

Ming Taizu's Problem with His Sons: Prince Qin's Criminality and Early-Ming Politics

Zhu Shuang was the second son of the Ming-dynasty founder Zhu Yuanzhang 朱元璋 (1328–1398; temple name Taizu 明太祖, or Grand Progenitor; r. 1368–1398) by his primary consort empress Ma 馬 (1332–1382). The founder sired twenty-six sons and sixteen daughters with empress Ma and a number of consorts, including Mongolian and Korean women, and even a consort of his defeated nemesis Chen Youliang 陳友諒 (1320?–1363). (See the appended table of Taizu's offspring.) Shuang was invested as the prince of Qin by the emperor in 1370, at fourteen *sui*, when the emperor revived the feudalistic institution enfeoffing each of his male offspring to a principedom of semi-autonomous civil and military authorities. As he grew to manhood and assumed charge of his fief-state, the prince of Qin turned out to be morally degraded and inept. He repeatedly committed heinous crimes against officials, the military, and the civilian populace. This essay documents a litany of indictments against the prince and the emperor's reactions. It draws on Taizu's edicts and ordinances preserved in the little-known imperial compendium *Taizu huangdi qinlu* 太祖皇帝欽錄 (*Private Records of the Emperor Taizu*), and *Jifei lu* 紀非錄 (*Record of Wrongdoings*), a register of the crimes and offenses committed by imperial princes. I analyze the impact of these negative acts on the revisions of the laws governing the enfeoffment system as contained in the Ancestral Injunctions, and the repercussions felt upon the imperial succession and related crises confronting Taizu during his rule.

INTRODUCTION

Twenty-four of the sons and fourteen of the daughters grew to adulthood and constituted the core of the imperial clan.¹ A roster is found in the imperial compendium *Tianhuang yudie* 天潢玉牒 (“*Jade Records*” of the Heavenly Ruler; ca. 1402) compiled by Hanlin academician Xie Jin 解縉 (1369–1415), and in Taizu’s epitaph “Da Ming Xiaoling shenwu shengde bei” 大明孝陵神武聖德碑 (“Epitaph of the Divine Martial Power and Sagely Virtue of the Filial Mausoleum of the Great Ming”; 1413). It is also included in later private histories, such as *Huang Ming tongxing zhuwang biao* 皇明同姓諸王表 (*A Table of the Imperial Princes of the Same Surname of the Great Ming*; 1564) composed by Zheng Xiao 鄭曉 (1499–1566) and others. Though no official biographies were written for these progeny, unofficial biographies can be found in several collections by private Ming historians, and they are also represented in the officially compiled *Mingshi* 明史 (*History of the Ming*) of the early-Qing dynasty.²

According to the imperial genealogy, the first five sons were born to the empress Ma (easily seen in the table). But modern research has demonstrated that the natural mother of the fourth, Zhu Di, was a Mongolian consort from the Qonggirad clan known in Chinese as Gongfei 碩妃 (consort Gong).³ Following the Confucian principle of primogeniture, Zhu Biao was appointed heir-apparent (*huang taizu* 皇太子) and *de*

¹ For biogs. of empress Ma and Ming Taizu’s consorts, see Zhang Tingyu 張廷玉 et al., eds., *Mingshi* 明史 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1974; hereafter *MS*) 113, pp. 3505–9. See also Wang Shizhen 王世貞, *Yanshantang bieji* 弇山堂別集 (1590 edn.; Taipei: Taiwan Xuesheng shuju, 1965), 20, pp. 5a–5b. Cf. Wu Han 吳晗, *Zhu Yuanzhang zhuan* 朱元璋傳 (Beijing: Sanlian shidian, 1965 rev. edn.), pp. 279–80; Lü Jinglin 呂景琳, *Hongwu huangdi dazhuan* 洪武皇帝大傳 (Shenyang: Liaoning jiaoyu chubanshe, 1994), pp. 259–78. See also Chou Tao-chi, “Empress Ma,” in L. Carrington Goodrich and Chaoying Fang, eds., *Dictionary of Ming Biography, 1368–1644* (hereafter *DMB*) (New York: Columbia U.P., 1976) 1, pp. 1023–26.

² See Xie Jin, *Tianhuang yudie* (CSJC edn.; Changsha: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1938), pp. 22b–23a; “Da Ming Xiaoling shenwu shengde bei,” rpt. *Ming Xiaoling* 明孝陵, ed. Nanjing Museum (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1981), appendix 1, pp. 1–3; Zheng Xiao, *Huang Ming tongxing zhuwang biao*, in *Wuxue bian* 吾學編 (hereafter, *WXB*), as printed in *Xuxiu Sikuquanshu* 續修四庫全書 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1995; hereafter *XXSKQ*) 12, pp. 11b–12a. The imperial epitaph was composed by Yongle in 1413 as a tribute to his father and erected in front of Taizu’s mausoleum known as Xiaoling in Nanjing. For a collection of biogs. of the enfeoffed princes, see Zheng, *Huang Ming tongxing zhuwang zhuan*, j. 1–2, in *WXB*, 14, pp. 8b–23b; 15, pp. 1a–23b; Zhu Mouwei 朱謀瑋, *Fanxianiji* 藩獻記 (pref. 1595), j. 1–3; and *MS*, j. 116–117.

³ For biogs. of Zhu Di, see *MS*, j. 5–7; and F. W. Mote and L. C. Goodrich, “Chu Ti,” *DMB* 1, pp. 355–65. See also n. 10, below. There is considerable literature on Zhu Di’s maternity in modern scholarship starting with the rejoinders between Fu Sinian 傅斯年 and Zhu Xizu 朱希祖, published in *CYTT* 2.3 (Apr. 1931), pp. 406–14; and *Guoli Zhongshan daxue wenshixue yanjiusuo yuekan* 國立中山大學文史學研究所月刊 2.1 (1933), pp. 1–13. See the reappraisal in Wu Han, “Ming Chengzu shengmu kao” 明成祖生母考, *Qinghua xuebao* 清華學報 10.3 (July 1935), pp. 631–46; and Li Jinhua 李晉華, “Meng Chengzu shengmu wenti huizheng” 明成祖

facto grand-coordinator of the army (*fujun* 撫軍) and regent (*jianguo* 監國) immediately after the dynastic founding. But he died unexpectedly in May 1392, leaving his second, but eldest surviving son Zhu Yunwen 朱允炆 (1377–1402), who later was installed as imperial grandson (*huang taisun* 皇太孫). Yunwen succeeded Taizu upon the latter's death in June 1398, being proclaimed as the Jianwen 建文 emperor (r. 1398–1402). His uncle Zhu Di launched the “*Jingnan* 靖難” (clearing away disasters) campaign against his nephew and ascended the throne as the Yongle 永樂 emperor (r. 1402–1424), whose temple titles were, first, Taizong 太宗 (Grand Ancestor), and then Chengzu 成祖 (Accomplished Progenitor) after October 1538.⁴ As the new emperor, Zhu Di reaffirmed the records he had doctored showing birth from empress Ma in order to justify his punitive campaign against the “depraved” Jianwen emperor, who had been “misguided” by treacherous ministers. Through a concerted pro-Zhu Di revisionist history, he legitimated his succession by invoking primogeniture, as stipulated in both *Zuxun lu* 祖訓錄 (*Ancestral Injunctions*) and *Huang Ming zuxun* 皇明祖訓 (*August Ming Ancestral Injunctions*).⁵ We can construct out of these surface facts a glimpse into the roiling world of an agonized tyrant-father and his recalcitrant children.

生母問彙証, *CYY* 6.1 (Mar. 1936), pp. 55–77. Recent studies are: Henry Serruys, “A Manuscript Version of the Legend of the Mongol Ancestry of the Yung-lo Emperor,” *Analecta Mongolica, Dedicated to the Seventieth Birthday of Professor Owen Lattimore* (Bloomington: Mongol Society, 1972), pp. 19–61; and Zhou Qingshu 周清澍, “Ming Chengzu shengmu Hongjilashi shuo suo fanying de tianmingguan” 明成祖生母洪吉刺氏說所反映的天命觀, *Nei Menggu daxue xuebao* 內蒙古大學 (*Zhexue shehui kexue ban* 哲學社會科學版) 1987.3 (July), pp. 1–18, which would seem to be definitive.

⁴ On these pivotal events, see Yao Guangxiao 姚廣孝 et al., eds., *Ming Taizu shilu* 明太祖實錄 (1418; hereafter *MTZuSL*) (Taipei: Academia Sinica, 1962 edn.) 29, p. 482; 217, p. 3194; 221, p. 3233. For Zhu Biao's biogs., see *WXB* 14, pp. 8b–13b; *MS* 115, pp. 3547–50; see also F. W. Mote, “Chu Piao,” *DMB* 1, pp. 123–25. For those of Zhu Yunwen, the Jianwen emperor, see *MS*, j. 4; and Mote, “Chu Yun-wen,” *DMB* 1, pp. 397–404 (also n. 59, below). The decree on the designation of Zhu Biao as heir-apparent is preserved in *Xiaoling zhaochi* 孝陵詔敕, included in *Mingchao kaiguo wenxian* 明朝開國文獻, ed. Wu Xiangxiang 吳相湘 (Taipei: Taiwan Xuesheng shuju, 1966), vol. 4, pp. 1834. The most authoritative work on Zhu Di's *jingnan* campaign against the Jianwen emperor and subsequent enthronement remains the studies by Wang Chongwu 王崇武 cited in n. 5, below. A more comprehensive survey is provided by David B. Chan, *The Usurpation of the Prince of Yen (1398–1402)* (San Francisco: Chinese Materials Center, 1976), but is now outdated. For background and additional bibliography, see Hok-lam Chan, “The Chien-wen, Yung-lo, Hung-hsi, and Hsüan-te Reigns,” in F. W. Mote and Denis Twitchett, eds., *The Cambridge History of China, Volume VII: The Ming Dynasty (1368–1644)*, Pt. I (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1988), pp. 196–202.

⁵ For details, see Wang Chongwu, *Fengtian jingnanji zhu* 奉天靖難記注 (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1948), and idem, *Ming jingnan shishi kaozhenggao* 明靖難史事考証稿 (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1948). *Fengtian jingnanji* was an official version of the coup-d'état against the Jianwen emperor composed by Yongle's official historians. It constituted the first 10 j. of *Ming Taizong shilu* 明太宗實錄, eds. Zhang Fu 張輔 et al. (1430; Taipei: 1962 edn.). On recent studies of this quest for legitimation through historical revisions, see n. 23.

A PLAN FOR THE IMPERIAL PRINCES

In his desire to expand his power and perpetuate the dynasty's fortune, Taizu took the lessons of past dynasties that were ruined by the rulers' inability to control their offspring. He was conscious of the upbringing of his sons and the institutional mechanisms of accommodation and control. Shortly after his accession in September 1368 at Yingtian 應天 (later renamed Nanjing 南京, or Southern Capital), when most of his elder sons were still in their early teens, Zhu Yuanzhang revived the feudalistic institution of enfeoffed princedoms. This system invested his sons with substantial power and responsibilities within a familial and dynastic framework. In May 1369 and February 1370, the emperor ordered the Central Secretariat to draft *Zuxun lu* and to draw up the laws and regulations. A decree issued in May 1370, which was composed by Hanlin academician Wang Wei 王禕 (1323-1374), gives the rationale for the establishment of the princedom in the opening statement:⁶

As we peruse the ancient ages, ever since the august rulers possessed the land under Heaven, the eldest son born to the primary consort was appointed to the legal position as the heir-apparent. For the other sons, they were to divide and share the land of the country to establish princely investitures. This is the way to mark the distinction between the elder and the young, and the means to stabilize the land from within and without... 考諸古昔帝王,既有天下,子居嫡長者必正位儲貳.若其衆子,則皆分茅胙土,封以王爵,蓋明長幼之分,固內外之勢者.

After announcing the appointments of the emperor's nine elder children junior to Zhu Biao (see appended table, sons 2-10); and Zhu Shouqian 守謙 (1364-1392), his grandnephew (son of his nephew Zhu Wenzheng 文正 [?-1365]), the prince of Jingjiang 靖江,⁷ the edict continues:

Alas, instituting these many princedoms is the way to broaden the security of the state's foundation, and widening the enfeoffment of the land is the means to deepen the solidarity of the lineage. This is the common custom of the past and present; how do I dare treat it as a selfish initiative. We cherish the support of our vassals and neighbors inside and outside the country in order that

⁶ *MTZuSL* 41, p. 818; 48, p. 951; 51, pp. 1000-1. The original text of the decree is preserved in Wang Wei, *Wang Zhongwen gong ji* 王忠文公集 (CSJC edn.) 9, p. 225. Part of the original text was modified when it was incorporated into the *shilu*; see n. 8. On enfeoffment of the princedoms, also see n. 9.

⁷ For biogs. of enfeoffed princes, with the exception of Zhu Di, see *WXB* 14, pp. 15b, 18b-19b, 20b; 21a-22b; 22b-23a; 23a-23b; 16, pp. 26a-28a; and *MS* 116, pp. 3562, 3565-66, 3570, 3573-74, 3575; 18, pp. 3612-13.

we shall attain a political and civilized order.⁸ 於戲！眾建藩輔，所以廣磐石之安；大封土疆，所以眷親支之厚。古今通誼，朕何敢私。尚賴中外臣鄰，相與維持，弼成政化。

It is clear that Zhu Yuanzhang, goaded by historical precedents and political concerns, sought to establish the feudalistic princedoms simply in order to ensure his control of the country as a family enterprise and pass it onto his offspring by invoking civil order. By this intent, the enfeoffment system became a family oriented state institution, and the training of the princes, who were to become head of the individual fief-states and play a pivotal role in securing the country, took on special characteristics and purposes.

The nine elder sons of Zhu Yuanzhang were enfeoffed at princedoms situated along the northern and northwestern frontiers and in the heartland of central China along the Yangzi River. The eldest son, Zhu Biao, having been appointed heir-apparent, was not included in this system. The most important of the princedoms were held by his three elder sons – Zhu Shuang at Xi'an 西安 (Shaanxi), Zhu Gang at Taiyuan 太原 (Shanxi), and Zhu Di at Beiping 北平 (“the North Pacified,” later Peking), with the respective princely titles of Qin, Jin, and Yan, corresponding to the historical designations of those areas. They received substantial annual stipends and gifts, and though possessing no legal authority over the population and the land of their domains, which were administered by officials appointed by the court, they enjoyed semi-autonomous power by the right to hold three military guard-units ranging from 3,000 to 19,000 men.⁹

⁸ *MTZuSL* 51, p. 1000. This last line of the original edict was deleted and replaced by: “Alas! Suppressing disorders in response to Heaven’s order is for the [good of the] general population; adopting this ancient law [of enfeoffment] to create kingdoms is to achieve perfect governance. Therefore I make public this decree so that all will hear and know about it.” 於戲！奉天平亂，實為生民法，古建邦用增至治。故茲詔示，咸使聞知。The Yongle official historians made the textual change to strengthen Taizu’s justification in establishing the enfeoffment.

⁹ Taizu’s enfeoffment of princedoms and their relationships with the court during early Ming is briefly given in *MS*, j. 116–18. For details, see Nunome Chōfū 布目潮瀨, “Ming-chō no sho-ō seisaku to sono eikyō” 明朝の諸王政策とその影響, *SZ* 55.3–5 (Mar., Apr., May, 1944), pp. 1–32; 50–87; 23–73; Huang Zhangjian 黃彰健, “Lun *Zuxun lu* banxing niandai binglun Mingchu fengjian zhuwang zhidu” 論祖訓錄頒行年代並論明初封建諸王制度, in Huang, *Ming Qing shi yanjiu congkao* 明清史研究叢稿 (Taipei: Taiwan Shangwu yinshuguan, 1977), chap. 2; Wu Jihua 吳緝華, “Lun Mingdai fengfan yu junshi zhiquan zhi zhuanyi” 論明代封建與軍事職權之轉移, in Wu, *Mingdai zhidushi luncong* 明代制度史論叢 (Taipei: Taiwan xuesheng shuju, 1971), vol. 1, chap. 2; Zhang Dexin 張德信, “Mingdai zhuwang fengfeng zhidu shulun” 明代諸王分封制度述論, *LSYJ* 1985.5 (Oct.), pp. 76–91; and Satō Fumitoshi 佐藤文俊, “Min Taisō no hōken sho-ō ni tsuite” 明太祖の封建諸王について, in *Wada Hironori kyōju koki kinen, Min Shin jidai no hō to shakai* 和田博德教授古稀紀念明清時代の法と社會 (Tokyo: Kyūko shoin, 1993), pp. 5–36. For a succinct account of these princes and princedoms, see John D. Langlois, Jr., “The Hung-wu Reign,” in *Cambridge History of China* 7, pp. 170–81.

Zhu Yuanzhang anticipated that these princedoms would serve as a bulwark against outside enemies, the Mongols, and various internal dynastic rebels. At the time of their enfeoffments, the princes were youths, but they began to assume personal control when they reached maturity, at about the age of twenty by the 1380s, and the number of princedoms subsequently rose to twenty-three in number. The most powerful turned out to be Zhu Di. Assuming residence in his fief in modern Beijing in April 1380, the prince was well educated, strong, energetic, and skilled in administrative and military matters. He impressed his father by his vigorous and gallant campaigns against the Mongols but at the same time harbored unbridled ambitions. While he showed obeisance to his father and elder brothers, he also secretly plotted his own schemes, culminating, as mentioned, in his usurpation.¹⁰

Taizu promulgated meticulous laws and regulations stipulating the rites and protocols of the princes and their relations with the imperial court. These rules defined their privileges and their responsibilities to the sovereign and their own princedoms; they laid down a code of conduct and judicial liabilities, including the principles and provisions of succession in their domains as well as succession to the throne, and punishments for abuses and transgressions. Such “family” laws constituted the main clauses of the *Zuxun lu* of 1373 (revised in 1376 and 1381). It is divided into thirteen sections: *zhenjie* 箴戒 (admonition and warning), *chishou* 持守 (observance), *yanjisi* 嚴祭祀 (proper sacrifice), *jin churu* 謹出入 (precautions on coming and going), *shen guozheng* 慎國用 (prudence in affairs of state), *liyi* 禮儀 (ceremony), *falü* 法律 (law), *neiling* 內令 (palace regulations), *neiguan* 內官 (eunuchs), *zhizhi* 職制 (rules of office), *bingwei* 兵衛 (military guards), *yingshan* 營繕 (constructions), and *gongyong* 供用 (provisions). Updated and renamed *Huang Ming zuxun* in 1395, *Zuxun lu* was widely disseminated among members of the imperial clan and posted in public places in the capitals.¹¹

¹⁰ See *Fengtian jingnanji zhu*, pp. 1–4; *Ming Taizong shilu* 1, pp. 1–4; *MS*, j. 5. For details, see Chan, *Usurpation of the Prince of Yen; Cambridge History of China* 7, pp. 196–202. For modern biogs. of Yongle, see Terada Takanobu 寺田隆信, *Eiraku tei* 永樂帝 (Tokyo: Jinbutsu oraisha, 1966); Shang Chuan 商傳, *Yongle huangdi* 永樂皇帝 (Beijing: Beijing chubanshe, 1989); Chao Zhongchen 晁中辰, *Ming Chengzu* 明成祖 (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1993); and Shih-shan Henry Tsai, *Perpetual Happiness: The Ming Emperor Yongle* (Seattle: U. Washington P., 2001), a work of inferior scholarship containing many mistakes.

