

## To Visualize or Not to Visualize: Commemorating the Suppression of Revolt in Early Qing China

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Students of Chinese art history may be unfamiliar with visualizations of the suppression of revolts, but the sheer number and significance of such pictures in late imperial China should not be overlooked. Compared to major genres of Chinese painting, such as landscape, representations of birds, flowers, or the human figure, depictions of revolts constitute a marginalized subject matter. Yet during the Ming dynasty (1368–1644), imagery drawn from the careers of officials gained tremendously in popularity. Functioning as visual *curricula vitae*, paintings sponsored by or for officials depicted the highlights of their public lives, including their supervisory roles in suppressing revolts locally and on the frontier.<sup>1</sup> Kept within families and often viewed within intimate circles rather than in prominent collections, most of these paintings are no longer extant. Furthermore, they are usually not registered in traditional Chinese painting catalogues. However, the frequent references in anthologies of scholars-officials testify to their prevalence in the visual culture of elites. Moreover, the representation of suppressing revolt was not confined to the circles of officials and the borders of China, nor was interest in the subject matter interrupted by the transition from the Ming to the Qing dynasty (1644–1911).

For example, paintings of Japanese pirates (fig. 1.1), made by late Ming commercial workshops, used the mode of career imagery to commemorate the governor-general Hu Zongxian (1512–1565), who was in charge of a campaign against pirates. The handscroll depicts him and other officers successfully leading Ming soldiers to rescue local people from an attack by pirates. In addition to the commercialization of career imagery for the domestic market, Chinese officials who went to Korea to help resist Toyotomi Hideyoshi's invasion of the peninsula in 1592 transmitted this visual culture to Chosŏn (1392–1910).<sup>2</sup>

The Manchus who established the Qing dynasty also embraced this visual trend. In 1635, Hong Taiji (1592–1643) compiled the *Pictorial Veritable Records*

<sup>1</sup> For the marginalized subject matter, see Ma, *Kehua Zhanxun*. For the following discussion of the Ming images of revolt, see Ma, "Military Achievement and Official Accomplishment."

<sup>2</sup> Ma, *Kehua Zhanxun*, 93–94.





FIGURE 1.1 Attributed to Qiu Ying, *Japanese Pirates* (detail), seventeenth century. Handscroll, ink and color on silk, 32 × 523 cm. Historiographical Institute, University of Tokyo

of *Taizu* (fig. 1.2) to depict the career of his father, Nurgaci (1559–1626), the founder of the Qing empire.<sup>3</sup> The images emphasize Nurgaci's military success, including the suppression of tribal revolts and defeat of the Ming armies, and they appear to be a Qing imperial invention, combining the Han Chinese long-standing tradition of textual *Veritable Records*, the imperial commissions of chronicles of previous emperors, and the visual Ming elite tradition of commemorating an individual's achievements. Imperial interest in visualizing Qing military successes recurred during the Qianlong reign (1736–1796). The Qianlong emperor commissioned numerous images to depict campaigns

