

HONGXING ZHANG

STUDIES IN LATE QING DYNASTY BATTLE PAINTINGS\*

PART ONE

DOCUMENTS FOR FOUR CHINESE BATTLE PAINTINGS  
IN WESTERN COLLECTIONS

In his seminal work on European culture in the late medieval period, Johan Huizinga (1872–1945) observed that history has always been more possessed by the problem of origins and development than by those of decline and fall. He writes: “When studying any period, we are always looking for the promise of what the next is to bring.”<sup>1</sup> This observation still holds true if applied to the study of nineteenth-century Chinese art, a burgeoning field in recent years. Thus, in art historical discourse on this period, much attention has been given to the search for the origins of modern Chinese culture. Many works have focused on the artistic productions shaped by new cultural forces, such as Sino-western pictures, popular prints, early photography, and above all paintings of the Shanghai School. The nineteenth century has been treated as if it had been no more than the infancy of modern China. Consequently, the contemporary court cultural production has been largely neglected.

Since the art at the late Qing court has been so poorly studied that reliable dates and attributions have not been established for even the most important artworks commissioned by the Manchu court, I want to postpone the reappraisal of the nature of the Chinese art during the nineteenth century. The present study considers dating and attribution problems of four large battle paintings in Western collections – one painting in the Mrs. Cécile McTaggart Collection, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada (fig. 1), two paintings in the National Gallery, Prague (figs. 2–3), and another in the Royal Collection at Sandringham House, Norfolk, England (fig. 4). This analysis is followed by a second, related study, that assesses a work available in two versions respectively in the National Palace Museum, Taipei, and the National History Museum, Beijing. A crucial technique applied to both studies is the use of the documents in the *Zhongguo diyi lishi dang’anguan* (Chinese First Historical Archives) in Beijing, in connection with other newly discovered visual and textual materials.

\* This article grew out of one chapter in my Ph.D. thesis, “Wu Youru’s ‘The Victory over the Taiping’: Painting and Censorship in 1886 China,” (London, University of London, 1999), on the 1885 imperial commission of a series of paintings commemorating the victory over the Taiping. During my research on my doctoral project, Roderick Whitfield has always been the prime source of guidance and encouragement. I also thank Wang Tao, Paul Moss, Fang Yujin, Man-jong Ou, Christopher Lloyd, Barbara Allred, Lucie Borotova, Ladislav Kesner, Cecile McTaggart, and colleagues at the Palace Museum, the Chinese First Historical Archives, the National History Museum, and the National Palace Museum, for their valuable support at various stages of my research. Huang Yin has read an early version of this article and helped to smooth the English. Roderick Whitfield has checked the language of the final version; I am grateful for their generous help.

1 Johan Huizinga, *The Waning of the Middle Ages* (London: Peregrine, 1965), 7.

In 1992, the McTaggart painting was shown in the exhibition, *Transcending Turmoil: Painting at the Close of China's Empire 1796–1911*, in the Phoenix Art Museum.<sup>2</sup> Claudia Brown, a curator of the exhibition, identified the subject of the painting as a battle in the Taiping Rebellion (1851–64), based on a study of the cartouches.<sup>3</sup> In a related article she also put forward a hypothesis that the painting may have belonged to a series of military paintings commemorating the dynastic victory over the Taiping Rebellion, commissioned by the late Qing court.<sup>4</sup> She was probably encouraged to offer that hypothesis by the existence of the three paintings in Prague and at Sandringham House, for all of these share a similar imperial style, being executed on the same material and having identical measurements. It is not only these pieces in Western collections that support Brown's speculation, the Palace Museum in Beijing also possesses twelve battle paintings that match the McTaggart painting in both their measurements and general stylistic features (fig. 5). The major differences in the case of the Palace Museum paintings are that each of them is accompanied by a text (fig. 6), indicating the particular battle represented, and recording the government's military campaign against the Muslim Rebellion in Yunnan and Guizhou (1856–74), rather than that against the Taiping. These differences, however, may advance Brown's hypothesis a step further. The disparity of the subject matter may actually indicate that the scope of the imperial commission was larger than Brown has suggested; the commission included, but was not limited to, the campaign against the Taiping Rebellion. The absence of any text on the four paintings in Western collections might have resulted from loss at some later time.<sup>5</sup>

The evidence that supports the hypothesis exists in the Chinese First Historical Archives.<sup>6</sup> Under the heading of the Junjichu dang'an (Archives of the Grand Council) there is a category for visual documents called Yutu (The Maps Depository), which was begun with the standardization of the Grand Council in the late 1730s and contains visual documents presented originally together with memorials by the council to the throne.<sup>7</sup> These visual documents are divided into seven sections:<sup>8</sup> the first includes atlases of administrative divisions, maps of individual regions, and city plans; the second comprises the maps of the Yangzi River and the Yellow River, and of the coastlines; the third concerns the Grand Canal; the fourth records battles and battlefields in major military events of the dynasty; the fifth documents the royal tours and visits; the sixth registers locations and buildings of monasteries

2 Claudia Brown and Ju-hsi Chou, *Transcending Turmoil: Painting at the Close of China's Empire, 1796–1911*, exhibition catalogue (Phoenix: Phoenix Art Museum, 1992), pl. 5.

3 *Ibid.*, 31. Brown does not specify the battle, the painting is simply titled *Battle Scene from the Taiping Rebellion*.

4 Claudia Brown, "Transcending Turmoil: Painting at the Close of China's Empire, 1796–1911," *Orientalism* 24, no. 4 (April 1993), 66–67.

5 See note 12.

6 Beijing, Chinese First Historical Archives (hereafter cited as CFHA), I. Archives of the Qing dynasty, A. The Central Administration Archives, 3. The Grand Council Archives. For the current classification system of the archives, see Qin Guojin, *Zhonghua Ming-Qing Zhengdang Zhinan* (A Guide to the Archives of the Ming and Qing dynasties), [Beijing] Renmin chubanshe, 1994), Appendix 1. "Zhongguo diyi lishi dang'anguan suocang Ming-Qing dang'an ge quanzong yilan biao" (An Overview of the System for the Ming and Qing Archives in the Chinese First Historical Archives), 243–46.

7 For the institutional history of the Grand Council, see Beatrice S. Bartlett, *Monarchs and Ministers: The Grand Council in Mid-Ch'ing China, 1723–1820* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), particularly Part Two, Chapter 5, 137–168. For the category of Maps Depository in the Grand Council archives, see Qin Guojin (1994), 45–48.

8 Qin Guojin (1994), 112.

and temples, and matters relevant to religions; and the seventh details imperial mausolea. Separated from the memorials that accompanied them as they entered the archives, these visual documents form an independent class. Various hands have contributed to the filing of documents over the years and the cross-referencing to the memorials was complex and not always consistent. It is therefore difficult to assess the precise date of some items.

Among the documents in the fourth section of the archives are the cartoons for the four paintings in Western collections,<sup>9</sup> as well as for the twelve paintings in the Palace Museum (fig. 11). The inscriptions on the four cartoons help to identify the particular subject-matter of the six paintings: the McTaggart painting depicts the battle at Tongcheng in Hubei province on December 10, 1857 during the Taiping War; the two paintings in the National Gallery, Prague, represent the scenes in the government campaign against the Nian Rebellion (1851–68): the defeat of the troops of a chief rebel Zhang Minhang in Shandong province in October 1861, and the triumphant procession of the government troops which completed the campaign in August 1868; and the Sandringham painting describes a battle between the government troops under the command of Duo-long-a (1817–64) and the rebels in the region of Wei River in Shaanxi province in August 1863, one of the numerous battles during the campaign against the Muslim Rebellion (1862–78) in Shaanxi, Gansu and Xinjiang provinces.<sup>10</sup>

The four paintings, as well as the twelve in the Palace Museum, form part of a single commission that involved many more paintings, as we learn from the way in which their respective cartoons are grouped in the section. Research on other pieces in the section shows that the sixteen cartoons are part of a group which contains sixty-seven cartoons in total, namely twenty paintings for the Taiping War, eighteen paintings for the Nian Rebellion, twelve paintings for the Muslim Rebellion in Yunnan and Guizhou, and seventeen paintings for another Muslim Rebellion in the Northwest.<sup>11</sup>

These sixty-seven cartoons probably formed the total number of paintings in the commission, for the twelve cartoons of the campaign in Yunnan and Guizhou squarely match the twelve paintings of the same subject in the Palace Museum, Beijing. This suggestion has been confirmed by the discovery of the photographic record of some of the finished paintings. Two photographic albums, which record the paintings for the victory over the Taiping and the Nian Rebellion, exist in the Peking University Library, and they contain exactly the same number of pictures as the cartoons of the two subjects (see Appendix 1).<sup>12</sup>

Like the finished paintings, the cartoons are not dated or signed and give little information about the patronage of the commission. Some of the documents produced during the commission which have

9 Beijing, CFHA, Maps Depository of the Grand Council, nos. 364, 380, 392, 395.

10 For works on the Nian and Muslim Rebellions, see Siang-tseh Chiang, *The Nien Rebellion* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1954); Wen-djang Chu, *The Muslim Rebellion in Northwest China, 1862–1878: A Study of Government Minority Policy* (The Hague: Mouton, 1966).

11 Beijing, CFHA, Maps Depository of the Grand Council, nos. 256–422.

12 Peking University Library, Special Collection, *Pingding Yuefei zhantu zhaopian* (The Photographs of the Battle Scenes from the Victory over the Taiping Rebellion); *Pingding Nianfei zhantu zhaopian* (The Photographs of the Battle Scenes from the Victory over the Nian Rebellion). Apart from showing the paintings, both albums also contain photographs of the original texts attached to the paintings (figs. 7–8), which confirm that the texts belonging with the four paintings under discussion have been lost.

been discovered recently in the Grand Council archives are invaluable sources in identifying the nature of this commission: these include four letters to the Grand Council by Yihuan (1840–91), the father of the young Emperor Guangxu (reigned 1875–1908), and various types of the Grand Council records.<sup>13</sup> These documents inform us that the court initiated the painting project to commemorate the government victory over three major rebellions in the mid-nineteenth century – the Taiping Rebellion, the Nian Rebellion, and the Muslim Rebellion in both the northwest and southwest – immediately after the peace agreement between China and France over the Vietnam controversy was signed in June 1885.<sup>14</sup> Due to the large scale of the commission, Yihuan acted as the commissioner. In November 1885, the Grand Council was assigned the task of selecting the subjects. Three clerks in the council, composed of one Senior Secretary (*dalami*) and two Junior Secretaries (*zhangjing*), were responsible for each war.<sup>15</sup> Their duties included studying official documents and drafting a list of subjects. The workshop to carry out the execution of the paintings was established under the Shenjiying (Beijing Field Forces),<sup>16</sup> a modern-trained troop of Bannermen guarding the capital. On March 11, 1886, the group of clerks for the Taiping Rebellion discharged their duty and submitted their proposal on the subject-

13 Peking, CFHA, A, 3: The Grand Council Logbook (*Suishoudang*), the entries on Guangxu (hereafter cited as GX) 12/2/6 (March 11, 1886), GX12/2/16 (March 21, 1886); Record Book of Imperial Edicts (*Shangyudang*), undated between two entries on GX12/2/6 (March 11, 1886) and GX12/2/7 (March 12, 1886), the entry on GX12/2/16 (March 21, 1886); Record Book of Lateral Communications (*Jiaofadang*), the entry on GX12/2/16 (March 21, 1886); Memorial Packet Copy of Palace Memorials (*Lufu zouzhe*), undated between two entries on GX12/2/6 (March 11, 1886) and GX12/2/7 (March 12, 1886); and Miscellaneous Documents – Yihuan’s Letters (*Zajianlei, Chun qingwang xin*), GX11/10/5 (November 11, 1885), GX11/11/26 (December 31, 1885), GX12/8/14 (September 11, 1886), GX12/10/30 (November 25, 1886). The first three letters by Yihuan have been published by Fang Yujin, “Qing Chunqingwang Yihuan xinhan xuan” (Selected Letters by Yihuan Prince Chun), *Lishi dang’an*, 1982.4, 33–40.

For general biographical information on Yihuan and Guangxu, see Arthur W. Hummel, *Eminent Chinese of the Ch’ing Period 1644–1912* (hereafter cited as *ECCP*) (Washington, D.C.: United States Printing Office, 1944), 384–86, 731–34.

14 *Ibid.*, Miscellaneous Documents – Yihuan’s Letters, GX11/10/5 (November 11, 1885). In this letter the Sino-French War (1881–85) is also included in the project: “I have seen the list of each war and the names and the ranks of the officials who participated in the campaigns. This project of painting, as far as my humble opinion is concerned, differs from previous ones which only focus on either one campaign or the merits of a few commanders. If our case is not treated with great care, many important events will be omitted. It might be proper therefore to divide the project into four groups: the first group is about the Taiping Rebellion, the second the Nian Rebellion, the third the Muslim Rebellion which also should be divided into two sub-groups: one is about the rebellion in Yunnan province, the other in Ili, and the last group concerns the Sino-French War in Vietnam.” But this last idea was probably soon abandoned, since some contemporary accounts of the commission mention only the three mid-century rebellions. For example, Jichang, *Xingshuzhai zaji* (Miscellaneous Notes of the Xingshu Studio), facsimile of 1901 edition (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian, 1984), second half of the volume, 7b. This may explain why there is no single cartoon representing the Sino-French War in the archives.

15 *Ibid.*, GX11/11/26 (December 31, 1885). Yihuan writes: “I suggest that we assign four *dalami*, each with two *zhangjing*, to be in charge of the four groups respectively.”

16 *Ibid.*, Record Book of Imperial Edicts, the entry on GX12/2/16 (March 21, 1886): “Deliver to the Beijing Field Forces. The Grand Council presented the twenty edicts issued regarding the suppression of the Taiping Rebellion. Today, the councilors received respectfully the Cixi duanyou kangyi yuzhuangcheng Empress Dowager’s order: deliver the twenty edicts to the Beijing Field Forces and order it to make paintings and present them to the throne.” See also The Grand Council Logbook, the entry on GX12/2/16 (March 21, 1886); Record Book of Lateral Communications, the entry on GX12/2/16 (March 21, 1886).

matter of twenty items (see Appendix 2).<sup>17</sup> Empress Dowager Cixi (1835–1908) approved the subject matter on March 21, and it was immediately handed down to the painting workshop in the Beijing Field Forces.<sup>18</sup> The subject matter for the Nian Rebellion was approved in September and went to the workshop immediately afterwards.<sup>19</sup> When the selection of the subject-matter for the Muslim Rebellion was completed is not documented.

