

Official Historiography and Ideological Indoctrination in High Qing: Emperor Qianlong's Compilation of the *Erchen Zhuan* and *Nichen Zhuan*

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The *Biographies of Ministers Who Served Two Dynasties* or *Biographies of Twice-Serving Ministers* (*Erchen zhuan*) and the *Biographies of the Traitors* (*Nichen zhuan*) are the last two official historical projects completed in the Qianlong reign (1736–1795). Finished in 1794, they brought to an end Qianlong-era evaluations of the early-Qing Han collaborators and traitors. Reflecting Emperor Qianlong's (Aisin Gioro Hongli · , 1711–1799; r. 1736–1795) ambitions to monopolize the authority of “praise and blame” (*bao bian*) in the interpretation of Chinese history, these two works, together with other Qianlong historical projects, were considered to be the official guidelines for the subsequent writings on the early history of the empire.

The *Erchen* project was initiated in 1777, a year after the completion of the *Records of All Officials [and Subjects] Who Died out of Loyalty to the Fallen Dynasty, Authorized by the Emperor [Qianlong]* (*Qinding shengchao xunjie zhuchen lu* , hereinafter cited as *Zhuchen lu*), and the *Nichen* project was derived from the former in around 1783. To the Qing court, the completion of the *Zhuchen lu* publicly proclaimed the Qing (1644–1911) official recognition of the moral deeds of the Ming loyalists who died in the resistance movement, 1644–1662.¹ However, the imperial commendation of these martyrs inevitably required the Qing court to review its previous evaluation of the disloyal Ming officials who were praised during the conquest period for their collaboration with the new government. As a result of a careful reconsideration, Emperor Qianlong came to the conclusion that in spite of their contributions to the founding of the Qing dynasty, the Han collaborators should not be forgiven for their violation of the Neo-Confucian principles of loyalty.

The Initiation of the Projects and Their Objectives

On January 11, 1777, shortly after the completion of the *Zhuchen lu*, Emperor Qianlong issued an edict ordering the compilation of the *Erchen zhuan*. According to the emperor, this idea was inspired by his reading of memorials written by the late-Ming ministers, collected in two anthologies entitled the *Memorials of the Late-Ming Officials* (*Mingmo zhuchen zoushu*) and the *Records of the Popular Views of the Contemporaries* (*Tongshi shanglunlu*). Going through writings of the former Ming ministers, such as Wang Yongji (1600–1659), Gong Dingzi (1616–1673), Wu Weiye (1609–1672), Zhang Jinyan (1631 *jinsbi*), Fang Kezhuang (d. 1653), and Ye Chuchun (1628 *jinsbi*), who took office under the Qing after 1644, Qianlong severely criticized them for their disloyalty to the previous dynasty and said:

1 For a study of the work, see Wing-ming Chan, “The Qianlong Emperor’s New Strategy in 1775 to Commend Late-Ming Loyalists,” *Asia Major*, Third Series, 13.1 (2000): 109–137.

... When our [Qing] dynasty was established, the late-Ming ministers who recognized the reality and surrendered [to us]... were countless in number. To achieve the great unification of the empire, [the government] had no choice but to appoint them to office so as to pacify the people and tell the obedient from those rebels. In an honest retrospection, these [collaborators] were officials of the previous dynasty who failed to sacrifice themselves for their emperor at the crucial time when they were needed. Cravenly clinging to life rather than braving death, they shamelessly surrendered [to the Qing]. None of them could be called perfect men. Even if they had any small service commendable, their faults should not be obscured. Those like Li Jiantai [d. 1650] and Jin Shenghuan [d. 1649], who rebelled after surrender, and Qian Qianyi [1582–1664], who secretly slandered [the Qing] after his submission, were unreliable and evil, and, therefore, could not be considered as human beings. These [collaborators] did not qualify for [a biography] in the *Ming History*. If we consider their small contributions and place in the official history of our [Qing] dynasty their [biographies] with those [of the ministers] with fair reputation, such as Fan Wencheng [1597–1666] in the conquest period or Li Guangdi [1642–1718] in the peace time, this is unjust in regard to “praise [and blame].” [However,] if [deeds of these collaborators] are not recorded [in history] because they served two dynasties, their faults will not be known. Then, how can [the official history] fulfil its function of keeping a true record of [history]? I think that these men with guilt of misconduct should not be forgiven during their lifetime, even if they have made contributions [to the Qing]. Nor should they be spared from blame after their death out of consideration [for the interests] of their descendants. A section of “twice-serving ministers” should be established in the [official] history to keep a true record of their deeds in both the Ming and our [Qing] dynasties without hiding [their faults]... Officials in the Historiography Bureau are hereby instructed to check the names and deeds [of the “twice-serving ministers”], compile their biographies, and submit them to me for final approval.²

The imperial edict of January 11, 1777 marked the beginning of a two-decade official historiographical project for the compilation of biographies of the early-Qing twice-serving ministers. It was a major enterprise that indicated the Qing house’s reevaluation of the Han collaborators who had assisted the Manchus with the conquest of China in the mid-seventeenth century. It was not until the compilation of the *Erchen zhuàn* that the political realignment of these collaborators, whose deeds had previously been recognized by the conquerors as an act that accorded to “Heaven’s Will,” was the subject of a full-scale reassessment by the Qing court.

During the conquest period, a considerable number of former Ming officials were recruited and appointed by the new government.³ As an important factor contributing to the founding of the new dynasty, their shift of loyalty was openly acknowledged and rewarded by the alien regime.⁴ Despite the later avowed state policy of promoting Neo-Confucian principles of

2 Zhongguo diyi lishi dang’anguan , *Qianlong chao shangyu dang* (Beijing: Zhongguo diyi lishi dang’anguan 1991), vol. 8, pp. 479-480 and Qinggui (1735–1816) et al. comps., *Gaozong Chunhuangdi shilu* , in *Qing shilu* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1985–1986), vol. 21, *juan* 1022, Qianlong year 41, month 12, pp. 693-694.

3 For instance, when the Manchu entered Beijing in 1644, most of the former Ming officials were appointed by the new government with promotion. The submitted officials were also encouraged to recommend qualified persons to the new court for appointment. See Batai (d. 1690) et al. comps., *Shizun Zhanghuangdi shilu* , in *Qing shilu*, vol. 3, *juan* 10, Shunzhi year 1, month 5, p. 57, pp. 59-60 and *Shunzhi yuan nian neiwai guanshu zoushu* (Beijing daxue yanjiusuo, preface, 1931).

4 Several cases demonstrated this attitude of the new regime. For instance, when Xu Yifan (d. 1648), a former junior Ming official who submitted himself to the Qing in 1644, gave up his life for the new dynasty in 1648, he received the imperial funeral and one of his sons was offered a place in the Imperial Academy. *Shizun Zhanghuangdi shilu*, in *Qing shilu*, vol. 3, *juan* 49, Shunzhi year 7, month 6, p. 392.

loyalty, this did not affect the imperial recognition of the collaborators' collaboration and the policy remained unchanged for decades after the consolidation of Qing rule.⁵ Neither Kangxi (Aisin Gioro Xuanye , 1654–1722; r. 1662–1722) nor Yongzheng (Aisin Gioro Yinzhen , 1678–1735; r. 1723–1735) had criticized these former Ming ministers for their disloyalty to the fallen dynasty. In his sixty-one years on the throne, Emperor Kangxi did not hesitate to laud the collaborators who were distinguished in their service to the Qing, regardless of their personal histories.⁶ In order to promote loyalty and filial piety in the wider society, Emperor Yongzheng ordered the enshrinement of Qing loyalists and virtuous officials on a number of occasions. In his decrees of 1725, 1729, 1730 and 1732, collaborators like Sun Dingliao (d. 1647), Hao Xiaozhong (d. 1651), Liu Liangchen (d. 1632), and Meng Qiaofang (1595–1654), men who had sacrificed their lives for or devoted themselves to the new dynasty, were included in the lists of enshrined Qing officials.⁷ Even Emperor Qianlong had ordered in 1764, earlier in his reign, that the collaborator Xu Yifan, an official killed in the resistance against rebellions, be enshrined in the temple for Qing loyalists.⁸

Apart from the case of Xu Yifan, the granting of rewards to the descendants of Wang Aoyong (d. 1644), Tian Xiong (d. 1663) in 1750, and Xu Yong (d. 1654) in 1767 for the contributions of Wang, Tian, and Xu to the establishment of Qing rule also suggests that in the first half of the Qianlong reign, the emperor did not consider the Ming officials' subjection to the Qing a grave fault.⁹ It seems that Qianlong only gradually formulated a rationale for condemning Han collaborators in the late 1760s and early 1770s, a time during which he reconsidered the previous imperial interpretations of the history of the resistance movement. When the court decided to commend late-Ming martyrs for their loyalty to the defunct dynasty in 1766, imperial approval of collaboration became contradictory and required reconsideration. Therefore, when the *Zhuchen lu* was compiled in 1776, the emperor came to the conclusion that the early Qing attitude toward the collaborators should be revised and it was in these circumstances that the project of *Erchen zhuan* was initiated.

The *Erchen zhuan*, together with the *Zhuchen lu*, constitutes the body of Qianlong-period historiography in regard to the reevaluations of these late-Ming and early-Qing figures. These works were ostensibly ethical tracts that would apportion "praise and blame" for the officials' deeds; furthermore, they were to serve a political purpose of ideological indoctrination.

5 Ye Gaoshu , *Xiang Qing Mingjiang yanjiu (1618–1683)* (Taipei: Institute of History, National Taiwan Normal University, 1993), pp. 287–288.

6 Two cases demonstrated Kangxi's attitude toward the collaborators. In 1681 and 1684, he commended Shang Kexi (1604–1676) for his loyalty to the Qing during the Three Feudatories Rebellion and openly admired Zhang Yong (1616–1684) for his military accomplishments in the northwest frontiers. *Zhongguo diyi lishi dang'anguan, Kangxi qijuzhu* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1984), vol. 1, Kangxi year 20, month 9, pp. 747 and vol. 2, Kangxi year 23, month 4, p. 1176.

7 *Qinding guoshi erchen biaozhuan* (archive materials, Guoli gugong bowuyuan [National Palace Museum], Taipei, no page number), vol. 1, *jia shang* 甲上, "Liu Liangchen," "Sun dingliao," "Hao Xiaozhong," and vol. 2, *jia zhong* , "Meng Qiaofang." Also see *Qingshi liezhuan* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987), vol. 20, *juan* 78, p. 6412, 6414, 6424, 6431.

