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NEO-CONFUCIAN LOYALISM IN THE SONG

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ABSTRACT: *Despite being one of the least militarily ambitious dynasties in Chinese history, the Song dynasty saw one of the strongest manifestations of loyalism in its final years. It was also during the Song that the Neo-Confucian school was established and gaining increasingly more influence, culminating in its crowning of the state orthodoxy in the mid-thirteenth century. This paper seeks to trace the unprecedented surge of loyalism during the Song to Neo-Confucian influences. Being the official teaching of the Civil Examination system, Neo-Confucianism guided the loyalists with its rangyi nationalistic sentiment and categorical emphasis on virtues like loyalty and righteousness. The Neo-Confucianists also expressed their philosophy in their historical writings, which both incited the loyalist acts and influenced later historians' perception of the loyalists, creating a historiographical bias in favor of them. This paper also includes two specific case studies of Wen Tianxiang and Feng Dao, in an attempt to grasp the change of tides in the values of historiography resulting from the growth of Neo-Confucianism.*

KEYWORDS: song dynasty, neo-confucianism, loyalism, 13th century

INTRODUCTION

For mankind of ages, no one's life
Escaped its fate of final depart;
But I shall make my scarlet heart
Forever shine on history's archive!

- Wen Tianxiang[1]

In March 1279, Wen Tianxiang (1236-1283), probably the most well-known of Song loyalists, stood on a Yuan warship, stationed in the estuary of Yaishan and ready to attack the Song fleet in front of them. Zhang Hongfan, who captured Wen in December 1278 and who now commanded the Yuan fleet, had invited Wen to switch side and serve the Yuan. Wen declined the offer with the poem above.

The ensuing battle, the battle of Yaishan, proved to be the final blow to the lingering Song dynasty. On March 19, the Yuan forces launched pincer attacks from the north and then from the south, inflicting heavy casualties on both sides. By the time fighting finally ceased, the Song had lost an astonishing 100,000, the entirety of its remaining military and civilian population.[2] Among them was the seven-year-old emperor Zhao Bing, the sole source of legitimacy for the Song loyalists. However, a large number of those who died, or maybe even the majority, perished at their own hands by drowning. Jia Chunxiao and his family, Lu Xiufu, and senior consort-dowager Yang Juliang, to name a few, all chose to drown themselves when there were other options of fleeing or surrender.[3] The rest, according to a Yuan chronicler, "numbering in the tens of thousands, were the esteemed officials, literati, and women who leaped into the water with gold weights attached to their waists."[4]

While loyalism was floating in the Chinese cultural subconsciousness throughout history, it emerged most drastically in Song, particularly during the fall of Southern Song. *Song Shi* (History of Song), compiled during the Yuan dynasty, recorded: "Loyalism among the literati has been on a decline, reaching a low during the *Five Dynasties*. It recovered in the Song ...so the gentry and literati valued their reputation and promoted virtue, ridding of the vices of *Five Dynasties*. Therefore, during the Jingkang Incident, the people rose up to support the emperor

without succumbing to the disaster. When Song fell, the loyal and faithful were so plenty that books could not contain their stories."[5] Commentators in the Ming and Qing dynasties also noted the exemplary pervasiveness of loyalist acts during Song.[6] To account for this surge of loyalism, scholars from China and abroad have proposed different theories. Hoyt C. Tillman attributes this phenomenon to a pathological trauma, experienced by the Song literati, that came with the calamities of the Mongol invasion.[7] Richard L. Davis sees loyalism as a manifestation of other symbols such as masculine virtues and gentry dominance.[8] Xiong Yanjun accounts for the phenomenon as merely a historiographical bias on the part of the *Song Shi* editors.[9] There is one other element, however, that has been rather underestimated in those accounts — the rise of Neo-Confucianism during the Song dynasty. By the end of the Song dynasty, the Neo-Confucian school had established an influential moral philosophy that both directly motivated loyalist acts and influenced posterity's perception on them, thereby creating a historiographical bias in favor of them.

Loyalists and Their Connection to Neo-Confucianism

Loyalists in the late Song can be classified into two groups, those of the *zhongyi* (loyal martyrs) tradition, who willingly sacrificed their lives out of loyalty for the Song, and the *yimin* (remnant survivors), who survived the dynastic collapse but refused to participate in the new government.[10] Besides their shared loyalty to the Song, one common feature and source of motivation of the two was their connection to the Neo-Confucian school. Since it became the state orthodoxy in 1241, Neo-Confucianism, especially as synthesized by Zhu Xi (1130-1200), had dominated the intellectual discourses at that time by being the official teaching of the civil examination system, which all literati needed to take to commence their political careers. Among those literati were the loyalists, who were just growing up and preparing for the Examination when Neo-Confucianism was made the orthodox teaching.[11]

An epitome of loyalism, Wen Tianxiang himself was a prominent participant and beneficiary of the civil examination, as well as the education system behind it. Born into a well-to-do gentry family, Wen had great political aspirations at a young age, emulating Ouyang Xiu (1007-1072), a Neo-Confucian political figure in Northern Song, as his model.[12] After gaining first place in *xiangshi* (county examination) at age 18, Wen enrolled at *Bailuzhou Academy* in his hometown Jizhou and studied Jiang Wanli, a prominent Neo-Confucian and disciple of Zhu Xi. In 1256, Wen won first place in the *jinshi* examination with his essay on *Dao* (the Way) and its manifestation in politics.[13] *Dao* was a Daoist concept, but by Wen's time Neo-Confucianists had incorporated it into Neo-Confucian cosmology, and Wen's interpretation corresponded precisely to the Neo-Confucian belief that the cosmic *Dao* mirrors ethical and political duties.

