Chapter Seven

Methodological Innovators and the Expansion of Philology (III)

This chapter concludes my tripartite treatment of the primary tools of the textual critic with an examination of the mindset, methodologies, and genres of the textual commentator. The vehicle of treatment will be a close examination of the work of prominent textual critics during the Eastern Han that culminated in the commentator *primus inter pares*, Zheng Xuan. His preeminence is easily evident because in Fan Ye's 范曄 (398–445) "Grove of Confucians Biography" 儒林列傳, four of the scholarly lineages that transmitted the Old Text Classics culminated in him: the *Mao Version of the Poems*,[1] *Esteemed Documents*,[2] and the ritual texts *Offices of Zhou* and *Records of Ritualists*.[3] One classic, the *Changes*, passed through Zheng to the scholar Xun Shuang 荀爽 (128–190).[4] Table Three below summarizes this flow of classical lineages to Zheng Xuan. The only classic among the early Five Classics not mentioned as being connected with Zheng Xuan in any manner is *Mr. Zuo's Commentary on the Spring and Autumn Annals*.[5] But we know from other sources that Zheng's teachings were the basis of Fu Qian's 服 虔 (d. 195 BC) commentary, which was widely utilized for several centuries.[6] That four of the official versions of the Five Classics (counting the two ritual texts as one) came to circulate with his authoritative commentaries, another one directly based on his teachings, and one indirectly dependent on his teachings, bespeaks the incredible impact his classical exegesis exerted on the

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[1] *Hou-Hanshu* 79b.2576.
[2] *Hou-Hanshu* 79a.2566.
[3] *Hou-Hanshu* 79b.2577.
[4] *Hou-Hanshu* 79b.2554.
[5] *Hou-Hanshu* 79b.2587.
[6] It is recorded in Liu Yiqing 劉義慶 (403-444), *Shishuo xinyu* 世說新語, that Zheng overheard the hitherto unknown to him Fu Qian discussing his views on the *Zuozhuan*—views that seemed compatible with his own. He therefore turned over his unfinished commentary to Fu, who completed it under his own name. See Liu, *Shishuo xinyu* (ZZJC ed.), "Wenxuepian" 文學篇, 2.48; Richard B. Mather, trans., *Shih- Shuo Hsin-Yü: A New Account of Tales of the World*, 2nd ed. (Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, The University of Michigan, 2002), 98–9. Anecdotes concerning Zheng Xuan's family life, scholarship, and social interactions are scattered about this work, which supplements his *Hou-Hanshu* biography and provides new information.

tradition. Furthermore, in the authoritative canon of the *Thirteen Classics* established during the Song dynasty in the mid-thirteenth century, four of his commentaries are enshrined—one each of his *Annotations* 注 for the three ritual texts of the *Rites of Zhou*, *Ceremonials and Rituals*, and *Records of Ritualists*, plus his *Notes* 箋 on the Mao commentary on the *Poems* together with the preface to his *Register* 譜 .[7] No other historical classicist had more than one commentary incorporated into the Thirteen Classics. Added to this are his great contributions to the revision of the calendrical system. We are left with no choice but to seek beyond the sphere of Chinese classical scholarship to find his nonpareil: Joseph Justus Scaliger (1540–1609), famed for both his unmatched textual exegesis and for his calendrical researches.[8]

Table 3. Transmission of the Classics to Zeng Xuan.

Classic	Classics Commented On or Name of Commentary	Author
尚 書 *Esteemed Documents*	大夏侯尚書 The Esteemed Documents of Greater Xiahou	牟融
	小夏侯尚書 The Esteemed Documents of Minor Xiahou	王良
	歐陽尚書 The Esteemed Documents of Ouyang	桓榮
	古文尚書 Ancient Text Esteemed Documents	杜林, 賈逵, 馬融, 鄭玄
易 *Changes*	孟氏易 The Changes of Mr. Meng	范升
	費氏易 The Changes of Mr. Bi	陳元、鄭眾
	費氏易 The Changes of Mr. Bi	馬融
	易注 Annotations on the Changes	鄭玄
	易傳 Commentary on the Changes	荀爽
詩 *Poems*	毛詩 Mao Poems	鄭眾、賈逵
	毛詩傳 Commentary on Mao Poems	馬融
	毛詩箋 Notes on Mao Poems	鄭玄
禮 *Rites*	周官傳 Commentary on the Offices of Zhou	鄭眾
	周官注 Annotations on the Offices of Zhou	馬融
	周官 Classic of the Offices of Zhou	鄭眾
	小戴禮 Rites of Minor Dai	鄭玄本
	禮記 Records of Ritualists	鄭玄
春 秋 *Spring and Autumn Annals*	春秋左氏學 Learning on the Spring and Autumn Annals of Mr. Zuo	鄭興、陳元

[7] It should be recalled that He Yan's 何晏 (c. 195–249) masterful *Lunyu jijie* 論語集解, included in the Thirteen Classics, was based on Zheng Xuan's *Zhu* 注. For the Thirteen Classics, consult Jiang Boqian 蔣伯潛, *Shisanjing gailun* 十三經概論 (JXCS ed.).

[8] See the magisterial survey of Scaliger's contributions in these twin fields by Anthony Grafton, *Joseph Scaliger: A Study in the History of Classical Scholarship. I. Textual Criticism and Exegesis. II. Historical Chronology* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983–1993).

At this point, a quick overview of Zheng Xuan's impact on the history of classical scholarship after his death will anticipate some of the conclusions reached in volume three of this series. A recent dissertation by Hua Zhe traces Zheng Xuan's pervasive influence during the post-Han period up to the Tang era.[9] Hua's macro- view of classical scholarship during the period of Northern and Southern dynasties commences with the Han. He divides the long stretch of hermeneutic history from Han to Tang into three stages of development. First is the era from the canonization of the classics under Emperor Wu until Zheng Xuan's successful formulation of an overarching system of classical exegesis based on the *Rites of Zhou* to integrate understanding of the entire canon. Second is the post-Zheng Xuan era when classical scholarship worked out along lines established by Zheng, albeit sometimes in opposite directions, as Wang Su 王肅 (195–256) reacted against the former's idealism with a more pragmatic approach to the rites and as He Yan 何 晏 (c. 195–249) strove to overthrow Zheng's system by denying the organic relationship between classics. Third is the Northern and Southern Dynasties era when the "Clearing-Up-the-Meaning" or "Interpretation and Epexegesis" 義 疏 genre of hermeneutics dominated, when scholarly attention turned away from the pragmatics of ritual performance back to elucidating the textual relations between classics and their commentaries, and

[9] Hua Zhe 华喆, "Han-Tang jian jingdian chanshi bianqian shilun" 汉唐间经典阐释变迁史论, Peking University, 2011. A recent repackaging of the essential arguments of this dissertation is Hua Zhe, *Li shi Zhengxue: Han-Tang jian jingdian quanshi bianqian shigao* 礼是郑学：汉唐间经典诠释变迁史稿(Beijing: Sanlian Shudian, 2017).

when Zheng Xuan was transformed from an interpreter of the classics into an object of interpretation. In Hua Zhe's expansive vision of the history of medieval classical scholarship, Zheng Xuan is seen to be both the textual linchpin and interpretive gauge. And my introduction to the present volume already indicates the extent of the veneration of Zheng Xuan by scholars of the evidential research movement who took him as their methodological model and font of inspiration by borrowing his name for their personal designations or names of studios.

Despite the Old Text master Zheng Xuan receiving the lion's share of the attention in this chapter, the last master of New Text learning, He Xiu, will first make an appearance.

7.1. He Xiu and the Last Flame of New Text Classicism

New Text studies during the latter part of the Eastern Han dynasty were either in a state of growth, measured by the great numbers of masters and students involved in the classical project (the idealized assessment of Pi Xirui 皮錫瑞 [1850–1908]), or in a state of stagnation and decline, measured by the low quality of such classicists. This was the more realistic opinion of Fan Ye.[10] He summarizes the state of classical studies after the conference at the White Tiger Hall as follows:

> Since that time, the number of students traveling to the capital to study increased exponentially, up to more than thirty thousand students. Nevertheless, section and line commentaries gradually became neglected, and many followed one another in engaging in flowery and insubstantial studies; the trend of Confucian learning then declined. Proscribed party men had been executed, and many eminent and prominent Confucians renowned for their moral conduct had been exiled or dismissed. This led to resentment and wrangling among them. Even worse were the mutual accusations and suits, and the private practice of bribery.
>
> 自是遊學增盛，至三萬餘生。然章句漸疏，而多以浮華相尚，儒者之風蓋衰矣。黨人既誅，其高名善士多坐流廢，後遂至忿爭，更相言告，亦有私行金貨。[11]

"Party men" refers to the Confucian reformers, considered as their own political party, who were twice incarcerated or estranged at the behest of court eunuchs who were in power. These victims were usually referred to as "proscribed factions" (*danggu* 黨錮). The persecutions occurred in 166–167, during the reign of Emperor Huan (r. 145–168), and again in 169–189, virtually coterminous with the reign of Emperor Ling (r. 168–189). Such political incarceration and estrangement ensnared even famous classicists, the most eminent being Zheng

[10] See the discussion of this multivalent assessment by Xu et al., "Liang Han juan," 447.

[11] *Hou-Hanshu* 79a.2547.

Xuan.[12] But the fact that one commentary from this era made it through the Han to eventually become enshrined as the officially sanctioned exegetical work on one of the Thirteen Classics, *Gongyang's Commentary*, evinces its basic soundness in terms of both textual explication as well as hermeneutical argumentation, at least from the perspective of partisans of this classic. This commentary was authored by He Xiu.

He Xiu 何休 (129–182) served at court as Advisory Counselor but is known for his overall mastery of the Five Classics. His biography emphasizes this:

> He Xiu's style was Shaogong; he came from Fan county, Rencheng prefecture [Shandong]. His father He Bao had been Superintendent of the Lesser Treasury. As a person, he was simple and unaffected but inarticulate. He was a profound thinker and meticulously studied the Six Classics; among contemporary Confucians none was his equal. Because he was the son of a high-ranking minister, he was appointed a Gentleman of the Palace, but it was not something that he enjoyed; he resigned, feigning illness. He did not serve in local administrations on any level. In making his decisions, he always accorded with ritual propriety. The Grand Tutor Chen Fan recruited him to advise concerning political affairs. After Fan's insurrection failed, Xiu was punished by being dismissed and proscribed, so he composed his *Gongyang's Commentary on the Spring and Autumn Annals Explained and Glossed.* He deeply pondered in seclusion for seventeen years, and explicated the *Classic of Filial Piety*, the *Analects*, and such books on prognostication as those concerning the techniques of the sounds of horns portending the mores of the people, and the division of days into seven sections of different types of *qi*— all standard canonical works on the classics and the apocrypha. He did not depend on the wording of texts for his views nor did he conform to contemporary theories. Further, he utilized the *Spring and Autumn Annals* to critique more than six hundred items from Han history, and caught the original meaning of *Gongyang's Commentary* to a marvelous degree. Xiu was good at predicting calendrical dates and information on the weather. With his teacher, the erudite Yang Bi, based on the former understanding of Li Yu,[13] they critiqued the two other commentaries on the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, and hence composed

[12] For the collective biography of those involved in these affairs, excepting major figures who earned independent biographies for other reasons, see *Hou-Hanshu* 67.2187–224. For political background, see Rafe de Crespigny, "Politics and Philosophy under the Government of Emperor Huan 159–168 A.D.", *T'oung Pao* 66 (1980):41–83 and "Political Protest in Imperial China: The Great Proscription of Later Han, 167–184." *Papers on Far Eastern History* 11 (1975): 1–36.

[13] Liu Yu had participated in the White Tiger conference as an expert on the *Gongyang* tradition. He has an entry in the "Grove of Confucians" collective biography at *Hou-Hanshu* 79b.2582.

the *Gongyang Defended like Mozi* [would defend against a siege], the *Incurable Diseases in the Diaphragm of Mr. Zuo*, and *Crippling Diseases in Guliang*. After the proscription against Confucians was lifted, he was once again recruited, this time into the office of His Excellency over the Masses. All the high ministers recommended Xiu for the profundity and understanding of his classical learning, and that it would be appropriate for him to serve at the side of His Highness. But favored courtiers did not like him, so he was appointed as a Gentleman Consultant; on multiple occasions he expressed loyal statements. He was transferred to be an Advisory Counselor. During the fifth year of the Glorious Harmony reign period (AD 182) when he was fifty-four, he died.

何休字邵公，任城樊人也。父豹，少府。休為人質朴訥口，而雅有心思，精研六經， 世儒無及者。以列卿子詔拜郎中，非其好也，辭疾而去。不仕州郡。進退必以禮。 太傅陳蕃辟之，與參政事。蕃敗，休坐廢錮，乃作春秋公羊解詁，覃思不闚門，十 有七年。又注訓孝經、論語、風角七分，皆經緯典謨，不與守文同說。又以春秋駁 漢事六百餘條，妙得公羊本意。休善歷筭，與其師博士羊弼，追述李育意以難二傳， 作公羊墨守、左氏膏肓、穀梁廢疾。黨禁解，又辟司徒。群公表休道術深明，宜侍 帷幄，倖臣不悅之，乃拜議郎，屢陳忠言。再遷諫議大夫，年五十四，光和五年卒。[14]

Xiu's New Text leanings are apparent not only in the focus of his research, *Gongyang's Commentary* and his refutation of the other relevant commentaries on the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, but also in his approach, with interpretations that seemed based more on preconceived notions than on close textual analysis.

An earlier classicist from Rencheng Prefecture was Wei Ying 魏 應, who participated in the White Tiger conference at Luoyang in AD 79; he decided which questions to debate and later rose to high rank. Despite his contributions to the court, Wei's scholarly career brought him his ultimate renown, first as an isolated teacher with hundreds of students and second as an erudite at the imperial academy as a specialist in the Lu version of the *Poems*.[15] Wei Ying is mentioned at this point to identify a possible source of inspiration for He Xiu, his later countryman, and to emphasize the point that, as with Wei Ying at the White Tiger conference, so too with He Xiu, the intellectual battles between Old Text and New Text masters were commonly contested on the field of the three commentaries on

[14] *Hou-Hanshu* 79b.2582. An in-treatment of his life, thought, and works is Huang Pumin 黃朴民, *He Xiu pingzhuan* 何休评传 (Nanjing: Nanjing University Press, 1998). See also Rafe de Crespigny, *Bibliographical Dictionary*, 315. He Xiu's contribution to classical scholarship representing the New Text stance is surveyed in Xu et al., "Liang Han juan"," 459–71.

[15] *Hou-Hanshu* 79b.2571.

the *Spring and Autumn Annals*. *Guliang's Commentary* and *Gongyang's Commentary* represent the official if enervated New Text tradition, and *Mr. Zuo's Commentary* represents the private if increasingly popular Old Text school. This is easily perceived in the focal point of He's research.

An extended passage in Zheng Xuan's biography explains the intellectual byplay that He Xiu had with Zheng. After ten years of traveling, Zheng devoted himself to scholarship in isolation and turned his attention to He Xiu's work on the *Spring and Autumn Annals*:

> At that time He Xiu of Rencheng was devoted to the learning of Gongyang; subsequently he composed *Gongyang Defended like Mozi* [would defend against a siege], the *Uncurable Diseases in the Diaphragm of Mr. Zuo*, and *Crippling Diseases in Guliang*. Zheng Xuan then lifted Mozi's siege, lanced the diaphragm, and relieved the crippling diseases. When He Xiu saw them, he said, "Zheng Kangcheng [Xuan] entered my chamber, grasped my lance, and used it to attack me!" Earlier, after the restoration, such classicists as Fang Sheng, Chen Yuan, Li Yu, and Jia Kui disputed in debate over Old Text and Modern Text learning. Afterwards, Ma Rong responded to the Governor of Bodi Liu Gui, and Zheng Xuan responded to He Xiu. Their argumentation was penetrating and their evidence profound; from this point on, Old Text learning became illuminated.
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> 時任城何休好公羊學，遂著公羊墨守、左氏膏肓、穀梁廢疾；玄乃發墨守，鍼膏肓， 起廢疾。休見而歎曰：康成入吾室，操吾矛，以伐我乎！初，中興之後，范升、陳 元、李育、賈逵之徒爭論古今學，後馬融荅北地太守劉鏤及玄荅何休，義據通深， 由是古學遂明。[16]

This intellectual debate between He Xiu and Zheng Xuan turned out to be the turning point in the competition between entrenched New Text orthodoxy and emergent Old Text innovation. Wang Baoxuan argues that He Xiu's backward-looking, ahistorical exegetical strategy of linking up "patterns and examples" (*tiaoli* 條例) throughout the text to teach theologico-philosophical tenets could not compete with Zheng Xuan's forward-looking, more historical and philological approach. He also posits two extra-scholarly reasons for the ultimate triumph of Zheng Xuan's approach. First is the fact that immediately after Zheng Xuan's victory, contemporary New Text classicists become preoccupied with political threats to the survival of the dynasty, namely the Yellow Turban rebellion of AD 184 and the uprising of Dong Zuo 董卓 (d. AD 192) from 189–192, and hence lacked the leisure or urgency to come to He Xiu's defense. With a lack of vigorous defenders of He Xiu, Zheng's approach won by default. Second, Zheng's intellectual approach represented the interests of the "hereditary ministers"

[16] *Hou-Hanshu* 35.1207–08.

(*shiqing* 世卿), who were considered the only hope for reestablishing power in the midst of rebellion and chaos, and opposed the interests of the royal in-laws, who were seen as the cause of such disorder.[17] Despite the defenestration of He Xiu's scholarship from the historical marketplace of classicism, at least in mainstream Han learning circles, his foundational contributions to the study of *Gongyang's Commentary* must be acknowledged.

All works by He Xiu analyzing and defending *Gongyang's Commentary* that survived into the Sui period and were included in the bibliographical monograph in the *History of Sui* are listed here:

- *Chunqiu Gongyang Moshou* 春秋公羊墨守, 14 scrolls
- *Chunqiu Gongyang shili* 春秋公羊讁例, one scroll
- *Chunqiu Gongyangzhuan tiaoli* 春秋公羊傳條例, one scroll (lost during the Liang dynasty)
- *Chunqiu Zuoshi gaohuang* 春秋左氏膏肓, 10 scrolls
- *Chunqiu Guliang fajī* 春秋穀梁發疾, three scrolls
- *Chunqiu Hanyi* 春秋漢議, 13 scrolls, rebutted by Zheng Xuan's *Bo Heshi Hanyi* 駁何氏漢議, two scrolls, and Fu Qian's *Hanyi bo* 漢議駁, two scrolls (lost before the Sui dynasty)
- *Heshi Chunqiu Hanji* 何氏春秋漢記, 11 scrolls, compiled by Fu Qian[18]
- *Chunqiu yi* 春秋議, 10 scrolls
- *Chunqiu Gongyangzhuan jiegu* 春秋公羊傳解詁, 11 scrolls[19]

This last work was He's masterpiece and will be examined presently. He also compiled commentaries on the *Analects* and the *Classic of Filial Piety*, as noted in his biography.[20]

A final work of He Xiu is noted in the biographical notice devoted to Fu Qian: "Fu had great talent, and was skillful in prose compositions. He authored the *Explanations of the Commentary of Mr. Zuo on the Spring and Autumn Annals*, which is in circulation even up to the present time. He further used *Zuo's Commentary* to rebut He Xiu's own rebuttal of the *Sixty Items of Events during the Han*" 有雅才，善著文論，作春秋左氏傳解，行之至今。又以左傳駁何休之所駁漢事六十條.[21] The original work that earned He's rebuttal remains unidentified.

Both *Gongyang's Commentary* and *Guliang's Commentary* were composed in the hoary format of the catechism, a reflection of the original nature of master-disciple transmission. He Xiu explains this process for this text at *Gongyang's Commentary*, "Yingong" 隱公, second year:

> Confucius feared the harm that would come at a distant time; he furthermore knew that Qin would burn the *Poems* and *Documents*, so his vocal explanations were imparted orally and passed down to the Han. Mr. Gongyang and his disciple Hu Wusheng et al. were the first to record them on bamboo and silk texts, hence they have certain deficiencies.
>
> 孔子畏時遠害，又知秦將燔詩書，其說口授相傳至漢。公羊氏及弟子胡毋生等乃始記於竹帛，故有所失也。[22]

At "Yingong," first year, He Xiu contrasts the process and nomenclature of the transmission of *Zuo's Commentary* with that of the two competitor commentaries:

> The question is posed: "*Mr. Zhuo* derived from Zuo Qiuming, but it is written that *Mr. Zuo*, *Gongyang*, and *Guliang* derived from Zixia. Why is it not written that they were transmitted by Zixia?" The answer is: "The one who transmitted *Mr. Zuo* was Qiu Ming, who personally wrote it by hand in order to explain the intent of the classic. Later scholars thus wrote *Mr. Zuo.* As for *Gongyang*, Zixia imparted it orally to Gongyang Gao; for five generations Gao's commentary was imparted from one master to another. Reaching the reign of Emperor Jing of the Han [r. 188–141 BC], Gongyang Shou together with his disciple Hu Wusheng then recorded it on bamboo and silk. Hu Wusheng wrote that it derived from his own master, hence it was called the *Gongyang*; he did not mention Zixia. The *Guliang* commentary was also recorded on bamboo and silk; it is written that it was also recorded jointly with a personal master, hence it was called *Guliang*."
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> 問曰：左氏出自丘明，便題云左氏公羊穀梁出自卜商，何故不題曰卜氏傳乎？答曰： 左氏傳者丘明，親自執筆爲之以說經意。其後學者題曰左氏矣。且公羊者子夏口授 公羊高。高五世相授。至漢景帝時公羊壽共弟子胡毋生乃著竹帛。胡毋生題親師故 曰公羊不說卜氏矣。穀梁者亦是著竹帛者，題共親師故曰穀梁也。[23]

When such orally imparted commentaries were first recorded on bamboo or silk, they formed a so-called "section and line" (*zhangju* 章句) commentary. Lu Chun

[17] Wang Baoxuan, "He Xiu yu Zheng Xuan de zhenglun—jinguwen jingxue lishi de zhuanzhedian" 何修与郑玄的争论—今古文经学历史的转折点， in *Jinguwen jingxue xinlun*, 274–79.
[18] Recorded in *Jiu-Tangshu* 46a.1978.
[19] *Suishu* 32.930–2.
[20] See also Yao Zhenzong 姚振宗, "Hou-Hanshu Yiwenzhi" 後漢書藝文志, in *Ershiwushi bubian* 二十五史補編, 6 vols. (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1989), 2:2335 (31a); 2:2323 (29.c).
[21] Zhenzong, "Hou-Hanshu Yiwenzhi," 79.2583.
[22] Chunqiu Gongyangzhuan zhushu 2.5b.
[23] *Chunqiu Gongyangzhuan zhushu* 1.4a.

陸淳 (fl. AD 750), *Collected Commentaries on the Spring and Autumn with Assembled Examples* 春秋集傳纂例, citing his teacher Master Dan Zhu 啖助 (AD 724–770), explains this process in terms of the three commentaries on the *Spring and Autumn Annals*:

> Master Dan said, "Anciently, all of the analyses and explanations were imparted orally. Starting in the Han dynasty, they were recorded into section and line commentaries. . . . This is how we know that the interpretations of the three commentaries [on the *Chunqiu*] originally were orally transmitted. Later scholars then recorded them on bamboo strips and silk rolls and ascribed them to the authorship of an ancestral master..., The *Gongyang* and *Guliang* at first were also imparted orally. Later persons distributed them about the text of the classic, matching the general meaning. Hence there were many unreasonable and erroneous places that contravened the main interpretive thread. Nevertheless, the essence was that which had been transmitted by Zixia."
>
> 啖子曰古之解說悉是口傳。自漢以來乃為章句。……是知三傳之義本皆口傳。後之 學者乃著竹帛而以祖師之目題之。……公羊穀梁初亦口受。後人據其大義散配經文。古多乖謬失其綱統。然其大指亦是子夏所傳。[24]

Qian Mu's 錢穆 (1895–1990) definition of a "sections and lines" commentary brings the discussion back to just how classical lineages were formed: A disciple transcribes the oral teachings of his master into a written text, naturally forming a section and line commentary. This commentary both defines the physical parameters of this newly formed text and transmits the master's explication of the message of the classic. The existence of this commentary creates the so-called "reading rules of a lineage" (*jiafa* 家 法), the interpretation of a text handed down from scholastic generation to scholastic generation.[25]

[24] Lu Chun 陸淳, *Chunqiu jizhuan zuanli* 春秋集傳纂例 (SKQS ed.), 1. 4b, 5a, 5b.

[25] Qian, "Jiafa yu zhangju" 家法與章句, in *Liang Han Jingxue jinguwen pingyi* 兩漢經學今古文評議(Taibei: Dongda tushu youxian gongsi, 2003), 196–204. Zhang Baosan 張寶三, "Handai zhangju zhi xue lunkao" 漢代章句之學論考, *Taida Zhongwen xuebao* 14 (2001): 35–76, views the formal development of the genre as an Eastern Han phenomenon associated with Modern Text masters, oriented toward interpretation rather than textual exegesis. Lin Qingzhang 林慶彰, "Liang Han zhangju zhi xue chongtan" 兩漢章句之學重探, in *Zhongguo jingxueshi lunwen xuanji*, 2 vols., ed. Ling Qingzhang, 1:277–97, likewise does not regard the genre as a transcription of the text for the sake of transmission but as a transcription of a master's oral interpretation of the meaning of a particular classic; like Zhang Baosan, Lin credits the genre to Modern Text masters of the Eastern Han period.

Gongyang's Commentary is, in my view, the single best extant example of the section and line genre.[26]

The opening chapter of this work provides many instructive instances of just which sorts of glosses and comments are utilized by the *Gongyang* tradition of section and line explication of the work:

> *Chunqiu*: First year spring, the orthodox month of the king. *Gongyang*: What is the "first year"? The first year of a lord. What is "spring"? The beginning of the annual round. Who is designated by "king"? It designates King Wen. Why is the "king" mentioned first and the "orthodox month" mentioned last? The king corrects the month. Why mention that the king corrects the month? To emphasize the grand unity [of the Zhou]. Why is not the "duke" referred to as "assuming his ruling position"? In order to fulfill the intention of the duke. How would the "duke's intentions be fulfilled"? By the duke pacifying his state and returning it to Duke Huan.
>
> 元年春，王正月。元年者何？君之始年也。春者何？歲之始也。王者孰謂？謂文王也。曷為先言王而後言正月？王正月也。何言乎王正月？大一統也。公何以不言即位？成公意也。何成乎公之意？公將平國而反之桓。[27]

In this first entry, the categories of interpretive strategies include word glosses, the identification of historical persons (in this case the man behind the office), the explanation of argumentation, and the choice of terminology. I elide the final few questions and answers which concern an examination of historical events, specifically the reasons for Duke Yin yielding to Duke Huan; they are translated shortly below.

I now excerpt the next entry, which reveals another exegetical strategy, that of paronomasia:

> *Chunqiu*: Third month. The Duke together with Yifu of Zhulou met to make a covenant at Mie. *Gongyang*: What does "together with" mean? It means "with"; "to join," "together with," "as well as" all mean "with." Why does it sometimes state "to join," sometimes "together with," and sometimes "as well as?" "To join" [Minimal Old Chinese **gwâts*, Late Han Chinese ***guas*] is the same as "to collect" [reading *zui* 最 as an alternate orthography for *ju* 聚 **tsôts* ***tsuas*.] "Together with" **gəp* ***gip* is the same as "anxious [to meet]" **kəpkəp* ***kipkip*. "As well as"

[26] For a more expansive treatment of this genre, see Honey, *History of Chinese Classical Scholarship*, vol. 1, chap. 8.6, of which the present overview of the subject is a lengthy excerpt.

[27] *Chunqiu Gongyangzhuan zhushu* 1.5a–10a. The following translation appeared too late to be of service to the current study: Harry Miller, *The* Gongyang Commentary on The Spring and Autumn Annals*: A Full Translation* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).

grjəts **gis is the same as "to follow along" *grjətsgrjəts* **gisgis. "Together with" implies being willing to attend; "as well as" implies being forced to attend.

三月，公及邾婁儀父盟于眛。及者何？與也，會及暨皆與也。曷為或言會，或言及， 或言暨？會猶最也；及猶汲汲也；暨猶暨暨也。及我欲之，暨不得已也。[28]

The final passage of the first entry was elided above. I translate it now to indicate the sometimes soporific lengths to which this commentary goes in order to explicate the text, lengths that during the Eastern Han often earned opprobrium for this genre with its simplistic syllogisms, repetitive treatment, and unnecessary attention *ad nauseam* to the slightest nuance, which often discovered deep theological or philosophical significance at the shallowest spots, all of which ran on to an obscene bulk.[29] I regard *Gongyang's Commentary* as a pre-Han work, the oral message of which was transmitted into the Han and only recorded at that time. Therefore, the received text is a physical record deriving from the Han period, while its intellectual message derived from pre-Han times. Hence, I supply both Old Chinese and Late Han phonological reconstructions. This work obviously reflects pre-Han exegetical strategies even if the degree of its garrulous prolixity comes nowhere near the irritating extent reached by New Text commentators in the Eastern Han. Still, the precedents are apparent in this text:

> What does "returning it to Duke Huan" mean? Huan was young yet noble, Yin was senior yet low. Their relative positions were obscure, but none in the state realized it. Yin was senior and worthy, and the various ministers depended on his position, so they supported his leadership. If Yin had declined, he still would not have known whether or not Huan would have become the Duke. And even if Huan became the Duke, he would be afraid that the various ministers would not have seconded the young lord. Hence, setting up Yin would have only been in order to set up Huan. Yin was both senior and worthy, so why wouldn't it have been appropriate to set him up? Setting up the son of a legal wife was on the basis of seniority, not worthiness; setting up a son [of a non-legal wife] was on the basis of nobility, not seniority. Why was Huan considered noble? Because his mother was noble. Why was a son noble if his mother was noble? Sons are ennobled by their mothers, and mothers are ennobled by their sons.
>
> 曷為反之桓？桓幼而貴，隱長而卑，其為尊卑也微，國人莫知。隱長又賢，諸大夫扳隱而立之。隱於是焉而辭立，則未知桓之將必得立也。且如桓立，則恐諸大夫之不能相幼君也，故凡隱之立為桓立也。隱長又賢，何以不宜立？立適以長不以賢， 立子以貴不以長。桓何以貴？母貴也。母貴則子何以貴？ 子以母貴，母以子貴。[30]

He Xiu's exegetical work is entitled *Gongyang's Commentary on the Spring and Autumn Annals with Explanations and Glosses* 春秋公羊傳解詁. With it, he partakes of both the format and the nature of the section and line commentary, which was still current.[31] To taste the flavor of his exegetical approach, I translate some of his comments, indicated in italics, with the quotation from *Goongyang's Commentary* indicated in underline, both in the English translation and in the original Chinese; these all derive from the first entry in *Gongyang's Commentary* translated previously. Many of these comments are interrupted by exegetical remarks by Tang scholiast Xu Yan 徐 彦 in his subcommentary to He Xiu's *Explanations and Glosses*, which I do not include here.[32]

> First year spring, the orthodox month of the king. *Orthodox month, the sound is zheng* 正 **teŋ **tśeŋ* or zheng 征 **teŋ **tśeŋ. Afterwards I place [these sound glosses] here.* The feudal princes inquire concerning what they don't know, so it is written "what is". What is the "first year?" *All inquiries about doubtful things, or questions about that which is unknown, are therefore called "what is this"?* It is the first year of the lord. *The first year of the lord is known since he ascended the throne according to the permanent record [*Spring and Autumn Annals*]; the "lord" was the nobleman of Lu, Duke Yin. "Year" is the overall term for the sequence of twelve months. When the* Spring and Autumn Annals *proclaims a "year" this is what it refers to. One transformation forms one primal month. "Prime" mean qi. It rises up from the formless and is divided when it takes form. It creates and begins heaven and earth, so it is the beginning of heaven and earth. Hence, on high it is not bound together but allows spring to bind it. The reason that the wording is not "duke" but "lord" is that kings and the feudal princes are both called lords. The reason that the meaning of this word includes kings is that only kings change the primal year and establish their own title. The* Spring and Autumn Annals *regard new kings as receiving their mandates from Lu, therefore it records ascensions to thrones, clarifying that kings should succeed heaven in installing primal months and cultivating and completing all things.* As for Spring, what is this? *It alone is placed before the term king. The reason is that they insisted that*

[28] *Chunqiu Gongyangzhuan zhushu* 1.12a–b.

[29] Wang Baoxuan points out the tendency toward obscurantism exerted by apocryphal literature on the genre of the section and line commentary. See Wang in "Chenwei dui jinwen zhangju zhi xue de yingxiang" 谶纬对今文章句之学的影响, *Jinguwen jingxue xinlun*, 107–12.

[30] *Chunqiu Gongyangzhuan zhushu* 1.10a–12a.

[31] Witness the great commentary on *Mengzi* by He's slightly older contemporary Zhao Qi 趙岐 (108– 201), *Mengzi zhangju* 孟子章句.

[32] But chap. 5.3.2 of vol. 3 of Honey, *A History of Chinese Classical Scholarshi,* does translate Xu's exegetical comments which are set aside here.

they did not know and asked. It is the start of the year. [In his Clearing-Up-the-Meaning commentary Xu Yan explains that only spring is habitually associated with the king, so why even ask about it?] Above, the text ties the first year in front of the correct month of the king, so we know the beginning of the year. As for "spring", it is the inauguration of the creation of heaven and earth, the head of nurturing life, the source of imitative semblances, and the foundational name of the four seasons. In the night sky, when the Dipper points east it is spring; when it points south it is summer; when it points west it is fall; and when it points north it is winter. As for a "year", it is the summative designation for the completion of the process. The Esteemed Documents *uses an intercalary month to determine the four seasons and to form one year.*

元年春，王正月。正月音征，又音政，後放此。元年者何？ 諸据疑問所不知故曰者何。君之始年也。以常録即位，知君之始年。君，魯侯隱公也。年者，十二月之摠號，春秋書十二月稱年是也。變一為元，元者氣也，無形以起，有形以分，造起天地，天地之始也，故上無所繫，而使春繫之也。不言公，言君之始年者，王者諸侯皆稱君，所以通其義於王者，惟王者然後改元立號。春秋託新王受命於魯，故因以録即位，明王者當繼天奉元，養成萬物。春者何？獨在王上故執不知問。歲之始也。以上繫元年在王正月之上知歲之始也春者，天地開辟之端，養生之首，法象所出，四時本名也。昏斗指東方曰春，指南方曰夏，指西方曰秋，指北方曰冬。歲者，摠號其成功之稱，尚書以閏月定四時成歲是也。

Such catalogic verbiage of mind-dulling explanations often go on to great lengths, as wryly notes Fan Ye: "Some of the section and line commentaries which are lengthy sometimes reach over a million words. Students labor over their study but gained little from them. Up and coming classicists doubt them and none are corrected" 章句多者或乃百餘萬言，學徒勞而少功，後生疑而莫正.[33] Notice that such overwhelming verbomania is associated with the genre of the section and line commentary; the oral teachings upon which such commentaries are based must present a soporific challenge to one's attention span, a test of true discipleship! The number of over a million words for a single commentary is equivalent to the entire oeuvre of Zheng Xuan or another prolific Old Text scholar, Jia Kui.[34] Such exegetical indulgence on the part of New Text scholiasts is reminiscent of the worst excesses of the commentaries of the early Western humanists, which often bloated works to become larger than the texts targeted for comment. As Anthony Grafton explains,

[33] Or "none of their works were corrected by such commentaries", *Hou-Hanshu* 35.1213.

[34] *Hou-Hanshu* 1212; 36.1240.

