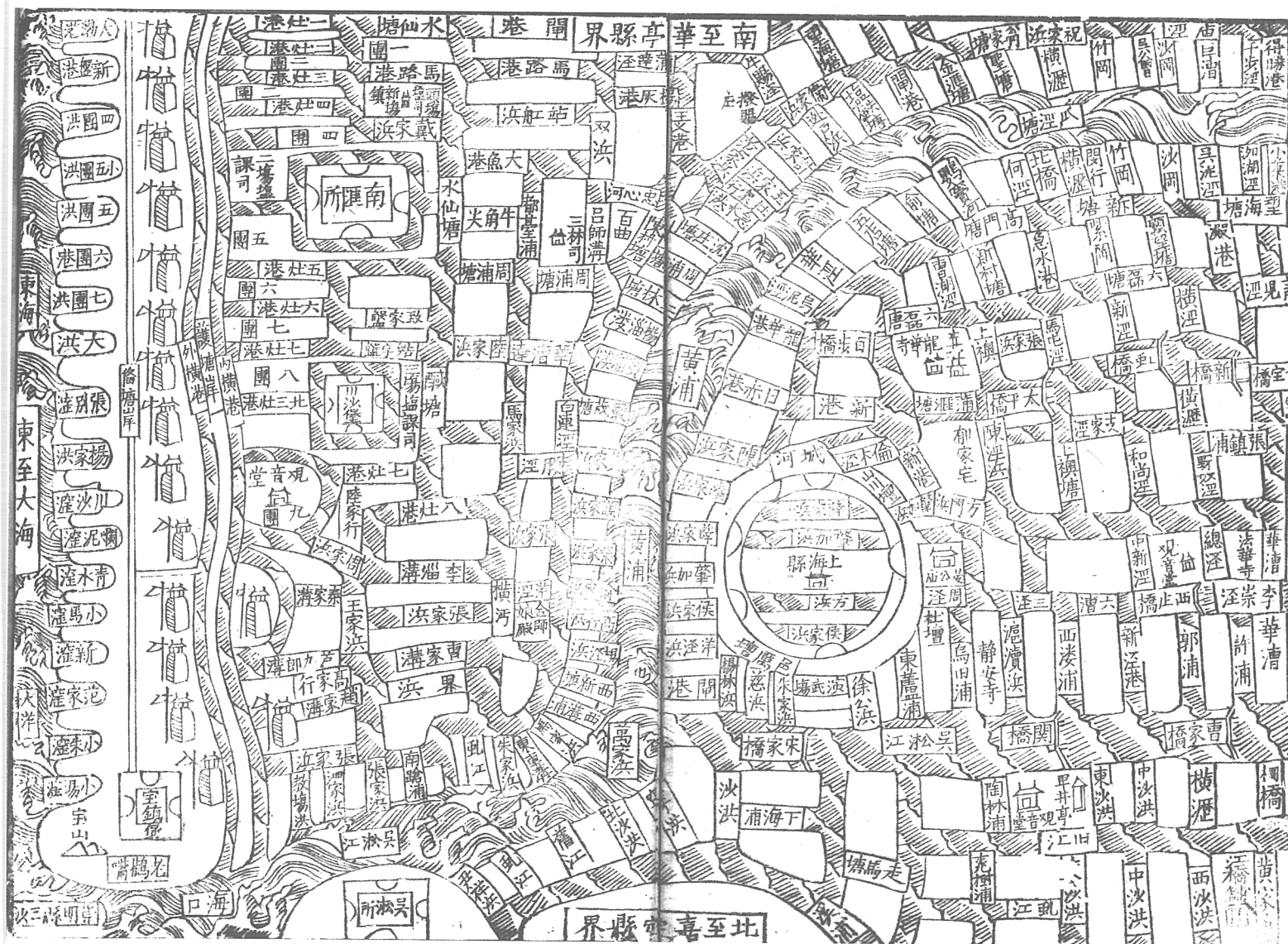


# Coming of age in Shanghai during the Ming-Qing transition

Yao Tinglin's (1628-after 1697)

*Record of the Successive Years*



明末的上海縣與周浦鎮（萬曆十六年木刻本上海縣志）

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I have encountered the very little known text I will discuss in these pages in the course of the investigations on Chinese official handbooks that I have been pursuing for several years now. Although it turned out not to be what I was looking for, it appeared to be so intrinsically interesting that I decided to study it nonetheless, and devoted quite an amount of time to analyzing it at my seminar at École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales. The present essay is based on these seminar readings, during which I benefitted from no little help on the part of my students.

I just spoke of “official handbooks”, that is, handbooks for *officials*. It is a fact that the vast majority of Chinese handbooks for administrators were intended for the ranking officials (or *guan* 官) that were appointed by the court and were politically accountable to the dynasty—such as, typically, the county magistrates for whom the most widely known handbooks have been written. But the Chinese imperial administration was not run just by ranking officials: there were many more personnel, of lesser status to be sure, but no less indispensable and sometimes definitely more indispensable than their superiors. Regrettably, very little literature aimed at those subaltern categories—either published or in manuscript form—has been preserved. The only and partial exception consists in the manuals written for the use of the private secretaries (or *muyou* 幕友) who flourished from the mid-seventeenth century and who, as their name indicates, were not actually state personnel, even though they were highly skilled administrators and played a crucial role in the field administration.

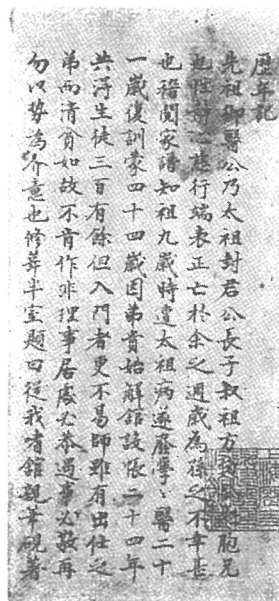
But how about less respected types—but no less important for the management of things—such as the private retainers of the officials (the *changsui* 長隨 and *jiaren* 家人) and, above all, the famous, or rather infamous, clerks (*lixu* 吏胥) that populated every office of the bureaucratic structure, from the ministries in the capital all the way down to the county sub-offices in the provinces? It was so easy for officials and literati to treat them as a bunch of corrupt underlings about whom the main problem was how to control them that in fact we know very little of their actual circumstances, methods of work, and mentality. So that one would die to see guidebooks and manuals of the sort I just mentioned, written by clerks and intended for clerks as serious professional literature, as opposed to official admonitions to be honest or sets of rules composed by their superiors to discipline them.

