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## Rotten Pedant! The Literary and Historical Afterlife of Qiao Zhou

In what is surely one of the classic understatements in the history of sinology, Winston Yang declared,

In China, far more people have read [Luo Guanzhong's 羅貫中] *Elaboration* [*Sanguo [zhi] yanyi* 三國志演義 (*Extended Meanings of the Records of the Three States*)]<sup>1</sup> than Chen Shou's 陳壽 (233–297) *Chronicle* [*Sanguo zhi* 三國志 (*Records of the Three States*)], and far more Chinese have gained some knowledge of the history of the Three Kingdoms period from the novel than from the official history.<sup>2</sup>

Now, Yang's claim may be said to have gone global, with numerous illustrated books, comics, television series, movies, and video games based on *Extended Meanings* translated into Asian and Western languages and hotly discussed on worldwide internet forums.

The widespread acceptance of *Extended Meanings* as “history” is problematic but not surprising; the text has long been regarded as a sort of popular history. Jiang Daqi's 江大器 preface to the earliest extant edition (dated 1494) claimed that the intent of the work was to correct the “contemptible and erroneous language” and “wild fiction” of blind storytellers who narrated Three States 三國 (220–280) history,<sup>3</sup> and to

<sup>1</sup> The attribution of the text to Luo (ca. 1315/18–ca. 1400) is much later than the earliest edition, and the issue of authorship remains hotly debated. Given the serious doubts about Luo's purported authorship, it becomes difficult to contextualize authorial motive and otherwise place the composition of the work into a historical setting. The standard edition of Luo's *Sanguo yanyi* is that of Mao Zonggang 毛宗崗 (fl. 1660) (Shanghai: Shanghai guji, 1989; hereafter, *SGYY*). For English translations, see C. H. Brewitt-Taylor, *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* (Shanghai, 1925; rpt. Rutland, Vermont: C. E. Tuttle, 1959); Moss Roberts, trans., *Three Kingdoms: A Historical Novel* (Berkeley: U. California P., 2004; hereafter, *Three Kingdoms*). Passages from the text cited in this essay are from Roberts, occasionally with some modification.

<sup>2</sup> Winston Yang, “The Literary Transformation of Historical Figures in the *San-kuo chih yen-i*: A Study of the Use of the *San-kuo chih* as a Source of the *San-kuo chih yen-i*,” in Winston L.Y. Yang and Curtis P. Adkins, eds., *Critical Essays on Chinese Fiction* (Hong Kong: Chinese U.P., 1980), pp. 76–77.

<sup>3</sup> I translate the Chinese term *Sanguo* 三國 as “Three States” rather than the more common but incorrect “Three Kingdoms,” since at the time of the formal division of China into three states, none of the rulers referenced themselves as kings.

“adapt and expand” on the historical documents from that period. According to Jiang, the resulting work “records events truthfully so that it should be properly deemed history.”<sup>4</sup> However, *Extended Meanings* is a novel, as the present article often refers to it, and thus not without fictional embellishments – a fact that led to extensive discussion among historians, literary scholars, and critics over the question of whether the work should be categorized as “history” or “fiction.” Zhang Xuecheng’s 章學成 (1738–1801) oft-quoted appraisal of the work as “seven parts history and three parts fiction” has long been regarded as an accurate measure of the *Extended Meanings*’ fidelity to the historical sources and limits of its author’s creative license.<sup>5</sup> C.T. Hsia argued that the work “is by design a historical narrative rather than a historical novel,” and that “it attains the condition of good literature precisely because its slight fictional elaboration of history has restored for us *the actuality of history*.”<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, Hsia claimed, Luo Guanzhong “had no pretension to being a novelist,” and Luo’s “habitual strength lies in his role as a popular historian.”<sup>7</sup> Winston Yang, noting the novel’s “departures from authentic history” were relatively few and only “when necessary to make concessions to popular taste,”<sup>8</sup> concluded, “With its close adherence to history and its retelling of history in a plainer language (simple *wenyan*),<sup>9</sup> Luo Guanzhong’s work should probably be read, therefore, as a popular history.”<sup>10</sup> Ironically, despite the contention that *Extended Meanings* offered a more historical alternative to the popular stories and plays, in many respects it displaced the surviving historical records as the primary vehicle for transmitting the history of the Three States period and the work spawned an even larger body of inaccuracies when compared to the actual primary sources.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Jiang Daqi, “*Sanguo zhi tongsu yanyi xu*” 三國志通俗演義序 (“Preface to the *Extended Meanings of the Records of the Three States in Popular Style*”) (rpt. Shanghai: Shanghai guji, 1980), p. 1. For a translation, see C. T. Hsia, “The Romance of the Three Kingdoms,” in *The Classic Chinese Novel* (New York: Columbia, 1968), p. 38. Jiang’s preface was written under the pseudonym of Yong Yuze 庸愚子 (lit. “The Common Fool”).

<sup>5</sup> Zhang Xuecheng, *Zhang shi yishu waibian* 章氏遺書外編 (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1936) 3, p. 127.

<sup>6</sup> Hsia, “Romance,” pp. 34–35; emphasis added.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 70–71.

<sup>8</sup> Yang, “Literary Transformation,” p. 49.

<sup>9</sup> I.e., plainer than the classical prose of the original historical records.

<sup>10</sup> Yang, “Literary Transformation,” p. 81.

<sup>11</sup> The major historical records for the period are Chen Shou 陳壽, *Sanguo zhi* 三國志 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1959; hereafter cited as *SGZ*); Fan Ye 范曄 (398–445), *Hou Han shu* 後漢書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1965); and Fang Xuanling 房玄齡 (579–648) et al., *Jin shu* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1974). Pei Songzhi’s 裴松之 (372–451) commentary to *Sanguo zhi* cites dozens of now-lost sources, and is thus a source in its own right. Additionally, there remains a small body of local histories, e.g., Chang Qu’s 常璩 (ca. 291–ca. 361) *Huayang guo zhi* 華陽國志 and Li Daoyuan’s 麗道元 (d. 527) *Shuijing zhu* 水經注; and anecdotal and lit-

This preoccupation with the generic classification of *Extended Meanings* has a long history, and shows little sign of abating. Andrew Plaks has noted, “Much of the critical discussion of the [*Extended Meanings*], from Ming times to the present day, has centered on the extent to which the novel is judged to be faithful or unfaithful to the historical facts, as reconstructed from the [official histories] and [annalistic] historiographical sources.”<sup>12</sup> A large portion of the debate referenced by Plaks addressed the manner in which various historical figures were portrayed in *Extended Meanings*. Noting the work’s tendency to adhere more closely to historical events than to the historical portrayal of individual figures, Winston Yang attributed this to Luo Guanzhong’s need to adhere to “popular images” of certain figures “firmly established among the populace” by professional storytellers, “taking popular taste into consideration and elaborating on certain misleading sources, [blending] the folkloristic images of such figures as Zhuge Liang 諸葛亮 and Cao Cao 曹操 with their historical reality.”<sup>13</sup> Most of the academic inquiries on the novel’s adaptation of historical sources have centered on major figures such as Liu Bei 劉備, Cao Cao, and Zhuge Liang.<sup>14</sup> For example, Winston Yang noted the manner in which *Extended Meanings* alters the historical records with regards to Liu Bei, presenting a more favorable character than the historical Liu Bei of Chen Shou’s *Records of the Three States*. Anne McLaren deconstructed a similar process in the recasting of the historical Liu Bei by two “revisionist” histories of the late-twelfth and thirteenth centuries, Xiao Chang’s 蕭常 *Xu Hou Han shu*

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erary collections such as Liu Yiqing’s 劉義慶 (403-444) *Shishuo xinyu* 世說新語, and Xiao Tong’s 蕭統 (501-531) *Wenxuan* 文選, which include a number of important historical and cultural documents.

<sup>12</sup> Andrew H. Plaks, *The Masterworks of the Ming Novel* (Princeton: Princeton U.P., 1987), p. 374. See especially the dissertation by Andrew Hing-bun Lo, “The *San-kuo chih yen-i* and *Shui-hu chuan* in the Context of Historiography: An Interpretative Study,” Ph.D. diss. (Princeton University, 1981).

<sup>13</sup> Yang, “Literary Transformation,” pp. 74-76.

<sup>14</sup> E.g., C.T. Hsia discusses the complex character of Guan Yu 關羽 (Hsia, “Romance,” pp. 41-48); Paul Kroll examines the literary evolution of Cao Cao (Paul W. Kroll, “Portraits of Ts’ao Ts’ao: Literary Studies on the Man and the Myth,” Ph.D. diss. (University of Michigan, 1976); and on a number of major figures, see Winston Yang, “Literary Transformation,” pp. 47-84, and Plaks, *Masterworks*, pp. 406-73. On Zhuge Liang, see Hoyt Cleveland Tillman “Historic Analogies and Evaluative Judgments: Zhuge Liang as Portrayed in Chen Shou’s *Chronicle of the Three Kingdoms* and Pei Songzhi’s Commentary,” in *Dimensionen der historischen Kritik in China*, in Achim Mittag, ed., special issue of *Oriens Extremus* 43 (2002) [2004], pp. 60-70; idem, “Textual Liberties and Restraints in Rewriting China’s Histories: The Case of Ssu-ma Kuang’s Re-Construction of Chu-ko Liang’s Story,” in Thomas H.C. Lee, ed., *The New and the Multiple: Sung Senses of the Past* (Hong Kong: The Chinese U.P., 2004), pp. 61-106; and idem, “Some Historical and Philosophical Sources of the *Sanguo yanyi*: Sima Guang and Chen Liang on Zhuge Liang,” in Kimberly Besio and Constantine Tung, eds., *Three Kingdoms and Chinese Culture* (Albany: State U. New York P., 2006), pp. 53-69.

續後漢書 [*Continued Later Han History*] and Hao Jing's 郝經 text of the same title. The motive behind the recharacterization of Liu Bei, both Yang and McLean argued, was to present Liu Bei and his state as the legitimate successor to the Han.<sup>15</sup>

Given the literary liberties taken with major historical figures, imagine the possibilities for recasting the scores of minor players in Three States' history to fit external popular expectations or the internal rhetoric of the *Extended Meanings* itself.<sup>16</sup> While the treatment of minor historical figures by storytellers and dramatists of the Tang, Song, and Yuan periods lies largely beyond our reach and we have little evidence how their presentations may have been incorporated into *Extended Meanings*, the novel's own intent to lay clear the moral messages of history provides a window to the manner in which historical figures were represented to further the goals of the novel and its author.

Nowhere is this more apparent than in the case of the central figure of this study, Qiao Zhou 譙周 (ca. 200–270), a noted scholar of the canon and history, an official of the state of Shu-Han 蜀漢,<sup>17</sup> and a figure not likely to have had a “popular image firmly established among the populace.” The historical sources portray Qiao Zhou as a brilliant intellectual and a long-time supporter of the efforts of the Shu-Han rulers to “restore the Han”;<sup>18</sup> they outline his role in the founding of Shu-Han

<sup>15</sup> See Yang, “Literary Transformation,” pp. 51–57; Anne McLaren, “History Repackaged in the Age of Print: The *Sanguozhi* and *Sanguo yanyi*,” *BSOAS* 69.2 (2006), p. 300. McLaren suggests that the presentation of these revisionist historians likely influenced the composition of *Extended Meanings*.

The question of which of the three states was the legitimate successor to the Han was hotly debated for centuries. Chen Shou granted legitimacy to Wei by exclusively titling the biographies of the Wei rulers “Basic Annals” (*benji* 本紀), and referring to their rulers as “emperors.” Political expediencies may have applied, since Chen Shou was a native and former official of Shu serving as a subject of Jin 晉, a dynasty claiming legitimacy partly by having conquered two successive dynasties descended ritually from Han. Protests over Chen's presentation first arose in the Eastern Jin and became especially heated during the Southern Song (both states who worried over legitimacy in an age of political and territorial disunion). Thus, even early arguments over Three States legitimacy generally had more to do with contemporary political concerns than any real regard for the post-Han civil war, as they would in the case of late-imperial and modern arguments of a similar type, as we see later in this article. For a discussion and collection of related document, see Rao Zongyi 饒宗頤, *Zhongguo shixue shang zhi zheng-tong lun* 中國史學上之政統論 (1977; rpt. Shanghai: Shanghai yuandong chubanshe, 1996).

<sup>16</sup> Only C.T. Hsia offers a brief discussion of “marginal characters,” including magicians, sorcerers, fortune-tellers, physicians (Hua To 華託), intellectuals (Kong Rong 孔融, Mi Heng 禰衡, etc.); Hsia, “Romance,” pp. 52–55.

<sup>17</sup> “Shu-Han” is a later term. *Sanguo zhi* uses the term “Shu” 蜀 (originally a reference to the Han commandery centered around Chengdu 成都) to refer to both the commandery and the state, which referred to itself as “Han.” See J. Michael Farmer, “What's in a Name? On the Appellative ‘Shu’ in Early Medieval Chinese Historiography,” *JAOS* 121 (2001), pp. 44–59. In the present article I employ the name Shu-Han to distinguish the state from the commandery.

<sup>18</sup> The principal biographical treatment of Qiao Zhou is found in *SGZ* 42, pp. 1027–34.

as well as his frustrations in his inability to guide his sovereign toward moral behavior, and the resignation of hope prompting him to recommend the state surrender to the rapidly approaching armies of Wei 魏 in 263. *Extended Meanings*, on the other hand, makes little mention of Qiao Zhou's scholastic talents, but rather presents him as a fatalistic fortune-teller whose readings of the stars foretold the destruction of the state. Even more significantly, the representation of Qiao Zhou in the novel largely displaced the historical records and profoundly shaped Qiao Zhou's reputation for the next five hundred years. The following study will examine the manner in which *Extended Meanings* transformed the historical figure of Qiao Zhou from a politically active scholar of the canon and history to a literary character who embodied important moral themes of the novel, resulting in Qiao's becoming an object of hatred and derision by later scholars, politicians, and the general public.

