Chapter 1

Orientations: Northern Continuities and Southern Innovations

The period of division between the North and the South, the existence of one half of which is commonly—and negligently—glossed over by the obscurantist title of the Six Dynasties, included four of which were exclusively southern regimes. This extended era, officially dating from 220 until 589, exerts a particular fascination for students of cultural interaction and reaction, religious growth, and literary splendor.[1] The tragic ephemerality of these polities, their leading princes, and short-lived poets, lends a hue of doomed fate to an otherwise glittering landscape of material wealth and flourishing fine arts.

Classical scholarship in the period of division can be broadly recognized as the old, traditional classical scholarship in the North versus the new classical scholarship in the South.[2] It can also be characterized by several distinct territorial trends, not all of which traversed entire regions. For instance, the purity of northern philologically based classicism in Hebei was not shared by the equally northern clime of Luoyang in Henan, which was suffused with the "Learning of the Mysterious" (*xuanxue* 玄學). Yet the philological strain was strong enough to stamp the entire North as the scholastic inheritor of traditional Han Old Text learning. Ignoring local currents that may have occasionally flowed in contrary

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[1] For introductions to literature and culture, see Paul W. Kroll and David R. Knechtges, *Studies in Early Medieval Chinese Literature and Cultural History: In Honor of Richard B. Mather and Donald Holzman* (Provo, UT: Tang Studies Society, 2003), Wendy Swartz, et al. eds. *Early Medieval China: A Source Book* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), and David R. Knechtges and Taiping Chang, eds. *Ancient and Early Medieval Chinese literature: A Reference Guide, Parts One, Two, Three and Four* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2010–2014). For the history of this era, I only mention the following: Mark Edward Lewis, *China between Empires: The Northern and Southern Dynasties* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2009), Wang Chongluo 王仲犖, *Wei-Jin Nanbeichao shi* 魏晉南北朝史 (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin Chubanshe, 1979), and Han Guopan 韩国磐, *Wei-Jin Nanbeichao shigang* 魏晋南北朝史纲 (Beijing: Remin Chubanshe, 1983). In all matters for this period, consult for quick reference Victor Chunrui Xiong, *The A to Z of Medieval China* (London and Toronto: The Scarecroft Press, 2010).

[2] An encapsulation of Qian Mu 錢穆 (1895–1990), *Jingxue dayao* 經學大要 (Taipei: Sushulou Wenhua Jijinhui 素書樓基金會, 2000), 248.

directions, the following epitome delimits generalities of approaches to classical scholarship in each greater region, northern and southern.

As discussed in volume 2, Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (127–200) was the archetype of formal systematic exegesis and the founder of an overarching and synthetic classical school that incorporated both Old Text and New Text learning and the apocrypha. The contradictions within his all-embracing ecumenicism were blunted by his effort to harness all this learning to support a ritual system and ritually informed classical exegesis based on the classic *Rites of Zhou* 周禮. His death in AD 200 at Yuancheng 元城 (modern Daming 大名 Prefecture, near Handan City in southern Hebei Province), his burial there, and his pervading presence could not help but influence the prevailing scholarly climate. This was reinforced by the similar impact of Zheng's former classmate Lu Zhi 盧植 (d. 192), who founded a family tradition of scholarship in Fanyang 范陽, in northwestern Hebei (modern Zhuozhou 涿州). The prevailing provenance of northern classicists can be confirmed and precisely localized prosopographically, for of some fifty-two classicists recorded in the "Grove of Confucians" 儒林傳 collective biography in the *History of the North* 北史, more than 80 percent hailed from Hebei, but less than 5 percent derived from the traditional bastion of Confucian scholarship, the province of Shandong.[3]

In contrast to the trend of southern classical scholarship being based in the capital of Jiankang or other large regional urban centers, where the impact of Learning of the Mysterious and Buddhist ontology was strong, in the North, prominent teachers gathered large followings of students in the countryside who were cloistered in concentrated study of the Confucian Classics. Such isolated study helped insulate students from novel trends of thought and interpretation that were present in larger metropolises such as Luoyang and, of course, southern cities. This sequestered study naturally led to the formation of "the learning of a master" (*shixue* 師學), the scholarly tradition imparted by a major classicist and transmitted over time to generations of followers, not family members. The following classical masters are considered by consensus to be among the leading lights of classical scholarship in the North, yet there is no evidence that any one of them taught members of their own families: Xu Zunming 徐尊明 (475–529), Li Xuan 李炫 (fl. 500), Liu Guisi 劉軌思, Liu Xianzhi 劉獻之, Xiong Ansheng 熊安生 (d. ca. 578), Liu Zhuo 劉焯 (544–608), and Liu Xuan 劉炫 (ca. 546–ca. 613). This contrasted with the southern tendency of establishing "the learning of a lineage" (*jiaxue* 家學) or "family learning", a scholarly tradition of transmitting

[3] See the treatment of Jiao Guimei 焦桂美, *Nan-Beichao jingxueshi* 南北朝經學史 (Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Chubanshe, 2009), 57–58.

the learning of a classical master to his sons and descendants and couching his individualized reading rules as "reading rules of a lineage" (*jiafa* 家法).[4]

Family learning is often more conservative than a master's scholarly lineage. One example, from the South, served to insulate the family tradition of scholarship on the *Changes* of the Yu 虞 clan from the ontological leanings of Wang Bi 王弼 (226–249). The founder of the family business, Yu Fan 虞翻 (164–233), had formed his school well before Wang Bi's reorientation of scholarship on the *Changes*. Hence, even long afterward, the family transmitted traditional Han scholarship represented by Jing Fang 京房 (77–37 BC), Meng Xi 孟喜 (fl. first century BC), and Zheng Xuan.[5] But after the fall of the Western Jin, classical scholarship in the South gradually grew less traditional with the increasing admixture of new intellectual trends, such as the Learning of the Mysterious, Neo-Daoist speculation, and Buddhist ontology. This shift away from traditional learning occurred despite the protective sheathing of such conservative family traditions of scholarship as that represented by Yu Fan and his descendants.

The preface to the "Grove of Confucians" collective biography in the *History of the North* explains the general differences in classical scholarship in the two great regions.

> All told, the types of classical commentaries and whose they favored in the South and North were different. In the South, Wang Bi was used for the *Zhou Changes*, Kong Anguo for the *Esteemed Documents*, and for *Zuo's Commentary* it was Du Yu. In the North, Fu Qian was used for *Zuo's Commentary*, and for both *Esteemed Documents* and *Zhou Changes* it was Zheng Xuan. As for the *Poems*, both were based on Sire Mao, and for ritual texts both esteemed Zheng Xuan. Southern classicists were concise and brief, and got at the essential flowers of the classics; northern classicists were profound and florid, and exhaustively plumbed their branches and leaves.
>
> In investigating the entire course of classical scholarship and in summarizing its conclusions and the reasons for classicists being established and gaining renown, we find that they reached similar goals via different paths. Ever since Liang Yue of the Northern Wei dynasty [386–534], those who transmitted, taught, explained and deliberated over the classics have been legion. Now I will order them in chronological sequence in order to complete this "Grove of Confucians" collective biography.

[4] Jiao, *Nan-Beichao jingxueshi*, 17–64. For a recent examination of family scholarship in the southern dynasties, see Guo Yongji 郭永吉, *Liuchao jiating jingxue jiaoyu yu boxue fengqi yanjiu* 六朝家庭經學教育與博學風氣研究 (Taipei: Huayi Chubanshe, 2013).

[5] *Sanguozhi* 三國志, "Wuzhi" 吳志, 57.1322–23, n. 2.

