

Resistance and Adaptation: Huang Zongxi's *Yimin* Identity in the Dynamics of Ming-Qing Transition

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To keep a good balance between resistance and adaptation to a changed situation is perhaps one of the most difficult challenges that human beings have to face. When the intelligentsia went through the political chaos of the late Ming, its consequent collapse, its replacement by the “barbarian” Manchus and the Qing’s relatively stable rule of order, they certainly had to choose a way of living and thinking to justify their continued existence in the new dynasty, if they chose to continue it at all. The word *yimin* (遺民), roughly translated as the surviving adherent to the former dynasty, is one category of identity that many intellectuals fell into; however, there are many different shades and nuances in being a *yimin*. Moreover, it is a dynamic concept rather than a static one. Huang Zongxi (黃宗羲), one prominent scholar during the Ming-Qing transition, exhibited a distinct type of *yimin* identity with both consistency and a gradual change. This is reflected in his life-time struggles and writings, which developed parallel to his attitude toward the Manchus. With the wheels of history rolling ahead, Huang Zongxi grew from a “barbarian”-hater to a more neutral scholar who even indirectly cooperated with the Manchus. Yet this change as a *yimin* had been consistent with Huang Zongxi’s bottom-line principle— no official connection with the Qing government.

***Yimin* as a Barbarian-Hater and Military Activist against the Qing**

Huang Zongxi's participation in his anti-Qing struggles was an extension of his earlier active involvement in the Ming politics, which was in turn largely influenced by his family background. His father Huang Zunsu (黃尊素) was killed in 1628 in the Donglin Dang (東林黨) struggle against the eunuchs. As an important member in Fu She (復社), Huang Zongxi fought against the leftover power from the camp of the eunuchs.¹ In 1644, the Manchu troops came through Shanhai Guan (山海關), and Fulin (福臨), i.e. Shunzhi Emperor (順治帝), and his regent Dorgon (多爾袞) occupied Beijing. The Qing conquest of other regions continued while several Southern Ming regimes were established as attempts to preserve and restore the Ming.² Liu Zongzhou (劉宗周), Huang Zongxi's teacher, refused to surrender to the invaders and starved himself to death in Zhejiang. From then on, Huang Zongxi plunged himself into a new cause of his life. In 1645, he and his brother sold out their belongings and organized military forces against the Manchus, in support of the regime of King Lu (魯王) of Ming. Huang Zongxi was very proactive in the efforts to fight the Qing troops and restore the Ming. However, his role as an officer was somewhat awkward as the disagreement on the battle tactics and power struggles inside the regime were discouraging. His proposals were not taken. The battles were lost. Meanwhile, the Qing Government wanted to catch him as well as his relatives. During this period, Huang Zongxi led an insecure and wandering life and lost several family members. In 1653, out of despair, King Lu gave up the title of his regime and this signified the end to Huang Zongxi's military activities against the Qing.³

When Huang Zongxi saw hope was gone and his efforts were futile, it was time for him to ponder. In the same year, he wrote eight articles, three of which were

¹ Wu Guang: Examination of Huang Zongxi's Works, P. 280-P. 282

² Encyclopedia of China: Chronological List of Historical Events

³ Wu Guang: Examination of Huang Zongxi's Works, P. 283-288

incorporated in *Ming Yi Dai Fang Lu* (《明夷待訪錄》) he wrote ten years later. The remaining five ones formed what was known as *Liu Shu* (《留書》). In this book, topics such as fiefdom, military system, factions and history were examined. It was a critical review of the fall of Ming, in which he provided an analysis of the fatal weaknesses of the Ming. In the mean time, we can feel a strong resentment and disdain towards the foreign nations and tribes, and in this case, the Manchus.

