

THE TWO XUN
The Contributions of Xun Yu and Xun You to the Foundations of Wei

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The end of the Han Dynasty began dramatically in 189 as the General Dong Zhuo lead his troops into the capital and usurped power. Over thirty years later, the end was completed by the abdication of the last Han Emperor Liu Xie, posthumously Emperor Xian “the Worthy,” to Cao Pi, posthumously Emperor Wen “the Literary,” in 220. This thirty year transition, one of the most famed and romanticized in Chinese history, involved a near total collapse in Imperial authority, and as a result the celebrated “Three Kingdoms,” the three claimant successors to Han, were forced to build their states almost from the ground up.¹

Of the three, the most successful in rebuilding and maintaining the institutions of Han was by far the Wei. Despite their Imperial ambitions, Shu in the Sichuan basin and Wu about the middle and lower Yangzi were largely warlord states based on the frontiers of the former Empire. Wei controlled the former Imperial heartlands in the central plains and about seven-tenths of the former registered population, and though the Wei dynasty was eventually subverted by the Sima family and replaced by the Jin, it was upon the foundations laid down by Wei that Jin was eventually able to conquer its rivals and briefly reunify the Empire.²

The foundations of Wei were laid under the leadership of Cao Cao, posthumously Emperor Wu “the Martial,” a talented and ambitious member of the middle and lower gentry.³ When Dong Zhuo first seized power in the capital, Cao Cao sold his family resources to raise personal troops and join the coalition of opposition forming against Dong Zhuo in the eastern parts of the Empire. In 191, one of the eastern armies led by Sun Jian⁴ drove Dong Zhuo out of the capital Luoyang, but Dong Zhuo had already evacuated the Emperor and Imperial Court west to Chang’an. With the absence of Imperial authority the members of the eastern coalition soon turned against one another, and soon the central plains were torn apart in anarchy and constant warfare.

I. Xun Yu and Xun You Amid Chaos

The Xun family was based in Yingyin county in Yingchuan prefecture, one of the most populous and prosperous of the Empire. It came into prominence about the time of Xun Shu, who held office as a county magistrate and had a reputation for scholarship. He had eight sons collectively known as the “Eight Dragons,” and by the time of Xun Yu,⁵ born about 163 and the grandson of Xun Shu, the Xun family was known across the Empire.

1 A narrative history of the time period is given in *To Establish Peace*, Rafe de Crespigny’s translation of chapters 59 to 69 of the *Zizhi Tongjian [ZZTJ]* of Sima Guang (1019-1086), and also in Mansvelt Beck, “The fall of Han,” in *The Cambridge History of China*, vol. 1, The Ch’in and Han empires 221 BC – AD 220.

2 This appraisal is well argued by de Crespigny in “The Three Kingdoms and Western Jin: A history of China in the Third Century AD.”

3 The Annals of Cao Cao, posthumously Emperor Wu of Wei, is in *Sanguozhi [SGZ]* 1.

4 The Biography of Sun Jian, posthumously Emperor Wulie of Wu, is in SGZ 46.

5 The Biography of Xun Yu is in SGZ 10, translated in Appendix A.

Xun You was a son of a second cousin to Xun Yu, though six years older.⁶ In 189, at the death of Emperor Ling, the brother of the now Dowager-Empress, He Jin, dominated the regency government and sought to establish his reputation by gathering scholars of reputation, including Xun You. However, when He Jin moved against the eunuch factions, he was assassinated and open fighting broke out in the capital. Without any legal authority, Dong Zhuo led troops into Luoyang and took power,⁷ and by the beginning of 190 troops were being raised in the east to oppose him.

Xun Yu had been appointed to government office in Luoyang about this time, but when Dong Zhuo came to power he foresaw coming trouble and asked to be reassigned to a position outside the capital. Instead of going this new post however, he resigned and returned home to Yingchuan. There he sought to warn the locals that Yingchuan's open position would make it vulnerable in the coming war, but most of them did not follow his advice. Xun Yu and his family and friends with him went north to Ye, capital of Ji province, at the invitation of its Governor (*mu*) Han Fu. Soon after this, Dong Zhuo sent troops eastward to plunder Chenliu and Yingchuan, and many of the people there were robbed and killed.

By the time Xun Yu arrived in Ye, Yuan Shao, from the powerful and influential Yuan family and former leader of the eastern coalition,⁸ had coerced Han Fu into ceding control of Ji province to him. Despite the change in government, Xun Yu was still welcomed warmly by this new host. Xun Yu's elder brother Xun Shen remained and joined Yuan Shao's government, as did two other scholars from Yingchuan, Xin Ping and Guo Tu.

Xun Yu however did not stay with Yuan Shao. In 192 he went south to join Cao Cao, who at this time had recently defeated a contingent of Black Mountain bandits in Yan province, to the south of Ji province, and restored a degree of order as Administrator (*taishou*) of Dong prefecture. The two became fast friends, and Cao Cao appointed Xun Yu as his Staff-Major (*sima*), essentially making him his leading advisor and second-in-command. It is said that Xun Yu advised Cao Cao to continue focusing on developing his position in the east, arguing that Dong Zhuo would certainly be destroyed very soon.

In the meantime, Xun Yu's kinsman Xun You had remained at Luoyang, and been relocated with the Imperial Court to Chang'an at Dong Zhuo's order. There he became involved in a plot to assassinate Dong Zhuo, but it was discovered before it could be carried out. Xun You was arrested and imprisoned, but continued to act calm and unconcerned. Shortly after this, Dong Zhuo was assassinated by his own bodyguard Lü Bu in another plot, and Xun You escaped.

Even after the death of Dong Zhuo, the Imperial government was unable to restore order. Lü Bu was driven away by Dong Zhuo's vengeful subordinates, who took control of the Emperor in a military junta. However, communication remained cutoff, and the new regime exerted no control over the affairs in the east. Xun You refused office and escaped east, eventually settling in Jing province about the middle Yangzi.

II. Xun Yu and the Beginning of the Rise of Cao Cao

After the Inspector (*cishi*) of Yan province Liu Dai was killed in battle against Yellow Scarves, a subordinate of Cao Cao, Chen Gong, convinced many of the Yan provincial staff to accept Cao Cao as

⁶ The Biography of Xun You is in SGZ 10, translated in Appendix B.

⁷ Biographies of Dong Zhuo are in SGZ 6 and HHS 72.

⁸ Biographies of Yuan Shao are in SGZ 6 and HHS 74.

the new Governor of Yan province, in order to take command of the provincial army against the continuing threat. In this capacity, Cao Cao led campaigns against Yellow Scarves to pacify the province, eventually obtaining the surrender of a considerable force.⁹ During this time, Xun Yu accompanied Cao Cao as his Staff-Major.

In 193 and 194, as Cao Cao launched campaigns against Tao Qian in Xu province to the east,¹⁰ Xun Yu instead remained behind to govern affairs in Yan province, stationed at Juancheng. At this time, Cao Cao's other subordinates and allies, notably Chen Gong and Zhang Miao,¹¹ began to have doubts of their choice of master, and invited Lü Bu, escaped from the west, to take over the province. As Lü Bu arrived in Chenliu, in the east of Yan province and Zhang Miao's headquarters, Zhang Miao sent a message to Xun Yu claiming that Lü Bu had come to assist Cao Cao's campaign.

Xun Yu immediately realized that Zhang Miao was plotting rebellion, and sent urgent word to Cao Cao's lieutenant Xiahou Dun, posted at Puyang in Cao Cao's former office as Administrator of Dong prefecture.¹² Xiahou Dun immediately went to Juancheng and helped restore order, executing a number of men who had been plotting together with Zhang Miao and Chen Gong. The greater part of Yan province had joined with Lü Bu and Zhang Miao, however, leaving only three cities: Juancheng, Fan, and Dong'e.

