

# The Making of a Hero and a Villain: Southern Song Literati's Changing Perceptions of the Memoirs of Li Gang and Wang Boyan

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Li Gang 李綱 (1083–1140) and Wang Boyan 汪伯彥 (1069–1141) both served as chief councilor during the troubled early years of Zhao Gou's 趙構 (better known as Emperor Gaozong, 1107–1187, r. 1127–1162) reign. In recognition of their loyal service to the Song, the court conferred the same posthumous name, “Steadfast Loyalty” (Zhongding 忠定), upon both statesmen. What deserves our attention is the reversal in opinion regarding the historical reputations of the two men. Whereas the achievements of Li were commemorated in *Sichao mingchen yanxinglu* 四朝名臣言行錄 (The Records of the Words and Deeds of Illustrious Ministers at Four [Song] Courts), the biography of Wang was categorized among the “nefarious ministers” (*jianchen* 姦臣) in the *Songshi* 宋史. What explains the contrasting images of Li and Wang as shown in these two works?

Recent Western scholarship on Song historiography has identified the rationale behind the labeling of historical figures in different genres of historical writings as a legacy of the praise and blame tradition grounded in the *Chunqiu* 春秋. According to Naomi Standen and Richard L. Davis, the rise of moral historiography advocated by prominent historians like Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007–1072) and Sima Guang 司馬光 (1019–1086) played an important role in the emergence of Feng Dao 馮道 (882–954) as an icon of disloyalty in the eleventh century.<sup>1</sup> Feng Dao was a minister who “served four royal houses and ten sovereigns” (*shi sixing shijun* 事四姓十君) in the Five Dynasties.<sup>2</sup> Subsequent to the local turn of scholarly elites in the Southern Song, the scope

1 Richard L. Davis, trans., *Historical Records of the Five Dynasties* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 2004), lxxi–lxxiii, and Naomi Standen, *Unbounded Loyalty: Frontier Crossing in Liao China* (Honolulu: Univ. of Hawai'i Press, 2007), 59–62.

2 *Xin Wudai shi* 新五代史 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1976), 54.614. For a translation, see Davis, *Historical Records of the Five Dynasties*, 441.

of historical compilations expanded further beyond the lives and careers of “national” political figures like Feng Dao. More virtuous deeds of “local” elites, as Peter Bol has argued, were commemorated in different forms of local history compiled by local scholars from the Southern Song onwards. Such “a demonstrable increase in a variety of writings that remembered what was conceived of as the ‘local’ rather than the ‘national’” illustrates how the elite localist turn influenced Song historiography.<sup>3</sup> In his studies tracing how the notorious councilors Cai Jing 蔡京 (1047–1126) and Qin Gui 秦檜 (1090–1155) ultimately became exemplars of evil and how a late Northern Song university student Chen Dong 陳東 (1086–1127) eventually became a paragon of loyalty, Charles Hartman shows how the *daoxue* 道學 movement fostered the historiographical transformation of these men.<sup>4</sup> Building on the insights of the above works, this article aims to shed some light on the evolution of the historical reputations of Li Gang and Wang Boyan in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. In particular, it will focus on Southern Song literati’s changing perceptions of the three memoirs that the two men composed in the 1120s and 1130s.

In response to an edict in 1134/3 ordering former councilors to submit to the court summaries of their discussions with the emperor,<sup>5</sup> both Li Gang and Wang Boyan compiled their respective *Shizhenqi* 時政記 (Records of Current Governance). Li Gang also jotted down his experiences as chief councilor in a personal memoir, *Jiyan jintuizhi* 建炎進退志 (A Record of Advancement and Retirement during the Jiyan Period). Li composed this work on his own initiative, shortly after his dismissal as chief councilor in 1127. Hence this article starts with a brief discussion of how Li and Wang compiled the three memoirs that offer different narratives on the Southern Song restoration. It then examines how these texts were circulated and received among Southern Song literati in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The aim of this study is to show how

3 Peter K. Bol, “The Rise of Local History: History, Geography, and Culture in Southern Song and Yuan Wuzhou,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 61 (2001): 41.

4 Charles M. Hartman, “The Making of a Villain: Ch’in Kuei and Tao-hsueh,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 58 (1998): 59–146; Hartman, “A Textual History of Cai Jing’s Biography in the *Songshi*,” in *Emperor Huizong and Late Northern Song China: The Politics of Culture and the Culture of Politics*, ed. Patricia Buckley Ebrey and Maggie Bickford (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Asia Center, 2006), 517–64; and Charles M. Hartman and Cho-ying Li, “The Rehabilitation of Chen Dong,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 75 (2015): 77–159.

5 Xu Song 徐松 (1781–1848) et al., *Song huiyao jigao* 宋會要輯稿 (Beiping: Guoli Beiping tushuguan, 1936), “Zhiguan” 職官, 6.31 and Li Xinchuan 李心傳 (1166–1243), *Jiyan yilai xinian yaolu* 建炎以來繫年要錄 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2013), 74.1416. Dates in this article correspond to the Chinese lunar calendar. The years of the Song court calendar are converted into the corresponding Western year. Thus 1127/6/1 stands for the first day in the sixth month of the first year of the Jiyan reign period of Song Gaozong.

changing literati perceptions of the three memoirs shaped the historical reputations of the two men.

The central thesis of this article is that the divergence of the reputations of Li Gang and Wang Boyan—Li was glorified while Wang was vilified—can be traced back to the early thirteenth century, when, in their accounts of the Song restoration, Southern Song literati consciously adopted Li Gang's personal memoir while ignoring the two *Shizhengji* that he and Wang Boyan compiled. The fact that both *Shizhengji* were cited in mid-twelfth-century historical compilations suggests that the two accounts were then treated as equally authoritative. However, some scholars in the late twelfth century began to question the veracity of Wang Boyan's account. Around the same time, the descendants of Li Gang managed to have their ancestor's works circulated among scholars in Fujian who were affiliated with *daoxue*.

In general, the scholars who identified with Li were not only inclined to resent the northern Jurchen Jin who had driven the Song south but were also disappointed with autocratic councilors who brutally suppressed dissent. They supported the printing of Li Gang's works to help promote their agenda in relation to these two points. In particular, Li's personal memoir explicitly accused Wang Boyan and another councilor, Huang Qianshan 黃潛善 (?–1129), of using underhanded ways of thwarting his plans to re-conquer the north. To further promote their belief that persecution by the politically powerful was an important mark of moral worth, these *daoxue* scholars formulated a new narrative of the Song restoration by portraying Li as a victim of the evil plots of Wang: upright ministers like Li might have succeeded in re-conquering the north had they not been betrayed by treacherous ministers such as Wang.

To accomplish this, they not only discounted Wang's *Shizhengji* but also gave less weight to Li's, which is more neutral in tone relative to his personal memoir. First, through their willful articulation of Li's explicit denunciation of his political adversaries, which had originated from his personal memoir, *daoxue* historians disparaged Wang's contributions and writings in their new narratives of the Song restoration. Second, they glorified Li's achievements and elevated his reputation so that he was celebrated as an "illustrious minister" (*mingchen* 名臣). In the fourteenth-century *Songshi*, under the influence of *daoxue* historiography, Wang Boyan was ultimately labeled as a "nefarious minister" next to Cai Jing and Qin Gui.

## The Two Memoirs of Li Gang

After Zhao Gou acceded to the throne, he summoned Li Gang back to the court and appointed him Chief Councilor of the Right on 1127/6/1.<sup>6</sup> Li Gang was a war hero who had successfully defended the city of Kaifeng a year earlier. During his tenure as chief councilor, he advocated for harsh punishments not only for Zhang Bangchang 張邦昌 (1081–1127), a former Song chief councilor who was chosen by the Jurchen as the puppet emperor of the Da Chu 大楚 regime, but also for Zhang's followers. With the aim of speedily ousting the Jurchen from former Song territories in the north, Li also recommended that Zhang Suo 張所 (?–1127) should enlist rebels against Jurchen rule in Hebei 河北, and that Fu Liang 傅亮 should prepare to take back Hedong 河東.<sup>7</sup> As part of his ambitious schemes to retake the north, Li even suggested relocating the court to Xiangyang 襄陽 (modern-day Hubei), where expeditions against the Jurchen could be based. However, Gaozong did not consistently support Li's initiatives. Li, therefore, tendered his resignation and requested a sinecure position. The court approved Li's request, which ended his extremely short seventy-five-day tenure as chief councilor.<sup>8</sup> On 1127/8/18, the court issued an edict to Li Gang, in which more than ten of Li's misdeeds are spelled out, and reappointed him to a sinecure position.

Soon after Li stepped down from the chief councilorship, a censor named Zhang Jun 張浚 (1097–1164), who would become chief councilor in the 1130s,<sup>9</sup> accused Li of blocking communication channels, overtaxing the general populace, and shielding his relatives from legal investigations.<sup>10</sup> Without confirming

6 Wang Ruilai 王瑞來, ed., *Song zaifu biannianlu jiaobu* 宋宰輔編年錄校補 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1986), 14.890.

7 Li Gang, *Jianyan jintuizhi* 建炎進退志, 2.63–64. The edition of this work that I refer to is a punctuated edition incorporated into the notebook collection *Quan Song biji* 全宋筆記. See Li Gang, *Jianyan jintuizhi*, in *Quan Song biji*, Ser. 3, Vol. 5, ed. Zhu Yi'an 朱易安 et al. (Zhengzhou: Daxiang chubanshe, 2008), 47–98. All page numbers of the *Jianyan jintuizhi* quoted in this article, unless otherwise specified, refer to this *Quan Song biji* edition.

8 Among the 71 chief councilors in the Northern Song, only Zhang Bangchang, who served in the post between 1126/1/29 and 1126/3/28 (around 60 days) had a tenure shorter than Li Gang's. See *Songshi* 宋史 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1977), 212.5531 and Li Yumin 李裕民, "Liang Song zaixiang qunti yanjiu" 兩宋宰相群體研究, in *Songshi kaolun* 宋史考論, ed. Li Yumin (Beijing: Kexue chubanshe, 2008), 35–44.

9 Zhang served as chief councilor between 1135/2 and 1137/9. See *Songshi*, 213.5554–55.

10 Yan Yongcheng 燕永成, ed., *Zhongxing liangchao biannian gangmu* 中興兩朝編年綱目 (Nanjing: Fenghuang chubanshe, 2018), 1.21–22. Recent studies have confirmed Chen Jun's 陳均 (1174–1244) authorship of this work (see pp. 1–6 in the preface by Yan Yongcheng). See also Charles M. Hartman, "Chen Jun's Outline and Details: Printing and Politics in

the veracity of the accusations, the court had Li punished and detained in Ezhou 鄂州. Li then took the water passage from his hometown, Wuxi 無錫, to his destination Ezhou. However, rampant banditry along the Yangzi River disrupted his journey. This forced Li to temporarily stay in a Buddhist monastery in Songyang 崇陽 county, where he had time to rework the diaries he wrote during his tenure as chief councilor. He started to recall how the emperor had entrusted him with state affairs and how he had been removed from office because of the slander he had faced. Lamenting the recent relocation of the Song court and the social unrest along the Yellow and Yangzi Rivers associated with the Jurchen pillaging, Li decided to record the events connected to his promotion to and demotion from the post of chief councilor in mid-1127. This chronologically arranged memoir, *Jiyanan jintuizhi*, was completed in 1128/10. Besides describing the background of his compilation of this work, as discussed above, Li, in a postscript dated 1128/10/20, also explained the memoir's structure and the materials incorporated into it:

I have selected the chief events from the period of my advancement [to the court] and my retirement and have presented a comprehensive account of these events. [These are] arranged in chronological order, adding decrees, edicts, letters, and memorials in an appendix, in a combined ten fascicles that I have entitled *Record of Advancement and Retirement during the Jiyanan Period*, in hopes of providing readers with materials for their investigations. As for suggestions from officials, requests from the four corners, the promotion and demotion of talents, and policy reforms, officials at the Institute of History will naturally write about them, so I shall not record them here again.

取進退之大概，次第而總敘之，與夫制誥、詔命、書疏、表劄，編纂附著，合為十卷，目之曰《建炎進退志》，庶幾覽者有所考焉。至於臣僚之所建明，四方之所陳請，陟降人材，改革政事，自有史官書之，此不復錄。<sup>11</sup>

Several years after Li Gang had completed his personal memoir, he received an edict from the court ordering him to compile a *Record of Current Governance* (*Shizhenji*). Following the historiographical practice of the Tang period, each

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Thirteenth-Century Pedagogical Histories," in *Knowledge and Text Production in an Age of Print: China, 900–1400*, ed. Lucille Chia and Hilde De Weerd (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 273–315, particularly p. 307.

