



# Posttraumatic Art: Painting by Remnant Subjects of the Ming

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The fall of the Ming dynasty (1368–1644) was experienced by most educated Chinese as a collective and personal trauma. Confucian education inculcated from childhood the idea that each individual had a family relation to the nation. The 1644 suicide by hanging of the last Ming emperor, Chongzhen 崇禎 (r. 1627–1644)—in response to the fall of the Ming dynasty to Chinese rebels—was therefore equivalent to the death of a father. The rebels themselves, however, would immediately fall in turn to the Manchus, who ruled China after 1644 as the Qing dynasty (1644–1911). The fall of the Ming dynasty thus also meant the loss of the nation. The trauma was double.

The Manchus did not invade the south of China until 1645. At that point, with resistance movements active in many parts there, no one knew whether the Qing dynasty would survive for ten years, let alone two hundred and fifty, but it was already clear that nothing could ever be the same again. In that year, Xiao Yuncong 蕭雲從 (1596–1673), an artist better known for his landscape paintings (cat. no. 24), created an image of a hanged man (fig. 29). It was part of a large series of designs for *Li sao tu* 離騷圖 (Illustrations to “Encountering Sorrow,” 1645), a book of illustrations to a poem dating from the early third century BCE when China was not yet unified and states were continuously warring with each other. The original poem evokes a world of chaos and violence in one of those states, and Xiao’s illustrations are clearly meant as indirect evocations of the horrors of war in his own time, and of the uncertainty of the future. Although Xiao’s image of a hanged man does not directly represent the emperor’s death and brings other possible real-life scenarios to mind as well, no educated man in 1645 could have viewed the image without being reminded of Chongzhen’s fate.



OPPOSITE: FIG. 28 Gong Xian,  
*Landscape* (detail), 1689 (cat. no. 36)  
RIGHT: FIG. 29 Xiao Yuncong, “Suicide  
by Hanging,” from *Li sao tu*; Woodblock prints.  
From Xiao Yuncong, *Li sao tu* (reprint,  
Taipei: Guoli Gugong bowuyuan, 1988), 48b.

For Chinese living after 1644, the fall of the Ming dynasty and their country's conquest by the Manchu Qing dynasty were the defining historical events of their lifetimes. Not only did the processes initiated in 1644 disastrously affect individual lives, but they also transformed the terms of political subjecthood for all those who lived through dynastic change. Subjecthood (an individual person's relation to the dynastic state) is at the heart of the present essay. Here I discuss the many different ways in which literati artists' convictions and sentiments about dynastic subjecthood affected their creative practice, conditioning their attempts to come to terms with what had happened and was happening around them. The trauma of what later came to be known as "the transformation" (*bian* 變) or "the chaos" (*luan* 亂) took infinite forms, at all levels of society. The artists generally sought to give voice to a wider suffering than their own, but in ways that were always mediated—and often muffled—by an obsession with answering the question: Of which dynasty am I the subject?

In dynastic subjecthood, two separate Chinese terms are in play. The first is *min* (民), often translated as "the people." Perhaps the most fundamental of this word's various meanings is the mass of the population subject to the emperor and for which he had responsibility. The *min* were divided into four categories that made up a socio-moral hierarchy: from top to bottom were scholars (the basis of the government), farmers, artisans, and finally merchants. However, political discourse also employed a second term, *chen* (臣), literally "servant" or "servitor." *Chen* was much narrower than *min* because it implied at least the possibility if not the reality of government service, and this made it particularly relevant to the educated elite. Referring to oneself in a signature or seal as a *chen* was one of the ways in which artists who remained loyal to the Ming advertised their fidelity, just as court painters working for the Qing emperors were obliged to preface their signatures with a *chen* character, there meaning "your loyal servant." Thus Xiang Shengmo 項聖謨 (1597–1658) signed his 1644 self-portrait, painted in the month following the Chongzhen emperor's suicide, "Xiang Shengmo from south of the Yangzi, a servitor in the wilderness" (cat. no. 20). And Gong Xian 龔賢 (1619–1689), a decade later, impressed a Ming loyalist seal reading "servitor Xian" on *Lofty Peak and Dense Woods* (cat. no. 34).

Broadly speaking, two normative conceptions of dynastic subjecthood had currency in the mid-seventeenth century. The first held that one's status, and thus also one's responsibilities, as political subject were determined by the dynasty under which one had been born. The opposing conception held that the Mandate of Heaven through which a ruling dynasty exercised power played the determining role. As long as the ruling dynasty's possession of the mandate was not seriously challenged, the two conceptions were not in contradiction and indeed were often not distinguished. However, when a dynasty fell, an entirely different kind of situation ensued because the dynasty under which one had been born no longer possessed the mandate. Of course, we have to bear in mind that not everyone at the time accepted that the Ming had lost the mandate in 1644; in fact, an armed Ming loyalist resistance continued as late as 1668. The "fact" that the Ming fell in 1644 was necessarily produced retrospectively.<sup>1</sup> Through the 1650s and even into the 1660s, an undeterminable number of the artists in this exhibition were no doubt still hoping for the restoration of the Ming empire.

During the first twenty-five years after 1644, when the Qing conquest still faced serious armed resistance, the two conceptions of subjecthood described above split apart. A fissure appeared between the sense of responsibility to the Qing dynasty's claim to the Mandate of Heaven,

and responsibility to the Ming dynasty under which one was born. If the emperor's relation to his subjects was analogous to a father's relation to his family, how—in a culture that extolled filial piety—could one simply forsake one father for another? Yet, the counter-principle was equally strong. For the mandate was the guarantee of the flow of continuity (*tong* 通) traversing the change (*bian* 變) of dynasties. In practical terms, it was the guarantee of the stability that made normal lives possible.

For the educated elite, these considerations were anything but theoretical since the mandate had its practical political realization in the state political apparatus. Government, after all, was the preferred career for those with a Confucian education. For those who privileged a mandate-defined definition of subjecthood, it was possible to conceive of entering Qing government, if not immediately (though a number did) then after a decent period of withdrawal. Others, however, defined their subjecthood in terms of the dynasty of their birth; for these men—at least for as long as they held true to their Ming roots—personal participation in Qing government was unthinkable. Both paths were entirely legitimate by their own lights, though obviously not by each other's, even if some individuals sought ways of reconciling the two and men on the two sides often respected each other's choices. Both paths also had long histories, with exemplars to follow as far back as the Three Dynasties of antiquity. In this essay, however, I shall be concerned only with the latter camp, that of the men who thought that to claim the name of a “left-over” or “remnant” subject of the Ming (*yimin*) entailed a corresponding disengagement from the Qing.

Xiang Shengmo's inscription to the aforementioned *Self-Portrait in Red Landscape*, dated to the fourth lunar month of 1644, dramatizes one man's immediate reaction to the fall of the Ming. “Sorrow and anger resulted in illness. Once I recovered, I sketched my likeness in ink and added the red painting” 悲憤成疾，既甦乃寫墨容，補以硃畫。Xiang felt the need to express viscerally his loyalty to the fallen dynasty, using red to allude to the name of the Ming dynastic family (fig. 30). He would not go on to commit suicide, or join the resistance, or become a monk; his lament was a private one, carefully concealed from the view of non-family members and according to family tradition subsequently kept for generations in the family temple. His two inscribed poems express his shame—at the insufficiency of the image he has painted and the words he has inscribed, and at the very sight of his own face. But the second poem ends on a note of resignation rather than defiance: “Though tear traces have been wiped away, grief remains; Daily hoping for the ascent of peace, my thoughts become foolishly obsessed” 啼痕雖拭憂如在，日望昇平想欲癡。It was precisely this desire for peace among the silent majority of the elite of southeast China that made it possible for the Manchu Qing to turn an occupation into accepted dynastic rule.