Many of Wen's fellow graduates in 1256 turned out to be important loyalists twenty years later. Among them, Lu Xiufu (1237-1279) and Xie Fangde (1226-1289) were born into similar families as Wen and received Neo-Confucian education proper to literati of their status. After their political lives ended with the Mongol invasion, Lu committed suicide with the child emperor Zhao Bing at Yaishan in 1279, and Xie refused to serve in the Yuan government and fasted to death in 1289.[14] Huang Zhen (1213-1280), while achieving the *jinshi* degree at an older age, went on to start a new branch within the Neo-Confucian school. Already retired at home when Song collapsed, Huang starved to death after he heard the news of Yaishan.[15]

Despite their common connection to Neo-Confucianism, the loyalists were diverse in their professions and durations of loyalism. Li Tingzhi (1219-1276), a less known and acknowledged contemporary of Wen, spent most of his life not as a scholar-official but as a military general. However, that is not to say he is somehow less connected to the

literati culture: after all, he obtained *jinshi* degree in 1241. Since there was no record of his intellectual originality, it is safe to assume he was a disciple of Neo-Confucianism, the orthodoxy of the Civil Examination. His loyalist resistance ended relatively early with his capture and execution in Yangzhou shortly after Song surrendered in 1276.[16] On the other hand, the resistance of Chen Yizhong (1218-1283) lasted the longest among the loyalists. A former National University student and a prominent councilor in the last years of Song, Chen inherited Neo-Confucianists' urge to reform the government and their hawkish attitude towards the "barbarians," which continued to motivate Chen to fight for loyalist cause even after Yaishan and his flight to Champa and Siam in 1279.[17]

The examples above should be sufficient to prove the loyalists' shared connection to Neo-Confucianism, as well as a correlation between this school and the loyalist phenomenon. Besides the fact that Neo-Confucianism had become the state orthodoxy and the guiding doctrine of almost the entire literati in late Song, the school itself also had some characteristics that contributed to the prevalence of Song loyalism. Among those, a strong, nationalistic *rangyi* (literally, expel the barbarians) sentiment, a primary emphasis on virtue, and a new historiographic trend will be the foci of our discussion.

Nationalism in Neo-Confucian Thoughts

The distinction between the Chinese and the barbarians was present in Confucianism from its early days. The phrase *rangyi* (expel the barbarians) was invented shortly before Confucius, by Guan Zhong (720BC-645BC), who devoted himself to help his prince earn recognition by fighting the barbarians from the north. Confucius applauded Guan's endeavor in his *Analects*: "But for Guan Zhong, we should now be wearing our hair unbound and buttoning the lappets of our coats on the left side."[18] Underlying this attentiveness for dress and hairstyle

was a sense of cultural superiority and a duty to preserve this culture. Mencius reinforced this cultural identity in one of his discourses: "I have heard of men using the doctrines of our great land to change barbarians, but I have never yet heard of any being changed to barbarians."[19] However, this early manifestation of rangyi was nothing like nationalism in the modern sense, since it was based mostly on culture and not ethnicity: "in teaching there should be no distinction of race [lei]," as Confucius insisted.[20]

This vision of cultural nationalism came to a decline in Song, arguably the least militarily ambitious dynasty in Chinese history. For the Chinese under the Song, the barbarians had always been inside the gate: ever since it was established in 960, Song had to deal with the nomad peoples that lived within the borders of former Tang. After a series of unsuccessful campaigns against the Khitans from the north and the Tanguts from the west, Song acknowledged the legitimacy of the Liao (Khitans) and Western Xia (Tanguts) by making peace treaties with them.[21] Hostilities gradually ceased as the Liao and Western Xia underwent various degrees of sinicization, but during this time the Chinese started to see themselves distinct from other people not by culture but by ethnicity. This emerging ethnic consciousness was transformed into outright nationalism after the *Jingkang Incident*. In 1127, the Jurchens, who had previously annihilated the Liao, conquered Song's capital along with most of northern China. The Song court, along with tens of thousands of literati and gentry, was forced to migrate to the south of the Huai and Yangzi River, while the Yellow river region, birthplace of Chinese civilization, was left to the Jurchens. For the Neo-Confucians, this meant the physical symbol of their lineage, the Middle Kingdom, was threatened. On top of that, the Jurchens committed atrocities in their conquest of northern China, which led to resentment of the Chinese.[22] In this context, the then maturing Neo-Confucianism carried a strong nationalistic flavor.