Huang Zongxi's antipathy toward the barbarians was conveyed through his arguments. In *Fiefdom* (《封建》), Huang Zongxi wrote, "after the Three Dynasties, what disturbs the world are invariably the barbarians."⁴ But the actual case was that Chongzhen Emperor (崇禎帝) was ousted by the peasant troops of Li Zicheng (李自成) and later the Manchus defeated Li Zicheng and claimed power.⁵ In *On History* (《史》), he talked about the correct way of recording history. In this article, emotionally charged with hatred towards the barbarians, he even came to an unsound conclusion: "The divide between the Chinese and the barbarians is that the former is within and the latter is without. Let the Chinese rule the Chinese and let the barbarians rule the barbarians. Otherwise, it is like the intermix of human beings and beasts. Even if the Chinese thieves and robbers rule China, they are still Chinese human beings."⁶ Granted, the barbarians could have ruled the Chinese people very cruelly to the extent that they were like beasts. But how much better is it to let the indigenous bad guys rule the country? If to liken the foreign nations to beasts is still understandable, to allow Chinese thieves and robbers rule is apparently a display of narrow and irrational nationalistic sentiments.

⁴ Zhuang Yan (Ed.): Selections of Huang Zongxi's Poems and Articles, P.196: "自三代以後，亂天下者無如夷狄也....."

⁵ Encyclopedia of China: Chronological List of Historical Events

⁶ Shen Shanhong (Ed.): Complete Works of Huang Zongxi, Volume 11, P.12: "中國之與夷狄，內外之辨也。以中國治中國，以夷狄治夷狄，猶人不可雜之于獸，獸不可雜之于人也。是故即以中國之盜賊治中國，尚為不失中國之人也。"

In addition, we can clearly see Huang Zongxi's antipathy from the caustic words he used throughout the articles. He referred to the Qing's reign as the illegal dynasty established by the slavery foreigners (虜設偽朝)⁷. He called the Shunzhi Emperor chief of the slavery foreign tribe (虜酋)⁸ and he still referred to the Ming as this dynasty (本朝)⁹.

At this stage, Huang Zongxi chose to be a *yimin* with a very clear mission. On the premise that the Chinese and the barbarians were disparate, and the latter were apparently inferior, he was committed to chasing them away and restoring the Han Chinese rule, i.e. the Ming order. However, his personal frustrations with the late Ming politics and wasted restoration efforts, blended with his disgust with the barbarians, prompted him to adjust himself as a *yimin*. He saw no prospect in armed struggles and *Liu Shu* was his new attempt. In his preface to the *Liu Shu*, he said "I live in a world of obscurity and confusion and I have seen much of order and disorder and understood the causes of them. I examined and organized the important points and wrote down these eight articles in my spare time off farming. Looking up to the universe, where should I go with all these writings? It is just empty words that I leave the world with! My book is not about my own selfish ideas. If the posterity can practice what is said in my book, what is the difference from practicing it by myself? Therefore, this book must be left behind..."¹⁰ Huang Zongxi didn't expect himself to have the chance to practice his ideas and so placed his hope on the future readers, unclear as he

⁷ Shen Shanhong (Ed.): Complete Works of Huang Zongxi, Volume 11, P.10

⁸ Shen Shanhong (Ed.): Complete Works of Huang Zongxi, Volume 11, P.10

⁹ Shen Shanhong (Ed.): Complete Works of Huang Zongxi, Volume 11, P.7

¹⁰ Zhuang Yan (Ed.): Selections of Huang Zongxi's Poems and Articles, P.187 ".....僕生塵冥之中，治亂之故，觀之也熟，農瑣餘隙，條其大者，為書八篇，仰瞻宇宙，抱策焉往，則亦留之空言而已！.....吾之言非一人之私言也，后之人苟有因吾言而行之者，又何異乎吾之自行其言乎？是故其書不可不留也....."

was as to exactly who they would be. Therefore, *Liu Shu* can be regarded as a turning point for Huang Zongxi from physical military involvement to political propositions meant for the future. This is what *yimin* meant for him at that time.

