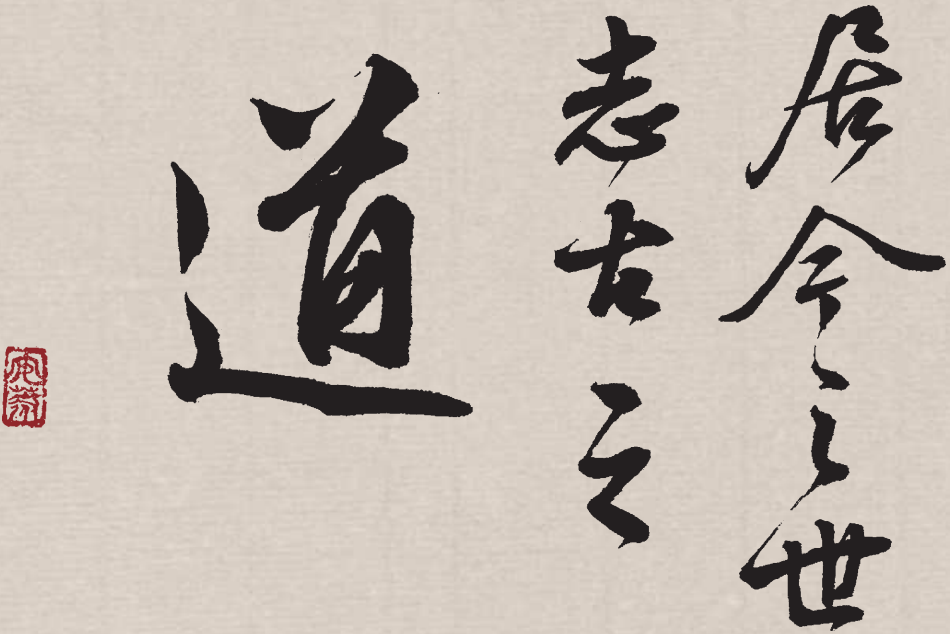


**Settled in the Present,
Committed to the Past**



Festschrift for Achim Mittag

Edited by
Fei Huang,
Dorothee Schaab-Hanke
and Martin Hanke

Settled in the Present, Committed to the Past

Festschrift for Achim Mittag
on the Occasion
of His 68th Birthday

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Dorothee Schaab-Hanke
and Martin Hanke

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The calligraphy on the cover, created by Dan-wei Zhu-Mittag (2024), 居今之世，志古之道, alludes to a passage in Chap. 18 of the *Shiji* 史記 ('The Scribes' Records) that serves as the governing word of this volume. For more details, see the introduction.

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The Mutiny of 1560: Testing Zhu Guozhen's (1557–1632) *Yongchuang xiaopin* as a Source of Micro-History

Ulrich THEOBALD*

The “Chinese History” volumes (*Zhongguo lishi* 中国历史 1-3) of the *Encyclopaedia of China* (*Zhongguo da baike quanshu* 中国大百科全书) include an entry on Zhu Guozhen's 朱國禎 (1557–1632) *Yongchuang xiaopin* 湧幢小品 (Minuscule (or: Unworthy) Book from the Yongchuang Studio).¹ This is quite surprising because this book does not figure among the eminent historiographical writings and is published in just a few series specifically dedicated to the typical Chinese genre of “brush notes” (*biji* 筆記), which are loosely arranged collections of “eruditeness in miscellaneous knowledge”.² Chinese bibliographers, therefore, do not acknowledge the *biji* genre as a bibliographical category but allot books written in this style into different thematic and functional categories.

The *Yongchuang xiaopin* has a particular informative value concerning historical events or facts. Yet Ju Mingku criticises it for its “confusing arrangement, errors in citing ancient books, and promoting superstition”.³ The introductory summary (*tiyao* 提要) of the Jinbu shuju 進步書局 edition says that Zhu “collected remarkable stories (*qiwen* 奇聞) and anecdotes (*yishi* 逸事) from old and modern times and compiled them into a book.”⁴

This article, therefore, attempts to test the historiographical reliability of Zhu's book by critically analysing the chapter on a mutiny that occurred in 1560 in Nanjing. Zhu's text will be compared with different accounts of the event. To evaluate Zhu's merits as a historiographer – which the *Zhongguo da baike quanshu* acknowledges – the concept of “micro-history” will be adhered to.

We will start with an overview of Zhu Guozhen's life and his works, and then characterise the style and contents of the *Yongchuang xiaopin*. The core part of this article is a translation and a discussion of Zhu's chapter on the Nanjing mutiny, which will include some thoughts on the style and arrangement and – most importantly – a comparison with other sources on the mutiny of 1560. It will be seen that the *Yongchuan xiaopin* can be characterised as a book that makes extensive use of micro-history, with an emphasis on small units of time, space, and action.⁵ The book of Zhu offers unique insights from a perspective that shows the behaviour and reactions of actors at close quarters.

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I want to thank my students Chen Chuyi, Dai Yan, Samuel Chun Ho Lee, Wu Wen-Die, and Zhang Yiteng for helping me understand the spoken passages of the original text. Also, much thanks to Scott Stelle, who checked the English.

1 Xie and Wei 1992.

2 On the *biji* genre, see Ma 1986; Trauzettel 2004; Zhang 2012.

3 Ju 2008, 54.

4 *Yongchuang xiaopin*, “Tiyao” [131].

