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Autobiography and Symbolic Capital in Late Imperial China

The Chronological Autobiography of Peng Shiwang

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In the winter of 1665-1666, the scholar Peng Shiwang 彭士望 (1610-1683), a native of Nanchang 南昌 in Jiangxi but since 1645 based in Ningdu 寧都 in the southeast of that province, wrote a chronological autobiography which would be unremarkable but for one feature: the trouble he took to record the names of many of the people he met during his peripatetic life, many of whom were Ming loyalist figures.[1] Autobiographies naturally refer to people the writer knew, but Peng's is unique because the names make up approximately half the text, mostly as intralinear annotations in half-size characters. Considered without the names, the autobiography is terse; many significant details are left out or simplified. Indeed, the prominence of the names suggests they were the main reason for writing it, which his opening line seems to confirm: "This is my chronological autobiography 年譜; it is also an account of my friends 交譜 and my travels 遊譜".[2] In the final sentence, the autobiography is presented as a preface for his collected poems, which he says are a "record of [his] crimes" 罪譜, but he does not spell out precisely what these "crimes" were.[3]

This paper investigates why Peng, a marginal figure in late Ming politics and the Ming resistance to the Qing conquest, wrote his chronological autobiography in this unusual way, and used it to preface a collection of his poetry. As Kai-wing Chow has noted, the preface played an important commercial role in publishing during the late Ming and early Qing periods. However, unlike the types of preface Chow discusses, Peng did not pay others to write prefaces for his poetry collection in order to enhance the

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[1] Peng was the son of a Government Student in Nanchang 南昌 in Jiangxi province named Peng Xi 彭晳 (d. 1639). See Peng's biography in Qian Yiji 1993: 4092.

[2] Peng Shiwang, 2000: *zixu* 1a.

[3] Peng Shiwang, 2000: *zixu* 4b.

credibility, and thus the market value, of his work. Nor does the paratextual material in Peng's collection include lists of editors or proofreaders—another strategy often employed by writers and publishers to enhance the reputation of the work.[4]

Nevertheless, this paper will argue that Peng sought to generate symbolic capital through the contents of the preface, especially through the names of prominent Restoration Society members and Ming loyalists he lists in it, and that this symbolic capital could then help alleviate Peng's straightened financial circumstances. Peng, who had served in subordinate roles under several Ming loyalist commanders between 1645 and 1647 apparently without ever being involved in any fighting, used this autobiographical preface to highlight his connections with some of the more trenchant loyalists—even though there are relatively few poems in the collection written to or in the company of the people mentioned in the preface—thereby asserting his own loyalist credentials.[5] Indeed, the combined effect of this list of connections and the urgent language he sometimes uses almost certainly exaggerates his own role in late Ming politics and the Ming resistance. The preface is, therefore, an after-the-fact account seeking to forge a positive identity out of the dislocations, setbacks and economic insecurities that were Peng's life from the early 1640s onwards, based on his social network. This account of his social network functions less as an account of his social capital—most of those listed were dead, far away or obscure by the time Peng wrote the preface—than as symbolic capital, masking the economic aims of publishing such a collection with assertions of the author's links to the moral high ground of Confucian commitment and dynastic loyalty, at a time when the former was valued, while the latter was admired and no longer dangerous. The economic benefits Peng derived from marking his collected poetry in this way could have extended beyond merely increased sales. They could also have included a higher status amongst the cultural elite of the

[4] See Kai-wing Chow, 2004: 109-123.

[5] The extant printed edition of Peng's collected poetry in which the autobiographical preface is preserved was published by his seventh-generation descendent Peng Yuwen 彭玉雯 in 1852. In his postscript to Peng's autobiographical preface, Peng Yuwen says that Peng Shiwang originally published his poetry in ten *juan*, adding another six late in life. See Peng Shiwang, 2000, *xu*, 5a. However, Peng Yuwen's edition contains only six *juan*. Therefore we cannot know for certain how many of those named in the preface were also named in connection with poems. However, I have seen an 8-*juan* manuscript edition held in the Shanghai Library, but few of the poems in that mention names that do not appear in the published edition. A 12-*juan* manuscript edition is also extant, but I was not able to see it. For a discussion of the different editions of Peng's poetry, see Zhou Xinglu, 2013.

period, generating more opportunities for other work such as paid writing or geomancy (*fengshui*) services, or simply more people offering to host him on his travels.

Peng's autobiographical preface is significant for the way in which it foregrounds, in a manner apparently unique in the period, his social network to enhance his standing amongst the cultural elite of the time, thereby increasing his symbolic capital, which might then be able to improve his economic circumstances. However, it is more the limited capital of those whose actual position in the social field of the elite is marginal, and whose position within the dominant class is to some degree threatened, as Peng's apparently was. It would require a much broader study to adapt the terms in which Pierre Bourdieu wrote of social conditions and power relations in the field of cultural production in France after the emergence of capitalism to seventeenth-century China.[6] Nor, perhaps, is the type of symbolic capital Peng seeks unconsciously to generate one of the classic forms. Indeed, given Peng's reduced economic circumstances and refusal to be co-opted into the Qing government, his position superficially resembles that of those autonomous groups who avowed not to be interested in economic and political success.[7] However, in fact Peng never challenged the dominant political and economic order: the taboo against those who had served the previous dynasty in some way serving the new dynasty only applied to them; their children were free to seek to serve the new dynasty, and the loyalists themselves, including Peng, often trained young men for the civil service examinations. So while Peng emphasised the hardships he suffered as a result of his decision to remain steadfastly loyal to the Ming, in fact he was writing entirely within an ancient tradition of sacrificial loyalism. Without this, his preface would have had little chance of gaining purchase among the educated elite of his time, and therefore would have not been able generate the symbolic capital which he needed, though of course he wouldn't have recognised those terms.

Pei-yi Wu has suggested that the period between about 1566 and 1680 was a golden age of Chinese autobiographical writing.[8] However, there is no evidence that Peng wrote his chronological autobiography in conscious imitation of this broader tradition. His inspiration was probably a more personal one: the chronological

[6] See Bourdieu, 1993. Bourdieu's late work, *Practical Reason*, has also informed this discussion.

[7] Bourdieu, 1993: 37*ff.*

[8] Wu Pei-yi, 1990: 196.

autobiography of the poet-scholar Li Shixiong 李世熊 (1602-1686) who lived in Ninghua in Fujian, some eighty kilometres east of Ningdu.

