

Biographies, Series 4: The Various Princes, no. 1 / The Sons of Taizu, no. 1 /
Prince of Nanling [Zhu] Muyang¹
列傳第四: 諸王一 / 太祖諸子一 / 南陵王睦楨

Translated by Aaron Throness, 2nd Year MA Student
Department of History, The University of British Columbia
Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada
aaronthroness@alumni.ubc.ca

The Prince of Nanling [Zhu] Muyang, Prince Dao's ninth son,² was a highly perceptive and insightful individual. In 1562 the Censor Lin Run³ memorialized: "With regard to the tax revenues collected from across the realm, that which is annually dispatched to the capital totals 4,000,000 *shi* of rice. And yet, the stipends for each princely estate annually come to 8,530,000 *shi*. Now, Shanxi and Henan retain rice stocks in the sum of 2,363,000 *shi*. But the rice stipends for the imperial clansmen there total 5,040,000 *shi*. Even if there were no tax remissions for natural calamities, annual tax shipments would not be enough to supply even half of these rice stipends. Year after year [the princely population] proliferates; the state of destitution grows increasingly severe. How will we be able to shoulder these expenses?"⁴ The matter was referred to the various princes for discussion. The [lunar] year following Muyang submitted a memorial with seven recommendations: he requested the establishment of clan schools in order to exalt virtuous teachings [among the clansmen]; the forming of an examination selection system in order to encourage talented clansmen;⁵ the undertaking of rigorous investigations in order to extirpate excesses; the removal of superfluous officials in order to remove those unworthily receiving salaries; the warning against chasing fame in order to extinguish greed; the institutionalization of tomb-sweeping in order to expand filial thinking; and the establishment of mourning regulations in order to economize on stipend expenses. It was ordered that these recommendations be sent down to officialdom for consideration. Thereafter princes gradually began to state their opinions on the benefits and drawbacks; Secretary Li Chunfang⁶ collected

¹ Zhang Tingyu 張廷玉 et al., comp., *Mingshi* 明史 (Beijing 北京: Zhonghua shuju 中華書局, 1974), 116.3568. I do not include the Zhonghua shuju editors's annotations. In this translation I have made use of the following text for translation: Paul W. Kroll, *A Student's Dictionary of Classical and Medieval Chinese*, rev. ed. (Leiden: Brill, 2017). Official titles generally follow: Charles O. Hucker, *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China* (Taipei: SMC Publishing, Inc., 1995).

This *Mingshi* biography for Zhu Muyang is essentially identical to – and must be derived from – this late Ming predecessor: Zhu Mouwei 朱謀埠, *Fanxian ji* 藩獻記 (1600, National Central Library, Taiwan), 1.9a-10a.

² His father was Zhu Anheng 朱安瀆 (d. 1499). Zhu Muyang (1499-1567) was himself a sixth-generation descendant of the Hongwu 洪武 Emperor (r. 1368-1398).

³ For a detailed biography, see: Jiao Hong 焦竑, ed., *Guochao xianzheng lu* 國朝獻征錄 (1616), 62.102a-105a.

⁴ The full memorial is preserved in: *Shizong shilu* 世宗實錄 (Taipei 臺北: Zhongyang yanjiu yuan lishi yuyan yanjiu suo 中央研究院歷史語言研究所, 1961-1966), 514.8448-8450.

⁵ These two proposals are referred to in: Roger V. Des Forges, *Cultural Centrality and Political Change in Chinese History: Northeast Henan in the Fall of the Ming* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003), 18.

⁶ L. Carrington Goodrich and Chaoying Fang, eds., *Dictionary of Ming Biography, 1368-1644* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), vol. 1, 818-819.

them all and submitted them to the throne. On the promulgation of the *Zongfan tiaoli*,⁷ many of Muyang's recommendations were adopted therein.⁸

[116.3568] 南陵王睦楨，悼王第九子，敏達有識。嘉靖四十一年，御史林潤言：「天下財賦，歲供京師米四百萬石，而各藩祿歲至八百五十三萬石。山西、河南存留米二百三十六萬三千石，而宗室祿米五百四萬石。即無災傷蠲免，歲輸亦不足供祿米之半。年復一年，愈加蕃衍，勢窮弊極，將何以支。」事下諸王議。明年，睦楨條上七議：請立宗學以崇德教，設科選以勵人才，嚴保勘以杜冒濫，革冗職以除素餐，戒奔競以息饕貪，制拜掃以廣孝思，立憂制以省祿費。詔下廷臣參酌之。其後諸藩遂稍稍陳說利弊，尚書李春芳集而上焉。及頒《宗藩條例》，多採睦楨議云。

⁷ Liang Manrong 梁曼容 offers an exhaustive overview of the *Zongfan tiaoli*'s contents: it was a comprehensive collection of reforms for the imperial clan, the overarching purpose of which was to resolve the court's dire financial straits: "Mingdai fanwang yanjiu 明代藩王研究" (PhD diss., Dongbei shifan daxue 東北師範大學, 2016), 303-313.

⁸ Imperial clan schools (*zongxue* 宗學) would not undergo meaningful institutionalization until 1569. For further details, see: Zhang Mingfu 張明富, "Mingdai zongxue shezhi shijian kaobian 明代宗學設置時間考辨," *Xinan daxue xuebao* 西南大學學報 (*shehui kexue ban* 社會科學版) 34, no. 6 (2008): 70-74.