3 For the discussion of *Pictorial Veritable Records of Taizu*, see Ma, *Kehua Zhanxun*, 93–126.



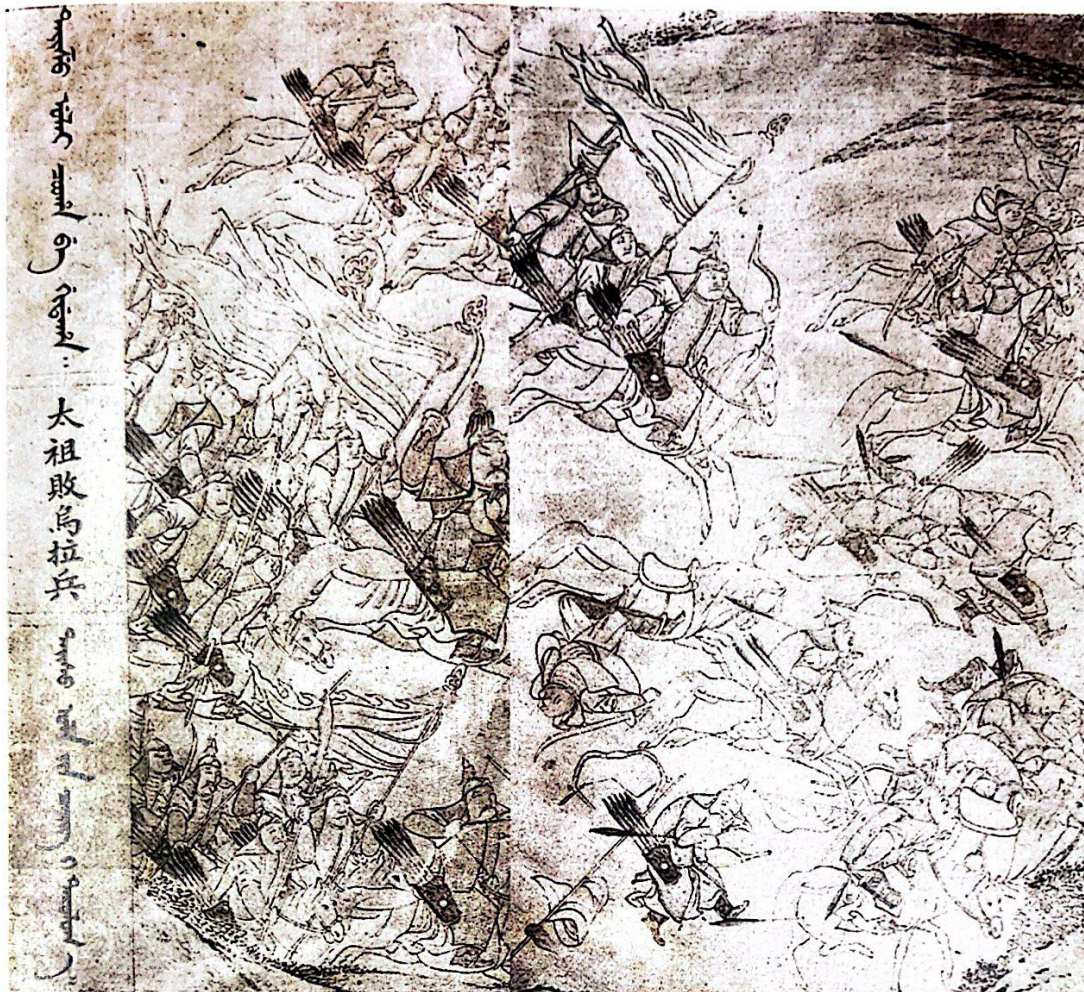


FIGURE 1.2 Anonymous, Taizu Defeating the Ula Army, in *The Pictorial Veritable Records of Taizu*, repainted during the Qianlong reign (1735–1795). Reprint 1920. Harvard-Yenching Library, Cambridge, MA

pacifying frontier peoples, including *The East Turkestan Campaign* (fig. 1.3), a set of sixteen copperplate prints drafted in Beijing by Jesuits, sent to Paris to be engraved and printed, and returned to China to be reprinted and circulated among imperial relatives, officials, book collectors, and diplomats.<sup>4</sup> Such campaign images became the imperial model for visualizing the suppression of revolts and the military splendor of the empire until the end of the Qing dynasty.

Between the time of Hong Taiji and the Qianlong emperor, no images of suppressions of revolt issued from the imperial court during the Kangxi reign (1662–1722). Interestingly, some rather grand commemorative pictures were commissioned for or by officials outside the court to communicate with the

<sup>4</sup> See <http://www.battle-of-qurman.com.cn/> for a bibliography of this printed set and other related images. For one of the most recent studies, see Ma, “War and Empire.”





FIGURE 1.3 J. P. Le Bas (after a drawing by Jean-Denis Attiret [1702–1768]), *The Victory of Khorgos*, in *The East Turkestan Campaign*, 1774. Copperplate engraving on paper, 55.4 × 90.8 cm. Cleveland Museum of Art

public. For instance, two very large incised stones (figs. 1.4 and 1.5) depicting the surrender of ethnic minorities to a local official Ohai (?–1725) were placed in the famous Ci'en Temple in Xi'an.<sup>5</sup> By contrast, why did the Kangxi emperor, who patronized many large-scale pictorial projects, not encourage the visualization of revolt suppressions under his reign? In this chapter, I explore the political and cultural contexts in which visualizing or not visualizing the suppression of revolt was part of the pictorial, textual, and ritual matrix of commemorating military achievements of officials, the emperor, and the state in early Qing China.<sup>6</sup>

## 1 The Self-Aggrandizing Case of Yao Qisheng

The trend for visualizing one's career, including the supervision of suppressing revolts, continued throughout the early Qing. Officials in early Qing followed their Ming dynasty predecessors by commemorating their achievements via

5 The whereabouts of the stones is not clear, but the rubbings measure 86.5 × 229.5 cm and 87.5 × 235.5 cm, respectively. The rubbings are in the collections of the Field Museum, Chicago, and of the Academia Sinica Institute of History and Philology Fu Sinian Memorial Library, Taiwan. Chen, *Da Ci-En Sizhi*, 39.