大抵南北所為章句，好尚互有不同。江左，周易則王輔嗣，尚書則孔安國，左傳則杜元凱。河洛，左傳則服子慎，尚書周易則鄭康成。詩則並主于毛公。禮則同遵于鄭氏。南人約簡，得其英華；北學深蕪，窮其枝葉。考其終始，要其會歸，其立身成名，殊方同致矣。自魏梁越已下，傳授講議者甚眾，今各依時代而次，以備儒林雲爾。[6]

This listing of the major classics and their commentaries can of course be refined much further. Indeed, the bibliographical monograph of the *History of Sui* 隋書 presents short epitomes of the various commentaries favored during each dynasty of this era, but it is a bit tedious to include here. And such dynastic variations wreak havoc with the supposed symmetry of general trends. But in the main, both the northern and southern classical schools addressed the same central texts and major commentaries, including some not previously noted in this chapter: the *Changes* 易 and *Documents* 書, with various commentaries taking the lead, seemingly with each change in dynasty; *Mao Poems* 毛詩; *Three Rites* 三禮 according to Zheng Xuan; *Three Commentaries* 三傳 on the *Spring and Autumn Annals* as interpreted by He Xiu 何休 (129–182) for the first two; *Zuo's Commentary* 左傳 and *Gongyang's Commentary* 公羊傳; and by Mi Xin 糜信 (fl. 230) and Fan Ning 范寧 (339–401) for the *Guliangzhuan* 穀梁傳, *Analects* 論語 and *Classic of Filial Piety* 孝經. Buddhist interpretive strategies influenced both northern and southern classical schools, but it seems that only in the South did competing interests from Daoist Classics such as the *Laozi* 老子 and *Zhuangzi* 莊子 distract attention from Confucian studies, an attrition hardly appreciable in the North.[7] For this reason, the scope of classical scholarship in the South was more broadly conceived; it also included historical and literary studies, and often classicists moonlighted as literati who left anthologies of their collected prose and poetic works, a distracting habit that occurred only occasionally in the North. Even the famous Sui dynasty classicists and fast friends Liu Zhuo and Liu Xuan are described apologetically as "lettered and yet still classicists" 文而又儒.[8] But in general, northern classicists seemed content to remain in their narrow parameters of classical scholarship *sensu stricto.* Southern classicists were also more prone to compose commentaries, while northerners were prolific teachers much more than they were authors. When synthetic studies of classics appeared, southerners favored the *Three Ritual Classics* of the *Rites of Zhou*, *Ceremonials and Rites* 儀禮, and *Records of Ritualists* 禮記; northerners instead concentrated

[6] *Beishi* 81.2709.

[7] For this and the trends isolated later in the chapter, see Jiao, *Nan-Beichao jingxueshi,* 173–81.

[8] Kong Yingda 孔穎達 (574–648), "*Maoshi zhengyi* xu" 毛詩正義序, *Maoshi zhengyi*, 2a.

on the three commentaries on the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, *Zuo's Commentary*, *Gongyang's Commentary*, and *Guliang's Commentary.*

Qian Mu reads the evidence with a singular difference. He selects two ritual classics to explain the impetus for classical learning in both the North and the South. Given the concern for dynastic legitimacy and the constant need to adjust to changing political realities in the North, the key text was the *Rites of Zhou.* In the South, the concern for genealogical clarity to justify and demonstrate inherent privileges among the hierarchies of great families privileged the ritual text *Mourning Vestments* 喪服. Qian further differentiates the classical scholarship of the Han and its inheritor, the northern tradition, from the classical scholarship in the South by explaining the broadening of "range of visions" (*shiye* 視野) in southern classicism. Traditionally, only two "ranges of vision" obtained: the official classical scholarship produced under government sponsorship and the private research conducted at home on "scholarship on the masters" (*zixue* 子學), such as commentaries on the *Analects*, *Mengzi* 孟子, *Laozi,* and *Zhuangzi.* With the intellectual developments that occurred during the Southern Dynasties, the outlooks of historiography and literature broadened the scope of the scholarly vision on the classics and the masters. This expanded vision greatly enriched the depth and sophistication of the classical scholarship during this era, most prominently in the South.[9]

One other obvious and important difference in approach between the classical studies of these two regions noted by Jiao Guimei is the fundamental focus on "meanings and principles" (*yili* 義理) hermeneutics of southern classicists versus the "section and lines" (*zhangju* 章句) close reading of texts and the "exegesis and glosses" (*xungu* 訓詁) of words prevalent in the North.[10] Northerners

[9] Qian Mu, *Jingxue dayao*, 262–64. Zhang Xitang also characterizes the classical scholarship of the entire stretch of the Three Kingdoms and Six Dynasties era as being obviously influenced by the flourishing of literature and historiography, as well as the Learning of the Mysterious. Zhang Xitang 張西堂, "Sanguo Liuchao jingxueshang de jige wenti" 三國六朝經學上的幾個問題," *Jingxue yanjiu luncong* 9 (2001): 1–26, p. 2. For the extensive use of the *Zhouli* in the North, see Pan Zhongwei 潘忠伟, *Beichao jingxueshi* 北朝经学史 (Beijing: Shangwu Yinshuguan, 2014), 330–35. For the popularity of the *Sangfu*, the *Liji*, and the other ritual classics in the South, see Zhang Quancai 章权才, *Nan-Beichao Sui-Tang jingxueshi* 南北朝隋唐经学史 (Zhaoqing: Guangdong Renmin Chubanshe, 1996), 175–78.

[10] These two terms represent two different exegetical approaches, the former based on interpretive issues and the latter on textual problems. Witness *Hanshu* 漢書 36.1967; the technical terms "sections and lines" will be addressed later in this chapter. As for the significance of "meaning and principles," Deng Guoguang 鄧國光 cites Zeng Guofan 曾國藩 (1811–1872) to the effect that "the foundation of studying the classics is research on meaning and principles" 讀經以研究義理為本. Deng Guoguang, *Jingxue yili* 經學義理 (Shanghai: Guji Chubanshe, 2011), 1. Zeng takes

concentrated on bland explanation, while southerners produced commentarial works written with style and literary flair. It is in this sense that northern classical scholarship, by way of contrast, was known for being "plain and unaffected" (*zhipu* 質樸); it also closely adhered to Han commentarial traditions and remained devoted to the lineage of a single master.

Given this background and the general trends as delineated by Jiao Guimei, the following characterization of classical scholarship in this era, cited earlier, becomes clear with the addition of a few words of paraphrase: "Southern classicists were concise and brief, and got at the essential interpretive flowers of the classics; northern classicists were profound and florid, and exhaustively plumbed their textual branches and leaves." The prose style of classical scholarship in the South was short and to the point because it only dealt with interpretive conclusions and insights. The style in the North was naturally more florid and detailed, because it revealed the complexities of textual scholarship that often required lengthy discourses and deep plunges into linguistic minutiae. This led to a counterintuitive narrative phenomenon: the philological approach of northern philologists as manifested in its compositional style ran on at length despite its plain and unadorned nature; yet the more interpretive, nascent hermeneutic approach of southern classicists, despite its ornate and rococo style, was more concise and restrained.

In a short but important article, Zhang Xitang isolates five micro-trends that occurred in Chinese classical scholarship through the Wei, Jin, and Six Dynasties. These trends constitute concrete intellectual rebars to lend tensile strength to the somewhat amorphous abstractions generalized by Jiao Guimei. Zhang's five micro-trends are first, the impact of Learning of the Mysterious; second, the shifting quotas for erudites in the Grand Academy; third, the attachment of commentaries to the classics and the development of the new genre of collected explanations; fourth, the rise of the clearing-up-the-meaning genre and its format; and fifth, the study of the Three Commentaries [to the Spring and Autumn Annals] and related issues. All these issues receive varying degrees of treatment in this volume.[11]

A recent PhD dissertation presents a formulation of the general trends of classical scholarship during the Northern and Southern Dynasties that differs from that of Jiao Guimei. It operates on a parallel, albeit higher, level than the earthy textual analysis of Jiao, and therefore does not contradict or cancel out her work. Instead, it operates in the rarified air of hermeneutics, especially as it played out as either a refinement or a rejection of Zheng Xuan's ritual system. This is the

"meaning and principles" in its general usage of "interpretation"—more in a practical sociopolitical sense than in a theoretical philosophical one. Yet despite Professor Deng's detailed historical survey, his approach seems rather to read this term as "the meaning of principle"—taking "principle as the guiding but neglected theoretical foundation of statecraft.

