zhejiang) already in 1425, though this is difficult to verify.[13] Writers in the late 15th century frequently attested that elders in the local towns were able to recall the events of 1402 and were a major source of information in reconstructing events.

With the terse and uneasy narrative of 1402 provided by the court and imposed through stern proscription, these local gravesites, empty residences, manuscript publications and personal stories were missing a broader central narrative context. The gradual process of filling this vacuum was therefore entirely a local and trans-local process. In the late fifteenth century, there were still only a small number of commemorations of these martyrs. By the 1580s a variety of shrines commemorated upwards of 150 martyrs and their dependents who had died in the service of Jianwen. More importantly however, these commemorations, most of them individual and local, had emerged as part of a trans-local network of shrines, all of them designed in self-conscious awareness of a larger audience and a larger moral imperative to pursue such recognition for the martyrs. Hence, in 1573, when the Longqing Emperor 隆慶 (r. 1567-1572) ordered local officials to search for any records, relics or remains of Jianwen loyalists in their jurisdictions, to offer them sacrifices in shrines, and to publish their writings, he was simply confirming what had become a wide-spread normative practice across much of the realm at the local level.

MARTYRS FROM JI'AN

The early isolated localized efforts developed into a larger trans-local network in the middle of the fifteenth century. The catalysts for this transformation were a cohort of men from Jiangxi who dominated the upper echelons of the court, including the grand secretaries Xie Jin 解縉 (1369-1415), Yang Shiqi 楊士奇 (1365-1444), Hu Guang 胡廣

[12] Zhao Hongsi 1986, 161:3a-b.
[13] Ji Zengjun 1986, 222:21a.

(1370-1418) and Jin Youzi 金幼孜 (1368-1431). Early aides to the Yongle Emperor after usurpation of the throne, these men were among the chief architects of the official court narrative that papered over the Jianwen reign and recast the usurpation of 1402 in triumphal moral terms.[14] These men were also at the apex of a large network of Jiangxi scholars who, through connections and recommendations, played a prominent role in the central administration in the first half of the fifteenth century.[15]

Privately and in a low-key fashion, these Jiangxi officials began a process of honoring the martyrs of their own locality and others that they had known. Immediately after the usurpation, Grand Secretary Xie Jin composed his official eulogy for fellow Ji'an native Zhou Shixiu 周是修 (1354-1402), mentor to the Prince of Heng. Zhou's body was brought back to his native Taihe for burial after he hung himself upon Zhu Di's triumphant arrival in Nanjing. Zhou's family was clearly protected from the purge of relatives that took place after the usurpation. His son Zhou Yuan 周轅 (n.d.) became a school teacher and maintained close connections to his father's peers, including Xie Jin, Yang Shiqi and later Wang Zhi 王直 (1379-1462), another grand secretary from Taihe in Jiangxi.[16] Xie's essay was terse and focused upon Zhou's talent as a literary figure of Luling 廬陵, the prefectural seat of Ji'an, with no mention of the causes of his death.[17] In 1430, around the time that the *Veritable Records* and other official works were edited, Yang Shiqi also wrote a biography for his friend. Here he also praised Zhou's literary talent, and briefly commented on the tragedy of his death.[18] Unlike most other Jianwen loyalists, Zhou's collected writings were published not long after his death by his grandson.[19]

[14] See Ditmanson 2007. On Xie Jin's role, see Chan 2005.

[15] For an analysis of this network and Yang Shiqi's place in it, see Dardess 1996, especially ch. 6. On the Jiangxi dominance of the early Ming court, see Deng Kesheng 1991.

[16] Wang Zhi wrote about Zhou Yuan in a preface to Zhou's work. See Wang 1986, 16:4a-b. Wang also composed a eulogy to Zhou Shixiu, including information about his interment. See Wang 1986, 26:57a-59a.

[17] Zhou Shixiu 1986, 6:61a-b.

[18] Yang Shiqi 1986, 22:17a-18b.

[19] Zhou Shixiu 1986, *tiyao* 提要:2a.

It is a testament of the clout and political savvy of the Jiangxi clique at the court that such formal pieces could be written for Jianwen loyalists so soon after the usurpation. There was a limit to this clout however. While some of the loyalists of Jiangxi could be quietly honored, the same was not true of Lian Zining of Xin'gan 新淦 County, in Linjiang Prefecture 臨江. Like Fang Xiaoru and Huang Zicheng, Lian had been regarded as a particularly prominent "evil minister" and was therefore off-limits. A local scholar named Wang Zuo 王佐 compiled the surviving remnants of his writings, but they apparently did not circulate until they were deemed safe to publish in 1511.[20]

Over time, the commemoration of Jiangxi martyrs extended beyond the prefectures of these men to regions beyond. In 1439, while travelling home to Jiangxi along the Grand Canal, Yang Shiqi stopped in Pei County 沛縣 and wrote a poem for a family friend from Luling, Yan Bowei 顏伯瑋. As magistrate of Pei County, Yan and his son had died defending the county against the forces of the usurpation[21] Yang's commemorative piece for Yan Bowei signaled a modest and tacit sanction for the honoring of this martyr, both among his fellow Ji'an natives and at Pei County where Yan and his son had fallen in 1402. Early in the Zhengtong reign (1436-49), another scholar-official from Ji'an, the censor Peng Xu 彭勗, was distressed that the tomb built for Yan had fallen into disrepair. He erected a formal shrine after examining the local records of Yan's defense of the county seat. Peng composed a eulogy inscribed for the dead official, in which he praised his "righteous" death and explained that his desire in erecting the shrine was to promote local moral values for future generations.[22] He also followed Yang Shiqi's poem praising Yan's valor with one of his own.[23] Peng was linked to Yang and to Yan by his own Ji'an origins, but he had an even more proximal link to the martyrs of Jianwen. He came from Yongfeng 永豐, home of two other Jianwen martyrs, Zou Jin 鄒瑾 and Wei Mian 魏冕.[24]

[20] Cited in Tu Shufang 1988, 10:17a.
[21] Yang's account of his journey south is found in Yang 1986, 49:1a-20b. The poem on Yan Bowei and his son is found at 59:49a-b.
[22] Li Tang 2001, 9:54a-b (273).
[23] Wang Zhi 1990, 10:20a-b (377-8).
[24] Lu Ji 1986, 139:16b.

Soon afterwards other Ji'an statesmen followed the lead of Yang and Peng, stopping in Pei County along the Grand Canal to pay their respects at the site and to leave poems of their own. Zhou Xu 周敘 (1417 *jinshi*) from Jishui 吉水, who served in court as Hanlin compiler and court lecturer, stopped to write a piece praising the loyalty and filial piety of Yan and his son. Zhou's fellow townsman, Liu Yan 劉儼, first place winner of the 1442 civil service examinations, also wrote a piece praising the loyalty and great virtue of the Yan family. His poem was followed by one by a more famous Ji'an native Liu Qiu (劉球, 1392-1443, *jinshi* 1421). Liu was serving as a Hanlin expositor-in-waiting 翰林侍講 and shortly thereafter became a notorious martyr himself as an outspoken critic of the disastrous southern Luchuan 麓川 campaigns in Yunnan and Burma ordered by the eunuch Wang Zhen 王振 (d.1449).[25]

By 1441, Yang Shiqi's willingness to voice his concern for the recognition of these martyrs extended beyond his fellow Ji'an natives. Sometime earlier, he had written to the Prefect of Guangde Department to inquire after the remains of his colleague, the Hanlin compiler, Wang Shuying. He had heard reports that Wang had committed suicide in a temple near Cishan in Guangde while fleeing the usurpation forces. Hearing a confirmation, he then wrote a eulogy for his old friend.[26] Wang was not a Ji'an colleague, but had worked closely with Yang in the Jianwen years. Yang's pieces were personal reflections on Wang, his literary talents, his moral character and their friendship. While he commented upon Wang's noble tragedy in death, he cautiously avoided any larger implications of the usurpation. Indeed only a figure of Yang's stature could have had the clout and political sagacity to have written eulogies at this early stage.

These Ji'an writers were among the earliest to commemorate specific Jianwen loyalists, but they was a remarkable exception to the general slow and low-key pace by which martyrs were recognized and honored throughout the realm. Clearly, the authority of Yang Shiqi cast a long shadow of legitimation and protection, but those who followed him in writing about Yan Bowei were prominent officials in their own right with a keen sense of the limits of acceptable political discourse. But

[25] Franke 1976, p. 1348.

[26] The letter to the prefect of Guangde is found in Yang 1986, 47:11a. His eulogy is found in 46:11a-12a.

beyond this special connection, efforts to commemorate other Jianwen martyrs were slow and decidedly local in nature.

MARTYRS AS TRANS-LOCAL LINKS

By the middle of the fifteenth century, the localized efforts and the efforts of prominent Jiangxi officials began to broaden into a wider network of commemorations to the Jianwen martyrs. On the one hand, the prominent officials from Jiangxi discussed above had tentatively signaled the leniency of the court in these matters. On the other hand, travelling officials had begun to share information on the commemoration of martyrs from region to region. Officials who actively commemorated the Jianwen martyrs who lived or died in their jurisdiction usually came from districts that had their own important martyrs to commemorate.

One such figure was Ke Xian 柯暹 (n.d.) from Chizhou Prefecture 池州府 in the southern metropolitan district. Ke was well connected to Yang Shiqi and other prominent figures in the central administration and eventually earned a prestigious position working on the Yongle Emperor's encyclopedia project, the *Yongle dadian* 永樂大典. He later served as magistrate of Jishui County in Ji'an, after which he was promoted, on Yang Shiqi's recommendation, to become surveillance commissioner of Jiangxi. Through his career track, Ke seems to have developed a knowledge of the Jianwen martyrs of Jiangxi, and was compelled to compose a biography was composed for Chizhou's most important Jianwen martyr, Huang Guan 黃觀, a supervising secretary in the Revenue Ministry. Despite his powerful connections, however, Ke did not publish his biography.[27]

In a similar vein, during the Xuande reign 宣德 1425-35, in Rui'an 瑞安 in Zhejiang, a biography and a chronology was composed for the martyred revenue minister Zhuo Jing 卓敬 by his fellow townsman and disciple, Huang Chaoguang 黃朝光 . Though Huang also did not dare to publish these materials, his son, Huang Yangzheng 黃養正, later took Zhuo's biography, along with a portrait of the martyr, to the capital to solicit a formal biography from his own teacher, Liu Qiu, the Hanlin expositor-in-waiting from Ji'an noted above who had written for the martyr Yan Bowei. Huang's outreach to Liu was clearly done under

[27] Cited in Tu Shufang 1988, 8:12b-13a.

the cautious terms of their master-student relationship. Huang might have further been motivated by Liu's outspoken reputation, or perhaps by the fact that Liu had already shown his willingness to write for another martyr, Yan Bowei. Liu apparently wrote a biography 傳 for Zhuo Jing that does not survive.[28]

The tentative quality and limited focus of local commemorative efforts was still apparent in the 1460s, when Zhao Hong 趙洪, a little-known schoolteacher in Linhai 臨海, in Taizhou Prefecture 台州府, sought to compile the surviving works of his fellow townsman, Fang Xiaoru 方孝孺, the most prominent of the martyrs of the 1402. Zhao claimed to have heard of Fang from the elders in his region, but by then he seemed obscure enough that Zhao felt compelled to re-introduce him with a preface that recounted his history and carefully praised his brilliant service in the Hanlin Academy.[29]

Zhao's enterprise was limited in its scope and resources and later editors of Fang's work derided its errors and omissions. Zhao himself complained of his lack of resources and that he worked on the project in solitude and without adequate materials. He had difficulties finding and gathering up Fang's works, relying on a friend who brought a manuscript copy from Sichuan. Nevertheless, Zhao's work was one of the earliest to explicitly present a Jianwen martyr as a figure of local pride. In fact, Zhao felt compelled to answer to the charge that his efforts were simply for the promotion of his locality, arguing instead that the publication of Fang's writing had a larger moral effect, both at home and across the realm. For Zhao, the goal of restoring the memory of a Jianwen martyr like Fang Xiaoru served a moral purpose with which both the local and broader community ought to identify.

Zhao Hong's work in commemorating Fang Xiaoru was soon outstripped by other efforts in Linhai and in the broader Taizhou prefectural region. In 1489, another Linhai townsman, Chen Ji 陳紀 compiled a far more thorough-going biography of Fang, providing much more detail on Fang's scholarly and literary role.[30] Zhao's publication of Fang's writings was upstaged in 1479 under the direction of a new magistrate in nearby Ninghai County 寧海縣. Guo Shen 郭伸 (1475 *jinshi*) apparently knew something of Fang Xiaoru before

[28] Cited in Tu Shufang 1988, 9:17b-18a.
[29] Zhao's preface can be found in Fang Xiaoru 1996, Appendix: 896-7.
[30] Fang Xiaoru 1996, Appendix: 884-6.

coming to his appointment, for soon after his arrival in the late 1470s, he sought out Fang's old residence and an old shrine that locals must have built. Guo ordered them renovated and offered sacrifices. Guo also heard that Xie Duo (1435-1510) and Huang Kongchao (1428-91, 1460 *jinshi*) from the nearby counties of Taiping 太平 and Huangyan 黃巖 had embarked on a more comprehensive project to publish Fang's writings. Xie and Huang held prominent positions at court as a Hanlin compiler and as vice minister of Works and had collaborated with several of their colleagues from other areas to collect and collate Fang's writings. Complaining of the inferior quality of Zhao Hong's earlier edition, they planned a more comprehensive version. Hence when this new edition of Fang's work was published in 1479, it was a far more prominent project based upon the regional efforts of the different parts of the prefecture and with the scholarly participation of a broader scholarly circle, including such luminaries as the Suzhou statesman Ye Sheng 葉盛 (1420-74). In their prefaces, they explained the broader importance of Fang's scholarly and moral contribution to the empire. "How," exclaimed Huang Kongchao, could we people of Taizhou Prefecture keep this just for ourselves?"[31] Here Huang recast Fang Xiaoru as belonging to the whole prefecture, not just to the Ninghai county, as Zhao had modestly done earlier. The participants in this project expressed their appreciation to the magistrate Guo Shen for his participation in the project, and it is clear that he played an important role in the logistics of having Fang's work published.[32]

Magistrate Guo left no writings, and so it is difficult to discern his views on the project. He was quoted by Xie Duo as declaring "The Master was from this township. Therefore, we cannot let his work disappear. It would be beneficial to have this published."[33] Guo likely had his own acquaintance with the issue of venerating the Jianwen martyrs, for his own home was in Yichun County 宜春縣 in Yuanzhou Prefecture 袁州府. This was just upriver from Fenyi 分宜, the home one of Fang Xiaoru's close Jianwen colleagues, Huang Zicheng 黃子澄, minister of the Office of Imperial Sacrifices. Hence it does not seem surprising that Guo came to his position in Ninghai with Fang Xiaoru in mind.