There the *Record of the Successive Years* makes its appearance. A few years ago Joseph



McDermott of Cambridge University, with whom I was discussing my interest in administrative manuals of every description, told me that he knew of a text written by a clerk and discussing his work that appeared to be fairly interesting. He had in particular read about it in an article by a Japanese scholar, whose complete citation he sent me later. And this is how I became acquainted with the *Linian ji*, first through the excellent article published by Kishimoto Mio in 1984, and then by studying the text itself.<sup>1</sup> Let me say from the start that if the *Linian ji* indeed devotes a sizable section to the years its author spent as a yamen clerk, it is in no way a handbook or a guide written for his colleagues. As we shall see, the section in question is a personal account, and a rather picaresque account at that, of the tribulations the author went through while filling a position that he hated and that he was only too glad to quit after about a decade. As already said, if I decided to spend time on the *Linian ji* despite the fact that it had nothing to do with my research on official handbooks, it is because it turned out to be an extraordinarily interesting and even striking document on Chinese society at the time of the Ming-Qing transition—or at least, of a certain Chinese society. Before trying to convey some idea of this, however, let me first give some more specific information about the text and its author.

As is suggested by its title, the *Linian ji* is a chronicle; in other words, it conforms to the annalistic format year by year, month by month and day by day that has been central to Chinese historical writing from its very origins. It is the chronicle of its author's life—so, an autobiography, and more specifically an “auto-chronology” (a “self-*nianpu*” 年譜 one might say). The author, whose name was Yao Tinglin 姚廷遴 was the scion of a lesser gentry family of Shanghai; he was born in 1628 and died at an unknown date after 1697, which is when his autobiography ends. He did not pass any examination and was never an official (as we just saw, he was a clerk for some time, and he did not boast



上海博物館藏的《曆年記》稿本

1. Yao Tinglin 姚廷遴, *Linian ji* 曆年記, in *Qingdai riji huichao* 清代日記匯抄, Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1982, pp. 39-168. Kishimoto Mio 岸本美緒, “Rekinenki ni miru Shinsho chihō shakai no seikatsu” 曆年記に見る清初地方社會の生活, *Shigaku zasshi*, XCV/6 (1986), pp. 53-77. See also the entry on the *Linian ji* in Lynn A. Struve, *The Ming-Qing Conflict, 1619-1683: A Historiography and Source Guide* (Ann Arbor, Association for Asian Studies, 1998), p. 247.

about it); likewise, there was nothing in his life or activities that could have led him to concentrate in his remembrances on one or several of the set roles in society to which well-established categories in biographical writing corresponded—like being an official, a *littérateur*, a scholar, an artist, an eccentric, a philanthropist, or whatever. Regarding all these socially acknowledged positions, or ways of life, Yao Tinglin was a nothing: in his early years he had been a kind of spoiled child and a lazy youth, and after stints in petty commerce, in agriculture, and in government service in a lowly position, he ended up a rural schoolteacher and a part-time small-scale agriculturist. Obviously, what was of interest for him in his own life and life-times was *change*: it was the incredibly varied and unexpected circumstances through which he and his family had been; and also—and this is a point that he stresses again and again—it was the dramatic political events he had witnessed and the staggering changes that the society and polity around him had experienced during his seven decades of life.

Another point that defines the nature of the *Linian ji* is that the text was in no way intended for publication, and probably not for circulation either. (The manuscript was found in the Shanghai library and published in its entirety for the first time in 1982.) As a result, Yao Tinglin was able to ignore altogether not only the conventions of formal biographical writing, but also, I might say, the rules of decorum and even good taste. Since he was writing for himself he could be, and he *was*, to a remarkable degree, totally candid on his life experiences and private behavior (including some fairly intimate details that one would never find in a “normal” autobiography), on the character and actions of his various relatives and connections, and so on. There are emotions and feelings in the *Linian ji*, a sense of moral outrage at places, but there is not much moralizing, very little self-justification, and above all, no posturing at all: in other words, we could hardly be farther from the sort of autobiography that was written for self-glorification (with whatever protestations of modesty) or with an eye to providing an example to one’s children and grandchildren.

Yao Tinglin says in his preface that he started writing the *Linian ji* in 1668, when he was forty-one, and then continued it in fits and starts. The abundance of detail and the precise dating, to the day, of every occurrence, including during the years before 1668, suggest that he may have relied on the entries of a diary, and if this is so then he might have kept the diary since perhaps age twelve. Whatever the case may have been, he clearly chose

from among his recollections or notes everything that seemed to him of interest or significance either in his own life or in direct connection with it; in other words, what he recorded in the *Linian ji* was his own private experiences, things that he had witnessed personally or that had been reported to him by eyewitnesses, sometimes things that were heard through the gossip and rumors whose circulation was part of everyday life in Shanghai, and more generally, things that had a direct impact on his life. What is noteworthy is that, more often than not, Yao Tinglin takes care to say that *he* witnessed this or that in person, or else that it was reported to him by such and such person, and so on; and what I find truly remarkable is that, despite this comparatively self-centered outlook, Yao Tinglin should be able to spread out such a rich and colorful tapestry of social life and drama. One rather simple reason, of course, is the time and place: Shanghai in the late Ming and early Qing was no backwater, and the events that attended the transition from one regime to the other were exceptionally rich in dramatic occurrences. Another reason might be, quite simply, the author himself, with all his candor, no-nonsense attitude, extreme curiosity and, precisely, sense of amazement.

In fact the *Linian ji* reads like a novel, with its moments of fun and its episodes of drama, its lengthy descriptions of places and things, its realistic and occasionally sardonic assessment of people's psychology and behavior, and above all, in the way it mingles the happenings in the lives of not particularly remarkable individuals with the larger tragedies of history. Incidentally, if it reads like a novel, then it is not a novel that reads easily. To be sure, the language is a very plain *wenyan*, mostly devoid of literary flourishes and with occasional colloquialisms. The problem is rather that the text was written as a sort of self-reflection, or should I say as a "remembrance of things past" for self-consumption, and that consequently Yao did not make any effort to adapt to a reader who might not understand right away every allusion to local realities and everyday practices, to language peculiarities, to places and to people that were familiar to the author and his immediate milieu; said otherwise, he made no effort at introducing the context to an external reader. As a result, and also because with a text of this sort one is so far from the formality of the literary or historical sources with which we are more familiar, reading the *Linian ji* raised all sorts of problems of comprehension, at least at the level of detail, not only for myself but also for the Chinese graduate students who participated in my seminar and helped me out in more than one

difficult passage.

But the *Linian ji* is not a novel; it is not even an embellished or fictionalized record of things that actually happened: quite the contrary, it is a *testimony*, and it insists on being just that; so that matter-of-the-factness might very well be its principal characteristic. As a result, we can treat it as a unique historical source, as I will do in what follows.

As I said, the *Linian ji* has been the subject of an article by Kishimoto Mio, published shortly after the complete text had been printed for the first time. With the exception of a shorter article by Watari Masamitsu 渡昌弘 which concentrates on the question of the “serfs” (or *jiaren* 家人) in the *Linian ji*,<sup>2</sup> Kishimoto’s fine piece is, to my knowledge, the only study of substance devoted to this remarkable text. And yet, much remains to be said about it. Kishimoto concentrates on three particular topics: one is interpersonal relations, both within the family and among various groups of friends and other relations; the second is economic aspects, in other words, what Yao Tinglin’s adventures and enterprises tell us about the economic history of his times; the third topic is the relation between state power and local society, essentially in the two areas of justice and taxation, as illustrated by the incidents recounted in the text. I will also touch upon some of these subjects, but my approach and interests are somewhat different from those of Kishimoto, so that I will emphasize certain aspects or events that she mentions only cursorily, or not at all, but which I found especially striking or significant. In any case, it is impossible within the space of a short article to mention everything of interest in a text which is not only extremely dense in information, but also fairly long. Out of necessity, this presentation will have to remain somewhat impressionistic.

