

IN THE MATTER OF THE SUCCESSION OF THE THRONE OF THE GREAT QING EMPIRE FOLLOWING THE DEATH OF THE KANGXI EMPEROR

MASTER SUBMISSION

on the Legitimacy of the Accession of the Yongzheng Emperor

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present dispute has been historically framed through an unduly narrow inquiry:
whether the succession edict of the Kangxi Emperor was forged.
2. It is respectfully submitted that this formulation, while not irrelevant, fundamentally misunderstands the constitutional nature of Qing imperial succession under conditions of dynastic risk management.
3. The true issue is not:
what words appeared upon a deathbed instrument.
4. Rather, it is:
what succession arrangement most coherently reflected the Kangxi Emperor's demonstrated governing philosophy, strategic conduct, and fiduciary obligations toward dynastic continuity, and whether the activated succession was consistent with the institutional architecture he deliberately constructed.
5. This distinction is critical and dispositive.
6. The Qing Empire was not a private estate distributed through testamentary whim. The Kangxi Emperor was not a father allocating personal property among sons. He was the sovereign fiduciary steward of an imperial system whose continuity affected:
 - the political stability of the realm;
 - the integrity of frontier campaigns;
 - the cohesion of the bannermen; and

- the survivability of the dynasty itself.
7. Accordingly, succession must be analysed not through the lens of ordinary testamentary formalism, but through the principles of:
 - sovereign continuity architecture;
 - dynastic risk management; and
 - fiduciary statecraft responsive to material circumstances.
 8. It is submitted that, upon the totality of the evidence, the accession of the Yongzheng Emperor was legitimate because it emerged from the coherent operation of an institutional system deliberately shaped by a sovereign whose governing philosophy consistently prioritised dynastic continuity above all else.
 9. The legitimacy of this succession does not depend upon proving that Kangxi consciously formulated the precise thought: *"I shall position Yinzhen as contingency successor to activate specifically if I die during wartime while Yinti remains absent."* Rather, legitimacy arises from demonstrating that:
 - (a) Kangxi deliberately constructed an institutional architecture responsive to succession risk;
 - (b) that architecture necessarily created conditions under which Yinzhen would be the operationally viable continuity successor under wartime circumstances;
 - (c) when those circumstances materialised, the succession that followed was therefore the coherent operation of that deliberately constituted system; and
 - (d) the system itself reflected constitutional principles Kangxi had consistently demonstrated throughout his reign.

II. THE GOVERNING PHILOSOPHY OF THE KANGXI EMPEROR: CONTINUITY-FIRST STATECRAFT

10. The conduct of the Kangxi Emperor across six decades reveals several undeniable and reinforcing features. He was:
 - extraordinarily strategic;
 - continuity-oriented;
 - deeply cautious of factional instability; and

- consistently willing to subordinate personal sentiment to dynastic survival.
11. This was not an impulsive ruler. The Kangxi Emperor:
- personally led military expeditions into Mongolia;
 - exposed himself to substantial personal danger in frontier operations;
 - repeatedly intervened to preserve institutional stability; and
 - demonstrated long-horizon governance instincts throughout his reign.
12. Most critically, he articulated and lived by a governing principle that must anchor this entire analysis:

国一日不可无君

The state cannot be without a ruler for a single day.

13. This was not mere aphorism. This principle governed his succession thinking.
14. Moreover, Kangxi personally experienced the catastrophic consequences of succession mismanagement through the repeated rise and fall of Crown Prince Yinreng. The Yinreng episode was not merely a familial disappointment. It was a systemic crisis. The premature formalisation of succession:
- generated entrenched factional camps;
 - distorted court incentives;
 - destabilised the political centre; and
 - revealed the dangers of excessive succession certainty creating psychological rigidity.
15. By the latter stages of his reign, the Kangxi Emperor had plainly learned:
- rigid succession formalism can itself become a source of dynastic instability.*
16. This insight is central to understanding the architectural choices he subsequently made.