[31] Fang Xiaoru 1996, Appendix: 899.
[32] This project is described in greater detail in Ditmanson 2002, 122ff.
[33] Fang Xiaoru 1996, Appendix: 858.

In the rhetoric of this publishing collaboration, we see a general pattern in the different perspectives of the local gentry and the local officials in the commemoration of Jianwen loyalists. Local gentry like Huang regarded their enterprise as presenting their martyr Fang Xiaoru for the benefit of the broader community. Magistrate Guo shared this goal, with a clear sense of his own official obligations to the locality: the preservation of its moral assets.

From the 1470s onward, the local commemoration of Jianwen martyrs seemed to be increasingly collaborative efforts between local gentry and locally assigned officials. By 1482, for example, local people in Xuancheng 宣城, Ningguo 寧國 in Anhui had begun to offer their own annual sacrifices to Chen Di 陳迪, their townsman who had been executed by slow-slicing for his opposition to Yongle. In response to this local practice, in 1484 the prefect Tu Guan 涂觀 had a formal shrine built to Chen Di at his old residence.[34]

Thus century, the commemoration of these martyrs served as a symbolic nexus linking different localities together. Whereas the first generations to commemorate the martyrs worked in isolation, subsequent efforts were more concerted collaborations across county, prefectural and provincial lines. A good example is the evolving commemoration of Wang Shuying, Yang Shiqi's friend mentioned above. Wang was from the Huangyan 黃巖 and Taiping 太平 regions in Taizhou 台州 in Zhejiang, not far from Fang Xiaoru's home district. Wang died in Guangde Department in Anhui. His remains were secreted on the grounds of a temple there on Cishan Mountain by a Daoist monk who was originally from Wang's native Huangyan. As noted above, the process of commemorating Wang as a martyr had begun with the circumspect eulogy by Yang Shiqi in the 1440s. By 1473, fellow natives of Huangyan, Xie Shixiu 謝世修 and Xu Fu 徐孚 had collected private local funds to compile and publish Wang's writings.[35] That same year in Guangde, the prefect Zhou Ying 周瑛 (1430-80, *jinshi* 1469), arranged for Wang's remains to be reburied and commemorated in Guangde. Zhou explained that he had heard much about Wang from the gentry of Wang's home region, as well as from the local people at his current post in Guangde. He accordingly erected a shrine to Wang and offered sacrifices to him. This commemoration in

[34] Cited in Tu Shufang 1988, 8:3a-b.
[35] Wang Shuying1986, supplement:1a.

the same year that Wang's works were published suggests a linkage and coordination across the localities of Guangde and Taizhou. Sometime later in Guangde, Zhou Ying was remembered for his association with Wang Shuying, for at some unknown date, Wang and Zhou had become associated with one another and were added to a Yuan dynasty era shrine in Guangde to the Song dynasty scholars, Zhen Dexiu 真德秀 and Fan Zhongyan 范仲淹.[36]

Zhou Ying himself was from Putian 蒲田 in Fujian, a county two of its own martyrs, Chen Yanhui and Chen Jizhi, whose clothes and cap had long been preserved in a hall in the county seat, as noted above. Zhou was part of a close-knit group of Putian scholars that eventually established shrines to the two Chens in 1517.[37] In his inscription for this shrine, Putian resident Lin Jun 林俊, a friend of Zhou Ying's, praised the two Chens as peers of Fang Xiaoru, Zhou Shixiu, Wang Shuying, Huang Guan, Chen Di and several other martyrs who had been recognized elsewhere. Now that these other Jianwen officials were widely known and honored, Lin insisted that his martyred fellow townsmen be included in their ranks. At some later (unrecorded) date, Chen Yanhui, one of the martyrs of Putian, was himself later enshrined in Shexian 歙縣 in Anhui, where he served as prefect until he fell in 1402.[38]

Hence, by the end of the fifteenth century, the commemoration of these martyrs had evolved into a network of information and connections across several different counties, where officials serving in various precincts interacted with local gentry in an exchange of information on the usurpation and the geographic range of the martyred loyalists. This network of exchange gradually seemed to have lead to a broad consensus of views on the martyrs and to standard modes of honoring them. In part, these commemorations now seemed to be aimed more self-consciously at a broader and more synthesized audience. Decades earlier, Yang Shiqi and others had written poems and eulogies that seemed to have a private and personal air to them. Even when Zhao Hong compiled and published Fang Xiaoru's writings in 1467, his uncertain and defensive preface hinted at an unclear readership. By the end of the century, however, commemorations and prefaces for

[36] Zhao Hongsi 1986, 42:40a.
[37] Gong Zhaolin 1963, 3:36b (137).
[38] Zhao Hongsi 1986, 41:20b.

published works were being composed with a broad readership in mind. Scholars in the 1480s and 90s quoted from the 1479 edition of Fang's writings. New editions of Fang's works were published in 1520 in another collaborative effort, this time between the prefect of Taizhou and local scholars. The republication was necessary, its editors explained, because the older blocks were already worn out.[39]

By the late fifteenth century, commemorations of Jianwen martyrs in different localities had become remarkably standardized. In their efforts to defend the loyalists, eulogists almost uniformly drew upon the same quotes from the Yongle and Hongxi emperors. Yongle was quoted as saying that the loyalists "received their salaries and then exerted themselves completely." He was said to have noted that "if Lian Zining were still alive, he would certainly employ him." As noted above, Hongxi had been quoted as saying that "Fang Xiaoru and his peers were all loyal ministers."[40] Such passages began to appear in commemorations on a regular basis. For example, already in 1473, Zhou Ying used each of these quotes in his inscription for Wang Shuying's shrine in Guangde. In the early sixteenth century in Jiangxi, the scholar Qian Qi (錢琦 1469-1549, *jinshi* 1508) used all these same phrases in his biography of Lian Zining.[41]

While much of the information on the martyrs was conveyed from locality to locality, occasional prominent officials played an important role in synthesizing and contextualizing the aggregation of information. Scholars like Xie Duo and Huang Kongchao who republished Fang Xiaoru's works clearly made use of their prominence in the central government to gather resources and information for the publication of Fang Xiaoru's collected works.

By the end of the fifteenth century, a few prominent officials had begun to use their broad connections and access to court records to compile biographies of the martyrs. The retired grand secretary Yin Zhi 尹直 (1427-1511, *jinshi* 1454) devoted considerable effort to composing biographies of various Jianwen martyrs. These were not compiled into a single collection, but were scattered throughout his miscellanies. Yin's biographies were rich in lurid detail on the deaths of the martyrs and on what happened to their families. Around the same time, in the

[39] See Ditmanson 2002, 126-8.
[40] The evolution and use of these quotes is examined in Ditmanson 2007.
[41] Lian Zining 1986, supplement.

1480s and 1490s, the scholar Song Duanyi 宋端儀 (1447-1501, *js* 1481) compiled the first large-scale collection of biographies of Jianwen martyrs. Song was from Putian and was acquainted with Zhou Ying and others who had written about the Jianwen martyrs. He had also served prominently in the Ministry of Rites and his collection made significant use of documents available in the central ministries. Song died before completing his manuscript and it remained unpublished in manuscript form for decades.[42] The accumulation of detailed biographies of Jianwen loyalists at the end of the fifteenth century was possible because of the exchange and accumulation of information about these martyrs between localities in the preceding decades.

These compilations by Yin and Song laid the groundwork for more comprehensive and polished compilations in the early sixteenth century onward. Works such as Zhang Qin's 張芹(1466-1541, *jinshi* 1502) *Complete Remaining Records* (備遺錄) in 1516 and Huang Zuo's 黃佐 (1490-1566, *jinshi* 1521) *Record of the Extirpation* (革除遺事) were more thorough in collecting and collating local and central accounts of the Jianwen loyalists and the events of 1402. Such compilations continued to be published throughout the sixteenth century, culminating in Tu Shufang's 屠叔方 (*jinshi* 1577) compendium, *Unofficial Record of the Jianwen Reign* (建文朝野彙編) in 1598.

THE ZHENGDE AND JIAJING WATERSHED AND BEYOND

By the Zhengde (1506-21) and Jiajing reigns (1522-66), the veneration of the Jianwen martyrs had become standard practice nearly where ever they could be found. Most of the localized shrines to martyrs began during this period, following the conventions established in previous reigns. The pattern of dual initiatives between local gentry and locally assigned officials continued to shape the establishment of these shrines. Some local officials took on the project of enshrining and honoring Jianwen martyrs in each of their appointments. Shao Rui 邵銳 (*jinshi* 1508), from Renhe 仁和 near Hangzhou, collaborated with the regional prefect and the county magistrate of Fenyi to locate the old home of

[42] On the compilations of Yin and Song and others in the mid-Ming, see Ditmanson 2007, 129-35.

Huang Zicheng and to build a shrine there during the Zhengde reign.[43] Later in the Jiajing reign, as an educational intendant, Shao built a shrine and offered sacrifices to the martyred county teacher Chen Sixian 陳思賢 in Gaozhou Prefecture 高州府 in southern Guangdong.[44] Shao and his collaborating officials on these projects were known for their record of shrine-building in other jurisdictions in which they served.

The scholar Wang Yunfeng 王雲鳳 (1465-1517, *jinshi* 1484) was a northerner from Heshun 和順 in Liaozhou Prefecture 遼州 in Shanxi. Wang was known for his active efforts at promoting schools and for his crusades against illicit shrines. He took a particular interest in the Jianwen martyrs linked to his region. Much of the activity of recognizing martyrs had taken place in the southern regions, but by the Zhengde and Jiajing reigns, northern communities had begun to commemorate martyrs as well. Wang wrote a commemorative essay on the martyr Gao Wei 高巍, who came from his same prefecture.[45] Wang also took a particular interest in Fang Xiaoru and wrote a eulogy for him. He established a shrine to Fang in Hanzhong 漢中 in Shaanxi, where Fang had served briefly as a teacher. Wang's inscription at the shrine railed against the injustice done to Fang and privately granted him the posthumous title of Wenzhen 文貞, "Civil and Virtuous."[46]

For the more well-known martyrs like Fang Xiaoru, shrines began to appear in the Jiajing reign and after in any location that could claim some of his legacy. In addition to the shrine to him at his home in Ninghai, shrines were built for him at the prefectural capital in Taizhou and at his (formerly secret) burial site at Jubaoshan 聚寶山 in Jiangning county 江寧縣, near Nanjing. In addition to the shrine built in Shaanxi, mentioned above, shrines to Fang were also built in Huating 華亭 and in Songjiang 松江 near Suzhou.[47] Each site attempted to draw whatever association they could from Fang's life.

Other scholars were similarly honored in various places. A shrine was built for Huang Guan in his home prefecture of Chizhou in Anhui, and

[43] Xie Min 1986, 108:33b.
[44] Zhang 1974, 143:11a-b.
[45] Wang's essay, praising Gao's promotion of education, is found in the Liaozhou tongzhi 遼州府志 6.1:24a-25b.
[46] Fang Xiaoru 1996, Appendix:887.
[47] Zhao Hongsi 1986, 30:35b, 39:2b. He Shen 1986, 58:29b.

in the Zhengde reign, local people erected a shrine was erected to him on the Luocha Jetty 羅刹磯 on the Liyang River 李陽河 in the Metropolitan District, where Huang leapt off his boat to commit suicide rather than surrender to Yongle's forces.[48] Another shrine was erected on the Qingxi River 清溪 in Nanjing, at the site where Huang's wife and children also committed suicide by drowning.[49] This intense desire to commemorate any local links to the martyrs is illustrated in the inscription for this shrine by the famous scholar Jiao Hong 焦竑 (1541-1620, *jinshi* 1589). As a Jiangning resident, he lived not far from the places in which the Huang family members perished:

> I am fortunate to have been born in their district and to know of them. If I do not rouse tears and praise beauty, how we show later generations the virtue of Master [Huang]'s whole household? The minister died for his lord; the wife died for her husband and the daughter died for her parents. As prisoners, they died for their lord with the brilliance of the sun and the moon, stirring the world. But this need not rely upon my words. There is evidence in the veritable records and in the words of the elders. The facts can be verified one by one, including that which has become muddled by the commoners. As one born here, this is my responsibility.[50]

By the time of Jiao's inscription, the construction of shrines and commemorations had progressed far beyond the tentative efforts of the mid-fifteenth century to become a widely recognized moral duty.

The construction of shrines to the martyrs had become such a standard obligation by the mid-sixteenth century that the norm was used by locals and by local officials as an argument for building more. In the Jiajing era, for example, the magistrate and local people of Taiping erected a shrine to their townsman Wang Shuying, noting that a shrine for him already existed where he died in Guangde and that a shrine to Fang Xiaoru already existed in neighboring Ninghai. Hence, they argued, it was a "discrepancy" that there was no special shrine to him in Taiping. (He was already worshiped in the shrine to local worthies.) The "Loyalty and Virtue Shrine 忠節祠 was thus erected. An attempt was made to locate any surviving descendants to support, but to no avail.[51]

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[48] Zhao Hongsi 1986, 41:53a.
[49] Wang Shizhen 1986, 25:17a.
[50] Zhao Hongsi 1986, 37:20b.
[51] Zeng Caihan 1981, 4:14b-15a.

The pristine moral virtue of the Jianwen martyrs had become a symbol of considerable plasticity, and could be deployed to represent the moral vision of a county, a prefecture, a province or the empire itself. The gentry of Taiping were concerned that Wang Shuying was their representative, and therefore competed with the shrine bestowed to him at Guangde where he committed suicide. At Taizhou prefecture, scholars and officials sought to extend the claim to Fang Xiaoru's legacy beyond his local county of Ninghai. In 1511, when the famous Li Mengyang (李夢陽 1437-1529) established a shrine to commemorate Lian Zining, he located Lian and fellow martyr Huang Zicheng in the legacy of Jiangxi province as a whole, asserting that Lian and Huang, together with Wen Tianxiang 文天祥 and others, represented the "moral force" (氣) that infused the history of Jiangxi.[52]

CONCLUSIONS

The evolution of the veneration of the martyrs of 1402 complicates our perceptions of local activism in several ways. On the one hand, the veneration of Jianwen loyalists was part of the process of forging a renewed local identity in the late fifteenth and sixteenth century. Local proponents held that these loyalists were premier representatives of the moral core of the local community and as such, their "fragrance" lingered on from 1402 down to their own day. For Zhao Hong in 1467, Fang Xiaoru was part of the unique legacy of Ninghai County. For Jiao Hong in the late sixteenth century, the tragedies of Huang Guan's were part of the moral essence of the Nanjing suburbs.