Let me start with Yao Tinglin’s family environment, which provides one of the many fascinating aspects of the text. Kishimoto has painstakingly reconstructed the genealogical tree of the Yaos. While this is comparatively easy to do for the central characters (in fact, Yao himself in his introduction gives an account of the line of ancestors that led to him), it becomes much more tricky when we have to decide on the exact place in the family tree of a multitude of uncles, aunts, cousins, nephews, their spouses, the relatives of the spouses, and

2. Watari Masamitsu 渡昌弘, “Minmatsu Shinsho Shanhai Yo ka no ‘kenin’—doboku rikai no tame ni” 明末清初上海姚家の「家人」—奴僕理解のために, *Tôhoku daigaku Tôyôshi ronshû*, 6 (1995), pp. 409-433.



so forth, who appear here and there in the text under various appellations which, more often than not, are different from the standard terms of kinship one finds in the dictionaries—not to mention several cases of intra-family adoption with ensuing changes in generational ranking and appellation.<sup>3</sup>

There is no point in explaining all the details here, since I won't even mention the vast majority of the individuals involved. To describe the situation in the simplest possible terms, one might say that the family structure as Yao Tinglin knew it took shape two generations before him. His grandfather had two brothers, and this was the generation of the "Yongs": there were two great-uncles, named Yongji 永濟 and Yongyu 永豫, and his grandfather, Yao Yongfeng 姚永豐, who was the eldest. As we shall see later, the great man of the family during the first part of Yao Tinglin's life was his great-uncle Yao Yongji; and the bad guy, if I can say, was his grandmother née Zhao, the wife of his grandfather Yao Yongfeng.

At the next generation, whose generational character was ming 明, his great-uncle Yao Yongji had three sons (two by his wife and one by a concubine), who were therefore called "uncles" by Yao Tinglin; and his grandfather had only one surviving son—Yao Tinglin's father, whose name was Chongming 崇明—and three daughters. This made for a lot of cousins in Yao Tinglin's generation, some of them (the children of his aunts) bearing different surnames, and some bearing the same surname, but only known in the text by the terms of address used by Tinglin himself (like "second elder brother" for the second of his cousins in the branch of his great-uncle, and so on); plus "uncles" or "nephews" who technically belonged to other generations than his but were in fact his age and more like what we would call "cousins". As for Yao Tinglin himself, he had no less than five sons (of whom four survived) and four daughters (of whom three survived).

This purely structural description is of no particular interest by itself, however. What is interesting is that the orderly four-generation lineage that could be suggested by the representation of the structure on paper did not in the least correspond to the realities of life. There was a lot of mutual help and interaction among the individuals belonging to the different branches and generational lines in the structure; but there were also a lot of enmities and fights, and also much spatial mobility from one residence to another depending

3. Kishimoto's family tree seems to contain only one minor error, which was found by one of my students and involves one of these complicated processes of adoption.

on the economic circumstances of the individual households, or on the way they went along with each other.

More strikingly, it seems to me, there was also a lot of communication, interaction, spatial movement, and occasionally conflict between the Yaos and the families that were related to them by marriage. The text mentions several cases of sons-in-law residing in their wives' families, which does not seem to have raised particular problems, at least in terms of social acceptance, in the sense that the move was not necessarily caused by poverty on the male side, but rather by emotional or practical factors. For example, the husbands of Yao Tinglin's three aunts (his father's sisters) resided with their wives in the compound that had been built for his grandfather after his great-uncle's success in the examinations. Better than that, in one remarkable episode immediately following Tinglin's grandfather's death we see his grandmother involving one of her sons-in-law, together with several retainers, in an attempt to seize for herself and her in-laws her deceased husband's estate and valuables, only to be stopped by the intervention of Tinglin's uncles from the other branch after the information had been leaked by a retainer who was feeling uncomfortable with the plot (after which the daughters and sons-in-law felt obliged to leave the Yao residence). Later on, when Tinglin's own father died, his grandmother again attempted to deprive his mother and her children from access to her late husband's estate, and she at least succeeded in misappropriating some land in favor of one of her daughters' in-laws.

Another example of "practical uxorilocalism" (if I can call it this way) is that of Yao Chongming (i.e., Tinglin's father), who at one point was so much exposed to his own mother's nastiness that he left the family compound and moved out of the city to stay with the family of his wife née 金—in Zhoupu town 周浦鎮, on the shores of the Huangpu river to the southeast of Shanghai—a place that Tinglin found very boring but where he and his mother were to stay quite often during the ensuing years. Before that, when the newly-wed Yao

周浦鎮杜名在十七保去縣東南三十六里  
宋末詩人儲冰故里也舊置下砂鹽場杜浦  
巡司于市由是人簾物廣其後逐利而遷阻  
海之三甲五甲相挺為暴省憲委官撫安之  
古蹟鶴坡鄰于其右  
盤龍鎮在三十四保去縣西北五十四里寶  
元初葉太史釀盤龍浦為新渠俗呼新涇鎮  
瀕浦瀕因名  
青龍鎮龍在四十五保去縣西七十里瞰

明弘治年間刊行的《上海志》，  
對周浦鎮有簡要的描述。

Chongming was still living with his parents, at one point he fell gravely ill and his mother not only ordered that from now on the young couple “cook separately”, but also cut them off from the household resources; I mention this because both Chongming’s uncle Yongji and his father-in-law Mr. Jin supported the young and penniless household. Much later, in 1652, when he was married out by his great-uncle, Yao Tinglin had to go and stay with the family of his new wife, née Tan 談 (whose family was related to the Jin by marriage); but this time his uncle did claim that it was because of his impoverished circumstances.<sup>4</sup> In any case, the impression throughout the text is that not only protracted and daily interaction between families related by marriage was common, but also that an individual’s interaction with his wife’s family, even though he was by no means “adopted” by it, could be as strong or even stronger than with the members of his own lineage.

Another interesting aspect is that the actual quality of the relations between the different branches and households of the lineage was determined not by ritual or a sense of hierarchy, but by imbalances in prestige, fortune, or even character and personality. The two branches which are constantly present in Yao Tinglin’s autobiography are his own—that is, the one stemming from his grandfather, Yao Yongfeng—and the one established by his great-uncle Yao Yongji. (His other great-uncle, the youngest of the three, is hardly mentioned in the text.) Yao Tinglin’s branch was in some way the “weak” one: his grandfather, a doctor, was poor, but apparently an upright man and also a nice and generous person, contrary to his fearsome spouse. Likewise, his father Yao Chongming, a talented and sensitive person, was a sickly man dominated by his wife. He died at the early age of thirty-five, in 1640, when Tinglin was only thirteen years old; indeed, Tinglin appears to have cherished him, and his despair at his father’s death is the occasion of one of the few truly moving passages in the entire work.