11 Li Gang, *Jiyanan jintuizhi*, 4.97.

of these records was intended to be a monthly administrative summary compiled by individual members of the Secretariat Chancellery (Zhongshu menxia 中書門下). After each *Shizhengji* was submitted to the throne, the Institute of History would extract information from the texts to compile official historical works such as veritable records (*shilu* 實錄) and state histories (*guoshi* 國史).<sup>12</sup> However, due to political contingencies in the early Southern Song, officials were often delayed in submitting the records, or even failed to submit them entirely. Emperor Gaozong hence issued a decree on 1134/3/18 ordering former councilors to submit their respective records for the period from 1127/5/1 to 1130/4/1.<sup>13</sup>

Upon receipt of the edict, Li Gang managed to swiftly compile his *Shizhengji*, likely based on a reworking of the personal memoir, *Jiyanan jintuizhi*, that he had completed earlier. He finished a roughly two-volume memoir in approximately half a year and submitted it to the court by the early winter of 1134. In the preface to his *Shizhengji*, Li Gang first expressed his gratitude for the emperor's forgiveness, which preserved his life after his demotion and banishment in 1127. He then recalled the difficulties that he had encountered in the compilation of this record:

Now I receive an imperial edict that orders me to trace and record past events and compile them into a book for transmission to the officials in the Institute of History. Because I have suffered sorrow and disaster, have been beset by decrepitude and illness, unsettled in mind and resolve, inept and unsuccessful in my actions, and have repeatedly encountered robbers and rebels, my documents have been dispersed and, although I pressed my memory with the utmost effort, I have not been able to record

12 See Charles Hartman and Anthony DeBlasi, "The Growth of Historical Method in Tang China," in *The Oxford History of Historical Writing, Volume 2, 400–1400*, ed. Sarah Foot and Chase F. Robinson (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2012), 24 and Denis C. Twitchett, *The Writing of Official History under the Tang* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1992), 35–38 for the Tang historiographical practice. For detailed discussions of the historiographical operations in the Song court, see Wang Sheng'en 王盛恩, *Songdai guanfang shixue yanjiu* 宋代官方史學研究 (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2008); Sung Chia-fu, "The Official Historiographical Operation of the Song Dynasty," *Journal of Song-Yuan Studies* 45 (2015): 175–206; and for a brief discussion in English, see Charles Hartman, *The Making of Song Dynasty History: Sources and Narratives, 960–1279 CE* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2021), 4–10. Regarding the compilation of the various *Shizhengji* in the Song period, see Cai Chongbang 蔡崇榜, *Songdai xiushi zhidu yanjiu* 宋代修史制度研究 (Taipei: Wenjin chubanshe, 1991), 27–37. Li Gang's *Shizhengji* is the only such *Shizhengji* of the Song period that survives intact.

13 *Song huiyao jigao*, "Zhiguan," 6.31; *Jiyanan yilai xinian yaolu*, 74.1416.

even ten or twenty percent [of the events during my tenure]. As for the moments when I served you, the pure and enlightened emperor, I personally received your imperial instructions and orders. These moments are deeply engraved in my heart and internal organs. How dare I forget about them? I solemnly recall what I heard from you, sage emperor, the policies that you implemented, and a broad outline of the rewards, punishments, demotions, and promotions during the period when I served as chief councilor and write them down on sheets of paper. As for dates that I cannot remember, I leave them blank so that both truths and doubts can be transmitted. I solemnly transcribe them into two volumes and presumptuously submit them to you for your nighttime reading. You can then decide whether to hand them down to the Institute of History for selection.

今者又奉詔旨，俾追記往事，編錄成書，將以付之太史氏。顧臣自經憂患，衰病交攻，心志不寧，動輒廢失，屢遭盜賊，文籍散亡，極意追思，曾不能省記十之一二。至於日侍清光，親承訓勅，則銘鏤心腑，豈敢弭忘。謹以省記到昨任宰相日所得聖語、所行政事、賞刑黜陟之大略著於篇。至於日辰，有不能省記，則闕之，庶幾信以傳信、疑以傳疑之意。謹繕寫成上下兩冊，冒昧投進，以塵乙夜之覽，宣付史館，備采擇焉。<sup>14</sup>

Li's initial submission of the record was rejected as there were new instructions from the court ordering the deletion of routine matters. He therefore revised his work by supplementing it with more than twenty documents, such as his earlier policy propositions and memorials requesting for resignation. He then resubmitted his compilation to the court in 1135/3.<sup>15</sup> The fact that Gaozong once told his ministers that Li Gang's narratives in his *Shizhengji* "are entirely substantial" 皆是實事<sup>16</sup> suggests that he was satisfied with the veracity of Li's revised account. The emperor then ordered the work to be transferred to the Institute of History.<sup>17</sup>

Consisting of roughly 23,000 characters in four *juan*, the received edition of Li's *Jiyan jintuizhi* is slightly longer than his *Shizhengji*, which has about

14 Li Gang, "Jiyan shizhengji xu" 建炎時政記序, in *Quan Song wen* 全宋文, ed. Zeng Zaozhuang 曾棗莊 and Liu Lin 劉琳 (Shanghai: Shanghai cishu chubanshe, 2006), 172:3748.28–29.

15 Li Gang, "Yu Zhao xianggong shu biefu" 與趙相公書別幅, in *Quan Song wen*, 171:3738.201.

16 *Jiyan yilai xinian yaolu*, 87.1665.

17 *Song huiyao jigao*, "Zhiguan," 6.31.

17,000 characters in three *juan*. Despite the difference in length, both records have a similar coverage in terms of the events articulated, though one provides more detail than the other in certain parts. The *Jianyan jintuizhi* gives a comprehensive account of Li Gang's interactions with Emperor Gaozong and court officials, as well as the rationale behind his policy recommendations (such as dispatching his political allies Zhang Suo and Fu Liang to Hebei and Hedong). By contrast, the *Shizhengji* incorporates lengthy edicts that Gaozong issued and records the appointments and demotions of major court officials. To better understand the rhetoric that Li used in the two works and the messages that he tried to convey to the intended audience, I will briefly compare how Li narrated the oppositions to the plans of Zhang Suo and Fu Liang in the two records.

### Zhang Suo's Plan

In both records, Li Gang recalled that his ally Zhang Suo had once proposed establishing a Recruitment and Pacification Bureau (*zhaofusi* 招撫司) in the northern capital of Daming 大名 prefecture to facilitate the recruitment of bandits and rebels in Hebei. However, Zhang Yiqian 張益謙, a fiscal intendant (*zhuanyunshi* 轉運使) and the acting prefect of Daming, opposed Zhang Suo's plan on the grounds that it would cause great disturbances in Daming. Instead of establishing a new bureau in Daming, Zhang Yiqian suggested entrusting the task of recruitment to the military intendant of the Hebei circuit. Before elaborating on his response to Zhang Yiqian's memorial, Li speculated on the reason behind Zhang's move in his *Jianyan jintuizhi*:

This is all because Zhang Que had long served as the chief fiscal intendant of Hebei and befriended [Zhang] Yiqian. Holding me responsible for thwarting his promotion to councilor, [Zhang] Que collaborated with [Huang] Qianshan and [Wang] Boyan to devise a plot against me. They prompted [Zhang] Yiqian to prepare this memorial to thwart Zhang Suo and to deceive the emperor.

蓋張愨久為河北都運，與益謙善。愨以余嘗沮其執政，故附潛善、伯彥，相與謀，使益謙為此奏，以沮張所而惑上意也。<sup>18</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Li Gang, *Jianyan jintuizhi*, 4.90.



Li Gang considered Zhang Yiqian's denunciation of Zhang Suo's plan in Hebei to be a conspiracy against him that could be attributed to the disgruntled local official Zhang Que. Zhang Que's hatred of Li owed much to Li's objection to his promotion. Seeking a chance for revenge against Li, Zhang Que—with the support of his superiors, Wang Boyan and Huang Qianshan—prompted his friend Zhang Yiqian to discredit Zhang Suo. It is worth noting that the above judgmental remark on the clique of Huang Qianshan and Wang Boyan appears only in Li's *Jianyan jintuizhi*—not in his *Shizhengji*. To defend Zhang Suo's plan, Li submitted a memorial to refute Zhang Yiqian's accusations by elaborating on the unreasonableness of Zhang's arguments. After Li submitted this memorial, the emperor issued an edict instructing Zhang to establish the Recruitment and Pacification Bureau as planned. Li incorporated both his rebuttal and the emperor's instruction into both of his records.

In his *Shizhengji*, Li Gang ends the narrative of the Zhang Suo episode by quoting the emperor's endorsement of Zhang's proposition. However, in the *Jianyan jintuizhi*, he continued to depict how desperate Wang Boyan and his cronies were in thwarting Zhang's plan. We are told that Wang, then the Administrator of the Bureau of Military Affairs (*zhi shumiyuan shi* 知樞密院事), and his subordinate Zhang Que resubmitted the memorial of Zhang Yiqian to the emperor and successfully persuaded the throne to revert his earlier decision. Another edict, comprising over a thousand characters and denouncing the establishment of the Recruitment and Pacification Bureau, was then issued. In turn, officials in the northern capital were ordered to promulgate this edict across different prefectures and counties. Li Gang recalled that he only became aware of the emperor's change of mind when the edict reached the Department of Ministries (*Shangshusheng* 尚書省). He then submitted the two contrasting imperial instructions to Gaozong and “confronted Wang Boyan and Zhang Que in front of the emperor” 與伯彥、慤爭於上前.<sup>19</sup> Li's challenging of the two men is vividly depicted in his *Jianyan jintuizhi*; he asserts that the Bureau of Military Affairs should not have sought another edict since the emperor had already given instructions to the Department of Ministries. Li then accuses the chiefs of the bureau of “harboring personal grudges and harming public good” 挾私害公.<sup>20</sup> According to Li, “[Wang] Boyan and [Zhang] Que failed to respond” 伯彥、慤無以對 to his indictment.<sup>21</sup> Gaozong then ordered the bureau to amend the edict and follow the earlier instructions issued to the

19 Ibid., 4.90.

20 Ibid., 4.91.

21 Ibid., 4.91.

Department of Ministries. What deserves our attention here is that Li Gang only mentions his dispute with Wang as well as his denunciation of Wang's self-serving and devious move in the *Jianyan jintuizhi*. He does not mention it in his *Shizhengji*.

### Fu Liang's Plan

Although Li Gang managed to convince the emperor to endorse Zhang Suo's plan, his efforts to defend his political ally Fu Liang were less successful. Being the deputy finance commissioner (*jingzhi fushi* 經制副使) of Hedong,<sup>22</sup> Fu requested the establishment of a military base in Shanzhou 陝州, where he could train his troops and recruit regular soldiers and bowmen. Awaiting an opportunity to retake prefectures that were in the hands of the Jurchen, such as Hezhong 河中, Xiezhou 解州, and Heyang 河陽, after crossing the Yellow River and launching a northern expedition, Fu had been able to contact Song loyalists in Hedong. The Song court approved Fu's request at first, allowing him to recruit and gather troops in Shanzhou and to cross the Yellow River when he felt ready. However, this directive was soon overturned, as the court issued another edict urging Fu to cross the Yellow River immediately. Considering the new order impractical, Li sent word to the throne to point out that the troops in Shanzhou were not ready for battle. Should these unprepared troops be forced to cross the river, they would be easily defeated. The Song court would then lack the military power to retake Hedong. However, Li's proposition failed to persuade the other court ministers, as he recalled in his *Jianyan jintuizhi*:

Both [Huang] Qianshan and [Wang] Boyan said that should [the Song troops] not be forced to cross the river swiftly, they would miss an opportunity [to retake Hedong]. Officials like [Fu] Liang just hoped to linger.

潛善、伯彥皆謂不使之亟渡河，且失機會。如亮等但欲逗遛耳。<sup>23</sup>

In his *Shizhengji*, Li omitted Wang Boyan's name:

<sup>22</sup> *Jianyan yilai xinian yaolu*, 7.197.

<sup>23</sup> Li Gang, *Jianyan jintuizhi*, 4.92.

Huang Qianshan said that [the Song troops] lingered and did not move forward. As a result, they missed an opportunity [to retake Hedong].

黃潛善謂逗遛不進，致失機會。<sup>24</sup>

In both records, Li Gang recalled how he had refuted the accusations against Fu Liang, claiming that Fu had just received the command a few days earlier to establish a base in Shanzhou. Since Fu was still on his way to Shanzhou, he should not be considered to be lingering. Instead of urging Fu Liang to cross the river, Li requested that the emperor stick to the original plan and allow Fu to remain stationed in Shanzhou to recruit and train troops. We are told that the court took days to come to a decision. Li Gang blamed Huang Qianshan and Wang Boyan for the court's ambivalence. This charge appears only in his *Jiyanan jintuizhi*: "The emperor was misled because of the insistence of [Huang] Qianshan and [Wang] Boyan" 上以潛善、伯彥執議，聖意頗惑。<sup>25</sup> Urging Gaozong to quickly make up his mind, Li Gang stayed behind and had the following conversation with the emperor:

[Huang] Qianshan and [Wang Boyan] did their utmost to hamper Zhang Suo at the beginning. Only your sagacious consideration and scrutiny prevented them from indulging their every whim. They also did their utmost to thwart Fu Liang. This is all because I, your subject, suggested [sending Fu Liang and Zhang Suo, respectively, to] enlist rebels in Hebei and to oversee the administration in Hedong, and because I recommended Fu and Zhang. Forcefully impeding the two men is merely an attempt to frustrate me so that I feel uneasy in performing my duties. Having learned a lesson from the mistakes driven by discord among officials of the Jingkang era, I discuss every matter with Qianshan and Boyan before taking action. Yet to my surprise, the two men still scheme to slander me in such a way.