8 *Qinding guoshi erchen biaozhuan*, vol. 1, *jia shang*, "Xu Yifan;" *Qingshi liezhuan*, vol. 20, *juan* 78, p. 6422.

9 *Qinding guoshi erchen biaozhuan*, vol. 1, *jia shang*, "Wang Aoyong," "Xu Yong," vol. 3, *jia xia* , "Tian Xiong;" *Qingshi liezhuan*, vol. 20, *juan* 78, p. 6420, 6424, 6520.

According to the emperor's term, both works were to be employed to "foster forever the cardinal principles and constant virtues among ministers" (*wei wanshi benzhi zhi gongchang*)¹⁰. Both the history and purpose of the two books were closely interrelated. The *Erchen zhuan* was intended to condemn disloyalty; while *Zhuchen lu* celebrated loyalty.

In fact, the emperor's idea to use history as an effective means to warn his ministers against any misconduct can be traced back to 1765 when he read the official biographies of early-Qing ministers compiled by the Historiography Bureau during the Kangxi and Yongzheng periods.¹¹ The subjects of these biographies were important ministers who had made significant contributions to the Qing dynasty.¹² In the imperial edicts of August 9 and October 29, 1765, Qianlong criticized these official biographies of Qing ministers for extolling the merits of their subjects without mentioning their faults. He argued that this practice palpably violated the basic principles of historiography, which he deemed should emphasize objectivity and accuracy. To improve the quality of the official works, Qianlong ordered the reestablishment of the Historiography Bureau so that not only could the biographies in question be rewritten, but also the project was extended to incorporate all high-ranking Manchu and Han ministers of the previous reigns. At the same time, special instructions concerning the contents and arrangement of entries for the new biographies were given to the Bureau. Basically, Qianlong now required that in each biography all the achievements and faults of the figure concerned be accurately listed in detail. When each biography was completed, it was to be submitted to the throne for final approval.¹³

These imperial instructions of 1765, which led to a full-scale review of previous official Qing biographies, had two significant historical implications for the development of official historiography in the Qianlong reign. First of all, by monopolizing the authority to officially appraise past events and historical figures, the emperor made himself the ultimate judge of history.¹⁴ Secondly, through these acts of "praise and blame," official historiography then became a tool for posthumous reward and punishment that the court could employ in regard to

10 *Qianlong chao shangyu dang*, vol. 8, p. 480 and *Gaozong Chunbuangdi shilu*, in *Qing shilu*, vol. 21, *juan* 1022, Qianlong year 41, month 12, p. 694.

11 According to Kanda Nobuo, the Qing Historiography Bureau was first established as a temporary institute in 1636 and reestablished during the Kangxi and Yongzheng periods for the purpose of compiling the histories of previous reigns. It was not until 1765 that the Bureau became a permanent government institution. See Kanda, "Shinchō no kokushi retsuden to jishinden", in *Tōhō Gakkei sōritsu nijūgo shūnen kinen tobogaku ronshū* (Tokyo: Toho Gakkai, 1972), pp. 272-280. Also see Zhuang Jifa, "Qingdai guoshiguan de zhuanji ziliao ji liezhuan de bianzuan", in *Qingdai shiliao lunshu*, vol. 2 (Taipei: Wenshizhe chubanshe, 1980), pp. 151-192; Wang Zhonghan, "Qing guoshiguan yu Qingshi liezhuan", in *Qingshi xinkao* (Shenyang: Liaoning daxue chubanshe, 1990), pp. 257-278; and, Qiao Zhizhong, *Qingchao guanfang shixue yanjiu* (Taipei: Wenjin chubanshe, 1994), pp. 27-61.

12 See Zhaolian (1776–1802), *Xiaoting xulu*, in *Xiaoting zilü*, (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980), *juan* 1, pp. 399-400 and Oertai (1680–1745) et al. comps., *Baqi tongzhi (chuj)* (Jilin: Dongbei shifan daxue chubanshe, 1985), *juan* 1 p. 5.

13 *Gaozong Chunbuangdi shilu*, in *Qing shilu*, vol. 18, *juan* 739, Qianlong year 30, month 6, pp. 138-140, *juan* 744, month 9, pp. 192-193 and *Qianlong chao shangyu dang*, vol. 4, pp. 718-719.

14 Ho Koon-piu (He Guanbiao), "Lun Qing Gaozong ziwo chuixu de lishi panguan xingxiang", in *Ming-Qing renwu yu zhushu* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Educational Publishing Co., 1996), pp. 146-182.

its subjects. In this sense, the imperial prerogative of rewarding or punishing a minister was no longer restricted to his lifetime, but extended to his posthumous “career” as well. This was evinced, for example, in the emperor’s handling of the composition of the official biographies of Mingju (1635–1708) and Wang Hongxu (1645–1723). As Grand Secretaries of the Kangxi period, both men were impeached by the censor Guo Xiu (1638–1715) in 1688 and 1689 respectively. As a result of this impeachment, Mingju was demoted and Wang dismissed from office.¹⁵ Pre-Qianlong-reign official biographies, however, did not cite details of their demotion and dismissal. Obviously, Qianlong disagreed with these omissions. In his imperial edicts of 1772 and 1775, he ordered Guo’s memorials regarding the original cases be incorporated in the official biographies of Mingju and Wang in full so as to inform the public and later generations of the faults of these two former ministers. Taking the new arrangement as a posthumous punishment of the above figures, Qianlong also believed that these cases would serve as a warning to those currently in office against committing similar crimes.¹⁶ Pursuing this logic, the principle of “praise and blame” was now also applied to the *Erchen* project.

When the *Erchen zhuan* was initiated in 1777, the emperor’s evolving historical approach explained why for some time the contents and arrangement of the materials could not be finalized. On March 22, 1778, Emperor Qianlong issued a new edict to the Historiography Bureau detailing new instructions regarding the compilation of the work. He ordered that the *Erchen zhuan* was now to be divided into two categories, A and B (*jia* and *yi*). Category A was for the early-Qing collaborators who had wholeheartedly supported the new government and made acknowledged contributions to the founding of the new dynasty after their submission. Category B was for those “inferior men” (*xiaoren*) who had made only minor contributions and served the Qing without particular devotion or who had previously taken office under the rebellious regime founded by the bandits before turning to the Qing. Chief officials in the Historiography Bureau were instructed to conduct a careful investigation of the personal dossiers of all collaborators and placed their biographies in Category A or B according to their conduct and service to the new court. Of course, as indelible stains in their lives, histories of their activities under the former dynasty, now construed as shameful, were not to be omitted either. The emperor’s decision came with a moral explication of his approach. As he explained in the edict:

... I decided to [condemn disloyalty] not only to encourage ministers to observe the ethical code and foster the Confucian cardinal principles and constant virtues [in society] but also to remind [the future Qing] emperors of the foundations of the [Qing] dynasty and what [they should do] for the protection of their patrimony. Of course, there were capable ministers among these collaborators, and if the later Ming emperors could have maintained the authority [as passed on from their ancestors], these ministers would have assisted them in maintaining the succession of the dynasty and in turn be talents

15 For Guo’s memorials regarding the impeachment of Mingju and Wang, see *Qingshi liezhuan*, vol. 2, *juan* 8, pp. 531-532 and vol. 3, *juan* 10, 690-691. Also see Fang Chao-ying, “Mingju,” in *Eminent Chinese of the Ch’ing Period (1644–1912)* (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1943), vol. 2, pp. 576-578; Tu Lien-che “Wang Hung-hsü,” *ibid.*, p. 826; He Lingxiu, “Mingju,” in *Qingdai renwu zhuanqao, shangbian* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1991), vol. 6, pp. 35-47; and, Huang Aiping, “Wang Hongxu,” *op. cit.*, vol. 8 (1995), pp. 164-169.

16 *Qianlong chao shangyu dang*, vol. 7, pp. 192-193, 196-197 and *Gaozong Chunhuangdi shilu*, in *Qing shilu*, vol. 20, *juan* 919, Qianlong year 37, month 10, pp. 327-328; vol. 21, *juan* 979, Qianlong year 40, month 3, pp. 73-74.

for the service of the country. Therefore, if an emperor is good at maintaining authority, there would be no twice-serving ministers...¹⁷

Notwithstanding the above political-moral arguments, this new categorization applied in the *Erchen zhuàn* revealed Qianlong's personal detestation of the collaborators who had served the new court without any real loyalty. A case in point was Qian Qianyi, a minister who even harbored anti-Qing sentiment and took a pro-Ming perspective in his post-1644 writings on the Ming-Qing transition.¹⁸

Qianlong's intense antipathy toward Qian Qianyi was first evinced in 1761, when he criticized Shen Deqian (1673–1769), the compiler of the *Anthology of Poetry of the [Qing] Dynasty* (*Guochao shi biecai*), for listing Qian's poems as the foremost works in the anthology and commenting on Qian with undisguised admiration.¹⁹ It seems that the emperor was highly dissatisfied with the situation that Qian, a disloyal official of the former dynasty, still enjoyed a posthumous reputation for his literary talent among the Han literati. Arguing from a moral perspective, he advanced the opinion:

Those who lived in our [Qing] dynasty and still foolishly yearned for the former [Ming] dynasty were rebels. This is explicit in the law. [Qian] was a senior official of the Ming who voluntarily surrendered himself to us. In consideration of expediency during the conquest period, [he was] not expelled [by the Qing court], yet he could not be regarded as a human being. I am not concerned about the existence of these poems but I will not allow them to be selected and placed in the preeminent position among the poetry of our [Qing] dynasty... What is poetry? It is but [an expression] of loyalty and filial piety. Anything divorced from loyalty and filial piety cannot be called poetry.²⁰

The available sources indicate that in spite of his condemnation of Qian, until 1769, at least, Qianlong had paid little attention to Qian as well as to Qian's writings and it was only in 1769 that he systematically read Qian's *Collected Early Learning of Muzhai* (*Muzhai chuxue ji*) and *Collected learning of Muzhai* (*Muzhai youxue ji*).²¹ Enraged at Qian's egregious expression of anti-Qing sentiment, the emperor ordered a total ban on all Qian's works.²² That same year, the ban was further extended to include the quotation and citation of Qian's works in the writings of other authors.²³ To a certain extent, the establishment of Category B in the *Erchen*

17 *Gaozong Chunhuangdi shilu*, in *Qing shilu*, vol. 22, *juan* 1051, Qianlong year 43, month 2, p. 51.