6 For a more detailed discussion of the first three sections of this chapter, see Ma, "A Re-Examination of the Manchu Culture of Martial Prowess."





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FIGURE 1.4 Anonymous, *The Submission of Red Miao*, eighteenth century. Rubbing on paper, 86.5 × 229.5 cm. Fu Ssu-nien Library, Institute of History, Academia Sinica, Taipei

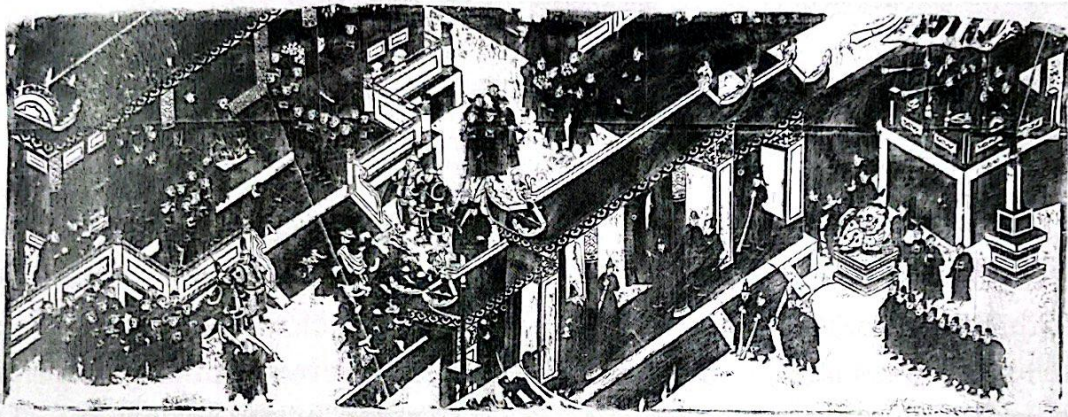


FIGURE 1.5 Anonymous, *The Black Barbarians Pledge Allegiance*, eighteenth century. Rubbing on paper, 87.5 × 235.5 cm. Fu Ssu-nien Library, Institute of History, Academia Sinica, Taipei

career imagery,<sup>7</sup> but they did not adhere to the Ming patterns. Not only did they go beyond major themes related to revolts such as military confrontations and ceremonies after pacification, to minor events such as transporting logistic material,<sup>8</sup> but they also greatly enlarged the format of the images, as in the aforementioned case of Ohai.

Among the typical handscroll and album paintings of revolts, the images sponsored by Yao Qisheng (1624–1684) were extraordinary. First, he commissioned a set of fifty large-size woodblock-printed images, *Prince Kang's Great Achievement of Pacifying Four Provinces* (32 × 64 cm) (fig. 1.6), affixed with fifty

