

ONE / INTRODUCTION

In February 1276, Mongol armies occupied Hangzhou, the capital of the Southern Song (1127-1276) and reunified China under foreign rule. It took another three years to suppress the last traces of loyalist resistance in the southeastern provinces. In contrast to North China which had by then undergone several foreign regimes, Jiangnan (i.e., South China, the territory of the Southern Song south of the Huai and Yangzi rivers) had never before been conquered by foreigners.¹ In the process of conquest and assimilation, the Mongols had become less destructive than the earlier reputation for which they were remembered.² Nevertheless, the double crisis of the collapse of the Song and its replacement by a foreign dynasty left an indelible mark on the educated elite of South China. Many officials and scholars collaborated with and surrendered to the Mongol Yuan (1276-1368), but not a few felt intense loyalty to the fallen dynasty and resisted the conquest by engaging in military combat, committing suicide or withdrawing into self-imposed exile.

The pacification of South China raises other questions. Did the response of the southern Chinese differ from that of the northern Chinese forty years earlier, when the Mongols supplanted the Jurchen Jin (1125-1234)? To what extent did ethnicity and culturalism dictate the varying types of response among the southern intellectuals? How was the Chinese perception of foreign

1. These foreign dynasties are the Toba Wei (386-534), Northern Qi (550-577), Khitan Liao (916-1125), Tangut Xixia (1038-1227), and Jurchen Jin (1125-1234).

2. On the process of Mongol conquest and assimilation patterns, seen from the perspective of Mongolian history, see Thomas A. Allsen, Charles Halperin, David Morgan, Morris Rossabi, and Zhou Liangxiao.

Chapter One

rule modified and rationalized over time? And, what effects did the Yuan government have on the social, cultural, economic, and political structures of society in South China?

Chinese historians have traditionally viewed the Mongol period in history as a disastrous and uprooting century that brought not only economic exploitation and suffering to the Chinese people, but a drastic interruption in Chinese culture and civilization as well. Those embracing such views dwell on the Yuan practice of dividing its subjects into four social classes in descending order of political and legal privileges: Mongols; Semu (Central Asians); Hanren (Tanguts, Khitans, Jurchens, northern Chinese); and Nanren (former subjects of the Southern Song). These writers claim that such discrimination based on ethnic origins and the order of submission to Mongol rule relegated the Confucian scholars and former officials of the Song to society's lowest strata, one rank above the paupers and one below the prostitutes.¹ Furthermore, social unrest and widespread rebellions in the late Yuan are interpreted as racially instigated uprisings against the Yuan administration. Likewise, the success of Zhu Yuanzhang (Ming Taizu, r. 1368-98) in establishing the Ming dynasty (1368-1644) is attributed to its indigenous origins.² The Ming scholar Wang Zhu (fl. 1521) took an extremist position: he ignored the entire Yuan period and represented Zhu Yuanzhang's ancestors as the legitimate heirs of the Song mandate.³ Modern Chinese nationalist critics of Western and Japanese imperialism and, until recently, most authors of general histories of China also deny that the Yuan period had any positive

1. See Zheng Sixiao, *Xinshi*, 129, and Xie Fangde, *Dieshan xiansheng wenji*, 6.3b. Cf. Chen Yuan, *Western and Central Asians*, 290-91, and Xiao Qiqing, "Yuandai de ruhu," 169. Chen Yuan and most modern historians now dismiss the statements of Zheng Sixiao and Xie Fangde as exaggerated complaints of frustrated scholars.

2. For example, see Jian Bozan, 338-44, and Jin Yufu, *Song Liao Jin shi*, 115.

3. Wang Zhu's *Songshi zhi* is discussed by Hok-lam Chan in his "Chinese official historiography," 95-105. See also Wang Deyi, "You Songshi zhi tandao Mingchao ren de Songshi guan," 510-25.

Introduction

features.¹

Alternative views have not been absent. After recognizing the permanence of Manchu power, some Ming loyalist scholars in the seventeenth-century looked back at the Yuan period and acknowledged that culture and civilization had actually survived Mongol rule.² Therefore, they somewhat confidently hoped that the same would prevail during the Manchu Qing dynasty (1644-1911).