With its black-ink self-portrait standing out against the red landscape, Xiang's painting is visually disjunctive—a rare phenomenon in the history of Chinese painting, where unity was a preeminent aesthetic ideal. The opening lines of the inscription explain: “Remnant waters, leftover mountains—color still cinnabar red; / Murky heavens, darkened earth—shadow of a trifling body” 剩水殘山色尚朱，天昏地黑影微軀。Xiang's black-ink depiction, therefore, shows the mere shadow of an insignificant body that has taken into itself the murky heavens and darkened earth of a disjunctive moment of rebellion, war, and dynastic change. It is not irrelevant that the contrast of black and red was integral to literati culture. Black-printed books and ink-transcribed manuscripts were punctuated using red ink, with double inkstones existing for the purpose. And most monochromatic ink paintings bore seals of the artist impressed in red. In this more subtle sense, the painting affirms a specifically scholarly sense of unhappy destiny.



FIG. 30 Xiang Shengmo, *Self-Portrait in Red Landscape* (detail), 1644 (cat. no. 20)

**THE SCREEN OF METAPHOR** China's educated artists made sense of their post-1644 experience by filtering the raw facts of personal circumstances through a screen of metaphor. Temporally speaking, *yimin* (遺民), for which I shall use the translation "remnant subject," was the all-important term. A more tendentious interpretation as "loyalist" is common but has the disadvantage of narrowing the meaning down to a politically engaged, activist interpretation embraced by only a minority, even of those who considered being an *yimin* meant rejecting Qing service. Here I shall reserve the term "loyalist" for politically engaged *yimin*. For the majority of remnant subjects, the appellation *yimin* 遺民 was instead a way of giving contemporary relevance to the more common homophonous term 逸民, meaning "a subject who has fled" or more simply "a recluse." The two terms were inherently complicit, as one can see from an early seventeenth-century definition of the *yimin* (逸民) recluse: "Recluses are like the roots that survive after wilderness grass has been burned to ashes" 逸民如野燒草灰而根存.<sup>2</sup> Thus, although some remnant subjects were activist loyalists such as Fang Yizhi 方以智 (1611–1671; cat. no. 40), post-1644 any Ming-born self-proclaimed recluse could make the claim to be a remnant subject. This was the case in the 1660s for Fang's cousin Fang Hengxian 方亨咸 (act. c. 1647–1678; cat. no. 39), who had previously served as a Qing official between 1647 and 1657. Only in context, therefore, could one know what kind of remnant subject one was dealing with, and as the decades passed the context was easily lost. In a letter to Zhuo Erkan 卓爾堪 (1653–1712), commenting on the latter's now-famous 1690s compilation of poetry by remnant subjects, the Yangzhou-area loyalist Li Lin 李麟 (1634–1710) pointed out that not all of the remnant subjects selected by Zhuo were engaged Ming loyalists but were in some cases merely recluses—and even recluses by necessity rather than conviction.<sup>3</sup> The *yimin* world was a world of greys.

Corresponding to the temporal state of remnant subjecthood was the metaphoric space of internal exile known as the wilderness (*ye* 野)—thus Xiang Shengmo's self-description as a "servitor in the wilderness." As an ancient metaphor that took its meaning from opposition to the space of central power, *chao* (朝, literally "the court"), the wilderness was inherently political. While the exile in question could be non-metaphorically physical and geographic, as in the cases of banishment or flight, it more fundamentally referred to a self-displacement of consciousness—a disengagement from the sphere of political authority. In pictorial representation, many visual equivalents for this self-imposed social and mental exile in the wilderness were deployed. The most common included empty or isolated landscapes with wild prunus and ancient trees of all kinds, as well as depictions of specific places historically associated with exile.

The wilderness theme has a long and distinguished history in painting, one that may be as long as that of the pictorial representation and enactment of subjectivity. This history bequeathed to post-1644 remnant artists a broad range of wilderness subjects and styles. Some of these were associated with the loyalist end of the remnant-subject spectrum, because the fall of the Tang, the Northern Song, and the Southern Song had all led to intense loyalist contributions to painting under the immediately succeeding dynasties. Other themes and styles were associated with imposed or self-imposed exile. The latter can often be traced back to the late eleventh century and the literati artists who experienced geographic exile in the form of banishment. Complicating this latter part of the remnant subject's wilderness inheritance, however, was a development of the final century of the Ming dynasty, when political disintegration and the rapid development of urban commerce proceeded side by side.<sup>4</sup> During that extraordinary period of cultural experimentation, the wilderness had taken on a more complex social character, continuing to signify a space of exile from the orbit of imperial power but at the same time connoting a different kind of space—one of urban entrepreneurial opportunity and tastes. After 1644, however, literati reacted by purging the wilderness of the

consumerist accretions that had adulterated its originally political meaning, allowing it to regain its character as a political space. Moreover, the exile connotations returned with intensified force, as we saw in the case of Xiang's 1644 self-portrait. This was to prove a temporary development, though, which would not survive the deaths of the final generation of Ming remnant subjects in the years on either side of 1710.

The transformation of 1644 being at once conquest by a foreign power and dynastic fall, remnant subjects focused now on one, now on the other, finding both equally painful. The Qing's conquest was the Ming's and their own defeat, leading to the loss of the nation. The fall of the Ming dynasty itself, meanwhile, was described in terms very different from the toppling action of our English metaphor. The dynasty was understood to have perished (*wang* 亡); indeed the Chinese nation itself as a sovereign entity had perished (*guowang* 國亡). This experience of dynastic death left remnant subjects with many questions that turned on the one hand around the possibility or impossibility of resistance, and on the other around the obligations of mourning.

Yang Wencong 楊文驄 (1597–1646) painted the handscroll *Water Village* (cat. no. 19, fig. 11) in the eleventh month of 1644. It is one of a number of surviving paintings produced in and around Nanjing during the brief period between the fall of Beijing in the third month of 1644 and the fall of Nanjing in the fifth month of 1645 that are pervaded by an eerie calm.<sup>5</sup> With Beijing in the hands of the Manchus, Nanjing became the capital of the Ming Hongguang 弘光 (1644–1645) regime, whose government Yang, formerly a Chongzhen-period official, joined, serving in the Ministry of War. Yang painted the scroll for a Hongguang Grand Secretary, Gao Hongtu 高弘圖 (1583–1645). From the artist's inscribed poems we learn that the view is of a peaceful watery landscape along the Xiang River in Hunan, invoking the ancient exile theme of the Xiao and Xiang Rivers. On one level, the painting is a dreamlike vision of retirement from court to the wilderness, of a longed-for self-imposed exile that had finally been attained after repeated petitions to retire. Yang advertises Gao's transitional situation through the combination of two Yuan-dynasty models, one by Zhao Mengfu 趙孟頫 (1254–1322), who had left the wilderness to serve the Mongols, the other by Huang Gongwang 黃公望 (1269–1354), who had kept his distance from the Mongol regime. The first of the artist's two poems comments admiringly on Gao's successive choices in the wake of Chongzhen's death to serve and then to withdraw:

Sage sovereign, dragon-like, soared to reside at Fenghao [capital of the Zhou dynasty, here an indirect reference to Nanjing];  
With single-minded virtue, ruler and officials focused on the throne.  
The prime minister from Shandong [Gao Hongtu] personally  
seasoned the soup [i.e., formed the Hongguang government];  
Doubly bright [alternatively, Under the renewed Ming dynasty],  
sun [日] and moon [月, the two characters together make up  
the word ming (明)] illuminated the blue sky.  
[But] senior officials sat and argued behind yellow-painted doors,  
As the signal fires to the south went out, [the prime minister]  
shook his sleeves and left.  
With utmost respect and tender affection, I cherish Grand  
Secretary Gao;  
By imperial grace, like the Marquis of Ye to Mount Heng, he can  
retire to hermit life.<sup>6</sup>

聖主龍飛宅豐鎬，一德君臣凝大寶。  
山東宰相手調羹，重明日月青天杲。  
老臣坐論在黃廟，江表烽銷遽拂衣。  
至尊繡纓借高尚，鄴侯詔許衡山歸。

Yang affirms that Gao had fulfilled his loyalist obligation, and that it was the situation that failed him rather than the reverse. In such circumstances, as Tim Brook explains elsewhere in this volume, reclusion was an admirable moral choice. However, the painting and poem are not just a vision of reclusion but also a patriotic statement. This scroll is one of many paintings of the period that aligned the Chinese nation with the south of the country, echoing the geography of the Ming resistance.