> The word-for-word approach had disadvantages as well as advantages. It forced the commentator to deal with every problem, the boringly simple as well as the interestingly complex. It also forced him to waste time and pages on the donkey-work of listing synonyms—which is all that thousands of the humanists' short glosses amount to. Worst of all, in a period of intense literary competition the commentary made it impossible for its author to shine. . . .
>
> Even numerous digressions into one's field of expertise could not make one commentary distinctively superior to its fellows for they were hidden by the mass of trivial glosses.[35]

The same strictures, *mutatis mutandis*, apply to He Xiu and other New Text scholiasts following the section and line format in their commentaries.[36]

It remains to inquire what He Xiu's purpose was in lending so much attention to *Gongyang's Commentary* on so many intellectual fronts. After all, scholarship was often put to a pure intellectual use, or applied to a moral program, or borrowed to strengthen political legitimacy, or even employed to propose new economic policies. Modern specialist Zhang Quancai responds to the quoted questions translated above from *Gongyang's Commentary* that, at this late date in the dynasty, He Xiu hoped to harness the discipline of classical scholarship to redress the political decline and disorder of the age. Zhang Quancai notes, for instance, that in Zheng Xuan's scholarship, he strove to strengthen the social impact of ritual through his ritually informed exegetical work. Zhao Qi 趙 岐 (108–201) rather focused on bolstering the role of Mencius, the second sage, and his exposition of the royal way in contemporary political discourse. And Cui Shi 崔 寔 (d. ca. AD 170), who helped edit the classical texts housed in palace archives and participated in the editorial committee that produced the *Records of Han from*

[35] Anthony Grafton, *Defenders of the Text: The Traditions of Scholarship in an Age of Science, 1450– 1800* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991), 50. It took the salutary example of Politian and his great notebook *Miscellanea* (1489) to effect a change in the format of scholastic writing from the textual commentary to thematic essays and jottings of the notebook.

[36] This genre did not completely die out. Witness Zhu Xi's use of it in his *Sishu jizhu* 四書集注; the first two books adopted this term in the title: *Daxue zhangju* 大學章句 and *Zhongyong zhangju* 中庸章句. The other two books are described as *Jizhu* 集 注, "collected annotations." *Sishu jizhu* (Taipei: Yiwen Yinshuguan, 1980). Zhu Xi once explained the rationale behind the utility of this genre in elucidating the *Poems*: "Section and lines are used to identify the main guidelines; glosses and exegesis are used to identify the main outlines; chanting is used to sing the poems, and internalization is used to embody them" 章句以綱之，訓詁以紀之，諷誦以昌之，涵濡以體之. "Preface," *Shijizhuan* 詩集傳 (Taipei: Xuehai Chubanshe, 2004), 2a.

the Eastern Belvedere 東觀漢記, advocated a return to rule by harsh laws.[37] Many of such classicists-turned-political theorists had been proscribed and were either incarcerated or forced to turn to research in seclusion. In the case of He Xiu, his work in classical research was directed to applying the political principles enshrined in *Gongyang*'s *Commentary*.[38] For this work focused on five main principles: strengthening the power of the sovereign, selecting the worthy and the able for government service, improving the relationship between sovereign and ministers, promoting the principle of filial piety, and treating the people with leniency.[39]

7.2. Ma Rong and Other Old Text Masters

Ma Rong 馬 融 (79–166) was famous for the breadth of his learning and the number and accomplishments of his disciples. Since he also hailed from Fufeng, Shaanxi, as did Jia Kui, and since they were contiguous in the line of great masters in the Old Text tradition, they are often paired together in both casual parlance on classical scholarship and in the technical taxonomy of scholarly lineages. But his greatest claim to fame, perhaps, is his role as the master who supplied the finishing touches to the training of Zheng Xuan.

Here follow lengthy extracts from his biography that inform his education and accomplishments as a literatus and classicist:

> Ma Rong's style was Jichang, and he was a man of Maoling in Fufeng [County, Shaanxi]. A son of the Court Architect Ma Yan, he was handsome and eloquent, and possessed striking talent. Early on, Zhi Xun from Jingzhao [modern Xi'an] taught Confucian classical scholarship, and lived in isolation in Nanshan. He did not respond to summons for office, and his renown filled the Guanzhong region. Rong followed him in study during Xun's travels. Rong became broadly learned in the classics and other works; Xun marveled at Rong's talent, and so married his daughter to him. . . . During the fourth year of the Yongchu reign period [AD 110], he was appointed as Collating Gentleman of the Palace and frequented the Eastern Belvedere to edit the books in the imperial collection. At that time, Empress Dowager Deng grasped the power at court, and the brothers of General Deng Zhi assisted her. Vulgar Confucians and worldly gentlemen felt that literary skills could flourish and military attainments would be appropriately neglected. So they

[37] He rendered this advocacy not through the medium of classical exegesis but in a purpose-composed essay entitled "Discourse on Politics" 政治論. He enjoys a short biography, fortified with citations from his writings and memorials, at *Hou-Hanshu*, 52.1725–31.

[38] Zhang, *Liang Han jingxueshi*, 260–62.

[39] Zhang, *Liang Han jingxueshi*, 269–75. A wide-ranging review of He's political thought based on the teachings in *Gongyang's Commentary* on the grand unity that goes well beyond saving the age is Huang Pumin, *He Xiu pingzhuan*, 94–202.

> abolished the rituals of hunting and stopped training in military tactics. Hence the crafty and unscrupulous rose up on all sides, taking advantage of the lack of defenses. Rong therefore felt deeply about this situation, considered that neither civil nor military paths would be neglected by the sages and worthies, and that none of the five talents could be dispensed with. During the second year of the Yuanchu reign period [115 AD], he submitted his rhapsody "In Praise of Being Broadly Accomplished" in order to admonish and reprove the throne.[40] After this panegyric was sent up to the throne it offended the Deng clan. So he languished in the Eastern Belvedere for ten years without transferring. When His Highness made an eastern tour to Mount Tai in his carriage, Rong submitted "In Praise of the Eastern Tour." The emperor marveled at his prose, and summoned him as Gentleman of the Palace. He then appointed him as Gentleman Consultant. Once again Rong worked on his compositions in the Eastern Belvedere but left office due to illness. Rong's talent was lofty and he was broadly erudite. He was the comprehensive Confucian of the age, and taught and developed various students, often numbering several thousands. Lu Zhi from Zhuojun and Zheng Xuan from Bohai were among his disciples. He was skilled at strumming the lute, and fond of playing the flute. He understood the meaning of life but was self-indulgent, and was not restrained by the conventions of Confucianism. His residence, implements, and clothing included much extravagant ornamentation. He often sat in a lofty hall, divided with red silk curtains in front of which he taught students; behind were arrayed women musicians. His disciples taught one another according to seniority, but rarely was one admitted into his presence. Once he desired to explicate *Mr. Zuo on Spring and Autumn Annals*, but when he saw Jia Kui's and Zheng Zhong's annotations, he stated: "Lord Jia is detailed but not broad, while Lord Zheng is broad but not detailed. Since they are both detailed as well as broad, what have I got to add to them?" Still, he composed *Explanations on the Differences and Similarities between the Three Commentaries*, and annotated the *Classic of Filial Piety*, *Analects*, *Poems*, *Changes*, *Three Rites*, *Esteemed Documents*, *Biography of Exemplary Women*, *Laozi*, *Master of Huainan*, and "Lisao." His miscellaneous compositions including rhapsodies, panegyrics, stone inscriptions, dirges, letters, records, recommendations, memorials, heptasyllabic verse, lyrics for the lute, counter proposals, orders for posterity, etc., reached some twenty-one fascicles.
>
> 馬融字季長，扶風茂陵人也，將作大匠嚴之子。為人美辭貌，有俊才。初，京兆摯 恂以儒術教授，隱于南山，不應徵聘，名重關

[40] For French translation, annotation, and analysis of the rhyme scheme of this piece, see Mieczyslaw Jerzy Künstler, "Ma Jong: vie et oeuvre," PhD diss. (University of Warsaw, 1969), 66–212.

西，融從其遊學，博通經籍。恂奇融才，以女妻之。四年，拜為校書郎中，詣東觀典校秘書。是時鄧太后臨朝，　鷺兄弟輔政。而俗儒世士，以為文德可興，武功宜廢，遂寢蒐狩之禮，息戰陳之法，　故猾賊從橫，乘此無備。融乃感激，以為文武之道，聖賢不墜，五才之用，無或可　廢。元初二年，上廣成頌以諷諫。頌奏，忤鄧氏，滯於東觀，十年不得調。車　駕東巡岱宗，融上東巡頌，帝奇其文，召拜郎中。復拜議郎，重在東觀著述，以病　去官。融才高博洽，為世通儒，教養諸生，常有千數。涿郡盧植，北海鄭玄，皆其　徒也。善鼓琴，好吹笛，達生任性，不拘儒者之節。居宇器服，多存侈飾。常坐高　堂，施絳紗帳，前授生徒，後列女樂，弟子以次相傳，鮮有入其室者。嘗欲訓左氏　春秋，及見賈逵、鄭眾注，乃曰：賈君精而不博，鄭君博而不精。既精既博，吾何加焉！但著三傳異同說。注孝經、論語、詩、易、三禮、尚書、列女傳、老子、淮　南子、離騷，所著賦、頌、碑、誄、書、記、表、奏、七言、琴歌、對策、遺令，　凡二十一篇。[41]

What is not noted in this lengthy abstract is the fact that he too was officially proscribed for offending Empress Dowager Deng.

Ma Rong's profile as a classicist is revealed in a PhD dissertation by Li Weixiong. Li digests the nature, approach, and contributions of Ma Rong's classical scholarship as follows:

1. Ma was an Old Text master who was a "Gatherer of Great Accomplishments" (*jidachengzhe* 集大成者), one who inherits all past learning and makes it his own.
2. He was skilled in glossing texts, a master of what later classicists conceived of as philologically based Han learning.
3. As appropriate for the intellectual background of the age, Ma utilized apocryphal texts and yin-yang cosmology.
4. He combined both Old and New Text learning, paving the way for his nominal disciple Zheng Xuan.
5. Ma mastered the entire corpus of classical texts.
6. His approach to textual explication, including utilizing quotes from all texts, was an example later generations of scholiasts followed.
7. His approach to explicating the subtle implications of the Classics was to link them to human affairs.

[41] *Hou - Hanshu* 60a.1953 – 78. See also Künstler, "Ma Jong," 11 – 63, and de Crespigny, *Biographical Dictionary*, 648 – 9. Huang, "Ma Rong yu Guwen jingxue" 馬融與古文經學, in *Jing jinguwenxue wenti xinlun*, 79 – 110, analyzes each of Ma's work in some depth. His overall exegetical approa ch for each work is detailed by Li Weixiong 李威熊, "Ma Rong zhi jingxue" 馬融之經學, PhD diss. (Taiwan Political University, 1975).

8. He tried to base his textual explication on historical fact in order to avoid criticism by later scholars.
9. Ma ignored purity of scholarly lineages and was not caught up in adhering to reading rules of masters or lineages.[42]

Hua Zhe adds some qualitative evaluations to the listing of mostly mechanical processes isolated above. He notes that Ma's classical scholarship is characterized more by conformity to the tradition inherited from past masters than by individual creativity; this contrasts sharply with the innovative classicism of Zheng Xuan. In resolving conflicting explanations of ritual institutions, Ma Rong's explanations are usually piecemeal and stopgap, and often not well thought out. Zheng Xuan's explanations are more systematized in the sense that one explanation fits all: ritual definitions are based on the *Rites of Zhou*; conflicting evidence is explained away either as being vestigial rites of the Xia or Shang dynasties or as errors that do not conform to the rites at all. Zheng Xuan's approach is elegantly simple, yet he often goes to great lengths to link up various conflicting evidence in interpretations to prove connections with the *Rites of Zhou* that are sometimes as strained as they are creative. Overall, Ma Rong is a traditional transmitter of ancient knowledge with little leavening of personal creativity, while Zheng Xuan appears as the first theorist of classical exegesis, a striking innovation of long-lasting import.[43]

Historically, Ma Rong's intellectual profile is that of a classicist. But, strangely enough, his contemporary reputation was based on his renown in belles lettres, not classical scholarship. His private anthology is included among the hundred or so anthologies of notable literati of the Han through the Six Dynasties period and contains four compositions of rhapsodies.[44] For instance, in the "Evaluation" (*lun* 論) appended to *History of Later Han* chapter 61, Ma is appraised as follows: "Huan Yan and Yang Hou were advanced on the basis of their Confucian learning; Cui Yuan and Ma Rong were prominent on the basis of their prose compositions" 桓焉、楊厚以儒學進，崔瑗、馬融以文章顯.[45] And it was Cai Yong 蔡邕 (132–192), a well-rounded scholar and prominent man of letters, not another major classicist, who shared the second half of the biographical chapter 61 with Ma Rong.[46] Ma's character flaws—self-indulgence, fondness for

[42] Li Weixiong, "Ma Rong zhi jingxue," *passim.*

[43] For the above epitome, see Hua Zhe, "Han - Tang jian jingdian chanshi bianqian shilun", 19 – 37.

[44] *Han, Wei, Liuchao baisan mingjiaji* 1:589–618.

[45] *Hou-Hanshu* 61.2042.

[46] Cai Yong is examined in chapter nine in conjunction with the discipline of epigraphy. Here I should state that he had served as a collator in the palace library, and authored one scholarly work, a *Yueling zhangju* 月令章句. He was also an intimate of Zheng Xuan and Lu Zhi, who was another student of Ma Rong to be introduced presently. Hua Zhe "Han-Tang jian jingdian chanshi bianqian shilun," 46–56, compares his commentarial approach to that of Zheng Xuan, concluding that his

women, neglect of the niceties of Confucian ritualized social intercourse—likely combined with the overwhelming fame of Zheng Xuan to dampen Ma's renown as a scholar. Classicist Zhao Qi hints at another failing of Ma—his reputation for arrogance given his social status: "When Qi was young he had mastered the classics, and was talented and accomplished. He married a cousin of Ma Rong of Fufeng. Rong was a member of the powerful clan of the royal in-laws, and Qi always despised him, and would not see him" 岐少明經，有才藝，娶扶風馬融兄女。融外戚豪家，岐常鄙之，不與融相見.[47] Rafe de Crespigny expands on these negative observations, commenting that "possessing great understanding of the Confucian classics when he was still young, Zhao Qi was also arrogant and independent. He married the Lady Ma Qiang [Zhongmei], a junior cousin of the celebrated scholar Ma Rong, but he felt insulted by Ma Rong's informal conduct and did not respect his scholarship."[48] Rong's teaching style reflected his aloof personality yet produced two outstanding scholars of wide influence, Lu Zhi and Zheng Zhong, apart from his nominal disciple Zheng Xuan.

Lu Zhi 盧 植 (d. AD 192) hailed from Zhuo Commandery 涿 郡 (modern Beijing); he reflected Ma Rong's catholic approach to the classics in that he studied both Old and New Text versions under him. Lu's scholarship and relationship with his master is described as follows:

> He was eight feet two inches tall [190 cm], with a voice like a bell. When young he and Zheng Xuan both served Ma Rong as their master. He was able to master both Old and New Text learning, and enjoyed researching into minutiae but did not hold with section and line commentaries. Rong was a member of a powerful clan of imperial in-laws, and often arrayed female musicians in front. Zhi, waiting in attendance and lecturing for quite a few years, never even glanced at them; because of this, Rong respected him. When his studies were completed, he said goodbye and returned home; he bolted his door and engaged in teaching. His nature was unyielding and resolute. He always harbored the ambition to save the age but was not fond of composing in the style of the rhapsody; still, he was able to drink a gallon of wine at one sitting. . . . He composed a *Section and Line Commentary on the Esteemed Documents* and *Explanations and Glosses on the Three Ritual Texts*.
>
> 身長八尺二寸，音聲如鍾。少與鄭玄俱事馬融，能通古今學，好研精而不守章句。 融外戚豪家，多列女倡歌舞於前。植侍講積年，未嘗轉眄，融以是敬之。學終辭歸， 闔門教授。性剛毅有大節，常懷濟世志，不好辭賦，能飲酒一石。作尚書章句， 三禮解詁。[49]

approach was to elucidate the practical side of the calendar, and had little interest in the text as part of the classical canon.

[47] *Hou-Hanshu* 64.3121.

[48] de Crespigny, *Biographical Dictionary*, 1102.

[49] *Hou-Hanshu* 64.2113.

Lu's biography both denies any interest in section and line commentaries and records the existence of one such commentary. It also notes an explanation and glosses commentary in the tradition of He Xiu's *magnum opus* on *Gongyang's Commentary*, directed rather towards a ritual text: *Records of Ritualists Explained and Glossed* 禮記 解 詁 [50] Hua Zhe contrasts Li Zhi's approach to classical exegesis with that of Zheng Xuan, claiming that the former was direct and natural, focusing on the meaning of the text, while the latter appropriated the text to serve the needs of his overarching ritual system; that is, word glosses served the text for Lu Zhi, while for Zheng Xuan they served his exegetical school.[51]

Another classicist mentioned previously in conjunction with Ma Rong's interest in annotating *Mr. Zuo's Commentary* is Zheng Zhong 鄭衆 (d. AD 83), who, on a more reduced scale, prefigured Zheng Xuan in his expertise in classical exegesis and accomplishments in calendrical studies. His biography records that "when he was twelve, he received from his father his tradition on *Mr. Zuo on the Spring and Autumn Annals*, was keenly assiduous in his studies, and understood the *Three Sequences Calendar*. He composed a *Miscellaneous Notes, Precedents and Examples of the Spring and Autumn Annals.* Concurrently he had mastered the *Changes* and *Poems*, and was renowned during his generation" 年十二，從父受左氏春秋，精力於學，明三統歷，作春秋難記條例，兼通易、詩，知名於世. He also transmitted his and his father's interpretations of the Mao version of the *Poems* and the *Offices of Zhou*. His father, Zheng Xing 鄭 興 (fl. AD 20), had studied *Gongyang's Commentary* but later switched emphasis to *Mr. Zuo's Commentary* under the tutelage of Liu Xin 劉歆 (46 BC–AD 23), from whom he also learned the *Three Sequence Calendar*.[52] His father's impact on the transmission of *Mr. Zuo's Commentary* is distilled as follows:

> Zheng Xing was fond of Old Text learning, and was especially discerning of *Mr. Zuo* and the *Offices of Zhou,* and well-versed in calendrical and mathematical studies. From the likes of Du Lin, Huan Tan, and Wei Hong, none but consulted with him. It was noised abroad during his generation that of those who studied *Mr. Zuo*, most of them derived from Xing, but Jia Kui himself transmitted his father's teachings. Hence came the term of "the learning of Zheng and Jia."
>
> 興好古學，尤明左氏、周官，長於歷數，自杜林、桓譚、衛宏之屬，莫不斟酌焉。世言左氏者多祖於興，而賈逵自傳其父業，故有鄭、賈之學。[53]

[50] Ikeda Shuzo 池田秀三, "Ro Shoku to sono *Raiki kaigo - ka -*" 盧植とその「礼記解詁」-下-. *Kyōto Daigaku Bungakubu kenkyū kiyō* 京都大學文學部研究紀要 (1991–03): 1–39.

[51] Hua Zhe, "Han-Tang jian jingdian chanshi bianqian shilun," 38–46.

[52] For the biographies of father and son, see *Hou-Hanshu* 36.1217–23; 1224–6.

[53] *Hou-Hanshu* 36.1223.

Two other figures deserve introduction. Huan Tan 桓譚 (c. 43 BC–AD 28) was analyzed at length in chapter 6 above, so we begin with Du Lin 杜林 (d. AD 47), who was responsible for invigorating the study of the *Old Text Esteemed Documents*.[54] He hailed from Fufeng, Shaanxi, along with Jia Kui and Ma Rong. His grandfather, Zhang Chang 張敞 (fl. 60 BC), had been an early expert in *Mr. Zuo's Commentary*; Du Lin studied with his cousin, Zhang Song 張竦, a grandson of Zhang Chang. His biography describes his youthful studies with his cousin, undertaken while ensconced in a bounteous family library, as developing him into a "comprehensive Confucian." Aside from his political contributions, including attracting other scholars to the cause of the newly founded Eastern Han due to the welcome he received at court, his major claim to fame was his possession of a single chapter of the *Old Text Esteemed Documents* preserved on lacquer strips. A rather lengthy paragraph links all of the contemporary Old Text specialists together by their common rededication to the *Old Text Esteemed Documents*:

> Zheng Xing of Henan and Wei Hong of Donghai were both well versed in Old Text learning. Xing once had studied under Liu Xin. When Lin met Xing, he happily stated, "Being able to associate with Xing is a harmonious thing. If Wei Hong could associate with me, it would benefit him." When Hong saw Lin, he submitted to him with sincerity. Xu Xun of Jinan at first served Hong as his master; later they all changed and received instruction from Lin. Previously when Lin was in Xizhou he obtained one chapter of the *Old Text Esteemed Documents* written on lacquer strips, which he continually treasured and cherished. Although encountering troubles or difficulties, he clutched it tightly and would not let it leave his side. He produced it and showed it to Hong and the others, saying, "When in the course of wandering amidst war and rebellion, I often feared that this classic would become extinct. Who would have thought that Wei Hong of Donghai and Master Xu of Jinan would be able to transmit it? This Way unexpectedly has not fallen by the side. Although the Old Text is not commensurate with contemporary affairs, still I wish that you various masters would have no regrets in your studies." Hong and Xun even more esteemed him, thereupon this Old Text learning subsequently started circulating.
>
> 河南鄭興、東海衛宏等，皆長於古學。興嘗師事劉歆，林既遇之，欣然言曰：林得 興等固諧矣，使宏得林，且有以益之。及宏見林，闇然而服。濟南徐巡，始師事宏， 後皆更受林學。林前於西州得漆書古文尚書一卷，常寶愛之，雖遭難困，握持不離 身。出以示宏等曰：林流離兵亂，常恐斯經將絕。何意東海衛子、濟南徐生復能傳 之，是道竟不墜於地也。古文雖不合時務，然願諸生無悔所學。宏、巡益重之，於 是古文遂行。[55]

[54] His biography is at *Hou-Hanshu* 27.935–39. All of the figures discussed hereafter in this chapter are superbly encapsulated by de Crespigny.

The second figure who impacted classical studies, and made an even greater contribution to literary studies, is Wei Hong 衛 宏 (fl. AD 20). His short biography in the "Grove of Confucians" immediately orients him toward his scholarship on the *Poems* but also reveals his interest in the *Old Text Esteemed Documents*:

> Wei Hong's style was Jingzhong; he was from Donghai [Shandong]. When young he and Zheng Xing both were devoted to Old Text learning. Early on, Xie Manqing from Jiujiang [Jiangxi] was skilled in the *Mao Poems*, and hence annotated it. Hong received his learning from Manqing and therefore produced a *Preface to the Mao Poems*. He was skilled at gaining the intent of the "Airs" and "Elegentiae" sections; the work still circulates up to the present age. Later on, he switched and received training in the *Old Text Esteemed Documents* from the Imperial Counselor Du Lin, and made an *Instructions in the Intent* commentary for it. At the time, Xu Xun of Jinan took Hong as his teacher, who was also renowned for his Confucian learning. From this, the study of Old Text learning was greatly invigorated.
>
> 衛宏字敬仲，東海人也。少與河南鄭興俱好古學. 初，九江謝曼卿善毛詩，乃為其訓。宏從曼卿受學，因作毛詩序，善得風雅之旨，于今傳於世。後從大司空杜林 更受古文尚書，為作訓旨。時濟南徐巡師事宏，後從林受學，亦以儒顯，由是古學大興。[56]

The *Preface to the Mao Poems* composed by Wei has traditionally been identified with the "Minor Preface" that has circulated with this edition of the *Poems* since Han times. The issue is still undecided, but the importance of this text in interpreting the purpose of this classic and its impact on literary theory over the ages has elevated the status of Wei Hong in the tradition of classicists.[57]

[55] *Hou-Hanshu* 27.935–36.

[56] *Hou-Hanshu* 79b.2575–76.

[57] Scholarly literature on the preface is, of course, legion. For general historical introductions, see Wang Liqing 王禮卿, *Sijia Shizhi huigui* 四家詩恉, 4 vols. (Shanghai: Huadong Shifan Daxue, 2009), 1:1–20, which is densely detailed; Legge, *Chinese Classics*, 4:29–33, with complete translation on pp. 34–80; and Steven Van Zoeren, *Poetry and Personality: Reading, Exegesis, and Hermeneutics in Traditional China* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1991), 80–115. Concise introductions to the new understanding of the preface reached from newly excavated documents are Xiao Bing 萧 兵 , *Kongzi Shilun de wenhua tuiyi* 孔子诗论的文化推绎 (Wuhan: Hubei Renmin Chubanshe, 2006), 4–10, and Lin Qingzhang 林慶 彰, "*Kongzi shilun* yu 'Shixu' zhi bijiao yanjiu" 孔子詩論與詩序之比較研究, *Jingxue yanjiu jikan* 經學研究集刊 5 (2005):1–12.

We have seen the family tradition of scholarship in the example of Zheng Xing and his son, Zheng Zhong. A final scholar and his sons should be introduced here as examples of family learning in the Old Text tradition. A parallel process was at play among New Text partisans, who took great pride in the purity of their scholastic lineages. However, these lineages were based not on family connections but on the ties of loyalty that disciples owed to their masters. These ties were based on the approach to reading the classics called "Regulations of a Master" (*shifa* 師法) or, when transmitted over time, "Regulations of a Lineage" (家法). These regulations were the reading rules established by a master to interpret a given text, including the precise wording involved and often the reason behind a particular orthography, pronunciation, interpretation, punctuation of lines, and moral or theoretical application.[58]

The patriarch of this illustrious family under discussion was Xun Shu 荀淑 (83–149); he hailed from Yingchuan 潁川, central Henan, and was an eleventh-generation descendant of Xunzi. While still young he was notable for his lofty conduct. His scholarship is described as "broadly learned yet not devoted to section and line commentaries, so he was often opposed by vulgar Confucians" 博學而不好章句，多為俗儒所非.[59] He had eight sons: Jian 儉, Kun 緄, Jing 靖, Tao 燾, Wang 汪, Shuang 爽, Su 肅, and Zhuan 專. They were collectively called the Eight Dragons for their various accomplishments, some in the political sphere and some as classicists.[60] The sixth son, Xun Shuang 荀爽 (128–190), was prominent as a teacher of the classics, claiming mastery of the *Spring and Autumn Annals* at the early age of twelve. His dedication to his studies is described as "deeply pondering the classics and other works, not attending marriages or funerals, neither responding to summons to service" 耽思經書，慶弔不行，徵命不應.[61] His scholarship is epitomized as follows:

[58] For a discussion of the terms *shifa* and *jiafa*, with introductions to relevant modern studies, see *A History of Classical Scholarship*, vol. 1, chap. 4.7. Of course, these broad outlines were often blurred by the realities of personal interests. For instance, two sons of the scholar Kong Xi 孔僖 from Lu, a specialist in the *Old Text Esteemed Documents* and the *Mao Poems*, displayed opposing scholastic loyalties. Kong Changyan 長彥 was devoted to the New Text approach of section and line commentary while the other son, Jiyan 季彥, "held to his family tradition" 守其家業. *Hou-Hanshu* 79a.2563.

[59] Chi-yun Chen, *Hsün Yüeh (A.D. 148–209): The Life and Reflections of an Early Medieval Confucian* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 67 takes this statement on Shu's dislike of the section and line commentary to indicate his distaste for classical learning in general, but it is surely a reflection of his adherence to Old Text learning, which was naturally rejected by "vulgar Confucians," who were the do-nothing adherents of New Text learning safely ensconced in their sinecures at the imperial academy.

[60] The biography of Xun Shu and his notable sons is at *Hou-Hanshu*, 62.2049–62.

[61] *Hou-Hanshu*, 2051.

> He composed commentaries on the *Rites*, the *Changes*, the *Poems*, also the *Orthodox Classic of the Esteemed Documents*, and the *Precedents and Examples of the Spring and Autumn Annals*. He further collected events that were successful and failures as guides and warnings, calling it *Tales of the Han.* He furthermore composed *Questions on the Gongyang* and *Discerning the Apocrypha.* He titled a collection of his other discourses and narratives in more than 100 scrolls as the *New Works.* Today much of it is lost.
>
> 著禮、易傳、詩傳、尚書正經、春秋條例，又集漢事成敗可為鑒戒者，謂之漢語。又作公羊問及辯讖，并它所論敘，題為新書。凡百餘篇，今多所亡缺。[62]

Another prominent member of the clan was Xun Yue 荀悅 (148–249), the son of Xun Jian. De Crespigny posits that, since Yue's father had died young, he was probably raised by his uncle, Shuang.[63] Being impoverished while young, he lacked sufficient books for his studies. Therefore, he had to develop a strong memory to allow him to recite texts upon a single reading. Still, he was able to explain the *Spring and Autumn Annals* by age twelve, and he developed a talent for composition. Because contemporary court affairs were dominated by powerful eunuchs, Yue avoided office. Later when Cao Cao was in the ascendancy, Yue served on his staff and became Custodian of the Imperial Library at court under Emperor Xian 獻 (r. 189–220).

Xun Xue's anthology is also included in the *Anthology of Famous Literati of the Han, Wei, and Six Dynasties* 漢魏六朝名家集;[64] his major works include a condensed history of the Han: "The emperor was devoted to the canons and other works, and often regarded Ban Gu's *History of Han* as too florid and difficult to understand. He therefore ordered Yue to compile the *Chronicles of Han* in thirty fascicles according to the format of *Mr. Zuo's Commentary*" 帝好典籍，常以班固漢書文繁難省，乃令悅依左氏傳體以為漢紀三十篇.[65] Another work was his *Extended Reflections* 申鑑 in five fascicles, which contained his discourses on politics. His biography recorded that his ambition was political reform based on Confucian moral principles. Since he had no political power to effect reform, the best he could do was to discourse upon such principles and political practices. The work begins with the emphasis of a core Confucian principle:

> Humanity and Righteousness are the foundation of the Way. The Five Classics are its warp, and all other writings its woof. It manifests in poetic recitation, singing, stringed music, and dance. The reflection of

[62] *Hou-Hanshu* 62.2057.

[63] On his life and thought, consult Chi-yun Chen, *Hsün Yüeh (A.D. 148–209)*.

[64] *Han, Wei, Liuchao baisan mingjiaji*, 1:619–56.

[65] *Hou-Hanshu*, 62.2062. For this work, see Hans Bielenstein and Michael Loewe, ed., at Loewe, ed., ed., *Early Chinese Texts*, 471–2.

history is already clear. [Its significance], however, needs to be extended and restated in later times. Therefore the ancient sage-kings devoted themselves to extending and stressing Humanity and Righteousness. Faithfully following this through time everlasting is what I call *Shenjian* (Extended Reflections).

夫道之本，仁義而已矣。五典以經之，群籍以緯之，詠之歌之，弦之舞之。前鑒既明。後復申之。故古之聖王，其於仁義也。申重而已。篤序無彊，謂之申鑒。[66]

Despite the potential for it, the Xun clan did not form a family scholarly lineage; each member went his own way based on his strengths and interests, perhaps due in part to the serious challenges facing the declining reign of the Han, which called more for men of action than of reflection. A prominent example of the non-classical route was Xun Yu 荀 彧 (162–212), grandson of Xun Shu and son of Xun Kun. Yu became the Chief Advisor to Cao Cao. Another son of Xun Shu, Xun Jing, was renowned for his moral probity, which earned him the epithet "Master of Profound Conduct" 玄行先生.[67] His uncle, Xun Yu 荀昱 (d. AD 169), was a successful politician and model administrator whom students venerated. He was strenuously opposed to eunuchs in power at court and died after being proscribed.

7.3. Zheng Xuan and the Synthesis of Old and New Text Learning

7.3.1. Historical Evaluation

Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (127–200), in my estimation, is the greatest textual exegete among pre-Qing classicists; he compares in the depth if not the breadth of the impact of his commentaries with the greatest textual hermeneut of all time, Zhu Xi 朱熹(1130–1200). Dai Zhen 戴 震 (1724–1777), who knew something about classical scholarship, made the same comparison, terming them both gatherers of great accomplishments.[68] Such was the respect Zheng enjoyed during his life that he was called "Minister of Finance" 大司農 despite his never having assumed this post that had been offered him. His influence waned in the south of China after the Eastern Jin dynasty, but it flourished in the north where textual exegesis, rather than hermeneutics, held sway. His reputation reached superstar status during the Qing dynasty, which period witnessed the popularization and ultimate paramountcy of the philological approach. The notable Qing

[66] *Shenjian* 申鑑 (ZZJC ed.), "Zhengti" 政體, 1.1; trans. Ch'i-yün Ch'en, *Hsün Yüeh and the Mind of Late Han China* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980), 104. For bibliographic details of this work, see Ch'i-yün Ch'en at Loewe, ed., *Early Chinese Texts*, 390–3.

[67] *Hou-Hanshu*, 62.2050.

[68] Dai Zhen, *Dai Zhen wenji* 戴震文集 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1980), 10.158.

commentator on ritual texts, Lin Tingkan 淩廷堪 (1757–1809), grouped Zheng with two other Eastern Han classicists, Xu Shen 許慎 (ca. 58–ca. 147) and Fu Qian 服虔 (fl. AD 189), to form a triumvirate of great Han-period Confucians. Gu Yanwu 顧炎武 (1613–1682) also included Zheng among another trio of greats whose learning led the way for Confucian scholarship from the Han to the Sui: Zheng, Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒 (179–104 BC), and Wang Tong 王通(584–617). Here I will translate excerpts from Ling's preface and translate that part of the poem by Gu devoted to Zheng Xuan's scholarship to provide some indication of the veneration accorded him by Qing classicists.

Ling Tingkan, "Appraisals of Three Confucians of the Later Han with Preface"

後漢三儒贊並序[69]

As for Lord Xu [Shen] Shuzhong, Lord Fu [Qian] Zishen, and Lord Zheng [Xuan] Kangcheng, they all capped the Eastern Han, and assuredly were the outstanding figures of the grove of Confucians. One excelled at philology, one was skilled in the *Spring and Autumn Annals*. The greatest one's merit lay in the Six Classics, whose learning also mastered the Seven Apocrypha—how elegantly refined! How richly accomplished!

若夫許君叔重、服君子慎、鄭君康成，皆東漢之冠冕，洵儒林之翹秀，或長於小學， 或精於春秋。其大者則功在六經，學通七緯，彬彬乎！郁郁乎！

Gu's poem follows:

Gu Yanwu, "Relating the Past" 述古[70]

。 。 。 。 。 .....

六經之所傳	He who transmitted the Six Classics,
訓詁為之祖	Was the ancestor of exegesis and glosses.
仲尼貴多聞	Confucius prized much learning through listening,
漢人猶近古	Men of Han were close to antiquity.
禮器與聲容	Ritual implements with poetic sounds and ritual countenances—
習之疑可睹	His practicing of them probably can still be observed.
大哉鄭康成	Great indeed, was Zheng Kangcheng!
探賾靡不舉	In investigating him—nothing but can be emulated.
六藝既該通	He mastered the entirety of the Six Arts,
百家亦兼取	The Hundred Masters were also utilized.

[69] Lin Tingkan, *Jiaolitang wenji* 校禮堂文集 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1998), 1.87.

[70] Gu Yanwu, *Gu Tinglin shiji huizhu* 顧亭林詩集彙注, 2 vols. (Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Chubanshe, 2006), 2:1006–14; pp. 1008–11.