On the other hand, the practices of commemorating the Jianwen martyrs at the local level were clearly synchronized with and conditioned by information and influences that were trans-local in nature. From the mid-fifteenth century on, the process of venerating the martyrs of a locality involved learning from other localities and outside sources about the broader meaning and significance of the Jianwen loyalists and the events of 1402. What is striking about the commemoration of Jianwen martyrs in the sixteenth century is not how localized they were, but how standardized.

This is not to say the local identities and local values were necessarily becoming homogenized or to deny that geographic differences and

[52] Li Mengyang1986, 49:2b-3a.

philosophical divisions were effaced. Rather, the ubiquity of the commemoration of the Jianwen loyalists suggests certain consistent shared elements within this diversity of local identity and local activism. For example, among those who championed the Jianwen martyrs in the early sixteenth century were partisans who counted themselves as Wang Yangming's followers and there were those who saw themselves as adversaries of Wang thought.

In the discourse on the martyrs, the theme of loyalty (*zhong* 忠) was the most persistent and seemed to embody a set of social, political, and cultural values that underpinned the burgeoning activism and reassertion of local and trans-local identity during this period. The significance behind the loyalty of the Jianwen martyrs lay in the fact that it was an abstracted loyalty that was not governed by the reigning imperial court. The virtue of the Jianwen loyalists lay in the perception of their absolute integrity, a kind of moral autonomy that could be deployed for a range of uses in local, trans-local identities and empire-wide identities.

Thus, the trans-local impetus to venerate the Jianwen loyalists also suggests a complex set of dynamics in terms of the relationship between local society and the central court. Indeed what we see over the course of late fifteenth and early sixteenth century is not simply a retreat of the central state from local life, but something even more dramatic. While the early Ming saw the Hongwu Emperor's attempts to impose a moral vision upon local society, the middle and late Ming social and political dynamics seem to indicate something very close to an inversion of that process: a broadly based impetus to impose the consensus values of local communities upon the central court. The full recognition of honors that was finally granted in the third year of Wanli era (萬曆 1573-1620) to the Jianwen Emperor and to his loyal ministers was driven almost entirely by a "localist" or trans-localist agenda, compelling the court to comply not simply by the succession of memorials from the 1490s onward, but also by the established community standards of the realm.

In this more generalized sense, the growing synchronization of local efforts to venerate the Jianwen martyrs corresponded closely to rising tenor of synchronized responses to the court and challenges to the imperium, as it weathered turmoil over the course of the middle Ming: the Tumu Incident that led to the kidnapping of the emperor in 1449,

the rise of the eunuchs Wang Zhen, Liu Jin and eventually Wei Zhongxian, and the succession crises of 1457, 1521 and the 1580s.

As my overview of the evolution of the Jianwen martyr commemorations indicates, this growing synchronization was undergirded by the dramatic economic changes that took place in the middle Ming. The last decades of the fifteenth century saw the beginning of a burgeoning publishing industry,[53] both commercial and private, which, as I have shown, fueled the spread of localized information about the Jianwen martyrs. Improved travel and communicate further accelerated this process. And finally, the gradual increase in local wealth increased the possibilities of building and rebuilding shrines and publishing writings by and about the Jianwen martyrs.

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[53] Chow 2004, p. 22.

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THE TRANSMISSION OF SANQU SONGS, WRITERS' REPUTATION, AND LITERATI NETWORK IN THE MID MING: LOCAL AND TRANS-LOCAL CONSIDERATIONS *

TIAN YUAN TAN

1. INTRODUCTION

The mid Ming is an extremely interesting and significant period in understanding the development of *sanqu* 散曲 (literally 'dispersed or individual songs'),[1] a kind of song verse in Chinese literature. After its so-called 'golden age' in the Yuan dynasty (1260-1368), *sanqu* went through a period of decline during the early decades of the Ming dynasty (1368-1644) in which we could find *sanqu* writings by only a few major writers such as Tang Shi 湯式 (fl.1383) and Zhu Youdun 朱有燉 (1374-1442). However, as scholars have observed, the 'revival' of the genre then took place around the second half of the fifteenth century and extended into the sixteenth century.[2]

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[1] Previous studies in western language on *sanqu* include Crump 1983 and 1993, Radtke 1984, Schlepp 1970, and more recently, Schlepp 2001. All of these studies, however, dealt almost exclusively with Yuan *sanqu* and very little has been discussed about the development of the genre beyond the Yuan dynasty.

[2] For example, see Schlepp 2001, p.381; Liang Yang and Yang Dongfu 1995, p.143; Zhao Yishan 2003, pp.141-145.

The idea of this 'revival' may be supported by the enormous number of songs and writers in the Ming. *Quan Ming sanqu* 全明散曲 (hereafter *QMSQ*) collects 10,606 *xiaoling* 小令 (short songs), and 2,064 *taoshu* 套數 (song sets), far exceeding what we have for the Yuan and Qing dynasty. According to *Quan Yuan sanqu* 全元散曲, we have 3,853 *xiaoling* and 457 *taoshu* in the Yuan, and according to *Quan Qing sanqu* 全清散曲, 3,214 *xiaoling* and 1,166 *taoshu* in the Qing. It has been pointed out that a more accurate count of Qing dynasty *sanqu* should be around 1700 *xiaoling* and 800 *taoshu*. See Liang Yang and Yang Dongfu 1995, pp.268-9. The number of Ming *sanqu* writers (406) is also the double of that in the Yuan (187) and the Qing dynasty (around 200, according to the amendment to the numbers in *Quan Qing sanqu* made by Liang and Yang 1995, p.269).

This revival of the *sanqu* genre in the mid Ming witnessed the emergence of a huge number of *sanqu* writers. In modern scholarship, these songwriters are usually classified into either the Northern or the Southern writers. Such a binary classification, however, fails to capture the movement of texts as well as the interaction between clusters of writers. To capture this process of *sanqu* writing, we need to rethink ways to account for and describe these writers. In this paper, I will first propose a new approach by considering the production, transmission, and consumption of songs from a local perspective. I argue that the emergence of these writers in the mid Ming took place as a distinctively local phenomenon, and that we are able to find several local centers of *sanqu* writing in this period.

Next, I will discuss the trans-local transmission of songs among these various local centers and explore how writers from different parts of the mid-Ming empire were connected through the formation of literary communities trans-locally. How did people from one region get to know about *sanqu* songs and writers from another area? How were texts circulated? Whose name was transmitted and known beyond one's local circle? Focusing on two case studies of the circulation of songs originally composed in Shandong and Shaanxi respectively, I examine how songs were transmitted locally and trans-locally, and how reputation traveled beyond these local regions through literati network.

2. UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD OF *SANQU* SONGS IN THE MID MING: FROM NORTH-SOUTH DIVISION TO LOCAL CENTERS

To illustrate the vibrant revival of *sanqu* in the mid Ming, let us begin by revisiting an often cited passage by the late Ming critic Wang Jide 王驥德 (d. 1623) in his *Qulü* 曲律 (On Rules of Songs):

> Among recent writers of songs,[3] for northern songs we have Principal Graduate Kang Hai 康海 (*zi* Duishan, 1475-1540) and *Taishi*[4] Wang Jiusi 王九思 (*zi* Meipi, 1468-1551) from Guanzhong, Principal Graduate Yang Shen 楊慎 (*zi* Sheng'an, 1488-1559) from Shu, *Taishi* [5] Chen Yi 陳沂 (*zi*

[3] The term *ci* is commonly used in the Ming to refer to *sanqu* songs.
[4] General term for staff members in the Hanlin Academy. Wang was taken into the Academy as a Hanlin Bachelor (*shujishi* 庶吉士) and later appointed the Examining Editor (*jiantao* 檢討).
[5] Chen served as a junior compiler (*bianxiu* 編修) in the Hanlin Academy.

Shiting, 1469-1538), *Taishi* [6] Hu Rujia 胡汝嘉 (*zi* Qiuyu, *jinshi* 1553) and recluse Xu Lin 徐霖 (*zi* Ranxian, 1462-1538) from Jinling, *shangbao*[7] Li Kaixian 李開先 (*zi* Bohua, 1502-1568) and Assistant Prefect[8] Feng Weimin (*zi* Haifu, 1511-1580) from Shandong, Case Reviewer[9] Chang Lun (*zi* Louju, 1493-1526) from Shanxi, recluse Wang Pan 王磐 (*zi* Xilou, ca.1455-after 1529) from Weiyang,[10] District Assistant Wang Tian 王田 (*zi* Shungeng) from Ji'nan, and [Secretary in] the Ministry of Rites Yang Xunji 楊循吉 (*zi* Nanfeng, 1456-1544) from Wuzhong. [The style of] Kang is rich but untidy; Wang is alluring yet well-arranged; Yang charming and flowery; Chen and Hu forthright and free; Xu free flowing but not yet polished; Li virile and straightforward; Feng full of luxuriant talent, but flaws appear at times; Chang full of courage yet lacks polishing; Xilou specialized in [writing] short tunes, [his style is] graceful and always refined; Shungeng often reaches close to human feelings, and is also competent in bantering and mockery; Yang is more boorish and rash. These gentlemen occasionally wrote southern tunes, but they were all not masters in it. As for southern songs we have Chen Duo 陳鐸 (*zi* Dasheng, ca.1460-ca.1521) and Jin Luan 金鑾 (*zi* Zaiheng, ca.1486-ca.1575) from Jinling, Shen Shi 沈仕 (*zi* Qingmen, 1488-1565) from Wulin,[11] Tang Yin 唐寅 (*zi* Bohu, 1470-1524), Zhu Yunming 祝允明 (*zi* Zhishan, 1460-1526), and Liang Chengyu 梁辰魚 (*zi* Bolong, 1519-1591) from Wu; Chen and Liang were the most well-known. The *xiaoling* by Tang, Jin and Shen are all very graceful and refined. Zhu's *xiaoling* writings are fine too, but his longer pieces are just mediocre. Chen and Liang wrote mostly song suites, which well displayed their talent and ability; but conventional expressions and clichés also abound [in their writings], and [in that respect, Chen and Liang] were almost equal. As for the rest, I have not read all their writings, and therefore would not venture to comment on who is superior or inferior.

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[6] Hu also served as a junior compiler in the Hanlin Academy.

[7] *Shangbao* refers to the Seals Office, but as far as I know, Li Kaixian did not hold an official post under that agency. Before he was forced to retire in 1541, Li was the Vice Minister in the Court of Imperial Sacrifices in charge of the College of Translators.

[8] *Biejia* is an alternative term for *tongpan* 通判.

[9] *Tingping* is an official term used in the Han dynasty equivalent to *pingshi* 評事 (Case Reviewer). Chang Lun served as *pingshi* at the Court of Judicial Review (*Dalisi* 大理寺).

[10] Alternative name for Yangzhou.

[11] Alternative name for Hangzhou.

> 近之為詞者，北詞則關中康狀元對山、王太史渼陂，蜀則楊狀元升菴，金陵則陳太史石亭、胡太史秋宇、徐山人髯仙，山東則李尚寶伯華，馮別駕海浮，山西則常廷評樓居，維揚則王山人西樓，濟南則王邑佐舜耕，吳中則楊儀部南峰。康富而蕪，王艷而整，楊俊而葩，陳、胡爽而放，徐暢而未汰，李豪而率，馮才氣勃勃，時見紕纇，常多俠而寡馴，西樓工短調、翩翩都雅，舜耕多近人情、兼善諧謔，楊較粗莽。諸君子間作南調，則皆非當家也。南則金陵陳大聲、金在衡，武林沈青門，吳唐伯虎、祝希哲、梁伯龍；而陳、梁最著。唐、金、沈小令，並斐亹有致。祝小令亦佳，長則草草。陳、梁多大套，頗著才情；然多俗意陳語，伯仲間耳。餘未悉見，不敢定其甲乙也。[12]

In this passage, Wang Jide gives an account of what he calls the "recent writers" active during the mid-Ming period. He discusses these writers in two separate groups: those who wrote northern songs and those who wrote southern songs. This distinction was important in the mid Ming which was the pivotal period in the development of *qu* 曲 (a collective term for both *sanqu* songs and drama) that witnessed the rise of the southern songs (*nanqu* 南曲) and the decline of the northern songs (*beiqu* 北曲).[13]

This passage by Wang is often cited by modern scholars as a piece of evidence showing that a North-South division existed among the songwriters during this period. In modern scholarship, it is now a common practice to divide *sanqu* writers of the mid-Ming dynasty using such a binary classification. The application of this North-South classification, however, is by no means a clear-cut issue. A writer may be characterized as belonging to the 'northern' group in one study, and as belonging to the 'southern' in another, in part due to the ambiguity and confusion in what is meant by 'Northern' and 'Southern'. This is reflected in the different terms used to describe theses writers, for example, 'northern/southern' (*beifang* 北方/*nanfang* 南方), 'northern/southern schools' (*beipai* 北派/*nanpai* 南派), or 'northern/southern *qu*' (*beiqu*/*nanqu*) writers.[14] It could refer to the

[12] Wang Jide 1983, pp.218-9.

[13] For example, Zheng Qian 鄭騫 sees the hundred years from 1465 to 1567, covering the four reign periods Chenghua, Hongzhi, Zhengde, and Jiajing, as the turning point of this development. See Zheng Qian 1972, p.248. See also Dolby 1976, p.89, and Gong Pengcheng 1994, pp.381-434.

[14] For examples of such classifications, see recent histories of *sanqu* such as Li Changji 1991, Yang Chunqiu 1992, Wang Xingqi 1999, and Zhao Yishan 2007. For a

regional north and south, the difference between the northern and southern songs, or even a more elusive and debatable northern or southern style. Whether a writer writes a certain genre or style of songs does not necessarily correspond to his origins. A *sanqu* writer, regardless of his regional origins, could write either northern or southern songs, and in northern or southern style, and very often, one is capable of both.[15] Despite these issues, the North-South classification is popular for its advantage in providing a structure to literary histories and in allowing one to make broad observations on literary developments.