5 Magnússon 2003, 709.

Zhu Guozhen and His Works

Zhu Guozhen, courtesy name Wenning 文寧, style Pinghan 平涵, Jiu'an 虬庵 or [Owner of the] Yongchuang Pavilion 湧幢亭, hailed from Wucheng 烏程 (today part of Huzhou 湖州, Zhejiang). He obtained the *juren* 舉人 degree in 1588 and graduated as a *jinsshi* 進士 the following year. The first significant step of his career was as head of the Directorate of Education (*guozijian jijiu* 國子監祭酒). In 1623, Zhu was appointed Minister of Rites (*libu shangshu* 禮部尚書) and concurrently Grand Academician (*daxueshi* 大學士) of the Hall of Literary Profundity (Wenyuange 文淵閣). A year later, he was transferred to the post of Minister of Revenue (*hubu shangshu* 戶部尚書), which was accompanied by the title of Grand Academician of the Hall of Military Glory (Wuyingdian 武英殿). In this function, he presided over the compilation team of the "Veritable Annals" of that period (*guoshi shilu* 國史實錄). Also, he held, for half a year, the post of Senior Grand Secretary of the Grand Secretariat (*neige shoufu* 內閣首輔), who was the informal Chief Counsellor of the sovereign.

Under the domination of the eunuch tyrant Wei Zhongxian 魏忠賢 (1568–1627), Zhu fell victim to the usual way of getting rid of competitors in the high echelons of the administration by bringing forward censorial charges of mismanagement. He, therefore, cited illness as a reason for withdrawing from office and thus escaped a worse fate. Later, he was even granted the honorific title of Junior Preceptor (*shaoshi* 少師) of the sovereign, and then that of Senior Preceptor of the Heir Apparent (*taizi taishi* 太子太師). He was also appointed Minister of Personnel (*libu shangshu* 吏部尚書). But he soon decided to retire and dedicated himself to writing historiographical books. His formal posthumous name was Zhu Wensugong 朱文肅公, the "Cultured-Reverent Lord".⁶

In the bibliographical chapters (*Yuwen zhi* 藝文志) in the official dynastic history *Mingshi* 明史, three compilations from Zhu Guozhen's hands are listed, namely *Ming shigai* 明史概 (Outline of Ming History, or *Huang-Ming shigai* 皇明史概 (Outline of the History of the August Ming) and *Huang-Ming jizhuan* 皇明紀傳 (Biographies of the August Ming) in the historiography section,⁷ and the *Yongchuang xiaopin* in the section of "fiction writers" (*xiaoshuojia lei* 小說家類) of the *Mingshi*.⁸ In the literary field, Zhu's collected writings are *Zhu Wensu yiji* 朱文肅遺集 and *Pinghan shiwen chao* 平涵詩文鈔.

The historiographical writings of Zhu Guozhen are rated in the descriptive catalogue *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao* 四庫全書總目提要. It says, referring to the *Yongchuang xiaopin*, that

其是非不甚失真，在明季說部之中，猶為質實。而貪多務得，使蕪穢汨沒其菁華，轉有沙中金屑之憾。

He is close to veracity in the question of discerning between correctness and falsehood, and among the narrative semi-history writings of the Ming period, [Zhu's writings] are of a considerable quality. However, the book is also criticised for its greed for too many [details] and the pursuit of getting [as much information as possible], which leads to the essentials getting lost in the confines of the thickets [of details]. [There is therefore] a similar kind of regret as when gold dust is lost in the sand.⁹

The compilers of the *Siku quanshu*, therefore, decided not to include the text of the *Yongchuang xiaopin* in the *Siku* series.

6 *Mingshi* 240.6251. Zhu Guozhen's biography in the *Mingshi* is an appendix to that of Zhu Guozuo 朱國祚 (1558–1624).

7 *Mingshi* 97.2379.

8 *Mingshi* 98.2434.

9 *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao* 128.10ab.

The *Huang-Ming shigai* is not a book of its own but a collection of several different types of historiographical texts, namely the chronicles *Dazheng ji* 大政記 (Records of the Grand Politics), original title *Huang-Ming dazheng ji* 皇明大政記 (Records of the Grand Politics of the August Ming) and *Huang-Ming dashi ji* 皇明大事記 (Records of the Grand Events of the August Ming), the *Huang-Ming daxun ji* 皇明大訓記 (Records of Important Instructions of the August Ming), and the two biographical collections of participants in the foundation of the Ming dynasty, *Huang-Ming kaiguo chen zhuan* 皇明開國臣傳, and *Huang-Ming xunguo chen zhuan* 皇明遜國臣傳.

Style and Contents of the *Yongchuang xiaopin*

The title of the book is derived from the shape of one of Zhu's buildings (a *ting* 亭-type pavilion), which was made of wood, but in its hexagonal construction, resembled the typical Buddhist stone pillars (*shichuang* 石幢) with their round, umbrella-shaped top, reminiscent of the yurts (*qionglu* 穹廬) of the pastoral folks, which can be freely erected anywhere. This, in turn, symbolised the unrestrained wandering of thoughts and themes that "poured out" (*yongchu* 湧出) from the mind.¹⁰

The *Yongchuang xiaopin* was printed during the Wanli reign-period 萬曆 (1573–1619), with a copy in 12 thread-bound booklets owned by the Library of Beijing Normal University (Beijing Shifan Daxue 北京師範大學), and reprinted in the Tianqi reign-period 天啟 (1621–1627; a copy is owned by the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C.). The most easily accessible version of the *Yongchuang xiaopin* is in the series *Biji xiaoshuo daguan* 筆記小說大觀, which was initially published in several batches during the 1920s by Jinbu shuju in Shanghai. In 1959 Zhonghua shuju in Shanghai published a modern edition in the series *Ming-Qing biji congkan* 明清筆記叢刊. The most recent edition was published in 2012 by Shanghai guji chubanshe in the series *Lidai biji xiaoshuo daguan* 歷代筆記小說大觀.