Sending Cheng Yu¹³ to rally the defenders at Fan and Dong'e, Xun Yu remained at Juancheng with Xiahou Dun and successfully resisted Lü Bu's attacks.¹⁴ Meanwhile Cheng Yu defeated Chen Gong at Dong'e, and so Cao Cao was able to return from Xu province and face this threat. After several months of heavy fighting, Lü Bu was gradually being driven back, when word arrived that Tao Qian had died. It is said that Cao Cao considered breaking off to conquer Xu province first before dealing with Lü Bu, but Xun Yu argued that Yan province was Cao Cao's base and must be settled first. Cao Cao followed this advice, and by the next year Lü Bu and Chen Gong were defeated and fled to take refuge in Xu province,¹⁵ and Zhang Miao was killed.

In 196, as Cao Cao extended his control further south into Yu province, a unique opportunity appeared. The Emperor and much of the Imperial Court had escaped their captors in Chang'an and returned east to the ruins of Luoyang. Cao Cao wished to relocate the Emperor further east to his own headquarters at Xu city in Yu province, but some of his subordinates argued that the east was still insecure and taking custody of the Emperor from the military leaders about Luoyang would be difficult. Xun Yu however argued that this opportunity to gain such legitimacy could not be missed, and Cao Cao followed this advice. Cao Cao successfully led troops to Luoyang, defeated the local rivals, relocated the Emperor to Xu, and began establishing a new Imperial government. Thereafter, Cao Cao could legitimize his campaigns and actions as serving and restoring the Han Empire, with himself as its foremost servant.

9 The number is claimed as 300,000 fighters and 700,000 dependents in a letter to the Court in Chang'an, preserved in SGZ 1, though this is an obvious exaggeration.

10 The Biography of Tao Qian is in SGZ 8. Though Tao Qian and Cao Cao were already enemies, the second invasion may have had a personal element: Cao Cao's father Cao Song was murdered by subordinates of Tao Qian in 194, as reported in the Biography of Ying Shao in *Houhanshu* [HHS] 48.

11 Zhang Miao was a well known figure and former friend of both Yuan Shao and Cao Cao. Neither Zhang Miao nor Chen Gong have their own SGZ biographies, and are instead contained within the Biography of Lü Bu in SGZ 7.

12 The Biography of Xiahou Dun is in SGZ 9.

13 The Biography of Cheng Yu is in SGZ 14.

14 An anecdote in the Biography of Xun Yu also tells of how Guo Gong the Inspector of Yu province led an army to Juancheng to observe the situation, but Xun Yu was able to convince him to remain neutral and leave with a show of confidence.

15 After the death of Tao Qian, control of Xu province had been taken by Liu Bei, posthumously Emperor Zhaolie. His biography is in SGZ 32. Shortly after arriving, Lü Bu seized control of the province, reducing Liu Bei to a junior ally.

In this new government, Xun Yu was appointed Director of the Secretariat, in charge with the handling, processing, and issuing of Imperial Orders and documents. Hereafter, Xun Yu largely became the head of Cao Cao's government and headquarters based in Xu. In this capacity, he also recommended many people to Cao Cao to assist in the rebuilding of a functional government, and it is said that nearly every single appointment based on his recommendation proved to be a great success.¹⁶

This of course, meant that Xun Yu would remain behind while Cao Cao was in the field on campaign. It is said that Xun Yu recommended Xun You as his own replacement.

III. Xun Yu, Xun You, and the Military Rise of Cao Cao

In 197, Cao Cao launched a campaign against Zhang Xiu, junior ally of Liu Biao in northern Jing province and a threat to Xu capital from the south, but was seriously defeated at Wan.

Yuan Shao, based in Ji province and in the process of establishing his dominance over the north of the Empire, was said to have resented Cao Cao's control of the Imperial Court, and wrote a contemptuous letter after Cao Cao's defeat. It is said that Cao Cao was angry as he knew he could not yet challenge Yuan Shao, but Xun Yu reassured Cao Cao by listing ways in which Cao Cao was sure to overcome Yuan Shao in the end¹⁷ and outlining a grand strategy for how Cao Cao should strengthen his positions in the west and east to resist and block Yuan Shao's own efforts of expansion. For the rest of the year Cao Cao continued to improve his position in the south in campaigns against Zhang Xiu and Yuan Shu,¹⁸ while at Xun Yu's recommendation Zhong Yao was sent to establish alliances with the military leaders in the west.

In 198, Cao Cao appointed Xun You as Military Master (*junshi*), his chief military strategist, with another of Xun Yu's recommendations, Guo Jia, in a junior strategist as Libationer (*jijiu*).¹⁹ That year, Cao Cao inflicted a heavy defeat on Zhang Xiu and Liu Biao at Anzhong,²⁰ largely securing his southern flank. With the encouragement of Xun You,²¹ he then turned east against Lü Bu in Xu province. Lü Bu was defeated in a series of engagements and eventually forced to defend in Xiapi city.²² As the siege dragged on, Cao Cao considered withdrawing, but Xun You and Guo Jia encouraged him to press the attack, and after redirecting the Yi and Si rivers to flood the city, Lü Bu was captured and executed in the beginning of 199.

16 The Biography of Xun Yu in SGZ 10 claims the only exceptions were the appointments of Yan Xiang to Yang province and Wei Kang to Liang province, both of whom were defeated and killed while in office.

17 This anecdote overlaps somewhat with a similar anecdote of Guo Jia, another military strategist in Cao Cao's service, listing ten points in which Cao Cao surpassed Yuan Shao. The anecdote is in the Biography of Guo Jia in SGZ 14.

18 Yuan Shu, a cousin and rival of Yuan Shao, had been based in Yu province and a threat to Cao Cao's position in Yan province, but was defeated and driven south from Yu into Yang province about 193. In 197 Yuan Shu declared himself Emperor, but this attempt to establish his own authority against Cao Cao's control of the Han Imperial Court backfired spectacularly by causing many of his subordinates to abandon him. The Biography of Yuan Shu is in SGZ 6.

19 Xun You and Guo Jia were probably already in Cao Cao's service, but SGZ 1 states that the offices of Military Master and Libationer were first established in the beginning of 198.

20 An anecdote in the Biography of Xun You states that Xun You had actually argued against the campaign at first, stating that the alliance between Zhang Xiu and Liu Biao would eventually fall apart but an attack would encourage them to work together. Later, when Cao Cao was hard pressed against their combined forces, he remarked that Xun You had been right. Nevertheless, Cao Cao was able to secure a decisive victory at Anzhong. The battle is described in SGZ 1, and includes an anecdote where Cao Cao predicted his victory in a letter to Xun Yu.

21 An annotation to SGZ 10 from Weishu tells of how Xun You argued that the recent victory against Zhang Xiu and Liu Biao gave them an opening to finish off Lü Bu before he could grow too powerful.

22 The Biography of Lü Bu is in SGZ 7.

About this time Yuan Shao had defeated the last of his major rivals in the north, Gongsun Zan,²³ and was preparing to turn his attention south against Cao Cao. With the securing of the western and eastern flanks and of the rear, Cao Cao was also preparing to face this challenge from the north. It is said that at a debate among Cao Cao's subordinates and advisors, Xun Yu judged that Yuan Shao's civil officers would not be able to work together, and that Yuan Shao's field commanders Yan Liang and Wen Chou would be easily dealt with.²⁴

In 200, Yuan Shao led his army to Liyang on the northern bank of the Yellow River to prepare to cross, and sent an advance force commanded by Yan Liang to attack Baima on the southern bank. At Xun You's advice,²⁵ Cao Cao sent a decoy force to draw Yuan Shao's attention away and then attacked Yan Liang at Baima, killing him. Cao Cao then evacuated Baima, but Yuan Shao sent another advance force commanded by Wen Chou in pursuit of this withdrawal. Again with Xun You's advice,²⁶ Cao Cao left his baggage trains exposed; as Wen Chou's army broke formation to seize the baggage, Cao Cao ambushed and defeated them, killing Wen Chou. Both Yan Liang and Wen Chou were quickly dealt with, as Xun Yu had predicted.