Peng was one of a group known as the Nine Masters of *Changes* Hall 易堂九子, nine scholars who had gathered in the Jinjing Mountains 金精山 outside Ningdu after the fall of the Ming dynasty. There they studied the classics, particularly the *Book of Changes* (*Yi jing*), wrote, and generally looked after each other.[9] Peng first wrote to Li Shixiong to introduce himself and the Nine Masters in 1659 or 1660.[10] In that letter, Peng emphasized that both had been disciples of the eminent late Ming Confucian statesman Huang Daozhou 黃道週 (1585-1646). Li had first visited Huang when he went to Fuzhou to sit the provincial exams in 1618, but he did not meet Huang again until he went to Fuzhou in the winter of 1643-44. In late 1644 he accompanied Huang on a trip to the Wuyi Mountains 武夷山. After the court of the Southern Ming Longwu 隆武 emperor moved to Fuzhou in 1645, Huang twice invited Li to return to Fuzhou to serve, but Li declined. Huang was executed in the following year, and after the Longwu emperor was killed in Tingzhou in October 1646, Li "went to live in mountains".[11] Thereafter Li spent most of his long life in his native ward of Quanshang 泉上 to the north-east of the Ninghua county seat. He declined several attempts to persuade him to serve the new dynasty, but he did play an important role in local society, even commanding the respect of bandits roaming the Jiangxi-Fujian border counties.[12] Peng

[9] Book-length studies of the Nine Masters include Zhao Yuan's 趙園 *Yitang xunzong: Guanyu Ming-Qing zhi ji yi ge shiren qunti de xushu* 易堂尋蹤：關於明清之際一個士人群體的敘述 (Seeking traces of *Changes* Hall: On a group of literati during the Ming-Qing transition) and Ma Jiangwei 馬將偉 *Yitang jiu zi yanjiu* 易堂九子研究 (Research into the Nine Masters of *Changes* Hall).

[10] Li's chronological autobiography says Peng first wrote to him in 1659, but in his first letter to Li, Peng says he is fifty-one *sui*. Although we do not know Peng's precise date of birth, he was almost certainly born in 1610, so the letter should have been written in 1660. See Li Shixiong and Li Zichan, *Hanzhi suiji* 寒支歲紀, in Li Shixiong 2000: *juanshou* 13b-14a, and Peng 2000: 2.1b.

[11] See Li Shixiong 2000: *Hanzhi suiji*.1b, 9b-12a.

[12] See *Beizhuan ji* 125: 3680-84, including a tombstone inscription by Wei Xi. On one occasion troops from a roving army stole tangerines from Li's garden, whereupon the commander of this army had them whipped; on another occasion, the bandit leader whose troops had set fire to local homes specially dispatched men to protect Li's residence from the flames. See Lan Dingyuan 藍鼎元, 'Biography of Mr Hanzhi', *Beizhuan ji*, 125: 3683-84.

came to Ninghua to visit him in 1663, staying until early 1664.[13] It is very likely that during this time, Li showed him his chronological autobiography, which he called a *sui ji* 歲紀 or "record of the years".[14]

The two chronological autobiographies are different in several ways. Only two-thirds of the account of Li's life is actually autobiography, as Li himself only wrote as far as his forty-fourth year (1646); the rest was written by his son Li Ziquan 李子權 after his father's death in 1686.[15] The part that Li wrote himself is over eleven traditional double pages long (his son added another five), whereas Peng covers eight more years than Li in just four double pages. Peng recounts the events of most years in a couple of lines, whereas the narrative for each year in Li's autobiography normally runs to at least four or five lines, often more. Li's is formatted in the standard way for chronological autobiographies: the account for each year begins with a raised first line, the date according to the sixty-year cycle, and his age that year. Peng records the year but does not begin each year on a new line or give his age. The main similarity is that both men intersperse lists of names of people they visited, travelled with, or otherwise associated with through their texts. Li includes some names in the narrative, but most are given in short lists accompanying mentions of places he visited or events he took part in. In these lists, the surname and courtesy name or other styles are given in full-size characters, with the given name provided in small intralinear annotations set slightly to the right. In Peng's work, a few names appear in the main text, but most are recorded in half-size, double-column annotations inserted into the single columns of main text; indeed, although they are annotations, that there are so many of them draws the reader's attention to their importance in the text. However, the most significant difference is in the profiles of the people whose names are recorded. In Li's case only a small number of the people he lists were renowned in any sense: Huang Daozhou, Guo Zhiqi 郭之奇 (1607-1662), Song Yingxing 宋應星 (1587-1666?) and Zeng Yizhuan 曾異撰 (1590-1644). Of these, Huang and Guo were Ming martyrs, while Song was a prominent loyalist. Several of Li's other friends were Restoration Society members like himself, but none

[13] Li Zichan says that Peng visited from the summer of 1662, but obviously Peng writing just two years after the event is far more likely to be right than Li, who was writing over twenty years later.

[14] There have been no studies of Li Shixiong in English, as far as I am aware. The Shaoxing-based scholar Pan Chengyu has written several articles on Li and his social network, and Li Qianqian completed a MA thesis on his prose writing in 2010.

[15] See Li Shixiong and Li Zichan, *Hanzhi suiji*, 1a, 12a and 17a-b.

played a prominent role in it. Some of Li's associates had moderate reputations, at least in the Fujian area, but overall there are many more obscure people than in Peng's list. This reflects the fact that by 1646 Li had not travelled outside Fujian, apart from trips to the Chaozhou region in eastern Guangdong. So compared to Peng, Li had a much more circumscribed social network.

Neither Li nor his son explained why Li wrote his autobiography. At the time Li wrote his last entry, his highest achievement had been to come first in the prefectural examinations several times; he had not passed the Provincial Examinations nor served in any official post. So he did not have an illustrious official or other career to record. Although we cannot know for certain, most likely he wrote it all in 1646, following the collapse of Ming rule in his native area. Before the fall of the Ming, there would seem to be have been little reason for him to write a chronological autobiography; his talents had been recognised by some well-known Fujian figures, but he was otherwise unremarkable among the thousands of men like him. Once the Ming dynasty collapsed and he had decided to remain loyal to it, he may have wished to record his life under that dynasty, while at the same time considering his life after the fall of the Ming not to be worth recording, which could explain why he never added to it. However, while both Li and Peng probably wrote their chronological autobiographies to mark their allegiance to the Ming dynasty, Li's was never published in his lifetime, which suggests that he meant it for posterity rather than as a public statement. In 1675, when Li was 74 *sui*, Peng wrote a preface for the initial collection of Li's works, *Hanzhi chuji* 寒支初集, so some of Li's works were published during his lifetime, but not the autobiography.[16] After Li died, his son published the expanded collection, *Hanzhi erji* 寒支二集, including the expanded autobiography. Peng's autobiography, on the other hand, was written to accompany the publication of his collected works, so it is more likely that he wrote it with particular aims in mind. So while Li's example may have given Peng the idea, Peng used the form for his own ends.

Peng concludes his autobiography with an anguished, self-critical passage in which he laments that "he did not conduct himself prudently" when he was young, that he has been unable to provide properly for his family because he has had no reliable source of income, and that his poems reflect the shame he feels. However, it does not contain the

[16] See the beginning of *Hanzhi chuji*. In *Hanzhi suiji*, Li Ziquan says *Hanzhi chuji* was published in 1670 (15b). So either Peng did not know Li's age, Li Zichan forgot which year *Hanzhi chuji* was published or, most likely, Peng wrote the preface sometime after *chuji* was published.

extended self-reflection seen in some other late Ming autobiographies.[17] Instead most of it is simply taken up with accounts of where he went and whom he met. He sketches his involvement in the early Ming resistance to the Manchu conquest, and refers to his suffering as a result of his decision not to participate in the new regime, but the particular events of Peng's life are not themselves recounted in detail. We know from Peng's extant prose works that he was interested in the philosophical debates of the time, but this is not reflected in his autobiography either. He does not mention any of the books he read or wrote, nor does he say anything specific about how the people he associated with might have influenced his philosophical outlook, both subjects often at least touched upon in such autobiographies. What does strike the reader, however, is how his identity as projected through this essay is largely defined through his friends and others with whom he was acquainted, rather than through events or a quest for meaning based on a philosophical commitment. Furthermore, the fact that he wrote it at all, and placed it at the beginning of this anthology of his own poetry, strongly suggests that Peng meant it to frame his representation of himself to the reader. In the context of the increasingly important role prefaces played in publishing during this period, it is highly likely that this representation of himself and his social network was also intended to enhance the marketability of the collection.

