The study of the compilation of *Mingshi* and its *lunzan*

by

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the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
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I declare that this work has not been previously included in a thesis, dissertation, or report submitted to this or any other institution for a degree, diploma, or other qualification.

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Abstract

Previous scholars have tended to argue that the compilation of *Mingshi* was a means by which the Manchu emperors intended to mollify the Ming loyalists. However, although the compilation of *Mingshi* was preliminarily politically orientated, its nature later changed and the project did not serve this purpose.

During the compilation of *Mingshi*, progress continued to suffer from the lack of official historians, source materials and the disorganization of the Ming Historiographical Institute. Such phenomena were largely due to the attitude of the emperor, which was affected by the political development at that time.

When the political situation of the Qing empire became more stable in 1681, the compilation project evolved into a historiographical undertaking. The reasons for the long period of compilation and the rejection of earlier drafts by the emperor were due to the contradictory views held by official historians and by the emperor in their evaluations of Ming history and figures.

The final completion and approval of *Mingshi* was an outcome of the efforts of various groups of people. The long compilation period enabled these different groups to contribute their expertise to the most appropriate parts of the project. Although the emperor possessed no well-defined principle of evaluation, he allowed the project to continue for further revision. As a result, historians were better able to evaluate historical figures and events of the Ming dynasty. Wang Hongxu had deleted the *lunzan* of earlier drafts. Such a move enabled later historians of the Yongzheng reign to distance themselves from the influence of earlier historians, and to develop their own *lunzan*.
Comparative studies between the lunzan of Mingshi and the commentaries by Emperor Qianlong clearly illustrate that the evaluation principles shown by each were different. Therefore, it is very possible that the finalized version of Mingshi might not have been approved and the revision period would have continued for a longer period if it had not been submitted in the first year of the Qianlong reign. The perfect timing of the submission of Mingshi was a vital factor in the final approval of the completed version.
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Explanatory Notes

1. The pinyin system is adopted in this thesis.

2. The term lunzan throughout the text refers to the individual paragraph of discussion and eulogy on one or more historical figures at the end of a zhuan (Biography) or benji (Imperial Annals) in Mingshi [Standard history of the Ming dynasty].

3. Most of the biographies cited in Mingshi, i.e. zhuan or liezhuan in fact consist of several biographies in which different figures of similar background, profession or political status are included. Different terms for types of biography are used throughout this thesis as follows:

   Biography - refers to the ordinary biography which consisted of the biography of one person or biographies of a group of people living in the same time period. However, some of the biographies in MS are not biographies of people. In fact, Biographies of Tusi (Aboriginal Offices), Waiguo (Foreign Countries), Xiyou (Western Countries) are accounts of aboriginal offices and foreign countries in the Ming dynasty.

   Main Biography - refers to the biography(ies) which were grouped together with several main biographies to form an ordinary biography. Sometimes there is only one single main biography in the ordinary biography.

   Classified Biography - refers to different figures listed under specific classification.
Associated Biography - refers to the biography(ies) of minor importance attached to the main biography.

4. Chinese characters for the terms used in the text are provided in the Glossary.

5. According to the Chinese custom, an emperor's reign title is used as if it were his personal name, hence "Emperor Kangxi", "Kangxi" all denote the Kangxi emperor.

6. Office titles in this thesis adopted the translation by Professor Charles O. Hucker in his work, A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China.

CORRIGENDA

For "annal" read "annals"

For "Prince Yan" read "the Prince of Yan"
Abbreviations

DMB: *Dictionary of Ming Biography* (L. Carrington Goodrich ed.)

ECCP: *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing period* (Arthur W. Hummel ed.)

MHI: Ming Historiography Institute

MS: *Mingshi* (Zhang Tingyu et al.)

MSBJ: *Mingshi benji* (Zhang Tingyu et al.)

MSCG: *Mingshi jizhuan* (by Wan Sitong)

MSEG: *Mingshi* (by Wan Sitong)

MSG: *Mingshi gao* (by Wang Hongxu)

MSL: *Ming shilu* (Yao Guangxiao et al.)

   SZSL: *Shenzong shilu*

   TZSL2: *Taizong shilu*

   TZSL: *Taizu shilu*

NHI: National Historiography Institute

NLC: National Library of China

QSG: *Qingshi gao* (Zhao Erxun et al.)

QSL: *Qing shilu*
Introduction

*Mingshi* ([History of the Ming dynasty], hereafter referred to as MS) is the last of the "Twenty-four standard histories" in traditional Chinese history. It is the standard history of the Ming dynasty, compiled by official historians of the Ming Historiography Institute (hereafter referred to as MHI) during the Qing dynasty. It consists of four divisions in the form of annals-biography, totalling three hundred and thirty-two *juan*.

Traditionally, the setting up of the Historiography Institute for official compilation work had always been a focus of criticism by private historians in China. Liu Zhiji (661 - 721), a renowned historian of the Tang dynasty, pointed out five major unfavourable conditions which prevailed in the official Historiographical Institute. First, the official compilation project prior to the Tang dynasty was usually assigned to individual historians who had the sole responsibility for it. In the Historiography Institute, the result of assigning the project to a team of official historians was a reluctance of those historians to express their own opinion or make a final decision on the evaluation of historical issues. Secondly, originally government departments were required to provide source materials for the official historians. Later, historians had to collect materials themselves, and this was surely an inefficient process producing unsatisfactory results. Thirdly, in ancient times, historians were separated from other people in order to avoid prejudice or hearsay in making historical evaluations. But other contemporary historians were quite willing to talk frankly about remarks made by official historians. It became very difficult for official historians to remain impartial when there was public discussion of their opinions on particular historical issues or figures. Fourthly, official historians had difficulty in working in the Historiography Institute when there were differing opinions on compilation principles and historical evaluation
among Directors-General and Chief Compilers. Finally, Chief Compilers, who were supposed to be responsible for the planning and overall supervision of the compilation project in traditional China, were in reality only nominally so, without performing any actual work. As a result, the organization of the institute was very loose and the progress of the entire project was very slow. Apart from these conditions, contemporary scholars also stated that the quality of the work of the institute was rather poor when the appointment of its official historians became a matter for contention among members of powerful families seeking career advancement in the Tang dynasty. The recruitment of official historians with political ambitions and connections resulted in the corruption of historical evaluations.

The situation of the government Historiography Institute in later dynasties was not much better. The standard histories completed by official historians of different dynasties are the best illustrations. The Song dynasty was a fruitful period in the history of historical writing. There are many historical works which were appreciated by later historians, such as *Xintangshu* [New History of the Tang dynasty] and *Zizhi tongjian* [Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Government]. There were also innovations in the methods of compilation as well as the form of historical writing. However, official compilation in the Song dynasty was still criticized for its lack of specially appointed official historians to be in charge of the entire compilation project, which seriously affected its progress and the final product. In the Yuan and Ming dynasties, the product of the Historiography Institutes was even worse. The Mongols delayed their compilation of *Songshi* [History of the Song dynasty], *Liaoshi* [History of the Liao dynasty] and *Jinshi* [History of the Jin dynasty] in order to resolve the issue of legitimate succession among these three previous dynasties and the Mongol empire. Once the Mongols had achieved this resolution, the
Compilation of the three historical works was completed within a very short period. The speedy compilation, though it clearly illustrated the efficiency of the Mongol government, resulted in numerous defects in the historical works, which were criticized severely by later historians. Another example of speedy compilation of an official project can be found in the early Ming dynasty. Although Emperor Hongwu (1328-98, reign 1368-98) wished to reconcile intellectuals by appointing many of them to participate in the compilation of *Yuanshi* [History of the Yuan dynasty], most of the intellectuals were reluctant to join the government. They completed *Yuanshi* in a short period of time and resigned immediately after its completion. Official historians of the project were reluctant to discuss the nature of the relations between the Mongols and the Han Chinese. The resultant work was incomplete without any *lunzan*, evaluations and eulogies at the end of the biographical accounts in a standard history.

The Manchus took over the Ming dynasty in 1644. Shortly after Emperor Shunzhi (1638-61, reign 1644-61) had been enthroned in Beijing, the Qing ruler announced the compilation of *MS* and the organization of the MHI. It appeared as if every means was used to facilitate the entire compilation project. It had the longest compilation period in the history of Chinese historical writing. The compilation began in 1679 and was finished in 1736. If the earlier compilation period in the Shunzhi reign is also included, the entire compilation lasted around one hundred years, without taking into account the revision in the late Qianlong reign. The best scholars in the empire were recruited, including the renowned historian on Ming history Wan Sitong (1638-1702). These scholars submitted valuable proposals on the principles and methods of compilation. Some of them also brought along with them their private collections of Ming historical sources. In addition, the emperors of the early Qing period showed a supportive attitude toward the compilation project. They reminded the
official historians to be fair in making historical evaluations and to be aware of the "impartial consensus of the time". All the above-mentioned measures of the Qing government may have contributed to the ultimate success of MS.

Among the standard histories in late Imperial China, MS was highly regarded by later historians. They were impressed by the well-planned organization of the four divisions of a standard history, the application of tables as well as the detailed and accurate accounts of the historical issues. Most of the historians attributed the success of MS to favourable conditions, such as the long compilation period and the recruitment of talented scholars over its entire course. The compilation of MS in the early Qing period apparently enjoyed the most favourable conditions for an official compilation in a government institute.

However, there were also historians who criticized the drafts and the final versions of MS. Wan Sitong, the renowned historian who joined the compilation project and who was highly respected by official historians in the MHI, criticized the relegation of the compilation to an official institute. Wan insisted that owing to time restrictions and the lack of coordination among official historians, the resulting official compilation could not be comparable to historical works by individual historians. Furthermore, contemporary historians had also pointed out that the historical accounts in MS were not entirely impartial. The history of the Manchus under the rule of the Ming dynasty in MS was erased. In addition, the form of the biographies of the emperors of the Southern Ming dynasty also aroused criticism from later historians. They were merely associated biographies in the Biography of Zhuwang (Princes) instead of Imperial Annals. Lastly, historians such as Wu
Han (1909 - 69) even pointed out that there were numerous mistakes in MS, which illustrated that the historical work was not very well examined.\textsuperscript{15}

Such phenomena lead to doubts that the compilation conditions in the early Qing period really were favourable and the shortcomings of official compilation by the Historiography Institute had really been overcome. It would also be of great importance to know in what way they affected the course of the compilation and the content of the final product.

Although there were many unfavourable conditions prevailed in the historical compilation of a government institute, the compilation of a standard history has always been an important cultural policy for a newly established government in its founding period. Its importance was especially emphasised when a different ethnic group had defeated the old regime and established a new empire. The compilation of the history of the previous dynasty by the new government had a great propaganda effect on fellow citizens.\textsuperscript{16} It would help to mollify the people in the conquered region and more significantly clarify and establish the legitimate successive relationship between the two governments. The Mongols spent over seventy years trying to settle the issue of legitimate succession which became increasingly significant as the Mongols "steeped themselves further in the Chinese tradition and gradually alienated themselves from the rest of the Mongol empire in their late phase of rule".\textsuperscript{17} On the other hand, the compilation of a standard history could also serve as a means of reconciliation between the new government and the intellectuals within the empire. Emperor Hongwu of the Ming dynasty intended to appoint talented scholars for his government by recruiting official historians in the compilation of \textit{Yuanshi}.\textsuperscript{18}

Since MS was the historical account of a Han Chinese dynasty compiled by official historians in the Historiography Institute under the
supervision of a different ethnic government, it was likely that the Manchu emperors suggested and implemented the compilation for political purposes. In fact, many contemporary historians argued that the Manchu rulers had managed to use the compilation project as a political measure. By engaging Ming scholars in the compilation project, they hoped eventually to improve the relationship between the intellectuals and the Manchu government.\textsuperscript{19} Criticism on the content of MS cited above also clearly illustrated the influence of political developments on the historical project.

As regards these criticisms, it is interesting to investigate how far the political development in the early Qing period affected the compilation process and the content and evaluations of MS, and in what way the official historians of the MHI formulated their final evaluations.

In order to determine the scope of political influence, the best solution was to study all the extant drafts of MS.\textsuperscript{20} Drafts of different phases would illustrate the historical ideas of official historians in different periods, thus helping to understand the impact of political development in different periods.

China had a long tradition of making comments at the end of historical accounts. This tradition can be traced back to the remarks in the \textit{Zuozhuan} [Zuo's commentary on the \textit{Spring-Autumn Annals}].\textsuperscript{21} The practice was adopted by the great historian Sima Qian (145 B.C. - ?) in the Han dynasty and then followed by later historians when compiling standard histories. \textit{Lunzan} is the term to describe the evaluations and eulogies of historical figures and historical issues at the end of the biographical accounts in a standard history. It is introduced with the term \textit{lunyue} (The discussion says) and is followed by a small paragraph discussing some aspects of the historical figures which were not clarified or elaborated in the main text of the biographical account. The initial phrase was also varied in the earlier
dynasties. Ban Gu (32 - 92) changed its form to poetry and Fan Ye (398 - 445) named the new form *zanyue* (The eulogy says). As time passed by, official historians tended to employ only the opening phrase *lunyue* in the standard history. The content of the *lunzan*, however, included more eulogies than discussions.

The evaluations of historical figures at the end of the biographical accounts had always been regarded as the responsibility and the right of the historians. This position was maintained and developed by historians of the Song dynasty, such as Ouyang Xiu (1007 - 72). While official historians had to record the biographical accounts in accordance with historical sources, the *lunzan* allowed more room for historians to elaborate their own historical judgements. The study of the *lunzan* of MS would therefore enable us to understand the general historical principle of official historians and to trace possible causes for the progress of the compilation project in different phases.

The aim of the present study is to clarify the general development of official compilations by the Historiography Institute, with special attention to the official compilation of MS in the early Qing period. Furthermore, another aim of this study is to examine the significance of the MS project in the political development of the early Qing period. In the past, many studies have been made on its course of compilation, and various aspects of MS. However, most of the research on the course of compilation has not made use of the extant drafts of MS. The present study will provide a more thorough understanding of the nature and the development of the official compilation in the Qing dynasty through the study of the extant drafts of MS.

In brief, this thesis proposes two hypotheses. First, the nature of the compilation of MS changed during its compilation, which was a major
factor affecting the progress of the project. At the initial stage, the compilation was entirely politically orientated. However, its nature changed during the later years of the Kangxi reign. Such changes subsequently contributed to the final completion of MS. Secondly, the shortcomings of the compilation in the Historiography Institute continued to exist in the MHI, and the final approval of MS was mostly the result of the efforts of people involved and the submission time. The conditions affecting the compilation in the Shunzhi reign, although apparently favourable, were in fact a false front put up by the Qing administration. During the early years of the compilation, the resources of the official compilation were insufficient and there was little progress. As a result, the completed drafts were unsatisfactory to both the emperor and the official historians. Later, due to the efforts of different groups of people, including the emperors as well as official and private historians, the MHI was able to gather different groups of talented historians to contribute to appropriate sections of the compilation and to complete the final version of MS. Last but not least, the submission of MS in the first year of the Qianlong reign was a decisive factor which contributed to its final approval.

The thesis is divided into two parts. Part one discusses the course of the compilation and the general political development during this period. The compilation conditions as well as the background, aim and historical attitude of the emperor and historians involved are analysed in order to trace possible causes for the extension of the revision of the earlier phases and the final approval of the compilation project. Part two concentrates on the study of the lunzan in the drafts of MS in different phases. Analysis of these lunzan provides essential evidence to determine the authorship and compilation date of two comprehensive drafts. With the comparison of the lunzan of these two drafts and other related drafts, the evolution of the lunzan during the entire course of compilation, and the change in the
general historical principles of the historians in different phases, can be traced. Then, the results of the comparison will provide an historiographical explanation for the cause of reasons for the revision and final approval of MS.

2 Zhang Rongfang, pp. 221-2.
3 Yang Liensheng has written an authoritative paper on the organization of Chinese official historiography. In his paper, he stated that although the historical method had been improved in later reigns, there is no new development of the historiographical principle. See Yang Liensheng, p. 57. For detail of the Chinese official compilation in the Tang, Song, Yuan and Ming dynasties, see Chan Hok-lam (1970); (1981), pp. 56-106; Zhang Rongfang; Lei Jiaji, pp. 1-36; Cai Chongbang; Shang Huiming, pp. 79-86; Luo Zhonghui, pp. 144-53.
4 Cai Chongbang, pp. 206-8.
5 Ibid, pp. 191-3.
8 Qian Mu (1964), pp. 245-326.
11 Qian Daxin, 38/368-9.
12 Xu Daling, p. 40; Liu Jie, p. 319; Yang Liensheng, pp. 51-2.
13 Ho Koonpiu (1978), pp. 509-43; Chiu Lingyeong, pp. 722-34.
14 MS, v. 12, 120/3651-6.
16 Yang Liensheng, pp. 47-8.
17 Chan Hok-lam (1981), p. 57
18 But the intellectuals were not impressed by the sincerity of Emperor Hongwu. Many of them refrained from serving the new government. Most of them left the government when they finished the compilation project. Luo Zhonghui, p. 145.
19 See chapter 2, note 19.
20 See Appendix 2.
21 Zhang Zhenpei, p. 93.
23 YangLiensheng p. 53.
24 Ibid, p. 52.
25 Since I was not able to obtain permission to make photocopies or take slides of the earlier comprehensive drafts which are still available, and their size was too big for hand copying, the present study consulted only the lunzan and part of the biographies of the two comprehensive drafts. For details of the two drafts, please refer to chapter 5, pp. 87-108.
Part I: The compilation of *Mingshi* -- An introduction

1. The compilation of MS in the Ming dynasty

The compilation of MS began early in the late sixteenth century. In 1594 Emperor Wanli (1563 - 1620, reign 1573 - 1620) appointed senior officials to the project of compiling the national history. The following years saw the recruitment of many officials, and proposals on various topics of Ming history were received. The project did not last long, due to an unexpected fire in the palace in which parts of the drafts were lost. The compilation project was not resumed until the end of the Ming dynasty, and the national history of the Ming dynasty was never completed.

In 1593, Chen Yubi (1545 - 96) submitted a memorial suggesting to the throne the idea of compiling a national history of the Ming dynasty. Before Chen's memorial, the Ming government had never compiled any composite form of annals-biography of the Ming dynasty. In March of the following year (1594) Emperor Wanli appointed Wang Xijue (1534 - 1610) to be Director-General in charge of the compilation project. Thereafter many senior officials including Shen Yiguan (1531 - 1615), Minister of the Ministry of Rites, Liu Yukui (1552 - 96) and Feng Qi (1558 - 1603), Supervisor and Vice Supervisor of the Household respectively, Fan Qian (1534 - 97), Left Vice Minister of the Ministry of Rites, were recruited. In August, the National Historiography Institute (hereafter referred to as NHI) was founded and the compilation project formally commenced.

Many officials in the Wanli reign had shown interest in the compilation project. They submitted proposals discussing the project in general or particular historical issues in Ming history. During the course of the compilation, Emperor Wanli only issued a few decrees in response to the proposals by his officials. In 1595 Emperor Wanli asked his Provincial
Education Commissioners to collect source materials for the compilation project related to renowned figures within their jurisdiction. The NHI was later expanded and many new staff members were recruited. Officials in the NHI proposed the table of contents of MS which included sixteen imperial annals, twenty-two treatises and twenty-six groups of biographies. By the time the project was suspended, most of the treatises had been drafted.

The compilation work lasted only four years. In June, 1597 the project was unable to continue due to a fire in three palace halls of the Forbidden City. After the fire was extinguished, the Grand Academician Zhang Wei proposed that the compilation project should be postponed. In his memorial he gave no precise details on the loss of historical materials or drafts of the compilation project in the fire. Since the hall of Huangji Palace was very close to the eastern pavilion where the drafts of the national history were stored, it was highly probable that a large part of the resource materials and drafts were lost in the fire of the palace hall. By that time enthusiastic advocators such as Chen Yubi and many senior officials in the NHI had either died or retired. Others left the NHI for various reasons. The only senior Director-General who held office was Shen Yiguan. He was initially reluctant to participate in the compilation project. Without any strong leadership in the NHI, the project gradually faded away from the mind of the emperor whose attention was now on military campaigns in the southwest and northeast. The project of the national Ming history was, therefore, left out of consideration until the end of the Ming dynasty.

2. A brief introduction

The first part of this thesis focuses on the study of the entire course of the compilation of MS. The aim is to trace possible extraneous factors affecting the progress of the compilation. The whole process was divided into four phases and will be discussed in chapters one to four respectively.
These four phases are phase one (1645 - 78), phase two (1679 - 92), phase three (1692 - 1723) and phase four (1723 - 39). Although the compilation project halted temporarily for a period of time during its course, it was treated as a continuous process in each phase since there was no formal announcement of the suspension of the project.

In the following four chapters, the progress of the compilation in each phase will be discussed. In order to determine their possible effect on the compilation and the people involved, the political developments of the same period will also be examined. Furthermore, there is also discussion on the general conditions such as the resources and organization of the institute. Finally, the background, the motives, the involvement and the contribution of the official historians as well as the emperors will be studied in detail in order to trace possible divergence in historical principles.

Chapter one studies the first phase which included the Shunzhi reign and the first seventeen years of the Kangxi reign. The Manchu rulers were preoccupied with matters related to the unification of the empire and the consolidation of Manchu rule during this time. Special attention is paid to political development during this phase, which greatly affected the political nature of the compilation and the attitude of the emperors and their regents.

Chapter two deals with the period during which the basis of later drafts was completed. During this period, the greatest number of official historians was recruited into the MHI. The background, motive, involvement and contribution of the official historians as well as Emperor Kangxi (1654 - 1722, reign 1661 - 1722) will be analysed in order to trace the cause for the rejection of the first draft at the end of this phase.
Chapter three traces the course of events during the compilation in the third phase. This phase is divided into two periods, 1692 - 1703 and 1704 - 22. Such division is mainly due to the difference in the compilation team at two different times. In the first period, the revision was carried on in the MHI. After the rejection of the second draft, the revision was carried on by Wang Hongxu (1645 - 1723), the retired Director-General of the MHI, at home, with the support of other private scholars. However, the results of these two periods were not approved by Emperors Kangxi and Yongzheng (1678 - 1735, reign 1723 - 36).

Chapter four focuses on the final phase when a completely new team of official historians was recruited. The background and the contribution of these official historians will be examined in order to trace the causes for the final approval of the MS. Special attention has been paid to the significance of the change of the emperor in the final approval of MS. In this chapter the epilogue is included in which the later Qianlong period revision was studied. The revision of this period was confined to the imperial annals and the resulting versions were included only in the Siku quanshu [Complete library in four classes of literature] edition of MS. The revision is not considered to be part of the compilation process. But the difference between MS and the Siku quanshu version provides essential information for a better understanding of the attitude of an Emperor toward historical compilation.

1 Li Xiaolin has written a paper about the official and private compilation of the national history in the Ming dynasty. Li Xiaolin, pp. 181-90.
2 MSL(SZSL), 263/4896-4907. Sun Chengzhe had also quoted the memorial of Chen in his work. But Sun missed out the discussion on the division of treatise and biography in the Standard History which constituted a major portion in Chen's memorial. The later part of Chen's
memorial quoted in Sun's work cannot be traced either in MSL or in Chen's other collected work. MSL(SZSL), 363/4900-1; Sun Chengze, 32/24b-25a.

3 The imperial edict can be found in MSL(SZSL), 271/5038-9. According to the practice in organizing the compilation team for a historical or similar project in the Ming dynasty, Grand Secretaries were appointed as the Director-General of the project. See Shen Shixing et al., v. 5, 221/3b-4a. In 1594, Wang Xijue, Zhao Zhigao and Zhang Wei were Grand Secretaries. As a result, all three of them were appointed to work on the project. MS, v. 11, 110/3371. At the beginning Chen Yubi had in his mind that Jiao Hong was the appropriate candidate to be fully in charge of the compilation project. However, Jiao declined the offer but helped to draft the Treatise of lingji (Classics and Books). MS, v. 24, 288/7392.

4 Senior officers who had been appointed and recruited into the NHI included three Director-Generals, namely Wang Xijue, Zhao Zhigao and Zhang Wei, four Vice Director-Generals, namely Chen Yubi, Shen Yiguan, Liu Yukui and Feng Qi, seven Vice Director-Generals who held concurrent posts, including Luo Wanhua, Shen Na, Fan Qian, Liu Yuanzhen, Sun Jigao, Zeng Chaojie and Lu Kejiao and nineteen Compilers, namely Yu Jideng, Xiao Liangyou, Li Tingji, Liu Yingqiu, Tang Wenzian, Jiao Hong, Zou Depu, Guo Zhengyu, Huang Ruliang, Quan Tianxu, Wu Daonan, Huang Hui, Zhuang Tianhe, Dong Qichang, Wang Tu, Xiao Yunju, Ou Daxiang, Zhou Rudi and Lin Yaoyu. MSL(SZSL), 271/5039-40.

5 MSL(SZSL), 276/5108.

6 In 1594, Sun Yuehou, Left Supervising Secretary of the Ministry of Rites, had submitted a memorial discussing the format, content, compilation method and resource materials for the entire project. MSL(SZSL), 276/5115-7. In 1595, Yang Tianmin, Left Supervising Secretary in the Ministry of Rites, Censor Niu Yingyuan and the Vice Director-General Fan Qian also submitted memorials discussing the status of Emperor Jianwen in the history of the Ming dynasty. MSL(SZSL), 289/5352-8.

7 MSL(SZSL), 271/5038-9, 289/5350.

8 MSL(SZSL), 289/5350.

9 After the formal appointment of officers in charge of the NHI, around thirty new members were recruited until the project was temporarily stopped in 1597. MSL(SZSL), 273/5068, 274/5079, 275/5102, 277/5133, 278/5139, 280/5170, 5175, 281/5199, 283/5230, 286/5309, 288/5334, 290/5372-3, 308/5762-3, 311/5806.

10 The draft will include imperial annals and annuals of the empress. The biographies of Emperors Jianwen and Jingtai will be attached. The twenty-two treatises are Hiaosi (Ceremonial Sacrifices), Miaosi (Ancestral Sacrifices), Dianji (Rites), Yuelu (Law and Music), Tianwen (Astronomy), Lifu (Calendar), Zongfan (Imperial Families), Xuexiao (School), Xuanju (Recruitment), Zhiguan (Civil Office), Lingji, Fuyi (Tax and Service), Huobi (Currency), Caoyun (Grain Transportation), Hegu (Rivers and Canals), Yanfa (Salt

11 Same as above. At least, one of the treatises, *Treatise of lingji*, which was drafted by Jiao Hong had survived from the palace fire and was available for later consultation. MS, v. 24, 288/7392.

12 MSL(SZSL), v. 110, 311/5817.

13 In the Ming dynasty, all drafts of *Qijuzhu* [Diaries of activity and repose] collected memorials of the six ministries and other historical records were stored in the eastern pavilion. The pavilion was situated in the south-eastern corner of the forbidden city. In 1597, three palace halls caught fire. Buildings in the gates of Guiji, Huangji and Wenzhao pavilion were also damaged. It is quite possible that the eastern pavilion was also damaged in this fire which subsequently caused the temporary suspension of the compilation project. For the regulations governing the storing of historical resources of the official compilation project, see Shen Shixing *et al*, v. 5, 321/7b; Sun Chengze, 32/28a. For the geographical situation, see Wang Puzi, v. 3, 410-1; Zhu Xie, pp. 599. For details of the fire of the three palace halls, see MSL(SZSL), v. 110, 311/5810-1. The only survived draft available at present was *Guoshi Jingji zhi* [Treatise of Classics and books of the national history] by Jiao Hong.

14 Chen Yubi died in 1596. Those who had been Vice Director-Generals and died around 1597 include Luo Wanhua (?-1594), Liu Yukui (?-1596), Fan Qian (?-1597) and Yu Jideng (?-1600). Wang Xijue, the Director-General also retired in 1594. The only Director-General in office was Shen Yiguan who was promoted to this position from Vice Director-Generalship.

15 Zhang Wei, the Director-General lost his post in 1598 and Zhao Zhigao was on sick leave from 1598 till his death in 1601.
16 In March, 1594, Shen Yiguan was appointed as Vice Director-General. In July he declined the offer but was encouraged by Emperor Wanli. MSL(SZSL), v. 108, 275/5087, Tan Qian(1973), sheng /43b.

17 These military campaigns were against Yang Yinglong in the southwest and the Korean campaign against Japan in the northeast. Ray Huang, pp. 564-5, 567-74.

18 In 1606 Wang Ruolin, Supervising Secretary of the Ministry of Rites submitted a memorial to propose the resumption of the compilation project, but the memorial did not receive support from the emperor and other ministers. MSL(SZSL), v. 115, 427/8049-50.
Chapter 1: The compilation of *Mingshi* -- First phase (1645 - 78)

I. The compilation of *Mingshi* in the Shunzhi period (1645 - 61).

(i) The course of events during compilation

Although the compilation project of MS commenced early in May, 1645, official historians had not completed any draft ready for submission by the end of the Shunzhi reign.1 After the emperor issued a decree ordering the compilation of MS, many Qing officials were appointed to the project.2 All six Grand Secretaries were appointed Directors-General to be in charge of the project.3 The emperor had shown his concern about the difficulties encountered and the progress of the compilation.4 He once even reminded the Directors-General of the project that the history of the Ming dynasty should be written in accordance with the historical truth and should not have any exaggeration.5 During this period of the compilation, many suggestions were made to the throne with special emphasis on the collection of relevant historical records.6 Historical resources for the compilation project were mostly based on *Ming shilu* [Veritable Records of the Ming Dynasty, hereafter referred to as MSL].7 Some official historians found historical accounts in MSL incomplete, and other historical sources available in the court were also limited.8 The emperor asked local officials to collect relevant source materials for the project.9 Although there were other similar requests from the emperor and official historians, the problem of the lacking of source materials, especially on the late Ming period, was never resolved.10

(ii) The background to and difficulties in the compilation project

The slow progress of the project is difficult to comprehend when its support from the emperor and his senior officials and its nature as one of
the major projects in the early Qing period are taken into consideration. The delay was, in fact, closely related to the political developments and the real motives of the Manchu rulers during the early Qing period.

The compilation commenced at a time when such a project was unlikely to be given a high priority by the Manchu government. 1644 was an important year in the Qing history when the Manchus established their new capital in Beijing and began their rule in China. The change was mainly the result of the adoption of unprecedented tactics by the newly appointed Manchu regent, Dorgon (1612 - 1650), against the Ming government and the peasant troops. Traditionally, most Manchu tribe leaders merely carried out raids along the border of the Ming empire. At the beginning of this year, Fan Wencheng (1597 - 1666), the Grand Secretary, proposed in a memorial that the Manchu emperor should fight against the peasant rebel troops instead of the Ming government and prepare to settle in China. After defeating the peasant troops in the north and the occupation of Beijing, the immediate tasks of the Manchu administration were "to restore military order to the capital and get the civil administration operating again; to pacify the unsettled countryside ... ...; and to pursue and destroy the Shun armies ... .....". In order to accomplish these varied tasks and prepare for the final conquest of the rest of China, the Manchu administration had to carry out a series of policies to win the support of the Ming officials and citizens in the conquered area. These measures included the appointment of former Ming officials, the introduction of additional civil examinations, the reversal of burdensome tax policies and the proper burial of the last Ming emperor. The compilation project of MS was one of the assignments in this period. It is therefore highly possible that the aim of the Qing administration was politically orientated.
The politically-orientated motive of the Qing administration can be further illustrated by the limitation of the involvement of the emperor. In the early Shunzhi reign, the government policy was dominated by the regent Dorgon with the support of the Grand Secretaries such as Fan Wencheng. The policy carried out in the early Shunzhi reign did not represent fully the interests of the emperor. There is no record of any criticism by the regent of the compilation. After the death of Dorgon, the emperor made a few minor remarks. He agreed to ask the local officials to collect relevant source materials and was more open-minded in listening to suggestions on collecting biographical information on those martyrs in the southern region. However, neither the regent nor the emperor showed any anxiety over the completion of the compilation project.

Study of the organization of the compilation will further expose clearly the motives of the Qing administration. The appointment of senior officials, such as Directors-General of the project, was supposed to provide the necessary leadership urgently needed by the project. The appointment of Han officials was also a symbolic move to show the sincerity of the Manchu administration in their treatment of the Han people and the Ming subjects. However, such arrangement achieved neither actual propaganda effect nor compilation efficiency.

In reality, the appointment of Grand Secretaries was merely an inheritance of the Ming dynasty regulation for the preparation of an official compilation. The appointment of Feng Quan (1595 - 1672), former Ming official and present Grand Secretary in the Qing court seemed certain to have an adverse effect among those former political enemies in the Ming court and Ming loyalists.
On the other hand, the appointment of those senior officials also caused foreseeable difficulties for the compilation project. First, the time and involvement of senior officials in the project was limited. In the early years of the Shunzhi reign, the Qing administration had to accomplish various tasks, from the stabilization of the conquered land in the north to the battles against the southern Ming regime and the peasant rebels in the south. It was fairly unlikely that the Qing administration would actually expect their key advisors to be involved in such a long-term project. During the early period of the compilation, these officials had many other concurrent appointments which required their immediate attention. They were also assigned to other compilation projects such as the Manchu translation of *Ming hongwu baoxun* [Imperial advice of Emperor Hongwu] and the compilation of *Qing taizong shilu* [Veritable Records of Emperor Taizong]. Besides, political disputes among the Grand Secretaries also caused disruptions in the progress of the compilation. Fan Wencheng had been dismissed for a short period after a quarrel with Feng Quan. Lastly, senior officials understood too well that the announcement of the compilation was entirely for propaganda purposes and not an urgent task. They were not experts on Ming history. Early accomplishment of the compilation would not necessarily be appreciated by the emperor and the regent. But a misinterpretation of the relationship between the Manchus and the Ming dynasty, which was a highly sensitive issue in the early Qing period, would definitely ruin their political careers. Their attitude towards the compilation project of MS became more cautious when some officials who were involved in another historical compilation were executed in 1650.

The lack of source materials severely handicapped the progress of the compilation. In as early as 1648, an edict was issued asking local officials to collect source materials related to the late Ming period. Similiar edicts were
issued in 1652, 1655 and 1659. However, the problem was never solved. One of the reasons was that the idea of collecting late Qing material was never taken seriously by the generals and local officials.\(^3\) As regards the attitude of the Qing administration, collection of this information was not considered an urgent task.

Instability in the north and the south of China had also blocked the way to collecting source materials and recruiting talented scholars essential to the compilation. While scholars in the south joined the anti-Manchu uprising, scholars in the north were also deterred from joining the project by the imposition of the shaved forehead and the queue.\(^3\) Those scholars were unwilling to cooperate with the Manchus in either contributing either their own collection of materials or their own service at this stage.\(^3\)

Such an environment for the compilation of the MS was unfavourable due to the lack of leadership, talented scholars and relevant historical resources. However, the most fundamental reason lay in the fact that the Qing administration showed such indifference to the progress of the compilation that little progress had been achieved by the end of the Shunzhi reign.

(iii) The case of *Mingshi jishi benmo* [Narratives of the Ming dynasty] by Gu Yingta

The case of *Mingshi jishi benmo* arose during the later years of the Shunzhi reign, and concerned a historical work on the Ming history personally compiled by a Qing official.\(^3\) The beginning and the final resolution of the case illustrated clearly the attitude of the emperor, Qing officials and private scholars towards the compilation of a history related to the Ming dynasty at that time.
Gu Yingtai was an official of the Qing dynasty who was personally interested in the compilation of a history of the Ming dynasty. In the late Ming and early Qing period, there were many private historians interested in compiling a history of the Ming dynasty. Such scholars included Zhang Dai (1597 - -?), Tan Qian (1593 - 1657), Zhu Guozhen (1557 - 1632) and Pan Chengzhang (1626 - 63). Some of their historical works were consulted by Gu. Later when Gu began his project, many scholars were invited to participate. Gu decided on all the titles of the topics in his work, and wrote most of the evaluations of the account of each topic at the end. During the course of the compilation, Gu had already taken great care in dealing with the historical issues related to the Manchus and the Ming government. However, he still neglected some of the Qing official interpretations such as the death of Li Zicheng (1606 - 45), the peasant troops leader. According to the Manchu record, Li committed suicide when he was besieged by the Manchu troops. But Gu attributed the death of Li to the efforts of a Ming general.

In 1660, the Censor Dong Wenqi sent a memorial to the throne and accused Gu Yingtai of altering early Qing history in his published work. Dong condemned Gu's work as a sign of total disrespect to the Qing administration. Although Emperor Shunzhi showed appreciation for the observation and courage of Dong, Gu was not publicly punished for his work, and his publication was not banned. In the next year (1661), Dong was even summoned to the throne and condemned for this accusation by Emperor Kangxi. The fact was that, although the Manchus had their own intrepretation, the background of the death of Li Zicheng was widely known among the populace. Neither emperors wished to arouse any public discontent and stir up political instabililty before the empire had been
completely pacified. In the meantime, the Manchus continued to use both
hard and soft tactics during the consolidation of their rule. On one hand, the
emperor established an epitaph for Emperor Chongzhen (1611-44, reign
1628-45). On the other hand, the Qing administration punished the gentry
in the south-eastern counties severely and continued to pursue Emperor
Yongli (1623-62, reign 1647-61) of the Southern Ming dynasty.43

The case of Gu showed clearly that the ideological restrictions on
scholars in the Shunzhi period were fairly loose. As a Qing official, Gu had
already self-censored his own work. Had he not realized the general attitude
of the Qing administration, he would not have dared to compile his own
accounts of Ming history or include in his book interpretations
contradictory to the official records. This case was not widely known among
the scholars in the Shunzhi and Kangxi periods. Before and after its
occurrence, private scholars remained ignorant of the threat of literary
inquistion on their private historical accounts. They refused to join the
Qing government and were interested in the compilation of their own
Ming history. Most of the scholars continued their own historical research
until the case of Mingshi jilae [The concise history of the Ming dynasty]
occurred in the early Kangxi reign. This case provided official historians with
an appalling experience of the sensitivity surrounding the issue of historical
accounts of the transitional period between the Ming and Qing dynasties.

2. The compilation of Mingshi in the early Kangxi period (1662-78)

(i) The course of events during compilation

Although official historians did not complete any draft in the
Shunzhi reign, the compilation project never officially ceased and the
Imperial edict continued to be in effect into the Kangxi reign. In 1665, Gu
Ruhua, a Censor, submitted a memorial in response to the young emperor
Kangxi, who suggested the need to collect source materials about the late Ming period and recruit talented scholars for the compilation of MS. Although the Qing officials were enthusiastic in contributing to the compilation, the progress of the project remained slow. In the early Kangxi period, official historians had merely translated part of MSL into the Manchu language and this project was suspended later when the compilation of Shizu shilu [Veritable records of Emperor Shunzhi] commenced. However, the compilation project did receive a certain degree of publicity, and Korean representatives were sent to request the redress of misinterpretation of historical accounts of Korea in an earlier history of the Ming dynasty.

(ii) The case of Mingshi jilae by Zhuang Tinglong

If the scholars and officials of the Qing dynasty not learned a lesson from the case of Gu Yingtai, they would definitely be reminded of the risk in writing late Ming history by the case of Zhuang Tinglong. This case began in the last year of Shunzhi reign (1661) and finally ended in the second year of the Kangxi reign (1663). It lasted for three years, much longer than Gu's case, and involved many renowned scholars and senior Qing officials in the Jiangnan region.

Zhuang Tinglong (? - 1655) was a native of Wujiang, Zhejiang province. He was the eldest son of Zhuang Yincheng (? - 1663), a wealthy merchant from the town of Nanxun in the Wuxing district. As a young scholar interested in history, he became almost blind and continued his ambitions in compiling an historical work with the help of his family and many other scholars. He purchased an unpublished draft of Zhu Guozhen and gathered many renowned scholars to join in with the revision work. They revised Zhu's work and supplemented it with imperial annals and historical accounts of the last two reigns of the Ming dynasty.
completed work was entitled *Mingshi jilae* and was published in 1660. The young historian did not live long enough to witness the publication of his work. However, the early death of Zhuang did not allow him to escape from the inhumane punishment caused by his historical work.

The historical work offended the Manchu rulers in its style of presentation, which was regarded by the Manchu rulers as treasonous. These offences included the discussion of the origin of the Manchus as rebels in the late Ming dynasty, reference to the Manchu emperors by their personal names and to their troops as "rebels", and denoting dates in accordance with the reign titles of the Ming emperors. When the book was first published in 1660, an immediate threat came from Wu Zhirong, a former magistrate of the neighbouring Guian district, asking for bribes to keep silent about the improper aspects of its presentation. Zhuang rejected the offer. Instead, he bribed Ke Kui, the General of Zhejiang province. Wu was furious and reported the case to Beijing in 1661. Eventually, the family of Zhuang Tinglong, the official who accepted the bribe, the family of the publisher, the families of those scholars who had written the preface and those whose names appeared in the book as the assistant compilers, were all severely punished.

The compilation and the publication of *Mingshi jilae* illustrated that restrictions on the discussion of Ming-Qing transitional history were not very rigid in the Shunzhi reign. As a result, private historians continued to work on their own historical research of the Ming dynasty. When the case was first disclosed, Qing local officials were not aware of the possible risk and accepted the bribe. Even the Board of Rites and the Censorate had not studied the book seriously when it was first submitted in January, 1661. However, scholars and Qing officials, having now been rebuked and severely penalized over this issue, were made aware of the presence of the
new superior power and its change of policy towards the recalcitrants in the south-eastern provinces.

The most obvious and immediate effects of this case on private scholars was the sharp decrease in private publications on Ming history. Private scholars were frightened by the purge and decided to abandon their Ming projects.\textsuperscript{53} A lot of historical resources concerning the later Ming history were destroyed during the investigation.\textsuperscript{54} Those who had an affection for the Ming dynasty and had planned to write its history in the MHI had to consider serving in the government institute.

On the other hand, the case again illustrated the sensitivity of the political issues in the compilation of the Ming histories. The accusations against the works by Gu Yingtai and Zhuang Tinglong had to a certain extent highlighted some areas which required special attention. Aspects such as the Manchu rulers' lack of general principle in determining the Ming-Qing relationship, and the way of evaluating the Ming historical figures, continued to deter official historians from active participation in the compilation of MS.

(iii) The background to the compilation and the difficulties encountered

At the beginning of the Kangxi reign, the environment for the compilation remained unfavourable. Although many political crises had been settled, there were continual political issues requiring special attention from the Manchu ruler.

The Southern Ming government had finally been crushed and its last emperor was captured in 1662.\textsuperscript{55} The anti-Manchu rebel troops, however, were far from completely eliminated. Zheng Chenggong (1624 - 62) recovered Taiwan from the Dutch and settled there. Although Zheng died
shortly after this, his successor continued the anti-Manchu campaign along the south-eastern coast of China.\textsuperscript{56}

Policy during the first decade of the Kangxi reign was dominated by the regent, especially Oboi (? - 1669).\textsuperscript{57} The regents were always suspicious of the connection between the troops of Zheng Chenggong and the people in Jiangnan. The Jiangnan region had been the centre of the loyalist movement for a long period and the Manchus carried out massacres against Ming supporters there. Although the confrontation had continued over two decades, hostility against the Manchus among local scholars still existed. Among the scholars, their rejection of the Qing rule was expressed commonly by their refusal to serve the Qing government and their use of dates according to the Ming reign titles in their writing.

When the tax deficit in the four prefectures of the Jiangnan province was first reported, the regent urged the local officials to take strict measures to enforce order, instead of taking measures to pacify the Qing populace.\textsuperscript{58} Later, when a large-scale protest occurred, the Manchu rulers acted brutally. Seventeen leaders of the protest were executed.

Scholars and people in the Jiangnan region were further horrified by the case of Zhuang Tinglong in 1662. These two occurrences horrified those private scholars who would, otherwise, have joined the compilation project earlier. Although the Qing rulers had explicitly pardoned those who submitted subversive materials,\textsuperscript{59} the people would never dare to circulate or submit relevant source materials, essential to the compilation, to local officials.

In 1667, Emperor Kangxi decided to regain the control over the empire from the regent Oboi. It took three years to complete the task with assistance from the Grand Empress Dowager and Manchu advisors.\textsuperscript{60}
However, shortly after the death of Oboi, the emperor's policy of eliminating the feudatories provoked three of them into the rebellion.

This rebellion lasted for eight years and was the most important incident in the early Qing period. The three feudatories, Wu Sangui (1612 - 78), Shang Zhixin (1635 - 80) and Geng Jingzhong (? -1682) had considerable military strength in the southern part of the empire. At one stage, there was a simultaneous confrontation between the Manchu troops, the armies of the three feudatories and loyalist troops from Taiwan. The troops of the Zheng family had taken control over all of the south-eastern coastal provinces. Detailed study of the influence of the rebellion on the political development of the Qing empire, and the attitude of the Qing emperor towards the compilation, will be discussed in the next chapter.

The early decades of the Kangxi reign saw the deterioration of relations between the Qing administration and scholars in Jiangnan, which deterred others from active participation. In addition, the long standing problem of the paucity of materials had never been solved. Although Emperor Kangxi managed to reassert his rule over the entire empire, he was first preoccupied with the struggle against the regent Oboi, and then, with the rebellion of the three feudatories. Under such circumstances, the compilation project, apart from the translation of MSL, was unable to make further progress.

1 The exact date of the imperial edict ordering the compilation of MS could not be found. The memorial of the officials in response to the edict was submitted in May 1645. QSL, v. 3, 16/1b-2a. Emperor Shunzhi had read some of the drafts in the institute but not the formal copy ready for submission. QSL v. 3, 72/3a.

2 Ibid, v. 3, 16/1b-2a.
3 There were only six Grand Secretaries in the Grand Secretariat in 1645. Qian Shifu, v. 1, p. 2. Ning Wanwo was promoted to Grand Secretary after the submission of the memorial. He was only appointed at first as the Vice Director-General in the official list of the compilation team. QSL, v. 3, 16/1b-2a.

4 QSL, v. 3, 32/8a, 40/10b, 72/3a, 4b-5a, 126/7ab; Liu Chenggan, 9/2ab.

5 QSL, v. 3, 32/8a.

6 QSL, v. 3, 54/2a, 126/7ab.

7 Liu Chenggan, 9/1b.

8 Liu Chenggan, 9/1b; QSL, v. 3, 54/2a; 126/7ab.

9 QSL, v. 3, 40/10b, 126/7ab. See also Struve (1982), p. 241.

10 There were repeated requests for the collection of relevant historical resources from the emperor and official historians in 1651, 1655, and finally in 1659, the second last year of the Shunzhi reign. QSL, v. 3, 54/2a, 126/7ab; Wang Zhonghan, v. 2, 8/553; Liu Chenggan, 9/1b-3a.

11 Wakeman, pp. 302-5; Zhou Yuanlian et al. (1986), pp. 163-4; Li Ge, pp. 118-9.

12 Wakeman, pp. 301-2; Jin Chengji, pp. 158; Li Ge, pp. 119-20.


14 Wakeman, pp. 414.

15 Wakeman, pp. 416-8; Zhou Yuanlian et al. (1986), pp. 188-92; QSL, v.3, 19/4b-5a

16 The memorial of Qing officials in response to the imperial edict was submitted in 1645. Since Emperor Shunzhi was enthroned in October of 1644, the announcement of the compilation may, therefore, have been postponed until the second year of the Shunzhi reign. Chen Shoushi suggested that the project was first proposed by generals who had surrendered to the Manchus. Since his source has been checked and his quotation was unavailable, his suggestion needs further evidence to prove. See Chen Shoushi et al. (1968), p. 17.

17 There are merely a total of four imperial edicts related to the compilation of MS throughout the Shunzhi reign. QSL, v. 3, 32/8a, 40/10b; 72/3a, 126/7ab.

18 At the beginning, Dorgon and Fan were quite close in organizing policy, but late in the second year of the Shunzhi reign, Fan was no longer favoured by the regent. For the life of Fan, see ECCP, 231-2; QSG, v. 31, 232/9350-5; Wang Zhonghan, v. 2, 5/257-61. For details about the relationship between Fan and Dorgon from 1645 till the death of Dorgon, see Jin Chengji, p.163. For the life of Dorgon, see ECCP, pp. 215-9; QSG, v. 30, 218/9021-32; Wang Zhonghan, v. 1, 2/22-41; Zhou Yuanlian et al. (1986).

19 QSL, v. 3, 72/3a, 126/7ab.

20 QSL, v. 3, 126/7ab; Liu Chenggan, 9/3ab.
Fan Wencheng and Feng Quan were the most senior Han officials in the Manchu court. Feng was well aware of the symbolic image of his appointment in the Manchu court. See Zhang Jiacang, p. 53.

Kun Gang, v. 17, 70/7a. See Part one, introduction, note 3.

There were disputes between Feng Quan and former political enemies in the Ming court. Jin Chengji, pp. 162-3; Zhongguo diyi lishi danganguan(1981), pp. 12-6. Struve(1982), p. 239.

There is a rumour stating that Feng stole part of MSL of the Tianqi reign of the Ming Dynasty, which included his own past record in the Ming court. Yang Chun, 2/12b.

The best example is Hong Chengchou who had to continue military expeditions in the south. QSL, v. 3, 24/10a, 35/284-5. His vacancy was not filled. For other assignments, see note 25.

Although these projects were more sensitive, they were of greater interest to the Manchu rulers and were, therefore, more urgent. QSL v. 3, 25/1a, 42/2ab; Jin Chengji, p. 165.

Jin Chengji, pp.163-4.

Director-General Qi Congge and Gang Lin and some senior officials had been accused of alteration of the historical facts in Qing taizong shilu and were later executed in 1650. See QSL, v. 3, 54/14a-17a; Jin Chengji, p. 165.

Official historians had reported the disappearance of Xizong shilu [Veritable records of Emperor Tianqi] and other source materials of the late Ming period. QSL, v. 3, 40/10b, 126/7ab. See also note 23.

Liu Chenggan, 9/4b.

The order to shave the forehead in Manchu style was issued shortly after the project began. People would lose their life if they did not follow the order. QSL, v. 3, 17/5ab, 19/4b-5a; Zhou Yuanlian et al.(1986), pp. 230-3. For the anti-Manchu development in the south, see Wang Sizhi et al., pp. 33-4; Chen Qiongying, pp. 19-22, 32-40; Struve(1984), pp. 61-74.

It was also possible that they were not willing to associate with Feng Quan, the betrayed official of the Ming dynasty.

Wang Chongwu(1948), pp. 265-73; Zhao Tiehan, pp. 1-5; Li Xinda, pp. 11-4; Ning Jing, pp. 43-9.

ECCP, p. 426; Wong Zhonghan, v. 18, 70/5706.

Zhao Tiehan, pp. 1-3, 5.
Ibid., pp. 3-5; Ning Jing, pp. 47-9.
Ibid., pp. 5.
For a discussion on different interpretations of the death of Li Zicheng, see Wang Chongwu (1948), 266-72.
Ibid., pp. 265-6, 272-3.
Ibid., p. 272.
Ibid.
Ibid., pp. 5.
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Ibid., pp. 265-6, 272-3.
Ibid., p. 272.
Ibid.
Ibid., pp. 5.
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Ibid., pp. 265-6, 272-3.
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Ibid., p. 272.
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For a discussion on different interpretations of the death of Li Zicheng, see Wang Chongwu (1948), 266-72.
Ibid., pp. 265-6, 272-3.
Ibid., p. 272.
Ibid.
Ibid., pp. 5.
57 For the detailed study of the politics in the regency of Oboi, see Oxnam; Zhou Yuanlian et al. (1984), pp. 27-38; Li Lin et al., pp. 67-70.

58 Oxnam, pp. 103-8, 112; Zhou Yuanlian et al. (1984), pp. 31-2.

59 QSL, v. 4, 16/239-40.


61 For details of the rebellion of the three feudatories, see Tsao Kaifu.
Chapter 2: The compilation of *Mingshi* -- Second phase (1679 - 92)

1. The *Boxue hongru* examination and the compilation of *Mingshi*

(i) The political background

The compilation of MS resumed in 1679 when Emperor Kangxi was about to settle the most serious political crisis of his reign.1 The immediate task of the emperor at that time was the suppression of the rebellion of the three feudatories. During the suppression, the emperor was also reminded by his officer to take measures to consolidate Manchu rule in the recovered provinces.2 It was at this stage that the emperor initiated the idea of holding a *Boxue hongru* examination. Most official historians of the MHI were recruited to participate in the running of the examination.

The three feudatory princes of the Manchu empire rose up against the Manchus in 1673.3 These three princes, Wu Sangui, Geng Jingzhong and Sheng Zhixing were the most powerful Chinese generals in the empire. At the beginning of the confrontation it appeared to be a difficult task for the young emperor to defeat the rebel troops.4 The rebel troops had gained an early success with the support of some people in the south-eastern provinces who were discontented with the Manchus and continued to have a strong affection for the Ming dynasty.5 During the course of the rebellion, Zheng Jing in Taiwan also despatched troops to assist. However, the three feudatories did not join hands with Zheng Jing because Wu Sangui and his allies refused to switch their allegiance from the Qing dynasty.6 The lack of a centralized command and financial support among the troops of Wu and his allies were the vital factors which contributed to the eventual failure of the rebellion.7 On the other hand, the Manchu army was able to adjust its military tactics and bring the allies of Wu to terms one by one.
By 1678, the Manchu administration had recovered most of the land conquered by the rebel troops and some rebel leaders had already surrendered. Wu Sangui, the leader of the rebellion, died in October of this year after his short-lived proclamation as the emperor of the Zhou Dynasty. His grandson became the new leader of the rebel troops and continued to fight against the Manchus. The suppression of the rebel troops by the Qing government looked inevitable.

(ii) The *Boxue hongru* examination and the compilation of MS

The *Boxue hongru* examination was regarded as a significant event in the Qing dynasty. In 1678, an imperial edict was issued to ask Qing officials to suggest the names of talented scholars who had been neglected by the government and of those who had not held government posts. As a result, many worthy scholars were recommended for imperial consideration. In the beginning, the response of some scholars was unfavourable. A few scholars even threatened to commit suicide if the local officials put pressure on them. Others surrendered to the coercion of the Qing administration and sat for two rounds of examinations. Although many of them did not complete the questions of the examination, they still passed the examination. All fifty of the successful candidates were granted government posts in the Qing government and all of them were assigned to work for the compilation project of MS.

Contemporary scholars tend to interpret the aim of the examination to be the recruitment of talented scholars for the historical project, in order to mollify the recalcitrants, particularly Ming loyalists. However, if the development of the idea of the examination and the background of the candidates are studied in detail, the aim of the examination and its
relationship with the compilation of MS emerge as rather different from the interpretation of these scholars.