Cao Cao's carefully planned withdrawals drew Yuan Shao forward toward Guandu, where Cao Cao had previously prepared fortifications in anticipation and planned to confront him. The fighting became a protracted siege, and Cao Cao considered withdrawing again to Xu capital. In a letter, Xun Yu encouraged Cao Cao to hold position at Guandu, arguing that the siege had exhausted Yuan Shao's forces and the time had come to use unexpected tactics to break the stalemate.²⁷ At Xun You's advice, Cao Cao sent his officers Xu Huang and Shi Huan to intercept and destroy Yuan Shao's supply wagons. Then, as Xun Yu had predicted, a conflict between Yuan Shao's advisors led his advisor Xu You to defect and reveal the location of Yuan Shao's supply depot at Wuchao guarded by Chunyu Qiong. Leaving Xun You and a cousin, Cao Hong, to command the main camp, Cao Cao personally lead the attack on Wuchao.

Yuan Shao sent his officers Zhang He and Gao Lan to attack Cao Cao's main camp, but as Cao Cao defeated Chunyu Qiong and destroyed the supplies, Yuan Shao's army was thrown into confusion, and Zhang He and Gao Lan sought to surrender. Cao Hong was doubtful, but Xun You successfully argued that the surrender was legitimate. Yuan Shao's army collapsed, and Yuan Shao himself fled with a small escort across the river, leaving Cao Cao to capture all his baggage.²⁸

In 201, as his supplies were insufficient for an invasion of the north, Cao Cao considered breaking off to turn south against Liu Biao. Xun Yu argued that this would give Yuan Shao the opportunity to rebuild his strength, and so Cao Cao continued focused on the north, leading mop-up operations and destroying the last of Yuan Shao's positions south of the Yellow River. In 202 Yuan Shao died, and Cao Cao with Xun You as his advisor launched an attack on Yuan Shao's sons Yuan Tan and Yuan Shang. Though he was able to capture Liyang on the northern bank of the Yellow River, Cao Cao met with fierce opposition and eventually withdrew back south for a time.²⁹ After the withdrawal, Yuan Tan and

23 The Biography of Gongsun Zan is in SGZ 8.

24 The debate, involving Kong Rong and Xun Yu, is given in SGZ 10. Kong Rong does not have a SGZ biography but does have a biography alongside that of Xun Yu in HHS 70.

25 The account is given in SGZ 1 rather than Xun You's biography in SGZ 10.

26 The account is given in both SGZ 1 and SGZ 10.

27 The letter is quoted in both SGZ 1 and SGZ 10.

28 An anecdote in SGZ 1 tells that Cao Cao found letters exchanged between his own officers and Yuan Shao, but burned them all unread, remarking that he understood that some of his men would have doubts about the outcome of the battle.

Yuan Shang fought over the succession of their father, and as Yuan Tan was defeated and driven back, he sent his advisor Xin Pi as envoy to ask to ally with Cao Cao.

Once again there was internal debate as to whether or not they should intervene in the north or break off for a time to look south. Xun You argued in favor of focusing on the north, stating that Liu Biao to the south was not as great a threat. Meanwhile, Xin Pi revealed his true sympathies by transferring his allegiance to Cao Cao and offering advice on how both Yuan Tan and Yuan Shang could be defeated.³⁰ Cao Cao therefore launched another campaign, with Xun You accompanying as usual as his military strategist in both the capture of Ye in 204 and the destruction of Yuan Tan in 205.³¹

In 207, following his victory at White Wolf Mountain and the pacification of the north, Cao Cao wrote that in strategic planning, Xun Yu had contributed the most and Xun You the next after him.³²

IV. The Characters of Xun Yu and Xun You

During the string of victories in the north from 204 onwards, Cao Cao had distributed generous rewards to his officers and followers, including Xun Yu and Xun You. However, Xun Yu had shown great humility by resisting receiving rewards and promotions,³³ and though there are no specific examples of declining rewards recorded for Xun You, he was also noted for humility.³⁴ Both men were said to be paragons of modesty and exceptional moral conduct.³⁵ However, in 212, a tragic event occurred.

Previously in 208, Cao Cao was defeated at the Red Cliffs³⁶ as he sought to extend his power southward, and for a while he was forced on the defensive against attacks by Sun Quan and his officer Zhou Yu³⁷ against his positions in the Han and Huai river valleys. After this position stabilized, Cao Cao turned westward and pacified the rebellious warlords based in the Wei river valley.³⁸ In 212, following these successes, the official Dong Zhao³⁹ with others in Xu capital proposed that Cao Cao should be given special fief as Duke (*gong*) of Wei and the special reward of the Nine Bestowments (*jiuxi*), to honor his unique achievements in supporting the Han government.

Under the old system used by Han, titles of nobility included titles as prince (*wang*)⁴⁰ granted to close members of the Imperial family granted, or as marklords (*hou*) used to reward exceptional

29 The account in SGZ 1 does not provide specifics, but de Crespigny's *Imperial Warlord: A Biography of Cao Cao 155 – 220 AD* argues that in this campaign Cao Cao was actually defeated, which may have necessitated the withdrawal so that opposition groups in the capital would not take advantage of his setback. The Biography of Guo Jia in SGZ 14 however claims that Guo Jia had suggested withdrawal in order to give space for the rivalry between Yuan Tan and Yuan Shang to grow. Whether by design or not, the withdrawal did lead to the brothers turning against each other.

30 Xin Pi was a brother of the Xin Ping of Yingchuan who had followed Xun Yu's advice to leave Yingchuan. The biography of Xin Pi is in SGZ 25.

31 Accounts of Yuan Tan are given within the biographies of Yuan Shao in SGZ 6 and HHS 74.

32 The order is quoted in SGZ 10.

33 Memorials sent up by Cao Cao recommending rewards for Xun Yu and of letters sent by Cao Cao to Xun Yu urging him to accept are quoted in SGZ 10.

34 An anecdote in SGZ 10 says that Cao Cao praised Xun You: "His wisdom can be matched but his modesty cannot."

35 The biographies of both men in SGZ 10 abound with praise, including comparisons to legendary paragons of the past. An excerpt of *Fuzi* quoted in an annotation to SGZ 10 goes so far as to associate Xun Yu with the legend of true sage-kings appearing every five hundred years.

36 In de Crespigny's *Imperial Warlord* he provides a compelling argument that the importance of the battle has been largely exaggerated in traditional accounts.

37 The biography of Sun Quan, posthumously Emperor Da of Wu, is in SGZ 47. The biography of Zhou Yu is in SGZ 54.

38 Accounts of the operations are given in SGZ 1 and in the biography of Jia Xu in SGZ 10.

39 The biography of Dong Zhao is in SGZ 14.

40 The title is also equivalently translated as "king." The choice is largely one of convention.

achievements. The use of Duke would have created a new rank and special status for Cao Cao above the marklords, while the Nine Distinctions were an incredibly high honor,⁴¹ though with certain implications as the last person to receive them was Wang Mang during Former Han, and he usurped the throne and proclaimed his own Xin “New” Dynasty four years later.⁴²

At this time Cao Cao was on his way south to launch another campaign against Sun Quan, and it is possible that he hoped to receive his promotions and honors at Xu along the way.⁴³ However, when Dong Zhao approached Xun Yu about the proposal, Xun Yu objected that such an action was improper. It is said that Cao Cao could not be at ease.⁴⁴

As Cao Cao led his army to Qiao, he summoned Xun Yu to join him to bring rewards to the army, and then detained him by promoting him and appointing him an advisor to the army. Though the promotions and appointments were all given in complimentary terms, they removed him from his independent position in Xu capital and from his influential post as Director of the Secretariat.⁴⁵ However, as the army continued south, Xun Yu took ill and was left behind at Shouchun.