As we saw, Yao Tinglin’s grandmother is described as a terrible person who seems to have been moved by a kind of hate toward her own son (Tinglin’s father) and his offspring, to the extent that in his introduction to the text Yao Tinglin literally denounces her for having caused the early death of his father and the ruin and dispersal of his household. Her vindictive, deceitful and mean character is demonstrated in a series of sometimes incredible episodes. But she is not the only one to behave undecorously. It is in general very striking in

4. *Linian ji*, pp. 68-69.

the *Linian ji* that, more often than not, both the actual behavior of the people it introduces and the way Yao Tinglin comments on them are a far cry indeed from the canons of filial piety and family harmony. In short, this is real life, not the Confucian fiction.

But real life also admits of mutual help and of a sometimes considerable degree of loyalty and generosity. In the case of the Yaos, generous support and efficient intervention mainly came from Yao Yongji, Tinglin's great-uncle, whose branch in the lineage can be described as the "strong" one, and occasionally from his two sons, "big uncle" and "uncle no. two" (dabo 大伯 and erbo 二伯). As I said, Yao Yongji was the great man of the family. Indeed, he was the only one to have real status and wealth, and the entire lineage benefitted from his generosity and sense of duty toward his kin. As a matter of fact, even though the Yaos prided themselves on being a "prominent family" in Shanghai (a *mingjia* 名家), they could not by any means compare with those established gentry families that maintained their fortunes and social distinction by producing degree holders and officials generation after generation.<sup>5</sup> The Yaos' prestige rested entirely on Yao Yongji's position first as a high official, then, after 1639, as a retired official (a *xianghuan* 鄉宦), and on the fortune he had amassed during his official career (I will come back to this); and indeed, it is rather striking to see that long after Yao Yongji had been ruined at the time of the Manchu conquest he continued to be highly respected by the local and even regional powers-that-be, as could be seen by the number of officials and gentry who attended (or sent presents for) the celebration of his ninetieth birthday, in 1652,<sup>6</sup> and later his funeral, in 1659. (Yao Yongji lived to the ripe old age of 97)

Yao Yongji was the only one across the four generations discussed in the *Linian ji* to attain the *jinshi* degree. His brothers and two of his sons, plus a grandnephew, were either "presented students" (*gongsheng* 貢生) or "imperial college students" (*jiansheng* 監生), which would put them in the category of what we call conventionally the lower gentry; but

5. On the emergence of such established gentry families in Ming Shanghai, see Timothy Brook, "Xu Guangqi in his context: the world of the Shanghai gentry," paper presented at the conference on Xu Guangqi, Paris, Collège de France, 20-23 March 1995. This paper also provides an excellent account of how in the course of the Ming Shanghai grew from a "small seatown" to a "major city" whose wealth was supported by the thriving cotton industry in the region.

6. And for his elder son's 63rd birthday celebration in 1652: *Linian ji*, p. 69.



none had any official career. Yao Yongji's own grandfather had also been a *jiansheng* and had held minor local positions; but Yongji himself could boast of a 25-year fairly distinguished career, during which he was among others an official in the Board of Rites, a military intendant in Shanxi (where he barely escaped the Manchu raid of 1629), and above all, a provincial administration commissioner (*buzhengshi* 布政史) of Zhejiang province for a period of nine years. As I suggested, he made a lot of money during these years; and this deserves some comment.

The wealth not only of Yao Yongji himself, but of the entire family (in so far as one can distinguish between the two), is not easy to assess. Watari Masamitsu has attempted to collect all the bits of information in the text regarding the Yaos' residences, landed property, and retainers. At first sight this information suggests moderate wealth—certainly nothing like the enormous estates that the most prominent families in the region were known to accumulate through various means, including usury and even physical intimidation, and that were run by powerful “adopted sons” (namely, people who had renounced their freedom and had commended themselves to a big family whose surname they adopted; and in this respect it is noteworthy that the retainers of the Yao family kept their own surnames). For example, there are notations around 1630 of Yao Tinglin's father going in person to collect rents from tenants working on plots owned by the family in some townships around Shanghai, which suggests a rather modest level of land accumulation. But the indications we can find in the text are far too sketchy to allow us to reconstruct the complete picture of the Yaos' estates before the dynastic transition crisis, and in particular to guess how much landed estate and houses Yao Yongji may have acquired with his own profits as an official.<sup>7</sup>

Indeed, if there is one thing that is clear, it is that during these years he had been able to accumulate a truly amazing amount of movable property in the form of valuables and money. That fortune was literally brought to the light of day and offered for every one to see in 1645, when Yao Yongji's residence in town was looted by the troops of an embattled Ming loyalist officer who was desperately looking for resources. This episode—certainly one of the most spectacular in the *Linian ji*—is assuredly worth recounting. It took place at a moment when, in Jiangnan at least, one could still believe that there was a degree of uncertainty concerning who would rule the empire in the end. Only a few days before—this

7. In 1651 he had some houses demolished to make money with the materials: *Linian ji*, p. 68.

was in the sixth lunar month—a small detachment of Qing cavalry (not ethnic Manchus, in fact, but Chinese), about fifty men, had reached Shanghai and taken their quarters in an orchard outside the northern gate of the city wall. From there they sent someone inside the city saying they wanted supplies. The lesser official more or less in charge of Shanghai by then (the regular officials had fled), who lived in a state of terror knowing that the Qing army was getting close, was only too glad to offer the submission of the city. The inhabitants of Shanghai, on the other hand, were convinced that killing or capturing such a small party would be a child's play, and soon a crowd of perhaps a thousand armed men rushed forward in joyous disorder, only to be welcomed by a deadly volley of arrows and a brutal counter-attack of the Qing troopers, which caused total panic among the attackers and ended with a hundred casualties. “From there on”—Yao Tinglin adds soberly—“one knew that Qing troops were formidable” (*zi ci cai zhi Qing bing lihai* 自此才知清兵厲害).

Only three days later, it was a Ming officer by the name of Jing Benche 荊本徹 who reached the Wusong garrison, and then Shanghai itself, and wanted Yao Yongji to “contribute military rations” (*zhuxiang* 助餉), as the phrase goes—in other words, to help funding the Ming resistance against the invasion of Jiangnan. (By that time the Manchus had already captured Nanking) Apparently Yao Yongji had a reputation for having a lot of money. On that day he was out of town, but Jing Benche politely invited his elder son on his boat to try negotiating help. But then one of Jing's subordinates, who knew of the family, reasoned with Jing that (in Yao Tinglin's words) since Yao Yongji had been the provincial treasurer of Zhejiang for nine years, then in his house there must be “mountains of gold and caves full of silver”; his troops along and systematically ransacked the “three big compounds” (*san da zhai* 三大宅) that made up the Yao residence. The text of the *Linian ji* claims that it took several thousands of soldiers—joined by local hoodlums—three days and three nights to move out cartloads of gold and silver, precious stones, jewelry, silks and other precious textiles, ivory, and so forth, leaving after they had departed the courtyards and paths strewn with all the stuff they had not been able to take along. They also tortured some of the Yaos' retainers to know about the caches, and kidnapped Yao Yongji's younger son to join his brother on Jing Benche's boat and extort more money from them. Only after some faithful retainers had dug out from a cache a sum of ten thousand ounces of silver which, apparently, had escaped the attention of the looters, and delivered it to Jing Benche as ransom, could Yao Yongji's sons be freed.