One manifestation of this sentiment was the constant mentioning of restoration (huifu — recovery of lost territories and lost grandeur). Like the Khitans, the Jurchens sinicized quickly: having established a stable government in northern China — the Jin dynasty — they proclaimed themselves to be the legitimate successor to the Song, the recipient of the *mandate of heaven*.[23] Nevertheless, the Song Neo-Confucianists never acknowledged their legitimacy and never gave up trying to reconquer the territories lost to the Jurchens. Zhu Xi, the most prominent Neo-Confucianist of the time, expressed this wish in his letters: "I want to see the restoration of the Central Plain; now I am old, but I still have not seen it accomplished."[24] An equally influential Neo-Confucian thinker, Chen Liang (1143-1194) pronounced this drive more harshly: "To take revenge against the enemy has been my life's ambition."[25] Both Zhu and Chen made concrete plans to retake the Central Plain, either through relocating the capital to the frontier or strengthening military capacities.

What is worth noting here is that the motivation of Zhu and Chen wasn't simply a revenge against an opponent nation, but one for the humiliation brought by a cultural and ethnic inferior. Unlike their Confucian predecessors, Zhu and Chen denied barbarians' potential to acculturate to Confucianism. The distinction between Chinese and barbarians was no longer cultural, but ethnic: "China should neither culture nor rituals with the barbarians."[26] The Jin rulers made conscious efforts to reconcile their rule with Confucian principles: for example, Jin Shi-Zong (reigned 1161-1189) claimed to adhere to the Confucian model of benevolent government, and the people of North China even revered him as "a miniature Yao or Shun (ancient sages)."[27] However, Zhu Xi disparaged this Jurchen emperor's claim to benevolent government and doubted his ability to "alter the barbarians' cultural bent." Chen Liang, more hawkish than Zhu Xi, applauded by reinvigorating the *Spring and Autumn Annals* injunction to prevent barbarians from encroaching on China.[28]

The two leaders of Southern Song Neo-Confucianism, albeit disagreeing on many other issues, set the tone for the school's attitude towards nomad peoples like Khitans, Jurchens, and later, Mongols. The particular circumstances of Song fostered a growing nationalism within Neo-Confucian thoughts, which motivated the loyalists to vehemently resist, or at least not cooperate with, the Mongols in the latter half of the thirteenth century. Besides hostility towards foreign belligerents, such nationalistic sentiment also manifested itself as antagonism towards foreign or unorthodox religions, most notably Buddhism and Daoism.[29] Neo-Confucianism's interactions with the two reveal a continual intellectual struggle, which started in the Tang and culminated in the Song, and the end result of which was a vigorous revival of Confucian virtues.

Resurgence of Confucian Virtues

Over several centuries, the Confucians had a complicated relationship with Buddhism and Daoism. It was during the Han dynasty (206BC-220AD) that Confucianism was designated as the state ideology, gaining ever more influence over the Chinese society, but around the same time, Buddhism was introduced to China, and Daoism started to emerge as a coherent religion. Once the unity and stability of Han were replaced by the chaos of Six Dynasties (220-589AD), Buddhism and Daoism flourished and became Confucianism's enduring rivals.[30] From the Six Dynasties to the Song, all three religio-philosophical traditions coexisted, with Buddhism being the most influential. Although Confucianism remained the state ideology, its influence was constantly challenged, initially among the common people, but gradually among the elites as well.[31]

What made Buddhism and Daoism appealing to the people was their lack of normative demands, which took away moral obligations that were difficult to fulfill in times of turbulence. The central theme of Daoist scriptures, the *Daodejing* and the *Zhuangzi*, is the *Dao*, or "the

way," which refers to an uncontrollable force that causes the constant, cyclical changes in the world. A life in harmony with the *Dao* — or "go with the flow," which usually means *wuwei* (non-action) — was the desired way of life for the Daoists.[32] The Buddhists promoted a similar idea of non-attachment. According to Buddhist epistemology, all things are illusory and lack independent existence outside of our perception. Our desires and sufferings, too, are the products of our subjective perception. The Buddhists also held a cyclical view of life and death, which means death was not the end to life, nor a way to escape suffering.[33] Therefore, the only solution is to achieve non-attachment from all things, all aspirations, all duties and obligations. Chan, the most influential Buddhist brunch in China, even idealized non-action and spontaneity as did Daoism.[34] The concept of virtue was largely absent in the two religions, and even if some form of it occasionally appeared in some scriptures, virtue was merely a means to an ultimate, transcendent goal.