#### A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO THE HISTORICAL QIAO ZHOU

Qiao Zhou was born into a family with longstanding status as intellectuals and public servants, sometime around the year 200. His father, a scholar of the canonical *Shangshu* 尚書 [*Hallowed Documents*], died while Qiao Zhou was a youth, leaving him to study with two of the region's notable intellectuals. From Du Qiong 杜瓊 (d. 250),<sup>19</sup> Qiao Zhou learned the mantic traditions of the Yang 楊 family of Guanghan 廣漢 commandery. These traditions, dating back to the early Han, focused on political prophesy by means of celestial observations (that is, astrology) and prophetic wordplay.<sup>20</sup> Members of this intellectual lineage were often sought out by local and imperial rulers for their ability to interpret the omens and portents of the natural and textual worlds, and to offer guidance on political affairs.<sup>21</sup> Some Yang-tradition scholars embraced political opportunities, while others rejected such summons and opted for lives of reclusion and teaching. In many ways, Qiao Zhou was the end of this particular intellectual tradition. His training with Du Qiong was used in the service of Shu-Han for most of his adult life, but none of his major disciples appears to have used these skills in their own academic or political activities.

<sup>19</sup> For the official biography of Du Qiong, see *SGZ* 42, pp. 1021–22.

<sup>20</sup> On the Yang family and their intellectual lineage, see J. Michael Farmer, *The Talent of Shu: Qiao Zhou and the Intellectual World of Early Medieval Sichuan* (Albany: State U. New York P., 2007), chap. 1, and the modern Chinese and Japanese studies cited there.

<sup>21</sup> For a lineage chart, see Farmer, *Talent of Shu*, p. 17.

Qiao Zhou's other mentor was an iconoclastic intellectual named Qin Mi 秦宓 (d. 229).<sup>22</sup> Qin, a broadly-read scholar of the canon and history, demonstrated a healthy skepticism toward the hallowed texts that he studied, and passed his knowledge of ancient and local history to Qiao Zhou, along with his critical attitude. Qin Mi, though initially inclined toward reclusion, ultimately entered the service of Shu-Han and was regarded as an important civil officer of the regime, another example followed by Qiao.

Qiao Zhou spent over four decades as an official of the state of Shu-Han. His earliest posts were associated with the provincial academy, and he was later transferred to serve in the household of the heir-apparent, apparently still in the capacity of an educator.<sup>23</sup> Late in his career he was promoted to a post which offered direct access to the emperor, and he was regarded as second only to the Three Ducal Ministers – the highest tier of the imperial bureaucracy. Throughout his career, Qiao Zhou appears to have taken opportunities to remonstrate his sovereign, weighing in on matters as diverse as ritual propriety and military policy. Qiao's political career provides the framework for Chen Shou's biography in the *Records of the Three States*, which proceeds chronologically in noting Qiao Zhou's official positions and participation in important political events. Moreover, Chen's account contains lengthy citations from Qiao Zhou's political writings related to the events in which he participated. Aside from a brief bibliography of Qiao Zhou's major writings appended to the end, little mention is made in the formal biography of Qiao's intellectual activity, the details of which are scattered among the biographies of his mentors, Du Qiong and Qin Mi, leaving the general impression of Qiao as a political figure.

#### THE POLITICAL LIFE OF QIAO ZHOU AS DEVELOPED IN *EXTENDED MEANINGS*

Similarly, *Extended Meanings* presents Qiao Zhou as a political figure, emerging only in conjunction with some type of crisis, and often playing a decisive role in the outcome of the matter. Over the course of the novel, Qiao appears in ten chapters in the context of three major historical events: the founding of the state of Shu-Han, debates over military policy, and the fall of Shu-Han. Three of the episodes in *Extended Meanings* have no analogues in the surviving historical records,

<sup>22</sup> For the official biography of Qin Mi, see *SGZ* 38, pp. 971–76.

<sup>23</sup> For a detailed discussion of Qiao Zhou's career as an educator, see Farmer, *Talent of Shu*, pp. 51–58.

while the details of others have clearly been embellished from the earlier source materials. In the pages that follow I will collate the historical sources with the *Extended Meanings* account, but I do so with the aim of illustrating the manner in which the literary character of Qiao Zhou was crafted to meet the rhetorical needs of the novel, and not as a criticism of *Extended Meanings* for straying from the historical record.

### *The Founding of Shu-Han*

As power to control the imperial court slipped from the hands of a succession of ever-younger Han emperors during the last half of the second century, so did the court's ability to control the provinces. Officials, eunuchs, and imperial in-laws fought amongst themselves for access to and control of the weak emperors, effectively removing any of their real power by the 160s. The Yellow Turban rebellion of the 180s amplified these problems, with the Han military leaders who were dispatched to punish the rebels ultimately establishing their own power bases across the empire. The situation in Yi 益 province (present-day Sichuan) was no different. In 189, the grand master of ceremony Liu Yan 劉焉 (d. 194), upon hearing a colleague at the imperial court prophesy that the "aura of a Son of Heaven" (*tianzi qi* 天子氣) had been seen in the astral sector corresponding to Yi province, requested a transfer from the capital to Chengdu, hoping to make good on the prophesy himself.<sup>24</sup> Once in the area, Liu Yan simultaneously begin assembling imperial carriages and other regalia, all the while battling with local bandits, peasants, and elites.<sup>25</sup> From the geographic security of the Chengdu Plain, Liu Yan plotted an attack on the capital, but these plans were not carried out, as two of his sons who were involved in the plot were captured and killed, and an infected sore on his back killed him in 194.

Liu Zhang 劉璋, another son, took upon himself his father's title of shepherd of Yi province;<sup>26</sup> moreover, he prolonged his father's conflicts with local elites, including Zhang Lu 張魯,<sup>27</sup> the leader of a Daoist theocracy centered in Hanzhong 漢中 commandery,<sup>28</sup> north of the

<sup>24</sup> The prophesy had been given by Dong Fu 董夫, a native of Yi province and a member of the Yang family intellectual lineage; *SGZ* 31, p. 865.

<sup>25</sup> For Liu Yan's actions in Yi province, see J. Michael Farmer, "The Three Chaste Ones of Ba: Local Perspectives on the Yellow Turban Rebellion on the Chengdu Plain," *JAOS* 125.2 (2005), pp. 194-95.

<sup>26</sup> The title of shepherd (*mu* 牧) was used along with inspector (*cishi* 刺史) during the Han to refer to the top-ranking provincial official; see Hans Bielenstein, *The Bureaucracy of Han Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1980), p. 90.

<sup>27</sup> The official biography of Zhang Lu is located in *SGZ* 8, pp. 263-66.

<sup>28</sup> Hanzhong was located in the Han river basin and separated the Guanzhong 關中 (Land

Chengdu Plain. As his late father's allies deserted him in favor of either Zhang Lu or to pursue their own ambitions, Liu Zhang sought aid from his distant kinsman Liu Bei,<sup>29</sup> who controlled the western areas of neighboring Jing 荆 province. In 211, Cao Cao invaded Hanzhong, prompting Liu Zhang to officially invite Liu Bei to Yi to aid in defense against both Cao Cao to the north and the rising tide of discontent in Chengdu. When Liu Bei entered the province, he was met by numerous local elites who immediately defected from Liu Zhang, pledging their moral and material support to Liu Bei. After greeting Liu Bei and his army at Fu 涪 prefecture, Liu Zhang then ordered him to attack Zhang Lu in Hanzhong. Marching northward, Liu Bei and his company "treated the local population kindly in order to win their hearts,"<sup>30</sup> but stopped short of engaging Zhang Lu. When Cao Cao shifted his attention from Hanzhong and attacked Sun Quan 孫權 in the east, Liu Bei turned his troops eastward to aid his former ally Sun. Meanwhile, Liu Zhang executed several of Liu Bei's allies in Yi, prompting an enraged Liu Bei to send a punitive expedition back to Chengdu. Despite having the resources to withstand a lengthy siege,<sup>31</sup> Liu Zhang decided to surrender within a few weeks, saying, "My father and I have been in this province for over twenty years and have added no favor or kindness to the people. The people have been fighting for three years, and those whose flesh greased the wilderness are because of me. How can my mind be at peace?"<sup>32</sup> The *Records of the Three States* account adds, "There was no one in the crowd who did not shed tears."<sup>33</sup> Liu Zhang then opened the gates to the city and surrendered.<sup>34</sup> Liu Bei, thus established, proclaimed himself shepherd of Yi province.

*The literary account of Qiao Zhou and the surrender of Liu Zhang*

To Chen Shou's terse history, *Extended Meanings* adds drama and introduces Qiao Zhou to the political history of the region. The literary

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Within the Passes) region near Chang'an from the Chengdu Plain. As such, it was a valuable strategic locale.

<sup>29</sup> The official biography of Liu Bei is located in *SGZ* 32, pp. 871–92. Another major account is found in *Huayang guo zhi*. See Ren Naiqiang 任乃強, ed., *Huayang guo zhi jiaobu tuzhu* 華陽國志校補圖注 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1987) 6, pp. 355–85.

<sup>30</sup> *SGZ* 32, p. 881.

<sup>31</sup> According to *SGZ* 31, p. 869, Liu Zhang possessed some 30,000 troops and a year's supply of provisions within the Chengdu city walls when Liu Bei's troops surrounded the city. Moreover, "the officials and people were united in their desire to die fighting." This claim seems unlikely, given the large number of defections from Liu Zhang to Liu Bei.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> Liu Bei removed Liu Zhang from Chengdu, restoring some of his titles and offices, and reassigned him to Gong'an 公安 prefecture in Nan 南 commandery, where he died in 219.

account of Liu Bei's conquest hinges on the defection of a skilled warrior, Ma Chao 馬超,<sup>35</sup> who after successively allying with Liu Zhang, Zhang Lu, and finally Liu Bei, arrived in Chengdu to convince his former patron (Liu Zhang) to surrender. Liu Zhang was inclined to open the city gates and allow Liu Bei to enter, but members of his staff objected and a heated debate ensued, with many urging Liu Zhang to resist the siege with his secure city walls, numerous troops, and ample provisions. As the argument raged, the novel notes,

Suddenly a man appeared and said, "Your Lordship's words accord with Heaven's wish." Everyone turned to Qiao Zhou (Yunnan 允南), a man from Xichongguo 西充國 in Baxi 巴西 and a skilled reader of the stars. Questioned by Liu Zhang, he said, "Observing the constellations, I have seen stars clustering over Shu, the main star as bright as the moon. It is the imperial sign. Moreover, a year ago, there was a children's ditty: 'If you want fresh rice, you must wait till First Ruler comes.' A clear omen: Heaven must have its way."<sup>36</sup>

This reading of the omens angered several close to Liu Zhang who called, unsuccessfully, for Qiao Zhou's execution. Almost immediately thereafter, another report of further defections among Liu Zhang's supporters reached Chengdu. With these ill omens and bad news on his mind, Liu Zhang retired. The next day, an envoy from Liu Bei's encampment refused to dismount his horse during a meeting with Liu Zhang. The novel reports, "Suddenly someone with a sword drawn shouted, 'Upstart! Think you're above us all? How dare you snub the worthies of Shu!'" This outspoken local was Qin Mi, one of Qiao Zhou's teachers. The envoy then dismounted and offered his respects to Qin Mi and the other officials, after which, Liu Zhang agreed to surrender.<sup>37</sup> Upon taking control of the province, Liu Bei rewarded the officials who had submitted (including those who initially refused to report for duty) with new or continuing appointments, thus demonstrating his generosity toward his subordinates.

The manner in which *Extended Meanings* introduces Qiao Zhou is significant both in terms of the specific context of this historical episode and in establishing Qiao's character preparatory for later episodes in the novel. First, Qiao Zhou was simply identified by name, appellation, and native place. By noting Qiao's home as Xichongguo pre-

<sup>35</sup> The official biography of Ma Chao is located in *SGZ* 36, pp. 944-48, and depicts Ma Chao as somewhat of an opportunist, frequently shifting his allegiance from one warlord to another.

<sup>36</sup> *Three Kingdoms*, p. 500; *SGYT* 65, p. 850.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

lecture in Baxi commandery, *Extended Meanings* indicates that Qiao Zhou was away from his home in the eastern Chengdu Plain, and his appearance at a gathering of provincial officials in a time of political crisis implies that Qiao Zhou was an officer of Yi province serving Liu Zhang. The novel, however, does not offer a proper identification of Qiao's position in Chengdu, but rather focuses on his contribution to the debate. Noting Qiao's reputation as "a skilled reader of the stars 此人素曉天文," the novel then provides the heart of Qiao's message to Liu Zhang: Heaven had expressed its will regarding the position of Liu Bei in Chengdu in the esoteric language of celestial patterns and prophetic words. Qiao's reading of the convergence of stars, including the imperial star, in the astral sectors corresponding to the Chengdu Plain and his interpretation of the rather-obvious ditty was in accord with Qiao's intellectual training with Du Qiong and the general intellectual trends of the region. As such, *Extended Meanings* sets up Qiao Zhou as one versed in the mantic arts, a characterization that recurs frequently throughout the novel.