**DEFIANCE** Educated to belong, at least potentially, to a national leadership class, China's literati could not but take the Ming defeat personally. Moreover, the Manchus quickly decreed that Chinese men wear their hair in the Manchu fashion as a way of forcing them to bear physically, as if branded, the sign of their humiliating new dynastic subjecthood. In response, many literati joined the Ming loyalist resistance and/or took the tonsure as Buddhist monks. Yang Wencong, for example, after helping to organize fortifications at Zhenjiang in late 1644, fought the Manchus at Quzhou in Zhejiang and later in Pucheng in Fujian, where he was captured and executed in 1645. Fang Yizhi is another artist who fought in the Southern Ming resistance, but he survived for a considerable time by becoming a monk. Fang was eventually arrested in 1671, suspected of rebellion, and died in custody by his own hand (see cat. no. 40). Gong Xian (cat. nos. 34–36) was active in the resistance during the 1640s. Although few details are known, Kuncan 龔殘 (b. 1612; cat. no. 37) is also thought to have participated in the Southern Ming resistance during the 1640s. Both the participants at the time and later the survivors once the resistance was defeated gave nationalist defiance symbolic form in writings and images. Here we have to remind ourselves that the art form we call literati painting (*wenrenhua* 文人畫) was not medium specific but rather was a culturally open practice, such that a single artwork could incorporate poetry, calligraphy, and painting proper, all of which mediated each other. For the educated man with some painterly skills, therefore, it was just as natural to express his defiance in this art form as it was for other literati to do so in poems or prose writings, or in the calligraphic transcription of appropriate texts.

Defiance was, however, dangerous. We have already seen that Xiang Shengmo's self-portrait was too explicit to be allowed to circulate outside the family. Artists dealt with this problem in a number of ways. Many stayed silent, especially prior to the 1680s, when one serious military threat to Manchu rule followed another. Even the die-hard loyalist Bada Shanren 八大山人 (1626–1705), according to Wang Fangyu, "seems to have refrained from expressing loyalist sentiments in his writings and art until the year 1682."<sup>7</sup> When he did start to express such sentiments, it was in densely allusive language that defied easy deciphering and in images of seemingly angry birds and fish whose meaning was brought by the viewer through context. Other artists preceded Bada in expressing their defiance obliquely by making their paintings either ambiguous or obscure, or both. This was easier to do when a painting was left unscripted or when the inscription left the image unexplained.<sup>8</sup>

It would be a mistake to interpret this type of painting simply in autobiographical terms. The poetics of defiance also contributed to the larger strategic goal of exposing the gap between Qing authority and legitimacy. The Qing state could make its claim on the entirety of Chinese territory, but Hongren 弘仁 (1610–1664) shows us places where people live, unseen and elusive, beyond the authority of the state.<sup>9</sup> The art of the Ming court no longer existed, but an artist like Bada kept its themes alive.<sup>10</sup> The former Nanjing had been renamed Jinling, but for loyalists it remained the southern capital, its many Ming sites still available even as they took on newly imposed Qing names.<sup>11</sup>



Three works in the exhibition by Gong Xian—*Lofty Peak and Dense Woods*, *Boating in the Breeze*, and *Landscape*—show one artist's evolving stance on defiance over a period of almost forty years. In *Lofty Peak and Dense Woods* (cat. no. 34), a work of the 1650s, the tall foreground trees interfere with our view of a residence nestled within more trees in the foothills of an imposing mountain. As is the case for many of Gong's early hanging scrolls, human presence seems absorbed into the landscape itself, which confronts the viewer as a claustrophobic icon of reclusion. As one spends more time with the image, however, one discovers that its frontality is balanced by implications of narrative that run laterally across the picture surface. Near the bottom of the painting, an area of ground left as bare silk narrows as it threads its way between the trees. A little further up, cut off by the right-hand edge of the painting, is a gallery leading to and from the main part of the residence. Thus the buildings are, after all, accessible—though not to

FIG. 31 Gong Xian, *Boating in the Breeze* (cat. no. 35)

us, who are cast in the role of witness. Still further up, a twisting band of mist leads to the topmost peak, implying movement, if only spiritual or imaginary, between the residence and the mountaintop. The top half of the painting is modeled on the art of the monk-painter Juran 巨然 (act. c. 960–980), who was active during the troubled tenth century, initially under one of the Tang dynasty's successor states, the Southern Tang dynasty. The suggestion of a historical parallel with the Southern Ming is likely deliberate.

By the time Gong painted the much more intimate *Boating in the Breeze* (cat. no. 35, fig. 31) in the 1680s, he had long since returned to Nanjing and established himself as a leading professional artist. In the more relaxed political atmosphere following the Qing suppression of the Rebellion of the Three Feudatories, his art had become progressively more expansive and self-assured, as he settled into the public role of a principled but no longer active loyalist. His inscription is light-hearted, evoking a pleasure outing by boat; indeed, the painting may be an occasional work, executed during just such an outing. "The entire boat is laden with wine / Its billowing sail borrowing the breeze that passes through the willows. / After it has sailed another ten miles or more, / How long will [the wine's] pure fragrance have lasted?" 滿船俱載酒，帆借柳風吹，過去十餘里，清香餘幾時。 The arresting visual image, though, freights these sentiments with melancholy. The willow has bare branches; the cliff is sheer rock; the shape of the sail, left as bare paper and silhouetted against the cliff, is reminiscent of a commemorative stone stele.

The latest of the three paintings, *Landscape* (cat. no. 36), dates from the year of Gong's death, 1689, which was also the year of the Kangxi emperor's 康熙 (r. 1661–1722) second visit to south China. In a conciliatory gesture, on this visit Kangxi poured libations at the mausoleum of the Ming founder, the Hongwu emperor 洪武 (r. 1368–1398), located at Mount Zhong just southeast of the city. For Gong, as for many Ming loyalists, this was an event that inspired mixed feelings. He responded by adding to the large number of landscape paintings by Nanjing artists that depict, without noting it in their inscriptions, Hongwu's mausoleum.<sup>12</sup> The many complexities of the painting are anchored by its character as a loyalist icon. The two-story structure of the mausoleum's stele hall, haloed by pines, nestles within a towering mountainscape transmuted from the low hills of Mount Zhong (fig. 28). Closer to us, empty residential buildings are framed by leafless, wintry trees. From all this our entry is barred by the expanse of water at the bottom of painting. Swaths of mist enter the landscape from both sides, intensifying the visual effect of a dystopian quasi-religious vision. And by summoning up memories of the monumental landscapes of the Five Dynasties, Song, and Yuan—an aspect of the painting that the artist underscores in his long inscription—Gong's masterwork identifies the lost Ming with the lost nation.