In the late Tang, Han Yu (768-824), the precursor of Neo-Confucianism, started the trend of criticisms on Buddhism and Daoism among Confucian scholars. In his time, Buddhism had become popular even in the court. In 819, Emperor Xianzong sent envoys to invite the Bone-relics of the Buddha — an important physical embodiment of Buddhism — to court. Han saw this as a dangerous sign of Buddhist dominance in the court and wrote a letter to Xianzong. In his letter "Memorial on Bone-relics of the Buddha," Han denounced "the elaborate preparations being made by the state to receive the Buddha's finger bone," which, according to Han, was "a filthy object" and should be "handed over to the proper officials for destruction by water and fire to eradicate forever its origin."[35] One motivation behind Han's objection was the nationalistic *rangyi* sentiment, as he considered Buddhism a religion of barbaric origin, where people were "like birds and wild beast or like the barbarians."[36]

The more subtle, and perhaps more fundamental motivation of Han was his concern for the social nihilism of Buddhism. As of Buddhism, Han was critical of Daoism, a native Chinese religion, for its degenerative influence on Chinese culture. In his essay *Yuandao* (The Origin of the Dao), he criticized both Buddhism and Daoism for their lack of moral guidance and inability to deal with social issues.[37] Instead, Han advocated for the revival of the Confucian tradition, which he believed could provide the moral guide needed for society. Particularly, Han emphasized Mencius' teaching of linking private morality to the well-being of society and the moral demands of fulfilling Confucian spirituality through public, mostly political, action. Without the transcendent cosmologies of Buddhism and Daoism, virtue in this world became the principal goal of life. This paradigm shift was started by Han Yu and would be continued and consummated by his Neo-Confucian heirs in the Song.

Aware of and acknowledging their debt to Han Yu, the Song Neo-Confucianists never failed to assert Confucian virtues and distinguish their teachings from Buddhist and Daoist cults. However, they differed in their approaches: while some wanted to purge all Buddhist and Daoist influences and restore Confucianism through political means, others took a more subtle approach of establishing a strong Confucian system and contending with Buddhism and Daoism through intellectual discourse. Prominent members of the first group include Fan Zhongyan (989-1052), Sun Fu (992-1057), Shi Jie (1005-1045), and Ouyang Xiu (1007-1072). In his famous essay *Shang Zhizheng Shu* (First Essay on Politics), Fan attribute "the ills of society" to the unregulated prevalence of Buddhism and Daoism. Taking a pragmatic approach, Fan criticized the two for their monasticism, which conflicted with people's duty to their parents and community.[38] Sun and Shi, on the other hand, attacked Buddhism and Daoism for their negative influence on Chinese culture. Sun outrightly called the two heresies in his *Ruru*

(Shames of Confucians) and deprecated their teachings as utterly immoral and detrimental to Confucian virtue of *ren* (humaneness). What Sun targeted was the inherent nihilism in Buddhist and Daoist morality, which took away the very concept of mundane virtue.[39] Shi included Buddhism and Daoism in his *Guaishuo* (Strange Teachings), equating them to demonic cults that undermined the virtues revered by the Chinese since antiquity.[40]

Ouyang Xiu was the exception to the first group in that he didn't favor the outright suppression of Buddhism that Han Yu proposed. Instead, Ouyang believed only a positive program of reform within the political and social system could remove the roots of Buddhist influence and restore Confucian virtues. In his essay *Benlun* (Essay on Fundamentals), Ouyang identified the cause of Buddhist popularity to be the political decay and social unrest after the Han dynasty.[41] As evidenced by its title, his essay revealed a fundamentalism that was essential to Neo-Confucian thought: the solution to social issues could be found in the writings of sages in the past, as well as the virtues they upheld. To revive those ancient virtues, for Ouyang, was to eliminate the very possibility of Buddhism, and the way to do so was through reforms. One of Ouyang's most famous reforms was to materialize Han Yu's project of replacing *pianwen*, a poetic, ornamental literary style, with *guwen* (literally "ancient writing"), the precise and logical language of ancient sages.[42] By encouraging the use of *guwen* in Civil Examinations, Ouyang sought to incite discussions on morals and Confucian virtues, as well as on how to apply those to society.[43]

The second group — those who sought to restore Confucian virtues through intellectual means — includes some of the most famous Neo-Confucian masters. Some of them were not repulsed by Buddhism and Daoism; instead, they borrowed bits of insight from the two, in order to show how all three traditions support their versions of Confucian

values and virtues. Zhou Dunyi (1017-1073), the first important contributor to Neo-Confucian cosmology, based his theory on Daoism. His foundational work *Taijitu Shuo* (Explanation of the Diagram of the Supreme Polarity) was actually an interpretation of a diagram attributed to a Daoist master, and the key terminologies in it had Daoist origins.[44] However Daoist it seemed, Zhou's work established the centrality of humanity, along with human values and virtues, which were denied in Daoism. While building on the Daoist conception of primordial chaos, Zhou affirmed the reality of the phenomenal world and human affairs. The Daoist sage was supposed to detach himself from worldly virtues and blend with Heaven and Earth, yet for Zhou, "the sage's virtue equals that of Heaven and Earth."[45] While Zhou's conception of Confucian sage was influenced by Daoism, his contemporary Shao Yong (1011-1077) depicts a sagehood that had elements of Buddhism. Focusing his studies on logic and epistemology, Shao wrote about sagely perception and knowledge and attempted to show how this Buddha-nature kind of sagehood was consistent with Confucian moral, social, and political ideas.[46]