至今三禮存　Up to the present the Three Ritual Texts are extant,
其學非小補　His learning is not just "mending society in a small way."[71]

Qing classicists of the Han-learning persuasion drew inspiration and motivation for their research from the example of Zheng Xuan. Witness the frequent use of the name *Zheng* in personal sobriquets or private studios. Examples include Wang Chang 王昶 (1725–1806), whose private studio for conducting collation work was named *Zhengxuezhai* 鄭學齋, "Study to Apply Zheng's Learning," and Kong Guangsen 孔廣森 (1753–1787), whose own study was named *Yi-Zhengtang* 儀鄭堂, "Hall of Ceremony for Zheng." Bibliographer Zhou Zhongfu 周中孚 (1768–1831) sported an alternate style of Zhengtang, as seen in the name of his important bibliographical study *Notes on Books Studied in the Hall of Zheng* 鄭堂讀書記, Li Ciming 李慈銘 (1830–1895) occasionally used the literary name of *Zhenghan* 鄭盦, "Cauldron of Zheng," and Wu Dacheng 吳大澄 (1835–1902) used the *hao* of Zhengkan, "Shrine to Zheng." Jiang Fan's 江 藩 (1761–1830/31) literary name was Zhengtang 鄭 堂 , "Hall of Zheng." Dai Zhen offers some insights into why his contemporaries honored Zheng Xuan in this way in his record of a visit to Wang Chang's studio, "Record of the Studio for Studying Zheng's Learning 鄭學齋記; it is worth perusing.[72]

7.3.2. Life and Works

Zheng Xuan's natural patrimony was his gift for scholarship, for he was a loose relative of Zheng Xing and Zheng Zong. His biography reads almost as an illustrative epitome of the process of classical learning through oral instruction from a master via a catechism, as detailed in volume 1 of *A History of Chinese Classical Scholarship*. Here I present lengthy extracts from his biography in the *History of Later Han*:

> Zheng Xuan, style of Kangcheng, was a man of Gaomi, Bohai [northeast Shandong]. . . . When he was young he became a Provincial Bailiff but was laid off and returned home. He frequently attended the local schools, but was not happy being a scribe. His father several times became enraged at this, but was unable to stop him, so he visited the state academy and enrolled as a student. He took for his master Diwu Yuanxian [fl. AD 150] of Jingzhao [modern Xi'an].[73] He first mastered *Mr. Jing's Changes*, *Gongyang's Spring and Autumn Annals*, *Three Sequences Calendar*, and *Nine Chapters on the Mathematical Arts*. He also followed Zhang Gongzu [fl. AD 150] of the Eastern Commandery in receiving his instructions on the *Officials of Zhou*, the *Records of Ritualists*, *Mr. Zuo's Spring and Autumn Annals*, *Han's Poems*, and *Old Text Documents*.[74] No one else in Shandong was worth learning from, so he then entered the pass in the West [the Guanzhong region around Chang'an], and went along with Lu Zhi of Zhuo Commandery, and apprenticed himself to Ma Rong of Fufeng.
>
> 鄭玄字康成，北海高密人也。玄少為鄉嗇夫，得休歸，常詣學官，不樂為吏，　父數怒之，不能禁。遂造太學受業，師事京兆第五元先，始通京氏易、公羊春秋、　三統歷、九章筭術。又從東郡張恭祖受周官、禮記、左氏春秋、韓詩、古文尚書。　以山東無足問者，乃西入關，因涿郡盧植，事扶風馬融。
>
> The followers of Rong numbered more than four hundred, and those who "ascended his hall" and advanced to private study reached more than fifty. Rong was always haughty and presumed upon his nobility. Xuan belonged to his following, but for three years never got to see him. Rong sent a disciple of high accomplishment to transmit and orally impart his learning to Xuan. Day and night Xuan searched the classics and chanted passages, never shirking nor tiring. Once Rong gathered all of his students to test them on the numerological charts and deliberate over the apocrypha. He heard that Xuan was good at calculations, so he summoned him to see him in his upper story. Xuan responded with all the answers to his questions and doubtful points; after these inquiries he excused himself and departed. Rong sighed and spoke to his disciples, saying, "Now that Master Zheng has departed, my Way has moved eastward."
>
> 融門徒四百餘人，升堂進者五十餘生。融素驕貴，玄在門下，三年不得見，乃使高業弟子傳授於玄。玄日夜尋誦，未嘗怠倦。會融集諸生考論圖緯，聞玄善筭，乃召見於樓上，玄因從質諸疑義，問畢辭歸。融喟然謂門人曰：鄭生今去，吾道東矣。[75]

[71] An allusion to the influence exerted on society by a gentleman. *Mengzi* 7a.13; trans. Legge, *The Chinese Classics*, 2:455: "Wherever the superior man passes through, transformation follows; wherever he abides, his influence is of a spiritual nature. It flows abroad, above and beneath, like that of Heaven and Earth. How can it be said that he mends society but in a small way?" 孟子曰：夫君子所過者化，所存者神，上下與天地同流，豈曰小補之哉？

[72] Dai, *Dai Zhen wenji*, 177.

[73] An erudite at the imperial academy in Luoyang, Diwu Yuanxian was expert in the *Three Sequences Calendar*, the *Changes*, *Gongyang's Commentary*, and *Nine Chapters on the Mathematical Arts*, all works that Zheng mastered.

[74] Zhong Gongzu was another erudite at the imperial academy.

[75] *Hou-Hanshu* 35.1207–13. For other biographical sources, consult Sun Xingyan 孫星衍 and Ruan Yuan 阮元, eds., "Zheng Sinong nianpu" 鄭司農年譜, in *Han-Jin mingren nianpu* 漢晉名人年表, 3 vols. (Beijing: Beijing Tushuguan, 2004), 1:463–554; Wang Liqi 王利器, *Zheng Kangcheng nianpu* (Jinan: Qi- Lu Shushe, 1983);

Other early sources state that Zheng Xuan did not immediately leave after being questioned by his master Rong but instead stayed an additional seven years for further personal study.[76] Given this alternate possibility, it is hard to determine whether Zheng was Ma's nominal or formal disciple. We may summarize Zheng's experiences as follows: he first learned all he could from local schools, then he traveled about to serve a progression of teachers, trying "to seek the company of a master" (*qinshi* 親 師). He found masters in the imperial academy at Luoyang. Realizing that he had exhausted all that he could learn from them, he sought out the famous classicist Ma Rong. By this time, Zheng's learning encompassed the full range of classical texts and commentaries. He continued to plumb them by repeated reading and memorization of selected passages, we may assume to internalize their moral messages. In fact, his conduct as a reclusive scholar and teacher made him, along with Xun Shuang and one Shentu Pan 申屠蟠, paragons of quiet but committed Confucian moral conduct.[77] Zheng Xuan's experience with the advanced students of Ma Rong included the reception of the Ma-school interpretations through oral instruction. We may safely assume that such transmission was performed in a ritualized teaching setting. Finally, the Master himself conducted a catechism, surprisingly focused on the questions posed by him, not his follower Zheng, on specialized topics that he felt he could learn from his prized pupil.

Zheng's career as a classicist is narrated next:

> Because Xuan was traveling to study, it was more than ten years before he returned to his native village. His family was poor, so he farmed rented land in Donglai [eastern Shandong near the cost of Bohai]; but students who followed him already numbered in the hundreds and thousands. When the affair of the proscribed parties occurred, he then was proscribed and forbidden [public office] along with Sun Song from the same commandery and more than forty others.[78] Subsequently, he

Mieczyslaw Jerzy Künstler, "Deux biographies de Tcheng Hiuan," *Rocznik Orientalistyczny* 26.1 (1962):23–64; Mark L. Asselin, in Xinzhong Yao, ed., *RoutledgeCurzon Encyclopedia of Confucianism*, 2:814–6; de Crespigny, *Biographical Dictionary*, 1126–8; and the work of Geng Tianqin detailed in the bibliographical appendix at the end of this chapter.

[76] Noted in Sun Xingyan and Ruan Yuan, eds., "Zheng Sinong nianpu," 483–9.

[77] *Hou-Hanshu*, 62.2057. Shentu Pan's biography is at *Hou-Hanshu* 53.1750–4; it characterizes his scholarship as follows: "Studying meticulously while dwelling in seclusion, he broadly linked up the Five Classics, and concurrently understood the charts and apocrypha" 隱居精學，博貫五經，兼明圖緯 (p. 1751). Along with Xun Shuang and Zheng Xuan, he was one of the fourteen classicists summoned to serve as imperial erudites in AD 188, which summons he refused. A similar summons the next year accompanied by the pressure of palpable threats was refused with equal alacrity.

[78] Sun Song is notable in classical circles for having hidden Zhao Qi, the famous commentator on Mencius, from prosecution for several years. His substantial career is summarized by de Crespigny, *Biographical Dictionary*, 776.

> cultivated classical learning in seclusion, barring his door and never exiting. At that time He Xiu of Rencheng was devoted to the learning of Gongyang, subsequently he composed *Gongyang Defended like Mozi* [would defend against a siege], the *Uncurable Diseases in the Diaphragm of Mr. Zuo*, and *Crippling Diseases in Guliang.* Zheng Xuan then lifted Mozi's siege, lanced the diaphragm, and relieved the crippling diseases. When He Xiu saw them, he said, "Zheng Kangcheng entered my chamber, grasped my lance, and used it to attack me!" Earlier, after the restoration, such classicists as Fang Sheng, Chen Yuan, Li Yu, and Jia Kui disputed in debate over Old Text and Modern Text learning. Afterwards, Ma Rong responded to the Governor of Bodi Liu Gui, and Zheng Xuan responded to He Xiu. Their argumentation was penetrating and their evidence profound; from this point on Old Text learning became illuminated.
>
> 玄自游學，十餘年乃歸鄉里。家貧，客耕東萊，學徒相隨已數百千人。及黨事起， 乃與同郡孫嵩等四十餘人俱被禁錮，遂隱修經業，杜門不出。時任城何休好公羊學， 遂著公羊墨守、左氏膏肓、穀梁廢疾；玄乃發墨守，鍼膏肓，起廢疾。休見而歎曰： 康成入吾室，操吾矛，以伐我乎！初，中興之後，范升、陳元、李育、賈逵之徒爭 論古今學，後馬融荅北地太守劉鏤及玄荅何休，義據通深，由是古學遂明。[79]

Zheng's death and heritage are presented last:

> In the spring, during the fifth year [of the Jian'an reign period, AD 200], he dreamt of Confucius telling him: "Rise up, rise up! This year Jupiter will be in the Dragon asterism; next year it will be in the Snake asterism." After waking, he verified this with the apocrypha, and so knew that his life would be over. After a while he was confined to his bed with an illness. His illness grew more severe and he never recovered. He died in the six month of that year, aged seventy-four. His dying command was to have a simple burial. More than a thousand persons, including all who had studied under him, from the governor on down, attended in mourning garments. His followers worked together to compile Zheng Xuan's responses to questions from his various disciples concerning the Five Classics, and composed the *Record of Zheng*in eight fascicles according to the format of the *Analects.* In all, Zheng annotated the *Zhou Changes*, *Esteemed Documents*, *Mao Poems*, *Ceremonials and Rituals*, *Records of Ritualists*, *Analects*, *Classic of Filial Piety*, *Great Commentary on the*

[79] This paragraph, starting from "At that time," was translated earlier in conjunction with my analysis of the scholarship of He Xiu.

Esteemed Documents, *Zhonghou*,[80] and *Qianxiang Calendar*.[81] Furthermore, he composed the *Discourse on the Seven Governing Bodies in Astronomy*, *Interpretation of the Lu Rites of the Grand and Collective Sacrifices*, *Discourse on the Six Arts*, *Register on the Mao Poems*, *Refutation of Xu Shen's Divergent Interpretations of the Five Classics*, [and] *Responding to Lin Xiaocun's Difficulties on the Rites of Zhou*, in more than one million words all told. . . . Xuan focused on the explication of words. Other learned scholars somewhat mocked his wordiness. But due to his intimate familiarity with the classics and commentaries, he was acclaimed as a masterful Confucian. He was venerated as the founding classical master in the areas of Lu and Qi.

五年春，夢孔子告之曰：起，起，今年歲在辰，來年歲在巳。既寤，以讖合之，知命當終，有頃寢疾。疾篤不進，其年六月卒，年七十四。遺令薄葬。自郡守以下嘗受業者，縗絰赴會千餘人。門人相與撰玄荅諸弟子問五經，依論語作鄭志八篇。凡玄所注周易、尚書、毛詩、儀禮、禮記、論語、孝經、尚書大傳、中候、乾象歷，又著天文七政論、魯禮禘祫義、六藝論、毛詩譜、駁許慎五經異義、荅臨孝存周禮難，凡百餘萬言。玄質於辭訓，通人頗譏其繁。至於經傳洽孰，稱為純儒，齊魯間宗之。[82]

Finally, Fan Ye appends his evaluation of Zheng Xuan as a classicist:

The Evaluation states: Since Qin burned the Six Classics, the texts of the sages disappeared with the dust. With the rise of Han the various Confucians somewhat cultivated the texts of the classical arts. With the move to the eastern capital, scholars each formed their own schools. Yet those who held fast to the text rigidly adhered to their own views, and heterodoxical views sprouted up, each vigorously attacking the other. This caused each classic to have several interpretive schools, with each school holding to different views. The longest section and line commentaries sometimes reached more than one million words, but students struggled and labored without achieving much. Advanced students doubted and were not able to identify the correct views. Zheng Xuan enveloped the great canons, encompassed all the specialists, deleted the prolix and excised the erroneous, corrected what had been omitted, and revised to reflect what had been lost. From this point on learners somewhat knew how to orient themselves. Every time my grandfather in Yuzhang studied the classical commentaries of previous

[80] This work is a now-lost apocryphal work on the *Esteemed Documents*.

[81] This calendar was composed by a mathematician and colleague of Cai Yong, one Liu Hong 劉洪, an official in the Bureau of Astronomy; it recorded celestial phenomena. Hong's career is well treated by de Crespigny, *Biographical Dictionary*, 509–10.

[82] *Hou-Hanshu* 35.1211.

Confucians, hegave priority to the views of Zheng Xuan, and always thought that none of the followers of Confucius could surpass him. When it came to transmitting and imparting orally to his own disciples, grandfather exclusively followed Zheng Xuan's "reading rules of a master."

論曰：自秦焚六經，聖文埃滅。漢興，諸儒頗修藝文；及東京，學者亦各名家。而守文之徒，滯固所稟，異端紛紜，互相詭激，遂令經有數家，家有數說，章句多者或乃百餘萬言，學徒勞而少功，後生疑而莫正。鄭玄括囊大典，網羅眾家，刪裁繁誣，刊改漏失，自是學者略知所歸。王父豫章君每考先儒經訓，而長於玄，常以為仲尼之門不能過也。及傳授生徒，並專以鄭氏家法云。[83]

7.3.3. Commentary

In evaluating Zheng Xuan's approach to the classics, we may apply the same summative profiles adduced by Li Weixiong earlier in this chapter in his study of Ma Rong's classicism, only to a greater degree. However, two profiles must be modified to fit Zheng Xuan. Profile No. 4, "He combined both Old and New Text learning," is a notion inspired in the modern mind by Pi Xirui 皮錫瑞 (1850–1908) in his *History of Classical Scholarship* that has almost universally been taken as gospel. But Pi's original wording is, "This shows that Zheng's annotations of [insert name of classic] concurrently adopted both New and Old Texts" 是鄭注_兼采今古文也.[84] This truism has to be recalibrated in the case of Zheng to read, "He based his scholarship on Old Text Learning, with judicious utilization of New Text learning."[85] The concept of "comprehensive learning" (通學 *tongxue*) means, then, that Zheng mastered all classical learning but did not necessarily weigh all schools equally. Profile No. 7, "His approach to explicating the subtle implications of the classics was to link them to human affairs" must be emended to link these subtle implications not to human affairs but to ritual settings, appurtenances, and performance. This overarching approach informed all of his exegesis and is seen most clearly in his work on the *Poems*.[86]

Scholars assume that Zheng Xuan's ritualized readings obtain for all of the texts he elucidated, but no proof exists to indicate his ritualized approach to, say, the *Documents* or the *Changes*. Recently recovered manuscripts from Dunhuang and Turfan containing Zheng's commentary on the *Analects* finally confirm the

[83] *Hou-Hanshu* 35.1212–13.

[84] Pi Xirui 皮錫瑞 (1850–1908), *Jingxue lishi* 經學歷史 (JXCS ed.), 135–6.

[85] As argued by Wang, *Jinguwen jingxue xinlun*, 164–8. For background to the development of "comprehensive learning" as epitomized by Zheng Xuan, see Yang Guangwei 楊廣偉, "Lun Zheng Xuan tongxue chansheng de lishi yuanyin" 論鄭玄通學產生的歷史原因, in Lin, ed., *Zhongguo jingxueshi lunwen xuanji*, 1:351–3.

[86] See most exhaustively Liang Xifeng 梁錫鋒, *Zheng Xuan yi li jian Shi yanjiu* 鄭玄以禮箋詩研究 (Beijing: Xueyuan Chubanshe, 2005).

pervasiveness of his ritual approach and reveal its foundation in the *Rites of Zhou*. For example, *Analects* 6:13, which in James Legge's translation reflects the majority view of this passage:

> The Master said to Zixia, "Do you be a scholar after the style of the superior man, and not after that of the mean man."
>
> 子謂子夏：儒為君子儒，無爲小人儒。
>
> Zheng's Commentary: "Scholars who stress teaching and training serve as teachers. Zixia had an impatient personality, so it was fine for him to teach and train gentlemen; but in teaching petty men he would get irritated and anxious, hence Confucius restrained him. The *Rites of Zhou* states: 'Scholars utilized the power of morality to teach others.'"
>
> 儒主教訓，為師也。子夏性急，教訓君子之人則可，教訓小人則慍恙，故戒之。周禮曰"儒以道德教人"。[87]

Zheng's reading is entirely inspired by this passage from the *Rites of Zhou* about the moral basis of education. Hence, taking *ru* 儒 "scholar, official" to indicate a teacher is a context-based conjecture, not a serious word gloss, but of course is of a piece with Zheng's overall approach of privileging the *Rites of Zhou* over all other texts, even the two other ritual classics. Demonstration of this preeminence is found in the "Jade and Embellishments" chapter of the *Records of Ritualists*. The epexegetical commentary of Kong Yingda preserves a catechism from the lost *Monograph of Zheng* 鄭志 which includes a response by Zheng Xuan to a question posed by his most notable disciple Zhao Shang 趙商. Zheng prefaces his explanation by distinguishing the relative authority of two of these ritual classics, the *Records of Ritualists*, and what he terms the classic, the *Rites of Zhou*:

> The *Records of Ritualists* were collected by later persons, and explained the rites according to the times. Sometimes those of the feudal princes were the same as the Son of Heaven; sometimes those of the Son of Heaven were the same rank as the feudal princes; that which they enacted were different. . . . Many places in the rules in the "Kingly System" chapter differ from the Zhou, but we should regard the classic as correct.
>
> 禮記後人所集，據時言。或諸侯同天子，或天子同諸侯等，所施不同.....王制之法與周異者多，當以經爲正。[88]

Apart from his ritual-inspired exegesis, Zheng Xuan was the founder and systematizer of the mature discipline of textual commentary. Zheng adopted a variety of forms for his commentaries. The major titles of commentaries used in early, pre-Tang China are listed in table 4. It is beyond the scope of this work to distinguish the natures of these various types of commentaries other than that suggested by their translations.[89] But it will be instructive to identify just which of these terms were used by Zheng Xuan. Here we first examine Wang Chong's artful assessment of the need for such a genre to accompany the classical canon:

> The sages composed the classics, worthy ones created their commentaries. These revealed the intentions of their authors and partook of the wills of the sages; hence classics needed commentaries. They were both made by worthies, so why do we only claim classics and commentaries as being correct, and other books and records as false? When one reads the texts of the classics and commentaries, and texts that comment on the classics, the classics must be explained, hence one calls them correct. When other books conflict with the classics, or offer different views, then they are termed false. From this point of view, the Five Classics are the standards for right and wrong. If something contravenes the Five Classics, even if correct it isn't heeded. If the Five Classics derived from the disciples of Confucius and up to the present aren't damaged or destroyed by anyone, they may be regarded as pure and complete, and they should be believed. But the Five Classics went through the abuse from extinct Qin, ran into the outrageous recommendations of Li Si, and suffered burning and prohibition. Master Fu and his kind embraced the classics and hid them deeply away. With the rise of Han, the Five Classics were gathered up and found incomplete, destroyed, or unclear, with fascicles and sections scattered or abandoned, resulting in incomplete texts. Cao Cuo and his ilk analyzed characters according to their private understanding; masters and disciples transmitted their learning among themselves, not knowing what was right. . . . Although Qin was nefast, they did not burn masters' literature, and so the masters' literature on foot-long strips and the fascicles of their texts are still preserved. They may be read and used to correct explanations; they may be gathered and strung together to display to later men....
>
> The ones who realize that the roof is leaking are the ones under the eaves; the ones who know that government is failing are the ones in the wilds; and the ones who perceive the errors in the classics are the various masters. The texts of the books of the various masters are truly clear. Those who explain sections and lines ultimately do not seek for understanding and do not ask for clarification, but transmit their understanding from master to disciple. Those who at first compose section and line commentaries are not men of penetrating vision.

[87] Wang Su 王素, *Tang xieben Lunyu Zhengshizhu jiqi yanjiu* 唐寫本論語鄭氏注及其研究 (Beijing: Wenwu Chubanshe, 1991), 59. Hua Zhe, "Han-Tang jian jingdian chanshi bianqian shilun," 58–59, analyzes Zheng's unique reading of this passage and contrasts it with other medieval interpretations.

[88] *Liji zhengyi*, "Yuzao" 玉藻, 29.5a–b.

[89] For instance, *Register* is a commentary identifying names, places, and terms, put in the framework of chronological development. Each "decade" of poems in the *Shijing* has its own "register" in Zheng Xuan's commentary of this title.

聖人作其經，賢者造其傳，述作者之意，採聖人之志，故經須傳也。俱賢所為，何 以獨謂經傳是，他書記非？彼見經傳，傳經之文，經須而解，故謂之是。他書與書 相違，更造端緒，故謂之非。若此者，韙是於五經。使言非五經，雖是不見聽。使 五經從孔門出，到今常令人不缺滅，謂之純壹，信之可也。今五經遭亡秦之奢侈， 觸李斯之橫議，燔燒禁防，伏生之休，抱經深藏。漢興，收五經，經書缺滅而不明， 篇章棄散而不具。鼂錯之輩，各以私意分拆文字，師徒相因相授，不知何者為 是。……秦雖無道，不燔諸子，諸子尺書，文篇具在，可觀讀以正說，可采掇以示後人。後人復作，猶前人之造也。……知屋漏者在宇下，知政失者在草野，知經 誤者在諸子。諸子尺書，文明實是。說章句者，終不求解扣明，師師相傳，初為章 句者，非通覽之人也。[90]

Wang Chong not only explains the need for commentaries on the classics but also creates enough doubt as to the unerring accuracy of these classics to allow for other sources to serve as necessary commentaries—the writings of the various masters. He hence also grants status to his own work to be placed among such alternate commentaries. This mindset helps explain Ying Shao's 應劭 (ca. 140–206) decision in the introduction to his seminal work on Han customs, cults, and curiosities, *The Comprehensive Interpretation of Mores and Customs* 風俗通義, to couch the need for his book in terms of the commentarial tradition and how far it bifurcated into competing schools over time. He also seems to be contrasting his work of "commentary" to the section and line commentaries current during the Han.[91] His concluding line reads, "In all it consists of 11 scrolls, and I term it *Comprehensive Interpretations of Mores and Customs*; its words master the excesses and errors of current customs, and its matter is complete in interpretations and principles [of good government based on the classics]" 凡十一卷，謂之風俗通義，言通於流俗之過謬，而事該之於義理也.[92] It should be noted that the term "interpretations and principles" is taken from the literature on commentaries, as illustrated by a passage describing Liu Xin's editorial work: "When Xin studied *Mr. Zuo*, he cited this commentary to explain the classic [*Spring and Autumn Annals*] and used them to elucidate both. From this, sections and lines, and interpretations and principles were replete" 及歆治左氏，引傳文以解經，轉相發明，由是章句義理備焉 。[93] Both terms became normative in the later literature of classical scholarship, "sections and lines" encapsulating the textural, philological approach, and "interpretations and principles" representing the theoretical, interpretive approach.

[90] *Lunheng*, "Shujie" 書解, 276–7.
[91] Ying, *Fengsu tongyi jiaozhu*, 1:4.
[92] Ying, *Fengsu tongyi jiaozhu*, 1:4.
[93] *Hanshu* 36.1967.

The foundational genres of classical scholarship, according to Lü Simian 呂思勉 (1884–1957), are the classics, commentaries (*zhuan* 傳), explanations (*shuo* 說), and records (*ji* 記). The former two are based on the written word, composed by sages or, we may assume, worthies; the latter are the recorded transcriptions of oral teachings of the same sages and worthies.[94] Based on this basic formulation, table 4 presents the most commonly used terminology in the literature on exegesis before the era of full-fledged hermeneutics began sometime in the late Tang.[95] Note that several terms are listed under both written and spoken registers.[96] And used verbally, *chuan* 傳 meant to transmit one's learning via oral teaching to disciples; used nominally and pronounced *zhuan*, it referred to the written commentary to transmit one's learning to the scholarly world.

And used verbally, *chuan* 傳 meant to transmit one's learning via oral teaching to disciples; used nominally, it referred to the written commentary to transmit one's learning to the scholarly world. It therefore marks the juncture in the process of transmission when an oral text becomes transcribed and preserved in written form.

Table 4. Terminology of Commentaries.

Written Texts	Written Texts Based on Oral Origins
傳 Commentary	傳 Commentary
記 Record	記 Record
注 Annotation	說 Explanation
解 Analysis	章句 Section and line commentary
疏 Subcommentary, epexegesis	論 Disquisition
詁 Gloss	問 Questions
訓 Exegesis	答 Responses

[94] Lü Simian, "Appendix 2, "*Jing*, *zhuan, shuo, ji*" 經傳說記, in *Xian-Qin xueshu gailun* 先秦學術概論, 65–73. Included in *Minguo Congshu* 民國叢書, no. 4.1 (Shanghai: Shanghai Shudian, 1992), 1–161.
[95] For the background to this flourishing of hermeneutics that dominated classical scholarship during the late Tang, Song, Yuan, and Ming dynasties, see vol. three of the author's series, subtitled *The Decline of Practical Philology and the Rise of Speculative Hermeneutics*, chap. 1, sec, 1.1, "Excurses on Hermeneutics."
[96] On the theoretical background to a commentary in relationship to a classic, see Yen-zen Tsai, "*Ching* and *Chuan*: Towards Defining the Confucian Scriptures in Han China," 24–57.

釋 Elucidation

箋 Notes

譜 Register

贊 Appraisal

敍 Introduction

圖 Diagrams

目录 Table of records

議 Deliberations

駁 Refutation

述義 Narration of an Interpretation

According to table 15 of volume 2 of *History of Chinese Confucianism*, Zheng Xuan composed works in all twenty-three of the genres listed here except six: record, analysis, subcommentary, exegesis, elucidation, and explanation.[97]

Generally speaking, Han classicists adopted four major approaches to classical exegesis: (1) the use of the classics to explain the classics; (2) the use of word glosses, including identifying loan graphs based on phonological approximation and similarity of graphic structure; (3) the use of the commentaries of other classicists; and (4) the use of historical and cultural contexts.[98] A close analysis of Zheng Xuan's approach to exegesis by Zhang Shunhui reveals the breadth of his many exegetical techniques that are not limited to these general parameters. It is difficult to know just which techniques were pioneered by Zheng, since little comparative evidence from other classicists of the time is available. Still, such a glimpse into the inner workings of his textual criticism is a rare opportunity at this important stage in the development of classical philology.

Zhang Shunhui's magisterial study of the scholarship of Zheng Xuanisolates and amply illustrates twenty concrete patterns of Zheng's textual criticism, listed here:

1. Adoption of old glosses without identification.
2. No slavish following of old commentaries; adds clarification of comments or individual opinion when necessary.
3. Annotation of words according to textual contexts.
4. Annotation of binomes according to textual contexts.
5. Identification and correction of interpolations.
6. Rearrangement of sections and lines.

[97] Xu et al., eds. "Liang Han juan," 474–6. For a detailed analysis of Zheng's works on classical scholarship, see Chen Jiaji 陳家驥, "Zheng Kangcheng zhushukao" 鄭康成著述考, *Wenxue nianbao 2* (1936):147–78, and Li Yunguang 李雲光, "Zheng Kangcheng yishukao" 鄭康成遺書考, *Lianhe Shuyuan Xuebao*, 1 (1962):1–59.

[98] Ma Zonghuo 馬宗霍 (1897 – 1976), *Zhongguo jingxueshi* 中國經學史 (JXCS ed.), 56 – 7.

7. Seeking of evidence from a wide range of texts.
8. Utilization of phonological glosses, pattern 1.
9. Utilization of phonological glosses, pattern 2.
10. Reordering of syntax for clarity.
11. Substitution of new characters.
12. Tracing of the origins of old institutions or objects.
13. Annotation via current customs or idioms.
14. Citation of linguistic precedents and examples.
15. Identification of doubtful passages left unexplained by others.
16. Identification of textual variations due to transcription from oral transmission.
17. Veneration of the text of the classics; no hasty textual tampering.
18. Reliance on the apocrypha.
19. Focus on the important, not the trivial.
20. Resolution of discrepancies within annotations of a classicist by comparing to other classicist's annotations.[99]

In sum, Zheng Xuan's contributions to classical scholarship may be distilled into the following four areas from the authoritative perspective of the authors of the Han-dynasty volume of *History of Chinese Confucianism*: (1) the comprehensive coverage of his textual exegesis, (2) the editing and elucidation of the Six Classics,

(3) the ritual basis of his learning, (4) the innovations made in the format of exegesis. The fact that Zheng achieved such sterling accomplishment as a poor commoner is also noteworthy to these class-conscious editors.[100] And viewed from the macro- perspective of the history of hermeneutics, Hua Zhe adduces a superlative accolade of the immense impact on the tradition exerted by Zheng Xuan: as noted above,Ma Rong and other like-minded traditional classicists are traditional transmitters of ancient knowledge with little leavening of personal creativity, while Zheng Xuan appears as the first theorist of classical exegesis, a striking innovation. As such, it is too simplistic to characterize him as either an Old Text or New Text partisan, or, I may add, even as a master of both. Hua Zhe concludes that it is only with the post- Zheng Xuan era of negative reaction that we can discern the lasting effect his ritual system and commentarial approach exerted on the development of classical scholarship, a story to be taken up in volume 3.[101]

[99] Zhang Shunhui 張舜徽 (1911 – 1992), *Zhengxue congzhu* 鄭學叢著 (Jinan: Qi - Lu Shushe, 1984), 15 – 158.

[100] Xu et al., eds., "Liang Han juan."

[101] For the above epitome, see Hua Zhe, "Han - Tang jian jingdian chanshi bianqian shilun", 19 –37.

7.4. Conclusions for Methodological Innovators and the Expansion of Philology (I, II, and III)

The discipline of bibliography made a work known to the scholarly world and introduced its author and contents. Textual criticism determined the authenticity of a work and produced the best edition. Lexicography brought the reader down to the micro level of the word, and exegesis brought the reader back up to the wider world of the message of a work, at least on the level of sections and lines. Full-fledged hermeneutics concerning the purport of an entire work awaited a later day, but these disciplines formed the foundation of classical scholarship at its most basic level, that of textual scholarship, or the field of philology.

The development of these methodologies was impelled by the Old Text philological mindset of close reading to verify the facts of historical names and objects, especially those associated with ritual places and performances. The truth of the classics was embodied in their messages, which were revealed in the details of language; it was not apprehended by intuition or revealed by meditation and was certainly not insinuated out of political necessity. In part, the change in official status of the classics, New Text editions during the Western Han and much of the Eastern Han to Old Text versions at the end of the dynasty or shortly afterward, reflected the maturation of methodology and the popularization of Zheng Xuan's eclectic and encyclopedic erudition. Of course, the decline of imperial power and the increasing dissatisfaction with the empty and impractical theorizing of New Text scholarship must have seemed increasingly out of touch and enervated in a world spinning out of control. And New Text erudites had long since appeared more eager to protect their turf than to mend their texts or to consider alternate texts. Imperial sponsorship was officially switched in the post-Han period, as reflected by epigraphic evidence. In the AD 175 Xiping stone classics, commissioned by Emperor Ling 靈 帝 (168– 189), the New Text schools were the editions of choice; but when the Wei stone classics, another royal project, were completed by AD 248, the editions were all Old Text classics and included the two centerpieces of this classical approach, *Mr. Zuo's Commentary* and the *Old Text Esteemed Documents.* The discipline of epigraphy will be treated in a later chapter and will introduce another important tool in the scholarly kit of Chinese classicists.

Chapter Eight

Three Kingdoms and the Prelude to Hermeneutics

The Three Kingdoms were formed at the collapse of the Han when three warlords seized power outright in their own names and proclaimed the establishment of their own dynasties: Cao Pi 曹 丕 (187–226), son of the power behind the throne of Han for the last 15 years, Cao Cao 曹 操 (155–220), set up his court in Luoyang; Liu Bei 劉 備 (161–223) claimed the mandate of his royal relatives and formed his own polity in Chengdu in 221; and Sun Quan 孫權 (182–252) struck out on his own imperial enterprise in AD 229, reigning in Jianye [modern Nanjing] until his death.[1] Given the chaos and uncertainty of the age, classical scholarship was not a priority of either court or courtier except for the value that imperial sponsorship of academies and scholarship gave to legitimize the warlords' reigns.

Wang Su 王 肅 (195–265) was the chief textual critic of this new period, and Zheng Xuan's 鄭 玄 (127–200) fellow synthesizer of Old and New Text learning who held views that were not only independent from but often antithetical to those of Zheng. Wang's effort to expound the entirety of the classical canon sought to imitate Zheng Xuan in order to replace him; personal ego, then, rather than intellectual independence, seemed to drive his classical project.[2] His philology was rigorous and rational, and it spurned the use of apocryphal texts. Yet one aspect of his classicism opened the door for speculation inspired by contemporary Daoist and Buddhist metaphysics. This speculation led to the supremely influential and long-lasting scholarship of Wang Bi 王弼 (226–249), despite his short span of life. Wang Su and Wang Bi's two careers demonstrate that

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[1] For the decline and fall of Han, and the division of the empire into three powers established by three great clans, see Mark Edward Lewis, *China Between Empires: The Northern and Southern Dynasties* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2009), 28–53.

[2] This is evident from the fact that, in his exegesis, Wang most often adopts the readings of Ma Rong or Jia Kui over those of Zheng. When all three are in alignment, then he rejects them all. See the brief treatment of this issue by Li Zhonghua 李中华, "Wei-Jin Nanbeichao juan" 魏晋南北朝卷, pp. 364–65, vol. 3 of *Zhongguo Ruxueshi* 中國儒學史, 10 vols., eds. Tang Yijie 汤一介 and Li Zhonghua (Beijing: Beijing Daxue Chubanshe, 2011).

continuity of a popular research approach, or deviation from it, transcend artificial political boundaries erected by dynastic change and are more affected by actual intellectual trends. For the same cultural values and political goals at the foundation of Confucian classicism persisted more or less unchanged from the Eastern Han until the fall of the Western Jin; this will be examined throughout this chapter by tracing the course of classical scholarship. It is instructive that in his *History of Classical Scholarship*, Pi Xirui 皮錫瑞 (1850–1908) treats the end of Han, Three Kingdoms, and Jin all in chapter 5, "The Era of Declining Classical Scholarship" 經學中衰時代, for he also sees no need to break off his narrative at dynastic fault lines.

A parallel intellectual movement was the development of a metaphysically oriented Confucianism, which will be examined only as it impacted classical exegesis, not as an independent school of philosophy. A recent multi-volume overview of the history of Confucian scholarship, periodicized by in-depth probes into dynastic groupings, traces the development of classical scholarship during the Three Kingdoms through the Six Dynasties era on two tracks: the Wang Su and the Wang Bi lines.[3] Wang Su represents the comprehensive and synthesizing track of classical scholarship, while Wang Bi represents the metaphysical turn of Confucian thought, expressed in commentaries on the *Changes* and *Analects*. The turn towards metaphysics was inspired by Daoist ontological thought, generally termed "the Learning of the Mysterious" (*xuanxue* 玄學), and was called forth due to the political fragmentation and social instability of the age and to the failure of traditional Confucian thought to address these issues.[4] Metaphysics naturally

[3] The development of both currents, those of Wang Su and Wang Bi, is introduced in Li, "Wei-Jin Nanbeichao juan", 351–53. A specialized study of classical scholarship during the Three Kingdoms period, ignoring developments in metaphysics, selects only Wang Su and He Yan for extended treatment. See Wang Huimin 汪惠敏, *Sangguo shidai zhi jingxue yanjiu* 三國時代之經學研究 (Taipei: Hanjin Wenhua 漢京文化, 1981), 236–325. Another specialized study is too narrow for our purposes here: Cheng Yuanmin 程元敏 treats some 53 classical masters, none of whom seemed to impact the transmission of classical scholarship beyond the regional level. *Sanguo Shujingxue* 三國蜀經學 (Taipei: Xuesheng Shuju, 1997). Pi Xirui devotes some attention to Wang Su and mentions in passing Wang Bi and He Yan and their works as the founders of the metaphysical school. The only other classicist he mentions—as opposed to Confucian thinkers and bureaucrats—from the Three Kingdoms period is Yu Fan 虞翻 (d. AD 233), a teacher and commentator on the *Changes*, *Analects*, and *Laozi*. Pi, *Jingxue lishi*, 154–55. Jian Boxian 簡博賢 examines Yu Fan's surviving work on the *Changes*, *Jincun Sanguo Liang- Jin jingxue yijikao* 今存三國兩晉經學遺籍考 (Taipei: Sanmin Shuju, 1986), 4–61. Pages 5–10 contain his biography and a survey of his compositions on the classics.