Cao Cao destroyed Sun Quan’s positions north of the Yangzi, but was unable to overcome Sun Quan’s forward position at Ruxu or force a crossing of the Yangzi, and in 213 he returned north. Xun Yu, however, had already died in 212, aged fifty in traditional reckoning. Later in 213, Cao Cao took title as Duke of Wei and accepted the Nine Distinctions.

It is possible that Xun Yu died of natural causes. Many members of the Xun family were known to have died relatively young,⁴⁶ and many others from the north were recorded as succumbing to disease in the south during Cao Cao’s campaigns.⁴⁷ Nevertheless, the timing naturally lends itself to suspicions, and several accounts claim that Xun Yu had realized he had fallen from Cao Cao’s favor and so killed himself.⁴⁸ Historians from Chen Shou onward have cited the example of Xun Yu to discuss the tensions of loyalty and what should be considered proper conduct for a moral gentleman in times of difficulty.⁴⁹

Whatever the truth of the situation, the Xun family remained in positions of power and influence. Xun Yu’s son Xun Yun had previously been wed to a daughter of Cao Cao,⁵⁰ while Xun You was appointed Director of the Secretariat for the new fief of Wei and continued to serve loyally. However, as he accompanied Cao Cao’s 214 campaign against Sun Quan, he fell ill along the way and died, aged fifty-eight. It is said that Cao Cao would weep whenever he spoke of it.⁵¹

Though both Xun Yu and Xun You died before the culmination of the establishment of the Wei dynasty as the successor to Han, both men were among the most foundational pillars of that state, and worthy of

41 The Nine Distinctions are discussed in de Crepsigny’s *Generals of the South: the foundation and early history of the Three Kingdoms state of Wu* and in “A Question of Loyalty: Xun Yu, Cao Cao and Sima Guang.”

42 The biography of Wang Mang is in *Hanshu* [HS] 99.

43 This is argued in de Crepsigny’s *Imperial Warlord* and “A Question of Loyalty.”

44 SGZ 10.

45 In *Imperial Warlord* and “A Question of Loyalty.” de Crepsigny notes that as Director of the Secretariat, Xun Yu could have blocked any edict bestowing title on Cao Cao as Duke of Wei.

46 Accounts of members of the Xun family in SGZ 10 include many who died at younger ages than Xun Yu.

47 Examples include Sima Lang, whose biography is in SGZ 15, and also Xun You. *Imperial Warlord* also discusses the impact of disease in the north’s attempts to conquer the south.

48 Annotations to SGZ 10 and the account in HHS 70 include an anecdote of Cao Cao sending the ill Xun Yu a food container that turned out to be empty.

49 The debates over the centuries is reviewed by de Crepsigny in “A Question of Loyalty.”

50 SGZ 10.

51 Ibid.

being considered on a separate level from the other servants and advisors of Cao Cao. In this they fulfilled the archetypes often cited using the examples of the celebrated Zhuge Liang and Pang Tong who served Liu Bei,⁵² or of Zhang Zhao and Zhang Hong who served Sun Ce of Wu.⁵³

Though Chen Shou classified the two Xun together, he also included Jia Xu in the biography grouping. In response, Pei Songzhi wrote a criticism, arguing that Xun Yu and Xun You should have stood apart in SGZ 10, with Jia Xu categorized with Cheng Yu and Guo Jia in SGZ 14.⁵⁴ Given the unique achievements, character and conduct, and fundamental contributions to the foundations of Wei of the two Xun, this is easy to understand.

52 The biography of Zhuge Liang is in SGZ 35, of Pang Tong in SGZ 37. When Liu Bei invaded Yi province, Zhuge Liang remained behind to manage Liu Bei's base in Jing province while Pang Tong accompanied as military advisor.

53 The biography of Zhang Zhao is in SGZ 52, of Zhang Hong in 53, and of Sun Ce in 46. It is said that whenever Sun Ce went on campaign, one Zhāng would accompany him and the other Zhāng remain at headquarters. Unlike the two Xún, the two Zhāng were not related.

54 In the final appraisal section of SGZ 10, Pei Songzhi includes two annotations of his opinion. The first is a defense of Xun Yu against Chen Shou's criticism, and the second an argument that the two Xun should have been set apart and Jia Xu instead grouped with Cheng Yu and Guo Jia in SGZ 14.

APPENDIX A
Translation of the Biography of Xun Yu, SGZ 10

Xún Yù appellative Wénruò was a Yǐngchuān Yǐngyīn man. His grandfather Shū appellative Jìhé was Magistrate of Lǎnglíng. During the reigns of Hàn [Emperors] Shùn and Huán, he was well known at the time. He had eight sons, called “the Eight Dragons.” [Xún] Yù’s father [Xún] Gǔn was Chancellor of Jǐnán, and his father’s younger brother [Xún] Shuǎng was Executive of Works. (1)

(1) *Xùhànshū* “Continued Book of Hàn” states:

[Xún] Shū had high talent. Wáng Chàng and Lǐ Yīng all took him as a teacher. He became Chancellor to the Marklord of Lǎnglíng, and was called “the Divine Gentleman.”

Zhāng Fán’s *Hànjì* “Annals of Hàn” states:

[Xún] Shū was wide learned and elevated in conduct, with Lǐ Gù and Lǐ Yīng were comrades and good friends, appointed Lǐ Zhāo as a subordinate official, befriended Huáng Shūdù during childhood, was recruited as able and virtuous, skilled and proper, but opposed and criticized the Liáng clan, was sent out to replace the Chancellor to the Marklord of Lǎnglíng, and died in office. He had eight sons: Jiǎn, Gǔn, Jìng, Dào, Shēn, Shuǎng, Sù, Fū.

[Xún] Shuǎng appellative Címíng, was from childhood was good at his studies. Aged twelve, he finished the Chūnqiū and Lùnyǔ, and enjoyed pondering the classics, and he did not answer recruitment summons for over ten years. When Dǒng Zhuó seized power, he also summoned [Xún] Shuǎng. [Xún] Shuǎng wished to escape, but an official quickly detained him. Imperial Order was sent down to the prefecture, appointing him Chancellor of Píngyuán. On the way he reached Yuànlíng, and was again promoted to Minister of Attendants. He was in office for three days, when an order promoted him to Executive of Works. [Xún] Shuǎng began as a commoner, and in ninety-five days he reached the Three Executives.

[Xún] Shū’s old residence was at Xīháo neighborhood, and the county magistrate Yuàn Kāng said: “In the past the Gāoyáng clan had eight geniuses,” and renamed the neighborhood as Gāoyáng neighborhood. [Xún] Jìng appellative Shūcí also had virtue, his reputation almost reached [Xún] Shuǎng, and he refused office all his life.

Huángfǔ Mì’s *Yìshìzhuàn* “Biographies of Wandering Scholars”:

Someone asked Xǔ Zǐjiāng “Of [Xún] Jìng and [Xún] Shuǎng, who was more virtuous?”
[Xǔ] Zǐjiāng said: “Both men are jade. [Xún] Shuǎng] Címíng shines on the outside, [Xún] Jìng] Shūcí shines on the inside.”