[11] "Sanguo Liuchao jingxueshang de jige wenti."

dissertation of Hua Zhe on the development and impact of Zheng Xuan's ritual system on changes in interpretation from Han to Tang.[12] Despite this philosophical orientation, his dissertation often delves into concrete textual issues like the nature of early manuscript remains preserved in Japan, the formatting of classical commentaries, and the differences in exegetical approaches between various notable masters. His macro-view of classical scholarship during the period of Northern and Southern Dynasties commences with the Han. He divides the long stretch of exegetial history from Han to Tang into three stages of development. First, 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, the post–Zheng Xuan era when classical scholarship worked out along lines established by Zheng, albeit in negative 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, the Northern and Southern Dynasties era when the "clearing-up-the-meaning" genre of epexegesis dominated,[13] when scholarly attention turned away from the pragmatics of ritual performance back to elucidating the textual relations between classics and their commentaries, when exegesis trended towards hermeneutics, and when Zheng Xuan was transformed from an interpreter of the classics into an object of interpretation. In this expansive vision of the history of medieval classical scholarship, Zheng Xuan is seen to be both the textual linchpin and interpretive gage.

These two paradigms, the microtrends isolated by Jiao Guimei and the long-range patterns discerned by Hua Zhe, will inform this study of classical scholarship during the Northern and Southern Dynasties and help weigh the importance of individual leading classicists, their scholarship, and teachings. After all, as with volume 2 in this series, I concentrate on leading classicists and, where possible, the inner workings of their scholarship. I attempt to highlight innovations or at least make earnest attempts to maintain the central flow of philological research and to uncover efforts of classicists more concerned with

[12] Hua Zhe 华喆, "Han-Tang jian jingdian chanshi bianqian shilun" 汉唐间经典阐释变迁史论 (PhD diss., Peking University, 2011). A more recent recapitulation, which I have not seen, is Hua Zhe 华喆. *Lishi 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).

[13] John Makeham adopts the reasonable translation of "elucidation of the meaning" for this genre. But I have already reserved the word "elucidation" to translate the technical term *shi* 釋 in "Table Four: Terminology of Commentaries" in vol. 2, *A History of Chinese Classical Scholarship*, 7.3.3, and so I render the genre more literally as "clearing-up-the-meaning." See the analysis of this genre in the present volume, chap. 2, sec. 2.1.2.

interpreting texts according to novel interpretive frameworks than with preserving or transmitting such texts. I thus concentrate on the trees of classical methodologies and incipient hermeneutics instead of the forest of classical scholarship and its overarching trends. After all, in this latter attempt, the works of Jiao Guimei and He Zhe are superb.

The task of isolating leading figures is aided by several important works. In addition to such primary sources as the "Grove of Confucians" collective biographies contained in individual dynastic histories of the era and specialized biographies devoted to major masters, recent classical scholars from Pi Xirui 皮錫瑞 (1850–1908) and Ma Zonghuo 馬宗霍 (1897–1976) to modern specialists make their specialized selections, and they naturally focus on trendsetters and pivotal figures. Here, I note two studies that accessorize access to classicists from the post-Han period through the end of the Tang. First, Zhang Quancai, *Wei-Jin Nan-Beichao Sui-Tang jingxueshi*, tabulates all authors of works concerning classical scholarship according to the individual classics in a handy appendix of classicists from Wei-Jin through Tang.[14] Second, a recently published manuscript of late Qing/Republican poet and scholar Lin Shanyu 林山腴 (1873–1953) traces the filiation of classicists throughout this lengthy period. He does provide a table of classicists of the Northern Dynasties but states that it is impossible to construct such a table for classicists of the Southern Dynasties because their studies were concurrent with their interest in Learning of the Mysterious; hence, intellectual origins were impossible to chronicle.[15]

Two Sui/Tang works will prove to be indispensable to the present volume. First is the great edition of the Five Classics sponsored by the Tang court, entitled *Correct Meaning of the Five Classics* 五經正義. The second major work on classical scholarship is the great compendium of classical commentary and sound glosses by Lu Deming 陸德明 (556–627). It is entitled *Elucidation of the Texts of Canonical Works* 經典釋文, in thirty scrolls, and devotes each chapter (or sometimes multiple chapters) to an individual Confucian classic. The work also includes the two Daoist classics the *Laozi* and the *Zhuangzi.* These two seminal scholarly works will be thoroughly examined in chapters 8 and 9.

Even the overwhelming utility of such valuable resources for our study of the classical scholarship of Northern and Southern Dynasties should not blind us to the existence of regional leanings. Lu Deming's *Elucidation of the Texts of Canonical Works* was finished before the founding of Sui, and was hardly utilized, if at all, by northern classicists. The edition of the classics prepared by Yan Shigu 顏師古 (581–645) was based on editions popular in the southern states. And

[14] Zhang, *Nan-Beichao Sui-Tang jingxueshi*, 283–337.

[15] Transcribed and edited from a manuscript preserved in the Nanjing University Library by Tong Ling 童岭, *Nan-Qi shidai de wenxue yu* sixiang 南齐时代的文学与思想. *Nanjing Daxue Zhongguo Shixue Yanjiu Zhongxin Zhuankan*, #2 南京大学中国诗学研究中心专刊，第二辑 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 2013), 173–75.

despite Kong Yingda 孔穎達 (574–648) incorporating the Old Text version of the *Esteemed Documents*, the *Correct Meaning of the Five Classics* is considered to be a Southern School production.[16] In short, the line of classical scholarship that ran from the fall of Han through the Southern Dynasties and up to the Sui and Tang, insured the survival of this school, while the Northern School died off with the reunification of China under the Sui. The hermeneutical musings that characterized the Southern School therefore provided fertile ground to nurture the "doubting the classics" movement that sprouted during the Tang and that finally bloomed most vigorously during the Song starting in the 10th century.

1.1. Excursus on Hermeneutics

The decline of factual philology and the rise of speculative hermeneutics is the characteristic intellectual trend of the period covered in this volume. At this point it would be apposite to define and illustrate the term *hermeneutics*. Most often it is used in the general sense of the interpretation of a text, but it also carries a specialized connotation. A convenient *entré* into this intellectual endeavor is supplied by Donald Lopez in his introduction to a conference volume on this topic published in 1988, devoted to Buddhist hermeneutics:

> The term "hermeneutics" is heard frequently today in the fields of Biblical studies, philosophy, and literary criticism. It has been variously defined encompassing notions of translation, exegesis, interpretation, and understanding. For the purposes of this volume, hermeneutics will be broadly conceived as concerned with establishing principles for the retrieval of meaning, especially from a text. Hermeneutics is by no means a new science: sophisticated systems of interpretation were devised by the Talmudic rabbis and by early church fathers.[17]

The current volume of my continuing *A History of Chinese Classical Scholarship* is concerned not so much with the principles of the "retrieval of meaning" but with the concrete processes of this retrieval.

Nevertheless, a striking example of an exegetical tradition that self-consciously isolated a set of fundamental principles that should govern textual exegesis is the Buddhist *Catuḥpratisaraṇasūtra* (*Sutra of the Four Refuges*). It is introduced by Étienne Lamotte as follows:

[16] These final insights are derived from Xu Zhongyan 許宗彦 (1768–1819), "Ji Nanbeixue" 記南北學, in *Jianzhishuizhai ji* 鑑止水齋集 (HQJJ ed.), 1.6a (8:9786).

[17] Donald S. Lopez, Jr., ed., introduction to *Buddhist Hermeneutics* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1988), 1. In the provisional report of this conference, Donald Lopez mentions the early saint Origen as representative of early church fathers who devised a "sophisticated system of interpretation"; this minor fact is of interest due to Origin making a cameo appearance shortly. See Lopez, Jr., "Buddhist Hermeneutics: A Conference Report," *Philosophy East and West*, 37 (1987): 71–83, p. 71.

broadest degree of focus on entire texts, and the maximum distances from the texts that they ostensibly sought to explicate. Terms often applied to the mission of hermeneutics, such as misreading, violent reading, or subversion, suggest that utilizing modern hermeneutics to recover what the classics meant to readers and commentators of a given period reveal much more about these interpretive frameworks generated from fields outside of mainstream Confucianism than the classics themselves. Of course, hermeneutics does reveal what new relevance old texts may hold for modern readers, but reading this relevance retroactively into ancient readers is misleading and anachronistic. It is for this reason that the end of this volume concludes our exploration of this emerging hermeneutical treatment of the classics, leaving it in the capable hands of philosophers, theologians, and literary theorists; it also justifies our leap over the remainder of the Tang and the three later major dynasties to resume the story of classical scholarship by picking up the dim thread of philology in the early Qing with the storied career of Gu Yanwu 顧炎武 (1613–1682), the founding father of modern Chinese philology.