7 For reproductions of the Qing images, see National Museum of China, *Zhongguo Guojia*.

8 Yongzong, *Heyin Siku Quanshu*, 92–97.



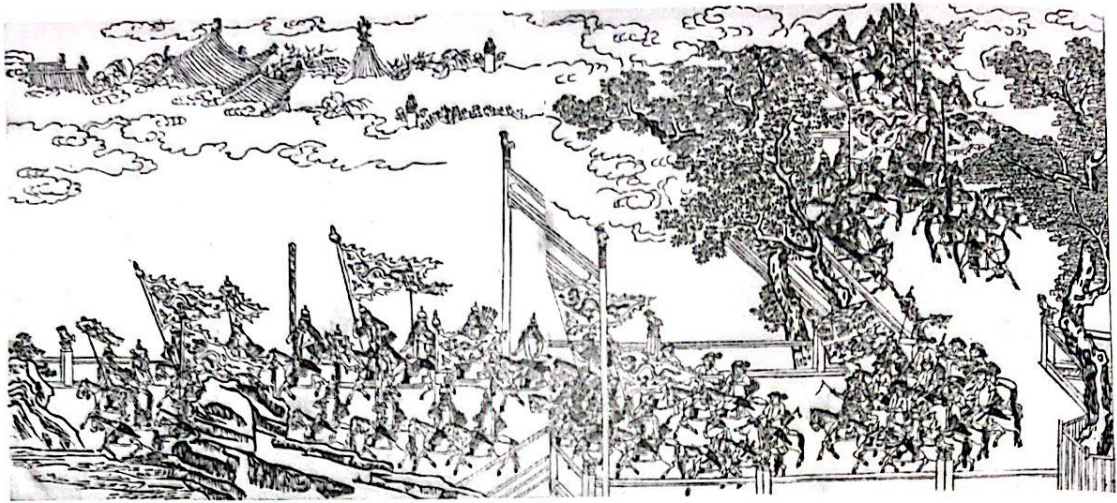


FIGURE 1.6 Anonymous, Prince Kang Receiving Orders to Pacify the South, in *Prince Kang's Great Achievement of Pacifying Four Provinces*, seventeenth century. Woodblock print on paper, 32 × 64 cm. National Archives of Japan, Tokyo

pages of colophons composed by local elites.<sup>9</sup> Yao may also have been the patron of a large screen with these fifty pictures. Both the prints and the screen commemorate Yao's supervisor, Giyešu (1645–1697), also known as Prince Kang, the commander in chief of the Qing armies against the revolt of three Han Chinese feudatories (1673–1681).<sup>10</sup> Yao's career trajectory corresponded with Giyešu's military charge. After raising an army of several hundred men to assist Giyešu in 1674, which successfully battled several uprisings, Yao was quickly promoted to the governor-generalship of the Fujian province in 1678.<sup>11</sup> The events selected for representation in *Prince Kang's Great Achievement* not only chronicle Giyešu's military achievement but also mark Yao's contribution. Indeed, when the later *Collected Eulogies from Fujian* was compiled to praise Yao's accomplishments in this province,<sup>12</sup> thirteen of sixteen illustrations in the introductory section, "Pacifying the Sea" (fig. 1.7), came from *Prince Kang's Great Achievement*. Both the format of the screen and the fifty colophons in *Prince Kang's Great Achievement* indicate Yao's interest in pictorial and textual publicity.

The *Collected Eulogies from Fujian* bear witness to public support. This is an astonishing collection of twenty-eight volumes of eulogies authored by local writers. All told, it comprises more than one thousand pieces of prose and

9 The National Palace Museum, Taipei, and the National Archives of Japan, Tokyo, both have one complete set of *Prince Kang's Great Achievement of Pacifying Four Provinces*.