***Yimin* as Ji Zi: Waiting to Be Visited?**

In 1662, the last remaining Yongli (永歷) regime of Southern Ming collapsed. By then, Qing had established its rule for 18 years. Huang Zongxi had come to the painful realization that the restoration of the Ming Dynasty was now totally impossible. *Ming Yi Dai Fang Lu* was completed in 1663. During the ten years between *Liu Shu* and *Ming Yi Dai Fang Lu*, Huang Zongxi had experienced more and gained more insight. He revised his viewpoints and what we saw in *Liu Shu* was probably something he no longer whole-heartedly endorse, something too offensive to be published at that time, or a combination of both. In *Ming Yi Dai Fang Lu*, he put forward a series of proposals in political, economic, legal, military, educational and cultural aspects of ruling a country. There was an element of democracy. He attacked the despotism throughout history on the premise that human beings were selfish. In *On Officials* (《原臣》), he indicated that it was irrelevant who the rulers were, since the welfare of the people was the most important and the rulers and their officials were to serve them: “The order and disorder of the world do not correspond to the rise and fall of a dynasty under a certain family. It depends on whether the people are content with life... If an official ignores the people's welfare, even if he can assist the ruler in establishing the dynasty and follow him to die, he is still not obeying the right way of being an official.”¹¹

¹¹ Shen Shanhong (Ed.): Complete Works of Huang Zongxi, Volume 1, P.5: “蓋天下之治亂，不在一姓之興亡，而在萬民之憂樂.....為臣者輕視斯民之水火，即能輔君而興，從君而亡，其於臣道固未嘗不背也。”

In the preface to this book, Huang Zongxi wrote, "...The disorder of the world has not ended and how could we enter an era of prosperity? Although I am old, I am perhaps like Ji Zi, waiting to be visited and consulted. How can I keep silent just because the sun has not risen from the horizon and the world has not been illuminated?"¹² There has been much debate as to for whom *Ming Yi Dai Fang Lu* was intended. Some say Huang Zongxi wanted to submit these policy recommendations to the Qing emperors since he likened himself to Ji Zi, a figure of the Shang (商) Dynasty who gave suggestions to King Wu of Zhou (周武王) that conquered Shang. Others countered that by quoting Huang Zongxi's reference to the Qing rule as an age when the sun had not risen. Besides, he did not have any substantial involvement in the Qing government. The Ji Zi analogy might shed some light on Huang Zongxi's self-identity as a *yimin*, though this certainly caused some difficulty in interpreting Huang Zongxi's motivation. Ji Zi is a *yimin*. But his case is different from that of Huang Zongxi. Had it ever occurred to Huang Zongxi that people might think he was implying that the Qing emperor, a "barbarian chief", was the counterpart of the King Wu of Zhou, the epitome of rulers? Was he just careless or did he deliberately leave that ambiguity with the readers? We may have to leave the question open. Whoever the book was intended for, it did indicate a change of attitude toward the Manchus. No more "divide between the Chinese and the barbarians" (華夷之辨) was elaborated on, which was once so conspicuous in *Liu Shu*. It seems that his intense hatred to the Manchus had ebbed in his acknowledgment of Qing's de facto rule and more reflection on the history. At least, here Huang Zongxi had affirmed again one layer of meaning of the continued existence of *yimin*: to preserve the insights for future use. Therefore, I would say that *Ming Yi Dai Fang Lu* reinforced a change in Huang Zongxi's *yimin* identity from a military activist and narrow nationalist to a more insightful thinker.

¹² Zhuang Yan (Ed.): Selections of Huang Zongxi's Poems and Articles, P. 173: "然亂運未終，亦何能為“大壯”之交！吾雖老矣，如箕子之見訪，或庶幾焉。豈因“夷之初旦，明而未融”，遂秘其言也！”

Huang Zongxi's *Yimin* Identity Defined and Refined

After *Ming Yi Dai Fang Lu*, there were no more political works of Huang Zongxi. He turned to scholarship to spend most of his time and energy. Although he was so politically active when he was younger, now he had to change his career path because of his *yimin* identity. However, his political aspirations were not abandoned altogether since his scholarship was another way to carry out his political aspirations in a longer run. Throughout his life and writings, his identity as a *yimin* became clearer when he tried to give it a definition and establish a principle for himself to stick to.