An additional view of Qiao's personality was also manifest in this anecdote. Though Qiao's official position in the administration of Liu Zhang, if any, was unstated, he showed no timidity in speaking frankly to the head of the province. Even more significant was Qiao's opposition of more powerful officials at the provincial bureau. According to *Extended Meanings*, those favoring defense of Chengdu against the siege of Liu Bei outnumbered those supporting surrender. Qiao Zhou's voicing of a minority opinion at the risk of his life in this situation also presaged future events in Qiao's political career. Some modern readers have concluded that Qiao's recommendation of surrender to Liu Zhang indicated his lack of loyalty and moral character; again traits that were manifest at later points in the novel.<sup>38</sup> In these terms, then, the presentation of Qiao Zhou in this anecdote establishes Qiao as an outspoken yet fatalistic man of questionable political and moral character.

Finally, the novel's use of Qiao Zhou in this episode sets up several recurring relationships between historical characters. Qiao Zhou's advisement of Liu Zhang at this critical juncture suggests that Qiao may have been a provincial official. More significant, however, was Qiao's prophesy in support of Liu Bei. *Extended Meanings* offers no indication that Qiao had any prior personal contact with Liu Bei, but rather tenders the notion that Qiao's support for Liu was based on an interpre-

<sup>38</sup> See various comments in the RTK Frontier Palace online forum thread "Opinions Regarding Qiao Zhou" <<http://www.3kingdoms.net/forum/showthread.php?threadid=14582>> (accessed March 2005).

tation of the Mandate of Heaven. Qiao's encouragement of Liu Zhang to submit to the will of Heaven and surrender to Liu Bei marked the beginning of a lengthy relationship between Qiao Zhou and Liu Bei's imperial enterprise.

Although of lesser magnitude, the characters who were presented in the literary account of Liu Zhang's surrender were also woven into other relationship patterns worth noting. Qin Mi's dramatic opposition to Liu Bei's envoy serves as the novel's first introduction to this notable figure. By presenting Qin Mi as "suddenly" entering the stage, *Extended Meanings* echoes the introduction of Qiao Zhou just a few lines earlier. The parallel bold entrances of Qiao Zhou and Qin Mi hint at the relationship between the two men, historically correct but unspoken in the novel.

While the *Extended Meanings'* depiction of the events surrounding the establishment of Liu Bei as the ruler of Yi province has a certain internal rhetorical consistency, some of its narrative of events and characterization of individuals are sharply at odds with the historical records. For example, the *Records of the Three States*, while noting that Ma Chao "secretly sent an epistle urging Liu Zhang to surrender,"<sup>39</sup> contains no mention of the lengthy duel between Ma and Liu Bei's general Zhang Fei 張飛 (168–221),<sup>40</sup> as vividly described in *Extended Meanings*.<sup>41</sup> Nor does the *Records of the Three States* biography of Qin Mi mention his purported service in the administration of Liu Zhang. In fact, the opposite is conveyed, with Qin Mi repeatedly rejecting appointments to office (including a request to serve under Liu Zhang) and only entering public service under Liu Bei.<sup>42</sup>

The *Extended Meanings'* recasting of historical figures is no better apparent than in its portrayal of Qiao Zhou. While the novel presents Qiao Zhou as "a skilled reader of the stars," a characterization grounded in historical evidence, the novel's timing is seriously askew. When Liu Zhang surrendered to Liu Bei in 214, Qiao Zhou was approximately fourteen *sui*. While this youthful age might not have prevented Qiao from possessing the skills and characteristics described in the novel, given Qiao's late entrance into the world of scholarship (as noted in his

<sup>39</sup> *SGZ* 36, p. 946.

<sup>40</sup> The official biography of Zhang Fei is located in *SGZ* 36, pp. 943–44.

<sup>41</sup> Even the *Outline of the Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Government*, a favorite intermediary source of the *Extended Meanings*, simply notes, "Ma Chao fled to Liu Bei. [Liu] Bei entered Chengdu and appointed himself shepherd of Yi province, naming Zhuge Liang as general"; Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130–1200), attr., *Zizhi tongjian gangmu* 資治通鑑綱目 (*SKQS* edn.) 14, pp. 23a–b.

<sup>42</sup> *SGZ* 38, pp. 971–73.

*Records of the Three States* biography), it seems highly unlikely that Qiao would have either occupied a provincial governmental post (implied but not explicitly stated in the novel), or been so bold as to present a prophetic reading of celestial and textual omens to the presiding provincial officer at such a young age. As I will discuss below, the anachronistic placement of Qiao Zhou at the center of Liu Zhang's surrender to Liu Bei established Qiao Zhou as an influential, though minor, figure in the literary account of Three States political history, and foreshadowed his role in later events.

*Urging Liu Bei to claim the throne*

Having removed Liu Zhang from office in Chengdu, Liu Bei governed Yi province for the next six years (214–220), maintaining his military campaigns against rivals to the north and east. In 215, he battled Sun Quan over territory in Jing Province, eventually ceding the eastern portion of that province to Sun and claiming the western commanderies for himself. In that same year, Cao Cao accepted the surrender of Zhang Lu and took possession of Hanzhong. During 218 and 219, Liu Bei battled Cao Cao for control of Hanzhong, eventually claiming the area in the summer of 219. Shortly thereafter, Liu Bei's supporters submitted a memorial to the Han court noting Liu's loyalty and his successes, and asked the emperor to bestow upon Liu Bei the honorific title of "King of Hanzhong."<sup>43</sup> While on the surface the memorial was a panegyric for Liu Bei, it also functioned as a "calling out" for Cao Cao, who had taken the Han emperor Xian 獻 into custody in 195 and was the de facto ruler of the Han court. Of course, no official reply was issued by the emperor, but Liu Bei took upon himself the title of king of Hanzhong in 219, then submitted his own memorial to the throne declaring his loyalty to the dynasty and outlining the crimes of Cao Cao. The following year, Cao Cao died and his son Cao Pi 丕 forced emperor Xian to abdicate the throne and declared himself to be the emperor of the Wei dynasty.<sup>44</sup> Reports of these events reached Liu Bei in Chengdu, along with the false rumor that the Han emperor had been killed, causing Liu Bei to put on mourning garb and issue a "posthumous" title upon emperor Xian. It is at this dramatic juncture that Qiao Zhou next appeared on the literary stage, though it marked his first public venture in the historical records.

Chapter 80 of *Extended Meanings* opens with Cao Pi's accepting the abdication of the Han emperor and Liu Bei's mourning. Too ill to

<sup>43</sup> The text of this memorial is contained in *SGZ* 32, pp. 886–87.

<sup>44</sup> *SGZ* 2, pp. 61–76.

tend to affairs of state, Liu Bei retired, leaving Zhuge Liang in charge. The *Extended Meanings*' account depicts Zhuge Liang in consultation with the grand tutor Xu Jing 許靖 and Qiao Zhou, identified as imperial household grandee.<sup>45</sup> The three men agreed to urge Liu Bei to proclaim himself emperor "on the grounds that the empire may not be without a sovereign even for a single day."<sup>46</sup> To this end, Qiao Zhou offered supporting evidence, saying:

Recently we have had the good omen of auspicious winds and clouds. In the northwest corner of Chengdu a yellow haze [aura] several hundred spans high rose into the evening sky. The imperial star was seen in the area of the Stomach, Mane, and Net, shining with an august fire and bright as the moon. These correspondent signs indicate that the king of Hanzhong should assume the imperial throne and continue the great line of Han. Their meaning is unmistakable.<sup>47</sup>

With the visible support of Heaven supplied by Qiao Zhou's reading of the omens, Zhuge Liang and the others approached Liu Bei, who balked at the suggestion. After repeated efforts to convince Liu Bei to claim the throne failed, Zhuge Liang feigned severe illness, finally tricking Liu Bei into accepting the proposal.

The historical records accord Qiao Zhou a somewhat different role in the effort to convince Liu Bei to claim the imperial title. According to *Records of the Three States*, Qiao Zhou was one of a dozen provincial officials who jointly submitted a memorial to Liu Bei offering prophetic evidence to support their patron's imperial ambition. The first type of evidence was gleaned from the apocrypha and employed various forms of prophetic wordplay to illustrate that Liu Bei was fated to become emperor.<sup>48</sup> A second set of evidence consisted of favorable astronomi-

<sup>45</sup> Xu Jing, had served under the provincial administration of Liu Zhang, and after Liu Bei's seizure of Yi province, was retained. Following the establishment of Liu Bei as emperor, Xu was appointed as minister over the masses (*situ* 司徒), one of the three highest civil offices. For Xu Jing's biography, see *SGZ* 38, pp. 963-69.

<sup>46</sup> *Three Kingdoms*, p. 609; *SGY* 80, p. 1037.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.* The terms "Stomach" 胃, "Mane" 昴, and "Net" 畢 refer to the 17th through 19th Lunar Mansions, all located in the western sky. *Jin shu* "Treatise on Astronomy" states: "The three stars of *Wei* form the larder of the heavens and govern warehouses and granaries for the five grains. Brightness of these stars forebodes peace;" "the seven stars of *Mao* form the ears of the heavens. They govern the Western regions and all matters pertaining to prisons;" and "the eight stars of *Bi* govern frontier troops and hunting" and are a sign of peace in the empire (*Jin shu*, 11, p. 302); trans. Ho Peng Yoke, *The Astronomical Chapters of the Chin Shu* (Paris: Mouton & Co., 1966), pp. 100-1. Also see vol. 3 of Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilisation in China* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1959-; rpt. Taipei: Caves Books, 1986), p. 236.

<sup>48</sup> For a translation and analysis of this portion of the memorial, see Farmer, *Talent of Shu*, pp. 48-51.

cal and astrological omens sighted in recent years, including “a yellow aura in the southwest,” “propitious clouds and auspicious breezes descending from the Jade-Pearl String,” a movement of flag-like auras from the west to the east, and the highly auspicious convergence of stars and planets mirroring a similar alignment that occurred when the Han founder Liu Bang 劉邦 took the throne.<sup>49</sup> The memorial concludes with a quotation from the *Yijing* 易經 (*Classic of Changes*) urging the sage-king to act in accord with Heaven’s wishes, in other words, for Liu Bei to take the throne. *Records of the Three States* does not provide an account of Zhuge Liang, Xu Jing, and Qiao Zhou in which the group makes visits to Liu Bei. Historically speaking, Qiao Zhou’s only role in the matter was likely as a contributor to the memorial.<sup>50</sup>

In addition to his role convincing Liu Bei to take the throne, *Extended Meanings* also attributes a significant place for Qiao Zhou in the accession ceremony. On the *bingwu* 丙午 day of the fourth month of Jian’an 26 (221),<sup>51</sup> as Liu Bei mounted the altar on which he was to perform the accession sacrifices, he was accompanied by Qiao Zhou, who according to *Extended Meanings*, “read out the accompanying text in a loud, clear voice,” while Liu Bei made the requisite offerings to the Heavenly Thearch and Earthly Spirits, thus establishing himself as the next emperor of Han.<sup>52</sup>

*Extended Meanings* takes significant liberties in its account of the accession ceremony of Liu Bei. While the document read in the literary account of the sacrifice follows closely the document contained in *Records of the Three States*,<sup>53</sup> Chen Shou’s account has Liu Bei himself read the text on the altar in the Chengdu suburbs. Moreover, Chen Shou’s biography of his teacher twice mentions Qiao’s lack of ability in oral communication.<sup>54</sup> As such, it seems unlikely that Qiao Zhou would have been called upon to read the text at such a solemn occasion, or that he would have done so “in a loud, clear voice.”

<sup>49</sup> *SGZ* 32, pp. 887–88.

<sup>50</sup> There has been considerable debate over Qiao Zhou’s role in this memorial, with many concluding that Qiao was too young (twenty-three *sui*) to have been included as one of the presenters of the document. However, these arguments lack convincing evidence, and Qiao is connected to the other signatories by way of his training in the mantic arts with Du Qiong, himself a signatory of the memorial. For a discussion, see Farmer, *Talent of Shu*, pp. 50–51.

<sup>51</sup> Though Cao Pi ended the Jian’an period in its twenty-fifth year, changing the year name to Huangchu 黃初, Liu Bei refused to recognize this calendrical change, hence his use of “Jian’an 26” – a year not found in most chronological tables.

<sup>52</sup> *Three Kingdoms*, p. 610; *SGY* 80, p. 1039.

<sup>53</sup> *SGZ* 32, p. 889. For a translation and discussion of the accession document, see Farmer, “What’s in a Name?” pp. 46–47.

<sup>54</sup> *SGZ* 42, pp. 1027, 1029.