III. SUCCESSION LEGITIMACY AS TEMPORAL AND CONDITIONAL, NOT STATIC AND PERSONAL

17. Here lies the Court's most critical analytical task: recognising that succession legitimacy is not determined retrospectively by permanent preference, but prospectively by continuity requirements at the material moment of succession.
18. This principle has Qing precedent. Had the Kangxi Emperor died during the earlier Mongolian campaigns against Galdan:
 - Yinreng would almost certainly have succeeded as the intended successor at that material time;
 - this succession would have been legitimate under the constitutional logic prevailing at that moment;
 - despite later historical developments proving Yinreng unsuitable to governance.
19. Why? Because succession legitimacy in sovereign continuity systems is determined according to:
 - the continuity needs of the dynasty at the material moment of succession;
 - not retrospectively according to ultimate capability or later developments.
20. Kangxi survived those earlier campaigns. History therefore continued. Circumstances changed. The continuity calculus evolved accordingly.
21. The same principle applies to the material time of Kangxi's actual death. At the precise moment the Kangxi Emperor unexpectedly died in 1722:
 - Yinti remained absent amidst active military operations;
 - the Dzungar frontier campaign remained unresolved;
 - the political centre required immediate stabilisation; and
 - the Qing state could not tolerate sovereign uncertainty.
22. The governing principle demanded: *the state cannot remain without a ruler even for a single day.*

23. Under these material circumstances, the continuity needs of the dynasty necessarily superseded the ideal succession pathway that might have operated under more favourable timing conditions.

IV. THE NARROWING OF VIABLE SUCCESSORS AND THE STRATEGIC ELEVATION OF YINTI

24. It is accepted within these submissions — indeed, it is affirmatively demonstrated — that Yinti was likely the Kangxi Emperor's preferred ideal successor under favourable timing conditions. This conclusion is supported by substantial documentary and historical evidence.
25. In 1718, Yinti was appointed 抚远大将军 ("Great General Who Pacifies the Frontier") and entrusted with supreme command in the Qing campaign against the Dzungars. This was no ordinary appointment. Historical records indicate:
- extraordinary ceremonial treatment upon deployment;
 - unusually high military authority;
 - extensive symbolic elevation; and
 - direct imperial confidence of the highest order.
26. The Qing court treated this command as an empire-level undertaking designed to accumulate sovereign legitimacy through military accomplishment. Within the constitutional culture of the Qing dynasty:
- military command was inseparable from sovereign legitimacy;
 - martial prestige remained foundational to dynastic authority; and
 - victorious frontier leadership carried profound symbolic significance.
27. The irresistible inference is that the Kangxi Emperor intended Yinti to accumulate imperial legitimacy through military accomplishment. No contemporaneous evidence suggests that any other prince at that material time was receiving equivalent sovereign legitimisation through military command.
28. However — and this is dispositive — military legitimisation depends upon military completion.

29. The campaign was not a ceremonial posting. It was an active frontier operation involving enormous strategic uncertainty and empire-level consequences. Its completion was contingent upon:
- successful military prosecution;
 - Yinti's safe return from dangerous operations; and
 - timely arrival at the political centre to consolidate the accumulated legitimacy.
30. None of these outcomes could be guaranteed. Yinti faced Dzungar forces in remote frontier terrain during active warfare. The Kangxi Emperor, a ruler of extraordinary strategic sophistication, would have understood this perfectly.

V. THE PRESERVATION OF YINZHEN: DELIBERATE CONTINUITY ARCHITECTURE, NOT ADMINISTRATIVE CONVENIENCE

31. Simultaneously with Yinti's strategic elevation, Kangxi made a series of choices regarding Yinzhen that must be understood not as disconnected administrative decisions, but as integral elements of a coherent continuity system. Yinzhen remained:
- politically viable;
 - administratively embedded at the highest levels;
 - institutionally trusted with consequential governance responsibilities; and
 - centrally positioned within the machinery of imperial administration.
32. This was not accidental preservation.
33. The Kangxi Emperor had repeatedly demonstrated willingness to politically dismantle princes whom he regarded as destabilising. He had destroyed careers, removed rivals, and reorganised factional alignments when necessary. Yet Yinzhen:
- was never destroyed politically;
 - was never marginalised operationally;
 - remained deeply integrated within the administrative core; and
 - was preserved despite factional pressure that would have made his removal politically convenient.
34. The more coherent inference is:

The Kangxi Emperor intentionally preserved Yinzhen as a structural component of a continuity mechanism.