Chapter 2

Southern Learning Part One: Song and Qi

The Southern Dynasties were, in close succession, Song 宋 (420–479), Qi 齊 (479–502), Liang 梁 (502–557), and Chen 陳 (557–589). All were based at Jiankang, and displayed variations on the same wearisome pattern of a powerful founding general or royal relative who seized the throne. The cultural splendor of the capital and the manifold dynasty-wide literary attainments were marked contrasts to the inherent weakness of the official polity and the integrity of its many segments. The ineluctable cycles in Daoist ontology and the ultimate impermanence of life that characterizes Buddhist epistemology were manifested at every turn by the rise and fall of powerful cliques and the series of short-lived dynasties during this time. The story of classical scholarship during this fragmented period will proceed with little recourse to the political floorshow that seemed to change with kaleidoscopic bewilderment and evanescence. Still, we group classicists during this period under the two broad spans of political periodicization, the Song and Qi era, when classical learning was rather dormant, and the Liang and Chen era, when classical learning reached the full-fledged degree of classical scholarship. Such scholarship was infused with imperial vigor, encouraged by official or semi-official sponsorship, and thus reached a new level of activity.

It is a commonplace belief that classical learning during the four Southern Dynasties was underdeveloped and unremarkable until the Liang dynasty. Of the dynastic histories devoted to the Song, Qi, Liang, and Chen regimes, only the last two include "Grove of Confucians" collective biographies; this fact supports the negative consensus. This view is most authoritatively expressed by the Sui historian Yao Silian 姚思廉 (557–637) in his preface to the "Grove of Confucian" collective biography in the *History of the Liang*. Yao's father had been a historian under the Chen dynasty, and Yao had incorporated some of his draft materials, so he inherited his father's dim views concerning the ostensibly sorry state of classical scholarship during the Song and Qi periods:

> When the regime in the territory Left of the Jiang was first established [the Eastern Jin], there was not enough time each day for what was needed. With the Song and Qi, the National Academy sometimes operated, but the classes offered did not cover much ground. It did not last even ten years, and only gained superficial results. It was abolished by successive regimes, and its demise had come suddenly. In the countryside, some perhaps opened academies, but high ministers rarely

had mastered the classics. Great Confucians at court confined themselves to individual study and refused to educate students; promising candidates remained isolated and uncultivated. So classical scholarship was offered but not studied nor practiced. Long indeed has the cultivation of the Three Virtues and the Six Classics been abolished.[1]

江左草創，日不 暇給；以迄於宋、齊。國學時或開置，而勸課未博，建之不及十年，蓋取文具，廢之多歷世祀，其棄也忽諸。鄉里莫或開館，公卿罕通經術。朝廷大儒，獨學而弗肯養眾；後生孤陋，擁經而無所講習。三德六藝，其廢久矣。[2]

The substance of Yao's critiques is true, although he does discount some occasional accomplishments of the pre-Liang period, and thus denies any contribution of this period leading toward the burgeoning of classical scholarship during the Liang.[3] But Jiao Guimei summarizes some of the limited steps in classical learning undertaken during the Song and Qi dynasties that bore fruit later on during the Liang period: (1) restoration of the National Academy, albeit for limited periods of time, which raised the profile of classical scholarship as an intellectual pursuit; (2) veneration of classical masters and the study of the classics; and (3) sponsorship of the classics-based education of royal sons and grandsons.[4] Because my concern is with the process of classical scholarship as it dealt with

[1] I have identified two possible sources of the allusion to Three Virtues. One set is recorded in the "Hongfan" 洪範 chapter of the *Shangshu* as being one of the nine divisions of the "Great Plan" (*hongfan*). Applied in terms of governing the people, these virtues are as follows: "The first is called correctness and straightforwardness; the second, strong government; and the third, mild government" 一曰政治，二曰剛克，三約柔克. *Shangshu zhengyi* 尚書正義 12.15a; James Legge, *The Chinese Classics*, 5 vols. (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1970), 3:333. Another, more likely, set in this scholastic context is preserved in the *Zhouli* 周禮 "Diguan, Shishi" 地官，師氏 chapter: "The Master Preceptor . . . taught the Three Virtues to the noble sons of the state. The first was called the utmost in virtue, and used to form the foundation of the Way. The second was called nimble virtue, and used to form the foundation of conduct. The third was called filial virtue, and was used to know how to counter evil" 師氏。……以三德教國子，一曰至德，以為道本；二曰敏德，以為行本；三曰孝德，以知逆惡. *Zhouli zhushu* 周禮注疏 14.2b.

[2] *Liangshu* 48.661.

[3] The joint authors of a recent survey of the History of Chinese classical scholarship encapsulate the scholarship of the Song and Qi period by merely quoting from Yao's negative preface, then moving quickly to Liang Wudi; see Wu Yannan 吳燕南, Qin Xueqi 秦學頎, and Li Yujie 李禹階, *Zongguo jingxueshi* 中國經學史 (Taipei: Wunan Tushu Chuban Gongsi 五南圖書出版公司, 2005), 154.

[4] Jiao, *Nan-Beichao jingxueshi*, 192–98; pp. 198–204 analyzes specific contributions made by the Song and Qi courts that paved the way for concrete measures undertaken during the Liang.

textual criticism and exegesis, rather than the institutions of classical scholarship, we proceed with a close examination of representative classicists and their work and only mention such structural developments in passing. I will treat four classicists, two Song masters and two Qi masters.

2.1. Song Classicist Lei Cizong

Volume 2 of this series *A History of Chinese Classical Scholarship* concluded with the Eastern Jin classicist Fan Ning 范甯 (ca. 339–401), the great exegete on *Guliang's Commentary on the Spring and Autumn Annals*. We pick up the story of classical scholarship with Fan's younger contemporary, Lei Cizong 雷次宗 (386–448), who survived the fall of the Eastern Jin into the next dynasty, and who was also based in Jiankang. Lei was the most notable classicist of his age, at least in the South. As a partisan of the exegetical approach of Zheng Xuan in the still-popular field of ritual studies, Lei was often paired in popular parlance with him and enjoyed equal renown.[5] As such, he offers an immediate and effective point of contrast between the differences of northern and southern learning, or in his case, a rare example of the northern scholarly approach operating in southern scholarly circles. Still, as the following analysis will divulge, Lei was in other respects a typical southern scholar in terms already sketched in chapter 1 above, namely because of the variety of his intellectual inspirations, Confucian as well as Buddhist; the multiple roles he played—detached eremite and engaged Confucian teacher and scholar—at different times and locations; the attractiveness of his prose style; and the focal point of his scholarship and teaching, which was based in the capital.

The complexity of southern learning, implied in chapter 1 by the fact that filiations of classicists are difficult to string together, is immediately apparent with Lei Cizong, the first prominent classicist during the Song dynasty. The History of Song places him in the collective "Biography of Recluses and Hermits" 隱逸列傳 along with Tao Qian 陶潛 (365–427), the archetypical recluse of irenic disposition and genteel penury, and other storied hermits and anchorites who at times were "seemingly unconventional but not secluded" 蓋逸而非隱, for "When worthies appear in the world, their undertakings cannot be calumniated" 賢人在世，事不可誣.[6] The "undertakings" at question in the case of Lei Cizong are the various aspects of his contributions to classical scholarship.[7]

Lei Cizong was born in Nanchang 南昌, Yuzhang 豫章 Prefecture, in central Jiangxi Province. Yuzhang Prefecture was a center of classical learning during

[5] Pi Xirui 皮錫瑞 (1850–1908), *Jingxue lishi* (JXCS ed.), 167.

[6] *Songshu* 93.2276.

[7] Beginning with Lei Cizong, all classicists who are given extended treatment here should be regarded as participating in fullblown classical scholarship, not classical learning that was often merely prepatory or preliminary. In other words, the term classical learning will no longer be employed.

the Eastern Jin and was the site of Fan Ning's government service and family scholarship. Lei's eremitic qualifications are immediately established in his biography, as are his classical credentials:

> Lei Cizong's style was Zhonglun; he was a man of Nanchang in Yuzhang. When young he moved to Mt Lu where he took as his master the monk Shi Huiyuan. He possessed deep resolve and was fond of learning. He was especially discerning in the *Three Rites* and *Mao Poems*. He withdrew in reclusion and did not engage in worldly affairs. The local magistrate tried to recruit him to be on his staff, as did the Supernumerary Gentleman Cavalier Attendant; he refused them both.
>
> 雷次宗字仲倫，豫章南昌人也。少入廬山，事沙門釋慧遠，篤志好學，尤明三禮毛詩，隱退不交世務。本州辟從事，員外散騎侍郎徵，並不就。[8]

Following these credentials is a lengthy letter from Lei to his son and nephew explaining his detachment from worldly affairs. The letter need not be discussed further.