Names of the painters in the workshop are not given in the archives. Yet these painters were almost certainly under the command of Qingkuan (1848–1927).<sup>20</sup> We learn this from a highly reliable colophon by a certain Wang Yu on a landscape painting by Qingkuan (Appendix 3),<sup>21</sup> which notes that it was through Yihuan's recommendation that Qingkuan was placed in charge of the execution of the project.<sup>22</sup> The colophon gives a detailed treatment of the life of this Bannerman painter which is otherwise little known. According to Wang, Qingkuan was born into the Zhaojia clan and was a member of the Plain Yellow Chinese Banner. It seems that he had been under Yihuan's patronage since he was very young. As an adult Qingkuan worked as a secretary in several institutions such as The Beijing Field Forces, the Linggong (Imperial Mausoleum Work), the Haijun yamen (Board of Naval Affairs), all of which were under Yihuan's supervision. At the same time he seemed to have acquired painting skills in various subjects through diligent study. It was probably due to his close connections with Yihuan that his talent in painting was quickly recognized at court. From the 1880s, Qingkuan was appointed director of almost every major imperial art commission. Apart from the commission of the military paintings under discussion, he was in charge of the architectural decoration of the Summer Palace, the painting projects for Guangxu's wedding ceremony (1889) and Cixi's sixtieth birthday (1893). At the peak of his official career Qingkuan chaired three institutions of the Neiwufu (Imperial Household): Shangsiyuan (the Palace Stud), Wubeiyuan (Court of Imperial Armaments), and Fengchenyuan (Imperial Parks Administration).

The same colophon also notes that the commission commemorating government victory over three major rebellions was completed by 1890, and that the paintings were made for the Ziguangge (Purple Effulgence Pavilion) in the Sanhai (Sea Palace). We also know that this building had been a spe-

17 *Ibid.*, The Grand Council Logbook, the entry on GX12/2/6 (March 11, 1886): "Deliver the memorandum about the edicts regarding the suppression of the Taiping Rebellion issued during the war time, and the list of the twenty edicts. Chen and Shen on the sixth day of the second month." The twenty items are given in Record Book of Imperial Edicts, the undated entry between two entries on GX12/2/6 (March 11, 1886) and GX12/2/7 (March 12, 1886). Another copy is in Memorial Packet Copy of Palace Memorials, the undated entry between two entries on GX12/2/6 (March 11, 1886) and GX12/2/7 (March 12, 1886).

18 See footnote 16. For a brief biography of Cixi, see *ECCP*, 295–300.

19 *Ibid.*, Miscellaneous Documents – Yihuan's Letters. GX12/8/14 (September 11, 1886): "Today, by imperial decree we delivered a series of edicts regarding the suppression of the Nian Rebellion (to the Beijing Field Forces), which are again only the extracts of the full texts. Please remind the Southern Quarters of this and ask them to supply a full list of the people who received reward."

20 Qingkuan's dates are given by his descendant Zhao Zhengjin. See Zhao Zhengjin, "Yiwei zhide zhongshi de gongting huajia" (A Noteworthy Court Painter), *Guangming ribao*, July 14, 1985.

21 The reliability of Wang's colophon can be verified by the correspondence between the available documents about Qingkuan and the relevant passages in the colophon. See the footnotes for Appendix 3.

22 *Ibid.*

cial place for displaying and storing military paintings since the mid-eighteenth century,<sup>23</sup> and that when these paintings entered the building, the battle scenes commissioned by Qianlong (reigned 1736–96) had been taken off the walls in order to display the new ones.<sup>24</sup> These paintings remained on the walls of the pavilion until they began to be dispersed in the summer of 1900, when the Eight Allied Forces of the Western Powers seized Beijing and were stationed in the Sea Palace during the Boxer Uprising.<sup>25</sup>

23 For studies of the functions of the pavilion and analysis of the Purple Effulgence Pavilion as the architectural setting of the battle paintings, see Zhang Hongxing, “Wu Youru’s ‘The Victory over the Taiping’: Painting and Censorship in 1886 China,” 186–96. See also Walter Fuchs, “Die Schlachtenbilder aus Turkestan von 1765 als historische Quelle,” *Monumenta Serica* 4, (1939/40), 116–24; Wu Kong, “Ziguangge he Qianlong de Shiquan wugong” (The Purple Effulgence Pavilion and the Ten Complete Victories in the Qianlong Reign) *Beijing Wenshi* 1995.1, 17–20.

24 Beijing, CFHA, C.5: Record of Imperial Parks Administration, New System, GX15/11/1 (November 23, 1889).

25 Di Chuqing, *Pingdengge biji* (Notebook of the Pingdeng Studio), (Shanghai: Youzheng shuju, n.d.), vol. 1, 3b. Di records his visit to the building in the summer of 1900, describes how the staircases to the upper tier inside the building had been destroyed, and writes of how books were scattered on the floor. He also notes that the paintings depicting the victory over the Nian and Muslim Rebellions in the Northwest were still on the walls of the ground floor.

APPENDIX I  
A Check List of the Battle Scenes from the Commission

PM (Palace Museum, Beijing)

CFHA (Chinese First Historical Archives, Beijing)

BUL (Beijing University Library)

NG (National Gallery, Prague)

McT. ( Mrs. Cécile McTaggart Collection, Canada)

Royal Coll. (Royal Collection, Sandringham House, Norfolk)

No.	Subject	Cartoon	Painting	Photograph
<i>The Taiping Rebellion</i>				
1	Huaiqing	CFHA		BUL
2	Dulu	CFHA		BUL
3	Linqing	CFHA		BUL
4	Yuezhou	CFHA		BUL
5	Qizhou	CFHA		BUL
6	Xunjiang	CFHA		BUL
7	Lianzhen	CFHA		BUL
8	Fengguantun	CFHA		BUL
9	Tongcheng	CFHA	McT	BUL
10	Wuchang	CFHA		BUL
11	Ruizhou	CFHA		BUL
12	Huaitong	CFHA		BUL
13	Anqing	CFHA		BUL
14	Yuhuatai	CFHA		BUL
15	Jiufuzhu	CFHA		BUL
16	Shi Dakai	CFHA		BUL
17	Shuzhou	CFHA		BUL
18	Hangzhou	CFHA		BUL
19	Jiangning	CFHA		BUL
20	Hong Fuzhen	CFHA		BUL

*The Nian Rebellion*

1	Haozhou	CFHA		BUL
2	Qiuho & Zhengyang	CFHA		BUL
3	Liuan	CFHA		BUL
4	Changhuai	CFHA		BUL
5	Zhang Minhang	CFHA	NG	BUL
6	Biantang	CFHA		BUL
7	Pingyu	CFHA		BUL

No.	Subject	Cartoon	Painting	Photograph
8	Qixian	CFHA		BUL
9	Taoqingshan & Jinhe	CFHA		BUL
10	Sucheng	CFHA		BUL
11	Shaanzhou & Yongning	CFHA		BUL
12	Juheji	CFHA		BUL
13	Mengcheng	CFHA		BUL
14	Ganyu	CFHA		BUL
15	Gaobao	CFHA		BUL
16	Changzhou & Yanshan	CFHA		BUL
17	Zhang Zongyu	CFHA		BUL
18	Triumph	CFHA	NG	BUL

*The Muslim Rebellion (Yunnan and Yuizhou)*

1	Chuxiong & Jingdong	CFHA	PM	
2	Xingyi	CFHA	PM	
3	Qujing	CFHA	PM	
4	Zhenxiong	CFHA	PM	
5	Chengjiang	CFHA	PM	
6	Chengjiang	CFHA	PM	
7	Xingyi	CFHA	PM	
8	Zhaozhou & Menghuating	CFHA	PM	
9	Guizhou	CFHA	PM	
10	Dali	CFHA	PM	
11	Shunning & Xila	CFHA	PM	
12	Yunnan	CFHA	PM	

*The Muslim Rebellion (Shaanxi, Gansu and Xinjiang)*

1	Wanggecun & Qiangbaizhen	CFHA		
2	Changtouzhen	CFHA		
3	Weihe	CFHA	Royal Coll.	
4	Pingliangfu	CFHA		
5	Baofeng	CFHA		
6	Gaojiabao	CFHA		
7	Guyuan & Xiaohe	CFHA		
8	Heichengzi	CFHA		
9	Langzhou	CFHA		
10	Didaozhou	CFHA		
11	Hezhou	CFHA		
12	Wulumuqi	CFHA		

No.	Subject	Cartoon	Painting	Photograph
13	Manasinan	CFHA		
14	Daban & Tulufan	CFHA		
15	Kala & Shaerku	CFHA		
16	Akesu & Wushi	CFHA		
17	Triumph	CFHA		

## APPENDIX 2

Twenty Subjects Selected for the Commission Victory over the Taiping Rebellion (Beijing, CFHA, A, 3: Record Book of Imperial Edicts, microfiche no. 331)

Twenty imperial decrees regarding the Pacification of the Yue Bandits received:

- Rescuing of the Huaiqing prefect from siege, the fourth day of the eighth moon of the third year, Xianfeng reign (September 6, 1853).
- Destroying of the Dulu traitors, the thirteenth day of tenth moon of the third year, Xianfeng reign (November 13, 1853).
- Regaining of Linqing city, the twenty-eighth day of the third moon of the fourth year, Xianfeng reign (April 25, 1854).
- Regaining of Yuezhou city, the twenty-second day of the seventh moon of the fourth year, Xianfeng reign (August 15, 1854).
- Destroying of the bandit lairs in Tianjiazhen, the twenty-ninth day of the tenth moon of the fourth year, Xianfeng reign (December 18, 1854).
- Sweeping of the rebels out of the Xun River, the second day of the twelfth moon of the fourth year, Xianfeng reign (January 19, 1855).
- Overcoming of Lianzhen, the twenty-first day of the first moon of the fifth year, Xianfeng reign (March 9, 1855).
- Occupation of Fengguantun, the eighteenth day of the fourth moon of the fifth year, Xianfeng reign (June 2, 1855).
- Occupation of Tongcheng, the twenty-fifth day of the ninth moon of the fifth year, Xianfeng reign (November 4, 1855).
- Vanquishing of Wuchang city, the twenty-eighth day of the eleventh moon of the sixth year, Xianfeng reign (December 25, 1856).
- Overcoming of Ruichou city, the fifth day of the eighth moon of the seventh year, Xianfeng reign (September 22, 1857).
- Destroying of the bandits' lairs at Tongcheng and other places, the twenty-fifth day of the eleventh moon of the tenth year, Xianfeng reign (January 5, 1861).
- Occupation of Anqing city, the twenty-fifth day of the eighth moon of the eleventh year, Xianfeng reign (September 29, 1861).

- Lifting of the siege of Yuhuatai, Jinning, the eighth day of the eleventh moon of the first year, Tongzhi reign (December 28, 1862).
- Overcoming of the Isle of Jiufu and other strategic passes, the fifth day of the sixth moon of the second year, Tongzhi reign (July 20, 1863).
- Capture of the major traitors such as Shi Dakai and others, the twelfth day of the sixth moon of the second year, Tongzhi reign (July 27, 1863).
- Occupation of Suzhou city, the fourth day of the eleventh moon of the second year, Tongzhi reign (December 14, 1863).
- Overcoming of Hangzhou and Yuhang cities, the twelfth day of the third moon of the third year, Tongzhi reign (April 17, 1864).
- Overcoming of Jiangning city, the twenty-ninth day of the sixth moon of the third year, Tongzhi reign (August 1, 1864).
- Capture of Junior traitor Hong Fuzhen, the eleventh day of the tenth moon of the third year, Tongzhi reign (November 9, 1864).

### APPENDIX 3

Colophon by Wang Yu, dated in correspondence with 1915, on a landscape by Qingkuan. Handscroll in a private collection, Beijing.

I met Mr. Qing, Xiaoshan, in our late years. But our spiritual communication began thirty years ago. In the tenth year of the Guangxu reign (1884) when I was working for Mr. Zeng Zongxiang<sup>26</sup> the governor-general of Liangjiang, I learned his name. I was told at that time that he had been entrusted by Prince Chun<sup>27</sup> with the inspection of the newly-established School of Infantry and Navy, and that he had been praised by the prince for his work. In the following year when the renovation work of the Purple Effulgence Pavilion was finished, the court ordered the setting up of a workshop to paint the battle scenes and the portraits of the meritorious servitors from the three campaigns – The Taiping, Moslems, and Nian – for the hall. Upon Prince Chun's recommendation, Mr. Qing was put in charge of this commission, which was finally finished six years later, with one hundred and several tens of scrolls being made.<sup>28</sup> During this period, in the tenth year (1884),<sup>29</sup> he accompanied Prince Chun, General Shan,<sup>30</sup> and Governor-general of Zhili, Mr. Li Wenzhong,<sup>31</sup> to inspect the navy on the sea, and warship dock and torpedo factory in Lushun. Apart

26 Zeng Guoquan (1824–90), for biographical information see *ECCP*, 749–51.

27 Yihuan (1840–91), for biographical information see *ECCP*, 384–86.

28 The commission comprises not just battle paintings, but also portraits of commanders and officers. Several letters by Yihuan have made this clear. See Beijing, CFHA, A, 3: Miscellaneous Documents – Yihuan's Letters, GX11/10/5 (November 11, 1885), GX11/11/26 (December 31, 1885). We have limited our discussion to the battle paintings in this article, although these portraits are equally important for study.

29 Wang's date for the naval inspection is incorrect here. The correct date should be 1886, as we know from official documents such as the Veritable Records.