In *Extended Meanings*, Qiao Zhou's role in the establishment of Liu Bei as ruler of the Han is grounded in the earlier historical accounts, but with significant fictionalization. For example, in the historical record Qiao Zhou is listed as one of the signatories of the initial memorial urging Liu Bei to take the throne. But the novel's omission of the eleven other signatories places Qiao Zhou in a much more influential position than he likely held. First, the novel introduces Qiao Zhou as holding the post of imperial palace grandee, an office that Qiao was not appointed to until 258, and one that would not have existed in Chengdu until after an imperial court was established there. Chen Shou's *Records* does not mention an official post for Qiao Zhou until 223, roughly two years after the accession of Liu Bei. That post, attendant for the encouragement of education, placed Qiao as an instructor in the provincial academy (itself an unlikely platform for advising provincial leadership). By exaggerating Qiao Zhou's rank at the time of his consultation with Zhuge Liang and Xu Jing, *Extended Meanings* adds historically unfounded political credibility to Qiao's prognostication skills. Second, while the historical records noted Zhuge Liang as an early patron of Qiao Zhou, there is no surviving evidence to indicate that Qiao was a close confidant of Zhuge Liang. In fact, the historical accounts depict an oddly ambivalent relationship between Zhuge Liang and Qiao Zhou. Pei Songzhi's commentary quotes *Shu ji* 蜀記 [*Records of Shu*] on the initial meeting of the two men; it reads, "When Qiao Zhou first met Zhuge Liang, the attendants all laughed. When [Qiao] had left, a director asked to expel those who had laughed. Zhuge Liang replied, 'I too cannot endure [the sight of him], how much less so the attendants?'" – a reference to Qiao Zhou's diminutive stature and homely appearance.<sup>55</sup> Despite Zhuge Liang's initial mocking of Qiao Zhou, Zhuge Liang appears to have respected Qiao's academic abilities, appointing him as attendant for the encouragement of education in 223. Qiao's regard for Zhuge Liang was also manifest in the rapid abandonment of his post to attend Zhuge Liang's funeral in 234.<sup>56</sup> Thus, the *Extended Meanings'* portrayal of Qiao Zhou and Zhuge Liang appears to have exaggerated the nature of their relationship and Qiao Zhou's influence in the government of Yi.

The literary account of the persuasion offered toward Liu Bei, while grounded historically, also contains some significant creative adjust-

<sup>55</sup> SGZ 42, p. 1027, n. 1. The authorship of this particular *Records of Shu* remains unknown. There were several texts with this title that circulated before the Tang.

<sup>56</sup> SGZ 42, p. 1027.

ments. The auspicious omens and their interpretation offered by Qiao Zhou in the *Extended Meanings*' account were drawn from the lengthy memorial contained in *Records of the Three States*. While the novel notes the presence of a yellow haze or aura and the imperial star in key celestial asterisms (all included in the historical document), it omits many other pieces of historical evidence presented to Liu Bei, in particular, all references to apocryphal texts and prophetic wordplay. While the two signs presented in *Extended Meanings* were certainly easier to understand than those left out (an important aspect of retelling history to a popular audience), this editing creates a significantly different impression of both the nature of the persuasion and Qiao Zhou's skills. Readings of apocryphal texts and prophecies that contained elements of Liu Bei's given name and appellative as evidence that he was destined to become emperor were key to the historical memorial. The combined weight of the natural omens *and* the written prophecies made both for a stronger argument toward Liu Bei, and showed Qiao Zhou and his colleagues as well-rounded practitioners of various prophetic arts. The shorter persuasion offered by the *Extended Meanings* emphasizes Qiao's ability to read the natural signs, but omits his equally important training in prophetic wordplay.

The characterization of Qiao Zhou that emerged from the *Extended Meanings*' account of Liu Bei's accession both echoes and expands on the text's initial introduction to Qiao. This episode manifests Qiao Zhou's ability to interpret celestial patterns and presents it as the pillar of Qiao's academic skill. Additionally, the novel establishes relationships between Qiao and other characters, in this case, Zhuge Liang. By portraying Qiao Zhou as a confidant of Liu Bei's closest advisor (Zhuge Liang) and of one of the top civil officials (Xu Jing), the novel grants additional political clout to a character who, while historically involved in the events at hand, clearly was not so influential in real life. Combined with its treatment of Qiao Zhou in the episode of Liu Bei's conquest of Liu Zhang and Yi province, *Extended Meanings* sets Qiao Zhou as an early but fatalistic supporter of Liu Bei's political ambitions. This view of Qiao Zhou as a man possessing the ability to read the prophetic omens and offering his political support on the basis of these signs continues throughout the remainder of his appearances in the novel.

#### *Debates over Military Policy*

Following the accession of Liu Bei, Qiao Zhou disappears from the narrative in *Extended Meanings* for approximately six years, return-

ing in the context of a series of debates over the direction of Shu-Han military policy in 227. There are no historical records to corroborate this, and in fact, the next verifiable intersection of the historical and literary accounts of Qiao Zhou's political activity does not occur until 256/257, also in the context of military debates.

During the period in which Qiao Zhou was absent from the narrative, a number of significant events took place in the general history of Shu-Han; events that shaped the circumstances surrounding Qiao Zhou's reintroduction into the novel. In the fourth month of 223, Liu Bei lay dying. Summoning Zhuge Liang to his side, the emperor declared, "Your ability exceeds that of Cao Pi tenfold. I know that you will be able to pacify the state and complete this great enterprise. If my heir (Liu Shan 劉禪 [207-271]) is capable, then support him. If he is untalented, then take [the empire] for yourself."<sup>57</sup> Zhuge Liang tearfully accepted this charge, and Liu Bei, after instructing his son to follow Zhuge Liang as a father, died.<sup>58</sup> Based in the historical sources, *Extended Meanings* employs this episode to establish Zhuge Liang's loyalty to the wishes of his dying sovereign as a driving theme of its presentation of later Shu-Han history. After Liu Bei's death, Zhuge Liang took charge of Shu-Han administrative and military affairs, and for the next few years was the de facto ruler of the state, acting as regent for the sixteen-year-old Liu Shan. When the mourning period for Liu Bei was completed in the spring of 225, Zhuge Liang sent troops to suppress an uprising of non-sinified tribes in the south; a campaign that was completed by autumn of that same year.<sup>59</sup> Two years later, Zhuge Liang submitted a memorial to Liu Shan requesting permission to mount a campaign against Wei in the north. It is within this context that Qiao Zhou next appeared.

*The literary account of Qiao Zhou's opposition to Zhuge Liang*

In *Extended Meanings*, the account of Zhuge Liang's "Chu shi biao" 出師表 ("Memorial on Deploying the Army"),<sup>60</sup> and Qiao Zhou's

<sup>57</sup> This conversation is recorded in *SGZ* 35, p. 918. *Extended Meanings* reproduces it as well. See *Three Kingdoms*, p. 647; *SGYY* 85, p. 1099.

<sup>58</sup> *SGZ* 32, p. 891, marks the date of Liu Bei's death as *guisi* 癸巳, fourth month, a non-existent date. The following paragraph notes the date as 24th day, fourth month; a *xinsi* 辛巳 day, or June 10, 223.

<sup>59</sup> See *SGZ* 35, pp. 918-19. The southern campaigns are treated in great dramatic detail in chaps. 87-90 of *Extended Meanings*.

<sup>60</sup> The memorial was reproduced in *SGZ* 35, pp. 919-20, and quoted verbatim in *SGYY* 91, pp. 1186-87. For a translation of the *SGZ* text, see Robert Joe Cutter, trans., "Memorial on Deploying the Army," in John Minford and Joseph Lau, eds., *Classical Chinese Literature* (New York: Columbia U.P., 2000), pp. 593-96.

response, illustrates the core values of each character and foreshadows Qiao Zhou's later activities on the matter of military policy. Zhuge Liang's memorial appealed to Liu Shan's sense of filial piety and emphasized Zhuge Liang's loyalty to the deceased Liu Bei. In the document, Zhuge Liang noted the various officials' and generals' devotion to the cause of the emperor's late father and his own willingness to complete Liu Bei's work of reunifying the empire, viewing his charge as an unpaid debt. According to *Extended Meanings*, Liu Shan responded unfavorably to the proposal, citing his concern with overtaxing both the troops and Zhuge Liang after the recently-completed southern campaigns. To this, Zhuge Liang replied, "My devotion to the later Emperor's charge to assist his heir remains undiminished. With the south pacified, we are free of internal troubles and must chasten the traitors and win back the north; this opportunity may never come again."<sup>61</sup> As the exchange between chancellor and emperor continued,

Suddenly from the ranks Grand Historian Qiao Zhou stepped forth and addressed the emperor, "Last night I was watching the heavenly correspondences; signs to the north suggest the height of vigor; the northern stars are doubly bright. This is no time to plan action there." Turning to [Zhuge Liang] Kongming, he went on, "Your Excellency has a deep knowledge of the constellations. Why do you persist?"

Kongming answered, "The way of Heaven changes constantly. No one can cling to its patterns. I am going to post our forces in Hanzhong and observe our enemy's movements before advancing."<sup>62</sup>

The novel then notes, "Qiao Zhou's earnest objections were ignored," and Zhuge Liang immediately began making preparations for war, while Qiao Zhou was appointed as grand historian – a position that the historical Qiao Zhou never held.

While the "Memorial on Deploying the Army" illustrates Zhuge Liang's driving sense of loyalty, Qiao Zhou's objections to the proposed campaigns reinforce the *Extended Meanings*' views of Qiao as one able to read the signs of the times. The vaguely worded objection to the proposal simply indicates that the Heavens granted vigor and favor to the north, meaning Wei would prevail in a military conflict. Qiao Zhou's appeal to Zhuge Liang's own skills in comprehending celestial omens drives a wedge between the two individuals, previously portrayed as

<sup>61</sup> *Three Kingdoms*, p. 701; *SGYY* 91, p. 1186.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.* It is important to note that there is no historical record of Qiao Zhou's objecting to Zhuge Liang's memorial or campaigns.

close allies. This apparent rift in the relationship further manifests the core values of each character. For Zhuge Liang, loyalty outweighed human logic or Heavenly portent; while for Qiao Zhou, the will of Heaven stood supreme. As predicted, Zhuge Liang's campaign to the north was unsuccessful, and four years later, Zhuge Liang was forced to abandon the effort and regroup.<sup>63</sup>

The continuing difference of opinion between Zhuge Liang and Qiao Zhou on the matter of military policy was presented in similar fashion in an episode dated to 234, contained in chapters 101 and 102 in *Extended Meanings*. After three years of resting and resupplying the armies of Shu-Han, Zhuge Liang again petitioned Liu Shan for permission to attack Wei. The emperor initially refused the request, asking why the state should not enjoy the recent period of peace. Again couching his response in terms of filial piety and loyalty, Zhuge Liang argued the need to unify the empire to meet the wishes of the late Liu Bei. In the middle of this exchange between chancellor and emperor, Qiao Zhou again appeared and said, "Oh, do not muster the army, Your Excellency!"<sup>64</sup> Using Qiao Zhou's entrance as a dramatic breaking point, chapter 101 concludes with prophetic verse:

Kongming, the Martial Marquis, toiled for his kingdom unto death;

But Qiao, the official historian, could read the seeds of time and make sense of the stars.

What was Qiao Zhou's protest? Read on.<sup>65</sup>

Qiao Zhou's protest opens chapter 102, and departs somewhat from the reading of omens and portents by Qiao depicted earlier in the novel. In this case, Qiao Zhou approached the emperor and offered the following observation and request:

As official director of the Heavenly Viewing Stand,<sup>66</sup> I, your vassal, am duty-bound to petition Your Majesty on matters auspicious or adverse. Recently tens of thousands of birds flying up from the south plunged into the Han River and died – an adverse omen. I have also examined the star patterns: The Straddler stars<sup>67</sup> are

<sup>63</sup> See *SGZ* 35, pp. 922–27.

<sup>64</sup> *Three Kingdoms*, pp. 785–86; *SGYY* 101, pp. 1323–24.

<sup>65</sup> *Three Kingdoms*, p. 786; *SGYY* 101, p. 1324.

<sup>66</sup> *Sittiantai* 司天臺. *Extended Meanings*' use of this term is anachronistic, as there was no such office during the Three States period; rather, the title was used intermittently from the Tang through the Yuan. See Charles O. Hucker, *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China* (reprint; Taipei: Southern Materials Center, 1986), p. 457.

<sup>67</sup> The "Straddler" stars (*kui* 奎) refer to the sixteen stars of the 15th Lunar Mansion. According to *Jin shu* 11, p. 301, they "form the arsenal of the heavens"; trans. Ho, *Astronomical*

advancing through the zone of Venus and a vital aura is ruling the northern sky – both bode ill for an attack on Wei. Furthermore, the people of Chengdu have heard cries coming from the cypress trees. Such strange signs suggest that His Excellency, the chancellor, keep strictly to defense and take no rash actions.<sup>68</sup>

With this prophesy, Qiao Zhou demonstrated his ability to read more than just the stars, including two rather odd portents. First, he noted the strange and sudden deaths of “tens of thousands of birds” flying northward. While Qiao did not offer an explanation to the emperor, the meaning of the omen was clear: the birds represented the troops of Shu-Han, falling to their deaths as they attempt to cross the Han River into territory held by Wei. Qiao’s second portent, the movement of the stars and a strong aura in the northern sky, echoed his previous warning against a northern campaign (issued in 227), and indicated the continued strength of Wei.<sup>69</sup> In the final portent, the crying cypress trees in Chengdu were presumably those planted on the tomb of Liu Bei – a common feature of Han period imperial tumuli,<sup>70</sup> and signal the disapproval of the deceased ruler over the proposed campaign.<sup>71</sup>

The reading is borne out by Zhuge Liang’s reaction to Qiao’s presentation of the signs: after initially denouncing them as “meaningless portents,” the chancellor himself made offerings at the temple of Liu Bei, pledging his loyalty and devotion to the deceased emperor’s enterprise. Despite Zhuge Liang’s efforts to defy the will of Heaven, Qiao Zhou’s predictions came true. *Extended Meanings* includes a brief scene which confirmed Qiao Zhou’s prophesy. One evening, Liu Shan dreamt of an avalanche and woke disturbed. His officers were summoned to explain the dream. Qiao Zhou was among this group, and noted his own observation, “Watching the heavens last night, I noticed a ruddy falling star, a horn protruding from its awn. The star came from the northeast and landed in the southwest, signifying great disaster for the

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*Chapters*, p. 100. Also see Needham, *Science and Civilisation* 3, p. 236.

<sup>68</sup> *Three Kingdoms*, pp. 787–88; *SGYY* 102, p. 1328.