Zhang Zai (1020-1077) and the Cheng Brothers, Cheng Hao (1032-1085) and Cheng Yi (1033-1107), built on the works of Zhou and Shao. Unlike Zhou and Shao, they consciously tried to distinguish their teachings from the Buddhist and Daoist traditions by avoiding using Buddhist and Daoist terminologies. To do so, they needed their own system of terminology and a distinct and coherent Confucian cosmology. Zhang, for example, replaced Zhou's Daoist-like *yin-yang* dipolar system with a unipolar system of one Supreme Polarity. As the Supreme Polarity progresses with time, it generates the psychophysical substance of *qi*, which constitutes all myriad creatures.[47] This dynamic view of metaphysics undermined the belief that the universe and all phenomena are illusory products of the mind or ephemeral manifestations of the ultimate Emptiness, and through it, Zhang affirmed the reality of phenomena and human affairs. Zhang was also

mindful of deducing the Confucian virtues of humaneness, loyalty, and filial piety from his cosmology, as articulated in both his Ximing (The Western Inscription) and Zhengmeng (Correcting Youthful Ignorance).[48] The Cheng brothers, on the other hand, preferred to approach their cosmology from intuition instead of metaphysics. For them, the *li* (principle) of the cosmos could be discovered not through investigating the natural world, but through contemplating and reflecting from within.[49] Therefore, human virtues and morals are not only reflective of, but also intimately connected to, the order of the universe.[50] Their inward-looking methodology was different from Zhou, Hao, and Zhang, but they all arrived at the same end: they laid solid theoretical and cosmological foundations for their teachings on morals and virtues.

What are, after all, the virtues that the Neo-Confucianists strived to revive? Central to Confucius' teaching is the idea of *ren*, which can be interpreted as "humanity," "humaneness," or "benevolence." All these interpretations reveal an underlying universality: *ren* is meant to be a kind of care that ultimately includes everyone. However, unlike the Mohist ideal of "impartial care" and Buddhist teaching of "great compassion," the Confucian *ren* preserves the idea of special attachments and relationships by "caring about some more than others, in different ways than others."[51] What the Neo-Confucianists sought to rekindle was the morals in human relationships, which were largely dismissed in transcendental teachings of Buddhism and Daoism. The Confucian idea of *lunli*, which is often translated as "ethics," literally means "the Pattern of human relationships."[52] Among all different relationships, Mencius identified five as the Five Pillars: emperor-subject, father-son, among siblings, husband-wife, and between friends. The virtue associated with the relationship between the emperor and the subject was loyalty, which Mencius derived from the Confucian cardinal virtue of *yi* (righteousness) and li (ritual propriety).[53] To be *yi* (righteous) is to fulfill the duty inherent in a relationship, and to be *li* (ritually

proper) is to fulfill it in the right way. Loyalty is what bonds subject to the emperor, the foundation of that relationship, and it has to be expressed in a clear and proper way. Therefore, loyalty is closely linked to righteousness and ritual propriety.

Some Neo-Confucianists followed the example of Han Yu and simply stated and restated Confucian ethical virtues as self-evident without making any serious attempt to justify or reinterpret them.[54] However, many others followed Zhou Dunyi and tried to support and justify those virtues in their integrated cosmologico-ethical system. Shao Yong, Zhang Zai, and the Cheng brothers developed a series of such system that were similar yet still distinct from each other. Only in Zhu Xi did their systems reconcile into one consistent conception. In his *Jinsi Lu* (Reflections on Things at Hand), Zhu commented on and evaluated each of the thinkers above, while showing how their theories connected to each other. In the system he called Daoxue (School of the Dao), Zhu combined Zhang Zai's idea of *qi* (substance) and Cheng Hao's idea of *li* (principle) into his theory of *li-qi*.[55] Substances undergo changes and create seeming chaos, yet they follow the pattern of the principle, which is the ultimate reality of both the natural world and human affairs.[56] What supports and justifies the Confucian virtues, according to Zhu Xi, is the *li* (principle), which manifests itself in the form of *ren* (humaneness). From principle and humaneness grow righteousness, loyalty, and other virtues.[57] Therefore, if someone did not follow those virtues, their action would violate the *li*, namely the very principle of the cosmos.[58]

What Zhu Xi and his predecessors did was raising Confucian virtues to a cosmological significance. Underlying their articulation and justification of various virtues, the Neo-Confucianist delivered a more basic idea that those virtues themselves are the ultimate aim, the essential purpose of life. This was a clear paradigm shift from the Buddhist and Daoist beliefs that the ultimate aims have something to do

with "salvation, transcending this world, or entering nirvana."[59] The loyalists in late Song grew up learning that virtues, such as loyalty and righteousness, are what give life its purpose, so it is not surprising that they were willing to lay down their lives for the sake of those virtues. The revival of Confucian virtues, culminating in the state orthodoxy status of Neo-Confucianism, encouraged the literati in late Song to practice those virtues with, and sometimes at the cost of, their lives.