30 Shanqing (died 1889).

31 Li Hongzhang (1823–1901), for biographical information see *ECCP*, 464–74.

from his inspection duties, he was ordered to be in charge of painting the events of the journey. One day, the sea seemed to have a soul. Suddenly a mirage appeared. He quickly recorded the scene and presented it to the throne.<sup>32</sup> In the fourteenth year (1886) when The Summer Palace renovation work started, the designs of the decorations for all the halls, terraces and pavilions on the site were all made by him. In the fifteenth year (1889), he was commissioned to direct the painting of the complete wedding ceremony of Dezong.<sup>33</sup> A year before the twentieth year (*i.e.* 1893) he had painted a scroll to celebrate the Empress Dowager's sixtieth birthday and presented it to the throne; the scene that he painted was magnificent and spectacular. If Mr. Qing did not handle his subjects masterfully, how could such perfection be achieved? Sometimes in the past, it had occurred to me that Mr. Qing perhaps was just an expert on portraiture and of real scenes. But on viewing the present picture that embodies a real understanding of Mr. Dai Wenjie's<sup>34</sup> ideas, I could not help admiring him. Following my inquiry he told me that at the beginning of his career he studied with Yuan Ruishou from Shandong, concentrating on portraiture. Then he had an opportunity to learn Mr. Dai Wenjie's most secret methods, so that he employed landscape vividly.<sup>35</sup> Then, he studied with Wang Chengfeng,<sup>36</sup> and subsequently he gradually excelled at every kind of flower, bird, and insect subjects. He is such a diligent person, pursuing art with steady will and devoted mind. The forty-leaf album, *The Origins of the Truly Mighty*, and the painting, *The Mountain at Chonglin*, received special imperial rewards. Alas! Mr. Qing is so versatile that he was not only successful in the profession of painting. His name is Kuan. His *zi* is Youshan. Songyue *jushi* is his *hao*. When he became old he began to use Chengwai chunshou as his *hao*. Yet another later *hao* of his is Xingshou. He is a Bannerman, coming from the clan of Zhaojia, and belonging to the Plain Yellow Chinese Banner. From his position of assistant director and then director, he was promoted to be the chair of the Three Agencies in The Imperial Household.<sup>37</sup> He had served the Salt Control Circuit as the Surveillance Commissioner in Jiangxi province.<sup>38</sup> Since his childhood, his talent had been recognized by Prince Chun, so he served in The Beijing Field force as a secretary, as the inspector of imperial mausoleum work, and as head of the financial office and the archival office of The

32 This is also recorded in Yihuan's poems written during the journey. Quoted in Furen, "Yihuan xunyue haifang jingguo" (An Narrative Account of Yihuan's Naval Inspection), *Zijinzheng* 1990.4, 19.

33 Guangxu. A set of albums of the wedding is in the Palace Museum collection.

34 Dai Xi (1801–60), for biographical information see *ECCP*, 700–01.

35 It is likely that he had learned from studying Dai's paintings rather than from Dai Xi personally, for Qingkuan was only eleven years old when Dai Xi died in 1860.

36 Wang Chengfeng is recorded in Yu Jianhua, *Zhongguo meishujia renmin cidian* (Dictionary of Chinese Artists) (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin meishu chubanshe, 1981), 82–83.

37 The Three Agencies of Imperial Household during the Qing dynasty refer to the Palace Stud, Court of Imperial Armaments, and Imperial Parks Administration. He remained in this position at least until 1905, when he wrote a letter to Hubert D. Ves, a painter from the United States, regarding a portrait of Cixi painted by the latter. See Luke S. K. Kwong, "Cixi xiezhaode xubi: Hubert D. Ves" (Another note about Cixi's Portrait: Hubert D. Ves), *Gugong bowuyuan yuankan* 2000.1, 81.

38 For different account of Qingkuan's official career see, He Gangde, *Chunmeng Menglu*, 1922, repr. 1983 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji shudian), 21b–22a; *Qingbai Leichao* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1984), 332.

Board of Naval Affairs.<sup>39</sup> His achievements in official affairs are well known to all, and witnessed by the dynastic history, so it is unnecessary for me to relate them in detail. After he served in office outside the capital, he had ceased to paint. In *xinbai* year (1911) when the government was disbanded, he came back, living in solitude and returning to his old learning for self-enjoyment. But friends and acquaintances seeking for his paintings increased day by day. As an example, Tao, the Beile and the son of Prince Chun,<sup>40</sup> pleaded with Mr. Qing to paint a painting commemorating his balloon-excursion on his trip to Europe.<sup>41</sup> That painting is remarkably true to life, which indicates that Mr. Qing is also an expert in Western technique. The present scroll was made when he was sixty-eight. In the painting the gathering and flowing clouds and mists suggest imminent rain. This effect truly captures the essence of Mr. [Dai] Wenjie's art. I have traced the origin of Qingkuan's art at the end of this scroll so that the viewers of this painting in future are able to add this account to the history of painting. In the mid-winter season of the *jiwei* year (1919), Wang Yu, Dufu, from the ancient Yanguan, wrote this.

PART TWO  
TWO VERSIONS OF TWELVE BATTLE PAINTINGS BY WU YOURU  
IN THE NATIONAL PALACE MUSEUM, TAIPEI  
AND THE NATIONAL HISTORY MUSEUM, BEIJING

In the historical archives department of The National Palace Museum, Taipei, there is an album of twelve leaves which depict twelve battles from the Qing government's campaign against the Taiping Rebellion (figs. 9–20). Each painting is accompanied by a text on the facing page, written in small regular script. In 1961, the National History Museum in Beijing acquired a handscroll from Baoguzhai, an antique shop in Liulichang, Beijing,<sup>42</sup> with identical scenes. Although neither work bears the artist's signature or date, the condition of the mountings betrays their origin as a pair of paintings by late Qing court artists.<sup>43</sup>

While the Beijing scroll still remains unstudied, the Taipei album has attracted scholarly attention during the last decade. Four of the battle scenes have been published in Jonathan Spence's biog-

39 Qingkuan's appointment to the last post is also mentioned in a list of the officials of the newly established Board of Naval Affairs by *Wanguo gongbao*. Quoted in Wang Jiajian, *Zhongguo jindai haijunshi lunji* (Collected Essays on the History of the Chinese Navy in Early Modern Time), (Taipei: Wenshizhe chubanshe, 1984), 219.

40 Zhaitao (born 1886).

41 Zaitao made this trip to Europe in 1910 to study military conditions. See *ECCP*, 386.

42 I am indebted to Lu Changsheng, the curator of the Painting and Calligraphy Section in the National History Museum, for this information.

43 The National History Museum in Beijing registers its scroll as *Qingjun zoubao yu Taiping jun jiaozhan tujuan* (The Qing Government Army Reports the Battles with the Taiping). The National Palace Museum, Taipei, registers its album as *Pingding Yuefei tu* (Paintings of the Suppression of the Taiping Rebellion). It seems that neither museum was aware of the existence of the other version. I am indebted to Nie Chongzheng, an authority in the Qing court art in the Palace Museum, Beijing, for confirming the court identity of the scroll in the National History Museum through examination of its mounting.

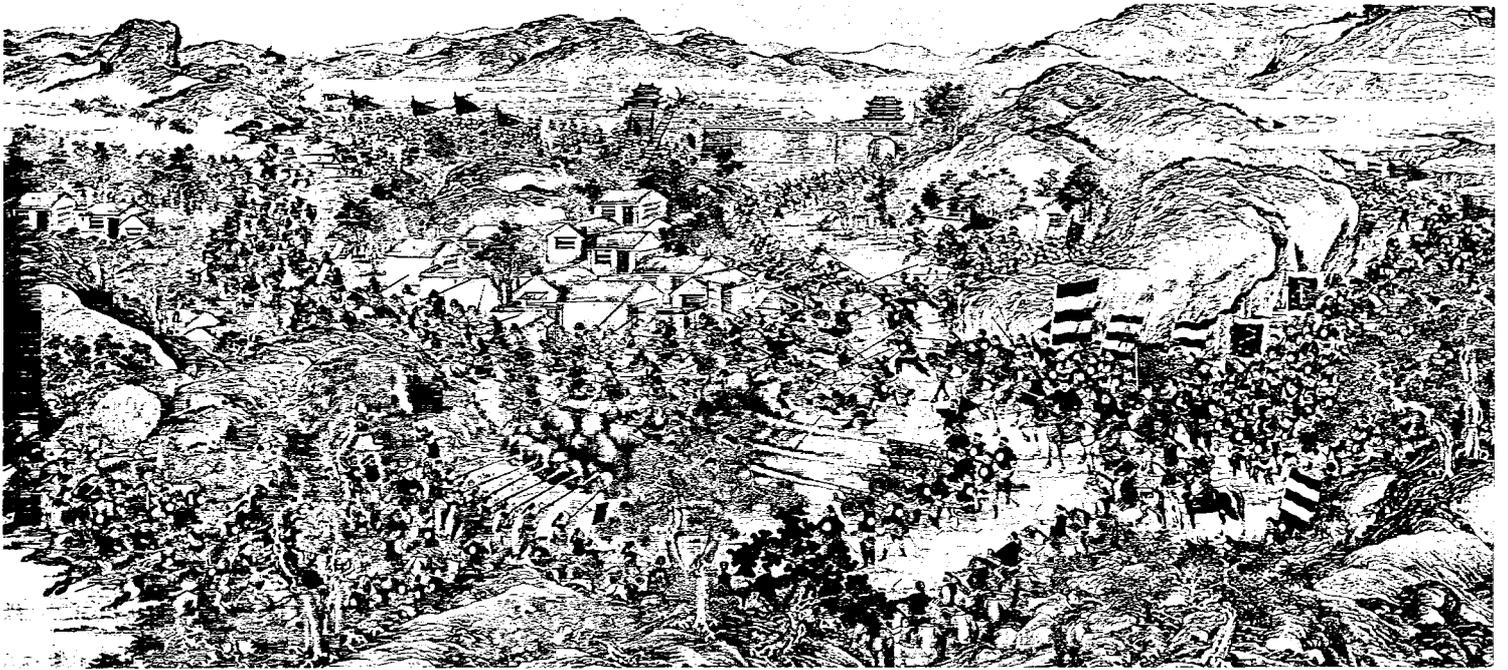


Fig. 1 Qingkuan *et al.*, *Victory over the Taiping*. 1886–90. Set of twenty paintings. Painting nine: “Regaining of Tongcheng, Hubei.” Ink and color on silk, 135.9 × 307.3 cm. Cécile McTaggart Collection, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. After Claudia Brown and Ju-hsi Chou, *Transcending Turmoil, Painting at the Close of China’s Empire 1796–1911* (Phoenix: Phoenix Art Museum, 1992), pl. 5.

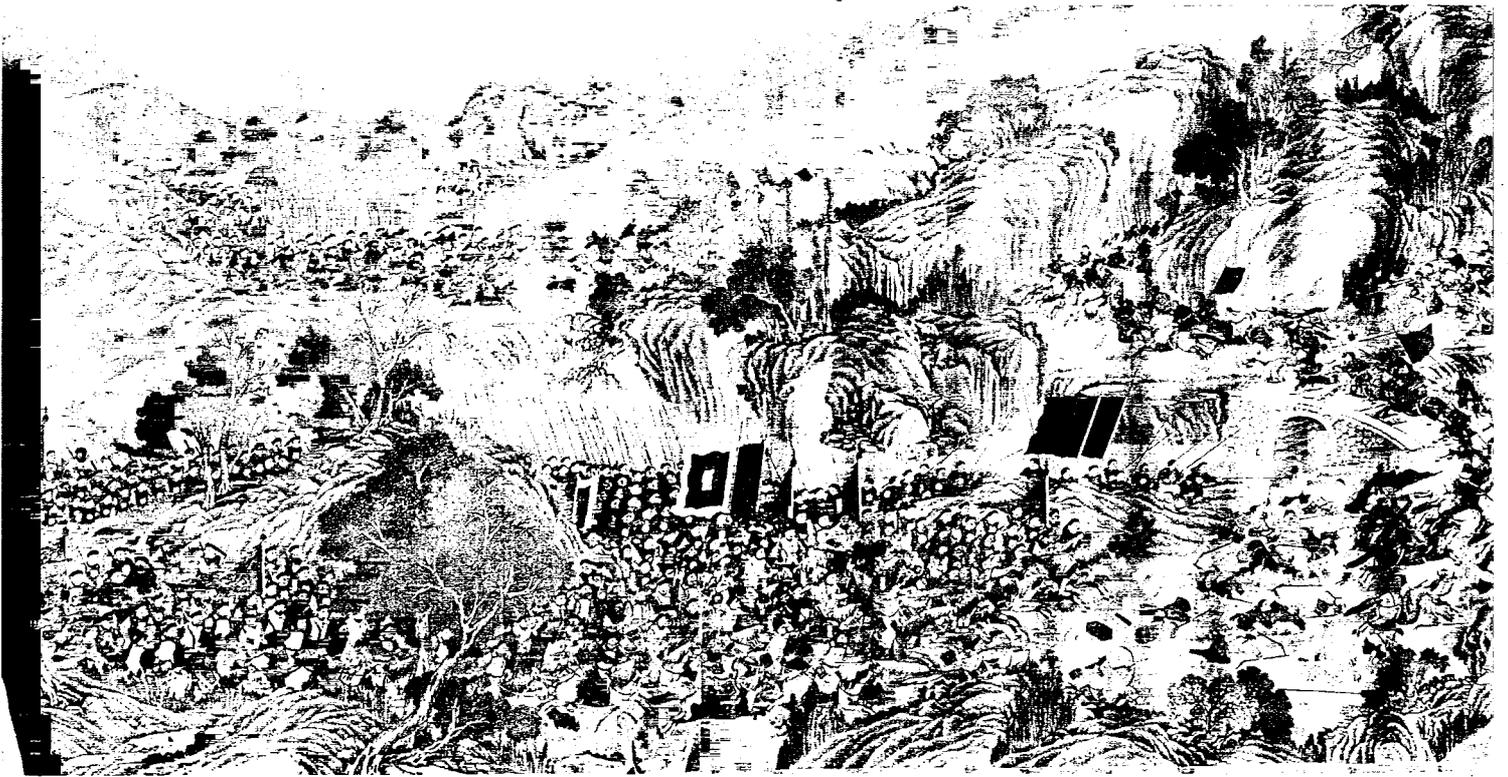


Fig. 2 Qingkuan *et al.*, *Victory over the Nian*. 1886–90. Set of eighteen paintings. Painting five: “Defeating the Nian Troops under the Command of Zhang Minhang in Shandong.” Ink and color on silk, 137.0 × 310.0 cm. National Gallery, Prague, Czech Republic.