**MOURNING THE MING LORD** The majority of literati did not join the armed loyalist resistance. In the early years they were instead racked by paralyzing guilt and remorse, leading them often to withdraw from the world or, more rarely, to commit suicide. The context for suicide lay in the obligations attendant on a servitor (*chen* 臣) mourning for a lord (*zhu* 主). Evelyn Rawski has shown that although the official death ritual following the deaths of Ming and Qing emperors largely followed the pattern of family mourning (see below), this did not exclude a certain role for the practice of accompanying-in-death

(*suizang* 隨葬).<sup>13</sup> Astonishing as it may seem, this archaic and barbaric practice, applied to palace concubines, remained active at the imperial level under the Ming until the second half of the fifteenth century, and its formal abolition in 1464 did not prevent it from continuing at the level of Ming princely burials.<sup>14</sup> In the mid-seventeenth century, various forms of accompanying-in-death were used in Manchu aristocratic burials, including that of the Qing emperor Shunzhi 順治 (r. 1644–1661) in 1660. The practice was finally abolished in 1673.<sup>15</sup> The suicide of the Chongzhen emperor in 1644 was not generally interpreted as an attempt to avoid a more unpleasant fate, but as a recognition of guilt or the loss of the mandate (interpretations varied). The emperor's suicide inspired a rash of suicides that were explicitly intended as accompaniment in death.<sup>16</sup> According to Frederick Wakeman, in Beijing "at least forty officials, many of them ranking ministers like Fan Jingwen 范景文 [1587–1644], committed suicide in the first few days following Chongzhen's death."<sup>17</sup> In the provinces, their example was followed by many others as the news spread. This martyrdom was in a sense the benchmark by which surviving loyalists measured their own demonstrations of loyalty. Zhang Dai's 張岱 (1597–c. 1684) commentary to the life of the Chongzhen emperor suggests something of the symbolic power of the idea of accompanying-in-death in loyalist consciousness: "When we scholar subjects [*shimin* 士民] turn our thoughts to the events of the third month of *jiashen* [1644], there is not one of us who is not so heartbroken that he could spit blood, and who does not think to himself that it would have been better to kill himself the same day as our late Emperor" 凡我士民, 思及甲申三月之事, 未有不痛心嘔血, 思與我先帝同日死之為愈也。<sup>18</sup>

It is from this point of view that some paintings by self-proclaimed loyalists can be understood as metaphoric representations of the Ming dynastic afterlife. Especially in the many loyalist representations of fantastic landscapes, the reference seems to be the wandering, unhappy *hun* (魂) soul roaming the dangerous cosmos in search of paradise. Many loyalist artists did wander the world during the first decades following 1644, fleeing from danger and scratching out a livelihood. As one of Gong Xian's poems has it: "Ten years in exile, my soul [*hun*] terrorized" 作客十年魂膽落.<sup>19</sup> In other cases, most obviously in depictions of the landscape around the former southern capital of Nanjing, the afterlife of the *po* (魄) soul that in contrast to the *hun* remained in the tomb residence seems the obvious point of reference. Just as a tomb contained depictions of a residence in order to provide the basis for the enactment of a continued comfortable existence in the afterlife, so too in painting we see the continuation of the Ming as a dematerialized, idealized, peaceable environment for men who considered themselves to be ghosts. It is striking, for example, how many loyalist painters—Hongren and Gong Xian being the most famous—omitted human figures from their landscapes. Houses, boats, and other signs of human presence such as fishing nets and well-tended fields make it clear that their landscapes are inhabited, but not by anyone that the ordinary viewer can see.

Other, more emblematic and self-referential loyalist images, notably depictions of the prunus, often catalyzed related poetic reflections. *Plum Blossoms and Pine* (after 1650; cat. no. 40, fig. 32) was painted by Fang Yizhi, a remnant subject who had donned monk's robes. Each painting in this set of four hanging scrolls bears an eight-line poem. The poem inscribed on an image of a prunus wreathed in white mist places us in Suzhou's Lingyan Monastery 靈巖寺:



FIG. 32 Fang Yizhi, *Plum Blossoms and Pine* (detail), after 1650 (cat. no. 40)

At Lingyan Monastery after people have left, I seek out  
 jeweled branches;  
 Newly displayed monk's robes are not to be wondered at.  
 In front of the cemetery gates, birds chatter in the snow;  
 Amid the sounds of flutes that arrive through white mist,  
 this visitor has no poem to write.  
 I can see [now] that in the days when flowers bloomed  
 so fragrantly in paradise,  
 Blossoms were already falling in wintry mountains.  
 Taking stock, my heart belongs too much to the past  
 for me to become a transcendent;  
 Yet the enticements of spring and the vulgar world have  
 no purchase on me either.

靈岩人去訪瓊枝，新敞袈裟正不奇。  
 玄墓門前禽語雪，白雲笛裏客無詩。  
 可知瓊圃芬芳日，已是寒山墮落時。  
 度自僊仙心太古，媚春媚俗未相宜。

The artist here eloquently describes the limbolike existence of the loyalist subject compelled to live outside dynastic time, all too aware of the dead. The case of the loyalist Gui Zhuang 歸莊 (1613–1673), whose defiant poetry is discussed in Jonathan Chaves's essay, elucidates the kind of thinking underpinning landscape images, such as Gong Xian's *Landscape*, that evoke the same limbo. After participating in the loyalist resistance, Gui returned to his hometown of Kunshan, where he built a home for himself beside his father's grave. He inscribed his studio with words that included the comment: "on all four sides [this house] touches the earth of the lower world: how rare the living, how numerous the ghosts!" 四鄰接幽冥之宅，人何寥落鬼何多。<sup>20</sup>

While he did not usually literally accompany the emperor in death, the loyalist who renounced the world to become a monk, or who more simply refused to take the official examinations, symbolically fulfilled his ritual as well as his political responsibility to the lost dynasty through his lifetime commitment. If the self-penned epitaph of Zhang Dai stands as the preeminent literary expression of remorse, no visual artist gave more vivid voice to *yimin* feelings of guilt than Chen Hongshou 陳洪綬 (1599–1652; cat. nos. 21–23). Prior to the fall of the Ming, Chen had been a literati professional heavily engaged in the market who employed several assistants. He was famous for creating surprising and transgressive images that subverted the conventions of genres and styles. Post-1644, however, his work darkened. One interpretation of the later work would highlight its ironic and theatrical distancing of self. This device had previously functioned as a defensive mechanism against the moral compromise involved in the commercialization of literati self-expression. Now, though, it became the means by which the artist distanced himself from an earlier, pre-1644 self, exposed in the later paintings as morally deficient.

Album for Monk Yu (cat. no. 23) is one of a number of superb post-1644 albums (this one painted around 1650) in which Chen created melancholy interpretations of a range of diverse themes. Largely devoid of inscriptional commentary by the artist, the images are left to tell their own story. A single narcissus alludes to a subject closely associated with Zhao Mengjian 趙孟堅 (1199–c. 1264), a thirteenth-century artist whom seventeenth-century literati mistakenly believed to have created images of narcissi during the initial years of the Mongol conquest (cat. no. 23:5). A butterfly hovers over a spray of chrysanthemum that

is paired with a stalk of bamboo; the fact that butterflies do not pollinate chrysanthemums makes this an image of futility (cat. no. 23:3). At the end of winter, an old prunus puts forth fresh blossoms, one of the most common self-images of the remnant subject (cat. no. 23:7). Three mynah birds, taking a rest from the squabbling that made them a Ming metaphor for court factionalism, sit on a tree branch (cat. no. 23:6); they have entered a painting that any educated viewer would have recognized as a reinterpretation of Su Shi's 蘇軾 (1037–1101) favorite theme of old trees, bamboo, and rocks: Su's visual metaphor for moral principles maintained in the face of adversity. One landscape explicitly evokes the restless style of Wang Meng 王蒙 (c. 1308–1385), who lived through the troubled transition between the Yuan and Ming dynasties (cat. no. 23:2); it takes a moment to notice a man in a skiff making his way out of the creek into open water as if emerging from hiding. A second landscape leaf painted, according to the inscription, in the recipient's library, "Reading History Pavilion" depicts a recluse picking his way through a lake landscape (cat. no. 23:4); the name of the library encourages us to see in this image a metaphor for the experience of reading history for its lessons. Finally, an aging recluse, archaically dressed, contemplates the falling leaves of autumn, as if seeing his remaining years slip away (cat. no. 23:1, fig. 33). Is this the artist? The recipient? It may be both, since Chen applies the word "old" (*lao* 老) repeatedly to both the recipient and himself. Among Chen's post-1644 style names was one, Belated Remorse, that corresponds well to the tone of this and similar albums.