The definition and principle were often touched upon in the many epitaphs Huang Zongxi wrote and the most clearly stated one is in the *Epitaph for Mr. Xie Shifu* (《謝時符先生墓誌銘》) he wrote in 1685 when he was 76 years old.¹³ “Therefore, *yimin* is the essence and vigor of heaven and earth. But scholars are different. Some neither go to the court nor participate in their banquets. So the difference of the scholars lies exactly in whether they serve as officials.”¹⁴ This definition was straightforward and therefore the principle entailed was relatively easy to follow. Apparently this was also what Huang Zongxi put into practice. With the acknowledgement of the reality, Huang Zongxi recognized that the choice he faced was not between Ming and Qing but between the Government and the Civilian:¹⁵

¹³ Wu Guang: Examination of Huang Zongxi's Works, P. 303

¹⁴ Shen Shanhong (Ed.): Complete Works of Huang Zongxi, Volume 10, P.411: “故遺民者，天地之元氣也。然士各有分，朝不坐，宴不与，士之分亦止於不仕而已。”

¹⁵ Zhao Yuan: Study of the Scholars during the Ming-Qing Transition, P.389

First, Huang Zongxi rejected all the offers of offices and invitations for official banquets. In 1671 when he was 62 years old, he composed two letters declining a County Director Zhang's request of him to write county records. His excuses were his own incapability and unsuitability to this task.¹⁶ In 1678, Kangxi Emperor (康熙帝) launched a special examination to select Han Chinese intellectuals of "broad learning and vast erudition" (博學鴻儒). Huang Zongxi was recommended by Ye Ren'an (葉詡庵), Minister of the Imperial Academy. It was Huang Zongxi's student Chen Jiemei (陳介眉), who knew Huang Zongxi's principle well, that dissuaded Ye Ren'an out of this attempt. In his letter to Chen Jiemei, Huang Zongxi thanked him for his understanding and effort. Again, his excuses were that he was not erudite enough for the title and he could not leave his mother alone. Furthermore, he firmly stressed his determination to stay away from government service: if they insisted on calling him, he would die.¹⁷ In 1680, Huang Zongxi again declined the call on him from Kangxi Emperor to write the Ming history. In 1689, a County Director Li held an official banquet and invited Huang Zongxi.¹⁸ He then wrote two letters to decline, "The Divine Son of Heaven asked me to work on history...I firmly declined it at that time as I am old and ill. The Divine Son of the Heaven showed sympathy and allowed it. Now the county drinking banquet is also an official order. If I obey this order, then the reason I declined the order for work was to avoid labor. On the other hand, if I follow this order that invites me to be a guest, then the reason will be my greed for entertainment and enjoyment of food and drinks. This is insincerity." ¹⁹

¹⁶ Shen Shanhong (Ed.): Complete Works of Huang Zongxi, Volume 10, P.156-158 《辭張郡侯請修郡志書》，《再辭張郡侯修志書》

¹⁷ Shen Shanhong (Ed.): Complete Works of Huang Zongxi, Volume 10, P. 162 《與陳介眉庶常書》

¹⁸ Shen Shanhong (Ed.): Complete Works of Huang Zongxi, Volume 12, P.52 《黃梨洲先生年譜》

¹⁹ Shen Shanhong (Ed.): Complete Works of Huang Zongxi, Volume 10, P. 207 《與李郡侯辭鄉飲大賓書》，《再與李郡侯書》：“義蒙圣天子特旨，召入史館……義

Second, to refine this *yimin* definition, Huang Zongxi divided a clear line between personal relationships and official relationships. For example, he had students that held Qing offices and apparently he did not sever himself from them at all. This was justified in his writing by commenting on two well-known *yimins* in history: Tao Yuanming (陶淵明) and Boyi (伯夷). In an epitaph written in 1677, he wrote, “people are born in this world and it is impossible to have nothing to do with it. If people do have anything to do with this world, inevitably there will be mutual exchanges. Tao Yuanming would not bend his integrity in a different dynasty but he could not resist the wine of Jiangzhou and the money of Shi'an.”

²⁰ Furthermore, he questioned Boyi's refusal to eat grain of Zhou by eating grass instead. He said: “If all the grains on this land are the grains of Zhou, what is the difference between the grass and grain?” ²¹ Huang Zongxi didn't blind himself to the reality—worldly connection was inevitable and his bottom line was to keep the connection unofficial. In his letter to Chen Jiemei discussed earlier in this paper, Huang Zongxi wrote, “as for Mr. Ren'an, I feel like writing him a letter. But it is not appropriate for a person who shuns the government to write to a high official. It goes against the dividing line.” ²² Here Huang Zongxi was indeed very careful in his action so as not to violate his principle.