18 For Qian's post-1644 anti-Qing ideas, see Qian, *Muzhai youxue ji* (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1996), vol. 2, *juan* 12, p. 574 and vol. 3, *juan* 49, p. 1587.

19 In the "explanatory preface," Shen emphasizes the moral function of poetry and affirms that moral education is the main purpose of the anthology. These usual clichés provided Qianlong an excuse against Shen's selection of Qian's poems, which, to the emperor, defeated the purpose of the anthology. See Shen, *Qing shi biecai* (originally entitled as *Guochao shi biecai*) (1760 edition, repr. Hong Kong: Zhonghua shuchū, 1977), *fānlǐ*, pp. 3-5.

20 *Qing gaozong (Qianlong) yuzhi shiwen quanji* () (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue chubanshe, 1993), vol. 10, *Yuzhiwen chujī* , *juan* 12, p.414-415.

21 *Gaozong Chunhuangdi shilu*, in *Qing shilu*, vol. 19, *juan* 836, Qianlong year 34, month 6, p. 155-156.

22 *Ibid.* Also see Yao Jinyuan ed., *Qingdai jin hui shumu* (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1957), p. 12, 56, 65, 58,90, 118, 218, 219, 251, 289, 322, 336; Sun Dianqi (1894–1958), *Qingdai jinshu zhi jian lu* (Taipei: *Shijie shujū*, 1960), p. 68, 69, 77, 105, 156, 157; and, Lei Mengchen , *Qingdai gesheng jinshu huikao* (Beijing: Shumu wenxian chubanshe, 1989), p. 116, 222.

23 *Gaozong Chunhuangdi shilu*, in *Qing shilu*, vol. 19, *juan* 848, Qianlong year 34, month 12, p. 356. Also see Zhuang Jifa, "Qing Gaozong jin hui Qian Qianyi zhushu kao" , *Dalu zazhi* , 7.5 (Nov. 1973): 22-30 and Jian Xiujuan , *Qian Qianyi cangshu yanjiu* (Taipei: Hanmei tushu gongsi, 1991), pp. 97-106.

zhuan 1778 can be viewed as an imperial revenge on those collaborators like Qian who harbored a grudge to the new dynasty following their subjection.²⁴ By announcing an official condemnation of these “twice-serving ministers” in Category B, the project attempted to deny totally their historical position in the history of the Ming–Qing transition and eliminate their influence on the Qing literati.

Qianlong’s condemnation of disloyalty also led to the compilation of another work dealing with the history of the early reigns of the dynasty. This was the *Nichen zhuan*. In 1783, five years after the establishment of Category B in the *Erchen zhuan*, the emperor’s attention was drawn to those historical figures of the Three Feudatories Rebellion, 1673–1681 as he found that a number of the rebellious officials came from the *erchen*. From the viewpoint of the Qing house, the three feudatories and their followers were rebels guilty of high treason.²⁵ According to the Qing precedent, no biography of these traitors would be permitted in the official history of the dynasty.²⁶ Qianlong, however, did not agree with this precedent. In the edict of November 19, 1783, he said:

The compilation of the [Qing] official history is aimed at commending virtue and exposing vice as well as making the truth known both at the present and in the future... The *Erchen zhuan*, which I instructed [the Historiography Bureau] to divide into categories A and B, is a new type of biography established to foster the [Confucian] cardinal principles and constant virtues. This work should be separated [from other sections of biographies in the official history] so as to transmit the true Way for the good of the world and the human heart. As for those rebellious ministers like Wu Sangui [1612–1678], the facts about their crimes should be clearly stated and [their biographies] be placed in another section [of the official history].²⁷

It was this 1783 edict that made biographies of the rebellious Qing officials part of Qianlong-reign historiography. Despite the plan to establish a new section in the official history for the rebellious officials, it was not until 1790 that the official title *Nichen zhuan* was confirmed. On January 23, 1790, an edict regarding the project was issued. It stated that the *Nichen zhuan* should be compiled in order to condemn the traitors and make their crimes known to the public.²⁸ In other words, this was a posthumous punishment of the imperial house imposed upon traitors to the Qing dynasty.

24 Sun Zhentao 孙震涛 even goes so far as to argue that the compilation of the *Erchen zhuan* was Qianlong’s revenge on Qian Qianyi. See Sun, “Qingshi Erchen zhuan ji Qingchu zhengyu” 清史二臣传及清初正狱, in *Qingshi shulun* 清史述论 (Hong Kong: Yazhou chubanshe, 1957), pp. 3-5.

25 In the Qing law, rebellion was one of the serious crimes listed in the “Ten Abominations” (*shi’e* 十恶). See Shen Zhiqi 申志奇, *Da Qing lüli jizhu* 大清律例集注 (1746 edition, repr. in *Beijing Daxue Tushuguan cang shanben congshu, Ming-Qing shiliao congbian* 明清史料丛编, vol. 1, *juan* 1, pp. 13-14. For the discussion of the Qing law regarding disloyalty, see Paul H. Ch’en, “Disloyalty to the State in Late Imperial China,” in *State and Law in East Asia: Festschrift Karl Bünger*, Dieter Eikemeier and Herbert Franke eds. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1981), pp. 159-183.

26 *Gaozong Chunhuangdi shilu*, in *Qing shilu*, vol. 18, *juan* 739, Qianlong year 30, month 6, pp. 138-139.

27 *Qianlong chao shangyu dang*, vol. 11, p. 855 and *Gaozong Chunhuangdi shilu*, in *Qing shilu*, vol. 23, *juan* 1191, Qianlong year 48, month 10, pp. 928-929.

28 *Gaozong Chunhuangdi shilu*, in *Qing shilu*, vol. 25, *juan* 1344, Qianlong year 54, month 12, pp. 1224-1225.

The Compilation Process, Selection Criteria and Taxonomy

Although the *Erchen zhuan* was initiated in 1777, some of its biographies had been compiled before then. A biography of Hong Chengchou (1593–1665), for example, had been submitted to the throne as early as 1766.²⁹ This suggests that some biographies of the collaborators were compiled immediately after the reestablishment of the Historiography Bureau in 1765. When the 1777 edict was issued, they were sorted out by the Bureau and transferred to the newly-initiated project.

Compared with the *Zhuchen lu*, which was completed within about a month, the progress of compiling the *Erchen* and *Nichen* projects was inordinately slow.³⁰ The compilation of both the *Erchen zhuan* and the *Nichen zhuan* came under the auspices of the Historiography Bureau, which was also responsible for the biographical projects on the early-Qing ministers. Unfortunately, most of the works being processed by the Bureau were far behind schedule and, since its re-establishment, only a few biographies had been completed. In 1781, Emperor Qianlong openly expressed his dissatisfaction with the slow progress of the assigned projects and instructed the Bureau to accelerate its pace. As a result, a new production schedule was drawn up and the Bureau was required to submit its drafts every twenty days so that all the historiographical projects in hand would be completed within five years.³¹ In spite of this imperial order, the compilers still failed to meet their target and little improvement was made in the years that followed. In 1792, officials in the Bureau were punished for their inefficient performance.³²

The completion dates of the *Erchen* and *Nichen* projects are not clearly stated in dynastic records, but there is a clue in the *Qinding guoshi erchen biaozhuan*, the final version of the *Erchen zhuan*. According to the “Compilers’ Notes” in this work, the project was completed “one hundred fifty years after the founding of the dynasty,”³³ which was, in other words, sometime around 1794, shortly before the end of the Qianlong reign. The *Nichen zhuan*, a project derived from the *Erchen zhuan*, was compiled during the same period and it was most probably that it was also completed in the same year.³⁴

No detailed information about the compilation process of the *Erchen* and *Nichen* projects is available but we can speculate based on the available evidence that it was Qianlong’s constant vacillations on the subject and the classification of biographies that were partly responsible for the Bureau’s tardiness. During the compilation, apart from changing his mind regarding the categorization, the emperor also wavered in determining whether some controversial figures should be incorporated in the project at all. For instance, in 1789, twelve years after the initiation of the *Erchen zhuan*, Emperor Qianlong advanced the opinion that those twice-

29 *Gaozong Chunbuangdi shilu*, in *Qing shilu*, vol. 18, *juan* 761, Qianlong year 31, month 5, p. 373.

30 Kanda Nobuo, “Shinchō no kokushi retsuden to jishinden,” p. 7 and Zhuang Jifa, “Qingdai guoshiguan de zhuanji ziliao ji liezhuan de bianzuan,” pp. 154-155.

31 *Qianlong chao shangyu dang*, vol. 10, p. 805 and *Gaozong Chunbuangdi shilu*, in *Qing shilu*, vol. 23, *juan* 1142, Qianlong year 46, month 10, pp. 293-294.

32 *Gaozong Chunbuangdi shilu*, in *Qing shilu*, vol. 26, *juan* 1412, p. 993, Qianlong year 57, month 9.

33 *Qinding guoshi erchen biaozhuan*, “Compilers’ Notes.”

34 In the *Qingshi Nichen zhuan*, there is one volume of biography of Cao Lun (d. 1813), a Company Commander of Eight Banners in the Jiaqing reign (1796–1820). Obviously the volume was compiled in the Jiaqing period and subsequently added into the *Qingshi Nichen zhuan*. The handwriting and page margin of this volume are different from other volumes done in the Qianlong period. In addition, Cao’s biography is not found in *Qinding guoshi nichen zhuan*, the manuscripts which are believed to be the Qianlong final version of the work. See the *Qingshi Nichen zhuan* and *Qinding guoshi nichen zhuan* (archive materials, Guoli gugong bowuyuan, Taibei).

serving ministers who had worked for the rebels during the transitional period and “inferior men” like Feng Quan (1595–1672), Gong Dingzi, and Qian Qianyi, were not qualified to have any place in the official history and that their biographies should be withdrawn from the *Erben zhuàn*. As a way of condemning them, their names, together with their precise faults given in point form, were now to be recorded in a table attached.³⁵ Six months later, however, Qianlong again suddenly changed his mind and thought that if no biography was compiled for these figures, their evil deeds would not be known in detail and their faults could not be fully exposed. Therefore, his previous order was countermanded.³⁶ It is understandable that as Qianlong changed his mind about the way to handle the biographies of the early-Qing collaborators from time to time, officials in the Historiography Bureau would find it extremely difficult to read his mind and proceed with their work. The compilers’ hesitation about fickle imperial intentions would certainly have hindered the progress of their work.