10 Anonymous, *Lifu Jiazhuan*, 621–648.

11 For a discussion of Yao Qisheng's career, see Qinfang, "Yao Qisheng."

12 Anonymous, *Min Song Huibian*. Shanghai Museum also has a copy of *Collected Eulogies from Fujian*.



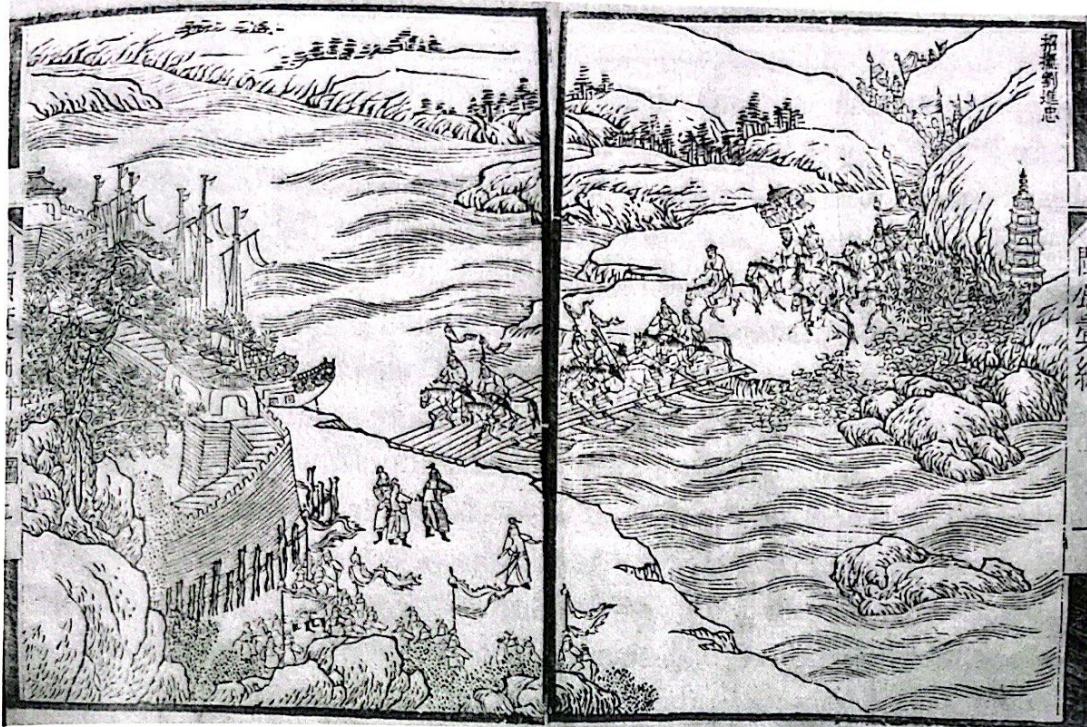


FIGURE 1.7 Anonymous, Offering Amnesty to Liu Jinzhong, in "Pacifying the Sea", in *Collected Eulogies from Fujian*, seventeenth century. Woodblock print on paper. Shanghai Library, Shanghai

poetry from all counties in Fujian. The sheer number of eulogies was probably meant to demonstrate local endorsement of Yao, particularly after he lost the full command powers in the field to Shi Lang (1621–1696). Shi would eventually destroy the Zheng family in Taiwan (near Fujian) and receive from the Kangxi emperor in the ninth month (lunar calendar) of 1683 the hereditary title of the "Marquis Who Pacified the Sea."<sup>13</sup> Interestingly, just one month after Shi received the title, a stele praising Yao's contribution to Fujian was installed by "all scholars, farmers, artisans and merchants in Fujian,"<sup>14</sup> a common phrase indicating all subjects. Emphasis on the zealous support of local people can also be found in the phrase "Fujian subjects' compilation," used in lieu of editorial recognition in Yao's memorials and announcements in the *Collected Eulogies from Fujian*.<sup>15</sup> The extant edition of *Collected Eulogies from Fujian* also contains a posthumous account of Yao's life authored by "all subjects in the province."<sup>16</sup> Since the preface and all the eulogies were written when Yao was still alive, the *Collected Eulogies from Fujian* were likely compiled under Yao's

13 Shi, *Shilang Nianpu*, 476.

14 Anonymous, *Min Song Huibian*, 31.

15 *Ibid.*, 117.

16 *Ibid.*, 85.



auspices but published immediately after his sudden death with the emphasis on the support from Fujian subjects.

Appeal to public sentiment is also apparent in both sections of images in the *Collected Eulogies from Fujian*. The first section, "Pacifying the Sea," downplays the glamorous display of Qing armies in *Prince Kang's Great Achievement* and instead addresses Yao's military and nonviolent (by offering amnesty) strategies to bring peace. The second section, "Reexpansion of the Borders of Two Counties," points to the manner in which his government benefited his subjects and to their gratitude.<sup>17</sup> Together these two pictorial sections emphasized Yao's service to the general public in Fujian.

Yao's textual and visual stress on public endorsement might have been related to his competition with Shi. Yao was particularly resentful because Shi could not have succeeded without Yao's help. As a former commander of the enemy Zheng's left vanguard, Shi could not have won the Kangxi emperor's trust without the support of Yao and other officials.<sup>18</sup> Shi's successful acquisition of the full powers in the field of all military decisions therefore must have been galling to Yao. In addition, even though Yao also assisted Shi during the Taiwan campaign, the emperor did not recognize the former's effort. The emperor bestowed upon Shi the title of marquis, but later blamed Yao as empty and boastful.<sup>19</sup> The "public" endorsement of Yao's contribution to Fujian in the *Collected Eulogies from Fujian* might have offered some compensation, but he probably remained furious at Shi, and he died just two months later.<sup>20</sup>

## 2 The Not-to-Visualize Response: The Case of Shi Lang

Shi Lang, Yao's competitor, also had a commemorative compilation made to record his military achievement. The only extant edition is a manuscript, but the prefaces indicate that the first of two related commemorative projects, *Eulogizing the Pacification of the South*,<sup>21</sup> was published after Shi's ennoblement and return to Fujian at the end of the eleventh month of 1683. In spring of 1684, Shi's memorials and announcements were added, and the whole was published as *Memorials of the Pacification of the South*.<sup>22</sup> Although the extant manuscript is based on a nineteenth-century edition of *The Pacification of*

17 Ibid., 67–83.

18 Chen, "Yao Qisheng," 36–39.

19 Ibid., 66.

20 Ibid.

21 Shi, *Jinghai Jishi*, 101.

22 Ibid., 101.



*the Sea*,<sup>23</sup> compiled later by Shi's descendants with additional records, a portion of the laudatory verses and all the prefaces and the memorials are preserved.