時以老病堅辭不行，聖天子憐而許之。今之鄉飲酒，亦奉詔以行者也。假若應命而赴，召之役，則避其勞而不往，召之為賓，則貪其養而飲食衎衎，是為不忠。”

²⁰ Shen Shanhong (Ed.): Complete Works of Huang Zongxi, Volume 10, P.276 《余若水周唯一兩先生墓誌銘》：“生此天地之間，不能不与之相干涉，有干涉則有往來。陶靖節不肯屈身異代，而江州之酒，始安之錢，不能拒也。”

²¹ Shen Shanhong (Ed.): Complete Works of Huang Zongxi, Volume 10, P.566 《王義士傳》：“若以率土之粟即為周粟，則薇與粟何擇焉。”

²² Shen Shanhong (Ed.): Complete Works of Huang Zongxi, Volume 10, P. 162 《與陳介眉庶常書》：“訢庵先生處，意欲通書，然草野而通書朝貴，非分所宜。”

However, Huang Zongxi did once carry his practical approach awry, which placed himself in an embarrassing position. *The letter to Xu Ganxue* (《與徐乾學書》), written in 1686, was stark flattery. Xu Ganxue was a Qing minister and the letter started by Huang Zongxi's overwhelmed joy and honor for having received Xu's prior letter. Then he went on to compare him to the ancient great men of wisdom and laud him as an extremely capable minister. Finally he came to his point: he wanted Xu's inscription on the tablet for his father's temple. Furthermore, he asked for his special favor in the examination for his grandson.²³ This letter's content and tone really cast some doubt on the integrity of Huang Zongxi. Probably Huang Zongxi himself was not comfortable with this letter so this letter was not seen in Huang Zongxi's major essay collections such as *Nanlei Wen'an* (《南雷文案》), *Nanlei Wending* (《南雷文定》) and *Nanlei Wenyue* (《南雷文約》) but in the less known *Nanlei Zazhu* (《南雷雜著》).²⁴ But we have to admit that there is no perfect man and it is difficult for a human being to stick to one principle all his life without any deviance. Therefore, this letter cannot be taken as a proof that Huang Zongxi had totally lost his principle. Rather, it should be regarded as a compromise to reality when priorities were placed on practical matters such as the prospect of his dear grandson.

Third, Huang Zongxi's *yimin* identity was also defined by his scholarship that stressed statecraft thinking and practical statesmanship (經世致用) as well as his appreciation of history. This actually meant an indirect involvement in the politics. In 1667 he resumed Liu Zongzhou's Zhenren Academy (證人書院), which became very popular and influential. Quite a few of his students were very accomplished and some even later gained positions with the Qing government through the official examination.²⁵ Huang Zongxi was a very prolific writer. The

²³ Wu Guang (Ed.), *Nanlei Zazhu in the Original*, P. 233

²⁴ Wu Guang: *Examination of Huang Zongxi's Works*, P. 187

²⁵ Wu Guang: *Examination of Huang Zongxi's Works*, P. 300

important works he wrote or compiled include *Ming Ru Xue'an* (《明儒學案》), *Ming Wen'an* (《明文案》) and *Ming Wenhai* (《明文海》). Thus, Huang Zongxi's thoughts were carried to a wider audience and even into current political rule. All these efforts made his existence as *yimin* all the more positive and active with his academic influence. Huang Zongxi also tried to preserve the old dynasty by indirectly assisting in writing the official history. In 1679, Kangxi Emperor asked him to work on the official compilation of the Ming History. As usual, he declined. But that was not the end of the story. Kangxi then ordered that all Huang Zongxi's works that might help in the project be copied and sent to Beijing. Huang Zongxi had to consent to this. Later Xu Yuanwen (徐元文) asked Huang Zongxi's son Huang Baijia (黃百家) to participate in the project. In his letter to Xu, Huang Zongxi wrote, "Now I am sending my son to you and you should release me!"²⁶ Both his son and his student Wan Sitong (萬斯同) played unofficial but important roles in the history compilation. Furthermore, though Huang Zongxi himself "did not accede to the calls for the project, his advice on all the writings of the major history cases was invariably sought."²⁷ Huang Zongxi went further than usual in this project to indirectly cooperate with the Qing Government. This special case was made for the nature of the work—history compilation—only. Huang Zongxi had been especially fascinated with history. His father's last word to him was "the most important thing for a scholar is to know the history."²⁸ This was indeed a guideline for Huang Zongxi all his life.