[4] Mark Edward Lewis provides a succinct overview of *xuanxue*, which he translates as "Dark Studies." The term "loosely refers to the activities of a group of writers working in the middle of the third century and their intellectual descendants. With the official textual orthodox of the classics compromised by the fall of the Han state, these writers explored the *Canon of Change*, the *Canon of the Way and Its Power*, and the *Master Zhuang* to provide fresh insights into language, society, and the cosmos. They framed arguments around a series of binary oppositions: being and non-being, name and reality, language and meaning, one and many, character and talent. These played into an overarching debate between the 'teaching of names' (*mingjiao*, received teachings on social roles) and the 'self so' or 'spontaneously natural' (*ziran*, the natural course of things without conscious interference). The key thinkers include He Yan, Wang Bi, Xiang Xiu, Guo Xiang, Zhong Hui, and the poet-essayists Ruan Ji and Xi Kang, who are linked as the two greatest Seven Worthies of the Bamboo Grove." Lewis, *China Between Empires*, 221– 22.

led to an examination of the import of work as a whole within this metaphysical system and eventually opened up the possibility of informal attempts at hermeneutics, in the sense of pre-nineteenth-century hermeneutics, which sought to derive a single valid or "true" meaning from a text. But even given the pervasive intellectual atmosphere, traditional textual criticism and exegesis maintained its quiet course, enabling this approach to survive and occasionally thrive. The impact exerted by the founders of these two intellectual currents, then, is of tremendous importance in the history of classical scholarship.[5]

Two other trends of classical scholarship during the Three Kingdoms period must be noted. Wang Huimin suggests that the reason hermeneutics developed at this time was the avoidance of Han classical exegesis; when the majority of classicists ignored Han commentarial genres, it freed them up to depend on their own intellectual devices and explore the classics for reasons of their own: in the main, problems in cosmology, politics, and even language and meaning. Second, what serious textual criticism did occur took place not in the capitals of these rather ephemeral states but among the people. These trends also help account for the paucity of notable classicists from this short thirty-year period.[6]

First a word of orientation. According to one popular handbook, "Hermeneutics, as opposed to exegesis, is the theory, rather than the practice, of interpretation."[7] Instead of the opposition of theory to practice, I rather oppose theory and text. For the purpose of this study, then, I regard hermeneutics as the interpretation of a text by a theoretical framework imposed from without, while exegesis is the interpretation of a text based on the evidence developed from within the text. Nascent hermeneutics is therefore the beginning of the effort to

[5] During the long course of the Three Kingdoms through the Six Dynasties period, the only classicists treated by Li Zhonghua are the dual Wangs—Wang Su and Wang Bi—for, according to Li, they not only founded these two intellectual currents, but their approach to the classics typified all classicists during this four-hundred-year stretch of history in terms of their intellectual outlets and overall exegetical approaches.

[6] Wang, *Sangguo shidai zhi jingxue yanjiu*, 16–17.

[7] Tilottanta Rajan, "Hermeneutics, 1. Nineteenth Century," in *The Johns Hopkins Guide to Literary Theory & Criticism*, ed. Michael Groden and Martin Kreiswith (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), 375-79.

formulate overarching interpretive frameworks based not on textual evidence but on theoretical musings. We have seen that Zheng Xuan guided his textual criticism according to the need to conform to the ritual system of the *Rites of Zhou*; but this was at its root a text-based system. The "Learning of the Mysterious," though inspired by speculation on Daoist texts and the *Zhou Changes*, was still externally imposed on Confucian classics without regard to the textual evidence. I therefore credit this attempt as an inaugural attempt at nascent hermeneutics, well before the development of formal hermeneutics created by the appearance of the "Clearing-Up- the-Meaning" (*yishu* 義疏) commentary, to be analyzed in a chapter below.[8]

Back to history. The fall of the north during the Western Jin resulted in the regrouping of the dynasty in distant Jianye in 317. That is why this volume does not conclude until the occurrence of this wrenching geographical and psychological sea change. Confucianism in Jianye, later called Jiankang, assuredly operated from a new set of assumptions and even a new worldview with this shift southward, since the Chinese *oikoumene* had been halved north and south, drastically reduced in political power and shrinking in relevance to continental concerns. This makes a natural starting point for volume 3 in this series: *Northern and Southern Dynasties, Sui and Early Tang.*

8.1. Wang Su and the Continuation of Philology

Retrospective and equitable evaluation of Wang Su's 王 肅 (195–256) scholarly contributions is complicated by two issues: First is his relationship to the royal throne of the Eastern Jin; his daughter married into the powerful Sima family in AD 231 when Su was just 36, and her son, Sima Yan 司馬炎 (236–290), eventually founded the Jin dynasty. The purity of his motivation is thus suspect. Second is Su's possible forgery of several works, chiefly the *Family Sayings of Confucius* and the so-called pseudo Kong Anguo *Commentary on the Esteemed Documents* 尚書傳 that is included in the *Correct Meaning of the Five Classics* 五經正義 series.[9] It did not help his nineteenth-century reputation that

[8] More in-depth attention will be paid to the discipline of hermeneutics in vol. 3 of this series.

[9] For an introduction to the former work, consult R. P. Kramers in Loewe, ed., *Early Chinese Texts*, 258–62. At a much earlier date, Kramers argued the position that Wang Su merely compiled this anthology from earlier sources. *K'ung Tzu Chia Yu: The School Sayings of Confucius* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1949), 193–98. In contrast, Yoav Ariel claims that the anthology is a complete forgery. *K'ung-Ts'ung-Tzu: The K'ung Family Master's Anthology: A Study and Translation of Chapters 1–10, 12–14* (Kington: Kington University Press, 1989), "Introduction," section 3. However, I find this view difficult to accept, given the many parallels between this anthology and earlier records such as contained in the *Records of Ritualists.* The discovery of a Western Han text of a hitherto unknown work, *The Words of Confucian Masters* 儒家者言 in 1973, and the same or a closely related work also dating from the Western Han in 1977, seems to demonstrate that the *Confucian Family Sayings*, or anthologies very similar to it, long predated the work compiled—or forged—by Wang Su. Others see these texts as sharing more similarities with such anthologies of anecdotes as the *Suoyuan* 說苑 or *Xinxu* 新序, edited by Liu Xiang 劉向 (79–8 BC). This issue is, of course, still open. See *Wenwu,* 1981, no. 8., for a transcription and annotation of the 1973 text. A preliminary orientation favoring the latter view is Ning Zhenjiang 宁镇疆, "Bajiaolang Hanjian *Rujiazhe yan* yu *Kongzi jiayu* xiangguan zhangci shuzheng" 八角廊汉简儒家者言与孔子家语相关章次疏证, *Journal of Ancient Books Collation Studies* 古籍整理研究学刊 2004, no. 5. For an introduction to the pseudo Kong Anguo *Commentary on the Esteemed Documents*, consult Cheng, *Shangshu xueshi*, 670–85.

[10] Pi, *Jingxue lishi*, 154.

Pi Xirui's *History of Classical Scholarship* groups Wang Su with Liu Xiang as the two "great vermin" (*dadu* 大蠹) of classical scholarship of the Han dynasty because of their supposed ventures in textual fabrications.[10] Here we will ignore the former issue of motivation and skip the latter problem with possible fabrication as we concentrate on his classical scholarship.

Wang Su's biography in Chen Shou's 陳壽 (233–297) *Sanguozhi* 三國志 is devoted mostly to his political career and his recommendations and memorials. Following are the sections that reveal his scholarly leanings and accomplishments.

> Su's style was Ziyong. When he was 18, he studied the *Classic on the Grandest Mystery* with Song Zhong and composed his own commentary.
> . . .
> At first, Su was devoted to the learning of Jia Kui and Ma Rong but disliked that of Zheng Xuan. He gleaned both similar and divergent views and composed analyses for the *Esteemed Documents*, *Poems*, *Analects*, *Three Rites*, and *Mr. Zuo*. When he compiled and completed his father Wang Lang's *Commentary on the Changes*, all of these works were deposited in the imperial academy. What he composed of records of mourning and discourses and rebuttals on institutions, suburban sacrifices, ancestral temples, and weighty or negligible matters of the court amounted to more than one hundred fascicles. At the time, Sun Shuran of Le'an [Shandong] had been trained by a follower of Zheng Xuan and was called the Great Confucian of Dongzhou [Shandong]. He was summoned as Custodian of the Private Library but did not serve. Su compiled the *Discourse on Verification by the Sages* to mock and criticize Zheng Xuan. Sun Shuran refuted it and analyzed it. Su also composed *Formulas in the Zhou Changes* and *Spring and Autumn Annals*, and annotations to the *Mao Poems*, *Records of Ritualists*, *Three Commentaries on the Spring and Autumn Annals*, *Tales of the States*, and *Close to Elegant*. He further authored letters in more than ten fascicles.
>
> 肅字子雍。年十八，從宋忠讀太玄，而更爲之解。……初肅善賈

、馬之學，而不好鄭氏，采會同異，爲尚書、詩、論語》、三禮、左氏解，及撰定父朗所作易傳，皆列於學官。其所論駁朝廷典制、郊祀、宗廟、喪紀、輕重，凡百餘篇。時樂安孫叔然，受學鄭玄之門，人稱東州大儒。征爲祕書監，不就。肅集聖證論以譏短玄，叔然駁而釋之，及作周易、春秋例，毛詩、禮記、春秋三傳、國語、爾雅諸注，又著書十餘篇。[11]

From early on, Wang Su's scholarship was colored by his initial studies with New Text scholar Song Zhong 宋 忠 (fl. 200), whose approach was by default to uncover the "Subtle Words and Grand Meanings" of the classics. In more concrete terms, Song Zhong was an adherent of the Jingzhou School 荊州學派 of classical scholarship. Song hailed from Nanyang 南 陽 , Henan, and was a supporter of Liu Biao 劉表 (142–208), the founder of the Jingzhou school; he utilized the apocrypha but opposed Zheng Xuan's catholic approach. Song Zhong admired Yang Xiong and annotated several of his works, including the *Classic of Grandest Mystery*, and set the direction of this school on studying Yang Xiong. Song Zhong was a notable teacher, with several accomplished students aside from Wang Su. In AD 200, he led a project to produce official section and line commentaries on the *Five Commentaries*, subtitled *Later Definitive Edition* 後定 , sponsored by Liu Biao.[12] Liu Biao was the local strongman in Jingzhou. His political proscription during the Han had been lifted in 184, and he had established an independent regime in Henan in 190, where he had been sent as the Pastor of Jing Province; his scholarly court in miniature became a haven for refugee scholars and literati. He himself specialized in the *Changes* and *Rites* and composed commentaries on them. The school he initiated, more by example than design, was characterized by its eclectic currents, including Old Text Confucianism, Legalism, and Huang-Lao Daoism. It is considered to be an important stage in the development of metaphysical Confucianism.[13]

[11] *Sanguozhi* 13.414, 419–20.

[12] Song Zhong has no biography in the *Sanguozhi*, but his admirable scholarly and political career is pieced together from various sources by de Crespigny, *A Biographical Dictionary of Later Han to the Three Kingdoms*, 756.

[13] See Li Yeya 李叶亚, *Jingzhou xuepai yanjiu* 荆州学派研究 (Huazhong Keji Daxue MA thesis, 2009), chapter 2, for characterizations of Li Biao, Song Zhong, and other prominent members of this school. Liu Biao's primary biographies are in *Hou-Hanshu* 74b.2419–24 and *Sanguozhi* 6.210–13. Consult further Cheng Yuanmin 程元敏, "Ji-Han Jingzhou jingxue" 季漢荊州學, *Hanxue yanjiu* 4 (1986): 211–64; Jin Renyi 金仁义, "Liu Biao yu Jingzhou xuepai" 刘表与荆州学派, *Chizhou Shizuan Xuebao* 池州师专学报 16 (2002): 71–74; and de Crespigny, *A Biographical Dictionary of Later Han to the Three Kingdoms,* 485–86. Jingzhou member Wang Can 王 粲 (177–217), a famous literatus, also composed at least one work on classical exegesis: *Elucidation of Questions Concerning the Esteemed Documents* 尚書釋問, four scrolls, and another work that was directed against Zheng Xuan but no longer extant. Cheng, *Shangshu xueshi*, 946–49. Wang Can seems to have served as the private secretary for Liu Biao, and in one essay he reveals the breadth of the intellectual activities undertaken by members of the Jingzhou school, including classical scholarship, belles lettres, musical studies, historical composition, penal code reform, and the like. See Wang Can, "Jingzhou wenxueji" 荊州文學記, in *Wang Zhongxuanji* 王仲宣集(BSJJ ed.), 1205–6.

[14] Li Zhonghua, "Wei-Jin Nanbeichao juan," 360–61.

As for the intellectual outlet of Wang Su, his earliest exegesis was devoted to the *Changes* and his father's draft edition, plus Yang Xiong's commentary on this classic. His use of the apocrypha added another layer of mysticism. With such a background, Wang was ineluctably set on track to pursue his classical scholarship that varied widely from that of Zheng Xuan. The fact that Wang included within his purview works that were known as Old Text classics does not mean that he was at heart an Old Text partisan; it seems that Old Text classics were the texts *du jour* and were the subject of scholarly interpretive schemes more characteristic of the New Text persuasion. It also signified that his comprehensive learning incorporated all important classical texts and was probably more eclectic than the approach of Zheng. It may be recalled that Zheng utilized Old Text editions as his base texts, then selectively chose from a wide range of textual material to aid in his annotations. Nevertheless, in his critical analysis of texts, Wang curbs this natural tendency towards mysticism as he appears consistently rational, even-keeled, and less inclined to resort to supernatural explanations than Zheng. This is true of his body of work as a whole, with the notable exception of his work on the *Changes*, to be examined presently.

Wang Su's rivalry with Zheng Xuan historically is termed "The Contention between Zheng and Wang" 鄭王之爭. The scope of Wang's exegetical work was similar to that of Zheng. In size, Zheng takes the palm by composing fifty-six separate titles; Wang produced some thirty-three separate works. Li Zhonghua notes three striking differences in the types of texts each classicist annotated: First, Zheng Xuan annotated all of the apocryphal texts available to him; Wang did not treat a single one. Second, Zheng Xuan annotated all three traditional commentaries on the *Spring and Autumn Annals* while Wang only singled out *Mr. Zuo's Commentary* for attention. Third, Zheng did not comment on Yang Xiong's *Classic on the Grandest Mystery*, which was young Wang's first attempt at exegesis.[14]

It takes a concerted effort to sift through enough material to conduct a substantial comparative analysis, something, happily, that is already provided by Shi Yingyong, who presents a detailed exposition of the differences in exegetical approaches of Zheng and Wang, summarized as follows. First, Zheng is more willing to change words, that is, to suggest alternate orthographies to identify loan graphs while Wang would rather force meaning from a word as it is written. Second, Zheng and Wang utilized different editions. Third, Zheng liberally quotes from the *Rites of Zhou*, but Wang seldom does. Fourth, Zheng is willing to cite

from the three New Text masters' exegetical schools on the *Poems* to correct Mao's views, while Wang cites Mao to refute Zheng's conclusions. And fifth, Zheng is more willing to adopt supernatural readings, whereas Wang is more secular and rational. Two other general trends are pointed out by Shi: the frequent similarity they shared and that the points of divergence between Zheng and Wang are exactly in the realm of ritual.[15]

Despite the Jingzhou school's practice of encompassing most of the traditional Confucian classics in their exegetical work, the *Changes* was at the heart of this endeavor. From Liu Biao to Song Chong and then to Wang Lang and his son Wang Su, each produced a commentary on the *Changes*. And it is with this work that Wang Su revealed his true exegetical colors: a mixture of rational glossology and speculative hermeneutics, each applied to a different textual layer.

First is the clear and brief nature of his commentary. For example, for three words in the Judgment 卦辭 on Hexagram #61 ("Inner Truth" 中孚, "Pigs and fishes. Good Fortune" 豚魚吉), Zheng Xuan expends an unseemly ninety-eight words to interpreting these three words, but Wang employs only sixteen.[16]

Second is his rational approach to word glosses. Concerning Hexagram #1, *Qian* 乾 , which reads, "In the fifth NINE, undivided, (we see its subject as) the dragon on the wing in the sky. It will be advantageous to meet with the great man" 九五：飛龍在天，利見大人. The *Commentary on the Images* 像傳 glosses this line as "'The dragon is on the wing in the sky:'—the great man rouses himself to his work" 飛龍在天，大人造也. Zheng Xuan glosses the word *zao* 造 as "to do, make" (*wei* 為); this accounts for Legge's translation "rouses himself to his work." Wang glosses it as "to go to, to arrive" (*jiu* 就, *zhi* 至), which is more in keeping with the notion of seeing a great man. In the "Xici" 繫 詞 commentary, part 1: "The stirring up the thought of (securing that there shall be) no blame arises from (the feeling of) repentance" 震无咎者，存乎悔. Zheng takes "stirring" (*zhen* 震) as "fearful" (*ju* 懼), while Wang reads it as "to move" (*dong* 動). In the same commentary, "The Three Extremes" 三 極 are interpreted by Zheng in an ontological manner, referring to the "Three Powers" (*sancai* 三 才)—Heaven, Earth, and Man—while Wang reads the term more earthbound as "Yin and Yang"

[15] Shi Yingyong 史应勇, *Zheng Xuan tongxue ji Zheng-Wang zhi zheng* 郑玄通学及郑王之争 (Chengdu: Ba-Shu Shushe, 2007), 231–32. Twenty-seven years before Shi Yingyong's work of 2007, Li Zhenxing 李 振 興 conducted an exhaustive analysis of 1,114 citations from Wang Su's lost exegetical works. He does record obvious differences with Zheng Xuan's commentaries but does not make a systematic analysis; his emphasis is on the accuracy of Wang's own views. See *Wang Su zhi jingxue* 王素之經學(1980; rpt. Shanghai: Huadong Shifan Daxue Chubanshe, 2012). Jian Boxian directly contrasts the exegetical approaches of Zheng and Wang at many points. Jian, *Jincun Sanguo Liang-Jin jingxue yijikao*, passim.

[16] Li, "Wei-Jin Nanbeichao juan," 370.

(*yinyang* 陰陽), "rigid and soft" (*gangrou* 剛柔) and "humaneness and fealty" (*renyi* 仁義). In these three examples, Wang's readings are as sensible as Zheng's, if not more so.[17]

Third is Wang's mystical side, represented by his utilization of numerology. Shi Yingyong explains the impact that Wang Su's fondness for numerology had on the development of the metaphysical side of Confucianism and on the increasing estrangement of classical studies from practical government. Sometimes his reasoning sounds counterintuitive, so I present his argumentation at some length:

> Because he did not cite the apocrypha, Wang Su shifted from the interpretative framework of the political legality of rule by emperor towards "rule by the sages"; Zheng Xuan rather preferred the "rule of theology." This means that in comparing the entirety of the classical exegesis by Zheng and Wang, that of Wang became less and less colored by gods and spiritual marvels. This type of change is precisely the purpose of the more rationalized fringe of practical government at the end of the Han, and was caused by a more realistic view of classical scholarship. The dynasty based on classical scholarship that was fringed by theology had already become thoroughly corrupt and rotten. Scholars who were conscious of the theological classical scholarship of the past adopted a critical attitude and trended towards such practicality, and became somewhat humanized. Furthermore, they no longer utilized research in classical scholarship that was aimed to serve realistic governance; instead, out of necessity they trended towards research based on interpretations and principles, and metaphysics. This type of theoretical resource naturally was derived from the *Laozi* and *Zhuangzi*; this was their forte, but the Confucian Classics did not serve as such a resource. Therefore, we can see that Liu Biao's aide Liu Xian "was erudite and strong of memory, and especially devoted to the words of Huang-Lao." Wang Can "disdained the rites and considered learning as ignorance, and practiced nothing and lacked desires." Song Zhong's studies in the *Changes* based on the *Classic of the Grandest Mystery* obviously trended towards the interpretations and principles' approach. After being transmitted to Wang Su, "he explained the *Changes*, and emphasized interpretations and principles, and somewhat adopted imagery and numerology, becoming the precursor to Wang Bi." Afterwards, Wang Bi's studies in the *Changes* "were founded on Wang Su's explanations," and quoting *Laozi* and *Zhuangzi* to annotate Confucian Classics became a fashion for a time. Later on, the influence of this line of classical

[17] These examples are gathered from Shi, *Zheng Xuan tongxue*, 232–36, table 1. Shi Yingyong includes six tables in all, comparing Zheng and Wang's approaches to the *Changes*, *Esteemed Documents*, *Mao Poems*, "Mourning Vestments" 喪服 chapter of the *Ceremonials and Rituals*, *Records of Ritualists*, and *Analects*.

> scholarship on "southern learning" [based in Jiankang during the so-called Southern Dynasties] was rather large. The reason it "gained brilliant results" was also precisely because classical scholarship became estranged from practical governance and trended towards simplification and the approach of interpretations and principles. And the type of classical scholarship that was in part associated with rites and closely associated with practical governance was, from beginning to end, exclusively monopolized by Zheng Xuan.[18]

Space does not permit analysis of this lengthy explanation of the intellectual trends that caused the bifurcation of classical scholarship along traditional conservative- philological and innovative-metaphysical interpretive tracks. And while this passage could also serve to introduce the brand of classical learning exemplified by Wang Bi, discussed later in this chapter, a concluding word of praise for Wang Su is appropriate. His classical exegesis was sufficiently rational and rigorous to inspire later followers of the philological line and to provide a methodological model, yet it was refined and sensitive enough to show the way to adopt insights gleaned from non-Confucian sources to explain the metaphysical basis of many traditional cultural patterns and moral principles. Instead of being a comprehensive Confucian in his classicism, then, we may be more accurate by defining Wang as an emerging hybrid exegete-hermeneut. A passage from Wang Su's preface to the *Family Sayings of Confucius* confirms this trend towards hermeneutics:

> The learning of Zheng has been circulating for fifty years now. After I became a student I set my will on scholarship and studied the learning of Mr. Zheng. Nevertheless, in analyzing texts, the results must match reality. In examining the context of Zheng's exegesis, I am not comfortable with his interpretations and principles. His mistakes and errors are numerous; for this reason I commandeered it and changed it.
>
> 鄭氏學行五十載矣，自肅成童，始志於學，而學鄭氏學矣。然尋文責實，考其上下， 義理不安，違錯者多，是以奪而易之。[19]

I contend that, before the great classical project of the Tang, the *Correct Meaning of the Five Classics* edited by Kong Yingda 孔 穎 達 (564–648), it is hard to argue for another classicist with such a firm footing in both fields of textual criticism and interpretation. Of course, Wang Su headed up a collaborative enterprise, and it would take the maturation of another genre in the commentarial literature, the clearing-up-the-meaning 疏, before formal hermeneutics emerged. Before Shi Yingyong's sensitive reading of the evidence, such a comparison would not even be possible. But from this new vantage point, Wang Su's contributions to the growth of classical scholarship appear less broad or far reaching, but probably more multidimensional, than those of Zheng Xuan.

[18] Shi Yingyong, *Zheng Xuan tongxue*, 386–87.
[19] *Kongzi jiayu* (ZZJC ed.), "Preface", 1.

8.1.1. Du Yu and Annotating Zuo's Commentary

Du Yu 杜預 (222–285) was a very successful general during the Wei dynasty and later served its successor dynasty, the Jin. He defended Wei from invasion by Shu and helped conquer the state of Wu in the south. His grandfather and father both worked in the Wei bureaucracy in high positions, and his career was aided by his marriage into the powerful Sima clan to a granddaughter of Sima Yi 司馬懿 (179– 251), whose grandson Sima Yan founded the Jin dynasty and assumed the throne as Emperor Wu 武帝. Hailing from Duling in Jingzhao 京兆杜陵 (modern Xi'an), Du's claim to fame as a classicist lay in his specialization in *Zuo's Commentary*. His biography notes that he "was broadly learned and mastered many fields, and brilliant in understanding the way of dynastic rise and fall. He constantly stated, 'Virtue cannot be hoped for, but achieving fame and leaving behind words can probably be attained'" 預博學多通，明於興廢之道，常言：德不可以企及，立功立言可庶幾也。[20]

The following extended passage from his biography reveals his persona as well as his profile as a classicist:

> As for Yu's person, he could not stride a horse; in his archery, he could not pierce a leather notebook. Yet every time he was appointed to manage a great affair, he assumed the post of general or commander. In his contacts with others and social interactions, he was respectful and ritually correct. He kept nothing back when asked, and was tireless in teaching; he was quick at his tasks and prudent in his words. After accomplishing meritorious achievements, he took his ease and avoided service, and so deeply pondered the classics and other writings, composing his *Collected Analyses of the Spring and Autumn Annals Classic and Mr. Zuo's Commentary*. He further consulted and examined the records of all specialists and called his work *Elucidatory Patterns* [*in the Spring and Autumn Annals and Mr. Zuo's Commentary*]. Furthermore, he composed *Diagrams on Leagues and Assemblies* and *A Long Calendar of the Spring and Autumn Period*. With these works, he was ready to found the scholarly lineage of a single master, which was formulated when he neared old age. He also compiled *Records and Appraisals of Notable Women*. At the time, commentators spoke of his pristine prose and direct meaning. Yet contemporaries did not yet respect him; only Zhi Yu [d. 311], Custodian of the Private Library, appreciated him. Yu commented, "Originally, Zuo Qiuming wrote a commentary for the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, yet afterwards it circulated by itself. The *Elucidatory Patterns* was originally designed as a commentary, yet what it clarified was not limited to *Zuo's Commentary*, hence it also circulated by itself." At that time, Wang Ji understood how to physiognomize horses and was very fond of doing so. He and He Jiao both levied taxes

[20] *Jinshu* 晉書 34.1025.

to increase their wealth. Du Yu often said that "Ji has an addiction for horses, and Jiao has an addiction for money." When Emperor Wu heard this, he asked Du Yu, "What addiction does my servant have?" He responded with "Your servant has an addiction for *Zuo's Commentary*."

預身不跨馬，射不穿劄而每任大事，輒居將率之列。結交接物，恭而有禮，問無所隱，誨人不倦，敏於事而慎於言。既立功之後，從容無事，乃耽思經籍，為《春秋左氏經傳集解。又參考眾家譜第，謂之釋例。又作盟會圖、春秋長曆，備成一家之學，比老乃成。又撰女記贊。當時論者謂預文義質直，世人未之重，唯秘書監摯虞賞之，曰：左丘明本為春秋作傳，而左傳遂自孤行，釋例本為傳設，而所發明何但左傳，故亦孤行。時王濟解相馬，甚愛之，而和嶠頗聚斂，預常稱濟有馬癖，嶠有錢癖。武帝聞之，謂預曰：卿有何癖？對曰：臣有左傳癖。[21]

Du Yu's main exegetical work on *Zuo's Commentary* won out over Jia Kui and Fu Qian's commentaries, and it was incorporated into Kong Yingda's *Correct Meaning of the Five Classics* and later the *Thirteen Classics*. He joined five other Wei-Jin classicists so honored by inclusion in this latter exclusive commentarial club, the first being Wang Su's pseudo–Kong Anguo *Commentary on the Esteemed Documents*, Wang Bi's *Annotations on the Changes*, and He Yan's *Collected Analyses of the Analects*, all scholars of the Wei. Du Yu, though educated during the Wei, completed his great work late in life and is hence regarded as a Jin-period scholar; two other Jin classicists included in the *Thirteen Classics* are Fan Ning's 范寧 (339–401) *Collected Analyses on the Guliang Commentary*, and Guo Pu's 郭 璞(276–324) *Annotations on Close to Elegance*. Hence, six of the commentaries on the *Thirteen Classics* are products of Wei-Jin exegetes, while the more famous classicists of the Han dynasty also numbered six. The sole exception to this Han and Wei-Jin monopoly is Tang emperor Minghuang's *Annotations on the Classic of Filial Piety*.[22]

The Qianlong bibliographers comment on Du Yu's exegetical work on *Zuo's Commentary* as follows:

> Of those commentaries transmitted to the present age, Du Yu's annotations and Kong Yingda's epexegesis are the most ancient. But often Du's annotations force the classic to conform to the commentary, and Kong's epexegesis also often denigrates Du and favors Liu Xuan.[23]

[21] Jinshu 1031–32.

[22] This point was noted, among others, by Pi, *Jingxue lishi*, 158.

[23] Liu Xuan 劉 炫 (ca. 546–ca. 613) and friend Liu Zhuo 劉 焯 (544–610) were the two outstanding classicists of the Sui dynasty, whose exegetical work covered the entire spectrum of the classics. Their commentaries were incorporated, sometimes whole cloth, into Kong Yingda's subcommentaries in the *Wujing zhengyi*. But the Qianlong bibliographers mistake Liu Xuan for Liu Zuo. The latter's two commentaries that partly critique, partly supplement those of Du Yu include *Chunqiu Zuozhuan shuyi* 春秋左傳述義 in 40 scrolls and *Chunqiu Zuozhuan Du Yu jiejie zizhu* 春秋左傳杜預集解字注 in one scroll. See the treatment of him and his works in conjunction with Du Yu's approach by Shen Yucheng 沈玉成 and Liu Ning 劉寧, *Chunqiu Zuozhuan xueshigao* 春秋左傳學史稿 (Nanjing: Jiangsu Guji Chubanshe, 1992), 168–76.

> These are both cases of trusting too deeply in the errors of specialization; we cannot but term this one of the failings of this work. Nevertheless, it was only with this annotation and epexegesis that the meaning of *Mr. Zuo* was clarified; with the meaning clarified, the traces of good and evil during the last 242 years of the Spring and Autumn period were verified one by one. Later Confucians acted wantonly in being too clever as they applied their individual conjectures in assigning praise and blame; we can still find evidence in the text to realize how absurd they are. However, since the Han and Jin periods, scholars depended on *Mr. Zuo* to know the meaning of the classic. After the Song and Yuan periods, they depended even more on *Mr. Zuo* to fabricate conjectural explanations. It is fair to say that the commentary together with the annotations and epexegesis performed a great service in understanding the *Spring and Autumn Annals*.

今世所傳惟杜注孔疏為最古。杜注多強經以就傳；孔疏亦多左杜而右劉。是皆篤信　專門之過，不能不謂之一失。然有注疏而後左氏之義明，左氏之義明，而後二百四　十二年內善惡之跡一一有徵。後儒妄作聰明以私臆談褒貶者，猶得據傳文以知其謬。則漢晉以來藉左氏以知經義，宋元以後更藉左氏以杜臆說矣。傳與注疏均謂有大功 於春秋可也。[24]

As for Du Yu's specific exegetical approach, the following excerpt from the famous episode of "Cui Shu Murders His Lord" 崔杼弒其君 is very revealing in this regard. Below I display three different textual layers: the original classic, *Zuo's Commentary*, and Du Yu's *Annotations* 注 , as called by Kong Yingda instead of Du's own term, *Analyses* 解 , when he inserted them interlineally in *Zuo's Commentary*, marked off here in italics.

Spring and Autumn Annals:

Twenty-Fifth year, spring: Cui Shu of Qi led a regiment to invade our border settlement in the north.

二十有五年，春，齊崔杼帥師伐我北鄙.

Zuo's Commentary with the Annotations of Du Yu:

Twenty-fifth year, spring: Cui Shu of Qi led a regiment to invade our border settlement in the north in order to take revenge on the regiment

[24] *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao*, 1:147 (*juan* 26).

of Xiaobo. *The previous year, Lu sent Meng Xiaobo to invade Qi on behalf of Jin.* Our duke was distressed by this, and sent an emissary to announce it to Jin. Menggong Chuo stated, "Master Cui has a greater intention for the future. *His intent lies in murdering his lord. Menggong Chuo was a grandee of Lu.* It does not lie in distressing us. He will certainly rapidly return. So what disaster will result from it? When he came, he did not plunder. *He did not plunder nor murder.* He treated the people leniently. *He desired to gain the hearts of the people.* This was different than the other day." The regiment of Qi returned, having accomplished nothing. "*Accomplished nothing" means "in vain.*"

二十五年，春，齊崔杼帥師伐我北鄙，以報孝伯之師也，公患之，使告于晉，孟公綽曰，崔子將有大志，不在病我，必速歸，何患焉，其來也不寇，使民不嚴，異於他日，齊師徒歸。[25]

Three things jump out from this short example. First is Du Yu's concern to identify historical characters, once supplying the surname of the Xiaobo mentioned in *Zuo's Commentary* and once identifying Menggong Chuo as a Grandee of Lu. Second is his concern to supply the historical background to events in *Zuo's Commentary*—the pretext for the raid of Cui Shu, which was revenge, and the larger purpose of this raid, to set the stage for the regicide of his liege. Third is his linguistic notes, either amplifying a short passage concerning pillaging or explaining the meaning of "accomplished nothing."[26] Readers of the original will note that I expunge phonological data appended to the *Annotations* because they were extracted from Lu Deming's 陸德明 (556–627) *Explanations of the Texts of the Classical Canon* 經典釋文 and inserted retroactively by Kong Yingda.[27]

Aside from the historical bent, Du Yu sometimes makes hermeneutically tinged explication; this is evident throughout his extended commentary, but it is more easily accessed in his own preface to his *Collective Analyses*. For instance, he perceives four narratological approaches utilized throughout *Zuo's Commentary*, approaches that function to interpret the text on the macro level. This hermeneutic vision far transcends the simple and very limited section and line techniques employed by *Guliang* and *Gongyang's* commentaries. Zuo's textual commentary is thus viewed as markedly more sophisticated and subtle:

[25] *Chunqiu Zuozhuan zhengyi* 36.2a–b.

[26] For Du Yu's focus on historical exegesis, a good starting point is Barry B. Blakeley, "Notes on the Reliability and Objectivity of the Tu Yü Commentary on the *Tso Chuan*," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 101 (1981): 207–12.

[27] It seems, however, that Du Yu attempted exegesis along phonological lines, since a work of sound glosses called *Chunqiu Zuoshizhuan yin* 春秋左氏傳音 is attributed to him in the *Sui* bibliographical monograph, along with one by Fu Qian and—uncharacteristically to our way of thinking—a member of the Bamboo Grove, Ji Kang 嵇康 (223–262). *Suishu* 32.928.

> Zuo Qiuming received this classic from Confucius; Zuo considered that this classic was a work that should not be published. Hence in his commentary he sometimes commenced his explication with events in order to emphasize the classic. Sometimes he slighted the wording of the classic in order to derive overall meaning. Sometimes he analyzed the classic to derive principles. And sometimes he canvassed the classic to harmonize it.
>
> 左丘明受經於仲尼，以為經者不刊之書也。故傳或先經以始事，或後經終義，或依經以辯理，或錯經以合異，隨義而發。[28]

This preface is a difficult text to understand and aroused some reaction, as seen by the production of a work devoted to this preface by the largely negative criticaster Liu Xuan.[29] But it seems that different explicative approaches are derived from four separate fields: history, narratology, hermeneutics, and intertextuality.

Further in his preface, Du Yu introduces another hermeneutical approach, that is, the search for meaning by way of key phrases or patterns in the classic, his *Explanatory Models in the Spring and Autumn Annals* 春秋釋例, 15 scrolls. An example of a key phrase is "in general" (*fan* 凡), which is used to confirm the authority of a statement by linking it to the Duke of Zhou, and should be read as "In general, as instituted by the Duke of Zhou…." An example of a pattern is when the classic is not commented on by Zuo or when Zuo comments on something not present in the classic.[30]

Du also isolates five rhetorical "conditions of the patterns" (*li zhi qing* 例之情): One is "subtle yet apparent" 微而顯, meaning that the text may be obscure in one place but the meaning is revealed elsewhere. Two is "obviously recorded yet veiled" 志而晦, referring to a precedent that is simply described that can still be extrapolated into a pattern. Three is "flowerly yet orderly" 婉而成章, connoting that the text may be beautifully written and contravene the inherent definitions yet still yield the proper sense. Four is "exhaustive yet not circuitous" 盡而不迂, signifying that the text may be comprehended and is not overwhelmed by rhetorical flourishes. Fifth is "admonish the wicked and encourage the good" 懲惡而勸善, indicating the use of the text for the purpose of exemplar historiography.[31] While some may quibble with my translations of Du's terminology, he himself explained the narrative application and purpose which I have encapsulated. However, the point is not to reveal the contours of Du's

[28] *Chunqiu Zuozhuan zhengyi* 1.11a.

[29] Liu Xuan, *Chunqiu Zuozhuan Du Yu xu jishi* 春秋左傳杜預序集釋, one scroll. *Suishu* 32.934.

[30] See the extensive discussion on these and related hermeneutical issues by Shen and Liu, *Chunqiu Zuozhuan xueshigao*, 138–48.

[31] *Chunqiui Zuozhuan zhengyi* 1.16a–17b.

pioneering attention to narratology and rhetoric but to reveal its existence as a prelude to hermeneutics at this early date.