¹¹ The 1381 edn. of *Zuxun lu* and 1395 edn of *Huang Ming zuxun* have been reproduced in Wu Xiangxiang, ed. *Mingchao kaiguo wenxian*, vol. 3. A modern edition is included in Zhang Dexin and Mao Peiqi 毛佩琦, eds., *Hongwu yuzhi quanshu* 洪武御制全書 (Hefei: Huangshan shushe, 1995), pp. 362–86, 387–410. For modern studies, see e.g., Huang Zhangjian, “Lun *Zuxun lu* banxing niandai bing lun Mingchu fengjian zhuwang zhidu,” in Huang, *Ming Qing shi*, chap. 2; Zhang Dexin, “*Zuxun lu* yu *Huang Ming zuxun* bijiao yanjiu” 祖訓錄與皇明祖訓比較研究, *Wenshi* 文史 45 (1998), pp. 139–62; and Tan Jiaqi 譚家齊, “Cong *Taizu huangdi*

Zhu Yuanzhang (Taizu) had grown up poor and illiterate, and entered a Buddhist monastery in 1344 at the age of sixteen. He aspired to learning, and eventually mastered letters and classics during the anti-Yuan rebellions and the struggles against his rivals. After ascending the throne, and under the influence of Confucian teachings and historical precedents, he yearned to be a strong, inspiring dynastic founder, as well as a benevolent, moral emperor. He wanted to set a strict, moralist example to his children by showering them with paternal affection and guidance, and providing them with a curriculum of classical education. In tandem with the restoration of state schools and annual sacrificial offerings to Confucius at the Confucian temple in Nanjing after the dynastic founding, he built a huge lecture hall in the palace compound in the national capital, storing a large collection of books there. He also summoned learned Confucian scholars to instruct the heir-apparent and junior princes. The princes were provided with junior scholars who served as assistant tutors and companions in social, literary gatherings, seeking to inculcate Confucian morals and principles of government through studying ancient classics and philosophical works. The teachers also instructed them in letters, poetry, and social intercourse in order to groom them as future administrators and rulers.¹²

Zhu Yuanzhang once confided to Wen Yuanji 文原吉, the Confucian head tutor at the fief of prince Qin, that in his injunctions he urged avoidance of frivolousness and absurd speech and laughter, and to be modest in food and drink and be frugal in clothing and utilities. In addition, worrying that the young royals were ignorant of deprivation, as well as labor, he tried to make them taste a bit of discomfort and to perform a small amount of physical service.

In regular instruction, besides the core Confucian classics and literature – the *Four Books* (*Sishu* 四書), *Book of Documents* (*Shujing* 書經), *Commentaries to the Spring and Autumn Annals* (*Chunqiu zhuan* 春秋傳) and

qinlu kan Ming Taizu xiuding *Zuxun lu de yuanyin*”從太祖皇帝欽錄看明太祖修訂祖訓錄的原因, *Journal of Chinese Studies* 中國文化研究所學報, *The Chinese University of Hong Kong* 44 (2004), pp. 83–102. For a complete English translation, see Edward L. Farmer, *Zhu Yuanzhang and Early Ming Legislation: The Reordering of Chinese Society following the Era of Mongol Rule* (Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1995), appendix 1.

¹² For basic information, see Lü Ben 呂本 et al., eds., *Huang Ming baoxun* 皇明寶訓 (1602), j.1 (“Xingxue” 興學); j.2 (“Zun Ruxue” 尊儒學); “Shengxue” 聖學; “Jiao taizi zhuwang” 教太子諸王,” rpt. *Hongwu yuzhi quanshu*, pp. 446–58. On Zhu Yuanzhang’s adoption of Confucian rites and Legalist precepts in government, see Farmer, *Zhu Yuanzhang and Early Ming Legislation*, chaps. 2–3; Luo Dongyang 羅冬陽, *Ming Taizu lifa zhizhi yanjiu* 明太祖禮法之治研究 (Beijing: Gaodeng jiaoyu chubanshe, 1998), chaps. 1–2. On his reverence of Confucius and policies concerning sacrificial offerings at the Confucian temple, see Zhu Honglin 朱鴻林, “Ming Taizu de Kongzi chongbai” 明太祖的孔子崇拜, *CNTA* 70.2 (June 1999), pp. 495–503.

the like, the princes were required to study *Zuxun lu*, and special works such as *Zongfan zhaojian lu* 宗藩昭鑒錄 (*Record of the Reflecting Mirror for Imperial Clansmen*) compiled in two *juan* in April of 1373 by the aforementioned Confucian scholars. It was a selection of incidents of delinquency and misconduct of the imperial princes of the Han and Tang dynasties, and was distributed to the princes for their enlightenment and introspection. It is still extant.¹³

The most eminent of the imperial tutors were Song Lian 宋濂 (1310–1381), a Hanlin academician who had served the emperor since the dynastic founding, and Kong Keren 孔克仁, a respected veteran Confucian teacher. The former served as the principal tutor of the heir-apparent Zhu Biao for more than ten years, coaching him in the subtleties of Confucian humanistic government and molding gentility and moderation. The latter, Kong, was tutor for an extended period in the imperial palace, diligently and patiently instructing the princes, as well as organizing classes for children from selected meritorious officials; he won the trust of the emperor and the respect of his pupils.¹⁴ Zhu Yuanzhang once said to Kong Kerun and his fellow tutors:

My sons will be given the responsibilities of governing the land under Heaven, the children of the meritorious officials will also be assigned administrative duties. The way of teaching them is to rectify their mind-and-heart; if the mind-and-heart is rectified, then everything will fall into the right principle. If they are not guided in the proper way, all kinds of desires will invade them, and the harm will be too great to enumerate. You gentlemen should complement the curriculum with practical subjects, do not just emulate the literary men (by making your pupils) memorize passages of literature. 朕諸子將有天下國家之責，功臣子弟將有職任之寄。教之之道，當以正心爲本，心正則萬事皆理矣。苟導之不以正，爲種欲所攻，其害不可勝言。卿等宜輔以實學，毋徒勸文士記誦詞章而已。¹⁵

This admonition shows that the emperor placed high priority on Confucian moral learning, particularly the rectification of the mind-and-heart, but he also expected that his sons be instructed in practical subjects.

¹³ See *MTZuSL* 80, pp. 1448–49. The compilation of the *Zongfan zhaojian lu* was started by Minister of Rites Tao Kai 陶凱, and completed by Wen Yanji and other commissioned Confucian scholars. For a bibliographic note, see Jiao Hong 焦竑, *Guochao jingji zhi* 國史經籍志 (CSJC edn.) 1, p. 1; and *MS* 97, p. 2390. See also Li Jinhua, *Mingdai chizhuanshu kao* 明代敕撰書考 (Peiping: Harvard-Yenching Institute, 1933), p. 7. On Wen Yuanji, see n. 40, below.

¹⁴ For Song Lian's biography, see *MS* 128, pp. 3784–88; see also F. W. Mote, "Sung Lien," *DMB* 2, pp. 1225–31. Kong Kerun's biog. is at *MS* 128, pp. 3922–24.

¹⁵ *MTZuSL* 41, pp. 816–17.

He was equally concerned with finding mates for his sons. Although he had declared he would select virtuous females from respectable families, most of the princely consorts were chosen from family of meritorious military commanders who had served the emperor since the dynastic founding.¹⁶ The heir-apparent Zhu Biao married the daughter of general Chang Yuchun 常遇春 (1330–1369). The consorts of Zhu Shuang, Zhu Su, Zhu Di, Zhu Zhen, Zhu Tan and Zhu Chun were daughters of Deng Yu 鄧愈 (1337–1377), Feng Sheng 馮勝 (1330?–1395), Xu Da 徐達 (1332–1385), Wang Pi 王弼 (?–1395), Tang He 湯和 (1326–1395), and Lan Yu 藍玉 (?–1393), all of whom later were ennobled and enjoyed considerable prestige and power. Military personnel were likewise favored in the selection of sons-in-law for his fourteen princesses.¹⁷ It was expected that intermarriage would create a princely-military hereditary nobility that would strengthen the princedoms and placate the military. The intent was to provide security to the dynasty, but unfortunately the contrary was often the case.

After the princes reached adulthood and assumed residence in their respective fiefs, Zhu Yuanzhang also appointed experienced administrators and Confucian advisers, such as the left prime minister (*zuoxiang* 左相), left and right tutor (*zuofu* 左輔/*youfu* 右傅), the head administrator (*zhangshi* 長史), and others to the princely establishment to assist his sons.¹⁸ The princes were routinely summoned to return to Nanjing or Zhongdu 中都, the auxiliary Central Capital at the ancestral place in Fengyang 鳳陽, Anhui, to receive injunctions and remonstrance from the emperor, study selected works of Confucian sages, and to undertake military drilling exercises.

Of all the imperial princes, Zhu Biao was the most cultured and educated. He was gentle and humane, and though he lacked physical prowess and martial valor, he displayed Confucian statesman-like temperament and abilities that pleased the emperor. As early as 1372, when Zhu Biao was seventeen, Zhu Yuanzhang had already ordered senior officials from all branches of government to inform the prince of their

¹⁶ See Ming Taizu's remarks on the selection of the primary consort for prince Qin in *MTZuSL* 68, p. 1271.

¹⁷ See *WXB* 14, pp. 13a–b, 23a; 15, p. 1a; *MS* 115, p. 3550; 116, p. 3560; 129, p. 3798; 113, p. 3509; 132, p. 3863; 116, p. 3575. These military officials' biogs. are at *MS* 125, pp. 3732–37; 126, pp. 3748–51; 129, pp. 3795–99; 125, pp. 3723–30; 132, pp. 3862–63; 126, pp. 3751–55; 132, pp. 3863–66. See also *DMB* 1, pp. 115–20; 2, pp. 1277–80; 1, pp. 453–55; 602–8; 2, pp. 1148–51; 1, pp. 788–91. On sons-in-law of Taizu's princesses, see *MS* 121, pp. 3662–63, 3665–68. See also Lianche Tu Fang, "Ning-kuo Kung-chu," *DMB* 1, pp. 1100–2.

¹⁸ On the appointment of these officials to the respective fief-states, see *Zunxun lu*, "Zhizhi," and *Huang Ming zuxun*, "Zhiji," rpt. *Hongwu yuzhi quanshu*, pp. 380–82; 405–7. Cf. Farmer, *Zhu Yuanzhang and Early Ming Legislation*, pp. 142–43.

memorials on state affairs. In 1377, officials were ordered to submit their communications to the prince for review before they memorialized, putting him in the vortex of daily policy and administrative decisions. In the early autumn of 1391, the emperor dispatched his son to take a tour of inspection of the civil and military situation in Shaanxi, with responsibility of considering the transfer of the capital from Nanjing to the ancient capital Chang'an (Xi'an). However, Zhu Biao died unexpectedly in May 1392, bringing tremendous grief to his father, as well as provoking a crisis in imperial succession.¹⁹

A few of Zhu Yuanzhang's enfeoffed princes turned out to be capable of managing their fiefs' administrative affairs and military preparedness, or could lead expeditions to expel the non-Han tribal intruders from the northern frontiers. The most gallant of the latter were the princes of Jin and Yan, Zhu Gang and Zhu Di. Since 1390, they both had led expeditions against Mongolian intrusions and demonstrated significant leadership even though they had not succeeded in overwhelming the enemy. In later years, after the death or purge of several of the veteran generals of the dynastic founding, such as Lan Yu, Fu Youde 傅友德 (?-1394), Feng Sheng and others (see below), the two princes assumed greater leadership roles in military defenses against northern tribesmen and took under their wings some of their junior siblings, such as the princes of Qi, Chu, Liao, and Xiang.²⁰

Some imperial princes developed talent specifically in literary matters, arts, and scholarship. Prince Zhou and prince Ning were the two most erudite and productive. The former was known for his work on Yuan court poetry and a manual of herbal medicine for aid in times of famine; and the latter, for his work on northern and southern lyrical drama, and a compendium of information on alchemy and pharmacopoeia.²¹ The princes of Tan, Lu, Shu, and Xiang were also adept in classical studies and literature, conversant in the military arts, and enjoyed companionship with scholars and religious people.²²

There were, however, several *bêtes noires* among these imperial princes, in particular the princes of Qin, Zhou, Qi, Tan, Lu, Dai, and

¹⁹ *MTZuSL* 77, p. 1411; 113, p. 864; 211, pp. 3134, 3138; 214, p. 160; 217, p. 3194.

²⁰ For details, see *Taizu huangdi qinlu* (n. 24), pp. 71-72, and *passim*. See also briefly *WXB* 14, pp. 15b-16a; *MS* 5, p. 69; 116, p. 3562.

²¹ For their biogs., see *WXB* 14, pp. 18a-19b; *MS* 5, p. 69; 116, pp. 3565-66; Chaoying Fang, "Chou Su," *DMB* 1, pp. 350-54; and *WXB* 15, pp. 9b-11b; *MS* 5, p. 69; 117, pp. 3591-93; D. R. Jonker, "Chou Ch'üan," *DMB* 1, pp. 305-7.

²² See *WXB* 14, pp. 22b-23b; 15, pp. 1a-3a, 6a-7a; *MS* 116, pp. 3574-75; 3579-81, 3588.

Jingjiang, who were criticized by the emperor in various imperial memoranda. They were charged and chastised by him in internal documents circulating among the imperial clan, documents that referred, among other things, to abuse of privileges and the flouting of the law, immoral conduct and corruption, and persecution of subordinates. These documents are found in the aforementioned *Taizu huangdi qinlu*, a compendium of imperial edicts and letters transcribed by the staff of the prince of Jin, and *Jifei lu*. Few of the wrongdoings of these princes were known to the public, having been imperial household secrets. Moreover, because of the imperial *taboo*, even though these private documents could become accessible to official historiographers in the next reign, few of the morbid activities of the imperial black sheep were revealed in the twice-revised *Ming Taizu shilu* 太祖實錄 (*Veritable Records of Taizu*) compiled under emperor Yongle, which sought to embellish the dynastic progenitor and his progenies at the expense of truth and objectivity.²³ It is fortunate that these two rare documentary collections are still extant, one kept in the Palace Museum in Taipei and the other in the State Library in Beijing. They provide indispensable sources for an in-depth study of the hitherto little known criminal offenses of the prince of Qin and his delinquent siblings and their impact on the enfeoffment system as well as on critical issues in the volatile political transformation of the early-Ming period.²⁴

THE NOTORIETY OF PRINCE QIN ZHU SHUANG

A credible biography of Zhu Shuang has to be reconstructed from entries in *Taizu shilu* because no Ming-court biography was written of him after his death. *Taizu shilu*, which drew on the “Qijuzhu” 起居注 (“Diary of the Emperor’s Activity and Repose”), “Rili” 日曆 (“Daily Record”), and other official compendia, recorded most of the prince’s

²³ The Jianwen emperor ordered compilation of *MTZuSL* February 1399; it was completed in January 1402, but unacceptable to the Yongle emperor because it contradicted his claims to legitimate succession. The *shilu* was then ordered revised, producing a first revision in July 1403 in 183 *juan*. Still unsatisfactory, another revision (the final version) was completed June 1218 in 257 *juan*. Historians have concluded that tampering occurred almost entirely in records pertaining to the prince of Yan, his relations with Taizu, and his machination to seize the throne. For details, see Hok-lam Chan, “Xie Jin (1369–1415) as Imperial Propagandist: His Role in the Revisions of the *Ming Taizu shilu*,” *TP* 91.1–3 (2005), esp. pp. 65–76; and idem, “Legitimizing Usurpation: Historical Revision under the Ming Emperor Yongle (r. 1402–1424),” in Philip Yuen-sang Leung, ed., *The Legitimation of New Orders: Case Studies in World History* (Hong Kong: The Chinese U.P., 2006), esp. pp. 105–8.

²⁴ This Palace Museum copy of *Taizu huangdi qinlu* (hereafter, *TZHDQL*), with prefatory remarks by Chang Bide 昌彼得, has been reproduced in (Taipei) *Gugong tushu jikan* 故宮圖書季刊 1.4 (September 1970), pp. 71–112. See Chen Xuelin 陳學霖, “Guanyu Ming Taizu huangdi qinlu de shiliao” 關於明太祖皇帝欽錄的史料, *Jinan xuebao* 暨南學報 2 (Dec. 2003), pp. 26–30;

activities except for the indictments mentioned above. They were shielded from the official records and were only revealed by the emperor's own admission in *Jifei lu* and in death-bed rescripts that were relayed to the princes.

Zhu Shuang was born on December 3, 1356 (Yuan-era Zhizheng 至正 16/11/11) and was invested May, 1370. The principal officials appointed to assist him at his establishment were prime minister of the left Zheng Jiucheng 鄭九成, left tutor Wang Kerang 王克讓, and the aforementioned Wen Yuanji, the right tutor who later became head administrator. In October of 1371 Shuang married a sister of Wang Baobao 王保保 (?–1375), formerly a Yuan-dynasty prime minister of Chinese origin who was known by the Mongol name Kōkō-temür. Wang had surrendered to the Ming and was ennobled as prince of Henan 河南.

In October of 1375 Zhu Shuang was sent to the auxiliary capital Zhongdu together with his siblings the heir-apparent and the princes of Jin, Chu, and Jingjiang. They toured the ancestral place and engaged in military drills. At the end of this year he took the daughter of general Deng Yu as a secondary consort. In April of 1378, Shuang, at twenty-two *sui*, assumed formal residence at his fief in Xi'an; at that time his military guard consisted of 3,748 men. On this occasion the emperor sent him a sealed letter in which he pointed out that as the land south of the Great Wall was still undergoing reconstruction, the population remained burdened by various labor-intensive services and had not been given a rest after the downfall of the Yuan regime. He exhorted the prince not to initiate unnecessary public works after the completion of his palace in order to soothe the people under his governance.²⁵

In September 1382, upon the death of his mother, Zhu Shuang returned to Nanjing together with his siblings to attend the funeral,

republished in *Mingshi yanjiu luncong* 明史研究論叢 6 (Beijing: Zijincheng chubanshe, 2004), pp. 76–98. The full text has been reprinted in an extended study by Zhang Dechang, “*Taizu huangdi qinlu jiqi faxian yu yanjiu jilu, jianji Yuzhi Jifei lu*” 太祖皇帝欽錄及其發現與研究輯錄, 兼及御制紀非錄, in *Ming Qing luncong* 明清論叢 6 (Beijing: Zijincheng chubanshe, 2005), pp. 83–110. The Beijing State Library copy of *Jifeilu* was first noted by the late professor Gu Cheng 顧誠 of Beijing Normal University; he prepared a collated and punctuated copy for private circulation; rpt. in Zhang, “*Taizu huangdi qinlu*,” and is analyzed in Chen Xuelin, “Ming Taizu *Jifei lu* shuhou, Qin Zhou Qi Tan Lu Dai Jingjiang zhuwang zuixing xulu” 明太祖紀非錄書後, 秦周齊譚魯代諸王罪行絞錄, *Journal of Chinese Studies, The Chinese University of Hong Kong* 45 (2005), pp. 97–140. My citations of *Jifei lu* refer to the latter. These two works are not included in the *Quan Ming wen* 全明文 edn., Qian Bocheng 錢伯城 et al. (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1992), vol. 1: “Zhu Yuanzhang wen” 朱元璋文

²⁵ *MTZuSL* 4, pp. 50; 51, pp. 1001–2; 68, pp. 1272; 73, p. 1341; 101, p. 1710; 102, p. 1717; 104, p. 747; 108, p. 1803; 117, p. 917; 118, p. 1927. However, in reporting the prince's birth on December 3 1356, *MTZuSL* 4, p. 50, does not mention his name Shuang. The reason is unknown.

and he stayed there for two months. In August 1384 they again visited the capital to observe mourning rites known as *daxiang* 大祥, when the late empress's spirit-tablet was transferred to the Ancestral Temple. In October 1385, Zhu Yuanzhang sent a rescript to Shuang, the prince of Qin, and the princes of Jin and Zhou, reporting a recent anomaly of the planetary movement and its prognostication of military hostilities, and admonished them to step up military drills in their respective fiefs. In October of 1388, probably in response to a summons of injunction and remonstrance, Shuang and nine other junior siblings, including the princes of Jin, Zhou, and Yan, returned to the capital for a brief sojourn. In February of 1389, he was appointed director of the newly revised Court of the Imperial Clan (Dazongzheng yuan 大宗正院). This was a very important managerial position, and in light of the emperor's rescript to the prince reprimanding him for wrongdoings (the particulars of which are looked at, below), it would appear that at this time the emperor had forgiven him, and did not contemplate that he would commit more infractions.²⁶

Late in August of 1391, however, Shuang was summoned to Nanjing. *Taizu shilu* gives no explanation, but its entry for October of the previous year reports that the emperor, having given instruction to the Ministry of Rites to mold gold goblets for the princes of Qin, Jin and Yan, suddenly rescinded the order for prince Qin, suggesting a possible ominous incident. His appointment at the Court of the Imperial Clan may have been terminated at this time. No date of Shuang's return to Xi'an was reported. According to his *Mingshi* biography, as discussed later, he was recalled and reprimanded for wrongdoings that are not revealed in *Taizu shilu*. He was exonerated because of the intercession of the heir-apparent Zhu Biao, and he returned to his fief in August 1392, three months after the latter's death. In October, Zhu Yunwen, who was Zhu Biao's eldest surviving son by his secondary consort, was designated imperial grandson. In August 1393, Zhu Yuanzhang again summoned Shuang, along with nine of his elder siblings; no explanation was given, but it was probably intended to rally their support to the imperial grandson to promote his future succession.²⁷

In February of 1395 the prince of Qin was appointed to oversee a punitive expedition headed by general Ning Zheng 寧正 (?-1396)

²⁶ *MTZuSL* 147, p. 2324; 149, p. 2350; 163, p. 2532; 175, p. 2662; 193, pp. 2903, 2905; 195, p. 2925.

