

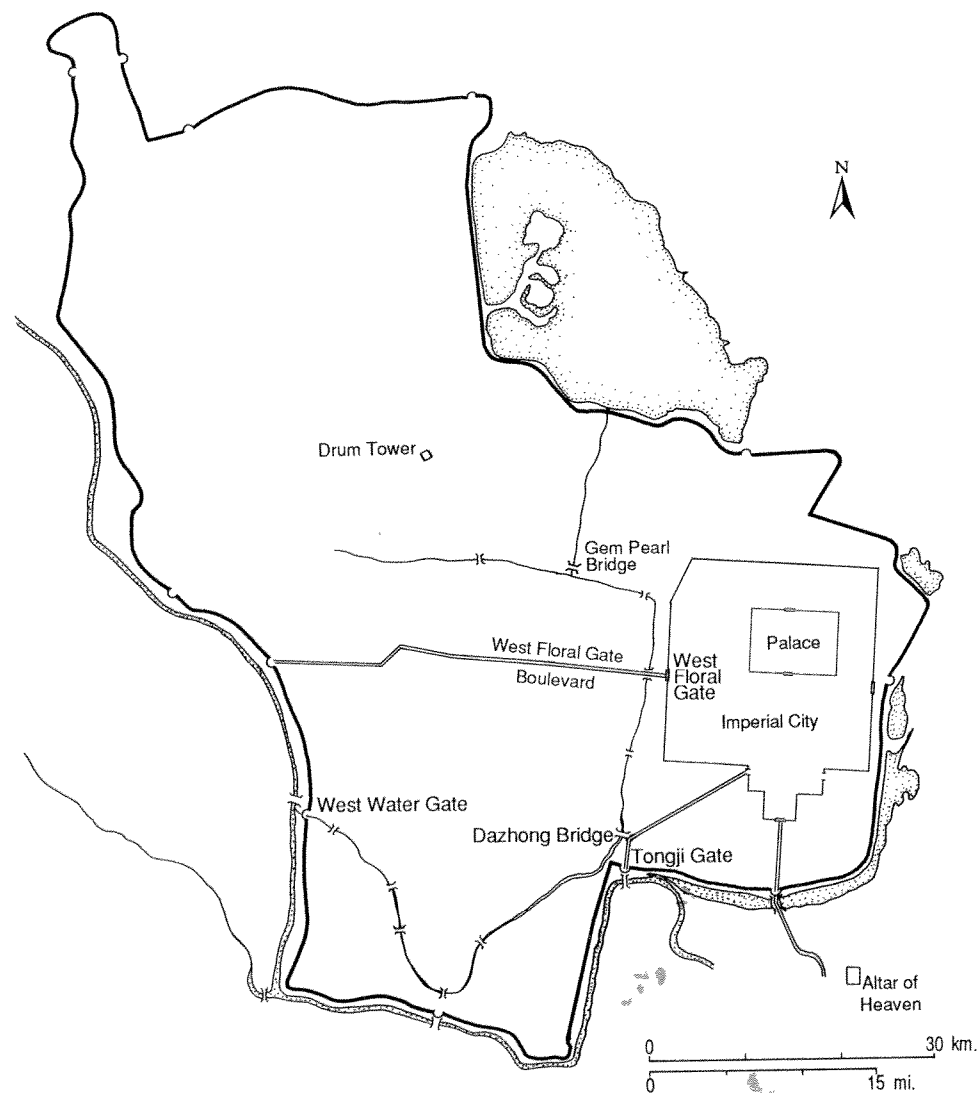
Manchus could be in their use of force, but Nieuhof could not have known to what extent that ruination had been perpetrated by the citizens of Nanjing themselves.