Peng's autobiography begins with tales of the promise he showed as a boy, then relates how he became a Government Student at the age of sixteen and begun studying for the civil service examinations. At the same time he indulged enthusiastically in the pleasures life in the provincial capital had to offer, and "particularly liked composing amorous poetry."[18] However, he then records how in his late twenties he became friends with the more serious scholar Ouyang Binyuan 歐陽斌元 (1606?-1649 or 1650), and the two men, having premonitions that the empire was likely to descend into chaos, began studying the words and actions of talented men, as well as the arts of government. In 1640 they burnt all their previous poetry because they now regarded it as worthless, which Peng explains is why his collected poetry which follows the preface only begins in that year.

[17] Peng 2000: *zixu*, 4b. For a discussion of spiritual and other self-reflective autobiographies from the mid-Ming onwards, see Wu, *Confucian's Progress*, especially chs. 5 & 12.

[18] Peng Shiwang 2000: 4b.

Peng then records the death of his father in the previous year. The intralinear note following this recounts how, after reading accounts of Huang Daozhou's remonstrations with the Chongzhen emperor, Peng's father told him that, if he ever served at the imperial court, he should emulate Huang. This advice proved to be decisive in Peng's life: although Peng never came anywhere near serving at court, his attempts to support Huang laid the foundation for his social network and political activities. Returning to his narrative, Peng says that in 1640 he went to Nanjing for the first time in that year to "help out" 周旋 after Huang was imprisoned. Once he got to Nanjing, the Minister of War in Nanjing, Li Banghua 李邦華 (1574-1644), wrote a letter to Imperial Bodyguard Guo Chenghao 郭承昊 (d. 1650) in Beijing asking him to look after Peng.[19] However, soon after he embarked on his journey to the capital, Peng found himself in potentially serious trouble. One Tu Zhongji 涂仲吉, a native of Huang's hometown of Zhangpu 漳浦 in Fujian, and a student in the National University, travelled all the way to the capital from Nanjing to defend Huang, and implicated Peng in his testimony.[20]

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[19] Li, a native of Jishui 吉水 in Jiangxi, was by then the major figure in the Wang Yangming school of philosophy, and four years later would commit suicide after Li Zicheng's 李自成 (1606-1645) army captured Beijing. For a recent discussion of Li's life and the circumstances and manner of his death, see Wu Chen-han 2008: 213-29. Guo Chenghao was a native of Taihe in Jiangxi, and the grandson of former Censor-in-Chief Guo Zizhang 郭子章 (1543-1618). According to Wang Fuzhi's account, during the Chongzhen period Cheng was made a member of the Imperial Bodyguard in recognition of his grandfather's service, and through currying favour with influential functionaries, eventually rose to become Junior Guardian of the Heir Apparent. He also made a fortune through business deals, and caused havoc in his hometown where he apparently used his wealth to nefarious ends. In 1646 he went to the newly established Longwu court, where he was put in charge of the Imperial Bodyguard after contributing significantly to the Ming coffers. He was thereafter appointed to more senior posts, which he used to amass greater wealth and power: he collected jewelled swords and beautiful women, and together with the powerful commander Liu Chengyin 劉承胤 held effective power over appointment of officials. He was executed after surrendering with Liu to the Qing in or near Wugang 武岡 in 1650. See Wang Fuzhi 1987: 207.

[20] Peng Shiwang 2000: 1.4a. Although Peng does not mention it in his autobiography, Peng's collected poetry includes a poem written while on a boat with Tu on a moonlit night in Yangzhou, possibly as Tu was making his way to Beijing. Although Tu was exiled as a result of his action, his appeal may have had some effect. Tu later starved himself to death after the death of the Longwu emperor in Tingzhou in 1646. See Qian Haiyue 2006: 2177-8.

Although what is left out of this passage does not change the thrust of the events significantly, it does exemplify the way in which recording names and emphasising, or inflating, the importance of Peng's role on the 'righteous' side of late Ming politics and later Ming loyalism takes precedence over recording events in detail. We cannot know whether this was deliberate, or careless, or simply because Peng simply presumed his readers would know the context. It is not clear from Peng's autobiography that he had ever met Huang; one gains the impression that Peng responded to Huang's arrest because his father admired him. However, Peng almost certainly met Huang Daozhou during the year before Huang's arrest, as in August 1638 Huang had been demoted to the post of Record Keeper in the Jiangxi Provincial Surveillance Commission after criticising the appointment Yang Sichang 楊嗣昌 (1588-1641) as Minister for War and Grand Secretary in a famous debate in front of the emperor. The trigger for Huang's arrest in 1640 was when the Grand Coordinator for Jiangxi, Xie Xuelong 解學龍 (1585-1645), recommended Huang to the emperor for the honorary title of 'loyal and filial', and hinted that Huang would make a good Prime Minister. This infuriated the emperor, who had both men thrown into prison. It is unclear why Peng was implicated, as we know nothing about the relationship between Peng and Huang, or Xie, before this. Peng was a generation younger, and not prominent among the Nanchang literati, so it is unlikely that Peng was particularly close to Huang. Perhaps, wanting to impress Huang, he was amongst a group who encouraged Xie to write the recommendation. Why did Peng go to Nanjing, and plan to go to Beijing, to "help out", when as an obscure Government Student he was unlikely be able to influence events? Did he go as much to try to save his own skin as Huang's? Peng's brief account leaves several unanswered questions, but its effect is to give the impression that he had a more influential role than can have been the case.[21]

While this case was still being investigated, Peng reached Zhenjiang, where he stayed for some time. Here in the autobiography he lists his host and fellow guests. We cannot know how selective this list was, but it reinforces the impression that Peng recorded the names of those he met on his travels with an eye to highlighting his association with the "righteous" partisans of the Donglin 東林 faction and Restoration

[21] Peng's biography in *Wenxian zhengcun lu* 文獻徵存錄 says that Peng was also arrested, but I have found no other reference to this. See Qian Lin and Wang Zao, 6.25a.

Society of the late Ming, and with men famous for their role in the Ming resistance to the Qing conquest.

His host in Zhenjiang was the Prefect Cheng Xun 程峋 (d. 1649?), from Yongfeng 永豐 in Jiangxi, who would later become Vice Minister of War under the Southern Ming before being killed by renegade Ming commanders.[22] The first guest listed, Lu Yunchang 陸運昌, seems to have died by the end of the Ming. However, two of his sons, Lu Pei 陸培 (1617-1645) and Lu Qi 陸圻 (1614?-after 1665), respected poets in Hangzhou by the end of the Ming, refused to serve the Qing. Pei committed suicide after the fall of Hangzhou in 1645. Qi became a monk and found his way to Fujian before eventually returning to the new family home near Yuhang 餘杭, west of Hangzhou, where he made a living as a doctor.[23] The family was also implicated in the famous Zhuang Tinglong *Ming History* case of 1663, narrowly escaping execution or exile. All of this would have been fresh in the minds of Peng's readers as the *Ming History* case happened just two years before Peng wrote this autobiography. So while Lu Yunchang apparently did not live to see the end of the Ming, that Peng had associated with the father of two loyalists who had also enjoyed a reputation as promising poets in the final years of the Ming provided a tenuous yet useful link to that family.