<sup>69</sup> *Extended Meanings* points out that the same celestial omens observed and reported by Qiao Zhou were also visible in the courts and encampments of Wei. The Wei general Sima Yi 司馬懿, upon seeing the vitality of the northern heavens, predicted Zhuge Liang’s attack and fall; *Three Kingdoms*, p. 788; *SGYY* 102, pp. 1328–29.

<sup>70</sup> References to this practice in the Han appeared in the works of Tang poets such as Bo Juyi 白居易 and Li He 李賀, who referred to Han tombs as “cypress walled” (*bocheng* 柏城) and “cypress tumuli” (*boling* 柏陵); *Hanyu da cidian* 漢語大辭典 (Shanghai: Hanyu da cidian chubanshe, 1990) 4, p. 917.

<sup>71</sup> Qiao Zhou’s reading of these natural anomalies was consistent with the historical “tree-stump prophesy.” See *SGZ* 42, p. 1022; Farmer, *Talent of Shu*, pp. 70–71.

chancellor. Your Majesty's dream of an avalanche is a corresponding sign." Immediately following Qiao Zhou's presentation of the additional omen and his interpretation thereof,<sup>72</sup> word reached Liu Shan of Zhuge Liang's death from illness at the age of fifty-four *sui* in the eighth month of Jianxing 12 (234), while on campaign against Wei.<sup>73</sup> These exchanges between Zhuge Liang and Qiao Zhou, though without historical foundation, reinforce the novel's theme of the struggle between loyalty and fate.<sup>74</sup>

*"Discourse on Enemy States"*

Even with the death of Zhuge Liang, the debates over military policy continued at the Shu-Han court. Control of the army passed from Zhuge Liang to Jiang Wan 蔣琬 (d. 246) to Fei Yi 費禕 (d. 253), and in 253 eventually settled on Jiang Wei 姜維 (202–264).<sup>75</sup> During the nearly twenty years between Zhuge Liang's death and this moment, Shu-Han had adopted a largely defensive policy, with few major northern campaigns.<sup>76</sup> The deaths of important civil officials like Dong Yun 董允 (d. 246), as well as the rising power of the eunuch Huang Hao 黃皓,<sup>77</sup> resulted in a deteriorating situation at court, with Liu Shan growing less interested in efforts to reunify the empire, and more content in his palace lifestyle. At this time, Jiang Wei began to petition the emperor for permission to conscript local minorities to supplement the Shu-Han army and to launch another attack against Wei. A request made early in 253 was opposed by fellow-general Fei Yi, who chastised Jiang Wei, reminding him of Zhuge Liang's failure to defeat Wei and noting openly that neither himself nor Jiang Wei was equal to the late Chancellor.<sup>78</sup> Following the death of Fei Yi in the summer of 253, Jiang Wei again

<sup>72</sup> *Three Kingdoms*, p. 811. The Shanghai guji edition of *SGYY* does not include this episode in chap. 105.

<sup>73</sup> *SGZ* 35, p. 925. The *Extended Meanings* account of Zhuge Liang's illness and death is contained in chaps. 103–4; see *Three Kingdoms*, pp. 796–807; *SGYY* 103–4, pp. 1341–63.

<sup>74</sup> In a recently published article on cosmic foreordination in *Extended Meanings*, Constantine Tung mentions the exchanges between Qiao Zhou and Zhuge Liang, characterizing Qiao as one who "understands cosmic foreordination and signs in the constellations, yet does not withdraw from the secular world as many wise Daoist recluses do." While I strongly object to Tung's classification of the literary character of Qiao Zhou as "Daoist," he and I similarly conclude that the literary character Qiao Zhou generally deals with fate, in opposition to struggles against fate by the novel's heroes, including Zhuge Liang. See Constantine Tung, "Cosmic Foreordination and Human Commitment: The Tragic Volition in *Three Kingdoms*," in Besio and Tung, eds., *Three Kingdoms in Chinese Culture*, pp. 10–12.

<sup>75</sup> Biographies of Jiang Wan, Fei Yi, and Jiang Wei are located in *SGZ* 44, pp. 1057–69.

<sup>76</sup> The largest campaign was led by Jiang Wei in 240 to attack Wei forces in Yong province; *SGZ* 44, p. 1064.

<sup>77</sup> See *SGZ* 39, p. 936.

<sup>78</sup> Cited in Pei Songzhi's commentary, *SGZ* 44, p. 1064, n. 1.

requested permission to engage in a northern campaign. The request was approved, and for the next five years Jiang Wei led several unsuccessful expeditions into Wei territory. Not only were these campaigns unsuccessful and costly in terms of expense and manpower, they were morally depressing. In 256, Jiang Wei's army was defeated in battle at Duangu 段谷 by the Wei general Deng Ai 鄧艾, who anticipated Jiang Wei's tactics and inflicted great casualties upon the Shu-Han army. So humiliating was this defeat that Jiang Wei was forced to issue a letter of apology to the court.<sup>79</sup> Following these crushing defeats, Jiang Wei reversed a long-standing Shu-Han military policy by dismantling a string of defensive garrisons along the northern border, hoping to lure the Wei army onto the Chengdu Plain and engage them there. Jiang Wei's changes to the defensive fortifications were opposed by other members of the Shu-Han military, but were allowed to stand by the court.<sup>80</sup> Despite several protests from the military, only Qiao Zhou objected to Jiang Wei's military policy at court.

Significantly, *Extended Meanings* alters the historical backdrop in which Qiao Zhou voiced his objection to Jiang Wei's aggressive military policy. The novel notes that in 257 armies from Wu were preparing a campaign against Wei, and that when Jiang Wei heard of their plans, he sought approval from Liu Shan to lead Shu-Han forces to the north. The account then introduces Qiao Zhou into the narrative:

Household Master Qiao Zhou learned of these developments and said with a sigh, "How low the Shu-Han court has sunk these days, succumbing to the temptations of vice and luxury and placing all its trust in the favored eunuch Huang Hao, who ignores official business in his pursuit of pleasure. All the while Jiang Wei remains addicted to his campaigns of conquest, unconcerned for the troops' welfare. This house stands in grave peril." Qiao Zhou then wrote the essay "Discourse On Enemy States" ("Chouguo lun" 讎國論) and sent it to Jiang Wei. Jiang Wei opened the seal and studied it. The text read....<sup>81</sup>

Then comes a quotation from the text of Qiao's essay, followed by Jiang Wei's response: "The views of a rotten pedant!"<sup>82</sup> Apparently having received approval for the campaign, Jiang Wei then plotted a strategy,

<sup>79</sup> See *SGZ* 44, p. 1064.

<sup>80</sup> See Liao Hua's 廖化 opposition in 262, cited in Pei Songzhi's commentary, *SGZ* 45, p. 1077, n. 1.

<sup>81</sup> *Three Kingdoms*, pp. 868–69; *SGYY* 112, pp. 1453–54.

<sup>82</sup> "Rotten pedant 腐儒"; *Three Kingdoms*, p. 869; *SGYY* 112, p. 1454.

readied his commanders, and set out to attack Wei. The novel offers no evidence of Qiao Zhou's thoughts on the outcome of his essay.

Although *Extended Meanings* claims that Qiao Zhou presented "Discourse on Enemy States" directly to Jiang Wei, *Records of the Three States* clearly states otherwise: "Qiao Zhou and the prefect of the masters of writing<sup>83</sup> Chen Zhi 陳祗 (d. 258) debated the merits and demerits [of these campaigns]. Returning to his home, [Qiao Zhou] wrote this, calling it "Discourse on Enemy States."<sup>84</sup> Regarded as a prodigy, Chen Zhi's rise at the Shu-Han court had been quick, and at the time of the debates he and Huang Hao were arguably the two most influential and powerful men in Chengdu. Despite having served Shu-Han from its inception, Qiao Zhou's position at court was very minor compared to that of his opponent in the debate, and he offered his opinion with no small degree of risk to his position and person.

The version of "Discourse on Enemy States" quoted in *Records of the Three States* takes the literary form known as *shelun* 設論 (hypothetical discourse),<sup>85</sup> and seeks to persuade the reader through both evidence and style. Following the tradition of *shelun* (and earlier Han *fu* 賦), Qiao introduces the debaters (himself and Chen Zhi) under the allegorical personae "Mr. Falling-down Fool" (*fu yu zi* 伏愚子) and "Mr. Lofty-worthy Minister" (*gao xian qing* 高賢卿).<sup>86</sup> Mr. Lofty-worthy Minister (Chen Zhi) then questions Mr. Falling-down Fool (Qiao Zhou) on the manner in which smaller states had defeated their larger rivals. Mr. Falling-down Fool responds in rhymed passages that cite cases from ancient history, arguing that smaller and weaker states prevailed through patience and by nurturing the common people. Chen Zhi's second question references the Han founder, Liu Bang, who was able to unify China although he was the weaker contender. Qiao replies that actions must match the present conditions, and that what worked in one context will not necessarily work in another, again arguing for patience in the matter of military policies. Throughout "Discourse on Enemy States,"

<sup>83</sup> The prefect of the masters of writing (*shangshu ling* 尚書令) supervised the corps of imperial secretaries, and was regarded as a powerful position, drawing a salary of 1,000 bushels; Hucker, *Official Titles*, p. 412.

<sup>84</sup> *SGZ* 42, pp. 1020–30. The latter offers no date for the debates, however, *Records of the States South of Mount Hua* sets them in Jingyao 景耀 1 (258), while the *Comprehensive Mirror* gives the date as Wei Ganlu 甘露 2 (257). Regardless, the debate must have taken place prior to Chen Zhi's death at an unspecified time during 258.

<sup>85</sup> For a detailed study of *shelun*, see Dominik Declercq, *Writing Against the State* (Leiden: Brill, 1998).

<sup>86</sup> For a detailed examination of the names of Qiao's interlocutors, see Farmer, *Talent of Shu*, pp. 189–90, n. 122.

Chen Zhi's questions are presented in plain prose form, while Qiao's replies are elegant and poetic. This imbalance enhances its rhetorical force. Unfortunately, the historical records offer no evidence on the manner in which Qiao's "Discourse on Enemy States" was received; however, they do note that Qiao Zhou was promoted, and that Jiang Wei's campaigns continued.

The portrayal of these debates and Qiao Zhou's role in them as given in *Extended Meanings* diverges widely from the historical records. First, the circumstances surrounding Qiao's composition of the essay are significantly altered. Missing completely in the *Extended Meanings* narrative are the main proponents at court, Huang Hao and Chen Zhi. Similarly, no mention is made of Jiang Wei in the *Records of the Three States* account. The novel's recontextualization of Qiao's discourse thus transforms the essay from an opinion on policy into a personal attack on Jiang Wei and on his position. By shifting from the historical characterization as a literary transcript of a court debate to an epistle delivered directly (and only?) to Jiang Wei, the novel creates a sense of enmity between Qiao Zhou and Jiang Wei that is not present in the historical sources; furthermore, it removes Huang Hao and Chen Zhi from their historical positions as Qiao's opponents at court. The newly created tensions between the characters Qiao Zhou and Jiang Wei will be taken up again in *Extended Meanings*, as we soon see.

A second difference between the historical and literary accounts of Qiao Zhou and the policy debates is found in the text of Qiao's discourse itself. *Extended Meanings* quotes a drier and slightly abridged version of "Discourse on Enemy States" taken from Sima Guang's *Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Government* rather than the more elegant *Records of the Three States* account. Significantly missing from the accounts in *Comprehensive Mirror* and *Extended Meanings* are the allegorical interlocutors from the original essay whose names emphasized the power differential between the two men at court. The later versions of the discourse present Qiao speaking in first-person voice, with his opponent introduced simply as "someone." By removing these allegorical characters, the essay loses rhetorical and aesthetic impact. As such, the editing of Qiao's "Discourse on Enemy States" effectively removes not only Chen Zhi but everyone other than Qiao Zhou from the argument, thus transforming what was once an embellished literary account of an oral debate between two officials at court into a rhetorical policy statement aimed at Jiang Wei.

*Prophecy of the failure of Jiang Wei's campaigns*

The portrayal of tensions between Qiao Zhou and Jiang Wei, exemplified by a recontextualized “Discourse on Enemy States,” continues in *Extended Meanings* through an episode in chapter 115. Set in 263, after eight campaigns in six years against the state of Wei, Jiang Wei again requested permission to march northward. The account in *Extended Meanings* notes that Liu Shan was undecided on the matter, when Qiao Zhou emerged from the ranks of courtiers to venture another observation, saying,

Last night in the constellation guarding our kingdom of Shu, the general’s star burned low. For the supreme commander to take the field again would prove a most unprofitable course. Your Majesty should issue an edict preventing him from doing so.<sup>87</sup>

Liu Shan replied, “Let the outcome decide it. If he fails, I shall end the campaigns.” To this response, Qiao Zhou was said to have “[returned] home in despair, thereafter [claiming] to be too ill to appear publicly.”<sup>88</sup> While there is no historical record of this exchange, the interpretation of celestial omens remained consistent with both the characterization of Qiao Zhou as a skilled astrologer and with his stance opposing aggressive campaigns in the north echoing his prophecy of Zhuge Liang’s impending death. As predicted, Jiang Wei’s campaigns proved unsuccessful and the situation at court and in the state deteriorated. Huang Hao’s influence grew and the emperor’s neglect increased.