潛善、伯彥始極力以沮張所，賴聖度鑒察，不得行其志。又極力以沮傅亮。蓋招撫河北、經制河東，皆臣所建明，而張所、傅亮又臣所薦用。力沮二人，乃所以沮臣，使不安其職。臣每鑒靖康大臣不和之失，凡事未嘗不與潛善、伯彥商議而後行，不謂二人乃設心如此。<sup>26</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Li Gang, *Jiyanan shizhengji*, 3.140, in *Quan Song biji*, Ser. 3, Vol. 5, 99–142.

<sup>25</sup> Li Gang, *Jiyanan jintuizhi*, 4.92.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

In the above dialogue, Li Gang accused Huang Qianshan and Wang Boyan of ousting him from power by thwarting the proposals of his supporters. Such an explicit criticism against the two men appears only in Li's *Jianyan jintuizhi*. Gaozong verbally reassured Li that he would stick to the original plan and instruct Fu Liang to establish a base in Shanzhou. However, the opposite occurred. One day after the above conversation took place, Gaozong issued the following edict, which Li Gang quoted in both of his records: "Since Fu Liang does not have many troops, he should not cross the river. Additionally, he should be removed from the post of deputy finance commissioner" 傅亮兵少，不可渡河，可罷經制副使。<sup>27</sup> What explains Gaozong's sudden change of mind? In his *Jianyan jintuizhi*, Li Gang speculated that "it was because of Huang Qianshan, who stayed behind and secretly memorialized the throne" 蓋潛善留身密啟之也。<sup>28</sup> Feeling that the emperor had lost all faith in him, Li Gang repeatedly requested to step down from the chief councilorship. On 1127/8/18, the court issued an edict to Li Gang and reappointed him to a sinecure position. This edict also lists more than ten of Li's misdeeds, all of which, according to his personal memoir, "were given to the Secretariat drafters secretly by [Huang] Qianshan" 潛善密以付詞臣 for composition.<sup>29</sup>

### Differences between Li Gang's Two Records

The above comparison of how Li Gang, in his two records, narrated the events connected to his resignation shows that Li refrained from criticizing Huang Qianshan and Wang Boyan in the *Shizhengji*, but explicitly accused the two men of thwarting his plans to retake Hebei and Hedong in the *Jianyan jintuizhi*. In fact, Li clearly delineated in the latter how the two men were at odds with him on a number of issues.<sup>30</sup> Regarding where the court should be temporarily relocated, Li suggested moving it to Nanyang 南陽, whereas Huang and Wang proposed moving it to the southeast.<sup>31</sup> Regarding the punishment for Li Zhuo 李擢 (?–1153), whose carelessness in the defense of Kaifeng led to the fall of the capital city, Huang proposed lenient treatment, whereas Li

27 Li Gang, *Jianyan shizhengji*, 3.140. See also Li Gang, *Jianyan jintuizhi*, 4.93.

28 Li Gang, *Jianyan jintuizhi*, 4.93.

29 *Ibid.*, 4.96.

30 For a study of the relationship between Li Gang and his competitors Huang Qianshan and Wang Boyan, see Bai Xiaoxia 白曉霞, *Nan Song chunian mingxiang yanjiu* 南宋初年名相研究 (Guangzhou: Jinan daxue chubanshe, 2012), 80–87.

31 Li Gang, *Jianyan jintuizhi*, 4.85–87.

Gang advocated a harsh penalty.<sup>32</sup> On 1127/8/5, Li was appointed Chief Councilor of the Left, while Huang Qianshan was promoted to Chief Councilor of the Right. Soon, some officials who had close ties to or enjoyed the patronage of Li Gang came under attack. As Li elaborated in his *Jianyan jintuizhi*, Huang first criticized Weng Yanguo 翁彥國 (?–1127), an official who had ties to Li Gang through marriage, for bringing social unrest when the latter was overseeing the construction and renovation of palaces in the southeast. Huang then joined Wang Boyan to thwart the proposals of Zhang Suo and Fu Liang. Li perceived these moves as Huang's means for consolidating power and curbing Li's political influence, ultimately leading to his demotion and banishment. In narrating his disputes with Huang Qianshan and Wang Boyan in his *Jianyan jintuizhi*, Li Gang adopted a more personal and judgmental tone. From the above account of how Li argued with Wang about Zhang Suo's plan, we can see that Li presented himself as an upright and sensible gentleman fighting for the public good while depicting Wang as an unreasonable "petty man" exploiting administrative loopholes to harm the public interest.

In contrast, Li exercised great restraint in not conveying his own emotions in his narratives in his *Shizhengji*. Here we cannot find any trace of Li Gang's dissatisfaction about Huang Qianshan and Wang Boyan, nor any blame for his misfortune on Huang and Wang. The relative obscurity of Li's political adversaries in the *Shizhengji* is attested by the fact that Huang's name only appears seven times and Wang's appears only three times, while Li's name appears thirty-seven times and Li's fourteen times in the *Jianyan jintuizhi*. Why did Li Gang refrain from criticizing Wang Boyan in his *Shizhengji*? It owes partly to a rapprochement between the two men in the mid-1130s. By the time Li had received the imperial command to compile his *Shizhengji*, he was already residing in Changle 長樂 county in Fuzhou 福州, where he had assumed a sinecure position. In an 1134 letter to his friend Li Guang 李光 (1078–1159), Li Gang mentions that many scholar-officials, including his former political opponents Wang Boyan and Zhang Jun, had visited him.<sup>33</sup> The former passed by Fuzhou, likely on his way back to his hometown, Huizhou 徽州, after he stepped down from the position of military intendant (*anfushi* 安撫使) of Guangzhou 廣州 in 1132/12.<sup>34</sup> The latter had been banished to Fuzhou in 1134/6 following his military failure in Sichuan.<sup>35</sup> Apart from inviting the two men for

32 Ibid., 4.87–88.

33 Li Gang, "Yu Li Taifa duanming shu" 與李泰發端明書, in *Quan Song wen*, 171:3737.190.

34 *Jianyan yilai xinian yaolu*, 61.1217.

35 Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130–1200), "Shaoshi baoxinjun jiedushi Weiguogong zhishi zeng taibao

banquets, Li Gang also exchanged poems with them.<sup>36</sup> Many scholar-officials were delighted to see heavy rains in Fuzhou in 1134/7 after seasons of drought. Expecting a bumper harvest in the following year, they composed poems to express their happiness and optimism and exchanged these with their peers. To show how pleased he was, Li composed two poems matching the rhymes and order (*ciyun* 次韻) of an earlier work by Wang Boyan.<sup>37</sup> Frequent interactions between Li Gang and Wang Boyan in Fuzhou suggest that the two men were not on bad terms in 1134, despite Li's fierce disparagement of Wang in his personal memoir written a few years earlier. The two men likely continued to have good rapport with each other for the rest of their lives, as evidenced in their epistolary exchanges as late as 1139.<sup>38</sup>

Another possible explanation for Li's not having included his criticisms against his political opponents like Huang Qianshan and Wang Boyan in his *Shizhengji* is that this work was meant to be submitted to the Institute of History for incorporation into official historical compilations. As such, it had to be more neutral and factual. Moreover, by omitting his confrontation with Wang, Li portrayed himself as a gentleman (*junzi* 君子) who, according to the famous Confucian dictum, "is conscious of his own superiority without being contentious" 君子矜而不爭.<sup>39</sup> He also wished to leave an image for posterity that showed senior court ministers under Gaozong's early reign working in harmony even though they did not share the same views.

In addition to submitting *Shizhengji* to the throne, Li Gang also shared it with his contemporaries. A close examination of all extant writings of Li Gang reveals that he sent copies of *Shizhengji*, with his approximately twenty memorials elaborating on policy proposals or requesting resignation, to at least three of his old colleagues in the early Southern Song court. First, around the same time Li submitted his *Shizhengji* to the court, he sent a letter, a copy of the *Shizhengji*, and his memorials to Zhao Ding 趙鼎 (1085–1147), who had recently

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Zhang gong xingzhuang shangzhixia" 少師保信軍節度使魏國公致仕贈太保張公行狀上之下, in *Quan Song wen*, 252:5663.212.

36 Li Gang, "Yu Li Taifa duanming di'er shu" 與李泰發端明第二書, in *Quan Song wen*, 171:3737.191–92.

37 For poems of Li Gang to Wang Boyan, see Li Gang, "Wang Tingjun jianshi xiyu hepian ciyun dazhi ershou" 汪廷俊見示喜雨和篇次韻答之二首 and "Ciyun Tingjun ji yaopu xiaoji jianzeng zhizuo" 次韻廷俊紀藥圃小集見贈之作, in *Quan Song shi* 全宋詩, ed. Fu Xuancong 傅璇琮 et al. (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 1991–1998), 27:1569.17803 and 1570.17816.

38 Li Gang, "Hui Wang xianggong qi" 回汪相公啓, in *Quan Song wen*, 171:3745.320–21.

39 D.C. Lau, trans., *The Analects* (Hong Kong: Chinese Univ. Press, 2004), 154–55.

been appointed chief councilor in 1135/2.<sup>40</sup> Zhao had served as acting assistant officer in the Ministry of Finance (*quan hubu yuanwailang* 權戶部員外郎) in mid-1127,<sup>41</sup> soon after Gaozong's accession. Li asked him to read his memoir at his leisure so that Zhao could gain "a brief understanding of the personnel arrangements and matters that deserved particular attention at the time [when the Southern Song had just been restored]" 見當時備員措意之梗概也.<sup>42</sup> It seems that Zhao Ding perceived Li's earlier removal from the chief councilorship as a misfortune upon reading the latter's record. In response to the emperor's affirmative remarks regarding Li Gang's *Shizhengji* quoted above, Zhao commented that Li Gang's "talent surpasses ordinary men. Yet many of his subordinates whom he had recruited earlier were impetuous young scholars. As a result, he was ensnared" 才氣過人，但向辟屬官，多少年浮躁之士，致有所累耳。<sup>43</sup> Even though Zhao held Li's talent in high regard, he had reservations about Li's ability to perform the role of chief councilor. He once told a friend that Li could not offer much help with state affairs—even if he were appointed to the top administrative post.<sup>44</sup>

Second, Li sent his *Shizhengji* and memorials to another former colleague, Pan Lianggui 潘良貴 (1094–1150), who had briefly served as the right policy critic (*you sijian* 右司諫) when Li was the chief councilor in 1127.<sup>45</sup> Fearing that Pan "at that time had arrived in the temporary court in haste and hence did not know the entirety of the situation" 當時到行朝倉卒，不知本末，<sup>46</sup> Li sent him his materials with a letter, hoping that Pan could thus gain a better understanding of what had happened.

Third, Li conveyed a similar letter and the same materials to the investigating censor (*jiancha yushi* 監察御史) Ren Shenxian 任申先. On Li's recommendation, Ren Shenxian had been admitted to the Song civil service in early 1126.<sup>47</sup> For unknown reasons, Li specifically reminded Ren "not to show [these materials] to the wrong people" 勿示非其人。<sup>48</sup> Li had not articulated this request

40 See Xu Ziming, *Song zaifu biannianlu jiaobu*, 15.1002; see also *Jianyan yilai xinian yaolu*, 85.1614 and *Songshi*, 213.5554.

41 For Zhao Ding's appointment in 1127, see *Songshi*, 360.11286.

42 Li Gang, "Yu Zhao xianggong shu biefu," in *Quan Song wen*, 171:3738.201.

43 *Jianyan yilai xinian yaolu*, 87.1665.

44 *Jianyan yilai xinian yaolu*, 142.2686.

45 *Ibid.*, 7.204 and 8.225.

46 Li Gang, "Yu Pan Zijian longtu shu" 與潘子賤龍圖書, in *Quan Song wen*, 171:3737.189.

47 Ren Shenxian was recommended by Li Gang earlier in 1126; see Wang Mingqing 王明清 (1127–c. 1214), *Huizhu lu* 揮塵錄 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1961), *houlu yuhua* 後錄餘話 1.267, and *Jianyan yilai xinian yaolu*, 89.1711.

48 Li Gang, "Yu Ren Shichu chayuan shu" 與任世初察院書, in *Quan Song wen*, 171:3738.197.

in his letters to Zhao Ding and Pan Lianggui. Due to the scarcity of relevant sources, we cannot discern how Pan Lianggui and Ren Shichu received Li's memoir. Likewise, we do not know how widely Li Gang's *Shizhengji* circulated among his contemporaries in the early Southern Song.