Neo-Confucian Historiography

Besides the obvious way of reading the Confucian Classics, the study of history was also an essential part of Song literati's education, and it was no coincidence that the official history books of their time were composed by Neo-Confucianists. Unlike the modern discipline with the same name, history in the Confucian tradition did not mean purely factual accounts of past events; instead, it was often used to showcase Confucian ideals. Confucius himself set the tone for Confucian history writing in his *Spring and Autumn Annals*, where he indirectly express moral judgment through his diction, praising those who exemplified Confucian virtues and criticizing those who did not.[60] This blending of facts and value became known as the Spring and Autumn Style. After Confucius, this style of history writing continued, since the compilers of official history records were often themselves Confucian. However, the history writing in Song still stands out for its use of Spring and Autumn Style and strong moral judgment. On the one hand, Neo-Confucian compilers had a stricter sense of morality than their predecessor; on the other, the time period they wrote about, The Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms, was a period of chaos and, according to their accounts, moral decay, which urged Song history writers to reestablish Confucian virtues ever more clearly and forcefully. Among all history works composed during the Song, Ouyang Xiu's *Historical Records of the Five Dynasties* and Sima Guang's *Comprehensive Mirror in Aid of Governance* were the most prominent and well-known for their distinctively Confucian character.

Ouyang Xiu, a leading Neo-Confucian historian, was a disciple of *Spring and Autumn Annals*. Unlike his fellow Neo-Confucianists, he focused less on metaphysical and cosmological inquiries, and more on the study of history, which he considered to be the most direct and effective way of continuing Confucian virtues. For him, the *Annals* was "two hundred and forty-two years of good and evil in play," and he clearly intended to emulate it in his *Historical Records*.[61] Ouyang was uncompromising on his contempt for the period he was writing about, the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms, where the central government changed five times and coexisted with ten countries in merely 53 years, not to mention that barbarian forces often played a role in those successions. In such a context, Ouyang argued, Confucian virtues of loyalty and righteousness were largely abandoned and trampled upon. It might be true that the Five Dynasties was indeed a time of moral decay, but it could very well have been that Ouyang's Neo-Confucian heritage made him judge those events in a more strict manner. Either way, Ouyang decided to grossly apply the Spring and Autumn Style to his work, which resulted in more and harsher criticisms on people of questionable loyalty and righteousness.

What is worth noticing is that Ouyang emphasized a kind of unconditional loyalty on the part of the subjects. No matter how illegitimate and tyrannical the emperor was — which, a lot of Five Dynasties' emperors indeed were — his subjects were still obligated to show absolute loyalty and never permitted to switch sides when the tide turned.[62] This conception of loyalty was in contrast with the traditional Chinese belief of *Mandate of Heaven*, according to which, once a ruler had lost his legitimacy, he was no longer the ruler and his subjects could rightfully leave him. Ouyang's solution for this conflict was that the subjects, once having discovered the illegitimacy and tyranny of the ruler, should become recluses and never serve in any government. He gave his reasoning in the *Historical Records*: "[Living] in

the mountains and close to wild mooses, [this way of life] is not enough to fulfill the Way, but compared to earning shameful salary, bowing in disgrace, [it] leaves you with no regret and frees you for self-fulfillment."[63]

Therefore, according to Ouyang, it is acceptable for the subjects of a fallen dynasty to live in reclusion and become a yimin (remnant survivors), which many loyalists in the late Song did. The best option, nevertheless, is to sacrifice one's life for the sake of loyalty and become a *zhongyi* (loyal martyr), an option many other loyalists chose. The absolute worst option is to switch sides and serve the new dynasty. To stress the categorical sinfulness of disloyalty, Ouyang picked a famous yet controversial example — Feng Dao (882-954). Probably the iconic statesman of the Five Dynasties, Feng had been respected by many: he was highly reputed among his contemporaries as a "conscientious Confucian," and some historians in early Song also thought well of him.[64] As a son, Feng displayed exemplary filial piety to his parents; as a councilor, Feng attended to the needs of his people. His only serious controversy was to serve more than one dynasty — eight emperors of five dynasties, to be exact. For Ouyang, however, that was the epitome of the degeneracy of Confucian virtues. It was in his preface to Feng Dao's biography that Ouyang pronounced his strict demand of loyalty on the part of Confucian literati, making Feng a despicable counterexample of it.[65]

Sima Guang (1019-1086) was a student of Ouyang, and like his teacher, Sima employed Spring and Autumn Style in his history writing. A more influential work even than the *Historical Records*, Sima's *Comprehensive Mirror in Aid of Governance* extended Neo-Confucian virtue judgment to a longer period of history, from 403BC to 959 AD. On the issue of Feng Dao, Sima was even more critical than Ouyang in that he even blamed the emperors who admitted Feng to

service, for "any wise emperor" should have been "ashamed" of employing a disloyal subject.[66] Sima's reasoning was that disloyalty was a moral crime so severe that it ruined the Confucian person entirely. In other words, a disloyal subject could not be trusted to do anything else: "the large virtue (of him) was (abandoned) like that, so how would his small goodness matter?"[67] In doing so, Sima granted loyalty a central and foundational status among all Confucian virtues — to be disloyal was to desert the Confucian way of life entirely.