When [Xún] Yù was young, Nányáng’s Hé Yóng was impressed with him, saying: “He is a genius to assist Kings.” (1)

(1) *Diǎnlüè* states: Palace Regular Attendant Táng Héng wished to wed a daughter to Rǔnán’s Fù Gōngmíng, Gōngmíng would not accept, and transferred her to [Xún] Yù. His father [Xún] Gǔn

admired [Táng] Héng's power, had [Xún] Yù wed her, and so [Xún] Yù was ridiculed by commentators.

Your Servant [Péi] Sōngzhī comments:

Hànjì says that Táng Héng died in Emperor Huán's Yánxī seventh year [164]. [Xún] Yù at that time would only be aged two, so at the time of [Xún] Yù's marriage, [Táng] Héng would have been gone for a long time. The talk of admiring [Táng Héng's] power cannot be correct.

Your Servant [Péi] Sōngzhī also believes that [Xún] Gǔn as one of the Eight Dragons would certainly not have without reason obtained [the "Eight Dragons" honorific], so though he might be forced to agree, how can one speak of admiring power? In the past, Zhèng Hū for refusing [marriage alliance with] Qí was ridiculed, but Master Juàn [Bùyí] for resisting [marriage with the daughter of] Huò [Guāng] was praised. The ridicule was for losing assistance, and the praise was for considering the long term. Having no relations can reach to harm, therefore each safeguarded their principles and that is all. As for when the eunuchs managed affairs [in Xún Gǔn's time], everyone within the seas held back their voices; the voices of Zuǒ Guàn and Táng Héng commanded life and death. Therefore at the time there was a saying: "Zuǒ can turn the Heavens, Táng sits alone," meaning that none could match their authority and power. If one obeyed them then their close relatives were save, if one disobeyed them then great disaster would arrive. This truly was a time when it was easy to be destroyed and one must suffer disgrace in order to protect oneself. In the past Jiǎng Xǔ had marriage connections with Wáng [Mǎng's] clan, and this did not decrease his pure and high conduct. [Xún] Gǔn in this marriage, how could there be any harm?

Yǒnghàn first year [189] he was nominated as filial and incorrupt, and appointed Director of Palace Office Supplies. Due to the chaos of Dǒng Zhuó, he asked to be sent out as a replacement official, and was appointed Magistrate of Kàngfù, but then he resigned his office and returned home, saying to the local elders: "Yǐngchuān is open land surrounded on all four sides by war. The realm is in transition, and will have soldiers charging. We must quickly leave here, and not stay long." Of the villagers most were attached to the land and hesitated. At the same time the Governor of Jìzhōu, Hán Fù of the same prefecture [Yǐngchuān] sent cavalry to invite them, but there were none who followed them. [Xún] Yù alone led his clansmen to Jìzhōu.

By then Yuán Shào had already seized [Hán] Fù's position [as Governor of Jìzhōu], and cared for [Xún] Yù with the utmost Courtesy to a Guest. [Xún] Yù's younger brother [Xún] Chén and the same prefecture's [Yǐngchuān's] Xīn Píng and Guō Tú all were appointed by [Yuán] Shào. [Xún] Yù judged that [Yuán] Shào in the end would not be able to complete a great work. At the time Tàizǔ [Cáo Cāo] was General Exerting Warfare and at Dōngjùn.

Chūpíng second year [192], [Xún] Yù left [Yuán] Shào and joined Tàizǔ. Tàizǔ was greatly pleased and said: "You are my [Zhāng] Zífáng," appointing him as Staff-Major. At the time he was twenty-nine.

At that time, Dǒng Zhuó's power dominated the realm, Tàizǔ asked [Xún] Yù about this, and [Xún] Yù said: "[Dǒng] Zhuó is beyond brutality and tyranny, and will certainly end in disaster. There is nothing that can be done about it." [Dǒng] Zhuó sent Lǐ Jué and others out east of the Passes, and wherever they passed they ravaged and plundered, reaching Yǐngchuān and Chénliú and returning. Of the villagers that remained most were killed and robbed.

Next year [193], Tàizǔ became Governor of Yǎnzhōu, and afterward became General Defending East. [Xún] Yù always followed as his Staff-Major.

Xīngpíng first year [194] Tàizǔ campaigned against Táo Qiān, appointing [Xún] Yù to remain and manage affairs. At the same time Zhāng Miǎo and Chén Gōng, in order to lead Yǎnzhōu in rebellion, secretly invited Lǚ Bù. When [Lǚ] Bù arrived, [Zhāng] Miǎo then sent Liú Yì to inform [Xún] Yù: “General Lǚ has come to assist Governor Cáo in attacking Táo Qiān. We should quickly present his army with food supplies.” Everyone was suspicious. [Xún] Yù knew [Zhāng] Miǎo was rebelling, quickly gathered troops and made preparations, and urgently sent summons to Administrator of Dōng Prefecture Xiàhóu Dūn, but Yǎnzhōu’s various cities all had turned to [Lǚ] Bù.

At the time Tàizǔ had led all the armies to attack [Táo] Qiān, the remaining garrison troops were few, and of the commanders and officials most had plotted together with [Zhāng] Miǎo and [Chén] Gōng. [Xiàhóu] Dūn arrived, and that night executed the plotters, several tens of men, and the army was therefore settled.

Inspector of Yùzhōu Guō Gòng led his army of several tens of thousands to come and reached below the city walls. Some said he was conspiring with Lǚ Bù, and the army was deeply afraid. [Guō] Gòng asked to meet [Xún] Yù, and [Xún] Yù was about to go. [Xiàhóu] Dūn and others said: “You sir are the defender of the whole province. If you go you will certainly be in danger. You cannot go.”

[Xún] Yù said: “[Guō] Gòng in ordinary times did not correspond of [Zhāng] Miǎo and the rest. Now he has come quickly, and his plans are certainly not decided. When he is undecided and we persuade him, even if we cannot use him, we can cause him to be neutral. If we first suspect him, he will then become angry and settle his plans.”

[Guō] Gòng saw that [Xún] Yù had no fear and said Juànchéng would not be easy to attack, and therefore led his troops away.

He also made plans with Chéng Yù, sending [Chéng Yù] to persuade Fàn and Dōng’ē, and in the end they saved three cities to support Tàizǔ. Tàizǔ from Xúzhōu returned to attack [Lǚ] Bù at Púyáng, and [Lǚ] Bù fled east.

Second year [195] summer, Tàizǔ garrisoned Chéngshì, there was great famine, and people cannibalized each other.

Táo Qiān died, and Tàizǔ wished to therefore seize Xúzhōu and afterward return settle [Lǚ] Bù. [Xún] Yù said:

“In the past Gāozǔ [Liú Bāng] defended Guānzhōng, Guāngwǔ [Liú Xiù] occupied Hénèi. Both used deep roots and firm foundations to rule the realm. Advancing they could overcome enemies, retreating they could firmly defend, and therefore though they had difficulties and defeats in the end they achieved their Great Enterprise. General, you originally used Yǎnzhōu as your headquarters, pacifying the troubles east of the mountains, so that of the people none did not turn their hearts to support you. Moreover, the Hé and Qí are strategic positions in the realm, though it is now ravaged and ruined, yet it is easy to defend itself, and it is also your Guānzhōng and Hénèi. It cannot but be settled first.

“Now you have destroyed [Lǚ Bù’s subordinate officers] Lǚ Fēng and Xuē Lán. If you send a division of troops east to attack Chén Gōng, then [Chén] Gōng will certainly not dare look west, and so in the

meantime you can lead troops to collect and harvest wheat, storing supplies and grain, in one move [Lǚ] Bù can be destroyed. When [Lǚ] Bù is destroyed, you can then make alliance south with Yángzhōu to together attack Yuán Shù, and by this reach the Huái and Sì.