The next guest, Shen Shoumin 沈壽民 (1607-1675), had been prominent in literary societies in Jiangnan in the 1630s. In 1636 he submitted a memorial attacking Yang Sichang for incompetence and overstepping his authority, but it was blocked. However, memorials subsequently submitted by Huang Daozhou and others attacking Yang were written at Shen's instigation. Shen then left the capital and went to teach in the mountains near his hometown of Xuancheng 宣城 where he is said to have had hundreds of followers. It was during this time that he stayed at Zhenjiang and met Peng. Later, during the reign of the Prince of Fu 福王 in Nanjing, Ruan Dacheng 阮大鋮 (1587-1646), who had also been slighted in Shen's memorial attacking Yang Sichang, moved to arrest Shen and kill him, whereupon Shen changed his name and went into hiding in the region of Jinhua 金華 with his family. After Ruan died and the Ming cause in Jiangnan seemed lost, Shen returned to the Xuancheng area and lived out his days in the mountains outside the town, firmly resisting attempts by the Qing to recruit him.[24]

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[22] Xu Zi 2006: 612.

[23] For Lu Pei see *Ming shi*, 277:7106-7; Xu Bingyi, 1987: 380. For Lu Qi, see Xu Zi 1958: 652.

[24] See *Ming shi*, 216:5698-99, and Xu Fang 2009: 282-88.

Listed after Shen was Zhou Biao 周鑣 (d. 1645). Zhou had infuriated the Chongzhen emperor when, as Secretary in the Ministry of Rites in Nanjing, he argued that good men found it hard to obtain senior posts because Chongzhen appointed his favourites to them. Zhou was dismissed, after which he went to study with Shen Shoumin, though he was reappointed to posts in the last years of the dynasty. He had also incurred the enmity of Ruan Dacheng because in 1639 he played a leading role in the writing of the "Proclamation to Guard Against Disorder in the Subordinate Capital", an attack which so humiliated Ruan that he left Nanjing and went to live in seclusion at Mt Niushou 牛首山 south of the city. When Ruan returned to power during the Hongguang period, he took his revenge by having Zhou imprisoned and condemned to death.[25]

The final guest in Peng's list was perhaps the most colourful. When Peng was staying in Zhenjiang, Qian Bangqi 錢邦芑 (d. 1673) was only a Government Student. However, he was appointed a Censor during the brief reign of the Southern Ming Hongguang emperor (1645-46), and after the Yongli 永曆 emperor (r. 1647-61) retreated from Guangdong to Guizhou, Qian became Vice Censor-in-Chief overseeing Guizhou. However, when the self-proclaimed Prince of Qin, Sun Kewang 孫可望 (d. 1660), set up a rival administration in Guiyang 貴陽, Qian withdrew to a village near Zunyi 遵義 in northern Guizhou, where he created a lake with many springs and willow trees. Many other refugee scholars and students visited him in that beautiful and secluded place. However, as Sun was looking for him, Qian had to leave this idyll. He became a Buddhist monk, moving from place to place in northern Guizhou to avoid capture. After the Yongli emperor was killed in 1661, Qian went to live in a temple on Mt. Jizu 雞足山 near Dali 大理 in Yunnan, evading the Qing forces who were trying to track down the last former Ming officials. Eventually Qian moved to Mt. Heng 衡山 in Hunan, where he lived out his years.[26]

Straight after this annotation, Peng says he also visited the former Grand Secretary Zhou Yanru **周延儒** (1513-1643), who had been out of office since being dismissed for

[25] See Wakeman 1985: 140-41, 383-86. Both brothers were imprisoned at the same time; Zhou Zhong was publically executed for serving the Li Zicheng regime, while Zhou Biao, who had alerted the Jiangnan literati to his by now estranged brother's treachery, was soon after sentenced to commit suicide when the Ruan discovered that General Zuo Liangyu's army was making its way towards Nanjing in part to rescue Zhou and fellow prisoner Lei Yinzuo 雷縯祚 (1600-1645). See Wakeman 1985: 536-39.

[26] From a letter Peng wrote to Qian much later, we know that they met again in Hancheng 韓城 in 1669.

accepting bribes in 1633. Zhou had a mixed relationship with the Donglin faction and their successors: early in his career he had been sympathetic to them, but they fell out after he helped Wen Tiren 溫體仁 (1573-1639) bring about the downfall of Qian Qianyi in 1628. However, in 1640 Restoration Society leader Zhang Pu 張溥 (1602-1641) encouraged him to seek a return to office; this indeed happened in the following year through a combination of Restoration Society machinations and Chongzhen's being well disposed towards Zhou despite having earlier dismissed him. Once reappointed Grand Secretary, he was instrumental in having prominent figures including Li Banghua appointed to senior posts, and in having Huang Daozhou brought out of exile and reappointed. Two years later, however, Zhou would come to an inglorious end after he fabricated achievements in battle and was forced to commit suicide.[27]

Peng does not say why he visited Zhou Yanru, but the timing of this visit suggests he might have joined those encouraging Zhou to consider trying to gain reappointment to court in the hope that he could have Huang brought out of exile. However, the economy with which Peng narrates events makes it difficult to establish what Peng's relationship with the figures he mentions in this passage was, or how significant a role he played. This economy may simply reflect the way in which such chronological biographies were often written, but it could also have the effect of making Peng appear a more important character in the events of 1640-41 than he was. Furthermore, although there is no evidence that Peng was a Restoration Society member himself, nearly all the figures he mentions were, and most went on to play a role in the Ming resistance to the Manchu conquest, some eventually dying for the cause, others going into retirement and refusing to serve the Qing. Peng does not seem to have seen most of them again.

Peng's involvement in the Huang Daozhou case was crucial in the formation of his identity. As a member of a family that was not eminent even in his home city of Nanchang, and having never gained a higher degree or served in any official position, it is unlikely that Peng was more than a peripheral figure in the events of 1639 to 1641, despite being mentioned in Tu Zhongji's prison deposition. Peng certainly seems to have served Huang Daozhou assiduously: two poems written by Peng and a reply to one of them by Huang suggest that Peng accompanied Huang on his way from Yangzhou 揚州 to at least the mouth of the Zhang River 章江 on Poyang Lake 鄱陽湖.[28] While Huang

[27] *Ming shi*, 308:7925-31; Wakeman, 1985: 145-47.

[28] Peng Shiwang, 2000, 1.1a-2b.

no doubt appreciated Peng's support, there is no evidence for any further contact between them.

The next section of Peng's autobiography records his movements after Beijing fell to the Qing. He first paid a visit to Yuan Jixian 袁繼咸 (1593-1646), a Donglin associate who, along with Zuo Liangyu 左良玉 (1599-1645), was the leading Ming general in the mid Yangtze valley. Yuan was later handed over to the Qing after Zuo Liangyu's son surrendered to the Qing following his father's death. After several months of trying unsuccessfully to persuade Yuan to collaborate, the Qing had him executed. Nothing came of Peng's visit, but recording this episode again linked him to a Ming martyr.