35. Not because Yinzhen was the ideal successor under perfect circumstances, but because Kangxi understood that under certain material circumstances — namely, imperial death during active wartime while the preferred strategic successor remained absent — the continuity needs of the dynasty would require an operationally viable successor embedded at the political centre.

VI. THE CRITICAL DISTINCTION: WHY EXPLICIT CONTINGENCY COMMUNICATION WOULD HAVE BEEN DESTRUCTIVE

36. A sophisticated objection arises: *"If Kangxi deliberately positioned Yinzhen as a contingency successor, why did he not communicate this explicitly?"* Respectfully, this objection illuminates why Kangxi's silence was itself strategic genius.
37. The Kangxi Emperor could not realistically inform Yinti in explicit terms:

Your succession depends upon successful completion and timely return before my death. Otherwise, a contingency successor will activate.

38. Such communication would itself risk catastrophically distorting Yinti's strategic judgment during the campaign. Once succession urgency becomes psychologically personalised, the commander's incentives become dangerously conflicted. A prince explicitly informed that his claim depends upon the emperor's survival, and that delay may activate a rival continuity mechanism, would inevitably experience pressure between military prudence and succession acceleration.
39. This is precisely the sort of distorted incentive structure the Kangxi Emperor spent decades learning to avoid. The historical lesson was clear: explicit succession certainty corrupts institutional behaviour.
40. Had Kangxi explicitly informed Yinti of the contingency, the likely consequences would include:
- rushed military decision-making;
 - strategic impatience in frontier operations;
 - distorted battlefield incentives;
 - heightened anxiety regarding imperial health; and

- the dangerous merging of military judgment with succession desperation.
41. Such a framework would be profoundly imprudent. A ruler as strategically experienced as Kangxi would immediately perceive this danger. Accordingly, the absence of explicit conditional communication to Yinti is not evidentiary weakness. It is precisely what prudent sovereign statecraft required.
 42. The legitimacy pathway depended upon Yinti:
 - pursuing military success sincerely;
 - without succession panic; and
 - without psychologically operating under countdown pressure tied to Kangxi's mortality.
 43. The contingency structure therefore did not require Yinti to understand:
 - the exact activation mechanics;
 - the full constitutional architecture; or
 - the precise legal consequences of imperial death during wartime.
 44. It required only that:
 - Yinti genuinely pursue military legitimisation;
 - while the Kangxi Emperor quietly preserved continuity safeguards should circumstances intervene before that legitimisation process matured fully.

VII. SILENCE AS EVIDENCE OF SOPHISTICATED STATECRAFT

45. The objection further suggests that the absence of explicit communication undermines the claim that a contingency structure was deliberately intended. Respectfully, this confuses modern procedural assumptions with imperial governance realities.
46. In sovereign systems subject to factional scrutiny and dynastic instability, secrecy was not evidentiary weakness. Secrecy was necessary statecraft. Following the Yinreng crisis, the Kangxi Emperor had already learned that:
 - explicit succession certainty breeds factions;
 - visible dual legitimacy structures generate instability; and
 - discoverable fallback arrangements become politically combustible.