In more recent times, Meng Siming's pioneer study concludes that, contrary to previous opinions, the Mongol conquest did not fundamentally upset the socio-economic organization of Chinese society in the South.³ Meng argues that although the Yuan government superimposed political control over the gentry and former Song officials who had submitted, it more or less allowed them to retain their economic power and regular administrative functions at the local level. Being economically powerful, this Chinese elite of large landowners and wealthy merchants was placed in an advantageous position to exercise political influence over some destitute Mongol nationals. Meng also dismisses the view that reaction against racial discrimination had been responsible for the final destruction of Mongol power in China. He points out that it was the Chinese elite who quickly volunteered aid to the Yuan court when indigenous rebels threatened the central government. Only when the Yuan formulated policies that antagonized the Chinese elite in the 1350s did the latter switch sides to join forces with Zhu Yuanzhang. Meng feels that to regard the late Yuan uprisings as a nationalist resistance to foreign rule was tantamount to using the outcome of history to determine the nature of the uprisings. He and the Japanese scholar Yanai Watari concur in the view that although Yuan regulations were discriminatory, the law was sometimes flexible, and many northern Chinese in fact reached prominent government posts. They argue further that the four social classes had not

1. See Jacques Gernet, 18, and Witold Rodzinski, vol. 1, 184-85.

2. For a comparative view of the Qing situation, see John D. Langlois, Jr., "Chinese culturalism," 355-56.

3. Meng Siming, *Yuandai shehui jieji zhidu*, 1-2, *et passim*.

Chapter One

necessarily been perpetuated by ethnic differences and were less exclusive and rigid than previously assessed.¹ They both assert that economic factors, and not racial and ethnic hostilities, had primarily been responsible for the fall of the Yuan in 1368.

Recent regional studies have yielded varied conclusions about ruptures in the socio-economic structure of Chinese society in the South. Davis' study of a prominent lineage in Qingyuan (Ningbo) shows its drastic social and political decline after the Song demise. In contrast, Hymes' research demonstrates that the local elite in Fuzhou (Jiangxi province) emerged essentially intact through the Song to Yuan transition.² Likewise, Langlois not only contradicts traditional claims of a stagnancy during this period, but shows unbroken traditions and innovations in Chinese civilization, arts and culture in the light of the reunification of the country.³ In Taiwan Yao Congwu's favorable views about the employment of Confucian scholars by the Yuan government have been adopted by Li Zefen, whose assessment of the Yuan dynasty as a constructive period also drew upon Western studies.⁴ Mainland Chinese historians previously subscribed to Soviet historiography, which viewed the Mongols as aggressive and expansionist, laying waste whatever territory they conquered. Since the 1960s, however, they have interpreted the Mongol reunification of China to be a progressive and positive measure, a view that is now very much in accordance with the government's present policy to win the goodwill of ethnic minorities and to emphasize the multi-

1. See Yanai Watari, 97-101.

2. On Qingyuan (Mingzhou), see Richard L. Davis, and on Fuzhou, Robert P. Hymes.

3. Langlois, ed., *China Under Mongol Rule*, contains the theme of Yuan contribution to Chinese culture. I had completed my research and formulated my conclusions when the book came out, but I am still indebted to this volume which confirms some of my conclusions presented in this study.

4. See Yao Congwu, "Cheng Jufu," 353-79. See also Li Zefen's five-volume work which, however, should be cautiously used, as factual errors (e.g. Zhou Mi, in vol. 5, 409-10) and tenuous views of the Yuan dynasty occur frequently.

Introduction

ethnic nature of the Chinese population.¹

These two conflicting interpretations of the impact of Mongol rule on South China reflect in general the divergent focuses of the authors. Alternative views are more interested in the collaborators and cooperators while traditional writings emphasize the role of the loyalists who resisted Mongol rule. In this study, the term "loyalists" is used in the same sense as the United Empire Loyalists and the Spanish Loyalists, in which loyalty to the existing order and authority was retained even when both were about to be toppled and replaced;² the term "loyalism" refers to a specific type of loyalty exhibited during dynastic change.³ "Song loyalists" (similarly, "Ming loyalists") describe men who embraced a lingering loyalty to the former dynasty, and refer specifically to a subgroup of loyal men who defended the state against various hostile forces during different periods of the dynasty (e.g., bandits, usurpers, rebels, and alien conquerors). The term "loyalist" incorporates two groups of men: the *zhongyi* 忠義 (loyal and righteous martyrs) and the *yimin* 遺民 (leftover, remnant, or surviving subjects). The *zhongyi* maintained their loyalty to the end, dying during or shortly after the Mongol conquest; thus the term carried the sense of martyrdom.⁴ In contrast, the *yimin*

1. See David M. Farquhar; Yuanshi gangyao bianxie zu; Shu Zhenbang; and Zhou Liangxiao.

2. This usage is in accordance with Webster's *International Dictionary* (1971), p. 1342: "A person who is or remains loyal to a political cause, party, government or sovereign." The *Shorter Oxford Dictionary on Historical Principles* (1980), p. 1245, also states: "One who is loyal; one who adhered to his sovereign or to constituted authority, especially in times of revolt; one who supports the existing form of government." The use of the term "loyalist" to describe loyal men at the end of the dynasty, i.e., a subgroup of all loyal men throughout the dynasty, is conventional, as applied to the Ming loyalists.