As Li Gang emphasized in his letters, he hoped his contemporaries upon reading his *Shizhengji* would have a better understanding of what had happened in the Song court during his tenure as chief councilor. Clearly, his intention was to help them—particularly those in the Imperial Library and the Institute of History—to recall his contributions to the Southern Song restoration and to show that he was not to be blamed for some of the wrongdoings of the early Southern Song court. It may not have been Li Gang's intention to seek political rehabilitation through the circulation and submission of his *Shizhengji*. However, on the recommendation of Chief Councilors Zhang Jun and Zhao Ding, Li was summoned back from a sinecure position and entrusted with the important task of serving as Pacification and Military Commissioner of the Jiangnan West circuit (*Jiangnan xilu anfu zhizhi dashi* 江南西路安撫制置大使) in 1135/10. This summoning back to office occurred approximately half a year after his submission of the *Shizhengji*. This fact somehow suggests that Li's efforts to forge a positive image of himself may have paid off.<sup>49</sup> After spending nearly two years in Jiangnan West circuit, Li received another sinecure appointment in 1137/+10.<sup>50</sup> This owed much to Gaozong's inclination toward appeasing the Jurchen after the mutiny of Li Qiong 酈瓊 (1104–1153) in 1137/8, which led to the removal of hawkish chief councilor Zhang Jun in 1137/9 and the rise of Qin Gui in 1138/3.<sup>51</sup> Since Gaozong considered reaching a peace accord with the Jin the top item on his political agenda, it is not hard to understand why he chose not to re-appoint the hawkish Li Gang to lead the government. At the time of Li's death in 1140/1, the Song court did not confer posthumous honor upon him. Likely, this was because praising his achievements in fighting against the Jurchen was potentially inconsistent with seeking a peaceful coexistence with the Jin.

Whereas Li generously shared the relatively neutral and impersonal *Shizhengji* with his friends, he hesitated to have his personal memoir, the *Jianyan jintuizhi*, spread widely among his contemporaries. The fact that this title only appears in the postscript to his personal memoir but is not mentioned in other extant writings of Li Gang suggests that Li had yet to mention it to his friends. The way in which Li denigrates his political opponents in the *Jianyan jintuizhi*,

49 *Jianyan yilai xinian yaolu*, 94.1801–2.

50 *Ibid.*, 116.2163.

51 *Songshi*, 213.5555–56.



I suspect, explains why Li was reluctant to circulate it, as it clearly undermines the gentlemanly image projected in his *Shizhengji*. By the time of his death in 1140, it is likely that only his family members had access to the *Jianyan jintuizhi*.

Southern Song literati in the thirteenth century categorized the two works in the same bibliographic category. For example, Zhao Xibing 趙希弁 (thirteenth century) listed both works under “Miscellaneous Histories” (*zashi* 雜史) while Wang Yinglin 王應麟 (1223–1296) listed the two works under “Records” (*jizhi* 記志).<sup>52</sup> Importantly, such a classification should not obscure the distinctions between the two works. In fact, Li Gang was clear that his two records would serve different purposes. The *Jianyan jintuizhi*, a work including more judgmental remarks, was a personal memoir that he did not intend to circulate during his own lifetime. By contrast, he exercised great restraint in producing the more impersonal *Shizhengji*, which circulated among some of his friends and was submitted to the court for future incorporation into the official histories. Obviously, Li hoped to project himself to be an upright minister who did not defame his political opponents.

### Wang Boyan and His *Shizhengji*

Like Li Gang, Wang Boyan also compiled a memoir in response to the edict in 1134/3 ordering each former councilor to submit to the court a *Shizhengji*.<sup>53</sup> A native of Qimen 祁門 county in modern Anhui, Wang, while serving as the prefect of Xiangzhou 相州 in late 1126, exhausted all efforts to protect Zhao Gou, then the Prince of Kang. Half a year after Zhao Gou acceded to the imperial throne, he promoted his faithful servant, Wang, to the position of co-administrator of the Bureau of Military Affairs (*tongzhi shumiyuan shi* 同知樞密院事). A year later, in 1128/12, Gaozong again promoted Wang, this time to chief councilor. The mutiny of Miao Fu 苗傅 (?–1129) abruptly ended Wang’s term in office.<sup>54</sup> By the time the imperial order of 1134/3 reached Wang, he was likely on a journey from Guangzhou to Huizhou.<sup>55</sup> Since neither the preface nor postscript of Wang’s *Shizhengji* survive today, the initial structure of this

52 See Zhao Xibing 趙希弁 (thirteenth cent.), *Dushu fuzhi* 讀書附志, in Chao Gongwu 晁公武, *Junzhai dushuzhi jiaozheng* 郡齋讀書志校證, ed. Sun Meng 孫猛 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1990), *shang*.1115, and Wang Yinglin 王應麟 (1223–1296), *Yuhai yiwén jiaozheng* 玉海藝文校證, ed. Wu Xiucheng 武秀成 and Zhao Shuyang 趙庶洋 (Nanjing: Fenghuang chubanshe, 2013), 23.1151.

53 *Song huiyao jigao*, “Zhiguan”, 6.31; *Jianyan yilai xinian yaolu*, 74.1416.

54 Xu Ziming, *Song zaifu biannianlu jiaobu*, 14.881, 911, and 914; *Songshi*, 473.13745–46.

55 *Jianyan yilai xinian yaolu*, 61.1217.

work as well as the background of its compilation remain unclear. What makes an analysis of this work even more difficult is that it did not survive intact. Fortunately, thanks to the efforts of Southern Song historians such as Xiong Ke 熊克 (ca. 1111–ca. 1189), Li Xinchuan 李心傳 (1166–1243), and Xu Mengxin 徐夢莘 (1126–1207), who extensively quoted Wang's *Shizhengji* in their own compilations, we can have a glimpse of the shape of the narrative that it presents.

Whereas Huang Qianshan and Wang Boyan are portrayed in a negative light in Li Gang's personal memoir, Wang's account underscores their sagacity. We are told that prior to the mutiny of Miao Fu in 1129/2, the two men had already recommended that Gaozong not send all his trusted subordinates away. Wang Boyan vividly depicts their warning in his *Shizhengji*:

Huang Qianshan and others said, "Your Majesty has already asked Zhu Shengfei (1082–1144), Zhang Jun, and Wang Yuan (1077–1129) to stay behind with the garrison in Pingjiang so that they are stationed in the northern part of Wu. If you dispatch [another general named] Zhang Jun<sup>56</sup> (1086–1154) [to Pingjiang], we, as your subjects, worry that the temporary residence of Your Majesty will [be protected] only by Miao Fu's troops. Not only is Miao Fu not reliable in emergencies but there is no one who can counterbalance him. This is extremely worrisome. We beg that you keep [general] Zhang Jun beside you so that the situation in the temporary residence will not turn into a disaster."

黃潛善等言：「陛下已留朱勝非、張浚、王淵在平江，居吳之北，若更差張俊去，臣等慮行在只有苗傅一軍，不惟緩急有警，傅不可倚仗，兼恐無以相制，可虞非常。乞留俊，庶幾行在不致誤事。」<sup>57</sup>

Apart from projecting himself as an official with foresight, Wang Boyan also stresses his adherence to the Way (*dao* 道) in his narrative of how Gaozong treated valuable imported objects made of glass and agate that had been transferred from the Inner Treasury in the former capital of Kaifeng. Considering that "playthings sap one's aspiration" 玩物喪志, the emperor ordered the destruction of such objects and explained to his councilors the rationale behind his move.<sup>58</sup> We are told that Wang Boyan said the following in response:

56 This Zhang Jun 張俊 should not be confused with the Zhang Jun 張浚 mentioned just above and discussed elsewhere in this article.

57 *Jianyan yilai xinian yaolu*, 20.464.

58 See Lu You, *Zhongxing shengzhengcao* 中興聖政草, in Appendix 4 of Kong Xue 孔學, *Huangsong zhongxing liangchao shengzheng jijiao* 皇宋中興兩朝聖政輯校 (Beijing:

Soon after Your Majesty's ascension, you managed to nourish your ambition through the Way and not to become ensnared by objects, [a virtue that even] your meritorious achievement in restoring the dynasty could hardly match.

陛下初即位，便能以道養志，不累於物，中興之功，不足致也。<sup>59</sup>

According to Wang Boyan, it is more important for the emperor to embrace the Way than to make political accomplishments. To fulfill such an ideal, one should not be distracted by sensuous luxuries. What Wang proposes here is strikingly similar to a famous dictum of Cheng Yi 程頤 (1033–1107), one of the founders of the *daoxue* movement in the eleventh century: “Once personal desires are eliminated, heavenly principle will be enlightened” 滅私欲則天理明.<sup>60</sup> By incorporating this dialogue with the emperor in his *Shizhengji*,<sup>61</sup> Wang Boyan hoped to remind readers that he had constantly reminded the emperor to adhere to the Way.

Besides submitting his record to the court, Wang Boyan had likely shared this text, which is composed of accounts highlighting his loyalty, sagacity, and foresight, with his contemporaries. A prolific scholar named Wang Zao 汪藻 (1079–1154) would have been among the possible readers of this work. In 1132/11, the court granted Wang Zao's request to compile a collection of edicts and decrees from 1100 to 1129.<sup>62</sup> Wang exhausted every possible means of soliciting materials to include in his collection. We are told:

[He] collected lost passages and made reference to public opinions. For people living several thousand *li* [away from the court] in Fujian and Sichuan and for people residing nearby in official residence or with host

Zhonghua shuju, 2019), 1580. See also *Huangchao zhongxing jishi benmo* 皇朝中興紀事本末 (Beijing: Beijing tushuguan chubanshe, 2005), 1b.58.

59 Quoted from *Huangchao zhongxing jishi benmo*, 1b.58–59. The translation is made with reference to Charles M. Hartman, “Lu You's *Draft Entries for the Sagacious Policies of the Restoration* (*Zhongxing shengzheng cao*),” *Asia Major* 3rd ser. 34:1 (2021): 47.

60 See *Henan Chengshiyishu* 河南程氏遺書, *juan* 24, in Cheng Yi and Cheng Hao, *Er Cheng ji* 二程集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1981), 312.

61 As Charles Hartman points out, Lu You has omitted Wang Boyan's conversation with Gaozong that immediately follows the narrative of the emperor's instruction to destroy the precious objects, an entry for which Lu acknowledges as sources the two *Shizhengji* by Li Gang and Wang Boyan; see Hartman, “Lu You's *Draft Entries*,” 47.

62 *Jiyan yan yilai xianian yaolu*, 60.1204–5.

families, [Wang Zao] either sent them official letters or exchanged private correspondence with them [to collect relevant sources]. Through his extensive efforts in acquisition, all materials from near and far reached him.

公蒐攬闕文，參稽衆論，遠至閩蜀數千里外，近在寓公寄客之家，或具公移，或通私書，旁搜博采，遠近畢至。<sup>63</sup>

It is likely that Wang Zao acquired copies of Wang Boyan's *Shizhengji* during the compilation process between 1132 and 1138.<sup>64</sup> The fact that three entries in Lu You's 陸游 (1125–1210) *Gaozong shengzheng* 高宗聖政 (Sagacious Policies of Emperor Gaozong) are culled from the records that Wang Zao and Wang Boyan produced suggests that there was a certain coherence between the two Wang's accounts.<sup>65</sup>

Close contact between Wang Zao and Wang Boyan persisted through the late 1130s. After the honorary title of Regional Commandant (*jiedushi* 節度使) was conferred upon Wang Boyan in 1139/6,<sup>66</sup> Wang Zao not only sent the former chief councilor a formal congratulatory greeting (*heqi* 賀啓) but also composed a poem matching the rhymes of Wang Boyan's earlier poem.<sup>67</sup> During his tenure as the prefect of Xuanzhou 宣州 between 1139/2 and 1140/5,<sup>68</sup> Wang Boyan built a studio named Huaxiu Hall 畫繡堂 in the vicinity of Lake Boyang 鄱陽湖 to prepare for his life in retirement. After the building was completed, Wang Boyan requested that Wang Zao compose a piece to commemorate the erection of the studio. The writer extolled the political achievements of Wang Boyan, who had “devised marvelous stratagems and secret plans to assist in the successful restoration” 出奇謀秘策以輔成中興之功.<sup>69</sup> As the first chief councilor of the Song dynasty that the Xin'an 新安 area had ever produced, Wang Boyan displayed “supreme loyalty [to the Song regime], remaining as steadfast as metal and stone” 精忠如金石.<sup>70</sup> Foreseeing that the veteran

63 Sun Di 孫覲 (1081–1169), “Song gu Xianmoge xueshi zuo taizhong dafu Wang jun muzhiming” 宋故顯謨閣學士左太中大夫汪君墓志銘, in *Quan Song wen*, 161:3488.15.

64 Wang finished compiling the record in 1138/11; see *Jianyan yilai xinian yaolu*, 123.2305.

65 See Lu You, *Zhongxing shengzhengcao*, 1577 and 1584–85.

66 *Jianyan yilai xinian yaolu*, 129.2424.