YAO WENXI When Ma [Shiyang] and Ruan [Dacheng] heard that Yangzhou had been crushed and that news from the north was urgent, on the 6th day of the 5th month [May 30, 1645] they had three [of their political enemies], Guang Shiheng, Zhou Zhong, and Wu Su, executed in the marketplace at Bamboo Mat Bridge. Two others, Zhou Biao and Lei Yinzuo, after drinking together one last time, both hanged themselves with lengths of silk that had been conferred on them in prison.* At that time Zuo Liangyu's whole army had come down the Yangzi River to Jiangnan [from Huguang Province] to punish Ma and Ruan for their crimes. So Ruan Dacheng, with Huang Hushan [De-gong], installed watchtowers along the riverbanks at Taiping and Wuhu [see map 3], and they had mounted cannon on a cordon of warships stretched across the river to block Zuo's advance. All day long, their troops and Zuo's had been killing each other.

Inside the Southern Capital no one was permitted to talk casually in the teahouses or wineshops or at the corners of streets or lanes. The police went out in all directions on patrol, and they straightaway grabbed anyone they saw conversing in public. Toward evening every household tightly closed its front door and didn't dare light any lamps. In sum, one couldn't utter one word about the situation to the north.

Ma and Ruan had clearly said that if the Tartars came, everyone should scatter. At that time I'd been tutoring students in my home. But because things in general didn't look good, and I couldn't concentrate on my reading, I went out walking in the streets. On West Floral Gate Boulevard on the 9th of the month [June 2] I saw some eunuchs dressed in military garb and armed with knives. They were transporting under guard a number of very small crates—so heavy that two or three men were needed to carry each one. They went out West Floral Gate toward South Gate Boulevard [map 4].⁹

*The presentation of a length of silk to a prisoner indicated that he had been given the privilege of committing suicide, rather than suffering the indignity of dying by the hand of an executioner.



Map 4. Yao Wenxi's Nanjing

The commander in chief of the capital guard, the Earl of Xincheng, Zhao [Zhilong], lived on West Floral Gate Boulevard, and my house was just to the right of his. Around dusk on the 10th [June 3], we saw foot soldiers and cavalymen completely surrounding the place. They told us to close our doors and not come out during the night. Toward midnight all we could hear were men and horses. Around three in the morning we heard some people shouting and others sobbing, so we couldn't but open the door and go out. Then we saw men and women carrying their sons piggyback or leading their daughters by the hand, going from south to north in a continual hubbub.

They all said the [Hongguang] emperor had left, but we still couldn't believe it. Just before dawn my paternal uncle [Yao] Zhongwen's young servant, named Chunbao, said, "Wait, and I'll go see." So my maternal uncle, Zilai, and another young servant, Liuxi, also went. In a short while, Chunbao came back and said, "The emperor really seems to have left." When we asked him how he knew, Chunbao replied, "I've been inside the palace, and going and coming back I saw no end of people stealing things there." When we asked him what sorts of things, he groped in his sleeve and brought out two palace fans and two boxes of palace incense, saying, "There were so many people, I couldn't get my hands on any more."

Before long, Uncle Zilai also came back, carrying two bolts of satin, four bags of silver beads, two small satin garments, and several porcelain cups and bowls. In addition, he felt around inside his sleeve and brought out some packets of roasted rice, soybeans, and bits of aloeswood all mixed together and half of a fresh summer squash. He said, "The emperor really has left. I went into the palace and saw three large chambers. In the middle one lay an eight-foot gold-lacquered bed, and in the two side chambers were cool [wicker summer] beds. The good things had all been looted; I got only the satins. Above the bed canopy was a mound of red boxes—similar to one another in design but in smaller and smaller sizes—that were stacked very high. The crowd of people pulled them down, and two boxes of silver and pearls and one box of aloeswood bits spilled onto the floor, where the aloeswood got mixed up with some soybeans and roasted rice. I brought some of that home in the two packets in my sleeve. This half of a summer squash was on the windowsill of one of the chambers. These two small garments had been thrown on the floor, so I took them, too. When I went back in, there was nothing left—only a white parrot. I tried to cage it

in my sleeve, but by the time I'd walked to West Floral Gate, my hands hurt from carrying so much stuff, so I dropped it."

Before dawn, sometime between three and five in the morning, countless court ladies carrying gold and silver fled from the palace. Some went back to their natal families, some were taken in by other families, and some went with men who were fleeing. When the looters had emptied the interior of the palace, they pillaged the eunuchs' residences. In taking knives from the palace armory, some got their hands or feet cut off. The silver, the fine satins, and the copper and tin utensils were first seized by some and then grabbed away by others, so that the original looters got nothing.