Zhu Guozhen worked on the book for more than ten years, from his retirement from public affairs in 1609 to 1621. The book is divided in 32 *juan* and comprises 1,452 brief chapters with a wide range of topics.¹¹ The book thus belongs to the genre of *biji*-style books ("brush notes"). Yet this also means it presents its readers not only historical facts but also with issues of curiosity and stories circulating in educated circles.

Regarding historical facts, the book speaks about the political and administrative system, politics, economy, technology (including the iron smelters of Zunhua 遵化 and the oil wells of Yan'an 延安), military (including advanced weapons of iron and their use in "martial arts"), customs and habits, flora and fauna, Buddhism and Daoism, biographies of individuals, etc. Zhu provides many interesting details to his readers, like the realisation on the local level of the commutation of the corvée service (*yaoyi* 徭役) into monetary payment by the single-whip law (*yitiaobian fa* 一條鞭法), accounts on the incursions of Wokou 倭寇 pirates and peasant rebellions and the urban anti-taxation protests organised by Wang Chaozuo 王朝佐 and Ge Xian 葛賢 during the Longqing 隆慶 (1567–1572) and Wanli reign-periods. Zhu's *biji* book is beneficial for learning more about administrative details and daily life during the late Ming period. Zhu's sources were his experiences and hearsay (*jianwen* 見聞), personal investigations and research, and some archival documents from the palace administration, details of which found entrance into his *Huang-Ming shigai*.

¹⁰ *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao* 128.10ab.

¹¹ Li and Lü 1996, 1980.

Zhu Guozhen's Text

振武兵變

The Revolt of the "Recruits of Invigorated Martiality" [Nanjing, in 1560]

嘉靖中，倭寇起南京募兵三千，營曰振武。三十九年庚申正月二十五日，殺侍郎黃懋官。懋官，福建晉江人。

During the Jiajing reign-period, when the Wokou pirates were active, 3,000 troops were recruited in Nanjing who were called the "[Regiment] of Invigorated Martiality". On the day Jiajing 39/1/25 [20 Feb 1560]¹² in the year of the cyclical number *gengshen*, they killed Vice Minister [of Revenue] Huang Maoguan, who hailed from Jinjiang in the province of Fujian.

鄉舉時，夢千餘人持梃相向官，府尹以嚴辯稱，改前官。署中多聚蜂結，巢甚盛，謂為吉徵。變之前。數日，遍體皆粟，寫十神牌祈禳，無故自焚。家人見一緋袍者坐堂上，懋官至，徐徐引去，曰：「是我家先人也」。卒不察。

During the provincial examination, he once dreamed that a thousand men were standing against him with clubs in their hands. During his term as metropolitan prefect, he was known as a strict and meticulous officer. Before his transfer [to Nanjing?], countless bees gathered in the official residence and built a huge nest. This was interpreted as an auspicious omen.¹³ Several days before the revolt, [Huang] was seized by a tremor that shook his entire body, after which he had ten spirit tablets written to pray. Yet the tablets spontaneously combusted. A household member of Huang's saw a person with a red official gown sitting in the great hall, and when Huang Maoguan arrived, he slowly walked away, and [who?] said, "This is one of our ancestors." [The people] did not finally investigate this kind of omen.

是日祥既以苛刻失眾心，有數十卒哄於院門，親戚多請自便，不聽。然內懼，出其眷屬，匿撫臺署中，而密以帖邀內廠何綬、督府徐鵬舉、李廷竹，大司馬張鰲，少司馬李遂。至懋官出迎，諸卒隨入。懋官以金帛布地餌之，不退，益大集。

Since [Huang's] harshness had caused the loss of the hearts of the troops, dozens of them assembled at the gate and shouted around. [Huang's] family members urged them to go, but they did not listen. Gripped by great fear, the family members were taken to the Grand Coordinator's residence to hide themselves. Huang sent secret notes to invite the [Director] of the Palace Depot He Shou, the Chief Military Commissioners Xu Pengju and Li Tingzhu, the Minister of War Zhang Ao, and Vice Minister of War Li Sui. When Huang went out to welcome them, the rebellious troops followed suit. Huang thereupon had gold and brocade (i.e., money) spread on the ground for the soldiers to take and had them served with food, but instead of withdrawing the crowds kept growing larger.

綬等惶恐，將往估計廳俟變。而懋官自後踰垣體，魁壯不能上。一家僮自下推之，僕地氣息，僅屬抵一民家羅姓者口出語不可辨，但曰：「馬石渚方員外誤我」。馬為前尚書，坤方則名攸躋，贊其事者。

He Shou and the others were terrified and planned to go to the Tax Calculation Office to await the outcome. Huang attempted to climb over the [backyard] wall, but he appeared too tall and

12 The date is not correct. The official chronicle *Ming Shizong shilu* 481.4a [8031] records the event for Jiajing 39/2/dingsi(=21), corresponding to 17 Mar 1560. The killing happened the day before.