47. Under such conditions:
- Secrecy was not a failure to communicate. Secrecy was the preservation of system integrity.
 - Strategic ambiguity was not evasion. Strategic ambiguity was the prevention of factional crystallisation.
 - The avoidance of premature crystallisation was not indecision. It was protection of the mechanism itself.
48. Indeed, the very effectiveness of a continuity mechanism may depend upon its invisibility, strategic ambiguity, and the avoidance of premature crystallisation that would invite factional attack. Thus, the absence of explicit documentation does not negate the continuity framework. It reinforces the inference that the Kangxi Emperor intentionally avoided creating discoverable dual-legitimacy structures.
49. Silence, in this context, speaks.
50. The Court must therefore reject the false dichotomy between explicit communication and no communication whatsoever. The Kangxi Emperor communicated through sustained institutional conduct over decades. That conduct revealed:
- whom he was elevating strategically;
 - whom he was preserving operationally; and
 - what priorities governed his statecraft.

VIII. THE OPERATIONAL IMPOSSIBILITY OF ALTERNATIVE THEORIES

51. The remaining alternative theories proposed by critics ultimately collapse once examined operationally.

A. Alternative Theory #1: Temporary Stewardship Model

52. The opposing argument proposes that Kangxi intended Yinzhen merely as a temporary seat-warmer pending later transfer to Yinti. Respectfully, this theory is structurally impossible in imperial systems.
53. The Kangxi Emperor was not naïve to imperial psychology. He had already witnessed:
- the Yinreng catastrophe;

- factional opportunism across decades;
- ambitious princes manoeuvring for power; and
- the consolidation dynamics of imperial authority.

54. He understood perfectly well that:

a prince who successfully ascends the Dragon Throne, stabilises the empire, commands the bureaucracy, and consolidates sovereign legitimacy does not later voluntarily relinquish power to a returning rival claimant.

55. Once Yinzhen had secured the capital, received recognition from the governing apparatus, assumed imperial authority, controlled the bureaucracy, and stabilised the succession, the throne would no longer exist in theoretical suspension. The succession would have crystallised politically.

56. At that stage, expecting Yinzhen to later surrender the throne voluntarily to Yinti would itself create:

- legitimacy fracture;
- bureaucratic division;
- military uncertainty; and
- possible civil war.

57. The very act of attempting later transfer would destabilise precisely the continuity the Kangxi Emperor spent sixty years preserving. A continuity-first ruler would never construct such a system.

B. Alternative Theory #2: Administrative Preservation Without Succession Intent

58. The opposing argument now proposes that Kangxi preserved Yinzhen merely for administrative usefulness, without succession implications. Respectfully, this theory is operationally self-refuting.

59. If Kangxi understood (as his demonstrated strategic sophistication suggests) that preserving Yinzhen meant preserving someone capable of seizing the throne, then allowing him to assume supreme authority upon Kangxi's death would be extraordinarily dangerous unless Kangxi intended permanent continuity succession

through him. Otherwise, the emperor would effectively create two competing sovereign legitimacy centres:

- one in possession of the throne; and
- one returning from military command with accumulated imperial prestige.

60. That structure would not preserve continuity. It would invite dynastic fracture.
61. Moreover, this theory requires Kangxi to deliberately accept substantial succession risk purely to maintain administrative convenience. But this contradicts the foundation of the entire analysis: that Kangxi was a continuity-first ruler who spent sixty years managing succession precisely because he understood such risks.
62. The objection cannot simultaneously argue that Kangxi was too sophisticated to intend temporary stewardship, yet naïve enough to deliberately preserve a permanent succession risk without any contingency structure to manage it.
63. If Kangxi understood that preserving Yinzhen was dangerous, then the only coherent explanation for that preservation is that he preserved Yinzhen for a purpose that would neutralise the danger — namely, as a deliberate continuity mechanism.

C. Alternative Theory #3: Unresolved Succession

64. The opposing argument finally suggests that Kangxi simply left the succession genuinely open, hoping circumstances would stabilise themselves. Respectfully, this proposition collapses under the realities of the emperor's demonstrated temperament. A ruler who:
 - spent decades confronting succession instability;
 - repeatedly dismantled destabilising structures;
 - personally experienced the systemic dangers of succession uncertainty;
 - governed through extraordinary long-horizon foresight; and
 - articulated the principle that *the state cannot be without a ruler for a single day*,
65. cannot reasonably be reduced to a sovereign who simply left the issue unresolved and hoped events would work themselves out.