67 See Wang Zao, “He Wang xiang jianjie qi” 賀汪相建節啓, in *Quan Song wen*, 157:3383.218 and Wang Zao, “Ci Wang xiang yun” 次汪相韻, in *Quan Song shi*, 25:1435.16532.

68 The court approved Wang Boyan's request for a sinecure position in 1140/5. See *Jianyan yilai xinian yaolu*, 135.2518.

69 Wang Zao, “Huaxiu tang ji” 畫繡堂記, in *Quan Song wen*, 157:3385.246.

70 *Ibid.*

Wang Boyan, who was still as sharp as a fifty-year-old man although he was over seventy by then, would return to court for the third time, Wang Zao suggested that the former chief councilor formulate strategies to recover former Song territories in modern Shanxi and Shandong that were in the hands of the Jurchen and to escort Gaozong back to the capital of Kaifeng.<sup>71</sup> Such a sagacious image of Wang Boyan likely reflects the influence of his *Shizhengji* on Wang Zao. The popularity of Wang Zao's writings among his early Southern Song contemporaries,<sup>72</sup> I argue, helped promote Wang Boyan's image by painting the former chief councilor in a positive light. Even though Wang Boyan had been fiercely criticized for his poor governance by certain scholar-officials from the late 1120s onward,<sup>73</sup> he continued to enjoy much praise among some of his contemporaries—particularly those in the top echelon of the Song administration in the early 1140s. Gaozong's pro-appeasement attitude, his appreciation of Wang's allegiance and achievements, and Qin Gui's gratitude to his former teacher may all explain why Wang Boyan was credited with the posthumous name "Steadfast Loyalty" upon his death in 1141/5.<sup>74</sup>

### Reception of the Memoirs of Wang Boyan and Li Gang between the 1140s and 1240s

We have discussed the background of the three memoirs by Li Gang and Wang Boyan. How were these works received by the Southern Song literati upon the deaths of the two men? To what extent did the circulation of these works in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries help shape the two men's historical image? The remaining part of this article attempts to answer these two questions by investigating the circulation and reception of the three memoirs in the century between 1140s and 1240s.

As mentioned above, since Li Gang hesitated to share his personal memoir, *Jiyan jintuizhi*, with his contemporaries during his lifetime, only his fam-

71 Ibid., 157:3385,247.

72 Sun Di, "Fuxiji xu" 浮溪集序, in *Quan Song wen*, 160:3476.308. The Sichuan bibliophile Chao Gongwu saw a copy of Wang Zao's collected works; see Chao Gongwu, *Junzhai dushuzhi jiaozheng*, 19,1032.

73 See *Jiyan yilai xinian yaolu*, 20.469–70 and 21.510. For Hu Anguo's 胡安國 (1074–1138) criticism of Wang Boyan in 1131, see Hu Anguo, "Shizheng lun: heshi" 時政論覈實, in *Quan Song wen*, 146:3146.122–24.

74 *Jiyan yilai xinian yaolu*, 140.2639–40. Qin Gui was a student of Wang Boyan, see Xu Mengxin 徐夢莘 (1126–1207), *Sanchao beimeng huibian* 三朝北盟會編 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1987), 129.8a.

ily members had access to the work. In 1156, when Li Gang's younger brother, Li Lun 李綸, composed a biographical sketch of Li Gang's life, he made full reference to *Jianyan jintuizhi*, particularly when outlining the plots of Huang Qianshan and Wang Boyan to oust Li Gang from power.<sup>75</sup> This biographical sketch of Li Gang thus became an additional source for preserving Li Gang's own memories of his chief councilorship, although this piece of writing was probably not widely circulated in the 1150s.

In contrast, the two *Shizhengji* that Li Gang and Wang Boyan submitted to the court in the 1130s had a much broader audience. Court historians occasionally referred to the two works in preparing accounts of the Gaozong era. In the early 1160s, when Lu You received an order from the court of Emperor Xiaozong (1127–1194, r. 1162–1189) to compile the *Gaozong shengzheng*, he quoted from the various *Shizhengji* texts submitted by early Southern Song councilors. These would have included those by individuals such as Wang Boyan, Li Gang, Lu Yundi 路允迪 (?–1140), Lü Yihao 呂頤浩 (1071–1139), Zhang Jun, and Wang Tao 王綯 (1074–1137).<sup>76</sup> A close examination of the twenty entries in a draft version of the *Gaozong shengzheng* that still exists today shows that Wang Boyan's record was cited seven times—much more than those by Li Gang, Wang Tao (both three times) and the others (one time).<sup>77</sup> This finding suggests that Lu You held the two *Shizhengji* by Wang Boyan and Li Gang equally authentic. Circulation of these two memoirs were not restricted to court historians. For example, Xu Mengxin, a prominent historian who had never served in the Imperial Library, also managed to access the two works. This is well evidenced in many citations of the *Shizhengji* by Li and Wang in the *Sanchao beimeng huibian* 三朝北盟會編 (Compendium of Documents on the Treaties with the North under the Three Reigns), a compendium of primary historical sources that Xu finished in 1194.<sup>78</sup>

Wang Boyan's high reputation in the mid-twelfth century not only explains why Lu You and Xu Mengxin cited his records. His status also drove Luo Yuan 羅願 (1136–1184) to include Wang's biography among the “foremost and accomplished” (*xianda* 先達) men in the *Xin'an zhi* 新安志, a local gazetteer that Luo

75 Li Lun, “Li gong xingzhuang” 李公行狀, in *Quan Song wen*, 207:4592.161–63.

76 For a detailed discussion of this work, see Hartman, “Lu You's Draft Entries,” 33–59 and Kong Xue 孔學, “Lu You ji Gaozong shengzhengcao” 陸游及《高宗聖政草》, *Shixue yuekan* 史學月刊 1996.4: 32–38.

77 See Lu You, *Zhongxing shengzhengcao*, 1577–89.

78 See Chen Lesu 陳樂素, “Sanchao beimeng huibian kao” 《三朝北盟會編》考, in his *Qiushi ji* 求是集 (Guangzhou: Guangdong renmin chubanshe, 1984), 141 and 298.

compiled in the 1170s to showcase the local pride of Huizhou 徽州.<sup>79</sup> In Wang's biography in the gazetteer, Luo highlights Wang's lasting loyalty to Zhao Gou prior to the latter's ascension. Earlier, both men had endured extreme hardships. On one occasion, when Zhao was lost and very hungry, Wang managed to obtain some lamb soup and a steamed bun to relieve the prince's hunger.<sup>80</sup> The Song prince also cared for his aide; he once took off his war robe and gave it to Wang for fear that his faithful servant would freeze in the cold weather.<sup>81</sup> Luo compared Wang's allegiance to that of Feng Yi 馮異 (?–34) and Wang Ba 王霸 (?–59), two prominent generals who assisted Emperor Guangwu (5 BCE–57 CE, r. 25–57) in restoring the Han empire (206 BCE–220 CE). Such lavish praise of Wang Boyan owed much to the fact that Wang was the first man from Xin'an in the Song period to have been promoted to the office of chief councilor. By putting the biography of Wang among those of "pioneering eminent" figures in Huizhou,<sup>82</sup> Luo hoped to showcase the prominence of Xin'an in the Song political realm.

Wang Boyan was held in high regard not only in the local gazetteer of his hometown Huizhou, but also in two literary anthologies compiled in the late twelfth century. In the late 1180s, two scholars, Wei Qixian 魏齊賢 and Ye Fen 葉棻, managed to have their *Shengsong mingxian wubaijia bofang daquan wencui* 聖宋名賢五百家播芳大全文粹 (Collected Works of Five Hundred Famed Worthies of the Sagacious Song Period) engraved on woodblocks and printed in Jianyang 建陽, Fujian. A few years later, an anonymous scholar compiled and published *Xinkan guochao erbaijia mingxian wencui* 新刊國朝二百家名賢文粹 (A New Printed Edition of the Collected Works of Two Hundred Famed Worthies of the Dynasty) in Meishan 眉山, Sichuan in 1197.<sup>83</sup> The fact that both works incorporate the writings of Wang Boyan suggests that Wang was viewed as a "famed worthy" (*mingxian* 名賢) in the eyes of the compilers.<sup>84</sup> The

79 For a discussion of how Southern Song gazetteers became monuments to local pride, see Bol, "The Rise of Local History," 37–76.

80 Luo Yuan, *Xin'an zhi* 新安志, in *Song Yuan zhenxi difangzhi congkan jiabian* 宋元珍稀地方志叢刊甲編, vol. 8 (Chengdu: Sichuan daxue chubanshe, 2007), 7.220–22.

81 Luo Yuan, *Xin'an zhi*, 7.220–22; see also *Sanchao beimeng huibian*, 72.10b, which quotes from the *Zhongxing ji* 中興記 (*Records of Restoration*) by Geng Yanxi 耿延禧 (?–1136).

82 Luo Yuan, *Xin'an zhi*, 7.220–22.

83 For brief discussions of the two works, see Zhu Shangshu 祝尚書, *Songren zongji xulu* 宋人總集敘錄 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2004), 183–94 and 211–16.

84 Eight pieces of Wang Boyan's writings are preserved in the extant 196-juan *Xinkan guochao erbaijia mingxian wencui*; see Liao Yin 廖寅, "Xinkan guochao erbaijia mingxian wencui de bianzuan yu jiazhi fawei" 《新刊國朝二百家名賢文粹》的編纂與價值發微, *Wenxue yichan* 文學遺產 2019.6: 87. However, in the received edition of the *Shengsong mingxian*

publication of these two anthologies in the eastern and western parts of the Song realm in the late twelfth century may have helped to retain or even promote Wang's reputation. Yet the increasing availability of Li Gang's writings would ultimately deal a severe blow to Wang's image, as we will see below.

Decades after the death of his father, Li Xiuzhi 李秀之, Li Gang's son, gathered his father's writings, mostly memorials (*zouyi* 奏議), and compiled them into a work that totaled eighty scrolls. In 1176, he showed his collection to a prominent Fujianese official, Chen Junqing 陳俊卿 (1113–1186), a chief counselor in the 1160s and a close friend of the Neo-Confucian master Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130–1200). Li Xiuzhi requested that Chen write a preface to the work.<sup>85</sup> Partly owing to his admiration of Li Gang's bravery in fighting against the Jurchen in the Jinggang era (1126–1127), Chen agreed to write a preface for Li's collection in 1179. Later, Li Gang's grandson, Li Jin 李晉, invited Zhu Xi to contribute a postscript to the collection, which Zhu finished in 1183.<sup>86</sup> According to Li Dayou 李大有 (*jinsi* 1199), another grandson of Li Gang, this eighty-scroll collection consisted of not only Li Gang's memorials but also his three accounts of the Northern-Southern Song transition, namely, the *Jinggang chuanxinlu* 靖康傳信錄 (Transmitted Record of the Jinggang Period), the *Shizhengji*, and the *Jianyan jintuizhi*. This collection, along with the preface and postscript written by Chen Junqing and Zhu Xi, respectively, was copied and submitted to the court in the late 1180s.<sup>87</sup> Impressed with Li's writings and earlier achievements in the Song restoration, Emperor Xiaozong ordered ritual officials to discuss. It was decided in 1189/1 that Li would be conferred with the descriptor "Steadfast Loyalty".<sup>88</sup> While the compilation and submission of his works by his descendants played a role in the court's recognition of Li Gang's merits nearly fifty years after his death, I suspect that the death of Gaozong in 1187 was also an

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*wubaijia bofang daquan wencui*, which is no longer intact, no writings of Wang Boyan can be found.

- 85 Chen Junqing, "Li Zhongding gong zouyi xu" 李忠定公奏議序, in *Quan Song wen*, 209:4647.349–50.
- 86 Zhu Xi, "Chengxiang Li gong zouyi houxu" 丞相李公奏議後序, in *Quan Song wen*, 250:5621.326–28.
- 87 Li Dayou, "Liangxi xiansheng wenji ba" 梁谿先生文集跋, in *Quan Song wen*, 303:6914.29–30.
- 88 See *Songshi*, 35.691. For discussions of the posthumous name to be conferred upon Li Gang, see Ye Shi 葉適 (1150–1223), "Li chengxiang Gang shi Zhongding yi" 李丞相綱諡忠定議, in *Ye Shi ji* 葉適集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1961), 26.527–28 and Song Zhirui 宋之瑞, "Li chengxiang Gang shi Zhongding fuyi" 李丞相綱諡忠定覆議, in *Li Gang quanji* 李綱全集 (Changsha: Yuelu shushe, 2004), 1773–74. See also *Song huiyao jigao*, "Li" 禮, 58.102–3.



important factor. As the arch patron of Song appeasement, the retired emperor could hardly endorse the conferral of a posthumous honor on the hawkish Li Gang. Only after the emperor's death, would it have been possible for Xiaozong to formally express his appreciation of Li's earlier achievements. Even though Li Xiuzhi wished to engrave this collection of his father's writings on woodblocks and have it widely circulated among the educated, a lack of financial means thwarted his ambition. As a result, at the end of the twelfth century, those who could access this collection would have been limited to Li Gang's descendants themselves plus a small number of Song literati who worked in the Imperial Library or who had connections with Fujian literati such as Chen Junqing and Zhu Xi.<sup>89</sup>

Xiong Ke, a native of Jianyang county, managed to obtain access to Li Gang's writings in the 1180s, likely owing to his Fujianese background. With reference to official historical compilations and private records, Xiong finished compiling a short chronological history of the Gaozong era titled *Zhongxing xiaoli* 中興小曆 (Minor Calendar of the Restoration) between 1187 and 1188.<sup>90</sup> In his narratives explaining why the plans of Zhang Suo and Fu Liang had been thwarted in 1127, Xiong followed the account in Li Gang's *Jiyan jintuizhi*. In particular, Xiong holds Huang Qianshan and Wang Boyan responsible for ousting Li from power by denouncing Zhang and Fu.<sup>91</sup> Xiong's adoption of the details in Li's personal memoir not only proves that he had read that less widely circulated text but also suggests his belief in the veracity of Li's account.