3. This usage concurs with Laurence A. Schneider, 78. On the term "Ming loyalists," see Lynn A. Struve, "Ambivalence and action," 327.

4. Other terms are *zhonglie* (loyal and brave), *yishi* (righteous men), and *zhongchen* (loyal subjects). The *zhongyi* biographies have been included in dynastic histories since the *Tsinshu*, compiled by Fang Xuanling. It should be noted, however, that the distinction between *zhongyi* and *yimin* is not always consistent, nor are the terms mutually exclusive. Even in the *Songshi*, compiled by Toghto (hereafter SS), the *zhongyi* biographies include several individuals who did not die, but withdrew from society or disappeared.

Chapter One

loyalists survived the Song demise and withdrew from public office as a form of protest against the new government. In its original sense, the term *yimin* generally meant survivors or a population remaining after large-scale natural disasters or after a dynasty became defunct.¹ By the time Yuan replaced Song, however, it was used in both this general sense and a more specific one to refer to subjects of a former dynasty who refused to serve the new government. The term *yimin* 遺民 (surviving subject) is to be distinguished from the term *yimin* 逸民 (recluse). I should point out that the *zhongyi*, *yimin* (surviving subject), and *yimin* (recluse) were not exclusive from each other: for instance, a *zhongyi* who did not die immediately during the dynastic collapse could have lived the life of a surviving subject for the period before he died a martyr; and a surviving subject could have become a recluse during his period of passive protest to the new dynasty.²

What is generally ignored by the authors of traditional views is the fact that the Song loyalists comprised a minority of the southern Chinese elite, while those who surrendered or collaborated with the Mongols made up the majority. The loyalists, however, left an indelible imprint on the history of the transitional period between the Song and Yuan. The active participants of the resistance mobilized local and popular forces formidable enough to keep the Mongol army and navy fully employed for three years. Even after final defeat at the sea battle of Yaishan and the death of virtually all the leaders, the survivors joined with other loyalists who had already engaged in passive protest since the fall of the Song capital. Among the literati of southern Chinese society in the first generation of Yuan rule, the loyalists constituted a visible social group. Many rejected public office under the new government and immersed themselves in poetry, art, scholarship, and teaching.

The legacy of the loyalists is a large volume of extant writings in fields ranging from history to art connoisseurship. These writings provide

1. The term *yimin* was first used in the *Zuozhuan* and by Mencius. See James Legge, vol. 5, 127, and vol. 2, 353. The Mencius quotation makes a reference to the Yunhan poem in the *Shijing*.

2. This distinction is also referred to by Langlois in his "Chin-hua Confucianism under the Mongols," 48, 339, note 77.

Introduction

documentation on their response to dynastic change. In addition, they constitute primary sources on the last years of the Southern Song, the loyalist resistance, and the plight of Confucian scholars in the early years of Yuan domination in South China. Through teaching, the loyalists also exerted strong influence on their children and students--the second generation of southern Chinese intellectuals under the Yuan. The Song loyalists excelled in scholarship: Wang Yinglin (1223-96) in classical studies, Ma Duanlin (1254-1325) in bibliographical work, Zhou Mi (1232-98) in *biji* (random jottings) miscellanies, and Liu Chenweng (1232-97) and Wang Yuanliang (fl. 1270-1300) in poetry. As a social and cultural group, the loyalists inspired a large body of literature that idealized and glorified the spirit and activities of Song loyalism. Ming loyalists, in particular, found ideological precedents from this period of history for moral support of their fierce resistance to the Qing dynasty. Therefore, the Song loyalists justify a monographic study on the basis of their significance as a political threat during the loyalist resistance of 1276-79 and as a visible social group during the first generation of Yuan rule, not to mention their ideological impact on loyalists of subsequent periods.