13 The blogger pinocchio 2023 wonders whether they weren't wasps (*huangchao* 黃蜂), so a wasp's nest (*huangfengchao* 黃蜂巢) could be a (hidden) pun on the rebel Huang Chao 黃巢 (835–884).

heavy; therefore, a household servant had to support him from below. Still, he fell forward, [was injured] and could only breathe with great difficulty. When he arrived at the house of a family called Luo, his words were barely understandable, but he said that “Ma Shizhu and Vice Director Fang had wronged him”. Ma was the former minister Ma Kun, and the other person Fang Youji who [had both] endorsed Huang’s decision [to cut the troops’ salaries].

第中劫掠一空，械其故妻之柩，跡懋官得其處。時綏、鵬舉等亦至，懋官牽鵬舉衣呼諸卒為爺，曰發廩發廩。鵬舉稍諭止之，罵曰：「草包何為！」張鏊呼曰：「幸為我賞懋官」。不聽，數卒翻屋上木飛瓦。及鵬舉冠，乃各棄去，曰：「力不能保公矣」。然猶抱鵬舉足，不肯舍。一侍者手撥之，乃脫。

His official residence was plundered entirely, and his late wife’s coffin was cut open.¹⁴ [The marauding troops] pursued Huang’s tracks and found him. At that moment, He Shou and Xu Pengju also reached him, and Huang grabbed Xu’s robe and pleaded with the soldiers as “high lords” and exclaimed: “Open the granaries! Open the granaries!” Yet Xu calmed down [the advancing troops], asking: “What can you scarecrows do?” [Yet] Zhang Ao called out: “Please spare [Huang] Maoguan for my sake!”, but the troops did not listen. Several turned over the roof construction, threw tiles, hit Xu’s hat,¹⁵ and drove them away. [He Shou and Xu] explained that “we can no longer protect you, Sir”, but Huang grabbed Xu’s foot with all his force. Only when a servant struck his hands did he let go.

卒持挺亂下，其家僮臥腹上，受捶無數，面決眼突。挺及懋官身。一卒持銃擊腦後，垂死。拽至大中橋，以繩裸懸坊上，紐不作結，每一懸輒擲下，初猶作呻吟，聲數擲絕矣。

When the revolting soldiers approached with clubs in their hands, Huang’s private servants threw themselves on [Huang’s] belly [to protect him]. They received numerous blows, so their faces were unrecognisable, and their eyes popped out. The clubs also fell onto Huang’s body. One of the soldiers struck him on the back of the head with an arquebus (or a halberd), and he died. They dragged his body to the Dazhong Bridge and hung his naked body on the gate pillar with a rope. Because the knob of the rope was not knotted tightly, the body swung up and down, and with each jerk, another moan sounded from Huang’s mouth, and he finally expired.

劉世延後贖其屍，殯而歸之。

Liu Shiyan later ransomed Huang’s corpse for money and had him properly buried in his hometown.¹⁶

Discussion

The introductory sentence is very lucid, like a briefing of the story’s subject. It also imitates, in a very concise way, the standard formulas of official biographies by telling the office and the hometown of the person what the text is talking about.

A literary aspect of the story is found in the next part of the chapter, where dreams and omens are mentioned, typical attributes of fiction. Zhu failed to embed these occurrences into the main story, for instance, that the good omen of the bees was a deceptive prediction of a successful term or

14 *xie* 械=*jie* 截. The fact that the coffin was still in the house suggests that the woman had only recently died, perhaps even from the revolt, possibly from fear, as the above passage *ran nei ju* 然內懼 (but his wife was very afraid) might suggest, or even by suicide after Huang had fled over the wall.

15 The blogger pinocchio 2023 assumes that Huang Maoguan tried to hide himself behind Xu Pengju.

16 *Yongchuang xiaopin* 32.3b-4a [389f].

that the accidental ignition of the spirit tablets was an evil presage. The third strange occurrence, namely the appearance of the ancestor's ghost, is likewise not pursued in the narration.

It must be acknowledged how lively and realistically he portrayed the horror of the situation when the revolting soldiers threatened Huang's family members, robbed his household and even destroyed a sacred object like the coffin of his wife. Zhu describes in very empathetic words how Huang was injured, how he was – exhausted and barely able to speak – surrounded by the rebels and hysterically grabbed the clothes, and then the foot, of his colleague, and how the marauders treated the unconscious man, stripping off his clothes and hanging him up on the bridge gate until he expired.

Another aspect worth mentioning is that Zhu could be sure that his readers were familiar with the background of the revolt. He only says that the troops no longer trusted the civilian authorities, but he gives no reasons for the revolt apart from mentioning Huang's "harshness" (*keke* 苛刻). It becomes also apparent that the troops had not received their pay and suffered hunger. Zhu, however, does not clarify Huang's conclusion that Ma Kun 馬坤 (1494–1570) and Fang Youji 方攸躋 "did wrong him". At least he describes how Xu Pengju 徐鵬舉 (d. 1571) and He Shou 何綬 left Huang alone with the mutineers. All this symbolises how Huang's colleagues blamed the chaos on the already "finished man".

Historical Background

In the next section, I would like to reconstruct the background and the course of the mutiny as described in other sources.