At this point, his biography introduces Lei Cizong's major contributions to classical studies in the capital within the realms of education and classical scholarship:

> During the fifteenth year of the *Yuanjia* reign period [438], Cizong was summoned to the capital; he founded an academy on Mt Cock Cage, and gathered disciples for teaching and instruction; he accepted more than one hundred pupils. Zhu Yingzhi of Kuaiji and Yu Weizhi of Yingchuan both supervised these students by virtue of their Confucian learning.[9] At that time, the national academy had not yet been established. But His Highness was attentive to the fine arts, so he commissioned the governor of Danyang He Shangzhi to establish the course in Learning of the Mysterious.[10] The Director of the Watches for the heir apparent He Chengtian established the course in historiography.[11] The Adjutant to Minister of Education Xie Yuan established the course in literature. All four courses of study were therefore established. His Highness took the royal carriage on several occasions to visit Cizong's academy, and supplied lavish material support. Cizong was also offered the post of Supervising Secretary, but he did not assume office. After a long while, he returned to Mt Lu. All officials from palace ministers on down saw him off.
>
> 元嘉十五年，征次宗至京師，開館於雞籠山，聚徒教授，置生百餘人。會稽硃膺之、潁川庾蔚之並以儒學，監總諸生。時國子學未立，上留心藝術，使丹陽尹何尚之立玄學，太子率更令何承天立史學，司徒參軍謝元立文學，凡四學並建。車駕數幸次宗學館，資給甚厚。又除給事中，不就。久之，還廬山，公卿以下，並設祖道。

Note that Learning of the Mysterious, historiography, and literature shared imperial sponsorship with the classical curriculum. This diverse academic career path naturally diluted the intellectual gene pool for classical studies, but it also reflected the contemporary trend toward concomitant broad and varied theoretical interests, and cross-fertilization among schools of thought. Lei Cizong is a prominent example of this, due to his intellectual enlightenment under the famous monk Shi Huiyuan 釋慧遠 (334–416). After young Huiyuan had absorbed the thought of Guo Xiang 郭象 (d. AD 312), the eminent commentator on the Daoist classic *Zhuangzi*, he developed a fondness for the *Laozi*. The founding patriarch of the Pure Land Sect, Huiyuan is best known for his sponsorship of the alarming argument that "Monks do not bow down before kings." He established the

[8] *Songshu* 93.2293–94. His biographies are in *Songshu* 93.2293–94 and *Nanshi* 南史 75.1867–68. His extant prose pieces are included in Yan Kejun 嚴可均 (1762–1843), ed., "Quan Songwen" 全宋文, in *Quan Shanggu Sandai, Qin-Han, Sanguo, Liuchaowen* 全上古三代秦漢三国六朝文, 4 vols. (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1987), 3:2596–97.

[9] Zhu Yingzhi does not figure in the history of classical scholarship outside of this episode. Yu Weizhi will receive separate treatment in sec. 2.2 below.

[10] He Shangzhi 何尚之 (382–460), derived from Qian Prefecture 灊縣, Lujiang 廬江, Anhui. An important official and general, he was sufficiently accomplished that he was awarded posthumous honors. For instance, he once served as the Chancellor of the National University. He was also a colorful character who generated much contemporary gossip and many anecdotes for the enjoyment of later generations. He was of course trained as a classicist but gained more notoriety as a thinker along the lines of contemporary interests in Learning of the Mysterious. The home that he built in the southern suburbs of Jiankang was devoted to schooling his admirers in this theme. See his biographies at *Songshu* 66.1732–39 and *Nanshi* 30.781–85.

[11] He Chengtian 何承天 (370–447) hailed from Donghai, Shandong. He was a mathematician, astronomer, historian, and thinker. Nephew of historian Xu Guang 徐廣 (352–425) via Xu's learned younger sister, he was nurtured on the Confucian classics and traditional histories. Prominent in courtly affairs, most importantly in the office of the Palace Aide to the Censor-in-Chief, he not only established the history course as described above, he was appointed to supervise the erudites in the newly established national academy in 442. He also revised the contemporary calendar *The Yuanjia Calendar* 元嘉曆. Of interest to classical studies, he abridged an 800-scroll compilation entitled *Discourses on Ritual* 禮論 down to a more manageable size of 300 scrolls, as noted at *Suishu* 32.923. His biographies are in *Songshi* 宋史 64.1701–11 and *Nanshi* 33.868–70, and he enjoys a reconstructed literary anthology in Zhang Pu 張溥 (1602–1641), ed., *Han-Wei Liuchao baisan mingjiaji* 漢魏六朝百三名家集, 6 vols. (Taipei: Wenjin Chubanshe, 1979), 3:2497–2535. See also the scattered material at "Quan Songwen," 2556–69.

Donglin 東林 Monastery on Mount Lu, where he taught Lei Cizong. Perhaps unsurprisingly, Huiyuan lectured on the key text of interest to contemporary Confucians, the "Mourning Vestments" chapter of the *Ceremonials and Rituals*.[12] Lei Cizong's own commentary on this chapter, *Brief Annotations on the Mourning Vestments, Classic and Commentary* 略注喪服經傳 was undoubtedly greatly indebted to his master's teachings.

2.1.1. *Brief Annotations on the Mourning Vestments, Classic and Commentary*

It is well known that ritual studies became popular during the Jin dynasty and that this trend continued throughout the Northern and Southern Dynasties. What is less well known are the reasons for this popularity. Intellectual inertia, generated by the popularity of Zheng Xuan's ritual system, explains this in part. But sustained commitment can only come from external factors, and, happily, modern historian Zhang Quancai supplies them. As with his other histories that account for economic, political, and demographic conditions that either fostered or impeded the flourishing of classical studies during the twin Han dynasties, Zhang's work on this long era from the Wei-Jin period up through the Tang reveals such conditions. His argumentation revolves around the impact of famous hereditary households and powerful clans (*shijiahaozu* 世家豪族) and the dynamics of demographics resulting from the constant influx into the South of displaced folks fleeing the instability of the North. It behooved such powerful entities to protect their interests against both competitor clans and new immigrants. The prerogatives of power and the trappings of cultural superiority were both on high display through ritual performances and appurtenances, especially the rites of mourning and the accessories of ritual vestments. The function of ritual in demonstrating the purity and superiority of genealogical lineages was an important aide in maintaining social standing, and such genealogical filiations played a role in the operation of the Nine Grade Official Selection (*Jiupin zhengzhong* 九品正中) system. The culturally stable South was also more amenable to ritual scholarship as the inheritor of traditional legitimacy, while the North was culturally unstable and dependent more on Buddhist than Confucian means of legitimacy.[13] The study of the *Three Ritual Classics* thus naturally took on an immediate practicality apart from any inherent interest in the subject matter that may have existed.

[12] This text is generally italicized to indicate that it was considered an independent work and circulated as such.

[13] Zhang Quancai 章权才, "'Sanli' zhi xue—Dongjin Nanchao shiqi shijia haozu de xianxue" 三礼之学—东晋南朝时期世家豪族的显学, in *Wei-Jin Nan-Beichao Sui-Tang jingxueshi* 魏晋南北朝隋唐经学史 (Zhaoqing: Guangdong Renmin Chubanshe, 1996), 175–78.

Among these ritual texts, the separately circulating *Mourning Vestments* partook of both topical importance and canonical interest.[14] This text was much studied during this long era, with peak attention being paid during the Jin and the Song era of Lei Cizhong: three works date from the Han, three from the Wei, one from the Wu, then eight from the high peaks of Jin and six from the Song. The Qi dynasty only produced one work.[15] Lei's study of this canonical text then naturally conformed to the intellectual trends of the times.