Traditional, i.e. pre-1900, Chinese scholarship on the Song loyalists was involved in three overlapping areas: editing and prefacing literary collections of the loyalists, adding biographies of local loyalists to gazetteers and genealogies, and compiling biographies of loyalists as separate works or as sections to be included in private and official histories. In some cases the authors were themselves Song loyalists or loyalists of later periods, and in all cases they were sympathizers and admirers of loyalist figures. Their chief concern lay in adding entries of those men whom they felt had been left out in previous compilations, and thus their approach was neither critical nor analytical. Modern Chinese historians, affected by a deep admiration for the patriotic spirit, have been prolific in studies of the legendary loyalist hero Wen Tianxiang (1236-83), and there exist separate articles on less known loyalists,

Chapter One

but to date the group has not been studied in its entirety.¹

In the 1950s several prominent scholars in Hong Kong debated the actual routes taken by the refugee Song court during the loyalist resistance and the site of its last lookout tower.² Their interest was in the significance and role of Kowloon in Song history and not in the overall perspective of the loyalists. Another aspect of Song loyalism Chinese scholars have paid attention to is the poetry of the loyalists which mourned the demise of the dynasty and which reflected the poetic trends during the transition from Song to Yuan. Several separate studies of these poets have appeared.³ In the West, scholarship on the topic has also been selective and limited.⁴ Mote's study of eremitism under the Yuan provides brief profiles of Wen Tianxiang, Xie Fangde (1226-89) and Zheng Sixiao (1241-1318).⁵ Art historians have shown interest in the loyalist painters Qian Xuan (ca. 1235-aft. 1300), Zheng Sixiao, and Gong Kai (1222-1307).⁶ In addition, Franke's biographical dictionary of the

1. See, for example, Yang De'en and Li An. There are also several separate articles on Li Tingzhi, Zheng Sixiao, Ma Tingluan, Xie Fangde and a few others. Sun Kekuan, "Yuanchu Nan Song yimin chushu," ignores the *zhongyi* loyalists and looks at only the *yimin*. It lists and categorizes ninety-five *yimin* loyalists but does not analyze personal relationships and individual loyalists. Japanese scholarship has contributed little to the topic, except for studies on Wen Tianxiang, such as by Kamegei Ryo, and on poetry in Yoshikawa Kôjirô, *Genminshi gaisetsu*, 50-86.

2. This debate will be discussed in Chapter 3.

3. Anthologies of Song literature usually include the poetry of the Song demise. Recently theses by Su Wenting and Wang Weiyong have been published in Taiwan. On Liu Chen-weng, see Huang Xiaoguang; and on Zhou Mi, see Wang Yinghua. These works are mostly annotations of the poetry and contain little analysis.

4. William Andrews Brown's dissertation is essentially a translation of Wen's *SS* biography. See also C. Bradford Langley.

5. Frederick W. Mote, "Confucian eremitism in the Yuan period."

6. See James Cahill, *Hills Beyond a River*, 15-37; Sherman E. Lee and Wai-kam Ho, 92-95.

Introduction

Song period includes a sizable number of biographies of Song loyalists.¹

These previous studies either focused on several prominent loyalist figures whose exemplary conduct won the exaggerated praise and idealization of Chinese historians up to the present century, or else dealt with some aspect of an individual loyalist's achievement in certain fields. Accounts of the Song loyalists and the resistance battles are brief in most general histories of China, and our picture of Song loyalism is still vague and incomplete. The popular image sees the loyalists as totally self-righteous men who gathered only in each other's company and had no contact at all with any part of the Yuan government, but it is merely a myth with some grains of truth. The myth becomes more distant from reality when the virtues of the loyalists are embellished and their faults ignored to serve new circumstances and events through the writings of the traditional historians.

The entire group of loyalists and the full spectrum of their activities and personal relationships need to be presented in order to gain a broad perspective on Song loyalism's influence and role in the Song-to-Yuan transition and its significance for subsequent periods of dynastic collapse. Through critical use of official sources and the loyalists' own writings, I reassess the last years of the Southern Song, the sequence of events leading to its surrender by Empress Dowager Xie (1208-82), and the rise and defeat of loyalist resistance in 1276-79. By examining the nature of loyalist writings and the particular aspects of Yuan historiography in regard to the Song loyalists, I explain certain discrepancies among the sources and discuss the myth-making mechanism of the exemplary figures. By studying this group of intellectuals, highly sensitive to their political and cultural environment, I hope that we can acquire some new insights on Song loyalism, particularly on the impact of, and the Chinese response to, foreign rule in South China.