²⁶ Shen Shanhong (Ed.): Complete Works of Huang Zongxi, Volume 12, 黃梨洲先生年譜 P.48: "今我遣子從公，可以置我矣。"

²⁷ Shen Shanhong (Ed.): Complete Works of Huang Zongxi, Volume 12, 全祖望《梨洲先生神道碑文》P.12: "公雖不征書，而史局大案，必咨于公。"

²⁸ Zheng Wangeng: Three Great Thinkers at the Ming-Qing Transition, P. 11, "學者最貴通史事"

He said “A country can perish. History cannot.”²⁹ He told his student in a poem that what he was to write should be able to gain the power to correct the errors in the history.³⁰ Huang Zongxi’s incentive was clear here: as a *yimin*, he wanted to have a say in the history as a way to preserve the important names and events in the Ming and give them their due. Because this history was compiled officially by the Qing Government, it became all the more significant. Therefore, we can see that the existence of *yimin* had one more layer of meaning-- to preserve the Ming through the Qing implementation. This meaning gained precedence over his non-cooperation principle. Besides, this principle did not extend to his sons and students. Huang Zongxi saw no necessity for them to stay strictly out of the Qing Government. After all, the significance of the Ming had become even vaguer to these “second generation” *yimins*.

In addition, Huang Zongxi criticized some scholar’s conversion to Buddhism as a way to show their loyalty to the Ming. In his article *Qi Guai* (《七怪》), he wrote, “They don’t want to be the officials for this foreigner but why are they willing to convert to yet another foreigner?”³¹

***Yimin* Identity in Comparison: Huang Zongxi’s Contemporaries**

Huang Zongxi was not the only *yimin* in the transitional period and it would be helpful to examine him in a broader picture with various *yimins*.

²⁹ Shen Shanhong (Ed.): Complete Works of Huang Zongxi, Volume 10, 《戶部貴州清史司住事兼經筵日講官次公董公墓誌銘》, P. 300: “國可滅，史不可滅。”

³⁰ Zhu Xueqin: The Intrinsic Contradiction of Cultural Nationalism from the Perspective of the Dilemma of the Ming Scholars: 黃宗羲《送萬季野貞一北上詩》: 憑君寄語書成日，糾繆須防在下風。

³¹ Shen Shanhong (Ed.): Complete Works of Huang Zongxi, Volume 10, P. 631, “不慾為異姓之臣者，且甘心為異姓之子矣！”

Gu Yanwu (顧炎武) (1613-1685) also participated in the military activities against the Qing troops after the fall of Ming. His mother starved herself to death and asked Gu Yanwu never to serve two surnames (莫事二姓). Gu Yanwu kept his hair as a way to defy the Qing governance and show his loyalty to the Ming. Like Huang Zongxi, he also stressed practical learning. He traveled around China and gained much knowledge. He agreed with Confucius' positive comment on Guanzi (管子) who worked for Duke Huan of Qi (齊桓公), enemy of his former master Prince Jiu (公子糾), in his efforts to fight off the barbarians. To him, the divide between the Chinese and the barbarians was more important than the loyalty to one certain master.³² Gu Yanwu was more persistent with this view while we could not see its continued and conspicuous presence in Huang Zongxi's later works and life.