Shi Huiyuan's biography records the following instructive exchange between two of his disciples concerning the origin of this work:

> Internally, Huiyuan had mastered Buddhist principles, and externally, he excelled at understanding the corpus of books. Prospective students all imitated him. At that time, Huiyuan was lecturing on the *Classic of Mourning Vestments*. Lei Cizong, Zong Bing and others grasped their scrolls of paper and received his teachings. Afterwards, Cizong composed his own clearing-up-the-meaning commentary. When he first assigned the authorship to himself, Zong Bing sent him a letter deriding him, writing: "Formerly I sat with you sir at the feet of the Monk Shi and received this interpretation. But now you ascribe this work to that of yourself, Mr. Lei?"
>
> 遠內通佛理外善群書。夫預學徒莫不依擬。時遠講喪服經。雷次宗宗炳等並執卷承旨。次宗後別著義疏。首稱雷氏宗炳因寄書嘲之曰。昔與足下共於釋和上間面受此義。今便題卷首稱雷氏乎?[16]

Lei's biography in the *History of Song* records his return to Jiankang late in life and his lectures at court:

> After leaving his academy on Mt Cock Cage, Lei was summoned back 10 years later by Emperor Wen who advanced him in honorary rank and increased his sinecure. Later on he was again summoned to visit the capital, and a residence was built for him under a west-facing cliff-face on Mt Zhong; it was called Hostel for Summoning a Recluse. He was

[14] For an exhaustive analysis of this work, see Ding Ding 丁鼎, *Yili Sangfu kaolun* 仪礼丧服考论 (Beijing: Shehui Kexue Wenxian Chubanshe, 2003).

[15] These data, drawn from the following work, are not exhaustive but are indicative of the major works that received notice by traditional scholarship: Liu Zhaoyou 劉兆祐, ed., *Yili zhushukao (yi)* 儀禮著述考（一）(Taipei: Guoli Bianyiguan 國立編譯館, 2003), 625–731. A survey of relevant works listed in the *Suishu* bibliographical monograph reveals similar groupings: of those authors who can be dated, 4 date from the Han, 2 from the Wei, 1 each from Shu-Han and Wu, 11 from the Jin, 6 from the Song, 5 from the Qi, and 12 from the Liang. *Suishu* 32.919–20.

[16] Shi Huijiao 釋慧皎 (497–554), ed., *Gaosengzhuan* 高僧傳. CSJC *chubian* ed. (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1991), 99.

commissioned to lecture on the *Mourning Vestments* for the imperial heir and various princes.

後又征詣京邑，為築室于鐘山西岩下，謂之招隱館，使為皇太子諸王講喪服經。[17]

Lei died within the year. The charge of Zong Bing was that Lei's commentary derived solely from the lectures of their common master. It reveals the oral provenance of the new genre of commentary during the Six Dynasties era, that of "clearing-up-the-meaning"; there will be more on this new genre later. Here I merely note that this work did not survive the Sui period.[18]

Happily, several compilations of passages from this lost work preserved elsewhere have been undertaken.[19] Jiao Guimei's analysis of 35 of these fragments occupies five pages of her history. Her evaluation of the main characteristics of this work include three major areas. First, Lei based himself on Zheng Xuan's understanding of the text, and expanded on it. Second, he was skilled in extrapolating meaning from the narrative of the text of the classic and its commentary. And third, on the foundation of Zheng's interpretation, he was still able to contribute some original insights.[20] She concludes that the influence of this work was considerable because of the literary style of his prose and the freshness of his original insights. His solutions to several long-standing points of difficulty ultimately were taken as gospel. Yet sometimes his understanding of Zheng's views were off because they did not pay sufficient attention to the broader contexts.[21] Another modern specialist, Jian Boxian, characterizes Lei's ritual studies represented by this work in broad terms such as "Lucid in explaining the meaning, and profound in his mastery of the meaning of the classics."[22]

Since no integral work of Lei Cizong is extant, it is easy to overlook the importance of his scholarship from our present perspective. But careful study of surviving fragments reveals something of his influence. One example is a line from the *Mourning Vestments*: "When a father dies, a step-mother can remarry; [the son] follows, and mourns for him, to repay him" 父卒，繼母嫁，從，為之服，報.[23] The punctuation presented above is the reading of Wang Su 王肅 (195–256) that Lei Cizong follows. Ma Rong 馬融 (79–166) and most others instead punctuate this passage as follows: 父卒，繼母嫁，從為之服，報, which I translate as "When a father dies, a stepmother can remarry; following she mourns for him to repay him." Only Wang Su and Lei Cizong's readings place the emphasis on the mourning of the son. In his comments, Lei Cizong emphasizes the concept of "repayment," stating: "Whenever anyone mentions repayment, the repayment of a stepmother is also in this manner" 凡言報者，繼母報亦如此. Jia Gongyan's 賈公彥 (fl. AD seventh century) epexegetical commentary, included in the Thirteen Classics edition of the *Ceremonies and Rituals*, is indebted to Lei Cizong's comments that open up the possibility of the son mourning for his stepmother and for his father. Jia's comments thus read, "When one feels thankful for grace received, every such case is called repayment; in like manner a son remembers the ultimate result of the grace of his stepmother, and following from this makes repayment" 感恩者皆稱報，若此子念繼母恩終，從而為報.[24] This interpretation thus makes the line more generally applicable in mourning practices in general and, if characteristic of the work as a whole, marks it less as a collection of word glosses and more of an interpretive explanation.

Another work on the classical scholarship of Lei Cizong made it into the historical record and left scattered traces preserved until the present. *Essential Meaning of the Five Classics* 五經要義, in its present reconstruction, is merely the *disjecta membra* of a long work of interpretation; we posit that it originally stretched to considerable length because it is hard to imagine that a work of short compass could cover a single classic, let alone all five of them. The *History of Sui* monograph records it in five scrolls, but a version dating from the Liang was extant in 17 scrolls.[25] Three compendia of scattered fragments exist.[26]

2.1.2. The Genre of "Clearing-up-the-meaning"

The genre that came to the fore in classical circles during the Northern and Southern era was the "clearing-up-the-meaning" form of commentary. Ma

[17] *Songshu* 93.2294.

[18] It is noted in the *Suishu* monograph of bibliography, but not in the Tang monographs. *Suishu* 32.920.

[19] Ma Guohan 馬國翰 (1794–1857), *Yuhanshanfang jiyishu* 玉函山房輯一佚書, 8 vols. (Yangzhou: Jiangsu Guangling Guji Keyinshe, 1990), 2:357–63. Other versions are included in the *Huangshi yishuchao* 黃氏逸書考 and the *Hanxuetang jingjie* 漢學堂經解.

[20] Jiao, *Nan-Beichao jingxueshi*, 223–28.

[21] Jiao, *Nan-Beichao jingxueshi*, 228–30.

[22] Jian Boxian 簡博賢, *Jincun Nan-bei Chao Jingxue yijikao* 今存南北朝經學遺籍考 (Taipei: Liming Wenhua Youxian Gongsi, 1975), 147. Jian's entire evaluation of this work encompasses pp. 146–53.

[23] *Yili zhushu* 儀禮注疏 30.7b.

[24] *Yili zhushu* 30.7b. For documentation of original sources and scholarly analysis, see Jian, *Jincun Nan-Beichao jingxue yijikao*, 150–51 and Jiao, *Nan-Beichao jingxueshi*, 227.

[25] *Suishu* 32.938.

[26] Ma Guohan 馬國翰. *Yuhanshanfang jiyishu* 玉函山房輯一佚書 5:190–92. Sun Qizhi 孫啓治 and Chen Jianhua 陳健華 eds., *Zhongguo guyishu jiben mulu jieti* 中國古佚書輯本目錄解題 (Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Chubanshe, 2009), 88, indicate that quotes are also gathered in the *Han-Wei yishuchao* 漢魏遺書鈔. All relevant bibliographical notices on this work are gathered in Ji Xusheng 季旭昇, ed., *Qunjing zongyi zushukao (yi)* 群經總義著述考（一） (Taipei: Guoli Bianyiguan, 2004), 114–17.