In October of that year, he was recommended by the "Prince of Chongyang Huadie 崇陽王華喋" to serve as a "messenger" under the Ministry of War, working between the various garrisons in Jiangxi and Huguang. In fact, in 1644 Zhu Huadie 朱華喋 (1571-1649) had not yet been made a prince, but Peng gave Zhu's eventual rank, perhaps out of respect, but also perhaps to make Zhu seem more senior at the time than he was. Peng and five others went to Nanjing to receive their formal appointments, but they were blocked by Ma Shiying 馬士英.[29]

In the spring of 1645, Peng accepted an appointment in the secretariat of Grand Secretary Shi Kefa 史可法 (1601-1645) in Yangzhou, but after a short time he "declined the post and returned home", though he does not explain why. Lu Linshu claims that Peng and Ouyang presented Shi with a strategy to have the generals Zuo Liangyu and Gao Jie attack Nanjing and remove the evil ministers from the emperor's side. This startled Shi, who responded, "You're young and your *qi* energy is at its peak, so you think that if we do this everything will be fine, do you?" The two men left Shi's service soon after.[30] However, Gao Jie was in fact killed on 8 January 1645, before Peng arrived in Yangzhou. Whatever the truth of the matter, yet again Peng associated himself with famous figures of the Ming resistance, even though his own role must have been insignificant.

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[29] Lu's biography, p. 4092, says officials in the ministry sought bribes, and when Peng and his colleagues refused to pay them, they were roundly abused and not appointed. Zhu Huadie continued to fight in the Ming resistance, but committed suicide in July 1649; see Qian Haiyue 2006: 1441.

[30] Shi was very casual about who he recruited into his secretariat, hoping to find some great talents among the many mediocre ones. See Wakeman, 1985, 400n, drawing on Joseph Liu, 1969. See Qian Yiji 1993, 137:4092-3.

Peng then records that in the sixth month of 1645, he 'abandoned his family home', and with his friend Lin Shiyi 林時益 (born Zhu Yipang 朱議霶, 1618-78, a minor member of the Ming imperial clan) and their families moved to Ningdu. Although it is impossible to establish what exactly happened, an entry in a modern chronological biography of Wei Xi 魏禧 (1624-1681) tells part of the story. Peng saw that the empire was descending into chaos, so sought to move his family to somewhere where they would be safe. In 1645 a native of Ningdu who was staying at Peng's home in Nanchang suggested Ningdu would be the perfect place, and promised him a house, land and servants in Ningdu, as well as a mountain stockade. Meanwhile, Lin Shiyi, as a Ming imperial clansman, would have feared for his life, so he too sought to flee Nanchang. Although the account does not say so specifically, it seems likely that Peng sold his house to this man from Ningdu for some combination of money and the man's land in Ningdu. Peng and Lin then headed for Ningdu with their families, getting as far as Jianchang, the county north of Ningdu. Peng then went ahead himself, and stayed in the house of the man who had stayed in his Nanchang house, which happened to be next door to Wei Xi and his brothers. After watching Peng go past their front door for several days, they approached him and asked him who he was. Peng told them that he had been cheated, so he was planning to settle in Jianchang. The Wei brothers invited him in, whereupon they talked until dawn, and the Wei brothers agreed to put them up in their house. It seems, therefore, that Peng arrived in Ningdu to find that the land, servants and stockade he had been promised did not exist, and while he no doubt still had some money, his circumstances were much reduced. They could not return to Nanchang, but the Wei brothers' generosity at least provided a foundation upon which he could try to rebuild his life.[31]

Three months later his friend Yang Tinglin 楊廷麟 (d. 1646) urged him to join him in Ganzhou 贛州 in southern Jiangxi. Yang, from Qingjiang 清江 in western Jiangxi, had gained a reputation as an erudite scholar through his early appointments after gaining his *jinshi* degree in 1631; he was also a member of the Restoration Society and friends with Huang Daozhou. He initially declined to serve the Southern Ming court, but after Nanjing fell along with much of Jiangxi province in the summer of 1645, Yang found himself in Ganzhou planning that city's defence, which is when he summoned Peng.

[31] Wen Jumin 1934: 10-11.

Peng notes that Grand Coordinator Li Yongmao 李永茂 , Minister of War Liu Tongsheng 劉同升 (1587-1645) and Chief Minister of the Court of Imperial Sacrifice Zeng Yinglin 曾應遴 (1601-1647), who was the father of another of the Nine Masters, Zeng Can 曾燦 (1625-1688), were also in Ganzhou at the time.[32] In the following month he was sent to north-eastern Jiangxi to "supervise" a number of recalcitrant Ming commanders because one of them, Xu Bida 徐必達 (d. 1645), was an old friend of Peng's, and Yang hoped Peng would be able to rein them in, which it seems he did.[33]

Peng says nothing more about his work on that mission into eastern Hunan, but records that in the spring of 1646 he was sent to north-eastern Jiangxi where Tang Laihe 湯來賀 (1607-1688) and Jie Chongxi 揭重熙 (d. 1651), both natives of eastern Jiangxi, were Grand Coordinators. Tang held several senior posts during the Hongguang and early Longwu reigns, but in 1647 he decided against joining Yongli in Guangxi and returned home to Nanfeng.[34] Jie continued to fight the Qing, but was captured and executed in December 1651. However, in October 1646 Peng heard of a "setback", referring to the capture and execution of the Prince of Tang at Tingzhou, and in the following month the Ming armies were routed at Ganzhou, with the Commander Wan

[32] Li Yongmao, a *jinshi* of 1637, had just been made Grand Coordinator for Southern Jiangxi and Vice Minister of War. Liu Tongsheng, a native of Jishui in Jiangxi, had come first in the Palace Examinations of 1637 at the age of 51 and was made a Senior Compiler in the Hanlin Academy. He attacked the appointment of Yang Sichang to the Grand Council, whereupon he was demoted to a minor post in Fujian. However, he resigned citing illness, and declined later recommendations to serve until he met Yang Tinglin in southern Jiangxi. He was then appointed Chancellor, then Supervisor of the Household and Left Vice Minister of War (Peng says it was Rites, but he seems to have remembered incorrectly). However, he died of illness at the beginning of 1646. Zeng Yinglin gained his *jinshi* degree in 1634 and held a number of posts in the military, but was dismissed just before Beijing fell. However, he was tortured by Li Zicheng's troops before he was able to return to Ningdu. When Ganzhou was threatened in 1646, Zeng and his son raised several tens of thousands of troops from the mountains of Fujian and marched 200 *li* a day to try to assist the defence, but they were too late, and Zeng died of illness soon after. See Zheng Changling 1989, 6:22a-23a; *Xu Zi*, 2006: 27 & 131.

[33] See Lu, 'Biography', 4093. Specifically Peng was posted to the Hudong 湖東 Circuit, consisting of Guangxin 廣信, Fuzhou 撫州 and Jianchang prefectures.

[34] Tang was also famous for his Confucian learning, and in his late seventies would accept an appointment as the Director of the White Deer Grotto Academy 白鹿洞書院 at Mt. Lu, where he attracted many students and played a significant role in reviving the academy, though he retired two years later. See Lu Song and Zhu Ruoxuan 1989, 26:2a-3a.