Qianlong’s decision regarding the biography of Zhang Yuanxi (d. 1658) may further reflect his unpredictable ideas about the selection criteria for the *Erben* project. Zhang was a Ming *jinshi* of 1643, who began his official career in the Qing and was promoted to Governor-general of Zhili, Shandong, and Henan in 1657.³⁷ Insulted by Maleji (d.1689), a Manchu Hanlin Bachelor, he committed suicide in 1658.³⁸ During the compilation of the *Erben zhuàn*, the Historiography Bureau originally incorporated Zhang’s biography in Category B. In 1791, Qianlong read the *Veritable Records of the Shunzhi Reign* and was attracted by the case of Zhang. As a result, he re-read Zhang’s biography. Bitterly denouncing Maleji for victimizing his Han Chinese colleagues and restating the imperial policy of equal treatment between the Manchus and Han Chinese, the emperor now criticized the Director-generals of the Bureau for their bias toward Zhang. He thought that it was a mistake in principle to consider Zhang a twice-serving official. The imperial edict pointed out:

Zhang Yuanxi served the [Qing] dynasty without misdeed. Despite being a Hanlin bachelor of the Ming, [he] had not been appointed any official position [in the Ming,] and was thus different from those prominent Ming ministers who shamelessly realigned [with the new dynasty]. [Zhang, therefore,] should not be incorporated in the *Erben zhuàn*, let alone in Category B.³⁹

With this logic, Qianlong then instructed the Historiography Bureau to crosscheck the compiled biographies of twice-serving ministers. For those Ming degree-holders in the Qing court, if they had never taken any government position during the Ming, their services in the Qing were not to be regarded as a betrayal of the earlier dynasty. It was now decreed that any misjudgment upon these figures should be corrected and their biographies withdrawn from the *Erben* project.

35 *Qianlong chao shangyu dang*, vol. 14, pp. 967-968 and *Gaozong Chunbuangdi shilu*, in *Qing shilu*, vol. 25, *juan* 1332, Qianlong year 54, month 6, pp. 1031-1032.

36 *Qianlong chao shangyu dang*, vol. 15, 348-349 and *Gaozong Chunbuangdi shilu*, in *Qing shilu*, vol. 25, *juan* 1344, Qianlong year 54, month 12, pp. 1224-1225.

37 Zhu Baojiong and Xie Peilin, eds., *Ming-Qing jinshi timing beilu suoyin* (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1980), vol. 3, p. 2624 and Zhao Erxun (1844-1927) et al., *Qingshi gao* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1976-1977), vol. 24, *juan* 197, pp. 7077-7078.

38 *Shizuo Zhangbuangdi shilu*, *juan* 117, Shunzhi year 15, month 5, p. 909; *juan* 118, month 6, pp. 920-921; *juan* 119, month 7, p. 925.

39 *Qianlong chao shangyu dang*, vol. 16, p. 214 and *Gaozong Chunbuangdi shilu*, in *Qing shilu*, vol. 26, *juan* 1375, Qianlong year 56, month 3, pp. 460-461.

The edict of 1791 formulated Emperor Qianlong's definition of *erchen* and made it clear that the imperial condemnation of disloyalty was only confined to the former Ming ministers who took office under Qing rule and did not apply to those Ming degree-holders whose first official appointments were under the new government. The emperor's resolution of these selection criteria for the *Erchen zhuàn* also demonstrated a close resemblance regarding the definition of loyalty and disloyalty between the imperial view and the shared perspective of the educated Han Chinese. Both of them emphasized, in the high Qing historian Quan Zuwang's (1705–1755) words, “not serving two dynasties.”⁴⁰ To what extent the emperor's decision was influenced by public opinion may never be known, however, to a certain extent, the resolution of 1791 can be considered a tacit acceptance by the Qing house of its shared perspective of the conquest history with the Han literati in eighteenth-century China.⁴¹

When the two biographical projects were completed in 1794, 144 biographies, together with 23 sub-biographies, of the *erchen* and *nichen* had been compiled. As the *Erchen zhuàn* had excluded the collaborators of low ranks from the Ming, the incorporated figures of the two projects only account for a small proportion of the total number of the Ming officials who surrendered.⁴² For example, Sun Degong (孫德恭), Zu Dashou (祖 Dashou (d. 1656), and Zuo Menggeng (左 Menggeng (d. 1654) surrendered themselves to the Qing along with their subordinates but most of their underlings were excluded from the *Erchen* project.⁴³ The work also excluded Shi Lang (施 Lang (1621–1696), a former subordinate of Zheng Chenggong (1624–1662) who played an important role in the Qing conquest of Taiwan. Moreover, after the subjugation of Taiwan in 1683, the descendants of Zheng were appointed to government positions in the Qing court. Their deeds were mentioned in the biography of the *nichen* Zheng Zhilong (鄭 Zhilong (1604–1661), but none of them was given a place in the *Erchen zhuàn*.⁴⁴ From an analysis of the contents of the two works and our study of the 125 *erchen* and 42 *nichen*, the following table can be deduced:

Allocation of biographies in the *Erchen zhuàn* and *Nichen zhuàn*

Categories	Biographies	Sub-biographies	Total
<i>Erchen zhuàn</i> , A	51	3	54
<i>Erchen zhuàn</i> , B	69	2	71
<i>Nichen zhuàn</i>	24	18	42
Total	144	23	167

Sources: *Qinding guoshi erchen biaozhuàn* and *Qinding guoshi nichen zhuàn*⁴⁵

40 For the discussion on the shared Qing perspective of loyalty, see Wing-ming Chan, “The Qianlong Emperor's New Strategy in 1775 to Commend Late-Ming Loyalists,”

41 For the shared Qing perspective, see Wing-ming Chan, “The Early-Qing Discourse on Loyalty,” *East Asian History*, 19 (June 2000): 27-52.

42 According to the preface of the *Qinding guoshi erchen biaozhuàn*, only those former Ming officials with high rank and significant standing were qualified for a place in the project.

43 Sun Zhentao, “Qingshi Erchen zhuàn jì Qingchu zhengju,” p. 15.

44 Ye Gaoshu suggests that this is because Qianlong regarded the Zheng descendants Qing pirates in the coastal regions rather than Ming subjects. See Ye, *Xiang Qing Mingjiang yanjiu (1618–1683)*, p. 3.

45 The figures are based on a tabulation of the final version of *Qinding guoshi erchen biaozhuàn* and *Qinding guoshi nichen zhuàn*. In the *Man-Han mingchen zhuàn* (Guoshiguan comp., Harbin: Heilongjiang renmin chubanshe, 1991) and *Qingshi liezhuan*, the biography of Cao Lun, a Jiaqing figure, is also incorporated.

In addition to the above categorization, both Categories A and B of the *Erchen zhuan* are subdivided into three hierarchical sections: the upper, middle, and lower sections. The selection criteria of each section are clearly stated in the “Compilers’ Notes” and the “Table of *Erchen*” of the work:

[The *Erchen zhuan*] is divided into two categories, A and B, each containing three sections. Those [twice-serving ministers] who joined the [Qing] dynasty and died for the empire are placed in the upper section of Category A, ... those [who served the Qing] in an exemplary manner in the middle, ... and those [who discharged their duties] with honor in the lower... Those [twice-serving ministers] who made no contribution are placed in the upper section of Category B, ... those who later committed crimes in the middle, ... and those who served as bandits or began as bandits in the lower.⁴⁶

The incorporated biographies of the *erchen* are arranged in six volumes in the order of rank based on the aforementioned criteria. In Category A, 9 biographies are placed in the upper section, 10 in the middle, and 32 in the lower. The numbers of biographies in the three sections of Category B are 23, 18, and 28 respectively. As a summary of the imperial evaluations, a “Table of *Erchen*,” indicating the official ranking of each incorporated figure, is placed at the beginning of the first volume of the work.⁴⁷

The twenty-three sub-biographies of *erchen* and *nichen* mainly come from the minor historical figures of the Ming-Qing transition. Brief narratives of their deeds are attached to the biographies of their relatives or colleagues. For instance, the sub-biographies of Liu Zehong (d. 1695), Zu Zepu (d. 1661), Zhang Tianfu (d. 1667), and Zhang Duan (d. 1654) are placed at the end of the biographies of their fathers or brothers.⁴⁸ Sub-biographies of other six rebels, Yang Yuming, Yang Baoyin, Yang Fu (d. 1674), Cai Lu (d. 1674), Yang Laijia (d. 1680), and Wang Yongqing 王永清 (d. 1682) are attached to the biography of Zhang Guozhu (d. 1683), one of the followers of Wu Sangui in the Three Feudatories Rebellion.⁴⁹ Strictly speaking, Zhang’s biography, like some others in the *Nichen zhuan*, is actually composite of several biographical sketches of the minor figures involved in the Three Feudatories Rebellion.

The two extant official manuscripts of the *Erchen* and *Nichen* projects available in the Palace Museum, Taipei, are different from the privately-printed *Erchen zhuan* and *Nichen zhuan* circulated in the late Qing.⁵⁰ Apart from the six-volume *Qinding guoshi erchen biao zhuan* and the

46 *Qinding guoshi erchen biao zhuan*, vol. 1, “Compilers’ Notes.”

47 *Qinding guoshi erchen biao zhuan*, vol. 1, “Table of twice-serving minister.” Also see *Qinding guoshi er-ni chen zhuan mulu* (archive materials, Guoli gugong bowuyuan, Taipei), no page number.

48 See the attached sub-biographies in the biographies of Liu Liangchen (d. 1632), Zu Zerun (d. 1659), Zhang Tianlu (d. 1659), and Zhang Xin (d. 1658). *Qinding guoshi erchen biao zhuan*, vol. 1, *jia shang*, “Liu Liangchen,” vol. 3, *jia xia*, “Zu Zerun,” “Zhang Tianlu,” vol. 6, *yi xia* 乙下, “Zhang Xin.” Also see *Qingshi liezhuan*, vol. 20, *juan* 78, pp. 6412-6413, 6507-6508, 6477-6478, *juan* 79, p. 6618.

49 *Qinding guoshi nichen zhuan*, “Biography of Zhang Guozhu.”