Finally, in the preface Du Yu takes us back to philology by way of format. He explains that the name of his work, *Collected Analyses* 集 釋 , does not refer to collecting a wide range of earlier authorities to elucidate *Zuo's Commentary*; rather we should parse it as a verb-verb locution, "to combine and analyze," rendered something like "to combine the texts of the classic and commentary to allow for mutual elucidation." Du Yu puts it this way: "I divided the classic and commentary by year and attached them together, and thus compared their interpretations and narrative categories. I analyzed them by following each. Its name is called *Spring and Autumn Annals and Zuo's Commentary, Combined for Analysis*" 分經之年與傳之年相附，比其義類。各隨而解之，名曰經傳集解 .[32] Du's precedent in combining commentary with classic was a momentous editorial choice that affected classical scholarship ever after and put classicists greatly in his debt.[33]

Du Yu's school on *Zuo's Commentary* became popular in the south—perhaps because his nuanced and open approach to exegesis, set as it was in the environment of light conversation and deep speculative thought that prevailed in the refined courtly atmosphere of Jiankang, was thus more inviting and approachable to the local intellectual elite. Zheng Xuan's school, through the medium of Fu Qian's commentary, was more unabashedly philological and brooked little room for speculation. It must have matched better the harsh and hurly-burly cultural atmosphere of the newly sedentarized and sinicized ruling class, whose attempts at refinement must have seemed oafish and out of reach. At any rate, the former school dominated southern classicism, and the latter school prevailed in the north.

I conclude with the evaluation on Du Yu's school of exegesis by the *Suishu* bibliographic monograph: "By the Sui dynasty, Mr. Du's learning was fully ascendant, and the interpretation according to Fu Qian as well as the *Gongyang* and *Guliang* commentaries declined into obscurity, and now have scarcely any masters to explain them" 至隋，杜氏盛行，服義及公羊穀梁浸微，今殆無師說.[34] By the time Kong Yingda headed up the committee to produce his *Correct*

[32] *Chunqiui Zuozhuan zhengyi*, 1.21b.

[33] L. D. Reynolds and N. G. Wilson explain that placing random scholia in the margins of classical texts was the first instance of commentaries circulating with classics in the West and that this practice began in the school of Christian classicists in Gaza during the fourth or fifth centuries. They continue: "The idea of entering copious scholia in the margins of a text may have arisen at any time after the codex became the normal form of book; yet copious marginal scholia are not commonly found until the ninth century." Reynolds and Wilson, *Scribes and Scholars: A Guide for the Transmission of Greek and Latin Literature*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 52–53.

[34] *Suishu* 32.933.

Meaning of the Five Classics in early Tang (finished in 642), there was really no other choice of commentary to explicate *Zuo's Commentary*.

8.2. The Metaphysical Turn of Confucian Learning

How did a metaphysician attach his ethereal intellectual musings to the coarse substantiality of textual criticism? One way was to apply such musing to a classic that lends itself to the metaphysical approach, the *Changes*. According to Wang Baoxuan, traditional Daoist thinkers of the Warring States through the Qin-Han era had always approached the centerpiece texts at the basis of metaphysics in the priority order of the *Zhuangzi*, *Laozi*, and *Changes*. It was the virtue of Wang Bi to change the order of emphasis to the *Changes*, *Laozi*, and *Zhuangzi*, hence elevating the classic over what he viewed as commentaries to it. In this manner, Wang Bi accommodated to the intellectual trends of the time and advanced the cause of Confucian classicism, enhancing the utility of the *Changes* and the *Analects* in contemporary discourse and revealing hidden depths within these seminal works.[35] He also directed his exegesis on the *Changes* to making the message of the text, especially the role of a sage, applicable to current concerns. However, before we can go into detail on Wang, we must first examine his predecessor in metaphysics, He Yan, who, together with Wang, formed the famous Wang-He pairing that encapsulated the scholarship of the age.

8.2.1. He Yan and Exegesis of the Analects

He Yan 何 晏 (c. 195–249), born in Nanyang, Henan, was the grandson of General He Jin 何 進 (d. 189) and an adopted son of Cao Cao. His greatest contribution to classical scholarship is his commentary on the *Analects,* titled *Collected Analyses of the Analects* 論語集解. Because he also produced formal essays on metaphysical subjects, such as *Disquisition on the Way* 道 論 , he was well ensconced in the metaphysical school of the time. He brought this turn of thinking to his exegetical task, thus earning fame in both fields of speculative thought and classical exegesis. However, popular perception over time exclusively colored him as a metaphysician; his profile as a classicist thus seemed to be that of a thinker who was preoccupied with esoteric knowledge limited to insiders.

He Yan was the leading light of contemporary "Pure conversations" 清 談 , which functioned as private gatherings of famous literati, powerful officials, or renowned social misfits, with no regard for rank or standing. Such meetings paralleled literary or poetical salons, only differing in their devotion to such topics as evaluating the characters and qualities of contemporaries, philosophical theories such as human nature and language, and metaphysical flights of fancies, especially on the Three Mysteries 三玄, that is, the thought of the texts of the *Laozi*, *Zhuangzi*, and the *Changes*. Wang Xiaoyi describes the formalized

[35] Wang Baoxuan, "Cong '*Zhuang Lao Yi*' dao '*Yi Lao Zhuang*' de zhuanbian" 从庄老易到易老庄的转变, in *Jingguwen jingxue xinlun*, 485–90.

proceedings of a session of pure conversationalists: First, two sponsors hosted the event, one presiding and one conducting. The presiding spirit made a proposition or expressed a viewpoint, which the conductor countered and tried to refute. One proposal and one refutation constituted one round, no matter how many thrusts and parries occurred before a winner was declared by the audience based on the rigor or clarity of the logic. Due to the content of these conversations, some scholars equate pure conversation with learning of the mysterious, an assumption rejected by Wang Xiaoyi.[36]

Apart from his leading role in pure conversation circles, He Yan is credited with being a full-fledged participant in the learning of the mysterious. Two examples illustrate this overwhelming component of his historical characterization. First, his biographical notice in the *Records of the Three Kingdoms* mentions only the arcane and aphotic zone of his intellect: "When young he became renowned for his ripening talent. He was devoted to the words of Laozi and Zhuangzi, and composed a *Disquisition on the Way and its Power* and works in prose and poetics in several scores of fascicles" 少以才秀知名，好老莊言，作道德論及諸文賦著述凡數十篇.[37] Second, two anecdotes in Liu Yiqing's *New Accounts of Tales of the World* negatively compare He Yan to Wang Bi. One explains Yan's composition of his *Disquisition on the Way and its Power*:

> Before He Yan had completed his commentary on Laozi, he saw that of Bi and said that the intent of his own commentary had many failings; he could not make any more noise but merely mumble "yes, yes" in response to Bi. Subsequently he stopped his annotating. Therefore he composed his *Disquisition on the Way and Its Power.*
>
> 何晏注老子未畢，見王弼自說注老子旨。何意多所短，不復得作聲，但應諾諾。遂不復注，因作道德論。[38]

If Du Yu made a great contribution to classical scholarship by combining classic and commentary in one convenient text, something that did not happen in the West until medieval times. He Yan made his own contribution by creating the genre of the collective commentary. This time the title *jijie* 集 解 should be parsed more instinctively as an adjective-noun construction, yielding the expected, if pedestrian, reading of "collected analyses." Again, this innovation

[36] Wang Xiaoyi 王晓毅, *Wang Bi pingzhuan* 王弼评传 (Nanjing: Nanjing Daxue Chubanshe, 1996), 98.

[37] *Sanguozhi* 9.292. The appended *Weilüe* commentary is much more expansive, but only in areas of effete personality, foppish dressing, and frivolous love affairs. An extended biography plus a streamlined "chronological biography" of He Yan is included in Wang Xiaoyi, *Wang Bi pingzhuan*, 43–161, 344–61; pages 368–75 include a survey and analysis of his nine known works.

[38] Liu, *Shishuo xinyu* 2.49, author's translation of this passage is based on an alternate edition; see Mather, *New Accounts of Tales of the World*, 101.

came earlier in China than in the West. It was Procopius during the late fifth and early sixth centuries in a community of Christian classicists in Gaza who first developed the collected commentary. N. G. Wilson describes Procopius's work as follows:

> He is generally held to be the inventor of the form of literature known as the catena, a commentary on a book of the bible which consists of a compilation of excerpts from various previous commentaries, each excerpt as a rule prefaced with the name of its author, and the compiler himself as a rule contributing little or nothing. It marks a significant stage in the history of biblical scholarship, and its importance for classical scholarship is that in some degree it resembles the commentaries on Greek literature. These, like the commentaries on books of the bible, were originally separate books. At some date, probably in late antiquity, it became the custom to make a compilation of them. Since the number of commentaries on some texts was very large and no doubt a good deal of duplication occurred, the new compilation if skillfully undertaken could give the reader the benefit of a convenient synopsis of what the best scholars had thought of the text and its problems.[39]

In the case of He Yan's catena, he was willing to hazard his own views, as he states in his "Preface": "Now in assembling the excellent interpretations of the various masters, I record their surnames and names. Where I am uneasy about any, I somewhat modify or change them. The title is called *Collected Analyses of the Analects*" 今集諸家之善，記其姓名；有不安者，頗為改易，名曰論語集解.[40] As is customary for the genre, author Xing Bing's 邢 昺 (932–1010) remarks in his epexegesis included in Kong Yingda's *Correct Meaning* edition are directed to He Yan's original commentary and reveal what the genre of "collected analyses" focused on: He Yan's work "then assembled and collected the 'interpretations and principles' of the various masters in order to analyze the similarities of wording in the *Analects* and differences in meaning" 乃聚集諸家義理以解論語言同而意異也.[41] In contrast to assembled scholia, which concentrated mainly on textual and linguistic details, an "interpretations and principles" approach is clearly hermeneutically oriented, as appropriate for the intellectual atmosphere of the age.

The attribution of lead authorship to He Yan of the *Collected Explanations*, among a committee of five classicists cited in the preface, is recently challenged by John Makeham in his survey of the commentarial history of the *Analects*, where he also downplays the influence of the metaphysical element characterized

[39] N. G. Wilson, *Scholars of Byzantium* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983), 32–33.

[40] *Chunqiui Zuozhuan zhengyi*, "Preface," 5b.

[41] *Chunqiui Zuozhuan zhengyi* 6a.

as "Learning of the Mysterious."[42] Makeham's argumentation is skillfully marshalled and fascinating in its implications, but it is ultimately irrelevant to the present work since classical tradition long ago accepted He Yan, his committee leadership, and his abstruse approach to exegesis. And the present work, it should be remembered, is concerned with explaining the development of Chinese classical scholarship from the insider, subjective perspective of the tradition, not rewriting it from the modern, objective perspective of newly developed interpretive strategies or archaeological discoveries. Though Makeham's work falls outside my purpose, truth should be presented where possible alongside the tradition, and Makeham acknowledges the presence of the metaphysical element even as he redefines it.

Two examples of He Yan's exegetical approach follow:

> *Analects* 7.6: "The Master said, 'Set your intent on the way'" 子曰：志於道.

He Yan's *Collected Analyses* commentary grants the concept "way" as something ineffable: "The Way cannot be embodied" 道不可體.[43] It is certainly not anything related to Mencius's royal way of humane kings nor the social way of organized and stratified society.

> *Analects* 7.17: "The Master said, 'If some years were added to my life, I would give fifty to the study of the *Yi*, and then I might come to be without great faults.'" 子曰：加我數年，五十以學易，可以無大過矣。

He Yan's remarks on the *Classic of Changes* refer to it not as a classic of Confucianism, but to its function as font of metaphysical understanding: "The *Changes* exhaust understanding of principle and human nature up to the point of comprehending fate" 易窮理盡性以至於命.[44] Such remarks spread throughout the text point to the definition of "mysterious learning" adopted by Makeham to bridge what he sees as a large gap between the reputation of He Yan as a metaphysicist and what is actually present in the text. Makeham suggests that "metaphysics" is less appropriate as a definition of "mysterious learning" than the definition he provides: "the discussion of abstract philosophical concepts." These include, in Makeham's translations, "initiating no action" (*wuwei* 無爲), "emptiness" (*xu* 虛), "one and the many" (*yiduo* 一多), "root and branches" (*benmo* 本末), "the emotional responses" (*qing* 情), and "pattern" (*li* 理).[45] Tsai

[42] John Makeham, *Transmitters and Creators: Chinese Commentators and Commentaries on the Analects* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2003), 23–75.

[43] Lunyu zhushu 7.2a.

[44] Lunyu zhushu 7.6a.

[45] Makeham, *Transmitters and Creators*, 35. For the traditional treatment of the concept of mysterious learning with which Makeham is sometimes at odds, see Tang

Chen-fung illustrates that He Yan's mysterious learning, which undergirds his hermeneutics of the *Analects,* is based more on conceptions and categories derived from the *Changes* than Daoist thought, and are derived either from Zheng Xuan's *Annotations on the Changes* or, when differing from Zheng's views, the canonized *Commentary on the Changes* 易傳 attributed to Confucius.[46]

He Yan's *Collected Analyses* was based on the commentarial work of eight classicists on the *Analects*: Kong Anguo's 孔安國 (ca. 156–ca. 74 BC) *Exegesis and Explanations* 訓解, Bao Xian's 包咸 (6 BC–AD 65) *Sections and Lines* 章句, Mr. Zhou's 周 氏 (fl. first century AD) *Sections and Lines*, Ma Rong's 馬融 (79–166) *Exegesis and Explanations* 訓說, Zheng Xuan's *Annotations* 注, Chen Qun's 陳群 (d. 236) *Explanations of the Interpretations* 義 說 , Wang Su's *Explanations of the Interpretations*, and Zhou Shenglie's 周生烈 (195–256) *Explanations of the Interpretations.*[47] Some 143 unattributed editorial comments appear and have always been assumed to derive from He Yan, an assumption as yet unproven according to Makeham.[48] Nevertheless, the tradition accepts He Yan's authorship without question.[49]

One purpose of this grand work, according to He Zhe, is to disentangle the text of the *Analects* from the entanglements of Zheng Xuan's ritually based

Yongtong 湯用彤, *Wei-Jin xuanxue lungao* 魏晉玄學論稿 (Beijing: Renmin Chubanshe, 1957) and Wang Baoxuan 王寶瑄, *Zhengshi xuanxue* 正始玄學 (Ji'nan: Qi-Lu Shushe, 1987).

[46] Tsai Chen-fung (Cai Zhenfeng) 蔡振豐, "He Yan *Lunyu jijie* de sixiang tese jiqi dingwei" 何宴論語集解的思想特色及其定位, *Taiwan Daxue Xuebao* 15 (2001): 41–60; pages 8–11 cite 10 instances of this influence. Scholar Wang Xiaoyi agrees with Makeham's assessment that there are few true metaphysical elements in the *jijie*. Wang grants that He Yan was the founder of mysterious learning of the time but faults scholars for, *ipso facto*, reading metaphysics into the text. He characterizes the *Collected Explanations* as the essence of Han dynasty rational analysis of the *Analects* and in no way representative of He Yan's bent for mysterious learning. Wang, *Wang Bi pingzhuan*, 314. For a more detailed refutation of the basis of He Yan's commentary in metaphysics, see Jin Peiyi 金培懿, "Zushu Lao-Zhuang? Yixuan jiejing? Jingxue xuanhua? —He Yan *Lunyu jijie* de chongxin dingwei" 祖述老莊?以玄解經?經學玄化?—何彥論語集解的重新定位, in Yang and Liu eds., *Wei-Jin Nanbeichao jingxue guoji yantaohui lunwenji*, 2:535-88.

[47] *Lunyu zhushu*, "Preface," 4a–5a.

[48] Makeham, *Transmitters and Creators*, 25, 37. Tsai Chen-fung, "He Yan *Lunyu jijie* de sixiang tese jiqi dingwei," defends the traditional ascription of lead authorship to He Yan, including the unattributed editorial comments.

[49] This tradition is based on Sui and Tang bibliographical references which informed later understanding. The authoritative imprimatur of Lu Deming in his *Jingdian shiwen* is probably the foundation of this belief, which unequivocally assigns the role of editor to He and acknowledges that his opinion informs the work; see *Jingdian shiwen xulu shuzheng* 經典釋文序錄疏証 (Beijing: Zhonghua Zhuju, 2008), 125.

exegetical system. Out of some 1,089 separate commentarial remarks that make up the *Collected Analyses*, only 104 of these, or less than 10%, derive from Zheng Xuan.[50]

In conclusion, He Yan's *Collected Analyses*, with its eclectic use of commentators from different classical schools—Old Text, New Text, and with He Yan's own interpretations based on concepts from the *Changes*—destroyed the Han tradition of faithfully remaining within an intellectual lineage.[51] However, it actually represents the culmination of Han classical learning on the *Analects*, not a new beginning except in the sense of breaking with Zheng Xuan; this new start came with Huang Kan's 皇侃 (488–545) *Clearing-Up-the-Meaning of the Analects* 論語義疏, which only includes post-Han commentators.[52] Markham explains that, while Zheng Xuan was the most influential individual commentator on the *Analects* in the interval between the Han and Tang, the *Collected Explanations* was the most influential commentary on the *Analects* from its compilation until the production of Zhu Xi's 朱熹 (1130–1200) great commentaries.

8.2.2. Wang Bi and the Metaphysical Turn in Classical Exegesis

Wang Bi's text and commentary on the *Classic of the Way and Its Power*, which commentary has served as the standard text and received reading for almost two thousand years, overwhelms his contributions to classical scholarship, another facet of his scholarly profile. Here we examine Wang's contributions to classical exegesis, focusing on his commentary on the *Analects* and *Changes*. A short bibliographical notice in the *Records of the Three Kingdoms* is found in the biography of the talented but treacherous general Zhong Hui 鍾 會 (225–264), who helped conquer the kingdom of Shu but tried to set himself up there as an independent entity:

> Earlier, when Hui came of age, he and Wang Bi from Shanyang [Shandong] were equally renowned. Bi was devoted to discoursing on Confucianism and Daoism. He was a skillful prose stylist and was talented, unconventional, and good at debate. He annotated the *Changes* and *Laozi*, and served as a Gentleman in the Secretariat. He died some years past twenty.
>
> 初，會弱冠與山陽王弼知名。弼好論儒道，辭才逸辨，注易及老子，為尚書郎，年二十餘卒。[53]

Appended to this snippet is a lengthy biography of Wang authored by He Shao 王劭 (236–301), who became an important minister during the ensuing Jin dynasty. I extract relevant excerpts:

> When Bi was young, he was observant and intelligent. He was devoted to Mr. Lao [Laozi] and mastered his work, was discerning in its understanding, and was able to vocalize his views. His father, Wang Ye, was a Gentleman in the Secretariat; at that time Pei Hui was a Gentleman in the Board of Personnel. Before he had come of age, he set off to visit Hui, who marveled at him upon first meeting and asked: "As for the concept of nothingness/lacking, it truly is what informs all things. Nevertheless, the sages were not willing to address it, but Laozi extended it to include a lack of self. Why is this?" Bi replied, "The sages embodied nothingness/lacking, but it cannot be glossed, hence they did not explain it. Laozi was somebody who affirmed something/possessing, hence he constantly explained where nothingness was insufficient. . . ." At that time, Yan was in the Secretariat of the Board of Personnel and was in awe of Bi. Yan sighed, saying, "Confucius claimed that up-and-coming masters were to be revered; a man such as this can discuss the intersection between Heaven and man " Bi got along well with Zhong Hui. In their discussions and deliberations, Hui's point of view came from his military career; he thus submitted to Bi's lofty insights. He Yan contended that the sages lacked the feelings of delight, rage, sorrow, and happiness; his discourse on this was quite refined. Zhong [et al.] transmitted these views. But Bi differed from them, proposing that the reason sages were superior to normal persons was due to spiritual intelligence, and what made them the same was the Five Passions. Being superior because of spiritual intelligence, they were able to embody emptiness and accordance in order to penetrate into nothingness. The reason the Five Passions made all the same was that it is impossible to lack sorrow and joy to respond to things. Nevertheless, in the case of the passions of the sages, they do not become attached when they respond to things. Now, because they lack attachment, it is called "no longer responding to things"; this is a grave error. . . . Bi annotated the *Laozi* and provided *Shortcuts and Reductions* for it, and hence developed a synthesis for its theoretical system. He composed a *Brief Discourse on the Way*, and annotated the *Changes*, often employing soaring and beautiful phraseology. Wang Ji from Taiyuan was fond of pure talks and abhorred the *Laozi* and *Zhuangzi*. But he often stated that when he read

[50] Other commentators contributed their mites to the extent of 460 quotes from Kong Anguo, 189 from Mr. Bao, 131 from Ma Rong, 3 from Chen Qun, 38 from Wang Su, and 150 editorial comments which are attributed to He Yan. See Chen Jinmu 陳金木, *Tang xieben Lunyu Zhengshizhu yanjiu—yi kaoju, fuyuan, quanshi wei zhongxin de kaocha* 唐寫本論語鄭氏注研究—以考據、復原、詮釋為中心的考察(Taipei: Wenjin Chubanshe, 1996), 217–18. For Hua Zhe's views on the overarching purpose of this work to negate Zheng's exegesis and to sever the internal ties shared between individual classics, see "Han-Tang jian jingdian chanshi bianqian shilun," 117–27.

[51] Tsai, "He Yan *Lunyu jijie* de sixiang tese jiqi dingwei," 45.

[52] Wang, *Wang Bi pingzhuan*, 315.

[53] *Sanguozhi* 28.795.

Bi's *Annotations on the Changes*, he gained enlightenment in many areas.

弼幼而察慧，年十餘，好老氏，通辯能言。父業，為尚書郎。時裴徽為吏部郎，弼 未弱冠，往造焉。徽一見而異之，問弼曰：夫無者誠萬物之所資也，然聖人莫肯致 言，而老子申之無已者何？弼曰：聖人體無，無又不可以訓，故不說也。老子是有 者也，故恆言無所不足。……於時何晏為吏部尚書，甚奇弼，嘆之曰：仲尼稱後 生可畏，若斯人者，可與言天人之際乎！。……弼與鍾會善，會論議以校練為家， 然每服弼之高致。何晏以為聖人無喜怒哀樂，其論甚精，鍾會等述之。弼與不同， 以為聖人茂於人者神明也，同於人者五情也。神明茂故能體沖和以通無；五情同故 不能無哀樂以應物，然則聖人之情，應物而無累於物者也。今以其無累，便謂不復 應物，失之多矣。弼注老子，爲之指略，致有理統。注[=著]道略論、注易，往往 有高麗言。太原王濟好談，病老莊，常云：見弼易注，所悟者多。[54]

This extended passage provides several leads that deserve to be followed. Since I employ this passage as a commentary on Wang's abbreviated biographical blurb, my comments here, in effect, function as a form of epexegesis. First are some details concerning Wang Bi's patrimony: Wang Bi's father, Ye, was born in Shanyang, Shandong, and was the grandson of Liu Biao through Liu's wife. It will be recalled that Liu was the founder of the Jingzhou school of classical scholarship. Ye was mandated by Emperor Wen to become the adopted son of Wang Can, after Can's own two sons had been executed in an aborted uprising. Ye's true father was a clansman of the same generation as Wang Can. As the lineal, if not literal, son of Wang Can, Ye inherited the famous literatus's splendid library along with the Jingzhou school perspective, both from his nominal father and from his real grandfather. Like his father, Bi was also born in Shanyang. Since he died young at age twenty-four, it must be presumed that the entirety of his classical education was undertaken at home and in the locality of this birth and that his intellectual outlook was saturated within the heady milieu of Jingzhou classicism and Song Zhong's commentary on Yang Xiong's *Classic of Grandest Mystery*. He was nurtured among the rich holding of the family library, including the *Sections and Lines Commentary on the Five Classics* produced by the Jingzhou school, and among other residual intellectual influences must be counted the edition of Wang Chong's *Discourses in the Balance* that Wang Can had owned. Because he absorbed Wang Chong's rationality, Wang Bi rejected the correspondence between Heaven and Man in Han- period theology, and he did not attempt to probe the origins of the cosmos. Textual mastery, a mystical bent, and rationalist thinking must be counted among both Wang Bi's heritage and his intellectual capital.

[54] *Sanguozhi* 28.795–96.

Second to be explained is Wang Bi's earthbound bent, as seen in his view of Laozi. Emphasizing the utility of the Way in human life, his argument, greatly simplified, goes: Nothingness is the foundation of the cosmos and the world. In the human realm, Nothingness should be read as "Non-Purposeful Action"; the Way is an alternate name for Nothingness. In human affairs, the Way is enacted by following this non-directed, non-targeted approach to life and letting life and death, health and sickness, prosperity and poverty, fame and obscurity, and social stability and political chaos follow natural paths and cycles. Hence, Laozi can be said to discourse on the Something/Possessing of the Way. Wang Xiaoyi characterizes Wang Bi's thinking in this area in terms of two approaches: "using Nothingness as the foundation" 以無為本, and "using Nothingness for application" 以無為用.[55] At first blush, characterizing Wang Bi's interpretations of Laozi as possessing an earthbound side seems not only off-key but even absurd. But in view of the insubstantiality and ultimate irrelevance to human life of the subjects of pure conversations during the Wei period, Laozi is revealed to be more grounded in human concerns.

A third and final note on He Shao's biography of Wang Bi is directedtoward the reaction of Wang Ji. Ji advocated pure conversation but abjured Laozi and Zhuangzi. This is actually to say that Ji rejected the reading of texts in favor of abstract oral discourse. In other words, pure conversationalists were the inheritors of the early New Text classicists whose foundational texts had been transmitted orally up to the Han, when they first had been transcribed into written documents and physically circulated. The search for the Subtle Words and Grand Meaning of the classics on the part of pure conversationalists, when they would deign to address such mundane topics that lay outside of the purview of the only classic that mattered to them, the *Changes*, then reverted to the oral exegesis characteristic of traditional teaching and transmission of the classics in their original form in ancient China.[56] When He Yan descended from the heady, cloud-bound plateau of pure conversation onto the terra firma of textual explication, the work he compiled, *Collected Annotations on the Analects*, was not indebted to the oral tradition of pure conversationalists and, as we have seen, was impacted little by the arcane problems they pursued. He Yan thus changed roles when he changed altitude and switched genres.

8.2.3. Wang Bi's Exegetical Works

It will be recalled that Wang Bi changed the order of emphasis in the study of Daoist and metaphysical literature from the late Zhou-Han sequence of *Zhuangzi*, *Laozi*, and *Changes* to *Changes*, *Laozi*, and *Zhuangzi*. This refers to the actual areas of emphasis in his exegesis. In terms of actual procedures, Wang followed the traditional order as he used the *Zhuangzi* to clarify the *Laozi*, and then utilized insights from the *Laozi* to annotate the *Changes*. Wang Bi's main

[55] Wang, *Wang Bi pingzhuan*, 241–55.

[56] An insight of Wang, *Jinguwen jingxue xinlun*, 512–13.

works are subsumed under three separate categories: First are his commentaries on the *Way and Its Power,* which include two works, *Annotations on Laozi's Classic of the Way and Its Power* 老子道德經注 two scrolls and an epitome of this work, *Models, Pointers, and Reductions in the Laozi* 老子指略例 two scrolls. Second are his three commentaries on the *Changes—Annotations on the Zhou Changes* 周易注 10 scrolls, *Reductions and Models from the Zhou Changes* 周易略例 one scroll, and *Grand Elaborations of a Discourse on the Zhou Changes* 周易大演論 one scroll. Third is his work on the *Analects,* the *Elucidation of Doubtful Points in the Analects* 論語釋疑 3 scrolls.[57]

Annotations on Laozi's Classic of the Way and Its Power was probably originally entitled *Annotations on the Classic of the Way and Its Power*. It was not divided into "Way" and "Power" sections, nor were individual pericopes isolated. It has been transmitted complete as the popular received version in common use and has increased readers' understanding of Laozi for generations—so much so that the thought of Laozi is now synonymous with that of Wang Bi. It did not, however, reach its prominence until sometime in the Song dynasty (960–1279).[58]

In comparison with the simple and terse wording of Wang's later commentary on the *Changes*, the language of these annotations is rambling and verbose. An example of Wang's proclivity towards prolixity comes from chapter 1, in his annotation on the second line. Laozi: "The nameless is the beginning of heaven and earth; the named is the mother of the ten thousand things." Wang Bi:

> All beings originated from *wu*. Thus before there were form and names, (Dao) then is the "beginning of the ten thousand things." When there are form and names, (Dao) then "brings them up, nourishes them, makes them secure and stable"; it is their "mother." This means that Dao in its formlessness and namelessness originated and completed the ten thousand things. They are thus originated and completed, but without knowing why—this is what is "more profound than the deepest profundity."[59]

[57] Seven other works are noted in the historical record as little more than names and length: *Xuanyan xinji daode* 玄言新記道德, two scrolls, *Daolüelun* 道略論, *Laozi zalun* 老子雜論, one scroll, *Zhouyi qiongwei* 周易窮微, one scroll, *Zhouzhuan zuantu* 周傳纂圖, three scrolls, *Yibian* 易辯, one scroll, and *Wang Bi zhuan* 王弼集, five scrolls. Li, "Wei-Jin Nanbeichao juan," 398.

[58] Alan K. L. Chan, *Two Visions of the Way: A Study of the Wang Pi and the Ho-shang Kung Commentaries on the Lao-Tzu* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991), 3.

[59] Chan, *Two Visions of the Way*, 49. Translations of the complete commentary on Laozi by Wang Bi include Paul J. Lin, *A Translation of Lao Tzu's Tao Te Ching and Wang Pi's Commentary* (Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan, 1977); Ariane Rump and Wing-tsit Chan, *Commentary on the Lao Tzu by Wang Pi* (Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, 1979); Rudolf G. Wagner, *A Chinese Reading of the Daodejing: Wang Bi's Commentary on the Laozi with Critical Text and Translation* (Albany: State University Press of New York, 2003); and Richard John Lynn, *The Classic of the Way and Virtue: A New Translation of the Tao-te Ching of Laozi as Interpreted by Wang Bi* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004). Wagner's study reveals the important fact that the text in common circulation with Wang Bi's commentary was not Wang Bi's original text of the *Laozi.*

This trend towards verboseness is also evident in passages that are not necessarily oriented towards cosmological issues. For instance, chapter 25 contains the line "Within the realm, there are four great ones." Wang Bi expostulates as follows:

> The four great ones are the Dao, heaven, earth, and the king. Things all have designations and names, and as such they are not the ultimate. To speak of "Dao" is to have recourse to reason. Based on reason, it is then called the Dao. This means that Dao is great among what can be designated. It is not as great as what cannot be named; (thus) it is called the "realm." Dao, heaven, earth, and the king are all within that which cannot be designated. Thus it is said, "Within the realm there are four great ones."[60]

Far from identifying individual characters graphologically, glossing individual words linguistically, or parsing individual lines grammatically, Wang Bi directly targets the message of the text in a discursive manner. His format is unique for the time, even though he gives his work the old title of "annotations." His recourse is to reason in explaining the essence of the message embodied in the text without delving into the text. He has clearly adopted and modified the genre of the "disquisition" (*lun* 論)—an extended essay—and applied it to textual interpretation.

Another indication of Wang Bi's nascent hermeneutics is his next work on Laozi. His *Models, Pointers, and Reductions in the Laozi* 老子指略例 only exists in fragments. But one such survivor suggests Wang Bi's overriding exegetical approach: "As for how things are generated and how merit becomes complete, they must be generated from the formless, and derive from the nameless. What has no form and no name is the ancestor of the ten-thousand things" 夫物之所以生，功之所以成，必生乎無形，由乎無名。無形無名者，萬物之宗也.[61] The creative process of bringing things into existence in the world and multiplying them, both in the natural and human realms, is nothing. Operating on both the planes of nothing and something makes Laozi's thought relevant for both cosmic and social processes. With such a view brought to bear on his textual exegesis,

[60] Chan, *Two Visions of the Way*, 60.

[61] Wang Zhiming 王志銘, ed., *Laozi weizhi lilüe, Wang Bi zongji* 老子微旨例略，王弼注總輯 (Taipei: Dongsheng Chuban Shiye Youxian Gongsi 東昇出版事業有限公司, 1980), 1; Wagner, *A Chinese Reading of the Daodejing*, 82–83.

Wang Bi certainly adopts a preconceived, overarching interpretive framework, and hence is hermeneutic in his treatment of the entire work.[62]

Of Wang Bi's three works on the *Changes—Annotations on the Zhou Changes*, *Reductions and Models from the Zhou Changes*, and *Grand Elaborations of a Discourse on the Zhou Changes*—his most influential (and only extant) work is his *Annotations.*[63] Richard John Lynn terms this work "the first philosophical commentary on the *Changes*. His approach synthesizes Confucian, Legalist, and Daoist views, with Confucian views predominant."[64] It was incorporated into the *Correct Meaning of the Five Classics* as the best commentary. But Zhang Shanwen stresses that, for classical scholarship, the value of Wang Bi's work in textual criticism in settling the definitive form of the *Changes* is equal to the value of his interpretive work.[65]

Zhang Shanwen proposes that the format development of the *Changes* text is indebted to three classicists. First was Western Han scholar Bi Zhi 费直 of Donglai, Shandong, who utilized a classic in ancient characters that never was granted official recognition but circulated privately. To him is attributed the merit of circulating his text in tandem with the so-called "Ten Wings" commentaries; such an amalgamated version became known as the *Zhou Changes*. In his exegesis, he relied on these commentaries and did not produce a sections and lines commentary. Second was the Eastern Han classicist Zheng Xuan. To his early mastery of New Text scholarship on the *Changes*, he added the learning of Mr. Bi as absorbed from Ma Rong; it was thus the text and learning of Bi Zhi that became the foundation of Zheng's approach to the *Changes.* Zheng rearranged the placement of the various commentaries with his edition. Most prominent was his insertion of the relevant portions of the "Commentary on the Decision" 彖傳 and "Commentary on the Images" 象傳 after each of the sixty-four hexagrams, while the other commentaries of the "Ten Wings" were appended to the Classic

[62] Consult Wang, *Wang Bi pingzhuan*, 241–60. Chan, *Two Visions of the* Way, 45–88, refines the interpretive framework of Nothing to include Wang's incorporation of "principle" (*li* 理) and directs both to the practical end of elevating the role of the sage. As for Wang Bi as exegete, two works by Rudolph G. Wagner explore Wang Bi's commentarial methodology in depth: the first is devoted to Laozi, *The Craft of a Chinese Commentator: Wang Bi on the Laozi* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000), and the second is more general for all his exegesis, *Language, Ontology, and Political Philosophy in China: Wang Bi's Scholarly Exploration of the Dark (Xuanxue)* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003). See further Su Dongtian 苏东天, *Yi Laozi yu Wang Bi zhu bianyi* 易老子与王弼注辨义 (Beijing: Wenhua Yishu Chubanshe, 1996).

[63] Wang's *Annotations* and his *Reductions and Models from the Zhou Changes* are treated in some depth by Jian, *Jincun Sanguo Liang-Jin jingxue yiyikao*, 381–429.

[64] Lynn, *Classic of Changes*, 7.

[65] Zhang Shanwen 張善文, "Wang Bi gaiding Zhouyi tizhikao" 王弼改定周易體制考, in *Zhongguo jingxueshi lunwen xuanji*, ed. Lin Qingzhang, 1:520–29.

itself. Wang Bi, by basing his work on Zheng Xuan's edition, was inheriting the learning of Fei Zhi. Third came the contributions of Wang Bi of the Wei period. Wang Bi offered three major innovations to the text of the *Changes*. First, he inserted the relevant portions of the "Commentary on the Images" and "Commentary on the Decision" below each "Hexagram Statement" 卦 辭 and "Line Statement" 爻辭. Second, he inserted the "Words of the Text Commentary" 文言傳 within the chapters treating the *Qian* 乾 and *Kun* 坤 hexagrams, the only ones covered by this particular commentary. And third, Wang Bi commenced each chapter with the name and number of the hexagram, in imitation of the Mao commentary on the *Poems*. Ease of access to readers, then, as much as exegesis of meaning, was the merit of Wang Bi's edition. This version even resisted Zhu Xi's own efforts at textual reorganization, and it continues its seminal role as the received text today. We thus conclude that Wang Bi was equal parts textual critic and textual hermeneut, the former role remaining little noticed but equally important to the history of scholarship on the *Changes* with the production of the definitive edition called the *Zhou Changes.*

Finally, we glance at Wang Bi's commentary on the *Analects*: his *Elucidation of Doubtful Points in the Analects* 論語釋疑. This can be viewed as the first exegetical work based on theories derived from the learning of the mysterious. Though lost after the Song dynasty, some forty-seven fragments are extant, many preserved in Huang Kan's *Clearing-Up-the-Meaning of the Analects.*[66] The intersection of Wang's thought on Daoism and Confucianism converges on the theme of the sage, prominent in both the *Way and Its Power* and the *Analects.* T'ang Yung-t'ung finds four characteristics of the sage stressed in Wang Bi's hermeneutics on the latter text: first is the sage as the head of Confucianism; second is the prescient, even prophetic, abilities of the sage; third is the sage as political ruler; and fourth is the sage's willingness to emerge from hiding and appear in the world.[67]

Indications of Bi's metaphysical leanings coloring his exegesis include the following, all presented in the English translation of James Legge:

> *Analects* 1.2: "Filial piety and fraternal submission!—are they not the root of all benevolent actions?" 孝悌也者，其為仁之本與
>
> Wang Bi: "Natural and personal love is filial piety; to extend love to things is to be humane." 自然親愛為孝，推愛及物為仁也。
>
> *Analects* 3.8: "Lin Fang asked what was the first thing to be attended to

[66] Huang Kan's *Lunyu yishu* is partially reconstituted in Ma, *Yuhan shanfang jiyishu* 4:337–43.