In contrast, Wang Fuzhi (王夫之) (1619-1692) was more inflexible. He also fought against the Qing troops at the fall of Ming. When he saw the Southern Ming regimes were gone, he went into retreat and spent his time in retrospection and writings over history and philosophy. However, he was not so well-known at his time because of his seclusion. He concluded that the Chinese represented civilization and the foreigners represented barbarism. The fall of Ming was a painful event of beast conquest of the civilization.³³

On the other hand, Lu Liuliang (呂留良) (1629-1683) was an interesting figure. He was also active in anti-Qing struggles. He also shunned the Qing Government and devoted himself to scholarship and book collection. Huang Zongxi and he were once friends but tension grew between them and finally they became enemies. There were many factors such as competition in the purchase of good books and different approaches to scholarship. But their different

³² Wu Rui: History of Academies, P.11-12

³³ Wu Rui: History of Academies, P.13

attitudes toward the Qing raised the major issue. Throughout his life Lu Liuliang was very resentful to the Manchus, as seen from his poems. His loyalty to the Ming was reinforced by his nationalistic hatred to the Manchus, which could not be compromised by mere non-cooperation attitude of one generation. When some of Lu Liuliang's friends became socially successful or even if they only expressed such a wish, Lu Liuliang broke up with them.³⁴ Therefore, Huang Zongxi's indirect cooperation with the Qing, justified as it might be, was outrageous in Lu Liuliang's eyes. The *yimin* identity presented by Lu Liuliang was therefore a much more stubborn one than that of Huang Zongxi.

Qian Qianyi (錢謙益) (1582~1664) was probably not even qualified to be termed as *yimin* in the strict sense. As a Ming official, he surrendered Nanjing to the Manchus and later served as an official in the Qing. However, he had his own justifications: He would sacrifice his own reputation to save the lives of other Chinese, both the citizens of Nanjing and his scholar friends who might be suspected of being anti-Qing. In fact, he did help Huang Zongxi and Gu Yanwu out of some legal difficulties.³⁵ However, Qian Qianyi was never fully trusted by the Manchus. In 1648, Qian Qianyi was imprisoned for a while for his alleged connection with an anti-Qing activist. Then he got home to collect and write books. But some of his works were banned for its anti-Qing and pro-Ming elements. Therefore, to both the Qing governors and adherents to the Ming, Qian Qianyi was disloyal. He seemed to be opportunistic with no consistent principle. After all, to remain a *yimin* spiritually, if at all, while being a turncoat in fact was dangerous and difficult.

All these scholars during the transition of Ming and Qing located themselves in the different positions of the *yimin* identity spectrum. Huang Zongxi, Gu Yanwu and Wang Fuzhi all started with military fight against the Qing and after that their

³⁴ Wu Guang (Ed.), On Huang Zongxi, P.471

³⁵ Frederic E. Wakeman Jr. (Ed.) : The Great Enterprise: P.595-596

life courses and views became different to various degrees. None of them chose to commit suicide as they still believed in the meaning of their continued existence in the new dynasty as *yimins*. Their thoughts and their scholarship, whether actively promoted or not, did have impact on their contemporaries and their posterity. Lu Liuliang's *yimin* identity finally got himself and his family severely persecuted during the Yongzheng (雍正) period in the Zeng Jing (曾靜) case. Qian Qianyi's road was much more different and his self-assumed *yimin* identity made his situation very embarrassing.

A Qualification:

The Ambivalence and Ambiguity in Huang Zongxi's *Yimin* Identity

Huang Zongxi stated in his *Ming Yi Dai Fang Lu* that the welfare of the people was the most important while who ruled the country was not fundamental. The function of an official was to serve people but not the ruler.³⁶ With this logic, if the Manchus were ruling the country, a person should not have too much scruple in being a Qing official as long as what he did could do good to the people's welfare. But Huang Zongxi still refrained from official relationship. To reconcile all these contradictions, the underlying assumption of Huang Zongxi should be examined. Did he altogether abandon the Chinese-barbarian divide view in his later stage of life? The answer is probably no. Though he stopped condemning and even praised the Qing emperors, he found it hard to break away from his self-imposed identity as a *yimin* so as to practice his proposal in *Ming Yi Dai Fang Lu*. This Chinese-barbarian divide had already been instilled in him by the long-stranding Chinese culture, values and tradition and grasped his superego. Huang Zongxi was human being and we could not expect him to be free of contradictions. On the other hand, if we interpret Qian Qianyi's turncoat behavior as a practice of Huang Zongxi's idea—serve the people regardless of the ruler, we find that Qian Qianyi was not successful with either side. Society is complex

³⁶ See Note 11

and history is ironic sometimes; Qianlong Emperor (乾隆帝) even ordered the compilation of *Biographies of Turncoat Officials* (《貳臣傳》) to criticize the apostasy of the Ming officials who turned to Qing, as an effort to promote loyalty to the Qing.