Perceiving Li Gang to be a victim of Wang Boyan's evil plot, Xiong remained skeptical toward the latter's account of the restoration, particularly those con-

89 You Mao 尤袤 (1127–1194), who assisted in the compilation of various official historical works in the Imperial Library in the late 1180s, recorded in his book catalogue his possession of a copy of Li Gang's memorials; see You Mao, *Suichutang shumu* 遂初堂書目, 96a (SKQS). For You Mao's service in the Imperial Library, see *Nan Song guangexulu* 南宋館閣續錄 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1998), 9.360 and 367. For a study of officials in the Imperial Library and their prospect of career advancement, see Xiong Hui-lan, "A Reservoir of Talent: An Analysis of the Career Advancement of Imperial Library Officials during the Southern Song," *Journal of Song-Yuan Studies* 48 (2019): 7–56.

90 See Gu Jichen 顧吉辰, "Xiong Ke he tade *Zhongxing xiaoli*" 熊克和他的《中興小紀》, *Guji zhengli yanjiu xuekan* 古籍整理研究學刊 1986.3: 39–44; Xin Gengru 辛更儒, "Youguan Xiong Ke jiqi *Zhongxing xiaoli* de jige wenti" 有關熊克及其《中興小曆》的幾個問題, *Wenshi* 文史 2002.1: 198–200 and Zhou Lizhi 周立志, "*Huangchao zhongxing jishi benmo yu Zhongxing xiaoli zhi guanxi*" 《皇朝中興紀事本末》與《中興小曆》之關係, *Wenxian* 文獻 2010.3: 106. For a brief discussion in English regarding Xiong Ke and his *Zhongxing xiaoli*, see Hartman, "The Making of a Villain," 75–76.

91 Xiong Ke, *Zhongxing xiaoli*, 2.6a (SKQS)

veyed in records that portrayed Wang in a positive light. For example, in his *Shizhengji*, Wang Boyan recalls how Gaozong had praised him after his appointment as chief councilor. Even though Xiong quotes this passage in his *Zhongxing xiaoli*, he deleted the parts where Gaozong praised Wang's outstanding services as prefect of Xiangzhou as well as parts about his loyalty and faithfulness. A comparison of Wang's *Shizhengji* cited in Xiong's work and in Xu Mengxin's *Sanchao beimeng huibian*, a Southern Song compendium of historical sources completed in 1194 that incorporated a wider variety of primary sources than other contemporary records, reveals the account that Xiong chose not to include in his work (text highlighted in bold typeface in the following translated passage):

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**Wang Boyan's *Shizhengji* quoted in Xiong Ke's *Zhongxing xiaoli***

[Huang] Qianshan and [Wang] Boyan became Chief Councilors. The Emperor said, "With Qianshan as Chief Councilor of the Left and Boyan as Chief Councilor of the Right, why would We worry about state affairs not being in order? [I hope that both of you will] work with one heart in order to satisfy Our will."

潛善、伯彥入射，上曰：「潛善作左相，伯彥作右相，朕何患國事不濟？更同心以副朕意。」皆稽首謝。<sup>92</sup>

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**Wang Boyan's *Shizhengji* quoted in Xu Mengxin's *Sanchao beimeng huibian***

Huang Qianshan and Wang Boyan expressed their gratitude. The Emperor said, "With Qianshan as Chief Councilor of the Left and Boyan as Chief Councilor of the Right, why would We worry about state affairs not being in order? **Previously when Boyan was the prefect of Xiangzhou, he had an excellent political reputation. Serving Us at a time when we shared hardships and perils together, I am fully aware of his loyalty.**

[I hope that Qianshan and Boyan] work with one heart to assist [in state affairs] in order to satisfy Our will." 黃潛善，汪伯彥並謝。上曰：「潛善作左相，伯彥作右相，朕何患國事不濟？伯彥昨知相州，甚有政聲，事朕同險艱，備知其忠實。潛善，伯彥更同心濟助，以副朕考慎之意。」<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Xiong Ke, *Zhongxing xiaoji*, 4.22a.

<sup>93</sup> *Sanchao beimeng huibian*, 119.11b.

This omission, as Xiong explains in a commentary appended to the quotation, owed much to his doubt that Gaozong had full confidence in Huang and Wang. He even suspected that Wang had forged the emperor's conversation with the two men and that it probably never occurred:

Regarding [the event that Wang] Boyan had recorded, did it really happen? If it really happened, and the two ministers [i.e., Huang Qianshan and Wang Boyan] could not live up to the Emperor's expectations, their crime would become more severe.

伯彥所記，其果有之邪？若果有之，而二臣不能副所期，罪益深矣。<sup>94</sup>

By removing Gaozong's compliments from his narrative, Xiong deliberately obscured Wang's contributions to the Southern Song restoration. Xiong's skepticism toward the Jurchen may help explain his adoration of Li Gang and his abhorrence of Wang Boyan. For fear that the Jurchen would suddenly violate the peace accords and resume their attacks against the Song, Xiong once suggested that Emperor Xiaozong devise a defense strategy during peacetime.<sup>95</sup> By reworking the accounts of Li Gang and Wang Boyan and adding judgmental remarks into his own narrative of the Song restoration, it is obvious that Xiong was promoting his own political agenda. The portrayal of Wang in the *Zhongxing xiaoli* as an advocate for peace who thwarted the irredentist plans of the anti-Jurchen war hero Li reflects Xiong's reservations about the nonaggressive stance toward the Jurchen. It appears that the literati's perceptions of Li and Wang in the 1180s correlated with their attitude toward the Song dynasty's relationship with the Jurchen.

The changing political milieu after the assassination of Chief Councilor Han Tuozhou 韓侂胄 (1152–1207) in 1207 facilitated the publishing of Li Gang's writings and helped boost Li's historical image. After his notorious proscription against the *daoxue* scholars in the Qingyuan period (1195–1200),<sup>96</sup> Han was

94 Xiong Ke, *Zhongxing xiaoli*, 4.22a–b.

95 *Songshi*, 445.13144.

96 For discussions of the Qingyuan factional proscription, see Conrad Schirokauer, "Neo-Confucians Under Attack: The Condemnation of Wei-hsueh," in *Crisis and Prosperity in Sung China*, ed. John Winthrop Haeger (Tucson: Univ. of Arizona Press, 1975), 186; Richard L. Davis, "The Reigns of Kuang-tsung (1189–1194) and Ning-tsung (1194–1224)," in *The Cambridge History of China: Volume 5 Part 1, The Sung Dynasty and its Precursors, 907–1279*, 783–89; and Shen Songqin 沈松勤, *Nan Song wenren yu dangzheng* 南宋文人與黨爭 (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2005), 98–119.

eager to enhance his image and solicit the support of his former political enemies. This eagerness impelled him to launch a military expedition against the Jurchen Jin. However, Han's adventurism turned out to be a disaster, and he was ultimately made a scapegoat for the Song defeat in 1207.<sup>97</sup> Subsequent to Han's assassination, many Song officials who had supported his irredentist invasions "were intent on hiding their connections to Han Tuo Zhou and linking their support for the war to Gaozong-era heroes."<sup>98</sup> The succeeding Shi Miyuan 史彌遠 (1164–1233) administration also put more historical emphasis on the early Gaozong era, as evidenced in the court's accelerated pace for compiling a state history for Gaozong's reign.<sup>99</sup> Echoing the rising importance of the history of Gaozong's early reign, a new historical narrative of the restoration gradually evolved "that eventually undermined the status of the negotiated peace of 1142, demonized Qin Gui, and extolled those who had opposed Qin's policy of negotiated peace, including Li Gang, Yue Fei 岳飛 (1103–1142), and Chen Dong."<sup>100</sup> The printing of the collected works of Li Gang and Chen Dong under the initiative of Li Gang's grandson, Li Dayou, helped promote this new narrative.<sup>101</sup> In a postscript that Li Dayou wrote for his grandfather's collected works, he explains the predicament faced by the Song regime in the 1120s and 1130s. Why did the Song court become an exiled regime soon after its rejuvenation? Why did the Jurchen cavalry resume its attacks on the Song shortly after the latter's retreat? Li attributed this precarious situation of the Song regime to the demotion of gentlemen and the advancement of petty men.<sup>102</sup> His intention to highlight the contributions of his grandfather to the Song restoration is obvious: when gentlemen such as Li Gang were in power, they could fend off the Jurchen invaders and restore political order. After the petty men gained sway in the court and ousted the gentlemen from power, the Song relocated its base to the southeast

97 For a thorough analysis of Han Tuo Zhou's motives behind the northern expedition and the politics behind Han's assassination, see Li Chao 李超, *Nan Song Ningzong chao qianqi zhengzhi yanjiu* 南宋寧宗朝前期政治研究 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2019).

98 Hartman and Li, "The Rehabilitation of Chen Dong," 117–18.

99 Charles Hartman, *The Making of Song Dynasty History: Sources and Narratives, 960–1279 CE* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2021), 117. The highest number of entries for the early reign of Gaozong compared to other periods in the *Song Huiyao jigao* also attested to the emphasis on the history of the early Southern Song; idem, 42–45.

100 Hartman and Li, "The Rehabilitation of Chen Dong," 119. For a discussion of how the Southern Song Sichuan historian Li Xinchuan utilized nonofficial sources to enhance the negative character of Qin Gui in his chronological history of the Gaozong era, the *Jiyan yan yilai xinian yaolu*, see Hartman, *The Making of Song Dynasty History*, 116–18.

101 For a detailed discussion of how Li Dayou helped printing the collected works of Chen Dong, see Hartman and Li, "The Rehabilitation of Chen Dong," 113–19.

102 Li Dayou, "Liangxi xiansheng wenji ba," in *Quan Song wen*, 303:6914.29–30.

for the sake of evading the Jurchen forces. To further promote this historical narrative of the Southern Song restoration, it was essential to print and circulate Li Gang's voluminous writings. To do so, Li Dayou managed to solicit the support of Zhang Ying 章穎 (1140–1217) and Zhao Defu 趙德甫 to finance the publication project. By then Zhang was the prefect of Quanzhou 泉州, where Li Dayou was serving as an executive in the office of the maritime trade intendant in Fujian circuit (*Fujianlu tiju shibosi ganban gongshi* 福建路提舉市舶司幹辦公事). Zhang's generous support, I suspect, owed much to his own irredentism. Likely under the impetus to praise Han Tuo Zhou's military operations, Zhang submitted the biographies of four prominent generals in the early Southern Song dynasty, namely, Liu Qi 劉錡 (1098–1162), Yue Fei, Li Xianzhong 李顯忠 (1109–1177), and Wei Sheng 魏勝 (1120–1164), to the court in 1206.<sup>103</sup> In his submission declaration, Zhang praises the achievements of these generals in fighting against the Jurchen conquerors and “expanding the awe-inspiring might of the dynasty” 張大國家之威.<sup>104</sup> Similar skepticism toward the Jurchen is abundant in the writings of Li Gang, which explains why Zhang, an admirer of Li's loyalty and meritorious achievements, not only sponsored the printing project but also wrote a postscript for Li's collection.<sup>105</sup>

Once a collection of Li Gang's eighty scrolls of memorials was printed in 1209,<sup>106</sup> it began to circulate within Song literati circles, first in the vicinity of Quanzhou. In a postscript written in 1210/9, Zou Yinglong 鄒應龍 (1172–1244), prefect of Quanzhou between 1210 and 1212,<sup>107</sup> recalled that Li Dayou had shown him a printed copy of Li Gang's works.<sup>108</sup> Considering that what had been published (mostly memorials) was only a very small part of all his grandfather's writings, Li Dayou later asked Huang Deng 黃登 (*jinshi* 1211), a professor of the Shaowu 邵武 prefectural school, to compile and print a complete collection of Li Gang's writings. After three months of labor, a new edition of Li Gang's collected works, totaling one hundred and eighty scrolls, was published in 1220. Huang Deng and the prefect of Shaowu Jiang Zhu 姜注 wrote a postscript to commemorate the printing of this work.<sup>109</sup> Once again, a new

103 See Ji Yun 紀昀 (1724–1805), ed., *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao* 四庫全書總目提要 (Shijiazhuang: Hebei renmin chubanshe, 2000), 61.1662–63.