The timing of Shi's 1684 *Memorials of the Pacification of the South* immediately after Yao's 1683 *Collected Eulogies*, and the similarity of their major contents, namely, eulogies and memorials, suggest that Shi's compilation responded directly to Yao's. Yao's *Collected Eulogies* was compiled by "all Fujian subjects," but Shi's *Memorials of the Pacification of the South* made a similar claim in the prefaces that the "Fujian people" initiated the project.<sup>24</sup> If the twenty-eight volumes of local eulogies in Yao's *Collected Eulogies* were meant to demonstrate public support for him, Shi too needed public sentiment on his side.

However, in contrast to "all Fujian subjects" in Yao's book, Shi's compilation referred particularly to championing from members of the local "scholar-gentry." The prefaces announced that "Fujian people" had called for their composition, but attached after each of Shi's memorial was a similar endorsement that "the original comment [was] jointly published by scholar-gentry from all eight prefectures of Fujian."<sup>25</sup> The emphasis on the scholar-gentry population is demonstrated also by the authorship of the only two eulogies in the extant manuscript. One was written by Zheng Kaiji, a famous scholar-official, the other by Zhou Pengbai, an obscure fellow who signs as "[Shi's] scholar student."<sup>26</sup>

If Yao relied on the sheer number of eulogies to demonstrate the support from the general public, Shi depended on the authority of scholar-gentry to endorse his accomplishment. Although we do not know how many verses were published in *Memorials of the Pacification of the South*, the survival of only two scholars' eulogies in the extant manuscript indicates that the original number of eulogies was likely not great. Yet, it is also possible that *Memorials of the Pacification of the South* only published those verses by scholars or that later editors preserved scholars' verses exclusively. In either case, since scholars' authority often outweighed that of other social groups in late imperial China, to Shi their praise likely carried a weight comparable to that voiced by the general public in Yao's compilation.

The unusual "original comment jointly published by scholar-gentry from all eight prefectures of Fujian," in particular, shows how Shi's compilation highlighted the joint and objective endorsement from Fujian elites and responded

23 Ibid., 99–101.

24 Ibid., prefaces 3, 7, 11.

25 Ibid., 4, 8–9, 12, 17, 19–21, 24, 26, 37, 42, 45–46, 48, 50, 53, 62–63, 65–66, 69.

26 Ibid., prefaces 17, 21.



to Yao's book. Unlike the numerous eulogies written by individuals in Yao's compilation, the comments in Shi's were "jointly published by scholar-gentry" as objectively representing public opinion. All comments after Shi's memorials praised his virtue, talent, and contribution. Among them, some specifically supported him in his competition with Yao. The comment that follows Shi's memorial requesting full powers in the field of all military decisions defends Shi, attesting to his ability to take full command and praising his competence at whatever military rank he might hold.<sup>27</sup> Another comment that follows Shi's victorious report acclaims Shi's achievement and poses the rhetorical question, "How could Fujian people praise one out of ten thousands of Shi's accomplishment even if they compose eulogies?"<sup>28</sup> as if referring to the numerous laudatory verses in Yao's *Collected Eulogies*. In fact, commentaries were rarely included in the anthology genre of memorials, let alone those issuing from an obscure scholar-gentry body. The special "original comment published by scholar-gentry from all eight prefectures of Fujian" was a deliberate innovation in response to Yao's compilation. The elites' joint comments on Shi's memorials were meant to represent objective evaluation, in contrast to the countless, subjective eulogies flattering Yao.

The absence of illustrations in *Memorials of the Pacification of the South*, too, was probably a strategy reacting to Yao's visualization. Although whether the original edition of *Memorials of the Pacification of the South* contains pictures cannot be confirmed, none of the prefaces in the extant manuscript signals the existence of images. Given their authors' emphasis on the Fujian scholar-gentry, these preface writers were aware of Shi's strategy for his compilation. If illustrations represented an important aspect of that earlier compilation, they would probably have mentioned the existence of images. It is thus likely that the original woodblock publication did not contain any illustrations. This was in contrast to Yao's vigorous employment of images, including *Prince Kang's Great Achievement* with fifty large-size woodblock-printed images, the large screen with the same fifty pictures, and the illustrations in *Collected Eulogies from Fujian*; Shi's rejection of visualization was probably a deliberate choice.