²⁷ *MTZuSL* 204, p. 3058; 211, p. 3133; 217, p. 3194; 219, p. 3213; 221, p. 3233; 228, p. 3344; 229, p. 3352. See also Pan Chengzhang 潘程章, *Guoshi kaoyi* 國史考疑 (XXSKQS edn.) 3, p. 15a.

against the Tibetans in Tiaozhou 洮州 in Shaanxi near the Tibetan border. They were successful, and the leaders were given handsome rewards. Shortly after his return, however, Shuang died unexpectedly in his fief on April 9 (Hongwu 28/3/20), at the age of forty *sui*; the cause was not announced. His primary consort *née* Wang, having been maltreated by the prince, who favored the secondary consort *née* Deng, killed herself in the traditional rite of *xun* 殉 for her dead husband and was given a canonized name. Deng preceded the prince's death under unsavory circumstances. According to *Jiefeilu*, she hanged herself after being reproached by the prince for displaying jealousy. The prince was survived by six male children who successively, down to the Zhengde 正德 reign (1506–1522), inherited his noble rank.²⁸ *Taizu shilu* carries a funeral notice, and, according to one report, at the suggestion of minister of rites Ren Hengtai 任亨泰, the emperor chose “Min 愍” (“Pitiful”) as the prince's canonized appellation, and “Min lie 愍烈” (“Piteous and Chaste”) for that of his primary consort. According to Yu Ben's 俞本 (1331–1403+) *Jishi lu* 記事錄 (*Record of Historical Events*), a contemporary private reminiscence, Shuang was entombed in the hilltop south of the walled city of Xi'an in the intercalary ninth month (October–November, 1395).²⁹ The imperial command on the canonized appellation, excerpted in *Taizu shilu*, is preserved in *Taizu huangdi qinlu*.

Thus was the information about the prince of Qin from *Taizu shilu*; whatever its shortcomings, it became the basic source later for Ming and Qing biographies of him. In Ming times, the brief biography in Zheng Xiao's *Huang Ming tongxing zhuwang zhuan* 皇明同姓諸王傳 (*Biographies of the Princes of the Same Surname of the August Ming*), for example, was drawn exclusively from the *Shilu* without any explanation of the gaps in the official account.³⁰ A later, similar, account in *Fanxian ji* 藩獻記 (*Record of the Enfeoffed Princedoms*) by the imperial noble Zhu Mouwei 朱謀瑋 drew on much the same information. His work contains a preface dated 1595 and was published shortly before his death in 1624; the work is extant.³¹ The official *Mingshi* compiled in the Qing (1736), though basically depending on the various *shilu* for its sources, offered a comment to explain why the prince was recalled to Nanjing

²⁸ *MTZuSL* 236, p. 3445; 237, p. 3461–2; 242, p. 3519. On the death of consort Wang, see *MS* 116, p. 3560; on consort Deng, see n. 52, items 3, 28. For biogs. of prince Qin's male children, see *WXB* 14, pp. 14a–15b; *MS* 116, pp. 3560–62.

²⁹ See *MTZuSL* 237, pp. 3461–62; 242, p. 3519; Yu Ben, *Jishi lu*, in Zhang Datong, *Ming-xing yeji* (see n. 43, below), *j. xia*, p. 41b.

³⁰ See *WXB* 14, pp. 13b–14a.

³¹ See Zhao, *Fanxian ji* (1595 preface) 1, pp. 1a–1b; rpt. Jiao Hong, *Guochao xianzheng lu* 國朝獻徵錄 (Taipei: Taiwan xuesheng shuju, 1965) 1, pp. 8a–8b.

in September 1391: that it was because Zhu Shuang “had committed many wrong-doings 過失,” but without specifics. It goes on to say that after the return of Zhu Biao to the capital from an inspection tour in Shaanxi, probably assessing the feasibility of Xi’an as the site of the new national capital, the heir-apparent successfully mediated his junior brother’s case before the emperor, and Zhu Shuang was subsequently forgiven and returned to his fief. *Mingshi* apparently drew on the Ming-Qing historian Pan Shengzhang’s 潘禋章 (1626–1663) *Guoshi kaoyi* 國史考疑 (*Verifications concerning National [Ming] History*), but it offered no clear statement of its source nor further explanations of Zhu Shuang’s wrongdoings. There simply was not any new information.³²

Despite the deliberate silence in *Taizu shilu*, a rescript sent to prince Qin dated September 1, 1378 (Hongwu 11/7/19), and preserved in *Taizu huangdi qinlu* shows that as early as the prince’s becoming established at Xi’an, Zhu Yuanzhang had been told of his various breaches of propriety and transgressions. They included the strange habit of leaving his sleeping chamber and reposing instead in a makeshift abode for debauchery outside the palace gate; he also had relocated the pavilion of the Nine Dragons Pond to the site of the old hall of a nearby walled city; and he repeatedly maltreated his primary chef. The rescript, “Laiyu Qinwang wen” 勅諭秦王文, gives the details:

I listened to the Confucian officials reading the *Shu* (*Book of Documents*) and the *Zhuan* (*Commentaries to the Spring and Autumn Annals*) of the ancients, and came to know that many of the enfeoffed princes of the Zhou, Qin, Han and Tang periods were mediocre in caliber and lost their riches and honor, and some were block-headed and were being cheated and bullied. For these two categories of people I had asked the Confucians to put them in a record entitled (*Zongfan*) *Zhaojian lu*. It contained all (the lessons) of riches and honors, gains and losses. For conscientious people who regard this as a source of admonition, it is not difficult to sort out the information. Now there are those who have the book but do not read it; the book shows that the way of the ancient sages had not prevailed and so they loathe it. Attitudes such as these will inevitably glamorize the intentions of the evil people of ancient times and retrace their wrong steps. 朕嘗聽儒臣誦古人書傳，見周秦漢唐藩王多有不才而失富貴者，有自己蠢而被欺侮者。此二者朕命儒錄爲書，題曰“昭鑒錄，”其富貴得失，盡在其中。若有心將斯以爲戒，甚不難於檢閱。今有是書而不看，即是古聖賢之道不行，將欲惡之也。若此必美古惡人之志，又將欲行之矣。

³² MS 116, p. 560; Pan Chengzhang, *Guoshi kaoyi* 3, p. 15a.

Previously I commanded you to take residence in your fief inside the Great Wall and I had wished that all your daily activity and repose, and other comings and goings were in accord with (the principles of) what is good and auspicious. Yet when you arrived in your state, you did not reside in the sleeping chamber, but reposed (in a makeshift abode) outside the palace gate. Why? From what I see this is not proper human behavior, but that of the birds and beasts. Moreover, your residential palaces and walls were built by conscripting the military and civilian to perform labor-intensive tasks and they were not completed in a single day and night. Now that all are completed, they expect that your arrival will bring them rest. How could you be so naive not to consider the hardship of the military and the people but propose to relocate the pavilion of the Nine Dragons Pond (a symbol of imperial power) to the site of the old hall of the Yangjia walled city! This matter may seem trivial but if it was done by the sons and agnatic grandsons of the Han and Tang rulers, it would have given nefarious people the pretext (to plot sedition), and their lives would be constantly in danger. Now that I have seen you are ignorant in dealing with people and handling business, as foolish as the birds and beasts, I have no qualms in inflicting reprimand and punishment on you. If you are still as idiotic as you are now sometime after my death, it would not be the failing of your elder brother the heir-apparent (who has not given you proper guidance), but you take the blame onto yourself. 前者命爾之國關內，朕必欲日日起居出入，皆合吉祥。何至國中，不居寢室，止宿歇門下，是何道理。於此觀之，非人所為，禽獸也。且爾所居宮殿城郭，前後役使軍民，非一朝一夕而成者。今既完成，軍民想望爾到，必有休息之理，何期至無知。不念軍民之艱辛，又欲將九龍池中亭子，移往楊家城古殿基上。此一事輕看不覺，若是昔日漢唐子孫有此所為，則姦人易為借口，其王身命不保朝暮。今朕見在，爾不曉人事，蠢如禽獸，朕加爾以責罰，庶可無疑。設若朕身後日久，爾蠢若是，非是為兄者之過，乃爾自取之也。

As I see it, two things may endanger your life. The most serious offense was the relocation of the pavilion, and I am worried it may incur unexpected disaster. The other was your repeated abuse of the kitchen chef. The chef is the man who nourishes life, and only he who specializes in the culinary arts can perfect it. It is wrong for you to treat him as an ordinary person. If you repeatedly order his beating I fear tragedy will befall you. Moreover, as you just arrived at your fief all the vegetables and fruits in your garden evidently could not have been consumed in this year. You

should send them to the various government offices for consumption in the following year. This probably would be the right way. From now on, you should be very cautious and attentive; do not be indulgent and reckless. In the case of the relocation of the pavilion, but for head administrator Wen (Yuanji)'s persistent remonstrance, things would not have gone smoothly. If you do not accept remonstrance, eventually things will turn bad. When you arrived at your new palace you chose not to reside in the sleeping chamber. I had sent for a eunuch to relay my injunction, but you ignored your father's command, still living outside the palace's gate. This was not because I made an exception to forgive you; if you do not rectify yourself, there would naturally be reports. If you now do not listen to your father the emperor, and later your brother (i.e. the heir-apparent) tries to use faithful remonstrance and hard words to lecture you, you may feel you are right and your brother wrong. This is not the way to protect your riches and honor. When my message arrives, you should examine it and rectify yourself. Only persistent remonstrance can bear fruit.³³ 朕觀爾不會保身命有二。其罪大者無如欲移亭子，其恐有不測之禍。數辱造繕者，繕、立命也。非操專其事者不得其精，爾將操繕者視以尋常，是不可也。若頻加捶楚，不測之禍恐生於此。且初之國，各園中果菜之類，初年用不了，宜給各衙門官共到次年，或者如此為庶可。自今以後，十分謹慎，不可非理放肆。移亭一節，非文王相（文原吉）苦諫，事不諧矣。爾不聽人諫，久必不好。爾到新宮，不居寢室，朕命內使令來教說觀爾。爾終不從父命，止居於門下，若此非為權且饒爾，若久不省，自來回話。如今朕乃爾父教之不聽，若久後為兄者以苦口毒言教之，爾必為己是兄非，此不能保富貴也。朕言既至，爾自觀之省之，為苦諫有功。

The last part of the rescript indicates that despite repeated admonition, the prince apparently turned a deaf ear, prompting the emperor to send a strong remonstrance that urged him to undertake serious reform and introspection in order to avoid disaster. It also indicates that Zhu Yuanzhang placed priority on Confucian teachings concerning paternal persuasion and self-rectification, and had expected that the heir-apparent would rein in his insubordinate siblings through remonstrance on his behalf, without threatening to mete out draconian punishment.

However, prince Qin was not the only improper prince. In a rescript addressed to the princes of Zhou, Chu, and Qi, Zhu Yuanzhang chided prince Qi for snatching a guard's sword and slashing a pigeon to stop its squawks, for ordering a new-born bird be taken from the eaves

³³ *TZHDQL*, p. 71.

of the house and roasted alive for a meal, and for repeatedly disobeying the injunctions of his father. The emperor was greatly disturbed by the brutal nature of these acts and worried that the prince's cruel nature and brash temperament, unless subdued, would diminish his morals and affect his judgment in affairs. In yet another rescript issued separately to the prince of Zhou in 1379, the emperor excoriated his grandnephew the prince of Jingjiang, charging him with repeating the heinous misdeeds of his late father Zhu Wenzheng (sentenced to die in 1365 for sedition), contumaciously ignoring the emperor's injunctions, spurning remonstrance, and committing crimes. As a result, the prince was recalled and downgraded to be a commoner; he was sent to Fengyang, where he was ordered to perform farming labor. He was rehabilitated after completing the sentence and his rank restored seven years later.³⁴

No negative report on these princes was made available during the next several years until March 1387, when the emperor, heeding an ominous planetary anomaly, issued a rescript to the prince of Jin that urged military alertness in the northern territories. He also rebuked the youthful princes of Zhou, Qi, Tan and Lu (the latter were in their late teens) for their atrocious behavior and depraved conduct:

Currently the heavenly phenomenon has portended the occurrences of calamities and abnormalities, and laid out the specific years, months, days and hours. The Moon (*taiyin*) and Venus (*jinxing*) will be moving very close (*lingfan*) to the feudal princes' constellation (*zhuwang xing*), and disasters will ensue. Last year, the nineteenth year (of Hongwu), on four occasions Mars (*huoxing*) had moved very close to the feudal princes' constellation. I had been worrying that my sons might suffer calamities. To my astonishment, the princes Zhou, Qi, Tan and Lu all had committed wrongdoings. As they had already offended the spirits and men, even though they had received reprimand, how could they ease the wrath of the spirits and heaven. If they could not reform themselves in a hurry, they would not be able to stay alive. In this year, the Moon and Venus again made such very close approaches (to the feudal princes' stars) on four occasions. I do not know what disasters this will entail. Everyday the princes committed wrongdoings, provoking Heaven's rage, such that the two

³⁴ *TZHDQL*, pp. 72–75. On biogs. of princes Zhou, Chu and Qi, see n. 7, above. On biogs. of prince of Jingjiang, see *WXB* 16, pp. 26a–28a; and *MS* 118, p. 3613. Details of his crimes were recorded in *Jifei lu*; see Chen, “Ming Taizu *Jifei lu* shuhou,” pp. 123–33. On Zhu Wenzheng, see *MS* 118, pp. 3612–13. For a study of his execution, see Gu Cheng, “Zhu Wenzheng *shiji jikao*” 朱文正事跡稽考, in Zhang Lian 張璉, ed., *Mingren wenji yu Mingdai yanjiu* 明人文集與明代研究 (Taipei: Zhongguo Mingdai yanjiu xuehui, 2001), pp. 51–68.

celestial bodies were moving towards each other very closely. The crimes might lie with Zhou, Qi, Tan and Lu. Why? I think Zhou, Qi, Tan and Lu deserved that. 今將天象昭示災異, 明白具定年月日時, 四次太陰、金星凌犯諸王星. 其禍必有當者. 舊歲十九年, 太陰、火星凌犯諸王星四次. 朕憂諸子, 恐有當災者. 不期周、齊、潭、魯一概爲非, 已得罪於神人, 時下雖備責罰, 如何消得神天之怒. 若不急急改過, 將後命不可活. 今年太陰、金星又犯四次, 此禍不知何. 王每日爲非, 激怒上天, 所以二曜(按指太陰、金星)相犯甚急, 罪恐專在周、齊、潭、魯. 爲甚麼, 料想周、齊、潭、魯當之.

For instance, Zhou did nothing meritorious and I would say he had not committed the worst kind of vice yet. He abducted the fiancée of a “licentiate” (*shengyuan*) named Yan Dun and has not yet returned her. Qi snared civilian females into the palace, and beat to death those he disliked and burnt them into ashes to be dispersed outside. Tan killed an archivist (*dianbu*) by striking him one thousand times with a leather whip; and smashed a head manager (*dianzhang*) with an iron instrument. Lu was the most rude; his primary consort (i.e., the daughter of general Tang He) should be condemned to death by slicing (*lingchi*). These rotten creatures (*po dongxi*) should be summoned by eunuchs to the palace to face capital punishment. How could they lure the seven-, eight- or ten-year-old children from civilian households into the palace to play, and free them three or five days after castrating them as eunuchs, infuriating the people in the area. This husband and wife cannot be redeemed by death. They also snatched the children from the military family camps into the palace. Some were released later but others were not, thus frightening these children such that they hide under the bed when they see the eunuch. This is very disturbing. This husband and wife committed a capital crime and should not be spared. It is proper to sentence the daughter of the duke of Xinguo (i.e., Tang He) to death by slicing. I am relating a summary of the events to you princes. In light of such celestial abnormalities, those who love and care for their life would know how to protect themselves; otherwise calamities cannot be averted. This is my command.³⁵ 如周無所不爲, 說不能盡爲非之甚者, 奪生員顏鈍已定親, 至今不還. 齊擅將民間女子入宮, 不用者打死, 燒成灰送出外來. 潭一千皮鞭打死典簿一員, 鐵骨朵打死典仗一員. 魯至無禮, 其妃當凌遲處死. 這等潑東西, 一日著內官召回宮來凌遲了. 如何將民間十歲、七八歲將在宮中玩耍, 三五日纔方將出, 闖爲火者, 怒及當境人民, 此二夫妻

³⁵ *TZHDQL*, p. 94. However, *MTZuSL* 184, p. 2768 recorded the close approach of the moon to the ‘feudal princes’ constellation as late as Hongwu 20/5/19 (June 5 1387).

死不可逃。又將軍家營裏小孩兒拿入宮中，有放的，有不放的，嚇得軍家小孩兒見火者去都藏在床下。如此教人難過，這夫妻兩箇死罪絕不可逃，合當凌遲信國公女。今將大概說與各王知道。天象如此，愛惜生命的自保護，作善挽回天意，不然禍不可逃。故諭。

Zhu Yuanzhang began by citing the reciprocity between heavenly phenomena and human affairs in order to warn his misbehaved sons that celestial abnormalities were in fact portents of the calamities that their deeds would bring, and he urged them to reform themselves. The repeated references to the Moon, Mars and Venus as encroaching on the *zhuwang* 諸王 or “feudal princes” constellation (the ancient name for a cluster of six stars located in Taurus) invoked a parallel sort of warning about heaven’s punishment of royal princes that had been invoked in the medieval period.³⁶ In this case, Zhu Yuanzhang ascribed the abnormalities to Heaven’s wrath over these specific crimes. It is extraordinary that although the emperor threatened death by dismemberment for prince Lu and his primary consort, it appears that only the consort was executed. The prince was apparently spared, and he lived on for almost three more years when he reportedly died of an overdose of mercurial drugs on January 2, 1390 (Hongwu 22/12/16), at the age of nineteen *sui*, and was canonized as *huang* 荒 (“The Dissolute”).³⁷

It is striking that the preface of *Jifei lu* was written on the same date as the aforementioned rescript to the prince of Jin containing rebukes against his four siblings. At the beginning, *Jifei lu* contained only the indictments against these four princes as amplifications of the rescript, and then some time later, perhaps not until 1391 or 1392, indictments against the princes of Qin, Dai, and Jingjiang were included, producing the full record in its present form.³⁸ An annal of the early Ming titled *Jishi lu* (discussed below) records a total of thirty-seven counts of indictment against the prince of Qin, the most disturbing of the *bêtes noires*: only the indictments against the prince of Jingjiang, the last on the list,

³⁶ On the Zuwang constellation and astrological implications, see Fang Xuanling 房玄齡 et al., eds., *Jinshu* 晉書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1974) 10, p. 369; cf. Ho Peng Yoke, *The Astronomical Chapters of Chin-shu* (Paris: Mouton & Co., 1966), pp. 36, 37, 90. See also Tuotuo 脫脫 et al., eds., *Songshi* 宋史 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1976) 51, p. 1044. In the technical term *lingfan* 凌犯, *fan* means two celestial bodies moving as close as about 1d to each other, and *ling* is even closer. I am indebted to Professor Huang Yi-Long 黃一農, a specialist in Chinese astronomy and engineering sciences at the Institute of History of Tsinghua University, Hsinchu, Taiwan, for assistance in the preparation of this footnote.

³⁷ See *WXB* 14, pp. 23a–23b; *MS* 116, p. 3575. Prince Lu’s death and his canonized appellation are reported in *MTZuSL* 198, p. 2974. For details of crimes, see Chen, “Ming Taizu *Jifei lu* shuhou,” pp. 118–19.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 134.

were more. The latter was accused of twenty major categories of crimes and transgressions, with many subdivisions in each category.