50 According to Kanda Nobuo, there are at least two privately printed editions of the *Erchen* and *Nichen zhuan*. See Kanda, “Shinchō no kokushi retsuden to jishinden,” pp. 8-9. One of them later is incorporated in *Qingdai zhuanji congkan*, (Zhou Junfu ed., Taipei: Mingwen shuju, 1985), vols. 56 and 57. Apart from the printed editions, there is also a Qing manuscript of the *Erchen zhuan* kept in the Fu Sinian Library, Academia Sinica, Taipei. The categorization and arrangement of biographies of these later private versions are different from those of the official *Qinding guoshi erchen biao zhuan* and *Qinding guoshi nichen zhuan*. They also contain a number of printing or writing errors. Li Xinda affirms that there is another Qing manuscript entitled the *Qinding guoshi erchen zhuan* in Beijing Library. See Li, “Qianlong di yu erchen zhuan”, *Zhongguo shi yanjiu*, 1988.4 (Nov. 1988): 165-166. Yet, no information about the Beijing manuscript is found in the catalog of the

two-volume *Qinding guoshi nichen zhuan*, several volumes of individual biographies are grouped together under the titles *Qingshi erben zhuan jiabian*, *Qingshi erben zhuan yibian*, and *Qingshi Nichen zhuan*.⁵¹ Evidence suggests that these individual biographies were compiled before the “imperial-approved” (*Qinding*) volumes. First, obvious mistakes of the former are revised in the latter.⁵² Moreover, on the cover of the biography of Li Yongfang (d. 1634), it states that the volume is “the original text submitted [to the throne] in the ninth month of the forty-third year [1778] of the Qianlong reign.”⁵³ Apparently, the *Qingshi* titles of the grouped materials were given by the Bureau of Qing History during the Republican period. As Kanda Nobuo asserts, the *Qingshi* biographies are the final drafts separately submitted by the Historiography Bureau to the throne and the “imperial approved” materials are the definitive versions of the projects approved by the emperor.⁵⁴ Notwithstanding the open imperial condemnation of the early-Qing *erben* and *nichen*, neither the *Erben zhuan* nor the *Nichen zhuan* was officially published after their completion.⁵⁵ It was not until the late-Qing and early-republican periods that the *erben* and *nichen* biographies were privately published and circulated in society.⁵⁶

The Contents and Narratives of the *Erben Zhuan*

Like other Qianlong-reign historiographical products, the *Erben* project relies heavily on official sources, including government dossiers, imperial memorials, and the *Veritable Records*. The incorporated biographies usually consist of the following information of the figures concerned in chronological order: their native places, official ranks and positions during the Ming, years of realignment with the Manchus, career paths under the new government, contributions to the Qing court, and rewards and punishments received.⁵⁷ The selected

Library. See Beijing tushuguan comp., *Beijing tushuguan guji shanben shumu* (Beijing: Shumu wenxian chubanshe, date unknown).

- 51 There are 20 volumes of the *Qingshi erben zhuan jiabian*, 37 volumes of the *Qingshi erben zhuan yibian*, and 7 volumes of the *Qingshi Nichen zhuan*. Basically, each volume contains one biography but some volumes also consist of sub-biographies. As there are two volumes of the biography of Liu Yingbun (1613 *jinsbi*), and the volume of Cao Lun was added in the late Jiaqing period, the total number of early-Qing biographies available in this *Qingshi* version should be 62, about 42 % of the projects.
- 52 For instance, in the individual volumes, the term “great Qing” (*da Qing*) was marked and changed to “the dynasty” (*benchao*) or “our dynasty” (*wochao*). In the *Qinding* versions, “the dynasty” and “our dynasty” are used in addressing the Qing.
- 53 *Qingshi erben zhuan jiabian*, “Li Yongfang.”
- 54 Kanda Nobuo, “Shinchō no kokushi retsuden to jishinden,” pp. 10-12.
- 55 This assertion is based on the following observations: except the manuscripts, no official published materials of the projects is found or mentioned in the catalogs of the Qing imperial published books; secondly, no information relating to the publication of the projects is found in the extant official Qing documents, including the imperial edicts, *Veritable Records*, and the memorials of the central and local officials.
- 56 Apart from the popular editions, biographies of the projects are also incorporated in the *Man-Han mingchen zhuan* and *Qingshi liezhuan*. See, *Man-Han mingchen zhuan*, vol. 4, *Appendices*, pp. 4413-4681 and *Qingshi liezhuan*, vol. 20, *juan* 78-80, pp. 6412-6701.
- 57 As Denis Twitchett observes, in imperial China, the official biographies are usually filled by materials relating to family backgrounds, official career paths, and social reputations of the subjects. See Twitchett, “Chinese Biographical Writing,” in William G. Beasley and Edwin G. Pulleyblank eds., *Historians of China and Japan* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), pp. 95-114. This is also applied to the *Erben* project though, according to Qianlong, it was a “new type” of biography.

materials and their arrangement convey not only imperial evaluations of the twice-serving ministers but also the Qing house's proclamation which restated its legitimate succession to the Ming and legitimacy of rule in China after 1644.

In the biographies of Category A, *Erchen zhuan*, considerable space is given to the narratives relating to the shift of loyalty of the historical figures, which implicitly explains the fall of Ming and the rise of Qing from a Manchu perspective. One typical example is the official account of the submission of Shang Kexi, the former Ming Regional Commander of Liaodong, who collaborated with the Manchus in 1634 and was conferred with the title Prince of Pacifying the South (*ping nan wang*) in 1649. The biography points out that for generations members of the Shang family were Ming loyalists who served in the Ming armies. In the late Ming, Shang Kexi's father died for the dynasty but he himself suffered from the chaotic factional politics of the court and was terribly persecuted by his political opponents. It was in this life-and-death situation that he turned to the Manchus.⁵⁸ The narratives of Shang's biography suggest that his realignment with the Manchus was a direct result of late-Ming factionalism.

Furthermore, in the case of Hong Chengchou, the compilers intentionally make use of his subjection in 1642 to illustrate the shift of the Mandate of Heaven during the dynastic transition. On the one hand, the biography gives an account of Hong's demotion in 1638 despite his exploits in the suppression of the late-Ming rebellion in 1629–1638. On the other hand, it highlights his dreadful predicament resulting from the shortage of military supplies in the Ming-Manchu wars, 1639–1642, which led to his eventual defeat and capture by the Qing. The recounting of the desperate straits that Hong found himself in could be considered to be an indirect criticism of late-Ming administrative dysfunction. Quoting the words of Emperor Taizong (Aisin Gioro Abahai, 1592–1643; r. 1626–1643), the biography offers a concluding remark to the effect that the Manchus' military victories in Liaodong “were an expression of Heaven's Will,” and this laid a solid foundation for their conquest of China.⁵⁹

In contrast to the criticism of late-Ming factionalism and administrative chaos, events demonstrating the Qing house's benevolent treatments of the Ming officials who surrendered are particularly emphasized in the biographies. For instance, in the account of the imperial rewards Sun Dingliao received after his submission, the following episode is recounted:

Sun Dingliao, a native of Liaoyang and the Regional Commander of Tailinghe, followed Zu Dashou and submitted [to the Qing] in 1630. He was awarded silver, saddles and horses, arrow quivers, and other articles for daily use. Later, [he] was appointed Vice Commander-in-chief affiliated to the Bordered Red Banner of the Eight Han Banners. In 1632 [1640], when the great [Qing] armies seized

58 *Qinding guoshi erchen biaozhuan*, vol. 2, *jia zhong*, “Shang Kexi,” *Qingshi liezhuan*, vol. 20, *juan* 78, p. 6438.

59 *Qinding guoshi erchen biaozhuan*, vol. 2, *jia zhong*, “Hong Chengchou,” *Qingshi liezhuan*, vol. 20, *juan* 78, pp. 6443-6445. The earliest Qianlong drafts of Hong's biography are available in Zhongguo diyi lishi Dang'anguan, Beijing, PRC. See “Guoshiguan dang'an,” *Quanrong* no. 11, *Zhuan* 129. I have compared the earliest drafts in Beijing with those in *jiabian* and *biaozhuan* in Taipei. The Beijing drafts provide the sketch with notes and commentaries done by the compilers and editors. Hong's biographies in the *jiabian* and *biaozhuan* were compiled based on the narratives of the drafts and most of these notes and commentaries were incorporated. For the recent discussion on Hong's submission to the Qing, see Li Guangtao (1902–1984), “Hong Chengchou bei Ming shimo” , *Guoli zhongyang yanjiuyuan lishi yuyan yanjiu jikan* , vol. 17 (April 1948): 231-245; Wang Chen-main, “Historical Revisionism in Ch'ing Times: The Case of Hung Ch'eng-ch'ou (1593–1665),” *Zhongguo lishi xuehui shixue jikan* , 17 (May 1985): 450-476 ; and, Wang, “Persistence in Chinese Culture: A Case Study of Hung Ch'eng-ch'ou (1593–1665),” *Late Imperial China*, 10.1 (June 1989): 27-62.

Songshan, [Emperor Abahai] permitted the family reunion of the submitted Tailinghe generals whose family members and relatives were in Songshan and Jinzhou. At the beginning of Dingliao's submission, two of his servants escaped. It was rumoured that Dingliao had sent his servants back to the Ming. Yet, the emperor did not investigate the case. Then, the edict [of family reunion to Sun] mentioned [the rumor]. Dingliao in his memorial [to the throne] said: "Upon receiving the edict, I came to learn that in the past twelve years, I was suspected of such a crime and it was due to the kindness of his Majesty that [I had never been] questioned [about my loyalty to the Qing]. After Songshan and Jinzhou were captured, it was time to prove my innocence. The two escaped servants have never been at my home [in Songshan]. If they are detained elsewhere, they should be closely questioned about the facts." The emperor comforted Sun in his response [to this memorial].⁶⁰

In the narratives of Hong Chengchou's realignment with the Qing, stress is put upon the emperor's generosity and the benevolent Qing policy in dealing with the submitted Ming ministers. Hong was captured by Qing troops in Songshan and sent to the Manchu capital in 1642. Being a man of talent, he enjoyed the favor of Emperor Abahai and was induced to collaborate with the new regime. According to the official biography, after his submission, Hong was granted an audience in the imperial palace. Realizing his previous offenses against the Manchus, he did not dare face the emperor and kneeled outside the imperial hall and begged for forgiveness. To dispel Hong's misgivings, the emperor assured Hong that he would not be blamed for his past deeds or political stance. As the imperial edict to Hong stated:

At that time, you [Hong] were engaged in the battles, fighting for your [Ming] master against us. Why should I mind that? It was Heaven's Will that I defeated one hundred and thirty thousand [Ming] soldiers and captured Songshan and Jinzhou. The Way of Heaven emphasizes saving lives. Those [rulers] who are good at saving lives are in conformity with the Way of Heaven. I, therefore, bestow favor upon you. What you should do is to bear in mind my imperial grace saving your life and do your best to repay it.⁶¹

Through the selected events and narratives in the biographies of Category A, the compilers have made their points clear that the dynastic change in seventeenth-century China was an inevitable result of historical development, in which the benevolent and energetic Manchus were chosen by Heaven to replace the corrupt Ming rulers.