However, such a general division between the north and the south tells us very little about the actual production, transmission, and consumption of songs, which was very much a communal and social act and an experience involving a community of writers, readers and audiences, and commentators. Now, if we reconsider Wang's passage cited above, there is another aspect in it that is very much unexplored. It is noteworthy that Wang pointed out the native place of every writer he listed. I suggest that one may indeed therefore read this passage as a preliminary mapping of the major songwriters in mid-Ming China.

If we traced the individual communities centered around these writers, we can start to see that this so-called 'revival' of *sanqu* in mid Ming took place distinctively as a local phenomenon. For example, I have argued elsewhere that in the first half of sixteenth-century north China, activities related to songs and drama were mainly found in local communities centered on retired or dismissed officials such as Wang Jiusi and Kang Hai in Shaanxi, and Li Kaixian in Shandong. Recently, I have extended this approach in studying the first generation of Nanjing songwriters such as Chen Duo and Xu Lin who emerged in the second half of the fifteenth century.[16] Other local centers of song production worth looking at include Suzhou with writers such as Tang Yin and Zhu Yunming, and Yunnan where Yang Shen spent his years in exile.

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general discussion on the various classifications of 'schools' (*liupai* 流派) in *sanqu*, see Lü Weifen and Huang Hui 1999, pp.1-67.

[15] I believe we can trace the formation of such binary classification and the confusion in the use of various terms to earlier studies by pioneer *sanqu* scholars such as Ren Ne 任訥. However, since this is only tangentially relevant to the current paper, I shall pursue this issue on another occasion.

[16] See Tan 2006 and 2008.

My emphasis on the local centers by no means suggests that the transmission of songs was restricted only to the local level. Rather, I believe such a local perspective lays the foundation for us to explore the trans-local dynamics among the various local centers of songwriting in the mid Ming.

3. TRANS-LOCAL TRANSMISSION AND LITERATI NETWORK

To illustrate how songs were produced and transmitted within and beyond the local regions, let us turn to the social context surrounding one particular set of a hundred songs written in Shandong by Li Kaixian, a sixteenth-century *sanqu* writer and dramatist well-known for his play *Baojianji* 寶劍記 (The Story of the Precious Sword).[17] After being forced to retire from office in 1541, Li returned to his native place, Zhangqiu 章邱 county in Shandong. Li Kaixian then wrote this set of a hundred songs in 1544, three years into his retirement.

This set of one hundred songs provides us with an interesting case to study trans-local transmission because a Qing dynasty hand-copied manuscript of this work preserves a long list of colophons containing invaluable information on the circulation and reception of these songs. Furthermore, the manuscript also includes a list of the biographical information (names, native place, and official posts) of these colophon writers at the end of the colophons.[18] Based on information recorded in the colophons, we know that this set of songs also generated at least 586 matching songs from various literati writers.[19]

In his preface, Li Kaixian gave an account of the context that inspired him to compose the hundred songs, stating that a singing boy happened

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[17] For biographical studies on Li Kaixian, see Bu Jian 1989, Iwaki Hideo 1989, and Zeng Yuanwen 1991. A brief introduction in English is provided by Lee Hwa-Chou in *DMB*, pp.835-7.

[18] The Qing dynasty manuscript (number 14805) is kept in the National Library of China. The valuable list of biographical information was left out in Lu Gong 1957, vol. 3, pp.870-902, but is now made available in Bu Jian's new edition of Li's complete works, *LKXQJ*, pp.1225-30. In consideration that the original manuscript edition is not paginated and is generally inaccessible to most readers, all references to the one hundred songs in this paper refer to the *LKXQJ* edition and any differences will be explained in footnotes.

[19] For a full discussion of the literary aspects of this set of songs and the social production of its matching songs, see Tan 2006, pp.145-168.

to visit Shandong and hence he wrote the songs for the boy to perform.[20] But how did these *sanqu* songs then circulate beyond this immediate context? The first colophon to these hundred songs provides us with some interesting information:

> For Li Kaixian, when his words appear, people trust them; when his lyrics appear, people spread them around. In his writing of the [hundred songs to the tune of] *Bangzhuangtai*, even before the manuscript was ready, voices singing these lyrics had already filled the alleys! Many people came to ask for or borrow a copy, and it is hard to fulfill such social obligations. Li therefore took an extra copy and gave it to the printer. Those who would sing and match these songs will soon be found all over the eastern lands.[21] How could it be restricted only to the alleys?
>
> 中麓李子，言出而人信之，詞出而人傳之，其為傍粧臺也，稿尚未脫，歌喉已溢里巷中矣。索借者眾，應酬為難，因取副墨，壽之木工，歌而和之者將遍東國，獨里巷也而已哉？[22]

This tells us that the songs were actively sung and performed, at least in Li's home village, but as Xie's colophon suggested above, there was also a practical need to put the *sanqu* songs into print to meet the growing demand.

Li's hundred songs were very popular and widely known among the literati at that time.[23] The Qing dynasty hand-copied manuscript shows that these songs gathered a total of 95 colophons signed by 86 writers[24], including famous literary figures such as Wang Jiusi, Yang Shen, and Feng Weina 馮惟訥 (*hao* Shaozhou 少洲, 1512-1572), but also lesser known ones including many who are little mentioned or who have been invisible in literary histories. Some of these colophons were comments left by literati after reading the text. We can also find later comments

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[20] Li Kaixian, "*Zhonglu xiaoling* yin" 《中麓小令》引, *LKXQJ*, p.1189. This preface is titled "Zhonglu shanren xiaoling yin" 中麓山人小令引 in the Qing dynasty hand-copied manuscript.

[21] The "eastern lands" refers to Shandong region.

[22] *LKXQJ*, p.1204. Xie published a *sanqu* collection titled *Dongcun yuefu* 東村樂府, prefaced by Li Kaixian.

[23] For example, see the colophons by Chen Taifeng 陳太峯 and Bai Dongchuan 白東川 in *LKXQJ*, pp.1206-7, and 1211.

[24] For the colophons, see *LKXQJ*, pp.1204-25. The following writers contributed more than one colophon: Fang Liangjiang 方兩江(2), Cui Daiping 崔岱平(2), Zhang Nanming 張南溟 (2), Kang Weibin 康渭濱 (3), Wang Jiusi (2), Gu Qiushan 顧秋山 (2), Zhang Longgang 張龍岡 (2), and Bai Dongchuan (2).

responding to earlier ones, showing that they were perhaps comments accumulated in a single copy.[25] There were also other colophons that appear to have been taken from elsewhere, for example, the prefaces to the various printings of the work.[26] Owing to this long list of colophons, we can now know the people who have read these songs and expressed their views. This information is significant because it allows us to plot how far and widely these songs were circulated.

While some colophons might have been written in a more immediate context after the songs were written in 1544,[27] the last dated colophon was written in 1546, which tells us that these colophons were not written on one occasion, but over a period of at least two to three years. From the colophons, we know that the text was circulated widely, not only to nearby northern regions such as Shaanxi 陕西 and Henan 河南, and the capital in Beijing 北京, but also to Kunshan 崑山 in the south and more remote areas such as Yunnan 雲南.[28] How did the one hundred songs come to gather this enormous number of colophons by numerous literati in various places?

There are several layers of transmission. First, we have the people who might have watched or listened to the performance of the singing of Li Kaixian's one hundred songs when they were first completed, or read the first manuscript of Li as it was copied. It is noteworthy that among the 86 colophon writers, 38 were from Shandong and 15 of them came from the same county (Zhangqiu) as Li Kaixian. In addition, a number of colophon writers who were natives of other provinces held offices in Shandong at that time. This therefore suggests that there was a strong 'local' component in the initial transmission of this set of *sanqu* songs, and that the activity was largely a regional or local one centered in Shandong.

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[25] For example, the twenty-fourth colophon writer Liang Dongan 梁洞菴 agreed with the comments made by the twenty-first colophon writer, Zhang Yongchuan 張甬川. See *LKXQJ*, pp.1208-9.

[26] For example, the colophon by Wang Jiusi is the same as his preface for *Nanqu ciyun*, a combined publishing of Li's original hundred songs and Wang's matching songs to them.

[27] The twenty-ninth colophon writer Lu Shen 陸深 passed away in 1544. Therefore, if the colophons were arranged chronologically, those before Lu's were all written within the same year, 1544, in which the hundred songs were composed.

[28] Yang Shen, then in exile in Yunnan, also received a copy from Li. See Yang's colophon, *LKXQJ*, p.1211.

Among the group of colophon writers, seven were co-members of Li Kaixian's local songwriting club named Fuwentang 富文堂, the 'Hall Abundant in Literature.' They were Xie Jiurong 謝九容 (*hao* Dongcun 東村, ?- before 1551)[29], Xia Wenxian 夏文憲 (*juren* 1528,[30] *hao* Hongshan 鬞山[31]), Gu Jizong 谷繼宗 (*hao* Shaodai 少岱, *jinshi* 1526),[32] Yuan Chongmian 袁崇冕 (1487-1566, *hao* Xiye 西野),[33] Yang Ying 楊盈 (*hao* Shuangxi 雙溪, 1483-1558, *juren* 1507),[34] Chen De'an 陳德安 (*juren* 1525, *hao* Taifeng 泰峯), and Jiang Dacheng 姜大成 (1494-1551, *juren* 1537, *hao* Songjian 松澗).[35]

If we study the colophons carefully, it is striking to note that six of them were among the first fifteen colophon writers, and that Xie Jiurong's and Xia Wenxian's colophons were even placed as the first and third.[36] If, as mentioned earlier, we believe that the colophons were arranged roughly in chronological order, then it would appear that Li's *sanqu* were first circulated among the members of his *qu* circle. These were people who met with Li regularly to write and read *sanqu*, and listen to the performances of *sanqu*.

This constituted the primary layer of transmission. The circulation of the text, however, was not restricted to the Shandong *qu* circle. The text also traveled beyond the local region to neighboring provinces, and Li's

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[29] Xie was only briefly mentioned at the end of the biographical note on Yuan Chongmian in *Zhangqiu xianzhi*, 6: 39a. It was said that Xie wrote 2 *juan* of *sanqu* and, just like Yuan Chongmian, he did not attain *juren*.

[30] Same year as Li Kaixian. For biographical information about Xia, see *Zhangqiu xianzhi*, 6: 24b.

[31] Also the name of a mountain east of Zhangqiu.

[32] Gu once temporarily lost his sight and stayed at Li's place for a period of time. See Li Kaixian, "He Gu Shaodai sangmu chongming xu" 賀谷少岱喪目重明序, *LKXQJ*, pp.415-6. Li Kaixian mentioned that Gu was once excessively involved in writing *Xuanji ciyun* 璇璣詞韻, which probably was a rhyme dictionary. See Li Kaixian 1959, p.275.

[33] For biographical information of Yuan, see *Zhangqiu xianzhi*, 6: 38b-39a, and Wang Shizhen 1982, pp.336-7. See also Li Kaixian, "Yuzuo xiangbin Xiye Yuanweng muzhiming" 豫作鄉賓西野袁翁墓誌銘, *LKXQJ*, pp.590-1.

[34] Zhangqiu xianzhi, 6: 25a.

[35] Li Kaixian, "Tunliu zhixian Jiang jun hezang muzhiming" 屯留知縣姜君合葬墓誌銘, *LKXQJ*, pp.614-7.

[36] The order of the colophon writers is as follows: Xie Dongcun (1), Xia Hongshan (3), Gu Shaodai (6), Yuan Xiye (12), Yang Shuangxi (13), and Chen Taifeng (15). The only one whose colophon was placed much later in the order is Jiang Songjian (57).

friends in Shaanxi formed the next layer of readers and colophon-writers.

Li Kaixian once made a trip to Shaanxi in 1531 to visit the two senior masters Wang Jiusi and Kang Hai. By the time Li wrote these 100 songs in 1544, Kang Hai had passed away earlier in 1541, but the other members of the Shaanxi community such as Kang Hao 康浩(1479-1560, *jinshi* 1511), Wang Jiusi, Zhang Zhidao 張治道 (1487-1556, *jinshi* 1514), and Hu Shi 胡侍 (1492-1553) were all very much involved in this case. Wang Jiusi and Kang Hao not only wrote colophons for Li, but each also came up with a hundred matching songs to Li's original.[37] Zhang and Hu already knew about and had highly praised Li's earlier *sanqu* in the early 1530s. We know that Zhang had remained in contact with Li since their meeting in Shaanxi, as seen in a number of Zhang's writings to Li.[38] Zhang also wrote ten matching songs for Li's hundred songs, but they are no longer extant. As for Hu Shi, it appears from the evidence we have that Hu was not actively involved in the actual writing of *qu*, but only participated in the *qu* gatherings organized by the above mentioned literati.[39] Nonetheless, Hu was also very interested in songs and drama and some of his views on Yuan *qu* and southern and northern songs were cited later by Li Kaixian.[40] Apparently, these literati from Shaanxi continued to be a part of Li's larger *qu* community, reading and writing colophons and matching songs for Li's one hundred *xiaoling* more than a decade after their initial meeting in Shaanxi. What we see here is that the transmission of songs on this level depended on the direct literati network between the two local communities in Shandong and Shaanxi established by Li Kaixian during his visit in 1531.

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[37] I have not found any records about Kang Hao's direct associations with Li Kaixian, except that Kang once went to Shandong during the Zhengde period on an official trip. See Wang Jiusi's tomb inscription for Kang He, in Wang Jiusi, *Meipi xuji*, lower *juan*: 64a.

[38] For example, see Zhang Zhidao, "Zhonglu pian wei Li Bohua fu," 中麓篇為李伯華賦 in idem, *Jiajing ji*, 2:4b-5a; "Ji Li Bohua" 寄李伯華, ibid., 3:18b; and "Wen Li Zhonglu Yuanting sheng jici" 聞李中麓園亭盛寄此, 5:15b-16a.

[39] Hu Shi, in his colophon, lamented his lack of musical knowledge and his inability to sing *sanqu* songs. See *LKXQJ*, p.1211. This might suggest that Hu did not have the required knowledge to take part in the writing of *qu*.

[40] For example, Hu Shi's section on "Yuanqu" 元曲 was later cited by Li in his preface to *Zhang Xiaoshan xiaoling*, cf. Hu Shi 1936, p.35, and *LKXQJ*, p.439.