The historical writings of Ouyang and Sima would become immensely influential during the later years of the Song dynasty. The loyalists, in particular, were well indoctrinated to their version of absolute loyalty, as Ouyang and Sima, among other Neo-Confucianists, were worshiped in Confucian temples and admired by the literati on a personal level.[68] Wen Tianxiang, for example, chose Ouyang Xiu as his personal model to emulate.[69] What was more significant, however, was that those historical accounts gave the loyalists a historical consciousness that allowed them to see themselves and their actions in history: reputation for posterity was paramount for Song loyalists. Wen repeated spoke of his aspiration for a place in history, which could only be achieved through martyrdom for his country. When his will seemed to waver, his close friend Wang Yanwu reminded him: "One strike of the sword is what you, sir, owe [to the Song]; A pure page of history you must retain for posterity."[70] Similarly, Xie Fande's student urged him to take the final step to ensure an untainted reputation in history:
Thirty years of persistence to perfect your conduct.

Now comes the test to truly show a Confucian immortal.
All others have bent their knees and compromised themselves,
Only you sir, loudly reviled [the captors] directly [to their face].
In this journey, be sure to use your three-inch tongue.
If you return [alive] you will not be worth one cash.
To the end your purity is left intact

And a fragrant name is retained for transmission to
Posterity.[71]

Xie fulfilled this *zhongyi* martyrdom when he refused to be part of Yuan society and fasted to death. Similar examples of loyalists choosing martyrdom with the wish of good reputation in history were unprecedentedly numerous, which Ouyang and Sima would have been delighted to see.

Neo-Confucian history writing started in the Song, but it by no means ended with the Song. Neo-Confucianism at large remained the dominant school of thought in private and regained the status of state orthodoxy when Yuan government reinstituted Civil Examination in 1313.[72] Many of the writers and editors of *History of Song* were themselves disciples of that school. This Neo-Confucian influence could account for not only the special attention given to the Neo-Confucian masters during the Song, but also the large number of loyalists recorded.[73] Because loyalty was raised to a supreme status by Song Neo-Confucianists, it is only logical that Neo-Confucian history writers would amplify loyalist phenomenon to emphasize what they thought to be important.[74] This, however, does not undermine the point that loyalism and martyrdom were popular for a fact, since historical records could not be invented *ex nihilo*. What likely happened was that due to the influence of Neo-Confucian history teaching, loyalist phenomenon flourished in the last years of Song, and due to the same influence, this phenomenon was well-recorded and well-represented in *History of Song*. In such a way, Neo-Confucian history writing made Song loyalism prevalent both on paper and in reality.

CONCLUSION

After four years of imprisonment and numerous invitations to government positions in the Yuan, Wen Tianxiang chose to die for his loyalty

in 1283. However celebrated and commemorated, he was only one example among many others of similar moral standing, one epitome of a broader political and social phenomenon. The loyalist phenomenon during the last years of the Song dynasty was unprecedented in scope, and the official account, *History of Song*, fully demonstrated it.[75] Despite, and in addition to, various factors that could account for such prevalence, the rise and influence of Neo-Confucianism cannot be overlooked. On the one hand, the nationalistic *rangyi* sentiment inherent to Neo-Confucianism made it difficult for the Mongols to gain legitimacy among the loyalists and disgraceful for the loyalists to surrender. One the other, as Neo-Confucianists attempted to counter Buddhist and Daoist influence, they restored Confucian virtues such as loyalty and righteousness, either directly by stressing them as self-evident or indirectly through building a cosmologico-ethical system to justify them. Those virtues were passed on through Neo-Confucian history writing, particularly those of Ouyang Xiu and Sima Guang, which put loyalty at the center of Confucian virtues. Their Spring and Autumn Style writings not only encouraged the loyalist acts by instilling a historical consciousness, but also influenced Yuan historians, who thereby put more emphasis on Confucian virtues of loyalty and righteousness, making the acts of loyalism sufficiently pronounced.

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Endnotes

[1] Wen, *Wenshan xiansheng quanji*, juan 14, 344.

[2] *Song Shi*, juan 47, 945; Song Lian, *Yuan Shi*, juan 129, p. 3158; Chen, *Songshi jishi benmo*, juan 108, 1182; Li, *Song Yuan zhanshi*, vol. 3, 1481.

[3] *Song Shi*, juan 449, 13238, juan 243, 8662.
[4] *Zhao zhong lu* (Baidu congshu jicheng edition), 36a.
[5] *Song Shi*, juan 441, 13149.
[6] Yanjun Xiong, "Song's Replacement by Yuan and the Historiography of Song Loyalists: A Relook at the Creation of 'Song Shi, Chen Zhao Zhuan,'" *Collected Studies of the History of Song* 2 (2017): 293.
[7] Hoyt Cleveland Tillman, "Experiencing Disorder as Trauma: Research on Responses to the Mongol Invasion," *NTU Humanitas Taiwanica*, no. 58 (May 2003): 82-84.
[8] Richard L. Davis, *Wind against the Mountain: The Crisis of Politics and Culture in Thirteenth-century China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 1996), 177-184.
[9] Xiong, "Song's Replacement," 294.
[10] Jennifer W. Jay, *A Change in Dynasties: Loyalism in Thirteenth-century China* (Bellingham, Wash.: Western Washington, 1991), 81.
[11] James T. C Liu, *China Turning Inward: Intellectual-political Changes in the Early Twelfth Century* (Cambridge, Mass.: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1988), 147-150.
[12] Jay, *A Change*, 102.
[13] Details of Wen's biographical information and his examination essay can be found in *Song Shi*, juan 418.
[14] Tillman, "Experiencing Disorder," 81; Jay, *A Change*, 122-129. Their biographical information is confirmed in *Song Shi*, juan 425.
[15] *Song Shi*, juan 438, 12991-94. There are two interpretations of Huang's death. In Jay's account (Jay, *A Change*, 181-182), Huang died in poverty because he refused to participate in society. Tillman, on the other hand, argues that Huang actively starved himself to death (Tillman, "Experiencing Disorder," 81). However, Huang's willingness to die out of loyalty is confirmed in both.
[16] This particular interpretation of Li's biography is found in Jay, *A Change*, 115-119.
[17] *Song Shi*, juan 418, 12529-33.
[18] *The Analects*, Xian Wen 16.
[19] *Mencius*, Teng Wen Gong 1.
[20] *The Analects*, Wei Ling Gong 39. This particular interpretation of the word [lei] is found in Hisayuki Miyakawa, "The Confucianization of South China," 1960, in *The Confucian Persuasion*, ed. Arthur F. Wright and James Cahill, Stanford Studies in the Civilizations in East Asia (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1960), 22-24.