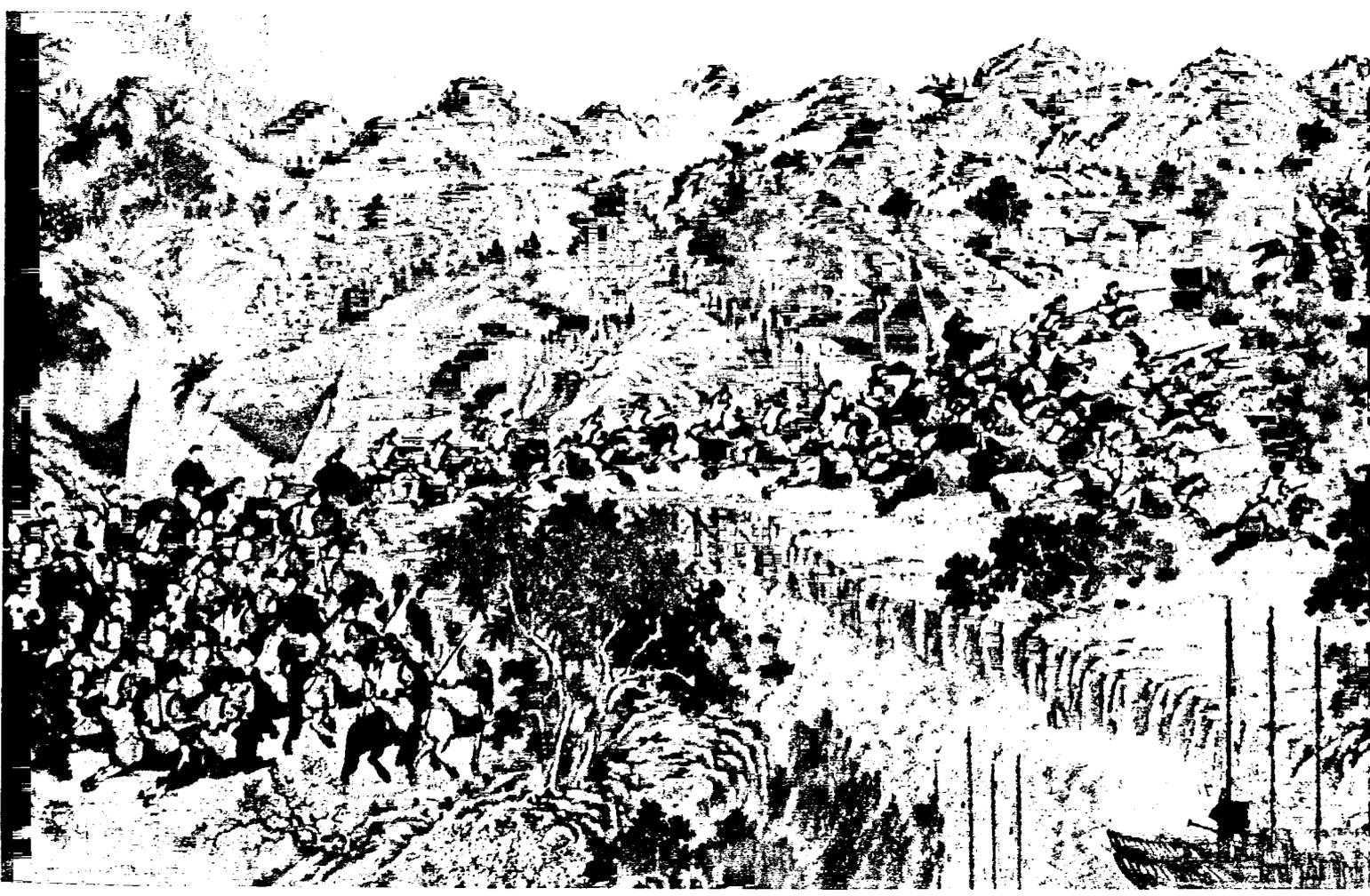




Fig. 3 Qingkuan *et al.*, *Victory over the Nian*. 1886–90. Set of eighteen paintings. Painting eighteen: “Triumphal Procession after the Campaign against the Nian.” Ink and color on silk, 137.0 × 310.0 cm. National Gallery, Prague, Czech Republic.



Fig. 4 Qingkuan *et al.*, *Victory over the Muslims (Shaanxi, Gansu and Xinjiang)*. 1886–90. Set of seventeen paintings. Painting three: “Battle at the Wei River.” Ink and color on silk, 136.0 × 310.0 cm. Sandringham House, Norfolk, United Kingdom.



Fig. 5 Qingkuan et al., *Victory over the Muslims (Yunnan and Guizhou)*. 1886–90. Set of twelve paintings. Painting ten: "Capture of Dali, Yunan." Ink and color on silk, 136.0 × 310.0 cm. Palace Museum, Beijing, People's Republic of China.

同治十二年正月二十四日內閣奉  
 上諭劉嶽昭奏英奏克復大理府城首逆伏誅全郡肅清一摺逆首杜  
 汶芳盤踞大理府城十有八載地險城堅負隅抗拒上年五月間官軍  
 攻克上下兩關賊勢漸蹙雲南巡撫岑毓英先將近省及東南各郡次  
 第肅清官兵前赴迤西規取大理十一月初十至二十等日總兵楊玉  
 科及派出各將弁開挖地道轟陷大理東南城隅乘勢擄入城內之土  
 城晝夜屢戰共斃賊二千餘名奪獲蓮花池一帶賊壘官軍攻逼土城  
 西北隅楊玉科復約東各軍四面合擊自率親兵策應施放開花大礮  
 再毀賊營燬樓木柵道首杜汶芳見事勢危迫於二十五日親率死黨  
 萬餘接仗楊玉科督軍兜勦至二十六日斃賊五六千名該逆敗入土  
 城內之偽城城急服毒其黨將杜逆獻解軍前正法岑毓英督軍至五  
 里橋地方環城密視探知餘首楊崇泰等仍行負固會商楊玉科  
 先期密派將弁暗入偽城分設伏仗十二月初七日楊玉科率同太和  
 縣知縣譚璋珍直至縣署駐紮初九日潛入偽府督令伏兵奔撲該逆  
 破樓賊眾驚亂岑毓英親率各軍與楊玉科內外夾擊連日血戰殺  
 賊萬餘賊分股由東南北三門狂竄我軍跟蹤追擊生擒偽大家宰馬  
 仲山等多名賊賊三千餘名生擒偽大司衙楊崇偽大經略蔡廷棟等  
 盡法德治並搜獲杜逆子女杜宗揚等分別收禁俾軍悉數殲除大理  
 全郡肅清覽奏深欣慰逆首杜汶芳首級即著於犯事地方懸竿示  
 衆毋庸獻藏來京其年未及歲之逆子杜宗揚杜廣揚杜成揚三名及  
 幼女一人著在該省嚴行監禁並著刑部查明例案咨行該督撫照例  
 辦理雲南巡撫岑毓英當兵餉支絀之時激勵眾心親臨前敵攻克堅  
 城派魁授首實屬謀勇兼裕調度有方深堪嘉尚著賞穿黃馬褂並賞  
 給騎都尉世職雲貴總督劉嶽昭與岑毓英和衷共濟克奏膚公著開  
 復革職留任處分交部從優議敘記名提督開化鎮總兵楊玉科著賞  
 給騎都尉世職並賞給白玉翎管一枝白玉搬指一箇小刀一柄大荷  
 包一對小筒包兩箇所有單開之總兵段瑞梅等均著交軍機處記名  
 遇有提督缺出請旨簡放段瑞梅等三員並賞穿黃馬褂恭摺並賞給  
 三代一品封典副將和賴著交軍機處記名遇有總兵缺出請旨簡  
 放並賞給達春巴圖魯名號遊擊李應舉等均著免補升參將遊擊  
 以副將儘先補用李應舉並賞給哈希巴圖魯名號都司和述廷等  
 均著免補升都司遊擊以參將儘先補用和述廷並賞給喀爾莽阿  
 巴圖魯名號楊建勳並賞給喀勒崇保巴圖魯名號范桂興等均著免  
 補都司以遊擊儘先補用並賞加副將銜范桂興並賞給曉勇巴圖魯  
 名號馬士成並賞給技勇巴圖魯名號守備董雲展等均著免補守備  
 以都司儘先補用並賞加副將銜把總輝師尹等均著以守備儘先補  
 用並賞加遊擊銜賞戴花翎勇目孫毓等均著以千總儘先補用並賞  
 加都司銜賞戴花翎楊天保著賞給三品頂戴道員岑毓英著賞給二  
 品頂戴補用同知直隸州知州范瓊章著俟補缺後以知府儘先補用  
 知府鍾念祖著俟補缺後以道員儘先補用知州楊鳳儀等均著免選  
 本班以同知直隸州知州儘先選用知縣馮乃熊等均著免補本班以  
 知州前補用並賞戴花翎候選府經歷縣丞朱席珍等均著免選本  
 班以州判不論雙單月前先選用並賞戴藍翎舉人趙錫光著以知縣  
 儘先選用並賞戴藍翎訓導蘇寶生著免選本班以知縣不論雙單月  
 儘先選用生員張兆芑等均著以從九品不論雙單月儘先選用張兆  
 芑等三員並賞戴六品頂翎其餘出力員弁及各路籌辦糧餉人員准  
 由該督撫查明覈實請獎陣亡之都司銜守備李正昌千總木朕芳把  
 總謝香廷擬保千總周文彩等九十七員傷亡之副將銜參將徐秀清  
 都司銜守備千總趙春山等均著交部從優議卹該部知道單  
 二件併發欽此

Fig. 6 Qingkuan et al., *Victory over the Muslims (Yunnan and Guizhou)*. 1886–90. Set of twelve paintings. Text for painting ten: "Capture of Dali, Yunan." Ink on silk. Palace Museum, Beijing, People's Republic of China.



Fig. 7 Anonymous, *Victory over the Taiping*. 1890–1900. Album of twenty photographs. Photograph nine: "Regaining Tongcheng, Hubei." 55.0 × 80.0 cm. Peking University Library, Beijing, People's Republic of China.



Fig. 8 Anonymous, *Victory over the Taiping*. 1890–1900. Album of twenty photographs. Photograph nine: "Regaining Tongcheng, Hubei." Text. Peking University Library, Beijing, People's Republic of China.

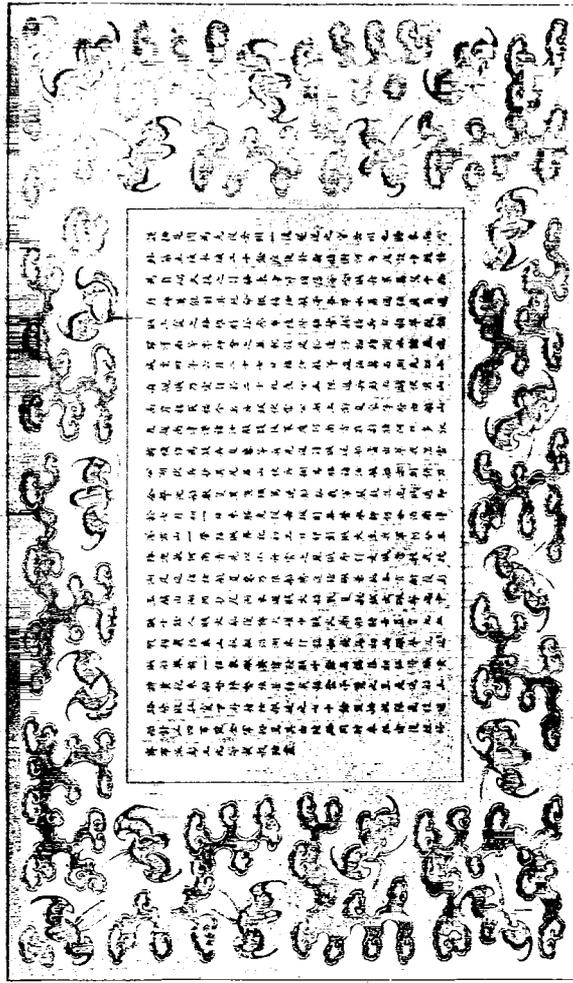


Fig. 9 Wu Youru, *Victory over the Taiping*. July-December 1886. Album of twelve leaves. Scene one: "Regaining Yuezhou." Ink and color on paper, 59.5 x 87.5 cm. The National Palace Museum, Taipei, Taiwan.

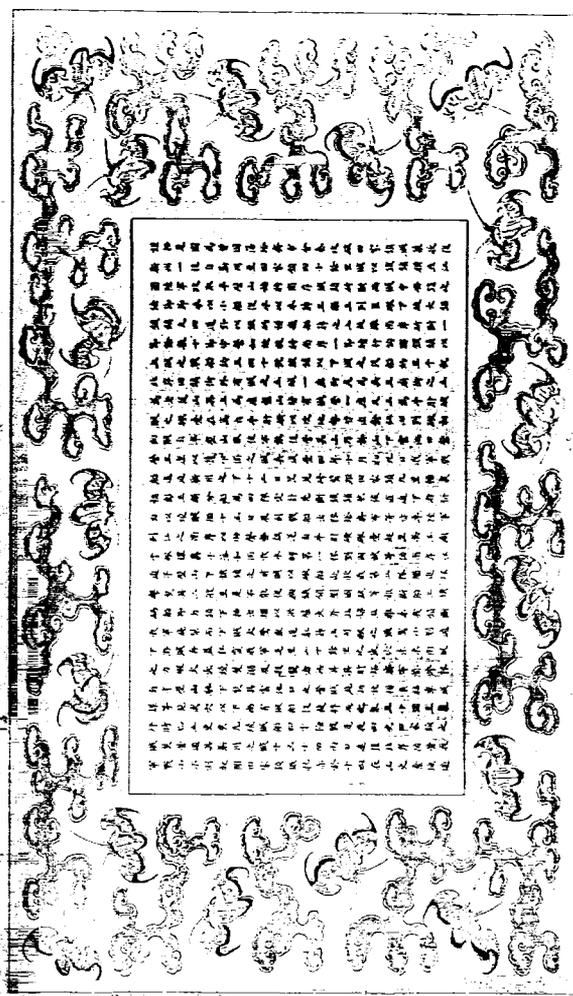


Fig. 10 Wu Youru, *Victory over the Taiping*. July-December 1886. Album of twelve leaves. Scene two: "Destroying the Bandit Lairs at Tianjiazhen and Regaining Qizhou." Ink and color on paper, 59.5 x 87.5 cm. The National Palace Museum, Taipei, Taiwan.