In addition, there were also other literati who received copies sent directly to them from Li, and these were probably his close friends and acquaintances. However, this by no means marks the end of the transmission. There were others who in turn received the texts indirectly from these primary readers. They either read the texts or watched the performance of the songs with their friends on various occasions.[41]

More interestingly, the text also traveled with some of the primary readers who possessed a copy. One carrier of the songs was Yang Xuan 楊選 (*hao* Dongjiang 東江,1512-1563, *jinshi* 1544):

> On my mission to the south,[42] I obtained a volume of your exquisite work, and I brought it to Nanyang [in Henan]. There, I met Prefectural Judge Bai Jianzhai, a native of Nangong [in Hebei], and we read your work together. Later, I returned from Dianzhong (Yunnan), and I passed by Nanyang again. I heard that Jianzhai really loves these songs and could not bear to take his hands off them...
>
> 余南使，得佳製一冊，攜至南陽，遇南宮白健齋節推，與觀之，後余囘自滇中，復過南陽，聞健齋愛是曲，不忍釋手……[43]

Here, we see how the text followed Yang to Henan. As the texts traveled, they were also multiplied in the process. One manuscript or printed edition of the hundred songs could then be copied to make multiple ones, which further spurred the transmission of the songs. Zhang Yingji 張應吉 (hao Dongquan 東泉, juren 1522) told Li in his colophon,

> I only brought one volume of your great work to this place, and those who saw it competed in spreading it and copying it, so now it is already widespread in the Guanzhong region.
>
> 高詞止攜一冊至是，見者爭傳錄之，已遍關中矣。[44]

If we pay attention to the backgrounds and careers of these colophon writers, one can begin to better understand the structure of Li's network as reflected in it. This is far from a well-defined literary school or group. Rather, what we see here is the social production, transmission, and consumption of a genre through the literati network. Among the

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[41] For example, see Zhang Yongchuan's colophon, *LKXQJ*, p.1208.
[42] Yang Xuan was once sent on a mission to Yunnan. See *Zhangqiu xianzhi*, 6:24b.
[43] *LKXQJ*, p.1215.
[44] *LKXQJ*, p.1211.

colophon writers, there were those who attained the *jinshi* degree or passed the provincial examination in the same year as Li Kaixian,[45] those who were his colleagues in the capital,[46] and also those who newly attained *jinshi* in the year 1544 when the songs were written.[47]

The above case study illustrates how the literati network served as an important mechanism for the production, transmission, and consumption of *qu* writings.

Many of the colophon writers or authors of the matching pieces were not known for their writings in *sanqu*. It would be difficult to argue whether all of the matching and writing of colophons for Li's songs happened purely because of the literary interests of these writers. This is what we may call the social production of *sanqu*. There were people who participated in the reading and writing of *sanqu* only because it became a social event in their lives.

The overwhelming responses to Li's writings beyond the local level have to be read against the social world of Li Kaixian. Li appeared to have a gigantic social network, and as one scholar has calculated, he might have had around five hundred close acquaintances.[48] In his late years, even the gregarious Li would complain of the incessant visits of guests and the excessive parties, and have to admit that he needed to reduce his social activities.[49] It was Li Kaixian, a retired scholar-official

[45] There were at least eleven of them who were in the same class of 1529 as Li Kaixian. They are Zeng Xian 曾銑, Sun Guanghui 孫光輝, Ye Hong 葉洪, Zuo Jie 左傑, Li Shen 李紳, Guo Zonggao 郭宗皐, Chen Ding 陳錠, Luo Hongxian 羅洪先, Huangfu Pang 皇甫汸, Hu Shi, and Wu Mengqi 吳孟祺. Luo Hongxian is a well-known thinker of the Wang Yangming school. See *DMB*, pp.980-4. Zhang Shunchen and Xia Wenxian passed the provincial examination in the same year as Li in 1528.

[46] See the example of one of the colophon writers, Ouyang Duo 歐陽鐸, in *LKXQJ*, p.1210.

[47] For example, Yang Xuan and Chen Ganyu 陳甘雨.

[48] Bu Jian, "Foreword" to *LKXQJ*, p.8.

[49] In what appears to be meant as a poster pasted on his doors, Li had an interestingly straightforward yet light-hearted account of why he decided to cut down on entertaining guests after his recovery from illness. While Li was ostensibly declining his guests, a reader may also very well read it as Li's boasting of his enormous social network. See Li Kaixian, "Binghou gaojian yingchou mentie" 病後告減應酬門帖, in idem, *Li Zhonglu xianjuji*, *juan* 12, unpaginated, in *Xuxiu Siku quanshu* edition, pp.375-6. We know that it was written in Li's late years because in it, he mentioned that he was nearly seventy years old. This piece of writing is not found in every edition of *Xianjuji*, and is also not included in *LKXQJ*.

with a wide social network, who brought his own *qu* writings out of the local context in Zhangqiu to a wider community of readers.

4. LOCAL OR NATIONAL: LAYERS OF WRITERS' REPUTATION

Literary histories can only list major names. We would remember that in Wang Jide's passage cited above, only one or two representative names were cited from each region. However, once we go deeper into these individual local centers and work on the reception of *sanqu* songs on the local level, we then encounter many more names around these major figures.

We have seen in the previous section how the songs of Li Kaixian was first transmitted within a close circle of friends, some of whom were members of the local songwriting club in his home village. These other writers might have been celebrated figures in the local region, but many of them appeared to only possess some local forms of fame, which did not necessarily translate into the wider framework which forms the basis for our later understanding of the period. As a result, they were invisible in the larger framework of literary histories, and have therefore remained obscure to us. A number of questions can be asked: How was reputation transmitted? How did people get to know about *sanqu* writers in another part of China? Whose name was transmitted trans-locally, and why? [50]

In the case of Li's one hundred songs, we can see that Li Kaixian was undoubtedly the center of the entire process, with all the colophons and matching songs addressed to him. The reputation of the author was enhanced through the process of transmission. The situation, however, might be different for a less famous writer or someone with a more limited literati network. In this section, I will explore the different layers of writers' reputation through a case study of a series of matching songs within and across two local centers. This series of matching songs developed within the Shaanxi *sanqu* community, and eventually traveled beyond it to the Yunnan region in three stages:

[50] My discussion on the transmission of writers' reputation in this section has benefited from a stimulating conversation with Craig Clunas on the local reputation of Nanjing songwriters and painters. Clunas also discusses this point in his recent book. See Clunas 2007, esp. pp.134-6.

Stage One: From Longqu to Kang Hai and Wang Jiusi in Shaanxi

The Shaanxi community was centered around two major writers, Wang Jiusi and Kang Hai, who were both cashiered because of alleged associations with the notorious eunuch Liu Jin 劉瑾 (1451-1510).[51] In the songs by Wang and Kang, a literatus by the name of Longqu 龍渠 appeared several times.

Longqu is most probably the literary name of Xie Chaoxuan 謝朝宣 (*jinshi* 1493) who was also a native of Shaanxi.[52] Unfortunately, none of Longqu's original *sanqu* songs were preserved. Interestingly, however, from the *sanqu* collections of Wang and Kang, we do know that both of them wrote multiple matching songs to a particular song or set of songs by Longqu written to the tune of *Qingjiangyin* 清江引.[53]

Although Longqu's original is now lost, we can gather some information about its specific form by looking at the template which Kang and Wang followed in their matching songs. The template requires the use of specific rhyme characters, *guan* 管, *san* 散, *fan* 飯, and *lan* 懶 on its first, second, fourth and fifth lines respectively. To illustrate this, let us look at one of Kang Hai's matching songs; the words in bold showing the rhyme characters which Kang followed from Longqu's original:

[51] For biographical studies on Kang Hai, see Han Jiegen 1993, Yagisawa Hajime 1959, pp.109-59, and most recently, Jin Ningfen 2004. In comparison, biographical studies on Wang Jiusi have been scarce, and most derive from Li Kaixian's biography of Wang. See Li Kaixian, "Meipi Wang Jiantao zhuan" 渼陂王檢討傳, *LKXQJ*, pp.763-8, and his later supplement to it, ibid., pp.800-2. Brief introductions to Wang Jiusi and Kang Hai in English are available in *DMB*, pp.1366-7, and 692-4 respectively. See also Wilkerson 1992, which has individual chapters on Kang Hai and Wang Jiusi.

[52] Xie's literary collection is titled *Longqu wengao* 龍渠文稿. See *Shaanxi tongzhi*, 75:54b. Also, in the writings of Zhang Zhidao, we find several references to a certain Xie Longqu 謝龍渠. See for example, Zhang, "Qiuri tong Xie Longqu xiansheng Lu Renfu binxiang sanbu dongcheng kanju gui ji Longqu xiansheng" 秋日同謝龍渠先生盧仁夫賓相散步東城看菊歸寄龍渠先生, in idem, *Zhang Taiwei shiji*, 8:15b. For biographical information on Xie Chaoxuan, see *Shaanxi tongzhi*, 57:18b.

[53] *QMSQ*, pp.863-5, 921-2, and 1139-40.

In the end, what matters? One had better do away with all the luxury and resplendence. A few beams make me a careful Peaceful nest, Simple meals give me a full belly. To reach for the highest achievements,[54] My mind and body are just too sluggish for that.	事到頭來誰照管， 好把豪華**散**。 數椽安樂窩，[55] 一飽家常**飯**， 百尺竿頭心力**懶**。[56]

In Kang Hai's song collection *Pandong yuefu* 汴東樂府 (ca.1524), we can find three sets of a total of twenty-eight matching songs to Longqu's original, first a set of sixteen songs titled "Sishi ci Longqu yun" 四時次龍渠韻 (Songs on the Four Seasons, Matching Longqu's Rhyme), then a set of six titled "Youci" 又次 (Matching Again), and finally, another six songs titled "Guiqing" 閨情 (Boudoir Sentiment) which, though not specified as matching songs, also used the same template of rhyme characters and thus may be considered as such.[57] Furthermore, Wang Jiusi, a close friend of Kang Hai and the other leader of the local center of songs and drama in Shaanxi, also wrote a total of twenty-six matching songs in three sets to Longqu.[58]

There are striking similarities between the matching songs by Kang and Wang. Each wrote three successive sets of matching songs using this template. In addition, both of their second sets of matching songs were on historical figures, most clearly spelled out in Wang's set titled "Songs on the Past" (*yonggu* 詠古), and their third sets were both on boudoir sentiments. Moreover, some lines from their matching songs show signs of influence or borrowing from each other.[59] It may not be too farfetched to speculate that the matching sets were composed on

[54] Literally, 'the tip of a hundred-foot pole'.
[55] Shao Yong 邵雍 (1011-1077) once named his residence the 'Anlewo' (Nest of Peace and Joy).
[56] *QMSQ*, p.1140.
[57] For these 28 matching songs, see Kang Hai, *Pandong yuefu*, 1:12a-14a; *QMSQ*, pp.1139-41.
[58] The three sets of songs are titled "Ci Longqu yun zayong" 次龍渠韻雜詠 (8 songs), "Zai ci qianyun yonggu" 再次前韻詠古 (10 songs) and "Ci Longqu yun zayong" 次龍渠韻雜咏 (8 songs) respectively. See Wang Jiusi, *Bishan yuefu* , "xiaoling" *juan*:7b-9a, and idem, *Yuefu shiyi*, "xiaoling" section:5b-6a; *QMSQ*, pp.863-5, and 921.
[59] Compare, for example, the last song in Kang's third set with the seventh song in Wang's third set. See *QMSQ*, pp.921 and 1141.

certain common social occasions or in direct response not only to Longqu, but to each other.

While the rhyme characters are followed strictly in all of their matching songs, Kang and Wang played with the various meanings of individual characters. For example, the character *guan* 管 was used in its different meanings such as 'to care about', 'to manage', 'a flute', and the historical figure Guan Zhong 管仲 (d.645 B.C.) in various songs. Wang Jiusi also added a feature to his second set of matching songs: the last line of each song which was required to rhyme using *lan* 懶 all ends with a standard phrase "fei shi lan" 非是懶 (is not lazy). It is noteworthy that three of Kang's matching songs also used this format.

Since these matching songs were found in the *sanqu* collections of Kang and Wang which were printed around 1524 and 1529 respectively,[60] we know that these matching songs by Kang and Wang took place before 1530. However, the matching of songs was not limited by members of the immediate community in Shaanxi. The next time we find this particular template of the tune *Qingjiangyin* copied by another writer, it actually took place in an area far away from Shaanxi.

Stage Two: From Kang Hai in Shaanxi to Yang Shen in Yunnan

Around the same time that Kang Hai and Wang Jiusi established themselves as major writers of songs and drama in Shaanxi in the 1520s, we find another community of writers around Yang Shen, a well-known figure in the Ming.[61] However, unlike the cases of Li Kaixian, or Kang and Wang where we find literary communities formed in the home villages of these discharged officials, this took place not in Yang's native place Sichuan. Yang Shen became the top graduate in 1511, but was later involved in the Great Ritual Controversy in 1524 and was exiled to Yunnan for the rest of his life.[62] It was in Yunnan that we find his literary community.

In Yang's song collection, we find a set of four *xiaoling* which follows the same format as those matching songs written by Kang and Wang. His third song in the set reads as follows:

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[60] This, however, does not necessarily imply that Kang's songs were composed before Wang's.

[61] For Yang Shen's role and influence on literary developments in Yunnan, see Tao Yingchang 1998, pp.90-4.

[62] On Yang's life, see Nienhauser 1986, pp.913-5, and Feng Jiahua 1998.

Because of this illness, I have gotten rusty with strings and pipes.	病來生疏絃與**管**，
Winding water[63] carries flowers floating scattered.	曲水流花**散**。
The immortal maiden's [64] verse adds joys to our literary conversation,[65]	仙娥句笑鹽，
The eccentric guest's poem accompanies our meal.[66]	狂客詩嘲**飯**，
The bird messenger is too lazy to fly westwards to deliver letters.[67]	青鸞寄書西去**懶**。

How did Yang Shen, then banished to Yunnan, came to know about this specific rhyming pattern which was circulated in Shaanxi? The title of this song, "Kang Liangqing xishang he Duishang xianbei yun shiri shangyuan" 康良卿席上和對山先輩韻是日上元, provides us with some information. It not only tells us that the set of songs was written on the Shangyuan day (the fifteenth day of the first lunar month, also known as the Lantern Festival), but more importantly, that it was a piece written to match the rhymes of a senior master named Duishan, which is Kang Hai's style name.

We do not know exactly how Yang learnt about Kang's song and this specific template for writing to the tune of *Qingjiangyin*.[68] As the title also suggests, this set of songs by Yang Shen was composed at a banquet of a person named Kang Liangqing whom we know almost nothing about. Yang Shen once wrote another poem giving a send-off to Kang Liangqing who was to return to the Qin 秦 region. Thus, some

[63] This is a reference to the famous meeting at the Orchid Pavilion.