A kind of official version of the revolt can be found in the *Mingshi* 明史, where the background of the mutiny is described in the following way:¹⁷

振武營者，尚書張璠募健兒以禦倭。素驕悍。舊制，南軍有妻者，月糧米一石；無者，減其四；春秋二仲月，米石折銀五錢。馬坤掌南戶部，奏減折色之一，督儲侍郎黃懋官又奏革募補者妻糧，諸軍大怨。代坤者蔡克廉方病，諸軍以歲饑求復折色故額於懋官。懋官不可，給餉又踰期。

The *Zhenwu* units were created by Zhang Ao [in 1545] to recruit fighters, who were notoriously arrogant and fierce, to deal with the Wokou pirates.¹⁸ Married soldiers among them were, according to old rules, given a monthly ration of 1 *dan* (c. 103 litres) of grain or 5 *qian* of silver in the mid-spring and mid-autumn months; and the unmarried troops only 0.6 *dan*.¹⁹ Ma Kun, at the time the Nanjing Minister of Revenue, wanted to convert the monetary pay into grain rations and reduce it by one *qian*. In addition to this reduction, Huang Maoguan, who was vice supervisor of grain tax (i.e., Vice Minister of Revenue)²⁰ or vice chief supervisor of grain tax,²¹ reduced, with approval of the court, the salaries of married soldiers to the level of unmarried ones. This filled all the soldiers with resentment. The acting minister of Revenue, Cai Kelian, was ill, and Huang thus had free rein in daily decisions. The hungry troops, who had not been given sufficient rations for a year, requested payment in grain according to the old quota. Huang refused and, to make things worse, delayed the distribution of the last payment.

¹⁷ *Mingshi* 205.5421.

¹⁸ *Mingshi* 89.2183.

¹⁹ During the Jiajing reign, the official rice price ranged between 178 and 400 *qian* per *dan*. Cf. Peng 2007, 501.

²⁰ *Mingshi* 89.2183.

²¹ *Mingshi* 18.246.

The *Mingshi* also says the Zhenwu troops were generally “cunning and deceitful” (*wu lai zi* 無賴子), and Huang had to discipline them (*yixue zhi* 抑削之).²² In Li Sui’s 李遂 (1504–1566) biography, they are called “arrogant and fierce” (*jiaohan* 驕悍).²³

三十九年二月都肄日，振武卒鼓譟懋官署。懋官急招鑿及守備太監何綬、魏國公徐鵬舉、臨淮侯李庭竹及遂至，諸營軍已甲而入。予之銀，爭攫之。懋官見勢洶洶，越垣投吏舍。亂卒隨及。鵬舉、鑿慰解，不聽。竟戕懋官，裸其屍於市。

In Jiajing 39/2 (Mar 1560), when military review and training were to be held, the troops revolted and surrounded Huang’s residence. Huang summoned Zhao Ao, Grand Defender-Supervisor (a eunuch post) He Shou, Xu Pengju (who was [later] Duke of Wei), Lin Tingzhu (the [eventual] Marquis of Linhuai), and [Li] Sui. When the armed troops entered the official residence, Huang paid them some money, but they scrambled to catch him. Seeing how menacingly they were coming for him, he could only flee over the wall, took refuge in the house of a government secretary, and was trapped by the soldiers. The latter did not accept the entreaties of [Xu] Pengju and [Zhao] Ao, killed him and exposed his naked body on the market.²⁴

It is also a historical fact that Xu and Zhang tried to appease the marauders. They produced a (fake?) imperial decree on yellow paper (*huangzhi* 黃紙)²⁵ promising to pay 10,000 taels, but the soldiers tore it up. Eventually, the officials were able to disperse the crowd by the promise to pay them 100,000 taels (*shiwan jin* 十萬金).²⁶ Li Sui even announced a day later that he would report that Huang had died when he fell from the wall and that the soldiers had merely desecrated his body and not contributed to Huang’s death. He promised to restore the ancient modes of payment and compensation for the reduced pay in money. But after this, he had the ringleaders (25 persons) arrested, reported everything to the imperial court, and explained the inglorious role of He Shou, Li Tingzhu 李廷竹, and Zhang Ao 張鑿 (d. 1572). They were dismissed, while three of the leaders – among them a certain Zhou Shan 周山 – were executed, and the others were sent into military exile.²⁷ Huang was posthumously stripped of his title and rank. Li Sui was rewarded with a promotion to the position of Left Vice Minister of War (*bingbu zuo shilang* 兵部左侍郎) and then Consultant Minister in Nanjing (*canzan shangshu* 參贊尚書). The obstinate *Zhenwu* troops were dissolved in 1567.²⁸

More facts about Huang’s career can be learnt from Wan Sitong’s 萬斯同 (1638–1702) draft of the official Ming history, *Mingshi(gao)* 明史(稿). Huang hailed from Putian 莆田, obtained the *jinshi* degree in 1538 and was first Director of the Bureau of Appointments (*wenxuan langzhong* 文選郎中) in the Ministry of Personnel (*libu* 吏部), was then promoted to the position of metropolitan prefect (*yin* 尹) of Shuntian 順天 (i.e., Beijing), and in 1557 transferred to Nanjing with the function of Vice Minister of Revenue and chief supervisor of grain tax.²⁹ The

22 *Mingshi* 89.2183.

23 *Mingshi* 205.5421.

24 *Mingshi* 205.5421.

25 The term *huangzhi* does generally refer to imperial decrees, and specifically to decrees of amnesty, cf. *Hanyu da cidian*, vol. 12, 990. This is congruent with Li Zhu’s promise to officially play down the role of the revolters in the death of Huang Maoguan.

26 *Mingshi* 205.5421.

27 *Mingshi* 199.5273.