The charges against prince Qin were as follows:³⁹

1. Delinquent in state administration. Dredging a water-storage pond in the princely walled city and filling it with water from the Chan River. Building a pavilion in the middle of the pond and also erecting an earth mound. Commanding the kiln smiths to blow glass objects, and assembling them at the end of the mound for playing games. How could people be forced to toil in this way! 不修國政,於王城內開挑池沼,引澆水灌之。於中蓋造亭子,又築土山。令各窯燒造琉璃故事,排列山末,以為玩戲。如此勞人。
2. Previously when head administrator Wen (i.e., Wen Yuanji) was on the job everything under his charge was handled properly, yet you recklessly bullied the official, and after he was retired because of old age, you refused to accept remonstrance and trusted lowlifes, such that the administration deteriorated.⁴⁰ 往先文長史(文原吉)在職時,諸般事務撥置停當,卻行凌辱本官。及本官告老去職,不聽人諫,親信小人,以致政事銷靡。
3. The “maid-servant imposter” (*jia sier*) Wang Pozi was from the former Yuan court; you brought her to stay in the palace, succumbed to her seduction into illicit sex, such that Wang Pozi often took her sons Wang “the second” (Wang Er) and Wang “the sixth” (Wang Liu) loitering in the palace. 假廝兒王婆子係元朝宮裏使喚的,取來在宮住歇,聽其教誘為非,以致王婆子常引其子王二、王六出入宮內。
4. Conniving at Fan Shipo to loiter in the palace, such that her son Fan Baobao was often disguised as a eunuch and stayed overnight in the palace. 容縱范師婆出入宮內,以致其子范保保如常假裝內官,在宮宿歇。
5. Sending judge Liu of the Military Guard (*zhenfu*) and eunuchs to Suzhou, Hangzhou, and other prefectures repeatedly to purchase girls from various civilian households, bringing along their parents, brothers as well as relatives. Their mothers were brought to stay in the palace and given a handsome award, squandering people's wealth. As their brothers and relatives took abode in other places, you often sent men to look for them and bring them into the palace. 差劉鎮撫同火者等前去蘇杭等府節次買取人家女子。其各女子父母兄弟親戚一同帶來。母則入宮住過,又加重賞,妄費民財。其兄弟親戚俱各在外寄住藏趨,使人會處尋覓,時常引入宮內。
6. Sending Old Lady Chen (Chen Po) together with eunuch Wu Tai

³⁹ For details, see *ibid.*, pp. 234-40.

⁴⁰ Wen Yuanji's retirement in October 1388 is noted in *MTZuSL* 193, p. 2905. Zhu Yangzhang approved of his service to the prince of Qin during his tenure as head administrator of the fief; *MTZuSL* 210, p. 3131.

to Suzhou, Hangzhou and other prefectures to purchase girls exactly like those drawn on the instructional paper. But in no place were they found, and men were sent twice to expedite the request. They scooped out Wu Tai's knee bones and had the elderly woman beaten to death in Hangzhou. 差陳婆同火者吳泰又去蘇杭等府要似紙上畫的一般模樣女子買來。本人無處尋買，二次差人催取。將火者吳泰剗了膝蓋，將陳婆就於杭州打死。

7. Taking the advice of woman Li Sengnu to send a man to Xianning and Chang'an counties to buy gold from the local people. After it was brought, a smith was summoned to smelt it, but silver appeared. It was given to Li Sengnu for inspection. She said that she had told the man to buy gold but silver was bought instead, and suggested that if she asked him to buy silver, they could see what he would get. Taking her advice, a man was again sent to buy silver. In this way the populace was bothered. 聽信婦人李僧奴差人於在城咸寧、長安二縣民人處買金子。及其買到，著銀匠銷過。內銷出銀子，又與李僧奴看。本婦言說問他買金子，他卻攙入銀子，而今只問他買銀子，看他再攙甚麼。依聽所說，又差人買銀子。如此攪擾百姓。
8. There were already over 115,000 sheep in the pastures. Yet, you indulged in the suggestion of the officials from the treasury to use the ragged money notes stored in the government storehouse to force purchases of more sheep from the people and then dispose of them in the market. Also, the soldiers disposed of a sheep among every five families, demanding a payment of seven *guan* in new money notes. 草場內羊見有十五萬有餘，又聽信庫官人等將庫內爛鈔於民間強買羊隻，卻回街上貨賣。又軍人每五家散羊一隻，要新鈔七貫。
9. Every year men were sent to sell the sheared wool in the market. Carts and carriages were conscripted from the people for carrying the goods into Henan, Fengxiang, Fenyang, Yangzhou and other places for sale. 每年剪下羊毛差人騎坐驛馬，起百姓車輛裝載，於河南、鳳翔、鳳陽、揚州等處貨賣。
10. A Muslim (Huihui) skilled in smelting silver was brought from Beiping. He was asked to instruct the soldiers and commanders from the Military Guards to smelt silver from the boulders obtained from the silver mine caves. It was so cold there that many soldiers were frost-bitten. 取到北平會煎銀子回回一名，教護衛軍人校尉於淘銀洞採取石頭煎銀、以致凍壞軍人。
11. Six female courtesans including Peng Nu, Bangu, and others were brought from Pucheng and Huinan counties; they repeatedly sang lewd songs in the palace. 於蒲城、渭南二縣取到娼妓彭女伴姑等六名，節次在宮歌唱荒淫。
12. Men were sent to buy summer cloth forcefully from the people.

- The headmen (who refused to sell) were put in cangues for display in public. 強買民間夏布, 將行頭人等枷令在街。
13. Every company commander (*baihu*) and those below his rank from the three Military Guards were given fifteen *guan* to procure a crimson *pulu* (*sic.* for *puluo?*, i.e., a Tibetan/Indian hand-knit woolen matress).⁴¹ 三護衛每百戶下散與鈔一十五貫, 著要買紅普魯(普羅?)一個。
 14. Dispensing the establishment's money notes to the residents in the city to procure gold. This caused a civilian couple who failed to fill the order to hang themselves. Also talking the advice of storehouse director Yu and vice-director Dong to send Cao the lieutenant-colonel (*jiaowei*) platoon commander (*zongqi*) and others to Long Bridge at Jingyang to purchase gold from people by force. 將課程鈔散與在城百姓買金子, 致令民人一家夫婦二人無處買辦俱各縊死。又聽信庫官余大使、董副使差校尉曹總旗等前往涇陽龍橋強買百姓金子。
 15. Though fully aware that embroiderer Geng Xiao and silversmith Yang Ren falsely transmitted orders to the *xingyuan* (i.e. brothel or prostitutes)⁴² to buy gold, they were not charged with the offense; only a cangue was put on them for eight days. 明知繡匠耿孝、銀匠楊仁詐傳令旨去“行院”處買金子也不罪他, 止枷了八日都放了。
 16. Allowing attendant-in-waiting (*daizhao*) Zhao Hu'er to loiter in the palace to commit promiscuous acts. 容留待詔趙虎兒容留待詔趙虎兒出入宮內為非。
 17. Often keeping flag-bearers (*qishou*) Chen Yun, Wu Zhong and Zhou Quan to gossip around you, and also sending them to purchase horse, sheep, gold and silver ornaments from the people by force. 常留旗手陳允、吳忠、周全三名在根前說是非, 又差他三人強買民間馬匹羊隻金銀等物。
 18. Often summoning painter Zhang to the palace to screen the paintings, such that he often stayed there overnight. 常令張畫士在宮裏揀畫, 以致本人如常在宮宿歇。
 19. Though fully aware that maid-servant attendant Wang Guangnu had been pregnant, no investigation was made and she was punished only by several beatings. 明知左右使喚丫頭王宮奴等有娠, 不行窮究, 止打了幾下。
 20. Succumbing to the cajolery of Old Lady Xi (Xi Po), lieutenant-col-

⁴¹ On the origin and meaning of these two terms, see Zhang Qiyun 張其昀 et al., eds., *Zhongwen dacidian* 中文大辭典 (Taipei, Yang Ming shan: Zhongguo wenhua yanjiu suo, 1962-68), vol. 16, p. 54A; vol. 18, p. 355B.

⁴² According to Ding Jian 丁鍵, *Yuanqu baike dacidian* 元曲百科大辭典 (Beijing: Xueyuan chubanshe, 1991), p. 59, citing sources of Yuan drama, the term *xingyuan* means: 1. prostitute (brothel); 2. actor (actress); 3. branch Bureau of Military Affairs (Xing shumi yuan 行樞密院). The first is applied here and also in Ming Taizu's 28 counts against the prince (nos. 9, 13, 23) cited in his funeral ode in *TZHDQL*; see n. 52, below.

onels were sent to deliver ragged money notes to the people asking them to buy gold, such that people had to mortgage their children and homes (to pay for the price differences). 又聽信席婆誘說, 差校尉人等出外俵與百姓爛鈔, 收買金子, 以致民間將兒女房舍貨賣。

21. A woman from Hangzhou named Wang Guannu (a different person from no.19) was bought and sent to the palace. She was consulted on various items of business; whatever she approved was accepted, otherwise they were rejected. 買到杭州女子王官奴在宮, 凡有事務便與商量. 他說可行便行, 不可行便不行。
22. Often allowing Wang Guangnu's mother née Lu to stay in the palace where promiscuous acts were committed. 常留女子母親陸媽媽在宮撥置為非。
23. Often sending “maid-servant imposter” Wang Pozi (same person as no.3) to various families of officials to snoop around for precious stones and jade objects, taking them to the palace but refusing to pay for them. 常差假廝兒王婆子於各官家探問寶石並玉器, 收取入宮, 又不還鈔。
24. Displeased with the big feet of the local females, underlings were dispatched to Suzhou and Hangzhou to purchase their girls. 嫌本處女子腳大, 又差人於蘇杭收買女子。
25. An old man from Shaanxi, disturbed by the repeated forced purchase of gold from the people, submitted a complaint to the administration, but you put a cangue on him, ordering the attendants not to provide him with food, and he was starved to death. 陝西老人因見累次買金, 百姓生受, 具本來啓, 反將本人枷了, 排門號令不與飯吃, 餓死了。
26. A man was found sleeping in the “dragon bed” during a cleaning of the palace, but you ordered no investigation and simply put him to death. 打婦宮殿搜出男子一人, 在龍床上睡著, 不行窮究, 止著號令死了。
27. Allowing the sick women Zhao Xiao'er, Liu Suo'er, and Du Hu'er to stay overnight in the palace to await medical treatment, they ended up performing promiscuous acts. 容留醫人趙小兒、劉鎖兒、杜虎兒在宮夜宿看病, 以致為非。
28. Allowing two consort attendants and nuns from the Guanyin Shrine to stay in the palace for medical treatment. They remained for ten days; and they ended up performing promiscuous acts. 容留二儀人觀音堂尼姑在宮看病, 住了十日, 以致為非。
29. Forcefully dragging widows from the military and civilian families into the palace. 於軍民家擡取寡婦入宮。
30. Allowing nine former eunuchs who had committed wrongdoings to stay inside the princely establishment, building houses for them out-

- side Zunyi Men (Gate), and keeping the imperial commissioner (*qin-chai*) and eunuchs in the dark. 容留舊日爲非火者九名, 另蓋房子在遵義門外與住, 不著欵差內官得知。
31. Conniving with your daughter's husband and his son to frequent the palace. 容縱妳子丈夫並兒子常行出入宮內
 32. Summoning a blind man to sing in front of the palace gate. 喚瞎眼男子在宮門上唱詞
 33. Summoning a fortune-teller Mister Pei and others into the palace to make divination by means of diagrams. 喚算命人裴先生等入宮算卦
 34. Shying away from upright people, often chatting with a flag-bearer nicknamed "Zhang the watery-eye" (Shuiyan Zhang). 不親近正人, 常與旗手水眼張說話。
 35. Summoning the sorcerer Lin Tongshan and Mister Hua to court; they painted door gods on the gate doors, and also amulets on the main palace gate door. 喚林通山、華先生入宮, 於各門上畫門神, 又於正宮門上畫符。
 36. Summoning singer of pipa lyrics (*pipa ci*) Wang Deheng to the palace to perform, and he stayed there overnight. 喚唱琵琶詞人汪德亨在宮唱詞, 過夜方出。
 37. Dispatching lieutenant-colonel platoon commander Li Fu to lead fifteen personal attendants of the three Military Guards to Guangdong to procure pearls. 差校尉總旗李福引領三護衛親丁十五名前往廣東買珠子。

These thirty-seven indictments against the prince apparently drew on evidence gathered either by the judicial officials from the principedom and reported to the emperor, or directly by the eunuchs or imperial commissioners sent by the emperor to investigate the prince. Based on information cited earlier, they probably cover the period from 1387 to 1392, when the text of *Jifei lu* was probably completed. The prince of Qin is accused of neglecting state administration, bullying administrators and common people, colluding with lowlife in order to cheat and confiscate, and engaging in all sorts of promiscuity and tolerance of laxness.

According to Zhu Yuanzhang's idea about princely morals and conduct, the prince's debauchery was not only immoral and harmful to innocent people, but it would endanger his own life. His unsavory conduct and criminal offenses deviated from the way of the sages and was a loss in "virtue" (*de* 德), something with disastrous political consequences for both his fief state and the dynasty. The indictment gave no reference to punishment or information about rehabilitation. It ap-

pears that the emperor, as revealed in the preface of *Jifei lu*, cited later, intended to publicize these cases as a warning to the various princes.

However, supplementary information about prince Qin's misdeeds and offenses surfaced in Yu Ben's *Jishi lu*. A junior army officer turned historian, Yu recorded several episodes about the prince in his annalistic account of the Ming founding, composed ca. 1403 after the commencement of the Yongle reign.⁴³ It shows that even though Zhu Yuanzhang's personal memoir had a restricted circulation, gossip about prince Qin's notoriety had flourished beyond the imperial establishment.

Yu Ben recounts in an entry under Hongwu, year 23 (1390):

In the □ month. The princely establishment of Qin herded several thousand heads of sheep into Xianyang, Xingping, Wugong, Fufeng and other counties, and the local people suffered as a result. Also, soldiers from the Military Guards of the establishment were given money notes for purchasing gold (from the local people). As a result, impoverished people took advantage of the situation in and out of the provincial capital city; whenever they ran into soldiers and women from families of scholars and commoners and saw golden ornaments (in their possession), they would snatch them. In all the *lijia* of the counties in Shaanxi, orders were given to dole out money notes to purchase gold, one *guan* of money was to fetch one *qian* of gold; before the end of the day, they were taken away by mule-driven carts. Those who reared the sheep were ordered to dispose of them in the market when they became fat, and the money notes collected were exchanged for soft gauze, or were again given to the local people for purchase of sheep to replenish the herd. At that time, in the third month, in the midst of the Qingming festival, the prince of Qin ordered the eunuchs to set up swings in and outside the walled city; whenever he sighted the beauties, he would ask for their names and immediately make arrangements to marry them and take them into the palace. He would keep them if they satisfied him, otherwise they were slain. He also gave orders to make dragon-robcs and dragon-beds. When

⁴³ Yu Ben's *Jishi lu* was long thought to have been lost after a lone copy kept in Qian Qianyi's 錢謙益 Jianguyun lou 絳雲樓 Library was gutted by fire in 1650. However, a 2-*j.* edn. survived under the altered title *Mingxing yeji* 明興野記 edited by the late-Ming bibliophile Zhang Datong 張大同 (pref. 1626). A very rare copy is preserved at the State Library in Taipei. See Edward L. Dreyer, "The *Chi-shi-lu* of Yu Ben: A Note on the Sources for the Founding of the Ming Dynasty," *JAS* 31.4 (August 1972), pp. 901-4. For details, see Chen Xuelin, "Yu Ben *Jishilu* yu Yuanmo Mingchu shiliao" 俞本記事錄與元末明初史料, rpt. in idem, *Mingdai renwu yu shiliao* 明代人物與史料 (Hong Kong: The Chinese U.P., 2001), pp. 1-20. A punctuated text of *Jishi lu* is appended in idem, *Shilin manshi* 史林漫識 (Beijing: Zhongguo youyi chubanshe, 2001), pp. 406-60.

informed, His Majesty summoned the prince to the capital (for interrogation). At that time the heir-apparent was sent to Shaanxi to placate the military and civilian populations for the emperor. Afterwards, the prince of Qin was exonerated, and order was given to rehabilitate his fief.⁴⁴ 口月, 秦王府牧馬數千匹於咸陽、興平、武功、扶風等, 縣民被其害. 又於護衛士卒處給以鈔買金, 無籍之徒, 乘時於省城內外, 凡遇往來官軍及土庶婦女, 但有金首飾之數即攘奪之. 陝西所屬各縣里甲, 散鈔買金, 每鈔一貫收金一錢, 刻日車載驢馱納之車載驢馱納之. 牧養官羊肥則賣之, 收出庫鈔貫卻換軟紗, 復給民間買羊入群. 時遇三月清明節, 秦王令內侍於城之內外鞦韆架下, 見美女, 訪其姓名, 即娶入宮, 如意則留之, 否則殺之. 及僭造龍衣龍床, 上知之, 宣秦王入京. 皇太子標親往陝西撫諭軍民, 尋宥, 令復其國.

Some of the above offenses, such as those about using ragged money notes to buy gold forcibly from local people, reselling sheep, and so forth, are similar to those adumbrated in *Jifei lu*. However, Yu Ben also revealed episodes of the prince's sadistic philandering and his disregard of imperial regulations. Thus it is probably true that the acts were known outside the establishment, and that the prince's crimes were quite grave in nature. Zhu Yuanzhang was evidently disturbed when he learned that the prince had given orders to make dragon-robcs and dragon-beds because the dragon was the regal insignia, the exclusive privilege of the sovereign. Anyone other than the emperor himself displaying such an insignia would be tending toward insubordination or treason, no matter whether the offender took it as a playful act or had ulterior motives in mind. Thus he summoned the prince to the capital for interrogation and reported his similar offense in the eulogy (discussed later). The last sentence from this private account supplies the missing information. It reports that the emperor, after having excoriated prince Qin in person, exonerated him, and an order was given to rehabilitate his fief-state. That was why in February 1395, Zhu Yuanzhang appointed the prince to oversee a punitive expedition against the Tibetan minorities in Shaanxi near the Tibetan border, but sadly, again, barbaric treatment of the defeated minority people was reported.

TWO LETTERS FROM TAIZU TO PRINCE JIN

New light was shed on the nature of prince Qin's death from two letters that Zhu Yuanzhang wrote to his third son Zhu Gang, the prince of Jin, and a funeral ode that the emperor personally composed for the

⁴⁴ See Yu, *Jishi lu*, in Zhang, *Mingxing yeji*, j. xia, pp. 38a-38b.

prince on the occasion of his burial. They are preserved in *Taizu huangdi qinlu*. The first letter reads:

Hongwu 28/4/5 (April 24, 1395)

A report was brought in by the battalion commander Zhou Bin of the princely establishment of Zhou. This is to inform the prince of Jin, Zhu Gang, that I have received the notice of the death of your brother the prince of Qin from his princely establishment. You can see that this (tragedy) happened because in normal times he spurned my teaching and injunctions, indulging in licentious activities in the palace, sexually preyed on and cruelly harmed several of the females from respectable families. He failed to designate a primary consort such that no one was in charge of the palace. Lowlifes intruded (into his quarters); at night he ate “fried grapes” (*putaojian*) as a snack. At the first watch he began bedding with lowlifes, and by the second watch, a new batch of them moved in, replacing the earlier group. Ah, I have sired several of you, but though I have summoned several of you to inspect your conduct, few were able to handle things. Most of you were just ordinary folks below average intelligence, without neither insight nor foresight. I am deeply worried and do not understand that of the few who were meritorious they were also involved in endless cliquish feuds. These children are not even cautious of the safeguards in eating and drinking. I have often taught them, but most of the food presented was made inside the palace against my injunctions. I have been deeply worried. Now tragedy has struck. Here I relate to you a summary of the report:

On Hongwu 28/3/19 (April 8 1395), at the third watch of the night, an old lady attendant (*popo*) reported that the prince fell sick and could not speak. (The commander?) rushed into the east room of the front hall of the palace, found that (the prince) was seated in front of the bed with the support (of a helper); his throat was choked by phlegm and saliva, his body was warm but the four limbs were cold and his eyes were not open. Immediately, an order was given to the eunuchs guarding the palace gate, Qin Yi and others, to summon physicians Qi Rong, Zhang Zishan and others to join with the commander of the guards, the principal administrator, the moral mentor (*ji-shan*) and others, to the scene. In the company of the physicians they found that (the prince's) four limbs were extremely cold, his lips and mouth and nails were bluish, his eyes were closed and could not open. The diagnosis was “complete blockage of

the six veins" (*liumai bijue*) (clogging of the blood vessels?). Thus four different herbs were boiled to extract the essence to prepare a soup medicine. But the prince could not swallow it and so exigent moxibustion therapy (*jijiu*) was administered to the lower abdomen; a hot water bottle was used to rub and warm up his feet, making the chest slightly warmer. Then on the fifth watch of the 20th day of this month (April 9), an order was again given to the physicians to administer *congyun* therapy,⁴⁵ but it failed to rescue (the patient). His body turned cold and he died at the end of the *mou* and beginning of the *chen* hour (i.e., 7–8 AM) of the same day.