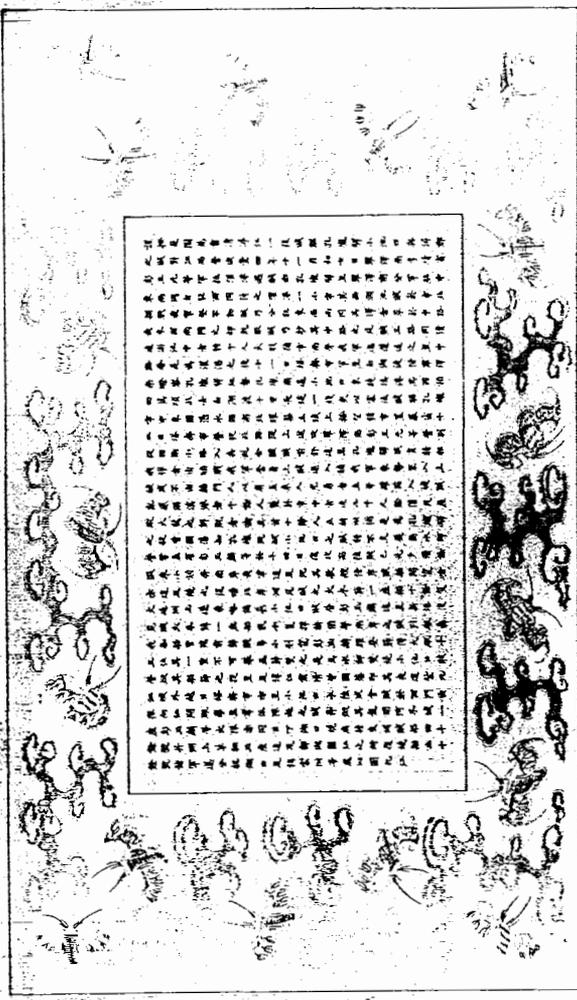
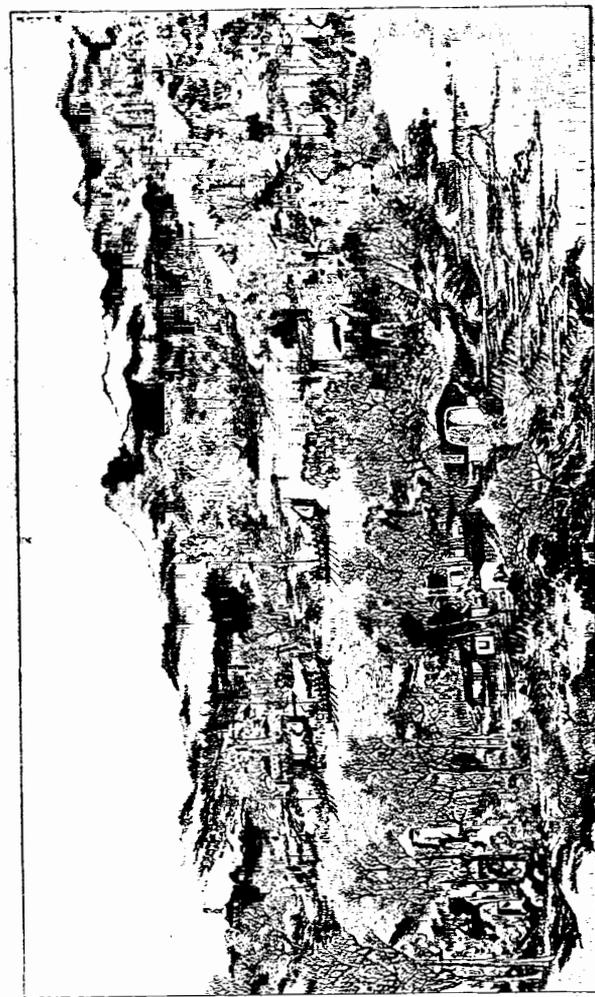


Fig. 11 Wu Youru, *Victory over the Taiping*. July-December 1886. Album of twelve leaves. Scene three: "Clearing the Xun River." Ink and color on paper, 50.5 x 87.5 cm. The National Palace Museum, Taipei, Taiwan.

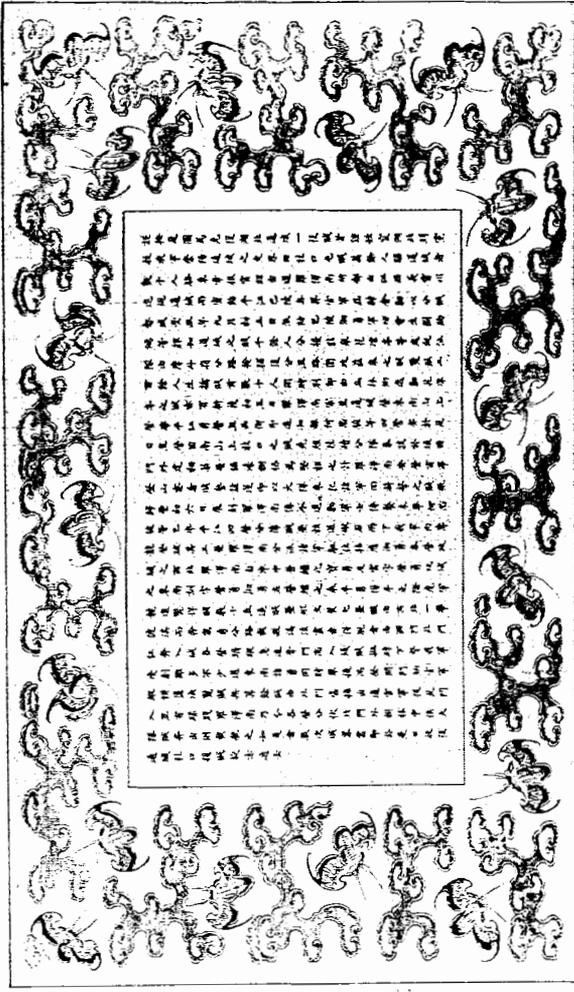


Fig. 12 Wu Youru, *Victory over the Taiping*. July-December 1886. Album of twelve leaves. Scene four: "Regaining Tongcheng, Hubei." Ink and color on paper, 50.5 x 87.5 cm. The National Palace Museum, Taipei, Taiwan.

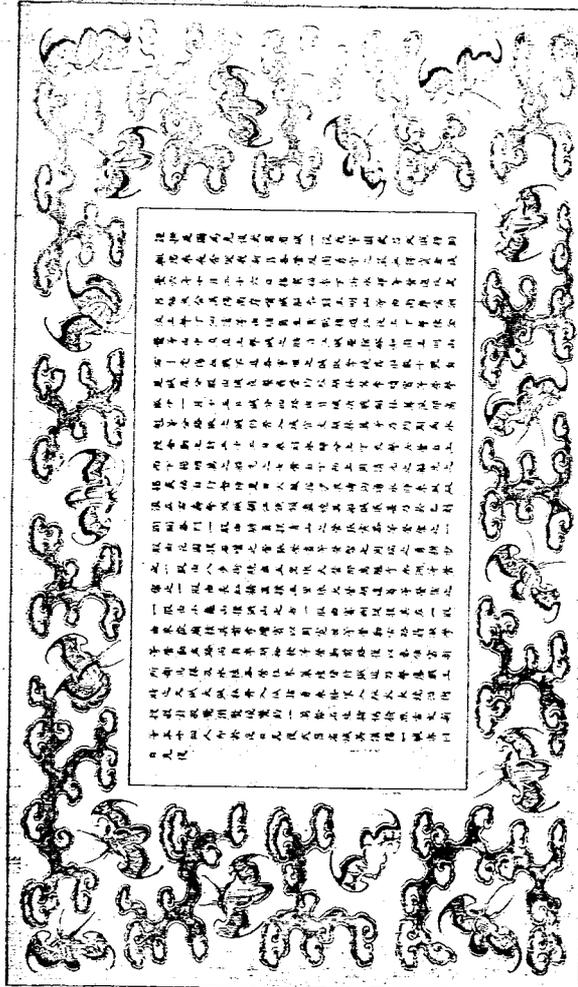


Fig. 13 Wu Youru, *Victory over the Taiping*, July-December 1886. Album of twelve leaves. Scene five: "Regaining the Provincial Capital Wuchang." Ink and color on paper, 50.5 x 87.5 cm. The National Palace Museum, Taipei, Taiwan.

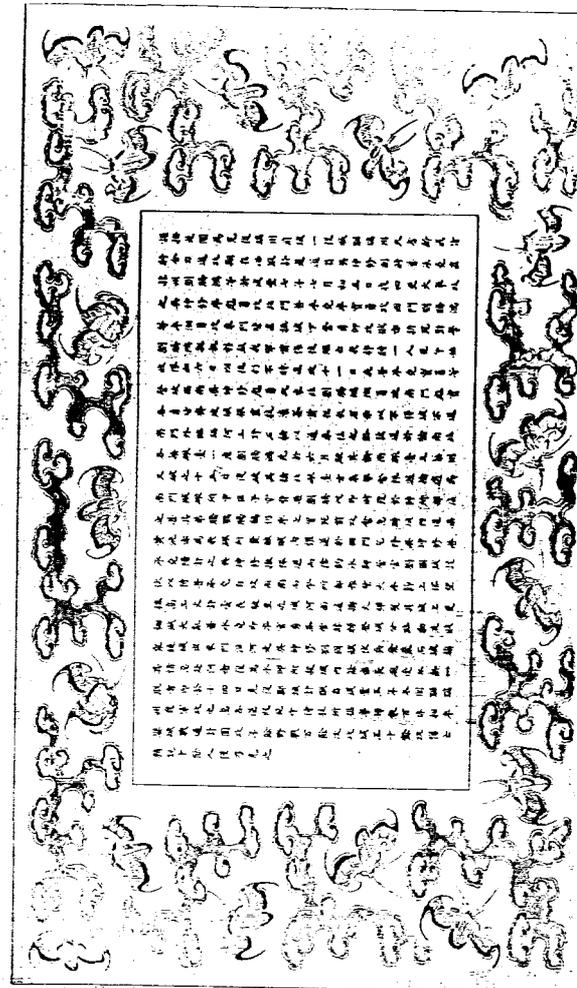


Fig. 14 Wu Youru, *Victory over the Taiping*, July-December 1886. Album of twelve leaves. Scene six: "Regaining the Provincial Capital Ruizhou." Ink and color on paper, 50.5 x 87.5 cm. The National Palace Museum, Taipei, Taiwan.

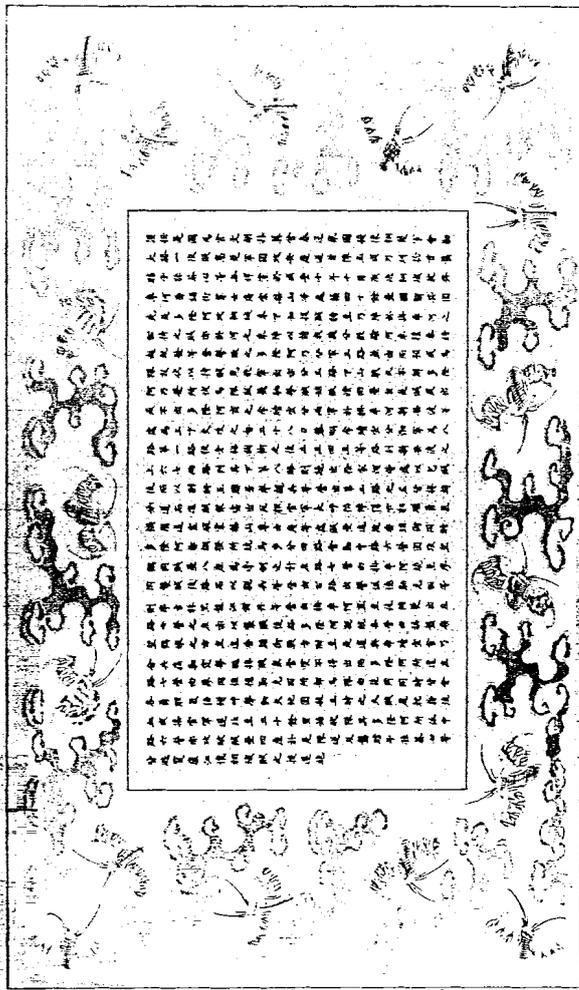


Fig. 15 Wu Younu, *Victory over the Taiping*. July-December 1886. Album of twelve leaves. Scene seven: "Chu Army Destroying the Reinforcing Bandits at Huaitong." Ink and color on paper, 50.5 x 87.5 cm. The National Palace Museum, Taipei, Taiwan.