[67] Tang Yongtong 湯用彤, "Wang Bi zhi *Zhouyi Lunyu* zhi xinyi" 王弼之周易論語新義, in Lin Qinghang, ed. *Zhongguo jingxueshi lunwen xuanji*, 1:504–19; pp. 514–19. English translation by Walter Liebenthal, *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 10 (1947): 124–61. For Wang Bi's conceptualization of the ideal sage as seen in the *Daodejing*, see Chan, *Two Visions of the Way*, 80–88.

in ceremonies?" 林放問禮之本。

Wang Bi: "Contemporaries abandon the roots and elevate the branches; hence they stress the ability to search for the intentions of ritual." 時人棄本崇末，故大其能尋禮本意。

Analects 7.1: "I venture to compare myself with our old Peng." 竊比於我老彭。

Wang Bi: "Lao is Lao Dan, Peng is Peng Zu." 老是老聃，彭是彭祖。

Analects 7.26: "The Master said, 'A sage it is not mine to see; could I see a man of real talent and virtue, that would satisfy me.'" 子曰：聖人，吾不得而見之矣；得見君子者，斯可矣。

Wang Bi: "This shows the difference between a sage and a gentleman. Still, when virtue is sufficient, then lords and things are both termed gentlemen. It also is a general designation for those who possess virtue." 此為聖人與君子異也。然德足君物皆稱君子。亦有德者 之通稱也。

In these few examples, we see employed such common concerns of the learning of the mysterious as the nature of sages, roots versus branches, and man's relationship to things. Eight times in the *Analects* the Dao is mentioned. Each of these mentions launch Wang Bi's metaphysical flights, as can be expected. I cite just one for flavor, already treated above in conjunction with He Yan's exegesis:

Analects 7.6: "The Master said, 'Set your intent on the way.'" 子曰：志於道。

Wang Bi: "The Way is an appellation of Nothing, but Nothing isn't trodden, Nothing isn't followed. How much less so in calling it solitary and lacking a body, and not being able to represent it by an image? Hence it merely records an aspiration, and that is it." 道者無之。稱也，無不道也。無不由也。況之曰道寂然無體不可為象。是道不可為體。故但志慕而已。

Wang Bi's classical exegesis on the *Analects*, in its fragmentary state, is understandably little utilized today. It is his great work on the *Way and Its Power*, which enjoys the received-version status of this classic of Daoism, and it is his momentous contributions to reformatting the text of the *Changes* that have earned him the esteem of later generations. Viewed retrospectively, Wang Bi's merit was to refine the intellectual ether of the time with his amalgamation of Daoist and Confucian thought, especially as it intersected with certain seminal concepts such as the Dao, the sage, nature, human nature, and the like. These concepts became naturally grafted on to traditional Chinese culture, which today cannot be conceived without them.

8.3. Conclusions

The classicists included in this chapter all played their parts in establishing the canon of Confucianism. Wang Su contributed Kong Anguo's pseudo *Commentary on the Esteemed Documents*, Du Yu established the text of the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, He Yan's *Collected Analyses on the Analects* preserved traditional commentaries on this text up to the end of the Han dynasty, and Wang Bi's *Annotations on the Zhou Changes* presented a more accessible text of this Classic with its commentaries and grounded its message in contemporary philosophical and social concerns. These all became enshrined in the Song dynasty authoritative set of *Thirteen Classics*. With their interest in the *Changes*, Yang Xiong's *Classic of Grandest Mystery*, and Daoist thinkers Laozi and Zhuangzi, these scholars played their roles in making a path toward hermeneutics. Wang Su should be viewed as a hybrid exegete-hermeneut, and He Yan should be seen as a leading light in the pure conversation movement and a participant in learning of the mysterious whose private views made little impact on his classical exegesis on the *Analects*. Wang Bi's probing intellect and metaphysical musings made it possible for readers to view a text holistically, concerned with the message of the whole, and not remain bogged down in details of philology. A macro approach to a text, then, was made possible by Wang Bi's early example of emerging hermeneutics, an approach that was to lead to new forms of commentary over the next several centuries.

Chapter Nine

Western Jin and the Imperial Sponsorship of Classical Scholarship

Among several important aspects of classical scholarship during the Western Jin dynasty, this last chapter will examine the resource for textual criticism on the classics known as epigraphy. Stone stelae with the texts of the classics carved on their imposing surfaces were set up outside the imperial academy at Luoyang. This not only provided definitive and normative texts to guide students and scholars, but the durable medium was chosen to prevent tampering for extra-scholarly reasons. This enterprise occurred first during the waning years of the Han and was repeated during the Wei, setting a precedent for later dynasties to follow suit. This type of public scholarly project sponsored by the throne will serve as the backdrop to other large-scale imperial projects initiated by the Western Jin court; these include a major effort to produce new editions of the works in the royal library, and a large project to edit newly discovered manuscripts derived from an ancient grave. Above-ground texts on stone and underground texts on bamboo, then, form the framework for the examination of classical scholarship during the Western Jin.

9.1. Stone Classics

Stone inscriptions enjoy a long history in China. The famous stone inscriptions of Qinshi Huangdi, six or seven in number, were merely the second stage in a hoary history of monumentary production in Qin that dates back to the fifth century BC in the form of ten stone drums with inscriptions.[1] The First Emperor's monuments were eulogistic proclamations of territorial suzerainty, directed to gods and men.[2] In later times, stone inscriptions graced scenic sites on mountains and river banks, carved by transient visitors who wished to link themselves to the permanent wonders of nature and thus enjoy an extension of their modest fame.[3] Stone inscriptions on a smaller scale ensconced within the

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[1] See Gilbert L. Mattos, *The Stone Drums of Ch'in* (Nettetal: Styler, 1988).

[2] Consult Martin Kern, *The Stele Inscriptions of Ch'in Shih-huang: Text and Ritual in Early Chinese Imperial Representation.* American Oriental Series 85 (New Haven, 2000).

[3] See the sumptuously illustrated volume by Robert E. Harris, Jr., *The Landscape of Words: Stone Inscriptions from Early and Medieval China* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2008).

human realm commemorated the worthy dead to perpetuate their names and fame in local communities. The latter type of inscription is of wide value for social historians and genealogists. Patricia Ebrey introduces the surviving examples from the Later Han period as follows:

> During the Later Han . . . men erected stone stelae (*bei* 碑) for such local and family purposes as to mark graves or commemorate good deeds of numerous sorts. . . . Somewhat over three hundred Later Han stone inscriptions have survived. Drafts of twenty-six inscriptions were preserved in the collected works of Cai Yong 蔡邕, the only Han writer whose works have survived intact. Knowledge of other inscriptions depends on the stones themselves or records made from them. Only a small number of the actual inscribed stones survive. . . . Rubbings made from stelae are much more plentiful. Despite the efforts of collectors and epigraphers, only a fraction of the stelae erected in the Han have survived to be recorded or preserved.[4]

Given such precedents, it was only natural that classicists eventually turned to stone to preserve and present the classics. Of course, an alternate source of inspiration was possibly the common practice of erecting commemorative stone inscriptions to announce a military victory, civil achievement, or virtuous conduct. An example of the first sort was a monument erected on Mt. Yanran 燕然 by General Dou Xian 竇憲(d. AD 92), whose victory over the Xiongnu in 89 AD resulted in him "erecting a stone stele to engrave his merit" (*lishi legong* 立石勒攻) or, as it is rendered elsewhere, "engrave a stone stele to record merit" (*keshi jigong* 刻石紀功.[5] It is not unreasonable to suppose that erecting stone tablets with the texts of the classics engraved thereon performed a similar function, that of proclaiming the merit of the dynasty to the effect that it was deserving as the warrantor and guardian of the classics; the potent legitimacy of the classics were thus transferred to a waning dynasty of questionable legitimacy or to a dynasty that was still trying to demonstrate its ascendant legitimacy.

The immediate pretext for rendering the classics onto stone, underplayed by later students of this discipline, was a case of textual tampering. Li Xun 李巡, a eunuch at the court of Emperor Ling 靈帝 (r. 168–189) of unquestioned integrity and some learning (he once annotated the *Close to Elegance*

[4] Patricia Ebrey, "Later Han Stone Inscriptions." *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 40 (1980):325–52; pp. 326–27. Timothy M. Davis reviews all of the above precedents in chapter two, section one, "The Canonically Sanctioned Inscription Tradition," of his recent book *Entombed Epigraphy and Commemorative Culture in Early Medieval China: A History of Early Muzhiming* 墓誌銘 (Leiden: Brill, 2015). The analysis of inscriptions commences with the extant examples dating from the Later Han.

[5] *Hou-Hanshu* 4.168; for the latter phraseology, see *Hou-Hanshu* 38.1283. In all, nineteen instances in the *Hou-Hanshu* record such commemorative actions in related terms.

onomasticon), was concerned about some cheating that had occurred on an examination for the position of erudite. Fierce competition for high placement on the exam caused much back and forth bickering, behind the scenes maneuverings, and false accusations. But when some desperate candidates went so far as to bribe officials in the imperial library to alter the texts of some of the classics to conform to the intent of their partisan scholarship, Li decided to take action and petition the throne. The bald narrative of this story follows:

> Some changed the characters in the lacquer classics held in the Orchid Terrace to make them conform to their private textual interpretations. For this reason, in the fourth year of the reign-period *Xiping* (175 AD), Emperor Ling convened the various Confucians to correct and establish the texts of the Five Classics; they were engraved on stone stelae, and were composed in the three styles of ancient characters, seal characters, and the clerical script in order to provide comparative reference.[6] They were set up near the gate of the imperial academy for all the world to take as models.
>
> 定蘭臺漆書經字，以合其私文。熹平四年，靈帝乃詔諸儒正定五經，刊於石碑，為古文、篆、隸三體書法以相參檢，樹之學門，使天下咸取則焉。[7]

Even though the classics had been written with durable lacquer ink on bamboo strips, this medium had not proven tamperproof. Li therefore proposed the following countermeasure: "He and various Confucians would engrave the texts of the Five Classics on stone. Thereupon, Cai Yong and others were summoned via imperial edict to standardize the written language. Afterwards, the Five Classics were set, and disputations ceased" 與諸儒共刻五經文於石，於是詔蔡邕等正其文字。自後五經一定，爭者用息。[8]

Of course, the official version leaves out the good eunuch and attributes the idea to leading scholars and the noble cause of critical scholarship: the need for normative and orthodox texts made available to all who would come and consult them, copying them for private use. Cai Yong was credited with this lofty idea, and he was commissioned to carry out the task after he and other colleagues petitioned the throne.[9] The actual process went as follows:

[6] Fan Ye 范燁 (398–445) erroneously describes these classics as engraved in three styles; they were actually produced in the single style of the clerical script, as is obvious from a glance at surviving remnants. For this reason, one designation of these classics was the "Single Script Stone Classics" 一字石經. It was the Wei stone classics that were in three styles.

[7] *Hou-Hanshu* 79a.2547.

[8] Hou-Hanshu 78.2533.

[9] The others included Tang Xidian 堂谿典, Yang Ci 楊賜, Ma Ridi 馬日磾, Zhang Xun 張馴, Han Shuo 韓說, and Dan Yang 單颺.

Yong then brushed the characters on the stele, and had workers engrave them and erect the stele outside the gate of the Grand Academy. Thereupon, later Confucians who were just starting their studies could all be thereby corrected. When the stele were first erected, those who came to read and copy them came daily in more than a thousand carriages and filled the streets and lanes.

邕乃自書冊於碑，使工鐫刻立於太學門外，於是後儒晚學，咸取正焉。及碑始立， 其觀視及摹寫者，車乘日千餘兩，填塞街陌。[10]

Cai Yong was naturally predisposed for working with stone inscriptions, for as noted above by Ebrey, his anthology preserves several scores of funerary inscriptions; this was due to his prominence as a popular writer of these ossified obituaries; in fact, he was the leading author of this genre at the time.[11] He was also something of a theorist, since his collected works also preserves a short "Discourse on Inscriptions" 銘 論 , which contains the following instructive lines: "Stone bells and bronze tripods are the implements of the rites and music, and display virtue and record merit in order to show them to sons and grandsons. This is because, of imperishable materials, none are more imperishable than metal and stone. Since recent ages, all make inscriptions of this virtue and merit on stelae" 鐘鼎、禮樂之器， 昭德紀功，以示子孫。物不朽者，莫不朽于金石故也。近世以來，咸銘之于碑。[12]

Ma Rong's 馬 融 (79–166) outstanding disciple Lu Zhi 魯 植 (d. 192 BC) expressed the need to perform basic textual criticism on the classics before a definitive edition was carved to preserve them for posterity:

Lu composed a *Sections and Lines Commentary on the Esteemed Documents* and an *Analysis and Glosses on the Three Rites.* At that time, they were just starting to erect the stone classics at the Grand Academy in order to correct the language and the wording of the Five Classics. Lu Zhi then presented a memorial that said, "When young, your servant studied Old Text learning under that erudite Confucian Ma Rong, the former Governor of Nan Commandery. I learned somewhat that at many points in the present text of the *Records of Ritualists* the meaning was beset with many convolutions and contradictions. Your servant previously based himself on the *Rites of Zhou* and the other classics, and discovered their textual corruptions and errors, and therefore boldly proffered my ignorant views in analyzing and glossing them. But my family was penurious, and I could not afford to make a copy for the court. I would like to have two students assigned to me, to visit the Eastern Tower with me and live off of the official stores and funds while we devote ourselves to meticulous research. In this way, we could collate the sections and lines of the *Esteemed Documents*, verify the accretions and deletions in the *Records of the Ritualists*, and hope to edit and finalize the sacred canons and publish the corrected texts on stele. The tadpole script of the ancient texts was close to being correct, yet it was a challenge to those of little learning, so they were reduced to philological studies. Since the restoration, such masterful Confucians and scholars of insight as Ban Gu, Jia Kui, Zheng Xing father and son [Zheng Zhong]—all delighted in encouraging critical studies. Nowadays, the *Mao Poems*, *Mr. Zuo*, and *Rites of Zhou* each possess their own commentaries and records, and collectively explain the words and meaning of the *Spring and Autumn Annals*. It would be suitable to recruit erudites, and establish official academic posts for them; this will aid the study of those who come after, and glorify and expand the intent of the Sage.

作尚書章句、三禮解詁。時始立太學石經，以正五經文字，植乃上書曰：臣少從通 儒故南郡太守馬融受古學，頗知今之禮記特多回冗。臣前以周禮諸經，發起秕謬， 敢率愚淺，為之解詁，而家乏，無力供繕上。願得將書生二人，共詣東觀，就官財 糧，專心研精，合尚書章句，考禮記失得，庶裁定聖典，刊正碑文。古文科斗，近 於為實，而厭抑流俗，降在小學。中興以來，通儒達士班固、賈逵、鄭興父子，並 敦悅之。今毛詩、左氏、周禮各有傳記，其興春秋共相表裏，宜置博士，為立學官， 以助後來，以廣聖意。[13]

This narrative reveals the official impetus behind the creation of the famous Xiping Stone Classics of AD 175,[14] which was to preserve their integrity as texts by engraving them on a durable substance. Disputations over the language of the classics were natural, given the corruption that crept into texts due to the physical exigencies of transmission via copying and recopying from scribe to scribe, from one generation to the next. Texts engraved on tablets of stone were impervious to tampering, intentional or not, as long as the stone slabs survived physically intact. Alas, most of these slabs were broken and some demolished within fifteen years

[10] *Hou-Hanshu* 60b.1990. In all, some twenty-four names of those involved in the project have been identified, although the degree of participation and division of labor is not clear. One Chen Xing 陳興 is credited with being the chief carver, though many more artisans must have been involved. See Ma Heng 馬衡, "Cong shiyanshang kuijian Han shijing zhi yiban" 從實驗上窺見漢石經之一斑, in *Fanjiangzhai jinshi luncong* 凡将斋金石论丛 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1977), 199–210.

[11] Mark Laurent Asselin also provides a thorough introduction to the genre of funerary inscriptions and translates two representative pieces, both annotated with uncommon thoroughness. See *A Significant Season: Cai Yong (Ca. 133–192) and His Contemporaries.* American Oriental Society Series 92 (New Haven, 2010), 230–84.

[12] Cai Yong, *Cai Zhonglangji* 蔡中郎集 (BSJJ ed.), 695–96.

[13] *Hou-Hanshu* 64.2113.

[14] Xiping was the contemporary reign title, in effect from AD 173 to 178.

due to the fighting in Luoyang attendant to the usurpation of power by Dong Zuo 董 卓 (d. AD 192) in 189.

The imperial sponsorship of stone classics occurred with some regularity over the ages, commencing with the Xiping monuments and included two major imperial projects during the Tang, two during the Song, and one during the Qing in 1792, eight major ones in all. It is instructive that the Cantonese classical scholar and historian Gui Wencan 桂文燦 (1823–1884), pupil of Chen Li 陳澧 (1810–1882), commences his masterful *Record of Broadly Gathered Gleanings on Classical Scholarship* 經學博采錄 with the need for accurate texts of the classics in the form of stone stele. He explains their true value: "There were no printed versions of classical works before the Song dynasty. During the course of transmission, errors easily occurred, hence stone classics were erected to correct and normalize them. This was a permanent plan" 經書自宋以前無梓本，其傳寫易訛，故立石經以訂正之，為長久計也.[15] The remainder of the first entry of his work is devoted to enumerating the various authors, iterations, and orthographic styles of stone classics over the ages.[16] But the earliest review of the topic during the early Qing, when the discipline of epigraphy was revived and revitalized, was by Gu Yanwu 顧炎武 (1613–1682), whose personal example set about this renaissance.[17]

Gu Yanwu composed a short work that not only covered much of the same ground as Gui Wencai but also added numerous textual examples, intending to be exhaustive, of the differences between the texts preserved in each edition of the stone classics with the received versions of his day. Entitled *Investigation of the Stone Classics* 石經考, Gu's work surveys the Xiping stone classics, the Wei period project, and one under the Jin. He also treats two official projects under the Tang, one under the Kingdom of Shu, and two under the Song. Also included are several topical studies. His analysis of the Xiping classics includes lengthy quotes from various biographies in the *Hou-Hanshu*.[18] Of course, later studies and modern analyses supersede Gu's early treatment, but for a compilation of original quotes, his work is still convenient.

The carving of the Xiping Stone Classics was approved in AD 175, but work was not completed until 183. Some forty-six tablets were produced, although one

[15] Gui Wencan, *Jingxue bocai lu* 經學博采錄 (Shanghai: Huadong Shifan Daxue Chubanshe, 2010), 1.

[16] Gui, *Jingxue bocai lu*, 1–3.

[17] For Gu's role in resuscitating this discipline and popularizing its use, see the author's "Expanding Methodological Frontiers: Gu Yanwu 顧炎武 (1613–1682), Travel, and the Development of Epigraphy." Western Branch, Association for Asian Studies, West Yellowstone, 12 October 2012. See further the expanded treatment in the author's unpublished MS *A History of Chinese Classical Scholarship,* vol. 4, *Qing Dynasty, Part I* (Provo, UT), chap. 3, sec. 3.1.

[18] Gu Yanwu, *Gu Yanwu quanji* 顧炎武全集, 22 vols. (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2011), 5:435–72.

contemporary source puts the number at forty-eight; at least one extra stele was erected to record the project and participants, which may account for this difference. They were erected on the eastern side of the main lecture hall of the imperial academy that was located outside of the Opened Solar Gate 開陽門 on the south side of Luoyang. All the classics were carved in the contemporary calligraphic style in current use, the clerical script.

Each stele was more than ten Chinese feet tall, or over 7 ft, and four Chinese feet wide, or about 3 ft. Characters were engraved on both obverse and reverse sides, and included the following classics: the Liangqiu version of the *Changes*, the Ouyang version of the *Esteemed Documents*, the Lu version of the *Poems*, the Greater Dai version of the *Ceremonials and Rituals*, the Mr. Yan 嚴氏 version of the *Gongyang Commentary on the Spring and Autumn Annals*, and the Lu version of the *Analects*. These were all New Text editions of the classics, confirming their official status in academic circles of the times. Interestingly enough, appended to each text were textual variora from other editions. Each line of characters varied from 70 to 73 graphs, and pages occasionally displayed different layouts; different calligraphic hands are also discernible.[19] Collections of rubbings were in use during the Liang dynasty (502–557) but disappeared a hundred or so years later during the Tang.

Rubbings of extant pieces were collected beginning in the Song period, which era saw widespread interest in antiquarianism, an interest that has never since waned. Modern scholar Ma Heng 馬 衡 (1881–1955) made the greatest contribution to studying their remains. His *Han shijing jicun* 漢石經集存 , first published posthumously in 1957, includes some 520 rubbings that contain more than 8,200 characters.[20] It took thirty years of sustained effort, and is the foundation of studies of these classics. The journal produced by the Hennan Museum, *Zhongyuan wenwu* 中原文物 1988, no. 2, includes a six-page report titled "Luoyang jinnian chutu de Hanshijing" 洛阳近年出土的汉石经. It details recent discoveries in Luoyang of broken pieces of the Xiping classics, discovered due to ongoing construction work. This publication and other similar reports slowly add to the extant corpus of remaining textual evidence of these stone classics.

The Wei Stone Classics were erected in AD 241 during the Zhengshi 正始 (240–249) era, at the height of the metaphysical movement. Something other than groundless theorizing must have motivated this immense project; we may theorize

[19] Yu Wanli 虞 萬 里 reviews the historical facts concerning the Xiping classics and brilliantly demonstrates their utility in modern research in the classics, especially when used in conjunction with newly discovered manuscripts. See his "Cong Xiping canshi he zhujian 'Ziyi' kan Qingren sijia *Shi* yanjiu." Consult also his new survey of modern scholarship on these stone classics starting from formal investigation in the 1900s; Yu, "20 shiji Xiping shijing yanjiu niaokan" 20 世紀熹平石經研究鳥瞰, *Zhongguo jingxue* 23 (2019): 193-246.

[20] Recently republished by Shanghai Shudian in 2015.

ourselves that it was an attempt to legitimize the state of Wei in its struggle for prominence with Shu-Han in the West and Wu in the South. But this theory falls to the ground due to the fact that only two classics were engraved, not the entire canon as was then constituted. They included only the *Esteemed Documents* and the *Spring and Autumn Annals* with *Zuo's Commentary*. It must be noted that the Xiping Stone Classics had been merely toppled over by Dong Zuo's rampaging troops, not deliberately destroyed. Many were, of course, broken in pieces by such rough treatment, but by the time the dynasty was officially established in AD 220, these stelae had been pieced together again and re-erected outside of the newly re-built imperial academy. The addition of these two classics, then, must have been due to their value as Old Text versions, unless economic constraints cut short the project. Keeping up with the scholarly trends of the times probably accounts for the addition of these two classics, which already had counterparts amid the existing Xiping classics. This abbreviated set of classics, then, must be regarded as merely supplementing and updating the Xiping classics.

The Wei Stone Classics were also called the "Zhengshi Stone Classics" 正始石經 and "Three Style Stone Classics" 三體石經. The following anecdote preserved in the *Weishou* 魏書 by Wei Shou 魏收 (506–572) in the biography of a contemporary lexicographer and calligraphist describes further details of the Wei Stone Classics.

> Handan Chun from Chenliu was also a contemporary of Zhang Ji. He was erudite in ancient studies and talented in many of the fine arts. He was especially sensitive to the intents of the *Cangjie Fascicle*, the *Close to Elegance*, and Mr. Xu's work. He made a thorough study of the overriding principles behind the eight types and six scripts, and was even more renowned than Zhang Ji. He taught calligraphy to the royal princes. He also erected the Three Style Stone Classics to the west of the Han stelae. The calligraphy was brilliant and bold, henceforth the three styles were once again manifested Comparing them with the *Explaining Simple Graphs*, the seal and clerical styles are largely the same, but the ancient graphs were somewhat different.
>
> 陳留邯鄲淳亦與揖同時，博古開藝，特善倉、雅，許氏字指，八體六書精究閑理， 有名於揖，以書教諸皇子。又建三字石經於漢碑之西，其文蔚炳，三體復宣。校之說文，篆隸大同，而古字少異. [21]

Handan Chun was a noted scholar and calligrapher during the late Han era. In AD 208 he served as tutor, especially in matters of fine arts, to Cao Zhi 曹植 (192–232), whom he later supported as the heir apparent. He was therefore eminently suited to write the calligraphy that graced these stone classics.[22]

Each stele was two feet shorter than the Xiping classics, eight Chinese feet in height, almost 6 ft., and four Chinese feet in width, about 3 ft. In terms of presentation, each line numbers twenty characters. The ancient graph text was written from the top down, with the two styles also written top to bottom in parallel lines below the text in ancient characters.[23] In all, each line of classic numbered sixty characters, twenty per style.[24] Each stele included 2,100 graphs. The number of individual stele varies in estimations from twenty-five to forty-eight. But given the fact that even forty-eight stelae would not be enough to accommodate the full texts of the *Esteemed Documents*, *Spring and Autumn Annals,* and the appended *Zuo's Commentary* in three separate scripts, there had to be many more stelae than that.[25]

The historicity of the Jin Stone Classics is only supported by two notices, but is taken to be fact by the majority of students of the subject. First, the *Jinshu* biography of Pei Wei 裴頠 (267–300), son of noted cartographer Pei Xiu 裴秀 (224– 271), notes that when Emperor Hui 惠帝 (r. 290–307) first ascended the throne, Pei Wei was appointed director of the Imperial Academy. His biography notes: "Now that the world temporarily enjoyed tranquility, Wei memorialized the throne to renovate the national academy, and engrave stones to copy the classics" 時天下暫寧，頠奏修國學，刻石寫經.[26] Second is a contemporary record from Jin times, a lost *Appraisal of the Various High Ministers of Jin* 晉諸公贊, which states: "Pei Wei was appointed during the era of Emperor Hui to be the director of the national academy. He memorialized the throne to establish the Imperial Academy. He initiated a lecture hall, constructed a lattice for the gates,

[21] *Weishu* 魏書 91.1963.

[22] A short biographical note derived from Yu Huan's *Weilüe* is included in *Sanguozhi* 21.603. Zhang Ji 張輯 , with whom Handan Chun is favorably compared, was an erudite during the early Wei era who specialized in lexicographical works; see *Weishu* 91.1963. Modern specialist Lū Zhenduan 呂振端, *Wei Santi Shijing canzi jizheng* 魏三體石經殘字集證 (Taipei: Xuehai Chubanshe, 1981), 16–20, disputes that Handan Chun was the original writer of the calligraphy engraved on the stones, since he had likely already died before the project came about.

[23] For a specialized study of the style of ancient graphs employed, see Qiu Dexiu 邱德修, *Wei Shijing guwen shixing kaoshu* 魏石經古文釋形攷述 (Taipei: Xuesheng Shuju, 1977).

[24] See Ma Heng, "Wei shijing gaishu" 魏石經概述, in *Fanjiangzhai jinshi conggao*, 220–24.

[25] See the discussion by Wang Guowei, "Wei shijingkao er" 魏石經考二, in *Guantang jilin*, 2:959–62. For collections of these stone classics, see Sun Haibo 孫海波, *Wei Sanzi Shijing jilu* 魏三字石經集錄(Beijing: Daye Yinshuju 大業印書局, 1937).

[26] *Jinshu* 35.1042.

and engraved stones in order to facilitate copying of the Five Classics" 頃，惠帝時拜為國子祭酒，奏立國子太學。起講堂，築門網，刻石以寫五經.[27]

9.2. Imperial Editions of the Four Categories of Books

The heritage of the famous Xun clan, purported descendants of the ancient philosopher Xunzi and active in political, educational, and scholarly affairs during the Eastern Han dynasty, was revived in the person of Xun Xu 荀勗/勖 (d. AD 289). Great-grandson of the towering classicist Xun Shuang 荀 爽 (128–190),[28] he was a man of many parts; his expertise ranged across the fields of musicology, metrology and historical measurements, poetry, scholarship, librarianship, and politics.[29] In AD 274 he was appointed Custodian of the Private Library and spent the next fifteen years at work on a great project of library classification, stretching roughly from 274 to around 287. The main description of this project is provided by the Sui bibliographical monograph:

> When the house of Wei replaced that of Han, they collected and strung together that which survived from all that was lost, and stored it in the central library and the Third Archive gallery outside the palace. Librarian Zheng Mo commenced to organize the *Classics in the Central Library*. Xun Xu, the Custodian of the Private Library, followed this organization of the classics in the Central Library and in addition composed a *New Catalogue*. It was divided into four divisions and encompassed all books. The first division, called A, recorded such works as the Six Classics and philology. The second division, called B, contained the ancient philosophical masters, and masters from recent ages, military works, military masters, and strategy. The third division, called C, contained historical records, old affairs, catalogues of works for imperial perusal, and miscellaneous affairs. The fourth division, called D, contained poetry and rhapsodies, diagrams and appraisals, and the documents from the Jizhong tomb. In all, the four divisions contained a total of 29,945 scrolls. They merely recorded the title and a few words. The works were stored in light blue silk bags and were written on yellow silk. As for the intents of the authors, these were not analyzed. During the reigns of emperors Hui (r. 290–307) and Huai (r. 307–311), uprisings rocked the capital,[30] and none of the works held in the gallery archives survived.
>
> 魏氏代漢，采綴遺亡，藏在祕書中外三閣，魏祕書郎鄭默始制中經。秘書監荀勗又 因中經更著新簿，分爲四部，總括群書。一曰甲部，紀六藝及小學等書。二曰乙部， 有古諸子家、近世子家、兵書、兵家、術數。三曰丙部，有史記、舊事、皇覽簿、 雜事。四曰丁部。有詩賦、圖讚、汲冢書。大凡四部合二萬九千九百四十五卷。但 錄題及言，盛以縹囊，書用緗素。至於作者之意，無所辨論。惠、懷之亂，京華蕩 覆，渠閣文籍，靡有孑遺。[31]

The catalogue included 1,885 separate works in 20,945 scrolls, more than twice the number recorded in the Han bibliographies. It was presented in sixteen scrolls, with two scrolls appended that treated Buddhist works. The catalogue only recorded book titles, the number of scrolls, and authors' or compilers' names. Some two-thirds of the works in the collection were lost during the rebellions attendant to the end of the Western Jin.[32] The bibliographic monograph in the *History of Sui* records that only 3,114 scrolls were extant when Li Chong 李 充 (fl. AD 350) compiled his own *Jin Yuandi sibu shumu* 西元帝四部數目.[33]

Other than chaos attendant on rebellion, another reason for the disappearance of many of the stone classics stelae is the fact that they were often moved from place to place. During the Northern Wei (386–534) and Northern Qi (550–577) periods they were moved to the capital at Ye 業 in Hebei in two stages, where they were damaged by flood waters. From Ye they were moved to Chang'an during the Sui period (581–618).[34]

Zheng Mo 鄭默 (213–281)'s catalogue on the classics is no longer extant, and little information survives as to its format or purpose except for a stray quote by a contemporary to the effect that with this work, "Both now and henceforth vermillion and purple will be distinguished" 而今而後，朱紫別矣, indicating that the catalogue was classified somehow, perhaps in the four-part division utilized later by Xun Xu.[35] The contemporary competitor states of Shu-Han and Wu each witnessed library projects that also included the effort to establish definitive texts. Xiang Lang 向 朗 (d. AD 247) of Shu-Han engaged in textual

[27] Quote preserved in the Yu Shinan 虞世南 (568–638), *Beitang shuchao* 北堂書鈔 (Taipei: Hongye Shuju, 1974); 67.3a, also included in *Yiwen leizju* 38.692 (*juan* 38), which reads "gate lattice" 門網 as "towered gate" *menque* 門闕. A recent review of the historicity of this project is Fang Bangjin 范邦瑾, "Jin shijing tanyi" 晋 石 经 探 疑 , in *Shilin* 史 林 no. 4 (1988), accessed 23 May 2015 at http://wap.cnki.net/qikan-LWBI198804001.html.

[28] Xun Shuang and members of his talented family are treated above in chapter 7.2.

[29] For an in-depth treatment of the many intellectual contributions of Xu Xun to his age, see Howard L. Goodman, *Xun Xu and the Politics of Precision in Third-Century AD China* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2010).

[30] This refers to the so-called "Rebellion of the Eight Princes" 八王之亂 of 291 to 306.

[31] *Suishu* 32.906; see the translation by Goodman, *Xun Xu and the Politics of Precision*, 306–307, with interlinear interpretive explanations.

[32] Zhou, *Guji muluxue*, 122.

[33] *Suishi* 32.906. See the analysis of Yang Yanqi 杨燕起 and Gao Guokang 高国抗, *Zhongguo lishi wenxianxue* 中国历史文献史 (Beijing: Beijing Tushuguan Chubanshe, 1987), 76–77.

[34] Sun Xingyan 孫星衍 (1753–1818), *Wei Santi Shijing yizikao* 魏三體遺字考 (CSJC ed.), 2.

[35] Zhou, *Guji muluxue*, 120.

criticism, collating texts and correcting errors well into his eighties; it was apparently a personal obsession, not an official assignment.[36] Wei Zhao 韋 昭 (204–273; often called Yao 曜 to avoid a Jin period taboo) led the effort of the Wu state. He was a historian who participated in the compilation of the *Book of Wu* 吳 書 , which later informed the Wu portion of the *Monograph on the Three Kingdoms* 三國志; he gained lasting posthumous fame for his moral probity, which unfortunately resulted in his execution. In AD 258 he was appointed an Erudite for the Five Classics and the director of the National Academy. A scholar of note who produced exegetical works on the *History of Han* and the earliest extant commentary on the *Tales of the States* 國語,[37] Wei was charged with collating the imperial library: when Emperor Jing 景 帝 (r. 258–264) ascended the throne, "He ordered Yao to collate and provide definitive editions of all the books according to the precedent of Liu Xiang" 命曜依劉向故事，校定眾書.[38] Liu Xiang's precedent of course included providing bibliographical notices for each text, but it is an open question whether Wei Zhao's project and the parallel private project in Shu-Han produced actual catalogues. We do see from the timing of Wei Zhao's assignment that it was part of the effort of a new emperor to bolster his credibility at that same time as benefitting the scholarship and literature of his state.

As a notable literatus, scholar, and official who served as close advisor to founding Emperor Wu 武帝 (r. 265–290), Xun Xu was well prepared to head up the new library project sponsored by the throne. He was aided by his sometime protégé in the library Zhang Hua 張 華 (232–300), scholar, poet, famous bibliophile, and erudite author of the miscellany *Monograph on Things Far and Wide* 博物志, 400 scrolls; their working relationship lasted until the mid-270s when a falling out occurred due to competing military advice, with Zhang promoting peace, and Xun Xu advocating attacking Wu.[39]

[36] *Sanguozhi* 41.1010.