Recorded on the *wei* hour (1–3 PM) of Hongwu 28/3/26 (April 15, 1395).⁴⁶

洪武二十八日四月初五日

周府千戶周彬，賚捧到記事。諭第三子晉王橒知道，今將爾兄秦王府中報到凶信，爾看此是平日不聽教訓，放肆宮中，淫樂酷害死良家子女若干。於宮不立正妃，宮且無主，小人雜進，挨晚食葡萄煎。初更小人同寢，及至二更又小人進，先小人退去。噫，生爾等若干，數召至觀其所以，少有能立事，皆是泛泛愚下之人，略不高明遠見。吾深憂爲何爲其有功者數數，陰謀不已，諸子甚不知關防爲飲食之爲。吾嘗教之，都則宮內造進不依吾言，吾憂之不已，今果有事，今將所報辭語令爾等知之。

洪武二十八年三月十九日夜三更時分，有婆婆報說，殿下有病，說不得話。隨即進到宮內前殿東房，看見扶座床前，痰涎壅響，身體溫，四肢冷，眼目不開。當即令守宮門內使欽義等，傳喚醫士齊瑢、張志善等，一同護衛指揮長史紀善等官，眼同令醫士看得四肢逆冷，唇口指甲俱青，目閉不開。診得六脈閉絕，隨煎四味理中湯藥，不能進，急灸臍下，用熱水瓶，溫熨腳心，即令胸前微溫。至本月二十日五更時分，又令醫士用「葱熨」法，救治不回，至當日卯末辰初時身冷薨逝。

洪武二十八年三月二十六日未時記事

The second letter reads:

On Hongwu 28/4/5, a report was brought in by the eunuch Huer. This is to inform the third son the prince of Jin that what had happened to the prince Qin was all caused by the absence of someone in charge of the palace. Every single day and night (he) mixed with various people in foul play, and recently cruelly killed two

⁴⁵ The *congyun* 葱熨 procedure was a noted moxibustion therapy for gravely ill patients in Song and Yuan times. See the late-Northern Song imperial medical compendia *Shengji zonglu zuanyao* 聖濟總錄纂要 reedited by Cheng Lin 程林 in the Ming (*SKQS* edn.) 3, pp. 43a–43b.

⁴⁶ *TZHDQL*, pp. 91–92.

woman from respectable families. One of them was said to have been buried by the eunuchs, and the other just vanished. Recently he commanded an expeditionary army against the (Tibetan minorities in the West), slaughtering almost two thousand of the captives, conscripting one hundred and fifty women taken by the army into the palace, and also castrating an unknown number of boys for unspecified purposes. In ancient times, when the king launched an expedition, the purpose was to dispense benevolence and justice, but prince Qin behaved most malevolently on his first assignment. After concluding his mission, he indulged in lust and merry-making in the palace, drinking icy water several times a day – this was apparently caused by the dryness-heat from the drugs he had taken. Now he died of poison – as I see it, the toxin was contained in the “fried cherries” (*yingtaojian*) soup he ate before he went to bed, and he died because of it. His death was caused by the banishment of the primary consort such that security became lax in the palace, and no one carefully safeguarded the service of food and drink. In the case of the (situation in the) sleeping chamber, when some of you (referring to prince Jin and others) visited the court, I had personally shown the setting of my own bed, where the surrounding palace servants slept on the padded floor, as well as the deployment of the security. But prince Qin refused to heed my instruction, frolicking with the lowlifes alone, thus the tragedy was unavoidable. Alas, I have become dim-sighted from old age over making plans for my sons, and now I have to wipe my blurred old eyes to transcribe the record to show the incident to my children.

Recorded on Hongwu 28/3/27 (April 16 1395).⁴⁷

洪武二十八年四月初五日內使虎兒賚捧到記事，諭第三子晉王橐知道。秦有事皆是宮無（主）主宮者，無晝夜雜處，近日酷死良家子女二名，一名傳說火者埋了，一名不知所在。邇來帥兵西征，所俘所殺將及二千，內於軍中搜取女子一百五十餘人入宮，又將幼男闖了若干，不知的實。古時王者出師，務行仁義，今秦初出乃有如此不仁。班師之後，逸樂於宮，日常數飲冰水，此是服藥燥使然。今服毒身死，吾觀毒入之計，中在臨歸寢服櫻桃煎，由此而亡。亡由正宮被苦，因宮禁不嚴，飲食無人關防計較。且如寢宮處所，爾等來朝，吾曾親引指示吾床，周匝群宮人鋪睡處，所有關防有勢。秦不以吾言為法，與小人孤處，殺身之禍必生矣。老眼昏花為諸子之計，又拭模糊老眼，還親藁淨行以示諸子。

洪武二十八年三月二十七日（1395/4/16）記事

⁴⁷ *TZHDQL*, pp. 92-93.

Both letters were transmitted separately on the same day to the prince of Jin and other princes. The first begins with a litany of the prince's debauched conduct, including bisexual activities, and a notice about his eating fried grapes, which would seem to be a medicine for relieving blood in the urine.⁴⁸ We also get a rather clinical report of the prince's condition before his collapse: his limbs were cold; his lip, mouth and nails looked bluish; his eyes closed and failed to open; and the physicians' diagnosis – a “complete blockage of the six veins,” probably referring to clogged blood vessels. When the prince failed to swallow the prescribed medicine, then moxibustion and a hot water bottle were given, and on the next day another kind of moxibustion therapy, which probably featured placing a heated onion mash against the body below the navel so as to inject heat and raise the temperature. But the prince succumbed shortly thereafter. There was no speculation on the cause, other than the harmful effects of his lifestyle.

In the second letter Zhu Yuanzhang supplemented all this by revealing the grave crimes, including the wanton slaughter of war captives and castration of boys – and speculated, on the basis of the ice water, that the prince may have been taking certain drugs and, further, that the loaded “fried cherries” may have contributed to his death.⁴⁹ The emperor did not explain how the prince was introduced to this poison, but in the subsequent funeral ode, he mentioned that certain palace ladies, unable to endure his tortures, had got toxin into the “fried cherries” and then committed suicide by eating them. The emperor apparently concluded that the prince died of eating a poisoned snack prepared by disgruntled palace maids in revenge for his atrocious treatment. He had repeatedly lamented the absence of a primary consort to be in charge of the princely palace, and now here no safeguards were placed on food and drink served to the prince.

The letters not only reported the prince of Qin's death to keep him and his siblings informed, but also urged prince Jin to take precaution and abide by his father's injunctions so that he would not repeat the mistake of his elder brother and would avoid debauchery. The same

⁴⁸ According to a Ming medical prescription, the *putaojian* is made of grapes extracting the juice and heated in a soup solution mixed with lotus root juice, yellow juice from dried rhizome of rehmannia (*huangzhi shengdi* 黃汁生地; *shengdi*=dried rhizome of rehmannia [*Rehmannia glutinosa*]) and honey. It is usually served before meal as a cure for blood-stained urine disorder. See Zhu Su 朱橚, *Pujifang* 普濟方 (SKQS edn.) *Pujifang* 259, p. 14b.

⁴⁹ According to Li Hong 林洪, *Shanjia qingong* 山家清供, the *yingtaojian* is made of fried cherries soaked with honey; it can be eaten as a cake or boiled in water to make a soup to ease stomach congestion. Li's work is included in Tao Zongyi 陶宗儀, ed., *Shuofu* 說郛 (120 j.) 74, p. 23a; rpt. *Shuofu sanzong* 說郛三種 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1988), vol. 6, p. 3411.

message was intended for all members of the imperial household. The circumstance of prince Qin's death was obviously known only to the inner circle: these letters were secret documents not to be circulated beyond the imperial clan, in order to prevent possible political turmoil.

Subsequently came the "August Ruler's command" on the posthumous appellation of the prince of Qin, as well as a funeral ode personally written by the emperor. The imperial command, dated October 24 1395 (Hongwu 28/9/10), reads:

I have noticed that in ancient states the children of the ruler were given a noble investiture (*jue*) during their lifetime, and received a posthumous appellation (*shi*) after death. The investiture is used to distinguish between the upper and lower ranks, and the canonized appellation to illuminate goodness and wickedness. This has been the emperor's prerogative and it is an unchanged institution since ancient times. Ever since my enthronement I have regulated the land and demarcated fields to create fiefdoms for my children. Since you were the elder you were the first given a fief established at Qin. I have hoped that you would keep your treasured position permanently to serve as the bulwark of the imperial house, yet you failed to uphold your conduct and lost your life. Sorrow and pain are the most intimate feelings of affection between father and son. The designation of a canonized appellation is the mark of the pursuit of public justice under Heaven. Wherever public justice is served, I dare not intervene with my private sentiments. I now confer on you the appellation "Min" (Pitiful). If you remain conscious (in your afterlife), do respectfully accept this command. The prince of Qin's canonization appellation is "Min," that of his primary consort is "Min lie" (Piteous and Chaste).⁵⁰ 皇帝制曰：“朕惟古者君國子民生則有爵，歿則有諡。爵所以辨上下，諡所以昭善惡，以帝王之制，古今不易之典也。朕自即位以來，列土分茅，封建諸子，以爾年長，首封於秦。本期永保祿位，藩屏帝室，夫何失於防戒，竟隕厥身。嗚呼哀痛者，父子之至情，追諡者，天下之公義，義之所在，朕何敢私。茲諡爾曰愍，爾其有知，服斯制命。”秦王諡曰愍，妃諡曰愍烈。

In contrast to the earlier internal letters, this document was meant for public dissemination. To hold to Confucian decorum, it did not disclose shocking facts; and in doing so it spared the emperor from humiliation. It was but a subtle reprimand of the prince for betraying his trust. The canonized appellation "Min" was understatement of the father's unhappiness over his son's actions, and only in the funeral ode,

⁵⁰ *TZHDQL*, pp. 92-93. See also *MTZuSL* 237, p. 2462 for textual comparison.

a private document, did he show his fury and trenchantly denounce prince Qin.

TAIZU'S FUNERAL ODE FOR PRINCE QIN

The "Funeral Ode for Prince Qin" ("Yuji Qinwang zhuwen" 諭祭秦王祝文) is undated but probably written for the formal burial of the prince in the ninth month of 1395. It was a private document but, fortunately, was preserved in *Taizu huangdi qinlu*.

Having commanded the land under Heaven I started enfeoffing my sons in order that they would serve as a shield of the imperial house. You Shuang were only junior to the heir-apparent and you were the first to be invested a fief at Qin. But ever since you arrived at your state, no meritorious deeds were reported. Partying with lowlifes, you indulged in profligacy, wine and women, wreaking havoc on the land, and provoked Heaven's wrath. I often admonished and reprimanded you but you were never enlightened and thus lost your life. Even death would not expiate all your sins. Now I adumbrate and publicize the crimes and disgusting misdeeds you had committed in your life time, to which you shall attend. 朕有天下, 封建諸子, 期在蕃屏帝室. 爾榘年次東宮, 首封于秦, 自爾之國, 並無善稱. 昵比小人荒淫, 酒色肆虐境內, 貽怒於天, 屢嘗教責, 終不省悟, 致殞厥身. 爾雖死矣, 餘辜顯然. 特將爾存日所造罪惡, 列款昭諭. 爾其聽之.

1. Your mother died in less than one hundred days but you displayed no traits of sorrow and despondency, without expressing gratitude to her toilsome labor and rearing; yet you sent people to Fujian, Hangzhou and Suzhou to set up a warehouse for the purchase of your daughter's dowry goods. Where is your filial piety? 爾居母喪, 未及百日略無憂戚, 不思劬勞鞠育之恩. 輒差人往福建、杭州、蘇州三處立庫, 收買嫁女粧奩, 孝心安在.
2. That I often commanded you to send the guilty people of your fief to the capital was to conduct a thorough investigation of the treachery and contumacy against your state and eliminate them. But you were so worried they may come to the capital to defame you that you gave an order to kill them immediately in order to silence them. This was done repeatedly in defiance of your father's command. What a great crime indeed! 爾國內凡有罪人, 每命拏赴京來, 本欲爲爾窮究奸惡, 除爾國害. 爾乃恐其赴京言爾非爲, 即時殺死, 以滅其口. 如此者數番, 故違父命, 罪莫甚焉.
3. Listening to the crafty secondary consort *née* Deng, you incarcerated your primary consort *née* Wang in a downgraded chamber. Everyday food was sent to her in a broken vessel, and the drinks

and fruits being served were not fresh. You treated her like an imprisoned convict. Was this the way of a husband? 聽信偏妃鄧氏, 將正妃王氏處於別所. 每日以敝器送飯與食, 飲食等物, 時新果木, 皆非潔靜, 有同幽囚. 爲夫之道, 果如是乎.

4. Listening to the crafty secondary consort *née* Deng, you sent men to purchase pearls and jade from the provincial administration commissions along the coast. 聽信偏妃鄧氏撥置, 差人於沿海布政司收買珠翠.
5. Coming to court in the 27th year of Hongwu (1394), you gave an order to the (officers of the) three Military Guards to purchase jade ornaments and precious pearls at Longjiang; but their activities were exposed. Earlier you had given orders to purchase pearls and jade, causing people to ruin their families and drive themselves to death. Now you again failed to rectify your previous wrongdoings. Why did you do that? 洪武二十七年(1394)間來朝, 著命三護衛於龍江收買玉器真珠等物, 致令告發. 爾先爲收買珠翠, 已自家破人亡, 今又不改前非, 果何所爲.
6. A man was found in the course of cleaning the halls and eaves (of your palace). He was actually staying overnight inside the palace, but you put him to death without verifying the circumstance. Therefore lowlifes in the palace easily committed wrongdoings, and people do not know the right and the wrong. 因打掃殿宇, 搜出男子一名, 本是宮中過宿者, 不行究問明白, 輕易殺了, 因此宮中小人得以爲非, 是非莫知所以.
7. Beguiled by the “maid-servant imposter” Wang Bozi, you had foolishly taken sexual stimulants; you also sought out widows from the military and civilian households and brought them into your palace, successively working them to death. This is not what a man should do. 聽信元朝假廝兒王婆子教誘, 服淫邪之樂, 於軍民之家搜取寡婦入宮, 陸續作踐身死, 非人所爲.
8. In successive years you had ordered the military and civilian personnel from south of the Great Wall to purchase gold and silver; these improvised people could not comply but had to pawn and sell their sons and daughters (to pay for the costs). When 300 people pleaded to be spared, out of rage you seized them for interrogation. Two hundred people had run away, and you seized one hundred of them. Within a day you wantonly killed an elderly man. At that time Heaven vented its anger, strong wind, rain and hail uprooted and wrecked the trees the entire walled city was darkened, people facing each other without knowing who they were. Such was Heaven’s scourge but you showed neither introspection nor fear. 連年著關內軍民人等收買金銀, 軍民窘逼無從措辦, 致令將兒女典賣. 及至三百餘人告免, 爾卻嗔怒, 著拏來問, 走了二百, 拏住一百, 日內即時殺死老人一名. 當時天怒, 大風雨雹, 拔折樹

- 木, 滿城黑暗, 對面人不相識. 天譴如此, 並不省懼.
9. A woman née Wang purchased from Hangzhou was assigned to run the affairs of the palace together with two *xingyuan* (prostitutes);⁵¹ with lopsided arrangements like this how could you manage a harmonious family? 將杭州買到女子王氏, 同行院二名共管王宮事務, 如此倒置, 何以齊家.
10. An order was given to build a water-storage pond in the garden, but the ground was sandy and could not hold water. Water temporarily filled the pond but it soon dissipated and the pond was dried up. Yet soldiers were instructed to patch the bottom of the pond with plywood and surrounded it with bricks; muddled soil was brought from the Chan River twenty and some *li* from the walled city to cement it. You poured water in for the fish, without realizing that it was a sandy land; thus even if mud was spread on the bottom of the pond, it eventually leaked and could not hold water. Was this not very stupid? Orders were then given to build a pavilion above the pond, without caring for the pains of the soldiers, treating them like prisoners. Heaven was enraged; thunder shattered the pavilion and the fish were all blown away. 於苑中開挑水池, 地本沙土, 不能畜水. 潦水漫流暫時積滿, 不久即便乾涸, 著令軍士用椿板墁底, 周匝以磚砌之. 離城二十餘里於滄河內取塗泥鋪上, 挑水養魚, 殊不知其地本是沙土, 雖把塗泥做成池底, 終又滲漏, 如何盛得水住. 這不是十分至愚. 又於池上建立亭子, 不恤軍士, 做囚徒一般役使, 以致天怒. 雷擊碎了亭子, 魚皆飛去.
11. Listening to the eunuch Guo's plotting, you ordered a drawing of beauties and sent men to Hangzhou to purchase women matching the looks in the portrait. 聽信郭火者撥置, 畫美女圖, 差人賚往杭州, 照樣尋買入官.
12. Seating with the secondary consort née Deng in the platform of the garden, you ordered a palace maid to roll up her garment above the knees, rub her knees with ginger, and then kneel and tread along. When she came to the curb of the slope, because of the knee pain she fell and rolled down, yet you quipped it was a good somersault and laughed merrily. 與偏妃鄧氏於花園臺上同坐, 令宮人捲衣至膝上, 於薑擦上跪行. 至半坡, 宮人膝痛, 跌倒滾下, 卻說打得好筋斗, 以為笑樂.
13. Inside the seat of the Audience Chamber in the palace, you held the hands of two prostitutes (*xingyuan*) and made them sit on the left and right of your two feet. The servants chortled heartily, saying that it was unfortunate they could not become your consorts. Not heeding your superior and noble status, you let lowlives behave so imprudently. 在殿內聽政座上, 兩手牽兩行院坐於腳踏左右, 行院仰面笑說, 我兩箇偏做不得妃子. 不自尊貴, 致令小人如此無禮.

⁵¹ Explanation at n. 42, above.

14. Burning and blowing glass to make a rockery for fun and game, what a gross waste of manpower. 燒造琉璃故事, 做成假山以為玩好, 如此妄勞人力。
15. Designing an empress's garment for the secondary consort *née* Deng as dress, and making a bed with a five-claw dragon design like that of His Majesty's seat in the main palace. Imperial princes of the past dynasties had only a four-claw dragon design bed, yet you usurped the protocol and committed imprudence in such a way. What a great crime! 製造后服與偏妃鄧氏穿著, 又做五爪九龍床如大殿御座之式, 且前代藩王只用四爪龍床。爾乃如此僭分無禮, 罪莫大焉。
16. Wanting to acquire a lady's mirrored trousseau (*fenlian*), a military commander named Liu was assigned to the task, but he was later replaced by commander Hu. Hu took out the goods (from the shop) three times, but failed to report them. Only when the lowlife became aware of his guilt did he confess to the authorities. 為粉奩事, 合拏劉鎮撫, 卻改作胡鎮撫。三次提取不發, 直至小人畏懼事發, 出首到官。
17. The office of *zhangshi* (head administrator) is equivalent to the ruler's prime minister. His duty is to guide the prince and remonstrate; he must be treated with decorum and be consulted on state affairs day and night. Yet you were incited by the machinations of the eunuch to take charge. You then arraigned and whipped the senior administrator (i.e. WenYuanji). Ever since no one dared to speak. With such dauntless behavior and indulgence in wrongdoing you set the state administration adrift, and you met your own demise as a result. 長史之官, 即是王相, 職專輔導諫諍, 必當以禮相待, 朝夕與他議論國政。爾卻聽信火者典仗撥置, 將長史 (按指文原吉) 擅自捶辱, 自此之後, 無人敢言。以此全不忌憚, 縱恣非為, 致使國無政事, 遂殞厥身。
18. There were already 150,000 head of sheep in your fief, but you accepted the scheming of the officials of the storehouse and used the ragged money notes from the storehouse to purchase sheep and sell in the market like a businessman. Is this the behavior of a prince? 本府已有羊一十五萬, 又信從庫官人等撥置, 將庫內爛鈔於間買羊來賣, 有同商賈, 豈王所為。
19. Many of the soldiers from the Military Guards were impoverished, and your fief annually sheared sheep's wool in excess of one hundred ten thousand and more units. If you use them to knit into woolen clothes and jackets and dispense them to the soldiers to keep them warm in the cold winter, how they could not feel gratified. When you meet a crisis, they would most likely devote themselves wholeheartedly to you to the point of death. Instead, you packed the wool in carts and carriages and shipped them to Henan and other places to sell in the market. Is this the Way of a

prince? 護衛軍士, 多有貧窘的, 爾本府每歲剪下羊毛不下百十餘萬, 若將此等羊毛, 捍成氈衫氈襖, 散與軍士禦寒過冬, 其軍士豈不感恩思報, 遇有緊急, 必肯捨死出力. 爾卻起遞運車輛運赴河南等處發賣, 爲王之道, 果如是乎.