**MOURNING THE MING PARENT** Gong Xian's *Landscape* is also a pictorial memorial to the death of the Ming dynasty, in which the tomb of the Ming founder comes to commemorate the dynasty's end. From this point of view, it is an image of mourning. Literati mourning of the death of the Ming was highly ritualized. While grieving for a lord provided one important model, familial mourning for parents was no less important. Gong's pictorial memorial did not just visualize the ghostly dynastic afterlife inhabited by Ming loyalists who had symbolically accompanied the emperor in death, it also enacted a particular moment in a process of mourning for the Ming dynastic parent. It was basic that mourning for parents should not go beyond a certain term. Although the term varied (for government officials it was twenty-seven months), the principle that it had to be brought to an end, declaring a symbolic return to normality, was inflexible. Thus the classical text, the *Liji* 禮記 (Book of rites), stipulates: "Three years are considered as the extreme limit of mourning; but though [his parents] are out of sight, a son does not forget them."<sup>21</sup> As we shall see, Gong's painting acknowledges in its own way that mourning the Ming dynastic parent had a limit, too—marked by the passing of Gong's generation.

Seen in terms of domestic, familial mourning, the dynastic transition emerges as a play of competing temporalities. The collaborating Chinese official in Qing government, through a restriction of the mourning period to the minimum length, was engaged in an operation of continuity that can be seen as maintaining the flow of dynastic time. It was possible, within the paradigm of familial mourning, for him to believe that by entering government under the Qing after a certain period, he was not simply being opportunistic but was fulfilling his ritual responsibility to the lost dynasty as well as his political responsibility to the new holder of the mandate.<sup>22</sup> The natural time lapse between the Ming military defeat and the Qing restoration of a functioning government took care of the mourning period. This course was not an easy one to choose, however. The collaborator was aware that he might be sacrificing his historical reputation—no small matter in a culture where the fortunes of the living were intertwined with those of the ancestors.



FIG. 33 Chen Hongshou, leaf from *Album for Monk Yu*, c. 1650 (cat. no. 23)

Among the painters represented in the exhibition, only Fang Hengxian (cat. no. 39) chose the path of collaboration, entering the Qing government in 1647, three years after the Ming fall. After 1660, however, following a period of banishment, Fang withdrew from public service. Like Cheng Zhengkui 程正揆 (1604–1676)—another artist who had served the Qing during the Shunzhi period—he subsequently supported himself as a professional artist in Nanjing, where the prefect, Zhou Lianggong 周亮工 (1612–1672), was a protector of remnant subject artists of all kinds. Five of the nine double leaves of Fang's album are a manifesto of the reclusive life: a man meditates in a cave; another wanders alone in a chilly wilderness environment; a house with no visible inhabitant stands within a compound whose outside gate is barred from within (fig. 23); a pile of vegetables extols the pleasures of a vegetarian diet; and a single lotus blossom blooms in its muddy pond, in an allusion to Zhou Dunyi's 周敦頤 (1017–1073) use of the lotus as an emblem of virtue. The opening double leaf, however, goes in a different direction, depicting an inscribed rock that had been an unwitting witness to dynastic change—a theme that Fang takes up again in the essay on an ancient coin that occupies the last three double leaves of the album. Both objects belonged to the wilderness. The rock stood “amidst wild grass growing in a deserted field” 於荒田蔓草間. The corroded coin, which he saw during the period of his banishment, had been found in the ground, amid the ruins of an old city wall.

In contrast to the collaborating official, the die-hard Ming loyalist extended the symbolic three years of mourning of the eldest son to cover his entire lifetime. If mourning always represents a calculated rupture with the normal socialized time of community or public life, the loyalist located himself within the disruption. He thus operated in a suspension of dynastic time, inhabiting and incarnating a limbo that one might call interdynastic in the sense that it stood outside Ming and Qing dynastic time.<sup>23</sup> As the drama progressed through the 1650s, 60s, and 70s, the hard line of even the most famous loyalists significantly softened. The decorum of mourning required that it not be taken to unreasonable lengths. The *Liji* stipulates: “The rites of mourning are the extreme expression of grief and sorrow. The graduated reduction of that expression in accordance with the natural changes (of time and feeling) was made by the superior men, mindful of those to whom we owe our being.”<sup>24</sup> What is more, the Qing government took extremely seriously its ideological offensive aimed at loyalists and was able to further marginalize those who were most intransigent. The drama of the extraordinary *boxue hongci* 博學鴻詞 examination of 1679 entailed tempting loyalists with the possibility of exchanging their paradigms of ritual reference thirty-five years after the fall of the Ming, when passions had cooled. Some accepted, but others like Cheng Sui 程邃 (1607–1692; cat. no. 32) and Fei Erqi 費而奇 (act. 1678 or earlier–1701 or later) did not. Correspondingly, in the foreground of Fei's charming and expertly composed image of a rustic retreat in the mountains (cat. no. 33:1) is a stream flowing from a cave, a direct allusion to the story of the Peach Blossom Spring and its hidden self-sufficient community existing outside dynastic time (fig. 34). Five years after the *boxue hongci* examination, one of Kangxi's key actions was to pay his respects to the tomb of the Ming founder in Nanjing, as he did again in 1689—the act to which Gong Xian responds in *Landscape*.

Through the play of temporalities associated with different ritual options of mourning, the dynastic transition took on something of the character of a ritual narrative. In this narrative, instances of sordid opportunism aside, both loyalists and collaborators were necessary, and its emplotment had a certain inevitability corresponding to a consensus view of national destiny. As such it functioned as a ritual mechanism that, through the symbiotic engagements of loyalists and collaborators, ensured the stability of the society in the face of disaster. While the role of the collaborating official in such a process is clear enough, the loyalist's role is more obscure. In one direction, by personally assuming the burden of collective grief and shame, the community of remnant subjects freed the rest of literati society to return to normality. But equally important is the fact that the collaborator alone did not have the moral authority to create the symbolic *tabula rasa* without which the new dynasty could not pass from imposed authority to legitimacy.

This is where the loyalist—once he had abandoned military resistance—came in. Although the loyalist's refusal to recognize the Qing appears on its face to have prevented the new dynasty from acquiring legitimacy, the fact that this refusal (once the Southern Ming resistance had failed) took place within a context of mourning functioned as an implicit acknowledgment of the fact that dynastic death had occurred. Despite its negative character, this acknowledgment was crucial because its moral authority could not be challenged.

A practical example of *yimin* use of their moral authority to acknowledge the Qing is the blessing that Huang Zongxi 黄宗羲 (1610–1695) gave the Qing-sponsored *Ming shi* 明史 (Ming history, completed 1739) by contributing materials and sending his son to participate in its compilation.<sup>25</sup> As soon as he gave up armed resistance, therefore, the loyalist was paradoxically condemned to collaborate, if only symbolically, with the collaborator in the normalization of Qing power. It is worth noting, in this light, that the political tensions between the two groups were not nearly as great in the late seventeenth century as is sometimes supposed. In the early Qing art world, it is the instances of intransigence that are unusual and notable.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, even the most committed loyalists took stock of the changing political situation. Part of what makes Gong Xian's *Landscape* such an important painting is the implicit acknowledgment it incorporates through its classicizing stability: that under Kangxi China had found peace again.

Mourning on the familial model found its pictorial expression within wilderness painting in a poetics of loss to which many styles made separate contributions. One common form was a desolate or melancholy mood already current in painting prior to 1644 but which was now recontextualized and inflected by the fall of the Ming. The Huizhou 徽州 wilderness vision as defined by Hongren, for example, took an archaizing mode of literati painting invented in the late Ming (see Song Jue's 宋瑀 [1576–1632] album leaf, cat. no. 33:5) and applied it to the landscape of Huizhou and Mount Huang. By keeping the style free of color and stripping the trees of their leaves and the landscape of its people, Hongren, the loyalist monk, touched every scene with a wintry cool. Entirely different was the colorful but elegiac art of the great late-seventeenth-century painter of flowers and plants, Yun Shouping 恽壽平 (1633–1690). In Yun's hands, the late-Ming sensualist immersion in presentness was reframed by accompanying poems that introduce the distorting lens of memory, often by evoking images of palace life.