It is worth noting that although condemnation of disloyalty was said to be the chief objective of the *Erchen* project, in the biographies of Category A, except the negative *erchen* label, the twice-serving ministers concerned were not seriously censured for their violation of the principles of loyalty. Nor were they personally blamed for the demise of the Ming in 1644. On the contrary, their contributions to the founding of the new dynasty were officially addressed and recognized in the biographies. Furthermore, in spite of the imperial decree depriving several *erchen* of their posthumous honors in 1790, the posthumous titles granted in the previous reigns to acknowledge the merits of these figures were not deprived.⁶² It appears that in the imperial reevaluation of the early-Qing figures, Emperor Qianlong did not adopt a rigid attitude toward all of the collaborators. At least, for those former Ming ministers who wholeheartedly supported the new government after submission, the emperor maintained that their loyal and meritorious

60 *Qinding guoshi erchen biaozhuan*, vol. 1, *jia shang*, "Sun Dingliao," *Qingshi liezhuan*, vol. 20, *juan* 78, p. 6413.

61 *Qinding guoshi erchen biaozhuan*, vol. 2, *jia zhong*, "Hong Chengchou," *Qingshi liezhuan*, vol. 20, *juan* 78, pp. 6445-6446.

62 For the imperial order of 1790, see *Qianlong chao shangyu dang*, vol. 15, pp. 348-349 and *Gaozong Chunbunwangdi shilu*, in *Qing shilu*, vol. 25, *juan* 1344, Qianlong year 54, month 12, pp. 1224-1225. Among the fifty-four *erchen* (including the three in sub-biographies) in this category, eighteen of them received posthumous titles, which were not affected by the order and still recorded in the *Qinding guoshi erchen biaozhuan*.

service deserved appropriate approval. In some biographies, they were characterized as victims of late-Ming politics rather than mere opportunists. Of course, to the compilers, it was the Qing dynasty that had given the surrendered Ming ministers a chance for a new life.

Comparatively speaking, the treatments received by the figures in Category B of the *Erchen zhuàn*, as well as those in the *Nichen zhuàn*, were much severe. As archive materials indicate, the emperor's condemnation of disloyalty is mainly reflected in the narratives and comments on people in these two categories, especially evident in Qianlong's strong censure on the deeds of Feng Quan, Gong Dingzi, and Qian Qianyi.⁶³ Resorting to a method of punishment for the immoral deeds of the twice-serving ministers, Emperor Qianlong issued a decree in 1790 to deprive some of the *erchen* of posthumous titles. In 1792, he gave further instructions to the Historiography Bureau that the term *zu* 罪, which was traditionally employed to denote the death of a senior official, be prohibited from use in the official biographies of the punished ministers. As a result, this word was immediately replaced in all biographies of the middle and lower sections of Category B by the term *si* 死, a general expression denoting death.⁶⁴ These punitive measures implied an imperial denial of these former ministers to be qualified as scholar-officials, an act which could be regarded the most severe punishment to an educated Han Chinese in late-imperial times.

Feng Quan's biography, which is placed in the middle section of Category B, provides a valuable case study of the imperial tactics employed in creating these narratives of disloyalty. Feng, a Grand Secretary of both the Ming and Qing dynasties, was notorious for his corruption and involvement in court factionalism, nonetheless, he survived an impeachment launched by his colleagues in the Shunzhi period.⁶⁵ During the compilation of the *Erchen zhuàn*, Feng was singled out in imperial edicts as one of the typical examples of "unreliable inferior men."⁶⁶ The biography first gives an account of his immoral deeds relating to late-Ming factionalism, in particular his attachment to eunuch cliques, blaming him for the political chaos of the dynasty. Then, it cites a number of Qing memorials impeaching him for taking bribes, ganging up for selfish interests, and abusing his authority.⁶⁷ Through the narratives and cited materials, Feng was characterized as a completely negative historical figure and his position in the history of the Ming-Qing transition was totally negated. Solely by studying Feng's biography in the *Erchen zhuàn*, one would hardly disagree with the imperial evaluation of the subject.⁶⁸

63 Several biographies in the *Qingshi erchen zhuàn jiabian* are attached with the emperor's edicts condemning the *erchen* but except that in the biography of Qian Qianyi, all of them are removed in the *Qinding guoshi erchen biaozhuàn*.

64 For the imperial edict, see *Gaozong Chunhuangdi shilu*, in *Qing shilu*, vol. 26, *juan* 1416, Qianlong year 57, month 11, pp. 1049-1050. In the *Qingshi erchen zhuàn yibian*, the term *zu* appearing in the biographies of the middle and lower sections was tagged and changed to *si*.

65 Zhongguo diyi lishi dang'anguan, "Feng Quan beihe an" , *Lishi Dang'an* , 1981.4 (Nov. 1981): 12-16, 29 and Gugong bowuyuan zhonggubu comp., *Zhanggu congbian* (Repr., Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1990), pp. 779-791. Also see Tu Lien-che, "Feng Ch'ün," in Hummel ed., *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period (1644-1912)*, vol. 1, pp. 240-241; Wang Zhengyao , "Feng Quan," in *Qingdai renwu zhuangao, shangbian* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1984), vol. 1, pp. 146-153; and, Zhang Sheng , "Feng Quan shishi zakao" , *Qingshi yanjiu* , 1998.3 (Sept. 1998): 89-96.

66 *Qianlong chao shangyu dang*, vol. 10, p. 805, vol. 14, pp. 967-968, vol. 15, pp. 348-349, and vol. 16, p. 214; *Gaozong Chunhuangdi shilu*, in *Qing shilu*, vol. 23, *juan* 1142, Qianlong year 46, month 10, pp. 293-294, vol. 25, *juan* 1332, year 54, month 6, pp. 1031-1032, *juan* 1344, month 12, pp. 1224-1225, vol. 26, and, *juan* 1375, year 56, month 3, pp. 460-461.

67 *Qinding guoshi erchen biaozhuàn*, vol. 5, *yi zhong* , "Feng Quan," *Qingshi liezhuan*, vol. 20, *juan* 79, pp. 6554-6559.

68 Obviously, some favorable comments on Feng were intentionally omitted. At least, Feng had been praised by Emperor Shunzhi for his political talent. See *Shizū Zhanghuangdi shilu*, in *Qing shilu*, vol. 3, *juan* 73, Shunzhi year 10,

Similar tactics were adopted in the biography of Gong Dingzi, a former Ming censor who took office under the rebels in 1644, turned to the Qing in the same year, and was promoted to Minister of Punishment in the Kangxi reign. Placed in the lower section of Category B, the biography points out that Gong was one of the former Ming officials who submitted to Li Zicheng immediately after the fall of Beijing. To expose his shamelessness, an incident involving a confrontation at court between Gong and his political opponent Feng Quan is mentioned:

The event originated from the impeachment of Feng Quan by the censors Xu Zuomei [1640 *jinsbi*] and Zhuang Xianzu [1637 *jinsbi*]. Prince Rui [Dorgon] summoned the departmental ministers to make inquiries [in the matter]. [During the meeting, Gong] Dingzi [attacked Feng and] said, “Feng Quan betrayed [Emperor] Tianqi [Zhu Youxiao, 1605–1627, r. 1620–1627] and aligned himself with Wei Zhongxian [1568–1627] to engage in evil.” Quan [responded in kind] by saying, “The rebel Li Zicheng killed the Ming emperor [Chongzhen] and usurped state power. Dingzi submitted himself to the rebels and served as Censor of the North City.” Dingzi argued, “I was not the only one [who capitulated. Among the Han officials,] who didn’t surrender [at that time]? [Besides, in Chinese history,] even Wei Zheng [580–643] submitted himself to [his former enemy Emperor] Taizong [Tang Taizong, Li Shimin, 559–649, r. 626–649]. Prince [Dorgon] laughed [at Gong] and said, “One must be loyal oneself before one can criticize others [for disloyalty]. Dingzi is shameless to compare himself with Wei Zheng and the bandit Li [Zicheng] with Tang Taizong. People [like Gong] would be advised to withdraw and remain silent. How could they glibly comment on others?⁶⁹

Furthermore, Gong’s involvement with Shunzhi-era Manchu-Han factionalism and the punishments he received are also highlighted in the biography. The construction of this narrative naturally leads readers to the conclusion that Gong’s moral integrity was highly questionable. Although the compilers do not make direct comment on the deeds of this subject, the intention to condemn Gong is clear.

Qian Qianyi was one of the most controversial figures of the Ming-Qing transition. Among the twice-serving ministers, he was the *erchen* most despised by Emperor Qianlong.⁷⁰ Since 1769, all of his works had been banned by the government. Mindful of the imperial will on this matter, the writers of the biography of Qian concentrate on negative stories, including his involvement in late-Ming factional politics, the punishment and dismissal he received in the Ming, and his alleged association with the anti-Qing activists after 1645. To declare the emperor’s hatred of Qian, excerpts from imperial edicts relating to the condemnation of the subject are attached to the end of the biography. Moreover, the emperor’s negative remarks on Qian are highlighted and the government’s order of the censorship of his works is indicated.⁷¹ This arrangement clearly reveals the emperor’s calculated attempt to suppress any public opinion in favor of Qian.

month 3, p. 579.

69 *Qinding guoshi erchen biaozhuan*, vol. 6, *yi xia*, “Gong Dingzi,” *Qingshi liezhuan*, vol. 20, *juan 79*, p. 6594.

70 For instance, although Qian Qianyi, Gong Dingzi, and Feng Quan were openly condemned by Emperor Qianlong, only Qian’s works were totally banned by the government. For the circulation of Gong’s and Feng’s works, see Ding Yuanji, “Qingshi Erchen zhuan zhushu kaolüe,” *Guoli bianyiguan guankan*, 12.2 (Dec. 1983), 193; 202-205.