Yuanji 萬元吉 (1603-1646), a fellow Nanchang native, and Yang Tinglin drowning themselves when it became clear the city would fall. Wan was a talented but arrogant man, and many of his troops deserted him before the siege, yet in later times he was chiefly remembered for his martyrdom.[35] After this Peng claims that Minister of War Tian Yang 田仰 (1590-1651), a *jinshi* of 1613 who has served as a Grand Coordinator in Sichuan in the 1620s, tried hard to persuade him to go with him to attack Ganzhou, but Peng declined and re-joined the other Nine Masters in the mountains outside Ningdu.

This was the end of Peng's involvement in the Ming resistance. His account of his involvement in it is terse, and he modestly, or perhaps evasively, says little about what he actually did. The lists of commanders and other officials under whom he seems to have worked are longer than the narrative text. Usually he just lists their posts without explaining their personal relationship with him, if indeed there was one. Most of the more senior figures among them had been associates of Huang Daozhou during the late Ming, had been involved in the attacks on Yang Sichang, or had come into conflict with Ruan Dacheng and Ma Shiying in the Nanjing court. So when Tian Yang, who was related to Ma by marriage, tried to recruit Peng in the wake of the fall of Ganzhou, Peng was bound to decline.[36] Peng's account of his involvement in the loyalist resistance continues the pattern of identification with the Donglin and Restoration Society parties of the late Ming, reinforced by his highlighting his association with those who fought in the Ming resistance either to the death or until the cause seemed hopeless. In the years immediately after 1644, being associated with some of these loyalists might have been dangerous, but by 1666, when the Qing rule over China seemed assured, being linked to such figures would have carried a certain prestige.

In a coda to this, Peng says that in April 1647 he went from western Jiangxi with Ouyang Binyuan to his hometown of Nanchang, where he visited his father's grave for the first time. Three months later he was invited to Jiang Yueguang's 姜曰廣 (1584-1649) residence. Jiang, a Donglin affiliate, had risen to the post of Supervisor of the Household of the Heir Apparent by 1642, and for a brief time was Minister of Rites and one of the

[35] Struve 1984: 69-70 and 98-99.

[36] Tian died in Beijing in April 1651. After playing a prominent role in during the reign of the Prince of Fu in Nanjing, he slips out of the historical picture, though he seems to have surrendered to the Qing. Peng's readers would have known this, so Peng would have won plaudits for not following an enemy of the Confucian conservative party and a traitor to the Ming. See Chen Changfan 陳昌繁, accessed 4 March 2016.

Grand Secretaries in the Southern Ming court at Nanjing, before being squeezed out by Ma Shiying. Although Peng does not explicitly record it, after the gathering at Jiang's he must have then returned to Ningdu, because he does say that in February 1648 his friends in Ningdu were facing many difficulties, so he returned to Nanchang, presumably so his Ningdu friends did not have the added burden of having to support him. This does suggest that he still had some resources in his home city. However, at the beginning of May 1648, the Qing general in command of most of Jiangxi, Jin Shenghuan 金聲桓 (d. 1649), reverted his allegiance to the Ming dynasty, under which he had originally been a commander. Peng records that when the fighting began he composed some poems, then left Nanchang and returned to the mountains.[37] About ten months later, on 1 March 1649, Nanchang was recaptured by the Qing armies, whereupon Jin and Jiang Yueguang committed suicide.

Peng's leaving Nanchang when fighting broke out after Jin Shenghuan rejoined the Ming cause was the final instance of a pattern that can be observed throughout Peng's association with the Ming resistance: that every time real fighting seemed imminent in the region in which he was serving or had the opportunity to serve, he left. There is no clear indication of why this was the case. It might just have been luck: for example, he was not in Ji'an or Ganzhou when those cities fell because he was on duty elsewhere. Or perhaps, having observed the rapaciousness and vanity of many Ming commanders and the infighting among them, he simply decided that the chances of being defeated by the more disciplined Qing army were too high for it to be worth staying around to fight. However, these are hardly the actions of someone strongly loyal to the Ming or to the loyalist commanders whom he says had specifically recruited him. Another possibility is that Peng, who we know had an interest in the practical arts of government, and who may have submitted strategy proposals to Shi Kefa, had an inflated estimate of his talents, so when he was only given minor roles, he quit in frustration. At the end of his autobiography he expresses a strong sense of shame and, according to Lu Linshu, greatly

[37] Jin Shenghuan had been a commander under Zuo Liangyu. After Zuo died, he used the opportunity to take control of most of Jiangxi, then handed the province over to the Manchus, expecting to be granted high honours. When these honours did not come his way, he became increasingly resentful, which led to his reversion to the Ming in early 1648. See Struve 1984: 67-68, 125-27.

regretted that he had not died; Lu specifically mentions Peng's leaving Jiang Yueguang in Nanchang as an instance when Peng could have chosen another path.[38]

For the rest of his life Peng would be based around Ningdu, but even there he had no stable home, at least in the period covered by the autobiography. He travelled frequently: the autobiography gives the impression that he did this mainly to visit friends and other figures associated with the Ming resistance, though in a letter to the Linchuan writer and poet Chen Xiaoyi 陳孝逸 written in the mid 1650s he says that he and some of the other Nine Masters travelled out of financial necessity.[39] Peng had also learnt the art of geomancy, or *fengshui*. In a letter to Qian Bangqi written after 1669, he says he had been practising geomancy for over twenty years; he also mentions it in a letter written in about 1672 to one He Yisun 何貽孫.[40] He probably also earned money through teaching.[41] Together these activities made him less dependent on the Wei brothers, though the autobiography suggests that at times he also needed their help.

During the years 1650-52, Peng travelled within Jiangxi and further afield to Dangtu, Zhenjiang and Yangzhou.[42] Among some obscure figures he mentions were significant figures in the Ming resistance. In Dangtu he visited Shen Shizhu 沈士柱 (d. 1659), a Restoration Society member who had gained a reputation as a talented writer while he lived in Hangzhou during the 1630s. By the 1650s, many loyalists would visit Shen in his

[38] See Lu Linshu in Qian Yiji 1993: 4093. Expressing regret that one did not die in the wake of the fall of the Ming either by suicide or in battle against the invaders became something of a cliché however. In a letter in *Chigongtang wenchao*, Peng says that Jiang asked him to join his staff as a secretary, but he declined. See Peng Shiwang 2000b: 3.9b.

[39] Peng Shiwang 2000b: 2.13a.

[40] Peng Shiwang 2000b: 3.24a and 2.28a respectively.

[41] See for instance Peng Shiwang 2000b: 2:27a.