FIG. 34 Fei Erqi, “Recluse on a Pine Path,” leaf from *Album of Landscapes by Famous Masters of the Late Ming–Early Qing* (cat. no. 33)



Yet another current of late-Ming painting had been the marriage of concrete particulars of place to poetic mood. This interest in a lyrical form of topographic depiction—originally associated with painters from Suzhou and Songjiang such as Shen Shichong 沈士充 (act. c. 1607–after 1640; cat. no. 17)—remained important in the late seventeenth century, when artists like the Nanjing-based Hu Yukun 胡玉昆 (act. c. 1640–1672) inflected the mood toward a poetics of loss and chose places for depiction accordingly. Four leaves by Hu are preserved in an album collection of works by otherwise unrelated artists (cat. no. 33). The places represented include ones of the deepest meaning to remnant subjects. The cemetery of Confucius and his descendants at Qufu in Shandong Province evoked the continuity of Han Chinese civilization (33:7). The area around Mount Tai, the sacred mountain of the east, also in Shandong, evoked both ancient battles and dynastic legitimacy (33:8). For the artist, the Temple of the Eastern Grove at Mount Lu in Jiangxi Province “calls to mind the worthies of old—summoning them [to government service] was hard!” 為想前賢難見招 (33:10, fig. 35). Eschewing the stylistic severity of his contemporary, Gong Xian, Hu used light color and delicate descriptive brushwork to exploit effects of light in the service of dreamlike, contemplative moods. His economical inscriptions provide just enough information to encourage melancholy reflection on recent events.<sup>27</sup>

For the few artists who were descendants of Ming princely households, familial mourning cut closer to the bone. One was Bada Shanren; another the monk Guofeng 過峰, who visited him in Nanchang in 1695. To commemorate the occasion and express his appreciation of the visit by this distant relative from faraway Yunnan Province, Bada painted for his visitor a folding fan (cat. no. 43, fig. 42). Through the golden space of the fan’s surface, twenty-one tiny fish swim in a meandering line, forming a long chain of one-to-one connections much like the meeting that brought artist and recipient together. Although Bada reused a favorite, densely allusive poem from the previous year, it was one that took on new relevance on this occasion due to its Yunnan theme. It reads, in one possible translation:

You come here to take pity on one who is haggard,  
Lingering—why, I wonder?—under the flowers for twenty  
or thirty days.  
To make Kunming Lake peaceful depends on the release of the fish.  
When the tree peony blooms, it is spring at Jinma.<sup>28</sup>

到此憐憔悴人，緣何花下兩三旬？  
定昆明在魚兒放，木芍藥開金馬春。

As Richard Barnhart has noted, it was near Kunming Lake and Jinma Mountain that the last princely claimant to the Ming throne had died in 1662.<sup>29</sup> Inscribed on a fan for a fellow princely descendant, the poem could not but be taken as a commentary on the fates of this scattered group of men. The release of the fish is most obviously a reference to the annual Buddhist practice of buying fish in order to release them and thereby accumulate karma. Bada may have originally been alluding to the need for the Qing government not to pursue Ming loyalists, but here it is hard not to bring to mind Kangxi’s 1668 order allowing “descendants of the Ming imperial family [to] return to their homes and restore their family name without recrimination.”<sup>30</sup> Since Yongli 永曆 (r. 1646–1662) died in the spring, the final line speaks of a painful memory that for men like Bada and Guofeng was bound to recur every year on the anniversary of Yongli’s death.<sup>31</sup>

**LATECOMERS** As the decades passed and the generations of older remnant subjects gradually disappeared, those who remained by 1700 were men who had been only children in 1644. By the 1690s, China was definitively a Qing nation led by a Manchu emperor who had earned widespread respect through his restoration of peace, stability, and prosperity. The dwindling loyalist community did not remain untouched by this evolution of the political situation. Even Bada underwent a change in attitude in his late years, seemingly letting go of his anger after 1694.<sup>32</sup> The very youngest remnant subjects were in a unique situation, since to all intents and purposes they had only known life under the Qing. In the world of artists, the most famous member of that final remnant-subject generation was Shitao 石濤 (1642–1707), who like Bada was born into a Ming princely household.

Yimin identity inspired conflicted feelings in Shitao during most of his life. He spent more than half a century as a Buddhist monk, initially to ensure his safety, then as a convinced religious professional pursuing a career, and finally during the first half of the 1690s in disillusionment at the failure of his ambitions as a Chan master. From the 1660s onwards, if not before, the monk’s imperial identity was an open secret, making him like Bada a remnant subject of a very particular, charismatic kind. Shitao accepted the attention of his contemporaries yet pursued a contradictory path. His teacher Lü’an Benyue 旅庵本月 (d. 1676), and his teacher’s teacher Muchen Daomin 木陳道忞 (1596–1674), were nationally prominent monks who had aligned themselves with the Qing court. Despite his Ming princely origins, or perhaps because of them, Shitao followed in their footsteps, engaging in a campaign to obtain the patronage of the Kangxi emperor. The campaign culminated in a sojourn between 1689 and 1692 in Beijing, where he was fêted by the high and mighty without in the end achieving his final goal of ensuring a sustained closeness to the throne. Rejected, entering his fifties, and disappointed in his longstanding ambition, he returned to the south in growing crisis, questioning his commitment to the life of the *sangha*.<sup>33</sup>

Having worked semi-professionally as an artist all his life, Shitao’s obvious way out was to become a full-time professional artist as Bada had done in the 1680s. He eventually followed Bada’s example, in the winter of 1696–97, but without fully returning to secular life. Instead, he proclaimed a Daoist identity even as he moved into his own house within the city of Yangzhou. During the final decade of his life, established as a professional artist in Yangzhou, Shitao embraced the role of a remnant subject and, more cautiously, of a Ming descendant. In 1697 he began to use regularly a seal whose meaning would have been cryptic for anyone not in the know, for it simply declared him to be the tenth-generation descendant of Zan, in reference to the founder of the Jingjiang princely lineage of the Ming, Zhu Zanyi 朱贊儀 (late fourteenth century). Not until 1701, at the age of sixty *sui*, did he feel able to sign a painting with his secular given name, Ruoji 若極. And only in 1702 did he begin to use a seal, declaring openly his Ming princely affiliation, that read “Jingjiang descendant” 靖江後人. By 1705 several other seals with related legends followed, but on present evidence he never once used his complete princely name of Zhu Ruoji 朱若極, probably out of a lingering fear that he might be considered a possible claimant to the Ming throne. For Shitao, the reengagement with his Ming family heritage at this point had little in common with the Ming loyalism of artists in earlier decades. For his contemporaries and men of a younger generation, however, he became a living monument of the Ming—a role that he increasingly embraced until his death in 1707.<sup>34</sup>

FIG. 35 Hu Yukun, “Tiger Stream Bridge at Mount Lu,” leaf from *Album of Landscapes by Famous Masters of the Late Ming–Early Qing* (cat. no. 33)

廬山、羊東林寺為想前賢難見招一夜溪聲耳如豹吼窮源  
上虎溪橋



廬山  
虎溪橋

As late as the winter of 1693–94, Shitao was still insistent on maintaining a dual status as monk and artist. In the dedication to the twelve-scroll *Plants of Virtue and Rocks by Water (Sketching Bamboo)* (cat. no. 50, fig. 37), painted in Yangzhou during the early winter of 1693, he writes:

I am by nature recalcitrantly myself and rarely get on with worldly society. It is only through brush and ink [that I do], expressing relaxed feelings and ancient ideas of virtue. When the monks of old said, “why not entrust one’s true character to brush and ink?” this is what they meant.