If Shi responded to the numerous eulogies in Yao's compilation by emphasizing the objectivity of the scholar-gentry, the rejection of images functioned similarly. Both Yao's and Shi's compilations belong to the category of collections of memorials written solely by officeholders as a vehicle for communicating local or national affairs to the emperor. Collections of memorials were often compiled by the authors, their colleagues, advisors, staff, descendants,

27 Ibid., 12.

28 Ibid., 37.



or later admirers as objective and official records of an event or an individual. Most such collections contain only memorials, which were usually composed solely of text, nevertheless, a few collections included images to commemorate the protagonists. The addition of illustrations testifies to the popularity of career imagery in late imperial China, but that addition more or less changed the objective nature of memorials as official documents. In this respect, Yao's illustrations were somewhat anomalous among other collections, while Shi chose to conform to norms and its ostensibly objective preservation of text alone. The unusual comments in *Memorials of the Pacification of the South* indicate that Shi's compiling strategy was not, however, conservative. The return to the text-only objective standard and the attachment of neutral comments by scholar-gentry (as opposed to eulogies by a broad swath of the population) affirmed the objectivity of elites' joint support. Later editors of *The Pacification of the South* added only objective documents, such as the Kangxi emperor's verses, and they did not visualize Shi's endeavor either.

### 3 The Official Histories of Pacifying Campaigns

The case of Shi's *Memorials of the Pacification of the South* confirmed the authority of official documents in commemorative projects and the popularity of such compilations during the Kangxi reign. On the one hand, since many of those involved in the suppression of revolts commissioned commemorative projects,<sup>29</sup> these compilations competed with each other to justify the protagonists' contribution and therefore pursued new strategies, such as comments by scholar-gentry in Shi's compilation to generate alliance. On the other hand, Shi's memorials were compiled as objective records to testify to his endeavors during the pacification and as reference for the scholar-gentry's comments. Although the current title, *The Pacification of the South*, might have appeared twenty years after the original compilation,<sup>30</sup> it was not uncommon to compile officials' memorials of specific suppression of revolt since the Ming dynasty. Such collections often used the formula "The Pacification of X" in their titles and functioned as both an account of the X campaign and a commemorative project of an official. Compared to narrative accounts of suppressing revolt, the compilations of memorials as historical documents appeared to be objective yet appealing. There were indeed so many such compilations that at least

<sup>29</sup> Other than Yao and Shi, at least Yang Jie and Wang Deyi also had their commemorative compilations made. See Yongzong, *Heyin Siku Quanshu*, 1199–1200.

<sup>30</sup> Shi, *Jinghai Jishi*, 101.



by the Qianlong period, they were often classified as historical accounts (usually as unofficial history, since they were not compiled by the state),<sup>31</sup> rather than collections of memorials.

I believe this is one of the contexts in which the Kangxi court invented a new genre of *fanglue* (official history of pacifying campaigns), which was issued by the emperor and compiled by officials who edited and put into chronological order the imperial decrees, officials' memorials, and other official documents of the suppression. Modern scholars consider *fanglue* a unique Qing invention of historical accounts and categorize it as a subcategory of *jishi benmo ti* (historical narratives of major events).<sup>32</sup> The compilers of the first *fanglue* also quoted past narratives of pacifications as preceding examples of the Kangxi compilation.<sup>33</sup> Nonetheless, previous narrative accounts of pacification usually do not include imperial decrees or other official documents. By contrast, *fanglue* bear striking similarity to officials' commemorative projects in that both chronologize official documents. The popularity of officials' commemorative compilations likely contributed to the invention of *fanglue*.<sup>34</sup>

Although the term *fanglue* was sometimes associated with leader's intelligence, the Qing *fanglue* as a historical account composed of imperial decrees and other official documents has been regarded less as a corpus of wise imperial commands than as an official history of pacifying campaigns. It was the objectivity of the official materials that transcended the personal dimension of both *fanglue* and collections of officials' memorials.