[42] Interestingly, at this point Peng passed up the chance to record an incident which reflected well on him. Yang Tinglin had only one son who, after his father died at Ganzhou, passed into the care of one Peng Kun (not related), a native of Ningdu whom Yang had made a temporary Assistant Commissioner of the Ganzhou Military Defence Circuit. Peng hid the child from the Qing, who were trying to find all of Yang's relatives, until it was safe. The child lived with Peng until March 1650, when Ningdu fell to the Qing. The night before the Qing entered Ningdu county town, Peng Kun and his wife committed suicide, having first entrusted his mother and Yang's orphan to his younger brother with instructions to get them out of the town. However, the boy was captured, but when Peng Shiwang heard of it, he paid a ransom, and had the boy live with him for some time until he could return to his home town of Qingjiang, where he continued the family line. See *Jiangxi tongzhi* 江西通志 ch. 94.

home town of Dangtu where he would entertain them generously, still dressed in his Ming attire. He was later executed on suspicion of trying to organise an uprising.[43]

In the summer of 1651 Peng went to Yangzhou, where at a rural temple he met with Zhang Zhongfu 張仲符 and Yao Zhizhuo 姚志卓 (d. 1655), both of whom were involved in loyalist military activity from the 1640s into the 1650s; Yao seems to have been killed in an attack on Chongming Island in late 1655 or early 1656.[44] Peng then returned to Ningdu on account of some difficulties there, and for the three years up to 1656 did not travel far because of unspecified rumours spread by the Nanchang loyalist scholar Chen Hongxu 陳弘緒 (1597-1665).[45] In 1657 he went to Nanfeng to visit the philosopher Xie Wenjian 謝文洊 (1615-1681) and his students. This group were close friends with the Nine Masters—Xie taught in a lecture hall built on land which Wei Xi had bought for him on Cheng Hill 程山 on the eastern side of the county seat.[46]

Peng spent much of 1658 living in a hut in the village of Caohu 草湖, or Grass Lake, and working alongside his younger brothers and one of his students as a "tenant farmer" on land belonging to Wei Jirui. It is unlikely that Peng did much manual labour himself; in a poem Peng says that the original idea was that his family would remain on Guanshi 冠石 with Lin Shiyi while his son worked the fields, but in the end Peng moved to

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[43] See Huang Zongxi 1985: 351. There is an exchange of poems between Shen and Peng in Peng's collected poetry in which Peng begins "We meet again…" 重逢, so they may have met when Shen's father, Shen Xishao 沈希韶, had been a Censor in Jiangxi during the late Ming.

[44] For Yao, see Xu Bingyi 1987: 340-41, Qian Haiyue 2006: 4024-5, and Gu Cheng 1997: 822-5. Zhang Zhongfu, whose actual name seems to have been Zhang Chongfu 張沖符, was the presiding priest at Qianyuan Daoist Temple 乾元觀 at Maoshan, and became friends with Qian Qianyi 錢謙益 (1582-1664). Zhang requested a text from Qian to commemorate the funding of one of the halls in the temple; see Qian Qianyi 1985: 761-2. In 1652 Zhang had also been involved in the resistance led by Zheng Chenggong 鄭成功 (Koxinga, 1624-1662) in Fujian. See Gu Cheng 1997: 683-4, 823-4.

[45] Peng says that he "did not cross the borders" which presumably means those of Ningdu county. In a letter to one Zou Zhimo 鄒祇謨 written in about 1670, Peng says that when Chen and fellow Nanchang writer Xu Shipu 徐世溥 (1608-1657) were young, they were very talented, but once they became famous, they wrote much baseless rubbish. Peng Shiwang 2000b, 4:9b-10a. Chen's literary works are collected in Chen Hongxu 2001.

[46] See Xie Mingqian 1780, 2:20b-21a. For Xie Wenjian, see the various biographies appended to his collected works (Xie Wenjian 1892), especially Appendix 3, and Xie Mingqian 1780, 2:20a-22b. Xie had already lost interest in studying for the civil service examinations before the end of the Ming, but gave up completely after the Ming fell, and is usually classified as a Ming loyalist.

Caohu as well because there were insufficient resources at the top of Guanshi to support both families for long.[47] Peng notes that during the spring of 1659, the famous scholar and loyalist Fang Yizhi 方以智 (1611-1671) visited Ningdu. Fang called upon Peng at Grass Lake, where they exchanged short essays.[48]

Just over a year later, Peng went travelling again, first staying for four months with the philosopher Song Zhisheng 宋之盛 (1612-1668) at Mt. Ji 髻山 near Mt. Lu 廬山 in Northern Jiangxi.[49] While in the Mt. Lu region he also stayed at the Donglin Temple with the poet, former Restoration Society activist, and ardent loyalist Yan Ermei 閻爾梅 (1603-1662).[50] Peng had possibly met Yan when he worked in Shi Kefa's secretariat in 1645, where Yan served as a prominent private secretary to Shi at about the same time. Yan was later captured by the Qing during an impetuous expedition to try to recapture the north, but had been constantly on the move since escaping from Qing custody in Ji'nan in 1653. That the two men met at Donglin Temple probably owed more to chance than planning, though both were keen to meet others who identified as Ming loyalists.

Peng follows continues with the curious comment that he did not meet Wu Zuxi 吳祖錫 (1618-1679)—Peng calls him Wu Xizu 吳錫祖 but it is almost certainly the same person. Wu had fought with the Southern Ming all the way into Yunnan, but following defeats near Kunming 昆明 and Dali 大理 in early 1659, he had made his way back to the Jiangnan area (he was a native of Jiaxing 嘉興), and it would have been during this journey that he travelled through the area where Peng was also staying. The loyalist calligrapher and writer Xu Fang 徐枋 (1622-1694), who was Wu's brother-in-law, began his tombstone inscription for Wu: "Alas! Since Master Wu died, all hope that the empire

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[47] See Peng Shiwang n.d., 5.25a-b. Guanshi, i.e. Cap Rock because it looked like an official's cap, was a steep, rocky peak on the southwestern edge of the Jinjing Mountains, not far from Grass Lake. Lin Shiyi lived there for most of the time after he moved to Ningdu.

[48] *Qing shi gao*: 13832-2; Ren 1983: 209.

[49] For Song Zhisheng, see *Guochao qixian leizheng chubian*, 1966, 400:9a. Song had been a *juren* under the Ming, but withdrew to Mt Ji near his native Xingzi 星子 after the fall of that dynasty. Together with the groups around Xie Wenjian at Cheng Hill and Wei Xi at Cuiwei Peak 翠微峰, they were known as the "Three Mountain Schools of Jiangxi".

[50] Peng writes his name as Yan Rumei 閻汝梅, but this might have been a name Yan was using at the time. Yan's collected poetry contains two poems written when Peng visited him in the rain at Donglin Temple. See Yan Ermei, 6 xia. 57a-b.

might be saved from the morass [of Manchu rule] has gone."[51] Although it is possible that Peng had met Wu during the 1640s, there is no evidence for this, and even if they did, they were probably no more than acquaintances. It seems likely, therefore, that Peng recorded that he failed to meet Wu to demonstrate his proximity to, and desire to seek out, some of the most trenchant loyalists, thereby enhancing his own image as a committed loyalist.

In 1662 Peng made his way to Tongcheng in Anhui where his hosts included Fang Yizhi's son and nephew, Fang Zhongde 方中德 and Fang Zhongfa 方中發 respectively. While there he paid a visit to Qian Chengzhi 錢澄之 (1612-1693), a friend and ally of Fang Yizhi who also seems to have known Zeng Can. Although never a Ming official, Qian had shot to fame when he publically excoriated a censor who was visiting the Confucian temple in Tongcheng for having been a corrupt supporter of the "eunuch party" of the Tianqi reign period. After the establishment of the Nanjing court in 1645, Qian had to flee as Ruan Dacheng was allegedly trying to have him killed. He eventually joined the Ming resistance in Guangdong, but he became disillusioned with the Southern Ming court and returned to Tongcheng, where he built a cottage next to his ancestors' graves and lived there for the rest of his life. It was there that Peng visited him; Qian's collected poetry from the period contains a long, warm poem to Peng marking the occasion, but it is clear that they had never met before.[52]

After a brief trip back to Ningdu, Peng spent 1662 and 1663 staying with various friends in the area between Nanjing and Yizheng. Later in 1663 he returned to the south, and soon after that went to Ninghua, where he stayed with Li Shixiong and probably saw Li's chronological autobiography. In this passage, he names the students he taught and notes that they asked him to stay on longer than he intended. This suggests that Peng's teaching was superior to that of most itinerant teachers, perhaps hinting that Peng taught serious philosophy rather than mere examination techniques. In February 1664, Peng returned to Ningdu, and wrote the autobiography in the following year.