Yao Tinglin, who was in Zhoupu at the time and went immediately to see the desolate scene after the soldiers had departed, comments that even though his great-uncle had had a long official career, no one had realized that there was such a hoard in his house. And after having enumerated all the precious objects, stones, clothes, pieces of jade, etc., left behind by the looters (some of the precise terminology escapes us), he concludes, we can assume with a bit of exaggeration: "In sum, that the residence should have been savagely looted by thousands of people loading a hundred boats during three days and three nights non-stop, and that what was left over still should have included all these exchangeable goods—all of this shows how rich he was!"

By its very nature and circumstances the fortune that Yao Yongji lost during this episode raises many interesting problems. For one thing, and as we just saw, it is clearly and quite naturally implied in Yao Tinglin's autobiography that in his and other people's minds this treasure had been accumulated during Yao Yongji's years in Zhejiang: in other words, it can only have been extortion on a grand scale. And the fact is that being the administrative chief of a rich province like Zhejiang, which moreover connected directly with a thriving overseas trade, was the ideal position to collect large quantities of gifts and bribes, especially when you were able to spend nine years there. Yao Yongji does not seem to have attempted to conceal that he had made money in his official positions, even though few people realized he had made that much money. In any case, this did not by any means prevent him from being highly respected and admired by his fellow citizens of Shanghai, and to remain so even after the true magnitude of his wealth had been revealed in the looting of 1645. Should we conclude that Shanghai in the late Ming was a place where outrageous money-making in official positions and the sort of hoarding just described, far from being at all shocking, were socially considered quite normal and even admirable—after all, Yao had worked hard for the benefit of his lineage, whose constant demands are documented in detail in Yao Tinglin's remembrances?

This may be true, but it is also a little more complicated than that. In a way, Yao Yongji's case adds an interesting footnote to considerations already made by several authors on the mentality and behavior of Jiangnan scholars-officials during the Ming. These considerations revolve, mainly, around two oppositions. One is the opposition between the respective cultural attitudes of the elites of the two large prefectures of Suzhou and

Songjiang (of which Shanghai was a dependent county): here I am thinking above all of Miyazaki Ichisada's superb article on the *shidafu* and populace of Suzhou and Songjiang in the Ming, first published in 1954, and also of Meskill's more recent book on what he calls the "gentlemen of Songjiang" in the sixteenth century.<sup>8</sup> Roughly put, for the cream of the Suzhou cultural elite administrative duty was a bore that was better avoided; but when it could not, then the ultimate vulgarity was to behave as a money-grabbing official in one's official positions: acquiring such a reputation would make one a laughing-stock for the opinion leaders back home. By contrast, the more nouveau riche and realistic elites of Songjiang had no such misgivings about making big money in office, and they were not likely to be fingered by their fellow citizens for having behaved shamefully.

The other opposition, which partly overlaps with the former, is the one between, on the one hand, gentrymen who made a point of acquiring a reputation for uprightness in their official positions, but once retired to their home counties were prone to use their political connections to manipulate power and behave like local tyrants and encroachers; and, on the other hand, those who did not hesitate to practice large-scale extortion while in post, but behaved as generous philanthropists back home.<sup>9</sup>

In other words, several combinations were possible. The last opposition is very well illustrated by the cases of two officials hailing from Songjiang prefecture: the first is Xu Jie 徐階, the famous grand secretary of the 1550s and 1560s, whose notorious avariciousness was limited by the fact that, when he was in the grand secretariat, most of the bribes were preempted by his superior and rival, the arch-corrupt Yan Song 嚴嵩, so that he could posture as an upright official; whereas back home he accumulated perhaps the largest estate in all of Jiangnan by means that were so cynical and brutal that when he was weakened by Hai Rui's 海瑞 attempt during the 1570s at forcing the big landlords of Jiangsu to return property illegally acquired, popular protest against him almost reached the level of an uprising.<sup>10</sup> The second, less famous example would be our Yao Yongji, whose behavior was the exact opposite of this pattern: according to his grand-nephew's testimony in the *Linian*

8. Miyazaki Ichisada 宮崎市定, "Mindai Sô-Shô chihô no shitaifu to minshû: Mindai-shi sobyô no kokoromi" 明代蘇松地方の士大夫と民衆—明代史素描の試み, in Miyazaki, *Ajia-shi kenkyû* スジス史研究, vol. 4 (Kyôto, Dôhôsha, 1957), pp. 321-360; John Meskill, *Gentlemanly Interests and Wealth on the Yangtze Delta*, Ann Arbor, Association for Asian Studies, 1994.

9. See the considerations to that effect in Jie Zhao, "Ties that bind: The craft of political networking in late Ming Chiang-nan," *T'oung Pao*, 86/1-3 (2000), pp. 136-164.



*ji*, during his years in official duty he accumulated an enormous fortune by means that can only have been of dubious honesty; but locally he was admired and respected as a benevolent notable. One telling detail, for example, is that the Yaos seem to have maintained cordial relations with their retainers and apparently were spared by the serf uprisings that erupted everywhere in Shanghai county right after the fall of the Ming.

Another interesting aspect in Yao Yongji's case is the movable nature of much of this huge fortune—it is the hoarding, as opposed to conspicuous consumption in the form of large estates, luxurious residences in town and country, fancy gardens and collections of art, books and calligraphy, with all the involved pretensions to cultural refinement. The Yaos obviously were part of mainstream gentry culture, as can be seen, for example, in what Yao Tinglin recounts of the fairly good education he received from several private preceptors; but we find very little of the extravagant life style that was cultivated by the cultural luminaries of Jiangnan and imitated by the nouveaux riches who tried to emulate them, in the Songjiang area especially (of which Shanghai was part). The feeling one gets from the innumerable descriptions and anecdotes scattered throughout the *Linian ji* is that of what should perhaps be called a bourgeois approach to the management of money and property, an approach that did not exclude petty commerce and a certain entrepreneur bent which may have been characteristic of the commercial ethos of Shanghai, but which in this case was on a rather modest scale. As a matter of fact, when he had to fend for himself after his great-uncle had been ruined in 1645, Yao Tinglin for his part quite naturally turned first to commercial ventures, and then to a form of commercial agriculture.

Whatever the case may have been, all the descriptions we have of the well-to-do life style of the Yaos under the benevolent aegis of Yao Yongji refer to the good old times of the Ming dynasty, which came to a brutal end with the ransacking of Yao Yongji's residence by a gang of Southern Ming soldiers, as we just saw. But it goes without saying that the years of the Manchu conquest were important for other reasons than the ruin of the Yao family and its impact on Yao Tinglin's life. And indeed, the *Linian ji* as a source adds much valuable information to the larger picture of the terminal crisis of the Ming regime in Jiangnan and of

10. As is well known, other notoriously grabbing landlords of the late Ming encountered the same sort of violence during the last decades of the Ming, beginning with the famous artist Dong Qichang 董其昌, also a Songjiang citizen. See also the related cases of Dong Fen 董份 (1510-1595) and Fan Yingqi 范應期 (1527-1594) in Jiangsu and Zhejiang in the mid-1590s, as analyzed in Jie Zhao's study mentioned in the previous note, pp. 152ff.

the tragic events of the Manchu conquest and attending social turmoil.