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[23] Hansen, *The Open*, 295-297.
[24] Hoyt Cleveland Tillman, *Utilitarian Confucianism: Ch'en Liang's Challenge to Chu Hsi* (Cambridge, MA: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1982), 169.
[25] *Ibid.*, 170.
[26] *Ibid.*, 175.
[27] *Ibid.*, 170.
[28] *Ibid.*, 171.
[29] J. Percy Bruce, *Chu Hsi and His Masters: An Introduction to Chu Hsi and the Sung School of Chinese Philosophy* (New York: AMS Press, 1973), 2-4.
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[33] *Ibid.*, 415-420.
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[40] *Ibid.*, 36-39.
[41] De Bary and Bloom, *From Earliest*, 590-594.
[42] *Ibid.*, 568-569.

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[44] *Ibid.*, 31-37.
[45] De Bary and Bloom, *From Earliest*, 672-675.
[46] Bruce, *Chu Hsi and His Masters*, 18-22.
[47] De Bary and Bloom, *From Earliest*, 684-687.
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[51] Angle and Tiwald, *Neo-Confucianism: A Philosophical*, 159.
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[53] Angle and Tiwald, *Neo-Confucianism: A Philosophical*, 160-161.
[54] Wm. Theodore de Bary, "Some Common Tendencies in Neo-Confucianism," 1959, in *Confucianism in Action*, ed. David S. Nivision and Arthur F. Wright, Stanford Studies in the Civilizations of Eastern Asia (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1959), 34.
[55] de Bary, "Some Common," in *Confucianism in Action*, 699-702.
[56] *Ibid.*, 706-707.
[57] *Ibid.*, 711-712; Angle and Tiwald, *Neo-Confucianism: A Philosophical*, 164-167.
[58] C. K. Yang, "The Functional Relationship Between Confucian Thought and Chinese Religion," 1957, in *Chinese Thought & Institutions*, ed. John K. Fairbank, Comparative studies of cultures and civilizations (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), 272-274.
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[60] Xiaoying Chen, *Wan Jin De Li Shi Ji Yi: Liang Song De Wu Dai Shi Guo Shi Yan Jiu (Historical Memories Now and Then: Song Historiographies on the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms)* (Beijing, China: Zhong guo she hui ke xue chu ban she, 2018), 155-156.
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[62] Chen, *Wan Jin De Li Shi Ji Yi: Liang*, 157.

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[65] Chen, *Wan Jin De Li Shi Ji Yi: Liang*, 159.
[66] *Ibid.*, 195.
[67] Guang Sima, *Zizhi tongjian (Comprehensive Mirror in Aid of Governance)* (Beijing, China: Zhonghua shuju, 1956), 9511-9512
[68] Liu, *China Turning*, 148
[69] Jay, *A Change*, 104.
[70] *Ibid.*, 109-110.
[71] *Ibid.*, 128.
[72] Liu, *China Turning*, 148.
[73] *Song Shi* has an enormous 10 juans specifically dedicated to loyalists, plus various persons of loyalism in other juans. It also, for the first time in history writing, contains 4 special juans for the Neo-Confucian masters.
[74] Yan Xiongjun, a contemporary scholar on Song historiography, hence suggests that the prevalence of loyalism in History of Song was a result of historiographical bias on the part of its compilers. However, while Yan believes the compilers were merely motivated by a political purpose of encouraging further loyalism to support the dwindling Yuan dynasty, the significance of Neo-Confucian influence cannot be downplayed, as it made a paradigm-shift and changed the very conception of what it meant to be loyal.
[75] Dezhi Chen, "On the Intellectual and Political Conditions of the Literati in the Yangzi Region During the Last Years of Song," *Journal of Nanjing University (Philosophy, Humanities and Social Sciences)*, no. 2 (1997): 151-152. According to Chen's account, about 75% documented Song subjects committed loyalist acts in one way or another, while only about 25% surrendered and served in Yuan government.