71 *Qinding guoshi erchen biaozhuan*, vol. 5, *yi zhong*, “Qian Qianyi,” *Qingshi liezhuan*, vol. 20, *juan 79*, pp. 6575-6578. Qianlong’s edicts condemning disloyalty are attached to several biographies of the *Qingshi erchen zhuan yibian*. However, except those in Qian’s biography, all of them are removed in the *Qinding guoshi erchen biaozhuan*.

The Contents and Narratives of the *Nichen Zhuan*

The use of history as a tool to condemn treason was not an innovation of Emperor Qianlong. There were numerous precedents in traditional Chinese official historiography. Since the Yuan dynasty, when the standard histories of the preceding dynasties were compiled, certain sections had been assigned to the biographies of evil and rebellious ministers under the titles of *jianchen zhuan* 奸臣傳, *panchen zhuan* 叛臣傳, and *nichen zhuan*.⁷² During the early Ming, Zhu Yuanzhang (1328–1398; r. 1368–1398), the first emperor of the dynasty, resorted to similar methods to declare the crimes of his executed ministers. In 1390 and 1393, he ordered the compilation of the *Records Announcing the Gang of Traitors* (*Zhaoshi jiangang lu* 昭示奸黨錄) and the *Records of the Rebellious Officials* (*Nichen lu* 逆臣錄), which were composed of the confessions of the figures involved in the two early-Ming great trials regarding high treason, to denounce Hu Weiyong (d. 1380), Lan Yu (d. 1393), and their cliques for their “rebellious” activities against the Ming.⁷³ In some senses, Qianlong’s compilation of the *Nichen zhuan* could be regarded as a Qing continuation of this tradition.

Derived from the *Erchen* project, the compilation of the *Nichen zhuan* was initiated to condemn early-Qing traitors for their betrayal of the dynasty during either the conquest period or the Three Feudatories Rebellion. The two-volume *Qinding guoshi nichen zhuan* comprises biographies of 42 *juan*. Among them, 30 are the Ming officials or rebels who capitulated while the rest, including Geng Jingzhong (d. 1682) and Shang Zhixin (1636–1680), two of the three rebellious feudatories, come from among Qing subjects, who began their official careers under the alien regime. The focus of the project is evidently the rebellion, as nearly four-fifths of the biographies, 33 out of 42, placed in the first part of the project are about its participants, accounting for about 75% of the narratives. In a broader sense, the compilation of the *Nichen zhuan* was also intended to tell the people about the imperial ability and determination to suppress any rebellious activity against the Qing.

Wu Sangui as the chief plotter of the rebellion was the central figure of the insurrection and his biography occupies considerable space in the work. The *nichen* biography of Wu Sangui concentrates on the historical events relating to his submission to the Manchus and his rebellion against the Qing, which provides an imperial perspective of the rise and fall of the powerful Yunnan feudatory in the mid-seventeenth century.⁷⁴ At the beginning of the biography, the compilers affirm that when the rebels seized Beijing in 1644, Wu initially considered subjugating himself to Li Zicheng (1606–1645). It was only after his

72 Tuotuo (1314–1355) et al. comps., *Songshi* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1977), vol. 39, *juan* 471–477, pp. 13697–13852; Tuotuo, *Jinshi* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975), vol. 8, *juan* 132–133, pp. 2817–2864; Tuotuo, *Liaoshi* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1974), vol. 5, *juan* 110–114, pp. 1483–1518; Song Lian (1310–1381) et al. comps., *Yuanshi* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1984), vol. 15, *juan* 205–207, pp. 4557–4606; Zhang Tingyu (1672–1755), *Mingshi* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1974), vol. 26, *juan* 308, pp. 7906–7987.

73 Qian Qianyi, *Muzhai chunxue ji* (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1985), vol. 3, *juan* 104, pp. 2129–2142 and Zhu Yuanzhang, *Nichen lu* (Beijing: Beijing Daxue chubanshe, 1991), preface, pp. 1–2. As Wu Han (1909–1969) points out, the cases of Hu and Lan were framed by Zhu Yuanzhang to consolidate his power. See Hu, *Zhu Yuanzhang zhuan* (Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 1965), pp. 244–255 and “Hu Weiyong an kao” , in *Wu Han shixue lunzhu xuanji* (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1984), vol. 1, pp. 442–480.

74 *Qinding guoshi erchen zhuan*, vol. 1, “Wu Sangui,” *Qingshi liezhuan*, vol. 20, *juan* 80, pp. 6632–6646.

concubine Chen Yuan (Chen Yuanyuan, 1624–?1681) was taken by Liu Zongmin (d. 1645), a subordinate of Li, that he decided to collaborate with the Qing instead.⁷⁵ From an official Qing view, Wu's subjection was an act with selfish motives and a temporary expedient in an extremely desperate situation. Moreover, it is said that Wu's conspiracy to overthrow the Qing could be traced back to the late-Shunzhi and early-Kangxi reigns, in which he captured and executed the last Ming claimant, Prince Gui (Emperor Yongli, Zhu Youlang, 1623–1662; r. 1647–1662), in Yunnan, and his power gradually increased to a level that was beyond the control of the Beijing court.

To expose the anti-Qing intrigues of Wu, details about his military activities in Yunan and Guizhou are given. Previously, when the *Comprehensive Mirror of Successive Reigns* (*Yupi lidai tongjian jilan*) was revised and extended in 1775 to incorporate the Southern Ming histories of Prince Tang and Prince Gui,⁷⁶ the compilers, fawning upon the emperor, had cautiously avoided mentioning the contributions of Wu to the Qing conquest of Southwest China and the capture of Prince Gui in Yunnan. However, when reviewing the submitted enlarged edition of the work, Emperor Qianlong was not satisfied with this approach. In his edict of 1782, he pointed out:

The officers in the [Historiography] Bureau, seeing Wu Sangui as a rebellious minister, avoided mentioning his capture of Prince Gui, [Zhu] Youlang, [in *Yupi lidai tongjian jilan*] and instead attributed this [military exploit] to Aixing'a. Of course, Aixing'a was the General of Pacifying the West. But Sangui was the Chief General of Pacifying the West and the strategy regarding the "three troubles and two problems," the aim of which was to destroy Youlang, was formulated by him. Even subsequent to this, when [the Qing] troops advanced [on Burma], the official denunciation of the Burma [authorities], the expulsion of Li Dingguo (1621–1662), and the surrender of Bai Wenxuan (1615–1675) were results of Sangui's plan. His contributions were undeniable. Yet, were his plans really devised for the benefit of our country? At that time, he was already plotting to seize Yunnan and Guizhou. If Youlang, Dingguo, and Bai Wenxuan were there, how could he seize them? ... If we compare the past with the present, Sangui's conspiracy is exposed. Why not give an impartial account of his merits and demerits? [I, therefore, instruct that] the Burma affairs of Wu based on his personal dossiers in the Historiography Bureau all be incorporated [in the *Yupi lidai tongjian jilan*] without abridgement...⁷⁷

75 Obviously, this assertion is based on the well-known literary writing of Wu Weiyue (1609–1672). See Wu, *Wu Meicun quanji* (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1990) vol. 1, *juan* 3, pp. 78-79. Also see Angela Hsi, "Wu San-kuei in 1644: A Reappraisal," *Journal of Asian Studies*, 34.2 (Feb. 1975): 443-453. Recently, the question of whether Wu surrendered to the Qing in 1644 has aroused a debate in mainland China. For a summary of this debate, see Ye Gaoshu, "Dalu xuezhe dui Wu Sangui 'xiang Qing' wentei de taolun" " " " "

, *Jindaishi yanjiu tongxun* , 12 (Sept. 1991): 114-120. Also see Ye, "Zhengzha yu maodun: pouxi Wu Sangui de jueze" : , *Lishi yuekan* , 81 (Oct. 1994): 42-51.

76 *Qianlong chao shangyu dang*, vol. 8, pp. 77-79 and *Gaozong Chunhuangdi shilu*, in *Qing shilu*, vol. 21 *juan* 995, Qianlong year 40, intercalary month 10, pp. 300-301.

77 *Gaozong Chunhuangdi shilu*, in *Qing shilu*, vol. 23, *juan* 1168, Qianlong year 47, month 11, pp. 667. The edict is also attached at the end of Wu's biography in the *Qinding guoshi erchen zhuann* but misdated as Qianlong year 45 (1780). The edict is quite misleading, since it mentions the sources of Wu's Burma affairs based on the "*Guoshi Wu Sangui zhuann*" , which might imply there was an official biography of Wu. However, as I have pointed out, the biographies of the Qing traitors were compiled after 1783. Therefore, the statement should be interpreted as "the personal dossiers of Wu Sangui in the Historiography Bureau," rather than "the biography of Wu Sangui in the History [of the Qing]."

In response to the emperor's criticism, the compilers then revised the last *juan* of the *Comprehensive Mirror of Successive Reigns* and highlighted the role of Wu in the Qing victories in Yunnan and Guizhou.⁷⁸ A note explaining the rearrangement was attached to the end of the work:

In the Burma campaign, Aixing'a was a branch general and Wu Sangui in fact was the general-in-charge. At that time, Sangui's conspiracy was not obvious and therefore he was admired for military exploits in which he captured the enemies and pacified the borders. When we compiled the first draft [of the *Comprehensive Mirror of Successive Reigns*], we mentioned Aixing'a and other generals but deleted Sangui's name [from the history] because of his evilness and rebellion. His Majesty was brilliant in pointing out that Sangui's defiant character [gradually] developed and, at that time, he already entertained a rebellious scheme in his mind. His leadership in the Burma campaign and capture of Prince Gui did not demonstrate his exploits but, on the contrary, were evidence of his plot... [His rebellion] was planned far in advance...⁷⁹

As the compilers realized, to the emperor, the exploits of Wu in the conquest period were nothing more than irrefutable proof of his heinous crimes. When the *Nichen* project was initiated, the imperial instruction of 1782 was also observed and the pursuit and attack of Wu upon the last Southern Ming regime, including the strategic plans and the warfare, were described in his biography. Although the Emperor Qianlong repeatedly argued that such an arrangement was to expose the conspiracy of Wu and give an impartial account of the history, to a large extent, it was a calculated attempt to lay the blame for the killing of Prince Gui on the former Ming general.