Indeed, the idea of holding a special examination for talented Chinese scholars of the empire developed in the mind of the emperor over a period of time. The idea began when government troops won the battle over the rebel troops in the south-eastern coastal provinces. At that time, the emperor adopted a series of policies designed to pacify the reclaimed provinces. During the rebellion of the three feudatories, public examinations in some areas were suspended and examination centres were restricted to four places. Under such circumstances, the organization of a special examination was essential to win the support of the intellectuals within the empire and provide them with an opportunity to join the government. According to the imperial edict issued in 1678, the emperor also regarded the organization of such examination as a means to create an image of the empire as prosperous and stable. The Qing empire was still facing rebel troops at that time. Thus organizing the examination was a type of propaganda designed to portray a prosperous Qing empire in the light of the consolidation of Qing rule and the winning over of the masses who supported the rebel leaders. Although one of the intentions of the emperor was the recruitment of talented scholars for his own administration, the major motive of the examination was definitely to pacify intellectuals and to spread propaganda. Until the formal announcement after the examination, there was no earlier indication of who were the successful candidates who would participate in the compilation of MS. The compilation project was, therefore, possibly a last-moment assignment for the successful candidates to prevent their early departure, and in the hope that some of them would eventually join the Qing administration. Further evidence can be found in later analysis of the
progress of the compilation project, and the attitude of the scholars and the emperor.

An analysis of the background of the successful candidates can clarify the aim of the examination and its relationship to the compilation project. Although a few renowned Ming loyalists refused to sit the examination organized by the Manchu government, the majority of the recommended scholars had already participated in the Qing public examination or even served the Qing government. Therefore, the target of the special examination was not simply or specifically to recruit Ming loyalists. Although the offer of working on the compilation project was a definite attraction to Ming loyalists, one should not neglect the fact that the compilation of MS was not announced until after the examination was over, and that the recruitment of further scholars for the project was only organized at the request of the Chief Compiler. Thus it was unlikely that the emperor planned to use the examination as a means of mollifying the Ming loyalists and the compilation project as a means of attracting Ming loyalists to sit the examination.

On the whole, it is true that the Boxue hongru examination enabled the Manchu government to gather many talented scholars to join the compilation of MS under its administration.

2. The organization of the MHI and the course of events during the compilation of Mingshi (1679 - 92)

(i) The organization of the MHI

The MHI was specially set up when the compilation project of MS was announced after the Boxue hongru examination. Although it had the biggest compilation team, the organization of the MHI was quite loose.
There were almost eighty official historians in the MHI. Most of the senior staff such as Chief Compiler, and Directors-General were senior officials of the Manchu court. The junior official historians were either members of the Hanlin Academy or successful candidates of the Boxue hongru examination. In addition, there were several private scholars who were invited by the Chief Compilers to join in with the compilation project.

Since there was no formal institute for compiling history in the Qing court, the officials appointed to the MHI had no established regulations to follow. In May, 1679, Emperor Kangxi appointed Xu Yuanwen (1634 - 91) as the Chief Compiler and Ye Fangai (? - 1682) and Zhang Yushu (1642 - 1711) as the Directors-General of the MHI. The fifty scholars who passed the Boxue hongru examination were also assigned to work on the project. They were given a room within the Dongan Gate to work. After Chief Compiler Xu Yuanwen had taken up the post, he requested the recruitment of more staff-members for the MHI, including Supervisors, Archivists and junior compilers. As a result, sixteen members of the Hanlin Academy were appointed along with another six individual scholars recruited especially for the project. Several members from the Grand Secretariat were appointed as Supervisors and Archivists of the MHI. Later Emperor Kangxi agreed to appoint more senior staff to join the compilation project. Four Grand Secretaries were appointed as additional Chief Compilers and seven Academicians were appointed as additional Directors-General. However, the organization of the MHI remained loosely structured. Official historians and senior members of MHI were all working at home. In MHI, only the Archivists and the record keepers were present to collect and transfer the completed drafts from junior compilers to senior members for further revision.
(ii) The course of events

Although there were constant revisions of various completed drafts in this phase, the emphasis of the work in the MHI was on the preparation of the first comprehensive draft of MS. The MHI was formally established in December, 1679, but the actual compilation work did not begin until early 1680. Senior officials and official historians first settled on the list of names of significant historical figures from the first eleven reigns from Emperor Hongwu to Emperor Zhengde (1491 - 1521, reign 1506 - 22). These selected names, together with other parts of the history such as imperial annals and treatises, were divided into five groups and were assigned to five groups comprising the fifty official historians who were recruited from the Boxue hongru examination. The official historians within each group later chose randomly those selected figures for whose biographies they were to be responsible. In the following year, the drafting of biographies of the reigns of Emperors Jiajing (1507 - 67, reign 1522 - 67), Longqing (1537 - 72, reign 1567 - 73) and Wanli commenced, and were followed by biographies of the reigns of Emperors Taichang (1582 - 1620, reing 1620 - 21), Tianqi (1605 - 27, reign 1621 - 28) and Chongzhen (1611 - 44, reign 1628 - 45). Due to a lack of sufficient source materials, official historians responsible for the drafting of these figures' biographies were only able to begin collecting historical materials and copying relevant historical facts from the MSL and other historical resources.

During the course of the drafting, official historians compiled comprehensive drafts for each selected historical figure or for the other parts of MS assigned to them, such as treatises and imperial annals. Before submitting their drafts, official historians sometimes held discussions among themselves. After the drafts were completed, they were sent to the MHI and were copied by the record keeper. Thereafter the Directors-
General and the Chief Compilers would either examine those drafts themselves or send them to Wan Sitong for detailed examination. If any corrections were necessary, the drafts would be sent back to the official historians for further revision. During the compilation, completed individual biographies were sometimes revised by official historians or Directors-General. Since most of the drafts were to be examined by Wan Sitong, and senior officials of MHI were preoccupied with their concurrent assignments, the influence of Wan Sitong was dominant at this early stage.

During this period, official historians were keen to work on the compilation. After several years of hard work, many parts of MS were completed. These included biographical drafts of several earlier reigns of the Ming dynasty and the drafts of the treatises. By 1684, many official historians had left the MHI for various reasons. Apart from the lack of labour and source materials, the compilation work was also hindered by lack of imperial guidance. Official historians were always suspicious of the attitude of the Qing emperor towards the interpretation of late Ming history. As a result, sensitive parts of late Ming period were assigned to those official historians who were about to leave the MHI and the progress of the project was slow. On the other hand, senior officials of the MHI made requests for imperial guidance in the arrangement and the evaluation of the sensitive historical issues and figures. They also requested consultation of early Manchu records when drafting the history of the late Ming period. In 1687, Chief Compiler Xu Yuanwen submitted twenty-two juan of the completed imperial annals and biographies of the first three emperors of the Ming regime to the throne for imperial comment. The submission did not receive any response from the emperor until 1692. The first completed draft of MS was finished in 1691. However, official historians decided to delay its submission until the response of the emperor was received.
Before the submission in 1687, Emperor Kangxi showed his concern in regard to the progress of the compilation. In 1683, the emperor twice asked about progress. The emperor reminded his historians that MS should be written according to historical records and that the evaluation should be impartial. He stressed in his edict that the compilation of MS should not be hastily completed. When he was told that drafts of the early reigns of the Ming dynasty had been completed, he asked official historians to submit those drafts to the throne. In 1687 the emperor received some parts of the drafts. Although the emperor praised the official historians for their hard work, he expressed his disapproval of the criticism of Ming emperors in his edict in 1692. As a result, the draft had to be revised again. It must be noted that the remark of the emperor was made entirely with respect to the parts of the drafts submitted and not on the complete version.

3. Attitude and contributions of historians in the compilation of *Mingshi*

Owing to their difference in their personal backgrounds, official historians had different attitudes towards the compilation and to Ming history. These differences contributed in different ways to the early completion of the first draft of MS as well as resulting in the eventual disapproval of the emperor in this phase. Judging from their background before appointment, the official historians can be divided into two large categories: official historians who were originally officials of the Qing court and those who were not. The second category can be further subdivided into two: official historians who had a background as Ming loyalists and those did not. Private historians such as Wan Sitong who did not belong to these three categories will be discussed at the end of this section.
(i) Attitude of official historians who were originally officials in the Qing court

The largest group consisted of official historians who were Qing officials. They included all those senior officials in the MHI such as the Chief Compilers and Directors-General, officials transferred from the Hanlin Academy and those who had served the Qing government or taken the Qing local public examination before they were recommended by the *Boxue hongru* examination. Xu Qianxue was the best example of this category.

Xu Qianxue (1631 - 94), alias Yuanyi*, was a native of Kunshan, Jiangsu province. He was the nephew of the renowned scholar Gu Yanwu (1613 -82) and the elder brother of Xu Yuanwen, the Chief Compiler of the MS project. He passed the palace examination in 1670. In 1682, Xu Qianxue joined the compilation of MS. He was later promoted to the rank of Director-General in the MHI. He had been very active in the government and was later appointed as Minister of the Bureau of Punishments. Although Xu was born in the Ming dynasty and his uncle Gu Yanwu was a well-known Ming loyalist, he showed little affection toward the Ming dynasty. Since the MS project was assigned to those successful candidates of the honourable *Boxue hongru* examination, Qing officials, such as Xu and other junior staff, were eager to take this assignment as a stepping stone for promotion. The industrious work of Xu and other Qing officials thus contributed to the early completion of the drafts on early Ming history. During the compilation, Xu Qianxue made detailed proposals on the basic principles of the compilation. Although he was forced to resign from his government post, he remained in charge of several compilation projects. The compilation project continued to provide him with essential
connections with other senior officials in the court and with intellectuals, which helped him make a later return to officialdom.\textsuperscript{73}

This group of official historians, although they helped to collect much relevant historical material and completed many of the drafts of MS, made little contribution to resolving the problem of evaluation. Since they were not experts on Ming history, they were very cautious in the drafting and evaluation of sensitive historical issues. The case of \textit{Mingshi jilae} in the early Kangxi period indicated clearly that any misinterpretation of late Ming history might ruin their political career. Apart from leaving the sensitive section of MS to other historians, they also tried to get imperial guidance in evaluating historical incidents and figures before they finalized the entire draft of MS.\textsuperscript{74} Whenever an evaluation of the earlier part of Ming history was involved, they would prefer to adopt the version of the Ming administration or opinion generally accepted by private historians of the Ming dynasty which appeared to be unchallengeable.\textsuperscript{75}

On the other hand, as this group of people aimed at further promotion opportunities in their official careers, they were more than willing to take up other government appointments.\textsuperscript{76} Once official historians of this category had left the MHI for further promotion or other government assignments, their involvement and influence in this phase were comparatively limited.

(ii) Attitude of official historians with Ming loyalist background

The second group consisted of official historians who had strong affection for the Ming dynasty. They had in common their family tradition as Ming loyalists and their outstanding academic talents. Some of them, though initially reluctant to join the Qing administration, worked
satisfactorily in the government later on. Representative of this group was Pan Lei.

Pan Lei (1646 - 1708), alias Cigeng, was a native of Wujiang, Jiangsu province. He had been brought up by his elder brother Pan Chengzhang, a Ming loyalist and a well-known historian specializing in Ming history. When he was young, he used to study with his brother and his brother's friends. They included Dai Li (1614 - 82) and Wu Yan (1624 - 63), both of whom were Ming loyalists. Later he became a disciple of another renowned Ming loyalist Gu Yanwu. Under the influence of his family and educational background, Pan Lei had a strong affection for the Ming dynasty and decided not to serve the Qing government. In 1662, his brother was involved in the case of *Mingshi jilæ* and was later executed. This incident greatly frightened the young brother. As a result, when Pan Lei was invited to take the *Boxue hongru* examination in 1679, he tried to ask for exemption but eventually yielded to pressure from the government. Pan Lei was one of the "Four Commoners" and was highly respected by the emperor and his superiors in the MHI. In 1684, Pan lost his post when he was charged with "petulance". Some historians regarded this as the result of conflict between the Chinese officials of different backgrounds in the Manchu court.

Pan received training in Ming historical research from his brother and his mentor. When the compilation of MS began, he made a comprehensive proposal for the compilation and expressed his own opinion on Ming history. Pan worked very hard in the MHI and was responsible for the compilation of the *Treatise of Shihuo* (Food and Commodities) and biographies of the early five reigns of the Ming dynasty. Before he drafted the treatise, he copied all necessary source materials from MSL and other private sources. When drafting the
evaluation of the early Ming figures, Pan tried to trace the reason for the rise and decline of Ming rule. He expressed his appreciation for the outstanding character and the contribution of the generals and ministers of Hongwu reign, which he considered essential elements in the success of Emperor. On the other hand, he criticized Emperor Hongwu's policy of eliminating meritorious officials which resulted in the usurpation of Prince Yan. One point worth noting was that although some of the policies of Emperor Hongwu were criticized harshly by Pan Lei, he always expressed his highest esteem for the legitimate status of the emperor. This style of evaluation may be the last tribute to a Ming emperor by a historian who still cherished the memory of the Ming rule. Until Pan was assigned to another position, he worked steadily on the project. His evaluations were also highly regarded by other colleagues because of his historical knowledge and his clarity of expression. However, since he stayed in the MHI for only a short period, his contribution to the final draft of MS was very restricted.

Since official historians of this group had strong affection for the Ming dynasty, they were anxious to find out the cause of the fall of the Ming Empire and would not simply accept the official interpretation of the Ming government. In fact, most of them held similar viewpoints as private historians of the Ming dynasty, criticizing harshly the policy of the Ming officials and emperors. They had good knowledge of Ming history, and were highly respected by senior officials in the MHI. However, most of them worked in the MHI for a short period and their influence was limited.

(iii) Attitude of the other official historians

The last group of official historians were those who were originally private scholars without a Ming loyalist background. Some of them were successful candidates of the Boxue hongru examination. They considered it an honour to be elected for the examination and were willing to complete
the assignments. It was not in their personalities, to be keen to develop their political careers. They concentrated on the drafting work of the compilation project. They were more open-minded because they had no strong affiliation with the Ming dynasty, and they were not so politically sensitive as the Qing officials. They were prepared to adopt general opinion on Ming historical issues and historical figures. The best representative of this group was You Tong.

You Tong (1618 - 1704), alias Zhancheng, was a native of Changzhou, Jiangsu province. Before he was recommended for the Boxue hongru examination, he worked as a judge for a short period. When he was recruited into the MHI, he worked very hard and drafted over three hundred individual biographies, which include Biography of Waiguo (Foreign Countries). You Tong did not possess a preconceived attitude towards Ming history. When he drafted the biographies of Ming historical figures, he commented in accordance with the historical resources available.

(iv) Attitude of private historians

Apart from those official historians, one outstanding figure who played a dominating role in this phase was the private historian Wan Sitong. Wan Sitong (1638 - 1702), alias Jiye, was a native of Ningbo, Zhejiang province. He was born into a loyalist family and was a disciple of the well-known Ming loyalist Huang Zongxi (1610 - 95). The fall of the Southern Ming dynasty and the consolidation of Qing rule forced the Ming loyalists to consider their personal future seriously. Some Ming loyalists decided to retire from urban life. Some of them decided to compile the history of the Ming dynasty. But the case of Mingshi jilue continued to make them wary. Furthermore, many Ming source materials were no longer available to private historians. As a result, when the Chief Compiler offered an
invitation, Wan Sitong agreed to join the project. In order to maintain his status as a Ming loyalist and not to serve the Manchus, he insisted that he remained under private sponsorship. Wan was enthusiastic about working for the project. Owing to his high intellectual status and profound historical knowledge, he was well received by successive Chief Compilers of the MHI. Most of the drafts completed by official historians had to be examined by Wan Sitong. Although historical records state that Wan was only responsible for the examination of the drafts, it was most probable that the choice of historical evaluation was greatly influenced by Wan in the early stages. This was when there was no formal imperial instruction on historical evaluation, and senior officials of MHI were mostly preoccupied with other concurrent appointments or reluctant to make decisions on the evaluations of the Ming historical figures. With reference to the compilation of MS, there were two general principles of evaluation by Wan Sitong. The first criterion was that comments should be made according to historical records. Wan always stressed the importance of historical resources. As a result, criticism of ministers and emperors who had made mistakes in managing state affairs should be judged by solid historical evidence rather than personal opinion. Furthermore, Wan had personal warmth towards ministers and people loyal to traditional Chinese history. It was therefore not surprising to find appraisal of loyalists of the Ming dynasty included in the evaluation in his drafted biographies.

After a general review of the attitude of those Qing official historians and private historians involved in the compilation project, one can easily notice that most of them were willing to work for the project and that they really worked very hard in the MHI. Their industrious work resulted in the large number of individual drafts of MS now included in some of their own collected works, and the first comprehensive draft of MS in 1691. In their evaluation of Ming historical figures, official historians held different
historical attitudes. At this stage there was scarcely any Manchu official evaluation work on Ming history ready for consultation. Thus official historians who were more sensitive to politics were eager to seek the evaluation of the emperor as guidance for further revision, or simply to adopt evaluations which were generally accepted by the public. For Qing official historians such remarks seemed more reliable. However, historians with a Ming loyalist background, such as Pan Lei and Wan Sitong, wished to maintain the high standard of historical work. They expressed their views explicitly and criticized harshly some of the Ming emperors. Most of their evaluations resembled those written by private Ming historians of similar background.

Some official historians were promoted to other government positions shortly after the commencement of the compilation. Others left the MHI because of illness or dismissal from the government. Those remaining official historians may also have been preoccupied by other government assignments. Since historians with Ming loyalist background, Wan Sitong in particular, spent more time in the MHI and were more eager to work on the project, the drafts completed in this phase were dominated by their historical evaluation criteria. The critical approach towards Ming emperors in general which resulted, was one of the causes leading to the emperor's disapproval.

4. The limitations on official historians in the compilation of MS

Apart from the possibly contradictory approach in the evaluation of historical figures between official historians and the emperor, there were other limitations which hindered the progress and the quality of the compilation of MS.
First, the lack of source materials remained a problem in the compilation of late Ming history. After continual requests from the Chief Compilers, local officials were ordered by the emperor to collect relevant resource materials more conscientiously. Emperor Kangxi approved the appointment of renowned Ming historians and recorded historical resources from private collectors. Manchu resources on early Manchu history which related to late Ming history were also requested by the Chief Compiler. Furthermore, official historians responsible for the later part of the Ming history also prepared a comprehensive draft before they began to draft biographies or treatises of related periods. However, some sensitive materials were still unobtainable during the course of collection which affected the content of the final draft.

Most official historians, either of senior or junior rank in the MHI, were supposed to be talented scholars but not historians specializing in history or Ming history. However, the draft of MS would still have been outstanding if those official historians can contribute their scholarship and efforts to the project continuously. But the fact was that during the entire course of compilation, the number of official historians who were able to concentrate on the compilation work was very few. This was in spite of the fact that the emperor increased the number of senior officials in the MHI and appeared to take the project seriously. In reality, the emperor never provided full support for the project. During the entire course of compilation, the emperor continuously appointed official historians of the MHI to other government posts or official duties, such as to officiate at the memorial ceremony for the great scholar Confucius, to be the Examiner for provincial examinations, or even to be diplomatic envoy to neighbouring countries. During this period, Emperor Kangxi also initiated many projects such as the compilation of *Sanchao shengxun* [Imperial Advices of
the early three reigns of the Qing Dynasty] (1682), *Qing Taizu shilu* [Veritable Records of Emperor Taizu] (1682), *Pingding sanni shengwu fanglae* [Official Account of the Suppression of the Rebellions of the Three Feudatories] (1683) *Daqing huidian* [Collected Statutes of the Qing dynasty] (1684), *Yitong zhi* [Comprehensive Geography of the Qing dynasty] (1685) and *Sanchao guoshi* [History of Emperors Taizu, Taizong and Shunzhi of the Early Qing Dynasty] (1690). Many junior official historians of the MHI were assigned to work on these projects. Among the fifty scholars recruited from the *Boxue hongru* examination, over thirty of them were later appointed to other government posts. It was in fact fairly common that the emperor transferred capable officials to other posts in the government to take up more important assignments, which they themselves were more than willing to accept. Some of them were later promoted to senior positions in the Qing court.

Although the vacancies for senior positions in the MHI appeared to have been filled relatively quickly by the emperor, this was not the case for junior official historians. Apart from later transfers and promotions, ten historians left the MHI after they had worked in the Institute for only a short period. The reasons for the departure of these official historians varied. Some of them hated serving the Manchu. Some failed in some political struggle, while some were tired, or simply took sick leave. As a result, the number of staff who were able to contribute to the compilation became less as time passed.

During the course of the compilation, historians of the MHI were all aware of the sensitivity of late Ming history. Owing to the fresh experience of the early Qing literary case, most of the official historians did not insist on their own attitude towards the Ming-Qing transitional period. Although historians still assisted in collecting original late Ming historical resources,
they left the drafting work of this sensitive period to those who were going to leave the MHI irrespective of the finishing date of these drafts.\textsuperscript{110} As a result, the compilation was quite fast for the first half of the Ming history, but extremely slow in the compilation of the latter half.\textsuperscript{111}

5. The role of Emperor Kangxi in the compilation of MS

(i) The attitude of Emperor Kangxi towards the compilation

During the course of the compilation of MS, Emperor Kangxi appeared to take the entire project seriously.\textsuperscript{112} However, he did not show his eagerness to complete the project very early on. In fact, the ultimate completion and appraisal of the work was due to his outstanding patience which enabled the compilation project to continue without over-hasty completion. The emperor was concerned about other aspects of the compilation rather than the final completion of the project.

At the beginning, the intention of the emperor in organizing the compilation of MS was merely to create a project for newly recruited scholars who passed the \textit{Boxue hongru} examination.\textsuperscript{113} The project enabled the emperor to keep those scholars in government service, thus helping to win the support of intellectuals throughout the empire. During this early period, Emperor Kangxi was preoccupied with other major political crises in the empire, such as the suppression of the three feudatories, Zheng's anti-Manchu troops in Taiwan and the Russian invasion in the north.\textsuperscript{114} As time went on, the rebellion of the three feudatories and other political issues passed, Manchu rule was well established and the emperor's attention was diverted to other aspects of the empire. These included river drainage problems and the tax on the transportation of grain.\textsuperscript{115} The MS compilation project was not highly regarded. However, the emperor realized the significance of MS among the Han intellectuals within the
empire. He kept the compilation project open and provide assistance if requested in order to avoid upsetting those interested scholars. He never took further steps to support and push forward the project as a whole. He appointed more senior Qing officials only to balance the possible bias of junior historians.

Although the compilation period lengthened and the staff members of the MHI were numerous, the number of official historians who could afford to work full time for the MS project was limited. Most of the official historians had concurrent appointments. Furthermore, vacancies left by members of MHI were often not filled and did not really attract the attention of the emperor. Since several talented and competent scholars had already been promoted to other government positions, the departure of the rest of the official historians, who had in fact caused bitter feelings among those officials who had passed in ordinary public examination, would have been welcomed by the emperor. One point worth noting was that Emperor Kangxi asked Chief Compilers to set a time limit for other compilation projects, but not for the MS project. He stressed in his edict that the compilation of MS should not be done in haste. Lastly, Emperor Kangxi, though he expressed his concern about the progress of the MS project and expected to read the draft before its formal publication, had to possess extraordinary patience to wait three years for the preparation of eight volumes of the drafts, and then took another three years to make his remarks.

The above measures clearly illustrated that Emperor Kangxi had, in the initial stage, realized the significance of the MS project in improving the image of the Qing administration, and relations between the government and the intellectuals. It is possible that the emperor used the compilation project as a means to urge those newly recruited scholars to stay in the
government. The completion of the historical work was never given a high priority. Instead, he tried to select capable officials as his own administrative staff. However, the official historians held a different attitude. Some of them took the compilation project as a chance for personal advancement, while others considered the compilation of the Ming history as their sacred duty. Although time and labour were limited, they still managed to complete a draft of MS, though it required further revision.

(ii) Emperor Kangxi's knowledge of the Ming dynasty and of historical evaluation

Emperor Kangxi was very diligent and had undergone systematic training in Chinese cultural studies. However, his knowledge about the Ming history and historical evaluation was limited at this stage. According to Qijuzhu, Academicians Expositor-in-waiting would first prepare the tutorial notes and then tutor the emperor on Chinese Classics and history personally every day. This daily tuition had been interrupted by the rebellion for several years, but the emperor asked the Academicians to resume the tutorials immediately once the situation in the empire had improved. However, the historical training of the emperor was slightly different. Although the Academicians had also prepared tutorial notes on the Zizhi tongjian and had given tuition for a short period, there was no tuition on historical topics after 1667. Emperor Kangxi studied and annotated Zizhi tongjian by himself. Furthermore, there is no record illustrating that the emperor had received special training on the Ming history.

If the imperial edicts on Ming history in this phase are analysed carefully, it is quite interesting to note that all the remarks of the emperor were illustrating the same point: that is, that the compilation of history is a serious business and evaluations should be impartial and fair. Such
remarks were too general, however. In fact, the emperor made no reference to any Ming historical issue or figure when he discussed the project with official historians. His first remark on Ming source material was related to MSL, which was made only after the submission of several volumes of official drafts. The emperor suggested that official historians should consult MSL when they compiled the drafts. Such a remark showed clearly the ignorance of the emperor of the source materials of Ming history, as MSL was undoubtedly the basic source for the compilation project. Later, when he studied the submitted drafts and consulted relevant historical source material, he made a remark to the effect that those records in MSL after the reign of Emperor Xuande (1399 - 1435, reign 1426 - 36) were full of falsified historical accounts. Such a contradictory comment clearly illustrates that the emperor's knowledge of Ming history had improved during these few years.

After analysing the comment of disapproval by the emperor, it may be noticed that the remarks of Emperor Kangxi were very subjective. In the edict of 1692, Emperor Kangxi explained in humble manner that he was too insignificant to make any criticism of the Ming emperors. Neither did he consider it appropriate to include so many criticisms of Ming emperors in the lunzan of their annals. He also considered it inappropriate to favour the contribution of the ministers without fair judgement on military officers. Yet he insisted on the necessity of rewriting those unfavourable evaluations which later scholars might attribute to his leadership, though he understood which were the responsibility of the official historians. Although the emperor tried to justify his request by stating that more source materials should be consulted before the evaluations were finalized, this edict clearly reflected that the emperor had no well-defined criteria in evaluating Ming historical figures. This lack of criteria was also illustrated in his frank opposition to criticism of the Ming emperors without any concrete
evidence. The attitude was a violation of the independence of the historian's profession. Similar remarks were carefully avoided in later imperial edicts.

Due to his insufficient knowledge of Ming history and historical evaluation, the emperor may not at the beginning have foreseen the difficulty in compiling an acceptable version of Ming history. It was only after the emperor had studied the submitted draft that he found its evaluation unacceptable, as it was dominated by official historians with a Ming loyalist background. He did not possess sufficient historical knowledge to overrule the decision of the historians. He did, in some instances, express his opinion frankly. However, the emperor was intelligent enough to permit the compilers to carry on revision work until the completion of the final acceptable version.

1 Emperor Kangxi regarded the rebellion of the three feudatories as one of the three most serious crises within his reign. QSL, v. 5, 154/701. The military situation began to change in favour of the emperor in 1676-7. See Tsao Kaifu, p. 126.
2 QSL, v. 4, 66/853.
3 See chapter 1, note 61.
4 The decision of the emperor was against the will of most of his senior officials. However, the emperor still benefitted from advice from the council of princes and high officials. Tsao Kaifu, pp. 73, 170. During the rebellion of the three feudatories, Emperor Kangxi had issued an edict intended to seek support from the Mongols and Tibetans, but his effort was in vain. However, his attempt clearly illustrated the anxiety of the emperor in the early stages. See Meng Sen(1980), pp. 480-5.
5 QSL, v. 4, 67/864; Tsao Kaifu, p. 89; Kessler, p. 86.
6 Tsao Kaifu, pp. 105-6.
7 Ibid., pp. 121-6.
8 Ibid., pp. 126-30.
9 QSL, v. 4, 76/977-8; Tsao Kaifu, pp. 132-4.
10 Li Ji et al., preface, 3a-4b; Meng Sen(1980), p. 494. For the historical resources of the Boxue hongru examination, see Li Ji et al., and Qin Ying. For analysis of the examination, see Wilhelm, pp. 60-6; Zhang Xianwen, pp. 111-6.
In the beginning, seventy-seven scholars were recommended. *Ibid.* At the end there were nearly two hundred scholars were recommended. The numbers of scholars according to Li Ji and Qin Ying were one hundred and eighty-nine and two hundred and two respectively. Although Qin Ying included scholars neglected by Li Ji, he also made a few mistakes in determining the list of the scholars. See the postscript by Shen Moude in Li Ji *et al.,* p. 68ab. There are two scholars each of whom had different names in various records. The names of Shao Wuyuan had been changed to Shao Yuanping in *Qingshi gao* [Drafts of the Qing history] and *Qingshi liezhuan* [Biographies of the Qing history]. See Li Ji *et al.,* pp. 30b-31a; Zhao Erxun *et al.,* v. 44, 484/13348; Wang Zhonghan, v. 18, 70/5755-6. The name of Li Laitai had been changed to Li Tailai in *Qingshi gao.* Li Ji *et al.,* p. 22b; Zhao Erxun *et al.,* v. 44, 484/13341; Wang Zhonghan, v. 18, 70/5719-20. In the annotation after the biography of Shao Wuyuan, Li explained that Shao had adopted the surname of his uncle "Wu with the name "Yuan". Later Shao changed back to his original surname with the new name "Yuanping". But there was no explanation for the different names of Li Laitai. In this paper, the name of Li Laitai which was adopted by both Li Ji and the author of *Qingshi liezhuan* is used.

13 Scholars had used different excuses to ask for exemption from the examination. Pan Lei, Wang Wan and other scholars reported ill, while Li Yindu made the excuse of looking after his elderly mother. QSL, v. 4, 75/966; Meng Sen(1980), pp. 498-500.

14 Gu Yanwu, 3/56.

15 Pan Lei did not wish to sit the examination at the beginning. At last, under the pressure from local Qing officials, he took the examination and participated the compilation project later. For details of Pan Lei, see Tso Keungming(1985), pp. 71-2.


17 Successful candidates were appointed as Readers-in-Waiting, Expositors-in-Waiting, junior compilers and examination editors. See QSL, v. 4, 81/1034.

18 *Ibid.,* 80/1023.


20 Kessler suggested that the idea of the examination was proposed in the memorial of Gu Ruhua in 1665. QSL, v. 4, 17/248-9. However, this would be very unlikely because by that time the emperor was only eleven years old. Furthermore, Gu Ruhua asked for the recruitment of talented scholars for the compilation of MS. But the compilation of MS had made no progress when the compilation of *Shizu shilu* began in 1667. See Yang Chun, 2/12b;
A similar proposal can also be found in the memorial submitted by Xiong Ciü when Emperor Kangxi was thirteen years old. QSL, v. 4, 22/307-10. In both memorials, officials suggested the recruitment of those talented recluses who remained outside the Qing administration, without targeting the Ming loyalists in particular.

The emperor had once been reminded of the necessity of implementing pacification policy. See QSL, v.4, 66/848, 853; 67/864.

Chan Kangqi, chubii, 6/116.

QSL, v. 4, 66/846.


Tsao Kaifu, pp. 130-40.

At the early stage of the rebellion, Wu had also spreaded rumours to give a false impression to the common people that the strength of the Manchus was far inferior to that of the feudatories, in order to threaten them not to support the rebellion. see Tsao Kaifu, p. 89.

Traditionally, candidates who were successful in the special examination would obtain low-ranking or merely honorary official posts. In 1679, however, when this system of appointments was proposed to the emperor, he rejected it. Instead, all 50 candidates were appointed to more senior official posts. This decision clearly illustrated the Qing emperor's use of propaganda to win the support of the intellectuals. Meng Sen(1980), p. 498; Li Ji et al., pp. 8a-14a.

See note 13; Meng Sen(1980), pp. 498, 517. According to Hezhen lu [An account of the candidates of the Boxue hongru examination], among the total of 189 candidates recommended, those who had not sit the examination for various reasons only amounted to thirty-three. Among them twenty-three had already taken various levels of Qing public examination and some of them had received the jinshi degree. Among the 147 candidates who had sat the examination, only ten of them had no experience of attending Qing public examination and two of them had sat the Ming examination. Li Ji et al., pp. 15a-61b.

QSL, v. 4, 87/1101-2, 88/1116-7; Xu Yuanwen, 18/7a-8b. Renowned Ming historian Wan Sitong who had joined the compilation project at the invitation of Xu Yuanwen and later by other successive Directors-General. Chen Xunci et al. (1991), pp. 127-9, 183-4; Tso Keungming (1981), pp. 246-8.

Mao Qiling, v. 6, pp. 1366-7.

QSL, v. 4, 81/1035, 87/1101-2; v. 5, 103/37, 39; Zhongguo diyi lishi danganguan (1984), pp. 853, 858, 870-1.


QSL, v. 4, 81/1035.
Ibid., 80/1023.
35 See note 30; Xu Yuanwen, 18/5ab.
36 QSL, v. 4, 87/1101-2.
37 Ibid., v. 4, 87/1101-2, 88/1116-7; Xu Yuanwen, 18/5ab. The recruitment of six scholars, Li Qing, Huang Zongxi, Jiang Chenying, Wan Yan, Wang Maolin and Cao Rong, was first rejected by Minister of Personnel but was approved later with special permission from the emperor. Han Tan, 17/6b.
38 QSL, v. 4, 87/1101-2; Xu Yuanwen, 18/5ab.
39 At the same time, Ye Fangai who had just died was replaced by Chen Tingjing. See QSL, v. 5, 103/37, 39; Zhongguo diyi lishi danganguan (1984), pp. 853, 858, 870-1.
41 Previous studies on the course of the compilation of MS included Huang Yunmei (1968), pp. 32-33; Li Jinhua (1968), pp. 78-83; Chen Shoushi (1968), pp. 187-90; Struve (1982), pp. 244-53.
42 By the time of appointment, Xu Yuanwen had resigned and was mourning the death of his mother. He took up the post in December. Xu Yuanwen, 18/4a; Fang Xiangying, preface, p. 1a; Han Tan, 17/6b.
43 Ibid.
44 You Tong (1694), v. 10, preface, p. 1a.
45 Ibid. See also note 30.
46 Ibid.
47 Fang Xiangying, preface, p. 1a.
48 Zhongguo diyi lishi danganguan (1984), pp. 1059, 1100-1; QSL, v. 5, 111/143. Yang Chun, 2/10a. Official historians such as Wan Yan and Pan Lei had copied materials from official records to compile a comprehensive source book for the drafting work. Tso Keungming (1985), p. 332; Zhu Yizun (1889), 73/840; Mao Qiling, v. 1, p. 109; Xie Guozhen (1981), pp. 137-9. Li Jinhua stated that Wang Ji had suggested to the Directors-General the compilation of a long draft before the formal drafting work. The suggestion of Wang Ji can be found in his biography in Qingshi liezhuan but not in the source cited by Li Jinhua. Wang’s suggestion cited in Qingshi liezhuan was made for the compilation in general. The number of historians who later joined the preparation of this long draft of the last three reigns was four instead of six as stated in Li’s work. Li Jinhua (1968), p. 79; Wang Zhonghan, v. 18, 71/5783.
49 Yang Chun, 2/10a. Some of the drafts of individual historians which were still available are listed in Appendix 2.
50 Mao Qiling, v. 1, p. 111.
51 Liu Chenggan, Xia, 5/15a.
52 Chen Xunci et al. (1991), pp. 135, 170-1. See also Li Jinhua (1968), p. 82.
53 If the drafts of individual historians and the Directors-General are compared, the change in the arrangement of the drafts can be clearly seen. See chapter 5, section 3, pp. 97-102 and Appendix 2, 1/ 7 & 9.

54 Those drafts of individual official historians currently available were mostly completed in the early years of this compilation period. See Appendix 2, section I.


56 See next section of this chapter, pp. 41-8.

57 Official historians were old enough to remember the cause of the case of Mingshi jilüe. They had learned from experience its close connection with their methods of compiling Ming-Qing transitional history. For details of the case of Mingshi jilüe, see chapter 1, 1/iii, pp. 22-4.

58 See note 30.

59 See note 30. Senior officials had also requested the emperor several times to provide sample evaluations. Liu Chenggan, xia, 9/5b-7a, 8ab; Xu Yuanwen, 18/8b-9a.

60 Liu Chenggan, xia, 9/8b; Xu Yuanwen, 18/8b-9a.

61 According to Qijuzhu and Han Tan's writing, official historians had submitted three volumes of seven juan of imperial annals and five volumes of fifteen juan of biographies. Zhongguo diyi lishi danganguan(1984), p. 1613; Han Tan, 17/15; Liu Chenggan, xia, 9/8a.

62 There was no indication that the emperor had any knowledge of the complete version. This version included all the completed lunzan at the end of imperial annals and biographies. See Yang Chun, 2/13a.

63 QSL, v. 5, 111/143, 113/163; Zhongguo diyi lishi danganguan(1984), pp. 1059, 1100-1, 1157, 1408, 1553


65 Ibid., p. 1157; QSL, v. 5, 114/187.

66 See note 61.

67 QSL, v. 5, 144/589, 154/700.

68 Other official historians who belonged to this catagory included Tang Bin, Xiong Cilü, Peng Sunyu.

69 Zhao Erxun et al., v. 33, 271/10007-10; Wang Zhonghan, v. 3, 10/678-84; Han Tan, 18/1a-14b; ECCP, pp. 31-2; Struve, (1982), pp. 231-66.

70 Among successful candidates of the Boxue hongru examination, two-third of them took other official posts during this period. A few official historians such as Peng Sunyu, Lu Rou and Li Kai were promoted later to senior official ranks as high as Grand Secretaries.

71 Liu Chenggan, shang, 2/1a-14a.

72 Xu Qianxue was involved in the bribery case of Zhang Qian and resigned in 1688. Wang Zhonghan, v. 3, 10/679-80.
Xu Qianxue had been accused unsuccessfully by Xu Sanli of making use of his official post in the MHI to get involved in political activities and to accept bribes. QSL, v. 5, 142/565. Later when Xu returned home, he brought along with him historical resources and continued the compilation work. Wang Zhonghan, v. 3, 10/683. For the effect of his involvement in the compilation on the political and social activities of Xu Qianxue, see Struve(1982), pp. 257-66.

See note 60. Xu Qianxue was also eager to request permission to consult Manchu records for the drafting of late Ming history.

In his proposal, Xu Qianxue adopted the interpretation of Emperor Hongwu in the cases of Hu Weiyong and Lan Yu, instead of the interpretation of private historians who accused the emperor of framing the meritorious officials. However, Xu also recognized that part of MSL had been revised to cover up the historical truth. Liu Chenggan, shang, 2/2b-3a, 4a.

Official historians who belonged to this category included Huang Baijia, Li Yindu and Shi Runzhang. Li Yindu resigned shortly after he had been appointed. Zhao Erxun et al., v. 43, 480/13109; Wang Zhonghan, v. 17, 66/5302-4.

Zhao Erxun et al., v. 44, 484/13343-4; Wang Zhonghan, v. 18, 71/5787-8; Tso Keungming (1985).

For the education of Pan Lei, see Tso Keungming (1985), pp.153-279.

For details of the case of Mingshi jilae and its effect on Qing intellectuals, see chapter 1, section 2. (ii), pp. 25-7.

Tso Keungming (1985), pp. 569-70; Kessler, p. 163.


Pan Lei, 5/1a-4b.


Ibid., pp. 333-50.

Pan Lei's evaluations of early Ming emperors and historical figures had been mostly adopted by MSCG. See Appendix 2, I/3.

Other historians which belonged to this category included Jiang Chenying, Zhu Yizun and Mao Qiling.

You Tong, Huian nianpu, 2 juan. in You Tong (1694), v. 1; Zhao Erxun et al., v. 44, 484/13340-1; Wang Zhonghan, v. 18, 71/5782-3.

You was not keen on insisting on his own view because he accepted the fact that the draft will be further revised by the Directors-General. You Tong (1694), v. 10, preface, 1ab. In the case of Zhu Yizun, his accusation on the forgery of Xingcunlu [The records of a political party] was based on his historical research rather than his bias against Emperor Jianwen. Zhu Yizun (1889), 32/404-6.
95 Ibid., p. 137.
96 Ibid. See also chapters 6, 7 & 8 for detailed illustration.
97 Zhongguo diyi lishi danganguan (1984), pp. 488, 492; QSL, v. 4, 88/1116-7; Xu Yuanwen, 18/6a-8b; Liu Chenggan, xia, 9/4a-5b; Struve (1982), pp. 239-44.
98 QSL, v. 4, 88/1116-7; Xu Yuanwen, 18/7a-8b. Wan Sitong brought along with him Huang Zongxi’s historical work on the Ming dynasty. Chen Xunci et al. (1991), p. 128.
99 See note 60.
100 See note 48.
101 Dai Mingshi criticized the shortcomings of the compilation project. One of the shortcomings was that the project had overlooked historical source materials related to the border regions after the Wanli reign of the Ming Dynasty. See Huang Yunmei (1968), p. 14.
102 See note 30, You Tong (1694), v. 10, preface, p. 1a.
104 There were many pieces of evidence in QSL. A few are cited here. QSL, v. 4, 91/1149, 94/1190, 96/1209, 1214-5, 12217, 1219, 97/1222, 1235, 99/1248, 1252, v. 5, 102/25.
105 Kun Gang, v. 17, 70/4b-5a; QSL, v. 5, 104/50-1, 57, 69, 89-90, 115/195, 125/324, 144/599-600.
106 See note 104.
107 Peng Sunyu, Lu Ruo and Li Kai developed successful political careers in the Qing administration. Zhao Erxun et al., v. 43, 481/13178, v. 44, 484/13338-9, 13352.
108 Ye Fangai was replaced by Chen Tingjing shortly after Ye’s death. Wang Guoan was replaced by Xu Qianxue shortly after his provincial appointment. QSL, v. 5, 103/37; Zhongguo diyi lishi danganguan (1984), pp. 853, 870-1.
109 Li Yindu asked for permission to resign in order to look after his elderly mother. The resignation of Fang Xiangying, Wang Wan and You Tong were due to their illness. Zhu Yizun and Pan Lei lost their posts because of different accusations against him. Xu Jiu and Yan Shengsun simply did not wish to continue their official career. Wang Zhonghan, v. 17, 66/5302, v. 18, 70/5727-8, 5730-2, 71/5788; Fang Xiangying, preface, p. 1b; You Tong (1694), v. 10, preface, p. 1ab. See also notes 81 & 82.
110 See note 30.
In fact, many parts of the late Ming history had already been drafted by official historians. Therefore, it was the reluctance of the Directors-General to revise the drafts which delayed the progress. Fang Xiangying, preface, p. 1b; You Tong(1694), v. 10, preface, p. 1ab.


See section 2 of this chapter.

QSL, v. 4, 96/1213, 1220, 98/1239-40, v. 5, 102/26, 104/52, 111/144, 140/543.

QSL, v. 5, 154/701.

Ibid. See also notes 40, 59 & 60.

Emperor Kangxi stated in his edict that he did not wish to have any biased interpretations of Ming history. However, his recruitment of senior officials in the MHI in fact suggested a concern about the possibility of unfavourable interpretations of the early Manchu history in the late Ming period. QSL, v. 5, 103/37. See also notes 36 & 37.

See note 103.

See note 82. Xu Ke, p. 1551.


Ibid., pp. 1157, 1613; QSL, v. 5, 114/187, 144/589, 154/700-1.

According to QSL, Emperor Kangxi started his tutorial on Chinese Classics as early as 1667. QSL, v. 4, 23/315-6. There were numerous records in Qijuzhu which mentioned the emperor's daily tutorials on Chinese Classics. The tutorials were interrupted by the suppression of the rebellion of the three feudatories. But the emperor continued to study on his own and asked the imperial tutors to resume whenever there was spare time during the military situation. Zhongguo diyi lishi danganguan(1984), pp. 83, 84, 174, 278, 1339-40; Lō Shiqiang, pp. 2-6.

Contemporary scholars have argued that the emperor was knowledgeable in Ming history, enabling him to comment on the submitted drafts of Mingshi and allowing him to follow closely the progress of the compilation. See note 112; Spence(1974), pp. 87-9; Lō Shiqiang, pp. 13-4.


According to the research of Lō Shiqiang, available historical records illustrated that the emperor had some knowledge of Ming history but no special training. One must be aware that Emperor Kangxi's remarks on particular issues of Ming history were all made after the submission of drafts by the MHI in May 1687. It is highly probable that the emperor began his detailed study of Ming history only after the submission.

Li Jinhua(1968), p. 57.
129 Ho Koonpiu suggested that this remark was a hint by the emperor to official historians in order to restrict the use of official Ming dynasty records. Later, when Emperor Kangxi stated that those sections of MSL dealing with events after the Xuande reign were unreliable, Ho further interpreted the edict as a hint by the emperor asking official historians not to consult controversial private records. However, Ho overlooked the fact that the emperor had asked official historians to consult MSL explicitly in his earlier edict in 1687 which was a contradictory statement to his edict in 1690. Furthermore, Emperor Kangxi later repeatedly stated that general public opinion must be consulted which was again contrary to his edict in 1690. It is therefore highly probable that the emperor's knowledge of Ming history increased after he began to study the submitted drafts. In addition, no matter how one was going to interpret the emperor's knowledge of Ming history, those contradictory edicts by the emperor clearly illustrated that he had not defined his own evaluation criteria for the project. Ho Koonpiu(1988), pp. 270-1; QSL, v. 5, 130/393, 144/589, 154/700-1, 212/149-50, 218/205-6.
Chapter 3: The compilation of *Mingshi* -- Third phase (1692 - 1723)

Owing to the change in the nature of the compilation project, the compilation of MS in this period can be subdivided into two periods, 1692 - 1704 and 1705 - 22. The compilation process continued in the MHI before 1704. Thereafter the compilation came to a standstill and then continued under the private sponsorship of Wang Hongxu at home.

1. The compilation of *Mingshi* in the third phase: part one (1692 - 1704)

(i) The course of events during compilation

Since Emperor Kangxi rejected the draft submitted in 1687, official historians had to revise the drafts again. But this time they were able to adopt the imperial remarks as the guiding principles for their future evaluations.

In 1691, official historians in the MHI had already completed the first comprehensive draft of MS. But detail Emperor Kangxi's remarks were not received until the next year. In his edict, he criticized the *lunzan* at the end of the submitted draft. As a result, official historians had to revise the drafts once again. By that time, most of the Chief Compilers and Directors-General of the MHI had already died or left. In 1694, Wang Hongxu and Xu Qianxue were summoned to work in the Institute. In 1697, Wang Hongxu was promoted to be one of the Directors-General. The revision work was separated among Zhang Yushu, Chen Tingjing (1639 - 1712) and Wang Hongxu. They were in charge of the revision of treatises, imperial annals and biographies respectively. The revision lasted for two years. During this period, Wan Sitong continued to work for the project under the private sponsorship of Wang Hongxu. In 1699, Xiong Cilü (1635 - 1709) was appointed to head the revision work of MS. After five years of hard work,
in 1703, Xiong Cilü submitted another comprehensive draft of MS amounting to four hundred and sixteen juan.\(^9\) However, the submitted draft was again rejected by Emperor Kangxi in the next year.\(^{10}\)

(ii) Revision work conditions in this period

Although the environment for the revision work in this period was more favourable than in previous periods, Emperor Kangxi remained unsatisfied with the revised product.

The compilation of MS had already continued for quite a long period. Most of the source materials available had already been collected in the MHI.\(^{11}\) A number of talented scholars had also contributed to the project in one way or another, such as by suggesting the compilation methods, and by preparing the comprehensive drafts of individual historical figures and the revised and combined biographies. Serious mistakes in historical details did not exist in the comprehensive draft completed in 1691. The major work of the official historians of the MHI in 1692 was the revision of the draft. Since Emperor Kangxi's criticism was mainly centred on the lunzan of the imperial annals and biographies, the subsequent revised draft would likely be approved by the emperor if the official historians prepared it in accordance with the the emperor's remarks.

The number of official historians remaining in the MHI was far less than the amount in the opening period.\(^{12}\) Nevertheless, the efficiency of these historians had greatly improved. Capable officials who were politically ambitious had already been promoted to senior ranks in other government ministries. Official historians who continued to work in the Institute could, therefore, concentrate more on the revision work. Furthermore, divergent judgements of Ming historical figures emerged far less frequently, partly due to the departure of official historians with Ming loyalist background, who would risk insisting on their own evaluations. However, the main reason
lay in the fact that the imperial comment on the criteria for evaluating Ming historical figures had already been laid down and guided the revision work in the MHI. Although the imperial comment was merely a general remark on lunzan of Ming emperors, the senior officials in the MHI who had requested imperial guidelines for a long time treated it seriously. Xiong Cilü, the Chief Compiler of the MHI during this period, who had been criticized by the emperor for his draft of lunzan in the first submitted draft, would definitely try to avoid the risk of imperial criticism again. Under such circumstances, Wan Sitong, though remaining the most authoritative historian on the Ming history, did not fully use his expertise in examining historical details in the completed draft. Consequently, the resulting draft would then be more likely to be acceptable to the emperor.

(iii) The cause for the emperor's rejection of the second comprehensive draft

Nevertheless, the revised version was again rejected by the emperor. During this period, major political crises within the Qing empire had already been settled. The decision of the emperor would, therefore, have been based entirely on the result of the revision work.

The emperor's historical knowledge had increased after drafts of MS were submitted and he began to study MSL. After the first draft was submitted, Emperor Kangxi issued several imperial edicts related to the compilation. Although the emperor continued to make mistakes in his remarks, the discussions in the later edicts were more concrete. In the edict issued in 1697, the emperor praised the talent of Emperors Hongwu and Yongle (1360 - 1424, reign 1403 - 25) of the early Ming dynasty. He also pointed out that many of the Ming dynasty's administrative practices were adopted by the Qing government. Furthermore, he concluded that the fall of the Ming empire was due to the corruption of the eunuchs. Such a remark
was in fact somewhat contradictory to his remark of 1692 and was more close to general opinion. This change illustrated the increase in the emperor's knowledge of Ming history. However, the emperor had not yet developed his own criteria for evaluating Ming historical issues and figures.

In the imperial edicts issued between 1692 - 1704, Emperor Kangxi stated two reasons for the rejection of the second submitted draft. Firstly, he pointed out that the historical accounts in the draft were not very accurate. Secondly, he attacked the official historians' compilation methods which he considered not serious enough in respect to the compilation of MS. The second draft may have contained a few mistakes of historical fact. However, the emperor's accusation about the accuracy of the historical accounts was not entirely justified. The omission of the detail of Nurhaci's announcement of his military expedition against the Ming dynasty in 1618 was criticized because it was essential evidence to support Manchu's claim of independence from the Ming government. This was surely unacceptable to the Manchu emperor. In 1704, Emperor Kangxi wrote an article specifically on the compilation of MS. In this article, Emperor Kangxi stressed that "While Mingshi must be compiled and historical issues must be clarified, public opinion must be considered and the judgements should not go against the will of the people." He further explained that the compilation of MS was a serious project and all lunzan should be judged with great caution. He criticized the way the official historians had compiled MS. He stated that many official historians had been either too subjective in drafting lunzan or too objective in merely adopting the remarks of the general public. The reasons stated in this edict may very possibly be the major cause of his opposition. The lunzan of the second draft should have been revised in accordance with the remarks of the emperor. However, since previous imperial remarks were not given in great detail, the evaluation of the official historians may not have been revised in
exactly the way the emperor expected. The lunzan at the end of those biographical accounts may have continued to adopt the remarks of Ming historians with only minor revisions. This kind of revision, as well as the omission of important Manchu historical details, thus resulted in another rejection. The request for a further revision confirmed Emperor Kangxi's wish to compile a history of the Ming dynasty, but only if it was acceptable to the Manchus as well as the Han people.

At that time, official historians and available source materials were mostly under strong influence of Ming historians. The emperor did not have his own well-defined evaluation criteria ready for consultation by the official historians. Neither did he have any intention of accepting a rough copy of MS, nor of terminating the compilation project rashly. In the end, the emperor was wise enough to request a continuation of the compilation of MS by emphasizing its seriousness.

However, it is worth noting that the final decision of Emperor Kangxi not only avoided the acceptance of an unsatisfactory version, but also the likely discontent of intellectuals and official historians should the compilation project have been terminated. In fact, the decision of the emperor earned him reputation of respecting the compilation of history. Most important of all, the decision saved time for a future possible solution to the problems of the historical evaluation of Ming history.

2. The revision of the draft of Mingshi (1704 - 23)

(i) The course of events during compilation

After Emperor Kangxi issued a decree ordering further revision of the second draft in 1704, official historians of the MHI continued to work on the compilation project. As a matter of fact, the revision work almost came to a halt in the following years due to the loss of two important team members.
Wan Sitong, the unappointed Chief Examiner, had died in 1702. Furthermore, in 1703 the Chief Compiler Xiong Cilü had requested permission to retire which was granted. However, the emperor had recruited no-one to fill the vacancies in the MHI. At this stage, the other senior officials of the MHI were preoccupied by other government appointments. Zhang Yushu and Chen Tingjing were promoted to the senior rank of Grand Secretaries. Both of them were preoccupied by other government affairs. Wang Hongxu, the other Director-General, was also promoted to the rank of Minister in 1708. The previous experience of his colleagues may have reminded Wang Hongxu about the importance of the compilation of MS for his future political career. As a result, he continued to involve himself in the revision of drafts of MS. When Wang Hongxu was forced to retire in 1709, he brought along with him the source materials and drafts from the Institute. He invited scholars to work for him and revised the drafts collected from the MHI. In 1714, Wang Hongxu submitted the revised draft under the title *Mingshi liezhuang zhuangao* [Draft biographies of the Ming history] which only consisted of biographies. After his submission, he was summoned to help the official compilation project in the MHI again. Wang Hongxu then revised the other sections of the previous draft and compiled *Mingshi gao* [Draft history of the Ming dynasty, hereafter cited as MSG]. The revised version, which had all four divisions of a standard history, amounted to three hundred and ten *juan* and was submitted in 1723. However, his completed version was again rejected by the succeeding emperor.