[37] For this invaluable commentary, which includes much work by his predecessors that would otherwise be lost, see Yu Zhihui 俞志慧, "*Guoyu* Wei Zhaozhu bianzheng" 国语韦昭注辨正, *Journal of Shaoxing University* 29 No. 3 (2009), accessed 24 June 2015 at http://wenku.baidu.com/link?url=3VQ5cZuMgaYOI_aZmOlX9LwXYowJmw8Sd3-nP50M5YAkz0F50iplElbNNR3Zs0wOoqWicCVT0sj2srU2-s_hQ2vUbDdP_PGb1t52akzr_Zq; and Li Ying 李颖, "*Guoyu* Wei Zhaozhu guxun zhaji" 国语韦昭注古训札记, *Jingidan jiaoyuan* 经典教苑 7 (2009), accessed 24 June 2015 at http://wenku.baidu.com/link?url=8mrH57xlBDA5TvlFb2CJ9boP8tgeVMYYp1XwFGdph2sR3p4zDWT_aZKH5mqPK2rD4qR48AmfSze3QqPrfB51cHVk0hDjRwsjTIUzA-u1EbG.

[38] *Sanguozhi* 65.1462.

[39] For their relationship, see Shaughnessy, *Rewriting Early Chinese* Texts, 146–48.

9.3. Imperial Editing of Excavated Manuscripts

Xun Xu and his committee were interrupted in their editorial work by an amazing turn of events: the recovery of a very large batch of ancient manuscripts. The basic narrative account is as follows: "Bu Zhun, a man from Ji Commandery, excavated the grave of King Xiang of Wei [d. 296 BC], and obtained bamboo strips with ancient books written in small seal script to the extent of more than 100,000 words. They were stored in the imperial archives" 汲郡人不準掘魏襄王冢，得竹簡小篆古書十餘萬言，藏于祕府.[40] This find yielded many works of considerable interest, including the *Bamboo Annals*, *Zhou Changes*, *Biography of Son of Heaven Mu,* and many miscellaneous works. When transcribed onto paper, they totaled seventy-five scrolls in number (one source states eighty-seven).[41]

The process by which these documents were edited is simply narrated by Xun Xu himself. First, Xun and his committee, of whom the only member mentioned by full name is He Qiao 何嶠 (d. AD 292), first edited the texts, that is, reassembled the scattered bamboo strips into some coherent order. Next, they had to interpret them; one aid was the ancient text script preserved on the Wei Three Style Stone Classics. Then, "the Director carefully transcribed them onto yellow paper two feet in width and submitted them, requesting that after events had settle down, both the original strip texts and the transcription be given to the Palace Library to be copied and to be placed among the [text called] *Central Classics* with a duplicate copy in the Third Archive."[42] When Du Yu, famous general and commentator on *Mr. Zuo's Commentary*, viewed the bamboo cache, he noted that "the tadpole script has long been in disuse, and attempts to interpret it were not completely successful" 科斗書久廢，推尋不能盡通.[43]

Two later transcriptions were hazarded, attempting to improve the accuracy of the original production. The first attempt is described by Shaughnessy as follows:

> Dissatisfaction with the original transcriptions seems to have led to a wholesale revision, which may have begun soon after Xun Xu was transferred out of his post as Director of the Imperial Library. Reports suggest that the work of revision began shortly after Xun Xu was replaced, at first undertaken by Wei Heng 衛 恒 (d. 291), Vice-Director

[40] Jinshu 3.70.

[41] Shaughnessy notes that "scroll" could be an error for "bundle" of bamboo strips. Shaughnessy, *Rewriting Early Chinese* texts, 146.

[42] *Chunchiu Zuozhuan zhengyi*, "Jiaokanji," 60.16a, "Houxu" 後序; trans. Shaughnessy, *Rewriting Early Chinese Texts*, 140; the entire preface is translated on pp. 143–45.

[43] *Chunchiu Zuozhuan zhengyi*, "Jiaokanji," 60.16a, "Houxu" 後序; trans. Shaughnessy, *Rewriting Early Chinese Texts*, 143; the entire preface is translated on pp. 143.

of the Palace Library. Wei, eldest son of Wei Guan 衛瓘 (220–291), probably the most powerful man at court by the end of Jin Wu Di's reign, was the foremost paleographer of his age. . . .

Unfortunately, in the summer of 291, his father was caught up in further factionalism at court and executed. Wei Heng was unable to escape involvement and, in the sixth month of that year, he too was killed, before having had a chance to complete his correction of the Jizhong texts.[44]

The second attempt came at the hands of Shu Xi 束晳 (ca. 261–300), a friend of Wei Heng, who studied the bamboo manuscripts while working in the library. His biography in the *History of Jin* notes that "when Xi worked in the clerical office, he got to see the bamboo texts, and consequently doubted their divisions and interpretations, for all of which he had documentation" 晳在著作，得觀竹書，隨疑分釋，皆有義證.[45] After Wei's death, Shu assumed this project and completed his textual work, which produced recensions that often varied from those edited by Xun Xun.[46]

The picture of Western Jin classical scholarship has been greatly clarified by two works already utilized above. Howard Goodman's *Xun Xu and the Politics of Precision in Third-Century AD China* sets the scholarly agendas of the age in the context of political rivalries, philosophical trends, and ritual priorities at court. Edward Shaughnessey's *Rewriting Early Chinese Texts* provides an ingress into the working methodologies of textual editors, with a welcome comparative perspective of current work being conducted on newly discovered manuscripts. I close this section with an apt quote from Goodman that puts these bibliographical and editing projects into the wider context of contemporary intellectual concerns:

> My discussion hopefully helps us see how Western Jin scholarship dealt with both old and new issues of reliability and forgery. When the Ji Tombs came into focus, the scholarly world found itself awash with "old texts" of a highly charged nature, reopening lines of questioning about historical fact and interpretation of history. It was an atmosphere perhaps not seen since early Eastern Han, after the work of Liu Xin to revamp the masters and the sages; furthermore, much of the scholarly world in the 270s and 80s was not yet finished digesting and refining the new proposals about antiquity, sages, and ancient texts that were propounded in *xuanxue* circles. Thus, with such startling material evidence in 280, sincerity of purpose and probity were important questions, ones that redounded to the man placed into the task of controlling and delivering the Ji Tomb texts [i.e., Xun Xu]. Was he admired and thought trustworthy? Clearly the answer was "not so"; if there was anyone in Luoyang capable of bending facts, making reality and physical forms conform to an agenda, it was Xun Xu.[47]

[44] Shaughnessy, *Rewriting Early Chinese Texts*, 150–151.
[45] *Jinshu* 51.1433; trans. Shaughnessy, *Rewriting Early Chinese Texts*, 151.
[46] Jinshu 51.1436.

9.3.1. The Presentation of a "Psuedo" Kong Anguo Edition of the Esteemed Documents

After the court moved south after the fall of the north and reconvened in Jiankang in AD 317, several educational projects were inaugurated to project an aura of normalcy and to help legitimize the new regime. Chief among them were the establishment of an imperial academy in that very year and the recruitment of classical erudites to operate it the next year.[48] Concurrent with this move was a state- wide call for books to be sent up to the throne. This, of course, paralleled initiatives made at the founding of both the Western Han and the Eastern Han, and it is an example of the official sponsorship of classical scholarship during the Eastern Jin. With this nascent polity, it seems that only some 3,000 works were housed in the new imperial library in Jiankang, down from the approximately 30,000 that had been stored in the capital archives in the north.[49] Books held among the populace was another matter, so a state-wide decree was promulgated to invite the submission of books to the court.

An example of the loss of works and the submission of replacement editions to the throne is the case of the *Esteemed Documents*. The monographic bibliography in the *History of the Sui* records both ends of the process, loss and gain:

> Of the editions preserved in the imperial archives over the various reigns during the Jin was the text of the classic of the *Old Text Esteemed Documents*, but it hasn't been transmitted to the present. With the chaos of the Yongjia era (307– 313), the editions of the *Esteemed Documents* of Ouyang, and Greater and Minor Xiahou were all lost. As for the commentary of Fu Sheng of Jinan, only the commentary on the "Five Operations" section [of the "Hongfan"洪範chapter] edited by Liu Xiang and his son followed the model of his edition; still, it has many differences. By the time of the Eastern Jin, the Executive Administrator of Yuzhang Mei Ze first obtained the [edition with a] commentary of Kong Anguo and submitted it. It itself lacked the single chapter of "The Canon of Shun."
>
> 晉世祕府所存，有古文尚書經文，今無有傳者。及永嘉之亂，歐陽，大、小夏侯尚 書並亡。濟南伏生之傳，唯劉向父子所著五行傳，是其本法，而又多乖戾。至東晉， 豫章內史梅賾，始得安國

[47] Goodman, *Xun Xu and the Politics of Precision*, 345. I shall not delve into this negative penumbra due largely to political concerns surrounding the career of Xun Xu; but it makes fascinating reading in the entertaining narrative of Goodman.
[48] *Jinshu* 6.149; 152. The foundational study of the imperial erudites in this era remains Wang Guowei, "Wei-Jin boshi kao" 魏晉博士考, in *Guantang jilin* 1:174–218.
[49] *Suishu* 32.906.

之傳，奏之，時又闕舜典一篇。[50]

It is traditional to claim that when Mei Ze 梅賾 (fl. AD fourth century) submitted this work, he asserted that it was the textual descendant of the *Old Text Esteemed Documents* as recovered from a wall of Confucius's ancient dwelling as edited by Kong Anguo 孔 安 國 (ca. 156–ca. 74 BC) with a commentary composed by him, a preface by Kong, and Mei's own memorial explaining the circumstances of its transmittal through a filiation of classicists stretching through the Western Jin dynasty back to Han masters.[51] The nature of this text is unclear but has always been described in later literature as an attempt by Mei at fabrication, using the thirty-two chapters of the current New Text version as base, with twenty-five additional chapters that he forged added to the mix. A total of fifty-nine chapters is reached by the inclusion of a preface attributed to Kong Anguo.[52] It has never been suggested until modern times that Mei had merely submitted a group of texts loosely associated with the *Old Text* version, not chapters, but obscure and incomplete commentaries. This scenario is made more palatable by the work of Yu Wanli (noted previously in chapter 4.1.1), who posited such an identification for a newly discovered text among the Tsing-hua bamboo documents.[53] However murky the circumstances and nature of the text or texts submitted by Mei, it is a fact that the *Old Text Esteemed Edition* had disappeared from official notice during the Western Jin, and hybrid editions by Zheng Xuan and Wang Su were the versions of choice by default. The fact that no edition of the *Old Text* version was located in the Jin imperial archives does not mean that it did not circulate in private among the people. It is also a fact that the so- called *Psuedo Kong* recension appeared during the Eastern Jin, early on attributed to Mei Ze. This originally could have been one of the private editions that gained increasing currency and became attributed to Mei Ze. Regardless, Mei's version gained wide currency, and it was ultimately included among the canonized classics edited by Kong Yingda. Worth noting at this point is the theory that Wang Su had been the original forger of the commentary attributed to Kong Anguo that accompanied this text; this was apparently an erroneous reading of statements by Lu Deming 陸德明 (556–627) and Kong Anguo first made popular by Hui Dong 惠棟 (1697–1758) and Wang Mingsheng 王鳴盛 (1722–1797).[54]

[50] *Suishu* 32.915.

[51] Dominik Declercq, *Writing Against the State: Political Rhetorics in Third and Fourth Century China* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 169–70, details this lineage of masters.

[52] For a detailed introduction to Mei Ze's text and the historical data on the circumstances of its presentation, see Liu Qiyu 刘起釪, *Shangshu yanjiu yaolun* 尚书研究要论 (Jinan: Qi-Lu Shushe, 2007), 7–30. Number two of Yan Ruoqu's 121 notices (ninety-nine extant) on the *Old Text Esteemed Documents* is also worth perusing. See Yan, *Shangshu guwen shuzheng*, 1:4–6.

[53] Yu, "You Tsingha jian 'Yingao' lun *Guwen Shangshu* 'Xianyou yide' zhi xingzhi."

[54] See Liu Qiyu, *Shangshu xueshi*, 189–90.

In the next section of this chapter I will introduce Jin classicists, both Western and Eastern Jin, a few who were on the inside running in official circles at the capitals, and more of whom were working on the outside in more quiet waters on the local level, often in seclusion.

9.4. Classical Scholarship during the Jin: The "Grove of Confucians"

In the preface to the "Grove of Confucians" collective biography in the *History of Jin*, the Tang historians note the meritorious ministers who helped organize the state with a new ritual system and operate it with new political policies. In this case, these Confucians were advisors for applied Confucianism in the hurly- burly world of practical statesmanship and immediate court procedures, not scholars working on Confucian classical texts in descent obscurity in either public academies or private studios.

> When Emperor Wu received the end [of the mandate of Wei], he fretted over the army and toiled for the state. At the time he had amalgamated the nondescript state of Shu, and was just then dealing with the state of rivers and lakes [the state of Wu]. He trained his foot-soldiers and polished his troops, stressed agriculture and stored grain. He was especially concerned to restore and renovate academies and establish schools, and favored the Biyong ritual edifice with his presence. And Xun Yi was praised for renewing the system of ritual;[55] Zheng Chong ascended to be royal tutor as the patron saint of Confucianism;[56] Mao Xian [Zhang Hua] advised on court politics due to his wide knowledge of things; Zizhen [Liu Shi 劉 寔] served as organizer of the ancestral

[55] Xun Yi 荀 顗 (205–274) was an elder clansman of Xun Xu and shared the family specialty in the *Changes;* he had been a Gentleman of the Palace under the Wei dynasty, as well as a royal tutor. During the Jin he was taken as a paragon of filial piety and an authority on proper mourning rituals. His biography records that, upon the subjugation of Shu, he was ordered to revise the ritual system of the Jin. He eventually produced a work entitled *New Rites* 新 禮 in 165 fascicles. His biography is at *Jinshu* 39.1150–52; his work on the rites is treated by Goodman, *Xun Xu and the Politics of Precision,* 62–64; 353–58; see Goodman, *Xun Xu and the Politics of Precision,* 65–69, for the Xun family scholarship on the *Changes*.

[56] Zheng Chong 鄭沖 (d. AD 274) rose to high rank under the successive emperors of the Wei, taught the *Shangshu* to Cao Mao, the nominal but puppet fourth emperor of Wei. Zheng personally delivered the official notice of abdication of the last Wei emperor to Sima Yan, who became Emperor Wu of Jin. He immediately served as royal tutor under the Jin, yet due to advanced old age seldom appeared at court. It was, however, mandatory to seek his advice, including on the projects to revise the rites mentioned above. His biography is at *Jinshu* 33.991–93.

rituals due to his commitment to the rites.[57]

武帝受終，憂勞軍國，時既初並庸蜀，方事江湖，訓卒厲兵，務農積穀，猶複修立學校，臨幸辟雍。而荀顗以制度贊惟新，鄭沖以儒宗登保傅，茂先以博物參朝政， 子真以好禮居秩宗。[58]

The eighteen Confucians plus the scattering of fathers, brothers, and sons subsumed in this collective biography were officials as well as classicists. But concrete scholarly contributions are rarely portrayed with adamantine sharpness. Typical is the first entrant, Fan Ping 范平, who served the state of Wu and is described as having extraordinary abilities in politics; he was summoned to office under the Jin, but he refused. As for his erudition, he is merely described as "deeply delighting in Confucian learning" 敦悅儒學, and a stone monument was erected upon his death to record his virtuous conduct. His three sons are described as "reaching high office due to their Confucian learning" 以儒學至大官. His grandson Fan Wei 范蔚 was the outstanding member of the clan: "For generations the family was devoted to learning, and owned more than 7,000 scrolls of books. Usually more than one hundred visitors from near and far came to read them. Wei provided clothing and food for them. Wei's son Fan Wencai 范文才 was also renowned while still young" 家世好學，有書七千餘卷。遠近來讀者恆有百餘人，蔚為辦衣食。蔚子文才，亦幼知名 .[59] Interesting information to be sure, but the Fan clan's contribution to classical studies was in that of an indirect and supporting role to aid the field, not to directly contribute to it via personal participation in scholarship. In the next entry, one Wen Li 文立 records his studies in Shu at the imperial academy and his specialization in the *Mao Poems* and *Three Ritual Classics.* His apprenticeship under the famous historian Qiao Zhou 譙 周 (d. AD 270) and the fact that he composed numerous political memorials, poems, and rhapsodies are also noted. Still, his biography is mostly occupied with his official career and his membership in the staff of the crown prince. Again, although I identify him as a classicist, classical scholarship is not seen as the chief concern of the "Grove of Confucians"; and obviously, with no extant works to examine, we cannot detect the working methodologies of the Confucian classicists so treated in this biography.

[57] Liu Shi 刘寔 (220–310) hailed from Shandong and rose to high office under the Jin. He was a distant relative of the Han royal line, and he became renowned for his erudition. Late in life he served as royal tutor. He was an expert on the *Sanli* and the *Chunqiu*, compiling such works as *Chunqiu fanli* 春秋条例in 20 scrolls, *Chunqiu Gongyang dayi* 春秋公羊达义 in three scrolls, and *Jijie Chunqiu xu* 集解春秋序 in one scroll. His collected miscellaneous works reached two scrolls; hid biography is at *Jinshu* 41.1190-98.

[58] *Jinshu* 91.2346.

[59] *Jinshu* 91.2347.

With the third entrant, Chen Shao 陳 邵 , at least we learn that, in addition to his appointment to office on the basis of his Confucian learning, he actually composed something relevant to classical scholarship, an *Assessment of the Rites of Zhou* 周禮評.[60] Fourth entrant Yu Xi 虞喜 (281–356), a famous astronomer who was the earliest to detect the precession of the equinoxes, again can contribute something to the story of classical scholarship, for he authored an *Abbreviation of the Mao Poems* 毛詩略, annotated the *Classic of Filial Piety*, and composed a *Grove of Men of Ambition* 志 林 in 30 fascicles. He also expressed his private views in the essay *Disquisition on Being Content in Heaven's Will* 安天論.[61] With the fifth entrant, Liu Zhao 劉兆, we finally encounter a classicist who not only contributes to our knowledge of what classical texts were current in scholarly circles, but whose working methodologies can also be observed. Liu became a noted teacher with several thousand nominal pupils but refused recruitment as an official erudite, preferring research in seclusion. He is known for a comprehensive exposition of *Mr. Zuo's Commentary* titled *Complete Synthesis* 全 綜 with the commentaries of *Gongyang* and *Guliang* printed in red ink, for which he also collated the variora in the texts of the *Spring and Autumn Annals* preserved in these different commentarial traditions. His *Glosses and Annotations on the Zhou Changes* focused on the following exegetical approach: "The 'main' and 'moving' hexagrams were used intra-textually to comprehend the text" 以正動二體，互通其文; that is, he interpreted the classic via the interaction between the primary or "main" (*zheng* 正) hexagrams and their related or "moving" (*dong* 動) hexagrams, that is, the related hexagrams derived by "transforming" (*bian* 變) internal elements of the primary hexagram. He also composed a lengthy work on an office detailed in the *Rites of Zhou* entitled *Mediators during the Chunqiu* 春秋調人 in more than 70,000 words.[62]

Below I continue to review the entrants in the "Grove of Confucians," only lingering over those who contribute to the story of classical scholarship in some major way, generally via written works that indicate scholarly trends. After a glance at ritual reform during the Jin, I conclude by treating several major classicists who were important enough to merit individual biographies.

Fan Yu 范毓 was another reclusive scholar along the lines of Liu Zhao, except he did not accept disciples; he would, however, point the way to further understanding for those of moral probity who earnestly inquired of him. He also focused on the three commentaries on the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, composing a work entitled *Explaining the Doubts in the Spring and Autumn Annals* 春秋釋

[60] *Jinshu* 91.2347–48. It made it through to the Tang, when it got listed in the *Suishu* bibliographical monograph as *Zhouguanli yitong ping* 周官禮異同評 in 12 scrolls.

[61] *Jinshu* 91.2348–49.

[62] *Jinshu* 91.2349–50.

疑.[63] Xu Miao 徐 苗 came from a family of successive erudites over the generations. He ended up as a reclusive scholar who, however, did accept acolytes. Along with his younger brother Xu Jia 徐賈 he studied under the erudite Song Jun 宋鈞 and produced a wonder for the times in its wide-ranging coverage, an *Appraisal of the Similarities and Differences in the Five Classics* 五經同異評 of an unknown length.[64] Cui You 崔遊, who had tutored the southern Xiongnu invader Liu Yuan 劉淵 (style Yuanhai 淵海, ca. 251–310) back in the day, refused Liu Yuan's summons to serve as a censor. He authored an *Illustrated Mourning Vestments* 喪服圖.[65] Fan Long 范隆 did accept Liu Yuan's summons to serve, having composed a *Three Commentaries on the Spring and Autumn Annals* 春 秋 三 傳 and a *Chronicles of the Origins of Auspicious and Inauspicious in the Three Ritual Classics* 三禮吉凶宗紀.[66] Du Yi 杜夷 was immensely erudite and taught thousands of pupils in his hermit-like existence, but there is no notice of his having authored anything apart from a work in twenty fascicles titled *The Master Who Seeks in Obscurity* 幽求子.[67]

The career of Dong Jingdao 董景道 explains why many contemporary Confucians preferred quiet scholarship and teaching in obscurity:

> When young he was devoted to his studies, and sought a teacher over a thousand miles. Wherever he was, he would read and chant day and night, and seldom interacted with others. He comprehended the *Three Commentaries on the Spring and Autumn Annals*, *Mr. Jing on the Changes* 京氏易, *Mr. Ma on the Esteemed Documents* 馬氏尚書, and the *Han Poems* 韓詩—for all he penetrated the grand meaning in a refined way. For the *Three Ritual Classics* he exclusively followed Mr. Zheng, and composed a *Comprehensive Disquisition on the Rites.* During the Yongping era (291) he realized that the world would soon turn chaotic, so he lived as a recluse on Mt. Shangluo,[68] wearing branches and leaves, and eating fruit from trees. He plucked his zither, and sang and laughed to amuse himself; poisonous bugs and fierce beasts all circled around him in delight at his side.
>
> 少而好學，千里追師，所在惟晝夜讀誦，略不與人交通。明春秋三傳、京氏易、馬 氏尚書、韓詩，皆精究大義。三禮之義，專遵鄭氏，著禮通論非駁諸儒，演廣鄭旨。永平中，知天下將亂，隱於商洛山，衣木葉，食樹果，彈琴歌笑以自娛，毒蟲猛獸 皆繞其傍.[69]

With Xu Xian 續咸 we are introduced to Confucians who struggled during the chaos of the Rebellion of the Eight Princes (291–306) and the disintegration of the state during the Yongjia period (307–313). A disciple of Du Yu, the master of *Zuo's Commentary*, Xu Xian is noted for his command of several texts, including *Spring and Autumn Annals* and *Mr. Zheng on the Changes*. He also taught several scores of students. During the rebellion his political career was stressed. Afterwards, he remained in the north under the rule of Shi Le 石 勒 (274–333), the Qiang chieftain who became the founding monarch of the kingdom of Later Zhao 後 趙 (319–352), and who recruited him as an Aide in the Personnel Section. Xu composed such works as *Monograph on Distant Wandering* 遠遊志, *Monograph on Odd Things* 異物志, and a paleologico-philological work directed at the Jizhong texts, an *Elucidation of the Ancient Script of the Jizhong Texts* 汲冢古文釋.[70]

Xu Miao 徐 邈 (344–397) leads off the classicists who were full-fledged citizens of the Eastern Jin. His grandfather Xu Chengzhi 徐澄之 had led more than a thousand of his kinsmen, friends, and fellow townsmen to flee his homeland of Xuzhou 徐州, northwest Jiangsu, heading south and eastward, taking refuge across the Yangzi River in Jingkou 京口, modern Zhenjiang, Jiangsu. Xu Miao became a high official who was valued by Emperor Wu 武 帝 (r. 372–396), and he served as an unofficial tutor to the crown prince.[71] His biography describes his scholarship as follows:

> When Emperor Wu the Filial began to peruse the canonical works, he summoned scholars of the Confucian persuasion. Since Miao was a well-established Confucian from the Eastern Provinces, the imperial tutor Xie An recommended him to respond to this selection process. When he was forty- four, he commenced by filling a post as worker in the Central Library, and in the Western Bureau he waited in attendance on the emperor. Although he did not orally transmit sections and lines exegesis, he opened up and elucidated the meaning of texts, marking and clarifying their intents. He composed and corrected sound glosses on the Five Classics. Scholars all venerated him as their progenitor.
>
> 及孝武帝始覽典籍，招延儒學之士，邈既東州儒素，太傅謝安舉以應選。年四十四， 始補中書舍人，在西省侍帝。雖不口傳章句，然開釋文義，標明指趣。撰正五經音 訓，學者宗之.[72]

[63] Jinshu 91.2351
[64] *Jinshu* 912351–52. The *Suishu* records another of his works, *Zhouyi shizhan* 周易筮占, 24 scrolls. *Suishu* 34.1033.
[65] *Jinshu* 91.2352.
[66] *Jinshu* 91.2352.
[67] *Jinshu* 91.2353–54.
[68] Located within the Qinling range in Shanxi Province.
[69] *Jinshu* 91.2355.
[70] *Jinshu* 91.2355.
[71] *Jinshu* 91.2356–58.
[72] *Jinshu* 91.2356.

Along with his contemporary and fellow special envoy to the throne Fan Ning (for whom see section 9.6 below), he also annotated the *Guliang* commentary on the *Spring and Autumn Annals*.[73] This work and his sound glosses on the Five Classics are the only classical offerings in his oeuvre mentioned in his biography, but the bibliographic monograph in the *History of Sui* details quite a few of his works on classical scholarship, a clear indication that these biographies are incomplete in so far as the totality of the contributions made to the field by these scholars.[74] This obvious observation is strikingly confirmed by the entry of the next scholar, Kong Yan 孔 衍 (258–320), twenty-second generation grandson of Confucius.[75] His biography commences with the conventional *topos* of early precocity: "When Yan was young he was devoted to learning, and was able to master the *Poems* and *Documents* when just twelve Among his works was *Postface to the Spring and Autumn Annals*, and the like" 衍少時好學，十二歲能通诗書。著有春秋後語等. Yet elsewhere his biography notes his productivity in writing but remains reticent as to details: "Although Yan was not acclaimed for the style of his compositions, in breadth of reading he exceeded even He Xun.[76] In all that he compiled or narrated, his words exceeded one million" 衍雖不以文才著稱，而博覽過於賀循。凡所撰述，百餘 萬 言 .[77] This assertion is borne out by the number of his works recorded in the *History of Sui* that were not mentioned in his biography.[78]

[73] See Jian, *Jincun Sanguo Liang-Jin jingxue yijikao*, 493–506. Jian also notes a similar work by Xu titled *Chunqiu Guliangzhuan yi* 春秋穀梁傳義 in 10 scrolls.

[74] Including *Zhouyiyin* 周易音, one scroll, *Guwen shangshuyin* 古文尚書音, one scroll, *Maoshij jianyinzheng* 毛詩箋音證, one scrolls, *Lijiyin* 禮記音, three scrolls, *Chunqiu Zuoshizhuanyin* 春秋左氏傳音, three scrolls, *Chunqiu Guliangzhuan* 春秋穀梁傳, 12 scrolls, *Xu Miao da Chunqiu Guliangyi* 徐邈答春秋穀梁義, 3 scrolls, *Lunyu* 論語, 7 scrolls, *Wujingyin* 五經音, 10 scrolls, *Zhuanzi jiyi* 莊子集音, 3 scrolls, and *Chuciyin* 楚辭音, 1 scroll.

[75] It may be mentioned that a grandson of Western Han master Kong Anguo's first sported the name of Kong Yan.

[76] He Xun 賀 循 (260–319) was a refugee scholar of an earlier generation. He was a notable scholar and writer from Kuaiji. Before the fall of the north he served on the staff of the crown prince, and he assumed that role after the court regrouped in Jianye. His career was plagued by ill health, including tuberculosis, so he could not function in sustained service. He Xun was known for the breadth of his reading, his skill in composition, and his mastery of the ritual classics and their commentaries. He left such works as *Record of the Essentials of the 'Mourning Vestments'* 喪服要記, *Record of Kuaiji* 會稽記, and his literary anthology. See *Jinshu* 68.1824–30.

[77] *Jinshu* 91.2359.

[78] Including *Xionglin* 兇禮, one scroll, *Qincao* 琴操, three scrolls, *Chunqiu Gongyang jingzhuan jijie* 春秋公羊經傳集解, thirteen scrolls, *Chunqiu Guliangzhuan* 春秋穀梁傳, fourteen scrolls, *Weishangshu* 魏尚書, 8 scrolls, which was some sort of historical work, *Kongshi shaolin* 孔氏說林, two scrolls, and *Binglin* 兵林, 6 scrolls.

[79] *Jinshu* 91.2360–62.

[80] *Jinshu* 91.2361–62.

[81] *Jinshu* 91.2362–66.

Of the last four Confucians in this collective biography, the first two are northern scholars who resumed their official and scholarly careers under alien regimes after surviving the upheavals in the north. The second two are Eastern Jin scholars.

I will treat the next scholar, Fan Xuan, last. Wei Sou 韋謏 from the Chang'an area is noted for being a high official under several northern regimes founded by nomadic invaders; his entire official career centered on political office. His advice was highly valued, and his biography is artificially inflated by the inclusion of several essays and letters, but his scholarship is not noted. A set of essays in three-thousand words called *Grove of Saying for Laying Low* 伏林 is remarked, which was later expanded to some twenty-three fascicles under title of *Canonical Grove of Saying* 典 林 . His corpus of prose works is another example of anonymity, merely being enumerated to the amount of several hundreds of thousands of words and evaluated as being profound and well written.[79]

Wang Huan 王 歡 was from Shandong; he was self-sufficient and content to lead a simple life. He did devote himself to scholarship, to the neglect of the household expenses. He persisted until he became a "Comprehensive Confucian" (*tongru* 通 儒). He served as an erudite in the national academy of the Later Yan during the reign of Murong Xi 慕容熙 (385–407), whom he personally tutored in the classics; he later was appointed director. When the state was destroyed in AD 407, Huan died in Chang'an.[80]

Fan Hongzhi 范弘之 (fl. AD 373) was an official during the Eastern Jin who was noted for his clear and convincing prose, whose way through officialdom was, however, blocked by the partisan wrangling at court. Several of his memorials, essays, and letters fill out his otherwise bare biography.[81]

The final Confucian that I treat, number fifteen out of eighteen in this collective biography, is Fan Xuan 范宣 (fl. AD 326). Born in Chenliu 陳留, Henan, it is unclear when or how he emigrated south. He was eccentric even as a youth, preferring to live in seclusion and pursue his studies in isolation; by age twelve he had mastered the *Poems* and *Documents*. He devoted himself night and day, seldom stopping for anything; he eventually became renowned for his expertise in the three ritual classics. I treat him last since he seems to be a transitional figure, straddling both Confucian and Daoist learning. Yet like any true Daoist, he kept his nature hidden from the world. The following story forms a natural transition to my examination of Guo Pu, known chiefly for his commentaries on Daoist classics, who also functioned as an ardent philologist for

Confucian works, and a final Confucian master, Fan Ning, whose annotations on the *Guliang Commentary* became canonized.

I present a large section of the biography of Fan Xuan at this point:

> Yu Yuanzhi was lavish in his aid to Fan Xuan in the form of supplies due to his permanent poverty and the famine that year, but Xuan did not accept them any more [than he had accepted offers of office]. Yuanshi inquired of him, saying, "You sir are erudite in learning and master of all things, so why are you so much a Confucian?" Xuan replied, "When the Han arose, it valued classical scholarship; but with the Stone Channel discussions, Confucians were actually despised. Since the Wei dynasty, the world has esteemed Laozi and Zhuangzi. Reaching the early Jin, they competed to demonstrate their loftiness by parading around naked. I am certainly too much of a Confucian. Nevertheless, 'Confucius did not teach the *Changes*.'" In Xuan's discourse and conversations, he never addressed *Master Lao* or *Master Zuang*. A visitor asked him about human life and sorrow both beginning together and stated that he didn't know where this quote came from. Xuan answered, "It comes from the 'Ultimate in Happiness' chapter of *Master Zhuang*." The visitor responded, "You sir stated that you do not read *Master Lao* or *Master Zhuang*, so how do you know this?" Xuan replied with a laugh, "I once glanced at them when I was young." None of his contemporaries could fathom him. Although Xuan lived at leisure in isolation, he often worked by teaching. Dai Kui from Qiaoguo [modern Anhui] and his ilk all heard of his transformative influence and venerated him as their model.[82] They all came from distant quarters, and the sounds of chanting were heard again just like in Qi and Lu. During the Taiyuan period (376–396), Fan Ning of Shunyang became Governor of Yuzhang; Ning was also an erudite in Confucianism and master of all things. In the commandery he established schools and usually taught several hundred men at a time. From this, the people in the provinces along the river all became devoted to classical learning, and they were transformed by the influence of these two scholars surnamed Fan. When Xuan was fifty-four, he died. His compositions on the *Rites* and *Refutations of Discourses on the Changes* still circulate today.

> 庾爰之以宣素貧，加年荒疾疫，厚餉給之，宣又不受。爰之問宣曰：君博學通綜，　何以太儒？宣曰：漢興，貴經術，至於石渠之論，實以儒為弊。正始以來，世尚老莊。逮晉之初，競以裸裎為高。僕誠太儒，然'丘不與易'。宣言談未嘗及老莊。　客有問人生與憂俱生，不知此語何出。宣雲：出莊子至樂篇。客曰：君言不讀老莊，　何由識此？宣笑曰：小時嘗一覽。時人莫之測也。宣雖閒居屢空，常以講誦為業，　譙國戴逵等皆聞風宗仰，自遠而至，諷誦之聲，有若齊、魯。太元中，順陽范甯為　豫章太守，甯亦儒博通綜，在郡立鄉校，教授恆數百人。由是江州人士並好經學，化二範之風也。年五十四卒。著禮易論難皆行於世。[83]

What should we make of such a collocation of Confucians? It is obvious that this collective biography is not devoted primarily to classicists. As treated separately above, Sima Qian's archetypical "Grove of Confucians" in the *Historian's Records* was devoted to the virtues of private classical scholarship, which was not motivated by the lure of either chrematistic or careerist success, while Ban Gu's "Grove of Confucians" in the *History of Han* countered this claim by glorifying official scholarship; his purpose was not purely academic assessment, it was to lend support to the legitimacy of the Western Han, thereby borrowing its luster to burnish the newly re-established regime under which he labored. The same collective biography in the *History of the Later Han* functions similarly. By the Jin dynasty, the term *Ru* 儒 had broadened in historiographical use to refer to any Confucian official at court or in the provinces, who supported the regime via service in political and/or military office. The governing policies and guiding principles for bureaucratic work were Confucian-based to be sure, but success was no longer measured in terms of the study and transmission of the Confucian Classics, but in how well the principles of good government and effective care of the people that were enshrined in the classics became implemented. In this "age of anxiety," to borrow a phrase from E. R. Dodds describing religious life in an era of decay before the fall of the Roman Empire, airy scholarly theories lost out to real-world practice of politics.

The *History of Jin* "Grove of Confucians" may be approached rhetorically, that is, as a collection of standard *topoi* of scholars or officials: poverty in childhood, precocity in learning while young, erudition and accomplishment while mature, inspiring teacher of scores or hundreds, disregard of fame and fortune, self-imposed eremitism for either safety or self-cultivation, effectiveness in office and sagacity in advisement, and the like.[84] I note that most of these Confucians seemed to have been molded on the local regional level in private, rather than being products of the official academy at the capital. But rather than a set of typical *topoi*, I prefer to read this text as a profile of the types of notable Confucians that populated this dynasty: Western Jin scholar-officials, Northern

[82] Dai Kui 戴逵 (326–396) from Anhui was a famous painter, calligrapher, sculptor, and lute player who never took office. Known for his composition skills and learning while still young, he became renowned as a master of all fine art; he later studied under Fan Xuan. He once even composed the calligraphy for a stone stele honoring Zheng Xuan. Under his influence, Fan Xuan learned to appreciate painting. See his biography at *Jinshu* 94.245759.

[83] *Jinshu* 91.2360. One work by Fan Xuan is noted in the *Suishu*: *Lijiyin* 禮記音, two scrolls.

[84] Li Shuzhe 李姝輒 takes this approach; see "*Jinshu 'Rulinzhuan'* zhong rushi xingxiang" 晋书林传中儒师形象, *Daxue jiaoyu kexue* 大学教育科学 5 (2009): 55–58.

scholar-officials who did not flee south, refugee scholars who fled south, and Eastern Jin officials born and raised south of the Yangzi, as witnessed by the following tables:

Table 5. Types of Confucians by Era and/or Region.