28 *Mingshi* 89.2183.

29 *Mingshi(gao)* 290.19b-20a.

version of Wan confirms that Huang reported to Beijing the plan to cut allowances for family members (*zou ge mubuzhe qi liang* 奏革募補者妻糧).³⁰ Huang also denied the troops' request to have the salaries converted into grain because of inflated prices in the grain market. He further delayed the distribution of payment. The *Zhenwu* troops are characterised as arrogant, fierce and unruly (*jiaohan, bu ke zhi* 驕悍, 不可制; *su bu xun yueshu* 素不徇約束). The reason was that they consisted not of the best soldiers from the Nanjing capital guards but were drafted from among unreliable "loitering layabouts and vagrants" (*jie shijing youshou, wu jie* 皆市井游手, 無藉).³¹ The course of the mutiny is described as known. The harassed Huang Maoguan 黃懋官 (1516–1560) ordered the granaries to be opened, but Xu Pengju tried to reason with the soldiers. However, they insulted the officers and began throwing roof tiles at them, so everyone except the injured Huang withdrew. His body was dragged to the market, where he was hanged and beaten with whips and clubs. His snow-white corpse impressed the crowd.³²

Some information on the background of the mutiny can also be found in the "Veritable Records of Emperor Shizong" (*Shizong shilu* 世宗實錄), the official chronicle of the Jiajing reign-period. The mutiny is here also led back to a cutting of the salaries by Ma Kun.³³ However, the *Ming Shizong shilu* depicts Huang Maoguan as having a cruel and exploitative character (*xing kexue* 性刻削). He ordered all military units to compile detailed monthly lists about troops that had deserted (and for which no rice or salary was due anymore; *song zhi ce bi jie qi taowang duogua* 送支冊必詰其逃亡多寡) and cut the allowance for married soldiers. He also delayed the pay, which was regularly due in the first ten-day week of each month (*xun* 旬), and it was still not paid at the end of the second ten-day week. In addition to the delay, market prices for grain had risen to 8 *qian* per *dan* 石, so the troops demanded grain instead of money.

The "Veritable Records" then explain that the *Zhenwu* troops once established by Zhang Ao were unreliable and of minor quality (*jie e shao youshou, wu lai zhe* 皆惡少游手, 無賴者).³⁴ The mutiny itself is dealt with relatively shortly. The troops assembled before Huang's residence, and when he fled over the backyard wall, he fell to the ground and could not rise again. The dramatic narrative of his end, as seen in Zhu Guozhen's account, is missing altogether. Still, the text says that the mutineers "hung up his body on the marketplace and subjected it to severe humiliation while cheering fiercely" to the spectacle (*xuan qi shi yu shi, tong jia diru, reng da hu xie* 懸其屍于市, 痛加詆辱, 仍大呼脅).³⁵ The "Veritable Records" also give an account of Li Zhu's attempts to conceal the actual cause of Huang Maoguan's death from the imperial court. He had paid out one tael per person to make good for the reduction of grain distribution.³⁶

We must not forget Zhu Guozhen's historiographical report, *Huang-Ming dashi ji*.³⁷ The story of the Nanjing mutiny is embedded here in a whole fascicle on military revolts. Zhu relates that in 1555, a Wokou raid on Nanjing made better defence measures necessary, to which the *Zhenwu* brigade with 3,000 troops belonged, which had to protect the imperial grave Xiaoling 孝

30 *Mingshi(gao)* 290.20a.

31 *Mingshi(gao)* 290.20ab.

32 *Mingshi(gao)* 290.21a.

33 *Ming Shizong shilu* 481.4a [8031].

34 *Ming Shizong shilu* 481.4ab [8031f].

35 *Ming Shizong shilu* 481.4b [8032].

36 *Ming Shizong shilu* 481.4b [8032].

37 *Huang-Ming dashi ji* 30.29a–38a.

陵.³⁸ The *Zhenwu* brigade consisted explicitly not of “spineless leftover men” of military households (*yuding xunnuo* 餘丁巽懦) but of brave and fierce guys (*xiaohan* 驍悍) that were roving around in the Jiang-Huai 江淮 region.

The reason for the monetary shortage was as follows:

其儲自浙江、江西、湖廣南直隸州縣派解原有定額。戊申邊餉索餉甚急。嚴旨催發。尚書方鈍皇懼不知所出。上言帑藏空虛狀，因條便宜七事。中言原派南戶部倉糧該徵本色，暫借三年，改折一年，轉發太倉銀庫濟邊。其南本色自三十一年至三十五年拖欠者改追折色，通限一年內完解銀庫。由是南額大虧，因定春秋二仲月，每石予折色銀伍錢。及馬坤為南戶部尚書奏減為四錢。[...]懋官既至，按籍纔給半年。

The allocated [grain] from the prefectures and districts of the provinces of Zhejiang, Jiangxi, Huguang, and Southern Zhili had fixed quotas. In the year *wushen* (1548), there was an urgent demand for military supplies, and [the throne] strictly ordered to expedite [grain]. Minister Fang Dun was alarmed because he did not know where to find the [grain] needed. Reporting that the [Nanjing] treasury was empty, he proposed seven measures. Among these, he suggested that the grain initially allocated to the granary of the Nanjing Ministry of Revenue, which was supposed to be collected in kind, should be borrowed for three years in the form of cash. The amount for one year should be transferred to the [southern] metropolitan Silver Treasury to aid the frontier supply. The grain arrears from the southern regions from 1552 to 1556 should be repaid in monetary form within one year and sent to the [Nanjing] Silver Treasury. As a result, the [yields from the] southern quotas were significantly reduced. Because of this shortage, Ma Kun asked the court to reduce the troops' pay to 4 *qian*. [...] When Huang Maoguan took over, he checked the registers and handed out grain or cash for half a year.³⁹