20. The establishment (*fu*) of your sister the imperial princess was built according to the standard size, its surrounding area not exceeding 110 or more *zhang*; the walls of the imperial city were no taller than nine hundred and more *zhang*. Yet you built in the establishment of your daughter the commandary princess (*jun-zhu*) more than one hundred and more houses, with surrounding walls of four hundred *zhang* tall, almost half the height of the imperial city. If you had ten daughters, and your walled city had only enough space to build the establishment of the commandary princess, then all the civilian inhabitants would have to live outside the city. Burdening the people in this way, is it not very foolhardy? 爾妹公主府第, 都是定制, 周迴不過百十餘丈, 皇城亦不過九百餘丈. 爾起蓋郡主府, 房屋百餘間, 周圍牆四百丈, 比之皇城, 將近一半, 設若爾有十女, 城內恰好只蓋得你郡主府, 百姓都用出城去住, 如此過分勞民, 豈不愚甚.
21. I had been hard at heels trying to settle and pacify the people of the eighteen lineages of the indigenous tribes (*tufan*) people and the results were positive. But you, setting out on a punitive expedition, seized the pregnant women and delivered them to your establishment. Harrassing and harming people in such way you had broken up the lives of husband and wife, where is the benevolent heart? 土番十八族人民, 我千方百計安頓撫恤, 方得寧帖. 爾因出征, 卻將他有孕婦人搜捉赴府, 如此擾害, 將人夫婦生離, 仁心安在.
22. It was reported that once while you were standing alone idly in the palace, a female brought from Hangzhou known as Wang Guannu sneaked behind your back and purposely tripped you. Startled, you asked who did that. She giggled and revealed her identity. This was because you so often fondled her, not bothered by the rule of propriety between superior and inferior; thus a low-life daringly browbeat her master. 爾於殿上閑立, 有杭州買到女子王官奴, 從後走來, 潛地將爾跌倒, 卻驚問是誰. 本人笑說便是王官奴, 蓋因爾平日與他褻狎, 無尊卑分, 致令小人敢肆凌侮.
23. You often brought in twenty or thirty prostitutes (*xingyuan*) to reside in the palace, ordering the palace maids to make garments for them, and let them stay for half of a month or a full month before dismissal. All the chores of the palace were handled by maids with unspecified duties who transmitted the orders to the outside, but you were so swayed by the opinion of Wang Guannu and two of the people from the brothel that the maids were just gossiping,

you cut out their tongues. Such were your recklessness and wanton killing of the very innocent. 爾常將行院二三十人入宮住宿，趨促宮人做造衣服與穿，或過半月、一月，打發出去，宮中事務，都是這等無藉婦人出外汎舌聲揚，卻聽王官奴并行院二人言說，都是宮中女子汎舌，爾便將那女子割了舌頭。如此全無分曉，濫殺無辜。

24. During your expedition against the Xi Fan (Tibetan minorities in western China), you had captured one hundred and fifteen young girls of seven or eight *sui*, and also numerous boys from seven to ten *sui*, castrating 155. They were carried on back by servants to the princely establishment in less than twenty days (after their castration); many had not recovered from their vital wounds and many of them perished as a result. 征西番，將番人七八歲幼女擄到一百五十名，又將七歲、八歲、九歲、十歲幼男，閹割百五十五名，未及二十日，令人馱背赴府，致命去處所傷未好，即便挪動，因傷致死者大。
25. The soldiers who were on the expedition brought along male children to carry their clothes and grain, but you were unmoved by the soldiers' hardship; instead, you castrated all the young children – so utterly heartless you were. 出征軍士將帶兒男挑運衣糧，爾不恤軍士艱苦，卻將此等幼男一概閹割，如此全無人心。
26. During your expedition against the Xi Fan, the soldiers' clothes and grain were carried by mule-driving carts but every man had to shoulder supplies on a 14–15-hundred-*li* march, such was their hardship. Yet after suppressing the bandits you seized 3,000 and more head of the soldiers' cattle and sheep to be your own, not dispensing them to be their provision. How foolhardy! 征西番時，軍士糧食驢馱車載，人肩一千四五百里，如此艱苦。平賊之後，將軍人所得牛羊，拘收三千餘隻以為己有，不行散與軍士以當糧食，如此無知。
27. During your idle hours in the palace, you had made the females put heavy powder on their faces, and rouge on their lips extending almost to the ears. You ordered one of the women to hold two paper pennants in her hands, dancing in quick steps and running around. The palace maids burst out in loud laughter and scrambled for cover. You also smeared black powder on the faces of the female servants, hanged two big purple eggplants onto their ears, and then ordered people to carrying these women around the corridors and chambers of the palace hall to make merriment. When the palace maids saw it they all burst into loud laughter. So much debauchery and imprudence! 在宮中閑逸無度，將婦女用稠粘厚粉塗面，臙脂畫口，將近耳垂，就令本婦兩手執紙旗二面，飛舞奔走。宮人喧笑趨避，又將官人以墨面，用大紫茄二枚綴於兩耳，令兩人肩此婦行，盤桓殿廷廊廡，以取懽樂。宮人見者，無不喧笑，如此荒蕩無禮。
28. Your secondary consort *née* Deng hanged herself after being reproached for displaying jealousy. Since then, I repeatedly remonstrated with you to treat your primary consort *née* Wang with decorum, but you ignored my instruction and still incarcerated

lady Wang in the palace. The way between husband and wife thus not regulated, you preferred to spend day and night indulging in merry-making with a bunch of petty people. As a result, no one assumed charge in the palace. No one regulated and supervised your food and drink, such that you were given to excesses, unlawfully torturing the palace attendants; some had their tongues cut off, some were bundled with ropes and buried in deep snow and died in the cold, some were tethered to the trees and died of hunger, and some were even burned to death. The palace attendants, old and young, all feared for their lives. There were three old ladies who poisoned the 'fried cherries'; after taking them, they died within minutes. 偏妃鄧氏,因妒忌被責,自縊身死,自此之後,再三省諭以禮相待正妃王氏。不聽父教,仍將王氏幽囚宮中,夫婦之道,並無一定之人,不過宵晝與無知群小放肆自樂。由是宮中無主,飲食起居無人擲節看視,因而恣縱,非法刑諸宮人,有割去舌者,有綁縛身體埋於深雪內凍死者,有綁於樹上餓殺者,有用火燒死者,老幼宮人見之,各憂性命難存。以致三老婦人,潛地下毒入於櫻桃煎內,既服之後,不移刻而死。

Alas! What you did was unprecedented. In terms of public law, your crimes did not warrant execution (that is, in reference to the stipulations in the "Law" section of *Huang Ming zuxun*; these sections were listed, above). Now I have barred your family members from dressing in the death-rite garb, and directed the authorities to give you a modest burial, downgrading it to the public ritual. In this way you will be punished for your guilt in the nether world, easing the wrath of the spirits and men. If your spirit is still conscious, accept this funeral verdict.⁵² 嗚呼,觀爾之爲,古所未有,論以公法,罪不容誅。今令爾眷屬不與終服,仍敕有司淺葬,降用公禮,俾爾受罪於冥冥,以泄神人之怒。爾其有知,服斯諭祭。

This is a very unusual funeral ode for a prince. The twenty-eight counts repeated some of earlier charges in varied or substantiated form, but they also unveiled sordid details of aggravated crimes committed by the prince, as new information emerged. They begin with those concerning the important mourning practice and also his lack of obedience to his father's governmental directives. The next twenty or so counts are similar to those recorded in *Jifei lu*, ranging from sexual assault of females in and out of the palace, seducing men and women to reside in the palace, having imperial designs used, and wasting money.

In addition, the prince was accused, *inter alia*, of maltreating his primary consort Wang, doting on his secondary consort Deng, tortur-

⁵² *TZHDQL*, pp. 93-97.

ing several palace servants to death, and committing atrocities against the defeated Tibetans. Seen in this light, the prince of Qin was a very complex, hideous, and fearful royal son, a product probably of flawed character accentuated by unhappy experiences while being reared in the palace under intense competition. As a spoiled but powerful imperial heir, second only to the heir-apparent, he grew up to be a debauched lecher, relentless torturer, and psychotic killer. He might have been a victim of mental sickness. These were not just infractions of Confucian morality, but were heinous offenses laden with terror and death. Apparently they utterly shattered the emperor's heart, and caused him in an unprecedented way to spill invective in the funeral ode. He felt frustrated even by not being able to condemn the prince to capital punishment in the absence of any imperial family law. He did not have the heart to set a precedent for fear of wrecking the current system. Thus he could only vent anger on the dead prince by downgrading his burial to a public ritual in the expectation that he "will be punished for his guilt in the nether world, easing the wrath of the spirits and men." It was indeed pathetic, but these sordid details, regarded as imperial household secrets, were guarded from dissemination to the public, lest they tarnish the sovereign's reputation and cause a power struggle.⁵³

REMEDIAL ACTION AND AFTERMATH

What does the notoriety of the prince of Qin tell us about various agonies the emperor faced late in his reign? What strategy did he devise to remedy the moral failure of his children and to sustain the enfeoffment system. How did the problems created by this elder son and other profligate children affect Ming politics in his later years and after his death? And how did the disparity between the private and public profiles of Ming Taizu revealed in the imperial internal documents, on the one hand, and the official Veritable Records, on the other, tell us about the conflicting worlds of the dynastic founder? To get to these points we must review the information from *Taizu huangdi qinlu* and *Jifeilu* in comparison with the stipulations governing the princes as pronounced in *Zuxun lu* and the revised *Huang Ming zuxun*, and evaluate the politi-

⁵³ For a perceptive editorial comment on the unusual openness of the funeral ode, see Yu Pingbo 俞平伯, "Jizai Qinggong suojian Zhu Yuanzhang de yuzhi" 記載清宮所見朱元璋的御旨, in Yu, *Zabaner 雜拌兒* (Shanghai: Kaiming shudian, 1928), pp. 113-14. A famed scholar in Peking, Yu Pingbo was one of the specialists appointed to inspect the holdings of the Ming-Qing collections in the Palace Museum in the 1920s, and he wrote this piece after reviewing the contents of *Taizu huangdi qinlu*.

cal turbulence spurred by the unexpected death of the heir-apparent in the later years of Taizu's reign.

In the first place, Zhu Yuanzhang had laid down various rules and procedures for the education and punishment of princes; they were well documented in *Zuxun lu* and *Huang Ming zuxun*. Embracing Confucian precepts and education, Zhu Yuanzhang placed great emphasis on the importance of lecturing and persuasion, seeking the rectification of the mind in the education of his children. If they committed only minor infractions, he would rebuke them to their face upon their return to court for a scheduled visit, or send a commissioner or eunuch to remonstrate with them on the positive and negative consequences of their behavior in order that they would reform on their own initiative. Often, he would also ask the heir-apparent Zhu Biao, or the elder princes, to remonstrate with the younger ones. If a prince committed serious wrongdoings and refused to renounce his crimes after repeated admonition, commissioners, eunuchs, or judicial officials would then be sent to summon him back to the capital, and the emperor would personally conduct an interrogation. If he was found guilty, he would be incarcerated in the capital for ten days, making him visit the emperor five times, and win release only after he showed repentance. Even though serious crimes were committed, no corporal or capital punishment was dispensed. In extreme cases, the culprit would be brought to the Central Capital in Fengyang for a longer period of incarceration, and, in some rare instances, be stripped of his investiture and demoted to commoner.⁵⁴

Taizu may have been denounced as a autocratic and sometimes violent ruler, notorious for brutal and malevolent treatment of advisers and officials, and dispensation of severe punishments for criminal offenders, but he was extremely benevolent and lenient to his own flesh and blood. Although such doting was from fatherly love and tolerance, perhaps fostered in his peasant upbringing and the struggles of his own family, Zhu Yuanzhang also followed the imperial legal principle codified in the Tang Code that "no corporal punishment shall be inflicted on the nobility." He afforded privileges especially to his imperial progeny.⁵⁵ This is clear from the following stipulation from

⁵⁴ See *Hongwu yuzhi quanshu*, pp. 373-75 (*Zuxun lu*); pp. 399-401 (*Huang Ming zuxun*).

⁵⁵ This is based on a legal provision first set out in *Zhouli* 周禮 (*Rites of Zhou*) late in the Warring States period about the way the status of an offender could have great effect on the conduct of a case, the sentence, and whether the offender would be punished at all. It is enumerated in Article Seven, "Eight Deliberations" (*bayi* 八議) in the *Tang lü* 唐律 (*Tang Code*). See Wallace Johnson, trans. and introd., *The Tang Code, Volume I: General Principles* (Princeton: Princeton U.P., 1979), pp. 23-25, 83-87. For studies of Ming Taizu's legal thought and

the “Law” section of *Zuxun lu*, which is reiterated in the revised *Huang Ming zuxun*. It concerns the punishment of imperial princes who commit crimes or transgressions:

When an imperial prince commits a transgression, if it is serious, an imperial relative or a eunuch shall be sent to summon him. If three times he does not come, again send a regular civil official together with a eunuch to summon him to the capital. The Son of Heaven shall personally proclaim what evils have been committed. If clear proof is found, he [the prince] shall be taken into custody for ten days by the imperial princes who had been assigned duties in the capital and by the eunuchs and supervisory officials. During that ten days he shall see the Son of Heaven five times. Afterwards he shall be released. Even if the crime is serious, penal punishment shall not be used. For a serious crime he shall be reduced to commoner status; for a minor crime he shall come to court and hear the emperor to proclaim his wrong, or else send an official to him with a rescript in order to tell him the positive and negative consequences of his behavior and cause him to reform.⁵⁶
 凡親王有過，重者，遣內使監官宣召。如三次不至，再遣流官同監宣召之至京。天子親諭以所作之非，果有實迹，以各王所差在京者及內使監官，培留十日。其十日之間，五見天子，然後發放。雖有大罪，亦不加刑。重則降為庶人，輕則當因來朝面諭其非，或遣官諭以禍福，使之自新。

In a similar vein, while poignantly exposing princes Zhou, Qi, Tan and Lu’s wrongdoings in *Jifei lu*, he did not threaten stern punishment but deplored their filial betrayal, which would cause Heaven’s wrath and undermine the family. He was worried that their transgressions would incite insurgence and expressed hope in the preface that they would reform themselves to avoid self-destruction:

My sons have now occupied their land within the nine territories. I had wished that they provide a screen to the family and the state and lay the foundation to the sovereign and country, and their sons and grandsons flourish from the same root and end with the heavenly mandate. How Zhou, Qi, Tan and Lu can dare commit such atrocious offenses! They will eventually lose

jurisprudence, with analysis of the leading legal works of his reign, see Yang Yifan 楊一凡, *Ming Dagao yanjiu* 明大誥研究 (Nanjing: Jiangsu renmin chubanshe, 1988); idem, *Hongwu falu dianji kaozheng* 洪武法律典籍考證 (Beijing: Falu chubanshe, 1992); Farmer, *Zhu Yuanzhang and Early Ming Legislation*; and Jiang Yonglin, *The Great Ming Code: Da Ming Lü* (Seattle: U. Washington P., 2005).

⁵⁶ See *Hongwu yuzhi quanshu*, p. 400 (*Huang Ming zuxun*). Trans. Farmer, *Zhu Yuanzhang and Early Ming Legislation*, p. 133.

their lives and end their state, showing no filial piety to me. This has made me very nervous day and night in my old age, all the time feeling alarmed and frightened. Why? Ah, because whereas those who have military merits are superior talents, they can be pampered to the extreme, but how could they be humiliated and still be used as helpers like wings? If we rush them there will be inevitable upheaval. People are the mandate of Heaven. He who has virtue Heaven will give it to him and people will follow. If he does not have, Heaven will withdraw (the mandate) and people will leave him. Now Zhou, Qi, Tan and Lu have indiscriminately bullied and humiliated the soldiers and people in their fiefs, would Heaven take the mandate away from them? I am afraid these sons of mine will in future bring disasters to the family and state. I now forward this book to them, hoping that they will read it day and night to undo their mistakes, and regain the will of Heaven so that calamity can be avoided. Do heed this with reverence.⁵⁷ 今朕諸子列土九州之內，朕願藩屏家邦盤固社稷，子子孫孫同始終天。何期周、齊、潭、魯擅敢如此非為，此數子將後必至身亡國除，孝無施於我。使吾垂老之年皇皇於宵晝，驚懼不已，為何？噫，軍功者皆英俊也，撫有餘則可，豈有辱之用為羽翼乎？急之必變。民天命也，有德者天與之，民從之；無德者天去之，民離之。今周、齊、潭、魯將所封軍民一概凌辱，天將取而不與乎？是子等恐異日有累家邦，為此冊書前去，期暮熟讀以革前非，早回天意，庶幾可免。汝其敬乎？

In light of the revelation in *Jifei lu* and other sources, Zhu Yuanzhang did not deviate from these principles, which he set up in handling the princes of Qin, Zhou, Qi, Tan, Lu, Dai and the prince of Jingjiang. Prince Qin died of poisoning, thus sparing Taizu the agony of having to deal with him extremely harshly, though he did blurt out his wrath in the funeral ode and set precedent by openly announcing imperial crimes and offenses, all the other princes received far more lenient punishment. In the case of prince Jingjiang, the surviving heir of his nephew Zhu Wenzheng whom he had to execute for committing high treason prior the dynastic founding, his crimes and transgressions were even more serious and numerous, but because of his special relationship he was handled leniently. At first, he was brought back to the capital where he was stripped of his rank and made a commoner. He was then sent to Fengyang to perform intensive labor on the farms for seven years. After that he was rehabilitated and appointed commander of an

⁵⁷ *Jifei lu*, pref. Hongwu 20/2/16; March 6 1387). Cf. Chen, "Ming Taizu *Jifei lu* shuhou," p. 104.

expeditionary army to Yunnan to pacify rebellious local ethnic groups. There he again committed offenses and was arrested and incarcerated in the capital, where he died in custody. He was not executed.

In the intervening years, however, having witnessed the repeated wrongdoings of the princes and the futility of admonition and persuasion, Zhu Yuanzhang sought a different approach. He started revising the laws and regulations in *Zuxun lu* that governed the rights and privileges of the princes. His aim was to tighten their authority and privileges and thereby curb abuses. A comparison of the contents of *Zuxun lu* with that of *Huang Ming zuxun* reveals some of the subtle remedies. It appears that, according to the decrees preserved in *Taizu huangdi qinlu*, some of those revisions affecting the princes were not new in 1395: they were already in force in 1391 in response to the transgressions of the prince of Qin. Unfortunately, this corrective process was disrupted by the unexpected death of the heir-apparent Zhu Biao and its political repercussions.

Zhu Biao died on May 17, 1392, after taking ill at the beginning of the year. He was thirty-seven. The nature of his sickness was not known, but it was presumably complicated by exhaustion from a tour in Shaanxi. His father, the sixty-four-year-old emperor, is said to have been so grieved and traumatized that he forsook all administrative responsibilities for a longer time than ritual formality demanded and finally had to be persuaded by his entire court to put aside mourning.⁵⁸ Yet, he had to come to grips with political realities and the potential of conflict among the princes.