Also pilfered and brought out were various kinds of wine drunk in the inner quarters. Among those coming and going were two men who drank to one another as they went along the road, hoisting a crock of wine. When they got onto the bridge outside West Floral Gate, the two men—who'd been drinking the wine by grasping the mouth of the crock on opposite sides—finally fell asleep, and the crock was spirited away by others. The onlookers all got a big laugh out of that. After noon Liuxi returned. He'd grabbed a *yuanbao*,* but a bunch of people had divided it up, leaving him only two ounces.

During the night of the 10th the Hongguang emperor fled into the camp of Huang Degong at Taiping. So for three days in succession—through the 11th, 12th, and 13th [June 4–6]—there was no emperor. Zhao [the Earl of] Xincheng had his troops surround and secure his headquarters, and cannon were mounted on either side of the entrance. Throughout the city common people killed soldiers from Sichuan,[†] and they seized the residences of Ma Shiyong and Ruan Dacheng. Shiyong's son and daughter-in-law were nabbed and paraded around in the streets with their hands tied behind their backs, their captors carrying knives and yelling, "These are the son and daughter-in-law of the traitorous minister Ma Shiyong!" It was the same when they got their hands on the son and daughter-in-law of Wang Duo.

On the afternoon of the 12th I saw a bald man with a beard wearing a long commoner's gown of blue cloth in front of the Drum Tower. He was being marched along, hands tied behind his back, by a crowd

*Yuanbao were ingots of fine-grade silver cast in the shape of horse hooves or horse "shoes," which weighed from forty-five to fifty-five ounces.

[†]Especially fierce fighters from the native tribes of the western provinces had been brought to Nanjing to serve under the command of Ma Shiyong.

of people who were shouting, "This is the traitorous minister Wang Duo, who wouldn't recognize the crown prince of our master, the Chongzhen emperor." One by one, these captives were taken under citizen's arrest into the headquarters of the Old Master, Commander Zhao [Zhilong], who said, "All of them should be put to death. Let me keep them here to be gradually killed off." But that bunch wasn't fated to die then; they made use of Zhao's ploy to keep themselves alive.

By that time the other civil and military officials had hidden even their shadows. On the afternoon of the 11th I saw [the Earl of] Chengyi, Liu [Kongzhao], who was wearing a four-cornered scholar's cap and lined gauze garment, riding through the streets on horseback.* But on the morning of the 12th the rumor went around that his whole family had disappeared.

Inside the city walls every household piled up meat-chopping boards, damaged desks and stools, or broken vats and crocks to barricade their doorways. During the night a lantern was lit at every front door, and someone in each household kept guard there holding a weapon.

On the afternoon of the 12th a lot of beggars and ne'er-do-wells plucked Wang Zhiming out of the Central Ward jail and carried him in a throng into the Imperial City. From there he issued an official edict calling on the Earl of Xincheng to attend his court, but the latter stayed in his headquarters. All anyone saw were the soldiers who'd been in defense positions along the river running toward the city out of formation with spears, knives, and guns slung on their backs and saying, "The Qing troops have come!"

On the morning of the 13th [June 6] the Earl of Xincheng put out a notice, which read: "I am already in communication with the supreme commander of the Great Qing, who will have his own way of handling matters. You common folk need not be alarmed." Everyone vacillated between belief and doubt until noontime, when another long, itemized notice was posted throughout the city. It read in part: "The Great Qing army is approaching the foot of the city wall. You citizens are not to fight against it, thereby bringing on regrettable consequences." At this,

*Liu was an earl in the military aristocracy who was commander in chief of river control. He was the most outspoken of the military nobles to clash with civil officials who resisted the militarists' encroachments on bureaucratic authority. Yao's comment underscores how nonmartial the demeanor of the military nobles had become.

everyone in the whole city realized that the Qing troops had actually come.