A significant shift in strategy by the new Wei military commander Sima Zhao 司馬昭 (211–265) led to an increase in resources directed to campaigns against Shu-Han. As these armies approached the Chengdu Plain in 263, Jiang Wei’s greatly reduced defensive garrisons were unable to withstand the Wei attacks, and Jiang Wei was forced to retreat repeatedly. Jiang Wei was able to stall one part of the Wei army at Jian’ge Pass 劍閣, but another unit was able to march through undefended territory, taking towns along the route to the Shu-Han capital. After a rout at Mianzhu 綿竹, the Wei army’s path to Chengdu was now clear. The literary account of Deng Ai’s march, contained in chapter 117, concludes with a chapter-ending poem, which reads,

The last days of the Later Sovereign [Liu Shan] recall  
The time Liu Bei coerced Liu Zhang’s surrender.

<sup>87</sup> *Three Kingdoms*, p. 886; *SGY* 115, p. 1488.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.* Regarding Qiao Zhou’s purported retirement, Chen Shou noted that after the debates with Chen Zhi, Qiao was not involved in governmental affairs, but was consulted on important matters by the court. No mention is made of illness or retirement; *SGZ* 42, p. 1030.

Would Chengdu fall or stand? Read on.<sup>89</sup>

This brief poetic transition returns the reader's attention to the analogous event some fifty years earlier: Liu Bei's march against Chengdu and the surrender of Liu Zhang. Significantly, *Extended Meanings* hints at the symmetry between the rise and fall of Liu Bei and Liu Shan's dynastic enterprise on the Chengdu Plain.

### *The Fall of Shu-Han*

The notion of symmetry takes on greater detail in the *Extended Meanings* account of Liu Shan's surrender, contained in chapter 118. With Wei's troops bearing down on the capital and the defections of several Shu-Han military commanders, the court and city were in a state of panic. Liu Shan called for suggestions from among the officials at court. An initial idea suggested that the court flee to the south, conscript men of the non-sinified tribes there, and mount a campaign to reclaim Chengdu. To this suggestion, Qiao Zhou raised the following objection: "That will never work. The southern Man [barbarians] are inveterate rebels who have never shown us kindness. If we seek refuge with them, it will end in disaster."<sup>90</sup> Another unnamed courtier posed the option of fleeing east to Wu. Again, Qiao Zhou opposed the plan, saying,

There is no historical precedent for a Son of Heaven seeking sanctuary in another kingdom. And Wei seems far more likely to devour Wu than the other way around. Declaring allegiance to Wu would be only the first disgrace. If the south falls to Wei, will Your Majesty suffer disgrace a second time by declaring allegiance to Wei? Why not submit directly to Wei, which will endow your majesty with some fief land to maintain your ancestral temple and provide for your people? I beg Your Majesty, consider this carefully.<sup>91</sup>

With these options presented, Liu Shan retired from court. The following day, more heated discussion ensued. Qiao Zhou then submitted a formal memorial of surrender. While *Extended Meanings* does not reproduce or even paraphrase Qiao Zhou's second argument, the document was reproduced in *Records of the Three States*, which presents Qiao's memorial as the factor that changed Liu Shan's wavering mind.<sup>92</sup>

<sup>89</sup> *Three Kingdoms*, p. 908; *SGYY* 117, p. 1519.

<sup>90</sup> *Three Kingdoms*, p. 909; *SGYY* 118, p. 1522.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>92</sup> Qiao's memorial notes the potential for southern tribes to rebel against the court; that the objective of the Wei invasion was not merely to secure territory, but rather to end the state of Shu-Han itself; the need to increase tax burdens in order to sustain a court-in-exile; and the welfare of the people of the Chengdu Plain who had supported the imperial venture of Shu-Han; *SGZ* 42, p. 1031. For a translation and discussion, see Farmer, *Talent of Shu*, pp. 65–68.

In one of the most dramatic scenes in the novel, immediately following Liu Shan's acceptance of this surrender plan, a prince suddenly emerged from behind a screen and said to Qiao, "Miserable pedant! Irresponsibly arguing the fate of our sacred grain altars just to save your miserable skin! What Son of Heaven has ever surrendered?"<sup>93</sup> Liu Shan quickly rebuked his son, Liu Chen 劉謙 (d. 263),<sup>94</sup> to which the prince responded,

While your father lived, Qiao Zhou never dared to meddle in government policy.<sup>95</sup> Now he rashly offers counsel in matters of state, presuming to give voice to subversive opinions, which have neither reason nor justification.... Why heed these miserable pedants and casually cast aside the late Emperor's patrimony?<sup>96</sup>

His mind fixed, Liu Shan had his attendants remove the prince from court and ordered Qiao Zhou to prepare the documents of surrender. Following his expulsion from court, Liu Chen killed his wife and children, offering their heads at the shrine of Liu Bei, and then he killed himself in the shrine.<sup>97</sup> The historical records also preserve a version of this anecdote, with Liu Chen's urging his father "to put his back to the wall and fight one last battle, dying together with the altars of the soil and grain, and in this manner, join the former emperor [Liu Bei]."<sup>98</sup> Following a brief mention of Liu Chen's sacrifice of his family and then himself at the shrine of Liu Bei, the history notes, "Of those in attendance, there were none who did not weep."<sup>99</sup>

*Records of the Three States* offers a clear narrative of the historical surrender. Accompanied by Qiao Zhou and two other officials, Liu Shan presented himself bound and with hearse and coffin to the Wei general Deng Ai, who immediately loosed the cords and received the Shu-Han ruler.<sup>100</sup> Deng Ai accepted the document of surrender and the imperial seals, thus bringing an end to the state of Shu-Han.

<sup>93</sup> *Three Kingdoms*, p. 909; *SGY* 118, p. 1522.

<sup>94</sup> Liu Chen was the fifth son of Liu Shan. In 259 he was ennobled as King of the Northern Territories (Beidi wang 北地王); *SGZ* 34, p. 908, n. 1.

<sup>95</sup> Of course, Liu Bei died in 223. At that time Qiao Zhou was a mere twenty-three *sui*, and had only recently been appointed to office under Shu-Han. But more significantly, the literary character Liu Chen forgot Qiao Zhou's role in the accession of Liu Bei.

<sup>96</sup> *Three Kingdoms*, pp. 909-10; *SGY* 118, p. 1522.

<sup>97</sup> *Three Kingdoms*, pp. 910-11; *SGY* 118, p. 1522.

<sup>98</sup> *Han Jin Chunqiu* 漢晉春秋, cited in Pei Songzhi's commentary, *SGZ* 33, pp. 900-1, n. 1.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>100</sup> See *SGZ* 33, pp. 900-3; Ren, ed., *Huayang guo zhi* 7, pp. 424-25; Sima Guang 司馬光 (1019-86), *Zizhi tongjian* 資治通鑑 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1956) 78, pp. 2472-74.

The *Extended Meanings*' account of the surrender closely follows the surviving historical accounts, and the few details that are of questionable historical veracity increase both the drama and rhetoric of the literary narrative. The literary description of the debate holds close to the narrative in *Records of the Three States*, and the proposals of the literary Qiao Zhou paraphrase the surviving text of the historical documents. Significantly, the rhetoric of Qiao Zhou's persuasion in this episode hinges not on celestial observation or other forms of prophesy, but on an articulation of the political reality of the situation. Flight of the court to the south or east was doomed on the basis of military concerns rather than on the supernatural. This portrayal is quite out of character for the literary Qiao Zhou, who *Extended Meanings* repeatedly shows as a man guided by Heaven's will as manifest through omens and portents. No explanation for this major shift in Qiao Zhou's motivation is offered in the novel.

The only significant claim in the literary account that directly contradicts historical evidence is the claim that Qiao Zhou drafted the document of surrender. *Records of the Three States* specifically states that this task fell on Xi Zheng 郤正,<sup>101</sup> who was also part of the embassy to Deng Ai and later accompanied Liu Shan and his family to Luoyang.<sup>102</sup> The novel tersely notes that after the surrender, Qiao Zhou, Xi Zheng, and others "were awarded lordships and titles" by Wei.<sup>103</sup> Beyond this statement, *Extended Meanings* makes no further mention of Qiao Zhou.

### *Qiao Zhou as a Literary Character*

Through the novel's treatment of Qiao Zhou as a literary character, we see two major themes. The first of these appears in the memorable opening axiom: "The empire, long divided, must unite; long united, must divide. Thus it has ever been."<sup>104</sup> The notion of symmetry and the cycles of history provides *Extended Meanings* a certain narrative force. And while Qiao Zhou is quite a minor figure in the novel's cast of heroes and villains, he is presented as an embodiment of this theme of symmetry and cycles, standing as a "bookend figure" in a number of ways.

First, his introduction in chapter 65 urging Liu Zhang to surrender to Liu Bei situates him as an influential figure in the demise of the dynastic ambitions of father and son Liu Yan and Liu Zhang. Similarly,

<sup>101</sup> See *SGZ* 42, pp. 1034-41.

<sup>102</sup> See *SGZ* 42, p. 1041.

<sup>103</sup> *Three Kingdoms*, p. 920; *SGYY* 119, p. 1537.

<sup>104</sup> *Three Kingdoms*, p. 5; *SGYY* 1, p. 4.

his recommendation that Liu Shan surrender to Wei brings an end to the imperial rule of father and son Liu Bei and Liu Shan. The carefully crafted nature of this narrative structure becomes more apparent with the recognition that there was no historical basis for Qiao Zhou's role in the surrender of Liu Zhang. The literary character of Qiao Zhou is developed to play on the similarities between the regimes of the two Liu clans. The transitional poem dividing chapters 117 and 118 – “The last days of the Later Sovereign recall/the time Liu Bei coerced Liu Zhang's surrender” – make the novel's intent in this matter especially clear, and the character of Qiao Zhou adds a human face to the argument.

Second, Qiao Zhou is represented as having played significant roles in the founding and demise of the state of Shu-Han. This made him influential in convincing Liu Bei to take the throne following the Han abdication. In addition to presenting Qiao Zhou's interpretations of prophetic omens, *Extended Meanings* has him draft and read aloud the documents of accession for Liu Bei. Some forty years later, Qiao convinces Liu Shan to surrender the throne and is charged with drafting and presenting the documents of surrender. Qiao's characterization as a “human bookend” in the rise and fall of the dynastic enterprise of Liu Bei and Liu Shan could not be more clear.

Qiao Zhou's actions following the surrenders of Liu Zhang and Liu Shan stand as another example of the novel's recasting of Qiao as a model of symmetry. While not explicitly stated, *Extended Meanings* gives the impression that he was an officer at the provincial bureau of Liu Zhang at the time of his surrender to Liu Bei. After Liu Zhang's surrender, Qiao is introduced in the text under the title of imperial household grandee, in the service of Liu Bei's provincial administration. The anachronistic use of the imperial title aside,<sup>105</sup> the novel presents Qiao as having quickly entered the service of Liu Bei after previously serving Liu Zhang. Likewise, following the surrender of Liu Shan in 263, the novel notes that Qiao Zhou was among those receiving “lordships and titles” under the Sima clan's administration in Wei and later Jin. This depiction of Qiao immediately taking office under a conquest regime after having urged his former rulers' surrender not only illustrates the concept of symmetry that Qiao personifies in the novel, but also subtly characterizes Qiao as an opportunist, an issue that I will return to shortly.

<sup>105</sup> Historically speaking, Qiao Zhou did not hold the office of imperial household grandee until 258 under the reign of Liu Shan.

Qiao Zhou's opposition to the military campaigns of Zhuge Liang and Jiang Wei stands as a final and somewhat lesser example of his symmetrical role in the novel. While lacking the beginning–ending symmetry in previous characterizations of Qiao Zhou, his vocal objections to both the first and last major military strategists of Shu-Han also frame the military debates. More importantly, these actions bridge the theme of symmetry and the second major theme of the novel – the struggle between fate and human will.

*Extended Meanings* regularly presents Qiao Zhou as a fatalist, in direct opposition to martial characters who embody the concept of human will and effort. In five of Qiao's appearances in the novel, he offers counsel on the basis of his reading of various omens and portents. Twice he is specifically referenced as "a skilled reader of the stars/constellations."<sup>106</sup> Furthermore, in chapter 102 Qiao introduces himself as "the director of the Heavenly Viewing Stand."<sup>107</sup> As a result, Qiao came to be regarded primarily as an astrologer or fortune teller, thus emphasizing only one aspect of his broad career as a scholar, educator, and statesman. The novel's presentation of Qiao admonishing his rulers on the basis of his readings of omens and portents establishes him as a character reporting the will of Heaven as manifest through signs. The omens and portents themselves function as motifs that support the larger argument that fate stands supreme. In no case is Qiao shown to advise or act contrary to the portents.

In opposition to Qiao Zhou the fatalist stand Zhuge Liang and Jiang Wei as believers in the power of human will to overcome even the will of Heaven. The literary character of Zhuge Liang clearly possesses the ability to read the will of Heaven through the stars and other signs. That he seeks out the interpretation of heavenly signs from Qiao Zhou in his efforts to convince Liu Bei to claim the throne speaks to his belief. That after Qiao Zhou warns the chancellor of his impending failures if he pursues an aggressive campaign against Wei, Zhuge Liang himself watches the stars and makes ritual offerings in an effort to overcome his destiny speaks to his ability. Zhuge Liang's belief in the power of human will, or at least his own power, to thwart fate even leads him to denounce the practice of observation and prophesy and declare his allegiance to human logic.<sup>108</sup> Tragically, after repeated warnings by Qiao, Zhuge Liang is conquered by fate in the form of incurable illness, thus fulfilling Qiao's prophesies.

<sup>106</sup> *Three Kingdoms*, p. 500; pp. 787–88; *SGYY* 65, p. 850; 102, p. 1328.

<sup>107</sup> *Three Kingdoms*, p. 787; *SGYY* 102, p. 1328.