(ii) The condition surrounding the compilation of *Mingshi gao*

The revision of the second comprehensive draft in the MHI made little progress after 1704. The lack of historians was a major problem in the MHI. Senior officials had either died or were preoccupied by other official
appointments. On the other hand, vacancies for junior official historians had never been filled. In fact, those official historians who remained in the MHI may also have had other official duties. As a result, no one had queried about Wang Hongxu's move to take away the second comprehensive draft and relevant historical resources and continue the compilation project at home.

Although Emperor Kangxi made a few remarks on the Ming history in the last decade of his reign, in fact he had limited time to look closely into its progress. One possible reason was that he had not sorted out the evaluation criteria for MS. However, the major cause for his neglecting the progress of the revision might have been due to his preoccupation with the reinstatement of his heir apparent, Yinreng (1674 - 1725). The crises of the heir apparent had lasted for many years in the later half of the Kangxi reign. After the subjugation of Galdan (1644 - 97) in 1697, the emperor returned to find misconduct on the part of his heir apparent. His dissatisfaction accumulated and Emperor Kangxi finally decided to depose Yunreng from his position as heir apparent. But Emperor Kangxi soon found excuses for his son and reinstated title as heir in early 1709. However, later the emperor had to depose his heir apparent again due to his mental condition. These crises exhausted the energy of Emperor Kangxi. They also led to the dismissal of Wang Hongxu who was a supporter of Prince Yinsi, and had himself been actively involved in the factional struggle among the princes in 1709. This forced retirement enabled Wang Hongxu to concentrate on the revision of the drafts of MS, and to stage a comeback later.

It was during this period that the case of Dai Mingshi occurred. Dai Mingshi (1653 - 1713), alias Hefu, was a native of Tongcheng, Anhui province. After repeated failures, Dai finally passed the palace
examination and was recruited into the Hanlin Academy. Before he joined the government, he had taught in a school for bannermen. In 1701, he collected his essays and published them under the title of *Nanshan ji* [Collected work from the Southern Hill], and this publication was the source of the accusation against him. In 1711, Dai was accused by Zhao Shenqiao (1644 - 1720) of publishing essays which contained injurious material. In his published work, Dai denied the legitimate status of the Qing dynasty by continuing to calculate the years by the reign titles of the Southern Ming dynasty. Furthermore, he also criticized the official MS compilation methods as well as the Manchu oppression of the Chinese in the early years of the Qing dynasty. Emperor Kangxi took Zhao's accusation seriously. A lot of people had been involved, and eventually all the males aged sixteen and above in Dai Mingshi's family were executed. The rest became slaves of the bannermen. Other related figures were also either executed or imprisoned.

The case of Dai Mingshi provided the most fresh evidence of the sensitivity of the compilation of MS, not only for official historians, but also for other officials who later became official historians in the Yongzheng reign. It may partly have been the reason behind Wang's revision of the part of MS related to the Southern Ming princes. He placed the discussion of the Southern Ming princes under the title *Biography of Sanwang* (The Three Princes) and stated clearly in its preface that the Ming dynasty had ended with the death-year of Emperor Chongzhen. Furthermore, he deleted all the *lunzan* at the end of the imperial annals and biographies in order to remove any subjective remarks which might have been challenged by other Qing officials. However, MS would not have been a complete work without the *lunzan*. The texts of the *lunzan* were the most obvious reason for the rejection of MSG by Emperor Yongzheng (1678 - 1735, reign 1723 - 36).
1 Yang Chun, 2/13a.
2 The first detailed remark made by Emperor Kangxi about the first submitted draft was mainly a criticism on the lunzan drafted by Xiong Cilü. QSL, v. 5, 154/700.
3 Xu Yuanwen had just died in 1691. His elder brother Xu Quanxue resigned and died before the decree to reappoint him to office was issued in 1694. Other senior officials in the MHI died much earlier. For instance, Li Wei died in 1684, Niu Niu in 1686. Sun Zaifeng in 1689, and Tang Bin in 1687. Wang Guoan had already left in 1682. Wang Hongxu was forced to retire in 1709, whereas Wang Xi was too old at that time. Alantai and Ming Zhu were too busy to be involved in the project all the time. Chen Tingjing had retired to observe the mourning for his father's death. Zhang Yushu was also preoccupied by the supervision of the drainage construction work. As a result, there was no senior official looking after the compilation project in the MHI. See Zhongguo diyi lishi danganguan(1984), pp. 870-1; QSL, v. 5, 156/719, 167/816; Wang Zhonghan, v. 2, 8/515, 534, v. 3, 9/629, 10/690-1, 701.
4 QSL, v. 5, 164/791-2. But Xu died three months before the decree was issued in 1694. Wang Zhonghan, v. 3, 10/684.
6 Wang Hongxu(chixiu), p. 1b.
8 Zhang Yus accompanied Emperor Kangxi in the military expedition against the Mongols and later retired in mourning for his mother. Wang Zhonghan, v. 3, 10/ 701-2. As a result, Xiong Cilü was appointed to head the compilation team. See note 5; Xiong Cilü(2), 2/2a.
9 Xiong Cilü(2), 2/1a-3a. Since Xiong retired in 1703 and Emperor Kangxi remarked on his submitted draft in the same year, the date of Xiong's submission should be before this year. QSL, v. 6, 212/148-9
10 Emperor Kangxi issued two decrees on Xiong's submitted drafts. QSL, v. 6, 212/149, 218/205-6.
11 Although there were historians such as Dai Mingshi who remarked that the MHI had overlooked many private or sensitive historical resources, many historians in the MHI understood very well that MHI had collected many historical resources which were no longer available in private collection. Wan Sitong copied many materials from the MHI to prepare for his own historical work on Ming history. Zhu Yizun lost his post because of copying material from the MHI without permission. See Ho Koonpiu(1988), pp. 268, 271; Chen Xunci et al.(1991), p. 169; Zhao Erxun, v. 44, 484/13340.
12 The vacancies of official historians who had left the MHI were not filled by new members. For details of the departure of official historians, see chapter 2, section 4, p. 50.
13 Liu Chenggan, 9/5b-7a, 8ab; Xu Yuanwen, 18/8b-9a.
14 QSL, v. 5, 154/700-1.
According to the study in chapters five to eight in the second half of this thesis, MSCG and MSEG were the drafts completed in phases two and three respectively. When these two drafts were compared, most of the revision in MSEG was seen to follow in accordance with the imperial remark in 1692. See chapter six, section 3, pp.117-23.

Imperial remarks after 1687 were more concrete and supported with historical details. See QSL, v. 5, 130/393, 397, 144/589, 154/700-1, 179/922, v. 6, 211/149-50; Zhongguo diyi lishi danganguan(1984), pp. 1617, 1625, 1894.

Ibid.

Li Jinhua(1968), pp. 57-60.

QSL, v. 5, 179/922.

QSL, v. 5, 154/700-2.

QSL, v. 5, 179/922, v. 6, 211/149-50.

Li Jinhua(1968), pp. 59-60.

QSL, v. 6, 212/149-50.

Ibid., v. 6, 218/205-6.

Ibid.


QSL, V. 6, 212/148-9, 227/274.

Liu Chenggan, xia, 9/13b

Both of them joined Emperor Kangxi's inspection tour to the eastern provinces in 1705 and became Examiners in regional examinations. Wang Zhonghan, v. 3, 9/642-3, 10/702-3.

Ibid., 10/693.

Owing to his contribution to various compilation works, Xu Qianxue was summoned to the throne again together with Wang Hongxu in 1694 after his retirement. QSL, v. 5, 164/791-2. Wang Zhonghan, v. 3, 10/694.

QSL, v. 6, 236/361; Wang Zhonghan, v. 3, 10/693; Wang Hongxu(chixiu), p. 2a; Yang Chun, 2/10ab.


According to the memorial of Wang Hongxu, Mingshi liezhuan zhuangao had 205 juan. However, historical accounts in Qingshi gao and Qingshi liezhuan both stated that the biographies in MSG amounted to 208 juan. Chen Naiqian explained that Wang Hongxu combined two juan of the Biography of Xiaoyi into one and three juan of the Biography of lienü into one after his submission in 1714. Thereafter Wang Hongxu may have changed the Chinese character in his first submitted memorial and put it at the beginning of MSG which had three hundred and ten juan. See Wang Hongxu(chixiu), p. 2a; Zhao Erxun et al., v. 33,


36 Liu Chenggan, xià, 9/14ab; Yang Chun, 2/14b.

37 See notes 26-30. The other two Directors-General Zhang Yushu and Chen Tingjing suffered poor health. Subsequently, Chen Tingjing retired in 1710 and Zhang Yushu died in 1711. QSL, v. 6, 244/423, 246/442.

38 QSL v. 6, 254/517-8, 255/525, 273/681, 275/695, 297/878, 300/902-5. Among them only the first remark was directly related to the Ming history. Others were merely discussions with citations of examples in the Ming dynasty.

39 For details of the relationship between Emperor Kangxi and his heir apparent, see Silas H. L. Wu.

40 QSL, v. 6, 234/336-7.

41 QSL, v. 6, 236/360-1.

42 QSL, v. 6, 251/486-8.


44 For detailed study of Dai Mingshi and the case of Nanshan ji, see Ho Koonpiu (1988).


46 QSL, v. 6, 249/465, 250/473, 253/506.

Chapter 4: The compilation of Mingshi. -- Final phase (1723 - 39) and aftermath

1. The course of the compilation of Mingshi: Final phase (1723 - 39)

(i) The course of events during compilation

The submission of MSG by Wang Hongxu in June 1723 reminded Emperor Yongzheng of the incomplete MS project. Since MSG was not a completed version and had only been revised by Wang, the emperor ordered the organization of another team to continue the compilation of MS. The new team was headed by two Chief Compilers, namely Lungkodo (? - 1728) and Wang Xiangling (1642 - 1725), as well as four Directors-General. Twenty-three junior official historians were also recruited. The actual compilation process began in early 1724. Since MSG was based on earlier well-documented official drafts, official historians of the MHI decided to adopt MSG as the basis for their revision work. The revision of the three hundred and ten juan of MSG was divided among the official historians. However, after the division of assignments, most of the official historians were appointed to other official posts. As a result, their assignments were later taken up by newly recruited historians. For example, the draft assigned to Wan Bangrong was originally the responsibility of Sun Jiajian (1682 - 1752). In the early years of Emperor Yongzheng, the progress of the revision was very slow. Therefore, the Directors-General assigned Wang Youdun (1692 - 1758) to take charge of the entire revision. Since the revision work was too large a project for a single historian in 1726, Wang Youdun, Wu Lin (1683 - ?), Hu Zongxu and Yang Chun (1676 - 1753) had to share the duty among themselves. Yang Chun was responsible for the revision of the biographies of historical figures from the Yongle period to the Zhengde period. Hu Zongxu was responsible for the biographies of historical figures from the
Jiajing period to the Wanli period. The revision of the rest of MSG was in the care of Wu Lin and Wang Youdun. Although the revision work of Yang Chun was completed very soon, the rest of the revision continued over a long period. During this period, official historians made suggestions but were rejected by the Directors-General and Wang Youdun. Although the emphasis of the work in this period was merely on the revision of MSG, the official historians and Directors-General put much effort into the revision and the addition of the lunzan at the end of each of the imperial annals and biographies. In early 1736, the revised draft of MS was eventually finished. Emperor Qianlong (1711 - 99, reign 1736 - 96) ordered the official historians to spend another six months checking for minor mistakes before the final draft was allowed to be published. In September 1739, the published copy of MS was submitted to the throne. In November, copies of MS were awarded to senior officials in the central and regional governments.

(ii) The condition surrounding the final completion of Mingshi

The condition surrounding the compilation of MS changed during the Yongzheng period. The political and social conditions of the Yongzheng reign were different from those of the Kangxi period. China had been under the rule of the Manchus for almost eighty years. These legitimate Ming loyalists were no longer a threat to the Qing empire. There was also no major military uprising threatening the stability of the empire. Under such circumstances, the revision of MSG was no longer an attractive project to the scholars, and became entirely an historiographical event for the official historians of the Yongzheng reign.

To Emperor Yongzheng, the compilation of MS was an incomplete project of his father's which needed to be finished during his reign. The completion of MS would also enable the Manchus to clarify their
relationship with the Ming dynasty and to reinstate the legitimacy of their Qing regime. However, the emperor had scarcely any time left to supervise the revision. During the earlier years of his reign, the emperor had to take steps to consolidate his own rule and eliminate possible challenges from other princes. Thereafter he transformed the aristocracy and the bureaucracy of the Qing empire. The Manchu aristocracy which formerly used to act entirely in its own interest was now placed under the rule of government and subjected to imperial decision regarding their dismissal or promotion. The bureaucracy of the Qing administration was also reformed according to Yongzheng's principles, so as to avoid factionalism, perfunctory and corrupt behaviour. Instead loyal, active and righteous characteristics in Qing officials were to be appreciated. Furthermore, the emperor also showed solicitude for the material well-being of the common people, and sought to improve the economic condition of the empire. He carried out reforms in local fiscal administration as well as implementing policies to promote agriculture within the empire.

In 1728, the case of Lǜ Liuliang (1629 - 83) was disclosed. Zhang Xi (?) - 1735) was asked by his teacher, Zeng Jing (1679 - 1735), to send a letter to Yue Zhongqi (1686 - 1754) persuading him to rise against the Manchus. Yue reported the case to Emperor Yongzheng. The emperor then traced the origin of these treacherous ideas to the writings of Zeng Jing. He accused the other princes such as Yinsi of spreading unjust criticism of the conduct and the succession of the emperor. At the same time, the emperor refuted the ideas of Lǜ Liuliang, whose written work was adopted and followed by Zeng Jing and his disciples as the guiding principle for their rebellious plan. Finally, the corpse of Lǜ Liuliang was disinterred and his head was exposed in public. Furthermore, the emperor took this opportunity to defend the legitimacy of his rule as well as that of the Manchus over China, by publishing Dayi juemi lu [A record of great tenor for the deluded].
Although the emperor had little direct involvement in the revision of MSG, his publication of this record and his treatment of the Lü Liuliang case, clearly set the standard for revising the relationship between the Manchu and the late Ming governments. Furthermore, the case also illustrated once again the sensitivity surrounding the compilation of MS.

Although Zhang Tingyu stated in the memorial of the submission of the completed MS that the work of the MHI comprised mainly the revision of MSG by Wang Hongxu, official historians had also examined the historical details in Wang's book and rearranged some of the contents. But, the major contribution to the revision of official historians was the drafting of the lunzan.

All the lunzan of the final version were originally drafted by official historians of the Yongzheng reign. The background of these official historians was more simple compared to their counterparts in the Kangxi reign. They were all born and educated in the Qing dynasty. They joined and served their own government voluntarily in order to develop their own future political careers. They had no special affection for the Ming dynasty. However, official historians continued to make different evaluations of Ming historical figures during the drafting of the lunzan. A few lunzan had in fact similar evaluations to those in earlier drafts which were criticized by Emperor Kangxi. The final choice mainly lay in the decision of the Directors-General. Most of the senior officials in the MHI were recruited in the Kangxi reign. Although drafts revised in the earlier Kangxi reign were removed by Wang Hongxu and were not available for Directors-General, they should have taken notice of the imperial criticism of the earlier drafts, and realized which aspects were regarded by the emperor as unsatisfactory. Zhang Tingyu (1672 - 1755), one of the Directors-General, thus selected the lunzan which most avoided criticizing Ming emperors.
Nevertheless, one should not deny the contribution of Wang Hongxu to the final revision. Since most of the content of the earlier drafts had already been researched and examined in detail by official historians of the Kangxi reign, Wang Hongxu’s revision was mainly concentrated on correcting historical details and reducing the size of the book by combining the biographies. His main contribution to the approval of the final version was, definitely, the deletion of the original lunzan from his draft. This enabled official historians of the Yongzheng reign to be free from the historical attitudes of their predecessors which had continuously been criticized by late Emperor Kangxi.

Indeed, the approval of the revised version in the Qianlong period was closely related to its date of submission. Although the official historians had revised the lunzan in an entirely different way, official historians could not be sure whether the new revised version would be acceptable to the Qing emperor. In fact, when comparing the commentaries of Qianlong in Yupi lidai tongjian jilan [A synotic view of the Comprehensive Mirror with imperial annotations] which was compiled in 1678, with the lunzan of MS, the divergencies in their evaluations of Ming historical figures are very obvious.29 However, the submission of MS in 1736 when emperor Qianlong has just been enthroned ensured the immediate approval of the revised work. Emperor Qianlong was twenty-five years old when he became emperor. He had developed his own idea of the emperorship.30 But he had not yet formulated his own criteria for historical evaluation.31 In fact, the probable reason for this was his lack of time to study the submitted MS in detail. At that time he was more preoccupied with taking measures needed to consolidate his rule over the empire. However, even if he had had time, Emperor Qianlong may have preferred to study other issues instead of a
project which was completed by his senior officials, in whom he had full trust and on whom he relied for the future management of the empire.

2. Aftermath: The revisions in 1775 and 1777

In 1767, Emperor Qianlong asked his senior officials to compile *Yupi lidai tongjian jilan* with his own annotations. The annotations, although mostly suggested by official historians, were revised by the emperor. Judging from the annotations, the major observation is that Emperor Qianlong did not avoid criticism of Ming Emperors. In certain issues such as the establishment of the principalities and the usurpation of Prince Yan, Emperor Qianlong criticized Ming Emperors Hongwu and Yongle harshly and explicitly. Furthermore, the emperor also criticized the misbehaviour of some worthy officials and ministers, judging their behaviour to be lacking such desirable virtues as loyalty and righteousness. Although the emperor formulated his own interpretation of Ming historical issues, he did not order the revision immediately. In 1770s, the emperor began a series of compilation and revision project relating to a new account of the rise of the Manchus, and the establishing of a standardized system for transcribing Manchu and Mongol names into Chinese. At the same time, the scheme of book collection for the compilation of *Siku quanshu* had developed into a campaign against seditious books.

In 1775, Emperor Qianlong appointed Ying Lian (1707 - 83) and several other senior officials in the court to be in charge of the revision of MS. The emphasis of the revision as stated in the imperial edict was to change the transcription of the Manchu and Mongol names according to the standard system. Two years later, when the revised version was submitted, Emperor Qianlong considered the historical account in MS, which had neglected certain essential historical details, unsatisfactory. He asked official historians to examine all the imperial annals in MS. The
resulting work was the version included in the *Siku quanshu* edition of MS.\textsuperscript{40} The changes were concentrated in the content, without any change in the *lunzan*.\textsuperscript{41} But most of the changes in the historical accounts followed the historical approach of Emperor Qianlong as stated in *Yupi lidai tongjian jilan*. In regard to the usurpation of Prince Yan, official historians of MS stated that Prince Yan ordered the eunuch to get the corpses of Emperor Jianwen (1377 - 1402?, reign 1399 - 1402) and his empress from the palace which was on fire.\textsuperscript{42} But in the revised version of the late Qianlong reign, historians accused Prince Yan explicitly of misleading the general public by substituting the corpse of Empress Jianwen for the missing emperor.\textsuperscript{43} On the other hand, in the discussions on Ming officials, the revised versions included more details of the crimes committed by those officials executed by the Ming emperors.\textsuperscript{44} For example, historians of MS had only stated that Yang Xian was executed because he had committed a crime. But in the revised version, Yang Xian was further criticized as imperious and treacherous.\textsuperscript{45} The revised versions of imperial annals replaced the original in the new *Siku quanshu* edition of MS. However, the latest revised version was only available in the *Siku quanshu* and was never published and circulated widely. The reason for this decision also remained unclear. In fact, according to the finding of Wang Songwei, official historians had also examined the historical details in other sections of MS.\textsuperscript{46} But the reason why those parts of the revision were never published was unknown. There were no more revisions during the rest of the Qing dynasty.

\textsuperscript{1} Liu Chenggan, *shang*, 1/9ab.
\textsuperscript{2} Ibid., *xia*, 9/14a.
\textsuperscript{3} The other four Directors-General were Xu Yuanmeng, Zhang Tingyu, Zhu Shi and Jueluo Fengtai. QSL, v. 7, 9/177. According to the record of Wan Bangrong, Cai Ting was also one of the Directors-General. Since Cai Ting was later executed, he was, therefore, dropped from the list of the compilation team. Wan Bangrong, p. 1; Wang Zhonghan, v. 4, 13/936-9.
4 Yang Chun, 2/7a. The list of the official historians was included in MS. MS, v. 28, pp. 8633-4. One of the officials recruited later was Wan Bangrong who was recommended in 1725 by Cai Ting. See Wang Bangrong, p. 1.

5 Wan Bangrong, ba, p. 2a.

6 Yang Chun, 2/7a.

7 See note 5.

8 Yang Chun, 2/7ab.

9 Until 1730, the rest of the revision had not yet been finished. Yang Chun, 2/9a.

10 Ibid., 2/8b.

11 Li Jinhua suggested that the revision of MSG was only minor. But according to the study by Xu Qingsong and his colleagues, there are some major revisions in the content and interpretations. Li Jinhua(1968), p. 89; Xu Qingsong, pp. 102-3.

12 QSL, v. 9, 9/333-4.

13 Ibid.


15 QSL, v. 9, 102/540.

16 See note 1.

17 QSL, v. 9, 23/369-73, 29/441-4;44/650-1, 45/669-80; Feng Erkang, pp.86-95, 128-38.

18 Huang Pei, pp. 302-4


20 For details of the biographical account of Lu Liuliang and his case, see Fisher.

21 See note 14.

22 At the beginning of the Yongzheng reign, most of the official historians had already been appointed to other official posts. Yang Chun, 2/7a.

23 The original lunzan drafted during the Yongzheng reign sometimes had more than one lunzan for each standard biography. Furthermore, there are different lunzan for the same biography. See Xu Qingsong, pp. 103-4.

24 Official historians had also hinted at the responsibility of Emperor Hongwu in one of the original lunzan on Lan Yu which was similar to the lunzan of individual official historians. See Xu Qingsong, p. 104. See also chapter 7, section 1, (iii), pp. 136-7.

25 Xu Qingsong, p. 101

26 Yang Chun, 2/10b.

27 An imperial edict which gave the opinion of Emperor Kangxi was issued together with an article specially written on the compilation of MS in 1704. QSL, v. 6, 218/205-6.

28 Xu Qingsong, p. 104.

29 For detail comparison of lunzan in MSCG, MSEG, MS and the judgements of Emperor Qianlong in Yupi lidai tong jian jilan please see chapters 7 & 8
Emperor Qianlong had asked his official historians to compile *Yupi lidai tongjian jilan* in 1767. In the same year the emperor had made his most comprehensive historical remarks on traditional Chinese history. See Fu Heng *et al.*

For details of the change in the interest shown by Emperor Qianlong, see Guy, pp. 163-4.

The cause of the change was unknown. *Ibid.*, pp. 157-166.

Wang Songwei, p. 7.

Li Jinhua (1968), pp. 62-3.

Liu Chenggan, 1/9b-10b.

Li Jinhua (1968), p. 159.

Duan Qionglin; Shi Yuan, pp. 158-62.

MS, v. 1, 4/66.

MSBJ, v. 1, 4/8b.

Shi Yuan, pp. 160-2.

Duan Qionglin (1931/12/5), p. 6.

Wang Songwei, pp. 6-7.
Part II: A study of the *lunzan* of MSCG, MSEG and MS -- An introduction

The second part of the thesis focuses on the study of the *lunzan* included in the drafts of MS. The result of the study will contribute to the understanding of the evolution of *lunzan* in different phases and also provide possible reasons for the rejection of the first two drafts within the historical work.

At present, *Mingshi jizhuan* [Imperial annals and biographies of the Ming history, hereafter cited as MSCG] and *Mingshi* [History of the Ming dynasty (by Wan Sitong), hereafter cited as MSEG] are the only two sets of comprehensive drafts completed within phases two and three. But most historians identified both of them as the works of Wan Sitong. If the authorship and the compilation date of these two drafts can be clarified and proved to be the drafts representing the collective efforts of official historians in phases two and three, the comparison of these two drafts and other drafts from different sources would help to identify the cause for the extension of revision.

Chapter five deals with the clarification of the authorship and the compilation date of MSCG and MSEG. Previous analyses were studied and weaknesses in their conclusions were traced. In conclusion, by comparing the form, the arrangement of biographies as well as the content of these two drafts with earlier individual drafts of official historians and the final MS, the question of the authorship and the compilation date of MSCG and MSEG are settled. Further supporting evidence for the authorship and the compilation date of these two drafts can also be found in chapter six, which was based on the result of a comparison of the two drafts and MS.

Chapter six provides a general review of the *lunzan* of MSCG, MSEG and MS. The review covers various aspects of the *lunzan* of these three
versions including the form, the length as well as the focus of discussion. However, the content is mainly based on the results of the comparative study of several sets of lunzan of these three versions as discussed in chapters seven and eight. In addition, the review of the lunzan of MSCG, MSEG and MS also provide a general account of historical ideas of official historians in the different phases, and possible factors for the rejection of early drafts.

Chapters seven and eight consist of comparative studies of eight sets of lunzan from drafts of MS completed in different periods. In order to provide a better understanding of the historical principles in MSCG, MSEG, and MS, early drafts from private historians, individual drafts of official historians, the revision drafts in the Qianlong reign as well as the commentaries by Emperor Qianlong are also studied and compared. Among the extant historical works of the Ming scholars, a few of them which were listed in the Treatise of Yiwen of MS were used in order to give a better understanding of the origin of historical accounts, and the choice available to official historians at the outset.

The eight sets of lunzan were selected based on their divergence in evaluating historical figures of the Ming dynasty. The case of Lan Yu (? - 1393) and the usurpation of Prince of Yan are the two most important political incidents in the early Ming dynasty. Since the evaluation of ministers involved in the usurpation varied in accordance with the evaluation of Emperors Jianwen and Yongle, their lunzan were also compared and studied. Figures such as Yang Hong (1381 - 1451), Yu Qian (1398 - 1457) and Zhang Juzheng (1525 - 1582) made great contributions to the Ming dynasty. The treatment of Yu and Zhang by the Ming government also aroused great discussion during the following reigns. The lunzan of the biography of Zuo Liangyu (? - 1645) was the only piece of lunzan available in
the latter half of MSCG. The *lunzan* of these four figures are thus chosen for further study.

The history of the Manchus under the rule of the Ming regime as well as the Southern Ming dynasty have not been studied here. They have not been selected mainly because official historians were aware of the possible risk in dealing with this sensitive part of history, and therefore decided to follow the decision of the emperor. As a result, there were no obviously contradictory opinions over these issues which may have affected the progress of the compilation. On the other hand, there is no *lunzan* of the latter half of the Ming history in MSCG. It is therefore not possible to make a comparison between the three versions of *lunzan*. 
Chapter 5: The authorship and date of compilation of MSCG and MSEG.

MSCG and MSEG are both drafts of history of the Ming dynasty.

MSCG is a handwritten copy from the Qing dynasty. It has three hundred and thirteen juan in sixty-eight thread-stitched volumes. It consists only of imperial annals and biographies. Imperial annals amount to nineteen juan and the remaining two hundred and ninety-four juan are all biographies. Twenty-two juan of the original manuscripts are no longer extant, including Imperial Annal of Emperor Taichang (juan 17, part three), Emperor Tianqi (juan 18) and Emperor Chongzhen (juan 19), Biographies of Yinyi (Hermits, juan 287), Lienû (juan 292), Huangguan (Eunuchs, juan 293), Jianchen (Treacherous Ministers, juan 294), Liuzei (The Bandits, juan 295), Tusi (Aboriginal Office, juan 296 - 300) and Waigu (juan 301 - 3, 308 - 9). All of these missing annals and biographies have their present substitute text copied from identical imperial annals or biographies in MS with the exception of the Biography of Xiyu (Western Countries, juan 310 - 3) which have been left without any text. At the end of the list of contents, there are four supplementary juan. Their titles are Mingshi jizhuan xu (The sequel to imperial annals and biographies of Ming history, Bielu (Additional notes), Buyi (Supplements and additions), Kaoyi (Examination of discrepancies), and Nianbiao (Chronicles). But the texts of these supplementary chapters have been lost. In the first volume before the list of contents, there is an epitaph for Wan Sitong written by Fang Bao (1668 - 1749). Since it was written after the death of Wan Sitong and did not include any special reference to MSCG, it fails to provide useful information concerning either the authorship or the date of the compilation of MSCG. Apart from the epitaph, there is no other obvious evidence within the draft suggesting a
MSEG is another handwritten copy from the Qing dynasty. It has four hundred and sixteen *juan* bound in one hundred thread-stitched volumes. It comprises four parts: twenty-six *juan* of imperial annals, one hundred and eleven *juan* of treatises, twelve *juan* of tables and two hundred and sixty-seven *juan* of biographies. With all the four major divisions in a standard history completed, MSEG is the most substantial draft of the history of the Ming dynasty available at present. At the bottom right corner of the first page in volume one, there are four seal marks which read as *Fangquan* (Square spring), *Beijing tushuguan cang* (Collection of Beijing Library) and *Ye Chaocai yin* (Seal of Ye Chaocai) and *Xixin shuwu* (Mind-cleaning library). Apart from providing information that the draft was once kept by a person called Ye Chaocai and is currently stored at the National Library of China (formerly Beijing Library, hereafter cited as NLC), there is no more information here concerning its authorship or the date of compilation.

1. Previous inquiries into the authorship and date of compilation of MSCG and MSEG.

Librarians at the NLC have identified Wan Sitong as the compiler of both MSCG and MSEG.\(^4\) However, up until now they have never been able to provide concrete supporting evidence for their identification.\(^5\) There is also no conclusive evidence from within the two drafts. Previous studies on the authorship of these two drafts have not reached a conclusion.

In about 1931 the NLC purchased a draft titled MSG consisting of 313 *juan* from the collection of Wang Kezhuang through a local bookstore.\(^6\) The draft was then put into the library collection under the title *Mingshi jizhuan* (that is MSCG), which was possibly due to the fact that it consisted of only imperial annals and biographies. Librarians at the NLC identified
the draft as one of the original works of Wan Sitong. The following year, Zhu Xizu supplied the NLC with two remarks from previous scholars. First, the memoir of Xiao Mu (1835 - ?) had recorded that one original draft of Wan Sitong's *Mingshi gao* (Draft history of the Ming dynasty) had been kept by Wang Kezhuang. Secondly, Wu Shouyang recalled that the incomplete *Mingshi gao* in his family's collection had totalled two hundred and sixty-seven *juan*, and his father suspected that the author of the draft was Wan Sitong. Since MSCG was purchased from Wang's collection and had the same number of *juan* remaining, Zhu therefore reconfirmed the library's identification.

However, the investigation of Zhu Xizu was far from conclusive. One of the factors which affected the accuracy of the result of this investigation was his acceptance of personal subjective remarks without further examination. Xiao's memoir was merely a record of his memory which needed further verification. Even if his memory was precise, one can only state that, according to Xiao Mu's version, Wang had collected a draft of Wan Sitong named *Mingshi gao*. Further solid evidence is necessary before the authorship of that draft can be confirmed. A similar situation occurred with Zhu's interpretation of the remark of Wu's father. Even if MSCG was the draft once kept by Wu's family, Zhu was never able to confirm Wan Sitong's authorship, while Wu's father had himself remained suspicious about his own identification.

Furthermore, there was a discrepancy between MSCG and the draft in the account of Zhu Xizu. According to Zhu's account, MSCG had already lost *Biographies of Fangji, Ningxing* (Fawning Favorites) and part of *Waiguo* which reduced the total remaining *juan* to the same number as the draft in Wu's collection. In fact, those biographies still existed in MSCG and gave no sign of being a substitute copy of any sort. The draft in Wu's
collection might have been closely related to MSCG. But these two drafts had a certain number of differences. The remark of Wu Shouyang could, therefore, no longer serve to support the Zhu's argument.

Discussions over the authorship of MSCG have never ceased. Later historians such as Hou Renzhi, Li Guangbi and Xie Guozhen (1901 - 82) found the identification of Zhu Xizu unsound and supported with ambiguous evidence. Others such as Li Jinhua, Tian Jizhong and Wan Ming simply adopted the library's version for convenience in their research on related fields. The latest participant in this discussion is Huang Aiping. He began his paper with an illustration that proved MSEG to be a draft compiled by Wan Sitong. Then in the light of obvious inheritances in the form and content of MSEG derived from MSCG, Huang reconfirmed NLC's identification of the authorship. Huang's study of MSEG will be discussed later in this chapter. However, although obvious inheritances were enough to suggest a close relation between MSCG and MSEG, they are still not sufficient to draw the conclusion that Wan was the compiler of MSCG.

According to previous records on MSEG, the NLC should have purchased the draft before 1931. Librarians at the NLC again identified the author of MSEG as Wan Sitong but without solid evidence. Until recently, historians with assenting views were very few. Most historians have raised queries about the identification by the NLC.

The most detailed study ever done on the authorship of MSEG is included in the paper written by Huang Aiping. Huang is a supporter of the identification made by the NLC. But he made serious mistakes in interpreting the source materials in his paper, and thus in turn his own conclusion was questionable. His argument as to authorship has three supporting pieces of evidence. Firstly, the total number of juan in MSEG.
was the same as the draft completed by Xu Yuanwen. Since Wan Sitong was in charge of the entire examination of the draft during the compilation, Xu's draft was, according to Huang, equivalent to Wan's draft. Therefore, MSEG was, in fact, a draft of Wan Sitong. Secondly, Biographies of Yang Tingxu and Xu Qian in MSEG were grouped into one juan, of which the arrangement was identical to the draft of Wan Sitong recorded in the collected work of Wan's young friend Fang Bao. Thirdly, Gongchen shibiao (Tables of Meritorious Ministers and their Descendants), Qichen shibiao (Tables of Ministers with Imperial Relation and their Descendants) and Huangxin shibiao (Tables of Eunuchs) in MSEG were similar to the draft of Wan Sitong on which the revision of Wang Hongxu's MSG was based.

The entire argument of Huang Aiping was based on the assumption that the drafts completed by Xu Yuanwen in 1690 and Xiong Cilu in 1702 were identical and both should be attributed to Wan Sitong owing to his continuous effort and enormous contribution. The assumption was drawn mainly from the memorial of Wang Hongxu, an official historian of the Kangxi reign, and the letter of Yang Chun, an official historian of the Yongzheng reign. However, Huang Aiping overlooked some important remarks in the same source materials.

In his letter, Yang Chun stated clearly that Wan Sitong had revised various sections of Xu Yuanwen's draft after its completion in 1690. Thus Xu Yuanwen's draft could not be totally identical to that of Wan Sitong, even though he assisted Xu Yuanwen in the preparation of his draft. On the whole, the identical number of juan between Xu Yuanwen's draft and MSEG is not sufficient evidence to support Huang's argument.

Furthermore, Huang Aiping drew the conclusion that the drafts of Xu Yuanwen and Xiong Cilu are identical, as seen in the memorial submitted
by Wang Hongxu. In the memorial, Wang stated that Xiong Cilu was preoccupied with political commitments and revised scarcely any part of Xu Yuanwen's draft. Here, Huang Aiping again ignored the unquoted part of the same memorial in which Wang Hongxu recalled that he, Zhang Yushu and Chen Tingjing had revised Xu Yuanwen's draft after his death for more than four years before handing it over to Xiong Cilu. In fact, Xiong Cilu also claimed in his memorial to have contributed to the revision of the draft which he finally submitted. Furthermore, Wan Shibiao (1679 - 1735), the son of Wan Sitong, stated clearly in his memoir that Xiong Cilu had revised the drafts on a small scale before submitting them to the throne.

At present, there are no source materials capable of indicating the precise extent of revision made by Xiong Cilu. However, the drafts prepared by Xu Yuanwen and Xiong Cilu would have been identical only if Wang Hongxu, Xiong Cilu and their colleagues had all cheated Emperor Kangxi and contributed nothing to the revision, which seems fairly unlikely.

Since Huang Aiping considered Xu Yuanwen's draft to be identical to Wan Sitong's draft, he took Yang Chun's reference to Xu Yuanwen's draft as an example to support his assumption. In one situation when the basis of Xiong Cilu's draft was mentioned, Yang Chun in fact wrote clearly that Xiong Cilu's draft was based on Xu Yuanwen's draft, and never confused Xu Yuanwen's draft with Wan Sitong's draft in the way quoted by Huang Aiping. A similar mistake was made in the description of the draft on which the revisions of three tables by Wang Hongxu were based. According to Yang Chun, Wang Hongxu based his later revision on the draft of Xu Yuanwen, not Wan Sitong.

Lastly, the memoir of Fang Bao, apart from illustrating that the draft had adopted Wan's opinion, which was fairly plausible given Wan's
dominant role in the entire project, could not be considered solid evidence for confirming Huang Aiping's argument.

Taking all these arguments into consideration, the problem of the authorship of MSCG and MSEG remains unsolved.

In the past there has been very little discussion of the compilation date of the two drafts. One reason for this was the uncertainty of their authorship. Another reason was possibly the fact that there were very few relevant source materials. Those scholars who agreed with the NLC's identification would think that these drafts had been prepared before Wan's death in 1702. Huang Aiping suggested that MSEG was completed in 1690 and that MSCG, being the basis for MSEG, was completed a little earlier. However, Huang's study has been proved to be wrong. Nonetheless, it would be very difficult to decide upon the date of the compilation of these drafts before their authorship has been decided.

2. Previous discussions concerning Wang Sitong's authorship of Mingshi gao

The disagreements among previous historians upon the authorship of MSCG and MSEG are mainly related to the question: was Wan Sitong the author? Most of the historians concerned believed, first of all, that Wan Sitong had compiled one set or more of drafts of Ming history. Secondly, they considered that part of Wan Sitong's draft had been copied and circulated and thirdly, that Wang Hongxu had compiled his own version by revising Wan Sitong's draft. Historians thought that if they could prove that the existing drafts formed the basis for Wang Hongxu's work and that the historical interpretation of these drafts was identical to that of Wan Sitong, then there would be sufficient evidence to settle the issue of the authorship of MSCG and MSEG.
Since Wan Sitong never claimed to have completed a draft of his own, the belief of the historians in the existence of Wan Sitong's drafts is mainly based upon records written by his relatives and friends. Although source materials are plentiful, historians still cannot resolve the contradictory versions from such reliable sources as Wan Sitong's relatives and close friends in respect of the content as well as the number of the drafts which Wan Sitong completed. Most of the sources stated that Wan Sitong had completed merely three hundred juan of biographies. These coincided with the circulated version of Wan Sitong's draft cited in the Shanyang xianzhi [Local record of the Shanyang County]. Several accounts came from the memoir of Wan Shibiao and Li Gong (1657 - 1733), a respected friend of Wan, recorded that Wan Sitong had completed also part of the imperial annals. Accounts written by later historians had even greater variations on this issue.

In order to understand the background for such phenomena, the usual practice of Qing intellectuals in regard to the authorship of editorial work should be clarified.

In the early Qing period most intellectuals regarded editorial or revision work as their own writings and would publish them under their names. Many official historians incorporated those revised historical drafts for which they were responsible into their own collections when they left the MHL. By tradition, drafts attributed to Wan Sitong were probably drafts submitted by other official historians to the Institute. They might include drafts which have been examined and those which required further examination.

The preface of Wan Jing (1659 - 1741), nephew of Wan Sitong provided further supporting evidence for this hypothesis. In Wan's preface
to his elder brother Wan Yan's *Mingjian juyao* [An outline of the comprehensive mirror of the Ming dynasty], he stated in his own words that his brother had consulted, not the draft of his uncle, but the draft of the Institute kept by his uncle.38

The differences between various accounts may be due to different drafts being referred to in different stages of compilation. In 1694, the revision of Xu Yuanwen's draft was divided among Zhang Yushu, Chen Tingjing and Wang Hongxu. Zhang was responsible for treatises, Chen for imperial annals and Wang for all biographies. After the death of Xu Yuanwen, Wan Sitong worked at the home of Wang Hongxu until his death in 1702. This explains why most of the accounts recorded only the draft of biographies, as this was the section of the draft under the charge of Wang Hongxu. In view of the high respect which other Chief Compilers had for Wan's scholarship, part of the drafts for which Chen Tingjing was responsible may have also been sent to Wan for examination. This resulted in differences in the accounts of Wan Sitong's draft. Wan Shibiao and Li Gong may have included the drafts by Chen Tingjing.39 Scholars in later years based their research on other indirect sources or memoirs, which resulted in even more divergent accounts.40

In regard to doubts about the origin of Wang Hongxu's MSG, historians believe that this was also partly due to a misunderstanding of the nature of Wan Sitong's contributions.41

Most of the friends and relatives of Wan Sitong referred to drafts from the Institute as Wan's personal works. Only a few of them clearly stated that Wan merely contributed to the partial preparation of the drafts. In the mid-seventeenth century, scholars began to attack Wang Hongxu's subjective approach in his preparation of MSG which was a revision of earlier drafts. Their accounts never stated that MSG was based upon Wan
Sitong's draft. It is possible that misunderstandings seemed to arise from the
criticisms of Weng Fanggang (1733 - 1818) and Wei Yuan (1794 - 1857). They
criticized the publication by his offspring of MSG under the name of Wang
Hongxu which totally ignored the contribution of Wan Sitong. Later
historians confused the contribution of Wan Sitong with the compilation of
his own draft. In order to glorify Wan Sitong's contributions to the entire
project of MS, and to uncover the dishonest behaviour of Wang Hongxu,
historians who were unclear about the tradition of early Qing period and
the nature of the draft by Wan Sitong, subsequently severely criticized
Wang Hongxu, and thus turned a false statement into an historical truth.

Now an assumption can be made that those drafts of Wan Sitong
discussed by previous historians were all drafts from the MHI, sent to Wan
Sitong's working place before his death.

Historians agreed unanimously that the major contribution of Wan
Sitong in the project of MS was the examination of all the historical drafts.
According to the tradition of the early Qing period, his role as the sole
responsible examiner could have earned him the title of author a particular
draft, if he could be identified as the last one to finish all the editorial and
revision work on that specific draft. Since there are insufficient source
materials to verify the entire role of Wan in the revision of each of the
drafts, it would be more appropriate to assign the authorship of the
available drafts to all members of the MHI, under a heading such as "Wan
Sitong and others".

In reality, these earlier drafts of the MS already incorporated many of
the efforts of those official historians involved. The compilers of these
drafts originally consulted a lot of the drafts written by official historians.
Apart from Wan Sitong, there were many official historians and Chief
Compilers who contributed to revisions of drafts in different phases. The
draft completed in 1690 would have been gone through by Xu Yuanwen, the Chief Compiler at that time, in its final stage of preparation. From 1694 onward, Xu Yuanwen's draft was further revised by Zhang Yushu, Chen Tingjing and Wang Hongxun until the drafts were assembled later by Xiong Cilu. The version submitted by Xiong Cilu in 1702 would also have been revised before he was confident enough to submit it to the throne. Even if the revisions were only minor ones, the contribution of those official historians should not be overlooked.

Based on the above assumption, both Wan Sitong's draft which is based on drafts from MHI, whatever they are called, were in fact both products of MHI. These two drafts belonged to the same revision series and their authorship cannot be attributed, without concrete evidence, specifically to any one of the historians involved in the MS project.

3. The authorship and date of compilation of MSCG and MSEG.

Since it has been argued that it is plausible that Wan Sitong's MSG is composed of drafts from the Institute, then the MSCG and MSEG which have been judged to be the original work of Wan Sitong may also be drafts of a similar nature. If the relationship between MSCG, MSEG, MSG, MS and drafts of the official historians can be clarified, and their nature as a revision series of the same origin in MHI can be verified, then the authorship of the two drafts can be settled and their date of compilation can be traced.

When the compilation first commenced, many official historians already emphasized in their proposal memorial the prime importance of the preparation of a substantial first draft. They argued that MS would not be accurate and complete if it was not based on substantial drafts. Therefore the following clarification of the relationship between various drafts of MS
is based on the assumption that the earlier the draft was, the more details it contained. The sequence comprises official historians' personal drafts, MSCG, MSEG, MSG and then the final version, MS.

After careful comparison of the size and the content of these drafts on different levels: it is fairly clear that they were revised physically by reductions in the size of the biography of each historical figure, and in the total number of juan as a whole, which conformed to the suggested sequence. The nature of these drafts as revision series of the same origin was also verified by comparison of the relationship of the grouping of biographies and the sequence of those chapters among these drafts.

The number of biographies which constituted the major portion of the traditional biographical history decreases from MSCG to MSG. MSCG has 258 biographies in 294 juan. MSEG has 241 biographies in 267 juan. MSG has 172 biographies in 205 juan. The number in MS increased to 185 biographies in 245 juan. Since it is known that MS is the revised edition of MSG, the increase in MS does not affect the validity of the basic assumption. A similar reduction also happened in treatises. While MSCG does not have this section, the number of treatises in MSEG, MSG and MS decreased from 111 juan, to 77 juan and 75 juan respectively.

Earlier drafts are also similar in their longer biographical accounts of each historical figure. The length of each account was reduced in the later revisions and the biographical notes appeared to be more precise and concise. Along with the revision process are the inheritance by later versions of the content and sometimes the entire presentation of the earlier drafts. This can be well-illustrated by the different versions of the Biography of Wang Wei. The main biographical source for Wang Wei was his biography in MSL. On the basis of this biography, Fang Xiangying prepared the first draft which was later adopted, with a reduction in length
but incorporating minor revisions in content, in the revised drafts of Tang Bin, MSCG, MSEG, MSG and then MS.47

Contrary to the reduction tendency, there was the increase in the size of each biography. As revision went on, the number of biographical accounts in each biography increased.48 Originally, official historians tended to draft one biography for each historical figure, which resulted in a longer and more substantial draft.49 Once the historians began to reduce the content as well as the length of the biographical accounts, historical figures of similar contributions were grouped together. The increase in the size of the biography is clearly illustrated by the development of the biographical account of Lan Yu in the drafts of Pang Kai, Wang Wan, Pan Lei, MSCG, MSEG, MSG and then MS. During the first draft by Pang Kai, the biographical account of Lan Yu formed an independent biography. After several rounds of revisions, Lan Yu became only one among a total of twelve historical figures in the biography in MS.50 The practice provided more systematic presentation of the biographies and also reduced the size of the entire draft.

Inheritance applies also to the grouping of the historical figures in the various drafts. Out of the total sixty-three lunzan drafted by Pan Lei, thirty-two had exactly the same group of figures included as in the biographies of MSCG.51 Apart from major revisions in the late Ming period and a few changes in the classified biographies, the biographical groupings of MSCG and MSEG are totally identical.52 The biographical grouping in MSG has been changed substantially partly due to the reduction of the total number of historical figures and then partly because of the increase in the size of the biography. However, the additional of classified biographies entitled Waiqi (Imperial Relatives) in MSEG is still inherited by MSG and MS.53
Another aspect of inheritance can be found in the *lunzan*. Over half of the *lunzan* drafted by Pan Lei were simply copied by MSCG.\(^5^4\) Many *lunzan* of MSCG were also adopted by MSEG without any changes.\(^5^5\) But most of the *lunzan* in MSEG were revised in accordance with Emperor Kangxi’s criticism which requested that attacks on Ming Emperors be avoided.\(^5^6\)

The interrelation between various drafts becomes even clearer when the sequence of their biographies is compared.\(^5^7\) MSEG inherited most of the biographies of MSCG and rearranged their sequence. The new sequence was inherited later by MSG and MS with some new changes. Another example of a similar nature is the change in the position of some classified biographies in early drafts and the final version of MS Biographies of Rulin (Confucian Scholars), Wenyuan and Xunli were placed in the middle among classified biographies in MSCG. They were later moved to a higher position in MSEG. In MSG and MS, these biographies occupied the forefront positions among classified biographies.\(^5^8\)

The early drafts are inconsistent in their form. This may be due to the fact that the form of MS had not yet been settled. Another reason may possibly be that official historians did not seriously edit these earlier drafts. For example, some of the biographies in MSCG had more than one piece of *lunzan*, which is not the official form of a standard history. This phenomenon continued in MSEG. In MS, each biography had only one *lunzan*.\(^5^9\)

Irregularities also existed within *lunzan*. The quotation of examples from previous dynasties, early classics or even some unofficial remarks was common in early drafts such as MSCG and MSEG. Such quotation was progressively reduced in the later drafts and MS. A comparison of MSCG,
MSEG and MS showed that the *lunzan* in the latter drafts are more refined than the earlier ones.60

Finally, some brief introductions to the tables which Wan Yan drafted during the period he joined the MHI are still available in his collected work. They are *Zhuwang shibiao* (Tables of Princes and their descendants), *Neige buyuan dachen nianbiao* (Choronogical tables of the Grand Sectoraries) and *Gongchen shibiao*.61 The titles of these tables are also found in MSEG, which once again illustrates its origin.62

According to the above comparisons, one can conclude that all the drafts, including MSCG, MSEG, MSG and MS, were revised products of the same origin, that is, the original drafts of official historians of the Institute.

MSCG inherited many of the works of the official historians and was in turn inherited by MSEG. Thus it is very clear that MSCG was merely one of the drafts completed in the Institute. A similiar situation also applied to MSEG which was based on MSCG and in turn was inherited by MSG.

By 1686, Xu Yuanwen had drafted more than half of the scheduled work.63 Four years later he completed all of the drafts for MS.64 At present only MSCG has the divisions of imperial annals and biographies. The absence of tables and treatises suggests that MSCG may be a draft completed by official historians between 1686 and 1690.

The key to the confirmation of the compilation date of MSEG lies in the changes in its *lunzan*. The *lunzan* of MSEG was revised in accordance with the criticism of Emperor Kangxi. Since the criticism was made in 1692, MSEG must have been completed not earlier than 1692. Shortly after 1692 the Xu brothers were forced to resign and returned home.65 The compilation work came to a halt, and then started again in 1694 when the Institute recruited new members. The revision work was divided between
Zhang Yushu, Chen Tingjing and Wang Hongxu. In 1698, Xiong Cilu assembled all the revised drafts and revised them again under his own supervision. The product was the draft he submitted in 1702. Although the total number of juan in MSEG and Xiong Cilu's submission is the same, there are some differences in the number of biographies. In this connection, the suggestion that these two drafts were identical is doubtful. However, in view of the fact that MSEG included all four divisions of a standard history and had all the lunzan revised, this draft must have been revised by official historians around 1694 - 1702.

1 In MSCG, the texture and colour of the papers of the original and substitute texts are identical. Since the substitute texts were copied from MS which was completed in 1739, Zhu Xizu therefore concluded that MSCG was a handwritten copy of the Qianlong reign. Zhu Xizu(1968), p. 227.

2 According to MSCG's list of contents, juan 17 consisted of three separate parts. Part one and two are the Imperial Annal of Emperor Wanli. Part three is the Imperial Annal of Emperor Taichang, the text of which was lost. The record in Guoli Beiping tushuguan shanben shumu yibian [Bibliography of the rare books in the Beiping Library: the second series] did not state the situation clearly and just counted juan 17 as a lost juan. In addition, the library has not as accounted for the loss of the Biography of Yinyin. As a result, the total number of original juan, even excluding the incomplete juan 17, was 291 instead of 292 as stated in the Guoli Beiping tushuguan shanben shumu yibian. See Guoli Beiping tushuguan, 2/2b.

3 Hou Renzhi(1939), p. 99 and (1968), pp. 236-7. See also Li Guangbi, pp. 194-5.

4 Guoli Beiping tushuguan, 2/2b.

5 In early 1987 I spent four months in the National Library of China (Formerly National Beijing Library or Beiping Library, hereafter referred to as NLC) collecting research materials. During that period, enquiries were made about the evidence for the identification. According to the librarians of the rare book section, evidence for the purchase or the identification could not be found probably because the process had been completed too long ago.

6 Zhu Xizu briefly described the purchase of the MSCG by NLC in his paper. Zhu Xizu(1968), pp. 227-9. See also Hou Renzhi(1939), p. 99. Between 1927-31 Xie Guozhen compiled a bibliographical work called Wanming shiji kao [Annotated catalogue of late Ming historical works]. It did not include MSCG. According to the diary of Chen Shoushi, he first noticed the sale information of MSCG in 1928. In 1932, MSCG was quoted in Li Jinhua's
Mingshi zuanxiukao [A history of the compilation of the Ming History]. The purchase of MSCG must, therefore, have occurred around 1931 and 1932. See Xie Guozhen(1968), Chen Shoushi(1984), pp. 423-4 and Li Jinhua(1933), pp. 84-105.


9 Wu Shouyang, 2/9a.

10 According to Zhu Xizu, twenty-seven original biographies of MSCG were lost. All except Biographies of Fangii and Ningxing had substitute texts copied from MS. In the present MSCG's table of contents, there is a "substitute" mark under those substitute biographies. In the beginning of each of those substitute biographies, the editor stated clearly that "the original text had been lost and the present text was a substitute copy of Mingshi." However, under Biographies of Fangii, Ningxing and Waiguo (juan 304-7), no remark can be made on the relationship between MSCG and MS without comparing their texts. Similarly, those texts of biographies can not be considered as substitute texts without making clear remarks about the draft. According to Zhu Xizu, original texts of Imperial Annal of Taichang, Tianqi and Chongzhen are no longer extant and were replaced by texts from MS. In MSCG, there are remarks stating that these imperial annals are substitute texts. However, Zhu Xizu has not stated that Imperial Annal of Taichang was in fact part three of juan 17. Zhu Xizu(1968), pp. 227-9. In the NLC, MSCG is at present the only set of draft of MS, which amounts to a total of 313 juan and comprises imperial annals and biographies only. See Guoli Beiping tushuguan, 2/2b. Therefore, MSCG should also be the one discussed in the paper of Zhu Xizu. However, there is no source available to trace the reason for the differences between the present MSCG and the draft accounted for by Zhu Xizu.


12 Li Jinhua(1933), pp. 84-105. Wan Ming, pp. 112-3. Tian Jizong adopted the library's version for the compilation of Combined indices to eighty-nine collections of Ming Dynasty biographies. Hong Ye et al., p. xvi. See also Hou Renzhi(1939), p. 99.


14 The NLC had not kept the purchase record of MSEG. Since MSEG had been recorded in Wanming shijikao which was completed in 1931, the draft must have been purchased before this year. Xie Guozhen(1968), v. shang, p. 65.