In the biographies of Geng Jingzhong and Shang Zhixin, stress is put on their collusion with Wu. In the view of the compilers, both Geng and Shang were disloyal and unfilial persons. It is said that when Geng decided to join the rebellion, his mother tried very hard to dissuade him from doing so but he did not listen and this resulted in her death from fury.⁸⁰ According to the biography, Shang was also an incorrigible alcoholic. For years, his brothers and subordinates suffered from persecution and abuse. Failing to force his father Shang Kexi to rebel against the Qing, he secretly collaborated with Wu and refused to obey Qing orders.⁸¹ It was only after the Qing government had gained control over the situation that the two rebellious feudatories resubmitted themselves to the court in 1675 and 1678. The *nichen* biographies detail the imperial verdicts and the sentences upon them.

For other accomplices in the rebellion and those submitted Ming officials who betrayed the Qing in the conquest period, their biographies in the *Nichen zhuàn* are very brief, generally containing only information about their official titles, sketches of their careers and rebellious activities, and punishments received. In most cases, the biographies incorporate one or more sub-biographies of the figures with similar backgrounds.

The biography of Zheng Zhilong is an interesting exception. In fact, it is a history of the resistance of the Zheng family, in particular the anti-Qing activities of Zheng's elder son, Chenggong, rather than a biography of Zheng himself. In the first half of the biography, there

78 Fuheng (d. 1770) et al., comps., *Yupi lidai tongjian jilan*, in *Yingyin Wenyuange siku quanshu* (Taipei: Taiwan Shangwu yinshuguan, 1983–1986), vol. 339, *juan* 120, p. 792, 797.

79 *Yupi lidai tongjian jilan*, *juan* 120, p. 792.

80 *Qinding guoshi nichen zhuàn*, vol. 1, "Geng Jingzhong," *Qingshi liezhuan*, vol. 20, *juan* 80, p. 6663.

81 *Qinding guoshi nichen zhuàn*, vol. 2, "Shang Zhixin," *Qingshi liezhuan*, vol. 20, *juan* 80, pp. 6669–6673.

is a brief account of the submission of Zheng Zhilong in 1645, and most of its narrative concentrates on the deeds of Zheng Chenggong, including his split with his father, his confrontation with the new dynasty, and finally the establishment of an anti-Qing regime in Taiwan. In the second half, it gives an exhaustive account of Kangxi reign policies and strategies in handling the “Zheng bandits,” which contributed to the subjugation of Taiwan.⁸² It seems that placing Zheng Zhilong in the *nichen* category is inconsistent with the selection criteria of the project. After his submission to the Qing, the subject was sent to Beijing and remained under home detention until his death in 1661.⁸³ Though he was charged and executed for the traitorous connivance of his son, there was no substantial evidence to prove that Zheng had participated in any rebellious activities against the new government. If he was regarded as a traitor to the Qing simply because he was held responsible for his son’s resistance against the Qing invasion, then according to the same logic, Shang Kexi, father of Shang Zhixin, and Geng Zhongming (1604–1649), grandfather of Geng Jingzhong, should also have been placed in the *Nichen zhuan*, instead of the *Erchen zhuan*.

The possible explanation of why Zheng Zhilong was included in the *nichen* list might lie in Emperor Qianlong’s interpretation of the history of the resistance movement. To the emperor, the Southern Ming resistance was justified by the imperial lineage of its princes even though the legitimacy of Ming rule in China ended in 1645. Nevertheless, when the last Southern Ming regime was defeated in 1662, all resistance movements lost their legitimate basis for existence. Without a leader with the imperial lineage of the Ming house, any anti-Qing activity under the name of Ming restoration, from a Qing perspective, was nothing more than a rebellion, like those frequently found in Chinese history. Based on these presuppositions, Zheng’s resistance in Taiwan was to be differentiated from the resistance movement in mainland China. Since Zheng Zhilong was executed as a traitor by the court and his descendants were basically regarded as Qing bandits who had usurped the name of Ming loyalists, the resistance history of the Zheng family was classified as traitorous activity and consequently incorporated in the *Nichen zhuan*.

Concluding Remarks

The *Erchen* and *Nichen* projects were initiated with the stated objective of condemning disloyalty. To the emperor, they were official teaching materials providing negative examples to the Qing subjects, warning them against any misdeeds which violated Neo-Confucian principles of loyalty, the most significant moral value governing human behavior. Furthermore, the projects also served as a political means for the emperor to reinforce imperial control over his ministers. Through the tactic of using “praise and blame” in the compilation of the selected biographies, they demonstrated the ruler’s absolute authority to inflict posthumous punishments upon the condemnable figures and conveyed a strong message that anyone who failed to comply with the avowed Confucian principles of loyalty would leave a foul reputation in history and be condemned for generations.

82 *Qinding guoshi nichen zhuan*, vol. 2, “Zheng Zhilong,” *Qingshi liezhuan*, vol. 20, *juan* 80, pp. 6691–6699.

83 Earl Swisher, “Chèng Chih-lung,” in *Eminent Chinese of the Ch’ing Period (1644–1912)*, vol. 1, pp. 110–111, and Deng Kongzhao, “Zheng Zhilong,” in *Qingdai renwu zhuanqao, shangbian*, (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987), vol. 4, pp. 179–180.

From a historical perspective, these two projects revealed not only a new imperial attitude toward the early-Qing collaborators but also the emperor's personal observation of the high-Qing socio-political development, in which, he believed absolute submission, rather than collaboration, was the chief factor contributing to state security. As the empire had by then existed for more than a hundred years and flourished in the mid-eighteenth century, the Manchus were no longer invaders but the legitimate rulers in China. The previous government policy of recognizing political realignment, which was an expedient measure adopted in the conquest period to gain collaboration from the resistant Han Chinese, was now outmoded and was no longer in line with the best interests of the dynasty. Seeing that the promotion of absolute loyalty among his subjects was the chief political task of the government, the emperor did not hesitate to abandon the outdated policy and make use of the condemnation of the twice-serving ministers as a means of political indoctrination in this new era in the dynasty's history. As a result of the imperial interpretation of contemporary politics, the initiation of the *Erchen zhuan* marked an end to the early-Qing policy of approval of the political realignment of the former Ming officials.

The compilation of the *Erchen zhuan* and *Nichen zhuan* had never been a smooth process. This may be partly explained by the changing mindset of Emperor Qianlong. Throughout the compilation, the emperor kept a constant eye on the work and repeatedly issued instructions to the compilers. Nonetheless, it appears that initially, he did not have a clear overview of the project and the details, including the contents, selection criteria, and taxonomy, and they were only gradually finalized under his direct supervision in his later years. The available sources indicate that even the final selection criteria were not determined until 1791, when the emperor decided to restrict imperial condemnation of disloyalty to the twice-serving ministers and traitors, and exclude those former Ming degree-holders who began their official careers in the Qing. While criticizing the officials in the Historiography Bureau for inefficiency, Qianlong himself was chiefly responsible for the slow progress of the compilation process.

Divided into two categories, A and B, the *Qinding guoshi erchen biao zhuan* amply demonstrates Qianlong-period evaluations of the twice-serving ministers. Though both were condemned for their disloyalty to the Ming, the historical figures in Category A and Category B received different treatments in the narratives. The former were mentioned with their contributions to the Qing dynasty while the latter were characterized as evil and unreliable "inferior men." To the emperor, the three types of twice-serving ministers who constituted the biographies of Category B were the most condemnable figures: firstly, those who submitted to the Qing but harbored an anti-Qing attitude, like Qian Qianyi; secondly, those who were political opportunists taking part in court factionalism, like Feng Quan; and thirdly, those who compromised with the rebels before submitting to the Qing, like Gong Dingzi. Emperor Qianlong's contempt for these figures is understandable. From the standpoint of a Qing ruler, their duplicity and infamy were harmful to the fundamental interests of the empire and, even in the high Qing, such behaviors were still definitely unforgivable. Since he took the throne, Qianlong had made great efforts to suppress the factional activities in the court.⁸⁴ The

84 Many studies indicate that during the Qianlong period, especially in the first half of the reign, court factionalism was a problem drawing the emperor's attention. See Dai Yi , *Qianlong di ji qi shidai* (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue chubanshe, 1982), pp. 124-146; Bai Xinliang , *Qianlong zhuan* (Shenyang: Liaoning jiaoyu chubanshe, 1990), pp. 58-74; Lai Huimin , "Lun Qianlong chao chu zhi

establishment of Category B and the caustic comments in the biographies of Qian, Feng, and Gong, reflected, to a certain extent, the emperor's abhorrence of court factionalism and political opportunism, and the compilation of the biographies served as a warning to those in his court.

Apart from serving as a means to condemn disloyalty, the compilation of the *Nichen zhuan* could also be considered an imperial refutation of the anti-Qing propaganda launched by the rebellious feudatories in the Three Feudatories Rebellion. During the rebellion, the chief accomplices Wu Sangui and Geng Jingzhong deliberately made use of ethnic issues to appeal to the Han Chinese for support.⁸⁵ Despite their malodorous reputation, some Ming *yimin* answered to the call and cherished hopes for Ming restoration.⁸⁶ Although these sensitive materials were intentionally omitted in the *nichen* biographies, the negative characterization of Wu Sangui and his followers, in particular the details of Wu's murder of Prince Gui, indirectly presented the government's counter-arguments against the ethnic-based claims of the rebels.

Mandang yu Handang” , *Family Process and Political Process in Modern Chinese History*, (Taipei: Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, 1992), Part II, pp. 721-743; Sun Wenliang 孫文良, Zhang Jie , and Zheng Chuanshui , *Qianlong di* (Changchun : Jilin wen shi zhe chubanshe , 1993), pp. 131-141; and, Tang Wenji and Luo Qingsi , *Qianlong zhuan* (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1994), pp. 94-103.

85 Chen Hong and Chen Bangxian , *Qingchu Pubian xiaocheng* , in *Zhongguo shehui kexue yuan lishi yanjiu suo Qingshi yanjiu shi* ed., *Qingshi ziliao* , vol. 1 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980), pp. 90-91.

86 For example, when the rebellion broke out, the well-known Guangdong Ming *yimin* Qu Dajun (1630–1696) went to Guilin to meet Wu in 1675 and accepted his appointment in the troops. When he realized Wu's ambition, he left Wu for home in 1676. See Wang Zongyan , *Qu Dajun nianpu* , in *Qu Dajun quanji*, eds., Ou Chu and Wang Guichen (Beijing, Renmin wenzue chubanshe, 1996), vol. 8, pp. 1926–1929.