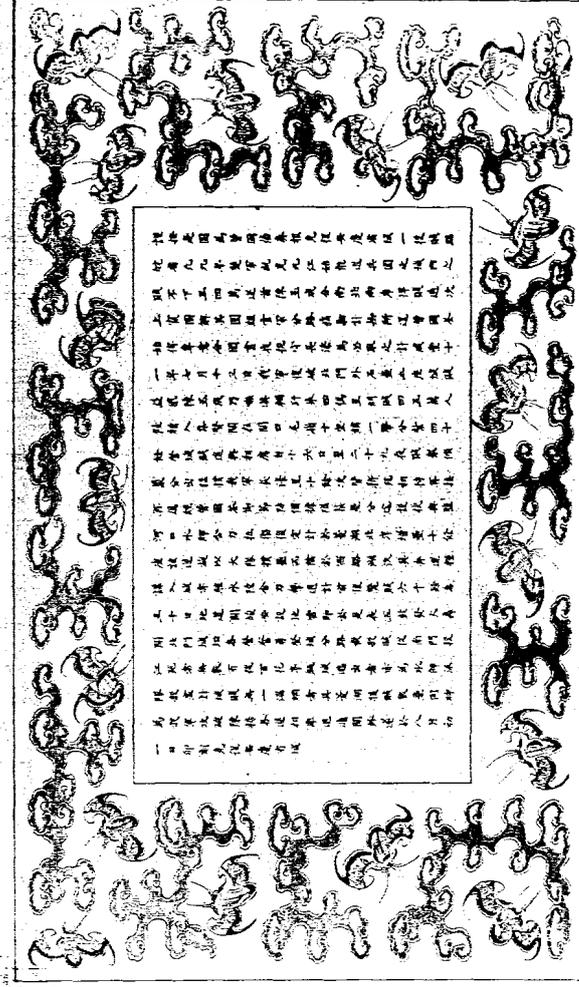
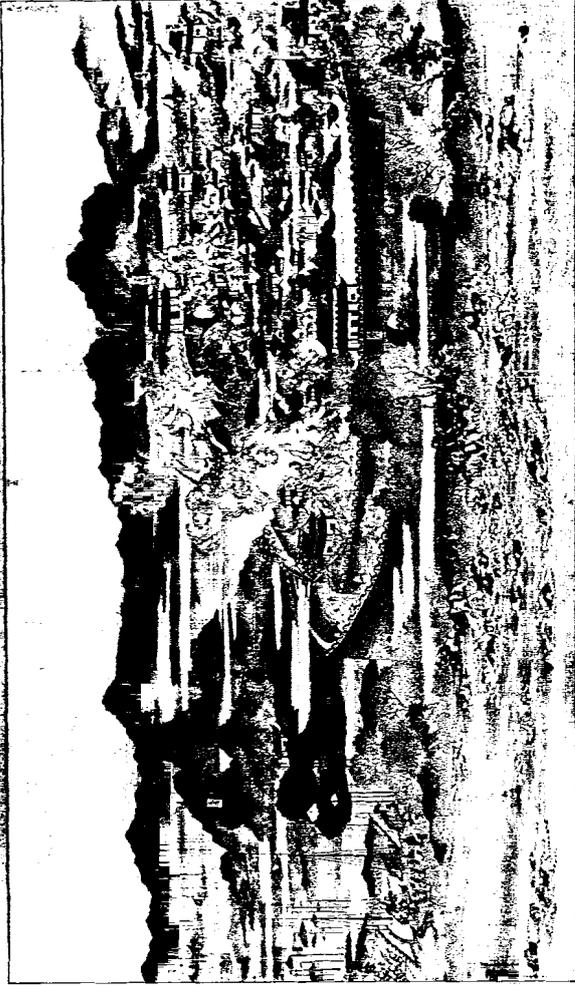


Fig. 16 Wu Younu, *Victory over the Taiping*. July-December 1886. Album of twelve leaves. Scene eight: "Regaining the Provincial Capital Anqing." Ink and color on paper, 50.5 x 87.5 cm. The National Palace Museum, Taipei, Taiwan.

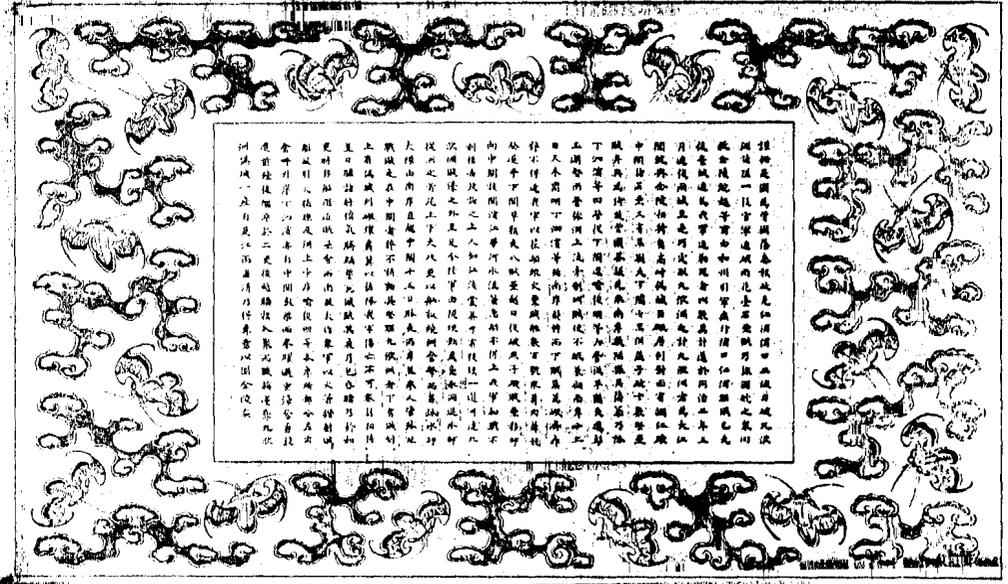
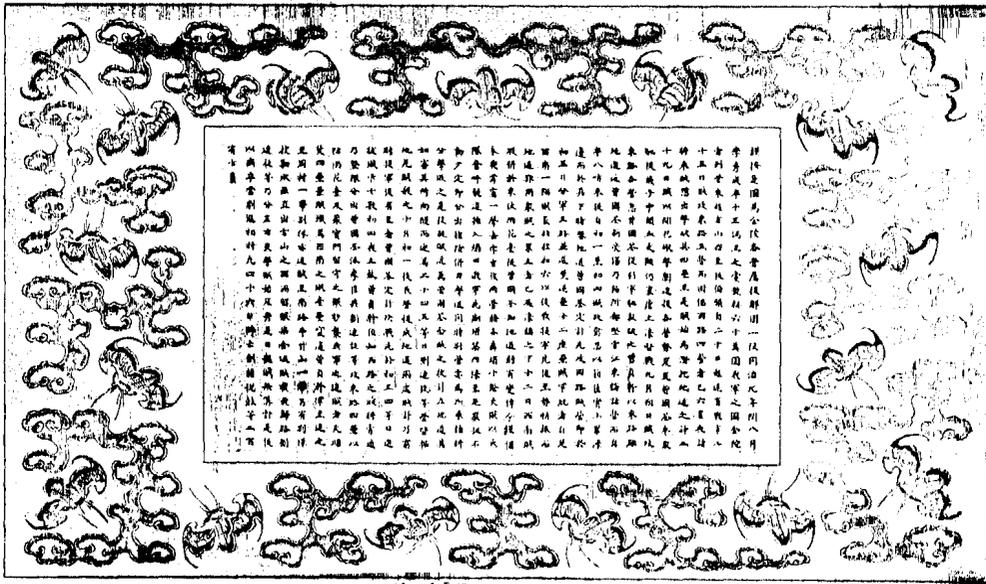
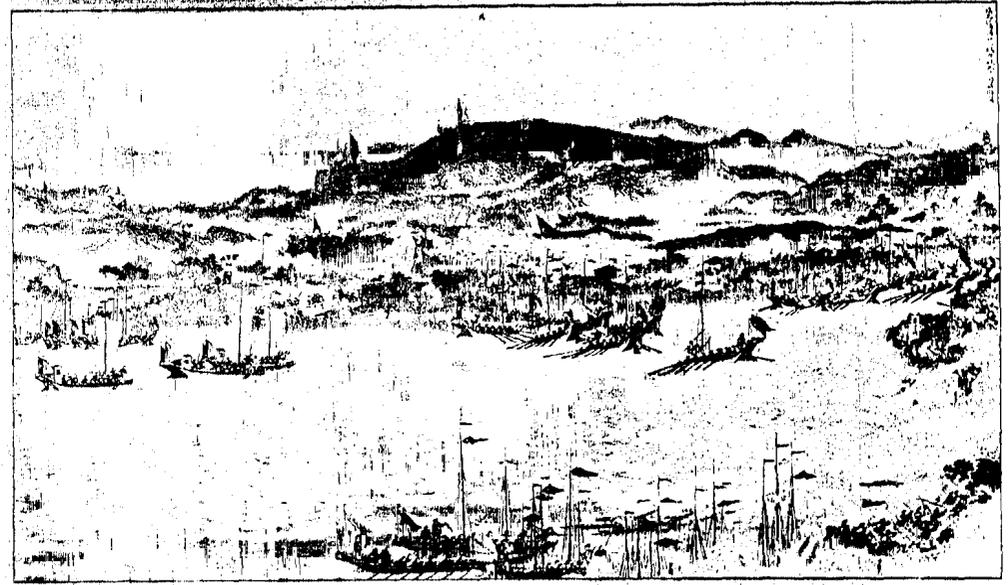


Fig. 17 Wu Youru, *Victory over the Taiping*. July-December 1886. Album of twelve leaves. Scene nine: "Lifting the Siege of the Army near Jinling." Ink and color on paper, 50.5 × 87.5 cm. The National Palace Museum, Taipei, Taiwan.

Fig. 18 Wu Youru, *Victory over the Taiping*. July-December 1886. Album of twelve leaves. Scene ten: "Regaining Jiangpu and Pukou, and Overcoming Jiufuzhu and Other Strategic Passes." Ink and color on paper, 50.5 × 87.5 cm. The National Palace Museum, Taipei, Taiwan.

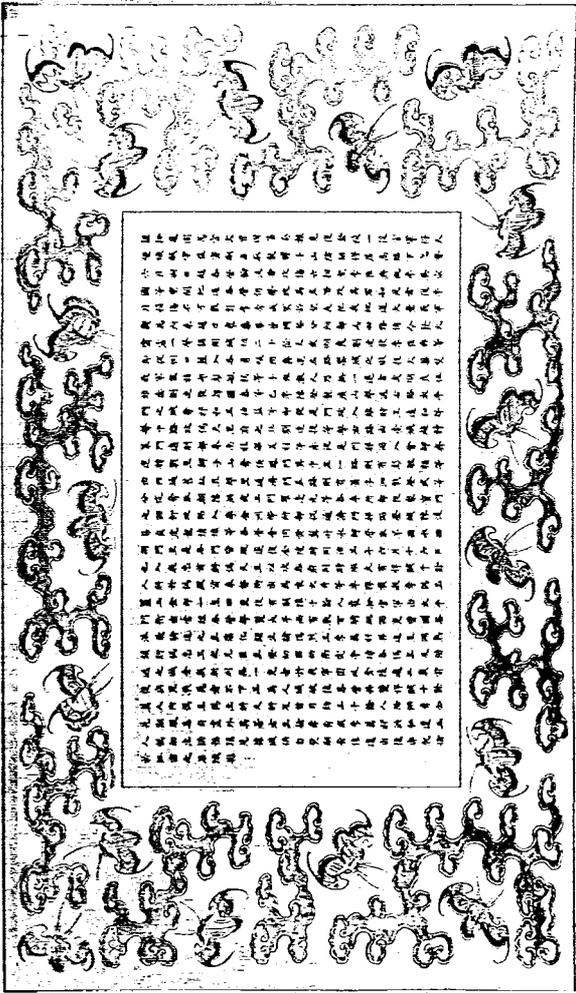


Fig. 19 Wu Youru, *Victory over the Taiping*. July-December 1886. Album of twelve leaves. Scene eleven: "Regaining Jinling." Ink and color on paper, 50.5 x 87.5 cm. The National Palace Museum, Taipei, Taiwan.

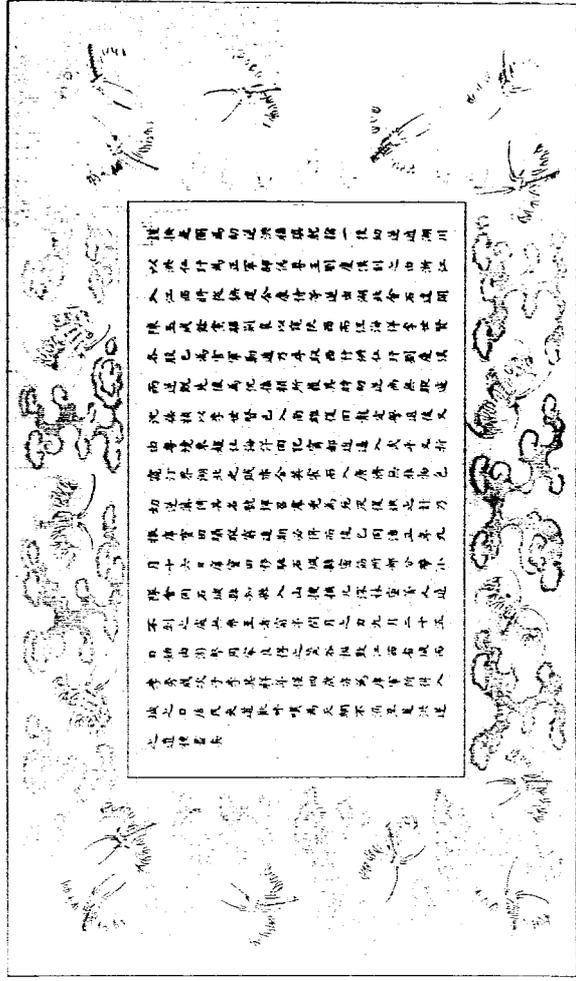


Fig. 20 Wu Youru, *Victory over the Taiping*. July-December 1886. Album of twelve leaves. Scene twelve: "Capture of the Junior Traitor Hong Fuzhen." Ink and color on paper, 50.5 x 87.5 cm. The National Palace Museum, Taipei, Taiwan.