In *Zuxun lu* and *Huang Ming zuxun* there are two principles of succession based on traditional primogeniture. The first and major principle was succession by the imperial heir born to the primary consort of the emperor, and the second principle, applicable in the absence of the first-born son, designated the younger brother next in line born to the same primary consort. The first principle was already evoked in the appointment of Zhu Biao as heir-apparent upon the dynastic founding: "When the state installs the heir-apparent to the throne, according to the code of rites the principles of primogeniture, the election of the eldest son of the Son of Heaven born to his primary consort, shall be followed. This is the foundation of the rule under heaven."⁵⁹ These are what were elaborated in *Zuxun lu* and *Huang Ming zuxun*:

⁵⁸ *MTZuSL* 217, pp. 3194. See also Wu, *Zhu Yuanzhang zhuan*, pp. 281-82, 297-98; Lü, *Hongwu huangdi dazhuan*, pp. 483-91. For Zhu Biao's biographies, see n. 4, above.

⁵⁹ *MTZuSL* 29, p. 482.

If there are no imperial sons (i.e., the eldest son born to the emperor's primary consort) in the court, the succession shall pass to the younger brother when the elder brother dies. Those born of lesser consorts shall not be elevated even though they are older. If there are treacherous officials who advocate abandoning sons of the primary consort and elevating sons of the lesser consorts, the sons of the lesser consorts shall hold fast to their station and not move. They should send a message to the son of the primary consort who ought to be appointed. The essential of the matter is that the son of the primary consort occupy the throne. The court shall decapitate the treacherous officials immediately.⁶⁰ 凡朝廷無皇子，必兄終弟及，須立嫡母所生者，庶母所生雖長不得立。若姦臣棄嫡立庶，庶者必當守分勿動，遣信報嫡之當立者。務以嫡臨君位，朝廷即佔斬姦臣。

These stipulations were applicable not only to succession to the throne but also to succession within the individual princedoms. In promulgating them, the Ming emperor had hoped they would regulate princely conduct and discourage abuses by his successors, and, moreover, prevent attempts by princes to usurp imperial authority. In Zhu Yuanzhang's mind, any alternatives would be bad for the empire.

In reality, however, given the notoriety of the prince of Qin and the problems with his younger brothers, the solonic Zhu Yuanzhang found it impossible to invoke the second principle. It may be argued that the emperor could have elected the next younger brother, prince Jin, who was also born to empress Ma and was modestly capable and trustworthy, but that would bypass prince Qin, and would create dissent – unless the prince was denounced for crimes and stripped of his investiture. The other candidate, prince Yan (the future Yongle emperor), would have been attractive given his impressive military achievements, but he was not legally qualified, even ignoring the presence of his two elder brothers, since his biological mother was a secondary Mongolian consort. The emperor may have been fond of the prince as some partisan records suggest, but appointing him would have been destructive to both the legal and political processes.

Taizu shilu presents a baffling story (probably doctored by Yongle's historians). Under Hongwu's reign, on May 19, 1392 (25/4/27), a purported conversation between Taizu and his ministers on the subject of succession was as follows:

⁶⁰ *Hongwu yuzhi quanshu*, p. 375 (*Zuxun lu*); p. 401 (*Huang Ming zuxun*); trans. Farmer, *Zhu Yuanzhang and Early Ming Legislation*, pp. 134–35.

Emerging from the Dongjiao Gate (of the palace), His Majesty summoned the ministers attending the court, saying: “The heir-apparent is unfortunately deceased. My fourth son is virtuous, enlightened, benevolent and generous, and as brilliant and martial as I am. What would you say if I elect him the heir-apparent. The Hanlin academician Liu Sanwu (1312–1399?) retorted: “Your Majesty is correct, but where would you place the princes of Qin and Jin?” His Majesty failed to respond and wailed; the subject was dropped.”⁶¹ 上御東角門，太祖召廷臣論之曰：“太子不幸，朕第四子賢明仁厚，英武似朕，朕欲立爲太子何如？”翰林學士劉三吾進曰：“陛下言是，但置秦晉二王於何地？”上不及對，因大哭而罷。

To solve the dilemma, Zhu Yuanzhang resorted to the first principle of succession by designating, on September 28, 1392 (Hongwu 25/9/12), Zhu Biao's second, but eldest surviving, son, Zhu Yunwen, as the imperial grandson and heir-apparent. Zhu Biao's primary consort née Chang 常 (?–1378), a daughter of general Chang Yuchun, bore his eldest son Zhu Xiongying 朱雄英, but he died at the age of eight in 1382. The secondary consort, née Lü 呂, was the mother of Zhu Yunwen. In this case, even though he was not born to the primary consort, he still fulfilled the *bona fide* qualifications. Zhu Yunwen, then sixteen *sui*, had exceptional qualities that greatly impressed his grandfather. He displayed some of the temperament of his father – bookishness, gentleness, and extreme devotion to the Confucian proprieties that befit an ideal benevolent ruler and set him apart from his combative, warlike uncles. His lack of martial ability and military experience was an obvious disadvantage, but without an alternative, Taizu had to reconcile his choice and prepare for a different political order. Indeed, if Taizu, as scholars have argued, was weary of wars and political brutality and thus wanted his successor (much as he had hoped concerning the eldest son Biao) to foster a Confucian-Legalist society by spreading authority to civil officials and bureaucratic organizations, then Zhu Yunwen would not be a bad choice. However, he was fully aware that his diffident grandson would need guidance and special political and institutional protection to shore up his power.⁶² That explains why after the appointment Zhu Yuanzhang took restrained the princes and targeted the powerful generals who posed a threat.

⁶¹ *MTZuSL* 217, p. 3195. On fabrication of this episode, see Wang, *Ming jingnan shishi kaozheng gao*, pp. 122–23.

⁶² On Zhu Yunwen's installation as imperial grandson, see *MTZuSL* 221, p. 3233. The original decree is preserved in *Xiaoling zhaochi*, included in *Mingchao kaiguo wenxian*, vol. 4, p. 1935. After becoming emperor, he elevated his mother née Lü to empress-dowager, March 1399; *MTZuSL* 145:2273; *MS* 115, p. 3550–51; also nn. 4, 5, above.

At this time, prince Qin, who was earlier in Nanjing, had already left for his fief-state in Xian. In an edict recorded under October 16 in *Taizu shilu*, the emperor noted that the regional military commission in Shanxi had often sent soldiers to accompany the prince without authorization, thus unlawfully enhancing his powers. Thus he served notice that the protocol of separation of authority between the court-appointed commissions and the enfeoffed principedoms needed be enforced.⁶³ Then in July 1393 the emperor issued a summons to prince Qin to head nine other senior princes to return to the capital, where they probably received remonstrance to support their nephew heir-apparent and not to instigate trouble. Obviously concerned about a possible coup d'état by a prince, in January 1393 the emperor promulgated to the princes a work entitled *Yongjian lu* 永鑒錄 (*Record of the Eternal Mirror*), which told the histories of princes who had rebelled against their rulers and thus brought ruin to their kingdoms.⁶⁴ Prince Qin remained rather quiet during these two years of the new heir-apparent. Then in February 1395 he was sent to supervise an expeditionary army against the Tibetans in Shaanxi, but, as we saw, died two months later, when more of his crimes were exposed.

In the meantime, the Ming emperor unleashed a wave of persecution against a number of eminent generals and senior officials, including several with marriage connections. The result was a series of executions based upon dubious allegations. Notwithstanding his appreciation of Confucian humanistic teachings, Zhu Yuanzhang was a despotic emperor who could not tolerate perceived threats. He had already set the precedent early in 1380 by putting to death the left prime-minister Hu Weiyong 胡惟庸, together with many of his associates, on trumped-up charges of high treason, implicating several tens of thousands of innocent victims. Next to fall was the grand preceptor the duke of Hanguo 韓國, Li Shanchang 李善長 (1314–90), whose son Li Qi 李祺 had married the emperor's eldest daughter princess Lin'an 臨安 (1360–1421). Li Shanchang was accused of being a co-conspirator in treason and was ordered to commit suicide in June of 1390.⁶⁵ Then,

⁶³ See *MTZuSL* 230, p. 3236.

⁶⁴ On the *Yongjian lu*, see *MTZuSL* 230, p. 3370. See bibliographic note in Jiao, *Guochao jingji zhi* 1, p. 1; and *MS* 97, pp. 2389.

⁶⁵ For Hu Weiyong's biographies, see *MTZuSL* 129, pp. 2043–48; *MS* 308, pp. 7906–8; see also Hok-lam Chan, "Hu Wei-yung," *DMB* 1, pp. 638–41. For Li Shanchang's biogs., *MTZuSL* 202, pp. 3023–27; *MS* 127, pp. 3769–72; also Romeyn Taylor, "Li Shan-ch'ang," *DMB* 1, pp. 850–54. For details of Hu Weiyong's alleged treason and execution, see Hu Han, "Hu Weiyong dang'an kao" 胡惟庸黨案考, *Yanjing xuebao* 燕京學報 15 (May 1934), pp. 63–205; and Thomas P. Massey, "Chu Yüan-chang and the Hu-Lan Cases of the Early Ming Dynasty,"

between 1393 and 1395, several veteran generals (and subordinates) who had close connections with the most prominent princes and had guarded the northern frontiers were targeted.

General Lan Yu's daughter was the consort of prince Shu and he received investiture in 1389 as the duke of Liangguo 涼國, having provided meritorious service in military campaigns in the northern frontier against the Mongols and in Yunnan pacifying southern ethnic minorities. In March 1393 he was arrested for plotting to assassinate the emperor. Lan, a brother-in-law of Chang Yuchun, hence already related to the imperial family through marriage, had been known as a brilliant and daring campaigner and courted the emperor's favor even though he was willful and temperamental. The indictment came as a surprise because it happened two months after Lan, together with Feng Sheng, Fu Youde, and others were appointed to concurrent positions on the staff of the household administration of the new heir-apparent (*zanshifu* 詹事府) Zhu Yunwen, indicative of the emperor's trust.⁶⁶ Accused as a member of Hu Weiyong's clique, Lan Yu was sentenced to brutal execution, purportedly public dismemberment before the princes and generals, while a number of his associates – veteran military and civil officials – suffered various degrees of punishment. The extended purge took the life of some fifteen thousand individuals. Zhu Yuanzhang wrote a memoir about this incident titled *Nichen lu* 逆臣錄 (*Record of Nefarious Officials*), and historians dubbed these two purges as “The Cases of Hu and Lan 胡藍之獄.”⁶⁷ In December 1394, and again in March 1395, two more eminent generals closely associated with Lan Yu, the duke of Yingguo 穎國, Fu Youde, and the duke of Songguo 宋國, Feng Sheng, were executed as accomplices, incriminating members of their families. The tragedy inadvertently affected the imperial family since Fu's eldest son Fu Zhong 傅忠 had married Zhu Yuanzhang's eldest daughter princess Linqing 臨清 (1360–1421), and Feng's daughter was betrothed to the prince of Zhou Zhu Su. The only other eminent general Tang He, whose daughter was married to prince Tan and had been executed for misconduct, escaped the fate because he had retired

Ph.D. diss. (U. Michigan, 1983; Ann Arbor: UMI, 1992), parts 2–4. See also, Lü, *Hongwu huangdi dazhuan*, pp. 352–37.

⁶⁶ See *MTZuSL* 223, pp. 3265–66; 225, pp. 3296–97.

⁶⁷ For Lan Yu's biographies, see *WXB* 18, pp. 9a–11b; *MS* 132, pp. 3863–66; see also Edward L. Dreyer and Hok-lam Chan, “Lan Yü,” *DMB* 1, pp. 788–91. Zhu Yuanzhang's *Nichen lu* was set in modern edn. by Peking U.P. in 1991. For a detailed account of Lan Yu's alleged rebellion and execution, see Massey, “Chu Yüan-chang,” part 5; also Lü, *Hongwu huangdi dazhuan*, pp. 419–44.

in 1388, suffering a stroke in 1390 and died of natural causes at Fengyang in August 1395.⁶⁸

It is perplexing, in the absence of concrete evidence (much of which was whitewashed anyway in *Taizu shilu*), that Zhu Yuanzhang drummed up such a ferocious persecution, particularly at this time of a new heir-apparent. The contributing reasons were complex, whether or not certain allegations involved collusion with the princes remains a mystery, but historians have speculated that the aging emperor, worrying about his meek grandson's situation, was paranoid about the real and imagined agenda of the generals. The fact was that they all had daughters or sons married to imperial offspring; hence they were *de facto* members of the imperial family and became a special privilege class. Some, like Lan Yu, had close relations with the prince of Yan Zhu Di through joint campaigns, and had allegedly bragged about his imperial pretension, but later turned his support to Zhu Yunwen, the imperial grandson, thereby antagonizing the prince. Centuries later, the historian Wang Shizhen 王世貞 (1526–90) suspected that Fu Youde and the others might have fallen victim to the jealousy of Zhu Di, but he presented no evidence.⁶⁹ It is quite likely, as Wu Han and others have suggested, that Zhu Yuanzhang, having already been tormented by the inability to correct his recalcitrant sons, and fearful of unbridled, well-connected generals meddling in court politics, felt betrayed at even hints of any infidelity and used trumped-up accusations to remove them. Whatever were the motives, these bloody purges tore apart the core of the hereditary and endogamous class of princes and nobles that Zhu Yuanzhang had worked very hard to cultivate so as to bolster the dynasty.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ On the death notices of Fu Youde and Feng Sheng, see *MTZuSL* 235, pp. 3435; 2447–51, but the imperial taboo prevented statement of causes. Yu alleged that they were executed as members of the clique of Lan Yu; see Yu, *Jishilu*, in Zhang, *Mingxing yeji*, j. xia, p. 71b; and Chen, *Shilin manshi*, p. 459. Wang Shizhen endorsed Yu Ben's opinion; *Yanshan tang bieji*, j. 25: "Shicheng kaowu" 史乘考誤 1, pp. 17a–18a. Their *MS* biogs. state that they were given orders to die by Taizu; *MS* 129, pp. 3799–3803; 129, pp. 3795–99. On Fu Zhong's marriage to prince Shouchun, see *MS* 121, p. 3666. On Tang He's biogs., see *MS* 126, pp. 3751–56; Edward L. Dreyer, "Tang Ho," *DMB* 2, pp. 1248–51.

⁶⁹ For Wang Shizhen's remarks, see prev. n. Wang never made any explicit comments about the prince of Yan's role in the death of Lan Yu and his associates. Henry Tsai apparently misunderstood these remarks, stating: "According to Wang Shizhen, a prominent Ming scholar, the Prince of Yan was chiefly responsible for the execution of Lan Yu, on the charge of treason..." ; see *Perpetual Happiness*, p. 51.

⁷⁰ On the story of Lan's bragging about Zhu Di's imperial pretension and his relations with the prince, see his biog., *WXB* 18, pp. 10b–11a. For comments on Zhu Yuanzhang's motives in executing the powerful generals, see e.g., Wu, *Zhu Yuanzhang zhuan*, p. 298; Mote, "Chu Yun-wen," *DMB* 1, p. 397–98; Langlois, "The Hung-wu Reign," in *Cambridge History of China* 7, pp. 169–70, and Tsai, *Perpetual Happiness*, pp. 15–16.

CHANGES IN FAMILY REGULATIONS
AS PROMPTED BY PRINCE QIN'S CRIMES

In October 1395, Zhu Yuanzhang promulgated *Huang Ming zuxun*, his revision of *Zuxun lu*. According to modern research, the revisions of the rites and regulations of the imperial princes were made in order to address the changes occurring through time and the resulting new political requirements. Following Huang Zhangjian's 黃彰健 pioneering study, Zhang Dechang 張德昌 pointed out that seventy and more important revisions occurred in different sections of *Huang Ming zuxun*. Tan Jiaqi 譚家齊 has identified crucial alterations in rites and legal authorities pertaining to the change in relationship between the imperial grandson and the princes and to curtailing abuses of the princes. A number of the clauses were instituted in response to the prince of Qin's fiasco.⁷¹ In the following list I set out specific passages of the earlier *Zuxun lu*, and then note the specific revision in *Huang Ming zuxun*, and in some cases comment on the context and motive.

1. Rites performed in visits of the princes to their eldest brother – the Son of Heaven

These were stated in *Zuxun lu*, section “Liyi” (“Ceremonials”), but now overhauled, because earlier Zhu Biao had been heir-apparent and with a new heir the situation had changed. The future Son of Heaven was now the nephew of the princes; hence, a new rite of relationship was needed. Zhu Yuanzhang was careful to protect his grandson, but concurrently he placated his sons the powerful princes.

1a. Example concerning the the princes' arriving for audience
Zuxun lu required performance of the “five-obedience rite” (*wubai li* 五拜禮) appropriate to emperor and subject, whereas *kowtowing* was exempted in order to spare the senior uncles any embarrassment. *Huang Ming zuxun* stipulated that when the princes appeared they should perform the “five-obedience rite, kowtowing three times,” even for senior princes.⁷²

⁷¹ See for example, Ishihara Michihiro 石原道博, “*Kō Min sokun no seiritsu*” 皇明祖訓の成立, in *Shimizu hakushi tsuitō kinen Mindaishi ronsō* 清水博士追悼紀念明代史論叢 (Tokyo: Daian, 1962), pp. 1–36; Huang, “Lun *Zuxun lu*,” pp. 36–45; Zhang, “*Zuxun lu* yu *Huang Ming zuxun*”; Xu Zhenxing 許振興, “Ming Taizu jiafa yanjiu yu jiazhi, *Zuxun lu* yu *Huang Ming zuxun lun*” 明太祖家法的研究與價值, 祖訓錄與皇明祖訓論, in Fang Keli 方克立 et al., eds., *Zhonghua wenhua yu Ershiyi shiji* 中華文化與二十一世紀 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 2000), pp. 905–15; and Tan, “*Cong Taizu huangdi qinlu kan*.”

⁷² See *Hongwu yuzhi quanshu*, pp. 369, 371 (*Zuxun lu*); pp. 396–97 (*Huang Ming zuxun*); trans. Farmer, *Zhu Yuanzhang and Early Ming Legislation*, p. 129.

2. Security of the palaces in the princely establishments

Stated in *Zuxun lu*, section “Zhenjie” (“Warnings”). This concerned inner-court affairs and warned the princes to be on guard constantly day and night. It cites a Yuan-dynasty precedent: “For example, when in the Yuan dynasty emperor Yingzong 英宗 (Shidabala, r. 1321–1323) was murdered in the night it was because his retainers and eunuchs had withdrawn far away. Consequently there was this tragedy. You must be highly vigilant.” However, *Huang Ming zuxun* inserted a clause: “it was just because his retainers and eunuchs had withdrawn too far 只爲左右內使迴避太遠” and “the imperial ladies were also not home 后妃亦不在寢處.”⁷³ Why was Zhu Yuanzhang so concerned about imperial ladies’ staying at home? A close reading of “The Funeral Ode for the Prince of Qin” leads to the conclusion that it was specifically after secondary consort Deng intrigued to remove the primary consort (see point 3 in the Ode, translated above) that the prince began his associations with low-class hangers-on. As there was then no female mistress of the palace, the prince indulged his wantonness. The insertion of the statement in *Huang Ming zuxun* was a pointer to the positive effects of a blissful union with one’s primary consort.

3. New proscription against unauthorized construction work

Zuxun lu, section “Yingshan” (“Constructions”), contained no such stricture against building separate palaces and pavilions, but *Huang Ming zuxun* adds the following:

In princes’ palaces it is not permitted to have detached palaces, separate halls, terraces and pavilions, and places of amusement. For the heir-apparent, who manages the affairs of the empire, it is even less permissible to erect detached palaces, separate halls, terraces and pavilions, and places for amusement.” 凡諸王宮室，並不許有離宮、別榭及臺榭遊玩去處。雖是朝廷嗣君掌管天下事務者，其離宮、別殿，臺榭玩去處，更不許造。⁷⁴

Apparently Zhu Yuanzhang sought to maintain the sovereign’s exclusive right to freedom of architecture. This legislation was clearly inspired by prince Qin’s building of a pavilion and earth

⁷³ *Hongwu yuzhi quanshu*, p. 365 (*Zuxun lu*), p. 391 (*Huang Ming zuxun*); trans. Farmer, *Zhu Yuanzhang and Early Ming Legislation*, p. 123. On the murder of the Yuan emperor Shidabala, see Song Lian et al., eds., *Yuanshi* 元史 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1976) 28, p. 633.

⁷⁴ *Hongwu yuzhi quanshu*, p. 385 (*Zuxun lu*), p. 409 (*Huang Ming zuxun*); trans. Farmer, *Zhu Yuanzhang and Early Ming Legislation*, p. 147.

mound for pleasure, and the expansive walls and buildings for his daughter's establishment.