15 Wan Ming and Huang Aiping are the only two scholars holding to the same identification. Wan Ming simply adopted the NLC version for his research. Huang Aiping had his own argument for the identification which will be analysed later in this section. See Wan Ming, p. 112. Huang Aiping(1983), pp. 95-7.
18 Yang Chun, 2/14a.
19 Fang Bao, 5/6a.
20 Yang Chun, 2/14b.
21 In Yang Chun’s letter to the Director-General of the MS project in the Yongzheng era, he said: "When Wan [Sitong] was still alive, he separated those combined, combined those separated, created those never found and cut out those established biographies in the draft of Xu Yuanwen. Qian [Mingshi] recorded detailed explanation under each item." Yang Chun, 2/14b.
23 Wang Hongxu (chixiu), v. 1, p. 1
24 Xiong Cilü (2), 2/1b-2a.
25 Wan Shibiao, p. 22.
28 Yang Chun, 2/14b.
29 Huang Aiping (1983), pp. 95-100.
30 There are many papers recording the Mingshi gao by Wan Sitong. Records before and shortly after the death of Wan Sitong include Wan Shibiao, Wan liye Mingshi gao liushan mulu (A catalogue of the lost Draft history of the Ming Dynasty by Wan Sitong), p. 22; Liu Fang, in Wan Sitong (1981), v. 1, p. 5b; Yang Ye, in Wan Sitong (1981), v. 1, pp. 2ab; Li Gong, 6/19a; Feng Chen, 3/13b; Wen Rulin, Fanli (Explanatory notes on the Neglected history of the southern regions), p. 3. Later records include Fang Bao, 12/2b; Yang Chun, 2/13b-14b; Quan Zuwang, 16/699; 28/1187; Qian Daxin, in Li Huan, v. 21, p. 12494. The accounts of the content and the amount of the Mingshi gao varied in the early records of Fang Bao and Quan Zuwang. Nonetheless, their records were adopted by most of the later historians. In addition, historians also began to comment on the revision of Wang Hongxu. See Wei Yuan, v. shang, pp. 222-4; Yao Fan, 43/7b; Weng Fanggang, juan 14, a quotation from Huang Aiping (1984), p. 59; Chen Kangqi, v. xia, p. 780. Discussions on this issue since the republican period include Liang Qichao, p.193; Chen Shoushi (1968), pp. 181-209; Ma Taxuan, p. 945; Huang Yunmei (1968), pp. 34-8; Chen Xunci, p. 10; Li Jinhua (1933), pp. 44-5; Zhang Xu, pp. 83-90; Tu Weiyun, p.3; Bao Zunpeng, pp. 6-7; Tso Keungming (1982), p. 137; Huang Aiping (1983), pp. 95-100; Fang Zuyou (1984), p. 63 and (1988), p. 18. Apart from the memoir of Wan Shibiao and Fang Bao, records of the circulation of the Mingshi gao also include Xiao Mu, Jinfu leigao [Classified drafts of Xiao Mu], in Huang Yunmei et al., p. 227

31 They included Liu Fang, Wen Ruilin and Yang Ye. Liu Fang stated: "Three hundred *juan* of the drafted biographies of MS were left in the [MHI]." Liu Fang, in *Wan Sitong* (1981), v. 1, p. 5b. Since the middle stroke of the character "three" in the printing-block was broken, the character was not clear in the epitaph of the block-printed edition. Zhang Xu had missed that the amount was two hundred *juan*. See Zhang Xu, p. 89. Wen Ruilin had also said: "Wan [Sitong] is short-lived. Drafts of the biographies of MS have just been completed and not yet revised." Wen Ruilin, *Fanli*, p. 3. Yang Ye twice mentioned the compilation achievement of Wan Sitong(*Wan Sitong* (1981), v. 1, pp. 2a and 2b). Although Yang Ye was in Zhejiang province when Wan Sitong died in Beijing, his record was reliable because his source materials were provided by Wan Shibiao. On the first occasion, Yang said: "[Wan Sitong has grouped source materials] either chronologically or under different categories and has completed three hundred *juan* of biographies." Then in another paragraph he stated: "[Jiye (Wan Sitong)] continuously joined the compilation project privately and completed three hundred *juan* of biographies." The later quarter of the epitaph by Yang Ye was lost and there is no trace of authorship in that epitaph. Shen Tiemin wrote a paper on the authorship of this epitaph. Shen Tiemin, pp. 1-3.

32 In *Shanyang xianzhi*, the author recorded: "[Liu Yongzhen] was a student of Wan Sitong, a native of the Yin County. [He] copied three hundred *juan* of MS which was compiled by Wan Sitong and kept at home." Jin Binzuo et al., p. 192.

33 On 1724, Wan Shibiao recorded: "My father's original drafts [of MS] that were kept at home included: four volumes of imperial annals; one volume on Emperor Taichang, Tianqi and Chongzhen were lost; a copy was available at the family collection of Chen Zhezhou (Tingjing); *Biographies of Honfei* and *Zhuwang*; no *Biography of Gongzhu*; biographies of ministers from Han Liner up till Tian Ergen were not available; there were copies in the private collections of Chan Shizhai, Xu Shian and Cai Zhanmin. They consisted of forty volumes of original [biography] drafts of mid Wanli and later periods and half of the original [biography] drafts of the last two reigns; no *Biography of Xunli*; *Biographies of Rulin* and *Wen yuan* were available; two *juan* of *Biography of Zhongyi* (The Loyalists) were extant; *Biography of Xiaoyi* (The Filials) were available; no *Biography of Yinyi*; *Biography of Lienü* were available; *Biography of Fangji* were available; no *Biography of Waiguo*; no *Biography of Huangyuan*; *Biography of Ningxing* and *Jianchen* were available; no *Biography of Liezei*; no *Biography of Tusi*; half of the *Biography of Waiguo* were extant." Wan Shibiao, p. 22. Apart from this, similar record was also available in the memoir of Li Gong. Li Gong remembered: "By then [Wan] Jiye (Sitong) just completed imperial annals and
biographies of MS. [Drafts of] treatises and tables were not yet available." Li Gong, 6/19a. Later Feng Chen adopted the record of Li Gong while compiling *Li Shugu xiansheng nianpu*. See Feng Chen, 3/13b.

34 According to the record of Fang Bao, the draft of Wan Sitong amounted totally to four hundred and sixty *juan*. Fang Bao, 12/2b. Although in one occasion Quan Zuwang stated that Wan Sitong left three hundred *juan* of imperial annals and biographies to one of his relatives, he again stated in his epitaph for Wan Sitong that he completed a total of five hundred *juan* of draft. See Quan Zuwang, 16/699 and 28/1187 respectively.


36 See Appendix 2, section *yi*, 9, pp. 4-5, 11, p. 5.

37 The drafts completed by Xu Yuanwen and Xiong Cilü both amounted to 416 *juan*. The amount of each division in Xu Yuanwen’s draft cannot be traced. But biographies in the draft of Xiong Cilü amounted only to 294 *juan* which was slightly less than the amount in previous records. It is, therefore, highly plausible that previous records accounted for the total sum of drafts around the working place of Wan Sitong, which included revised as well as unrevised drafts.


39 When Yang Ye wrote the epitaph for Wan Sitong in 1722, he based it on the source materials provided by Wan Shibiao and stated clearly that Wan Sitong had completed only three hundred *juan* of biographies. Yang Ye, in *Wan Sitong*(1981), v. 1, p. 1ab. Two years later Wan Shibiao had a different account of the completed draft. The major difference was the inclusion of imperial annals. According to Wan Shibiao, part of the draft was kept by Chen Tingjing who in fact was the Director-General responsible for the revision of all imperial annals. Therefore Wan Shibiao might have included those imperial annals sent over from Chen Tingjing and counted them as part of his father’s achievements. Wan Shibiao, p. 22.

40 See note 34.

41 In his paper, Huang Aiping analyzed the achievement of Wang Hongxu and tried to argue the innocence of Wang Hongxu in previous accusations. Firstly, he found *Mingshi gao* had made corrections to original drafts, not so biased as previous accusation had claimed. Secondly, the submission of *Mingshi gao* under the name of Wang Hongxu was an entirely common practice in the Qing court, which had been severely criticized as a disguised way of stealing the contribution of other official historians. Wang Hongxu did not intentionally claim all the credit. In this paper, Huang Aiping clarified for the first time that Qing scholars had mistaken the draft examined by Wan Sitong as his original works. However, Huang Aiping did not further clarify the nature of Wan Sitong’s *Mingshi gao*. Huang Aiping(1984), pp. 53-61.


44 Official historians who had proposed memorials included Pan Lei (5/1a-4b), Shi Runzhang (in Liu Chenggang, 4/9b-10a), Zhu Yizun (in Liu Chenggang, 5/5b-6a). When Pan Lei compiled the draft of the Treatise of Shihuo, he followed the suggestion in his proposal. Pan Lei, 5/15ab.

45 Wang Hongxu, Shiliyi (Discussions on the compilation of history), in Liu Chenggang, 2/36b.

46 Li Jinhua, Wan Ming and Huang Aiping had compared some sets of identical imperial annals and biographies with original drafts of individual official historians, MSCG, MSEG, MSG and MS. See Li Jinhua (1933), pp. 86-100; Wan Ming, pp. 109-12; Huang Aiping (1983), p. 98.

47 For the original biography, see Fang Xiangying, shang/26ab; Tang Bin, 10/11b-12b; MSCG, v. 12, 69/21a-22a; MSEG, v. 52, 214/22a-23a; MSG, v. 3, p.455; MS, v. 15, 170/4553. The comparison of this set of biographies can be found in Li Jinhua (1933), pp. 100-5.

48 The proposal is available in Xu Qianxue's Xiushi tiaoyi (Discussions in note form on the compilation of history), in Liu Chenggang, 2/8ab.

49 Examples of this sort can be found in drafts of Fang Xiangying, Mao Qiling, Pang Kai, Shi Runzhang, Xu Jiu, You Tong and Zhu Yizun. See Appendix 2, 1/1-13.

50 See Chapter 7, section 1, pp. 50-1

51 See Appendix 2, 1/3.

52 Apart from the difference in the order, biographies from juan 156 to 354 of MSEG are totally identical to that of juan 27 to 223 and 236 to 239 of MSCG.

53 The change of character for the Biography of lianchen in MSEG cannot be used as an illustration because the present Biography of lianchen in MSCG is a substitute copy from MS. See Appendix 5.

54 See note 51.

55 See chapter 6, pp. 110-1.

56 See chapter 6, pp. 117-23.

57 See Appendice 4 & 5.

58 See Appendix 5.

59 See chapter 6, pp. 111-3.

60 See chapter 6, 113-4, 126-7.
61 Wan Yan had left the Historiography Institute in 1688. Those tables must have been completed before his retirement. See Wan Yan, v. 1, p. 1b and 3/26b. His introductory section for those tables can be found in Wan Yan, 2/13a-21a.

62 MSEG, v. 39, 138/1-3b, v. 41, 142/1-2b, v. 42, 147/1-2b. However, the titles and the brief introductions of the tables have been changed in MS.

63 Xu Yuanwen, 18/8b. See also Han Tan, 17/15a.

64 Yang Chun, 2/13a.

65 QSL, v. 5, 143/573-4 and 146/610.

Chapter 6: The lunzan of MSCG, MSEG and MS -- A general review

This chapter is a general review of the lunzan of MSCG, MSEG and MS. Several sets of lunzan of these three versions will be chosen to compare and analyse in detail in Chapters 7 and 8. The result of the analysis will enable us to have a better understanding of the original presentation and evolution of the three versions. It also provides concrete evidence supporting the conclusive remarks in this chapter.

The lunzan of MSCG and MSEG have differences as well as resemblances in many respects. Apart from physical resemblances, the lunzan of these two drafts are different from MS in their content and the manner of their presentation. An analysis of their lunzan will provide further supporting evidence as to the authorship and the date of compilation of the two earliest drafts. In addition, the detailed analysis of these lunzan will also help to illustrate the aims and the limits of the official historians, as well as the involvement of the emperors which may have contributed to the prolonged course of compilation. When comparing these three versions, obvious trends of transformation can be traced. These trends include inheritance of content, presentation style, uniformity in physical form, and changes in the focus of discussion. Drafts of individual official historians and comments made by Emperor Qianlong are also used for comparison to review the lunzan of these three versions of MS.

1. Influence in the lunzan of MSCG, MSEG, and MS

When comparing the content and wording of the lunzan of drafts written by individual official historians, MSCG, MSEG, and MS, one can easily observe traces of inheritance among the lunzan of the first three
The striking resemblances between drafts of individual official historians, MSCG and MSEG led to the supposition that MSCG is a combination and revised versions of the drafts by individual official historians, whereas MSEG is a further revision of MSCG. On the other hand, the absence of inheritance between these drafts and the final version, i.e. MS, suggests that historians of MS may not have the chance to consult these two earlier drafts during the course of their revision and compilation.¹

One example of inheritance is the use of the opening phrase of the lunzan. The opening phrase varies among the lunzan of individual official historians. Most of them begin with the words lunyue.² The lunzan of MSCG also begins with lunyue. This open working is again adopted in MSEG. But the opening phrase of MS has been changed to zanyue.

In addition, the content of the lunzan written by individual official historians is also inherited by the historians of MSCG.³ After comparing the lunzan of MSCG with that of MSEG, evidence of inheritance between them can be found in three different categories. In the first category, the lunzan of identical biographies in the two drafts are exactly the same.⁴

In the second category, part of the lunzan of identical biographies in the two drafts are similar while the rest are different. In certain biographies, historians of MSEG, though holding the same views, copied only partially from the lunzan of MSCG and presented the rest of the argument in different wording.⁵

In the last category, the lunzan of identical biographies in the two drafts are still partly the same and partly different. However, the interpretation criteria of MSCG were not acceptable to the historians of MSEG. As a result, some texts of the lunzan were deleted.⁶ In most cases the
lunzan were supplemented with new arguments. The evaluation of Qi Tai (?) - 1402) in MSCG was largely adopted in MSEG. However, since the historians of MSEG held a different attitude towards Emperor Jianwen, the concluding evaluation of Qi Tai, the supporter of the emperor, was also changed. The first half of the lunzan on Zhang Yu (1343 - 1400) in MSCG is adopted by MSEG. But in the second half of MSEG, the evaluation of Zhang Yu, a key supporter of Prince Yan (later Emperor Yongle) in the usurpation incident, is improved due to the change of attitude towards Prince Yan in MSEG. After the adoption of part of the lunzan from MSCG, historians of MSEG sometimes supplemented it with suggestion for a code of conduct for the military leaders. One example is found in the lunzan of Yang Hong.

2. Uniformity in the lunzan of MSCG, MSEG, and MS

The trend of uniformity among the three drafts of MS appears in three aspects: the distribution of the lunzan, the length of the lunzan, and the manner of presentation in each set of identical biographies.

(i) Distribution of the lunzan

The lunzan in MSCG's biographies are not evenly distributed. In most of the standard histories, there is one piece of lunzan after each biography or imperial annals. In MSEG, slightly less than half of the biographies did not possess a lunzan. The total number of lunzan in MSCG is one hundred and sixty-one in two hundred and ninety-four juan of biographies. In addition, all sixteen imperial annals have no lunzan. Apart from fifty-eight juan of classified biographies most of the biographies which did not possess a lunzan are biographies from later reigns of the Ming dynasty. Among those which possessed lunzan, there are eight biographies each of which included two pieces of lunzan and one biography
which even has three pieces of lunzan.\textsuperscript{14} Each of the remaining biographies has only one piece of lunzan.

Possible reasons for the irregularities are related to its nature as a first complete draft and the political sensitivity of the late Ming period. The biographies of MSCG are the combined and revised versions of the drafts of individual official historians.\textsuperscript{15} Those early drafts of official historians are mostly biographies of individual figures.\textsuperscript{16} Some of them have their own piece of lunzan at the end.\textsuperscript{17} When these biographies are grouped together in MSCG, some of the lunzan which have not yet been finalized are also included for later revision.\textsuperscript{18} As a result, the uneven distribution of lunzan illustrates well that MSCG is an early revised draft.

The history of the late Ming period which involved the Manchus and the late Ming government was always a very sensitive area in the compilation project. At the early stage of the compilation, the Chief Compilers asked Emperor Kangxi to grant permission for them to consult Manchu records and requested the emperor's draft of lunzan.\textsuperscript{19} However, before the imperial edict in 1692 stating the emperor's attitude towards the submitted draft, official historians tried to avoid touching on those parts of the lunzan relating to the late Ming period.

The distribution of the lunzan in each biography of MSEG was not entirely decided either. Most of the biographies in MSEG such as classified biographies and imperial annals have a piece of lunzan at the end.\textsuperscript{20} The total number of lunzan in MSEG are two hundred and thirty-eight pieces out of two hundred and twenty biographies.\textsuperscript{21} Among them, one biography has two pieces of lunzan and another one has four pieces of lunzan.\textsuperscript{22} When the distribution of lunzan in the two drafts is compared, it is discovered that the irregularities in MSEG are much fewer. MSEG must have been a later revised version of MSCG.
MS has the most uniform distribution of lunzan among the three versions. All the biographies in MS are followed by one piece of lunzan. The total number of lunzan amounted to one hundred and sixty-two pieces. MS's classified biographies have no lunzan. Instead, a preface is found at the beginning of each set. At the end of the set of imperial annals of each emperor, there is one piece of lunzan.

(ii) Length of the lunzan

Uniformity also appeared in the length of the lunzan in the three versions. The later the version was, the shorter the average length of the lunzan would be.

MSCG has, in average, the longest lunzan among the three versions. The average length of each lunzan is around one hundred and twenty words. Those lunzan which were longer amounted to twenty-seven pieces. The longest piece has over two hundred and sixty words.

The average length of the lunzan in MSEG is similar to those in MSCG. However, when the lunzan of identical biographies in MSCG and MSEG are compared, it appears that the length of seventy-five pieces of lunzan had been reduced in MSEG. Only fifteen pieces have longer lunzan than in MSCG. The principle of using concise wording to describe more historical details also applied to the drafting of the lunzan. The lunzan of the late Ming period which were first drafted in MSEG were longer on average. Such a phenomenon clearly illustrated that while MSEG was a revision of an earlier draft, part of it was still a draft requiring further revision.

The length of the lunzan in MS is proportionally shorter. The actual average length of the lunzan of MS is similar to that of MSCG and MSEG.
However, while the length of *lunzan* remained the same, the content in the biographies of MS increased. The number of historical figures included in most of the biographies in MS is, in fact, equivalent to the amount included in two or more biographies in MSCG and MSEG.29

(iii) Presentation of the *lunzan*

There is a trend to refine the presentation and the content of historical interpretation in the *lunzan* of MSCG, MSEG and MS. Measures taken by official historians included decreasing the comparisons of Ming historical figures or cases with those of previous dynasties, and the avoidance of discussions based on rumour, unofficial historical records and general historical evaluation principle. There are quite a number of reasons for such revision measures. In some cases, reductions were made simply to make the *lunzan* shorter. In other cases, reductions were applied when historical materials quoted in earlier versions were no longer relevant.30 However, all these revisions helped to give a more uniform and compact appearance to the *lunzan* in the revised versions of MSEG and MS. The change between MSCG and MSEG is more obvious than that between MSEG and MS.

Comparisons of historical events and figures between the Ming and the previous dynasties are quite common in MSCG.31 This was generally the practice of traditional Chinese historians in determining the nature of historical events and the contributions of historical figures. In MSEG and MS, this kind of practice was greatly reduced and comparison restricted to those examples within the Ming dynasty.32 The set of the *lunzan* on Yu Qian best illustrates these revision measures and the possible reasons for deletion.33 Official historians of MSCG had hinted at the neglect of the emperors for the talents of their ministers by comparing the fate of Yu Qian to Li Gang (1083 - 1140) of the Song dynasty. Both Yu and Li were capable
ministers loyal to their countries but whose lives ended tragically. In MSEG, the comparison is again referred to but the focus shifted from accusation of the emperor to merely an appraisal of both ministers. Finally, Li Gang is no longer discussed in MS. The entire blame for the death of Yu Qian is placed on jealous ministers in the same court. By means of such presentation, official historians of MS avoided all possible criticism of the emperor. Indeed, it is possible that official historians of MS did not consider the option chosen in earlier versions. However, owing to their awareness of the emperor's opposition towards criticism of previous emperors, they made subsequent changes in their arguments and abandoned the earlier examples, even if the option was available.  

In MSCG, there are discussions on hearsay and popular unofficial remarks about political events of Ming history. Most of these remarks are, in fact, related to criticism of Ming emperors. The historians' interest in investigating the cause of the death of Han Liner in the transitional period of Yuan to Ming dynasties persisted throughout the Ming dynasty. In MSCG, historians believed that Liao Yongzhong (1323 - 75)'s act of drowning Han was out of his own ambition to win favour with Zhu Yuanzhang (later Emperor Hongwu). Although they attributed the later execution of Liao to his endless ambition and deceitful behaviour, they explicitly expressed their grievance against Emperor Hongwu's treatment of his meritorious officials. In MSEG, the role of Liao in the death of Han Liner is again discussed. Here, historians moderated their view by showing merely their suspicion about the execution of Liao in relation to the death of Han. Eventually, historians dropped the death of Han from their discussion of the contribution of Liao in MS. In the lunzan they justified the execution of Liao as a punishment for his repeated violation of the law. In MS, most of the discussions on hearsay about the Ming emperors are avoided in order to abstain from possible violation of the paramount status of an emperor.
However, there are a few exceptions in MS. In the lunzan on Lan Yu, unofficial remarks are discussed intentionally. Instead of making any criticism, the historians again justified the emperor's controversial policy as a necessary measure for the order of the newly established empire.

The official historians made criticism of previous historians' remarks in a few lunzan of MSCG and suggested the proper way of making an historical evaluation. One such example is the lunzan on Zhang Juzheng. Historians remarked that the varied opinions on Zhang Juzheng were mainly the result of the historians' personal bias about this historical figure. They furthered stated that while some historians praised Zhang as being as sagacious as the holy Emperor Yao in ancient Chinese history, others considered him the same typically bad ruler as Emperor Jie. In order to arrive at a fair judgement, they suggested that historians should study every possible detail and be impartial. This kind of discussion is very rare in later versions. Later historians must have realized that the discussion on those basic evaluation principles in the lunzan was merely a waste of space.

The development in the use of quotations in the three versions appears to be contradictory to the normal trend of development. Quotations from Chinese Classics and traditional writings of high prestige such as Yijing [Book of Changes] and Hanshu [History of the Han dynasty] are used in the lunzan of MSCG and MSEG. But the frequency of quotations in MS rises sharply. The increase in the use of quotations in MS may be considered as a change in attitude towards their use which occurred in the Yongzheng reign. In addition, it also justified the official historians overlooking the first two drafts. In the lunzan of the Biography of Lan Yu, historians of MSCG quoted from Xiaojing [Book of Filial Piety] to explain the principle of the behaviour of a general. This quotation has been discussed in MSEG, but is not mentioned in MS. The remark of the
historians of MSEG on the quotation cited in MSCG provides concrete evidence for the succeeding relationship between MSCG and MSEG. On the other hand, the incomplete citation in MSEG illustrated once again its nature as an draft.49

3. Changed focus of discussion in the lunzan of MSCG, MSEG, and MS.

When the lunzan of MSCG, MSEG and MS are compared, changes in the focus of discussion can easily be traced.

The most obvious change is the decrease in later versions in the amount of discussion on the responsibility of the emperor. Among the one hundred and sixty-one lunzan in MSCG, over half of them have discussions related to the emperors. Sixty-five of them blamed the emperors on one or more counts. There is less discussion related to the emperors in the lunzan of identical biographies in MSEG. Since MSEG has adopted many texts in the lunzan of MSCG, this may partly explain the small quantity of criticism about the emperors. However, if the newly drafted lunzan of the late Ming period are included, the total amount of lunzan on emperors is similar. The decrease in the amount of such discussion in MS is very great. The number of lunzan related to the emperors amounted to twenty-four whereas there are only fourteen lunzan with criticism on emperors.

The emperors were always the focus of criticism in the lunzan of MSCG. They are criticized for their harsh treatment of meritorious officials and their incompetence in managing national affairs. The evaluation of MSCG is strongly influenced by the interpretation of private historians in the late Ming period. Most of them considered the incompetence of the Ming emperors as one of the major causes leading to the fall of the Ming empire.50 In MSEG, official historians tried to shift the focus of criticism by
attributing the responsibility from the emperor to other parties or historical figures being discussed. In addition, they decided to ignore popular criticisms and confine their discussion entirely to the contribution and responsibility of those figures included in the biography. Official historians in MS sometimes, instead of blaming the emperors, justified the decision of the emperors based on another point of view.

Emperor Hongwu, the founding emperor of the Ming dynasty, was frequently criticized in MSCG. In the last section of the lunzan on Liao Yongzhong he was accused of wiping out meritorious officials. In the lunzan on Lan Yu, official historians of MSCG, though agreeing on the execution of some of the military leaders, expressed clearly their opposition to the large-scale purge initiated by the emperor. In MSEG, the focus of criticism was slightly diverted in such a way that the blame was shared between the emperor and those officials. In MS, criticism of the emperor no longer existed and thus the image of an emperor was well preserved. Historians argued that unofficial criticism of emperor of the early Ming period was a result of ignorance of the actual current circumstances. In order to preserve the sanctity of the law within the empire, they regarded that the penalty imposed on Lan Yu and his followers by Emperor Hongwu was necessary and justified.

In the evaluation of Yu Qian, whose contribution was indisputable and for whose death the emperor was definitely responsible, historians of MSCG made a severe criticism of Emperor Jingtai. Later the official historians of MSEG moderated the negative image of the emperor by deleting those descriptions which exposed the selfish motives of Emperor Jingtai. Official historians of MS were more intelligent. The lunzan of MS concentrated on highlighting the contribution and talent of Yu Qian.
without any discussion of his tragic fate which had so much to do with the emperor.

While the amount of criticism of emperors in most of the lunzan of MSEG and MS lessened, discussions related to the emperors increased in number in certain parts of MSEG. For instance, there were discussions on the waste of talented people, court policies and the Censors. The trend to avoid criticizing the emperors in MSEG still applied. Instead of explicit criticism, an increase is found in discussions related to the emperors. Historians of MSEG had already shifted the target of their accusations away from the emperors. But they did not realize that related discussions would also affect the paramount status of the emperors. The best way of preserving the image of the emperors was to keep any related criticism and discussions to the minimum which was the method employed by the historians of MS. This presentation style was likely to be appreciated by the Qing emperors.

One common complaint about the emperors in MSCG and MSEG is the waste of talented people. This kind of complaint in the lunzan reached eighteen in number in MSCG and thirty-four in MSEG. In MS, this kind of complaint only appeared three times.

In MSCG, most of these complaints appeared in the biographies of the Zhengde reign. The Biography of Chen Yu in MSCG included a total of twelve biographies and seven associated biographies of talented people. These historical figures contributed to the establishment of the Ming dynasty in different ways, but were never appointed to senior government positions. The historians of MSCG suggested that this practice was due to the negligence of the emperor after his enthronement. The biographies of identical figures in MSEG adopted the lunzan of MSCG. However, the historians of MS included discussions solely on the contribution of those figures. In this way, any possible complaints about the emperor could be
avoided. In the Biography of He Qiaoxin, historians of MSCG complain about the relegation of capable ministers which again indicated the emperor's neglect of talented people. The performance of these ministers was outstanding in the Hongzhi reign but they were never appreciated by the succeeding ruler, Emperor Zhengde. Although the lunzan of the biography of identical figures in MSEG draws the same conclusion, the argument is presented in a different way. Historians tried to improve the image of the emperor by taking a sympathetic view and by explaining the difficulty faced in arriving at cooperation between emperor and ministers. The scheme for combining historical figures is different in MS. Although the remarks about figures of similar background have the same focus in the discussion, the evaluation was dealt with in a different manner. In this final version, historians put the entire blame for the short-lived careers of the ministers on the eunuchs.

Official historians of earlier drafts also tend to blame the policies of the court for the fall of the empire. This kind of criticism appears to thirty-two times in MSCG and fifty-two in MSEG, but dropped sharply to fifteen in MS.

Historians of MSCG highly valued the contribution of the Censors in the Ming court. On the other hand, the emperors was always criticized for ignoring the suggestions of his Censors. This kind of remark amounted to twenty-eight in MSCG and thirty-one in MSEG. The amount again dropped to thirteen in MS.

The usurpation of Prince Yan and the restoration of Emperor Zhengtong (1427 - 1464, reign 1436 - 50, reign title Tianshun 1457 - 65) created the most difficult task for official historians in the revision of the lunzan. Both incidents were related to the legitimate status of the new emperor and the contribution of his supporters. Thus a solution needed to be worked out
by official historians of MSEG and MS during the revision to avoid criticism of the new emperor while not violating the dignity of the previous emperor.

In MSCG, official historians were on the side of Emperor Jianwen and Emperor Yongle was criticized as the chief usurper. In MSEG, official historians described Emperor Jianwen as incompetent and blamed him for his own downfall. Such contradicting approaches were possibly due to the confusion among the official historians after they received the imperial edict from Emperor Kangxi in 1692. On one hand, official historians were unable to avoid criticism of the emperors of the Ming dynasty. On the other hand, in MSEG they had to resolve the issue of succession between Emperor Jianwen and Yongle. They decided to stand on the side of the winner and the head of the existing imperial family. As a result of this attitude, the opposition of Fang Xiaoru (1357 - 1402) against Emperor Yongle, which was considered by traditional historians as courageous and noble behaviour, was queried in MSEG. The problem was eventually solved by official historians in MS who recognized both emperors and attributed the alteration of the emperor to the choice of Heaven. While the treatment of the two emperors in MS clearly illustrates the attitude of the official historians, the comments of Qianlong on this issue represent the imperial attitude. Both Emperors Jianwen and Yongle are criticized by Emperor Qianlong, clearly illustrating the freedom of discussion enjoyed by an emperor.

In fact, the lack of discussion about the emperors in MS had effectively improved the image of the emperors. Official historians of MS were able to minimize their exposure of the negative side of the emperors. In most of the lunzan, official historians tried to shift the blame to other parties such as eunuchs or historical figures themselves in order to avoid
criticism of the emperors. Such practice illustrated another major change in the focus of discussion, that is, away from the responsibility of the emperor and towards the historical figure discussed.

Official historians of MSEG and MS made great efforts to concentrate on the evaluation of the contributions of those historical figures. Their criticism is based on the performances of the figures without relating their fate to the responsibility of the emperor. One example is the set of lunzan on Yu Qian discussed in MSEG and MS. During the course of the revision, official historians of these later versions further established the code of conduct for able and virtuous ministers, as suggested first in MSCG. There are only twenty-eight related lunzan in MSCG. This amount later increased to forty-two in MSEG and forty-four in MS.

The lunzan on Lan Yu is another instance. When official historians discussed the responsibility of Lan for his own execution, they also stated frankly the proper character of a meritorious official. The lack of this character eventually explained the misbehaviour of these senior officials which contributed to their later misfortune. In MSEG, historians continued to judge Lan Yu in the same way. Finally, historians of MS further justified the execution of Lan by attributing it solely to the ignorance of Lan Yu and his supporters of the proper code of conduct in the court.

In MSEG and MS, official historians sometimes made use of the code of conduct in order to justify the policy of the emperor in eliminating discontent among the officials. In the Biography of Hu Dahai, historians of MSCG expressed their regrets over the death of the generals. The generals fought hard for Emperor Hongwu but never lived long enough to enjoy their accomplishments. In MSEG and MS, officials historians elaborated on the honours awarded after the death of those generals and stated that all generals should treasure such honours instead of seeking other benefits.
Most of the historical figures discussed are accused of weakness in their practice of the code of conduct. However, there are also lunzan in the revised version which clearly state that the talents and outstanding performance of certain ministers and generals eventually contributed to their success. In order to deny the contribution of Zhang Juzheng, historians of MSEG intentionally provided false information about Zhang's dates. When the character and contribution of Zhang are analysed against this background, he is severely criticized over his manner and his ways of managing national affairs. However, although Zhang continued to receive criticism about his relationship with the emperor, his talent was indisputedly appreciated, particularly in MS. The humble manner of Yang Hong was much appreciated in MS while other meritorious officials were censured. In the Biography of Xu Da in MSCG, historians described explicitly the characters of Xu Da (1332 - 85) and Chang Yuchun (1330 - 69), two generals of the Hongwu period. This best explained Emperor Hongwu's choice of his favourite generals. Xu was modest and courteous while Chang followed the instruction of the emperor strictly. In MSEG, historians elaborated further on the outstanding character of these two generals. Lastly, historians in MS stressed the good character of the two generals as contributing to their brilliant future.

4. Summary

The trend of development in uniformity, inheritance and changing focus of discussion clearly illustrate the sequence of succession between the three versions.

The lunzan of MSCG are the earliest drafts. Their physical form had not been entirely resolved. Some of their content was copied verbatim from earlier works by individual official historians. The absence of any lunzan of
late Ming period provides supporting evidence that it was an early draft. The official historians had not received imperial guidelines or official interpretations for this sensitive period. The only available lunzan of late Ming period in MSCG is the one on Zuo Liangyu, in which official historians merely provided historical details. Some of the official historians of MSCG showed a similar historical attitude to that of the private historians of the late Ming period. They received a similar education and were brought up in a similar background. It was very natural that they used research results of the Ming scholars and adopted their historical interpretation at an early stage. Official historians were more aware of the possible dangers in discussing the issues of the transitional Ming to Qing period, which were more sensitive than those of the early Ming period. They drafted the lunzan of late Ming, until Manchu records and the imperial edict on historical interpretation were made available. Official historians, like other historians in the Ming dynasty, were eager to trace the secret of the success and failure of the Ming empire. Inevitably, Ming emperors were accused of showing an irresponsible attitude as being part of the cause. On the other hand, historians were considerate in regard to their evaluation of accusations against ministers and meritorious officials who had devoted most of their life to the country. However, such an attitude was unacceptable by the standard of Emperor Kangxi. Later Emperor Qianlong also held a similar view. As an emperor, Emperor Qianlong could criticize the previous emperors without any hesitation. However, he would not tolerate the behaviour of any minister which would challenge the paramount status of the emperor. The revision of MSCG was therefore inevitable. Since the lunzan of MSCG were under the strong influence of the interpretations of private historians, they could be considered as representing the interests of private historians.
MSEG is a revision draft of MSCG and must have been completed after the issue of an imperial edict in 1692. The inheritance of the content as well as the manner of presentation from MSEG clearly demonstrated the succession of MSEG from MSCG. The *lunzan* of MSEG has many improvements in its physical form. However, the presence of a few inconsistencies in the distribution of *lunzan* illustrated that MSEG remained an incomplete draft and must not have been the version submitted by Xiong Cilu in 1702.84

In 1692, Emperor Kangxi gave his remarks on the submitted draft asking for the avoidance of criticism of the emperors in the later revision. Thereafter official historians revised and drafted all the *lunzan* in accordance with his principles. The most obvious difference between MSCG and MSEG was the effort of official historians of MSEG to remove criticism of emperors. Since many official historians of MSEG and MSCG belonged to the same group of people, the *lunzan* of MSEG therefore continued to follow most of the interpretations of its earlier version. During the revision process, official historians of MSEG had a clear objective but no detailed solution on how to delete all the criticism about the emperors. Consequently, part of the *lunzan* of MSEG retained some discussions related to the responsibility of the emperors, with slight changes of focus. The frequency of complaints about the emperors is therefore similar. In some *lunzan*, official historians revised the draft according to Emperor Kangxi's order without the justification of detailed historical research. Sometimes in extreme cases they simply diverted the responsibility to other parties or altered the historical background in order to justify their arguments. The results of these kinds of revisions were, of course, unacceptable to Emperor Kangxi, which may partly have caused the dismissal of the submission in 1702. The ultimate task of official historians of MSEG was to finish the
assignment according to the guidelines of the emperor. The *lunzan* of MSEG, fulfilled this task, and, although not satisfactory, should be considered more appropriately the work of officials of the early Qing period.

The *lunzan* of MS best represented the work of official historians. Since official historians of MS had not been able to consult directly earlier drafts in the MHI, trends of transformation from MSEG to MS, comparatively speaking, are not very obvious. In some aspects, there are contradictory developments between MSEG and MS, such as the increase in the number of quotations in MS. This was, in fact, due to favourable circumstances which enabled official historians of MS to free themselves from the influence of earlier historians. However, the *lunzan* improved on most of the shortcomings of the earlier drafts, both in physical form and historical interpretation. Official historians of MS had finished their official assignments successfully. A comparison of the *lunzan* of MS and the comments by Emperor Qianlong clearly illustrates the difference in attitude between an emperor and official historians. As an emperor, Emperor Qianlong is free to criticise anyone including emperors in the previous dynasty. But this kind of criticism is totally impossible in the eyes of the official historians of MS. In order to preserve the paramount status and the image of the emperors, not only was harsh criticism of emperors avoided, but also opportunities for possible discussion about emperors were eliminated. At the same time, the *lunzan* of MS are also historical works based on good research. Although official historians had to avoid criticism of the emperors, the historical interpretation of Ming figures remained sound. In order to minimize the amount of discussion on the emperors, official historians evaluated the status of historical figures based solely on their own efforts and contributions, without any remarks about the role of the emperors and the government. In a few cases, official historians of MS even successfully defended the image of the emperor by justifying the
imperial policy from a totally different point of view. The lunzan of MS demonstrated that official historians of MS had finished their job successfully, with a perfect balance between the requirements demanded of a Qing official and of an historian.

1 Wang Hongxu brought home all the drafts from the MHI. See chapter 3, note 32.
2 Among the drafts of individual official historians currently available, the lunzan of Pan Lei and Xiong Cilü have no opening phrase. The lunzan of other historians such as Shen Heng, Shi Runzhang, Tang Bin, Wang Wan, Xu Jiu, You Tong and Zhu Yizun all begin with lunyue. There are only a few lunzan by Shen Heng, Mao Qiling and Zhu Yizun which start with Shishi yue (The historian says), Zhi Yizun yue (Zhu Yizun says), Qiling yue (Qiling says) and Taishishui yue (The great historian says). See Appendix 2, 1/1-13.
3 Over half of the lunzan drafted by Pan Lei were adopted by MSCG. See Appendix 2, 1/3.
4 There are thirty-eight pairs of lunzan of MSCG and MSEG which are totally identical. They include MSCG, v. 13, 80/10ab; MSEG, v. 50, 202/10b-11a; MSCG, v. 16, 102/24b; MSEG, v. 56, 231/23a; MSCG, v. 17, 109/24b; MSEG, v. 54, 228/25b. Some of them have minor changes in wording.
5 There are over eighteen pairs of lunzan of MSCG and MSEG belonging to this category. They include MSCG, v. 15, 93/25ab; MSEG, v. 56, 234/26ab; MSCG, v. 15, 94/20ab; MSEG, v. 57, 235/21ab; MSCG, v. 21, 129/14ab; MSEG, v. 60, 252/15ab. An extreme example is the lunzan of the Biography of Liu Ji in the two drafts where the argument of the lunzan is the same but presented in entirely different wording. See MSCG, v. 30, 172/15a; MSEG, v. 65, 279/12b.
6 There are thirty pairs of lunzan of MSCG and MSEG belonging to this group. They include MSCG, v. 20, 123/123b; MSEG, v. 61, 258/24b; MSCG, v. 25, 147/17ab; MSEG, v. 62, 262/17b-18a; MSCG, v. 33, 185/27b-28a; MSEG, v. 76, 327/27.
7 Over eighty per cent of the lunzan of this group had supplementary arguments. An example can be found in the analysis of the lunzan of Yu Qian in chapter 8, section 4. (iv) & (v), pp. 189-91.
8 The change of lunzan on Qi Tai can be found in chapter 7, section 3. (iv), p. 156.
9 The change of lunzan on Zhang Yu can be found in chapter 7, section 4. (iv), pp. 164-5.
10 The discussion of Yang Hong in MSEG can be found in chapter 8, section 1. (iv), pp.180-1.
11 A lunzan was normally placed at the end of each biography. But in classified biographies, there is no lunzan but a brief introduction at the beginning of the first biography of each of the classified biographies. There are also lunzan at the end of the set of imperial annals of each emperor. In twenty-four standard histories in traditional China, only Yuanshi had no lunzan at the end of imperial annals or biographies. For the reason for the absence of the lunzan in Yuanshi, see Wang Gungwu(1968), pp. 44-6.
12 The total number of biographies which do not possess lunzan amounted to one hundred and forty-three. They include all classified biographies, namely Biography of Houfei and Biography of Zhuwang at the beginning of the biographies section and Biography of Xunli and others at the end of this section. One must also be reminded that some of the imperial annals and biographies in MSCG have been lost and their present substitute texts were copied from identical imperial annals or biographies in MS, with the exception of the Biography of Waiguo (v. 68, juan 310-3) which have been left without text. See chapter 5, p. 1.

13 There are only twelve biographies before the Wanli period which do not have any lunzan. On the other hand, there are only fourteen out of the total one hundred and thirty-eight biographies of the last four reigns of the Ming dynasty which possess lunzan. The only biography of the Chongzhen reign including a lunzan is the Biography of Zuo Liangyu which possess two pieces of lunzan. See MSCG, v. 50, 261/13ab, 21ab.

14 Biographies each possessed two pieces of lunzan can be found in MSCG, v. 9, 48/5ab, 11a, 50/2b,16b-17a, v. 16, 103/19b, 24b-25a, v. 19, 117/7b, 24b, 118/9b-10a, 29b-30a, v. 25, 150/11b,25a, v. 29, 166/no page number, v. 50, 261/13ab, 21ab. The biography that possessed three pieces of lunzan can be found in MSCG, v. 8, 43/8ab, 14a, 15ab.

15 See chapter 5, section 3 and Appendix 2, section yi.

16 See Appendix 2, section yi.

17 See note 2 of this chapter.

18 Early drafts of individual official historians were revised and combined during the later course of revision. See chapter 2, note 53.

19 Official historians were always eager to seek advice from the emperor before the compilation of biographies and drafting of the lunzan of later periods. See Liu Chenggan, 9/5b-7a, 8ab.

20 There are two pieces of lunzan at the end of the Biography of Li Shilu and part one of Biography of liuzei. See MSEG, v. 47, 179/2b, 17ab, v. 96, 407/39b-41a, 58b-59a. The Biography of liuzei had altogether three lunzan. In addition, there are two pieces of prefaces for two parts of these biographies. Biography of Tusi and Biography of Waifan [Foreign Countries] had no lunzan. See Wang Gungwu(1968), pp. 44-6. Imperial annals had lunzan at the end of each emperor.

21 It included fifteen classified biographies and three for empresses and princes. It did not include the lunzan of seventeen imperial annals, and prefaces of classified biographies.

22 Biographies which have two lunzan in MSEG are found in v. 47, 179/2b, 17ab, v. 96, 407/39b-41b, 58b-59a. The biography which included four lunzan is found in v. 46, 172/8b, 13b, 14b, 16b.

23 They included three biographies of empresses and princes.
Fifteen lunzan in imperial annals have not been included.
MSCG, v. 12, 70/15ab.

There are six lunzan which have over two hundred words in MSEG. MSEG, v. 45, 170/9b-10b, v. 70, 298/29ab, v. 71, 302/30ab, v. 75, 321/37ab, v. 76, 326/21b-22a, v. 77, 330/37ab.
This principle has been suggested by many official historians included Xu Qianxue and Pan Lei. See Liu Chenggan, 2/8ab; Pan Lei, 5/3b.
The longest piece which has over two hundred and sixty words is found in MSEG, v. 87, 375/31ab.
The expansion of the biographies in MS can be well illustrated in the study of the biographies of Lan Yu, Qi Tai and Zhang Yu in chapter 7, sections 1, 3 & 4.
Detailed illustration of the deletion of the comparison between Ming historical figure and those of previous dynasties can be found in the study of the lunzan on Yu Qian in chapter 8, section 2, pp.184-93.
There are around twenty lunzan referring to previous historical issues or historical figures. MSCG, v. 12, 69/21b-22a, v. 21, 126/15a, 127/19b-20a.
Although official historians of MS did not necessarily follow the trend of MSEG, the lunzan of MS referring to previous historical issues or historical figures were greatly reduced. The number of lunzan of this category is twelve for MSEG and ten for MS. The exact amount has only slightly reduced. However, if one takes into consideration the amount of lunzan increased in MSEG and MS, the rate of reduction is fairly high. MSEG, v. 47, 179/2b, 182/9b-10a, v. 50, 203/15a; MS, v. 13, 138/3978-9, v. 14, 148/4145, v. 16, 183/4870-1.
See note 30.
Emperor Kangxi's decree on historians' criticism of emperors was issued on 1692. QSL, v. 5, 154/700.
Those unofficial remarks are not referring to intellectual discussions. Instead, they are merely historical remarks among the common people. Two most common topics are the rise of Emperor Hongwu and the fate of Emperor Jianwen and his followers. MSCG, v. 7, 34/12b-13a, v. 11, 67/no page number, v. 20, 124/16b-7a; MSEG, v. 45, 163/13ab.
Han Liner was the first and only emperor of the Red Turban Song (1355 - 66) who at one time had the support of many rebellious troops in the late Yuan period. However, when the armies of Han were later defeated and association with him would mean losing the support of gentry, he was found drowned on his way back to Nanjing. Along with Han was Liao Yongzhong, a supporter of Zhu Yuanzheng. It is generally believed that Han was drowned by Liao and his act was under Zhu Yuanzhang (later Emperor Hongwu)'s instruction. DMB, v. 1, pp. 485-8, 909-10.
MSCG, v. 7, 34/12b-13a.
MSEG, v. 45, 163/13ab
39 MS, v. 12, 129/3812.
40 Ibid.
42 For the justification detail of Lan Yu in MS, see chapter 7, section 1, pp. 132-40.
43 MSCG, v. 8, 44/12a, v. 27, 159/29ab.
44 Ibid, v. 27, 159/29ab.
45 The decrease in the use of quotations from MSCG to MSEG is very moderate. The amount of quotations seen in MSCG, MSEG and MS is ten, six and twenty-three respectively. MSCG, v. 7, 35/7b, v. 9, 48/11a, v. 10, 61/11a; MSEG, v. 52, 211/22a, v. 54, 229/22b-3a, v. 60, 252/15ab.
46 The increase in the use of quotations in MS is very obvious. The amount of quotations in MS are twenty-three. MS, v. 14, 149/4156, 160/4370, v. 15, 168/4531-2.
47 The sentence is from the Xiaojing See MSCG, v. 7, 35/7b. The original text can be found in Ruan Yuan, v. 2, p. 2547.
48 MSEG, v. 45, 164/7b.
49 Official historians of MSCG had only cited the title of the source, i.e., one of the annotations of Chunqiu [Springs and Autumnns] without the provision of actual details. Such arrangement may have assumed the reader would be able to consult the discussed drafts at the same time.
50 Examples of the relationship between arguments of private historians and MSCG can be found on the section of private evaluations on the historical figures and the evaluation of MSCG in chapters 7 & 8.
51 See note 37.
52 Detailed comparison of the change in the focus of evaluation can be found in chapter 7, section 1, (iii) & (iv), pp. 136-8.
53 Please refer to chapter 8, section 2, (iii), pp. 189-90.
55 MSCG, v. 28, 162/24b, 163/22b, 164/30b-31a.
56 MSCG, v. 9, 47/12b-13a.
57 MSEG, v. 46, 176/13a.
58 MS, v. 13, 135/3924.
59 MSCG, v. 18, 110/22a.
60 MSEG, v. 57, 239/23a.
61 MS, v. 16, 183/4870-1.
62 MSCG, v. 10, 60/18ab, v. 12, 74/22b-23a, v. 13, 77/11a; MSEG, v. 50, 202/10b-11a, v. 52, 212/10ab, v. 54, 226/22b.
There is no explicit comment on both imperial annals but their attitude can be traced in biographies of leading figures of both parties in the usurpation incident. See chapter 7, section 3, (v), pp. 156-7, & section 4, (v), pp. 165-6.


Chapter 8, section 2. (iv) & (v), pp. 190-2.

MSCG, v. 8, 40/26b, v. 9, 45/18ab, v. 10, 54/20b-21a.

MSEG, v. 45, 166/12b, v. 45, 170/9b-10b, v. 47, 180/17b; MS, v. 12, 125/3738, v. 13, 139/4000, 143/4065.

Chapter 7, section 1, (iii), (iv) & (v), pp. 136-9.

MSCG, v. 8, 40/26b.

MSEG, v. 45, 169/29b; MS, v. 13, 133/3895.


Chapter 8, section 3, (v), p. 201.

Chapter 8, section 1, (v), pp. 181-3.

MSCG, v. 7, 31/18b.


MS, v. 12, 125/3738.

Chapter 8, section 4, (iii), p. 205.

Xiong Cilü(1), 2/2a.

Wang Hongxu brought along with him all the drafts from the MHI when he was forced to retire. Furthermore, he deleted all the lunzan in his two submitted drafts of Mingshi. Yang Chun, 2/10b.
Chapter 7: Comparative studies of the *lunzan* of MSCG, MSEG and MS -- Part One

1. An analysis of the *lunzan* of the Biography of Lan Yu

Introduction

The cases of Lan Yu and Hu Weiyong (? - 1380) were two important instances of conspiracy in the Hongwu reign of the Ming dynasty. In discussing the history of Early Ming period, historians typically name these two cases together. Some considered that the case of Lan was indeed a continuation of Hu's case. In official records of the Ming government they were regarded as the two leading figures of the two conspiracies. However, despite the fact that different versions of MS came to varied conclusions regarding Lan Yu, Lan was listed from the first draft of MS as one of the meritorious officials of the early Ming period ever since, whereas Hu appeared in the biographies of the treacherous ministers. The adoption of this arrangement by later versions including the official MS clearly reflects the different viewpoints of the official historians of early Qing period and the Ming government.

*Liangguogong Lan Yu chuan* (Biography of Lan Yu, Master of the Liang Kingdom) by Pang Kai (1657 - 1725) was the earliest official historical draft of the biography of Lan Yu extant in the Historical Institute. Its compilation was restricted to one figure in a single biography without any *lunzan* at the end. Later Xu Qianxue advocated the summary and addition to the content of this earliest draft. The resulting *Biography of Lan Yu* brought six related officials into the case apart from Lan Yu. This holds true for the official draft of Pan Lei as well as the first and second drafts of MS, i.e. MSCG and MSEG. The biographical notes of Lan Yu in the draft MSG were a by-product of the previous two drafts. Then in the final compilation of
the biography in MS, the seven figures included in the biography are rearranged with the addition of five more figures such as Zhu Liangzu (? - 1380). Not all the figures included in this final version are officials concerned with the case of Lan Yu. Instead, they are meritorious officials or ministers who had contributed to the success of the Early Ming regime but who were eventually executed similarly to Lan Yu. As initiated by Pan Lei and followed by all the drafts of MS except MSG, there are lunzan at the end of the biography which focus on the criticism of the case of Lan Yu.9

(i) The case of Lan Yu

Lan Yu (? - 1393), a native of Dingyuan (present day Dingyuan of the Anhui province), was the brother-in-law of Chang Yuchun. During the reign of Hongwu, he was one of the most honorable generals apart from Xu Da and Chang Yuchun. As a favourite of Emperor Hongwu, he first belonged to Chang's troop and later joined generals like Xu Da, Mu Ying (1345 - 92) and Fu Youde (? - 1394) to go on an expedition against the Mongol branch tribes in the northwest. Due to his military exploits, he was promoted to the rank of Marquis of Yongchong. In 1388, Lan Yu acquired the title of Duke of Liang Kingdom after the capture of the chief subordinates of Toyus Temur. In the following years he suppressed some regional rebellions in the southwest.

In general, modern historians agree that the case of Lan Yu was the result of Emperor Hongwu's policy of consolidating his imperial power and kingship.11

Emperor Hongwu and his officials were born as peasants at around the same time. In order to win the support of his subordinates, Emperor Hongwu could not keep up strict rites and ceremonies in the early years of his regime. Under such circumstances, some of the virtuous officials
became imperious and acted against the law such as by acquiring land. Extant historical records of the Ming dynasty have evidence of Lan Yu’s misbehaviour such as the keeping of slaves, seizing of land and connivance of subordinates to damage boundary gates. Emperor Hongwu was basically an arbitrary and easily irascible emperor. At first everything went smoothly because of his concern for kinship and his focus on mission. However, in view of despotic acts and building up of private parties by Hu Weiyong when he became the Prime Minister, Emperor Hongwu found it essential to consolidate his power. To exercise absolute power, he abolished the post of Prime Minister to enforce imperial dictatorship. In order to improve strict observance of the law, he executed meritorious officials who defied the law.

Another major cause of the case of Lan Yu was the consolidation of the fundamental enterprise of the Zhu family. Hongwu's crown prince was weak and frail. On one hand Emperor Hongwu invested his own relatives with hereditary titles and territories to replace the powerful generals. On the other hand he executed many powerful military officials implicated in cases such as that of Lan Yu. In 1380, immediately after the death of Hu Weiyong, numerous meritorious officials related to the case were executed. With the death of the prince in 1392, the threat from meritorious officials and old generals increased which intensified the emperor's quest for executions.

In February of 1393, Jiang Xian, the Commander of the Imperial bodyguard, lodged an accusation of conspiracy against Lan Yu. This case led to the execution of the whole clan of Lan Yu and more than fifteen thousand related individuals. In September Emperor Hongwu initiated and published a book which reported on the whole case and included a list of concerned officials entitled *Nichen lu* [Record of treacherous ministers].
(ii) Official and private evaluations of Lan Yu prior to the compilation of MS

Throughout the Ming dynasty, the official record of the case of Lan Yu was based on Emperor Hongwu's *Nichen lu*. The historical incidents of early Ming period were not discussed by historians until the periods of Jiajing and Wanli. However, due to the loss of historical documents and the presence of biased evidence, the truth of the case can not be further analysed.

In general, historians have two major evaluations of Lan Yu before the compilation of MS. Some of them such as Li Zhi (1527 - 1602) completely ignore the analysis and evaluation of the case and the service of Lan Yu. In the *lunzan* at the end of the biography of Lan Yu in *Xu cangshu* [Supplements to the Hidden Records], Li Zhi pointed out that the success of Emperor Hongwu was due to the mandate of heaven. In this way, the status of Emperor Hongwu was highlighted. In the latter part of the *lunzan*, Li stated that the meritorious officials became old in the later period of Hongwu, thus clarifying that the lack of outstanding military officials to defend Emperor Jianwen during the usurpation of Prince Yan was not the result of Emperor Hongwu's suppression policy. This helped to remove suspicion of his injustice over the execution of Lan Yu. However, most historians severely criticized Emperor Hongwu over the case of Lan Yu, and held the view that it was a serious verdict arising from Emperor Hongwu's intention to consolidate his imperial throne by wiping out powerful officials. Representative of this viewpoint was the *lunzan* by Fu Weilin.