克復瑞州府城圖

是圖為克復瑞州一役賊  
瑞州久省公齡或諸將  
合力進攻期在必取咸豐  
七年七月初五夜四更道  
員吳公坤修率勇攻北  
門副將善公承免率寶勇  
攻西門直隸州劉公騰鴻  
等率湘勇攻東門守直抵  
城下奮勇攻賊亦拚死  
對擊劉公執旗趕我軍  
前傷後繼陣亡將一員  
至午復始收隊十一夜普  
公攻西南其公攻東北盡  
撤運軍示以不得城不進  
南門外臨瑞河上踏石橋  
賊于南北兩岸各舉礮臺  
一處礮全騰鴻先于六月  
間破其橋南礮臺又幕則  
又破之十三日復破其橋  
北礮臺方舉營隊進橋  
邊為南門賊礮所中子穿  
過礮於陣所部傷之甚  
其弟騰鴻仍率之勇  
死前運時城內運糧實沈  
亦為我礮所斃賊城洶懼  
退于西門乞降吳公普公  
備許之吳公撤隊進而陰  
約水師營官劉公圖試設  
伏以待普公自攻西南而  
令所部礮于大木料上搭  
望樓高三丈許其後駛至  
近城河面遠舉大礮焚其  
城上更柵賊大亂普公即  
率寶勇各營隊梯登城分  
路如洗賊眾號城東門沿  
河丈吳公坤修劉公圖破  
伏兵發擊而賊其情急  
赴河者復為水師所殺城  
內餘匪長跪交刀無倖脫  
者即于十四日克復瑞城  
計賊自咸豐五年不閉瑞  
瑞州真軍攻之各逃逃既  
死守待援所獨守婦能守  
亦相率登降計圍城半年餘  
野戰百餘次攻城三十餘  
次至是始復

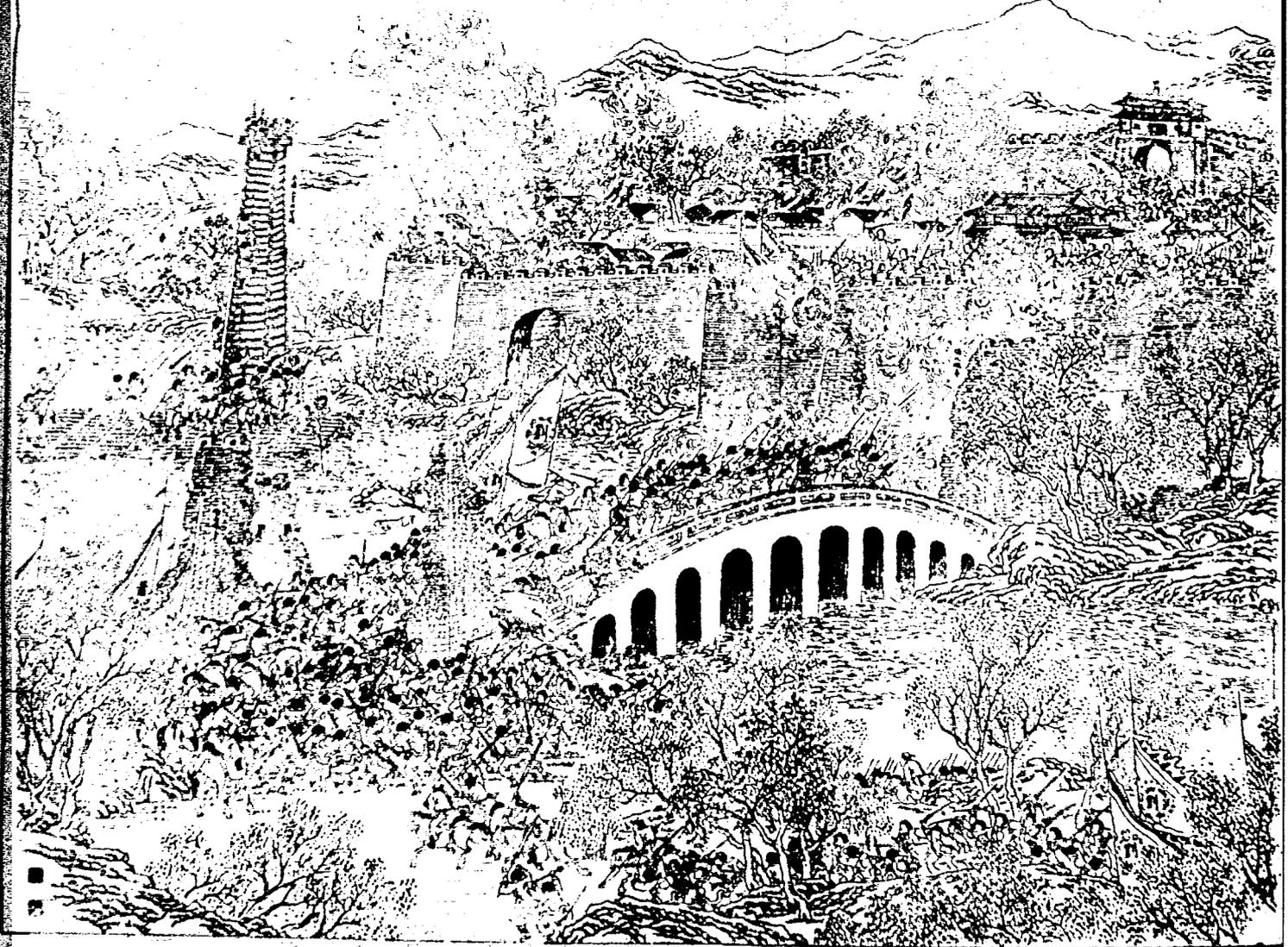


Fig. 21 Wu Youru, *Victory of the Taiping*. *Dianshizhai huabao* 23 July 1888–2 July 1889. Sixteen lithographic prints. Scene seven: "Regaining the Prefectural City Ruizhou." Library of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

raphy of Hong Xiuquan (1813–69), the “Heavenly King” of the Taiping Rebellion.<sup>44</sup> In 1993, the Taipei album was also shown in an exhibition concerning the official life of Zeng Guofan (1811–72), the chief architect of the government’s victory over the Taiping Rebellion. In an article written in connection with the exhibition, Feng Mingzhu, the curator of the exhibition, associates the Taipei album with the commission chaired by Qingkuan<sup>45</sup> and thus proposes an authorship and a date for the works. Feng’s proposition is both stimulating and intriguing, and are in accord with the document listing the subjects for the commission (Appendix 2). While the subject-matters of the Taipei and the Beijing works all nicely fit the list, thus suggesting strong connections with it, their total numbers fall short of the court requirement – eight were not painted at all. Furthermore, the Taipei and Beijing works are much smaller in size than the full-size cartoons in the Chinese First Historical Archives or the four surviving paintings in Western collections, and completely different in style. The aim of this study therefore is to reassess the authorship and date of those works and to examine the way in which they were associated with the commission in the original context by drawing on several contemporary sources.

The first source is the set of sixteen photo-lithographic prints in the Library of the School of Oriental and African Studies (hereafter cited as SOAS), London (fig. 21).<sup>46</sup> These prints are inserted and glued on the first pages of sixteen issues of *The Dianshizhai Illustrated News* (*Dianshizhai huabao*) published in Shanghai, the first and the most popular newspaper of this kind in the Chinese treaty-ports during the second half of the nineteenth-century. Since the prints are much larger than the newspaper in both dimensions, they were folded twice.<sup>47</sup> Comparison of the Taipei or Beijing works with these lithographs reveals that all twelve paintings in either set have corresponding prints, and the striking similarities between the two groups extend from composition to style, and to almost every detail of the representation. All but one of the prints bear two seals of the artist,<sup>48</sup> which read *Wu Jiayou* and *Youru*, names of the major illustrator of *The Dianshizhai Illustrated News* and one of the best known painters in Shanghai.<sup>49</sup> Therefore, it is almost certain that Wu Youru is also the artist who executed the paintings.

Among art historians who have been interested in Wu Youru’s life and works, it has been a widely known fact that Wu was once commissioned by Zeng Guoquan, commander-in-chief in the campaign to suppress the Taiping Rebellion and famous for capturing Nanjing the capital of the rebels in 1864,

44 Jonathan Spence, *God’s Chinese Son: Hong Xiuquan’s Heavenly Kingdom* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1996), 318–21.

45 Feng Mingzhu, “Zeng Guofan xiansheng wenxian zhan” (An Exhibition of the Documents Concerning Zeng Guofan’s life), *Gugong wenwu yuekan*, 1993.3, 92–108. Feng does not disclose her evidence for this attribution.

46 SOAS Library, *Dianshizhai huabao* (1884–95), The sixteen issues are *mao* 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, 10; *cheng* 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 12; and *si* 3, 6, 9, 12. *Mao*, *cheng*, and *si* are among the names of the Ten Celestial Stems and the Twelve Earthly Branches, used by the *Dianshizhai huabao* in the organization of the volumes.

47 I have given a detailed description of these prints, because they are of extremely fine quality in terms of the printing technique, and are rare among book collections. The Shanghai History Museum is the second institution, to my knowledge, which has some of these prints, but this set is incomplete. I am indebted to Bao Lihua for this information.

48 These two seals do not appear on the print *Capture of the Junior Traitor, Hong Fuzhen*, the Second scene.

49 For a recent study of Wu Youru’s life and works, see Zhang Hongxing, “Wu Youru’s ‘The Victory over the Taiping’: Painting and Censorship in 1886 China,” 122–45.

to produce a series of paintings to commemorate the victory over the Taiping.<sup>50</sup> It can be argued that this information has been derived mainly from the account given by the artist himself in the advertisement in the second issue of his own recently established *The Feiyongge Illustrated News* (Feiyongge huabao).<sup>51</sup> However, since the advertisement does not provide a precise date for the commission, at least three theories have been proposed. The first theory was proposed by Yang Yi, author of a biographical work on Shanghai artists, published in 1919. In his book Yang suggests that the commission was undertaken soon after Nanjing was captured (*i.e.* 1864).<sup>52</sup> If Yang did not draw his source directly from the advertisement in *The Feiyongge Illustrated News*, he might have used similar information provided in Tu Wei's 1909 preface, to *Wu Youru huabao* (The Masterpieces of Wu Youru), an ambitious collection of Wu Youru's surviving drawings.<sup>53</sup>

A different proposal, seemingly still current, was made by Zheng Yimei (died 1993), a journalist in Shanghai in the early twentieth century, famous in his later years for assembling anecdotes on the late Qing and early Republican periods.<sup>54</sup> Zheng's familiarity with the period encouraged Shanghai shudian in 1983 to commission him to write an up-to-date account of Wu Youru's life for the new edition of *The Masterpieces of Wu Youru*. Instead of suggesting that Wu Youru made the paintings soon after 1864, Zheng placed the date of Wu Youru's commission at the moment just before May 1884, when *The Dianshizhai Illustrated News* was established.<sup>55</sup> Zheng's proposal is seemingly more convincing than the earlier suggestion. He was probably aware that after Nanjing was captured, Zeng Guoquan immediately left his army and returned to his home in Hunan province on grounds of ill-health, but really to allay the court's anxiety over his growing fame and power.<sup>56</sup> Given the circumstances that prevailed in 1864, it would have been unwise for Zeng Guoquan to launch a project with the possible implication of self-glorification. But Zheng's theory also raises some problems. Zeng Guoquan was appointed governor-general of Liangjiang in February 1884 and he returned to Nanjing

50 Gong Canxing, "Wu Youru jianlun" (A Brief Note on Wu Youru), *Meishu yanjiu* 1990.3, 30–38; Pan Yaochang, "Cong Suzhou dao Shanghai, cong Dianshizhai dao Feiyongge: wan Qing huajia xintai guankui" (From Suzhou to Shanghai, from Dianshizhai to Feiyongge: a case study of the mental world of the painters in the late Qing), *Xin meishu* 1994, 65–72; Hiroyuki Takimoto, "Gakka Go Yujo to Seimatsu no jianarizumu tenkai – 'Shinbō' to 'Tensekisasi Gahō' no ichi sokumen" (The painter Wu Youru and the development of journalism in the late Qing – a sidelight from Shenbao and Dianshizhai huabao) *Ni Chu geijutsu kenkyū* 34 (August 1996), 67–78.

51 "As Dianshizhai took an initiative to publish the illustrated newspaper, it invited me to contribute pictures. Although connoisseurs judged my pictures as not false, there were only two or three pictures by one out of ten in each issue. Soon afterwards, I was summoned by Mr. Zeng Zhongxiang to paint the meritorious servitors and battle scenes from the pacification of the Yue bandits," *The Feiyongge Illustrated News*, no. 2 (September 1890).

52 Yang Yi, *Haishang molin* (The Ink Forest of Shanghai), 1919, repr. (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian, 1989), 78.

53 Tu Wei's preface, in *Wu Youru huabao* (The Masterpieces of Wu Youru), 1909, repr. (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian, 1983).

54 In 1981 Zhonghua shuju, one of the most prestigious academic publishers in China, published the first collection of Zheng's anecdotes, *Yilin sanye* (Miscellaneous Notes from the Art Forest). Two years later this book was supplemented by *Yilin sanye xubian* (A Sequel to the Miscellaneous Notes from the Art Forest).

55 Zheng Yimei's preface, in *Wu Youru huabao*.

56 See footnote 26.

in April. Since Zeng remained in that office until his death in 1890,<sup>57</sup> it is reasonable to propose that he had commissioned Wu Youru immediately after his arrival in Nanjing.

The third proposal for the date of the commission, also the most recent, is provided by Pan Yaochang,<sup>58</sup> who argues that it was granted soon after the establishment of *The Dianshizhai Illustrated News* that Wu Youru went to Nanjing to receive Zeng's commission. Evidence for this proposal derives from a key word in Wu Youru's advertisement, already mentioned, the value of which has been neglected. In the advertisement, Wu Youru connected his period at *The Dianshizhai Illustrated News* with that spent working on Zeng Guoquan's commission by using a temporal linking character, *xuan*, literally meaning "soon afterwards."<sup>59</sup>

Neither Yang Yi, nor Zheng Yimei, nor Pan Yaochang has provided new evidence to support their respective dating. To retrieve new information for dating the commission, the sixteen lithographs in *The Dianshizhai Illustrated News* again prove to be extremely important. The first battle scene appears in the issue published on July 24, 1888. Based on this date, a search through early issues of *Shen Bao*, another newspaper owned by the same entrepreneur as *The Dianshizhai Illustrated News*, reveals an announcement for the publication of the prints.<sup>60</sup> This announcement not only gives dates for the proposed publication corresponding to those of the actual issues in which the prints are inserted, but also makes it clear that Wu Youru went to Nanjing in response to Zeng Guoquan's summons in the summer of 1886, two years after *The Dianshizhai Illustrated News* was established, and that he returned to Shanghai the following year. Furthermore, it notes that while the paintings were sent to the court in Beijing when they were completed, Wu Youru kept a set of drawings and eventually took them to Shanghai, and it was the publication of these drawings to which *The Dianshizhai Illustrated News* announcement referred.<sup>61</sup>

57 *Ibid.*, 751.

58 Pan Yaochang, "Cong Suzhou dao Shanghai, cong Dianshizhai dao Feiyongge: wan Qing huajia xintai guankui" (From Suzhou to Shanghai, from Dianshizhai to Feiyongge: a case study of the mental world of the painters in the late Qing), *Xin meishu* (1994), 65–66.

59 See footnote 51.

60 *Shen Bao*, July 7, 1888.