This information is exclusively provided in Zhu Guozhen's *Huang-Ming dashi ji*. Huang thereupon submitted a request to the court that the annual northbound transports of grain be diverted to repay the previous debts accumulated in Nanjing because the situation remained complicated. When Huang decided to cut the extra allowances for married troops and enforced the exact registering of deserters, the grumbling among the troops became louder. Huang's resistance to the army's request to have their pay converted into rice in the face of market prices of 8 *qian* per *dan* and the delay of pay were the igniting sparks. Just on the day of the military review on Jiajing 39/2/20 (16 Mar 1560), the revolting troops surrounded Huang's residence. He jumped over the wall, fled despite a grave injury, uttered his curse of Ma Kun's and Fang Youji's treason, and was then killed. No more details are given about his attempted flight, and the scene of the troops encountering him is thoroughly missing. The story of the four omens is then presented in small-scale characters. The annotation includes a further event during the final attack on Huang. One servant prostrated, lying on his (Huang's) stomach, and both died.⁴⁰ The fake character of Li Sui's report to the throne is stressed in the words that “someone personally saw how Huang fell to death”.⁴¹

38 There were two more professional units, namely the “orthodox brigade” (*zhengying* 正營), and the “unorthodox brigade” (*qiyong* 奇營) whose troops were carefully selected. *Huang-Ming dashi ji* 30.29b.

39 *Huang-Ming dashi ji* 30.30a.

40 *Huang-Ming dashi ji* 30.30b.

41 *Huang-Ming dashi ji* 30.31a.

A very detailed report on the mutiny can be found in Jiao Hong's 焦竑 (1540–1620) *Guochao xianzheng lu* 國朝獻徵錄 (Testimonies on [Worthies] of Our Dynasty Presented to the Throne), a collection of biographies that includes a chapter on the *Gengshi jishi* 庚申紀事 (Affair of the *Gengshen* Year). This chapter was the base for Zhu Guozhen's brush notes, and Zhu quoted many sentences verbatim from Jiao's book. The *Guochao xianzheng lu* was highly factual and provided essential services in critical studies on the *Mingshi*, and must thus be seen as a very reliable source. It also includes the stories of the dreams and omens, but at the end of the account, which means that Zhu Guozhen turned around the order of the narrative and fed the readers of his *Yongchuang xiaopin* with the bizarre events first before turning to the historical facts.

Jiao reports that there was a drought in Nanjing in 1559, resulting in grain prices rising to "several hundred cash" per *dou* 斗 (several taels per *dan*).⁴² In addition, the depletion of the local treasury forced the authorities to hold back the payment of salaries. Ma Kun, the Nanjing Minister of Revenue, reduced the spring-and-autumn pay to save grain. Huang Maoguan, Vice Minister of Revenue, continued this policy, abolished the allowances for families, and delayed the monthly distribution of rice, thus saving a considerable amount of grain. When the officers complained, he scolded them: "Why aren't you scum of squaddies (*qiuzu* 囚卒) dying off? Hasn't it been the case since ancient times [that troops had to suffer hunger from time to time]?"⁴³

On Jiajing 39/2/15 (11th March 1560), during the troop review at the Grand Storehouse (*dacang* 大倉), soldiers blocked the roads, clamouring and demanding grain. Huang Maoguan retorted, "I want all you scum to starve (*zheng yu piao er zhu qiuzu* 正欲茅爾諸囚卒). If I don't give you [rice], will you be able to hang me in the marketplace (*wu zi bu ji er, neng xuan wo yu shi xie* 吾自不給爾, 能懸我於市耶)?"⁴⁴ This statement further fuelled unrest among the soldiers. Additionally, the price of commodities sold in the training camps was manipulated, and finally, the soldiers exclaimed, "We must kill this noisy wretch." (*bi zhu ci jueshe nu* 必誅此馱舌奴).⁴⁵ Ten days later, during the military review, Zhou Shan and his supporters led dozens of soldiers surrounding the grain depot. Huang Maoguan rushed out and sought support from the office guards, but they were unwilling to protect him. Still, he claimed, "How can this scum of soldiers hang me on the marketplace?" and "What can these rats do (*shi shubei he neng wei* 是鼠輩何能為)?" In the meantime, he ordered his family members to hide and his servants to carry away valuable things. When He Shou, Xu Pengju, Li Tingzhu, Zhang Ao, and Li Sui arrived, Huang greeted them in plain clothes (*bianfu* 便服).⁴⁶ To get rid of the revolting troops, he had money spread on the ground and had them given food. After his accident when climbing over the wall, Huang reached the dwellings of the Luo family, whose male head served as a non-ranked official (*lijia* 吏家, *lishu* 吏舍). An old man finally guided the dignitaries to the place where Huang was sitting on the ground, wept tears, and implored them: "Sirs, please protect me! (*zhu tong xing bao wo* 諸公幸保我)" He regained hope, but when the soldiers approached, Huang grabbed Xu Pengju's robe, crying out loudly. Several soldiers appeared with money in their hands, wanting to return it and requesting that the granaries be opened instead. As told above, the reason was that grain had become so dear that the troops preferred direct distribution of rice instead of having it

42 *Guochao xianzheng lu* 32.19a.