[64] A common term used to refer to singsong girls.

[65] This is a reference to an anecdote in *Shishuo xinyu* 世說新語 in which Xie An asked his family at a gathering how one could describe the profuse falling white snow. Xie laughed with delight when his nephew replied that it was like scattering salt in mid-air, and his niece compared it with willow catkins rising on the wind.

[66] The wording reminds one of a line in Su Shi's poem titled "Xu Shijun fen xinhuo" 徐史君分新火 which reads "Only an elegant poem accompanies these grains of rice" 只有清詩嘲飯顆.

[67] The specific context behind this song is unclear. Complaints about the difficulty in sending a letter were quite common in the writings of both Yang Shen and his wife Huang O who were separated for a long period. Some examples are discussed in Ch'en and Mote 2002, pp.1-32.

[68] Yang could have read Kang's song collection *Pandong yuefu* printed around 1524 which contains those songs. Yang had also once sent his poem to Kang. See Yang, "Qiongyinpian: ji Kang Duishan" 瓊音篇寄康對山, cited from Feng 1998, p.219 note 1.

scholars speculate that Kang Liangqing might be a clansman of Kang Hai.[69]

In his matching song, Yang Shen stated he was following the rhymes of Kang Hai. However, we have observed earlier that it was actually not Kang, but Longqu who set the original rhyme characters, and that Kang was merely a follower of the same rhyme characters himself. We do not know whether Yang Shen was aware of the earlier history of the transmission of the songs, or whether he knew about Longqu at all. There are several possibilities: Yang might not have known about Longqu because he might have heard only about Kang's third set of matching songs which did not indicate Longqu's name. It is also possible that Yang knew that it was not Kang's original composition, but addressed his song-matching to Kang because of the social occasion (if Kang Liangqing was indeed related to Kang Hai), or simply because matching a song by a fellow top graduate like Kang Hai was more worth mentioning than matching to one written by someone like Longqu who was little known outside of the local Shaanxi region.

Regardless of the reasons, what we can gather from the texts passed down to us is that as the rhyming pattern moved trans-locally from Shaanxi to Yunnan, the name of Longqu, the original rhyme-setter, was lost in the process. Instead, it was Kang Hai's name which became attached to the specific pattern.

Stage Three: From Yang Shen to Other Writers in Yunnan

Besides the set of four songs discussed above, Yang Shen also wrote another song using the same format. The song was left untitled in his first song collection, but was later added the titled "He Kang Duishan" 和康對山 (Matching Kang Duishan['s Rhyme]) in a later edition.[70] What is more significant is that in Yang's song collection, this song

[69] Wang Wencai 1981, p.74.

[70] The song was included again with this new title in the sequel to Yang's first song collection. See *QMSQ*, p.1482, note 142. This sequel was said to be compiled by his students and contains very few new songs. Out of the eighty songs in the sequel, fifty were actually taken from the first collection. See Wang Wencai 1984, "Chuban shuomin" 出版説明, p.3.

was appended by two matching songs written by Zhang Han 張含 (1479-1565, *juren* 1507) and Wang Zongzheng 王宗正.[71]

Yang's attempt in writing a matching song using the rhyme of Kang (which can be traced back to Longqu) now became a model of its own for other writers in Yunnan to follow. This completed the process of trans-local transmission: a specific form of writing a song to the tune of *Qingjiangyin* using the four rhyme characters came to be practiced not only in the Shaanxi region where it first started, but even in Yunnan.

The circulation of the songs occurred in three stages on two different levels: local level in Shaanxi and also later in Yunnan, and trans-local level between the two regions. However, not all writers can transcend the local level and be known at the national level. The link between individual local communities relied on the major writers who belonged to a trans-local literati network. This specific rhyming pattern first used by an otherwise unknown Shaanxi writer (Longqu) might have been well known at that time in its local region, but it would probably be now lost without the matching songs by major writers such as Kang and Wang. It was Kang Hai's matching song that eventually enabled the pattern to spread beyond Shaanxi. Similarly, the local writers in Yunnan needed a major writer like Yang Shen who acted as a communication bridge between Yunnan and other regions using his literati network. In this respect, it is important to remember that Yang Shen also received a copy of Li's one hundred songs as discussed earlier.

5. CONCLUSIONS

In an attempt to find out how *sanqu* songs were transmitted beyond and received outside a local center of production, in this paper I have focused on the circulation of individual songs or sets of songs based on direct responses either in the form of colophons (or prefaces) or matching songs. These provide ample evidence of trans-local transmission across regions. The movement of texts and literary ideas was dependent on major writers such as Li Kaixian, Kang Hai, and

[71] Yang Shen, *Taoqing yuefu*, 4:6b-7a; *QMSQ*, pp.1243, 1492. The song by Zhang Han is one of his two extant songs which are both matching pieces following the rhymes of Yang Shen. Wang Zongzheng's songs is his only extant *sanqu* we now have.

Yang Shen who were once national elites with a wide literati network, whereas other writers on a local level were sometimes lost in this process of trans-local transmission.

While this paper focuses on the transmission of song texts, there are other aspects of transmission that one has to consider, for example, through performance and anthologies. Since *sanqu* songs were meant to be sung and performed, they could also be transmitted orally through singsong girls or musicians. However, we know very little about how traveling performers helped to transmit songs, which is certainly an area that deserves more work. Traveling performers and musicians imply the possibility of performing particular subgenre of songs or drama. However, my impression from working with materials of this period is that trans-local transmission of songs relied more commonly on the circulation of texts across regions. We rarely read about a Ming literatus getting to know a new song of another writer through a performer. Rather, it was more often the case that one first received the text of a new song (again through one's literati network), and then passed on to his own private or local performers to perform.

Qu anthologies [72] acted as another significant medium for the transmission of songs. We can see an interesting interaction between the local and the trans-local aspects in anthologies as well. Often functioning as selections of the best and most popular songs, anthologies by nature are usually not only 'trans-local', such that they include writers from different regions, but they also often transcend the boundary of time since it was a common practice to include both Yuan and Ming dynasty songs in one volume. However, at the same time, many song anthologies also showed a local flavor. For example, the *qu* anthology *Nanbeigong ciji* 南北宮詞紀 (Compilation of Songs in the Southern and Northern Styles), compiled by Chen Suowen 陳所聞 (1526?-after 1605) who was a native of Nanjing, is most extensive in its selection of *sanqu* written by generations of Nanjing writers.

More work needs to be done on the role of song anthologies both as a medium for the circulation of song texts, and also as a site of writers' reputation. How widely were anthologies circulated in the Ming? Which songs and whose songs were selected? Answers to these

[72] These include anthologies that select only *sanqu* songs, and also those that include both *sanqu* and dramatic arias.

questions would inform us on a more 'impersonal' dimension to the transmission of songs which would supplement the form of circulation based on personal networks as discussed in this paper.

ABBREVIATIONS:

DMB: Goodrich L. Carrington, and Chaoying Fang, eds. (1976) *Dictionary of Ming Biography*, New York: Columbia University Press.

LKXQJ: Bu Jian 卜鍵, ed., *Li Kaixian quanji* 李開先全集, Beijing: Wenhua yishu chubanshe, 2004.

QMSQ: Xie Boyang 謝伯陽, ed., *Quan Ming sanqu* 全明散曲, 5 vols., Ji'nan: Qilu shushe, 1993.

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PART TWO

JESUITS' VISUAL CULTURE ACCOMMODATED IN CHINA DURING THE LAST DECADES OF MING DYNASTY

GIANNI CRIVELLER

In this contribution I shall present the first three visual narratives on the Life of Jesus produced by the Jesuits in late Ming China (XVII Century). These collections were quite an important component of the Jesuit evangelization method in China, known as "accommodation", which was the effort to "translate" into Chinese context the Jesuit meditative and visual culture.

THE EVANGELICAE HISTORIAE IMAGINES (1593) ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE GOSPEL STORIES

The European text that served as inspiration and model for the early production of Christian iconography in China is a work well known among the Jesuits of the latter part of the XVI Century and of the XVII Century. The *Evangelicae Historiae Imagines* (1593) [Illustrations of the Gospel Stories] by Jerónimo Nadal.[1] The global Jesuit community had been waiting since 1575 for the appearance of the text, considered a milestone in the spirituality, training and missionary activity of the Society of Jesus. The *Evangelicae Historiae Imagines* employed two major Jesuit characteristics: the narrative of "harmonization of the four Gospels" (*harmonia evangelica*); and the meditative methodology of visualization, known as "composition of place" (*compositio loci*).

The harmonization of the four Gospels consisted in the production of texts that merge the four Gospels into a single coherent narration that eliminates duplication. Since when Ignatius of Loyola read the classical work in "harmonia evangelica" style, the *Vita Jesu Christi* (1474) by Ludolphus of Saxony, this genre of biblical narrative gained great support among the Jesuits. It was adopted in China as well, especially by Giulio Aleni in his *The Life of the Lord of Heaven Incarnate* (*Tianzhu Jiangsheng Yanxing Jilüe* 天主降生言行紀略).

[1] The book's entire title is given in the bibliography. Nadal's writings and images have been studied extensively in recent years. See, among others, Fabre 2002 and Nadal 1975, 2003 and 2005.

In his seminal text *Spiritual Exercises*, Ignatius introduced his meditative methodology of visualization, which is a mental creation of a space where a narration takes place. The meditative method, thanks to a mental device called "composition of place", would generate in the person who meditates, a kind of inner journey into the biblical narrative; offering the chance of a (spiritual) encounter with the persons narrated in the biblical story. The images were indispensable tools to create such a meditative journey and the possibility of such an encounter.

In the Jesuits' world 'image' had indeed a place of primary importance. Image was not simply a tool illustrating the written text. On the contrary, it was the written text, which was at the service of the image. The image, acting on the receptivity of the human senses, produces emotions of the heart and motions of the will, which other forms of communication cannot produce. The image books, produced by the Jesuits, would provide a set of visual experiences for reading and for meditation. These image books were the culmination of Ignatius' meditative methodology, which exploited the emotional and intellectual power of visuality.

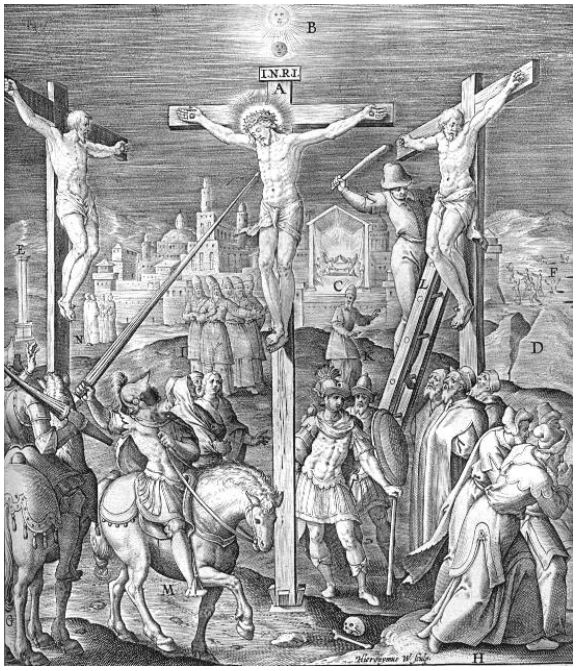

Figure 1: Nadal's Crucifixion (1593)

THE EVANGELICAE HISTORIAE IMAGINES IN CHINA

Missionaries in Asia particularly expressed a desire for having a copy of the Nadal's grand image book. The book reached China quite early, in or before 1605. On May 12 of that year Matteo Ricci wrote to Fr. Juan Álvarez in Portugal confirming that Fr. Manoel Diaz, at the Southern China residence in Nanchang, kept a copy of the book. Ricci therefore requested other copies for the residence in Beijing and other houses in the Northern part of China.

The early Jesuit missionaries who produced image books in China employed the character *xiang* 像 rather than *tu* 圖 to translate the word 'image': Giulio Aleni 艾儒略 authored *Explanations of the Scripture with Images of the Lord of Heaven Incarnate* (*Tianzhu Jiangsheng Chuxiang Jingjie* 天主降生出像經解, 1637); and Adam Schall Von Bell 湯若望, few years later, authored *Images in a Booklet Presented the His Majesty* (*Jincheng Shuxiang* 進呈書像, 1640).

Recently Nicolas Standaert has proposed a fascinating interpretation of the meaning of such choices of words. While *tu* 圖 indicates any form of visual production: pictures, maps, diagrams, charts..., the character *xiang* 像 (image) includes the radical indicating person, *ren* 人. An original and fascinating analysis of the use of *xiang* 像 (image) in the literature and figurative theory of funerary rituals leads Standaert to propose that *xiang* 像 has a complex meaning, which touches on the relationship that the image has the power to establish with the viewer. X*iang* 像 indicates not only the image, but also the act of perception by the recipient of the self-representation by the subject depicted. In the case of the funerary rite, x*iang* 像 becomes a 'figure' of the deceased, his or her 'personification replacement.' In this process the person is represented in the image not in terms of simple correlation, but rather in terms of incarnation.

From this analysis, Standaert derives the following conclusions, which render the deeper meaning and implications of Jesuits image books: "The images therefore not only function as sacred objects of worship or meditation, but also as sacred subjects that can cause an effect." Chinese image books produced by Da Rocha, Aleni and Schall combine "features of Chinese visual culture with characteristics of what was aimed at by meditating on the life of Christ in the *Spiritual*

Exercises: the creation of a space in which an encounter may take place."[2]

In a very recent article Michael Shin has argued that Jesuit visual production in China, particularly Aleni's, could have been eagerly accepted by an audience already familiar with a similar tradition in Pure Land Buddhism.[3]

Figure 2: Da Rocha's Crucifixion (1619)

THE METHOD OF RECITING THE ROSARY (SONG NIANZHU GUICHENG 誦念珠規程, 1619) BY JOÃO DA ROCHA 羅儒望

The first adaptation of Nadal's images in China was produced by João Da Rocha 羅儒望 who took Nadal's book with him to Nanjing, where he worked for many years. There, according to Jesuit renowned

[2] Standaert 2007, p. 78.
[3] Michael Shin 2009.

sinologist Pasquale D'Elia,[4] he possibly gave one of the students of the artist Dong Qichang 董其昌 (1555-1636) the job of making the engravings or cuts on wooden boards for the 15 mysteries of the Rosary using Nadal's illustrations as the prototype.[5]

Da Rocha's prints excel for their originality in the interpretation and adaptation to the Chinese style, visible in the facial features of all the figures, including Jesus, Mary, and the apostles; in all the clothing and decorations; in the buildings and drawings of the other architectural elements; in the gardens and landscapes.