Fu's criticism began by citing the allegory of "casting aside the bow once the birds are gone" to imply that the case of Lan Yu was an excuse by Emperor Hongwu to cast aside meritorious officials. The *lunzan* further
described the situation of the various meritorious officials inaugurated in the early Ming dynasty, and strongly recommended the outstanding service of Lan Yu who inherited the ideals of the late generals who founded the regime.

The latter part of the lunzan concentrated on the evaluation of the case of Lan Yu. The historian clearly pointed out that there were a few questionable elements in this conspiracy, such as insufficient evidence for its cause and the lack of detailed records of the case. It further deduced that the execution of more than twenty thousand figures concerned in this case was an outcome of Emperor Hongwu's seeking an excuse to wipe out his opponents.

At the end of the lunzan, the historian declared the execution of Lan Yu by the emperor to be unjust, which led to the lack of protection for the generals during the usurpation of Prince Yan. This contributed to the usurpation of the throne in the following regime, and Emperor Jianwen thus suffered from his predecessor's actions.

(iii) Evaluation of Lan Yu in MSCG

The lunzan on Lan Yu in MSCG was completely based on the official draft of Pan Lei. Its view was close to the sympathetic attitude of the Ming and Qing historians towards the meritorious officials. Among the three versions of MS, this was the most severe in its criticism of Emperor Hongwu. At that time Xu Qianxue, the Director-General, suggested that the official viewpoint on the Ming dynasty be adopted. However, this idea was neither approved by the imperial court nor completely accepted by the historians.

The content of the lunzan began by attributing the success of Emperor Hongwu to the assistance of military officials, aiming to highlight their
contribution. It then proceeded to criticize the injustice of Emperor Hongwu in the execution of meritorious officials after the founding of the regime.

The historians analysed the background of these officials and pointed out that these people were born into peasant families without any concept of ceremony and of the cultivation of morality. Here the historians cited references from the classics to stress that one must be modest in one's conduct in society. This hinted at the right course an official should take and indirectly attributed the execution of Lan Yu to his misconduct and lack of humble attitude.

Lastly, the historians pointed out that the execution of Lan Yu was the result of his personal conspiracy and other suspicion about him. However, the involvement of fifteen thousand people in this criminal case was really unjustifiable. Although historians never completely opposed the policy of Emperor Hongwu, the executions were considered an "unjust verdict" under the Emperor's policy of executing meritorious officials, and thus the historians tactfully criticized Emperor Hongwu as responsible for plotting charges against Lan Yu.

(iv) Evaluation of Lan Yu in MSEG

Historians of MSEG deleted the introduction covering the contributions of officials in the founding of the Ming dynasty. Subsequently the introduction criticized the injustice of Emperor Hongwu in the execution of meritorious officials as stated in MSCG.

It began by stressing that the merits of Lan Yu were sufficiently rewarded by Emperor Hongwu to justify the fair-mindedness of the emperor towards worthy officials.
It then stated that the arrogance of Lan Yu as one of the favourites of the Emperor was the main cause of the affair. Although the historians agreed that the individuals involved in the case were rather numerous, they explained that the case resulted from the lack of discipline of Lan Yu and his official adherants.

Lastly the *lunzan* remarked on the quotation cited in MSCG to illustrate the correct conduct of an official.\(^{30}\)

The *lunzan* of this draft considered the case of Lan Yu to be the outcome of his own misconduct, and deliberately absolved the emperor of any blame. Nevertheless, it did not thoroughly clarify suspicions about Emperor Hongwu’s strict policy and execution of worthy officials.

This argument in MSEG bore a close resemblance to the *lunzan* by Xiong Cilü at the end of the *Biography of Li Shanchang*.\(^{31}\) However, the writing and criticism in MSEG are comparatively more precise and mild. The draft by Xiong was completed before 1692\(^{32}\) and its content was greatly restricted by the comments of Emperor Kangxi.\(^{33}\) In comparing these two evaluations, it appears that MSEG was probably based on the draft by Xiong and was a version revised after 1692.

(v) Evaluation of Lan Yu in MS\(^{34}\)

The *lunzan* of the *Biography of Lan Yu* in MS was a rare one which defended the popular criticism of the case of Lan Yu.\(^{35}\) This phenomenon on one hand illustrated the popularity of such comments among the common people, and on the other hand reflected the great attention the historian paid to such popular criticism.

Both MS and MSEG corroborated the guilt of the figures concerned in the case. However, the historians of MS openly explained and extricated the
Emperor Hongwu from responsibility in the case, with reference to the development of the legal system.

The historians first emphasized the legal system as an objective standard for imperial rule. They further elaborated that the strict standard of the system was an inevitable outcome of the passage of time, and was not the product of the emperor's selfish desires to wipe out the senior founding officials. Based on this belief, the historians pointed out that the preceding criticism of the execution of meritorious officials was only due to the historians' lack of knowledge of how to govern a country.

The historians then explained that the firm foundation of the Ming regime during the case of Lan Yu did not provide a motive for Emperor Hongwu to execute the meritorious officials out of jealousy. Eventually, they concluded that in the government of state, the legal system could not be overturned because of personnel matters. It was their opinion that the treatment of Lan Yu and other generals by Emperor Hongwu was justified, since they had behaved in an arrogant manner and did not have the class to understand about playing safe.

MS historians did not get entangled in the question of the value of rewards given by the Emperor. The lunzan only commented on the misbehaviour of Lan Yu and others from the legal point of view. This provided a more reasonable explanation of the treatment of the case by Emperor Hongwu and helped to maintain the fair-minded image of the emperor.36

(vi) Commentary on Lan Yu by Emperor Qianlong37

Emperor Qianlong's remarks about the case of Lan Yu were totally different from the above-mentioned drafts. He made lunzan on both Lan Yu and the Ming Emperor Hongwu.
Similar to the historians of MS, Emperor Qianlong omitted any discussion on the merits of Lan Yu and justified the death of Lan Yu from the legal point of view. On the other hand, he stated explicitly that Emperor Hongwu had reason to be jealous of the meritorious officials, although the scale of his purge was greater than that of Emperor Gaozu (256 - 195 B.C., reign 184 - 195 B.C.) of the Han dynasty. Thus the rest of the victims in the two cases appear as sacrifices to Emperor Hongwu's policy of wiping out potential political threats. Because he was emperor, Qianlong was able to criticize historical events without any hesitation and his comments were more free and frank than in the above-mentioned drafts.

2. The usurpation by Prince Yan: An analysis of the *lunzan* on Emperor Jianwen and Prince Yan (later Emperor Yongle)

Introduction

The usurpation by Prince Yan altered the hereditary system of the Ming imperial throne. Even more important was its impact on the development of politics in the Ming dynasty. Due to political restrictions, extant historical references are scarce. During the reigns of Emperors Hongxi and Xuande, restrictions in politics lessened, resulting in more discussions among the populace. The next two sections of this chapter will discuss the two leading figures of the two parties during the usurpation incident. Since the evaluation by the historians of the figures involved in the incident was primarily based on the *lunzan* of Emperors Jianwen and Yongle, this section will discuss the two emperors as analysed in the different versions of MS.

The first draft of the biographical histories of Emperors Jianwen and Yongle were initiated by Xu Jiayen (1631 - 1703) and Zhu Yizun (1629 - 1709) respectively. Their original manuscripts no longer existed and at present
there are five different versions in the Historiographical Institute which include biographies of these two figures. They include MSCG, MSEG, MSG, MS and MSBJ.44

Aside from MSCG and MSG, the remaining three versions have lunzan.45 In MSCG, MSEG and MSG, the chapter headings of the section on Emperor Jianwen are Jianwen huangdi benji (Imperial Annal of Emperor Jianwen), Jianwen di benji (Imperial Annal of Emperor Jianwen) and Jianwen di (Emperor Jianwen) respectively. Due to the posthumous conferrment of the title of "Gongmin" (respectful and pitiful) to Emperor Jianwen in 1736 by Emperor Qianlong, the later dated versions of MS and MSBJ used Gongmin di (Emperor Gongmin) as their chapter headings.46

(i) Emperor Jianwen, Emperor Yongle and the usurpation incident

After the death of the Ming dynasty Emperor Hongwu, the throne was inherited by his royal grandson known as Emperor Jianwen (1377 - 1402, reigned 1399 - 1402).47 When the young emperor ascended to the throne, he paid special attention to the intellectuals as represented by Qi Tai, Huang Zicheng (? - 1403) and Fang Xiaoru. Both the emperor and these scholar-officials were enthusiastic in carrying out reforms, and thus changes in different policies implemented by Emperor Hongwu were inevitable. Emperor Jianwen's emphasis on the scholar-officials, his lesser regard for military generals as well as the change of ancestral policy, caused discontent.48 However, the major cause of the usurpation incident was his policy of reducing feudatories.

During the reign of Hongwu due to the threat to imperial power from meritorious officials and the need to provide defence against the Mongols in the north, principalities were invested with hereditary titles and territories. Towards the epoch of Emperor Jianwen, this developed into a
trend whereby these princes enlarged their armed forces and paid no respect to the imperial court. Both the emperor and his officials understood this threat and decided to take action to eradicate it. Shortly after his succession to the throne, Emperor Jianwen seized the power of Prince Zhou and several other princes. Prince Yan was conscious of the same danger and thus led a revolt in July of 1399.49

The slogan of the usurpation was "fengtian jingnan" (clear away the internal disorder in response to the will of heaven). In fact, Prince Yan had long intended to usurp the throne. As early as the late years of Hongwu, he began to establish his power-base and centred this at Beiping (later Beijing). Emperor Jianwen's policy of reducing the feudatories gave Prince Yan an excuse to accomplish his task sooner. He began his expedition in 1399, and was often victorious, occasionally defeated. The capital finally fell in June of 1402. Emperor Jianwen's fate was unknown. Prince Yan then seized the throne and changed the reign to Yongle, he himself becoming Emperor Yongle.

Emperor Yongle (1360 - 1424, reigned 1403 - 25), original name Di, was the fourth son of Emperor Hongwu.50 He was made Prince Yan in 1371 and was garrisoned in the territory of Beiping from 1381.

Emperor Yongle was a formidable and brilliant leader. During his regime, the military strength of the Ming dynasty was very strong and its status was respected highly by neighbouring countries. However, the usurpation incident had a continuing adverse impact on his own and the succeeding reigns. Using Emperor Jianwen's opposition to ancestral policy as an excuse for the outbreak of the incident, Emperor Yongle strongly advocated the observation of ancestral law after becoming Emperor, and thus contributed to the rigid politics of the Ming dynasty. In order to win the support of the scholars who were disturbed by the usurpation incident and
to control their intellectual thought, Emperor Yongle carried out a large-scale compilation project which restricted cultural achievement during the Ming dynasty. Besides, the move of the capital to Beiping without any northeastern barrier created boundary problems later. In 1424, Emperor Yongle set out on the fifth expedition to the northern desert region and died on the way back.

(ii) Official and private evaluations of Emperor Jianwen and Emperor Yongle prior to the compilation of MS

In order to maintain his status as legitimate heir after the usurpation, Emperor Yongle revised and modified the Imperial Annal of Emperor Hongwu to include the reign of Jianwen under the reign title of Hongwu. In Chengzu shilu [Veritable records of Emperor Yongle], Emperor Jianwen was deliberately described as an arrogant and incapable ruler. The official historians first indicated that Emperor Jianwen had altered the imperial order to seize the throne after the death of Emperor Hongwu. Then they continued with criticism of Emperor Jianwen's policy of changing the ancestral law, his appointment of treacherous court officials and his reduction of the feudatories which eventually forced the expedition of Prince Yan. In other words, the outbreak of the military confrontation was incidental without any premeditated plan by Emperor Yongle. The dispatch of troops was definitely an attempt to wipe out the treacherous officials and not an armed usurpation. Furthermore, Emperor Jianwen committed suicide after the fall of Nanjing out of shame, but not because of a plot devised by Emperor Yongle.

Due to scarcity of extant historical records, there were great differences among the historians' opinions of the two emperors and the usurpation incident.
In the criticism of Emperor Jianwen and his officials, although the historians held a sympathetic view, most of them considered that the blame must lie with the Emperor himself. For instance, He Qiaoyuan stated in the beginning of his criticism that "death is inevitable if one tries to reform the ancient rules and disrupt convention" and used this as the standard to comment on the usurpation incident. He thought that the abilities of Emperor Jianwen and his officials were less than those of the previous reign. Thus they should conform to the policies they inherited. He discussed the weakness of Emperor Jianwen's policy of reducing feudatories and stated that the new policy destroyed the clan relationships created with the principalities, thus contributed to the eventual usurpation.

The criticism of He was in general moderate. As regards other aspects of Emperor Jianwen and his subordinates, he only commented on the radical officials in whom the emperor had put too much confidence. In the latter part of his criticism, He praised various outstanding officials of the Jianwen reign and pointed out that they were efficient ministers. Finally, he cited the heroic death of officials during the usurpation which fully justified the success of Emperor Jianwen's policy of respecting able and virtuous scholars.

In discussing the usurpation incident and Emperor Yongle, most of the historians avoided the succession issue and used the mandate of heaven as a way round it. One explicit instance was He's saying that "heaven's blessing is only given to person with morals". Some followed the middle course and stated that both sides were innocent. Only a few historians such as Gu Yingtai frankly criticized Prince Yan's expedition. Although Gu did not state the nature of the incident explicitly, he clearly explained that "to clear away internal disorder" was only an excuse for Prince Yan to seize the throne. He further pointed out that the use by the historians of the
example of Master Zhou assisting Emperor Cheng in the Zhou dynasty, only aimed to absolve Emperor Yongle from blame.

(iii) Evaluation of Emperor Jianwen and Emperor Yongle in MSCG

The section of imperial annals in MSCG did not include any lunzan except that there are annotations at the end of the annals of Emperors Hongwu and Yongle. In 1692, Xiong Cilü drafted some evaluations based on MSCG for the comment of Emperor Kangxi. From the Emperor Yongle annotations in MSCG, the lunzan of the biographies of the officials of the Jianwen reign in MSCG and the lunzan by Xiong, the historians' evaluation of Emperors Jianwen and Yongle can be briefly deduced.

The historians of MSCG and Xiong Cilü are basically on the side of Emperor Jianwen, against Emperor Yongle. Their criticism of Emperor Yongle was as stern as that of the private historians of the Ming and Early Qing periods, such as Gu Yingtai.

Xiong's criticism began by stating explicitly that Emperor Jianwen did not commit any unjust acts in the early period of his reign. Although Xiong considered the reduction of feudatories as inappropriate, his comments are directed to the fact that Emperor Jianwen was not able to learn from ancient Han dynasty, and lacked comprehensive plan regarding the establishment of the policy. The criticism went on to analyze the measures adopted by Emperor Jianwen and his officials in the usurpation incident. Here Xiong blamed the inability of officials like Qi Tai and Huang Zicheng as contributing to the failure.

Xiong Cilü drafted the lunzan on the basis of MSCG and thus the arguments of MSCG and Xiong are identical. The historians of MSCG also put the blame on Qi and Huang in their lunzan. They praised Emperor Jianwen as a generous Confucian and attributed the catastrophe to the lack
of subordinates available to meet an emergency situation, and to the mistaken adoption of the policy of cutting back feudatories which was advocated by officials like Qi Tai.

Xiong's comment on the role of Emperor Yongle in the usurpation was long and couched in harsh terms. He compared Emperor Yongle with Emperor Zhengguan (599 - 649, reign 627 - 49) of the Tang dynasty and explained the fact that unlike Emperor Zhengguan who was never a subordinate of Prince Jiancheng (589 - 626), Emperor Yongle was a prince for a long time, thus a direct comparison could not be made. He then remarked that "making an excuse of pacifying internal disorder, Emperor Yongle led an expedition into the the imperial palace". This phrase indirectly expresses the view that Emperor Yongle's actions were usurpatory. Besides, Xiong also characterized as crimes Emperor Yongle's execution of loyal officials and abolition of the reign title of Emperor Jianwen in official records after the overthrow.

In drawing his conclusions about the political situation of the Yongle era, Xiong held the regime in high regard, comparing it to the good government of Emperor Zhengguan during the Tang dynasty. On the other hand, however, Xiong criticized the shortcomings of Emperor Yongle, including his militaristic and aggressive qualities and indulgence in Buddhism. In another lunzan Xiong further summarized all former criticisms of Emperor Yongle and concluded that the statements "only Emperor Yongle can carry on the empire of Emperor Hongwu" and "the change of the capital was essential" were merely the flattering ideas of Ming officials.

The annotations at the end of the Imperial Annal of Emperor Yongle in MSCG has no discussion about the responsibility of Emperor Yongle in the uprising. Here the gifted qualities of Emperor Yongle including his
outstanding military power, his efficient administration of state affairs, his good personnel and prudent handing out of punishments were given much appreciation. However, while Emperor Yongle's achievement in extending the state boundary was held in high regard, the historians had to admit that the death of Emperor Yongle in the region beyond the Great Wall was due to his own warlike tendencies.

In the biographies, the historians discussed Emperor Yongle's responsibility in the usurpation incident. Comparatively speaking, the evaluations here are more severe and attribute the ascension of Emperor Yongle to the throne to his use of military power. The use of the word "seize" explicitly reflects the improper succession of Emperor Yongle. They further strongly denounce the series of execution of officials and clansmen concerned with the affair launched by Emperor Yongle. Here the historians openly described the act of the Emperor as "brutal" and considered it a complete destruction of the grand foundations of the regime.

(iv) Evaluation of Emperor Jianwen and Emperor Yongle in MSEG

The standpoint of MSEG was totally different from that of MSCG. In the lunzan of the Imperial Annal of Emperor Tianwen, the overthrow was considered the outcome of wrong policy and overrated abilities of Emperor Jianwen. The historians described Emperor Jianwen as a weak and incompetent ruler. They took as an example the fact that Emperor Jianwen was unwise to insist on the bringing down of the powerful princes during his own reign. In this way Emperor Jianwen was responsible for the usurpation incident.

On the other hand, the historians further pointed out that officials like Qi Tai and Huang Zicheng were appointed by Emperor Hongwu. Since the Emperor was a capable ruler, his appointed officials must have been
very efficient. Thus the historians deduced that the outbreak of the usurpation incident could not be entirely attributed to the officials.

The lunzan of Imperial Annal of Emperor Yongle was in the form of questions and answers. Here the historians tried to clarify the reasons for Emperor Yongle's expedition, stressing that his dispatch of troops was forced by circumstances. They analysed the sequence of Emperor Jianwen's actions in quashing the princes and tried to explain that Emperor Yongle had to rebel as the only means of survival under the circumstances.

However, in the latter part of the lunzan, the historians fully recognised the early aggression of Emperor Yongle in seizing the throne. They pointed out that "to clear away the internal disorder in response to Heaven's will" was only an excuse for Emperor Yongle's uprising. They stated that the sadness expressed by Emperor Yongle after the fall of the imperial city was a pretence. At that time, the prince who was heir apparent was ignored. Instead of supporting the accession of the prince to the throne, Emperor Yongle raised his own personal status thus proving that his plan was premeditated.

(v) Evaluation of Emperor Jianwen and Emperor Yongle in MS

The lunzan of the two emperors in MS was comparatively more subtle. There was no mention of pacifying internal disorder in the lunzan of the annals. Instead, the terms "expurgated period" and "revolution" are used tentatively by the historians to avoid taking side in their account of the incident.

In the Imperial Annal of Emperor Jianwen, the outstanding character and successful policies of Emperor Jianwen such as modesty in learning, humility in receiving criticism and fairness in taxation were appreciated by the historians. The lunzan further turned to criticize Emperor Jianwen's
lack of official status after the overthrow in the Ming dynasty. In this way, the credit of the Qing emperor who confirmed the posthumous title of Emperor Jianwen was claimed. The whole lunzan completely avoided any criticism of the figures and events associated with the overthrow.

In the lunzan of the Imperial Annal of Emperor Yongle, the historians settled the dispute of his usurpation by hinting at Emperor Yongle's "making use of the delicacy of Emperor Jianwen's health". Since the historians could not find a suitable standpoint from which to discuss the overthrow, they had to narrate the course of events without any direct criticism.

In the major part of the lunzan, the historians concentrated on analysing the civil and military accomplishments of Emperor Yongle. It was only at the end of the lunzan that there was an expression of sympathy and mild criticism of the numerous executions during the overthrow which discredited the moral integrity of the emperor. This incidentally helped to express the feelings of the common people.

In the later two revised lunzan, the historians avoided criticizing the two emperors' responsibilities during the overthrow. They simply narrate the facts without making any subjective judgement. This treatment clearly illustrated that the historians, who were also government officials, were reluctant to give explicit comments about incidents related to the succession of the throne and royal secrets.

(vi) Commentary of Emperor Jianwen and Emperor Yongle by Emperor Qianlong

As an emperor of the Qing dynasty, Qianlong's commentary on Emperor Jianwen and Emperor Yongle are again most straightforward and severe.
Regarding the responsibility for the overthrow, Emperor Qianlong considered the blame should rest on Emperor Hongwu. He pointed out that an Emperor should appoint a successor on his merits and not rigidly adhere to ancient policy. The failure of Emperor Hongwu to appoint Prince Yan as the crown prince and the official appointment of Emperor Jianwen were the primary and secondary causes leading to the overthrow.

Taking all these factors into consideration, Emperor Qianlong regarded the previous appraisal of Emperor Jianwen by the historians to be largely unfounded. He stated that Emperor Jianwen carried out his policy without a realistic plan which reflected his weakness and inefficiency and accounted for his failure. In another part of the discussion, Emperor Qianlong explained in detail that Emperor Jianwen should have maintained a good relationship with the clansmen instead being in a hurry to curtail their power. However, due to his lack of ability, inappropriate policy and insufficient knowledge of the enemy, the defeat of Emperor Jianwen and his officials in the usurpation was inevitable.

In terms of the incident itself, Emperor Qianlong clearly identified Prince Yan as instrumental in the usurpation, as the prince under Emperor Jianwen's rule. He quoted the Mutiny of the Seven Princes in the early Han dynasty as an example and pointed out explicitly that "clearing away the internal disorder" was only an excuse made by Prince Yan to start the mutiny. Here Emperor Qianlong used the strictest terms "traitor and usurper" to describe Prince Yan. Furthermore, Emperor Qianlong pointed out that the term "clearing away the disorder" was a euphemism used by the historians in respect of the ban imposed by their superiors on any subjective discussion of the historical facts. Lastly, he ordered that subsequent records of this part of history must stop using this term when publicly describing the historical facts of proper succession.
3. The usurpation by Prince Yan: An analysis of the *lunzan* on Qi Tai, Huang Zicheng and Fang Xiaoru

**Introduction**

After the overthrow, many historians found reasons for it in the mistaken policies pursued by ignorant officials such as Qi Tai. Since the outbreak of the incident, these officials were unable to adopt adequate emergency measures to prevent Prince Yan's success. Nevertheless, the historians expressed appreciation for the moral integrity of the officials who would eventually be executed.

In the drafts of the Historical Institute, the three officials always came first on the list of the biographies of ministers of the Jianwen era. Pan Lei was responsible for the historical writing of the five eras from Hongwu to Xuande in the MHI. However, the original drafts of the historians are no longer extant and only some discussions at the end of the biographies exist. In the draft of Pan Lei, Qi Tai and Huang Zicheng were included in one biography whereas the biography of Fang Xiaoru was independent. Qi and Huang were listed before Fang. All of them were placed in front of Zhang Yu and Zhu Neng, who were officials of the Yongle era. In MSCG, the biographies of those officials sacrificed in the Jianwen era are placed after those of the worthy officials who were responsible for Emperor Yongle's successful power play. In MSEG and the other later drafts, the biographies of the officials are rearranged according to the sequence of the Jianwen and Yongle reigns. In MSG, Wang combined these two biographies into a single biography. This arrangement was followed by MS with minor changes. With the exception of MSG, the three versions of MSCG, MSEG and MS all included a *lunzan* at the end of the biographies. Together with
the draft by Pan Lei, there are a total of four official lunzan on Qi Tai and his friends.\textsuperscript{94}

(i) Biographical notes on Qi Tai, Huang Zicheng and Fang Xiaoru

Qi Tai (? - 1402), original name Dehong, was a native of Lishui (present day Lishui county of Jiangsu province).\textsuperscript{95} In 1388, Qi was awarded a jinshi degree in the imperial examination and was appointed to be Secretary in the Bureau of Ministries of Rites, and of War. Later Emperor Hongwu granted him the name of Tai and in 1898 Qi was promoted to be Minister of War. In the same year he promised to fulfil the order of the deceased emperor in assisting the royal grandson.

At that time the sons of Emperor Hongwu were conservative princes in possession of armies, and their power threatened the central government. Qi Tai then joined with Huang Zicheng to draw up policy to curtail the power of these princes. One of their tactics was to whittle down the princes' royal titles and estates. In this context, Prince Yan rose up with the slogan "clearing away the internal disorder in response to Heaven's will" with the intention of wiping out Qi and Huang. Emperor Jianwen made one attempt to banish Qi and Huang from their official posts in order to put down the rebellion, but in vain. Thus the two officials remained in their posts. Finally Emperor Jianwen was defeated by Prince Yan and disappeared. Qi Tai was arrested and executed because of his unyielding attitude to the new emperor.

Huang Zicheng (? - 1403), original name Ti, was a native of Fenyi (present day Fenyi county of Jiangxi province).\textsuperscript{96} In 1384 he entered the Imperial College and became a jinshi in the next year. Later he was promoted to Senior Compiler in the Hanlin Academy and then became the Chief Minister of the Office of Imperial Sacrifice. While Emperor Jianwen
was still the royal grandson, Huang had already suggested cutting the military power of the princes. After the royal grandson succeeded to the throne, Huang was appointed as Hanlin Academician. He was arrested after the usurpation incident and executed because he did not surrender to the new emperor.

Fang Xiaoru (1357 - 1402), alias Xizhi, was a native of Ninghai (present day Ninghai of Zhejiang province). Since childhood he had been an acquaintance of Song Lian (1310 - 81). With a very good academic reputation, he was praised several times by Emperor Hongwu. After Emperor Jianwen succeeded to the throne, Fang was summoned as the Expositor-in-waiting of the Hanlin Academy and later promoted as the Academician Expositor-in-waiting. He was also appointed Director-General to preside over the editorial projects of Taizu shilu [Veritable records of Emperor Hongwu] and other classified reference books. With the outbreak of the overthrow, Prince Yan denounced Emperor Jianwen's orders which were issued under the advice of Fang Xiaoru. After the Emperor Yongle took the throne, Fang did not surrender and was executed. Later emperors like Hongxi (1378 - 1425, reign 1425 - 6), Hongzhi (1470 - 1505, reign 1488 - 1506) and Wanli highly praised Fang and the other officials who were executed. Thus later, Fang's honour was officially re-instated.

(ii) Official and private evaluations of Qi Tai, Huang Zicheng and Fang Xiaoru prior to the compilation of MS

According to MSL, the three officials being executed were considered to be treacherous ministers. Although these lunzan were re-assessed by Emperors Hongxi, Hongzhi and Wanli, measures were taken to compensate the descendants of Fang, the basic official viewpoint in government records remained unchanged.
Historians of the Ming dynasty did not have unanimous viewpoint. They were more critical of Qi and Huang for their participation in the military affairs, whereas the evaluation of Fang was more favourable. In general, there were three different views at that time. The first was to make criticism in terms of the tactics and strategy of Qi and Huang, contributing to the uprising by their inexpedient and inappropriate tactics. The second gives prominence to the massacre after the overthrow. Historians like Gu Yingtai started a new chapter especially to criticize the massacre by Prince Yan after the incident in order to reflect the tragedy that befell Emperor Jianwen. However, these two views, which evade the question of royal heritage, are rare. Among them, the opinion of Li Zhi was the more extreme. Although Li commented the ardent loyalty of Fang Xiaoru, he regarded Fang's pioneer role simply as his only contribution to the government of Emperor Jianwen.

The third view reflects the attitude of most of the historians of the Ming and Qing dynasties towards officials like Qi and Huang. Their opinions may be different in terms of the tactics used by Qi and Huang, but all of them affirmed the moral integrity of these officials who were executed after their defeat in the usurpation incident. The most detailed criticism was that by Zhu Guozhen. Zhu analyzed the situation before the usurpation, explaining the serious threat posed by the princes after Emperor Jianwen succeeded to the throne. At that time the power of Prince Yan was building up gradually, and it was natural for military confrontation to evolve. Under these circumstances, the strategy of officials like Qi and Huang was imperative. The historians agreed that the development of events was beyond personal control, and thus led ultimately to failure. Nevertheless, the officials, who were a model with their outstanding unique moral character, were respected.
(iii) Evaluation of Qi Tai, Huang Zicheng and Fang Xiaoru in MSCG

MSCG completely adopted the *lunzan* in Pan Lei's draft on Qi Tai and Huang Zicheng, whereas it held different views on Fang Xiaoru. Pan Lei's discussion of Fang Xiaoru was the longest, citing past and present evidence to illustrate Fang's unyielding integrity and the nature of the usurpation by Prince Yan.

The historians of MSCG show a sympathetic attitude towards Emperor Jianwen. They put blame on the weakness of officials like Qi Tai and Huang Zicheng. All three officials are criticized by the historians in terms of their political ability, but their personal integrity was unanimously affirmed.

In the beginning of the *lunzan*, the abilities of Emperor Jianwen were affirmed, pointing out that he was able to rule with lenience and to respect the intellectuals. The historians believed that Emperor Jianwen would have been a good ruler upholding the achievements of his predecessors if he had been assisted by experienced and prudent officials. They considered that officials such as Qi and Huang were responsible for the disaster of the usurpation. Their advocation of the policy of destroying the princes led to the discord among the clansmen, which thus gave Prince Yan an excuse to revolt. These two officials were further accused of lacking the thorough tactics and ability which were needed to carry out emergency measures during the uprising.

The historians also criticized Fang's recommendation that ancient ways be restored in the hope of improving the political situation at that time. However, his loyalty to the emperor and refusal to submit to the new emperor were highly praised and his execution deemed sacrificial.
(iv) Evaluation of Qi Tai, Huang Zicheng and Fang Xiaoru in MSEG

The content of the *lunzan* of MSEG was mainly based on MSCG with some alterations in the presentation. However, the historians totally disregarded Emperor Jianwen's abilities and the policies implemented by him and his officials, suggesting rather that the usurpation was an inevitable outcome of the developing circumstances.

Basically, two divergent views appear when comparing MSCG with MSEG. The first difference was that the historians of MSEG considered Emperor Jianwen to be a weak ruler without any capable officials by his side. Thus the officials were seem as responsible for the fall of Emperor Jianwen. Such analysis suggested that the ruler was powerless and that the situation demanded action from Prince Yan. In this way, subjective judgement of the succession issue of Prince Yan was avoided.

The other difference was in the comment on Fang Xiaoru. The historians of MSEG first pointed out that although Fang was keen to restore ancient ways, he was not an expert in political affairs. In the euology the historians also stated that Fang's greatest tragedy occurred after the usurpation, with his own death and the execution of all his relatives and friends. Although Fang died for a just cause, the historians regarded his death as meaningless in terms of the trust the previous emperor had placed in him to assist Emperor Jianwen and the state affairs of the Ming dynasty. This indirectly depreciated the value of Fang's sacrifice for his country.

(v) Evaluation of Qi Tai, Huang Zicheng and Fang Xiaoru in MS

Regarding the performance of the various officials of the Jianwen era before and after the usurpation, historians wrote both complimentary and depreciating *lunzan*. 
The MS historians make it clear from the beginning that gaining an empire was purely a decision made by heaven, and was not affected by the power of man. In this respect, Qi and Huang could not influence the success of Emperor Yongle. The historians then use this as a way of solving the problem of royal responsibility in the overthrow. They avoided impeaching Emperor Yongle and making any criticism of Emperor Jianwen.

Since the power of men had no influence, the historians were able to absolve the ministers from most of their responsibilities. They pointed out that the ministers who were sacrificed were faithful to the empire but failed to follow a submissive policy. Here the historians did not criticize the policy of the ministers in detail but reinforce their praise for their moral integrity. They particularly spoke highly of their death as martyrs, clarifying that they were different from those who die in disastrous circumstances but without having participated in political affairs.

The *lunzan* of MS ends with the conclusion "cannot be discussed according to the common concept of success or defeat" which states clearly the historians' point of view. This hints that historians in the past had made their criticism in accordance with accepted wisdom and that their conclusion were therefore not suitable. On the other hand, this explanation echoed the use of the mandate of heaven to interpret the transition from Emperor Jianwen to Emperor Yongle.

(vi) Commentary of Qi Tai, Huang Zicheng and Fang Xiaoru by Emperor Qianlong\textsuperscript{114}

The attitude of Emperor Qianlong towards the ministers in the usurpation was more tolerant than that of the MS historians. In his commentary, Emperor Qianlong emphasized the difficulties faced by the ministers and praised their conscientious patriotism.
Emperor Qianlong criticized Qi and Huang for advocating the policy of ousting the princes at the beginning of the Jianwen reign. He agreed that the inappropriateness of their policy arose from an inability to respond to an emergency. However, in the analysis of the situation before and after the usurpation, Emperor Qianlong pointed out the unfairness of earlier criticism of Qi and Huang. He noted that the launch of the attack on the prices by Qi and Huang was critical due to Emperor Jianwen’s dangerous situation, which was different from the case of Emperor Jing (188 - 41 B.C., reign 156 - 41 B.C.) in the Han dynasty.

Emperor Qianlong agreed with previous critics that Fang’s support for the idea of restoring ancient ways was high-sounding but impracticable. Nevertheless, he highly recommended the loyalty and moral integrity of Fang and considered these to be the fundamental qualities of an official. After the failure of the usurpation incident, the effort to revive the status of Emperor Jianwen and the uncompromising attitude shown in the arrest of the three officials were also especially praised by Emperor Qianlong.

Finally, Emperor Qianlong clearly deplored Emperor Yongle’s policy of executing officials who showed allegiance to the previous era.

The commentary of Emperor Qianlong was similar to that in the conclusion of MS. The historians of MS tried to avoid any comment about the emperors, thus indirectly absolving the officials from any responsibility in the overthrow. The difference in argument was related to the identity of the critic. Emperor Qianlong did not need to avoid mentioning the emperors. After his condemnation of the usurpation incident by Emperor Yongle, the unswerving loyalty of the officials was much valued.
4. The usurpation by the Prince of Yan: An analysis of the lunzan on Yao Guangxiao, Zhang Yu and Zhu Neng

Introduction

The most outstanding of Emperor Yongle’s worthy officials in the overthrow were Yao Guangxiao, Zhang Yu and Zhu Neng.\textsuperscript{120} However, the status of these officials is treated differently and inconsistently in various drafts of MS. In the drafts by Pan Lei, MSCG and MSEG, officials such as Zhang Yu and Zhu Neng are classified together with the other military generals and placed at the top of the list of the worthy officials,\textsuperscript{121} whereas Yao Guangxiao was grouped with fortune-tellers and listed at the end.\textsuperscript{122} This reflects that the historians of MSCG and MSEG did not set a high value on Yao. This feature was altered in the draft of Wang (MSG) which combined the two articles into one. Thus Yao, Zhang and Zhu are put together in first place among the worthy officials.\textsuperscript{123} Although the figures are reclassified in the biographies of MS, there was no change in the status of figures like Yao Guangxiao, amongst the first group of meritorious officials.\textsuperscript{124} The original script of Pan Lei no longer exists. Among the extant MSCG, MSEG, MSG and MS, all except MSG include lunzan at the end of the biographies. Together with the lunzan of the draft by Pan Lei, there was a total of four lunzan.\textsuperscript{125}

(i) Biographical notes on Yao Guangxiao, Zhang Yu and Zhu Neng

Yao Guangxiao (1335 - 1418) was a native of Changzhou (present day Suzhou of Jiangsu province).\textsuperscript{126} At the age of fourteen, he became a monk in a temple and assumed the name Daoyan. With the death of Empress Ma during the Hongwu reign, Yao was employed at the court of the Prince of Yan to recite sutras for the deceased empress, and became closely acquainted with Prince Yan. Later he followed Prince Yan to Beiping and became the abbot of
Qingyun Temple. Right after the succession of Emperor Jianwen to the throne, Yao urged Prince Yao to revolt. With the outbreak of the uprising, Yao assisted Prince Yan and was stationed in Beiping. Although Yao did not participate in any military matters, he affirmed all the important aspects of military strategy. When Prince Yan became Emperor Yongle, Yao was appointed head of the central Buddhist registry. Later Yao was in charge of the compilation of Taizu shilu and Yongle dadian [Collectanea of the Yongle period]. He died of illness in 1418 and was ennobled Duke of the Rong Kingdom with the posthumous name "Gongjing" (Humble and stable). In 1530, the tomb of Yao was moved from the temple of Emperor Yongle to the Temple of Great Prosperity.

Zhang Yu (1343 - 1400), alias Shimei, was a native of Xiangfu (present day Kaifeng of Henan province). In 1385, he joined the military expedition to the boundary region. As a military reward, he was promoted to the rank of Battalion Vice Commander of the Guard in Jinan and later became a favourite follower of Prince Yan. With the outbreak of the usurpation, Zhang led troops and suggested strategy. He defeated the armies of Geng Bingwen and Li Jinglong respectively. In 1400, Zhang died in action with the troops of Shen Yong and was granted the title Prince of Dongping with the posthumous name "Zhongxian".

Zhu Neng (1370 - 1406), alias Shihong, was a native of Huaiyuan (present day Huaiyuan of Anhui province). He inherited his father's post and later served in the official residence of Prince Yan. During the uprising, he was one of the first military officers to support Prince Yan, along with Zhang Yu. He led the army and defeated the troops of Geng Bingwen and Li Jinglong. During the war with Sheng Yong, Zhang Yu was killed in action. Zhu Neng protected Prince Yan who was able to break out of the encirclement and then further destroy the army of Pingan. After Emperor
Yongle ascended to the throne, Zhang was granted the title of Duke of the Cheng Kingdom. In 1406, Zhang led an army to conquer Annan (present day Vietnam) and died in the war. Emperor Yongle conferred on him the title Prince of Dongping with the posthumous name "Wulie".\textsuperscript{130}

(ii) Official and private evaluations of Yao Guangxiao, Zhang Yu and Zhu Neng prior to the compilation of MS

As officials of merit in the coup, Yao, Zhang and Zhu not only won high positions and great wealth but also were bestowed with posthumous titles, which privileges were also conferred on their descendants. Official evaluations until the end of the Ming dynasty continued to consider the three as outstanding officials who served in the Yongle era.\textsuperscript{131}

However, opinions about the three people varied. Historians were more unanimous in their evaluations on Zhu Neng and all approved his status as a celebrated general. In the \textit{lunzan} on the other two officials, the appraisals differed greatly.\textsuperscript{132} Eulogists such as He Qiaoyuan regarded them as outstanding officials, critics such as Fu Weilin censured them as traitors.

In \textit{Mingshan cang} [Scriptures of famous mountains], the three officials are listed in the top category of meritorious officials of the Yongle era. At the end of the biography, He Qiaoyuan compared Zhang and Zhu to the founding officials Xu Da and Chang Yuchun, and Yao Guangxiao to Liu Ji (1311 - 75). This discussion totally affirmed that the contribution of the three officials during the Yongle era. Moreover, the historians thought that the royal reception accorded to the three officials was even more courteous than that offered to Xu Da.\textsuperscript{133}

Fu Weilin, who held a different opinion, also regarded Zhu Neng as a military officer although his comment was not as complementary as He.\textsuperscript{134} However, Fu classified Zhang and Yao as undisciplined traitor and
heretic respectively. Fu regarded the government politics of the Jianwen era as quite stable and relations between the emperor and his officials harmonious. Under such circumstances, the organizers of the armed rebellion must have been motivated by events, otherwise those such as Zhang Yu, whose rebellion was out of keeping with the times, would not be grouped together with the undisciplined traitors. There was no lunzan at the end of the Biography of Yao Guangxiao. But in the general discussion of the Biography of Yijiao (heretic) in which Yao was included, Fu stated that those heretics caught the attention of people by the display of their technical abilities. Nevertheless, they were considered evil because they were wilful, despised etiquette and advocated the nirvana state of Buddhism. The text stated explicitly that the upheaval in Beiping was an outcome of an undue pursuit of Buddhism after the founding of the Ming dynasty.

(iii) Evaluation of Yao Guangxiao, Zhang Yu and Zhu Neng in MSCG

The lunzan of MSCG regarding Yao, Zhang and Zhu was copied entirely from the lunzan by Pan Lei.

In MSCG, the biographies of Zhang Yu and Zhu Neng were listed first in the biographies of the meritorious officials of the Yongle reign. The biography of Yao Guangxiao was listed at the end, after those meritorious officials involved in the usurpation. Although the three officials were classified as having rendered outstanding services, the historians' lunzan on them are not so good.

In the lunzan of Zhang Yu, the historians pointed out that Prince Yan's position as powerful enough to suppress the ruler had been created by Emperor Hongwuh. They stated that Emperor Hongwu's original idea of granting territories to Prince Yan to guard against aggression from the north. It was not expected that Prince Yan would "change sides and start the
internal mutiny". Here the phrase "change sides" reveals the view that Prince Yan's intention was to usurp the emperor.

Next the historians explained that officials like Zhang Yu were originally under the command of Prince Yan, and referred to Zhang and Zhu as "favourite lackeys". This clearly shows their close relation with Prince Yan and their evil nature. Here the historians absolved Emperor Jianwen and his officials from blame in failing to save the desperate situation, focusing instead on the unhelpful policy of Emperor Hongwu and the strength of Zhang and Zhu.

At the end of the lunzan, the historians used the example of Zhang Yu as the chief plotter dying in action as a reminder not to be the chief initiator in a plot for fear of suggested retribution for evil deeds.

In the Biography of Yao Guangxiao, the historians confirmed Yao's first place as the worthy official in charge of the conspiracy during the coup. Next they justified the good fortune of Yao in gaining the favour of Emperor Yongle by referring to ancient military advisors who died after rendering outstanding services. Here the historians contradicted the motive of the conspiracy and implied that Yao was rewarded even though he had done evil deeds. This kind of attitude was verified in the discussion at the end of the lunzan.

At the end of the lunzan, the historians used Yao's changeable approach towards the issue of executing Fang Xiaoru to point out the difference between Yao and Fang. The latter actually felt ashamed to be associated with Yao. Here the historians have not explained their classification. However, it was stated that among the figures in the same biography, Jin Zhong began life as a fortune-teller, Li Youzhi was a legal officer, Guo Zi was originally an official of Emperor Jianwen who was the
first to surrender to Prince Yan. This hints that there were officials of the period who were shameless like Yao. The historians then concluded that their contributions were not worth remembering.

(iv) Evaluation of Yao Guangxiao, Zhang Yu and Zhu Neng in MSEG

The MSEG historians' *lunzan* on the meritorious officials involved in Prince Yan's coup varied in their appraisals of Emperors Jianwen and Yongle. Since the MSEG appraisal attributed the cause of the overthrow to the misplaced policy of Emperor Jianwen, the uprising of Prince Yan was seen only as an action taken under the stress of circumstances. With this background, Prince Yan's officials and generals are regarded as assistants to the true ruler and not considered as instigators.

The first half of the *lunzan* in the MSEG biographies of Zhang Yu and Zhu Neng was basically a copy from MSCG with a few alterations in the written language. The greatest difference lay in the deletion of the last paragraph of MSCG in which the death of Zhang Yu before he could fulfill his plan of action was satirized. This was then replaced by a passage comparing the astuteness and bravery of Zhang Yu to Xu Da and Chang Yuchun. The historians further pointed out that the success of Prince Yan was natural since he obtained and appointed professional officials. Lastly, since the historians used the mandate of heaven to explain the success of Prince Yan, they also applied the term "hero gathering" to describe military generals such as Zhang Yu.

Although the historians of MSEG made no commendation of Yao Guangxiao, the *lunzan* are not as ironic in tone as those in MSCG. Right at the beginning of the *lunzan* in MSEG, it was clearly pointed out that Yao Guangxiao was an opportunist. The rest of the content was mostly based on MSCG but the narration of the elimination of those highly esteemed
military advisors and the contradiction of Yao Guangxiao, who pleaded earlier for Fang Xiaoru's exemption from execution, are both deleted. Under this kind of arrangement, the tactful criticism of Yao, in the context of the class origin and moral integrity of the figures in the same biography, was modest when compared with MSCG.

(v) Evaluation of Yao Guangxiao, Zhang Yu and Zhu Neng in MS

In the beginning of the lunzan, the historians first described the stable political situation of the Jianwen reign as a confirmation of the political achievements of Emperor Jianwen. Next they pointed out the mutiny of Prince Yan not only risked universal condemnation, but was also not a surefire plan at that time. By means of outlining the situation during the uprising, the historians described the contribution of the various officials in establishing Emperor Yongle as monarch. Yao was responsible for the action planning and devising strategy, and Zhang died in action. However, the historians stated that the success of the upheaval was due to the inclination of heavenly will. In this context, this gathering of talented people coinciding as it did with the current situation, contributed to the outstanding service of the officials, and was a matter of fate. Here the fate referred to the various officials' knowing such a clear-sighted emperor at the right time, unlike the fate of elimination as mentioned in MSEG. This arrangement not only emphasized the rightful succession of the ruler, but also concealed the actual contribution of the military officers and officials. This then prevented any royal suspicion falling on the highly esteemed officials.

The historians also avoided any evaluation of Emperor Jianwen and Yongle in this lunzan. They stated explicitly the risk of universal condemnation by Emperor Yongle in confirming the legitimate status of Emperor Jianwen. However, they also used the mandate of heaven to clear Prince Yan from the wicked name of usurper, and to confirm his rightful
inheritance. As regards officials like Yao and Zhang, the historians tried not to mention controversial issues such as their class origin and moral integrity. There was also no appraisal of these officials as found in MSEG. The status of worthy officials in MS was only based on their contribution to the success of the mutiny.¹⁴⁴

(vi) Commentary on Yao Guangxiao by Emperor Qianlong¹⁴⁵

Because he disapproved of the usurpation action of Emperor Yongle, Emperor Qianlong's criticism on Yao Guangxiao, who advocated the overthrow, was very severe.

Emperor Qianlong used the term "treacherous parties of Prince Yan" to describe the officials involved in the coup. This clearly identified which officials he had in mind. He considered that the other officials had only chimed in, and that they could not be regarded chiefly as treacherous offenders. However, Yao Guangxiao's request to serve Prince Yan during the Hongwu era clearly showed his malicious intentions. Later Yao used the "heavenly way" to persuade Prince Yan to start the mutiny which finally led to the outbreak of the war. Yao was not only responsible for the downfall of Emperor Jianwen's regime but also for the eternally evil name of Emperor Yongle. Thus Emperor Qianlong considered Yao to be the chief offender and that his crime was even more cunning than those of military advisors of old.

Lastly Emperor Qianlong clearly stated that the common term "dead" instead of the more elegant "passed away" would be used to describe the death of Yao. This was a matter of historical record and regulation, as a warning to any future traitors and usurpers.
The most detailed account of the two cases in the Ming dynasty is the imperial edition of *Zhaoshi jiantang lu* [Record of public declaration of treacherous parties] with three *juan*, and *Nichen lu* with five *juan*. The former compiled the criminal cases of figures such as Hu Weiyong. The latter recorded the statements of the accused parties of Lan Yu. See Li Jinhua (1932), pp. 12 & 18. The two records still continued over into the early Qing dynasty. See Huang Yuji (1990), 10/26. However, they are no longer extant. The existing official record is TZSL. Since the cases were to be covered up, the work on the above-mentioned records evaded the crucial issues. Their texts are also contradictory with later historical facts which could not be taken word for word. For details see Qian Qianyi, pp. 189-238, Pan Chengzhang, pp. 85-138 and Li Qing, pp. 2610-3. The evaluation of the two cases of Hu and Lan prior to the compilation of MS in early Qing period mainly added some criticism after the narration of their biographical notes. Monographic analyses are given by Pan Chengzhang and Li Qing. Both of them have consulted *Zhaoshi jiantang lu* and *Nichen lu*. They also use examples to illustrate the contradictions in the two books. Right after the compilation of MS, Zhao Yi raised an objection and reiterated the views of Pan and Li. For further details see Zhao Yi, pp. 467-9. Up until the modern times, the most detailed discussion on the two cases are given by Wu Han (1934), pp. 163-205, (1976), pp. 158-173 and Zhu Hong (1984), pp. 595-658. The other figures who proposed different opinions include Huang Xiaoping, pp. 139-61; Chen Xinquan (1983), pp. 85-92 and Zhu Ziyian, pp. 63-8. Japanese and English discussions include Danjoh, pp. 1-84; Farmer, pp. 80-6; Dreyer, pp. 100-6, 140-7; Albert Chan, p. 16 and DMB, pp. 638-41, 788-91. John Langlais summarised the achievements of predecessors in a history of the Hongwu period of the Ming dynasty in the Cambridge History of China. Langlois. p. 172.

For details see Zhao Yi, pp. 467-9; Pan Chengzhang, p. 99.

The Biography of Lan Yu can be found in MSCG, v. 7, 351/76; MSEG, v. 45, 164/1-7b; MSG, v. 3, 113/132-4 and MS, v. 13, 132/3859-71. The Biography of Hu Weiyong is listed in the Biography of Jianchen in MSCG, v. 62, 294/1-44a (This *juan* is missing in MSCG and is now replaced by the one in MS); Biography of Jianchen, Part 1, in MSEG, v. 94, 401/1-13b; Biography of Jianchen, Part 1, in MSG, v. 7, 286/32-4 and Biography of Jianxhen, in MS, v. 26, 308/7905-8.

Pan Kai, 5/1a-4a.

Xu Qianxue suggested: 'There is one biography containing a few to nearly a hundred biographical pieces [in previous historical records,] ... now I followed this *Suzhi* [Local record of Sichuan] precedent. In the biographies of Hu and Lan, we could include biographical pieces of associated personages ... so as to simplify the organization and avoid the omission of related figures.' See Liu Chenggan, 2/8ab.
6 The Biography of Lan Yu in Pan Lei's draft, MSCG and MSEG all include Cao Zhen, Zhang Yi, Zhang Wan, Chen Yuan, Zhu Shou and Cao Xing. See Pan Lei, 11/3b; MSCG, v. 7, 35/1-7b; MSCG, v. 45, 164/1-7b.

7 The Biography of Lan Yu in MSG actually combined the two biographies of MSEG, 163 & 164 and 84 & 85 of MSCG. See MSCG, v. 7, 34/1-13b, 35/1-7b; MSEG, v. 45, 163/1-13b, 164/1-7b; MSG, v. 3, 118/132-4.

8 The official historians of MS combined Lan Yu and the six personages in Lan's associated biographies in MSG with other five figures, namely Zhu Liangzu, Zhou Dexing, Wang Bi, Xie Cheng and Li Xin. MS, v. 13, 132/3859-71. The earliest draft of Wang Bi by an individual official historian can still be found in the collected works of Wang Wan, 36/18b-20b.

9 There is no lunzan in MSG. The other lunzan can be found in Pan Lei, 11/3b; MSCG, v. 7, 35/7b; MSEG, v. 45, 164/7b; MS, v. 13, 132/3871.


18 Due to restriction on the political and historical data in the early Ming period, discussion on the historical events are mainly made by the official historians in the subsequent Jiajing and Wanli periods. The current historical events such as the two cases of Hu and Lan and the usurpation incident were related to the taboo of the court. Since the literary inquisition was very strict at that time, ordinary official historians dared not get bogged down in the quagmire of justice. See Wang Chongwu(1969), pp. 1-4. On the other hand, since the official account solely covered up everything, it could not be completely believed. See Wu Han(1976), pp. 296-301, 326-38; Chan Hok-lam(1981), pp. 512-6. Furthermore, official records such as MSL were only widely disseminated in the Xuande era. See Huang Zhijun, 28/14a; Tso Keungming(1985), p. 11.

19 Please refer to note 1.

20 Li Zhi, 4/77.

21 There is also no criticism about Emperor Hongwu in the evaluation of Lan Yu by Yin Shouheng. In Chengzu shilu [Veritable records of Emperor Yongle], there is also a record
that after Lan Yu failed to appease Emperor Yongle by presenting horses, he drove a wedge between the royal prince and his brother. Then Yin followed Lan's opportunistic conduct by trying to make up to the emperor, pointing out that Lan may not have pledged loyalty to the royal prince during the usurpation. Yin Shouheng, 27/12ab. However, since there are problems regarding the affair of the presentation of horses in the two written records, this saying is not taken seriously by later generations. The origin of the case is Fengtian jingnan ji [A record of the suppress in ordered from on high]. Most of the later historians considered the case as a sheer fabrication and did not adopt it. See Yang Chun, 2/24a; Fu Heng et al., v. 339, 101/233; Wang Chongwu, pp. 7-8; Kahn(1972), pp. 24-5.

22 Tan Qian(1958), 10/740; Pan Chengzhang, pp. 99-100; Li Qing, pp. 2610-3; He Qiaoyuan, v. 10, pp. 3168-9; Gu Yingtai, v. 1, 13/132-3. Cha Jizuo thought that Prince Yan was suspected of making a false charge. See Cha Jizuo, v. 2, 8/1441.

23 Fu Weilin, 96/1948.

24 MSCG, v. 7, 35/7b.

25 Pan Lei, 11/3b.

26 Xu Qianxue in his submitted Xiushi tiaoyi (Discussion on the compilation in note form) emphasized that the evaluation of the cases of Hu and Lan must be based on official records of the Ming dynasty such as Nichen lu. Liu Chenggan, 2/2b-3a.

27 The suggestion was submitted around 1687 when Xu Qianxue was appointed as Director-General. However, his suggestion was not considered seriously by official historians in the MHI and MSCG, while MSEG continued to include criticism of Ming emperors. For details please refer to the following analysis of the lunzan in MSCG and MSEG.

28 The quotation is from the Xiaojing. See Ruan Yuan, v. 2, p. 2547.

29 MSEG, v. 45, 164/76.

30 Here MSEG criticized the introduction of MSCG but without quoting its original text. This shows that the drafts were not polished in detail. Thus the draft was not a finalized edition intended for presentation. MSEG, v. 45, 164/7b.

31 Xiong Cilü(1), 6/27a-28a.

32 In 1687 historians such as Xu Wenyuan presented eight volumes of MS for the appraisal of Emperor Kangxi. Kangxi ordered Xiong Cilü to make criticism on the versions presented. In 1692 Emperor Kangxi made criticism based on the evaluation of Xiong. Thus Xiong's remarks must have been made between 1687-92. See Zhongguo diyi lishi danganguan (1984), p. 1613; QSL, v. 5, 154/700.