61 *Ibid.*, "In the summer of *bingxu* year (1886) Mr. Zeng, the governor of Liangjiang, summoned Wu Youru, a history painter, to paint the military victories and the meritorious officials of the civil and military services in the Restoration for the purpose of presenting to the throne. It was a truly magnificent achievement. Mr. Wu returned to Shanghai when the execution of the paintings was completed in the next year, and with him he brought back the sketches for the commission, and showed them to us... We earnestly announced that the sketches would be published in the technique of lithography. They will appear on the front page of each issue of the illustrated newspaper from the sixteenth day of the sixth month. The purpose to do so is to inform the wide world of the unprecedented glory of the military strength of our country." To the best of my knowledge, Zheng Jinwen is the only person who has given a correct date for Wu Youru's commission. See his entry on Wu Youru in *Qingdai renwu zhuangao*, vol. 5 (Liaoning: Liaoning renmin chubanshe, 1989), 368. Although Zheng Jinwen does not give the source of his evidence, it is probably Peng Hongnian's *Ziguangge gongchen xiaoxiang bing xiangjun pingding yuefei zhantu* (The portraits of the meritorious servitors and the battle scenes from the Hunan Army's pacification of the Taiping Rebellion for the Purple Effulgence Pavilion), another lithographic production of Wu's sixteen drawings, published in 1900, because the name by which he refers to Wu's commission is the same as the title that Peng gives to his lithographic album. At the end of this album Peng dates the commission to 1886 and includes the two letters from Li Hongzhang and Zeng Guoquan relating to the commission.

The announcement does not associate Wu Youru's paintings with the project in Beijing. For whatever reason, it creates the image of Wu's works as a local project initiated by a high provincial official and the paintings as being related to the court only in the sense that they were to be presented to the throne. Yet the striking affinity of subject-matter between Wu's paintings and those produced under Qingkuan's command, as pointed out at the beginning of this article, strongly suggests that this cannot be a coincidence. Wu Youru's commission may have well been a part of the large commission planned and completed in Beijing in the sense that his twelve paintings, together with some as yet unknown works, functioned as a source of factual information concerning individual battles that enabled Qingkuan and his associates at the court to complete the final versions, especially given that Wu's paintings were much smaller in size and Zeng Guoquan was one of the few commanders of the campaign still alive. Yihuan's letter to the Grand Council on November 11, 1885 also supports this hypothesis. In his letter Yihuan suggests that some distinguished war veterans should be asked to submit "base compositions" (*diben*) before the court painters worked on final paintings.<sup>62</sup> But it is the correspondence between Zeng Guoquan and Li Hongzhang, the governor-general of Zhili and perhaps the most powerful official in the provinces, published in 1900, that offers hard evidence for proving this hypothesis.<sup>63</sup> Li's letter was written on April 25, 1886, and Zeng replied on May 3. The two letters discuss a number of issues relating to the commission in its early stages, and reveal that both Li Hongzhang and Zeng Guoquan participated in the imperial commission. Soon after receiving Cixi's order on March 21st,<sup>64</sup> Yihuan divided the twenty subjects for the campaign against the Taiping Rebellion into two groups:<sup>65</sup> while five stayed with the Beijing Field Forces, fifteen were sent to Li Hongzhang in Tianjin. Li was ordered to take charge of the composition work for all fifteen. Zeng Guoquan was then brought into the commission. In late April, Li sent to Zeng thirteen out of the fifteen subjects he had received, and asked him to be in charge of them. Li explains that he was doing so because these thirteen are the battles won by the army from Hunan province which was under Zeng's command. Li's letter also directs that on the completion of the commission, Zeng should present the paintings through Li to the throne, and that they should include two versions, one in handscroll, the other in album format.<sup>66</sup> Zeng Guoquan completed his commission by the end of November 1886, as we know from another letter in Zeng's collected works.<sup>67</sup>

62 Yihuan writes: "It is appropriate to ask the veteran generals in the campaign to provide the base compositions, upon which the final paintings are to be executed." Beijing, CFHA, A, 3: Miscellaneous Documents – Yihuan's Letters, GX11/10/5 (November 11, 1885).

63 Peng Hongnian, ed., *Ziguangge gongchen xiaoxiang bing xiangjun pingding yuefei zhantu* (The portraits of the meritorious servitors and the battle scenes from the Hunan Army's pacification of the Taiping Rebellion for the Purple Effulgence Pavilion), 1900. Li and Zeng's letters appear at the end of the book, not paginated. Zeng's letter was also published in Xiao Rongjue, ed., *Zengzhongxiang gong quanji* (Complete works of Zeng Guoquan), 60 *juan* and a chronological biography in 6 *juan*, 1903 (reproduced in [Taipei: Chengwen chubanshe, 1969, edition]), 5283–90.

64 See footnote 16.

65 Li Hongzhang writes: "The Beijing Field Forces are not short of able painters at the moment, but it is difficult for them to paint when they know nothing about the actual people and events. To paint the portraits of the famous generals, it is impossible to attain a likeness if the painters have never seen their faces. Therefore, he (Yihuan) asked me to take charge of this commission, and sent me a list containing fifteen subjects." Peng Hongnian (1900).

66 "After examining the list, I discovered that most of the victories on the list were won by the Hunan army, and that over half of these battles had been fought under the command of you or your brother... I therefore selected thirteen sub-

There is a noticeable discrepancy between actual number of Wu Youru's paintings and those in the list that Zeng Guoquan received from Li Hongzhang. We now know that Wu's paintings include twelve battle scenes instead of thirteen as the letter indicates. It is possible that Zeng Guoquan sent the thirteenth composition back to Li Hongzhang for some unknown reason. According to Li Hongzhang's criterion of dividing the subjects, this unwanted composition could well be *Capture of the Major Traitor Shi Dakai and Others*, number sixteen on the list of the twenty subjects. Taking account of the nature of these thirteen subjects included in the fifteen sent by Yihuan, it is almost certain that Li's criterion had already influenced Yihuan's when he selected them from the original twenty. This being the case, the other two subjects that Li had received are undoubtedly *Occupying Suzhou City*, and *Overcoming Hangzhou and Yubang Cities*, because the former battle was fought by the army from Anhui province under the command of Li himself and the latter was won by another provincial army, whereas the remaining five battles on the list of twenty subjects were undertaken by the Manchu Banner army (see Appendix 4).

The album and the scroll in Taipei and Beijing are arguably two of the most important works by the Shanghai artist Wu Youru. Placed in a broad context, the identification of these previously unidentified compositions is significant. Together with the lithographic prints, contemporary photographs, the solitary surviving full-size painting by Qingkuan, and the associated documentation in the Qing state archives, they throw a remarkable light on a major imperial painting project. Furthermore, they present a fine case in the current art historical discourse whereby the existing concepts of art in the nineteenth century, as represented by that in the treaty ports, and the art in the treaty ports as diametrically opposed to that at the court, have to be reassessed.<sup>68</sup>

jects from the list and sent them to you for your inspection. I hope earnestly that you may start to look for fine draftsmen immediately and ask them to make paintings of two versions for each subject, which should represent the actual progress of the battle and its geographical setting, with yellow cartouches glued on the painting. The two versions may be different in size. One should be mounted as a scroll, and the other as an album. The height of individual figures in the paintings is about five to six inches, but they must capture the likeness of the persons exquisitely. The commission also must be completed without delay. After being mounted with the same care, please send them to my office, where they will be gathered with other paintings and submitted to Prince Chun's (Yihuan) residence for presenting to the throne." *Ibid.*

- 67 Xiao Rongjue, ed., *Zengzhongxiang gong quanji* (Complete works of Zeng Guoquan), 60 *juan* and a chronological biography in 6 *juan*, 1903 (reproduced in Taipei: Chengwen chuban she, 1969), 5314–17. The letter is addressed to Peng Yulin, a retired general from Hunan. Zeng writes: "The paintings for presenting to the throne were fortunately finished by the mid-eleventh month of last year, and they include two versions of the battle scenes, in a large album and a handscroll." We know the date of completion also through Li Hongzhang's letter, acknowledging the receipt of the paintings. See Yu Huiruo, ed., *Li Wenzhong gong chidu* (Letters of Li Hongzhang), vol. 3, 1916, not paginated.
- 68 A revised version of my doctoral thesis will be published under the title *The Empress Dowager's Victory over the Taiping: Painting and the State in Nineteenth-century China*. Through detailed study of this imperial commission, my book re-addresses some of the major problems pertinent to nineteenth-century Chinese art and culture, such as the role of the court in nation-state building, audiences for art, interplay between commercial culture, national identity, and political power, in a global framework.

## APPENDIX 4

A Check List of the Distribution of the Subject-Matter in the Commission for the Campaign against the Taiping Rebellion

Subjects	The Beijing Field Forces	Li Hongzhang	Zeng Guoquan
Huaiqing	Y		
Dulu	Y		
Linqing	Y		
Yuezhou			Y
Tianjiazhen			Y
Xunjiang			Y
Lianzhen	Y		
Fengguantun	Y		
Tongcheng			Y
Wuchang			Y
Ruichou			Y
Tongcheng			Y
Anqing			Y
Yuhuatai			Y
Jiufuzhu			Y
Shi Dakai		Y	
Suzhou		Y	
Hangzhou and Yuhang		Y	
Jiangning			Y
Hong Fuzhen			Y

## GLOSSARY

- Akesu 阿克蘇  
 Anqing 安慶  
 Baofeng 寶豐  
 Baoguzhai 寶古齋  
 Beile 貝勒  
 Biantang 汴塘  
 Cangtouzhen 倉頭鎮  
 Cangzhou 滄州  
 Chengjiang 澱江  
 Chuxiong 楚雄  
 Cixi 慈禧  
 Daban 達板  
 Dai Xi, posthumous *hao* Dai Wenjie gong 戴熙, 戴文節公  
*dalami* 達拉密  
 Dali 大理  
 Dezhong, the *nian hao* of Guangxu 德宗  
*Dianshizhai huabao* 點石齋畫報  
*diben* 底本  
 Didaozhou 狄道州  
 Duliu 獨流  
 Duo-long-a 多隆阿  
*Feiyingge huabao* 飛影閣畫報  
 Feng Mingzhu 馮明珠  
 Fengchenyuan 奉宸院  
 Fengchenyuan dang'an xinzheng 奉宸院檔案 新整  
 Fengguantun 馮官屯  
 Ganyu 贛榆  
 Gaobao 高寶  
 Gaojiabao 高家寶  
 Guangxu 光緒  
 Guizhou 貴州  
 Guyuan 固園  
 Haijun yamen 海軍衙門  
 Hangzhou 杭州  
 Haozhou 濠州  
 Heichengzi 黑城子  
 Hezhou 河州  
 Hong Fuzhen 洪福瑱  
 Hong Xiuquan 洪秀全  
 Huaiqing 懷慶  
 Huitong 懷桐  
 Huoqiu 霍邱  
 Jiangning 江寧  
 Jiangpu 江浦  
 Jianxiu 監修  
*Jiaofu dang* 交發檔  
 Jinling 金陵  
 Jingdong 景東  
 Jinghe 涇河  
 Jiufuzhou 九洑州  
 Jiwei 己未  
 Juheji 矩河集  
 Junjichu 軍機處  
*Junjichu dang'an* 軍機處檔案  
 Kala 喀喇  
*Kefu Suzhou shengcheng* 克復蘇州省城  
 Langzhou 廊州  
 Li Hongzhang, posthumous *hao* Li Wenzhong gong 李鴻章, 李文忠公  
 Liangjiang 兩江  
 Lianzhen 連鎖  
 Lingong 陵工  
 Linhuaiguan 臨懷關  
 Linqing 臨清  
 Liuan 六安  
 Liulichang 琉璃廠  
*lufu zouzhe* 錄副奏折  
 Lushun 旅順  
 Manasinan 瑪納斯南  
 Mengcheng 蒙城  
 Neiwufu 內務府  
 Pan Yaochang 潘耀昌  
 Pingliang 平涼  
 Pingyu 平輿  
 Pukou 浦口  
 Qiangbaizhen 羌白鎮  
 Qingkuan, *zi* Xiaoshan, *hao* Songyue jushi, Chenwai yesou, Xinsou 慶寬, 筱珊, 笑山, 松月居士, 塵外埜叟, 信叟  
 Qixian 杞縣  
 Qizhou 蘄州  
 Qujing 曲靖  
 Ruizhou 瑞州  
 Sanhai 三海  
 Shaanzhou 陝州  
 Shaerku 沙爾庫  
 Shangsiyuan 上駟院  
*Shangyu dang* 上諭檔  
 Shanqing 善慶  
*Shen Bao* 申報  
 Shenjiying 神機營  
 Shi Dakai 石達開  
 Shunning 順寧  
 Sucheng 宿城

*Suishou dang* 隨手檔  
Suzhou 蘇州  
Tianjiazhen 田家鎮  
Taoqingshan 桃清山  
Tongcheng 通城  
Tongcheng 桐城  
Tongzhi 同治  
Tulufan 吐魯番  
Tu Wei 屠維  
Wang Chengfeng 王承奉  
Wang Yu, zi Dufu 汪雱, 篤甫  
Wanggecun 王閣村  
Weihe 渭河  
Wu Jiayou, zi Youru 吳嘉猷, 友如  
*Wu Youru huabao* 吳友如畫寶  
Wubeiyuan 武備院  
Wuchang 武昌  
Wulumuqi 烏魯木齊  
Wushi 烏什  
Xianfeng 咸豐  
Xiaohe 蕭河  
Xila 錫賸  
Xingyi 興義  
*xinhai* 辛亥  
*xuan* 旋  
Xunjiang 潯江  
Yang Yi 楊逸  
Yanguan 鹽官  
Yanshan 鹽山  
Yihuan, Chun qingwang 奕環, 醇親王  
Yongning 永寧  
Yuan Ruishou 袁瑞壽  
Yue 粵  
Yuezhou 岳州  
Yuhang 余杭  
Yuhuatai 雨花臺  
Yunnan 雲南  
Yutu 輿圖  
Zaitao 載濤  
*Zajian lei, Chun qingwang xin* 雜件類, 醇親王信  
Zeng Guofan 曾國藩  
Zeng Guoquan, posthumous *hao*, Zeng Zhongxiang  
gong 曾國荃, 曾忠襄公  
Zhang Minhang 張敏行  
Zhang Zongyu 張總愚  
*zhangjing* 章京  
Zhaojia 趙佳  
Zhaozhou 趙州  
Zheng Yimei 鄭逸梅  
Zhengyang 正陽  
Zhenxiong 鎮雄

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