To be sure, there is no sensational revelation on the subject in the text. I would rather say that its testimony is precious insofar as it presents us with the fresh perspective of a Shanghai teenager who happened to be in the middle of things and experienced first-hand the excitement and anguish of the times, even though at the moment he probably did not understand much of what was going on. As a matter of fact, there exists a quantity of unofficial records and testimonies concerning the dreadful 1640s in Jiangnan. Many of them make exciting reading, but probably none of them is as personal and unmediated by political or cultural prejudice as the relevant sections of the *Linian ji*. So, let me simply recall the main events.

Drought and locusts struck the region during the spring, summer and autumn of 1641, and a terrible famine ensued in the winter and spring of 1642. Yao Tinglin, who was then a fourteen-year old and lived with his mother in quarters that had been fitted out by his great-uncle in the old Yao residence in the city, insists that he saw with his own eyes the dead bodies piling up at the gates of the city, the mass graves (perhaps indicative of epidemics, like his mention of people collapsing suddenly), the crowds of abandoned children by the bridges and at the crossroads, and also one of the family tenants eating grass and bark, and other such occurrences. Worse still, when the famine was peaking in the spring of 1642 people would come every night and die along the walls of the Yao residence; and he tells us that when he went out to drink with friends, as he started to do that year, coming back home in the deep of night he would stumble on dead bodies in the dark; and he adds: "Till now I am not affraid of seeing dead people: this is because I saw so many of them at the time." Anthropophagy is also mentioned, like elsewhere in the region (another chronicle says that up till then such a thing was considered unbelievable by the inhabitants of Suzhou, even though it was occasionally reported from the provinces of the north).

I could quote several other texts providing graphic descriptions of the 1642 catastrophe in Jiangnan;<sup>11</sup> but I think none of them has the immediacy and detail of the young Yao Tinglin's account. Especially noteworthy, here and elsewhere in the text, is the way he always clarifies his position as an observer when he recounts an incident: he happened to be there, or he heard of it and went to see for himself, or he heard reports by eyewitnesses, family members or others.

11. One of the most striking is *Qi Zhen jiwen lu* 啓禎紀聞錄 (wrongly attributed to Ye Shaoyuan 葉紹袁), *Tongshi* 痛史 ed. (1911), Taipei reprint, Guangwen shuju, 1968, j. 2.

One day during the fifth lunar month of 1644, Yao Tinglin, his great-uncle and other men of the family were drinking together when a friend rushed in in a panic, holding a “small gazetteer” (a *xiaobao* 小報, meaning an unofficial gazetteer) that said that the troops of the rebel Li Zicheng had captured Peking ten days earlier and that the Chongzhen emperor had committed suicide. The news was confirmed the next day by the official gazetteer (the *dabao* 大報). The rest, as the phrase goes, is history; but from there on again we have a first-hand and fresh account of the impact of the events on the inhabitants of Shanghai and of the town of Zhoupu (Yao Tinglin was constantly commuting between the city and Zhoupu, where his mother regularly went to live with her family)—and not only of the events, but also of the rumours, either fanciful or correct, and of how the chaotic political situation was translated for the public in what one may loosely call the media. For example, Yao Tinglin mentions the publication in Jiangnan of a novel on the fall of Peking only two months after the event, as well as the circulation of satiric songs ridiculing the rule of the Hongguang emperor and his henchmen in Nanking, of which he quotes one, saying there were many others. He also accumulates notations illustrative of the general confusion that prevailed in the people's minds; and he insists in particular, right from the beginning, on the fear of war, of destruction and of plundering in a place where people had never seen serious combat, and on the readiness to submit to new masters, whoever they were, as soon as they had made the required demonstrations of force. In this last respect, of course, after an initial period of uncertainty it soon turned out that the armies of the new Qing dynasty were without serious competitors; and indeed, as relayed by Yao Tinglin the reports of the conquest of the cities of Jiangnan by the troops of the fearsome Li Chengdong 李成棟, a former Ming general who had joined the Qing and had been put in charge of subjugating the Suzhou and Songjiang area by Prince Dodo, deliver a striking picture of swiftness, discipline, and brutality.

It took some time before Qing domination was definitively established in the region, however. In fact, troubles started in Shanghai soon after the news of the fall of Peking at the hands of Li Zicheng and of its reconquest by the Manchus had been received, and several months before the Qing armies had even crossed the Yangzi. It was as if the destruction of the ultimate symbols of legitimacy in the capital, far away in the north, had rendered the usual political controls ineffective and was enough to unleash social tensions that had been building up for decades. Only two months after Shanghai knew of the death of the

Chongzhen emperor, the countryside was subjected to a spectacular surge of servile violence under the leadership of an impoverished serf from a nearby township: everywhere serfs were seen clamouring to redeem themselves, attacked their masters to reclaim their deeds (*suoqi* 索契), humiliated their families and ransacked their residences. Not even the residence of the late Xu Guangqi 徐光啓—the famous Christian minister and one of Shanghai's most illustrious sons in this period—was spared by the disturbance. But order was restored by the swift intervention of an officer arrived from the nearby Wusong garrison: Ming power had not yet completely collapsed in the region. That would not be for a long time, however.

In the first months of 1645, the news that the generals supposed to protect the Southern Ming along the Yangzi (the so-called “four guardians,” 四鎮 plus the heroic Shi Kefa 史可法) had been routed one after another caused a general panic in Shanghai. Following a pattern that was the exact opposite of what had occurred one century earlier at the time of the Wokou disturbances, people left the city and fled to the countryside. When the fall of Nanking was announced, the magistrate also left, and for a while anarchy prevailed throughout the county, with the rich families recruiting and arming private militias for self-defense. Soon afterwards the troops of Li Chengdong made their appearance in Shanghai, causing the incident I have already mentioned, which as we saw was immediately followed by the looting of the Yao residence by Ming desperadoes. The ruthlessness of the Qing conquest army caused a new wave of panic in the entire region, but it also spurred resistance: while detachments from Li Chengdong's army captured cities largely abandoned by their inhabitants, several civil and military officials loyal to the Ming allied themselves with the so-called white turbans (*baitou bing* 白頭兵) of Lake Tai, who were actually semi-bandits used to rove the lakes and marshes of the area. Songjiang and Shanghai were for a time occupied by gentry leaders belonging to this coalition, but the Qing armies took them back, with much destruction in the case of Songjiang.