33 QSL, v. 5, 154/700.

34 MS, v. 13, 132/3871.
In MS, official historians had the same euphemism cited by Fu Weilin in the discussion of Lan Yu. See note 25.


Fu Heng et al., 100/52a-53b, 101/24a-25a, 101/28b-29a.

In 1777 Emperor Qianlong ordered the revision of MS. The official historians at that time pointed out that the deaths of more than half of the deceased figures in the case of Lan Yu were justified. This opinion is slightly different from Emperor Qianlong’s. Wang Songwei, p. 65.

After the usurpation of Prince Yan, the throne of the Ming regime shifted from the descendants of Emperor Jianwen to those of Emperor Yongle. In the official records of the Ming dynasty, the reign of Emperor Jianwen was even abolished. Wu Chihua(2), pp. 350-5; Wu Chihua(3), pp. 365-71.


Wang Chongwu (1969), p. 1-4; Huang Zhijun, 28/14ab. The text of Zhang Guangkai quoted the records by Li Zhi and Xia Xie. However, these records were also based on official records and fall short of the reality. Thus here the statement of Wang and Huang is adopted. Zhang Guangkai, pp. 44-7.


Xu Jiayan drafted Jianwen diji (Imperial Annal of Emperor Jianwei), Zhu Yizun drafted Ming wenhuangdi ji (Imperial Annal of Emperor Yongle), 3 juan. See Yang Chun, 2/13a; Zhu Yizun (1889), 32/404-6, 46/549. According to Zhu’s statement, the source of the material on which each was based is divergent. Zhu based his views on MSL and did not believe those works written by supporters of Emperor Jianwen whereas Xu’s opinion is different.

The Imperial Annal of Emperor Jianwen is found in MSCG, v. 2, 5/1-11a; MSEG, v. 2, 5/1-12a; MSG, v. 1, 4/24-7; MS, v. 1, 4/59-66; MSBJ, v. 1, 4/1a-9b. Parts I and II of the Imperial Annal of Emperor Yongle are found in MSCG, v. 8, 6/1-23a, 1-23b; MSEG, v. 3, 6/1-24a, 7/1-24a; MSG, v. 1, 5/28-41; MS, v. 1, 5/69-7/105; MSBJ, v. 1, juan 5-7.
The *lunzan* of the *Imperial Annal of Emperor Jianwen* is found in MSEG, v. 2, 5/11a-129; MS, v. 1, 4/66; MSBJ, v. 1, 4/9ab. The *lunzan* of the *Imperial Annal of Emperor Yongle* is found in MSEG, v. 3, 7/23b-24a; MS, v. 1, 7/105; MSBJ, v. 1, 7/12b.

For details of the discussion on the posthumous title of Emperor Jianwen in the Qianlong era, see QSL, v. 9, 20/494-5, 34; Lan Qianqiu, 17/10ab. Emperor Jianwen was granted "Huizong" as the name of his ancestral temple and the posthumous title "Rang huangti" by Emperor Hongguang of Southern Ming dynasty. For details on the posthumous title of Emperor Jianwen granted in the late Ming and Qing period, see Wu Chi-hua(2), pp. 359-62.


For the course of event during the overthrow, please refer to Wang Chongwu(1969), pp. 43-102; Meng Sen(1981), pp. 84-95; David Chan, pp. 31-86; Chan Hok-lam(1988), pp. 196-202.


For details of the compilation process of the imperial annals of Emperors Yongle and Jianwen, see Wu Han(1986), pp. 326-35. For details of the alteration of historical facts by Emperor Yongle, see Wang Chongwu's *Fengtian jingnan jizhu* and (1969), pp. 2, 6-8, 108-23; Kahn, pp. 22-9; Chan Hok-lam(1988), pp. 214-8. In the introduction to *Ming Chengzu yu Yongle zhengzhi* [Emperor Yongle and the politics of the Yongle period], Zhu Hong criticized those scholars who believed that Emperor Yongle had altered historical facts. However, the examples and explanation used in his books illustrated that Emperor Yongle resorted to every conceivable means to alter and fabricate history. This was a careless oversight. Zhu Hong(1988), pp. 10, 44, 246. As regards the discussion
on the alteration of the historical facts relating to Emperor Yongle's mother, please refer to Xu Hong, pp. 407-9.

52 Wang Chongwu, 1/16-7; MSL(TZSL2), 1/3a.
54 Wang Chongwu, 1/26-38, (1969), pp. 18-24; MSL(TZSL2), 2/2a-4a, 5/2a-4a.
55 MSL(TZSL2), 9b/3b.
56 There are two questions subjected to discussion by later historians about the usurpation of Prince Yan: the whereabouts of Emperor Jianwen and the nature of the usurpation incident. The outcome of the former question directly influenced the historians' judgement of the nature of the incident. The official view towards the whereabouts of Emperor Jianwen is that the emperor committed suicide for the country during the battle. See MSL(TZSL2), 9b/3b. Some of the historians suggested that Emperor Jianwen succeeded in escaping and became as a monk. Each of these two statements has its own basis. At present due to the lack of historical materials, a precise conclusion is hard to draw. Some historians who believed that Emperor Jianwen did not die clearly categorised the event as a usurpation. For research on the two above-mentioned questions, see note 47 and the discussion by historians of the Ming and Qing dynasties in this section. During the compilation process of MS, there are also different views on the fate of Emperor Jianwen. All three drafts, MSCG, MSEG and MSG, followed the view of MSL and at the same time pointed out that the popular rumour that Emperor Jianwen had become a monk was actually a disguise invented by other people. See MSCG, v. 2, 5/10a-11a; MSEG, v. 2, 5/10a-11b; MSG, v. 1, 4/27. At the beginning, MS stated that Emperor Jianwen was missing, then it stated that the corpse of the emperor was found by the people despatched by Emperor Yongle. This record is obviously contradictory. See MS, v. 1, 4/66. Huang Yunmei attributed this contradiction to the different views of the historical materials given in the two imperial annals drafted by Xu Jiayan and Zhu Yizun. In fact the inconsistency is a compilation loophole created by the official historians of the Yongzheng period. See Huang Yunmei(1979), v. 1, p. 57. MSBJ consulted Yupi lidai tongjian qinan and further pointed out precisely that Emperor Yongle's despatch of people to disguise a corpse as Emperor Jianwen was an act designed to cheat the world. Fu Heng et al., 101/56b; MSBJ, 4/8b.
57 Although Cui Xian, Chen Jiru, Gao Dai and He Qiaoyuan were sympathetic to the predicament of Emperor Jianwen, they considered that the fault lay with himself. Their view was that Emperor Jianwen ran counter to ordinary policies and neglected to give due consideration to his family members. On the other hand, the abilities of Emperor Jianwen and his officials were less good than those of Emperor Yongle. His defeat in the usurpation incident was thus inevitable. Tan Qian(1958), 12/838, 842-3; He
Qiaoyuan, v. 16, pp. 5073-6. Li Weizhen put the blame fully on the inefficiency of the ministers of the Jianwen reign. Tan Qian(1958), 12/839. Li Zhi even suggested the emperor and officials of the Jianwen era contributed to Emperor Yongle's urge to succeed, and to the subsequent establishment of the flourishing age of the Yongle era. Li Zhi, 5/84.

In general, historians adopted the middle way. Their criticism avoided any direct discussion of the responsibility of the two emperors. They only recounted the events of the usurpation incident. They attributed it to the mandate of heaven, or arbitrarily adopted a balance argument and considered that neither emperor bore any responsibility. These historians include Zheng Xiao, Yuan Maoqian, Tan Qian and Zhu Guozhen. Tan Qian(1958), 12/838-43. Fu Weilin and Cha Jizuo offered no discussion on this subject. See Fu Weilin, 5/78; Cha Jizuo, v. 1, 2/70, 3/96.

Gu Yingtai, 16/19b.

Although the evaluation of the two emperors by the official historians of MSCG is not entirely similar with that in MSL, the official record of the Ming dynasty, the narration of the fate of Emperor Jianwen is entirely based on MSL. Please refer to note 56.

The official historians of MSEG also entirely based on MSL their account of the fate of Emperor Jianwen. Please refer to note 56.
to the usurpation incident, the official historians also avoid any evaluation of the responsibility of the two emperors by referring to the mandate of heaven. MS, v. 13, 141/4029-30, 145/4097. Perhaps because of this attitude, the narration of the fate of Emperor Jianwen in MS is not entirely based on MSL. Please refer to note 56.

78 MS, v. 1, 4/66.
79 MS, v. 1, 7/105.
80 Fu Heng *et al.*, 101/19a-20a, 21b-22a, 23a, 24a-25a, 34b-37a, 40a-42a, 52a, 102/12b-13b, 28ab, 38b-39a, 41ab; Hongli, 6/1a-4b.
81 *Ibid*, 101/23a, 24a-25a, 52a, 102/12b-13b, Hongli, 6/3a-4a.
85 *Ibid*, 101/40ab, 52a; Hongli, 6/4a.
88 Pan Lei, 11/1a-25b.
91 Biographies of worthy officials of the usurpation incident are listed in MSCG, *juan* 54-62, whereas biographies of the officials of the Jianwen era are listed in *juan* 63-8.
92 Biographies of worthy officials of the usurpation incident are listed in MSEG, *juan* 189-97 (MSCG, 54-62) whereas the biographies of the officials of the Jianwen era are listed in *juan* 183-8 (MSCG, 63-8).
93 Wang combined MSEG, *juan* 83, 85 which is MSCG (63, 64).
94 Pan Lei, 11/11b, 12ab; MSCG, v. 11, 68/1a-11b; MSEG, v. 48, 183/1a-12a; MS, v. 13, 141/4013-30.
95 Jiao Hong, v. 3, 38/11a-12a; DMB, v. 1, pp. 224-7.
96 *Ibid*, v. 5, 70/7a-8b; Li Zhi, 5/84.
97 Fang Xiaoru, v. 1, pp. 11a-22a; Jiao Hong, v. 2, 20/50a-56b; DMB, v. 1, pp. 426-33.
99 MSL(TZSL2), 9b/8b.
100 Fang Xiaoru, v. 16, p. 1ab. For the grant of the Southern Ming and Qing dynasties to Fang, see DMB, v. 1, p. 432.
Criticism is made by Xu Xiangqing, Yuan Zhi, Qian Shisheng, Cha Jizuo and Yin Shouheng. For the evaluation of the first three historians, see Tan Qian(1958), 12/857-8. The rest are found in Cha Jizuo, v. 3, 12a/1810, v. 4, 25/2486; Yin Shouheng, 82/4b.

Commendations to Fang Xiaoru are made by Yuan Zhi, Wang Tingxiang, Gu Lin, Wang Shizhen and Cha Jizuo. The first four appraisals are found in Tan Qian(1958), 12/858-9. For the last comment see Cha Jizuo, v. 2, 9a/1470-1.

Same as note 101.

This statement is made by Xu Bida and Qian Shisheng. See Tan Qian(1958), 12/858, 860.

Gu Yingtai, 18/206-19.

Li Zhi, 5/84, 87.


MSCG, v. 11, 63/11b.

Pan Lei, 11/11b, 12ab.

Ibid, 11/12ab.

MSCG, v. 48, 183/11b-12a.


Fu Heng, 101/23a, 34b-36a, 38b-39a, 40a-41b, 58a-59a.

Ibid, 101/34b-35a.

Ibid, 101/35b-36a, 40a-41b.

Ibid, 101/33b-34b, 58a-59a.

Ibid, 101/23a, 38b-39a, 58ab.

Fu Heng et al., 101/58a-59a, 60ab. Perhaps for this reason, later Emperor Qianlong granted the posthumous title "Zhongwen" (Loyalty and culture) to Fang Xiaoru. DMB, v. 1, p. 432.

MS, v. 13, 145/4088.

Pan Lei, 11/15b-16a, 17b-18a; MSCG, v. 10, 54/1a-21a; MSEG, v. 43, 189/1a-24a.

MSCG, v. 10, 58/1a-10a; MSEG, v. 49, 198/1a-10a.

MSG, v. 3, 134/262-6. MSG had combined three biographies of early drafts into one. MSEG, juan 189, 190, 93; MSCG, juan 5, 55, 58.

MS, v. 13, 145/4079-97.

MSCG, v. 10, 54/20b-21a, 58/10ab; MSEG, v. 49, 189/23b-24a, 193/10b; MS, v. 13, 141/4097; Pan Lei, 11/15b-15a, 17b-18a.

127 MSL(TZSL2), v. 9, 12b/5a-6b; Jiao Hong, v. 1, 5/61a-63b; Li Zhi, 9/154-5.
128 The posthumous title of Zhang Yu was later changed to "Zhongwu", meaning "protect the emperor at the risk of one's life and resist foreign aggression". Bao Yingao, juan shang, 19b.
129 Jiao Hong, v. 1, 5/45a-48a; Li Zhi, 9/155-6.
130 The meaning of the posthumous title is 'credits to put down rebellion and reassure the public'. See Bao Yingao, juan shang, 16a.
131 See notes 122 & 124.
132 The legend of the highly esteemed officials of the usurpation incident and the supporting officials of Emperor Jianwen are opposite. The evaluation of the former worsens in later ages. See Wang Chongwu(1969), pp. 39-42. The historians of the Ming and Qing dynasties who eulogized figures such as Yang, Yao and Zhang include Wang Shizhen, Li Zhi, He Qiaoyuan, Yin Shouheng and Cha Jizuo. See Tan Qian(1958), 16/1151; Li Zhi, 9/151; He Qiaoyuan, v. 11, p. 3326; Yin Shouheng, 40/3b; Cha Jizuo, v. 4, 16/2238, 2240-41. Those who make criticism include Tan Qian and Fu Weilin. See Tan Qian(1958), 16/1151; Fu Weilin, 140/2788-90, 161/3172-4, 160/3155-9; Cha Jizuo, v. 4, 16/2234-5, 16/2238.
133 He Qiaoyuan, v. 11, p. 3326.
134 Fu Weilin, 140/2788-90.
136 Fu Weilin, 161/3174.
138 Pan Lei, 11/15b-16a, 17b-18a.
139 MSCG, v. 10, 54/1a-21a.
140 Ibid, v. 10, 58/1a-10b.
141 MSEG, v. 48, 189/23b-24a.
142 For the change of the evaluation of Emperors Jianwen and Yongle in MSEG, please refer to Chapter 7, section 2, (iv), pp. 147-8.
143 MS, v. 13, 145/4097.
144 There are divergent evaluation of figures such as Yao and Zhang among the official historians of MS. Lan Qianqiu criticized these figures as mutinous traitors. Lan Qianqiu, 18/20ab.
145 Fu Heng et al., 102/41a-42a. There is no criticism on Zhang Yu and Zhu Neng by Emperor Qianlong.
Chapter 8: Comparative studies of the *lunzan* of MSCG, MSEG, and MS -- Part Two

1. An analysis of the *lunzan* of the Biography of Yang Hong

Introduction

The earliest extant Biography of Yang Hong is in the biographical drafts by Tang Bin. In that biography Yang Hong was listed together with Guo Deng and Zhu Yong. In MSCG figures like Shi Heng (? - 1460) and Zhu Qian are added. Later MSEG and MSG inherited the arrangement of MSCG. On this basis, MS increased the number of figures and added personages such as Sun Tang and Fan Guang. With the exception of MSG, all the other versions included a *lunzan* at the end of each chapter.

(i) Biographical notes on Yang Hong

Yang Hong (1381 - 1451), alias Zongdao, was a native of Liuhe (present day Jiangsu province). During the Yongle era he rendered outstanding military service and was promoted to the rank of Battalion Commander. In the Xuande period he was in charge of guarding the northern frontier. He was appointed as the Mobile Corps Commander in the early years of the Tianshun era, and expanded the defence forces. At that time the great generals of early Ming had either died or retired. Thus Yang Hong's was an important position in the regime.

During Yang Hong's defence of the frontier, he first defeated Oirat and captured the minister of Oirat. Later he suggested the reinforcement of the city of Kaiping and expansion of Longmen Battalion. In 1444 he defeated Oirat once again and was appointed as Left Commissioner-in-chief.
During the Tumu Incident, Esen captured the Emperor and despatched orders to Yang Hong requesting the opening of the city gate. Yang refused to obey the order and was later ennobled as Earl of Changping under Emperor Jingtai. He continued to hold fast to his position and later joined with Sun Tang to defeat Esen as he was forced to retreat under unfavourable circumstances. Yang then suggested three schemes for resisting the invaders, all of which were accepted. He died of illness in 1451 and was granted the title of Duke of the Yong Kingdom. Since Yang Hong had rendered such outstanding service in resisting foreign enemies, he was granted posthumously the title "Wuxiang".

(ii) Official and private evaluations of Yang Hong prior to the compilation of MS

Yang Hong was an important general with military credits accumulated during the Zhengtong and Jingtai eras. In MSL there was a biography of Yang but no lunzan. Historians of the Ming and Qing dynasties gave very positive appraisals of Yang Hong. They mainly commended Yang's assistance in stabilizing the situation after the Tumu Incident by sticking fast to his position in the national defence. They also regarded Yang as a modest and prudent official. Yuan Zhi pointed out that there was no prolonged fighting during the invasion of Oirat mainly because of the threat of counter-attack from Yang. The stability of the first years of the Jingtai era was due to Yu Qian's good planning in the central administration, Shi Heng's high combat effectiveness and Yang Hong's strong defence. Here Yuan Zhi argued in favour of the strategy of defence instead of combat which was advocated by Yang Hong. Yuan analyzed Yang's military position and stated that due to Yang's occupation of a strategic fortress, it would have been unwise to start a
war which, in case of defeat, would endanger the capital. Cha Jizuo added that those criticisms that existed about Yang Hong were only laymen's remarks and thus could not form a basis for serious consideration. He also pointed out that Yang Hong was comparatively more modest and amiable than Shi Heng, and that his outstanding services formed a legacy which could be handed down. The two above-mentioned aspects are also the crucial points of discussion in MSCG, MSEG and MS.

(iii) Evaluation of Yang Hong in MSCG

The MSCG historians highly praised the contributions of figures such as Yang Hong and Shi Heng.

The first half of the lunzan analysed in detail the military situation during the Zhengtong era of the Ming dynasty. At that time the regime suffered heavy casualities of thousands of troops at Yanghe and Jierling. During the Tumu Incident, half a million troops were surrendered. Officers and equipment were so severely depleted after the several defeats that Oirat considered the fall of the Ming dynasty was inevitable.

Under such grim circumstances, officers like Yang and Shi rearranged the tired armies in order to protect the territory. Due to their efforts, the aggressive Oirat suffered setbacks. Although at that time the Ming regime enjoyed no important military victories, the historians pointed out that what might have happened to the safety of the capital and the fate of Emperor Zhengtong without the protection of the defensive efforts of those generals will never be known. Thus the historians regarded the awards given to those generals as very appropriate in light of their contributions.

(iv) Evaluation of Yang Hong in MSEG

The lunzan of MSEG and MSCG are different in the written language used, but the content of MSEG was mostly based on MSCG. The lunzan of MSEG mainly discussed the military merits of the generals. Their moral characters are only partially referred to in the last paragraph.

The historians of MSEG simplified the description of the military situation of the Zhengtong era. However, they still confirmed the grim situation of that time. Historians attributed the presence of those generals to the will of Heaven and the ancestral blessings. They had high regard for the contributions of officials such as Yang and Zhi in their efforts to protect the territory. According to their analysis of the current situation, the historians also agreed that rewarding these officials according to their military services was quite justified.

The greatest difference between MSCG and MSEG lay in the last paragraph of the lunzan of MSEG. After analysing the rewards given to the outstanding generals, it was pointed out that some figures such as Shi Heng found special favour and became swollen with pride. These factors later caused trouble and resulted in "the eventual execution". The historians stated that those persons did not possess the quality of "remaining persevering and modest" after accomplishing outstanding services. Here they defined the standards of official conduct by discussing the weakness of several generals.

(v) Evaluation of Yang Hong in MS

The contributions of officials such as Yang Hong are affirmed by MS. However, it was considered that their rewards were excessive relative to their achievements.
The *lunzan* of MS has no analysis of the national situation before and after the Tumu Incident, nor of the contributions of figures like Yang Hong in defending the territory and in the change of the military situation. The official historians only mentioned that persons like Yang Hong were able to exert themselves during those chaotic times. However, their achievements contributed to their being granted hereditary titles of marquis. Therefore, having played down the achievements, the official historians naturally considered the reward as excessive.

Next the *lunzan* concentrated on the analysis of the relationship between the moral integrity of people such as Yang Hong, and their fate. Yang was modest while Shi Heng was an arrogant favourite. The latter's behaviour led to the catastrophe of his whole clan, which was deemed a natural end. As for the other noteworthy officials treated in the same biography, some were courageous but some suffered misfortune. The official historians attributed this lack of set pattern to the mandate of heaven.

When comparing the *lunzan* of MSCG, MSEG and MS, we witness the evaluation of Yang Hong and other figures steadily worsening. The reason for this was that the historians who came after the period of compiling MSCG began to judge the officials according to a code of conduct. The historians of MSEG only added some observations at the end of the *lunzan*, whereas the historians of MS used this code of conduct throughout to re-evaluate those figures. The contributions of generals such as Yang Hong in protecting the frontier were, therefore, considered part of the proper responsibility of an official, while the granting of rewards was regarded as charity coming from the emperor.
In some sections of evaluation of the generals, the official historians only described their merits and rewards without analysing the background of the rise and decline of their careers. They referred to the mandate of heaven in regard to the fate of these generals. This painstakingly eliminates any possibility of criticizing the Emperor. Another prominent change in MS was the deletion of the analysis on the military situation of the Ming dynasty. Perhaps the official historians did not want to highlight the achievements of the generals. Another reason was that this also avoided any association with the official achievements of the emperor.

(vi) Commentary on Yang Hong by Emperor Qianlong

Emperor Qianlong has no commentary of Yang Hong in *Yupi lidai tongjian jilan*. However, the intention of Emperor Qianlong could be gleaned from his criticism on Guo Deng, a contemporary general of Yang Hong.15 Emperor Qianlong omitted the discussion on the military merits of Guo Deng and analysed in detail Guo's crime of refusing to admit Emperor Zhengtong who was seized by Esen during a direct confrontation as a means of inducing a capitulation. According to Emperor Qianlong, whenever the matter of an emperor is concerned, everything else should become less important. He clearly indicated that a subordinate should give the rescue of the ruler the highest priority when the ruler was tightly encircled by enemy troops. Subjects could not use the excuse of national security considerations to shirk their responsibility or to appoint another ruler. With this kind of standard in mind, the military achievements of Guo Deng were only his duties and not especially meritorious services. Besides, his refusal to save the Emperor was a serious crime.
2. An analysis of the *lunzan* of the *Biography of Yu Qian*

Introduction

Yu Qian was the most important official during the Zhengtong and Jingtai period of the Ming dynasty. After the outbreak of the Tumu Incident, Yu persisted in staying in Beijing to defend the capital against Esen and save the dangerous and declining situation of the regime.\(^{16}\) It was with the support of Yu Qian that Emperor Jingtai (1428 - 57, reign 1450 - 57) ascended to the throne, and thus the Emperor agreed to most of Yu's suggestions. Although Yu's contribution to the Ming dynasty was great, he was killed for a treacherous crime after Emperor Zhengtong re-ascended to the throne. The official historians have quite a lot to say about the exploits of this historical figure.

The extant biographies of Yu Qian are the two versions by official historians Fang Xiangying and Tang Bin.\(^{17}\) Comparatively speaking, the style of the Fang version maintains the ancient epitaph form with only one figure in one biography. This was the earliest version.\(^{18}\) The content of the Tang version was based on Fang's with the addition of a *lunzan* at the end of the biography.\(^{19}\) This composition was re-coordinated in MSCG and MSEG. Apart from Yu Qian, the two versions added the figures of Wang Zhi and Hu Ying to form a new set of biographies, and the associated biographies include figures such as Wu Ning.\(^{20}\) Up until the compilation of MSG, the biographies of Wang and Hu were deleted and replaced by Wang Hong.\(^{21}\) Both Wang Zhi and Wang Hong were the scholar-officials during the Jingtai and Tianshun periods. In MS *Biography of Yu Qian* included merely the biographical details of Yu Qian.\(^{22}\) All the above-mentioned versions have a *lunzan*, with the exception of the biography by Fang and
The *lunzan* in the various versions all concentrated on the discussion of Yu Qian.

(i) Biographical notes on Yu Qian

Yu Qian (1398 - 1457), alias Tingyi, was a native of Qiantang (present day Hangzhou of Zhejiang province). In 1421 he obtained the *jinshi* degree. During the early years of Xuande he was appointed as Censor and later sent to appease Jiangxi and other provinces. With the death of senior officials such as Yang Shiqi (1365 - 1444), Yang Pu (1372 - 1446) and Yang Rong (1371 - 1440), the eunuch Wang Zhen (? - 1449) was in power. In 1448, Yu took up the post of Left Vice Minister in the Ministry of War. Next year Esen launched an invasion. Wang Zhen supported the emperor's idea of going on a personal expedition. This idea was strongly opposed by Yu Qian and other favourite officials but in vain. After the defeat in the Tumu incident, Yu Qian advocated the defence policy and became Minister of the Ministry of War. Next Yu requested the appointment of Prince Cheng as Emperor. In 1450, Yu Qian supervised the troops in their resistance and defeat of Esen. In order to prevent further invasion by Esen, Yu distributed various generals to guard the frontier against Esen. After that, the situation of the empire became more stable. Esen sued for peace and returned Emperor Zhengtong. Later Esen even requested the right to resume paying tribute to the Ming regime.

In the early years of Jingtai, Yu Qian was regarded as a celebrated and upright official and was a favourite of Emperor Jingtai. All the government affairs and the appointment of officials were totally in compliance with Yu Qian's proposals. As a result, those persons who were unappointed or appointed officials who were out of favour with the Emperor, including Xu Youzhen (1407 - 72) and Shi Heng, were discontented. In 1456, Xu and Shi
greeted the return of Emperor Zhengtong. In the following year Yu Qian was executed with the crime of plotting a usurpation.

During the reign of Chenghua, Yu Mian, the son of Yu Qian, appealed against the injustice of the case. Yu Qian then was able to regain his official title and his right to official worship. Yu was granted the posthumous title "Shumin" in 1489 and "Zhongsu" in the middle of the Wanli era.²⁵

(ii) Official and private evaluation of Yu Qian prior to the compilation of MS

Although Yu Qian was executed as an usurper, Emperor Zhengtong realized the injustice of his action. Due to the concerns of state, the emperor found it hard to object to the appeal.²⁶ Yu Qian resumed his official title and was granted official worship rights in the Chenghua era. The contemporary edition of Yingzong shilu [Veritable records of Emperor Zhengtong] reflected the Ming official evaluation of Yu Qian.²⁷

The lunzan began by describing the outstanding services of Yu Qian. This included Yu's eighteen years of inspection tours and the stabilization of national power after the Tumu Incident. It was regarded that "the peace of the empire depended on Yu". Next the historians praised Yu's clear distinction between public and private interests and his moral integrity in not amassing wealth by accepting bribery. Besides, the historians further pointed out that Yu was an erudite scholar, efficient in presenting memorials to the emperor. It was perhaps because of this that Yu became conceited and contemptuous of the other noteworthy officials and relatives of the emperor. As a result, Yu encountered mishap at the hands of a conspiracy. Here the official historians totally avoided the discussion of the relationship between the death of Yu Qian and Emperor Zhengtong.
The official evaluation of Yu Qian was further improved when Emperor Wanli granted to him the posthumous title "Zhongsu", which literally means "loyal and eager to recommend people of virtue, conscientious and set a good example".

The evaluations of Yu Qian by private historians of the Ming and Qing dynasties mostly held a sympathetic view. They concentrated on discussing the responsibility of Yu Qian in two important events during the Zhengtong and Jingtai periods. One was the support of Emperor Jingtai in his fight against Esen and the other was the abandonment of Emperor Chenghua (1447 - 87, reign 1465 - 88), the royal son of Emperor Jingtai.

As regards the execution of Yu Qian, some historians regarded it as the result of growth and decline of the relative strengths of influential ministers. However, historians again clearly avoided any discussion on the responsibility of the monarch.

The viewpoint of most of the official historians can be represented by the evaluation given by Li Mengyang. Li narrated the kidnapping of Emperor Zhengtong by Esen during the invasion after the Tumu Incident. In this way, the tension of the situation at that time was only relieved when Yu Qian supported the ascension of Emperor Jingtai to the throne and thus border regions like Xuanfu and Datong were no longer in danger. Yu Qian used the slogan "put the country instead of the emperor in the first place" to relieve the threat from Esen. However, the historians pointed out that this slogan was also the cause of future trouble, stating that "the rendering of outstanding services was the root of misfortune". Yu Shenheng explicitly analysed the saying and said that the slogan "should have been edict given by the emperor but never by an official". Li Mengyang further explained that Emperor Jingtai put Yu Qian in an important position due to his
military talents, but did not repose full confidence in him. In this respect, Yu was unable to intervene when Emperor Jingtai changed the royal prince out of selfish motives. In order to prevent making any direct comment on the emperor, Li Mengyang could only refer the change of the imperial heir to the mandate of heaven. The historians quoted the incident of Yue Fei (1103 - 42) during the Song dynasty to compare with the experience of Yu Qian, noting with regret that loyal officials could not die a natural death. However, they criticized frankly corrupt officials who claimed credit for other people's achievements.

(iii) Evaluation of Yu Qian in MSCG

The opinion stated in the lunzan written by the official historian Tan Bin was similar to that of figures such as Li Mengyang. Right at the beginning of the lunzan, Tan clearly confirmed the contribution of Yu Qian in defending the Ming empire. The main text stated in detail the policy of Yu Qian after the Tumu Incident and its positive influence on the stabilization of the turbulent situation of the Ming dynasty. At the end the official historians explained that Yu Qian was not a threat of Emperor Zhengtong and his misfortune was due to the false accusation by villains. The fault also lay on them.

The evaluation of MSCG was very close to the evaluation of private historians of the Ming and early Qing dynasties.

The whole evaluation focused on two parts. In the first part the official historians criticized senior officials of the Zhengtong period such as Wang Zhi. They made no impact on the current events of the country. This served by way of a foil to the outstanding military ability of Yu Qian. The historians of MSCG illustrated with examples of Yu Qian's attitude of opposing the move of the capital to negotiate peace, and of setting up
policies to stabilize the turbulent situation at that time. They highly recommended the contribution of Yu Qian and likened him to the pillar of the country. They also analysed the internal conflict of Emperor Jingtai towards the life and death of Emperor Zhengtong. They pointed out that Yu Qian finally convinced Emperor Jingtai to welcome the return of Emperor Zhengtong, and resolved the kidnapping of Emperor Zhengtong by Esen. Yu's distinguished foresight and political ability were unquestionable.

In the second part the official historians discussed the responsibility of Yu Qian in the abandonment and appointment of the royal prince. Here they gave an example of the simple and crude imperial ceremony in greeting Emperor Zhengtong as indicative of the commonly known selfish ideas of Emperor Jingtai. An official was powerless in such a matter. Besides, Yu Qian was not an official who could abandon national affairs to dispute such a case. This fully explained Yu Qian's difficult position.

At the end of the lunzan, the official historians compared Yu Qian with Li Gang of the Song dynasty. The Song regime abandoned Li Gang which resulted in a disaster for the kingdom, whereas Yu was executed when the Ming dynasty was very stable. They expressed deep sympathy for Yu Qian. Although they did not strongly condemn Emperors Zhengtong and Jingtai, their grievance towards their personnel was all too clear.

(iv) Evaluation of Yu Qian in MSEG

The discussion of MSEG was based mostly on MSCG.

On the whole, the first half of MSEG was similar to MSCG apart from some minor changes in the written language. However, the official historians deleted the part which dealt with the conflict between Emperors Jingtai and Zhengtong in the analysis of the achievements of Yu Qian's policy. The lunzan only stated that Yu Qian maintained social order
through his appointment by Emperor Jingtai. Here the official historians regarded the contribution of Yu Qian highly and considered his accomplishment as the realization of the lofty aspirations of Li Gang in the Song dynasty.

The second half of the lunzan was greatly different from MSCG. The official historians of MSEG described in similar terms the return of Emperor Zhengtong and his having been shut up in the Southern Palace. They considered that the selfish motives of Emperor Jingtai were known to all. However, they deleted MSCG's detailed analysis on the selfish ideas of Emperor Jingtai, and openly discussed the background to Yu Qian's failure to argue about the abandonment of the royal prince.

At the end of the lunzan, an analysis of Yu Qian's disastrous fate was added. The official historians raised the fact that Yu's favoured position and firm attitude easily aroused suspicion. Besides, increased disagreements may have led to the danger of suffering setbacks. The text hints that there were many people attacking Yu Qian out of jealousy or suspicion. The root of the trouble appeared before the restoration of the old ruler. This kind of explanation implied that the fate of Yu Qian was partially determined by the weakness in his moral character.

In the comparison of MSCG and MSEG, we notice that official historians are sympathetic with the miserable fate of Yu Qian. They confirmed the contribution of Yu Qian after the Tumu Incident and his difficult position in the issue of abandoning and appointing the royal prince. The main difference between them was the extensive deletion of the criticism of the monarch in MSEG. In the analysis of the background to Yu Qian's misfortune, the official historians suggested that although other people acted improperly, there was also oversight on the part of Yu Qian.
Thus the responsibility was shifted to the other people and Yu Qian, while the major charges against the emperor were avoided.

(v) Evaluation of Yu Qian in MS

The lunzan of MS also fully confirmed the contribution of Yu Qian. The lunzan began by tracing the eminence of Yu Qian's political record and his management ability. Next the official historians discussed the performance of Yu Qian after the Tumu Incident. In the text there was no criticism about the emperors and their conflict. Instead, it was replaced by a narration of Emperor Jingtai's confidence in Yu Qian and Yu's enthusiasm in taking on his assignments. The official historians totally agreed with the outstanding services of Yu Qian in stabilizing the political power of the kingdom.

The first part of the lunzan has no discussion on the conflict between the emperors or on the abandonment of the heir apparent. In this respect, the official historians were able to avoid any comments about the responsibility of the emperor when discussing the unjust case of Yu Qian and to the restoration of Emperor Zhengtong. They completely laid the blame on figures such as Xu Youzhen and Shi Heng. On one hand they pointed out that the injustice done to Yu Qian was very clear to the court officials and the common people at that time. On the other hand they stated that public opinion was the best critic as reflected by the unnatural death of figures such as Xu and Shi followed by the restoration of Yu's official title and granting of pension entitlement. From beginning to end the argument was centered on the conflict between Xu and Yu.

(vi) Commentary on Yu Qian by Emperor Qianlong

...
According to the commentary on Yu Qian by Emperor Qianlong, Yu was a model of an upright official in the mind of the Qing emperors, and the Ming emperors were to blame for Yu's tragic fate.

There are four commentaries on Yu Qian in Emperor Qianlong's *Yupi lidai tongjian jilan*. The first two discussed Yu Qian's opposition to the move of the capital and his contribution of transferring troops to defend the country after the Tumu Incident. The other two stated the position of Yu Qian in the events surrounding the greeting of the return of Emperor Zhengtong and the change of the royal prince.

In the discussion of the move of the capital and defence of the country, Emperor Qianlong criticized those senior officials who talked wildly about astronomical phenomena without concerning themselves over the safety of the kingdom. Emperor Qianlong compared Yu Qian with Li Gang, the loyal official of the Song dynasty. He considered that Yu's decision stabilized the foundation of the Ming regime. The return of Emperor Zhengtong was also a great credit to Yu Qian. At the end of the commentary, Emperor Qianlong tactfully criticized the execution of Yu Qian after the return of Emperor Zhengtong and considered this unfair in terms of rewards and punishments.\textsuperscript{38} Emperor Qianlong defended the rumour about Yu's slogan "put the country instead of the emperor in the first place."\textsuperscript{39} Qianlong regarded that after the capture of the emperor, the officials should not have negotiated peace but should have risen to resist in order to save the emperor. He pointed out that Yu's remark was only expedient, and that the misunderstanding was due to later generations regarding it as a statement of policy.

Emperor Qianlong fully agreed with the policy of Yu Qian in greeting the return of Emperor Zhengtong. He considered the later restoration event
to be caused by the selfish motives of Emperor Jingtai. At that time Yu Qian resolved Emperor Jingtai doubts and set his mind at rest greeting the return of Emperor Zhengtong from the hands of Esen. This act saved Emperor Zhengtong from long period of exile and really represented one of Yu Qian's great achievements.\textsuperscript{40}

In discussing the change of the royal prince of Emperor Jingtai, Emperor Qianlong once again criticized the selfish motives of Jingtai and defended the prestige of Yu Qian.\textsuperscript{41} Emperor Qianlong first confirmed Yu Qian's loyal and considerate qualities and then pointed out that those persons who echoed the idea of changing the royal prince were "submissive and indifferent". On the other hand, he took as an example the fact that Yu Qian never received any reward to suggest the possibility of Yu's having offended the emperor before the case. Also, Emperor Qianlong pointed out that before this case of changing the royal prince, Yu Qian had already skilfully convinced Emperor Jingtai to greet the return of Emperor Zhengtong. Since this situation was irredeemable and Yu Qian was not anxious to scramble for fame, he certainly would not have gone along with other officials in their evil deeds.

3. An analysis of the lunzan of the Biography of Zhang Juzheng

Introduction

Zhang Juzheng was the most outstanding politician in the Ming dynasty.\textsuperscript{42} During his ten-year service as Senior Grand Secretary in the early years of Wanli, Zhang was highly respected by the emperor and his colleagues. However, less than two years after his death, the privileges conferred on his descendants and the posthumous honours he had been granted were rescinded and the family estate and property were confiscated. Throughout the rest of the Wanli era no one could plead the innocence of Zhang. The contribution
status of Zhang were only reconfirmed in the Tianqi era. Such a figure was widely talked about not only in the Ming dynasty. In early Qing there was still no uniform evaluation of Zhang. The compilation process of MS reflects the controversy of the early Qing evaluations.

The original author of the biographical drafts of Zhang Juzheng cannot be traced. The official version is also no longer extant. The two existing biographies of Zhang Juzheng were written by Wang Shizhen (1526 - 91) of the Ming dynasty and Tao Zhengjing (1682 - 1745) of early Qing period. Although these two figures were not historians of the MHI, the works of Wang were consulted by the Institute and the latter actually served under the Director-General of the Institute in the Yongzheng reign. A comparison of these biographies and the various drafts of MS reflected the change of viewpoint of the official historians. In MSCG and MSEG, Zhang Juzheng was included together with Xu Jie (1495 - 1574) and Gao Gong (1512 - 78) in one single biography. MSG reorganized the different biographies and combined Zhang with Gao in one biography. MS again grouped Zhang, Xu and Gao together. The above-mentioned versions, with the exception of MSG, all included a lunzan at the end of the biography.

(i) Biographical notes on Zhang Juzheng

Zhang Juzheng (1525 - 82), alias Shuda, pseudonym Taiyue, is a native of Jiangling (present day Jiangling of Hubei province). In 1547, he achieved the jingshi degree and received an appointment as Bachelor in the Hanlin Academy. During his years in the Academy, Zhang paid special attention to current political development and policies. In 1564 he was appointed as Adviser and became Lecturer to Prince Yu. In 1567, Zhang took the post of Grand Secretary shortly after the prince succeeded to the throne.
During the Longqing period, Xu Jie and Gao Gong both became Senior Grand Secretaries successively. There was power struggle between them. Thus the ambitious Zhang could achieve little at that time. Six years later (1573), Emperor Wanli ascended to the throne and Zhang eventually became Senior Grand Secretary in the same year with the support of a eunuch Feng Bao. In the following ten years, Zhang gained the trust of the young emperor as well as the eunuchs in the court. Hence, he was able to maintain internal order and resist foreign aggression. Thus a stable situation was established in the early years of Wanli.

In the Jiajing period, dissension in the court over foreign policy in the invasion of Altan-qayan clearly reflected corruption and incompetence in the military and political affairs of the Ming dynasty. When Zhang came to power, he managed to carry out policies to improve the military power and the economy of the empire. In terms of the defence of the frontier, Zhang appointed capable and experienced generals to strengthen the discipline of the frontier troops. He also adopted a coercion and bribery policy towards the Tartars in his foreign policy.

Internally, Zhang introduced the achievement evaluation policy which required the Six Offices of Scrutiny to take record of documents passing to and from the court, and established means for their application for easy routine checks. Furthermore, Zhang put into practice measures to cut down government expenditure. These included the reduction of expenditure of the imperial family, reorganization of the courier system and advocation of the corvee system. The economy of the Ming empire was much improved. Nevertheless, Zhang's arbitrary way of making decisions and the strict discipline behind those reforms aroused a great deal of discontent and criticism among the officials.
In 1577, Zhang Juzheng's father died. According to the practice of the Ming dynasty, an official must resign his post to attend the funeral and keep mourning for twenty-seven months before taking up the post again. Yet Emperor Wanli rejected Zhang's resignation and permitted him to remain in the Grand Secretariat. This kind of practice was termed "duoqing" in the Ming dynasty. Although an official should not disobey imperial orders, Zhang's act produced a lot of criticism from the ministers who were only silenced after many critics were flogged severely, demoted or exiled.

In 1582, the political situation of the Ming dynasty had stabilized and Zhang Juzheng also died in this year. He was granted the posthumous title "Wenzhong".52

In the autumn of the same year, the eunuch Feng Bao who had long supported Zhang Juzheng was impeached and later dismissed. After that the court was flooded with accusations against Zhang. In general, most people accused Zhang of bribery, and suppression of Censors, and some slandered his abilities. In 1583 Zhang's posthumous honours were removed. In April of the next year, his family's property was confiscated.53 The status of Zhang was not rehabilitated throughout the Wanli era.

The contribution of Zhang Juzheng was only re-evaluated when Emperor Taichang came to the throne in 1620. In 1622, Zhang's original official title was resumed.54 The imperial mandate to Zhang's family was finally conferred in 1630.55

(ii) Official and private evaluations of Zhang Juzheng prior to the compilation of MS

Zhang Juzheng was granted the posthumous title "Wenzhong" due to his qualities such as "diligence and respect to seniors". Although later his
posthumous honours were reviled as he was deemed a criminal official, his contribution was re-evaluated in *Shenzong shilu* [Veritable records of Emperor Wanli] compiled in the Tianqi period. In this record, the official compiler highly praised the ability and contribution of Zhang Juzheng in the Ming dynasty. The official historians regarded Zhang as able to analyse various problems in detail and generally to accept suggestions firmly. As a favourite of the emperor, Zhang was able to make great achievements in terms of internal politics and foreign policy. However, the weakness of Zhang in his treatment of people was mentioned at the end of the evaluation. The official historians analysed Zhang as being narrow-minded in suppressing opposition and reluctant to accept criticism. He had exercised overwhelming authority over the emperor which resulted in the disaster for his immediate and extended family.

The historians of the late Ming and early Qing periods wrote a similar evaluation to MSL. Among them there are a few historians such as Fu Weilin and Wan Sitong who held a more critical attitude towards Zhang. Fu criticized Zhang’s bribery of the eunuchs in order to strengthen his authority in the court. This resulted in the demotion of Censors and the in Zhang gathering crafty sycophants around him. Therefore, Fu considered the bad reputation of Zhang after death as very natural. At the end of the lunzan, the historians also pointed out that the country was very stable in the mid-Ming period and that other historians were wrong to suggest that Zhang had contributed to the strengthening and prosperity of the empire.

The controversy over the evaluation of Zhang Juzheng continued in the Qing dynasty.
(iii) Evaluation of Zhang Juzheng in MSCG

The works by Wang Shizhen are important historical references for the MHI. Wan Zitong was the chief officer-in-charge of the research and editing of the various drafts of MS. The evaluations of these two historians on Zhang Juzheng can be compared. Wang Shizhen confirmed the abilities of Zhang and considered that the national strength of the Ming dynasty was maintained by his efforts. However, Wang also agreed that Zhang was too arrogant and thus was responsible for his own bad reputation after his death. The evaluation of Wan Sitong altogether listed twenty-four crimes of Zhang Juzheng. The content of the criticism included collusion with the eunuchs, suppression of men of honour, taking possession of Wang's mansion and abolition of academies, etc. His criticism was as severe as Fu's.

The lunzan of the Biography of Zhang Juzheng was one of the longest in MSCG. The central part of the text stated that past criticism on Zhang was too severe and suggested that all criticisms must be based on facts and be practical and realistic. Such discussions on the ideas of previous historians and their methods of evaluation were few in MSCG.

MSCG concentrated on criticizing on the policies of Zhang Juzheng and his way of handling affairs. The historians considered Zhang's policies as impracticable and regarded his way of handling affairs as the cause of the dishonour after his death.

In the evaluation of the policies advocated by Zhang Juzheng, the historians described more than two hundred years of peace since the founding of the Ming regime. After the consolidation by Emperor Jiajing, the political situation was stable and without any sign of decline. They suggested that the current policies should have been moderate. Under such
circumstances, Zhang's policies such as reorganization of the corvee and the land tax systems as well as the increase of penalties were totally decried by the historians. Furthermore, the lunzan attributed the declining political situation during late Wanli and Chongzhen eras to the adoption of Zhang's policies. In this way, Zhang Juzheng's policies were further proved to be impracticable.

There are three points in the lunzan which deserved attention. First, the argument that the mid-Ming period was a peaceful epoch was different from the general view, which took the Hongzhi era as the resurgence of the Ming dynasty and the decline of the regime as already having begun in the Zhengde era in the early sixteenth century. During the Jiajing years, the emperor was wallowing in superstition while Yan Song (1480 - 1567), the Grand Secretary, overstepped his authority and abused his power to rule arbitrarily. The historical facts are different from the narrative in the lunzan of MSCG. Secondly, the chaos of the late Wanli period was not due to the practice of Zhang's policies. After the repudiation of Zhang's status, most of his policies were already rescinded. Instead, many old systems were restored. The third point was related to the corrupt political situation of the Chongzhen era. The political development of the Ming dynasty was in bad shape at the onset of the Chongzhen period. It was doubtful whether Zhang's policies were still suitable and thus it was unjust to put the blame on Zhang Juzheng.

In the discussion of Zhang's style in managing affairs, the lunzan pointed out the difficulties in assisting a young ruler. The text illustrated this point with the example that even such a loyal official as Huo Guang (? - 68 B.C.) of the Former Han dynasty could not escape the execution of his entire family after the emperor grew up. The official historians suggested that an official should hold the emperor whose status was honourable in
reverence. With the support of the empress dowager and eunuchs like Feng Bao, Zhang had abused his power and ignored the discontent of the emperor and his colleagues. Under this principle, the misfortune of Zhang and his clansmen were inevitable.

Judging from the above analysis of MSCG, we noticed that the official historians held a firm stand of complete disapproval in regard to Zhang's actions and behaviour. They considered that Zhang's policies were a primary factor in the breaking down of the stable political situation of mid-Ming period and in the later decline of the empire. However, they pointed out that although Zhang was to blame, the changed attitude of the emperor and the ministers' scramble for power also partially contributed to his misfortune.

(iv) Evaluation of Zhang Juzheng in MSEG

When comparing MSEG with MSCG, the written language of MSEG appears more succinct, with the deletion of the discussion of the criteria for criticism present MSCG. On the other hand, there was an explicit change in the emphasis and principle of evaluation in MSEG. In the lunzan of MSEG, the historians include no discussion on the political situation of the Ming dynasty. As for Zhang Juzheng's policies, the evaluation was, though positive, touched on very lightly, saying that the polices were "of some help". The whole evaluation was solely dominated by the criticism of Zhang's way of handling things.

This evaluation in MSEG was completely based upon moral principles. The lunzan clearly stated that the principle of an official should not be based on an individual's outstanding talents, but on the possession of basic characteristics such as uprightness and prudence. The example of Confucius' appreciation of virtuous scholar Qu Yuan rather than talented
minister Guan Zhong (? - 645 B.C.) was quoted. Evaluated by these principles, the complaint about his assisting the young emperor as stated in MSCG was overlooked, while all the controversial behaviour of Zhang Juzheng inevitably received severe criticism. Subsequently, Zhang's negligence of the superiority of the emperor, his failure to follow traditional ethical code and his arbitrary ways of managing affairs all violated the principles of official behaviour. Taking into consideration such moral criteria, the evaluation of MSEG completely detracted from the outstanding services of Zhang Juzheng.

(v) Evaluation of Zhang Juzheng in MS67

The lunzan by Tao Zhengjing was similar to MSL.68 The first half of the lunzan highly commended Zhang Juzheng's policies which contributed to the improvement and stability of the empire. Yet the latter half still criticized Zhang's misbehaviour and the calamity after his death. The focal point of the lunzan of MS was similar to MSL but the criterion of evaluation varies.

The official historians of MS have not analysed in detail the political development of the Ming dynasty. However, the lunzan pointed out that Zhang's policies improved the deteriorating milieu during the early Wanli periods. This illustrated that the official historians understood the declining situation of the Jiajing period. They also confirmed the importance of Zhang's policies which were not only "of some help".

Due to MS's support of Zhang Juzheng's policies, the talents of Zhang were also highly praised. Zhang's abilities in his thorough understanding of current developments and his courage in shouldering responsibility were highlighted in the lunzan. The criterion was different from MSEG which emphasized moral integrity instead of talents.
The official historians of MS also put down Zhang's way of handling the relationship between the emperor and an official. However, this was not the same moral standard as applied in MSEG but a more realistic approach taking into account conflicting interests. The lunzan also pointed out that Zhang's calamity resulted directly from his infringement of the sovereignty of the young emperor. Lastly, the official historians quoted from the Shangshu [Book of Documents] to point out that later ministers should learn an object lesson from Zhang's behaviour.

(vi) Commentary on Zhang Juzheng by Emperor Qianlong

Emperor Qianlong's criticism of Zhang Juzheng concentrated on the moral integrity of Zhang as an official.

Emperor Qianlong affirmed the talents of Zhang Juzheng. In the clause describing the transfer of Qi Jiguang (1527 - 87) to Guangdong, Qianlong pleaded for Zhang by pointing out that Zhang was able to observe current developments and support Qi's stay in the north to defend the frontier. The criticism of later generations was only a prejudice borne of their discontent with Zhang's services.

However, Zhang was totally unqualified as an official according to the criteria set by Emperor Qianlong. In the discussion on the promotion system of the court, the emperor pointed out that Zhang found a flaw in the institution and practised nepotism. As for the "duoqing" practice and Zhang's early request for resignation, Emperor Qianlong again observed Zhang's weaknesses such as greed for power, disregard of law and discipline, quest for personal gain and discrimination against dissidents. To conclude, Emperor Qianlong considered that talented officials such as Zhang Juzheng were not suitable for appointment.
4. An analysis of the lunzan of the Biography of Zuo Liangyu

Introduction

The Biography of Zuo Liangyu was the only biography with lunzan among the various biographies in the latter part of MSCG. In fact, those biographies of personages before and in the Wanli era in MSCG also seldom have a lunzan.73 Besides Zuo, the Biography of Zuo Liangyu in MSCG also included three figures, namely Huang Degong (? - 1645), Gao Jie (? - 1645) and Liu Zeqing (? - 1645).74 MSEG further added two associated biographies of Deng Qi and He Renlong under the biography of Zuo.75 Here Liu Zeqing was dropped to an associated biography under Gao Jie. In addition there was a single biography of Liu Zhaoji. MSG totally followed the arrangement of MSEG.76 MS deleted the two biographies of Huang Degong and Liu Zhaoji and replaced them with a single biography of Zu Kuan.77 Although the arrangement of the figures all along shows additions and deletions, Zuo is the key figure of the lunzan of all drafts and versions from beginning to end.78

(i) Biographical notes on Zuo Liangyu

Zuo Liangyu (? - 1645), alias Kunshan, was a native of Lingqing (present day Lingqing of Shandong province).79 He used to be the Regional Military Commissioner of Liaodong. In 1628, he was removed from office because of the Mutiny of Ningyuan. Later he rendered outstanding service when following Cao Wenzhao (? - 1635) to recover four cities. In the early years of Chongzhen, Zuo assisted several generals to send armed forces to suppress peasant rebels in provinces such as Henan, Shanxi and Shaanxi. Due to his accumulated military services, Zuo was promoted to Acting Assistant Commissioner-in-chief.
Since Zuo Liangyu was on bad terms with the Governor-General in Huaixing, he did not try his best to suppress the rebels there. This led to the repeated disaster at the hands of the peasant rebels. Very often Zuo accepted the surrendering rebels and pressed them into service in the armies. In 1636, Zuo joined arms with Tang Jiuzhou to suppress the peasant rebels. During the expedition, Zuo escaped and thus Tang died in action due to the lack of relief troops. In 1639 Zuo sent reinforcements to the capital and defeated many peasant rebels on the way. Among the rebels, Zhang Xianzhong (1606 - 46) first surrendered and then rose again. Zuo led the army in pursuit and suffered defeat. Later Zuo was recommended by the Senior Supervisor Yang Sichang (1588 - 1641) and appointed as General in charge of Suppressing Rebels. He then sent an expedition against Zhang Xianzhong again. However, due to the arrogance of Zuo who refused to obey the order to move the troops, the peasant rebels were set free and the rebellion could not put down throughout the Ming dynasty.

In 1644, Zuo Liangyu started a fight with Li Zicheng and was defeated at Zhuxianzhen (present day southwest of Kaifeng of Henan province). Zuo lost most of his personal troops and favourite generals of talent due to successive years of expedition. The rest of the troops were replaced by those rebels who had surrendered. These new recruits who lacked military discipline and received insufficient training were unable to match rebels such as Li Zicheng.

After Emperor Hongguang (1607 - 46, reign 1645) of Southern Ming dynasty ascended to the throne, Zuo was promoted to the post of Marquis. At that time, Huang Shu, the Army Inspecting Censor was discontented with the manipulation of power by Ma Shiying (1591 - 1646). Huang took the chance to facilitate Zuo’s expedition against Ma. In 1645, Zuo died of illness during the expedition.
(ii) Official and private evaluation of Zuo Liangyu prior to the compilation of MS

Zuo Liangyu died in the late Ming early Qing period when the military situation was critical. There was no official biography or any evaluation of Zuo in Southern Ming dynasty. Although there were few discussions by the historians of the Ming and Qing dynasties, the extant biographies have a pretty good evaluation on Zuo.