43 *Guochao xianzheng lu* 32.19b.

44 *Guochao xianzheng lu* 32.19b.

45 *Guochao xianzheng lu* 32.20a.

46 *Guochao xianzheng lu* 32.20a.

purchased on the market. When some troops rushed forward with clubs in their hands, [Xu Pengju]⁴⁷ stopped them and scolded them with the words: “What can you straw men do (*ruo caonang he neng* 若草囊何能)? If you don’t leave the Minister of Revenue alone, [we will] burn all of your sort to dead ashes.” Zhang Ao, for his part, bowed towards the soldiers and requested, “Please spare Maoguan for my sake!” but the marauders did not listen and began to throw tiles until the colleagues left Huang alone.

The rest of the story is more or less identical to Zhu Guozhen’s chapter, including the report of the looting of Huang’s residence and the damage of his wife’s coffin. The half-dead Huang suffered the fate that the soldiers “did not know how to tie knots” (*bu jie niu jiefu* 不解紐結法) when they hung him up at the gate and shot arrows at him. While some people had tears in their eyes because of the tragic appearance of the snow-white body of the slain Vice Minister, others laughed about the drum-like noises that his body produced when an arrow pierced him. They called out mockingly, “Can you now still check your ledgers of the tax grain?” (*neng fu jian liangchubu xie* 能復檢糧儲簿耶).⁴⁸

The three strange occurrences by which Zhu Guozhen introduces the story are reported at the end in the version of Jiao Hong.

The *Yongchuang xiaopin* as a Book of Micro-History

A comparison of Zhu Guozhen’s *Yongchuang xiaopin* version of the 1560 mutiny with other sources shows two things. The first is that Zhu did not go beyond what other sources tell us. He did not invent details, nor did his version add substantial information that was not found anywhere else. Instead, it is the opposite case, namely that Zhu cut out basic facts concerning the background of the mutiny and focused on narrative elements that are not reported in official sources like *Mingshi* or *Ming Shizong shilu*. The second observation is that Zhu produced two versions of the Nanjing mutiny: one in the historiographical book *Huang-Ming dashi ji* and one in the “brush-notes” book *Yongchuang xiaopin*. Both versions overlap in some parts, but the most significant part of the latter, with the detailed story of Huang Maoguan’s attempted flight, desperation, and sad end, is not found in the history book. Both texts can thus be read in a complementary way. We also found that Zhu borrowed the story from Jiao Hong’s reliable history book *Guochao xianzheng lu* with slight changes and many abbreviations. An assessment of the *Yongchuang xiaopin* version thus goes hand in hand with Jiao’s extended narrative version. Both texts are not fiction but belong to a genre called micro-history.

If read in an isolated way, micro-history texts appear as meaningless fragments. Yet, when embedded in their historical context, they appear as tools that “highlight the diversity of life and promote an understanding of all the extant threads” of an event, as Sigurður Magnússon says.⁴⁹ While all other reports of the mutiny, providing much information on why and how the troops revolted, keep to the distance a historiographer has to respect, the version of Jiao/Zhu reduces the observation scale. It allows a realistic insight into the emotions of all actors, from the culprit

47 The troops “rushed towards Mao and Xu”, and it is therefore quite probable that Xu ordered them to stop (*shaoshao zhi zhi* 稍稍止之), and scolded them. This assumption is corroborated in Zhu Guozhen’s version, where Xu is named as the subject who brought the marauders to a halt.

48 *Guochao xianzheng lu* 32.21b.

49 Magnússon 2003, 723.

Huang and his colleagues, who kept their heads out of the noose down to the marauding troops. The Jiao/Zhu texts, with their “narrative exposition”,⁵⁰ thus provide an “epistemological foothold”⁵¹ by which the reader can better understand the human motivations and reactions during the event. Huang Maoguan, for instance, who is said in the historiographical texts to have a “harsh character”, is vividly depicted in the Jiao/Zhu version as someone who rudely scolded the hungry troops. His assassination by the soldiers can thus be much better understood than in the official versions of the revolt. Zhu Guozhen presented in his *Yongchuang xiaopin* an “emotionally organized”⁵² version of the Nanjing mutiny that reveals the human dimension of the story.

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The essays assembled in this volume have been contributed by long-standing collaborators, colleagues and friends, students and former students of Achim Mittag. The contributors are from Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Spain, Austria, North America, Mainland China and Taiwan, who came to know him through conferences, research projects, and sustained scholarly conversations, as well as through the daily university work, and they all have enriched his life and academic career.

If one reads the 29 articles contributed by altogether 30 contributors attentively, one will find that most of them discuss topics that Achim Mittag himself has already explored in one way or another and that the authors explicitly refer to these talks or publications. What holds the contributions together is a shared interest: a curiosity to know more than was hitherto known or thought, and to scrutinize a detail that turns out to be a piece of the puzzle that makes up the bigger picture.

The volume is divided into eight thematic sections, namely Part I: "Macrohistory Versus Microhistory", Part II: "Between Historical Geography and Travelogue", Part III: "Working on Texts", Part IV: "Society versus Individual", Part V: "Intellectual Debates in China's Past and Present", Part VI: "Memory Culture and Identity", Part VII: "Early Cultural Encounters with China and the Beginnings of Sinology", and Part VIII: "China Expertise and 'Greater China'".

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