I cannot detail here the confused events of the second half of 1645 as Yao Tinglin recounts them, during which many places around Shanghai changed hands again and again, with all the attending disturbance and massacres. As a result of this instability the local inhabitants no longer knew what to do: as Yao claims to have seen by himself around Zhoupu, whenever the Qing army approached every household in the towns and villages



would paste pieces of yellow paper on their doors with the characters “Da Qing shunmin” 大清順民 (obedient subjects of the Great Qing) written on, but would tear them down as soon as the loyalist rebellion seemed to get the upper hand, only to paste them again when the Qing troops were supposed to come back. In the end the Qing order prevailed, of course, and every Chinese man had to pass through the agonizing process of shaving his head to demonstrate his loyalty. Yao Tinglin's testimony on this is only one among many others, but he adds the interesting notion that people made up their minds to do it, rather than going into hiding, once they realized that they needed to be around in order to protect their properties. This is what he himself did with his mother, coming back to Zhoupu after having taken refuge in the country.

Yao Tinglin's considerations at the end of the long section devoted to the year 1645 are to the effect that from now on nothing would be as before: it was to be a new dynasty, people looking differently, new social hierarchies, new rituals, and so forth—in short, “another world, with no restoring of the old order” (*lingzi yifan shijie, fei fu jiutai yi* 另有一番世界，非復舊態矣). And when in the first days of 1646 he could at last go back to the city of Shanghai and be reunited with his great-uncle and cousins for the first time after several months of separation and uncertainty, again it was like “being reborn in a new world” (*ru zaizhi, ru gengsheng* 如再世，如更生).

Yao Tinglin was eighteen years old by then. In many respects we can say that he had come of age at last. The years when he had been a thirteen or fourteen year old profoundly disturbed by his father's untimely death, his grandmother's vicious hostility and his mother's obvious lack of affection, when his great-uncle had sheltered him and entrusted him to a good private tutor while he refused to do any work (“I did not write even one character,” he says), going out instead with his pals for drinking parties amidst the horrors of famine and organizing a sworn brotherhood with a secret plan whose exact content we do not know,<sup>12</sup> but which must have been grave enough to provoke the magistrate's wrath—these years were relatively close in time, but mentally they were ages apart. One thing that was new was that now that his family was more or less ruined Yao Tinglin had to support himself and his mother, and later his own wife and children (in 1652 his great-uncle married him into a family of non-gentry landlords which was allied with his mother's family). His

12. Yao's manuscript presents a lacuna several sentences long at this point.

first attempt at commerce took place as early as the end of 1645—in this particular case he sold some land and houses and went to Suzhou with a retainer to invest the proceeds in salted pork meat. Several more attempts are mentioned during the next few years, always small-scale trafficking in ordinary goods like rice or cotton, sometimes involving travelling as far as Shaoxing, and in the end never successful.

His next occupation was agriculture on a relatively small plot that he cultivated together with one of the family retainers. I won't dwell on this episode here, even though it endured close to nine years. In her article Kishimoto Mio, an economic historian, has lucidly analyzed how Yao Tinglin first benefitted from high agricultural prices and then, from 1655 onwards, fell victim to the so-called Kangxi economic recession and to the collapse of prices that accompanied it. Kishimoto also stresses the value for the economic historian of a text where all the details and figures of the investments in materials and labor necessary to run a small-scale farm like Yao's are provided. (That sort of information does appear in some agricultural handbooks, but most often it is theoretical rather than realistic, and above all it concerns what we might call a sort of idealized domanial concern, not small-scale husbandry exposed to the vagaries of climate and of economic conjuncture.) As Yao Tinglin says, the result of the year, which was depending on a considerable number of variables, could be known only at the time of calculating the end balance—and then, it would be either joy or despair, profit or indebtedness.

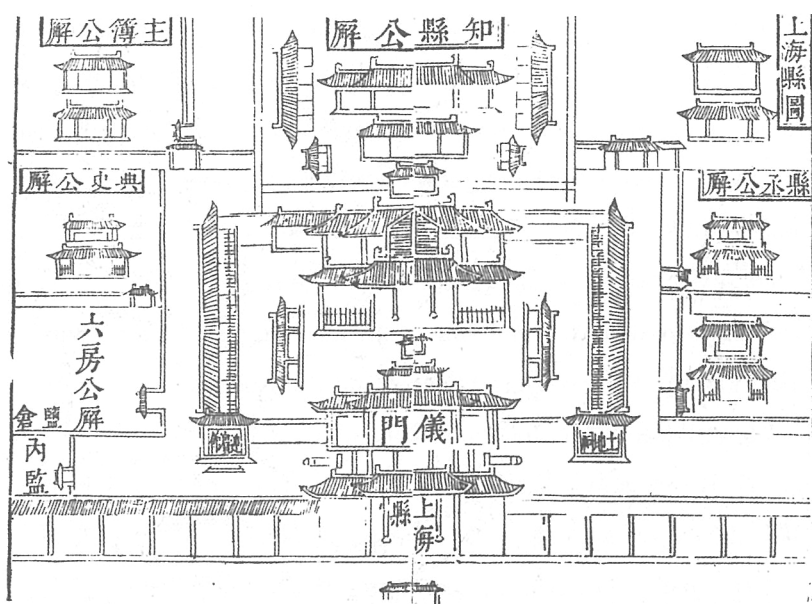
In the end it was systematic indebtedness, a situation that spurred Yao Tinglin to change occupation once again. This was in 1657, and this is when his years as government clerk began. As far as I know this testimony of a yamen clerk is unique, and consequently this part of the *Linian ji*, which for lack of space I won't be able to discuss in much detail here, is exceptionally interesting. It is not exactly what one would expect, however. The reason is that the status, position, and especially liabilities of yamen clerks in early Qing Jiangnan appear to have been fairly different from what we can know of their situation in the rest of the empire, especially after the dynasty had been securely established. The first two or three decades of the Qing were an uncomfortable period for Jiangnan notables. As is well known, the new Manchu rulers were determined to curb gentry power in the region and put an end to the extravagant privileges gentry landlords had accumulated during the Ming regarding taxes and corvée. The *Linian ji* features some vivid testimonies of Qing fiscal

ruthlessness in the Shanghai area, in particular during the celebrated zouxiao'an 奏銷案 episode of 1661, when the government claimed that it would recover all the taxes overdue by the gentry landlords of Jiangnan, a great many of whom were jailed, cashiered, or simply ruined in the process. In any case, the point here is that in such a dangerous environment it might be a good idea for gentry families to have some of their people in the local administrative offices, who would get familiar with the intricacies of government business, would make connections and would know the right people in the yamen; and indeed, many seem to have done so at the time, so that, sociologically speaking, clerical personnel in the local yamens of early Qing Jiangnan must have been significantly more distinguished than would be the case later in interior China.

This is exactly what we have with Yao Tinglin. One day in 1657 one of the ubiquitous and, clearly, experienced and influential retainers of the Yao family explained to Tinglin's cousins that sending him as an apprentice to a "master" in one of the bureaux in the Shanghai county yamen would allow him to know people useful to the family, and also to learn law and become later a private secretary (a *muyou* 幕友) to an official, and so be able to get a salary worth several times that of a private teacher. And so began a career that was to last ten years and, indeed, provide Yao Tinglin with connections that were useful to his relatives both during his tenure and long after he had resigned; but this career also caused him much discontent and torment, beginning with the fact that, far from enriching him as should have been the case—at least according to the conventional view of clerical corruption to which we tend to adhere uncritically—it eventually left him in debt.