<sup>108</sup> *Three Kingdoms*, p. 702; *SGYY* 91, pp. 1180–81.

While Jiang Wei's ultimate fate is nowhere near as tragic or heart-wrenching as that of Zhuge Liang, Jiang also manifests similar reliance on his own intellect and strength in opposition to the will of Heaven as interpreted by Qiao Zhou. The novel does not report Jiang Wei's reaction to Qiao's argument against campaigns in 263 on the basis of a reading of the stars, but the fact that Jiang sets out on the expedition against Wei attests to his dismissal of the prophetic warnings. In this episode, though, Liu Shan demonstrates his own doubts about the veracity of Qiao Zhou's readings of the signs and the ruler's belief in rational experience. His response to Qiao Zhou, "Let the outcome decide it,"<sup>109</sup> speaks for not only the emperor, but also indirectly for the late Zhuge Liang and the insistent Jiang Wei. Again, as in the case of Qiao Zhou's warnings to Zhuge Liang, fate triumphs over heroic human will and effort.

Significantly, *Extended Meanings* presents only two instances in which Qiao Zhou offers counsel not based on omen or portent. Qiao's "Discourse on Enemy States" and his argument for surrender lack any mention of the will of heaven or other supernatural justification for his position on the issues. Rather, Qiao's arguments are couched in terms of history. In particular, "Discourse on Enemy States" argues that understanding the specific context of historical successes and failures could enable rulers of the present to make proper decisions, yet relying on superficial beliefs about the past would lead to failure. His appeal to history in the matter of surrender is less sophisticated. Here, Qiao Zhou argues more in terms of practical politics: retreat southward would fail due to enmity incurred on recent campaigns against the inhabitants of that region, and that flight to the east would only prolong the inevitable defeat and require two acts of submission rather than one. In each of these persuasions, Qiao Zhou's understanding of history and political necessity drives his decision making process. In this small way, *Extended Meanings* acknowledges that the historical Qiao Zhou's skills went far beyond those of an astrologer, and hints at his reputation as a historian.

While *Extended Meanings* dispassionately presents Qiao Zhou as a fatalist and gives primacy to the victory of fate over heroic human will, lesser aspects of the novel's portrayal left room for unfavorable views of Qiao Zhou ultimately to develop. For example, Qiao's opposition to the beloved hero Zhuge Liang could be simplistically read as a general opposition to the imperial enterprise of the Lius in Shu-Han,

<sup>109</sup> *Three Kingdoms*, p. 886; *SGYY* 115, p. 1488.

as could Qiao's warnings to Jiang Wei against additional campaigns. While Qiao's appeals to fate and history in opposition to the military campaigns of Zhuge Liang and Jiang Wei make no direct criticism of Shu-Han, his simple opposition to the top-ranking military commanders of the state has been interpreted by later readers as treason. Additionally, that the literary character Qiao Zhou urged two rulers (Liu Zhang and Liu Shan) to surrender and later served new lords (Liu Bei and Sima Zhao) has been variously read on a continuum somewhere between "opportunistic" and "treasonous." Careful reading of *Extended Meanings* reveals no hint of such harsh judgment in the text itself. Nevertheless, the novel's depiction of Qiao as an able, honest, and accurate reader of Heaven's will has been largely overlooked in favor of textually unsupported positions that regard Qiao Zhou as a Shu-Han traitor.

#### IN THE EYES OF HISTORY AND THE COURT OF PUBLIC OPINION

Although a relatively minor figure in the historical and literary representations of Three States history, Qiao Zhou has been repeatedly judged by later historians, scholars, politicians, and fans of the novel and video games to have been one of the "bad guys" of the age. But the earliest surviving evaluations were, in fact, positive and focused primarily on his scholarly activities.<sup>110</sup> The next wave of assessments, coming in the fourth century, was considerably more negative, with one historian accusing Qiao Zhou of acting out of greed in urging Liu Shan to surrender, describing him as "truly a worn-out minister."<sup>111</sup> Zhu Xi's abridgement of Sima Guang's *Comprehensive Mirror* called Qiao Zhou "petty," but refrained from any truly harsh judgment.<sup>112</sup> Hu Sanxing 胡三省 (1230–1287), on the other hand, obliquely accused Qiao Zhou of working for the Sima clan of Wei (and later Jin) to overthrow Shu-Han from within. In a gross misreading of the *Records of the Three States*, Hu claimed that Qiao Zhou's use of the term "*jingdu*" 京都 to refer to the capital evidences his observance of a taboo on the character *shi* 師 (the given name of Sima Shi 司馬師, King Jing 景 of Jin) by not using the more common term "*jingshi*" 京師.<sup>113</sup> Hu Sanxing failed to realize that the surrender document was quoted by Chen Shou, himself a subject of Jin and thus subject to the taboo-character "*shi*." Any observa-

<sup>110</sup> See Farmer, *Talent of Shu*, pp. 145–47.

<sup>111</sup> Sun Sheng's 孫盛 criticism is quoted in Pei Songzhi's commentary, *SGZ* 42, p. 1031, n. 1.

<sup>112</sup> Zhu Xi, *Zizhi tongjian gangmu* 16, p. 38b.

<sup>113</sup> *Zizhi tongjian* 78, p. 2473; the usage occurred in Qiao's memorial urging Liu Shan to surrender.

tion of the taboo was more likely made by Chen Shou. Hu's negative but groundless evaluation of Qiao Zhou as a traitor would be echoed in later evaluations.

By far, the lengthiest evaluation of Qiao Zhou's activity and character came in *Extended Meanings*, and while the novel presents him primarily in the guise of a fatalist and offers a relatively neutral assessment of his political activity, evaluations from the fifteenth century onward sometimes took a much more critical view, often basing their arguments on the literary rather than the historical Qiao Zhou. The harshest critics expressed their views in inflammatory fashion and employed the figure of Qiao Zhou in debates on issues far removed from Three States period history. Other scholars and critics viewed Qiao in a more objective and sympathetic manner, offering justifications for his political actions.

One of the harshest critics was Wang Fuzhi 王夫之 (1619–1692), who blasted Qiao for his opportunism. Wang's *Du Tongjian lun* 讀通鑑論 (*Discourse on Reading the Comprehensive Mirror*) opens with a comparison of Qiao Zhou and Feng Dao 馮道, a tenth-century official who served under four different regimes.<sup>114</sup> Wang wrote,

People know of the evils of Feng Dao but do not know of the greater evil of Qiao Zhou. Feng Dao was crude, but his states had already been destroyed and his rulers already changed. He coveted his life and loved profit and fortune. He did not obtain this for himself, but often changed his mind. But Qiao Zhou was different from this. His state was still extant and his ruler still occupied the throne. [Qiao] spoke falsehoods in order to divide the will of the people and in the end caused them to surrender. He incessantly schemed, only fearing that Lord Liu [Shan] would not be defeated. Ugh!<sup>115</sup>

Wang's polemical essay focuses primarily on the assertion that Qiao Zhou's recommendation was based on his concern for the welfare of the people of Shu-Han. According to Wang, this view originated in

<sup>114</sup> Feng Dao was prime minister to the states of Later Tang 後唐 (923–936), Later Jin 後晉 (936–946), Later Han 後漢 (946–950), and Later Zhou 後周 (951–960), serving ten different sovereigns. See Xue Juzheng 薛居正 (912–981), *Jiu Wudai shi* 舊五代史 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1976) 126, pp. 1655–66; Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007–1072), *Xin Wudai shi* 新五代史 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1974) 54, pp. 612–15. For an English translation of the *Xin Wudai shi* biography, see Richard L. Davis, *Historical Records of the Five Dynasties* (New York: Columbia U.P., 2004), pp. 439–43.

<sup>115</sup> Wang Fuzhi, *Du Tongjian lun* (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, n.d.) 5, p. 17a. For a study of Wang Fuzhi and his historical views, see Li Jiping 李季平, *Wang Fuzhi yu Du Tongjian lun* 王夫之與讀通鑑論 (Ji'nan: Shandong jiaoyu chubanshe, 1982).

Qiao's "Discourse on Enemy States," and his feelings on Qiao's essay were made perfectly clear when he declared, "One who reads Qiao Zhou's 'Discourse on Enemy States' without hating him is not a subject [of the state]!"<sup>116</sup> That is, he is a traitor.

While acknowledging the burdens placed on the people of Shu-Han by Jiang Wei's campaigns, Wang Fuzhi dismissed the idea that the people required a respite from combat. Accusing Qiao of "sitting around waiting for [Shu-Han] to be swallowed,"<sup>117</sup> Wang contrasted the actions of Qiao Zhou with those of Zhuge Liang, who was able to inspire the people to battle despite numerous defeats. Qiao Zhou's chief shortcoming, according to Wang, was his failure to possess the will of the people. By not commiserating with the masses, Qiao Zhou did not understand how to properly motivate them and thus insure the survival of the state. Wang Fuzhi acknowledged that others in the Shu-Han court likewise were uncaring toward the citizens of the state. Wang wrote,

During Qiao Zhou's time there were Huang Hao and Chen Zhi who corrupted a mediocre sovereign and did not care about the common people's illnesses and suffering. If [Qiao Zhou] truly thought of the people, then he would have put an end to [Huang and Chen's] licentiousness, encouraged purity, and secured an order for clemency [for the people]. He should have caused the people to go forth to battle and transport, then retreat and rest. This could be done. But Qiao Zhou had blocked eyes and a gagged mouth. We do not hear of the presentation of a single word of counsel [by Qiao], but only his criticism of Jiang Wei in order to deceive the foolish people and flatter the eunuch and enable Sima Zhao to quickly enter into Shu. The state was lost and the sovereign shamed. [Qiao Zhou] thus saved his own advantage and emolument. He did not take delight in the people, but took delight in Wei. Qiao Zhou's crimes reach all the way to Heaven!<sup>118</sup>

Thus, the true cause of Shu-Han's fall, according to Wang Fuzhi, was Huang Hao and Chen Zhi's interference and immorality at court, and Qiao Zhou's misdirected attempts to end the military campaigns. Particularly harsh was Wang's characterization of Qiao as being blind and mute to the real problems. The statement indicates Wang Fuzhi's belief that Qiao's "Discourse on Enemy States" was primarily directed toward Jiang Wei – a view taken from *Extended Meanings* and not the historical account, which directly named Huang Hao and Chen Zhi as

<sup>116</sup> Wang, *Du Tongjian lun*, 5, p. 17a.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Wang, *Du Tongjian lun*, 5, pp. 17a–b.

the targets of Qiao's criticisms. Wang Fuzhi's most scathing denunciation of Qiao Zhou comes in his concluding remarks with the idea that Qiao Zhou manipulated the court at Chengdu in order to enable Sima Zhao to conquer the state. The phrase "He did not take delight in the people, but took delight in Wei" clearly presents Qiao Zhou as a traitor to Shu-Han.

Wang Fuzhi's assessment of Qiao Zhou, based largely on literary rather than historical evidence, may be as much a reflection of Wang's own historical circumstances and concerns. As a subject of the recently conquered Ming dynasty, Wang Fuzhi appears to have been acutely sensitive to the notions of treason, defined by service to a new sovereign and state. Thus, the characters of Feng Dao and Qiao Zhou were employed by Wang Fuzhi to criticize those of his own time period who served first the Ming and then the Qing states, and Wang's criticisms ought to be read more as an example of Ming-Qing transitional political rhetoric than as a true, historical evaluation of Qiao Zhou's political activity.<sup>119</sup>

Not all Qing period assessments of Qiao Zhou's political activity faulted Qiao for his role in the surrender of Shu-Han, and in fact, a few actually praised these actions and their larger benefits. Li Qingzhi 李清植 (1690-1744) offered a sympathetic appraisal, emphasizing Qiao's loyalty to Shu-Han:

While Qiao Zhou urged surrender, he never served Wei or Jin, though he was exhorted to do so over and over until the end of his life. Thus, as for his urging surrender, it was likely to go beyond the principle of dying with the state – something that the Later Sovereign could not have done. Thus, for a moment he employed this plan to save his ruler. Those who view this as harming his ruler in order to glorify himself clearly have too much free time!<sup>120</sup>

While this statement is true (Qiao Zhou never actually took up a post under either regime), it is somewhat misleading, for he accepted positions offered by the Sima clan, once under Wei and again under Jin. Only illness prevented Qiao from actually taking office. Another Qing-period assessment, from He Zhuo 何焯 (1661-1722), discussed the benefits of Shu-Han surrender. He wrote, "By following Qiao Zhou's

<sup>119</sup> For a brief discussion of Wang Fuzhi's life and works, see Siu-kit Wong, "Wang Fu-chih," in William H. Nienhauser, Jr., ed., *The Indiana Companion to Traditional Chinese Literature*, 2d rev. edn. (Taipei: SMC Publishing, Inc., 1986), vol. 1, pp. 863-65.

<sup>120</sup> Quoted in Lu Bi 盧弼 (1876-1967), *Sanguo zhi jijie* 三國志集解 (1936; rpt. Taipei: Yiwen yinshuguan, n.d.) 42, p. 20b.

plan, the people of Shu avoided the tragedy of a massacre.”<sup>121</sup> This actually followed Chen Shou, who wrote, “That no harm befell the Liu family and the state met with no misfortune was because of Qiao Zhou’s plan,”<sup>122</sup> and it runs counter to the primary argument of Wang Fuzhi.