予性懶真，少與世合。惟筆與墨，以寄閒情。古德云，何妨筆墨資真性，此之謂也。

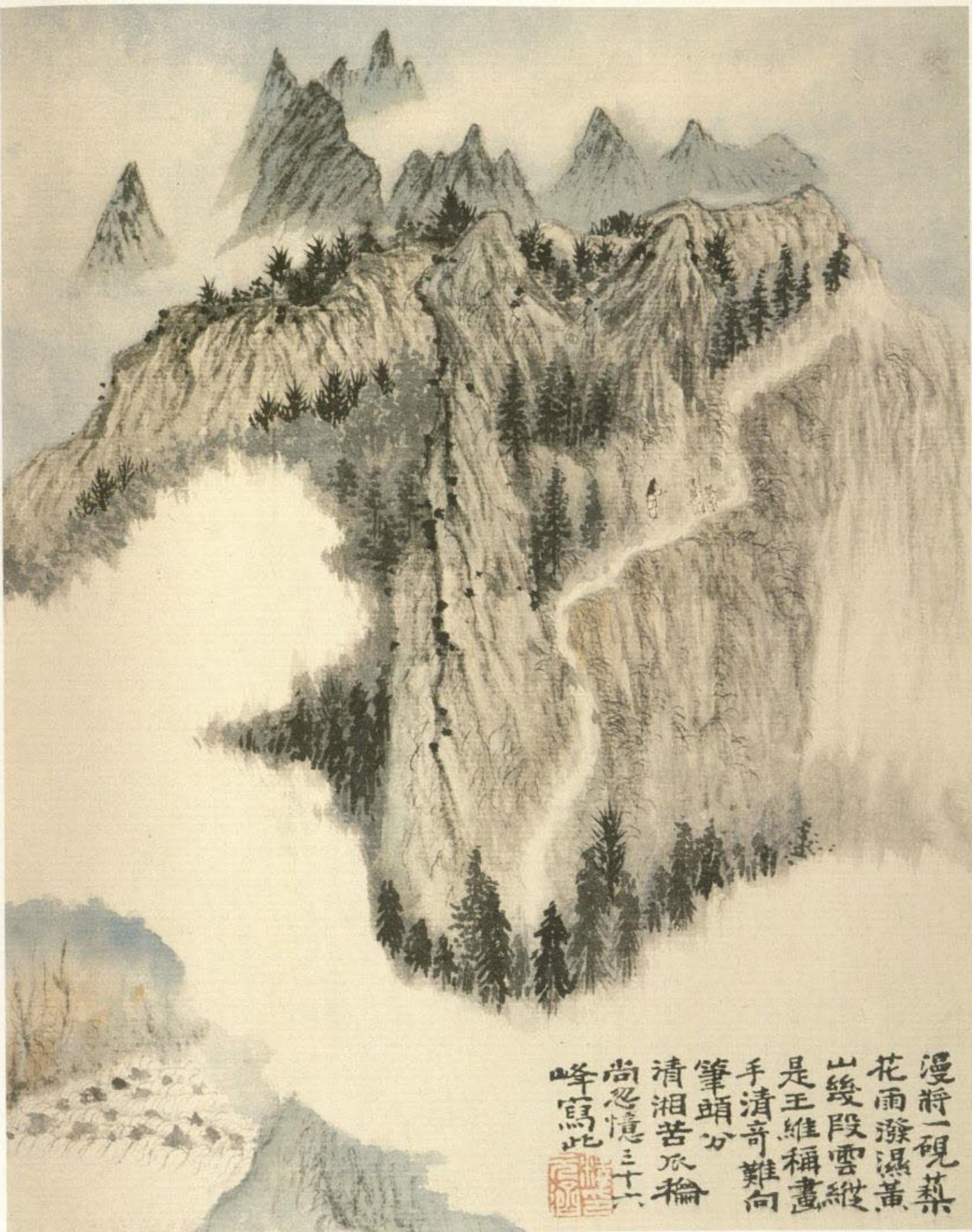
Shitao knew that his art was desirable in part because of the moral capital of his social position as a monk. Indeed, he notes in the dedication that the patron had requested that he articulate a Buddhist vision for the image. Like many scholar-officials of the time, he squared this request with the requirements of a decorative commission by exploring the iconography of virtue in a work of ink alone on paper, with inscriptions to draw out his identification with his subjects. From right to left, bamboo and chrysanthemums give way to bamboo and hibiscus, then plantains and orchids, followed by pines and orchids, before concluding with bamboos alone. Rocks, grasses, and water tie together the overall composition into a coherent autumnal garden scene, appropriate to the wealthy residence in which the painting would have been displayed either as a set of scrolls on the wall or on a folding screen. Six inscriptions of varying lengths, tones, and calligraphic styles punctuate the composition, allowing the painting to be read as much as beheld. Drawing attention to the garden rock anchoring the first thematic section, Shitao presents himself first as an obsessive lover of rocks in the line of Mi Fu 米芾 (1052–1107/08), whose running script calligraphic style he also evokes. He then frames the second section with two short clerical-script inscriptions in scrolls four and six, one devoted to bamboo and the other pairing bamboo with hibiscus. He reverts to standard script for a poem on orchids and plantain in the cold wind of late autumn that announces the arrival of snow. Switching back to running script, he uses a couplet to turn the vignette of slightly more distant pines into a microcosmic mountainscape, complete with cliff and waterfall. Finally, by pairing the above-cited dedication on scroll eleven with the foreground bamboo, he manages to imply the virtue of the patron, whom he praises as possessing “a lofty simplicity.” In this impressive work we see Shitao adapting to a southern clientele a mode of painting that he had previously perfected for the scholar-officials of the capital.

Shitao’s doubts about his vocation as a monk, suppressed in *Plants of Virtue and Rocks by Water*, surfaced during the same period in the more intimate album format in works whose recipients were close friends. By late 1694, when he painted the *Landscapes for Huang Lü* (cat. no. 51), his self-questioning was at its height. Lacking his former sense

of monastic purpose, he seems to have come to experience his itinerant circumstances as well-nigh intolerable, even as in characteristic fashion he confronted his situation head on in album after album. *Landscapes for Huang Lü* offers us leaves of itinerancy (the artist displacing himself to West Lake), of solidarity with a community of fellow artists, of a borrowed temple home, and of a sojourn as the guest of a private individual. The glory of the album, though, is the astonishing series of four leaves (cat. nos. 51:1, 3, 6, and 7; fig. 36) in which he visualizes destiny in terms of paths—paths that may or may not be mutually incompatible, that lead in different directions but may leave one back where one started, sometimes mutating along the way from the mundane to the transcendent. Rivers, streams, bridges, roadways, tracks between fields, cliffside paths, mountain ridges, and even clouds become the vehicles of the eye’s restless narrative urge. The agents of destiny in these restless images are solitary figures—standing alone, floating in skiffs with the current, encountering strangers coming in the opposite direction—each one a surrogate for the artist who at this point was beginning to embrace belatedly a new identity as an *yimin* artist, an identity that within another two years would give him the courage to leave the security of monastic life and establish himself as a full-time professional artist in the city of Yangzhou.

The viability of a primary social identity as an artist is, in fact, the other great theme of this album, which would be followed by others, equally extraordinary, over the next two years. Here, as he engaged directly for the first time with the alternative social identity it offered, Shitao framed artistic identity in clearly political terms. The final, dedicatory leaf bears a long inscription in which Shitao identifies the practice of painting—“this way”—with nine celebrated artists, living and deceased, to whom he pays homage and with whom he asserts his solidarity. All were remnant subjects like himself, here emblematically visualized as three leafless, wintry trees that frame the inscription. In this text, Shitao willingly assumes the role that others had long attributed to him but which he had resisted, of survivor and moral witness to history. As painting became his primary vocation, displacing Buddhism, it was fellow artists to whom Shitao looked as models. Of these nine men, five—Kuncan (cat. no. 37), Chen Shu 陳舒 (c. 1617–c. 1687), Hongren, Cheng Sui (cat. no. 32), and Bada Shanren (cat. nos. 41–48)—were well-known Ming loyalists. But the other four were not. Cheng Zhengkui served the Qing court from 1645 to 1657. Mei Qing 梅清 (1623–1697) sought repeatedly to pass the examinations under the Qing, and Mei Geng 梅庚 (1640–c. 1722; cat. no. 33:3) served briefly as a magistrate on the basis of a 1681 provincial-level *jurem* degree. As for Zha Shibiao 查士標 (1615–1698; cat. no. 49), he had neither presented himself as a loyalist nor sought to enter Qing government. The heterogeneous political affiliations of these artists should not be taken as indicating an indifference to politics on Shitao’s part; rather, they point to a distinctive political vision. Fifty years after 1644, with the legitimacy of Qing rule universally accepted, it was beginning to be possible to place openly the very different *yimin* responses to the fall of the Ming on the same footing. The litmus test of loyalism was finally starting to lose its relevance.