4. Changes concerning princes' authority over personnel and judicial matters

According to the ancestral injunctions, the court should appoint principedom head administrators, garrison commanders, and guard commanders, but the princes were empowered to appoint civil and military officials in their fief. The "Zhizhi" ("Rules of Office") section of *Zuxun lu* reads:

For the retainers of the civil and military officials, the civil officials and the executive officials in the princely establishment, they shall be appointed by the prince from within the territory of his fief. All military officials such as the battalion commander and company commanders are to be directly conscripted from their units of the military establishments. 凡王府文武官屬, 文官及首領導官, 從王於境內選用。武官千戶、百戶等, 於所部軍職內使用。

In addition, the princes were given the ultimate authority to decide on the fate of subordinate officials in their jurisdiction. In the "Law" section, the stipulation reads:

For all the civil and military officials and soldiers appointed personally by the prince, the prince has the authority to decide on their life and death; the court ought not intervene. 凡親王所自用文武官吏并軍士, 生殺予奪, 從王區處, 朝廷毋得干預。⁷⁵

All these rules were changed in *Huang Ming zuxun*. In the "Zhizhi" section the right of princes to appoint civil officials and executive officials from within their own fief was revoked, although they retained the authority to conscript military officials. In the "Law" section, the earlier reference to the total power over subordinates was replaced by the following:

Civil officials in the princely fiefs shall be carefully selected by the court and sent to the princely fiefs to serve. Military officers already have a fixed hereditary system. Should civil or military officers transgress the law, let the prince pass judgment in the case. Legal authorities may not raise obstructions and confusions to alter the prince's decision. If among the civil and military officials there are capable and upright ones who counsel the prince and help him preserve his fief, they shall not be casually abused. If the court hears of such an official he shall be

⁷⁵ *Hongwu yuzhi quanshu*, pp. 382-83 (*Zuxun lu*).

treated with courtesy. 凡王國文官, 朝廷精選赴王國任用, 武官已有世襲定制, 如或文武官員犯法, 王能依律剖判者聽, 法司毋得吹毛求疵, 改王決治。其文武官, 有能守正規諫, 助王保其國者, 無得輕易凌辱。朝廷聞之, 亦以禮待。⁷⁶

It is apparent that a painful lesson was learned in the matter of the prince of Qin, particularly his ill treatment of the head administrator. The emperor felt the need to withdraw some princely authority and privileges and thus give protection to the civil and military officials in the princely establishments and return the authority of jurisdiction and personnel appointment to the court.

5. Princes' right to punish flagrant lawbreakers and antagonists

Zuxun lu states:

If any of the people in the market towns or villages within the city or territory where the prince resides dare to break the law or be rude to the prince, they shall be punished by the prince at his deliberation; the court and the guardians of customs and laws (*fengxian guan*) shall not intervene. 凡王所居國城, 及境內市井鄉村人民等, 敢有違犯及侮慢王者, 從王區處, 朝廷及風憲官無得舉問。

Huang Ming zuxun deleted the phrase “people dare to break the law” and changed the latter part into “the prince shall arrest (the offenders) at once and send them to the capital. After interrogation to determine the facts they shall be punished 王即拿赴京來..., 審問情由明白, 然後治罪。” This returned authority to investigate civilians to the court. In addition *Huang Ming zuxun* stipulated that poisoning was not an option for punishment, declaring: “Should officials or commoners be guilty of crimes their crimes shall be clearly punished. Do not poison them 凡臣民有罪, 必明正其罪, 並不許以藥鳩之。”⁷⁷ It is an attempt to offset the arbitrary killing of offenders by the princes, in particular the princes of Qin and Jingjiang.

All these legal revisions attested to the emperor's determination to improve a more centralized and better managed enfeoffment system.

Having eliminated in 1394 and early 1395 the most powerful generals and meritorious officials who potentially posed a threat to the young imperial successor, Zhu Yuanzhang, as we have learned, dispatched prince Qin to oversee an expedition against the Tibetans

⁷⁶ *Hongwu yuzhi quanshu*, p. 400 (*Huang Ming zuxun*); trans. Farmer, *Zhu Yuanzhang and Early Ming Legislation*, p. 132.

⁷⁷ *Hongwu yuzhi quanshu*, p. 373 (*Zuxun lu*), p. 400 (*Huang Ming zuxun*); trans. Farmer, *Zhu Yuanzhang and Early Ming Legislation*, pp. 132-33.

in Shaanxi, and at the same time sent the princes of Jin and Zhou to mobilize the military guards in Henan to construct walled cities and build military colonies (*tuntian* 屯田). He commanded prince Yan to lead troops to Liaodong 遼東 and Daning 大寧 to strengthen defenses against Mongol intrusion.

Three years after prince Qin's death, prince Jin died in March 1398, thus removing two potential threats among the uncles of the heir-apparent. Still worried about the ambitions of prince Yan, the emperor gave orders to the new prince of Jin, Zhu Jixi 朱濟熿, to deploy military officers and horses among the troops of the prince of Yan to determine possible ulterior activities, thereby invalidating various assertions that the latter had been favored as successor.⁷⁸

On June 24, 1398 (Hongwu 31/intercalary 5/10), as Zhu Yuanzhang lay on his death bed, he decreed: "The imperial grandson is benevolent, enlightened, filial and friendly; people under heaven have turned their hearts to him, and he should ascend the majestic throne" 皇太孫仁明孝友, 天下歸心, 宜登大位. Zhu Yunwen hence succeeded as the Jianwen emperor. It was reported that the emperor had secretly asked his favorite son-in-law Mei Yin 梅殷 (?-1405), who was also by his bedside, to look after the future emperor to ease his worry. Mei, who married Taizu's second daughter princess Ningguo 寧國 (1364-1434), was well read and proficient in military skills.⁷⁹ However, through later tampering, *Taizu shilu* deleted the reference to Taizu's dying will and inserted a contentious inquiry. It reads:

(Taizu) immediately summoned the present "Majesty" (i.e., Zhu Di, the Yongle emperor) to return to the capital. When he was gravely ill, he asked his attendants, "Has the fourth son arrived

⁷⁸ On these activities, see *MTZuSL* 236, pp. 3445-46; 237, p. 3461; 256, p. 3704. The imperial command given to Zhu Qixi, the new prince of Jin, to spy on prince Yan is preserved in *TZHDQL* dated Hongwu 31/5/12 (May 28 1398). The text was tampered with in *MTZuSL* 257, p. 3715, to convey the impression that these forces were sent to follow the prince to Kaiping to strengthen its defense, under his direct command; see Chen, "Guanyu *Ming Taizu huangdi qinlu de shiliao*," p. 82.

⁷⁹ Taizu's will appointing his grandson as successor is preserved in Fu Fengxiang 傅鳳翔, ed., *Huang Ming zhaoling* 皇明詔令 (1539; Taibei: Chengwen chubanshe, 1967) 3, pp. 48a-49a. Mei Yin served the Jianwen emperor as the regional commander of the strategic area of Huaian 淮安, and refused to surrender to the prince of Yan after the fall of Nanjing. In October 1405 he was killed by military officers on his way to court to see the Yongle emperor. For biogs., see Jiao, *Guochao xianzheng lu*, 4, pp. 6a-7a; and Qian Shisheng 錢士升, *Huang Ming biao zhong ji* 皇明表忠記 (Chongzhen edn.) 1, pp. 3a-4a. See also *MS* 121, pp. 3663-64; and *DMB* 1, pp. 1100-2.

yet?" and said nothing else 即... 召今上 (太宗) 還京. ... 疾亟, 問左右曰: "第四子來未?" 言不及他.⁸⁰

This implies that the emperor's wish for the throne lay in the prince of Yan's camp. After the prince's eventual usurpation, official historians who produced the "white paper" "Fengtian jingnanji" 奉天靖難記 ("Account of the Campaign to Clear Away Disasters and Respond to Heaven's Will"; written ca. 1402) to legitimize the prince, even inserted a remark that "Zhu Yunwen forged the decree to ascend the throne 皇太孫矯詔嗣位." This was later repeated in *Taizong shilu* (*Veritable Records of the Yongle Emperor*) completed in 1430. Such fabrications helped to legitimate prince Yan's enthronement and covered up all the hard work Ming Taizu had done on behalf of his grandson and toward bringing general resolution to the problems of the princes.⁸¹

CONCLUSION

By virtue of the revelation of the crimes and transgressions committed by the prince of Qin and his siblings, as elucidated in rare documents composed by Zhu Yuanzhang for internal circulation among the imperial clan, we are able to gain a clearer picture and better understanding of the problems of the princes that the Ming founder faced. Those problems deeply impacted the enfeoffment system and created political repercussions. The documents have filled certain gaps in information about pivotal episodes in early-Ming politics and policy developments. They have helped us better understand the rationale behind the choice of Zhu Yunwen as *de facto* successor, as well as the changes in the regulations governing the princes. They also shed light on the complex motives behind the notorious purges and executions of the powerful generals in the aftermath of the installation of the new heir and the increased surveillance on the elder princes, who made the new heir seem so vulnerable. In addition, the disparate treatment in the private sources and the official records exposed the conflicting worlds of Zhu Yuanzhang as a private person and public figure, the agony and tension between his role as father and protector and that of a monarch demanding austerity and alertness from his offspring.

⁸⁰ See *MTZuSL* 257:3718. Cf. Wang, *Ming jingnan shishi kaozheng gao*, p. 122. On historiographical tempering of Taizu's *shilu*, see studies cited in n. 23, above.

⁸¹ See Wang, *Fengtian jingnanji zhu*, pp. 15–16; *Ming Taizong shilu* 1:5. For details of the historical revision, see Wang, *Ming jingnan shishi kanzheng gao*, pp. 122–23; and Huang Jiang-jian, "Du Mingkan *Yuging xunyi ji* suozai Ming Taizu yu Wudinghou Guo Ying chishu" 讀明刊毓慶動懿集所載明太祖與郭英敕書, in *MQSYJCK*, pp. 144–45.

In light of these findings, despite all his paternal affection, well-conceived intentions, and ingenious designs and implementations, Zhu Yuanzhang met with dismal results in rearing and educating his progeny and in setting up their fiefs. Despite the public rhetoric and conventional facades, the Confucian moral education through exemplary persuasion and immersion in classical philosophy and literature apparently failed to instill the sort of high conduct and moral virtue that the emperor expected. Nor did the numerous laws and regulations enacted in *Zuxun lu* and *Huang Ming zuxun* succeed in stamping out maladministration, insubordination, nor in curbing princely abuses. The reasons were that these princes, however they were groomed, received very little direct supervision from the emperor in person. The emperor unrealistically relied on his Confucian tutors and his eldest son as surrogates who would temper and monitor the princes. And the princes were given substantial semi-autonomous civil and military powers, which tended to breed corruption in the absence of checks and balances. More importantly, the emperor's lenient treatment of debauchery, exemplified by the notoriety of prince Qin and prince Jiangjiang, failed to provide a deterrent. The lenience came perhaps from paternal doting and an unwillingness to use capital punishment to protect neither his image nor the spirit of the family law. Worse yet, while the aging autocrat found it increasingly difficult to sustain support for the weakling Zhu Yunwen in his waning days, his passing only fueled latent centrifugal forces that had built up among the princes, and these latter unleashed the *jingnan* campaign, in which the prince of Yan seized the throne from Yunwen.

Historians have long been aware of the problems Ming Taizu faced in dealing with the princes, but they have been distracted by the positive rhetoric of public pronouncement and the display of legal and institutional guarantees meant to perfect the enfeoffment system. But those trappings concealed the reality. Zhu Yuanzhang made plain to his flesh and blood and to the imperial clan the seriousness of the problem through his exposure of princely crimes but confined the circulation of the documents to Zhu-family clansmen, for fear of inciting rebellion, tarnishing his image, and undercutting his authority and the health of the dynasty. This accounts for the absence of such dismal revelations in the official records and it complicates our understanding of Zhu Yuanzhang's frustrations over the princes, as well as his pent-up anger and the subsequent decisions toward violence that he made after the death of the earlier heir-apparent. Any balanced appraisal of the dynastic founder becomes drastically compromised.⁸²

⁸² Wang Shizhen made an effort to uncover the truth about the vicissitudes of the impe-

The revelations found in these private documents therefore not only help to understand critical events in the last years of Ming Taizi's reign, but also bring out contrasting images of the man himself. The public image that Zhu Yuanzhang desired very much to cultivate and project through official communications was that of a benevolent Confucian ruler. But it is belied by a frustrated old man torn by his juniors' profligacy. It was against them that he ranted in private, attempting to conceal their ways from public eyes. His violent outburst probably peaked when he sought to protect his grandson with purges and executions. All these were again shielded from public eyes because of official concealment and the doctoring of official records on such sensitive actions. Historians might not have any clue to the sudden change in the behavior of the emperor but for the private imperial records. They allow us to see something of Zhu Yuanzhang as an austere and doting father. He becomes for us an ruthless autocrat who at the same time tried to be tempered by a notion of Confucian edification and respect for official decorum, thus laying the grounds for a new assessment of the man.⁸³

All of it unfolds a sad scenario of human failing on a heightened scale: lust for sex, wealth and power, a morbid competition within the family, and the fallibility of moral education and institutional safeguards. Zhu Yuanzhang found opportunities among his extensive male offspring but failed to solve the problems of accommodation and control in their enfeoffments, something that he had laboriously devised and implemented. With this, his plan for the princes did not ultimately succeed. The negative legacy went much beyond the deadly struggle between Zhu Yunwen and the prince of Yan, because succeeding emperors could not find an alternative to the enfeoffment system, and none of the plans to alleviate the problems bore fruit. Ming emperors continued lamely to bear the political as well as financial burden of the princedoms, which were riddled by periodic internal conflicts and rebellions. They bulged in population, and in their own way contributed

rial princes, but concluded that much of his findings was speculative because of the imperial taboo and destruction of documentary records. See *Yanshantang bieji* 20, pp. 5a, 7a, 17b; 21, pp. 13b, 14b, 18b. For a study of Wang's scholarship, see Sun Weiguo 孫衛國, *Wang Shizhen shixue yanjiu* 王世貞史學研究 (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2006).

⁸³ On these dual aspects of Zhu Yuanzhang's character, see Wu, *Zhu Yuanzhang zhuan*, chaps. 7-8; Farmer, *Zhu Yuanzhang and Early Ming Legislation*, chaps. 3-4; and Ma Li, *Pouvoir et philosophie chez Zhu Yuanzhang (Despotisme et légitimité)* (Paris: Editions You-feng, 2002), parts 3-4, and conclusion; and Bi Yingchun 畢英春 and Hu Yihua 胡一華, *Liu Ji yu Zhu Yuanzhang* 劉基與朱元璋 (Xi'an: Xibei daxue chubanshe, 2005), chap. 6.

to sapping the economic well-being and the political vitality of not only the royal establishment, but also the Ming state and society.⁸⁴

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<i>DMB</i>	<i>Dictionary of Ming Biography, 1368–1644</i>
<i>MS</i>	<i>Mingshi</i> 明史
<i>MTZuSL</i>	<i>Ming Taizu shilu</i> 明太祖實錄
<i>TZHDQL</i>	<i>Taizu huangdi qinlu</i> 太祖皇帝欽錄
<i>WXB</i>	<i>Wuxue bian</i> 吾學編
<i>XXSKQS</i>	<i>Xuxiu Sikuquanshu</i> 續修四庫全書

⁸⁴ On the later Ming rulers' problems with princes and the burden of the principedoms, see e.g. Wang, *Ming jingnan shishi kaozheng gao*, chap. 7; Wu Jihua, "Mingdai huangshi zhong de qiahe yu duili" 明代皇室中的洽和與對立, rpt. in Wu, *Mingdai zhidushi luncong*, vol. 2, chap. 12; idem, "Lun Mingdai zongfan renkou" 論明代宗藩人口, rpt. in Wu, *Mingdai shehui jingjishi luncong* 明代社會經濟史論叢 (Taipei: Taiwan xuesheng shuju, 1971), vol. 2, chap. 7; Gu Cheng 顧誠, "Mingdai de zongshi" 明代的宗室, in *Ming Qingshi guoji xueshu taolunhui lunwenji* 明清史國際學術討論會論文集 (Tianjin: Tianjin renmin chubanshe, 1982), pp. 89–111; Zhao Lingyang 趙令揚, "Zhu Gaochi Gaoxu xiongdi zhengwei qianyi" 朱高熾、高煦兄弟爭位淺議, *Ming Qingshi jikan* 明清史集刊 1 (1985), pp. 1–14; and Huang Pei 黃培, "Mingdai de gaoqiang zhidu" 明代的高牆制度, *Journal of Chinese Studies*, The Chinese University of Hong Kong 44 (2004), pp. 61–80.

Table. Ming Taizu's Twenty-Six Sons and Their Birth Mothers

(Some princes had 2 successive titles or fiefs.)

MOTHER	SON	DATES	BIRTH ORDER	TITLE	POSTH. NAME	FIEF
emp. Ma 馬	Zhu Biao 標	1355-1392	1		Yiwen 懿文	
	Zhu Shuang 奭	1356-1395	2	Qin 秦	Min 愍	Xian 西安
	Zhu Gang 綱	1358-1398	3	Jin 晉	Gong 恭	Taiyuan 太原
	Zhu Di 棣*	1360-1424	4	Yan 燕		Beiping 北平
	Zhu Su 榘	1361-1425	5	Wu 吳		Hangzhou 杭州
				Zhou 周	Ding 定	Kaifeng 開封
cst. Hu 胡 (Chongfei 充妃)	Zhu Zhen 楨	1364-1424	6	Chu 楚	Zhao 昭	Wuchang 武昌
cst. Da 達 (Dingfei 定妃)	Zhu Fu 楮	1364-1428	7	Qi 齊		Qingzhou 青州
	Zhu Zi 梓	1369-1390	8	Tan 潭		Changsha 長沙
cst. Guo 郭 (Ningfei 寧妃)	Zhu Tan 檀	1370-1390	10	Lu 魯	Huang 荒	Yanzhou 兗州
cst. Guo 郭 (Huifei 惠妃)	Zhu Chun 椿	1371-1423	11	Shu 蜀	Xian 獻	Chengdu 成都
	Zhu Gui 桂	1374-1446	13	Yu 豫 Dai 代	Jian 簡	Datong 大同
	Zhu Hui 穗	1379-1417	19	Gu 谷		Xuanfu 宣府
cst. Hu 胡 (Shunfei 順妃)	Zhu Bo 栢	1371-1399	12	Xiang 湘	Xian 獻	Jingzhou 荊州
Gao 郜 ^A	Zhu Ying 楨	?-1419	14	Han 漢 Su 肅	Zhuang 莊	Ganzhou 甘州
cst. Han 韓	Zhu Zhi 植	1377-1424	15	Wei 衛 Liao 遼	Jian 簡	Guangning 廣寧
cst. Yu 余	Zhu Shi 榘	1378-1438	16	Qing 慶	Jing 靖	Qingyang 慶陽 Weizhou 韋州
cst. Yang 楊	Zhu Quan 權	1378-1488	17	Ning 寧	Xian 獻	Danling 大寧
cst. Zhou 周	Zhu Bian 榘	1379-1450	18	Min 岷	Zhuang 莊	Minzhou 岷州 Yunnan 雲南
	Zhu Song 松	?-1407	20	Han 韓	Xian 憲	Kaiyuan 開原
cst. Zhao 趙 (Guifei 貴妃)	Zhu Mo 模	?-1431	21	Shen 藩		Luzhou 潞州
cst. Li 李 (Xianfei 賢妃)	Zhu Jing 經	1386-1415	23	Tang 唐	Ding 定	Nanyang 南陽
cst. Liu 劉 (Huifei 惠妃)	Zhu Dong 棟	?-1414	24	Ying 郢	Jing 靖	Anlu 安陸
cst. Ge 葛 (LIFEI 麗妃)	Zhu Yi 樺	1388-1444	25	Yi 伊	Li 厲	Luoyang 洛陽
?	Zhao Qi 杞	1369-1371	9	Zhao 趙		
?	Zhu Ying 楹	?-1417	22	An 安	Hui 惠	Pingliang 平涼
?	Zhu Nan 楠 ^B		26			

KEY: emp. = empress; cst. = consort; ? = mother unknown

* Biol. mother undoubtedly was the Mongolian Gongfei (see n. 3)

^A Not made cst.

^B Born Jan. 2, 1394 (Hongwu 26/12/2); died before one mo.; *MTZuSL* 230, p. 3367.