Confucian	Western Jin	Post W. Jin Northerner	Refugee in Eastern Jin	Eastern Jin
Fan Ping	x			
Wen Li	x			
Chen Shao	x			
Yu Xi	x			
Liu Zhao	x			
Fan Yu	x			
Xu Miao 苗	x			
Cui You		x		
Fan Long		x		
Du Yi	x			
Dong Jingdao	x			
Xu Xian		x		
Xu Miao 邈				x
Kong Yan		x		
Fan Xuan			x	
Wei Sou		x		
Wang Huan		x		
Fan Hongzhi			x	
Totals	9	6	2	1

It is clear that the Tang historiographers emphasize Western Jin or post-Western Jin Confucians who remained in the North. Only two refugee Confucians and one Confucian born in the south figure in this collective biography. Without taking into account who among major Confucians during the Eastern Jin were given

individual treatment with their own biographies, minor Confucians certainly are not well represented in the Eastern Jin, whether refugee or southern-born. This fact must indicate lack of interest in traditional classical scholarship during this period, at least to some degree. Among the factors for this neglect we may posit a brooding sense of geographical and cultural alienation, the lack of political stability and precarious position vis-à-vis northern states given the failure to reunite the realm, the impact of the Buddhism and Daoism otherworldliness on this age of anxiety among displaced citizenry, and the lack of sense of civic duty among the rising generation more interested in personal survival than in public service. Of course, this lack of notice of Eastern Jin classicists may also indicate lack of respect on the part of Tang historiographers for the accomplishments of such classicists. Either way, Eastern Jin classicists did not contribute much if anything to the development of classical scholarship in any meaningful way. Of the three impactful classicists treated in the final section, only Fan Ning can be considered a full-fledged product of the Eastern Jin.

Table 6. Roles of Confucians in *History of Jin*, "Grove of Confucians."

Confucian	Official	Classicist	Teacher	Recluse
Fan Ping		x		
Wen Li	x	x		
Chen Shao	x	x		
Yu Xi		x		
Liu Zhao		x	x	x
Fan Yu		x		x
Xu Miao		x	x	x
Cui You		x		
Fan Long	x	x		
Du Yi			x	x
Dong Jingdao		x		x
Xu Xian	x	x	x	
Xu Miao 邈	x	x		
Kong Yan	x			

Fan Xuan		x		
Wei Sou	x	x		
Wang Huan		x		
Fan Hongzhi		x		
Totals	7	16	4	5

Of the eighteen Confucians in this collective biography, sixteen are identified as classicists; seven officials are not identified as having made any contributions to classical scholarship, only four are teachers, and five are recluses. Six display the dual roles of officials and classicists, a natural pairing given the prerequisite of some classical learning for office.

Another angle from which to view the major trends taken by classical scholarship during the Jin dynasty is provided by the actual targets of scholarly writings that survived until the reunification under the Sui dynasty in AD 589. The following table charts the themes of classical Chinese scholarship preserved in the monograph on bibliography in the *History of Sui*, chapter 32.

Table 7. Classics Treated during the Jin Dynasty according to the *History of Sui*.

Changes	Documents	Poems	Rites/ "Mourning Vestments"	Music	Spring & Autumn
19	4	5	(17/8) 25	1	21

Filial Piety	Analects	Close to Elegance	Regional Words	Five Classics	Apocrypha	Philosophy
5	10	2	1	3	1	9

Table 7 confirms contemporary intellectual trends isolated from historical sources. First, the *Rites* enjoyed a renaissance of attention, especially the matter of "Mourning Vestments," which was a chapter in the ritual anthology of *Records of Ritualists*. Second, the *Spring and Autumn Annals* was popular, no doubt as matters of state policy and legal matters must have seemed pressing during these precarious times. Third, interest in the occult and the otherworldly is shared by Buddho-Daoists through the preeminent book of divination, the nominal Confucian classic *Book of Changes*. Crossover classicists who leaned more ardently elsewhere could be counted as Confucians with their interest in this complex Confucian classic. The apocrypha is only represented by one work in the

"Classics" section; but too numerous to count are apocryphal works included under the rubrics of the "Five Phases," "Astronomy," and "Prognostication." The *Analects* and various works on philosophy are about evenly treated. Finally, an almost appalling lack of interest is shown in lexicography, at least in the scholarly study of the classical onomasticon *Close to Elegance* and Yang Xiong's famous work on dialectology. Still, nine works out of one hundred and eight on character primers are attributed to Jin authors.

9.5. Ritual Reforms During the Jin

Table 7 indicates that the main target of scholarship among the general run of classicists during the Jin period was the rites, in particular the rites of mourning and appropriate vestments. Revising the ritual system at the commencement of a new dynasty or at a critical juncture was a common measure among expected policy changes, such as proclaiming a general amnesty, advancing the rank of supportive officials, or revising the calendar, all inaugurated to strengthen the ideology of legitimacy of the new regime and to bolster its political control. The immediate precedent for the Jin revision of the rites was that undertaken by the young Emperor Ming 明帝 (r. 226–239) of the Wei dynasty, Cao Rui 曹睿 (ca. 206–239) in AD 237.[85] According to modern analysis, this project was based on the ritual system of Zheng Xuan.[86] During the mid-260s at the commencement of the Western Jin, Xun Yi was called on to revise the ritual system. Recall that the preface to the "Grove of Confucians" of the *History of Jin* records that "Xun Yi was praised for renewing the system of ritual."[87] The work he and his committee produced was entitled *New Rites* 新禮, in 165 scrolls, sometimes referred to simply as the *Five Rites* 五禮. Overall, it was unsatisfactory because it ignored relevant scholarship on the rites, especially the exegetical work by Zheng Xuan and Wang Su and technical commentaries by others on the core text of the issue, the "Mourning Vestments" 喪服 chapter of the ancient classic *Ceremonials and Rituals*. The *New Rites* ignored both critical scholarship and historical precedents, which was too much for a man like Zhi Yu 摯虞 (250–300), whose intellectual outlook was grounded in the need for historical accuracy made possible by critical scholarship, tempered by the necessity at times to accommodate to pragmatic contemporary concerns.

Zhi Yu was foremost a man of letters. Early on in his biography in the *History of Jin* the text of his "Rhapsody on Longing to Roam" 思游賦 is recorded,

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[85] *Sanguozhi* 25.712.

[86] Furuhashi Norihiro 古橋紀宏 (Chinese: Qiao Xiuyan 橋秀岩), "Wei-Jin Lizhi yu jingxue" 魏晋礼制与经学, *Rujia dianji yu sixiang yanjiu* 儒家典籍与思想研究 10 (2010).

[87] See footnote 53 above for more background information. *Jinshu* 39.1151 records that, although understanding ritual ceremonies, Xun Yi lacked the personal quality of "unaffected uprightness" (*zhizhi* 質直) and hence devised his ritual system in order to please others, not according to his personal scholarly understanding.

most likely to confirm the assessment of his biographers that he possessed the outlook of letting life take its course without striving to influence it and avoiding worldly attachments, both admirable Daoist attitudes. He is most well known today for his work on describing distinctions in literary genres: "He furthermore collected old essays and classified them by category into 30 scrolls, entitled *Anthology of Literature Distinguished by Genre*" 又撰古文章，類聚區分為三十卷，名曰流別集.[88] The formal title under which this work circulated is 文章流別集. The "Monograph on Bibliography" of the *History of Sui* indicates that it consisted of 41 scrolls during the Sui era but included 60 scrolls during the earlier Liang period.[89] Also circulating were presumably offshoots of the original anthology, specialized critical studies as indicated by their titles: *Monograph of Literature Distinguished by Genre* 文章流別志, two scrolls, and *Discourses on Literature Distinguished by Genre* 文章流別論, also two scrolls.[90]

The impetus for classifying literature by genre is traceable to Zheng Xuan by Deng Guoguang.[91] Whether or not he perceived this influence, Zhi Yu owed an even more intimate debt to Zheng Xuan—his Old Text classicist stance.[92]

In AD 284, Zhi You memorialized the throne with the intent to revise Xun Yi's ritual system. His first critical report was delivered in 291. I quote from the last section here:

> The original text of *Mourning Vestments* is terse and summary, and must depend on commentaries so that the meanings take shape. Today people consider that the different levels of detail in the handed-down explanations were composed by Zixia. Zheng Xuan and Wang Su primarily revered the classic and after that they honored the Tradition (of Zixia). But still each brought up differences, and people everywhere thus have been in doubt about the meanings; no one has known how to put it into order. Yet Xun Yi wrote strictly concerning the text of the ancient classic, and he completely eliminated the Zixia Tradition and the commentaries of the early *Ru* scholars. Ritual matters in this way cannot be practiced. If they were practiced, then with such mutual

[88] *Jinshu* 51.1427.

[89] *Suishu* 35.1081.

[90] *Suishu* 35.1081. See the excellent analysis of this work and its parent source by Wendy Swartz, "Classifying the Tradition: Zhi Yu's 'Discourse on Literary Compositions Divided by Genre,'" in Swartz, et al. eds., *Early Medieval China: A Sourcebook*, 274–86. For more exhaustive studies, consult the relevant chapters in Deng Guoguang 鄧國光, *Zhi Yu yanjiu* 摯虞研究 (Hong Kong: Xueheng Chubanshe 學衡出版社, 1990) and Xu Changsheng 徐昌盛, "Zhi Yu yanjiu" 摯虞研究, PhD diss., Peking University, 2012.

[91] Deng Guoguang, "Wei-Jin Nanbeichao de wenyuanlun" 魏晉南北朝的文原論, *Chinese Studies* 漢學研究 12.2 (1994): 221–28.

[92] Xu, "Zhi Yu yanjiu," chapter one.

> contradictions, one against the other, there would be no way to set institutions right. I, your minister, think that at present we must judiciously select from *Records of Ritualists*, and borrow the discussions in the Tradition to supplement what is not otherwise supplied, and unify the divergent meanings. By using Wang Su's work titled *Changes and Redactions in Mourning Vestments* as a model to make these matters categorical and clear, then we can end the contentions. After that there will not be two methods in the procedures, and everyone will have the same source from which to draw.
>
> Further, such a revised Rites ought to be published everywhere, and ought not to be burdensome. Xun Yi had made 165 *pian*; and these *pian* all went into one *juan*. All told, it was more than 150,000 words. I still say that even the one *juan* is too prolix, and it is all very repetitious. . . . Today rites and ceremonials may be the same in content but names can differ. They get separated into *pian*, and the *juan* become complex and unregulated. In all such cases we ought to reduce the verbiage, and bring together the items of a kind. When we use categories to bring them together, such items will be distinguishable. Only thus may we arrange different things into their groups. If we do this, we can reduce Xun Yi's work by a third.
>
> 喪服本文省略，必待注解事義迺彰；其傳說差詳，世稱子夏所作。鄭王祖經宗傳， 而各有異同，天下並疑，莫知所定。而顗直書古經文而已，盡除子夏傳及先儒注說， 其事不可得行。及其行事，故當還頒異說，一彼一此，非所以定制也。臣以為今宜 參采禮記，略取傳說，補其未備，一其殊義。可依準王景侯所撰喪服變除，使類統 明正，以斷疑爭，然 後制無二門，咸同所由
>
> 又此禮當班於天下，不宜繁多。顗為百六十五篇，篇為一卷，合十五餘萬言，臣猶謂卷多文煩，類皆重出。……今禮儀事同而名異者，輒別為篇，卷煩而不典。皆宜省文通事，隨類合之，事有不同，乃列其異。如此，所減三分之一。[93]

Zhi Yu's report consisted of 15 scrolls and was much more than a mere analysis. Its length suggests that he included samples of a proper ritual system for selected imperial rites. Zhi Yu and his main assistant Fu Xian 傅咸 (239–294) spent nine or so years on this project, which most claim was entitled *Annotations that Resolve Doubt* 決 疑 注. It remained incomplete but at least sketched out lines of direction to take in producing a new ritual system, one more historically based, more supported by classical texts, more clarified by scholarly

[93] *Jinshu* 19.582, trans. Goodman, *Xun Xu and the Politics of Precision in Third-Century AD China*, 356–57.

commentaries from both Wei and Jin, and more pragmatic.[94] The attention paid to "Mourning Vestments" was no airy theoretical discussion engaged in by armchair dilettantes but a practical debate among courtiers occasioned by such mournful precedents as the early death of Empress Yang Yan 楊艷 (238–274), founding Emperor Wu's primary wife, and the death of crown-prince Sima Shang 司馬尚 (300–302) before gaining his majority.[95] *Zuxing zhaomu* 族姓昭穆, a work in ten scrolls, evinces Zhi Yu's concern for historical grounding of genealogical pedigrees, something put in doubt by the chaos attendant to the fall of the Han.[96] More particularly, it confirms his historian's bent towards seeking the truth from facts, in the matters of the classics, ritual requirements, and the claims of history.

Zhi Yu makes no appearance in surveys of the history of classical scholarship. Yet his role in the future development of the field was crucial as he rescued from a downward slide into irrelevance, if not oblivion both Zheng Xuan's ritual system and the philologico-historical approach to studying the rites via specialized Wei and Jin commentaries as exemplified in the exegetical work of Wang Su.

9.6. Three Representative Classicists

Three final classicists follow who were important enough to merit their own biographies. What is notable is the fact that the first two are not normally recognized as classicists, given their prominence in other fields. It is tempting to term them cross-disciplinarian experts, but there is little discipline involved in some of their non-scholarly achievements. They do, however, represent the intellectual trend of the age in which a division of labor between the mind and the spirit led the same individual to stride out in different directions, some scholarly, some speculative, and some experimental. The final classicist produced a commentary that itself became canonical in its importance for classical scholarship.

9.6.1. Gan Bao

Gan Bao 干寶 (d. AD 351) came from a line of officials from the state of Wu. After the fall of Western Jin, he naturally became a citizen of the newly reconstituted regime in Jiankang due to his residence in the south. His biography

[94] To me, this title is suspiciously similar to an earlier work by Zhi Yu, described as annotations and explanations 注解 on the *Sanfu juelu* 三輔決錄 by Zhao Qi 趙岐 (108–201). *Jinshu* 51.1427. For a discussion of some of the views on the rituals of Zhi Yu, supposedly deriving from his report, see Chen Shuguo 陳戍國, *Zhongguo lizhi shi. Wei Jin Nanbeichao juan* 中國禮制史.魏晉南北朝卷 (Changsha: Hunan Jiaoyu Chubanshe, 2002), 114–16.

[95] Hua Zhe, "Han-Tang jian jingdian chanshi bianqian shilun," 135–41, discusses the ritual debates concerning the proper way to mourn the empress and to dress during the mourning period.

[96] *Suishu* 33.990.

in the *History of Jin* is included in a chapter peopled by historians;[97] under imperial auspices he compiled a *Chronicle of Jin* 晉紀. His chief claim to fame to modern readers is as the compiler of a collection of strange tales of the supernatural called *Search for the Spirits* 搜神記;[98] as such, he is known as the father of "Recording Strange Happenings" 志怪 tales, a forerunner of fictional prose writing.

For our purpose, Gan Bao should be commemorated for his authorship of numerous works concerned with classical exegesis. For the *Changes* he authored six works, *Annotations on the Zhou Changes* 周易注 in 10 scrolls, *Meaning of the Line Statements in the Zhou Changes* 周易爻義 in one scroll, *Overarching Path to the Zhou Changes* 周易宗塗 in four scrolls, *Refutations of Question about the Zhou Changes* 周易問難 in two scrolls, *Mysterious Appraisals of the Zhou Changes* 周易玄品 in two scrolls, and *Phonology of the Changes* 易音.[99] Related works on phonology include *Phonology of the Mao Poems* 毛詩音, *Orthodox Phonology* 正音, and *Phonology of the Zhou Offices* 周官音. Two more offerings on the *Zhou Offices* are *Rites in the Zhou Offices* 周官禮注 and *Responses to Refutations on Difficulties on the Zhou Offices* 答周官駁難. Attention to the *Spring and Autumn Annals* include *Transmitting via Correspondence the Meaning Mr. Zuo on the Spring and Autumn Annals* 春秋左氏函傳義 and *Disquisition on the Preface to the Spring and Autumn Annals* 春秋序論.[100] He also produced *Deliberations on Self-Cultivation in Later Life* 後養議 and *Establishing My Own Words*. Such an extensive oeuvre would honor any noted classicist and places him among the most prolific scholars of the period, at least in terms of the variety—if not the bulk of—his scholarship. His exegetical style seemed to focus on the broader meaning of a work instead of on close attention to its wording, for a dispositive quote from the preface to his annotations on the *Zhou Changes* reads "When small things are detailed, then the larger meaning becomes hidden" 小物詳而大義隱.[101]

9.6.2. Guo Pu

Another contemporary classicist whose profile is anything but Confucian is the famous self-indulgent sybarite Guo Pu 郭璞 (276–324). Born in Shanxi, Guo Pu made his way south to take refuge from the chaos in the north. He served as a local magistrate on several occasions, eventually being called to serve in the

[97] *Jinshu* 82.2149–51.

[98] Translated by Kenneth J. DeWoskin and J. J. Crump, Jr., *In Search of the Supernatural: The Written Record* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996).

[99] Gan Bao's works on the *Changes* are analyzed at length by Jian, *Jincun Sanguo Liang-Jin jingxue yijikao*, 99–118.

[100] Introduced at Jian, *Jincun Sanguo Liang-Jin jingxue yijikao*, 176–78.

[101] Jian, *Jincun Sanguo Liang-Jin jingxue yijikao*, 176.

historian's office. Friends with Gan Bao, Guo Pu also manifested Gan's scholarly versatility and preoccupation with Daoism. For instance, he was a noted prognosticator, whose baleful prediction of the results of Wang Dun's 王敦 (266–324) intended insurrection brought about his own death. He was master of other mantic arts as Daoist thaumaturge and wonderworker. His poetic explorations of Daoist immortals created the genre of "Poems on Wandering to Sylphdom" 遊仙詩.[102]

In terms of scholarship, he commentated on a number of classical, historical, and belles-lettristic works, including the *Zhou Changes*, the *Classic of Mountains and Seas* 山海經, the *Biography of Mu the Son of Heaven* 穆天子傳, and the *Songs of the South* 楚辭. His scattered approach to exegesis is actually unified by his interest in the occult: the *Changes* was a manual of divination, the *Classic of Mountains and Seas* a source of supernatural lore and local natural products, and the biography of Mu an early record of spiritual journeys, as was the anthology of song from the southern state of Chu. Even his famous annotated version of the Confucian onomasticon *Close to Elegance* should be viewed through the same otherworldly lens: we may surmise that he focused on animal and plant names as an aid to alchemical experimentation. However, such was his thoroughness that his edition became adopted into the canon of Thirteen Classics as the authoritative commentary on this classic.[103] He also annotated the *Three Cang* 三 倉 character primer, indicating a more than casual interest in diction and dictionaries. A more mainstream exegetical work is his *Gathered Up Gleanings on Mao's Poems* 毛詩拾遺.[104]

9.6.3. Fan Ning

Finally, Fan Ning 范 寧 (339–401), who has already made an occasional appearance here, contributed his own commentary to the canonized set of thirteen compiled by Ruan Yuan known as the *Thirteen Classics, with Annotations and Epexegesis.* Fan Ning's work was on *Guliang's Commentary on the Spring and Autumn Annals*. His ancestors came from Nanyang, Henan, but his career took him to Zhejiang, where his grandson Fan Ye 范曄 (398–445), the author of the *History of Later Han*, was born. Early on in his biography Fan Ning's intellectual stance is announced, and the political opposition cited that his probity created on several occasions:

> Ning's style was Wuzi. When young he was earnest in his studies, and for much of the canon, he was comprehensive in his reading. When Emperor Jianwen [Sima Yu 司馬昱 (320–372)] was prime minister, he wanted to recruit him. But he was criticized by Huan Wen, so the motion was tabled. Hence, throughout Wen's life, none of Ning's brothers were included in the ranks of officials. At the time, superficial literature and talks about mysticism were mutually supportive, and Confucians were being replaced right and left. Ning contended that the cause lay at the feet of Wang Bi and He Yan, and that the crimes of these two were worse the Jie and Zhou. He therefore composed a disquisition that said...."
>
> 寧字武子。少篤學，多所通覽。簡文帝為相，將辟之，為桓溫所諷，遂寢不行，故終溫之世，兄弟無在列位者。時以浮虛相扇，儒雅日替，寧以為其源始於王弼、何晏，二人之罪深於桀紂，乃著論曰。……[105]

[102] *Jinshu* 82.2149–51.

[103] He also produced *Illustrated Close to Elegance* 爾雅圖 in 10 scrolls and annotated another lexicographical work, Yang Xiongs' *Regional Words* 方言, in thirteen scrolls. *Suishu* 32.937.

[104] Analyzed at Jian, *Jincun Sanguo Liang-Jin jingxue yijikao*, 138–44.

A few notes on the above passage are in order. Huan Wen 桓 溫 (312–373) was a famous general and the power behind the throne from AD 361 until his death, who had become embittered against the Fan clan; it was not until after his demise that Fan Ning was able to commence his official career. Jie and Zhou were archetypal evil last rulers of the Xia and Shang states respectively, whose nefast and barbaric behavior led to the downfall of their dynasties.

Ning's first posting was as magistrate of Yuzhang Prefecture 豫章郡, Zhejing. He served for six years, sponsoring educational reforms with a focus on traditional Confucian rites. He gained quite a following and garnered a national reputation for his sterling personal example of the ideal Confucian civil servant and exemplar of ritualized behavior. He next served as the Governor of Linhuai 臨淮 Prefecture, Jiangsu, and ultimately was called to the capital, where his advice was much sought after. He reformed the ritual system and redesigned the ritual buildings of the Biyong and the Mingtang, as well as the ancestral temple. His outspoken criticism of fawning ministers ran him afoul of Wang Guobao 王國寶 (330–397), the sycophantic coattail-riding relative by marriage of one of the royal princes and son-in-law of the royal tutor and powerful presence at court, Xie An 謝 安 (320–385); Fan Ning was forced to flee by seeking the post of Governor of Yuzhang, where he resumed his former educational activities and established a new ancestral homeland. He attracted a following of over a thousand disciples, all of whom he supported out of his personal finances.

His post-retirement scholarship is described simply below:

> With his home in Danyang [Jiangsu] he became particularly assiduous in classical studies, never ceasing during each year. When he was 63, he died at home. Earlier, Ning considered that there were no good explanations of *Mr. Guliang on the Spring and Autumn Annals*, so he deeply pondered for years upon end, and composed a collected explanations for it. Its meaning was thoroughly explained, and became valued by the age. Afterwards Xu Miao annotated it, which was also

[105] *Jinshu* 75.1984.

acclaimed by the age.

家於丹陽，猶勤經學，終年不輟。年六十三，卒於家。初，寧以春秋谷梁氏未有善　釋，遂沈思積年，為之集解。其義精審，為世所重。既而徐邈複為之注，世亦稱之。[106]

Fan Ning's preface describes how his father Fan Wang 范　汪 (ca. 308–372) held regular confabs on the classics with his followers; his father also included his sons and grandsons and Ning's nephews in evaluating the merits of the commentarial traditions on the classics, including the three major commentaries on the *Spring and Autumn Annals.* It follows that, although close to ten exegetical works on the *Guliang* commentary were available, none of them reached the standards of insightful reasoning and elegance of language set by Du Yu and He Xiu in their separate exegeses of *Mr. Zuo's Commentary* and *Mr. Gongyang's Commentary*, and they lacked the imprint of a master classicist. Most egregious of all, these minor commentators adopted phraseology from these two commentaries to explain the text of *Guliang* in a contradictory and confusing manner that contravened the meaning of the text. Therefore, Fan Ning headed up a collective effort to produce this commentary which is still the standard for exegesis of this classic. He and his band of brothers and relatives discussed terminology and format, resolved doubtful points, harmonized contradictions, and determined what to adopt and what to discard.[107]

Wang Xiyuan isolates the main features of Fan Ning's commentary as follows: First, it approaches comprehensiveness in the authorities it cites from Han, Wei, and contemporary authorities. Second, it closely adheres to the views of Zheng Xuan. And third, it departs from the usual practice of overly esteeming the text of the classic; instead, Fan frequently disputes the meaning of the reading of *Guliang*, and he does not hesitate to indicate doubtful points. As for weaknesses, Wang Xiyuan contends that correcting the text of the *Guliang Commentary* through textual criticism was something Fan was unable to do. Given the long period of oral transmission that this text experienced, textual emendation was something sorely needed for this work; but Ning was unable to redress this need due to his lack of command of this discipline, something that his idol Zheng Xuan had mastered. Fan was also lacking in expertise in the old forms of characters, further hampering his ability to emend the text.[108] Yet in the end, Wang endorses Wang Yinglin's 王應麟(1223–1296) powerful approbation of Fan Ning's work in comparison to that of the other two masters, Du Yu and He Xiu:

> Master Wenzhong stated, "Fan Ning was dedicated to studying the *Spring and Autumn Annals.* He verified the sacred classics and glossed all the commentaries." It seems that Du Yu slighted the classic in order to promote its commentary; He Xiu cited the apocrypha and drowned the classic. Only Ning's scholarship was good.
>
> 文中子謂"范寧有志於春秋，徵聖經而詁眾傳。"蓋杜預屈經以申傳，何修引緯以汨經，唯寧之學最善。[109]

Fan Ning displayed another admirable trait in his exegesis of the *Guliang Commentary*, that of viewing the three traditional commentaries on the *Spring and Autumn Annals* with a clear critical eye, unobscured by the authoritative hallow that had attached to these commentaries over the centuries. In his preface to his annotations on the *Gongyang*, he stated:

> As for the *Zuo* commentary, its prose is exquisite and rich in content; its fault lies in recording the supernatural. As for *Guliang*, its prose is clear in conveying meaning and yet reserved; its fault lies in being too brief. As for *Gongyang*, its narrative is distinct and segmented; its fault lies in its coarseness. If one were able to be rich in content yet not be occupied with the supernatural, clear yet not short, segmented and not coarse, then it would be profound in the Way. Hence, in how the gentleman approaches the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, he should submerge himself in it and that is all that it takes.
>
> 左氏艷而富，其失也巫；穀梁清而婉，其失也短；公羊辯而裁，其失也俗。若能富而不巫清而不短裁而不俗則深於其道者也。故君子之於春秋沒身而已矣。[110]

Such a dispassionate and objective view is rare in any student of a text, let alone texts that were seminal in the tradition of classical scholarship and at the core of separate and competing interpretive lineages, and which were later to become enshrined in the hallowed hall of fame of the Thirteen Classics. Fan was also fair-minded and ecumenical in his argument that all three commentaries were necessary to allow scholars to approach the Way enshrined in the original classic, the *Spring and Autumn Annals.* This is an early articulation of the need for macro-textual reading of the commentaries to approach mastery of a classic. This trend was later to expand over time and develop into the full-blown macro-textuality that found full expression Gu Yanwu's approach to classical exegesis: "Those who study books [to prepare for exams] and haven't mastered the Five Classics will certainly not be able to master a single classic, so students should not be tested on individual classics" 讀書不通五經者，必不能通一經，不當分經試士.[111]

Fan Ning also composed several other offerings worth noting: *Annotations on the Old Text Esteemed Documents* 古文尚書注 in 10 scrolls, which

[106] *Jinshu* 75.1989.

[107] Summarizing *Chunqiu Guliangzhuan zhushu* 春秋穀梁傳注疏 "Preface," 10a–11a.

[108] Wang Xiyuan 王熙元, "Fan Ning jiqi *Guliang jijie* 范寧及其穀梁集解釋, in Lin Qingzhang, ed., *Zhongguo jingxueshi luwen xuanji*, 1:572–85.

[109] Wang Yinglin, *Kunxue jiwen* 困學紀聞, 3 vols. (Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Chubanshe, 2008), 2:918.

[110] *Chunqiu Guliangzhuan zhushu* 春秋穀梁傳注疏 "Preface," 9.b–10a.

[111] Gu, *Rizhilu*, "Niti" 擬題, 2:945–49; p. 947.

commentary only existed in one scroll by the Sui dynasty; treating the "Shundian" 舜典 chapter; *Miscellaneous Inquiries on Rites* 禮雜問 in 10 scrolls; *Patterns in the Guliang Commentary on the Spring and Autumn Annals* 春秋穀梁傳例; and *Fan Ning's Adumbration of Matters* 范寧啓事 in three scrolls, originally in 10 scrolls.

9.7. Conclusions

Both Gan Bao and Guo Pu, along with certain classicists-turned-essayists in the "Grove of Confucians" collective biography, represent the new spirit of the age, when Confucian state dogma had again been overwhelmingly discredited, first by the fall of the Han one hundred years earlier, then by the fall of the Western Jin. Political instability and personal insecurity naturally led away from the communal classical project and its focus on organized society and politico-military solutions; instead, the focus turned to the individual seeking solace to transcend physical threats to survival. Even some reclusive classicists dabbled in lifestyles more reflective of exuberant Daoist bon vivants than sober Confucian anchorites.[112] Does this reflect some sort of Confucian-Daoist intellectual accommodation or hybrid thought? I think not. Rather, it indicates different personal outlets: classicism for the mind, Buddhist speculation for the spirit, and Daoist alchemy for the body and soul. One is as valid an occupation of the moment as the others, and equally authentic in confirming a personal identity—but not to the exclusion of the others.

This new intellectual trend of personalized soteriology rather than communal stability will become more marked in the southern dynasties based in Jiankang than in the traditional homeland in the north. *A History of Chinese Classical Scholarship*, volume 3, *Northern and Southern Dynasties, Sui, and Early Tang: The Decline of Practical Philology and the Rise of Speculative Hermeneutics* will treat the stasis of hardnosed, textually based classical scholarship in the old heartland in the north, especially the continued validity of the scholarly approach of Zheng Xuan, and the gradual decline of textual scholarship in the south in the face of the allure of otherworldly speculation and the need to justify different worldviews from readings from the classics. The appearance of works important in the development of philology in the south should be viewed then not as developmental highpoints in the tradition but as calls-to-arms in the face of the decline of the tradition. The development of the exegetical mode called the sub-commentary or epexegesis (*shu* 疏) in this period and its maturation during the Tang will open the way for the speculative approach to hermeneutics as attention

[112] Dennis Grafflin suggests a more prosaic explanation for Daoist *cum* Confucian spirits inhabiting the same bodies: the need to kill time enjoyably in the pose of a Daoist recluse while waiting for an opening in one of the few attractive official posts that would hopefully open up. Grafflin, "Reinventing China: Pseudobureaucracy in the Early Southern Dynasties," in *State and Society in Early Medieval China*, ed. Albert E. Dien (Sanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), 139–70; p. 155, n. 56.

is turned from classical texts to their canonized commentaries and away from the wording of the classics to the intent of creative re-interpreters.

This volume has examined the recovery and reconstitution of the classics through oral transmission or exploitation of ancient written remains. It has traced the development of the major philological tools necessary to read and interpret the hoary Confucian canon: textual criticism and bibliography, lexicography, and commentary. Epigraphical sources from the Han, Wei, and Jin periods and state interest in scholarly endeavors prefigured Tang projects on a much larger scale. The early interest and nascent contributions to the methodological tool of historical phonology will be an important theme of volume 3. Early Tang classicists will also add their sub-commentaries to cement that indissoluble pairing of Han-Tang classical scholarship that will form the foundation of Qing evidential research. This sealing of the Han-Tang connection then will be the burden of volume 3.

Appendix to Chapter 7

Minimal Selected Bibliography on Zheng Xuan and Classical Scholarship

Before introducing indispensable book-length studies, I first review the following three works that should be the starting point for refined study of all aspects of Zheng Xuan's life, scholarship, and impact on classical scholarship:

Geng Tianqin 耿天勤. *Zheng Xuan yanjiu ziliao huibian* 郑玄研究资料汇编. Jinan: Shandong Wenyi Chubanshe, 2007.

This book is the closest approximation to a critical biography in the following divisions:

- Chapter 1: Ancestry (pp. 1–36)
- Chapter 2: Life and Studies (pp. 37–115)
- Chapter 3: Works (pp. 116–275)
- Chapter 4: Disciples (pp. 276–328)
- Chapter 5: Zheng's School over the Ages (pp. 329–458)
- Chapter 6: Archaeological Evidence and Surviving Relics (pp. 459–506)
- Chapter 7: Sacrifices and Celebrations in His Honor (pp. 507–63)
- Appendices:
  - Chronological Biography (p. 564)
  - Historical Research on Zheng Xuan (pp. 565–71)
  - Twentieth-Century Research on Zheng Xuan (pp. 572–79)[1]

Wang Zhenmin 王振民, ed. *Zheng Xuan yanjiu wenji* 郑玄研究文集. Jinan: Qi-Lu Shushe, 1999.

This anthology includes twenty-one entries and four appendices that not only distill traditional understanding reached over the centuries but also points students of Zheng Xuan along new paths of inquiry.

Zhang Shunhui 張舜徽, *Zhengxue congzhu* 鄭學叢著. Jinan: Qi-Lu Shushe, 1984.

This work analyzes the inner workings of Zheng's scholarship by citing standard examples of his exegetical work. It consists of six divisions:

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[1] A review of scholarship on Zheng Xuan up to 2010 in the West is Han Dawei 韩大伟 (David B. Honey), "Xifang Zheng Xuan yanjiu shuping" 西方郑玄研究述评 (A Review of Western Scholarship on Zheng Xuan), *Lishi wenxian yanjiu* 历史文献研究 29 (2010): 104–9.

1. Overall Evaluation of Zheng's Scholarship (pp. 1–38)
2. Zheng's Textual Collation (pp. 39–74)
3. Zheng's Textual Criticism (pp. 75–158)
4. Historical Transmission of His School (pp. 159–94)
5. A Compilation of Zheng's Word Glosses (pp. 195–420)
6. *Extension of the Shiming* 演釋名 (pp. 411–610)[2]

The following books directly relate to Zheng's classical exegesis and are merely suggestive, not comprehensive:

Chen Pinqing 陳品卿. *Shangshu Zhengshixue* 尚書鄭氏學. PhD diss., Taiwan National Normal University, 1977.

Chen Tiefan 陳鐵凡. *Xiaojing Zhengshu jiaozheng.* 孝經鄭注校證. Taipei: Guoli Bianyiguan 國立編譯館, 1987.

Feng Haofei 馮浩菲. *Zhengshi Shipu dingkao* 鄭氏詩譜訂考. Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Chubanshe, 2008.

Huang Zhuo 黃焯. *Maoshi Zhengjian pingyi* 毛诗郑笺评议. Wuhan: Wuhan Daxue Chubanshe, 2008.

Kanaya Osamu 金谷治, ed. *Tō shōhon Teishichū Rongo shūsei* 唐抄本鄭氏注論語集成. Tōkyō: Heibonsha, 1978.

Li Yunguang 李雲光. *Sanli Zhengshixue fafan* 三禮鄭氏學發凡. 1966, rpt.

Shanghai: Huadong Shifan Daxue Chubanshe, 2012.

Shi Yingyong 史应勇, *Zheng Xuan tongxue ji Zheng Wang zhi zheng yanjiu* 郑玄通学及郑王之争研究. Chengdu: Ba-Shu Shushe, 2007.

Wang Shounan 王壽南 and Chen Shuifeng 陳水逢, eds. *Zheng Xuan zhi chenweixue* 鄭玄之讖緯學. Taipei: Taiwan Shangwu Yinshuguan, preface dated 1974.

Wang Su 王素. *Tang xieben Lunyu Zhengshizhu jiqi yanjiu.* 唐寫本論語鄭氏注及其研究. Beijing: Wenwu Chubanshe, 1991.

Wang Yinglin 王應麟, ed. *Zhouyi Zhengzhu.* 周易鄭注 CHJC ed. Edited by Wang Yunwu 王雲五. Taipei: Taiwan Shangwu Yinshuguan, 1961. vol. 30.

[2] Liu Xi's 劉 熙 (b. ca. AD 160) compilation of paronomastic glosses was indebted to the precedent of Zheng Xuan, who was the first to broadly use sound glosses in opposition to Xu Shen's overwhelming focus on the structure of characters. Zhang Shunhui suggests that Liu was, in fact, a disciple of Zheng. Zhang did at least impact Liu's scholarship as Zheng did employ a format that Liu Xi's later adopted; for Zheng's fifteen thematic categories of puns, discernable in the pattern of his glosses, were expanded to twenty-seven formal categories in Liu Xi's work.

Wang Yinglin 王應麟, ed. *Shangshu Zhengzhu* 尚書鄭注. CSJC ed. Edited by Wang Yunwu. Taipei: Taiwan Shangwu Yinshuguan, 1961. vol. 161.

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Yang Tianyu 杨天宇. *Zheng Xuan Sanlizhu yanjiu* 郑玄三礼. Tianjin: Tianjin Renmin Chubanshe, 2007.

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