All the civil and military officials, holding their calling cards, went outside the city wall toward the Altar of Heaven to meet the Prince of Yu [Dodo],* and everybody else in the city, including us, went out to watch. The Prince of Yu turned out to be a fine specimen of a man. His face was like a full moon, and his lips looked as if they had been daubed with vermilion. He hardly seemed to have just come through the wind and dust of a military campaign. Tall and broad-shouldered, probably not over forty years of age, he wore a large purple python-robe[†] with clusters of flowers in the fabric design. He sat on a mat on the ground, and to his side sat several men of high rank, including one Chancellor Wu,[‡] a man of very small stature who spoke smartly, saying, "We are members of one family; you common folk should not be afraid."

[The former Ming officials'] calling cards lay in a pile as big as a hillock. Having seen the emperor leave, each man had looked to his own fate and hidden out. But when the Prince of Yu arrived, they wanted to be officials again, so they came out in greeting. The Earl of Xincheng, Zhao Zhilong, met with the prince inside the Qing camp, and the prince favored Zhao with a seat and some tea.

Straightaway, Chancellor Wu was deputed to lead several dozen horsemen into the city to inspect the granaries. After Wu got inside the Imperial City and looked around, Wang Zhiming was brought out, the others hanging around were driven away, watchmen were assigned, and Manchu soldiers replaced the Ming soldiers who had previously kept guard atop the gates of the Imperial City.

During the three days after the emperor left, everything had been held together by the efforts of Zhao Zhilong. . . . When the Prince of Yu had reached the foot of the city wall, Nanjing was handed over without his having to expend one iota of energy. So the next day, when

*See Chap. 2, nn. 3, 4.

[†]The most formal attire of high-ranking officials, the "pythons" of which were writhing, embroidered dragons. Use of this type of ceremonial robe had increased gradually during the Ming dynasty, and in the Qing period it was authorized for titled noblemen and officials down to the seventh rank.

[‡]The Manchu nobleman Udari, of the Nara clan, who was a chancellor of one of the Three Inner Departments, the highest advisory and secretarial bodies of the Qing court at that time. His position was the formal equivalent of chancellor of the Hanlin Academy in the Ming and later in the Qing period, though Udari's duties in this period were clearly more martial than those of the usual Hanlin academician.

word went around that military officers were to shave their heads,* the first one to do so was Earl Zhao—inside the Qing camp. The Prince of Yu conferred on him a white horse with golden saddle, bridle, and stirrups, a Manchu hat and boots, and a white python-robe with a clustered-flower design.

When the Qing came into the city, everyone said that only military officers and soldiers needed to shave their heads, so before long quite a number of Nanjing military men deserted. After a few days an edict was issued notifying all civil and military officials, soldiers, and civilians that every male was to shave his head within three days and cultivate a coin-sized rat's tail [a queue]. Anyone who didn't conform was to be killed. The common people were afraid to die, so within three days the men had shaved their heads shiny clean.

Among the civil officials the first to shave his head was Zhang Sunzhen.[†] Upon seeing the Prince of Yu at West Floral Gate, Zhang also told his circle that his own ancestors had been Tartars and that he still had a portrait of them in Manchu costume in his home, so it was fitting that he shave his head. I don't know how they [Zhao and Zhang] got employed as officials in the first place. That the two of them had now slipped through the net of circumstance was something to be decried for thousands of years.

We young men cherished our hair,[‡] and when we saw people with shaven heads, they didn't seem human. At first some of us hid out, unwilling to shave; but later we didn't see anyone on the streets unshaven. We *had* to shave. Old Master Sheng, who'd been in charge of the imperial hunting park, lived not far from my family. But we saw only his butler, carrying a net cap[§] and sobbing as he walked back toward Master Sheng's home. We asked him why, and he said, "The old master of my household was unwilling to shave his head and concealed himself in another old gentleman's home. But today, having heard that everyone—big and small—in the whole capital city had shaven, he had no recourse but to shave as well. I saw him there crying,

*See Chap. 1, n. 20.

[†]A strident but corrupt censor identified with the Ma-Ruan clique who was responsible for hounding key self-styled "righteous" figures out of office.

[‡]As part of one's body, gotten whole from one's parents. Preservation of one's hair was an expression of Confucian filiality.