“But if you leave [Lǚ] Bù and go east, if you leave behind too many troops you will not not enough to use [in Xúzhōu] and if you leave too few then the people will all seek refuge in the cities, and be unable to collect harvest. [Lǚ] Bù will take advantage to rob and plunder. The people’s support will be endangered, only Juànchéng, Fàn, and Wèi could be preserved, and the rest would be lost, and this would be to lose Yǎnzhōu. If Xúzhōu were not conquered, then where could you safely return?”

“Moreover, though Táo Qiān is dead, Xúzhōu will not be easily taken. They remember the warnings of their past defeats, will be afraid and join together, and help defend one another. Now the east has already collected its grain, and will certainly hide it and leave empty fields for you. When you attack them your will not overcome them, and when you plunder you will gain nothing, and within ten days, an army of a hundred thousand will without battle put itself in difficulties and that is all. (1) In your previous attack on Xúzhōu, your power and punishments were harsh, (2) the sons and younger brothers remember the shame of their fathers and elder brothers, and will certainly give themselves to defense, with no thought of surrender. Even if you can defeat them, yet you cannot hold them.

- (1) Your Servant Sōngzhī believes: At that time Xúzhōu was not pacified, and Yǎnzhōu was also in rebellion, yet he spoke of an army of a hundred thousand, even though these were words of exaggeration necessary to not reveal weakness. Therefore one may know that during the Guāndù campaign, it cannot be said that the troops were less than ten thousand.
- (2) *Cáo Mán Zhuàn* “Biography of the Deceiver Cáo” states: From when the capital region suffered the disaster of Dǒng Zhuó, people fled out east, and many took refuge about Péngchéng. When Tàizǔ arrived, he destroyed and killed several tens of thousands of men and women at the Sì river, so that the river could not flow. Táo Qiān led his army to garrison Wǔyuán. Tàizǔ could not advance, and led his army to follow the Sì south to attack and capture Lù, Suīlíng, and Xiàqū counties, and slaughtered all of them. Chickens and dogs were also wiped out, and in the ruined villages none returned.

“In matters where one must abandon one thing to acquire another, exchanging the small for the large can be done, exchange the dangerous for the secure can be done, and not risking the firmness of the foundation when seizing a critical opportunity can be done. Presently these three conditions are not fulfilled. May you reconsider, General.”

Tàizǔ therefore stopped, greatly collected grain, again with [Lǚ] Bù battled, and sent divisions of troops to pacify all the counties. [Lǚ] Bù was defeated and fled, and Yǎnzhōu was therefore pacified.

Jiàn’ān first year [196], Tàizǔ attacked and destroyed Yellow Scarves. Hàn Emperor Xiàn [Liú Xié] from Hédōng returned to Luòyáng. Tàizǔ discussed moving the capital to Xǔ. Some believed the east of the mountains were not yet pacified, Hán Xiān and Yáng Fèng had just brought Heaven’s Son to Luòyáng, allied to the north with Zhāng Yáng, and could not yet be dealt with.

[Xún] Yù advised Tàizǔ:

“In the past, Jìn Wén received Zhōu Xiāng-wáng and the vassal lords admired and followed him, Gāozǔ in his eastern campaign wore mourning dress for Yì-dì and the realm turned their hearts to him.

From when Heaven's Son was exiled, you General were the first to call for righteous troops. Only because the east of the mountains were in chaos were you unable to travel to the west of the passes, yet you still sent subordinate officers to brave the dangers and make contact as envoys. Though you defend against the chaos outside, yet your heart has never but been with the Ruling House. This is your fundamental ambition to restore the realm.

“Now the Imperial Carriage has returned, but the eastern capital [Luòyáng] is in ruins. Righteous gentlemen all think of defending the foundation, and the commoners long for the past and increase their mourning. Truly to take this opportunity to welcome the Ruler to follow the hopes of the people is great obedience, to wield justice to make the powerful submit is great strategy, and to support the righteous to recruit the talented is great virtue. Though the realm has traitors, they will certainly be unable to last; this is obvious. Hán Xiān and Yáng Fèng, dare they cause trouble? But if this opportunity is not decided, everywhere hearts will change, and though afterward you may worry about it, nothing can be done.”

Tàizǔ therefore reached Luòyáng, and invited Heaven's Son to move the capital to Xǔ. Heaven's Son appointed Tàizǔ as General-in-Chief, and promoted [Xún] Yù to Hàn Palace Attendant and concurrently Director of the Secretariat.

[Xún Yù] always held important responsibility at Court. (1) Though Tàizǔ led campaigns abroad, in military and state affairs he always made plans together with [Xún] Yù. (2) Tàizǔ asked [Xún] Yù: “Who can succeed you as my strategist?” [Xún] Yù said: “Xún Yōu and Zhōng Yáo.”

Before this, [Xún] Yù had discussed strategists and recommended Xì Zhìcái. When Zhìcái died, he also recommended Guō Jiā. Tàizǔ believed that [Xún] Yù understood people well, and all who were recommended proved competent for the office. Only the appointments of Yán Xiàng to Yángzhōu and Wéi Kāng to Liángzhōu afterward ended with their defeat and destruction. (3)

(1) *Diǎnlüè* states: [Xún] Yù acted humbly to subordinates, and did not seek to accumulate comforts. He had a powerful position, but never used it for selfish intentions. [Xún] Yù had a cousin with little talent and conduct. Someone said to [Xún] Yù: “With you managing affairs, how can you not appoint him as a consultant-gentleman?” [Xún] Yù laughed and said: “Officials are appointed to reward talent. If I do as you suggest, what will everyone say of me?” His fairness in governance was all of this sort.

(2) *Diǎnlüè* states: [Xún] Yù was tall and handsome.

Also, *Píngyuán Nǚ Héng Zhùan* “Biography of Nǚ Héng of Píngyuán” states:

[Nǚ] Héng appellation Zhèngpíng. At the beginning of Jiàn'ān [196] he traveled north from Jīngzhōu to Xǔ capital. He presumed on his talent to act arrogantly, was judgmental of the goods and faults [of others], and if he met someone who did not match him then he would not talk with them, so everyone because of this detested him. Only Minister Treasurer Kǒng Róng highly esteemed his talent, and sent up a letter recommending him: “He is virtuous in character and upright in conduct, his literary talent of utmost excellence. As soon as he is introduced to literature, he ascends up and understands the obscure meanings. With a single glance of his eye, he can recite it all from his mouth. With a single hear of his ear, he never forgets it in his heart. His nature is in keeping with principle, his thinking like the divine. [Sāng] Hóngyáng calculated

by heart and [Zhāng] Ānshì wrote from memory, but comparing them to [Nǐ] Héng, they truly cannot be considered special.” [Nǐ] Héng at the time was aged twenty-four.

At the time though Xǔ capital was newly established, it had gathered a great many scholars. [Nǐ] Héng once wrote a name card on his chest, but even when the words were faded out he still had not found a position. Someone asked him: “Why don’t you join Chén [Qún] Chángwén and Sīmǎ [Lǎng] Bódá?”

[Nǐ] Héng said: “You wish me to join with boys on the level of butchers and wine-peddlers!”

The someone also asked: “Presently in Xǔ, who can you most accept?”

[Nǐ] Héng said: “Among elder boys there is Kǒng [Róng] Wénjǔ, among younger boys there is Yáng [Xiū] Dézǔ.”

The someone also asked: “Are not Executive Cáo [Cāo], Director-Gentleman Xún [Yù], and [General] Overwhelming Bandits Zhào [Róng] matchless in these times?”

