

An Overview of the Development of the New Text Movement

1. Western Han. Texts transcribed into modern style writing, which was the contemporary style of small seal script 小篆, were normalized during the Western Han dynasty and canonized by Han Wudi in 136 BC. These New Text classics were the basis of imperial ideology and the foundation of study in the imperial academies.

2. Eastern Han. The officially sponsored classics remained the New Text classics. But the Old Texts that emerged from the wall of Confucius' old home and other discoveries attracted the attention of philologically-minded classicists such as Zheng Xuan. Attention had to be paid to understanding the ancient writing styles; this encouraged the philological approach to classical scholarship. His learning became dominant in private scholarly circles, but not in the imperial academies.

- He Xiu (129-182) became the last exponent of the New Text classics. His works include 春秋公羊解诂, 公羊墨守, 穀梁废疾, and 左氏膏肓 (膏肓 gāohuāng, the area just below the heart where diseases originate. the title of this work could be rendered as "The Intellectual Diseases Caused by Zuo's Commentary).

Qing. until

The New Text movement remained dormant 冬眠 until the mid-Qing.

-1780s. Zhuang Cunyu 庄存与 (1719-1788) attained the high rank of senior vice-president of the Board of Ceremonies. He was the first great scholar during the Qing of the Spring and Autumn Annals according to the Gongyang Commentary, and founded the Changzhou school of Gongyang studies 常州学派. In the 1620's Changzhou had been the center of protests against the Ming dynasty because the court was controlled by eunuchs 太监. This protest was the first manifestation of New Text school interest in political reform that eventually resulted in the 戊戌变法 reform movement of Kang Youwei.

Zhuang authored three works on the Chunqiu: 春秋正词 12 卷, 春秋举例 1 卷, 春秋要指 1 卷; all were printed in 1827. His grandson and pupil was Liu Fenglu 刘逢禄 (1776-1829). He specialized in the Gongyangzhuan through his reading of Dong Zhongshu's Chunqiu fanlu. He admired the scholarship of He Xiu 何休 (129-183) and his 公羊春秋何氏解诂 (and 公羊墨守, 穀梁废疾, 左氏膏肓). Liu's works include 礼部集, 十一卷, 仪礼决狱四卷, 公羊春秋何氏释例三十卷, 后录六卷, 公羊春秋何氏解诂笺, 一卷, 答难二卷, 申何难郑四卷.

He was the teacher of Wei Yuan and Gong Zizhen.

-Wei Yuan 魏源 (1794-1856) wrote 诗古微二十二卷, 书古微十二卷, 元史新编九十五卷, 海国图志一百卷.

Gong Zizhen 龚自珍 (1792-1841), grandson of Duan Yucai. wrote on history and politics, researched bibliography and epigraphy 金石学. In 1818 he gained "Recommended Person 举人 degree (MA degree) and became interested in the Gongyang Commentary and studied in 1819 with Liu Fenglu. He appreciated this classic because it encouraged men to be involved in politics and to work for reformation. He earned his "Presented Scholar 进士 degree (PhD) in 1829, but because of poor

handwriting his career did not advance. His essays on political reform impacted Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao, both because of his thought and because of his powerful prose taught to him by his grandfather Duan Yucai. His ability in philology is shown in his work 太誓答问. This chapter from the Esteemed Documents narrates Wuwang 誓师 "harranging the troops" to encourage them to attack the evil ruler of the Shang dynasty.

-1898: Wǔxū Biànfǎ 戊戌变法 lit. 'Reform of the Wuxu year') was a failed 103-day national, cultural, political, and educational reform movement that occurred from 11 June to 22 September 1898 during the late Qing dynasty. It was undertaken by the young Guangxu Emperor and his reform-minded supporters. Following the issuing of the reformative edicts, a coup d'état 政变 ("The Coup of 1898", Wuxu Coup) was perpetrated by powerful conservative opponents led by Empress Dowager Cixi. New Text partisan Kang Youwei led the movement. He borrowed New Text ideas from Wei Yuan and Gong Zizhen to replace Neo-Confucian orthodoxy in order to legitimize imperial power and promote political reforms.

Conclusions

Both Old Text scholars and New Text scholars were heavily reliant on the approach of philology. It was the point of commonality shared between the two scholarly approaches. For the Old Text school, philology meant a focus on classical texts that did not support the imperial ideology, and so could be considered to make a political statement. Philology for New Text adherents was also a tool that focused on the texts of classics that supported a reformation movement against the government. Hence philology displayed political implications, both anti-government, with New Text philology more openly anti-government.