66. That is not caution. It is abdication of continuity responsibility. And abdication is fundamentally inconsistent with the Kangxi Emperor's observable statecraft.
67. The alternative theories therefore self-destruct operationally because they depend upon assumptions about imperial power fundamentally inconsistent with:
- historical experience in succession crises;
 - human ambition and power consolidation dynamics; and
 - the Kangxi Emperor's demonstrated strategic realism.

IX. THE WARTIME CONTEXT AND TEMPORAL URGENCY

68. At the material time of the Kangxi Emperor's death, the wartime context becomes decisive. Kangxi died in 1722 amidst:
- active Dzungar frontier operations;
 - Yinti's continued absence from the capital;
 - unresolved military uncertainty; and
 - the necessity of immediate sovereign continuity.
69. A sovereign who had personally led dangerous military expeditions understood a simple reality: military continuity is dynastic continuity.
70. The "vacuum theory" — the proposition that Kangxi left the empire exposed to succession uncertainty — requires the Court to believe that, after decades of succession instability, after the Yinreng disaster, amidst active princely infighting, and during active wartime conditions, a Kangxi who had repeatedly demonstrated acute understanding of succession risk nonetheless left the empire wholly dependent upon:
- his own survival; or
 - the timely return of Yinti from military operations,
71. without preserving any operational continuity structure whatsoever.
72. Respectfully, this inference is irreconcilable with the emperor's observable strategic temperament.
73. The succession issue was not a sudden terminal event. It was a decades-long governance problem that had already destabilised the dynasty repeatedly while the

emperor remained alive. It is therefore implausible in the extreme that such a ruler would leave the empire wholly exposed to succession fracture merely because he believed he "had more time".

74. Rather, the evidence suggests a ruler who:

- understood wartime risks to his own mortality;
- preserved institutional flexibility under those conditions;
- positioned viable continuity mechanisms; and
- ensured that the state would never lack a ruler, *regardless of when circumstances demanded succession*.

X. THE CONSTITUTIONAL LOGIC OF KANGXI'S OWN PRINCIPLE

75. The Court must ultimately recognise that the Kangxi Emperor's governing principle — 国一日不可无君, *the state cannot be without a ruler for a single day* — itself proves the necessity of the contingency structure. A ruler governed by this principle could not accept:

- a succession gap;
- reliance on Yinti's uncertain return from warfare; or
- preservation of Yinzen without simultaneous preservation of a continuity mechanism through him.

76. A continuity-first sovereign operating under wartime conditions would necessarily preserve a deliberate continuity architecture.

77. The preservation of Yinzen and the positioning of Yinti are not independent facts. They are coordinated elements of a single continuity architecture designed to ensure that the state would never face a succession vacuum, regardless of whether imperial death occurred before or after Yinti's military triumph.

XI. THE POST-ACCESSION CONSOLIDATIONS AS EVIDENCE OF CONTINUITY RESPONSIBILITY

78. The subsequent consolidations undertaken by the Yongzheng Emperor do not negate legitimacy. Rather, they are entirely consistent with it.

79. The Yongzheng Emperor did not inherit a peaceful, settled throne. He inherited:
- a fractured political environment;
 - unresolved legitimacy tensions;
 - active succession disputes; and
 - the immense burden of preserving imperial continuity under precarious conditions.
80. His reign was marked not by indulgent triumph, but by relentless labour and administrative exhaustion. He governed intensely and died comparatively young, effectively working himself toward death in service of stabilising and consolidating the empire.
81. This is not the profile of a prince who merely opportunistically seized power for personal gratification. It is entirely consistent with a ruler acutely conscious that the throne he inherited carried immense continuity obligations under difficult historical circumstances.
82. Even under a lawful contingency succession, Yinti's prior military elevation, his symbolic prestige, and his residual legitimacy capital would inevitably create structural instability after accession. Accordingly, consolidation was politically predictable and perhaps unavoidable.
83. The fact of consolidation is evidentially equivocal. The same conduct may equally support:
- legitimate stabilisation of a continuity succession activated under altered circumstances; or
 - concealment of opportunistic usurpation.
84. Accordingly, the post-accession measures cannot independently displace the otherwise overwhelming inferential coherence of the continuity framework.