Why was this so? One of the revelations of the *Linian ji* in this respect is that in the first years of the Qing the clerks in charge of certain of the bureaux in the local yamen, notably Public Works and Military Affairs, had to act as contractors, with all the opportunities for profit but also with all the risks involved. To be sure, more than one author has already proposed that the tasks of the officials and subofficials of late imperial China were in a way subcontracted to them (or "farmed out," which is more or less the same thing), in the sense that they were expected to deliver certain services or a certain amount of fiscal product to the government and at the same time were in effect left free to make whatever profit they could in the process. Whatever the case may have been, one can say that Yao Tinglin and his clerk colleagues in Jiangnan during the Shunzhi and early Kangxi

periods were contractors in the literal sense since they might be ordered overnight to furnish the government with services or goods in large quantities and would have to devise by themselves ways to mobilize the necessary resources.



姚廷遴從1657年開始在縣衙裡當差。

Yao Tinglin started as an apprentice in a bureau called the *gongzhao fang* 供招房, which was in charge of collecting the testimonies and confessions during the judicial process; and this was all right. But because of some disagreement with his colleagues in the bureau he was moved to the military bureau (the *bingfang* 兵房). This was in 1659, and the timing could hardly have been worse. In the summer of that year (shortly before Tinglin was sent to the military bureau) the famous Ming loyalist Zheng Chenggong 鄭成功 (or Koxinga, as he was called by the Dutch in Taiwan) launched a raid on the Yangzi river that brought his fleet as far as Nanking, which he besieged for a short time. The response on the Qing side was frantic mobilization of troops and resources, and the state of emergency was to last a long time after Zheng Chenggong had been defeated and had fled across the ocean.

Such is the situation with which Yao Tinglin and his colleagues from the Shanghai military bureau, and no doubt many others in the region, were confronted. The *Linian ji* recounts in detail how Tinglin had to requisition boats, horses, fodder, and what not, and better deliver on time if he wished not to be jailed or receive a beating—in fact he was even threatened with beheading by a certain Ma, who was provincial commander-in-chief and happened to stop at the Wusong garrison, near Shanghai. In several occurrences high officials travelling through the region proceeded to a review of the clerks' performance, a

procedure which did entail a lot of beatings. Yao Tinglin himself appears to have always managed to get away from it, however. In any case, under such pressure there was obviously no time to take pity on the poor folks whose property was being requisitioned, as Yao Tinglin regretted in more than one circumstance.

Yao's experience with the military bureau in 1659 was so bad that he managed to be discharged thanks to the support of one of his uncles, who wrote to the magistrate. He was transferred to the bureau of judiciary affairs (the *xingfang* 刑房), where he spent the next few years but concerning which, regrettably, he says almost nothing in his recollections: the text during this period is principally devoted to the fiscal repression that struck Jiangnan in the early 1660s, and also to private and family business, illnesses that struck Yao and some of his close kin, the death of his mother, and even the death and resurrection of his wife (following which, he tells us, he started believing in ghosts and gods). But at the beginning of 1664 he was again transferred to the bureau of public works (or *gongfang* 工房). He tried to resist the appointment, but the magistrate had him jailed until he accepted; and indeed, it was even worse than being with the military bureau.

At one point Yao had to deliver weapons and lost much money because he had been cheated by a relative who had offered help. At another point he had to deliver charcoal to a plant in Suzhou that was producing gunpowder and various explosive devices; the plant was run by an individual who had studied western techniques under one of Xu Guangqi's disciples. In order to deliver the charcoal. In time Yao had to buy houses and burn them down. Later on he and his colleagues had to face a number of further demands from the military. For example, he had to spend a sizable amount of money to provide the required articles and supplies at the training camp of Nanhui 南匯, a township on the territory of Shanghai. The next year, in 1665, he and other colleagues had to get the bridges, roads and beacon houses in the area repaired, which entailed levying money from among all the townships of the county. Then in 1666 he had to refurbish various official buildings in Shanghai in order to accomodate Manchu inspectors sent down from the capital: as each time superior officials travelled through or came inspecting, the visit was a terrible pain for everybody. At that time Yao Tinglin had already offered his resignation to the magistrate on the grounds that after two years of duty he was one hundred taels in debt and wanted no more of it; the magistrate accepted in principle, but he managed to requisition him several

more times under the pretext that he had unfinished work to complete. Only at the beginning of 1667 was Yao Tinglin able to turn down further convocations and be left alone.

The beginning of 1667 was in fact the occasion for rather melancholy considerations on the time elapsed: “Kangxi sixth year, aged 40 *sui*. I have the feeling that most of these forty years have been spent for nothing, that I have been through incredible hardship, and yet have accomplished nothing so far.” But the second half of Yao Tinglin’s life was to be extremely different. In 1668 he opened a private school that he ran on and off during the next thirty years; during the same period he settled in the countryside outside Shanghai and did some agriculture. While he still had many connections in town and helped many people, he could no longer be described as a member of the local gentry. This second part of his life, which he continues to record in detail year after year, I won’t discuss here, if only because it is much less spectacular and colorful than the years that spanned the Ming-Qing transition—the “coming of age.” As a conclusion, however, it may be worth mentioning the rather striking piece that is appended to the text, with the title “Remembrances not yet recorded” (*Jishi shiyi* 記事拾遺). These seven pages (in the modern edition) would in themselves deserve a separate study. They consist of an enumeration of all the changes to which Yao Tinglin was witness during the years of the Ming-Qing transition: a sort of “before” and “after”—how it was at the time of the Ming and how it is now, after several decades of Qing rule—in every conceivable area.

The text deals with many topics, of which it should be enough to mention only a few. Clothing and the outer appearance of people were evidently subject to dramatic change with the Manchu conquest, and not only because the sumptuary laws of the Ming had been abolished. The respect shown to civilian and military officials, respectively, was no longer as before: at present the military commanded much more respect, and, to return to what I said of Yao Tinglin’s adventures as a clerk, one thing that is very striking during these volatile first decades of the Qing is how much the military were able to take pride of place: in the name of security the chiefs of the military bureaucracy and the field commanders were entitled to requisition whatever they wished from the local civilian administrations—money, supplies, materials, food, labor, horses, boats, houses, and so on and so forth; the local civilian officials obviously were no match to their arrogance and overbearingness. Another

area of change was the administration of justice, which according to Yao had become much faster and more efficient. As far as taxes are concerned, Yao describes in much detail what he does not hesitate to term a “revolution” (*gaige* 改革), with lighter taxes and much less corvée.

Even dining habits were changed, and Yao also mentions several items for consumption that were not known under the Ming. In general, he seems to speak of a more plentiful and more refined life for a larger number of people, which, we may perhaps guess, compensated for the disappearance or at least the toning down of the extravagant life style that had been cultivated by a small elite in late Ming Jiangnan. He also speaks in some detail of the new military organization, and, finally, mentions the reopening of maritime trade in the 1680s. In sum, at the end of the seventeenth century the people of Shanghai were living in a more prosperous and more peaceful world than had ever existed in the memory of the elderly citizen that was Yao Tinglin now.