My initial approach to the topic was to identify as broadly as possible the subjects of the study, that is, to decide whom to include and whom to exclude under the term "Song loyalists." From both primary and secondary

1. Herbert Franke, ed. *Sung Biographies*, particularly the biographies of Zhang Shijie, Chen Zhongwei, Chen Wenlong, Chen Yizhong, Zhou Mi, Xie Fangde, Lu Xiufu, Ma Tingluan, Ma Duanlin, Du Hu, Wang Yinglin, Wang Yuanliang, Wen Tianxiang, Zheng Sixiao, Gong Kai, and Wen Riguan.

Chapter One

sources I compiled about three hundred biographical sketches of men whose loyalist conduct during and after 1273-79 earned them a degree of commendation. These were individuals who fought in the military resistance, died or committed suicide because of the Song collapse; the survivors of the resistance battles; and former Song officials and commoners who withdrew from society or politics and declined to take up office under the Yuan government. Loyalty to the Song and refusal to serve in the Yuan were the criteria I used to identify and define the group. This seemed straightforward enough, but I soon noticed that the same individuals considered as loyalists in one source are criticized as collaborators in another. Their loyalty was doubted because they either served the Yuan under coercion before retiring or accepted office towards the latter part of their life. While some sources still classify them as loyalists on the basis that the offices held were merely teaching positions and did not entail taking orders from the throne, others condemn this conduct as failure to maintain integrity to the end and relegate them to the class of collaborators.¹ Among the sources there exists a general inconsistency as to whether such individuals should be included as loyalists. To exclude this subgroup from a discussion of Song loyalism would amount to concentrating on exemplary loyalists and ignoring less absolute manifestations of loyalism; a broad and comprehensive perspective on the Song loyalists would therefore not be achieved. Furthermore, it would succumb to the shortcomings of traditional scholarship on the topic--resorting to merely listing the individuals whose conduct ought to be extolled by future generations.

As I worked my way through the mass of loyalist literature, I became increasingly convinced that this group of marginal loyalists constituted an important part of the research, for it is through this middle-ground of loyalism that we can see that the Song loyalists were not a homogeneous group with absolute values and flawless conduct. They were, in fact, a loose gathering of individuals who defined their loyalism and life-style according to personal circumstances and experiences. The core of this study is thus concerned with identifying and describing three types or traditions of Song loyal-

1. Ming scholars were especially critical of individuals who served the Yuan, regardless of the nature of the position.

Introduction

ists: the *zhongyi* martyrs who died for the Song cause, the *yimin* who survived and largely maintained their loyalty by not serving the new dynasty, and the marginal loyalists, a subgroup of the *yimin*, whose loyalty was doubted by contemporaries or later critics because at some time they re-emerged into public office. The chapter on the martyr tradition deals with heroic examples of loyalism, as exhibited in Wen Tianxiang and Li Tingzhi (d. 1276), followed by an analysis of the relationship between these leaders of military resistance and their followers and supporters. My main purpose in the chapter on the loyalist survivors is to identify loyalist groups and leading personages, in addition to reconstructing personal relationships and major activities in Annam and Champa, Dadu (Beijing), Kuaiji (Shaoxing), Wuzhou and Jiande (Yanzhou), Qingyuan (Ningbo), Luling, Raozhou and Wuyuan, Pingjiang (Suzhou), and Dongguan (near Guangzhou). The marginal loyalists in Huzhou (Wuxing) and Hangzhou revolved around Zhou Mi; this group of friends and acquaintances is taken as a case study of the middle-ground of Song loyalism.

From these three traditions I discuss approximately ninety individuals, who either left collected writings or whose loyal conduct featured particular and unique characteristics of Song loyalism. These men belonged to the adult generations (over twenty years old at the time of the Song demise) who may or may not have been in Song office, but who physically and/or emotionally suffered through the fall of Hangzhou and/or the defeat of loyalist resistance in 1279, and afterwards for a period of time still considered themselves men of the Song. The backgrounds, activities, and experiences of these individuals before and after the dynastic crisis, together with their motivations, aspirations, and personal relationships are the central concern of this study. The Song loyalists were a product of their time and the crises they perceived, thus in the next chapter I first probe and reconstruct the political background with particular emphasis on the experience of the loyalists themselves. The period under research is limited to ca. 1273-1300 in order to focus on the first generation of Yuan rule in South China. By 1300, many loyalists had died, or their loyalism had in most cases become insignificant or transformed into a more accommodating acceptance of the new dynasty.