The biography written by Hou Fengyu (1618 - 54) spoke highly of Zuo's appointment of talented people irrespective of their class origin. Zhang Dai tried his best to defend Zuo's reputation in the lunzan at the end of Zuo's biography in Shikuishu houji. The lunzan started by saying that Zuo was sincere, frank and straightforward. Next Zhang pointed out that Zuo's impeachment of Ma Shiying and the sending of the official denunciation of Ma to Nanjing as well as the later despatch of troops were all under the coercion and instigation of Huang Shu. Huang Shu confused the truth but Zuo was the one subjected to humiliation as a scoundrel.

(iii) Evaluation of Zuo Liangyu in MSCG

The lunzan of the Biography of Zuo Liangyu in MSCG was not very long. The text has no evaluation of the achievements and errors of Zuo.

The official historians began by stating that the peasant rebels initiated the troubles in the Chongzhen era. The generals of the Ming regime varied in their achievements and faults during the suppression of these rebels. Some were killed in action while some surrendered to the rebels. Here the official historians suggested that the rebels were major threat to the existence of the empire. They further explained that only Zuo among the generals confronted the disaster of the peasant rebels from
beginning to end at that time. Thus there were more detailed descriptions of the peasant rebellion in Zuo's biography.

The *lunzan* made no criticism on the merits and demerits of Zuo's services. Perhaps this was due to the official historians' lack of suitable criteria of criticism on the historical events of the later Ming and early Qing period. However, the *lunzan* considered Zuo "related to the existence of the empire" which showed that the official historians fully affirmed the importance of Zuo.

(iv) Evaluation of Zuo Liangyu in MSEG

The official historians of MSEG judged Zuo's status according to the criterion of an official's devotion to his emperor and country. It was the most severe criticism on Zuo among the various drafts.

At the beginning of the *lunzan*, the official historians pointed out that Zuo possessed strong armies and that this had a direct bearing on the relative safety or danger of the country. As a result, the court granted him a high position and a handsome salary. The official historians stated that "the bounties bestowed are quite generous". This hinted that Zuo could not shirk his responsibility in terms of public and private interests.

Next the *lunzan* described the pressing national situation of late Ming period. The historians made this an excuse to criticize Zuo's imperious conduct as a favourite official. They considered that Zuo never successfully put down the peasant rebellion. Instead, he allowed the rebels to remain bringing disaster, and he set the armies free to plunder public properties which harmed the country and betrayed the favour bestowed on him.
In the middle of the text, the official historians described the critical situation of the newly-established Southern Ming dynasty. In spite of this, Zuo paid the tyrant and marched to attack the southern captial. On one hand the official historians pointed out that Jinling (Nanjing) would have been threatened if Zuo had not died of illness during the expedition. On the other hand, they quoted heaven's capture of Zuo's soul to imply Zuo's invasive actions were not in accordance with heavenly principles.

The last part of the *lunzan* pointed out that if the generals of the four garrisons of late Ming period had concerted efforts, there was a chance they could preserve half of the country. It is a pity that the generals caused each other's deaths resulting in a defensive setback. Here the historians directly criticized the misleading and ridiculous statements of Southern Ming court officials who believed extraordinarily that the current situation was rather peaceful, and the historians called this a sign of the resurgence of Guangwu era of the later Han dynasty.

(v) Evaluation of Zuo Liangyu in MS

The official historians of MS first narrated the course of Zuo's rise to power. They confirmed his "brave" and "suppressive" qualities against the rebels and showed that he was not devoid of merit. The historians analysed the main fault of Zuo as his overbearing character and arbitrary actions. When the situation was not tense, he allowed rebels who had surrendered to remain, which brought future disaster, whereas he was frightened by the enemy at the crucial moments when the situation was pressing.

However, the historians of MS also pointed out that the Southern Ming government did not punish the irresponsible generals such as Zuo Liangyu according to national law. Their toleration of evil deeds led to
Zuo's attack on the city and plundering of public properties. In this respect, the court was duty-bound.

MS also disregarded the contribution of Zuo Liangyu. However, the angle and severity of its criticism were different from that in MSEG. The historians simply judged the merits and demerits of Zuo Liangyu from point of view of the responsibility of an official and the law of the court. Thus there was no point in criticizing Zuo's betrayal of favours bestowed on him.

On the other hand, the historians of MS completely avoided any discussion about the rise and fall of the political situation of the Ming dynasty. They made no argument about the preservation of half of the country as MSEG did. They also showed no regret about the instability of the capital. They only discussed the merits and demerits of the various generals without touching on the current political situation, which might have led to sensitive judgement on the role of the Manchus.

(vi) Commentary on Zuo Liangyu by Emperor Qianlong

There was only one commentary on Zuo Liangyu by Emperor Qianlong. It discussed the event of the expedition against Ma Shiying by Huang Shu with armed forces loaned from Zuo. The focal point of Qianlong's analysis of this event was its effect on the political development of the Southern Ming dynasty instead of the merits and demerits of Zuo's conduct. Judging from Qianlong's consent to Huang Shu's expedition which assisted in strengthening the political situation of Southern Ming, his opinion to this event was different from the previous drafts and versions.
1 Tang Bin, 10/13a-24b.
2 The shared biographies in MSCG used Zhu Qian, the father of Zhu Yong as the main figure, whereas Zhu Yong is included in the associated biography. MSCG, v. 12, 72/1-24b.
4 Under Sun Tang there is an associated biography of Zhao Sheng in MS. See MS, v. 15, 173/4607-30.
5 Tang Bin, 10/24b; MSCG, v. 12, 72/24ab; MSEG, v. 53, 217/24ab; MS, v. 15, 173/4629-30.
6 MSL(YZSL), 208/4b-5a; Jiao Hong, 10/334-8. For the political and military situation during the Zhengtong and Jingtai periods of the Ming dynasty, please refer to Twitchett, pp. 316-341. As for the Tumu Incident, please refer to Mote, pp. 243-72.
7 The meaning of the posthumous title at that time is 'protect the emperor to resist foreign aggression and with military merits'. Bao Yingao, shang /176.
8 MSL(YZSL), 208/4b-5a.
9 The historians of the Ming and Qing dynasties who commended Yang Hong include Yin Shouheng, Yuan Zhi and Cha Jizu etc. For details please see Yin Shouheng, 93/6b. For the discussion on Yuan Zhi, see Tan Qian(1958), 30/1909; Cha Jizu, v. 4, 19/2356. Fu Weilin considered that the praise of these historians was slightly excessive. Fu Weilin, 98/1970. Huang Yunmei quoted the analysis of Li Xian and suggested that Yang Hong may not have had actual military merits. Perhaps it was only an exaggeration of his battle achievements making the best use of the situation. Huang Yunmei(1979), v. 5, pp. 1394-5.
10 Tan Qian(1958), 30/1909.
11 Cha Jizu, v. 4, 19/2356-7.
12 MSCG, v. 12, 72/24ab.
13 MSEG, v. 53, 217/24ab.
15 Fu Heng et al., 104/20a-21b.
16 For the Tumu Incident and the situation before and after the incident, see Twitchett, pp. 319-34; Mote, pp. 248-72. Regarding the contribution of Yu Qian, see Lai Jiadu & Li Guangbi, pp. 33-71; Wu Han(1986), v. 3, pp. 296-9.
17 At the end of the biography of Yu Qian in the two drafts by Fang and Tang, there are the associated biographies of Wang Wei, Zhu Ji and Fan Guang. See Fang Xiangying, shang /17-26b; Tang Bin, 10/13a-24b.
18 According to the account in Fang Xiangying's words, these drafts of biographies were completed in 1680. Fang Xiangying, preface, p. 1a.
19 Tang Bin(2), 10/24b.
20 Among the three figures in the associated biographies of Yu Qian in the drafts of Fang Xiangying and Tang Bin, namely Wang Wei*, Zhu Ji and Fan Guang, only Wang exists.
Besides, there is the addition of Wu Ning. The other main biographies in the same biography added Wang Zhi, Wu Ying and the associated biographies of Wang Bozhen and Gong Tingrong. MSCG, v. 12, 69/1-22a; MSEG, v. 53, 214/1-23a.

In MSG, the Biography of Yu Qian and its associated biographies remain unchanged. But the biographies of Wang Zhi, Wu Ying and other associated biographies are deleted and added the other biography of Wang Hong. MSG, v. 3, 154/451-7.

MS maintained the biography of Yu Qian and its associated biographies of MSCG but deleted all the other biographies which were grouped together in previous versions. MS, v. 15, 170/4543-53.

The meaning of the posthumous title "Shumin" is "show determination to solve national crises" and "Zhongsu" is "loyal and eager to recommend people of virtue, conscientious and set a good example". Bao Yingao, shang /22b, 30b.

This type of historian includes Wang Qiong, Yuan Zhi, Wang Shizhen, Li Mengyang, Yu Shenxing, Wang Tingxiang, Tang Shu, Yin Shouheng, He Qiaooyuan, Li Zhi, Fu Weilin and Cha Jizuo, etc. For the discussion of Wang, Li, Yu, Wang and Tang, see Tan Qian(1958), 32/2023-5. For the discussion of the other historians, see Yin Shouheng, 52/5b-6b; He Qiaooyuan, v. 12, p. 3595; Li Zhi, 15/310-1; Fu Weilin, 123/2452; Cha Jizuo, v. 2, 11a/1688-9.

Such historians include Cheng Minzheng, Wang Qiong, Yuan Zhi, Wang Shizhen and Yin Shouzheng. For the opinion of the first four historians, see Tan Qian(1958), 32/2023-4, 2026; Yin Shouheng, 51/5b-6b.

For the opinion of Li Mengyang, see Tan Qian(1958), 32/2023. After Li, Wang Tingxiang, Li Zhi and Fu Weilin all followed his opinion. For the opinion of Wang, Li and Fu, see Tan Qian(1958), 32/2033-4; Li Zhi, 15/310-1; Fu Weilin, 123/2452.

For the opinion of Yu, see Tan Qian(1958), 32/2425.

MSCG, v. 12, 69/21b-22a.

Tang Bin(2), 10/11a.

MSEG, v. 52, 214/22b-23a.

Same as note 31.

MS, v. 15, 170/4553.

Fu Heng et al., 104/14a-15a; 22a-23b, 31ab, 41a-42b.

Ibid., 104/14a-15a.
Liang Qichao has commended Zhang as one of the six great politicians in Chinese history.

Wang Shizhen, 7/373-398; Tao Zhengjing, 4/1a-7b.

Wang Shizhen's *Ming jiajing yilai shoufu zhuany* [Biographies of Senior Grand Secretaries since the Jiajing period of the Ming dynasty] is listed in MS's *Treatise of Yiwen*. MS, v. 8, 97/2400; Tao Zhengjing, 7/7ab.

Wan Ming has compared the *Biography of Zhang Juzheng* in the various drafts including Wang Shizhen's *Ming jiajing yilai shoufu zhuay*; MSCG, MSG and MS. This identified the sequence and relationship between the various drafts. Wan Ming, pp. 109-112.

MSCG, v. 27, 159/1a-29b; MSEG, v. 71, 302/1a-30b.

MSG, v. 4, 197/402-10.

MS, v. 19, 213/5631-54.

MSCG, v. 27, 159/29ab; MSEG, v. 71, 302/30ab; MS, v. 19, 213/5653.

MSL(SZSL), 125/56-66; Zhang Jingxiu *et al.*, 47/1a-46a; Wang Shizhen's *Biography of Zhang Juzheng* recorded in Jiao Hong, 17/60a-108a; DMB, v. 1, pp. 53-61; Zhu Dongrun. On the life and thought of Zhang Juzheng, please see Chen Baoliang, pp. 61-5; Qiao Shaoqiu; Xiong Shili; Crawford, pp. 367-413; Ono Kazuko, and Yutaka, v. 5, pp. 179-205. For the political situation of the Wanli reign, see Ray Huang, pp. 514-7, 529-80, Huang Renyu.

For the condition of the frontier during the Jiajing period of the Ming dynasty, please refer to Geiss, pp. 450-3.

MSL(SZSL), 125/6a, the meaning of the posthumous title at that time is "diligent to learn and protect the emperor to resist foreign aggression". Bao Yingao, *shang* /1b.

Zhu Dongrun, pp. 389-96; MSL(SZSL), 135/1a, 148/3a-4b.

Zhu Dongrun, pp. 396; MSL(XZSL), 22/3b-4a.

Huang Yunmei(1985), v. 6, p. 1725.

For the re-evaluation of Zhang Juzheng during the Tianqi and Chongzheng periods, see

MSL(SZSL), 125/6ab; *Chongzhen changbian*, 22/15a-18d; Huang Yunmei(1985), v. 6, p. 1725.

There are many discussions on the merits and demerits of Zhang Juzheng during the late Ming and early Qing periods. Most of the evaluations are similar to MSL. Such historians include Yu Shenhe, Feng Shike, Xie Zhaozhe, Mao Shoudeng. For their evaluations, see Tan Qian(1958), 71/4414-5; Wang Shizhen, 8/28b; Cha Jizuo, v. 3, 11b-1749; Tao Zhengjing, 4/6b-7a.
For the evaluations of Fu and Wan, see Fu Weilin, 150/2987; Wan Sitong(1972), 12/27a-28a; Gu Yingtai, 61/669-70. The opinion of Wan Sitong will be further discussed in the next section.

MSCG, v. 27, 159/29ab.

See notes 43 & 44.

Wang Shizhen, 8/28b; Wan Sitong(1972), 12/27a-28a.

The content of MSCG is similar to the evaluation of Fu Weilin. Their difference is in the presentation of the content which is directed against the view of Fu. For instance, there is no detailed explanation of the political situation of mid Ming period in MSCG. Fu Weilun, 150/2989, MSCG, v. 27, 159/29ab.


Atwell, pp. 585-90.

MSEG, v. 71, 302/30ab.

MS, v. 19, 213/5653.

Tao Zhengjing, 4/6b-7a.

Fu Heng et al., 110/10ab, 38b-39a, 46b-47a, 51b-52a, 55ab, 111/6ab.

Ibid, 111/6ab.

Ibid, 110/10ab.

Ibid, 110/46b-47a, 55ab

Please refer to Chapter 6, pp. 27-8.

MSCG, v. 50, 261/1a-21b.

MSEG, v. 88, 375/1a-31b.

MSG, v. 6, 256/66-73.

MS, v. 23, 273/6987-7013.

MSCG, v. 50, 261/13ab; MSEG, v. 88, 375/31ab; MS, v. 28, 278/7010.


Hou Fangyu, 5/24ab.


MSCG, v. 50, 261/13ab.

MSEG, v. 88, 375/31ab.

MS, v. 23, 273/7010.

Fu Heng et al., 116/30b-31a.
Conclusion

The compilation of MS in the early Qing period was not entirely politically orientated. The aim of the project changed in different phases. Contemporary historians had missed some of the historical details. As a result, they had an entirely different interpretation of the political nature of the compilation of the MS in the Kangxi reign and slightly exaggerated the political impact of the compilation project. The announcement of the project in the Shunzhi reign was entirely for the purpose of political propaganda to win the favour of the citizens in the conquered area; whereas the compilation project in the Kangxi reign was merely a means to engage those scholars recruited from the Boxue hongru examination in government services. Most of these scholars had already joined the Qing government either by receiving a degree or serving at a junior level. On the other hand, the compilation project had never been publicly announced before the examination was introduced, and Emperor Kangxi in his earlier years had not shown any concrete expectation as to the progress of the compilation. Therefore, the compilation project was not designed specially to appease the Ming loyalists.

The official compilation by the historiographical institute in the early Qing period continued to possess shortcomings similar to those of the historiographical institutions in previous dynasties.

During the course of the compilation of MS, its progress continued to suffer from a lack of official historians and source materials, and the disorganization of the MHI. Official historians of the Kangxi and Yongzheng periods had pointed out that although there were many scholars appointed into the MHI, the number of historians who were really available and prepared to work for the project was limited. Furthermore, the lack of
historical resources was always a major problem in the MHI. Official historians in the Shunzhi and Kangxi reigns had repeatedly requested the emperor to collect historical resources for the project. Due to unstable political situation in the early Qing period and the occurrence of unpleasant literary cases, common people were suspicious of the effect of submitting historical resources. On the other hand, local officials were preoccupied with the consolidation of the Manchu rule and thus were not enthusiastic about implementing the emperor's order to collect relevant source materials. During the course of the compilation, many sensitive materials or accounts contradictory to the Manchu records had already been destroyed before they could be consulted by official historians in the MHI.

The progress of the compilation also suffered from the disorganization of the MHI and the lack of unifying principles for the compilation.

The lack of organizational experience was one of the cause for the disorganization of the MHI. There was no similiar organization in the early Qing period. There was no establishment of a particular organization for the compilation project in the Shunzhi reign. During the Kangxi reign, since most of the senior officials in the MHI had many concurrent appointments, they had scarcely any time to improve the organization of the MHI. A similiar situation also occurred in the Yongzheng reign.

On the other hand, the MHI did not prepare a long term and overall plan for the entire compilation project, nor clearly defined the responsibilities of the official historians. During the Kangxi reign the official historians were assigned their jobs not according to their expertise or interest but by random choice. Discussion among official historians on their drafts was possibly only depending on their own wishes and personal connections. Most of the revision work was under the charge of a few
junior members who were favourites of senior officials in the MHI during the Yongzheng reign.

In the same time, there was no well-defined and uniform principle for the compilation in the early stages. Senior officials were anxious to get imperial guidance in evaluating Ming historical issues and figures in order to avoid misinterpretation. During this period, historians hesitated to make their own evaluation and were reluctant to take responsibility for the drafting of sensitive parts of the Ming dynasty history. In some cases, the drafting of the biographies according to the judgement of individual official historians had resulted in contradictory remarks within the drafts of MS. After the emperor had made brief remarks on the submitted drafts, these were adopted by senior officials of the MHI as the ultimate evaluation principle for the entire compilation. This was of course not sufficient to cover the evaluation of all aspects of Ming history.

The above shortcoming in the official compilation were due largely to the attitude of the emperor towards the compilation. The aim of the compilation in early Kangxi reign was merely to serve as an occupation for recruited scholars. Emperor Kangxi had no real expectation towards the progress of the project. During the course of compilation in the Kangxi reign, many official historians in the MHI were, therefore, appointed in other compilation projects or later promoted to other official positions. Thus official historians available in the MHI became fewer. Although the aim of the emperor towards the compilation had changed in the Yongzheng reign, the project never received serious attention from the emperor. As a result, many official historians of the MHI were also transferred to other departments during the course of compilation.
However, the political development in the early Qing period had helped to divert the attention of the emperor from the compilation project which in turn contributed indirectly to the final completion of MS.

When the political situation in the Qing empire stabilized after the suppression of the rebellion of the three feudatories in 1681, the nature of the compilation changed. In the later Kangxi reign and the Yongzheng reign, the compilation of MS was no longer a political tool. It had become entirely a historiographical project. The rejection of the first and second drafts was due entirely to the contradictory views between official historians and the emperor in the evaluation of Ming history and figures. In the first phase, the viewpoints of the MHI were dominated either by historians with Ming loyalist background or by evaluations of the private historical books published in the Ming dynasty. The emperor had no well-defined principle of his own. As a result, he was not able to supply detailed evaluation principles for future revision. Although official historians had revised the first draft according to the remark of the emperor, the result remained unsatisfactory.

The result of the comparative studies on the lunzan of the different drafts clearly illustrated that the rejection of the first and second drafts was inevitable. Emperor Kangxi rejected the submitted draft by emphasizing the consultation of public opinion. However, the emperor's disapproval of the lunzan of MSCG which had adopted the historical evaluations mostly approved by Ming historians, indicated clearly that the reason given by the emperor was merely an excuse. The lunzan in MSCG which represented most of the historical principles of Ming private historians paid no special respect to the emperors. Such an opinion was definitely unacceptable to Emperor Kangxi who wished to maintain the paramount status of the emperor in historical records. There were irregularities and incomplete
parts in MSCG. Since the remark of Emperor Kangxi on the first submitted draft were not detailed enough to cover all controversial issues, the revision work MSEG therefore could not fullfil the expectation of the emperor. Furthermore, when the evaluations of MS and Qianlong were compared, it was found that there were obvious differences in the evaluations of some controversial figures. As a result, the final version of MS may have been revised if it was not submitted in the early year of Emperor Qianlong.

The final approval of MS in the early Qianlong reign was never the expected outcome. However, the MS was the result of efforts of various groups of people. Among major causes for the success, the long compilation period was definitely the essential one. The long compilation period enabled different groups of people to contribute their expertise to the most appropriate parts in the course of the compilation.

The long compilation period was not the plan of the Qing emperors. However, none of the early Qing emperors put any pressure on official historians to meet a deadline for the completion of the project. Emperors Shunzhi and Yongzheng had been preoccupied by other domestic affairs and could not spare time to attend to the project. Emperor Kangxi immediately realized the importance of appropriate evaluation in historical accounts when he began to study the submitted drafts. Although he was unable to define his own evaluation principle for the MHI, he was wise and magnanimous enough to allow a further extension of the revision work. His decision enabled the revision of the drafts to continue in order to improve the presentation and find the ultimate solution in evaluation. One point worth noting is that although the role of the Qing emperors in determining the progress of the compilation was dominant, their involvement especially in defining the method of evaluation was very
limited. This statement is especially true in the case of Emperors Shunzhi and Yongzheng.

During the entire course of the compilation, many historians, both official and private, contributed their efforts in preparing different parts of the MS. The team of historians in the Kangxi reign, which included the renowned historian Wan Sitong, was more close to the historical sources of the Ming dynasty and was able to examine historical accounts in great detail. Yet their historical evaluation principles were not acceptable to the emperors. Historians in the Yongzheng reign, though, did not have as long a revision time as their Kangxi colleagues, but had established a different evaluation principle which was developed from their education background in the Qing dynasty. However, the expertise of these two groups of historians was only effectively employed in MS by the efforts of Wang Hongxu. Since Wang Hongxu had excluded all the lunzan in his two submitted drafts and removed all former drafts from the MHI, official historians of the Yongzheng reign were freed from having to consult the evaluations left by previous official historians which were under heavy influence of Ming scholars. On the other hand, these official historians were able to base their other revision work on Wang Hongxu's drafts which had undergone detailed examination by members of MHI in the Kangxi reign. The decision of Wang Hongxu thus, unintentionally enabled official historians in different reigns to contribute their expertise in the most appropriate part of the historical work and in perfect order.

The last and most important factor contributing to the final approval of MS is in fact the ideal choice of submission date. There were no indications suggesting that official historians in the Yongzheng period had any discussion about the date of submission. However, comparative studies between lunzan of MS and commentaries of Qianlong clearly
illustrated that the evaluation principle of each is different. It was therefore highly probable that the revision of MS might have continued until the completion of the *Siku quanshu* project if the final version of MS had not been submitted in 1736. In this way, the choice of the right time to make the submission contributed to the approval of MS in the early Qianlong period.
Appendix 1:
List of official historians involved in the compilation of MS in the Qing dynasty

1. Shunzhi reign

Chen Juqing 陳具慶
Cheng Kegong 成克鞏
Fan Wencheng 范文程
Feng Quan 馮鈐
Gang Lin 剛林
Gao Yan 高儉
Hong Chengchou 洪承疇
Hu Shian 胡世安
Hu Tongyu 胡統虞
Jiang Hede 蒋德德
Lai Gun 賴衮
Li Jiantai 李建泰
Li Motang 李啓棠
Li Ruolin 李若琳
Liu Qingtai 劉清泰
Liu Zhaoguo 劉肇國
Luo Xianwen 羅憲汶
Ning Wanwo 宁完我
Qi Chongge 邱充格
Tang Bin 湯斌
Tu Hai 圖海
Yi Tu 伊圖
Zhan Ba 詹霸
Zhang Duan 張端
Zhu Zhijun 朱之俊
Zhu Zhixi 朱之錫

2. Kangxi reign

Cao He 曹禾
Cao Rong 曹溶
Cao Yipu 曹宜溥
Chen Hongji 陳鴻錧
Chen Lun 陳論
Chen Weisong 陳維崧
Chou Zhaoao 仇兆鶚
Cui Ruyue 崔如岳
Dong Na 董納
Fan Biying 范必英
Fang Xiangying 方象瑛
Feng Xu 馮旭
Fu Lata 布臘塔
Gao Heng 高珩
Gao Yong 高詠
Huang Baijia 黃百家
Huang Yuji 黃與稷
Huang Yujian 黃與堅
Xiong Cilu 熊赐履
Xu Chao 徐潮
Xu Jiayan 徐嘉炎
Xu Jiu 徐籍
Xu Qianxue 徐乾學
Xu Shan 徐善
Xu Yuanwen 徐元文
Yan Shengsun 嚴承孫
Yan Yudun 嚴虞惇
Yang Wenyan 楊文言
Ye Fangai 葉方霭
Yi Sanga 伊桑阿
You Tong 尤侗
Yuan You 袁佑
Zhang Honglie 張鴻烈
Zhang Ying 張英
Zhang Yushu 張玉書
Zhou Qingyuan 周清原
Zhou Qingzeng 周慶曾
Zhu Yizun 朱彝尊

3. Yongzheng reign

Cai Ting 蔡挺
Erqi 鄂爾奇
Feng Rushi 馮如軾
Han Xiaoji 漢孝基
Hu Xu 胡煦
Hu Zongxu 胡宗緒
Jiang Jishi 蒋繼軾
Jiang Tingxi 蒋廷錫
Jin Menzhao 金門詔
Jueluo fengtai 覺羅逢泰
Lan Qianqiu 藍千秋
Liu Bao 留保
Lu Kuixun 陸奎勲
Lungkodo 隆科多
Mei Gucheng 梅桂成
Peng Tingxun 彭廷訓
Qiao Shichen 喬世臣
Sun Jiagen 孫嘉淦
Tang Jizu 唐繼祖
Tao Zhenyi 陶貞一
Wan Bangrong 萬邦榮
Wang Xiangling 王郯齡
Wang Yezi 王葉滋
Wang Youdun 汪由敦
Wu Lin 吳麟
Wu Qikun 吳啓昆
Wu Xiang 吳襄
Xu Yuanmeng 徐元夢
Yan Xing 閻啞
Yang Chun 楊椿
Yang Erde 楊爾德
Yao Kun 姚焜
Yao Zhiying 姚之駒
Zhang Tingyu 張廷玉
Zheng Jiang 鄭江
Zhu Shi 朱軒
4. Qianlong reign

Cheng Jingyi 程景伊
Fang Wei 方瑋
Gu Ruhua 顧如華
He Shen 和珅
Huang Shouling 黃夛齡
Liang Guozhi 梁國治
Liu Xigu 劉錫嘏
Liu Yong 劉墉
Luo Xiuyuan 羅修源
Qiang Rucheng 錢汝誠
Quan Zuwang 全祖望
Song Xian 宋銓
Yan Fu 嚴福
Ying Lian 英廉
Yu Minzhong 于敏中
Zhang Zongying 章宗瀛
Appendix 2: An introduction of the biographical drafts of *Mingshi*

The compilation of MS lasted for almost one hundred years from 1645 to 1739. During the compilation period, many drafts of MS were completed and revised in different phases. At present, some of these manuscripts and revised drafts are still extant. They include drafts of individual official historians and the early comprehensive drafts of MS. The drafts of individual official historians illustrate clearly their judgement on figures and events of the Ming dynasty. Thus an analysis of the differences among these drafts and the early comprehensive drafts of MS can promote a better understanding of various historical evaluation principles adopted during the compilation. Furthermore, the shift of focus during the revision of the drafts in different phases can also be traced.

Extant drafts of MS include all four categories of a composite annal-biographical history, i.e. imperial annals, biographies, treatises and tables. As this thesis mainly discusses the *lunzan* of MSCG, MSEG, MSG and MS, only biographical drafts of MS will be discussed below, in chronological order.¹

According to the order of compilation phases, biographical drafts of MS can be classified under five categories:

I. Drafts of individual official historians in the Kangxi reign.
II. MSCG and MSEG of the Kangxi reign.
III. MSG of the Kangxi reign.
IV. Drafts of individual official historians in the Yongzheng reign.
V. Draft of MS in the Yongzheng reign.

Since MSCG and MSEG have been discussed in detail in Chapter Five, category II will not be introduced here.
I. Drafts of individual official historians in the Kangxi reign.


At the beginning of this draft, there are prefaces by Mao Jike and the author. Fang states clearly in his preface that the extant draft was compiled when he worked in MHI during 1680 to 1683. Initially, Fang was assigned to draft the *Imperial Annal of Emperor Jingtai* and seventy-six biographies from the Jingtai reign until the Chongzhen reign. Later, he was commissioned to compile ten additional biographies. The extant draft comprises thirty-six biographies and three associated biographies of the Jingtai, Tianshun and Chenghua reigns, in *shang juan*. In *xia juan*, there are twenty-three biographies of Longqing and Wanli reigns, twenty-five biographies of Tianqi and Chongzhen reigns and another fourteen associated biographies with titles only. Fang’s draft of the *Imperial Annals of Emperor Jingtai* is no longer available. Since there is no mentioning of the titles of biographies assigned by MHI in Fang’s preface, we cannot reconcile such a difference in the total number of biographies between the actual draft and Fang’s assignment. In Fang’s actual work, all biographies consist of only one person and there is no *lunzan* at the end of each biography.


Mao Qiling joined the MHI after he passed the *Boxue hongru* examination in 1679. He worked in the Institute for six years. In MHI, he was mainly responsible for drafting over two hundred biographies of
Hongzhi, Zhengde reigns and biographies of empresses of the Tianshun, Chenghua, Hongzhi and Zhengde reigns. In addition, he also collected and revised biographical materials of the Chongzhen reign. However, these drafts no longer exist and Mao had only kept two of his drafts in his own collected work. One of them was the biographical account of Wang Shouren (1472 - 1528) which was later revised by You Tong. The text of Mao's draft was fairly long with inserted annotation and discussion within the text. There is a piece of commentary at the end of each juan.

Among the eleven juan of biographies, the first seven juan consist of forty biographies classified in accordance with the figure's life span, native place or personality. Listed historical figures include persons throughout different reigns of the Ming dynasty. There are a total of twenty-eight lunzan at the end of these biographies, with the exception of the fourth juan which is Biography of Wuzong (Five Loyalists). As the introductory phrases of the lunzan are not standardized, these biographies are most likely earliest drafts of the MHI. Biographies in the eighth to the eleventh juan are drafts which were prepared for the project but have not been consulted by official historians in the MHI. They include twenty-eight biographies and three associated biographies of the Hongzhi and Zhengde reigns. Among them, seventeen biographies have lunzan attached at the end.

The six juan of Shengchao tongshi shiyi ji [Miscellaneous notes of the empresses of the Ming Dynasty] consist of biographies of empresses from the Hongwu to the Chongzhen reigns. There are no lunzan attaching to these biographies. According to Mao, these drafts are based on source material which he had not used in drafting Biography of Houfei of the Tianshun, Chenghua, Hongzhi and Zhengde reigns, and the other reference is Gongwei jiwén [Notes of the empresses], a book in his family collection. Wuzong waiji [Additional notes of the Emperor Zhengde] comprises of one
juan only and is a historical record of Emperor Zhengde with no lunzan. According to the brief introduction by Mao, he wrote this book in order to record taboo materials on Ming emperors which had been tentatively left out by official historians. Although the above two works were not drafted by MHI, they are included here for reference as they can reflect the criteria of the selection of source materials in the Institute.

3. Pan Lei, Shu zuanxiu wuchao shizhuan hou (Discussions on biographies of the five reigns of the Ming Dynasty), 1 juan, Suichu tang wenji [Collection of Pan Lei's prose work] edition.

Pan Lei joined MHI and worked for the MS project for five years after passing the Boxue hongru examination in 1679. He was responsible for the drafting of the Treatise of Shihuo and biographies of the first five reigns of the Ming dynasty. All the drafts are no longer extant. The extant article is, in fact, a collection of sixty-three pieces of commentary on historical figures in the first five reigns of the Ming dynasty. Unlike lunzan, they have no formal introductory phrase. By comparing the text of Pan's article and the lunzan in MSCG, it is found that of the total of sixty-three pieces of commentary, thirty-three discuss the same groups of historical figures and twenty-one pieces are only slightly different. In respect of the text, thirty-six pieces of Pan's commentaries are identical to the lunzan in MSCG whereas eighteen pieces are slightly different. Judging from this, Pan's commentaries were probably drafted later than the biographies for which he was responsible in MHI, and which were later adopted by official historians in the Institute. Commentaries on identical figures are found in the collected works of Pang Kai and Wang Wan. When compared with Pan's, each commentary of Pang and Wang only focused on one historical figure whereas the historical figures listed in each commentary are greatly expanded in Pan's work. Since the format of Pan's commentaries is similar
to the lunzan in MSCG, his work is most probably a revised version of the commentaries of Pang and Wang, completed during his stay in MHI.27


Pang Kai worked in MHI for six years. In his collected work, there are fifteen biographical pieces. Nine of them are biographies of early Ming generals such as Lan Yu. The rest are biographies of the government officials of the Zhengde and Jiajing reigns.30 None of these biographies have lunzan. All the historical figures listed, eight of them were included in the draft of both Pang Kai and Pan Lei but in different format. While Pang's work still resembled a traditional epitaph in focusing on one single person and the text is fairly long, Pan's article is in fact a collection of biographies and is closer to the standard of MHI. Pang's biographies are, therefore, the earlier draft which he worked on when serving in MHI.31

5. Shen Heng,32 Biographies, 11 pieces, Gengyan wenxuan [Selected work of Shen Heng] edition.33

There are eleven biographical pieces covering historical figures from the Wanli to the Chongzhen reigns in this collected work of Shen Heng.34 Seven pieces of them have lunzan at the end.35 Shen worked in MHI for more than two years and was responsible mainly for the drafting of lunzan. The format of Shen's biographies is similar to that of Fang Xiangying and Mao Qiling with each biography dedicated to one single figure. A discussion can be found at the end of each biography. These biographies, though completed before Shen joined the MHI, would probably have been consulted by official historians and have, therefore, been included here for reference.36

The historical biographies in Shi's collected work consist of forty-eight biographies of figures dating from the Yongle to Chongzhen reigns of the Ming dynasty. Nine of them had a brief examination of discrepancies attached to the end of each biography. Only two biographies include lunzan, namely Sichen zonglun (Biographies of Four officials) and Biographies of Liu Dingzhi and Yuan Jie. According to Mei Wending (1633 - 1721), Shi had drafted over seventy biographies. Apart from these historical biographies, in the Shiku quanshi edition of Xueyu tang wenji [Collection of Xueyu tang], there is a Biography of Li Banghua which is likely to be the earlier draft of the Biography of Li Banghua in Xueyu wenji. The rest of Shi's work is no longer extant.


These historical drafts of Tang Bin include Imperial Annals of Emperor Hongwu (juan 1-4), Treatise of Li (Calendar) (juan 5-7), biographies of empresses of the first seven reigns of the Ming Dynasty (juan 8) and biographies of officials in the five reigns from the Zhengtong to Hongzhi reigns in the last juan. Some of Tang's drafts bear the same titles as those of other official historians' works. Tang's text also has traces of having adopted other historians' interpretations. In Tang's memorial, it is stated that he was responsible for the revision of Treatises of Tianwen, Li, Wuxing (Five elements), and biographies from the Zhengtong to Hongzhi reigns. Thus, Tang's work is merely a later revised version based on the drafts of official historians in MHI. Although the format and the text of those
historical drafts in Tang's version had been much improved, most of them, except *Imperial Annal of Emperor Hongwu* and other nine biographies, have neither *lunzan* nor other form of commentaries. This shows that Tang's version was still in draft form, due for further revision.


During his period in the MHI, Wan Yan compiled *Chongzhen changbian* [[Long draft of Emperor of Chongzhen], which is no longer available. The extant seven articles consist of three *lunzan* of imperial annals and three prefaces for tables. The remaining one is a preface of a classified biography. Since there is no table in MSCG and most of the *lunzan* of imperial annals are not available, Wan's work was probably written after the compilation of MSCG. Besides, the title of *Neige buyuan dachen nianbiao* (Table of the ministers in Ministries and Grand Secretariat) has been changed to *Dachen nianbiao* (Table of Senior Ministers) in MSEG. Thus the drafts of Wan Yan are likely to have been written between the period when MSCG and MSEG were drafted.


This work by Wang Wan can be divided into four catagories. The first *juan* which is *Biography of Gongzhu* include biographies of the princesses of Emperors Hongwu and Hongxi. From the second *juan* onwards, the following twenty *juan* of biographies accounted for officials in the reigns from Hongwu to Wanli. The twenty-second and twenty-third *juan* are *Biographies of Wenyuan*. The last *juan* consists of drafts of seven classified biographies which include *Biographies of Waiqi, Lienu, Fangji, Huanguan* and two attached biographies.
In the entire work, there are one hundred and forty-three biographies and seventy-one pieces of associated biographies. Among the twenty-nine biographies of officials, there are twenty-five lunzan. The titles of thirty-four biographies drafted by Wang Wan were identical to the drafts of Pan Lei. After comparing the lunzan of these two drafts, it is apparent that Pan's work was a revision of Wang's draft.


There is a collection of thirty-one pieces of drafted lunzan on twenty-six historical figures in these remarks by Xiong Cilü. Among these figures, three are emperors and twenty-three are officials and generals. In 1687, after official historians submitted part of the draft of MS to Emperor Kangxi, the emperor asked Xiong Cilü to re-examine and submit it again later. In the re-submitted draft, Xiong had prepared some draft lunzan attached to those relevant biographical accounts. In 1692, Emperor Kangxi rejected the drafted lunzan submitted by Xiong Cilü and criticized Xiong's inappropriate comments on Ming emperors and officials. The interpretation and the content of the lunzan included in Xiong's collected work were similar to the lunzan criticized by Emperor Kangxi and thus this work was highly probably completed before 1692. Among the twenty-six figures discussed, five of them had two pieces of lunzan focusing on each figure. The lengths of the lunzan are so uneven that the shortest piece has less than forty characters while the longest one has over four hundred characters.


During the three years when Xu Jiu served in MHI, he has drafted nearly two hundred pieces of biography. At present, the seven pieces in his
own collected work are his only extant drafts of MS. These drafts, which consist of seven standard biographies and three associated biographies, accounted for the life of historical figures in the Jiajing and Wanli reigns. Among them, Biography of Jiang Han is the only one with a lunzan. Since the drafts were no longer written in the form of an epitaph, they were possibly revised works of earlier drafts in MHI.


You Tong stated in his memoir that he was responsible for more than three hundred biographical drafts from the Hongzhi to Chongzhen reigns and five juan of Treatise of Yiwen when he worked in MHI. Now only fifty biographies which combined with twenty-two associated biographies and grouped into six juan, and another eight juan of Biography of Waiguo, still exist. Part of the titles of historical figures mentioned in You's work are also included in the biographies drafted by Wang Wan and Tang Bin. Judging from the text of these three drafts, You Tong had revised the work of Wang Wan, while his own work was further revised by Tang Bin. In You's own collected works, there are thirty-one pieces of lunzan. Most of them include comments on each historical figure individually. For a small portion, one lunzan includes comments on a group of people. According to You's memoir, these commentaries were written by him in private.

There is a record that Zhu Yizun has drafted the Imperial Annal of Emperor Yongle, biographies of literary persons and officials in the Jiajing reign, such as Zheng Xiao and Wang Tingxiang. But all the above mentioned drafts are no longer extant. The only two drafts which exist today include biographies of historical figures dating from Emperor Hongwu to Emperor Zhengtong. They are probably parts for which Zhu was responsible during the early compilation period. Shiguan zhuangao is a hand-written manuscript, whereas Biographies is a block-printed edition compiled by Zhu in his later years. There are records revised in ink on the hand-written manuscript. Such revisions are not seen in the block-printed edition, which separately retains Biography of Wang Mian, the drafts of Biography of Qian Longxi and Biography of Wang Kekuan. The last biography bears only a title without any text in the hand-written manuscript. There are three biographies in Zhu's draft with historical figures identical to Wang Wan's draft. In comparing Zhu and Wang's drafts, it appears most probable that Zhu's work is a revised copy of Wang's drafts. There is no lunzan in the hand-written manuscript, whereas there is a piece of lunzan at the end of the biographies of Wang Mian and Qian Longxi in the block-printed edition.

III. MSG of the Kangxi reign

In 1709 Wang Hongxu was forced to retire because of his participation in factional activities. Before he left office, he took away all the drafts in MHI and assembled a group of scholars to revise them in his home town. In 1714 Wang presented two hundred and eight juan of revised draft biographies of MS to the throne. In the following year he received imperial order to compile books. During this period, Wang took the opportunity of revising those drafts of biographies once again. In 1723 Wang presented three hundred and ten juan of MSG comprising imperial annals, treatises
and tables and biographies. At present, the two drafts presented by Wang in 1714 and 1723 and part of those revised drafts written during this period are still available.\textsuperscript{82} Since there is no lunzan in Wang's drafts, only two editions of MSG with three hundred and ten juan will be quoted in this thesis.

1. Wang Hongxu,\textsuperscript{83} \textit{Mingshi jizhuan gao} [Biographical drafts of MS], 208 juan, edition of Jingshen tang, Kangxi period.

This is Wang's draft presented to Emperor Kangxi in 1714 which solely consisted of biographies. The only extant edition is kept in the Library of Beijing University. There is no lunzan attached to each biography.\textsuperscript{84} In terms of content, there is great difference in the order of the discussions on government officials who abdicated during the Jianwen reign and the three Emperors of the Southern Ming period when compared with \textit{Chixiu mingshi gao} [MSG Revised under Imperial Order].\textsuperscript{85}

2. Wang Hongxu, \textit{Chixiu mingshi gao}, 310 juan, hand-written manuscript of Imperial Palace, Yongzheng period.\textsuperscript{86}

At the beginning of this draft there is a record of the imperial order dated 1697 and the memorial for the presentation of Wang Hongxu's draft in 1714. The draft is complete, with imperial annals, treatises, tables and biographies, numbering nineteen juan, nine juan, seventy-seven juan and two hundred and five juan respectively. The total quantity is thus three hundred and ten juan. When comparing this draft with the other two drafts of MS, it is found that there are many similarities. This illustrates that Wang's draft is a revision based on the other two drafts.\textsuperscript{87} The major difference lies in the deletion of all the lunzan in Wang's draft.

3. Wang Hongxu, MSG, 310 juan, Wenhai chubenshe edition.\textsuperscript{88}
This edition is a photocopy of the MSG edited by Jingshentang and contains seven volumes. There is no table of contents in the front and the text is in general similar to Chixiu mingshigao.

IV. Drafts of individual official historians in the Yongzheng reign.

1. Jin Menzhao,\textsuperscript{89} \textit{Mingshi zhuang zonglun} (Introductions of classified biographies of MS), 2 \textit{juan}, \textit{Jin Donshan wenji} [Collection of Jin Menzhao's prose work] edition.\textsuperscript{90}

   In the first \textit{juan} of Jin's work are the introductions to different categories in the draft \textit{Treatise of Yiwen} in MS. In the \textit{Treatise of Yiwen} of MSG and MS, there is only a comprehensive introduction at the beginning of the treatise and the other introduction are no longer extant. The second \textit{juan} consisted of eight pieces of comprehensive introduction to classified biographies such as \textit{Zhongyi, Xiaoyi, Yinyi, Fangji, Waiqi, Lienü, Tusi, Liuzei}, etc. and fifty-eight pieces of introduction to minor divisions. After comparing the comprehensive introduction of similar classified biographies in Jin's draft, Wang's draft and MS, we can trace its evolution from Wang's work to Jin's and finally the summing up by MS. The introduction to minor divisions are is the personal work by Jin. Although it is not inherited from Wang's draft, it is not adopted by MS.

2. Lu Kuixun,\textsuperscript{91} \textit{Mingshi nizhuan gao} (Draft biographies of MS), 5 \textit{juan}, \textit{Lu Tang wenji} [Collection of Lutang] edition.\textsuperscript{92}

   This draft is found in the article by Wang Aiping.\textsuperscript{93} The original work was not personally consulted by the author of this thesis.

3. Tao Zhengjing,\textsuperscript{94} \textit{Ming shizhuan zhuanzan} (Commentaries on biographies of MS), 1 \textit{juan}, \textit{Tao wanwen xiansheng ji} [Collected work of Tao Zhengjing] edition.\textsuperscript{95}
Although Tao Zhengjing did not enter in MHI, he revised many drafts in the Institute.\(^9^6\) In this extant work there is the Biography of Zhang Juzheng and sixteen pieces of *lunzan* of other biographies. Judging from the content of the *lunzan* attached at the end of Biography of Zhang Juzheng, this is probably not a draft written specifically for MHI, but is a work written by Tao for the reference of the Institute.\(^9^7\) None of the sixteen *lunzan* bear any opening phrase although they are noted as *lunzan*. This is perhaps due to the fact that Tao is not an official historian. Part of these commentaries are used by MHI, and the text of some of them is even adopted without any change.\(^9^8\)

4. Tao Zhenyi,\(^9^9\) *Mingshi jizhuan lun shisan shou* (Thirteen pieces of *lunzan* on imperial annals and biographies of MS), *Tao tuian xianshengji* [Collected work of Tan Zhenyi] edition.\(^1^0^0\)

Tao Zhenyi drafted imperial annals and biographies of the Hongxi reign in MHI, but none of them are available now. Among the extant thirteen pieces of *lunzan*, only the Imperial Annal of Emperor Hongxi has two pieces of *lunzan* attached. Each of the rest of the biographies of inaugural officials of the early Ming dynasty bear only one *lunzan*. Only one piece of *lunzan* on biographies of officials such as Hu Dahai was summarized and used by MHI.

5. Wan Bangrong,\(^1^0^1\) *Mingshi liezhuan fenzuan* [Separate compilation of biographies of MS], 15 *juan*, *Wan Liude* block-printed edition dated 1834.

Most of Wan's drafts are adopted in MS. The titles of the first fourteen *juan* of Wang's draft are more or less the same as *juan* 225 to 238 of MS. The only difference lies in the re-arrangement of the biographies in the fifteenth *juan* of Wan's draft when compared to various biographies in MS by the official historians. There are also some minor alterations in the text and *lunzan* of the biographies.
V. Drafts of MS in the Yongzheng reign.

1. Author unknown,\textsuperscript{102} *Mingshi liezhuang cangao* [Incomplete drafts of biographies of MS], 13 *juan*, hand-written manuscript of the Qing dynasty.

There is a total of ninety-six biographical pieces and seventy-one associated biographies in this draft. According to the marks on the manuscript and judging from the content which was compiled between Wang Hongxu's MSG and MS, scholars like Xu Qingsong concluded that this must be a revised draft dated to the Yongzheng period.\textsuperscript{103} Although most of the *lunzan* in the biographies of these incomplete drafts are similar to MS, some of the texts are quite different. Such differences illustrate that, based on Wang Hongxu's drafts, quite a lot of revisions were made during the compilation of MS.

\footnotesize

1 Drafts of tables and treatises of individual official historians such as Cao Rong's *Mingshi caoyun zhi* [Treatise of Grain Transportation in MS], Huang Yuji's *Mingshi yiwen zhi* [Treatise of Art and Literature in MS], Wan Sitong's *Mingshi shisan biao* [Thirteen Tables of MS], Wang Yuan's *Mingshi shihuozhi* [Treatise of Food and Commodities in MS], Zhang Tingyu's *Mingshi dili zhi* [Treatise of Geography in MS] and *Mingshi hequ zhi* [Treatise of Rivers and Canals in MS] and *Mingshi yiwen zhi* etc. will not be be introduced here. Li Jinhua has studied the handing down of various drafts of imperial annals and biographies. This appendix is a supplementary study based on Li's work. For Li's article, please refer to Li Jinhua(1968), pp. 116-133. This section will not touch on drafts of MS with unknown authors.

2 Alias Weiren, pseudonym Xiazhuang, Fang Xiangying was a native of Suian, Zhejiang province. He became a *jinshi* in 1667 and joined MHI for the compilation of MS after passing the *Boxue hongru* examination in 1679. During his service in MHI, Fang was responsible for the compilation of *Imperial Annal of Emperor lingtai* and eighty-six biographies of government officials from the Jingtai to Chongzhen reigns. In 1683 he broke down from constant overwork and retired in 1687. His works include *Jiansong zhai ji* [Collection of *Jiangsongzhai*]. For biographical detail of Fang Xiangying please refer to Zhao Erxun et al., v. 44, 484/13345; Fang Xiangying, *Preface*, v. 2, pp. 1ab; Li Ji et al., 23/27ab.

4 Fang Xiangying, *shang*/1a. Later the Director-General Tang Bin used his work and made some revisions. The revised draft can be referred to in the section of Tang Bin. A comparison between these two drafts can be found in Li Jinhua(1968), pp. 150-151.

5 Fang Xiangying, *shang*/1a.

6 The official historian Chen Weisong died in 1682. Fang continued his work on the compilation of biographies of ten officials under the instruction of the Directors-General Xu Qianxue and Tang Bin. See note 5.

7 Li Jinhua refered to Fang's preface which stated that all the records after the Tianqi and Chongzhen reigns were unreliable and deduced that Fang deleted the biographies of these two reigns when revising the drafts. Li Jinhua(1968), p. 124.

8 Alias Cheng and Dake, pseudonym Xihe, Mao Qiling (1623 - 1716) was a native of Xiaoshan, Zhejiang province. In the early years of Kangxi, he took office in the Imperial College. In 1679 he joined MHI for the compilation of MS after passing the *Boxue hongru* examination. During his service in MHI, he wrote over two hundred biographies of government officials and empresses of the Hongzhi and Zhengde reigns. In 1685 he took leave and soon retired due to illness. His works include *Xihe wenji*. For biographical detail please refer to Mao Qiling, v. 5, pp. 1165-78; Zhao Erxun, *et al.*, v. 43, pp. 481/13174-76; ECCP, pp. 563-5.

9 Mao Qiling, v. 4, 5, 7, 8.

10 Mao Qiling entered MHI in 1679 and took leave in 1685. His service in MHI lasted for six years. The incident of his leave for attending a funeral is recorded in *Xihe wenji*, v. 1, p. 110. Li Jinhua quoted from another work by Li Tianfu which wrongly claimed that Mao stayed in MHI for eight to nine years. Li Jinhua(1968), p. 68.

11 Mao Qiling, v. 1, pp. 109, 110, 121; v. 5, p. 1172; v. 7, p. 1601.


14 The compilation method of MS is to gather all the historical materials into lengthy biographies known as drafts first. Then biographies are written based on these drafts. The first *juan* of *Biography of Wang Wencheng* is a lengthy copy of *Biography of Wang Shouren*. Mao Qiling, v. 5, p. 979. The second *juan* is the continuation of *juan* one with the addition of source materials collected by Mao Yuansheng and Zhang Wenqi. It is not Mao's draft from when he served MHI. Mao Qiling, v. 5, p. 995.

15 The first *juan* uses the introductory phrase, *Shilun yue* (The historical discussion says) whereas the second *juan* starts with *lunyue*. See Mao Qiling, v. 5, pp. 990-1, 1004.
Classification by life span include in *Chongzhen erfu zhuan* (Biographies of the two Grand Coordinator in the Chongzhen reign), by geography include in *Yuezhou xianxian zhuan* (Biographies of Virtuous Ancestors in Yuezhou). Those classified by personality include in Biography of Wuzong in *juan* four and assorted biographies of filial, dutiful officials and chaste women in *juan* five. Mao Qiling, v. 4, pp. 829-927.

Apart from using the common opening phrase *lunyue* and *zanyue*, the *lunzan* attached at the end of these twenty-eight biographies also used five other phrases including *Maocheng yue* (Mao Cheng says), *Qiling yue* (Qiling says), *Tai shishi yue* (The Grand historian says), *Yu xiansheng yue* (Mr Yu says), *Jia shishi yue* (Private historian says). The shortest discussion only consists of one line with twenty-four characters but the longest one has more than one thousand characters.

At the beginning of *juan* eight, there is a note stating that "Source materials of historical figures selected, which was contradictory would be gathered as supplementary biographies by the MHI for reference". Mao Qiling, v. 4, p. 929. Li Hong stated that Mao Qiling selected his own research materials and those from MHI which were not previously used. Li Hong, Preface. Mao Qiling, v. 4, p. 709.

Mao Qiling, v. 7, p. 1601.

Mao Qiling, v. 8, p. 1677.

For Pan Lei’s life history, see chapter 2, section 3, (ii), p. 44; Tso Keungming(1985), v. 1, pp. 59-152. For details of his contribution to the compilation of MS and his recommendation on MS, see Tso Keungming(1985), v. 2, pp. 568-570.

Pan Lei, 11/1a-25b.

Pan Lei was demoted and returned to his home town in 1684. His service in MHI lasted for five years. Tso Keungming(1985), v. 2, pp. 568-570.

Pan Lei has compiled over sixty volumes of drafts of *Treatise of Shihuo* in MS and *Mingchao shigao* [Draft history of the Ming dynasty]. The latter draft may be a drafted copy of the biographies for which he was responsible in MHI. However, both works are no longer extant. Tso Keungming(1985), v. 1, pp. 100-2.

Identical pieces in Pan’s biographies with same title include 1(27), 4(30), 5(31), 6(32), 7(33), 8(34), 9(35), 12(38), 13(39), 14(40), 15(41), 22(44), 23(45), 24(46), 26(48), 28(50), 30(51), 31(52), 34(65), 35(64), 36(66), 38(68), 39(54), 42(52), 43(58), 44(59), 45(60), 46(61), 47(76), 51(86), 55(79), 57(82). Besides, there are twenty-one pieces which are slightly different. They include 2(28), 3(29), 10(3), 11(37), 16-7(42), 18-21(43), 25(47), 27(49), 37(67), 40(55), 48 and 50(77-8), 52(85), 56(84), 58(83), 61(88), 62(53). The number inside the parentheses indicates the *juan* number of combined biographies in MSCG.

The *lunzan* of the biographies which are identical in both Pan’s draft and MSCG include 1(27), 2(28), 3(29), 4(30), 5(31), 6(32), 7(33), 8(34), 9(35), 11(37), 12(38), 18(43), 20(43),
21(43), 22(44), 23(45), 24(46), 26(48), 27(49), 28(50), 32(63), 38(69), 39(54), 40(55), 42(57),
44(59), 45(60), 47(76), 48(77), 49(62), 51(86), 52(85), 55(79), 57(82), 59(87), 69(88). Those
which are slightly different are 10(36), 13(39), 14(40), 15(41), 17(42), 25(42), 30(51), 31(52),
34(65), 35(64), 36(66), 37(62), 43(58), 46(61), 50(77-8), 56(84), 58(83), 62(53). MSCG only lacks
the nineteenth and twenty-ninth biographical commentaries of Pan's draft. The number
inside the parentheses indicates the juan number in MSCG.