[Nǐ] Héng did not judge much of Executive Cáo, and also observed that Xún [Yù] had good looks and Zhào [Róng] had large abdomen, and therefore answered: “[Xún Yù] Wénruò can use his face to give condolences, [Zhào Róng] Zhìcháng can be sent to supervise the kitchen when hosting guests.” The meaning of this was to say that Xún [Yù] only had appearances and Zhào [Róng] good at eating meat. Therefore everyone all gnashed teeth in anger.

[Nǐ] Héng knew everyone was displeased, and wished to return south to Jīngzhōu. When dressed to leave, everyone went to send him off, first set up a canopy to the city wall’s south, and when they gathered said to each other: “[Nǐ] Héng is rude. Now when he arrives, we will not rise to answer him.”

When [Nǐ] Héng arrived, everyone all remained sitting and did not rise. [Nǐ] Héng therefore cried out and loudly wailed. Everyone asked him the reason. [Nǐ] Héng said: “When walking among corpses and coffins, can one not but grieve?”

[Nǐ] Héng went south and met Liú Biǎo, and Biǎo was deeply courteous to him. General Huáng Zǔ was stationed at Xiàkǒu, and [Huáng] Zǔ’s son [Huáng] Shè was friendly with [Nǐ] Héng, and therefore he went to Xiàkǒu. [Huáng] Zǔ commended his talent, and every time they were seated with other guests, he would introduce them to [Nǐ] Héng to talk. Later [Nǐ] Héng became arrogant, answered [Huáng] Zǔ’s words with excessively coarse words, and [Huáng] Zǔ believed it was insulting him, was greatly furious, and ordered his men to drag [Nǐ] Héng by the hair out. The attendants therefore grabbed him and went, pulling him out and killing him.

Your Servant Sōngzhī, because the base biography does not appraise [Xún] Yù’s appearance, recorded *Diǎnlüè* and [Nǐ] Héng *Zhuàn* to illustrate it. Also, Pān Xù on [Xún] Yù’s stele appraised [Xún] Yù: “Gem-like beauty and unique appearance.”

Zhāng Héng’s *Wénshìzhuàn* “Biographies of Literary Scholars” states:

Kǒng Róng repeatedly recommended [Nǐ] Héng to Tàizǔ. [Tàizǔ] wished to meet him, but [Nǐ] Héng detested him and was resentful, and therefore claimed illness to refuse, and repeatedly

made [negative] comments. Tàizǔ heard of this, wished to humiliate him, and therefore appointed him as a drum official.

Later in the eighth moon at Court there was a great feast, and guests and visitors gathered together. At the time, when drum officials had beat the drums, all were to remove their old clothes and change to new clothes. At [Nǐ] Héng's turn, [Nǐ] Héng beat the *Yúyáng Sānzhuā* [song]. His method was unusual and the sound wonderful. The seated visitors heard it, and none were not moved. Afterward [Nǐ] Héng did not change clothes, the official scolded him, and [Nǐ] Héng therefore went in front of Tàizǔ, removed his clothes piece by piece, stood naked, then slowly put on trousers and cap, and went back to beat the drums to play the *Sānzhuā*, and his face had no embarrassment. Tàizǔ greatly laughed, and told those seated around him: "I wished to humiliate [Nǐ] Héng, but [Nǐ] Héng instead humiliated me." Up to now there is the *Yúyáng Sānzhuā*, composed by [Nǐ] Héng himself.

[Kǒng] Róng deeply reproached [Nǐ] Héng repeatedly, and also explained Tàizǔ's intentions, wishing to have him meet with Tàizǔ. [Nǐ] Héng agreed, saying: "For your sake I will go." At the tenth moon at Court, [Kǒng] Róng first met Tàizǔ, saying: "[Nǐ] Héng wishes to meet." Later that day, [Nǐ] Héng wore plain robes, cloth shoes, sat outside the gate of Tàizǔ's camp, with a staff hammered the ground, repeatedly insulting Tàizǔ. Tàizǔ ordered the outer stables to quickly prepare three elite horses and two riders, and said to [Kǒng] Róng: "This brat Nǐ Héng dare act thus! I could kill him like a sparrow or rat, but considering that this man has false reputation, and has been heard of far and near, if I kill him now, people will say I lack tolerance. Now I will send him to Liú Biǎo, and see how he ends up." Therefore he ordered to riders to set [Nǐ] Héng on the horse, and the two riders held and sent him to Nányáng.

Fùzǐ states:

[Nǐ] Héng was good at debating in speech and scolding in discussion. On the day he met Governor of Jīngzhōu Liú Biǎo, in order to ingratiate himself with [Liú] Biǎo he acted even more so, and [Liú] Biǎo was pleased with him and treated him as a most honored guest. [Nǐ] Héng praised [Liú] Biǎo's goodness without end, but when discussing [Liú] Biǎo's attendants he was without restraint. Therefore the attendants because of his weakness slandered him: "[Nǐ] Héng praised the General's [Liú Biǎo's] benevolence as being unsurpassed by Xī-bó, but believes he is not decisive and in the end will not be successful certainly because of this." These words were an honest description of [Liú] Biǎo's wisdom and faults, but were not something [Nǐ] Héng had said. [Liú] Biǎo did not thoroughly investigate, and therefore grew distant from [Nǐ] Héng and sent him away. [Nǐ] Héng, because he lost favor with Liú Biǎo and was unwise with Huáng Zǔ, died and was discredited, and was laughed at by the realm. Those who slander are effective indeed.

(3) *Sānfǔ Juélù Zhù* "Annotations to Diaries of the Three Capital Prefectures" states:

[Yán] Xiàng appellative Wénzé was a Jīngzhào man. When young he was astute and widely-learned, and had courage and wisdom. As Deputy to the Palace Censorate Commanding the Army he went to Yángzhōu to attack Yuán Shù. It happened that [Yuán] Shù died of illness, and therefore he was appointed Inspector of Yángzhōu. Jiàn'ān fifth year [201] he was killed by Sūn Cè's Administrator of Lújiāng Lǐ Shù killed. At the time he was thirty-eight. Zhào Qí from the same prefecture as [Yán] Xiàng compiled the *Sānfǔ Juélù*, feared his contemporaries would not thoroughly understand his meaning, and therefore hid the text, showing it only to [Yán] Xiàng.

[Wéi] Kāng appellation Yuánjiāng was also a Jīngzhào man. Kǒng Róng wrote a letter to [Wéi] Kāng's father [Wéi] Duān: "The day before yesterday [Wéi] Kāng Yuánjiāng visited. He has profound genius and bright talent, elegant manner and great determination, and is someone capable of great things. Yesterday [Wéi] Kāng's younger brother Zhòngjiāng also visited. He has virtuous nature and loyal honesty, nimble writing sincere and true, and is someone to secure the family. How unexpected that these two pearls should come from an old oyster; one should deeply value them." [Wéi] Duān from Governor of Liángzhōu was appointed Minister Charioteer. [Wéi] Kāng succeeded as Inspector of Liángzhōu, and at the time people honored him. Later he was besieged by Mǎ Chāo, firmly defended for a long time, but the relief army did not arrive, and therefore he was killed by [Mǎ] Chāo. Zhòngjiāng was named [Wéi] Dàn. See *Liú Shào Zhuàn* [SGZ 21].

From when Tàizǔ welcomed Heaven's Son, Yuán Shào inwardly refused to submit. When [Yuán] Shào conquered the north of the Hé, the realm feared his power. Tàizǔ to the east was concerned about Lǚ Bù and to the south resisted Zhāng Xiù, but [Zhāng] Xiù defeated Tàizǔ at Wǎn, and [Yuán] Shào became increasingly arrogant, wrote a letter to Tàizǔ, and his words were offensive and proud.