104 See *Song huiyao jigao*, “Li,” 59.20–21, for Zhang's declaration of submission.

105 Li Dayou, “*Liangxi xiansheng wenji ba*,” in *Quan Song wen*, 303:6914.29; see also Zhang Ying 章穎, “*Liangxi xiansheng wenji ba*” 梁谿先生文集跋, in *Quan Song wen*, 277:6267.64–65.

106 Li Dayou, “*Liangxi xiansheng wenji ba*,” in *Quan Song wen*, 303:6914.29.

107 See Li Zhiliang 李之亮, *Song Fujianlu junshou nianbiao* 宋福建路郡守年表 (Chengdu: Bashu shushe, 2001), 109–10.

108 Zou Yinglong 鄒應龍, “*Liangxi xiansheng wenji ba*,” in *Quan Song wen*, 306:6976.12.

109 Jiang Zhu 姜注, “*Liangxi xiansheng wenji ba*,” in *Quan Song wen*, 318:7307.363 and Huang

historical narrative of the Southern Song restoration eulogizing Li Gang was articulated. According to Huang Deng, Li Gang was the only minister since the Jingkan era whose councilorship had been bright and luminous and whose propositions had been upright and honest. Such praise implies that Li's contemporaries (such as Huang Qianshan, Wang Boyan, Zhao Ding, Zhang Jun, and Qin Gui) were no match for the great Li. Even the chief councilor in Huang Deng's time, Shi Miyuan, fell short of the high bar set by Li. Huang foresaw that the printing project would facilitate a wider circulation of Li Gang's writings, which would enable incumbent officials to "taste Li's prose, think of Li the person, and thus to imitate his moral uprightness during his service in the court" 味其文，想其人，因以彷彿其立朝之大節。<sup>110</sup>

Unfortunately, rampant banditry in Shaowu destroyed many books in the prefectural library, including Li Gang's collection. After Zhao Yifu 趙以夫 (1189–1256) assumed prefectural leadership in Shaowu in 1231, he found that approximately five hundred printing blocks of Li Gang's anthology were missing. He then instructed workers to make new blocks to supplement the missing parts, a task finished by 1232.<sup>111</sup> Partly because Zhao had recently assisted in fighting against bandits in Shaowu, he was particularly impressed with Li Gang's earlier accomplishments in subduing rampant banditry in Hunan and Jiangxi. Li's successes in restoring social stability in the two regions, as Zhao argued in the postscript that he had written for the new printed edition of Li's collected works with supplements, were evidential proof of Li's talent. Lamenting Li's short tenure as court councilor, Zhao posited that "should Li's proposals have been fully adopted, he would have made far greater achievements than what he had done" 使盡行其言，功業詎止是耶。<sup>112</sup> Unlike Li Dayou, who held the rising petty men responsible for ousting his grandfather from power, Zhao Yifu did not explicitly mention the names of individual ministers who had thwarted Li Gang's efforts. A possible explanation is that Zhao exercised some level of self-censorship in writing the postscript. In particular, the denunciation of councilors who suppressed dissent might have been perceived as an indirect

Deng 黃登, "Liangxi xiansheng wenji ba" 梁溪先生文集跋, in *Quan Song wen*, 318:7310.409–10. In a recent study of the origin and transmission of Li Gang's anthology, Miao Runbo 苗潤博 succinctly argues that both postscripts were written in 1220. See Miao Runbo, "Li Gang *Liangxi ji* banben yuanliu zaitan: wenxian zhulu yu xijian chaoben de zonghe kaocha" 李綱《梁溪集》版本源流再探—文獻著錄與稀見抄本的綜合考察, *Hanxue yanjiu* 漢學研究 35:3 (2017): 109–10.

110 Huang Deng, "Liangxi xiansheng wenji ba," in *Quan Song wen*, 318:7310.410.

111 Zhao Yifu 趙以夫, "Bukan *Liangxi xiansheng wenji ba*" 補刊梁谿先生文集跋, in *Quan Song wen*, 333:7676.266; see also Miao Runbo, "Li Gang *Liangxi ji* banben," 109–10.

112 Zhao Yifu, "Bukan *Liangxi xiansheng wenji ba*," in *Quan Song wen*, 333:7676.266.

criticism of the powerful Shi Miyuan, who dominated court affairs at that time. Considering that Shi had launched a literary inquisition against several poets whose works were perceived as slanderous and had ordered the destruction of the printing blocks of such poems a few years earlier,<sup>113</sup> Zhao might have wished to avoid trouble by not calling out the political opponents of Li Gang by name.

Whereas the historical image of Li Gang benefited from scholar-officials in Fujian who printed, circulated, and promoted his works between the 1210s and 1230s, Wang Boyan's posthumous reputation became increasingly disparaged from the thirteenth century onwards. Liu Zai 劉宰 (1166–1239) composed a biography of Chen Dong and an inscription for Chen's shrine at the Zhenjiang 鎮江 prefectural school in the early 1200s. Chen was a fearless university student who had repeatedly submitted candid political criticisms and suggestions to the throne in 1126 and 1127. Liu attributed Chen's execution to Huang Qianshan and Wang Boyan. According to Charles Hartman and Li Choying, such a vilification of Wang Boyan reflects Liu Zai's opposition to the Han Tuozhou administration and sympathy toward the *daoxue* scholars whom Han had proscribed.<sup>114</sup> In 1217/1, Wei Liaoweng 魏了翁 (1178–1237) submitted a memorial to the throne requesting that the court grant posthumous names to three Northern Song pioneers of Neo-Confucianism, namely, Zhou Dunyi 周敦頤 (1017–1073), Cheng Yi, and Cheng Hao 程顥 (1032–1085). At that time, Wei claimed that Wang Boyan's deeds were so self-serving that he did not deserve the posthumous praise of having "steadfast loyalty."<sup>115</sup>

What further reinforced the negative image of Wang Boyan, I argue, was the Southern Song literati's skepticism about chief councilor Shi Miyuan's auto-

113 For detailed discussions of the literary inquisition against the Rivers and Lakes poets, see Zhang Hongsheng 張宏生, "Jianghu shihuo kao" 江湖詩禍考, in his *Jianghu shipai yanjiu* 江湖詩派研究 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1995), 358–70, and Li Yueshen 李越深, "Jianghu shian shimo kaolüe" 江湖詩案始末考略, *Zhejiang daxue xuebao* 浙江大學學報 1.2 (1987): 111–15. For studies in English, see Michael A. Fuller, *Drifting among Rivers and Lakes: Southern Song Dynasty Poetry and the Problem of Literary History* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Asia Center, 2013), 455–57, and Chu Ming Kin and Franz-Julius Morche, "The Printers' Networks of Chen Qi (1186–1256) and Robert Estienne (1503–1559): A Micro-Comparative Approach to Political Dependence and Censorship," in *Political Communication in Chinese and European History, 800–1600*, ed. Hilde De Weerd and Franz-Julius Morche (Amsterdam: Amsterdam Univ. Press, 2021), 390–405.

114 Hartman and Li, "The Rehabilitation of Chen Dong," 108–12.

115 Wei Liaoweng 魏了翁 (1178–1237), "Zouqi zaoding Zhou Cheng san xiansheng shiyi" 奏乞早定周程三先生謚議, in *Quan Song wen*, 309:7054–76. The memorial was submitted in 1217/1, see Peng Donghuan 彭東煥, *Wei Liaoweng nianpu* 魏了翁年譜 (Chengdu: Sichuan renmin chubanshe, 2003), 196–97.

cratic rule. By the late 1220s, Shi had dominated the court for over two decades since 1208 and was following in the footsteps of his predecessors like Qin Gui and Han Tuo Zhou in silencing political opposition. Partly driven by their conviction that political victims who were persecuted by autocratic councilors proved their inner moral perfection,<sup>116</sup> thirteenth-century literati supported the printing of the writings of Li Gang and Chen Dong, who became exemplars of loyalty and uprightness. Their sponsorship of the printing projects not only helped to expose how Wang thwarted political oppositions (the way in which Li Gang recalled in his *Ji anyan jintuizhi* for example). Their support can also be interpreted as a kind of protest against Shi's dominance. The prefaces and colophons that they composed for the collected works of Chen and Li in the 1220s and 1230s also hint at their dissatisfaction with the autocratic Shi. In these texts, they not only highlight the political rectitude of the two men, but also portray the councilors who brutally suppressed dissent in a negative light. Since Wang Boyan was perceived to be one of the masterminds who ousted Li Gang from power and advocated the execution of Chen Dong, he became a primary target of denunciation. In a colophon written in the latter half of the 1220s for a printed edition of Chen Dong's writings, Wei Liaoweng praises Chen's principled opposition to autocratic councilors and compares the misfortune of the righteous Chen Dong with the fortunes of four notorious ministers who had assumed senior positions in the court before Chen fiercely criticized them—namely, Cai Jing, Tong Guan 童貫 (1054–1126), Wang Boyan, and Huang Qianshan.<sup>117</sup>

Colophon writers disparaged Wang even more freely after the death of Shi Miyuan in 1233/10. In a colophon that he wrote in 1234/2, Liu Xiren 劉希仁 criticizes Wang's "mediocrity and lack of vision" 庸昏無遠略 and holds him responsible for not alerting Gaozong earlier to the immediate threat of the Jurchen.<sup>118</sup> Wu Qian 吳潛 (1196–1262) accuses Huang Qianshan and Wang Boyan of refusing to accept candid criticism in a colophon that he composed in 1234/4. He compares Huang and Wang with Kong Ning 孔寧 and Yixing Fu 儀行父, two notorious ministers in the Spring and Autumn period (771–476 BCE) who urged their ruler, Lord Ning of Chen 陳靈公 (?–599 BCE), to execute an upright official who had criticized them.<sup>119</sup> Gui Ruhu 桂如虎, in another colophon writ-

116 Hartman, "The Making of a Villain," 119.

117 Wei Liaoweng, "Chen Shaoyang wenji xu" 陳少陽文集序, in *Quan Song wen*, 310:7081.61. See also Hartman and Li, "The Rehabilitation of Chen Dong," 119–21.

118 Liu Xiren, "Ba yigao" 跋遺稿, in *Song Chen Shaoyang xiansheng wenji* 宋陳少陽先生文集, 10.15a, reprinted in *Songji zhenben congan* 宋集珍本叢刊 (Beijing: Xianzhuang shuju, 2004), 39.192.

119 Wu Qian, "Ba yigao" 跋遺稿, in *Song Chen Shaoyang xiansheng wenji*, 10.15b, reprinted in *Songji zhenben congan*, 39.192.



ten in 1237/4, praises Gaozong's sagacity and resoluteness in the late 1120s in demoting "two nefarious ministers with flattering tongues" 二奸佞—Huang Qianshan and Wang Boyan. Their demotion, according to Gui, originated from Chen Dong's earlier criticisms of the two.<sup>120</sup> Similarly, Wang is portrayed as "nefarious and evil" 奸邪 in a colophon written in 1240/8 by Wu Ting 伍霆. Wu interprets Wang's repression of Chen Dong as "petty men framing the loyal and virtuous" 小人之害忠良, which would ultimately harm the state.<sup>121</sup> In another colophon composed in 1240, Teng Jia 滕嘉 attributes the failure of the Song court to return to the former capital of Kaifeng, an aggressive plan advocated by upright loyalists like Li Gang and Chen Dong, to the dominance of pacifists in the court, among them Qin Gui, Shi Hao 史浩 (1106–1194) and Shi Miyuan.<sup>122</sup> Clearly, the adoration of Li and Chen as well as the defamation of Wang Boyan in the colophons owed much to the writers' discontent with Shi Miyuan and other autocratic councilors in the Southern Song.

Disparaging Wang Boyan who had harmed the upright Li Gang and Chen Dong is not found only in the prefaces and colophons of the collected works of the two men. In formulating their narratives of the Song restoration in different genres of historical compilations, Southern Song scholars in the thirteenth century also chose to turn a blind eye to Wang's *Shizhengji*. Wang's accounts of the Song restoration survived into the thirteenth century, as evidenced in the book catalog of prominent Southern Song bibliophile Chen Zhensun 陳振孫 (1179–1262).<sup>123</sup> Despite this, we find hardly any traces of Wang's accounts in the *daoxue* historiography compiled in the thirteenth century. Moreover, historians in the Yuan court failed to adopt Wang's narratives when they compiled the official *Songshi* in the fourteenth century. The fact that there are no traces of Wang Boyan's memoir in book catalogs or historical accounts compiled in the Ming (1368–1644) and Qing (1644–1912) periods shows how Wang's account of the restoration that cast himself in a favorable light had passed into oblivion.