27 Please refer to I/4 and 9 in this appendix.

28 Alias Jigong, Pang Kai was a native of Renqiu, Zhili province. He became a juren in 1675
and was responsible for compiling MS after passing the Boxue hongru examination in 1679. In
1685 he was appointed secretary in the Grand Secretariat and was later promoted to be the
Prefect of the Jianming Prefecture, Fujian province. His work include Congbi shanfang wenji.
According to Biography of Pang Kai as quoted from a book edited by Li Huan, Pang died in
1735; whereas, in Qingshi liezhuan edited by Guoshiguan, it is stated that Pang Kai died at
the age of sixty-nine. If Pang died in 1735, he was only twelve years old when he took the
Boxue hongru examination which is very unreasonable. Jiang Liangfu fixed 1725 as the year
of Pang Kai's death and dated his birth in 1657. However, there is no existing reference
which clearly state 1725 as Pang's birth date. Thus the life span of Pang still requires
further research. See Guoshiguan, 70/61a-62a; Li Huan, v. 13, 222/7718; Jiang Liangfu, p.
553.

29 Pang Kai, 5/1a-6/14a.

30 In juan six there are other drafts such as Biography of Shi Xiaolian which recorded figures
during the Ming-Qing transitional period or his own relatives. Since these drafts are not
related to historical biographies of MS, they are not mentioned here.

31 Pang Kai, 5/1a-17b, 20a-26a; Pan Lei, 11/1a, 3b-5a, 10b-11a.

32 Alias Zhaozi, pseudonym Gengyan, Shen Heng (1619-1695) was a native of Haining,
Zhejiang province. He became a jinshi in 1664 and entered MHI to participate in the
compilation of MS after passing the Boxue hongru examination in 1679. During this period
he was mainly responsible for the writing of lunzan. In 1682 he resigned due to illness. His
major work is Gengyan wenji [Collected work of Shen Heng]. His other book Mingshi yaolile
[An account of the Ming dynasty] is no longer extant. Zhao Shilin, 17/9a-11b; Li Ji, et al.,
23/23ab.

33 The version of Gengyan wenxuan quoted in this appendix is a Qing edition without any
division into juan. Please also refer to Shen Heng, Gengyan wenxuan, first collection, block-

34 See Gengyan wenxuan with no juan numbers (Qing edition). Li Jinhua also recorded an
article Ming taipu tangong changyan zhuang (Biography of Tan Changyan), Li Jinhua(1968),
p. 80. There is no record of this article in the two versions quoted in this appendix. Thus Li's account requires further research.

35 Among the seven pieces of lunzan, five begins with the introductory phrase lunyue and the other two starts with Shishi yue (As said by Shishi).

36 See footonote 33.

37 Alias Shanghai, pseudonym Yushan, Shi Runzhang (1618 - 1683) was a native of Xuancheng, Anhui province. Shi became a jinshi in 1649 and took up many government posts such as Provincial Education Commissioner and Administration Vice Commissioner. In 1679 he entered MHI to compile MS after passing the Boxue hongru examination. He drafted more than seventy biographical pieces. In 1683 he was appointed to work in the Hanlin Academy and died during this service. His major work is Xueyutang wenji. For biographical detail please refer to Shi Nianzeng, Shi yushan xianshen nianpu [Chronicles of the life of Shi Runzhang]; Mei Wending, 6/4b-6a.

38 Shi Runzhang(edition of the Kangxi period), v. 18-9. Tan Bin's statement, that there are five juan of "Mingshi drafts" by Shi still available, is a mistake. Shi Nianzeng, 4/appendix p. 3b.

39 Mei Wending, 6/5b.

40 The Biography of Li Banghua in Xueyutang wenji of 1983 edition is more detailed than Li Banghua in Shizhuan. It is suspected that the former biography is a draft of the latter one. See Shi Runzhang(1986), v. 1313, 16/1a-7b. Li Jinhua quoted from juan 16 of 1983 edition and stated that there were another fourteen biographies. Among these works, some of them are written and published under another name or for passing on to friends. Thus they do not qualify as drafts of MHI. Furthermore, Biography of Yuan Yesi quoted by Li is not found in the 1983 edition and his source is unknown. Li Jinhua(1968), p. 78. Besides, Mao Qiling recorded that Shi has drafted Biography of Feng Gongding which is also not available now. Mao Qiling, v. 5, p. 1034.

41 Alias Kongbo, pseudonym Qianan, Tang Bin (1627 - 1687) was a native of Suizhou, Henan province. He became a jinshi in 1652 and was appointed Examining Editor of NHL. After getting first class honours in the Boxue hongru examination, he participated in the compilation of MS in 1679. During his five years in MHI, he was Director-General as well as official in the Imperial Diary Office. Later he was appointed as Provincial Governor of Jiangning and later took up posts such as Minister in the Ministry of Rites and then Works. He died at the age of sixty-one. His works include Qianan ji [Collected work of Tang Bin]. For biographical detail please refer to Tang Bin(1), Preface/pp. 18a-49a; Zhao Erxun et al., v. 33, 265/9929-34.

42 Tang Bin(1), v. 17-29.
Similar evidence includes: both Mao Qiling and Tang Bin were responsible for drafting Biography of Houfei of the Tianshun and Chenghua periods; among the biographies of Government Officials from the Zhengtong to the Hongzhi reigns written by Shi Runzhang, twelve of them are also found in Tang Bin's draft. The biographies of Government Officials of the Jingtai, Tianshun and Chenghua reigns recorded in Fang Xiangying's Mingshi fengao canbian, with the exception of Huang Hao and Wei Neng, are all found in Tang's draft. See Mao Qiling, v. 7, p. 1601; Shi Runzhang(edition of the Kangxi period), 1/1a-4/2b; Fang Xiangying, juan shang; Tang Bin(2), juan 8-20. Besides, Li Jinhua stated that biographies of Fan Guang, Zhu Ji and Wang Wei are attached to Biography of Yu Qian in Tang's draft, whereas in Fang's draft they have independent biographies. After checking Fang's draft, the biographies of these three figures are actually attached under Biography of Yu Qian. See Li Jinhua(1968), p. 75; Fang Xiangying, jshang /1b, 23b-26b.

Judging from the differences in Biography of Li Xian in Tang Bin and Shi Runzhang's drafts, it is evident that Tang has revised the drafts written by other official historians. Shi Runzhang (edition of the Kangxi period), 1/1a-8b; Tang Bin(2), 11/1a-8b. Similar evidence can be found when compared the drafts of Tang Bin and Fang Xiangying, such as the Biography of Yu Qian. Fang Xiangying, shang/17a-23b, Tang Bin(2), 10/1a-8b.

In 1684 Tang Bin transferred from Director-General of MHI to be Provincial Governor of Jiangning. Before his transfer he has submitted a memorial stating that he was appointed as Director-General of MHI on 19 June, 1682 and has revised nine juan of Treatise of Tianwen, twelve juan of Treatise of Li and thirty-five juan of biographies. Tang Bin, 1/4a. Now only three juan of Treatise of Li and twelve juan of biographies are still extant, with the addition of four juan of Imperial Annal of Emperor Hongwu and one juan of Biography of Houfei. Based on the above quotation and after comparing Tang's work with the drafts of official historians (refer to footnotes 43 and 44), Tang's drafts are probably a revision of those drafts of official historians and are not his personal work. Li Jinhua's opinions that (a) those drafts of biographies, only found in Mao Qiling and Tang Bin's drafts, were newly comprised works, or that (b) based on the existence of those biographies in Tang's drafts it is possible to determine if it is a original or revised work, or that (c) Tang Bin may have revised Fang Xiangying's draft and taken them as his own works etc. are indeed doubtful. This is due to his misunderstanding about the basic revised nature of Tang's drafts. Li Jinhua(1968), pp. 71-4, 134.

We can trace the evolution of the format of biographical drafts by comparing the drafts of Fang Xiangying, Shi Runzhang and Tang Bin. Fang's draft still retained the traditional individual biographies. Shi Runzhang has changed this format and combined several biographies in one juan. Tang Bin not only revised the text of the biographies but also
grouped figures according to their life span and contributions, which is much closer to the format of a formal standard history with combined biographies.

47 Alias Zhenyi, pseudonym Guancun, Wan Yan was a native of Yinxian, Zhejiang province. In 1675 he was recommended by Xu Yuanwen to join MHI. During his ten years in MHI, he has drafted Chongzhen changbian and prefaces and lunzan of imperial annals and tables. Later he was appointed as District Magistrate of Wuhe. His major work is Guancun wenchao nei bian. For biographical detail please refer to Anonymous, Biographies, 2 pieces, in Wan Yan, preface/1a-1b. Biography II stated that Wan has stayed in MHI for over five years. Here we refer to Wan's own words and change the duration to ten years. Wan Yan, 3/24a.

48 Wan Yan, 2/10b-21a, 30ab.

49 Please refer to MSCG, v. 1, Table of Contents.

50 The preface of Dachen nianbiao in MSEG still begins in the first page with the title Neige buyuan dachen nianbiao. MSEG, v. 42, 147/1a.

51 Alias Shaowen, pseudonym Dunweng, Wang Wan (1624 - 1690) was a native of Changzhou, Jiangsu province. He became a jinshi in 1655 and took the post of Secretary in the Ministry of Revenue. In 1679, he participated in the compilation of MS after passing the Boxue hongru examination. He stayed in MHI for only sixty days and wrote one hundred and seventy-five draft pieces. Later he retired due to illness and died at the age of sixty-seven. His major work is Dunweng qianhou leigao [Classified drafts of Wang Wan]. See Zhao Erxun et al., v. 44, 484/13336-7; Li Huan, v. 9, 120/5004-7.

52 Wang Wan(1771), juan 31-54.

53 Emperor Hongwu had a total of sixteen daughters. Among them, the third, tenth and thirteenth died young and were not granted any titles, and biographies of them were not written. Wang Wan(1771), 31/lb.

54 Chen Tingjing stated that Wang Wan drafted one hundred and seventy-five biographies. The actual number of existing biographies is different. This is perhaps because some drafts were lost or Chen did not count correctly the number of associated biographies. Li Huan, v. 9, 120/5004. Li Jinhua counted the number of Wang’s biographies as one hundred and twenty-five pieces. Now, after checking the titles of biographies, it was found that the three biographies of Chang Yuchun, Fang Guzhen and Zhu Mujie were missing, and Lai Zhide was mistaken for Lai Zhidao. After adding the statistics of Li Jinhua with the three absent biographies and the Biography of Gongzhu, the total sum is exactly one hundred and forty-three. Furthermore, Li Jinhua discovered over twenty different biographies after inspecting Wang Wan’s Yaofeng wenchao [Collection of Wang Wan's prose work] and suspected that they were also drafts of MHI. However, ten of them were written upon the request of the figures' descendents, six biographies are entitled with figures of the Qing dynasty, and two
are clearly stated as written for later reference. The content of most of these biographies has no relation to the compilation of MS. The opening phrase at the end of the biographies of Wen Zhenmeng and Zheng Erfu clearly refer to *Qian shiguan wangan gue* (Wang Wan, former official historian, says) which shows that these biographies were written after Wang Wan left MHI. Judging from the content of these biographies, two or three pieces with unknown background in the same *juan* may not be drafts of MHI. Li Jinhua(1968), pp. 79-80; Wang Wan(1983), v. 1315, 34/1a-35/21b.

55 See the *lunzan* of the comparable biographies of the two drafts such as Han Liner, Li Wenzhong, Tang He and Luo Furen. Pan Lei, 11/1a-2b, 7a. Wang Wan(1771), 32/4b, 35/7ab, 15b, 22b-23a, 41/5a. See also comparison in 1/3 in this appendix.

56 Alias Jingxiu, Xiong Cilü (1635 - 1709) was a native of Xiaogan, Hubei province. He became a *jinshi* in 1658 and has served as Minister of Ministries of Justice, Rites and Personnel as well as Grand Secretary of the Hall of Military Glory. In 1694 he was appointed as Chief Compiler of MS and was responsible for the editing of MS in 1697. Two years later he became the Director-General. In 1702 he completed the compilation work and submitted MSEG, 416 *juan*, which was rejected by Emperor Kangxi who ordered its revision. He died in 1709. His works include 18 *juan* of *jingyi zhai ji*. For biographical detail please refer to Kong Jihan, 7/1a-13b, 141/15a; Zhao Erxun, vol. 33, pp. 9891-5; Yang Chun, 2/13b; Xiong Cilü(1), 2/1a-3a.

57 Xiong Cilü(1), 6/18a-29b.

58 There are two *lunzan* on Emperor Yongle, Han Liner, Ming Yuzhen, Kökö Temür and Liu Yongchong whereas the rest of the biographies have only one *lunzan* on one figure.

59 QSL/vol. 5, 154/700.

60 Please refer to note 58.

61 The shortest *lunzan* is the one on Liu Yongchong which consists of 35 words and the longest one is on Li Shanzhang with 397 words. See Xiong Cilü (1), 6/24b, 27a-28b.

62 Alias Dianfa, pseudonym Hongting, Xu Jiu (1636 - 1708) was a native of Wujiang, Jiangsu province. Originally a National University Student, he took the *Boxue hongru* examination in 1679 and was then commissioned to compile MS. Having served in MHI for three years, he has edited and submitted nearly two hundred pieces of biography. In 1682 he retired because of illness and died at the age of seventy-three. His major work is *Nanzhou caotang ji*. For biographical detail please refer to Guoshiguan, 71/9b; Xu Jiu, 27/1ab; Tso Keungming(1985), vol. 2, p. 565.


64 Xu Jiu entered MHI in 1679 and retired because of illness not later than 1682. He has served in MHI for more than three years. Xu Jiu, 27/1ab; Tso Keungming(1985), vol. 2, p. 565.

65 Xu Jiu, 27/11b.
For biographical detail please refer to chapter 2, 3/iii, p. 46; You Tong(1694), v. 1; Li Huan, vol. 9, 119/4973-4.

You Tong(1694), v. 10.

There are two extant editions of You Tong's biographies of foreign countries. One is the edition in Xilang quanji, vol. 11. The one we quote here is the more commonly used edition of Xuesheng shuju, Taiwan, 1977.

You Tong(1694), v. 1, xia/5b, vol. 10, p. 1ab.

Similar biographies in You's draft and Wang's draft are those seven pieces on Shu Fen, Zhou Shunchang, Zhu Zuwen, Xu Zhenqing, Tang Yin, Zhu Yunming and Wen Zhengming; whereas there are six repeated biographies of Yang Shouchen, Yang Shouzhi, Yang Shousui, Yang Maoyuan, Zou Zhi and Li Wenxiang in You's draft and Tang's draft.

Refer to You Tong(1694), v. 10, 2/1a-18a; 3/3b-6a; 4/8ab, 16a-20b. Wang Wan (1771), 46/7b-11a; 49/13a-15b; 53/2b-11b. Tang Bin, 16/18a-24a; 19/23b-29b. Wang served in MHI for only 60 days and retired after vacation leave one year later. You stayed in MHI for three years. Thus Wang's draft was probably not compiled after You's. Refer to notes 51 and 66

You Tong(1694), v. 1, Preface, 1ab.

 Alias Xichang, pseudonym Zhucha, Zhu Yizun (1629 - 1709) was a native of Xiushui, Zhejiang province. In 1679 he took the Boxue hongru examination and was appointed as Examining Editor responsible for the compilation of MS. He edited Imperial Annal of Emperor Yongle, biographies of literary persons and officials of the Jiajing period. In 1681 he was promoted to Imperial Diarist in charge of the South Studio. In 1692 he retired after vacation leave and died in 1709. His major work is Baoshu ting ji. For biographical detail of Zhu Yizun please refer to Yang Qian, Zhu zhucha xiansheng nianpu [The chronicle of the life of Zhu Yizun], in Zhu Yizun(1889), introductory message; Li Huan, 118/4947.

Zhu Yizun, Shiguan zhuangao, 30 pieces, in Deng Shi, Fengyu lou miji liuzhen, edition of the Republican period, vol. 3.

Zhu Yizun, Biographies, in (1889), 62/1a-64/14b. At the end of the juan there are two biographies: combined biography of Cui Zihong and Chen Hongshou and biography of Li Wugou. These are not drafts of MHI. Cui and Chen were two painters of the late Ming dynasty; whereas Li was a medical doctor of the Early Qing period. According to Zhu's statement at the end of the Biography, they were only nostalgic works.

During the early compilation period of MS, the official historians were divided into five groups. The history from the Hongwu to the Zhengde reigns of the Ming dynasty was also divided into five periods, each of which was drafted by the five groups of official historians. The history of the later reigns of Jiajing, Longxing and Wanli were edited together and the draft work was re-assigned to official historians. The extant drafts of Zhu are probably sections for which he was responsible during the early compilation period; whereas those lost biographies of the Jiajing reign were assigned later. You Tong(1694), preface, p. 1a.

This block-printed edition, apart from the revision of the written language, includes a complete Biography of Wusidao.

The Biography of Wang Mian records this historical figure of the Ming dynasty. This biography was not found in the hand-written manuscript. In the block-printed edition, this is the first piece in juan sixty-four. It is probably one of the drafts of MHI. The Biography of Qian Longxi records the life story of Qian Longxi in the reign of Chongzhen. It takes the format of brief biographical sketch. As the historical references of the Chongzhen era were not complete, MHI permitted official historians to collect biographies on figures of this reign on their own. Qian's biography was probably Zhu's draft work of the Chongzhen era. Mao Qiling, vol. 1, 1/109.

Zhu and Wang both prepared identical drafts of three biographies of Gao Qi, Yang Weizhen and Xu Yikui. From a comparison of these two drafts, it is evident that the three biographies have similar content. As Wang Wan stayed in MHI for only two months and Zhu remained there for a longer period, Zhu's drafts are most probably a revision of Wang's drafts. Zhu's draft on Yang Weizhen was more concise than Wang's, but Zhu's account in the other two biographies was more detailed than Wang's. In the case of latter two, Zhu Yizun may have considered Wang's draft too simple and thus revised it during the compilation. Zhu Yizun(1889), 32/3b, 62/6a-7a, 64/2a-6a; Wang Wan(1771), 51/9a-11b, 52/1a-3b, 9a-11a. Please also refer to footnotes 51 and 73.

The introductory phrases of the lunzan of these two biographies are not the same. The introductory phrase of the lunzan at the end of the Biography of Wang Mian reads, "Zhu Yizun says"; whereas the introductory words of the lunzan in the Biography of Qian Longxi reads, "The discussion says". Zhu Yizun(1889), 64/2a, 14ab.

Apart from these two drafts, extant revised drafts by Wang Hongxu include Mingshi Liezhuan gao [Biographical drafts of MS], 162 juan; Mingshi Liezhuan cangao [Incomplete biographical drafts of MS], 4 vols edition; Mingshi Liezhuan cangao [Incomplete biographical drafts of MS], 6 vols edition. The first version was the transitional draft between the two drafts presented. The other two were transitional drafts between MHI and the first presentation. The 4-volume Mingshi eliezhuang cangao is currently kept in the
Library of the Beijing University. Huang Aiping considered this the version seen by Hou Renzhi. It is a pity that what Hou saw was the 6-volume version now kept in the Fu Ssunian Library of Academia Sinica. The author has compared the ink colour, handwriting and traces of deletion of these two versions. It is deducted that they belong to the same set of biographies but the exact relationship between them needs further reference to the content of the original. See Hou Renzhi(1939), p. 99; (1968), pp. 231-259; Huang Aiping(1983), pp. 102-5.

83 Alias Xiuyou, Pseudonym Yanzhai, Wang Hongxu (1645 - 1723) was a native of Huating, Jiangsu province. In 1673 he became a jinshi and was appointed Junior Compiler. Later he was promoted to the rank of Grand Secretary of the Grand Secretariat. In 1686 he returned to his home town because of the death of his mother. He was appointed Director-General of MHI under imperial order in 1694 and served subsequently as Minister in the Ministries of Works and Revenue. Five years later he was demoted due to his involvement with political factions. In his late years he revised the drafts of MS several times. He died at the age of seventy-nine. His works include MSG, Hengyun shanren ji [Collected work of Wang Hongxu] etc. For biographical detail of Wang Hongxu please refer to Li Huan, 58/3500-7.

84 For the reason behind this measure, please see Wang Hongxu, Shiliyi (Discussion on historical principles) in Liu Chenggan(1981), 2/38b.

85 For the similarities and differences between the various drafts by Wang Hongxu, see Zhu Xizu(1961), pp. 73-4.

86 This draft was missing juan 295-7, 301-4 and is currently kept in the Central Library, Taiwan. According to the research of Huang Aiping, there is another copy of Chixiu Mingshi gao in the National Library of China, which is identical in terms of narration format and content. Huang quoted Huang Zhangjian's statement and considered the copy in the National Library of China to be the hand-written draft presented by Wang Hongxu during the Yongzheng period. As there no comparison could be made between the two versions, the extant draft has adopted for identification purposes by the Central Library. See Huang Aiping(1983), 105-6; Huang Zhangjian(1953), pp. 133-4.

87 Li Jinhua(1968), p.173.


89 Alias Yidong, Pseudonym Dongshan, Jin Menzhao (1675 - 1754) was a native of Jiangdu, Jiangsu province. He became a juren in 1717 and later a jinshi in 1736. In 1731 he was recommended by Zhang Tingyu and entered MHI to participate in the compilation of MS. He drafted the Treatise of lingji and part of the lunzan. Later he was dispatched as District Magsistrate of Shouyang and died at the age of eighty. His major work is Jin Dongshan wenji. There are different opinion about his birth date. One version considers his birth year to be 1673 (Wu Hailin et al., p. 368); a second considers it to be 1672 (Jiang Liangfu, p. 564),
the source of which is unknown. Here the birth year is based on Gu Chunliang's preface. Gu Chunliang, Preface, in Jin Menzhao, preface/1a-6a; Li Fusun, 24/19b.

90 Jin Menzhao, 1/1a-2/34b.

91 Alias Juhou, Lu Kuixun (1663 - 1738) was a native of Zhejiang province. As a youngster he followed his uncle Lu Rou to the capital and was popular among the officials. He became a jinshi at the age of sixty in 1721 and was appointed as Junior Compiler in MHI. Soon he resigned because of illness and became head of the Xiufeng Academy in Guangxi province. His major work includes Lutang wenji, 20 juan. For biographical detail of Lu Kuixun please refer to Zhao Erxun et al., vol. 44, 484/13352-3.

92 This draft can be found in the article of Wang Aiping. Wang Aiping(1984), p. 61.

93 Ditto.

94 Alias Zhuzhong and Wanwen, Tao Zhengjing (1682-1745) was a native of Changshu, Jiangsu province. He became a jinshi in 1730 and was appointed Junior Compiler. He served as Chief Minister of the Court of State Ceremonial and Assistant Censor-in-Chief. He died at the age of sixty-four. For biographical detail please see Qian Yiji, vol. 21, 56/5b-9a; Li Huan, vol. 7, 79/4028-31.

95 Tao Zhengjing, Mingshi zhuan zhuanzan, in Tao Zhengjing, juan 4.

96 Tao was once recommended by Jiang Tingxi for entry into MHI but was turned down by Zhang Tingyu. Although Tao was not Compiler of MS, he personally assisted his patron Jiang to compile at least twelve juan of drafts of MS. Since his drafts were accepted by MHI, he is also listed here. Tao Zhengjing, 7/7ab.

97 Tao Zhengjing, 4/7a.

98 Lunzan inherited by MHI included lunzan of Biographies of Wei Qing and others, Biographies of Xi Shu and others, Biography of Wang Shouren, Biographies of Yang Jue and others and Biographies of Yang Sichang and others. Tao Zhengjing, 4/7a-10b.

99 Alias Gaizhi, pseudonym Tuian, Tao Zhenyi (1676 - 1743) was a native of Changshu, Suzhou district. In 1712 he became a jinshi and entered MHI in the early years of Yongzheng reign. He was responsible for drafting biographies of the Hongxi reign but soon resigned. He died at the age of sixty-eight. His major work was Tao tuian xiansheng ji. For biographical detail please see Tao Zhenyi, preface/1a-5b; 6a-10b. According to the names of the compilers on the Mingshi liezhuan cangao, Tao Zhenyi also drafted the biography of Wu Bozong, see Xu Qingsong, p. 102.

100 Tao Zhenyi, shang/ 57a-62b.

101 Alias Renbo, pseudonym Xitian, Wan Bangrong (1673 - 1741) was a native of Xiangcheng, Henan province. In 1720 he became a jinshi and was recommended to compile MS in 1725. During his three-year service in MHI, he drafted the biographies of the Jiajing and Wanli periods. In 1736 he sat the Boxue hongru examination but failed. Then he was appointed as
District Magistrate of Shenxian in Shantong province and died in service. His major work is
*Hongya shiji* [Collection of Wan Bangron's poetry]. For biographical detail please refer to

102 As these incomplete manuscripts are revised drafts and the identity of most of the authors
and compilers is not clear, it is classified as author unknown although some drafts kept the
name of the original official historians.

103 Xu Qingsong, pp. 101-2.
Appendix 3:

Selected *lunzan* of MSCG, MSEG and MS

3.1 Biography of Lan Yu in MSCG (v. 7, 35/7b)
3.2 Biography of Lan Yu in MSEG(v. 45, 164/7b)
3.3 Biography of Lan Yu in MS (v. 35, 132/3871)

致慨於南宮之藏，謂出於英主之猜謀，殊非通達治體之言也。夫當天下大定，勢如磐石之安，指麾萬里，奔走恐後，復何所疑忌而芟蘢之不遺餘力哉？亦以介胄之士桀驁難馭，乘其餘勇，皆能無尺寸之虗張，亦出於不得已，而非以剪除為私計也。
3.4 Annal of Emperor Jianwen in MSEG(v. 2, 5/11a-12a)
3.5 Annal of Emperor Jianwen in MS(v. 1, 4/66)

因病延朝，朱昌隆進諫，即深自引咎，宜共疏於中外。又除軍衞營丁、滅蘇、松重賦，皆惠民之大者。乃革命而後，紀年復稱洪武，嗣是子孫臣庶，以紀載爲嫌，若野傳疑，不無訛謬。更
3.6 Annal of Emperor Yongle in MSEG (v. 3, 7/23a-24a)
3.7 Annal of Emperor Yongle in MS(v. 1, 7/105)

【注】文皇少長習兵，據幽燕形勝之地，乘建文孱弱，長驅內向，奄有四海。即位以後，躬行節儉，水旱朝告夕惕，無有壅蔽。知人善任，表裏洞達，雄武之略，同符高祖。六師屢出，漠北塵清。至其季年，威德遐邇，四方賓服，受朝命而入貢者殆三十國，幅員之廣，遠邇漢、唐，成功驟烈，卓乎盛矣。然而革除之際，倒行逆施，禍德亦曷可掩哉。
3.8 Biographies of Qi Tai, Huang Zicheng and Fang Xiaoru
in MSCG(v. 11, 63/no page number)
3.9 Biographies of Qi Tai, Huang Zicheng and Fang Xiaoru

in MSEG(v. 48, 183/11b-12a)
3.10 Biographies of Qi Tai, Huang Zicheng and Fang Xiaoru
in MS(v. 29, 141/4029-30)
 Biography of Yao Guangxiao in MSCG (v. 10, 58/10ab)
3.12 Biography of Yao Guangxiao in MSEG(v. 49, 193/10b)
3.13 Biographies of Zhang Yu and Zhu Neng in MSCG (v. 10, 54/20b-21a)
3.14 Biographies of Zhang Yu and Zhu Neng

in MSEG(v. 48, 189/23b-24a)
3.15 Biographies of Yao Guangxiao, Zhang Yu and Zhu Neng

in MS(v. 13, 145/4097)
3.16 Biography of Yang Hong in MSCG (v. 12, 72/24ab)
3.17 Biography of Yang Hong in MSEG(v. 53, 217/24ab)
3.18 Biography of Yang Hong in MS(v. 15, 173/4629-30)

知盛滿可懼，而傾邪猥粗傲，枯頽而誇，共遺殃宜哉。

朱讎勇略不及郅臻，登乃無後，而餱

相去豈不遠哉？
3.20 Biography of Yu Qian in MSEG (v. 52, 214/22b-23a)
3.21 Biography of Yu Qian in MS(v. 15, 170/4553)

心置腹，謙亦憂國忘家，身繫安危，志存宗社，厥功偉矣。變起奪門，禍機猝發，餘、僧之徒出力而殉之死，當時莫不稱冤。然有貞與亭，吉祥相繼得禍，皆不旋踵。而謙忠心義烈，與日月爭光，卒得復官賜邑。公論久而後定，信夫。
3.22 Biography of Zhang Juzheng in MSCG (v. 27, 159/29ab)
3.23 Biography of Zhang Juzheng in MSEG (v. 71, 302/30ab)
3.24 Biography of Zhang Juzheng in MS (v. 19, 213/5653)

凌人。及為馮保所逐，柴車即路。傾軋相尋，有自來已。張居正通識時變，勇於任事。神宗初政，起衰振隳，不可謂非幹濟才。而威柄之操，幾於震主。卒致論發身後。書曰，‘臣罔
3.25 Biography of Zuo Liangyu in MSCG(v. 50, 261/13ab)
3.26 Biography of Zuo Liangyu in MSEG (v. 87, 375/31ab)
3.27 Biography of Zuo Liangyu in MS(v. 23, 273/7010)

贊曰：左良玉以勇猛之材，頻殲叛寇，遂擁強兵，驍勇自恣，綏則養寇以贻憂，急則棄甲

兵犯闕而不顧也。高傑、祖寬皆剛悍難馭，恃功不戢，而傑尤為兇猛。然傑被戮於鏡湖，

取之時，傑受誅於力戰赴援之後，死非其罪，不能無遺憾焉。
Appendix 4:
The order of biographies in MSCG, MSEG, MSG and MS

<table>
<thead>
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<th>MSEG</th>
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The number inside the brackets is the group number of the biography. The biographies of MSEG, MSG and MS are arranged according to the group number of MSCG.

*juan 262-312 are classified biographies. For the sequence of the various versions, please refer to Appendix 5.

#The sequence of the arrangement of some of the following biographies of late Ming period is very vague due to the common combination of the biographies.
Appendix 5:

Classified biographies and their orders

in MSCG, MSEG, MSG, and MS

MSCG

Zhongyi 忠義 (The Loyal)
Xunli 循吏 (Dutiful Officials)
Xiaoyi 孝義 (The Filial)
Rulin 儒林 (Confucian Scholars)
Wenyuan 文苑 (Men of Letters)
Yinyi 隱逸 (Hermits)
Fangji 方伎 (Exorcists and Magicians)
Ningxing 佞幸 (Fawning Favorites)
Lienü 列女 (Chaste Women)
Huanguan 宦官 (Eunuchs)
Jianchen 誇臣 (Treacherous Ministers)
Liezei 流賊 (The Bandits)
Tusi 土司 (Aboriginal Offices)
Waiguo 外國 (Foreign Countries)
Xiyu 西域 (Western Countries)
MSEG

Zhongyi 忠義 (The Loyal)

Rulin 儒林 (Confucian Scholars)

Wenyuan 文苑 (Men of Letters)

Xunli 循吏 (Dutiful Officials)

Xiaoyi 孝義 (The Filial)

Lienü 列女 (Chaste Women)

Yinyi 隱逸 (Hermits)

Fangji 方伎 (Exorcists and Magicians)

Waiqi 外戚 (Imperial Relatives)

Jianchen 奸臣 (Treacherous Ministers)

Ningxing 奴幸 (Fawning Favorites)

Huanguan 宦官 (Eunuchs)

Liezei 盜賊 (The Bandits)

Tusi 土司 (Aboriginal Offices)

Waifan 外藩 (Foreign Countries)
MSG

Xunli 循吏 (Dutiful Officials)
Rulin 儒林 (Confucian Scholars)
Wenyuan 文苑 (Men of Letters)
Zhongyi 忠義 (The Loyal)
Xiaoyi 孝義 (The Filial)
Yinyi 隱逸 (Hermits)
Lienü 列女 (Chaste Women)
Fangji 方伎 (Exorcists and Magicians)
Waiqi 外戚 (Imperial Relatives)
Huanguan 宮官 (Eunuchs)
Ningxing 娥幸 (Fawning Favorites)
Jianchen 奸臣 (Treachery Ministers)
Liezei 流賊 (The Bandits)
Tusi 土司 (Aboriginal Offices)
Waigo 外國 (Foreign Countries)
Xiyu 西域 (Western Countries)
MS

Xunli 循吏 (Dutiful Officials)

Rulin 儒林 (Confucian Scholars)

Wenyuan 文苑 (Literary Persons)

Zhongyi 忠義 (The Loyal)

Xiaoyi 孝義 (The Filial)

Yinyi 隱逸 (Hermits)

Fangji 方伎 (Exorcists and Magicians)

Waiqi 外戚 (Imperial Relatives)

Lienü 列女 (Chaste Women)

Huanguan 宮官 (Eunuchs)

Yandang 閹黨 (Eunuchs Faction)

Ningxing 首幸 (Fawning Favorites)

Jianchen 奸臣 (Treacherous Ministers)

Liezei 流賊 (The Bandits)

Tusi 土司 (Aboriginal Offices)

Waiguo 外國 (Foreign Countries)

Xiyu 西域 (Western Countries)
Glossary*

* This glossary only includes terms used in the main text.

Alantai 阿蘭泰
Altan quran 俺答
Ban Gu 班固
Beijing tushuguan cang 北京圖書館
Beiping 北平
Benji 本紀
Biao 表
Bielu 別錄
Bingzhi 兵志
Boxue hongru 博學鴻儒
Buyi 補遺
Cai Ting 蔡珽
Cai Zhanmin 蔡瞻岷
Cao Rong 曹溶
Cao Wenzhao 曹文詔
Cao Xing 曹興
Cao Zhen 曹震
Caoyun 漕運
Cha Jizuo 查繼佐
Chang Yuchun 常遇春
Changping 長平
Changshu 常熟
Changzhou 長洲
Chen Hongshou 陳洪绶
Chen Jiru 陳繼儒
Chen Naiqian 陳乃乾
Chen Shizhai 陳寔齋
Chen Tingjing 陳廷敬
Chen Weisong 陳維崧
Chen Yi 陳沂
Chen Yu 陳遇
Chen Yuan 陳垣
Chen Yubi 陳于陛
Chen Zezhou 陳澤州
Cheng Minzheng 程敏政
Cheng 廓
Chenghua 成化
Chengzu shilu 成祖實錄
Chixiu mingshi gao 數修明史稿
Chongzhen changbian 崇禎長編
Chongzhen erfu zhuan 崇禎二撫傳
Chongzhen 崇禎
Chunjiu 春秋
Cigeng 次耕
Congbi shanfang wenji 叢碧山房文集
Cui Xian 崔銑
Cui Zizhong 崔子忠
Dachen nianbiao 大臣年表
Dai Li 戴笠
Dai Mingshi 戴名世
Dake 大可
Daoyan 道衍
Daqing huidian 大清會典
Datong 大同
Dayi juemi lu 大義覺迷録
Dehong 德洪
Deng Qi 鄧肅
Di 桢
Dianfa 電發
Dianli 典禮
Dingyuan 定遠
Dong Qichang 董其昌
Dong Wenji 董文驥
Dongan Gate 東安門
Dongping wang 東平王
Dongshan 東山
Dorgon 多爾袞
Du mingji suibi 讀明紀隨筆
Duke of Liang Kingdom 涼國公
duoqing 奴情
Emperor Cheng 周成王
Emperor Chenghua 明憲宗
Emperor Chongzhen 明思宗
Emperor Gaozu 漢高祖
Emperor Gongmin 恭愍帝
Emperor Hongguang 明福王
Emperor Hongwu 明太祖
Emperor Hongxi 明仁宗
Emperor Hongzhi 明孝宗
Emperor Jiajing 明世宗
Emperor Jianwen 明惠帝
Emperor Jie 帝桀
Emperor Jing 漢景帝
Emperor Jingtai 景帝
Emperor Kangxi 清聖祖
Emperor Longqing 明穆宗
Emperor Qianlong 清高宗
Emperor Shunzhi 清世祖
Emperor Taichang 明光宗
Emperor Tianqi 明熹宗
Emperor Wanli 明神宗
Emperor Xuande 明宣宗
Emperor Yao 帝堯
Emperor Yongle 明成祖
Emperor Yongli 明惠王
Emperor Yongzheng 清世宗
Emperor Zhengde 明武宗
Emperor Zhengtong 明英宗
Emperor Zhenguansu 唐太宗
Esen 也先
Fan Guang 范廣
Fan Qian 范謙
Fan Wencheng 范文程
Fan Ye 范曄
Fang Bao 方苞
Fang Guzhen 方谷真
Fang Xiangying 方象瑛
Fang Xiaoru 方孝孺
Fangquan 方泉
Fanji 方俊
Feng Bao 梵保
Feng Gongding 梵恭定
Feng Qi 梵琦
Feng Quan 梵鉢
Feng Shike 梵時可
Fengtian jingnan 奉天靖難
Fengtian jingnan jizhu 奉天靖難記注
Fengtian jingnan ji 奉天靖難記
Fenyi 分宜
Fu Weilin 傅維麟
Fu Youde 傅有德
Fuyi 賦役
Gaizhi 改之
Galdan 噶爾丹
Gang Lin 剛林
Gao Dai 高岱
Gao Gong 高拱
Gao Jie 高杰
Gao Qi 高啟
Gaoyi 高逸
Geng Bingwen 聲炳文
Geng Jingzhong 聲精忠
Gengyan wenji 聲巖文集
Gengyan 聲巖
Gong Tingrong 龔廷榮
Gongchen shibiao 功臣世表
Gongjing 恭靖
Gongmin 恭愍
Gongmin di 恭愍帝
Gongwei jiwen 宫闈紀聞
Gongzhu 公主
Gu Lin 頤麟
Gu Ruhua 頤如華
Gu Yanwu 頤炎武
Gu Yingtai 谷應泰
Gu Yingxiang 谷應祥
Guan Zhong 管仲
Guancun 管村
Guangwu 光武
Guian 歸安
Guiji 歸極
Guo Deng 郭登
Guo Zhengyu 郭正域
Guo Zi 郭資
Guoqüe 國榷
Guoshiguan(NHI) 國史館
Haining 海寧
Han Liner 賀林兒
Han 漢
Hanshu 漢書
He Qiaoxin 何喬新
He Qiaoyuan 何喬遜
He Renlong 賀人龍
Hefu 被夫
Hengyun shanren ji 横雲山人集
Hequ 河渠
Hezheng lu 鳥徵錄
Hong Chengchou 洪承疇
Hongguang 弘光
Hongting 虹亭
Hongwu 洪武
Hongxi 洪熙
Hongya shiji 紅涯詩集
Hongzhi 弘治
Hou Fangyu 侯方域
Hou Renzhi 侯仁之
Houfei 后妃
Hu Dahai 胡大海
Hu Weiyong 胡惟庸
Hu Ying 胡熾
Hu Zongxu 胡宗緒
Huaiqing 懷慶
Huaiyuan 懷遠
Huang Aiping 黃愛平
Huang Baijia 黃百家
Huang Degong 黃得功
Huang Guangsheng 黃光升
Huang Hao 黃鎬
Huang Hui 黃輝
Huang Ruliang 黃汝良
Huang Shu 黃澍
Huang Yuji 黃虞稷
Huang Zicheng 黃子澄
Huang Zongxi 黃宗羲
Huangji 皇極
Huanguan 官宦
Huangxin shibiao 官幸世表
Huating 華亭
Huo Guang 霍光
Huobi 貨幣
Jia shishi yue 家史氏曰
Jiajing 嘉靖
Lianchen 奸臣
Jiang Chenying 姜宸英
Jiang Han 姜漢
Jiang Xian 蒋獻
Jiangling 江陵
Jiangnan 江南
Jiangsong zhai ji 健松齋集
Jianning 建寧
Lianwen huangdi benji 建文皇帝本紀
Lianwendi benji 建文帝本紀
Lianwen diji 建文帝紀
Lianwen di 建文帝
Jiao Hong 焦竑
Jiao Yuanxi 焦袁熹
Jiaosi 郊祀
Jierling 雜兒嶺
Jigong 聲公
Jin Menzhen 金门诏
Jin Zhong 金忠
Jinan 濟南
jingji 經籍
Jingtai 景泰
Jingxiu 敬修
Jinling 金陵
Jinshi 金史
jinshi 進士
jiubian 九邊
Jiye 季野
juan 卷
Juelou fengtai 覺羅逢泰
Juhou 聚侯
Lunghuo 郡國
Junzheng 軍政
juren 舉人
Kaifeng 開封
Kaiping 開平
Kangxi 康熙
Kaoyi 考異
Ke Kui 柯奎
Kongbo 孔伯
Kökö Temür 擴廓帖木兒
Kunshan 昆山
Lai Zhidao 來知道
Lai Zhide 來知德
Lan Yu 藍玉
Lei Li 雷禮
Li Banghua 李邦華
Li Gang 李綱
Li Gong 李綰
Li Guangbi 李光璧
Li Jinglong 李景隆
Li Jinhua 李晉華
Li Kai 李鎧
Li Laitai 李來泰
Li Mengyang 李夢陽
Li Qing 李清
Li Shanchang 李善長
Li Tailai 李泰來
Li Tianfu 李天馥
Li Tingji 李廷機
Li Wei 李霳
Li Weizhen 李維楨
Li Wenxiang 李文祥
Li Wenzhong 李文忠
Li Wugou 李無垢
Li Xian 李賢
Li Xin 李新
Li Yingdu 李因篤
Li Youzhi 李友直
Li Zhi 李誌
Li Zicheng 李自成
Li 厲
Liangguogong Lan Yu zhuang 梁國公藍玉傳
Liao Yongzhong 廖永忠
Liaoshi 遼史
LienQ 列女
Lifa 歷法
Lin Yaoyu 林堯俞
Lingqing 臨清
Lishui 漬水
Liu Dingzhi 劉定之
Liu Ji 劉濟
Liu Ji 劉基
Liu Jizhuan 劉繼莊
Liu Yingqi inputs 劉應秋
Liu Yuanzhen 劉元震
Liu Yukui 劉虞夔
Liu Zeqing 劉澤清
Liu Zhaoji 劉肇基
Liu Zhiji 劉知幾
Liuhe 六合
Liuzei 流賊
Lixue 理學
Longmen 龍門
Longqing 隆慶
Lu Kejiao 陸可教
Lu Kuixun 陸奎勋
LU Liuliang 呂留良
Lu Rou 陸柔
Lu Shude 陸樹德
Lu Shusheng 陸樹聲
Lu Yanzhang 陸彥章
Luanzei 亂賊
Lungkodo 隆科多
lunyue 論曰
lunzan 論贊
Luo Furen 羅復仁
Luo Wanhua 羅萬化
Ma Shiying 马士英
Mao Jike 毛際可
Mao Qiling 毛奇齡
Mao Shoudeng 毛壽登
Mao Yuansheng 毛遠生
Maocheng yue 毛廓曰
Marquis of Yongchang 永昌公
Master Zhou 周公
Mazheng 马政
Miaosi 廟祀
Ming chengzu yu yongle zhengzhi 明成祖與永樂政治
Ming hongwu baoxun 明洪武寶訓
Ming shilu 明實錄
Ming jiajing yilai shoufu zhuan 明嘉靖以來首輔傳
Ming jingnan shishi kaozheng gao 明靖難史事考證稿
Ming shi shisan biao 明史十三表
Ming_shizhuan_zhuanzan 明史傳
傳贊
Ming_shizhuan_zonglun 明史傳
總論
Ming taipu tangong changyan
Ming wenhuangdi ji
Ming Yuzhen
Ming Zhu
Mingchao shigao
Mingjian juyao
Mingshan cang
Mingshi caoyun zhi
Mingshi dili zhi
Mingshi gao
Mingshi hequ zhi
Mingshi jishi benmo
Mingshi jizhuan gao
Mingshi jizhuan lun shisan shou
Mingshi jizhuan xu
Mingshi liezhuan cangao
Mingshi liezhuan fenzuan
Mingshi liezhuan zhuangao
Mingshi nizhuan gao
Mingshi shihuo zhi
Mingshi yaoque
Mingshi yiwenzhi
Mingshi zuanxiu kao
Mingshi  明史
Mingshi gai
Mingshi gai(MHI) 明史館
Mingshi ji
Mu Ying
Nanjing
Nanshan ji 南山集
Nanxun 南浔
Neige buyuan dachen nianbiao
Nichen lu
Ning Wanwo
Ningbo
Ninghai
Ningxing
Ningyuan
Niu Niu
Niu Yingyuan
Nurhaci
Oboi
Oirat
Ou Daxiang
平定三逆聖武方略
Prince Cheng 廻王
Prince Jiancheng 李建成
Prince Yan 燕王
Prince Yu 裕王
Prince Zhou 周王
Qi Chongge 祁充格
Qi Jiguang 戚繼光
Qi Tai 齊泰
Qian Longxi 錢龍錫
Qian Shisheng 錢士升
Qianan ji 潛菴集
Qianan 潛菴
Qianlong 乾隆
Qiantang 錦塘
Qichen shibiao 戚臣世表
Qijuzhu 起居注
Qiling yue 奇齡曰
Qin Ying 秦瀛
Qing taizong shilu 清太宗實錄
Qing taizu shilu 清太祖實錄
Qingshi gao 清史稿
Qingshi liezhuan 清史列傳
Qingyun Temple 慶雲寺
Qu Yuan 璇瑗
Quan Tianxu 全天敘
Quanxing 權倖
Renbo 仁伯
Renqiu 任邱
Rongguo gong 榮國公
Rulin 儒林
San chao guoshi 三朝國史
San chao shengxun 三朝聖訓
Sanwang zhuan 三王傳
Shang Zhixin 尚之信
Shangbai 尚白
Shangshu 尚書
Shanyang xianzhi 山陽縣志
Shanyang 山陽
Shao Wuyuan 邵吳遠
Shao Yuanping 邵遠平
Shen Heng 沈珩
Shen Shixing 申時行
Shen Yiguan 沈一貫
Sheng Na 盛讃
Sheng Yong 盛庸
Shengzhao tongshi shiyi ji 勝朝彤史拾遺記
Shenxian 萃縣
Shenzong shilu 神宗實錄
Shi Heng 石亨
Shi Runzhang 施閔章
Shi Xiaolian 史孝廉
Shihong 士弘
Shihuo 食貨
Shikui cangshu 石匮載書
Shikuishu houji 石匱書後集
Shiliyi 史例議
Shilun yue 史論曰
Shimei 世美
Shishi yue 史氏曰
Shizhuan 史傳
Shizu shilu 世祖實錄
Shouyang 壽陽
Shu Fen 舒芬
Shu zuanxiu wuchao shizhuan hou 書纂修五朝史傳後
Shuda 叔大
Shumin 肅愍
Shun 順
Shunzhi 順治
Sichen zonglun 四臣總論
Siku quanshu 四庫全書
Sima Qian 司馬遷
Siyi 四夷
Song 宋
Song Lian 宋濂
Songshi 宋史
Suian 遂安
Suizhou 隋州
Sun Chengen 孫承恩
Sun Chenghong 孫承宏
Sun Jiagen 孫嘉淦
Sun Jiagen 孫嘉淦
Sun Jigao 孫繼皋
Sun Tang 孫镗
Sun Yuehou 孫月侯
Sun Zaifeng 孫在豐
Tai shishi yue 太史氏曰
Tai 泰
Taichang 泰昌
Taiwan 台灣
Taiyue 太岳
Taizu shilu 太祖實錄
Tan Qian 談遷
Tang Bin 湯斌
Tang He 湯和
Tang Jiuzhou 湯九州
Tang Shu 唐憲
Tang Wenxian 唐文獻
Tang Yin 唐寅
Tao Chengxue 陶承學
Tao Wangling 陶望齡
Tao Zhengjing 陶正靖
Tao Zhenyi 陶貞一
Tartar 韜靼
Ti 涌
Tian Ergeng 田爾耕
Tian Jizong 田繼綜
Tianqi 天啓
Tianshun 天順
Tianwen 天文
Tingyi 廷益
Toyus Temür 脱古斯帖木兒
Tongcheng 桐城
Tuian 退壘
Tumu Incident 土木堡之變
Tusi 土司
Waifan 外蕃
Waiguo zhuan 外國傳
Waiguo 外國
Waiguo 外戚
Wang Bangrong 王邦榮
Wang Jing 王經
Wang Ming 王明
Wang Shibiao 王世標
Wang Sitong 王斯同
Wang Yan 王言
Wang Bi 王弼
Wang Bozhen 王伯貞
Wang Guoan 王國安
Wang Hong 王竑
Wang Hongxu 王鴻緒
Wang Ji 汪楫
Wang Kekuan 王克寬
Wang Kezhuang 王可莊
Wang Maolin 汪懋侖
Wang Mian 王冕
Wang Qiong 王瓊
Wang Ruolin 汪若霖
Wang Shizhen 王世貞
Wang Shouren 王守仁
Wang Songwei 王頌爵
Wang Tingxiang 王廷相
Wang Tu 王圖
Wang Wan 汪筭
Wang Wei 王韋
Wang Wei 王偉
Wang wencheng zhuanben 王文成傳本
Wang Xiangling 王項齡
Wang Xijue 王錫爵
Wang Youdun 汪由敦
Wang Yuan 王源
Wang Zhen 王振
Wang Zhi 王直
Wanli 萬曆
Wanwen 晚聞
Wei Neng 蔚能
Wei Qing 衛青
Wei Yuan 魏源
Weiren 渭仁
Wen Zhengming 文徵明
Wen Zhenmeng 文震孟
Weng Fanggang 翁方綱
Wenyuan 文苑
Wenzhao pavilion 文昭閣
Wenzhong 文忠
Wu Bozong 吳伯宗
Wu Daonan 吳道南
Wu Han 吳瀚
Wu Jiang 吳江
Wu Lin 吳麟
Wu Ning 吳寧
Wu Sangui 吳三桂
Wu Shouyang 吳壽暘
Wu Yan 吳炎
Wu Zhirong 吳之榮
Wuhe 五河
Wujiang 吳江
Wulie 武烈
Wusidao 烏斯道
Wuxiang 武襄
Wuxing 吳興
Wuxing 五行
Wuzong waiji 武宗外紀
Wuzong 五忠
Xi Shu 席書
Xia Xie 夏燮
Xiangcheng 襄城
Xiangfu 祥符
Xiao Lingyou 蕭良有
Xiao Mu 蕭穆
Xiao Yunju 蕭雲舉
Xiaogan 孝感
Xiaojie 孝節
Xiaojing 孝經
Xiaoshan 蕭山
Xiaoyi 孝義
Xiazhuang 霞莊
Xichang 錫崞
Xie Cheng 謝成
Xie Guozhen 謝國楨
Xie Zhaozhe 謝肇浙
Xihe 西河
Xin tangshu 新唐書
Xingcunlu 幸存錄
Xingfu 刑法
Xiong Cilu 熊賜履
Xitian 西田
Xiufeng Academy 秀峰書院
Xiushi_tiaoyi 修史條議
Xiusui 秀水
Xixin Shuwu 洗心書屋
Xiyu 西域
Xizhi 希直
Xizong shilu 熹宗實錄
Xu Bidi 徐必達
Xu cangshu 續藏書
Xu Da 徐達
Xu Jiayen 徐嘉炎
Xu Jie 徐階
Xu Jiu 徐墀
Xu Qian 徐汧
Xu Qianxue 徐乾學
Xu Qingsong 許青松
Xu Sanli 許三禮
Xu Shian 許時騏
Xu Xiangqing 許相卿
Xu Yikui 徐一夔
Xu Youzhen 徐有貞
Xu Yuanmeng 徐元夢
Xu Yuanwen 徐元文
Xu Zhengqing 徐禎卿
Xuancheng 宣城
Xuande 宣德
Xuanfu 宣府
Xuanju 選舉
Xuexiao 學校
Xueyue wenji 學餘文集
Xunli 循吏
Yan Shengsun 嚴鏞孫
Yan Song 嚴嵩
Yanfa 鹽法
Yang Chun 楊椿
Yang Fengbao 楊鳳苞
Yang Hong 楊洪
Yang Jue 楊爵
Yang maoyuan 楊茂元
Yang Pu 楊溥
Yang Rong 楊榮
Yang Shiqi 楊士奇
Yang Shouchen 楊守陳
Yang Shousui 楊守隨
Yang Shouzhi 楊守祉
Yang Sichang 楊嗣昌
Yang Tianmin 楊天民
Yang Tingxu 楊廷樞
Yang Weizhen 楊維楨
Yang Xian 楊憲
Yang Yinglong 楊應龍
Yanghe 楊和
Yanzhai 儒齋
Yao Guangxiao 姚廣孝
Ye chaocai yin 葉朝采印
Ye Fangai 葉方霭
Yi 夷
Yidong 易東
Yijiao 異敎
Yijing 易經
Yin Shouheng 尹守衡
Ying Lian 英廉
Yingzong shilu 英宗實錄
Yinreng 咸初
Yinsi 咸祀
Yinxian 咸縣
Yinyi 隱逸
Yitong zhi 一統志
Yiwen 藝文
Yongchang 永昌
Yongguo gong 穎國公
Yongle dadian 永樂大典
Yongle 永樂
Yongzheng 雍正
Zhou Dexing 周德興
Zhou Rudi 周如砥
Zhou Shunchang 周順昌
Zhou 周
Zhu Guozhen 朱國楨
Zhu Ji 朱驥
Zhu Liangzu 朱亮祖
Zhu Mujie 朱睦桔
Zhu Neng 朱能
Zhu Qian 朱謙
Zhu Shi 朱軾
Zhu Shou 朱壽
Zhu Xizhou 朱希周
Zhu Xizu 朱希祖
Zhu Yintai 朱尹台
Zhu Yizun 朱彝尊
Zhu Yong 朱永
Zhu Yuanzhang 朱元璋 (Emperor Hongwu)
Zhu Yunming 祝允明
Zhu Zuwen 朱祖文
Zhuan/Liezhuan 傳 / 列傳
Zhuang Tianhe 莊天合
Zhuang Tinglong 莊廷龍
Zhuang Yincheng 莊胤城
Zhucha 竹垞
Zhuwang shibiao 諸王世表
Zhuwang 諸王
Zhuxianzhen 朱先鎮
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