Zonghuo 馬宗霍 (1897–1976) explains the difference between earlier commentarial genres:

> It seems that when men of Han studied the classics they focused on the basic text of a classic. The commentaries and annotations which they composed all served to elucidate the classic. Ever since the Wei and Jin eras, however, many only focused on the annotations of the classics. . . . With the Northern and Southern Dynasties, the commentaries which they grasped even less were able to go beyond the various classical masters of the Han, Wei, and Jin dynasties. Yet they still held to the annotations of a single master and interpreted and elucidated them. Some cited from ancillary explanations and verified and clarified these annotations. The name was nominally classical studies, but in matter of fact, it was annotation studies. Therefore, the genres of commentaries and annotations declined daily, while the genre of "clearing-up-the-meaning" rose daily.
>
> 蓋漢人治經以本經爲主。所爲傳注皆以解經。至魏晉以來則多以經注為主。……至南北朝則所執者更不能出漢魏晉諸家之外。但守一家之注而詮釋之，或旁引諸說而證明之。名為經學，實即注學。於是傳注之體日微，義疏之體日起矣。[27]

Next Ma traces the origin of this genre back to the practice of oral lecturing and discourse:

> Seeking the rise of "clearing-up-the-meaning," it seems that at first it derived from lectures and disquisitions. During the two Han dynasties, examples of lectures on the classics are evident. That which the Stone Channel Gallery evaluated and that which the White Tiger Hall deliberated over are examples of this. The Wei and Jin periods esteemed pure talk; they grasped their credentials and established their interpretations. Others imitated them and it became customary. They shifted the focus from discoursing on the mysterious to discoursing on the classics, and so the practice of lecturing on the classics became even more popular. During the Northern and Southern Dynasties era Buddhism was venerated; Buddhists would spread out mats and explain the dharma; classicists imitated them, basing themselves on the style of that sect. Another example was to ascend an elevated seat and explain the classics. Early on, classics were transmitted via oral transmission; next came works transcribed on bamboo and silk; finally "clearing-up-the-meaning" took form.
>
> 緣義疏之興，初蓋由於講論。兩漢之時已有講經之例。石渠閣之所平，白虎觀之所議，是其事也。魏晉尚清談。把麈樹義。相習成俗。移談玄以談經，而講經之風益盛。南北朝崇佛教。敷座說法。本彼宗風。從而效之。又有升座說經之例。初憑口耳之傳，繼有竹帛之著。而義疏成矣。[28]

Coincidently, this sequence of oral teaching, written transcription, and then oral elucidation is reflected in the main themes of the first three volumes of *A History of Chinese Classical Scholarship.*

Another oral inspiration for the genre of "clearing-up-the-meaning" is the genre of section and line commentary (*zhangju* 章句). In volume 1 of *A History of Chinese Classical Scholarship*, I discussed the oral basis of this genre in recording the spoken teachings of a master who dictated both the text to be transcribed and his notes on punctuation, pronunciation, and word-glosses.[29] Jian Boxian makes the explicit connection between this Han period genre and the later genre of clearing-up-the-meaning.[30] He notes that the earliest work to bear this name was the *Clearing-up-the-meaning of the Esteemed Documents* 尚書義疏 by Yin Shuo 尹說 of the Jin dynasty.[31] I might add that the genre really took off under the influence and with the example of Emperor Wu of the Liang dynasty (464–549), to be treated in the next chapter.

As noted previously, the Buddhist practice of lecturing on sutras also influenced the development of the genre of clearing-up-the-meaning. In fact, Mou Runsun maintains that the original significance of the term *shu* in the context of writing was not elucidation but rather transcription or recording. He further states that *yishu* meant "to record the meaning of a lecture."[32] He concludes that "Confucian scholars not only adopted the ceremony of that other religion, but also imitated its practices of making records and lecturing on the meanings of classics. Hence it created the genre of the 'clearing-up.' The cause was to explain classics through lectures, and the result was the genre of clearing-up-the-meaning."[33] The

[27] Ma, *Zhongguo jingxueshi*, 85.

[28] Ma, *Zhongguo jingxueshi*, 85.

[29] See Honey, *A History of Chinese Classical Scholarship*, vol. 1, chap. 8, sec. 8.6, "Zixia and the Genre of the Section and Line Commentary."

[30] Jian, *Jincun Nan-Beichao jingxue yijikao*, 2.

[31] Jian, *Jincun Nan-Beichao jingxue yijikao*, 2. Yin Shuo's work is listed in the *Suishu* bibliographical monograph after a Liang period work of the same title in 10 scrolls and before one in 30 scrolls; both were composed during the Liang period.

[32] Mou Runsun 牟润孙 (1908–1988), "Lun Ru-Shi liangjia zhi jiangjing yu yishu" 论儒释两家之讲经与义疏, in *Zhushihai conggao (zengdingben)* 注史齋叢稿 （增訂本）, 2 vols. (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 2009), 1:88–155; pp. 242–43. John Makeham provides a detailed introduction as part of his study of Huang Kan's work in this genre on the *Analects*; see Makeham's "Huang Kan and the *Shu* genre," in *Transmitters and Creators*, 79–95. See also Appendix D, "Format and Early History of the *Elucidation of the Meaning*: Earliest Extant Japanese Handwritten Manuscript Copies," 391–96. Most of the same manuscripts are treated in great detail by Qiao Xiuyan 喬秀岩, *Yishuxue shuaiwang shilun* 義疏學衰亡史論 (Taipei: Wanjuanlou, 2013).

[33] Mou, "Lun Ru-Shi liangjia zhi jiangjing yu yishu," 88.

name *Correct Meaning* that was later applied to the imperially sponsored version of the classics during the early Tang was itself indebted to this new genre.[34] I should add that one inherent feature of the *yishu* genre is the format of the catechism, which will be observed in the manuscript of a hitherto lost work of Huang Kan 皇侃 (488–545) to be analyzed in chapter 3, section 3.2.2.

2.2. Song Classicist Yu Weizhi

Yu Weizhi 庾蔚之 (d. ca. 464) was mentioned previously as an assistant to Lei Cizong in supervising the students of the classics in the academy founded by Lei Cizong on Mount Cock Cage. Lei's classical contributions centered on the text of the *Mourning Vestments*; Yu will be examined instead in conjunction with the famous classic *Exegetical Glosses Compiled for the Records of Ritualists*. This work was also the object of much scholarly attention during the Northern and Southern Dynasties. Along with the *Changes, Analects*, and *Classic of Filial Piety*, it was particularly susceptible to interpretations based on Learning of the Mysterious concepts, which was another reason for its popularity quite apart from its utility for deciding pressing questions concerning ritual matters at court.

Yu Weizhi enjoys no biographical entry in any early history, but he appears in scattered references, some noting his participation in courtly debates before His Highness on ritual matters.[35] Like his associate Lei Cizong, he produced a work on the *Mourning Vestments*, a set of annotations on a work of He Xun 賀循 (260–319) entitled *Essential Records on the Mourning Vestments* 喪服要記,[36] but he was most productive in scholarly works devoted to the *Records of Ritualists*. As summarized by Ma Guohan, "He further compiled the *Transcriptions of Ritual Disquisitions* and *Responses to Questions on the Rites*. He devoted his thinking to ritual clothing, which was his specialty" 又撰禮論鈔，禮答問，究心於禮服，此其所長也.[37]

Yu Weizhi's major exegetical work is the *Abbreviated Explanations of the Records of Ritualists* 禮記略解. This work influenced latter classicists even more deeply than Lei's work on the *Mourning Vestments*. Although occasionally noting sound glosses and the proper way to parse sentences through punctuation, this work stressed the interpretation of the text. Its scholarly virtues, according to the analysis of Jiao Guimei, are as follows: (1) it focuses on interpretation with admirable concision and minimum of extra verbiage; (2) it is based on the views of Zheng Xuan, with an occasional citation of two other notable classicists Lu Zhi 盧植 (139–192) and Wang Su; (3) it delves into textual criticism at least in terms of identifying variora; (4) it is good at eliciting the meaning of the original authors;

[34] Jian, *Jincun Nan-Beichao jingxue yijikao*, 3.
[35] These references are reviewed by Jiao, *Nan-Beichao jingxueshi*, 230–31.
[36] Noted in *Suishu* 32.921.
[37] Ma, *Yuhanshanfang jiyishu*, 3:2. Pages 3–13 include all of the gleanings of the scattered fragments of Yu's work.