[§]A thin summer cap of open-weave silk that clung to the head and incidentally reduced the appearance of baldness—or having a shaven pate, in this case.

heartbroken, with the other old gentleman. And later when I saw him shaven, indeed, he looked very ugly. I can't help but shed tears, too." When he finished speaking, he walked on, carrying the mesh cap and sobbing.

On the 17th [June 10] the Prince of Yu deputed Chancellor Wu to go into the city with some soldiers. They demarcated the whole area north of Tongji Gate and Dazhong Bridge and west of the place called Small Camp near Gem Pearl Bridge [for exclusive occupation by Qing bannermen], and they ordered everyone to move out of the dwellings in that area within three days. The common people again were not very happy, but neither did they dare fail to accede. From the northeast of Nanjing to the southwest is a distance of twenty to thirty *li*. How could anyone move much at all? In some cases, one family teamed up with another to use a carrying pole—one member of each family at each end—lugging first an item for one family and then an item for the other. And the pawnshops didn't even want silver for redemptions; people were told just to identify and take back their own things. Weeping and wailing, people moved until breakfast time on the third day, when the whole Qing army entered the city. . . .

Each day I saw women who had been captured in Yangzhou being brought into the city several dozen at a time.* Manchu troops drove them from behind with leather whips, lashing them pitilessly, as though they were driving pigs. Also, I saw a woman, about fifty years old, whose hair had been cut off to a length of just four or five inches, sitting on an unhinged door,[†] crying loudly and cursing vehemently. Four people came and swiftly carried her away [on the door], followed by some Manchu soldiers who were taking her into custody—I don't know why. Every day I went into the Qing camp to look at the captured women. Some had disheveled hair and dirty faces and cried in anger; others used makeup and emollients and laughed with delight. Every day there were fathers ransoming their daughters, and husbands ransoming their wives. There was one woman who didn't want to go back and who wouldn't go until the Manchu soldier in charge of her got mad.[‡] Each woman had a price tag stuck into her hair. The best were going for only three or four taels. Those wearing clothes worth more than

*See Chaps. 2, 5, and 6.

[†]Chinese doors could easily be taken down and used, for instance, to cart goods and people.

[‡]For a variation of this story, see Chap. 5.

ten taels were being sold or ransomed for no more than a few tenths of a tael.*

Inside the camp velvets, pongees, and silk garments of various colors were piled up as high as the hillsides. The best rhinoceros-horn goblets had been chiseled in half and drilled with holes so the soldiers could fasten them to their belts for drinking tea and eating rice. When the Prince of Yu first entered the Imperial City, some who had looted yuanbao but not gotten a fair cut turned themselves in, and resentful bystanders turned in others. Numberless people lost their lives because of that. Then one day word went around that things pilfered from the Imperial City were going to be confiscated. So during the night people everywhere threw python brocades and armory knives into the levees, wells, and ditches.

In the autumn, when Hong Chenghou[†] came to relieve the Prince of Yu and the latter went back to Beijing, several hundred of the women who'd been captured—the ones between fourteen or fifteen and thirty years of age, not too fat or too thin—were taken along. As they went out West Floral Gate toward West Dryland Gate on horseback, they knew that the North was not as good as the South, and the sound of their lamentations shook the earth. No one among the onlookers could keep from shedding tears.

From this time forth, the Chinese world was at peace. Those who'd been living temporarily within the White Gates [of Nanjing] daily left the city and returned to their native places.

JOHANN NIEUHOF [On May 4, 1656] we came in sight of that Renowned and Royal City of Nanking [Nanjing; fig. 7]. . . ; we came to Anchor in the Harbour, and lay with our Vessels before the Gate Suisimon [Shuiximen], which signifies the [West] Water-Gate. The Embassadors went the next day to visit the three Governours of this City,[‡] and were carried in Palankins, and their Followers waited upon them on Horseback. . . .

*The author implies that the soldiers were so unsophisticated that they didn't know the worth of what they had.

[†]See Chap. 9.

[‡]The identities of these men are uncertain. At that time the governor of Jiangning (as the Qing then called Nanjing and the coextensive prefecture) was Zhang Zhongyuan. The administrative commissioner for Jiangnan, with particular responsibility for the Jiangning circuit, was Liang Fengming. And the Manchu general with the highest military authority in Jiangnan—Jiangning in particular—was Hahamu.