Another context in which the Kangxi emperor issued the compilation of *fanglue* was in his promotion of military rites and martial culture. Besides commissioning *fanglue*, the Kangxi emperor developed a new set of state rituals after the successes of the pacifying campaigns: he would declare the successful completion of a campaign to the Imperial Academy (also the Confucian Temple) in the capital, install there a colossal stele to commemorate the victory, and then issue the compilation of *fanglue* as the official history of the pacifying campaign.<sup>35</sup> By announcing the military success and installing the monument of Manchu military prowess in the Confucian Temple, one of the most important locations of Han Chinese civilization, the Kangxi emperor transgressed the long-standing boundary between the civil and military realm and reversed the traditional Han Chinese hierarchy of civil merits over martial

31 Yongzong, *Heyin Siku Quanshu*, 1123–1202.

32 Yao, *Qing Dai Fanglue*, 194–195.

33 Ledehong, "Pingding Sanni Fanglue," 354.

34 Yao, *Qing Dai Fanglue*, 194–195.

35 Ma, *Kehua Zhanxun*, 142.



ones. The imperial appropriation of officials' commemorative compilations became not only the official history of pacifying campaigns but also part of the imperialization of military culture.

#### 4 The Lack of Visualization at the Kangxi Court

Even though the Kangxi emperor personally led armies and won battles over the Dzungars, he did not commission any images related to those military events. Visualizing the suppression of revolt was not included in the state's military rituals, even though the emperor sponsored many large scale pictorial projects, including the projection of an ideal, agricultural state in *Tilling and Weaving*,<sup>36</sup> the highlights of his reign in *Southern Inspection Tours* and *Sixtieth Birthday Celebration*,<sup>37</sup> and the representation of his imperial garden in *The Mountain Estate to Escape the Summer Heat*.<sup>38</sup> Given his obvious interest in image-making and the vigorous involvement of some of his officials in commemorative visualization of pacifying campaigns, why did the Kangxi emperor not sponsor images of the suppression of revolt?

The Kangxi emperor's detachment from his own martial achievement might explain his exclusion of visualizing the suppression of revolt. For example, his account in the *fanglue* of the Dzungar campaign did not emphasize his martial power but rather his sage character, as when he ate the same meager food as his soldiers.<sup>39</sup> He also changed the title of the Qing founder Nurgaci from "martial emperor" to "highest emperor."<sup>40</sup> It seems that he did not want to underscore an emperor's personal martial achievement. Rather, he aimed to imperialize the military culture by establishing the Manchu state rites of the stele, the declaration at the Imperial Academy, and *fanglue*. In contrast to the institutional dimensions of state rituals, commemorative images of the suppression of revolt in China were in his time associated with an individual's military accomplishment. We have seen with the case of Yao Qisheng that the early Qing witnessed the self-aggrandization of such visualization. Then, in the case of Shi Lang, images were omitted in favor of objectivity. In this context, the Kangxi emperor's exclusion of visualizations of revolt suppression could

36 Lo, "Yongzheng Emperor."

37 Ma, *Kehua Zhanxun*, 135-140.

38 Whiteman, *Where Dragon Veins Meet*; Ma, "The New Pictorial Canon of Imperial Gardens"; Strassberg and Whiteman, *Kangxi Emperor*.

39 Wenda, "Shengzu Ren," 354, 452.

40 Crossley, *Translucent Mirror*, 138.



be interpreted as a way to avoid a close personal connection to his own military accomplishments.

Visualizing or not visualizing the suppression of revolt, therefore, was not an inconsequential choice in early Qing. On the one hand, early Qing officials continued and developed Han Chinese patterns to commemorate and compete with each other with regard to their military achievements under Manchu rule. On the other hand, at the time when the Manchu began to stabilize their rule over China proper, the imperial commemoration of pacifying campaigns involved ethnic dynamics in the pictorial, textual, and ritual conduits. To the Manchu emperors, Han Chinese elites' cultural practices became significant alternatives of imperial traditions to acknowledge, reject, or appropriate. Through the transformation, the Manchu monarchs were able to assert the cultural hegemony of imperial Qing over the ruled Chinese society.

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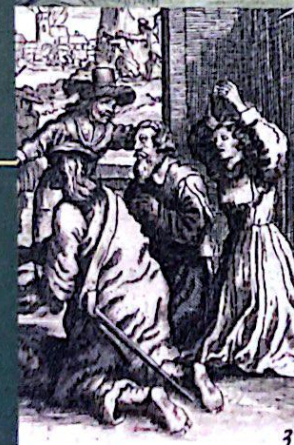


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