and (5) it interprets variant passages in a rational manner. In the main, he adopts three approaches to reach his rational conclusions. First, he notes the possibility of orthographic variation during the original process of transcribing an oral teaching; second, he distinguishes between temporary and provisional rites that can change according to circumstances and permanent and immutable rituals. Third, he analyzes linguistic glosses to identify possible homonyms and synonyms.[38]

Yu Weizhi's work spread far and wide, and even caught the eyes of northern classicists. Qing ritual specialists such as Zhu Bin 朱彬 (1753–1834), *Exegetical Glosses Compiled for the Records of Ritualists* 禮記訓纂, and Sun Xidan 孫希旦 (1737–1784), *Collected Elucidations on the Records of Ritualists* 禮記集釋, made broad use of Yu's work in their own specialized studies of this classic. Even though it did not displace Huang Kan's more broadly based study, it did appear frequently in Kong Yingda's 孔穎達 (574–648), *Correct Meaning of the Records of Ritualists*.[39]

2.3. Qi Classicist Wang Jian and Bibliographical Studies

The first classicist to be treated from the Qi period is Wang Jian 王儉 (452–489), who was educated during the Song period, but who made his major contributions during the Qi. His contemporary Liu Huan was equally influential, but not at court. Ma Zonghe distills the essence of earlier histories by concluding that "During the age of Qi, the authority of Confucian learning was expanded and rewarded. At court Wang Jian grasped all operations; while in the countryside Liu Huan was universally esteemed" 齊世宏獎儒學之權，在朝操諸王儉，在野共推劉瓛.[40] We now look at both of them seriatim.

Wang Jian is considered to be one of the most influential classicists of both the early Qi period and the entire course of classical scholarship during the four successive Southern Dynasties. A member of the storied Wang clan of Langya 琅玡 (modern Qingdao and Linyi, Shandong), his forbearers included such illustrious and powerful ministers as cousins Wang Dao 王導 (276–339) and Wang Dun 王敦 (266–324), and supreme calligraphists father and son Wang Xizhi 王羲之 (303–361) and Wang Xianzhi 王獻之 (344–386). It was the virtue of Wang Jian to turn the focus of his clan from literary composition and other cultivated pursuits toward classical scholarship.

Wang Jian was only one year old when his father Wang Sengzhuo 王僧綽 was killed. Consequently, he was raised by his uncle Wang Sengqin 王僧虔. Both father and uncle were noted for their literary talent, but Jian dedicated himself to

[38] See the in-depth treatment by Jiao, *Nan-Beichao jingxueshi*, 230–41.
[39] See Jian Boxian's analysis of Yu' work at *Jincun Nan-Beichao jingxue yijikao*, 153–60.
[40] Ma, *Zhongguo jingxueshi*, 80.

more traditional intellectual pursuits. His youthful attention to his studies and mature reputation brought him to the notice of Emperor Ming of the Song dynasty (r. 466–479). He served in a succession of posts in the archives and library during the Song, which were reflected in his first major field of research: bibliography. His biography records his contributions in this branch as a catalogue in 40 scrolls entitled *Seven Monographs* 七志, modeled after the *Seven Epitomes* 七略 of Liu Xin 劉歆 (ca. 53 BC–AD 23). It was produced after Jian petitioned the throne to be allowed to collate the classics, and it was reportedly written in an elegant style.[41] He also compiled a major bibliography, the *Yuanhui Reign Period* [425–453] *Book Catalogue in Four Sections* 元徽四部書目, four scrolls. Both of his bibliographies were completed in 473. The four-scroll catalogue was an official composition, while the lengthy 40-scroll compilation, *Seven Monographs*, was the first private bibliography in Chinese history.

Seven Monographs is a descriptive bibliography. Although it was lost, from data derived from other historical sources, Zhou Shaochuan is able to characterize it as a "descriptive bibliography with bibliographical information; additionally it included prefaces and specialized analyses."[42] Zhou cites Zhang Shunhui 張舜徽 (1911–1992) to the effect that "The creation of bibliographies that were limited to contemporary works commenced with Wang Jian's *Seven Monographs*" 造书目者止录当代著述始于王俭七志.[43] This is borne out by the title of the work in the *History of Sui* monograph on bibliography: *Contemporary Works in Seven Monographs* 今書七志, 70 scrolls.[44]

The next significant bibliographer after Wang, his younger contemporary Ruan Xiaoxu 阮孝緒 (479–536), details the differences in organization and nomenclature in Wang's work in comparison with the earlier *Seven Epitomes* of Liu Xin, which was based on the work of his father Liu Xiang:

> Wang Jian's *Seven Monographs* changed the category of the Six Arts to Classics and Canons. Next was Various Masters. Next was Poems and Rhapsodies, which was changed to Literary Compositions. Next was Works on Weapons, changed to Military Works. Next was Mathematical Arts, changed to Yinyang. Next was Magical Arts, changed to Techniques and Arts. Despite the work of Liu Xiang [77–6 BC] and Liu Xin being called *Seven Epitomes*, in actuality there were only six categories. Hence Wang established a separate category of monograph for Charts and Registers in order to complete the seven delimited areas.

[41] *Nan-Qishu* 南齊書 23.433; his entire biography encompasses pp. 433–38; a slightly shorter biography, lacking several memorials, is preserved in *Nanshi* 南史 22.590–96.
[42] Zhou Shaochuan 周少川, *Guji muluxue* 古籍目录学 (Zhengzhou: Zhongzhou Guji Chubanshe, 1996), 126.
[43] Zhou, *Guji muluxue*, 126.
[44] *Suishu* 33.991.

> 王儉七志改六藝為經典，次諸子，次詩賦，為文翰，次兵書為軍書，次數術為陰陽，次方技為術藝。以向、歆雖云七略，實有六條，故別立圖譜一志，以全七限。[45]

While Wang Jian is regarded as a Late Qi bibliographer and classicist, Ruan Xiaoxu was a Liang period bibliographer, who worked in seclusion and was bereft of imperial support or resources, yet he built on the seven-part format of Wang, while adding "outer" and "inner sections" to each category.[46] Further contributions to the development of the discipline of bibliography by Wang Jian include the addition of an appendix devoted to Daoist and Buddhist works. That these two categories of books are placed outside of the main work, as well as the order of treatment of Confucian, Daoist, and Buddhist works, reveals the priority Wang placed on each group of classics.[47]

In terms of direct impact on the field of classical studies, Jiao Guimei summarizes Wang's contributions as follows: First, Wang personified Confucian moral conduct and intellectual interest. He disdained the prevailing trend of literary composition and instead preferred traditional classical scholarship to restore this traditional enterprise to its rightful place at the center of intellectual life. His personal scholarship set the standard and, in some ways, kick-started the field. Second, he encouraged the new generation by both precept and example. Furthermore, he personally sponsored numerous students by arranging stipends for them or placing them in positions in the bureaucracy. Many of these students became leading figures in classical circles during the Liang period.[48]

When he was young, Wang Jian specialized in the *Three Ritual Classics* and the *Spring and Autumn Annals*. Among his works on classical scholarship and other scholarly fields, the following names are known to history, and are all noted in the bibliographical monograph of the *History of Sui*. Wang is described in this monograph as the Grand Guardian of Qi, one of the most eminent officers of the court. Parenthetically, works authored by such a high official certainly carried great weight. *Collected Notes on the Old and Modern Texts of the Mourning Vestments* 古今喪服集記 was in three scrolls.[49] *Essential Disquisitions on the Records of Ritualists* 禮記要論 is noted under 10 scrolls, but during the Qi it circulated with only three scrolls.[50] *Ceremonials in Auspicious Books* 吉書儀 also

[45] Ren Lili 任茉莉 ed, preface to "Xumu"序目 *Qilüe jizheng* 七略輯證 (Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Chubanshe, 2011), 3.
[46] For his innovations built on the foundation of Wang's work, see Zhou, *Guji muluxue*, 127–29.
[47] Jiao, *Nan-Beichao jingxueshi*, 205.
[48] Jiao, *Nan-Beichao jingxueshi*, 205–10.
[49] *Suishu* 32.921.
[50] *Suishu* 32.923. This work was a distillation of a lengthy work in 300 scrolls by He Chengtian, *Lilun* 禮論; Wang reduced it to 8 cases and compiled a catalog in 13 scrolls