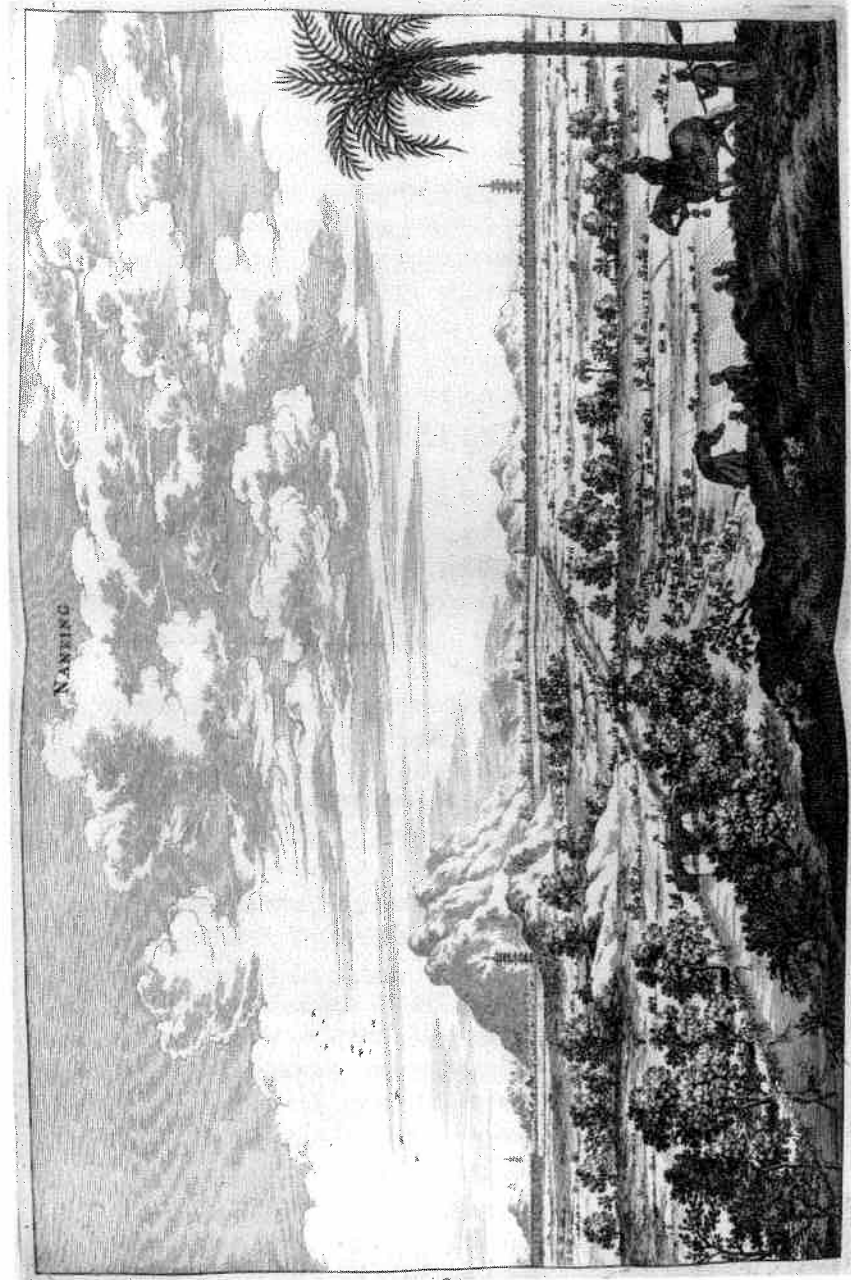


Figure 7. The outskirts of Nanjing in the 1650s, viewed from the west. Like most Chinese metropolises, Nanjing was horizontally, not vertically, extensive, with few buildings over two stories high. Although Nanjing was protected to the north and west by the wide Yangzi River, it still relied on stout city walls for security from attack, as did most Chinese cities in broad, level agricultural regions.