The artist employed by Da Rocha reduces the complex composition of Nadal's illustrations to a single scene. This simplification allows space around the main scene; an emptiness which dramatically emphasizes the central theme.

A fine example is the scene of the crucifixion, where Chinese artists simplified Nadal's illustration (see figures 1 and 2). In the background of a stark mountain, which substitutes for the city of Jerusalem, the cross emerges in great relief. The crosses of the two thieves are left out. The lone cross with Jesus nailed on it is dramatically desolate between earth and heaven, in an apparently desolate solitude. Small groups of figures here and there around the cross suggest the cruelty and indifference of the soldiers that tortured and killed Jesus, the cold impassivity of the powerful ones who condemned him and, finally, the helpless pious and suffering women. This image must have had a powerful emotional impact on the viewers.

[4] D'Elia 1939 and 1942, p. 384.
[5] The images have been reproduced by D'Elia 1939.

Figure 3: Aleni's Coronation of the Blessed Virgin (1637)

THE ILLUSTRATED LIFE OF THE LORD OF HEAVEN INCARNATE (TIANZHU JIANGSHENG CHUXIANG JILÜE 天主降生出像經解, 1637) BY GIULIO ALENI 艾儒略

The Illustrated Life of the Lord of Heaven Incarnate, the second adaptation of Nadal's images in China, was published in Fuzhou in 1637, 18 years after the *The Method of Reciting the Rosary* by Da Rocha. Two years before, Aleni published *The Life of the Lord of Heaven Incarnate* (*Tianzhu Jiangsheng Yanxing Jilüe* 天主降生言行紀略, 1635) in eight volumes, a translation and adaptation in 'harmonia evangelica' style of Ludolphus of Saxony's *Life of Christ*. As Aleni stated in the introduction, *The Illustrated Life of the Lord* was conceived as a complement to the previous work. The whole project is a touchstone in Jesuit China Mission, since the Chinese audience was finally offered the possibility of reading the words of Jesus in their own language and of seeing illustrations of the main events of his life. With

this work, Aleni rose to the position of one of the most influential missionaries in China.

There were 57 prints in the standard edition, including an image of Jesus the King of the universe (which has a Chinese style globe) on the cover and a map of the city of Jerusalem, collocated after the introduction. The first illustration shows the episode of Zachery in the Temple and the last, the Coronation of the Virgin. The title of the illustrated episode is in the upper part of each image. The illustrations have Chinese characters called *tian gan* 天干 (the cyclical annual symbols of the *gan zhi* 甲子 system), that mark the different figures, places, or important details. The same characters are reproduced on the bottom, followed by an explanatory sentence of the item. Thus Aleni's work is organized in the same way that Nadal's original was.

When one compares the works of Aleni and Da Rocha it is truly surprising that Aleni did not pursue in the same line of adaptation, as one would expect. Why didn't Aleni follow Da Rocha's accommodating style? The answer might be in the different nature and goals of the two works. Da Rocha's text was a devotional manual for the meditation of the rosary. Aleni aimed at producing a visual narrative of the life of Jesus in its entirety, and for such a special purpose, he must have decided that an image book faithful to the European original was warranted. Aleni's work, a milestone for the evangelization of China, reproduced in numerous editions until the twentieth century.

Aleni's images collection was quite faithful to Nadal's original. Aleni's, similarly to Nadal's, employed the use of shadows and linear perspective and simultaneously represented a sequence of consecutive scenes in the same illustration. Yet, Aleni did not simply make copies of the European model. There are significant differences. For example, Aleni's illustrations are more essential and the composition is more dramatic. Some minor figures have Chinese lines. Aleni sometimes reproduces Chinese decoration, as in the image of the child Jesus in the Temple and the one illustrating the Last Supper (see figure 3), where the wall in the background has a window (or more likely a typical Chinese window frame) that allows looking at the Chinese style landscape, with bamboo and thorny bushes.

The most interesting difference between Aleni and his prototype is the last image that represents the Coronation of the Virgin (see figure 4).

The original European image is divided into three parts: the apostles are at the bottom, Mary and Jesus in the middle in a circle of clouds, and the small size scene of the Coronation is at the top. Da Rocha reduced the three parts to a single scene: the Virgin in the clouds is receiving the crown from God the Father on one side; the Son on the other, and the Holy Spirit on top in the form of a dove. Aleni keeps the main Coronation scene as Da Rocha did, but he adds close to 10 Chinese-looking angels on the right and on the left. The most important innovation in Aleni's image is however on the bottom, where Aleni reintroduced the crowd that Da Rocha has left out. On the right side the apostles applaud the Virgin's glory, but they are not alone. On the left side there is a group of about 15 Chinese figures combined with European figures. Among the European figures, the Pope is recognizable by his Tiara and a monarch by his headgear. The Chinese figures are various *literati*, a soldier with different head dressings and a child with the characteristic lock of hair. Between the people and the clouds there is a line of European and Asian looking buildings (houses, palaces, temples). Another minor detail in Chinese style is the globe that Jesus is holding in his right hand. The Coronation of the Virgin Mary is an event witnessed and applauded by a mixed crowd of European and Chinese people witnessing the event of the Virgin Coronation. Aleni's message seems quite clear: the Chinese are now part of the Church, with the same dignity as of other members. If before they were out of this event of salvation, the situation is now changed, because China has finally entered the life of the universal Church which is part of the history of salvation. With one image alone, Aleni responded to the objections of some *literati*, reported in three dialogue books by Aleni published in 1627; 1635 and 1640, about the exclusion of China from the plan for salvation.[6]

[6] Criveller 2001.

Figure 4: Aleni's Last Supper (1637)

THE PICTURES OFFERED TO THE EMPEROR (JINCHENG SHUXIANG 進呈書像, 1640) DE JOHANN ADAM SCHALL VON BELL 湯若望

In 1617 the Franco-Belgian Jesuit Nicolas Trigault was in Monaco of Bavaria to implement one of the important tasks for which he was sent to Europe by Nicolò Longobardo, the superior of the Jesuit mission in China: collecting precious gifts for the Emperor of China and *literati*. Duke Maximilian I of Bavaria and his father, Duke William V, were the sovereigns of Europe who responded most enthusiastically to the call of the Jesuits. Among the numerous and valuable gifts by the dukes of Bavaria, a picture book excelled. It was a book produced in a single copy, with a long title that begins with the words "*Vita Dni nri Jesu Christi* [...]", specially designed and produced for the occasion by Jesuit Matthäus Rader. This book, which contained 45 images of the life of Jesus painted in miniature, was unique in every sense: no

duplicate was ever produced; it was special because it was intended for a special person: the Emperor of China. It was a book of exceptional quality and value, and a book with a mission to accomplish. The purpose of Maximilian's donation was twofold: to provide support for the Jesuit mission in China and to establish a direct contact between the Duchy of Bavaria and the Empire of China.

For the Jesuits, the policy of offering gifts to the Emperor and to the *literati* answered the need to obtain the authority's favour: an indispensable condition to continue the missionary work in freedom and security.

The book was accompanied by a short introduction to Christian doctrine and explanatory notes on the meaning of the images. With this, the missionaries hoped to attract the curiosity and sympathy of the Emperor and inducing, if at all possible, his conversion: a result which by itself would contribute greatly to the progress of evangelization in the Empire.

The book brought to China by Trigault has not yet been found, and perhaps it is no longer in existence. However, a good description from contemporary sources has been traced down by Nicolas Standaert in his recent work *An Illustrated Life of Christ Presented to the Chinese Emperor*. Bavarian missionary Adam Schall Von Bell had the opportunity to donate Maximilian's book-gift to Chongzhen 崇禎, the last Emperor of the Ming Dynasty, in 1640. Following that audience with the Emperor, an event already in itself extraordinary, Adam Schall published the *Images in a Booklet Offered to His Majesty* (*Jincheng shuxiang* 進呈書像), which reproduced and translated, adapting them to the Chinese readership, the images and the explanations contained in book donated by Maximilian I. Schall's booklet contains 46 images, rendered in a Chinese pictorial style. At each image's right side Schall reports the title of the evangelical episode. However, the explanations of the details in the images, unlike in Nadal's and Aleni's collections, are omitted by Schall. He offers instead a narration of Jesus' life, based on a harmonization of the four Gospels.

This was the third and last work produced in China with the Nadal model in the late period of the Ming dynasty.

Figure 5: Shall's Annunciation (1640)

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SHIMAZU YUKIHISA AND THE FOUR JUNSHI IN SADOWARA. A LOYALTY CASE IN TOKUGAWA JAPAN

MARIA PAOLA CULEDDU

SAMURAI AND JUNSHI

The warrior caste (*bushi* 武士) dominated Japan since 1192, when Minamoto Yoritomo 源頼朝 became the most powerful man in the country and established the first shogunate (*bakufu* 幕府, "tent government"). With the establishment of the military government *bushi* became the icon of strength and authority, and at the same time the symbol of order, justice and of a superior unique style of life. The "moral superiority" that *bushi* claimed over the other castes allegedly derived from their own "noble" values and a specific code of conduct, to a large extent extraneous to the other social classes.

The lifestyle *bushi* adopted was essential and austere. They adhered to a set of values that clearly made them distinct from the other men. They even wanted to distinguish themselves from *kuge* 公家, the court nobles, to whom they were at least partially tied by blood and whose origins were already a fundamental element of distinction: *kuge* were elegant, cultured and refined, but had become incapable of administering their land, leading men and fighting, in other words of ruling the country.

Bushi fought for their own family, clan, Lord, and also for the Emperor, supreme priest of Japan and intermediary between Japanese people and the deities. The *chū* 忠, the "loyalty to the Lord", was a fundamental value for *bushi*. Duty, or better the "action dictated by righteous thoughts" (*gi* 義, "loyalty", "justice"), derived from the *chū*, which encompasses most of the values that regulate the *bushi*'s life and actions.

Death was the extreme expression of this loyalty. Not a meaningless death, but a real sacrifice. The proof of one's loyalty could be shown only by an extremely painful farewell to the world, achievable in an extreme situation: the battlefield (under the enemy's blow or by

throwing oneself on one's sword in order not to be taken prisoner) or the ritual suicide (*seppuku* 切腹).

The importance of *seppuku* was so high that through it a *bushi* had the power to avoid dishonour and fault, and therefore clear one's name and that of one's family, or protest against a wrong decision of one's Lord and show one's good intentions (*kanshi* 諫死). Also, a *bushi* could commit the ritual suicide to follow or to follow one's Lord in death (*junshi* 殉死).

In 1663 the *bakufu* banned the *junshi*,[1] and labelled it "antiquated" and "wasteful" in terms of human lives. Yet, in a rather peaceful period, when there was a remote chance of dying in battle, the *junshi* continued to be considered a sublime expression of loyalty to the Lord and examples of *junshi* are still found ever since 1663.

The Akō incident is undoubtedly well known to those interested in Japanese and samurai history. In 1701 Asano Naganori, the *daimyō* 大名 of Akō's feud, was provoked by Kira Yoshinaka. Kira was slightly wounded, but the use of weapons in the castle of the *shōgun* in Edo was forbidden by a *bakufu* law. Therefore Asano was forced to commit *seppuku*, his feud was confiscated and his retainers became *rōnin* 浪人. Ōishi Kuranosuke Yoshio and other forty-six samurai warriors considered unfair the death of their Lord, because Kira hadn't been punished at all. At the beginning of 1703 they finally revenged Asano by killing Kira in his castle. After the murder, they handed themselves over to the authority. They were sentenced to death in about two months, for they had broken the shogunate law which *forbade* private *revenge* (*katakiuchi* 敵討ち) and forced to commit *seppuku* on February the 4th. By committing *seppuku* they were allowed an extreme act of loyalty, for they could follow their Lord in death in the most honourable way, not different from the *junshi*. The forty-seven *rōnin* were then called *chūshin gishi* 忠臣義士, "righteous and loyal samurai."

[1] *Junshi* was prohibited in many feuds, such in Saga, where it was forbidden by *daimyō* Nabeshima Mitsushige (1632-1700). See Ikegami 1997, p. 283. *Junshi* was then officially banned by the *Buke shohatto* 武家諸法度 (*Law for the Military Houses*, J.W. Hall 1968 e J.H. Wigmore 1975) revision, which was promulgated by *shōgun* Tokugawa Ietsuna 徳川家綱 (1641-1680).

General Nogi Maresuke's 乃木希典 (1849-1912) suicide is another well known and more recent event. General Nogi had strongly contributed to Japanese victory in the Russian war (1904-1905). In 1912 he committed *junshi* with his wife when Emperor Meiji died. This "traditional" samurai act echoed all over Japan, while Japan was in a process of modernization and was showing off its modernism to claim superiority in Asia.

A less known example of *junshi* is quoted in an ancient war tale, the *Hōgen Monogatari* 保元物語 (approximately 1320), which tells about the so called *disorders of the Hōgen era* (*Hōgen no ran* 保元の乱, 1956). In the hard struggle for succeeding Emperor Toba 鳥羽天皇 (1103-1156) the most powerful military families in the country gathered round two sons of Toba's: some families took sides with Go Shirakawa 後白河天皇 (1127-1192), other families with Sutoku 崇徳天皇 (1119-1164). Minamoto no Tameyoshi 源為義 (1096-1156) and his son Minamoto no Yoshitomo 源義朝 (1123-1160) fought one against the other. When Sutoku's supporters were defeated, Yoshitomo was ordered to kill Tameyoshi, who was sentenced to death together with five sons, the oldest being only thirteen years old. Yoshitomo refused to obey the order, but the death sentence was still executed. The tutor (*menoto* 傅) of Yoshitomo's sons committed *junshi*, as his young Lords died. A warrior killing himself in order to follow his Lord in death was not unusual, but this act, committed by a civilian, was an exception and therefore even more praiseworthy.[2]

SHIMAZU YUKIHISA

The graves of four samurai retainers who committed *junshi* (Kimotsuki Jibuzaemon 肝付治部左衛, Sarutawari Sakonnojō 猿渡左近丞, Hidaka Ōizaemon 日高大炊左衛門 and Kubo Godabyoūe 久保権太兵衛) are located in the temple of Daiun-in 大雲院 (Higashiyama 東山) in Kyoto. They were all retainers of Shimazu Yukihisa 島津以久 (1550-1610).