FIG. 36 Shitao, leaf from *Landscapes for Huang Lü*, 1694 (cat. no. 51)



漫將一硯  
花雨潑濕黃  
山幾段雲  
是王維稱  
畫手清奇  
難向筆頭分  
清湘苦  
尚忽憶  
三十六  
峰寫此





- 1 See Jonathan Hay, "The Suspension of Dynastic Time," in *Boundaries in China*, ed. Hay (London: Reaktion, 1994), 171–97.
- 2 Or "like the characters that continue to exist after the candle by which one was writing finally goes out" 亦復如夜書，燭滅而字在。These definitions, cited from Chen Jiru's 陳繼儒 (1558–1639) *Yimin shi* 逸民史, appear in Liang Weishu's 梁維樞 (1587–1662) 1655 *Yujian zunwen* 玉劍尊聞, 8/1a.
- 3 For a discussion, see Hay, *Shitao: Painting and Modernity in Early Qing China* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 100–1. The ambiguity could also be turned to rhetorical advantage. In the biography of the noted Ming loyalist Wang Fuzhi 王夫之 (1619–1692), written in 1705 by his follower Pan Zongluo 潘宗洛 (1657–1716, by then a Hanlin academician), Wang is described as "a remnant subject [here Pan uses an alternative and even stronger term, *yichen*] of the former Ming, and a recluse of our present dynasty" 故明之遺臣，我朝之逸民也。Jian Bozan 葛伯贊 and Zheng Tianting 鄭天挺, eds., *Zhongguo tongshi cankao ziliao, gudaibufen* 中國通史參考資料，古代部分 8 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1966): 248.
- 4 On the late Ming "opening"—what he terms the breakup of the epistemological field—see the important article by John Hay, "Subject, Nature, and Representation in Early Seventeenth-Century China," in Wai-ching Ho, ed., *Proceedings of the Tung Ch'i-ch'ang International Symposium*, 4.1–4.22.
- 5 Others include an album of landscapes by Zhang Feng 張風 (d. 1662), now in the Metropolitan Museum, discussed in Hay's "The Suspension of Dynastic Time," and an album of landscapes by Xiao Yuncong in the Zhilelou Collection.
- 6 The reference is to the Tang imperial advisor Li Mi (722–789), who was reluctantly permitted by Emperor Suzong to retire to Mount Heng as a hermit.
- 7 Wang Fangyu, "The Life and Art of Bada Shanren," in Wang, Richard Barnhart, and Judith G. Smith, eds., *Master of the Lotus Garden: The Life and Art of Bada Shanren (1626–1705)* (New Haven: Yale University Art Gallery, 1990), 54.
- 8 For discussions of such images by Zhang Feng and Gong Xian, see Hay, "The Suspension of Dynastic Time."
- 9 Although Hongren's paintings are not represented in this exhibition, one of his poems was transcribed by another artist, Zhang Xuezheng 張學曾 (act. c. 1633–1657), onto a landscape hanging scroll (cat. no. 25).
- 10 On Bada's treatments of Ming court themes, see Wang, Barnhart, and Smith, *Master of the Lotus Garden*, 198–201.
- 11 See Hay, "Ming Palace and Tomb in Early Qing Jiangning: Dynastic Memory and the Openness of History," *Late Imperial China* 20, no. 1 (June 1999): 1–48.
- 12 Hay, "The Suspension of Dynastic Time," 189–97; and "Ming Palace and Tomb."
- 13 Evelyn Rawski, "The Imperial Way of Death: Ming and Ch'ing Emperors and Death Ritual," in James L. Watson and Rawski, *Death Ritual in Late Imperial and Modern China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 228–53.
- 14 See Huang Zhanyue 黃展岳, "Ming Qing huangshi de gongfei xunzang zhi" 明清皇室的宮妃殉葬制, *Gugong bowuyuan yuankan* 故宮博物院院刊, no. 1 (1988): 29–34. Huang seems to suggest that the practice extended in some cases to wives and concubines of the gentry.
- 15 *Ibid.*; and Rawski, "The Imperial Way of Death," 250.
- 16 In addition to the many suicides of eunuchs and other palace personnel (see Huang, "Ming Qing huangshi de gongfei xunzang zhi," 29), one can also note that of the hereditary noble Li Guozhen 李國楨 (d. 1644). According to Zhang Dai (other sources differ), having obtained assurances from Li Zicheng 李自成 (1606–1645) that the imperial tombs would not be destroyed and permission was granted to bury the emperor with the proper rites, Li Guozhen buried Chongzhen and then immediately killed himself. See Zhang, "Lie huangdi benji" 烈皇帝本記, in *Shikui shu houji* 石匱書後集.
- 17 Frederick Wakeman, *The Great Enterprise: The Manchu Reconstruction of Imperial Order in Seventeenth-Century China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 269.
- 18 Zhang Dai, "Lie huangdi benji."
- 19 Cited in Liu Haisu 劉海粟, *Gong Xian yanjiu ji* 龔賢研究集, 1 (1989): 90.
- 20 Cited in a biography by Niu Xiu 鈕琇 (d. 1704). See *Gui Zhuangji* 歸莊集, vol. 2 (Shanghai: 1983), 577.
- 21 *The Sacred Books of China: The Texts of Confucianism, Part III, The Li Ki, I–X*, trans. James Legge (reprint, 1968; Oxford: 1885), 124.
- 22 I exclude here those Ming officials who immediately took office under the Qing, since these were men for whom ideological legitimacy was not the primary concern.
- 23 For a more detailed argument, see Hay, "The Suspension of Dynastic Time."
- 24 *The Sacred Books of China*, 167.
- 25 See Wang Sizhi 王思治 and Liu Fengyun 劉風雲, "On the Evolution of Anti-Qing Attitudes among Yimin in the Early Qing Period" 論清初遺民反清態度的轉變, *Ming Qing shi* 明清史, 5 (1989): 33–42. The Ming shi could be described as the Ming dynasty's official epitaph.
- 26 One example is Bada's relationship with Song Luo 宋學 (1634–1713) during the latter's tenure as governor of Jiangxi (see Wang, Barnhart, and Smith, *Master of the Lotus Garden*, 58–59, 120–23).
- 27 Quite different yet again was the conspicuous abandonment of restraint characterizing the paintings of certain wilderness artists, often proudly presented as madness (*chi* 癡), craziness (*kuang* 狂), or strangeness (*qi* 奇). Here there was a more radical displacement of experience. If *yimin* painting of this kind was heir to the transgressive tradition of late-Ming individualism, it also shared in wilderness painting's general commitment to the expression of "feelings for the former nation" (*guguo zhi qing* 故國之情).
- I wonder, though, whether in such lack of restraint there is not some echo of the alternative, Daoist ideological response to death as disorder (*luan* 亂). Whereas normative Confucian ritual aims at the restoration of order after the disorder that death represents, Daoist ritual restores order by embracing disorder.
- 28 Translation modified from that by Richard Barnhart in Wang, Barnhart, and Smith, *Master of the Lotus Garden*, 148, partly in the light of Hui-shu Lee's alternative translation in "The Fish Leaves of the Anwan Album: Bada Shanren's Journeys to a Landscape of the Past," *Ars Orientalis* 20 (1990): 69–85.
- 29 Wang, Barnhart, and Smith, *Master of the Lotus Garden*, 148.
- 30 *Ibid.*, 54.
- 31 For a more detailed reading of this fan, to which my own is heavily indebted, see *ibid.*, 160.
- 32 *Ibid.*, 125.
- 33 For a detailed discussion of Shitao's life down to 1692, see Hay, "Zhu Ruoji's Destinies," in *Shitao*, 83–111.
- 34 For a more detailed discussion of this process, see Hay, "The Acknowledgment of Origins," in *Shitao*, 112–43.