Just as the judgments of Qiao Zhou by traditional Chinese scholars have varied, so have more recent appraisals. In an article published in 1917, Li Zefen 李則芬 characterized Qiao Zhou as a traitor and offered a provocative yet unsubstantiated hypothesis on Qiao’s motives, according to which Qiao had secret contacts with Wei and carefully plotted to induce the surrender of Shu-Han. Li offered three pieces of evidence. First, Qiao’s “Discourse on Enemy States” “sounded like an echo of Wei policy,”<sup>123</sup> although Li presented no concrete examples of the similarity between the document and Wei policy. Nevertheless, he continued, arguing that the allegorical names assigned to Shu-Han and Wei by Qiao in “Discourse on Enemy States” also provided “proof” of Qiao’s collaboration with Wei.<sup>124</sup> Second was Li’s opinion that Qiao Zhou’s “heart was set on Wei,”<sup>125</sup> and third was that after the surrender, Qiao “happily” accepted a Wei post, with only illness keeping him from reaching Luoyang to serve.<sup>126</sup> Here, Li admitted his lack of overall evidence but stated, “I suspect that Qiao Zhou had contact with Wei,” thus coordinating the plot to overthrow Shu-Han. “His traitorous crimes cannot be washed clean!”<sup>127</sup> Following this denunciation, Li Zefen quoted Wang Fuzhi’s criticism of Qiao Zhou in its entirety. Li’s essay, while certainly filled with passion, lacks objective evidence, and clearly represents a strong personal opinion rather than an impartial assessment of Qiao Zhou’s political activity. One suspects that, as in the case of Wang Fuzhi, contemporary affairs drove Li Zefen’s assessment of Qiao. Coming on the heels of the 1911 fall of the Qing state and the ongoing struggle for control of China, Li’s essay most likely reflects his position in this context, but this remains unclear without specific details of his life and political activity.

<sup>121</sup> Quoted in *Sanguo zhi jijie* 42, p. 18a.

<sup>122</sup> *SGZ* 42, p. 1031.

<sup>123</sup> Li Zefen, “Ping Chen Shou *Sanguo zhi*” 評陳壽三國志, *Dongfang zazhi* 東方雜誌 14.7 (1917), p. 19; rpt. in Li Zefen, *Sanguo lishi lunwen ji* 三國歷史論文集 (Taipei: Liming wenhua, 1982), p. 189.

<sup>124</sup> Qiao’s essay uses the terms “*yinyu zhi guo*” 因餘之國 (“Vestigal State”) to refer to Shu-Han and “*zhaojian zhi guo*” 肇建之國 (“Newly-founded State”) for Wei.

<sup>125</sup> Li, *Sanguo lishi lunwen ji*, pp. 189–90.

<sup>126</sup> Li, *Sanguo lishi lunwen ji*, p. 190.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*

Zhu Xiuxia's 朱秀俠 1945 essay entitled "On the Traitor Qiao Zhou" offers an even more vitriolic opinion.<sup>128</sup> Zhu began his essay with a harsh statement that set the tone for the rest of the piece:

Of all the Three States period figures, I despise Qiao Zhou the most. This man's mouth spoke the words of sages and worthies but his actions were the most shameless! It is said, "His words and principles were deep and penetrating, and he was one of the great scholars of the age."<sup>129</sup> He had surely read a great number of books and his writings were in fact considerable, but what use is this sort of intellectual? The principles he learned from books were not used to bear the times and save his state. In fact, he used them to betray his state. This is the most shameless of intellectuals!<sup>130</sup>

According to Zhu, the "useless intellectual" Qiao Zhou misguided Liu Shan, thus bringing down the state. The theme of the useless intellectual appears throughout Zhu's essay. Citing the common notion of "Read the words of the sages and worthies to learn how to serve 讀聖賢書所學何事,"<sup>131</sup> Zhu then declared, "I truly want to raise the dried bones of Qiao Zhou and whip them three hundred lashes!"<sup>132</sup> Zhu Xiuxia's feelings were perfectly clear, as is the source of his information on Qiao Zhou.

Throughout the essay, Zhu referred to Liu Shan by his nickname, A'dou 阿斗, a clear indication that his primary source of information was *Extended Meanings*. Furthermore, Zhu's frequent references to Qiao Zhou as a "useless intellectual" reflect the view expressed by the character of Jiang Wei in the novel, who scathingly characterized Qiao as a "rotten pedant." Finally, Zhu's argument that the surrender documents were drafted by Qiao and reflect his "Defeatist Not-fight-but-surrenderism 不戰而降的失敗主義" also originated with *Extended Meanings* and is at odds with the surviving historical sources.<sup>133</sup> Zhu Xiuxia concluded his attack on Qiao Zhou with a survey of prior historians' assessments of Qiao, arguing that "while Chen Shou did not originally seem to be muddled," his positive evaluation of Qiao can only be attributed to

<sup>128</sup> Zhu Xiuxia, "Lun Hanjian Qiao Zhou" 論漢奸譙周, in *Sanguo renwu xinlun* 三國人物新論 (Shanghai: Guoji wenhua fuwushe, 1945). The article was reprinted under the title "Lun Qiao Zhou" 論譙周, in a recent edition of *Sanguo renwu xinlun* (Taipei: Yiwen shuju, 1987), pp. 149-56.

<sup>129</sup> This passage comes from Chen Shou's formal appraisal; *SGZ* 42, p. 1042.

<sup>130</sup> Zhu, "Lun Hanjian Qiao Zhou," p. 149.

<sup>131</sup> This phrase appears to have originated with Wen Tianxiang 文天祥 (1236-1282); see Tuo Tuo 脫脫 et al., *Song shi* 宋史 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1977) 118, p. 12540.

<sup>132</sup> Zhu, "Lun Hanjian Qiao Zhou," p. 151.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*

Chen's desire to hide Qiao's bad and extol his good, and "flatter the Jin court."<sup>134</sup> In short, Zhu's essay was an impassioned anti-Qiao rant, and while much of Zhu's understanding of Qiao can be traced to *Extended Meanings*, the deeper source of his anger toward Qiao remains a mystery.

Recent appraisals of Qiao Zhou's political activity have offered relatively more positive judgments presented in terms of Qiao's role in the unification of China. Xu Caian's 徐才安 1992 article "Speaking of Qiao Zhou, Discussing Unification" argued that Qiao Zhou clearly understood the principles of symmetry and cycles in history as contained in the opening maxim of *Extended Meanings*: "The empire, long divided, must unite; long united, must divide. Thus it has ever been."<sup>135</sup> According to Xu, Qiao Zhou understood fate, history, and the need for China to reunify, and his encouragement of Liu Shan to surrender was based on this understanding. As support for this position, Xu cited "the people of Nanchong" – Qiao Zhou's hometown – who appreciated him for his far-sightedness and contributions to the unification of China, among other things.<sup>136</sup> In another recent evaluation of Qiao Zhou, Long Xianzhao 龍顯昭 similarly argued for the positive impact of Qiao's recommendation to surrender. Long concluded, "Looking at Qiao Zhou's activities after the establishment of Jin, we can see that his urging of surrender was to save his ruler and protect the people from disaster, and was not a plan for personal glory and emolument."<sup>137</sup> Furthermore, Long argued that Qiao's plan resulted in "peaceful unification" of the empire.<sup>138</sup> A final appraisal, contained in a high school textbook on Three States history compiled by He Ziquan 何茲全, posited that Qiao Zhou's argument for surrender was based on the principle of a sage's ability to recognize fate.<sup>139</sup> The dual implication of He's rhetoric is clear: Qiao Zhou as a sage recognized that Liu Shan and Shu-Han could not survive; but

<sup>134</sup> Zhu, "Lun Hanjian Qiao Zhou," p. 154.

<sup>135</sup> *Three Kingdoms*, p. 5; *SGYY* 1, p. 4. Cited in Xu Caian, "Hua Qiao Zhou, shuo tongyi" 話譙周說統一, in *Sichuan gudai shihua* 四川古代史話 (Chongqing: Chongqing chubanshe, 1992), p. 74.

<sup>136</sup> Additionally, Xu Caian noted that the people of Nanchong valued Qiao for his intellectual accomplishments, the influence of his students and descendants, and material artifacts of Qiao's life in the city, including his former residence, observatory, library, and a stele. Nanchong's support for Qiao Zhou, Xu argued, was manifest in a street named in his honor, Qiao Gong xiang 譙公巷 (Master Qiao Lane). These feelings may have changed in recent years, as I have been unable to locate this street on either contemporary maps of the city, or during two visits to Nanchong in 1998 and 2001. See Xu, "Hua Qiao Zhou," pp. 74–76.

<sup>137</sup> Long Xianzhao, "Qiao Zhou," in Jia Shunxian 賈順先 and Dai Dalu 戴大祿, eds., *Sichuan sixiang jia* 四川思想家 (Chengdu: Ba-Shu chubanshe, 1987), p. 75.

<sup>138</sup> Long, "Qiao Zhou," p. 93.

<sup>139</sup> He Ziquan, *Sanguo shi* 三國史 (Beijing: Beijing shifan daxue chubanshe, 1994), p. 268.

Liu Shan must have considered himself a sage in order to act on this recommendation. Following his favorable judgment on Qiao Zhou, He Ziquan posed several questions:

Should the Later Sovereign have surrendered or fought? Was Qiao Zhou's recommendation to surrender right or wrong? [...] How should we esteem Qiao Zhou's encouragement to surrender? Was it right or wrong?<sup>140</sup>

These questions were not posed on moral, but rather pragmatic terms. He Ziquan then offered a summary account of the difficulties laid upon the common people during the time of Dong Zhuo's rebellion, arguing that the establishment of the three states of Wei, Wu, and Shu-Han was for their benefit. But, He Ziquan continued, by the end of the Three States period, the able founding rulers and ministers had passed on and disorder once again occurred. That the surrender of Shu-Han and the subsequent overthrow of Wei by the Simas led to the reunification of China and peace was, in part, the result of Qiao Zhou's actions. As with previous evaluations of Qiao Zhou and his role in the surrender of Shu-Han, these favorable views based on the resulting reunification of China under the Jin likely reflect the concerns over the return to Chinese sovereignty of Hong Kong and Macau in the 1990s and the ongoing debate over Taiwan. Again, Qiao Zhou served as a convenient rhetorical figure to be applied to a variety of contemporary debates.

## CONCLUSION

In summary, Winston Yang's claim of the primacy of the *Extended Meanings* as the major source of information for Three States period history appears to be disturbingly accurate. The text has long been accepted as a work of popular history and its noticeable deviations from the historical record dismissed as both minor and necessary accommodations to widely-held public conceptions of the major heroes and villains of the novel. While several studies have examined the manner in which the novel treated major historical figures, little work has been done on *Extended Meanings'* treatment of lesser historical figures. This study seeks to fill that gap, and in doing so, identify the significant fictionalization of Qiao Zhou that occurred in the novel, and highlight the important consequences of this literary recasting.

<sup>140</sup> He, *Sanguo shi*, p. 268.

Through a detailed collation of the surviving historical accounts of Qiao Zhou's political activities with the portrayal of Qiao in *Extended Meanings*, this article has shown how the novel both invented new roles and significantly altered historical ones in order to create a figure capable of promoting and personifying major rhetorical themes of the novel. The novel's recasting of Qiao Zhou is, in many cases, subtle, basing its characterizations on the historical record with important but easily overlooked alterations. As a result of these changes, Qiao Zhou is presented as a human embodiment of the theme of symmetry and cycles in history. He is shown as an influential figure in the rise and fall of states, as an opponent of the first and last great generals of Shu-Han, and as taking official posts in conquest regimes after having urged his former rulers to surrender. Additionally, the literary character of Qiao Zhou is depicted as the personification of Heaven's will in the epic struggle between fate and human will. The fictional character of Qiao Zhou, based on but with frequent departures from the historical record, is a brilliant literary creation, regularly emerging from the shadows to rearticulate important themes of the novel, and then quietly yielding the page to the novel's charismatic martial heroes and villains.

Unfortunately, few readers of *Extended Meanings* recognize either the role Qiao Zhou plays in the novel, or the significant alterations to the historical Qiao Zhou required to create this literary character. Rather, in the five hundred years since its initial publication, readers have tended to accept the Qiao Zhou appearing in *Extended Meanings* as a historically accurate figure, often misreading the novel's relatively nonjudgmental views of Qiao in a much more negative light. Moreover, later readers appear to have used the literary character of Qiao Zhou as a rhetorical tool in debates over contemporary issues such as loyalty and treason in the Ming-Qing transition of the seventeenth century or discussions over Chinese reunification in the 1990s.

Today, Qiao Zhou remains a little known or grossly misrepresented figure in Three States history. In one online forum discussing Three States history and culture, participants named Qiao ("some astrologer guy, or something") one of the most hated figures of the time.<sup>141</sup> This view, like most of those after the fifteenth century, was shaped by the representation of Qiao Zhou as a literary character in *Extended Meanings*, and it speaks volumes to the ongoing influence and the engaging nature of not only the novel but of the age it represents. While the minor literary character of Qiao Zhou helps drive the novel's messages

<sup>141</sup> Posted at <[www.3kingdoms.net/forums](http://www.3kingdoms.net/forums)> (accessed Feb. 15, 2004).

regarding the cyclical nature of history and the tragic triumph of fate over human will, the historical Qiao Zhou has fallen victim to countless careless readings of *Extended Meanings*, leaving behind another, non-historical, non-literary, “imaginary” Qiao Zhou.

*LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS*

- SGZ*                    Chen Shou, *Sanguo zhi* 三國志  
*SGYY*                Luo Guanzhong (attrib.), *Sanguo [zhi] yanyi* 三國志演義  
*Three Kingdoms*    Moss Roberts, trans., *Three Kingdoms: A Historical Novel*