In contrast, Li Gang's condemnatory remarks on Huang Qianshan and Wang Boyan in his personal memoir had widely been adopted in thirteenth-century historical works compiled by *daoxue* scholars. Their adoption of this perspective was facilitated by the wider circulation of the printed works of Li Gang and Chen Dong, through which they had access to writings that fiercely denounced Huang Qianshan and Wang Boyan; these included Li's *Jiyan jintuizhi* and the

120 Gui Ruhu, "Ba Chen Shaoyang yigao" 跋陳少陽遺藁, in *Quan Song wen*, 325:7476.291.

121 Wu Ting, "Ba yigao," in *Song Chen Shaoyang xiansheng wenji*, 10.18b, reprinted in *Songji zhenben congkan*, 39.193.

122 Teng Jia, "Ba Chen Shaoyang yigao" 跋陳少陽遺稿, in *Quan Song wen*, 343:7937.403–4.

123 Chen Zhensun, *Zhizhai shulu jieti*, 5.155.

memorial that Chen sent to Gaozong, which had been unknown or unavailable to the historians of the previous century. Even though Li Gang's relatively mild and impersonal *Shizhengji* and his poetic exchanges with Wang Boyan in the 1130s also were available to *daoxue* scholars, they chose not to make full use of these sources in creating their narratives. Their belief that a rapprochement between the "loyal" Li Gang and the "evil" Wang Boyan should never have occurred would have been one reason for such a choice. In addition, their preference for Li's more radical and judgmental view from his *Jianyan jintuizhi* would have better suited their political agenda of deploring autocratic councilors. In the *Zhongxing liangchao biannian gangmu* 中興兩朝編年綱目 (Chronologically Arranged Outline and Details of the Two Restoration Courts), a work compiled in the first half of the thirteenth century, Chen Jun 陳均 (1174–1244) appended the following accusation of Li Gang against Huang Qianshan in the "details" (*mu* 目) under the "outline" (*gang* 綱) of "Li Gang's demotion" (李綱罷) to highlight how Li had been a victim of the oppressive Huang Qianshan:

[Huang] Qianshan's forceful impediment of the two men is merely an attempt to frustrate me, so that I feel uneasy in performing my duties. Having learned a lesson from the mistakes driven by discord among officials of the Jingkan era, I certainly discuss every matter with Qianshan and the others before taking action. Yet to my surprise, they still scheme to slander me in such a way.

潛善力沮二人，乃所以沮臣，使不安職。臣每鑒靖康大臣不和之失，凡事必與潛善等議而後行，不謂彼乃設心如此。<sup>124</sup>

In their historical compilations, Chen Jun was just one among many *daoxue* historians who quoted Li Gang's explicit denunciation of Huang Qianshan—a passage that originated from Li's *Jianyan jintuizhi* and was not articulated in his *Shizhengji*.<sup>125</sup> In *Sichao mingchen yanxinglu* compiled and printed in the early 1260s by Zhu Xi's disciple Li Youwu 李幼武 (thirteenth century),<sup>126</sup> this denunciation of Huang Qianshan is also quoted in the record of the words and deeds of Li Gang.<sup>127</sup> This passage also appears in the *Xu Song zhongxing*

124 *Zhongxing liangchao biannian gangmu*, 1.22.

125 Li Gang, *Jianyan jintuizhi*, 4.92.

126 See Zhu Xi and Li Youwu, *Song Mingchen yanxinglu* 宋名臣言行錄, in *Rucang jinghuabian* 儒藏精華編, ed. Li Weiguo 李偉國 (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 2016), 151a:14.

127 Li Youwu, *Sichao mingchen yanxing bielu shangji* 四朝名臣言行別錄上集, 1.859, in *Rucang Jinghuabian*, 151b:877.

*biannian zizhi tongjian* 續宋中興編年資治通鑑 (Continuation of the Comprehensive Mirror to Aid in Government as Annals for the Song Period) compiled by Liu Shiju 劉時舉 (ca. thirteenth century), a late Southern Song and early Yuan (1271–1368) *daoxue* scholar.<sup>128</sup> Echoing Li Gang's judgmental view in his personal memoir, Lü Zhong 呂中 (*jinshi* 1247), a *daoxue* historian from Fujian in the mid-thirteenth century, held that the chief councilorship of his virtuous fellow countryman Li “was impeded by [Huang] Qianshan and [Wang] Boyan” 為潛善、伯彥所沮.<sup>129</sup> The wide circulation of Lü's work, which was meant to be an examination preparation manual that helped candidates familiarize themselves with contemporary history,<sup>130</sup> further undermined the image of Wang Boyan. Ultimately, in the official historical account, Wang turned out to be one of the treacherous ministers. Under the influence of *daoxue* historiography, historians in the Yuan court in the fourteenth century continued to adopt Li Gang's account in his *Jianyan jintuizhi* and attributed the end of Li's chief councilorship to the evil plots of Huang Qianshan and Wang Boyan. Two of their political moves—urging Fu Liang to cross the Yellow River to retake Hedong prefecture and opposing Zhang Suo's proposal to set up a Recruitment and Pacification Bureau in Daming prefecture—are portrayed in the official narrative as conspiracies to oust Li Gang from power. In the words of Li Gang, “[Huang] Qianshan and [Wang] Boyan forceful impediment of [Zhang] Suo and [Fu] Liang is merely an attempt to frustrate me” 今潛善、伯彥沮所及亮，所以沮臣。<sup>131</sup> Compilers of the *Songshi* not only adopted Li's overt criticism of Huang and Wang in the biography of Li Gang, but also categorized the two political opponents of Li as “nefarious ministers.” By placing the biographies of Huang Qianshan and Wang Boyan between those of Cai Jing and Qin Gui, the two political opponents of Li Gang played pivotal roles in this official “lineage of evil” by bridging the group of nefarious ministers from the Northern to the Southern Song dynasties.<sup>132</sup>

128 Liu Shiju and Wang Ruilai 王瑞來 eds., *Xu Song Zhongxing biannian zizhi tongjian* 續宋中興編年資治通鑑 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2014), 1.11.

129 Lü Zhong 呂中, *Leibian huangchao zhongxing dashiji jiangyi* 類編皇朝中興大事記講義 (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 2014), 4.492.

130 See Huang Huixian 黃慧嫻, “Lü Zhong yu huangchao dashiji” 呂中與《皇朝大事記》, in *Yan Songji* 研宋集, ed. Hui Chun-hing 許振興 and Choi Sung-hei 蔡崇禧 (Hong Kong: Xianggang yan Song xuehui, 2011), 101–28.

131 *Songshi*, 358.11258.

132 See Hartman, *The Making of Song Dynasty History*, 312–28.

## Concluding Observations

This article has discussed the Southern Song literati's evolving perceptions of the memoirs of Li Gang and Wang Boyan, who both served as chief councilor during the troubled early years of Emperor Gaozong's (r. 1127–1162) reign. It has also shown how changing perceptions shaped the historical reputations of the two men. Soon after he stepped down from his chief councilorship, Li Gang compiled his *Jianyan jintuizhi* to delineate how he was promoted to and removed from the post as chief councilor in mid-1127. In this personal memoir, Li Gang clearly attributed his downfall to attacks from his political adversaries such as Huang Qianshan and Wang Boyan. Six years after Li completed his memoir, the court ordered former councilors to submit a *Shizhengji* associated with their previous tenure as councilors. Both Li Gang and Wang Boyan responded to the imperial order and submitted their own records. Unlike his personal memoir, the *Shizhengji* that Li Gang submitted to the court is more impersonal and did not articulate his earlier confrontation with Wang Boyan in the court. This owes partly to the reconciliation between Li and Wang in the mid-1130s and partly to Li's aim to project himself as a "gentleman" who refrained from being contentious in the court. Both Li and Wang made copies of what they had submitted to the court and shared these copies with their friends. The fact that scholars in the second half of the twelfth century extensively quoted the *Shizhengji* by Li Gang and Wang Boyan suggests that the two works had a sizable circulation within the literati circles. By the late 1180s, the two men were remembered as loyal Song ministers who assisted in the restoration, as attested by their posthumous description as having "steadfast loyalty."

However, the posthumous reputations of Wang Boyan and Li Gang soon began to diverge from each other. Growing concern among Southern Song literati about the veracity of Wang Boyan's account would have contributed to this divergence. Their efforts in promoting Li's writings and elevating his reputation would have been another factor. Driven by their skepticism toward the Jurchen and disappointment with autocratic councilors who brutally suppressed dissent, many literati in Fujian in the early thirteenth century supported the printing of the collected works of the hawkish Li Gang and Chen Dong whose irredentist proposals were thwarted by the pacifist ministers Huang Qianshan and Wang Boyan. In turn, Li's *Jianyan jintuizhi* and Chen's memorial to Gaozong, which fiercely denounced Huang and Wang, managed to reach a wider audience. This motivated the *daoxue* historians to access Li Gang's formerly lesser-known personal memoir to formulate a new narrative of the Song restoration that hints at their aversion toward autocratic ministers. To do so, they projected the upright Li to be a victim of the evil plots of autocratic

councilors by deliberately adopting Li's judgmental view and explicit criticism against his political adversaries. Such an overt attack of Huang Qianshan and Wang Boyan cannot be found in Li's more neutral *Shizhengji*. Apart from their preference for Li's personal memoir, the *daoxue* historians also turned a blind eye to sources that were favorable toward Wang. Wang's description of the foresight he had in predicting the 1129 mutiny, of Gaozong's praise and high hopes for him, and of his possible rapprochement with Li, as evidenced in their poetic exchanges in the 1130s, are scarcely to be found in the narratives compiled by the *daoxue* scholars. In turn, Wang's image as an evil minister who thwarted Li's irredentist plan and suppressed Chen's loyal criticisms was reinforced, while Li's loyal and upright propositions were commemorated. Whereas Li was celebrated as an "illustrious minister" in the works of *daoxue* historians, Wang ultimately was denounced as a "nefarious minister" alongside Cai Jing and Qin Gui in the *Songshi*. As a result, from the thirteenth century onward, Li lived on as an icon of loyalty while Wang was remembered as an icon of treachery.

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### Abstract

This article discusses how Southern Song literati's changing perceptions of the three memoirs of Li Gang 李綱 (1083–1140) and Wang Boyan 汪伯彥 (1069–1141) shaped their posthumous reputations. Both men served as chief councilor in the early Southern Song. Literati in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries became increasingly skeptical of Wang Boyan's memoir, a work that had been considered as authentic decades earlier. Partly driven by their irredentist passion and their disappointment with autocratic councilors, literati identified with the hawkish Li and supported the printing of his works. After Li's formerly lesser-known personal memoir had a wider

circulation in the thirteenth century, *daoxue* 道學 historians deliberately adopted his overt criticism of Wang to form a new narrative that praised Li and vilified Wang. The posthumous reputations of the two men went into two extremes as a result—Wang was nefarious while Li was an illustrious minister.

## Résumé

Cet article examine comment les perceptions changeantes des lettrés des Song du Sud concernant les trois mémoires écrits par Li Gang 李綱 (1083–1140) et Wang Boyan 汪伯彥 (1069–1141) ont façonné leur réputation posthume. Les deux hommes ont occupé le poste de conseiller impérial au début des Song du Sud. Les lettrés de la fin du XII<sup>e</sup> siècle et du début du XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle sont devenus de plus en plus sceptiques à l'égard des mémoires de Wang Boyan, une œuvre qui avait été considérée comme fiable des décennies auparavant. En partie poussés par leur passion irrédentiste et leur déception à l'égard des conseillers autocratiques, les lettrés s'identifièrent à Li qui avait une réputation de faucon et soutinrent l'impression de ses œuvres. Après que les mémoires personnels de Li aient connu une plus grande diffusion au XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, les historiens du Daoxue 道學 ont délibérément adopté sa critique ouverte de Wang pour former un nouveau récit qui louait Li et vilipendait Wang. En conséquence, la réputation posthume des deux hommes déboucha sur deux extrêmes : Wang est devenu infâme tandis que Li devenait un ministre illustre.

## 提要

本文通過考察南宋士人對李綱（1083–1140）的《建炎時政記》、《建炎進退志》和汪伯彥（1069–1141）《時政記》三書的不同觀感，探討其觀感上的轉變如何塑造這兩位南宋初年宰相在後世的名聲。汪伯彥所撰的《時政記》在十二世紀中葉被認為是可靠記述，然而十二世紀末至十三世紀初的南宋士人卻對汪伯彥《時政記》抱以懷疑的態度，某程度上歸因於他們對復國的狂熱和對獨裁宰相的失望。在這一背景下，他們認同主戰的李綱的理念並且支持刊印其作品，故李綱以前鮮為人知的《建炎進退志》在十三世紀得以廣範流傳。受道學思潮影響的史學家更有意識地採納李綱對汪伯彥的公開批評，以建構一個褒揚李綱和貶低汪伯彥的敘事。二人身後的名聲因此走向了兩個極端——李綱名垂千古而汪伯彥則遺臭萬年。

## Keywords

Southern Song – Chinese Historiography – Li Gang – Wang Boyan