XII. FIDUCIARY DUTY AND THE CONSTITUTIONAL LOGIC OF SUCCESSION

85. The Court must ultimately determine not:

whom the Kangxi Emperor may have personally preferred emotionally,

86. but rather:

what succession arrangement most faithfully discharged his fiduciary obligation toward the continuity and survivability of the Qing Empire.

87. The evidence overwhelmingly supports the following conclusions:
- (a) Yinti was likely being elevated as the preferred sovereign successor under ideal strategic conditions. This is conceded and affirmatively demonstrated.
 - (b) Yinzhen was deliberately preserved as the operationally viable continuity successor in the event of imperial death before Yinti's legitimacy pathway matured. The architecture for this positioning is evident.
 - (c) The Kangxi Emperor's paramount concern was dynastic continuity rather than ceremonial succession purity or the expectations of individual princes. This is demonstrated across six decades of governance.
 - (d) The emperor's governing principle — the state cannot be without a ruler — required that he preserve a continuity mechanism responsive to wartime uncertainties. This principle is articulated and observable.
 - (e) The emperor's death during active wartime conditions, while the preferred strategic successor remained absent, activated a continuity mechanism that Kangxi had deliberately constructed but intentionally left undisclosed. The circumstances aligned precisely with those conditions.
 - (f) The accession of the Yongzheng Emperor was therefore legitimate within the constitutional logic of Qing imperial statecraft, even absent explicit textual proof of subjective intent. Legitimacy arose from structural coherence, not from documentary formalism.

XIII. THE CRUCIAL DISTINCTION: CONSTITUTIONAL LEGITIMACY VS SUBJECTIVE INTENT

88. The Court should recognise a critical analytical distinction that has sometimes blurred in opposing arguments.
89. The legitimacy of Yongzheng's succession does not depend upon proving that Kangxi consciously formulated the specific thought:

I shall position Yinzhen as contingency successor to activate if I die during wartime while Yinti remains absent.

90. That would require proof of subjective intent that is, by its nature, difficult to establish conclusively centuries after the event, across a cultural and linguistic distance, in a system where deliberate secrecy was statecraft.
91. Rather, legitimacy arises from demonstrating that:
- (a) Kangxi deliberately constructed an institutional architecture responsive to succession risk — this is evident from his choices over decades;
 - (b) that architecture necessarily created conditions under which Yinzheng would be the operationally viable continuity successor under wartime circumstances — this is undeniable given the positioning of Yinti and the preservation of Yinzheng;
 - (c) when those circumstances materialised, the succession that followed was therefore the coherent operation of that deliberately constituted system — this is logically entailed by items (a) and (b) and the material facts of 1722; and
 - (d) the system itself reflected constitutional principles — continuity-first governance, dynastic stabilisation, avoidance of succession vacuum — that Kangxi had consistently demonstrated throughout his reign — this is historically abundantly evident.
92. Legitimacy thus arises not from proving subjective intent to this specific succession, but from demonstrating that the succession emerged from the coherent operation of an institutional system deliberately shaped by a sovereign whose governing philosophy and demonstrated conduct made such a system necessary.
93. This is constitutionally sound jurisprudence. It honours both:
- the limitations of historical proof regarding subjective intent; and
 - the legitimate need to ground succession legitimacy in observable governance architecture and demonstrated principles.

XIV. YINTI'S RESISTANCE AND THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN EMOTIONAL GRIEVANCE AND CONSTITUTIONAL INVALIDITY

94. The objection may note that Yinti resisted fiercely after the accession, suggesting he did not accept the contingency structure. Respectfully, this conflates two distinct categories — subjective disappointment and objective constitutional invalidity. These are not equivalent.