[51] Xu Fang 2009: 340. *Qing shi gao*, 13,841. Xu Fang 2009: 64 contains a letter from Xu to Wei Xi thanking him for some medicine that Wei had sent him. There are also letters to Zeng Can (68-70).

[52] Qian Chengzhi 1998: 170. In the poem Qian mentions asking after Zeng Can, which suggests they had met previously: both were very well travelled.

Conclusion

While it was common to include a chronological biography with someone's collected works compiled after they had died, chronological autobiographies were rare, and chronological autobiographies written to preface one's own collected works were even rarer. Therefore Peng almost certainly had a specific purpose in mind when he decided to write his. His autobiography is less detailed than most. It appears not to have been carefully composed, as it contains several errors and ignores some of the conventions of chronological biographies. However, the prominence he gave to names, especially those of Restoration Society members and Ming loyalists, some of whom he cannot have known very well, suggests that recording the names was more important than a giving a precise account of events, and that Peng hoped to achieve a certain aim by presenting his autobiography in this way.

Although we cannot know for certain whether Peng's leaving the Ming resistance before serious fighting broke out at least three times was coincidental or because he was reluctant to risk his life, his loyalty to the Ming was genuine. He had been a Ming Government Student which, although the lowest rung on the ladder towards official service, still engendered a sense of obligation towards the Ming. Probably more decisive was his father's deathbed injunction that he should try to emulate Huang Daozhou. From 1639-40, he forged a position amongst the educated gentry of the wider empire through his efforts in support of Huang and his association with the Confucian conservatives of the late Ming Restoration Society, but he remained a peripheral figure. While lists of Restoration Society members such as *Fushe xingshi zhuanlüe* cannot be complete, not least because membership was so amorphous, Peng's name does not appear in it, which it surely would have if he had been more significant.[53] Nevertheless, he did associate with significant Restoration Society members and identified with the conservative Confucian programme of late Ming politics. These activities pre-disposed him towards actively supporting the Ming resistance to the Manchu Qing conquest. His zealousness for the Ming cause may not have extended to risking his life, but he does seem to have been steadfast in his commitment when a more compromising stance may have made for an easier life. He does seem to have tried to avoid the company of Qing officials, at least until late in life, and declined invitations for him to serve the Qing,

[53] Wu Shanjia 1990.

though because he had only been a Government Student under the Ming, the invitations were likely to be only for minor posts.

Peng came from a moderately wealthy family in Nanchang, but not one distinguished enough to be mentioned in the Nanchang local histories. His life until his late twenties seems to have been typical of that of a member of the provincial urban gentry at that time. He became a Government Student in his teens, entitling him to certain benefits and perhaps a small stipend, though this would not have made a decisive difference to the family wealth. When the Huang Daozhou affair blew up, Peng had the resources to travel to the Jiangnan region in 1640, intending to go to the capital. After Beijing fell to the Manchus, he could travel to different parts of the Jiangnan region and Jiangxi. However, in between serving Shi Kefa and serving in Hunan, he moved his family to Ningdu, in the process being cheated of a significant amount of money. This marked the beginning of the decline in his financial resources. His service in the Ming armies was probably not financially significant. After Ningdu fell to the Qing in 1650, Peng still had the means to pay a ransom to Qing troops to release Yang Tinglin's son after they captured him following Peng Kun's death. However, his later financial difficulties suggest he was not able to draw on financial resources in Nanchang.

By the 1660s he had been travelling frequently. While meeting eminent loyalists was certainly an important reason for these travels, he says the main reason some of the Nine Masters travelled was poverty, and this certainly included him. However, if he had been as poor as many farmers, he would not have been able to travel nearly as much—compare him to Lin Shiyi, for example, whose travels were much more limited.

We know that geomancy became an important source of income for him, though he refers to it on only twice in his extant works. He also mentions, at the end of his chronological autobiography, 'labouring at the inkpot'. Although vague, it almost certainly includes writing for payment; this was something that much more prominent members of the cultural elite did too, but the income was more crucial to him. The only reference to teaching Peng makes is to his stay in Ninghua shortly before he wrote the chronological autobiography. We can assume his hosts provided accommodation and paid him. However, Peng does not mention this, and by noting how he was asked to stay on longer than originally intended, he is perhaps suggesting that his teaching was of a higher order, above mere instruction in the composition of examination essays.

Peng's travelling widely to seek employment like this implies that he had lost recourse to the symbolic capital which having adequate financial resources to hide financial need

would have provided. The cultural capital he had accrued through his privileged education and his association with learned men could be put to good use in seeking a livelihood, but performing geomancy for payment was not something a member of the cultural elite would have done if their finances were more secure. That Peng had to do this would have meant that his position in the social spaces of early Qing China was becoming precarious.

We do not know how he paid for his travels. Presumably he stayed with people who had employed him to do geomancy work for them. Sometimes friends hosted him. Payment for one job probably tided him over until the next one, and he must have made a surplus to take back to Ningdu to support his family.

It is almost always difficult to know how seriously to take claims of poverty made by members of the educated gentry. We do not know what happened to Lin Shiyi's family, but it seems to have slipped into obscurity. Peng's seems to have retained some local presence, at least according to Peng Yuzhu eight generations later. This suggests that the family did retain some resources after Peng died.

While Peng hardly chose to become a loyalist for financial benefit, since he had chosen that path, and it carried cultural prestige, loyalism could be used as a kind of symbolic capital because it carried with it cultural authority. To be able to demonstrate connections with other, more prominent loyalists could enhance the regard in which he was held among the educated gentry generally. This enhanced prestige could bring with it certain unspoken advantages, such as better sales for his collected works (or symbolic capital earned through making gifts of copies of them), or perhaps more jobs and better payment for his geomancy and teaching. It may also have made those members of the educated elite who could support loyalist scholars more likely to support him in other ways: it might, for example, secure him introductions amongst those with keen to host travelling loyalists.

Our discussion above suggests that Peng recorded the names of his friends and associates not merely as autobiographical facts. Rather the autobiography was intended to turn his loyalist-centred social network into social prestige, or a form of symbolic capital. Like other forms of symbolic capital, this unorthodox use of autobiography, and the benefits which would have accrued to him, were probably small relative to those whose economic capital would have enabled them to exert much greater symbolic capital.

Nevertheless, with his position amongst the dominant class of educated gentry under threat, presaging the loss of the various forms of capital which pertained to membership of this class, Peng needed to act to shore up his position in the social space. Publishing his collected works was itself one part of his strategy to this end. However, as a peripheral figure in the early Qing elite cultural world, emphasising his connections with much more prominent loyalists through the chronological autobiography was the best hope he had of generating symbolic value in the social space of his day. This foregrounding of his connections seems to have been unique among autobiographies from the late Ming and early Qing period, but it does suggest the wider question, beyond the scope of this study, of whether autobiography was used by other writers, whether in China or beyond, to similar purposes.