Huang Zongxi's *Yimin* Identity in the Dynamics of a Changing Time

The *yimin* identity was a dynamic one for Huang Zongxi, who lived long enough to witness the chaos and collapse of late Ming, the invasion of the Manchus and the prosperity of the Qing, especially under Kangxi's rule. "So called moral principle cannot always resist the power of time."³⁷ Change was simply inevitable. Huang Zongxi's attitude toward the Manchus changed. He started by fighting against these barbarian Manchus. In his writings at that time, he called the army of King Lu the Imperial Troops (王師) and referred to the Manchus as slavery foreigners. And later he acknowledged the reality and turned to scholarship. After 1658, the 15th year of Shunzhi, he no longer used derogatory terms. Instead, he neutrally referred to the Manchu army as the Northern Army. Beginning from 1679, the 18th year of Kangxi, he began to use the titles of an emperor's reign in his articles, which signified his acknowledgement of the legitimacy of Qing.³⁸ Furthermore, he became very comfortable with referring to Kangxi Emperor as the Divine Son of the Heaven, as seen in his letter to decline the banquet invitation.³⁹ Huang Zongxi ended up asking favor from a Qing minister for his grandson's prospect in the official examination. Huang Zongxi's life that spanned the Ming-Qing transition was long but the change was still radical enough. However, this shift in his *yimin* identity was still understandable.

³⁷ Zhao Yuan: Study of the Scholars during the Ming-Qing Transition, P.380

³⁸ Wu Guang, On Huang Zongxi, P.355

³⁹ See Note 19

In his theory, Huang Zongxi transcended the boundary of who-the-ruler-is mentality. In a sense, he was the *yimin* for a culture. When the Manchus first entered China, the *yimins* were dismayed that the inferior barbarians were trying to take over China so they resisted hard. As time went on, they saw the Ming restoration was impossible. More importantly, they had to admit that the Qing governors were ruling the country quite well. The Manchus adopted a rather lenient or even supportive policy toward the Han culture and intellectuals. They began to realize the barbarians were not so bad. Kangxi was actually better than the late Ming rulers. In general, the *yimins* gave up military resistance activities and resigned themselves to the legitimacy of the new dynasty. Under such circumstances, Huang Zongxi could not resist the temptation of a good atmosphere for culture and scholarship. Throughout Huang Zongxi's writings and life, we see both consistency and revision of his *yimin* identity and his attitude to the Qing. Adaptation and resistance—it showed how Huang Zongxi made judgment and choices in a major social shift that he had to face and handle. He went from total condemnation of the Manchus to acquiescence. He found justification in the principle of non-official-connection and cooperation, which did not extend to his sons and students. Therefore, the cultural unification has finally led to political reconciliation.⁴⁰

Furthermore, resistance and adaptation were not only on the part of the *yimins*. Perhaps the Manchus had consciously gone through even more. They conquered China as a minority with their military power. They managed to change the customs and imposed their peculiar hair and dress styles on China. But to change the culture was a much more formidable task. They realized that their relatively young civilization was weaker than the Chinese culture. And in order to maintain power and stability, they chose to adapt themselves to a certain extent. This strategy means the Manchus' concession in the cultural aspect in

⁴⁰ Zhu Xueqin: The Intrinsic Contradiction of Cultural Nationalism from the Perspective of the Dilemma of the Ming Scholars

exchange for obedience. And this strategy worked! So we see that China was initially conquered by the Manchus by power and then by their deliberate adoption of the Han culture. On the other hand, we can also say that the Chinese culture conquered the Manchus and made their distinct identity somewhat lost, in which *yimins* like Huang Zongxi certainly played an important part. However, who the true conqueror and winner was no longer important. Although the divide between the Chinese and the Manchus was always there, history went on and the issue of the true foreigners—the Westerners—in the late Qing was more complicated and prominent.

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