95. Yinti's resistance was entirely understandable:
- he had accumulated genuine legitimacy capital;
 - he likely perceived himself as advancing toward succession; and
 - he was deprived of that culmination not through failure, incompetence, or disgrace, but through the timing of Kangxi's death.
96. But understandable grievance is not equivalent to superior legal entitlement. Indeed, the distinction between emotional legitimacy and constitutional necessity lies at the heart of this dispute.
97. Yinti's perspective was shaped by:
- personal ambition;
 - perceived expectation; and
 - unfinished succession momentum.
98. Kangxi's perspective, by contrast, was shaped by:
- dynastic continuity;
 - wartime stability;
 - factional containment; and
 - sovereign fiduciary duty.
99. Those perspectives need not align. And history repeatedly demonstrates that the Kangxi Emperor consistently subordinated the former to the latter.
100. Moreover, Yinti's resistance actually reinforces the legitimacy of the contingency framework rather than undermining it. If Yinti had been genuinely blind to the contingency structure, his resistance would appear as protest against unannounced usurpation. But if Yinti understood (even if reluctantly) that Kangxi had preserved a conditional succession structure, his resistance becomes the understandable protest of a claimant whose ideal succession pathway was interrupted by timing — not by his own failure.
101. The emotional intensity of Yinti's later resistance supports the proposition that:
- he genuinely believed himself close to succession;
 - he viewed the throne as within his reach; and

- he experienced the outcome as personal defeat caused not by disqualification, but by historical interruption.
102. Such reactions are psychologically predictable even if the contingency succession itself remained both structurally sound and consistent with Kangxi's demonstrated governing philosophy.
103. The Court must therefore distinguish between:
- the strategic foresight of the sovereign (which created a coherent institutional system); and
 - the emotional reactions of disappointed claimants (which explain resistance, not constitutional invalidity).
104. The former governs the legitimacy of the succession framework. The latter merely explains the turbulence that followed its activation.

XV. CONCLUSION

105. The succession of the Yongzheng Emperor cannot properly be analysed through the narrow lens of deathbed textual formalism alone. The proper inquiry is structural, fiduciary, constitutional, and systemic.
106. When the totality of the evidence is viewed holistically:
- the vacuum theory becomes inconsistent with the Kangxi Emperor's demonstrated foresight;
 - the notion of reckless succession exposure becomes implausible given his principle that *the state cannot be without a ruler for a single day*;
 - the notion that Kangxi would preserve Yinzhen as a merely administrative officer while tolerating dangerous succession risk becomes operationally incoherent; and
 - the contingency framework emerges as the only reconstruction consistent with:
 - the emperor's demonstrated conduct;
 - his governing philosophy;
 - the wartime circumstances;

- his fiduciary obligations toward dynastic continuity; and
 - the constitutional logic he articulated and lived.
107. The throne was not seized opportunistically in violation of the Kangxi Emperor's intentions. It passed according to the only continuity architecture consistent with:
- the demonstrated priorities of a sovereign who had spent six decades preserving the Qing dynasty;
 - the institutional positioning he deliberately created;
 - the constitutional principles he repeatedly articulated; and
 - the material circumstances that activated the system he had deliberately constructed.
108. The Kangxi Emperor's governing principle — 国一日不可无君, *the state cannot be without a ruler for a single day* — was not merely aphorism. It was constitutional imperative. And it necessarily required the preservation of a continuity mechanism that would ensure the dynasty never faced a succession vacuum, regardless of when imperial death occurred.
109. When those conditions materialised, that mechanism activated.
110. The legitimacy of Yongzheng's accession therefore rests not upon proving subjective intent to this specific succession, but upon demonstrating that the succession was the coherent operation of an institutional system deliberately shaped by a sovereign whose governing philosophy made such a system constitutionally necessary.
111. Judgment should therefore be entered affirming the legitimacy of the Yongzheng Emperor's accession.

Respectfully submitted,

On behalf of the constitutional integrity of Qing imperial statecraft