Yukihisa was a warrior and the Lord of a castle and a feud (*han* 藩). During his life he witnessed to different historical and political situations from the civil wars of the Sengoku 戦国 ("Warring States", 1477-1576), through the reunification of the country in the Azuchi-

[2] Ozawa Tomio 2005, pp. 33-34.

Momoyama 安土桃山 period (1573-1600), to the Tokugawa 徳川 era (1600-1868), known as *pax Tokugawa*.

Shimazu Yukihisa[3] was born on the 2nd of August 1550 in Nagayoshi 永吉 (Satsuma 薩摩 province, western part of today's Kagoshima 鹿児島 prefecture). He was called Matashirō 又四郎 at birth, but then changed his name, according to traditional custom. Yukihisa was initially written 幸久, afterwards 征久 and finally 以久. He was son of Shimazu "Utenkyū" Tadamasa 島津右典厩忠将 (1520-1561), a retainer (*bushō* 武将) of the Shimazu clan and the Lord of Shimizu castle 清水城. In 1561 he lost his life on the battlefield fighting against the Kimotsuki 肝付 clan. His older brother, Yukihisa's uncle, was Shimazu Takahisa 島津貴久 (1514-1571), a powerful *daimyō* of southern Japan (Kyūshū 九州). In 1587 Yukihisa left Shimizu castle to his son Teruhisa 彰久 (1567-1594) and retired in Uwai 上井 (Ōsumi 大隅 province, eastern part of today's Kagoshima prefecture). In 1603 he was entrusted with Sadowara 佐土原 feud (worth 30.000 *koku* 石 of rice), in the Hyūga 日向 province (today's Miyazaki 宮崎 prefecture). He spent the last years of his life in Fushimi 伏見, where he died of illness on the 31st of May 1610.

Yukihisa was a skilled warrior and an excellent strategist that proved his value in all the battles he fought. He faced his baptism of fire at the age of sixteen taking part in a punitive expedition against the Kimotsuki. In 1576 he participated in the attack on Takahara castle 高原城 (Shizuoka 静岡 province) against Itō Yoshisuke 伊東義祐 (1512-1585). He served Shimazu Yoshihisa 島津義久（1533-1611), Takahisa's son, in several campaigns. In 1578 he helped to defeat the army of Ōtomo Sōrin 大友宗麟 (1530-1587), a powerful *daimyō* in Kyūshū also known as Ōtomo Yoshishige 大友義鎮. Yukihisa received high praise from the whole army for this achievement. In 1587 the Shimazu were the most powerful military clan in Kyūshū and Yukihisa distinguished himself in the battle of Takashiro 高城 castle. In 1592 he also took an active role in Toyotomi Hideyoshi's 豊臣秀吉 campaign to conquer Korea (Seikan 征韓).

[3] Information on Shimazu Yukihisa has been found in Furukawa Tetsushi 1979, pp. 65-69; Kūshō Setsuji 1997, pp. 135-155; and Hidaka Tokutarō 1960. On Sadowara see also *Miyazaki ken* 宮崎県, pp. 372-73, *Hanshi Jiten*, pp. 520-521, and *Miyazaki ken no chimei*, pp. 328-329.

As a military commander, Yukihisa's strategies on the battlefield reflected the *chiyūkenbi* 知勇兼備 creed, "being invincible through wisdom and courage." At Takashiro he faced an army that was ten times superior in number and realized that the enemy was full of ardour, but poor in spirit. Therefore he decided to aim at the units directly led by the opposite commander, rather than facing the whole army. This turned to be a winning strategy that destabilized and dispersed the enemy forces. Under different circumstances, Yukihisa gave evidence of his diplomatic skills. When retainer Ijūin Tadazane 伊集院忠真 (1576–1602) rebelled against the Shimazu in Kagoshima, Yukihisa was charged to subdue him and, considering the strength of such an enemy, he opted to forgive Tadazane's crime rather than fighting. And doing so, he successfully put an end to the rebellion.

Yukihisa was also said to be a hearty and righteous man. His samurai spirit shone through his benevolent attitude. During the battle of Takashiro Yukihisa ran into fifty enemy soldiers that were about to commit *seppuku*. He told his men that letting them live would bring no damage and that killing them wouldn't help to win the battle. Therefore he ordered to save them from death and sent them back to their homeland. His decision surprised both the fifty enemies and his men. Yukihisa was also very fond of dogs. During the mission in Korea he even took with him a dog and a servant whose duty was to sleep with it at night. One evening a tiger entered the room where they were sleeping. The servant was frightened and threw the dog to the tiger, that killed the dog and ran away. The morning after the servant started crying because he was sorry for what had happened and scared by the fact that his Lord could punish him. Instead, Yukihisa didn't even scold him, but complimented him on his cleverness.

Filial piety is also mentioned among Yukihisa's virtues and was a fundamental value for a *bushi*. When his father Tadamasa died at war, Yukihisa was very stricken. He was only a child at that time and he gained his first great victory in war while still young, in revenge for his father: he grasped his weapons and threw himself on the battlefield. In the last years of his life, Daianji temple was built to venerate his father. In the temple lies the memorial tablet with his father's Buddhist name.

Yukihisa's loyalty to the *shōgun* and the Emperor was strong as well. He answered the *shōgun*'s call for restructuring the shogunal palace, providing building materials and personally going to Edo 江戸. Before

leaving and returning to Fushimi castle, the *shōgun* Tokugawa Hidetada 徳川秀忠 (1579-1632) rewarded him for his service with many gifts, such as the precious short sword of Kanemitsu 兼光の脇差, robes and silver. In another occasion, while Yukihisa was in Kyoto, he found out that the Imperial Family was in urgent need of food and other facilities, and that the Imperial Palace was decaying. He committed himself to solve this unpleasant situation and this commitment gave birth to significant rules that his family would then follow from generation to generation.

Yukihisa's wisdom was greatly appreciated as well. Once, Tokugawa Ieyasu 徳川家康 (1543-1616) ordered Yukihisa's cousin Shimazu Iehisa 島津家久 (1547-1587) to go to Kyoto. Iehisa was convinced that it was a plot and that he risked to be attacked in Kyoto. Instead, Yukihisa wisely advised him to go. He told him that Ieyasu, being the supreme Commander of Japan, was certainly moved by noble principles and couldn't have bad intentions. Iehisa went to Kyoto, was kindly treated by Ieyasu and accomplished his mission safely.

To such a man, renowned as an "extraordinary", valiant and benevolent commander, the four samurai of Sadowara devoted their own death.

LOYALTY TO THE LORD

Confucianism originated in China and spread through Japan in the 4th-5th century. Many Confucian principles were accepted, such as the "five bonds" (Ruler to Ruled, Father to Son, Husband to Wife, Friend to Friend, Elder Brother to Younger Brother) and the belief in a hierarchical society where every human being has a specific role and specific duties. According to Confucianism, the Emperor was supposed to act towards his subjects as a benevolent father, whose main duties were obedience and filial piety.

Confucianism and Neo-Confucianism (introduced to Japan in the 12th century) played a functional role in Tokugawa society and helped to legitimize *bushi*'s authority and superiority over the other social castes. Japanese people regarded the relationships between ruler and ruled and between father and son as the most important ones. For a Japanese warrior, filial piety (*kō* 孝) and loyalty to the Lord (*chū* 忠) were strictly related. Connection between this two values originated from Confucian principles, as well as from the Shinto spirituality. In

prehistoric Japan and during the proto-state period, clan chiefs (*uji no kami* 氏の上) were political rulers as well as priests, as they were thought to have descended from the deities (*kami* 神). These ancient beliefs gave birth to the faith in a divine Emperor which officially survived until the end of the Second World War. Parental ties with Emperors and court nobles were essential for claiming someone's importance in society. Founders of the warrior houses (*buke* 武家) in the 12th century were all related to court nobles or members of the Imperial Family, and noble samurai used to declaim their family tree (*ujibumi wo yomu* 氏踏みを読む) in front of the enemy before a duel.

In the 17th century as in ancient times, a *bushi* was honoured to be allowed to serve a noble samurai and his ideal mental disposition forced him all his life to return the favour he had received (*on* 恩). Many praiseworthy examples of this are found in warrior literature. *Mutsuki* (陸奥記), a tale of the rebellion of the Abe 安部 clan, tells us about the "way of the *bushi*" according to Yoriyoshi 源頼義 (988-1075), head of the Minamoto clan. Yoriyoshi maintained that one should not regret dying for one's Lord, because human body is made for returning the favour and life becomes "light" (軽) when one's willing to die for duty (*gi* 義) or for the *on*. In a similar way, before going to battle, Yoriyoshi's loyal General Kiyohara Takenori 清原武則 stated that he had a high sense of loyalty and filial piety and that the bodhisattva Hachiman (God of War) was his witness: "if I cherished my own life too much and consciously avoided a desperate and hopeless fight, I might as well die hit by a sibilant arrow".[4] In other words, he might die in vain as well.

These events happened before the establishment of the shogunate. Four centuries later, during the Sengoku period, the whole country was at war and the so-called *gekokujō* 下克上 took place, that is "lower overcoming the higher." Some low-level and mid-level warriors emerged on the political scene by virtue of their military power and ability. Some of them came to be great *daimyō* or Generals despite their humble origins. Although the loyalty to the Lord was often strong enough to overcome the issue of noble origins, family tree was still very important. For instance, Hideyoshi, who ruled the country in the Azuchi-Momoyama period, was a man of humble birth, but he arranged

[4] The two anecdotes in the *Mutsuki* are quoted in Ozawa Tomio 2005, p. 25.

to have himself adopted into the Fujiwara 藤原 house and in 1586 was given the name Toyotomi by the Imperial Court.

Being the country at war in the Sengoku period, many *bushi* served several Lords, because *junshi* was still considered an honourable and sublime death, but also a significant and wasteful loss of human lives.

In the early Tokugawa period peace was restored. There is evidence that several warriors committed *junshi* even after it was banned in 1663. Some *bushi* became monks to follow their Lord in death at least symbolically. But mostly, the ideological meaning of loyalty changed from "loyalty to a specific Lord" to "loyalty to the Lord", from the beginning to the end (始終一人と同じ).[5] In regards to the Akō incident mentioned at the beginning of this essay, J.A. Tucker wrote:

> While the notion *chūshin gishi* can be translated via its component parts as "loyal and righteous samurai" or "loyal and dutiful samurai," such easy glosses hardly convey its whole meaning. In particular, such glosses overlook significant religious nuances that seventeenth -and eighteenth-century Tokugawa (1600–1868) religio-philosophical discourse either asserted or assumed the notion to have had. Scholars such as Hayashi Razan (1583–1657), Yamaga Sokō (1622–1685), Arai Hakuseki (1657–1725), and prominent followers of Yamazaki Ansai's (1618–1682) Kimon school of Neo-Confucianism explicitly understood the term to denote persons who had sacrificed their lives for some transcendent cause associated with a ruler, nation, or community.[6]

CONCLUSION

In Tokugawa society, *bushi* were expected to act autonomously, even though their autonomy was limited.[7] The four retainers of Sadowara who committed *junshi* represent the traditional "idea of a *bushi*" (武士の理念)[8] and "how a *bushi* should be" (なるべき武士) by virtues of their act. Nevertheless, one question arises: were they forced (not necessarily by someone, but by the *bushi* "law") to commit *junshi*? How autonomous was their decision?

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[5] *Reirōshū*, p. 138.

[6] J.A. Tucker 1999, p. 2. The author highlights the religious implication of the notion *chūshin gishi*. He also states that the forty-seven *bushi* were venerated in the Meiji era (1868-1912) by the Emperor.

[7] Cf. Takagi Shōsaku 2007, p. 154.

[8] Sakata Yoshio 1979, p. 23. The author refers to some Sengoku *bushi*.

In the way of the warrior (*bushidō* 武士道) loyalty to one's Lord and devotion to one's father are similar and strictly connected.[9] They both rise from a very strong feeling, equal to love. Loyalty is often even more important than filial piety. The forty-seven *rōnin* of Akō rest next to Asano's grave in the Sengakuji temple, and the four samurai of Sadowara next to Yukihisa's grave in Kyoto.

The moral code of the *bushi* constantly refers to death. Being ready to die is translated into an "enthusiasm" for throwing himself into extreme and desperate situations. The samurai of General Minamoto Yoshinaka 源義仲 (1154-1184) are said to have died on the battlefield shouting "we, men of the eastern provinces, will be the best example of suicide in whole Japan."[10]. In peaceful Tokugawa Japan as in ancient times, *bushidō* was still based on fighting in the battlefield, where a *bushi* and his Lord fought side by side.[11] Akō's warriors violated the peace kept by Tokugawa policy, but at the same time

> [...] this sentiment served to strengthen the political bond between the *daimyō* and his vassals as one fighting unit, and thus helped to eradicate the Sengoku type of intrahouse struggle.[12]

Yukihisa died of illness. Nevertheless, a different version of his death is reported. According to this version, he was on his way back from Osaka to his castle in Fushimi on a river. When his boat crossed Hosokawa Tadaoki's 細川忠興 (1563 -1646) boat, Tadaoki's men insulted Yukihisa's. Yukihisa lost his patience and planned to kill Tadaoki. Once in Fushimi, he informed Kabayama Hisanari 樺山久成, an adviser to the Shimazu, about his plan. Hisanari disagreed, unwilling to endanger a peaceful situation and possibly cause the downfall of the whole family, but Yukihisa refused to listen to his advice. At night four samurai were ordered to serve him *sake* 酒, wait until he would fall asleep and then kill him.

Should this be the true story of his death, by committing *seppuku*, the four men cancelled a merciless and disloyal act to their Lord and demonstrated their loyalty to Yukihisa.

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[9] Kanno Kakumyō 2006, pp. 247-249.
[10] Quoted in Ozawa Tomio 2005, p. 37.
[11] Kanno Kakumyō 2005, p. 16. The author refers to the moral principles in the *Hagakure* 葉隠れ.
[12] Takagi Shōsaku 2007, p. 148.

A *bushi* would naturally follow the way of duty only if he was inspired by a strong and genuine feeling of grateful and absolute love. This “righteous thought” (*chūgi* 忠義), corresponding to a perfect identity between mind and action, reveals the autonomy of a warrior. On the contrary, automatic loyalty (only inspired by rules) is similar to *chūkō*, but with no consistency.[13]

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[13] Kanno Kakumyō 2005, p. 16.

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