Tàizǔ was greatly furious, when he went about his movements changed from normal, and everyone all said it was because he had been unsuccessful against Zhāng Xiù. Zhōng Yáo asked [Xún] Yù about this, and [Xún] Yù said: "The Executive's intelligence is such that he certainly does not obsess over past calamities. He is probably thinking over something else."

Then he went to meet Tàizǔ to ask him, and Tàizǔ therefore showed [Yuán] Shào's letter to [Xún] Yù, saying: "Now I wish to punish this injustice, but my strength is no match. What of it?"

[Xún] Yù said: "Considering the successes and failures of ancient times, those who truly had ability, though they were weak they were certain to become strong, but those who did not, though they were strong they became weak. Liú [Bāng] and Xiàng [Yǔ] in their successes and defeats are enough to demonstrate this. Now the only one who can contest the realm with you is Yuán Shào. [Yuán] Shào appears outwardly lenient but inwardly is jealous, appoints people but suspects their intentions. You are of wise judgment and adaptable, and only ability determines appropriate [appointment]. This is superiority in judgment. [Yuán] Shào is hesitant and makes few decisions, missing opportunities. You are able to decide great affairs, and adapt to changes without limit. This is superiority in planning. [Yuán] Shào's military discipline is lax, his orders are not firm, and though the soldiers are many, in fact they are difficult to use. Your orders are clear, rewards and punishments are enforced, and though the soldiers are few, they all fight to the death. This is superiority in military. [Yuán] Shào relies on his family accumulations, feigns appearances of wisdom in order to collect famous followers, and therefore many gentlemen of little ability but good reputation follow him. You use benevolence to care for people, sponsor sincerity and not empty good appearance, in your own conduct are solemn and frugal, but in rewarding the accomplished begrudge nothing, and therefore the truly loyal and upright gentlemen of the realm all wished to serve. This is superiority in virtue. With these four superiorities to support Heaven's Son, wielding justice to go on campaign, who dares be disobedient? What can [Yuán] Shào's powerful words do?"

Tàizǔ was pleased.

[Xún] Yù said: "Without first eliminating Lǚ Bù, the Hé's north cannot yet be easily planned for."

Tàizǔ said: “Agreed. I am concerned by this, but also fear [Yuán] Shào will raid inside the Passes, stir up the Qiāng and Hú, and to the south join with Shǔ-Hàn. Then I would alone be using Yǎn and Yù to resist five-sixths of the realm. What should be done?”

[Xún] Yù said: “Inside the Passes the military leaders are over ten, and none can unite them. Only Hán Suì and Mǎ Chāo are the strongest. They will observe the east of the mountains are fighting, and will certainly each hold armies to defend themselves. Now if we assure them with kindness and virtue, sending envoys to make peace, though the situation cannot be secure for long, it will be enough that they will not move while you pacify the east of the mountains. Zhōng Yáo can be entrusted with western affairs. Then you will have no concerns.”

Third year [198], Tàizǔ had defeated Zhāng Xiù, to the east captured Lǚ Bù and settled Xúzhōu, and therefore opposed Yuán Shào. Kǒng Róng said to [Xún] Yù: “[Yuán] Shào’s territory is expansive and his troops powerful. Tián Fēng and Xǔ Yōu are gentlemen of wisdom and calculation, making plans for him. Shěn Pèi and Féng Jì are ministers of utmost loyalty, managing his affairs. Yán Liáng and Wén Chǒu are valorous champions of the armies, leading his troops. This danger is difficult to overcome!”

[Xún] Yù said: “Though [Yuán] Shào’s troops are many, his methods are not organized. Tián Fēng is stubborn and offensive to superiors, and Xǔ Yōu is greedy and uncontrollable. Shěn Pèi is dictatorial and lacks planning, and Féng Jì is obstinate and selfish; these two remain to manage affairs in the rear, and if [Xǔ] Yōu’s family violates their laws, they will certainly not spare them. If they do not spare them, then [Xǔ] Yōu will certainly rebel. Yán Liáng and Wén Chǒu are of merely common valor, and can be taken in a single battle.”

Fifth year [200], continuous battles with [Yuán] Shào. Tàizǔ defended Guāndù, and [Yuán] Shào besieged him. Tàizǔ’s military provisions were about to be exhausted, and he wrote a letter to [Xún] Yù, discussing that he wished to return to Xǔ to draw out [Yuán] Shào. [Xún] Yù said: “Now though the army’s provisions are few, it is not yet as desperate as when Chǔ and Hàn fought between Xíngyáng and Chénggǎo. At that time, neither Liú [Bāng] and Xiàng [Yǔ] could be first to withdraw, for the first to withdraw would be defeated. You have resisted with an army ten to one, prepared ground and defended it, grabbed him by the throat so he cannot advance, already for half a year. Observing that his strength is exhausted, there will certainly be some change. This is the time to use surprising plans, and it cannot be missed.”

Tàizǔ therefore remained, then used surprise troops to attack [Yuán] Shào’s separate camp, beheading his commanders Chúnjú Qióng and others, and [Yuán] Shào retreated and fled.

Shěn Pèi because Xǔ Yōu’s family violated law arrested his wives and children, and [Xǔ] Yōu was angry and betrayed [Yuán] Shào; Yán Liáng and Wén Chǒu in battle were beheaded; Tián Fēng for his criticisms was executed. All these were as [Xún] Yù had predicted.

Sixth year [201], Tàizǔ gathered grain at Ānmín in Dōngpíng, the provisions were few and not enough to oppose the Hé’s north, and because [Yuán] Shào was newly defeated he wished to in the meantime attack Liú Biǎo. [Xún] Yù said: “Now [Yuán] Shào is defeated and his army lost morale, and it is suitable to take advantage of his difficulty and therefore settle him. But if you turn your back to Yǎn and Yù to distantly campaign against the Jiāng and Hàn, should [Yuán] Shào collect his scattered forces and take advantage of your absence to attack your rear, then you would be finished.” So Tàizǔ again went up the Hé. [Yuán] Shào died of illness. Tàizǔ crossed the Hé, attacked [Yuán] Shào’s sons [Yuán] Tán and [Yuán] Shàng, but Gāo Gàn and Guō Yuán invaded Hédōng, the west of the Passes were

shaken, and Zhōng Yáo sent Mǎ Téng and others to attack and defeat them. This is told in [Zhōng] Yáo *Zhuàn* [SGZ 13].

Eighth year [203], Tàizǔ noted [Xún] Yù's achievements from beginning to end, and memorialized to give fief to [Xún] Yù as Marklord of Wànsuì precinct. (1)

(1) [Xún] Yù *Biézhuàn* records Tàizǔ's memorial:

“I your servant have heard that consideration is the head of achievement, planning the foundation of reward, accomplishments in the field do not surpass those in the planning halls, and merits of many battles do not exceed merits for the state. That is why the bestowment of Diǎnfù [to Jī Dàn] was not after Yíngqiū [to Lǚ Shàng], and Xiāo Hé's fief was before Píngyáng [to Cáo Cān]. Valuable strategies and important plans were esteemed from ancient times to now. Palace Attendant and Director of the Secretariat [Xún] Yù accumulated virtues and accomplishments, from youth to adulthood had no wrongs, encountered an age of disturbance, and harbored loyalty and is devoted to governance. From since I your servant first raised righteous troops, traveling about on campaign, have been of joined strength and united hearts with [Xún] Yù, ever to support the Ruler's plans, and of all the words he gave and plans I received, none that were carried out were ever ineffective. [Xún] Yù's merits and achievements were my relief, used to split the clouds, and restore the light of the sun and moon. When Your Majesty came to Xǔ, [Xún] Yù as attendant served nearby, loyal and reverent and respectful and obedient, as if treading thin ice, serving with all energy and acuteness, to care for the matters of the people. The settlement of the realm is [Xún] Yù's achievement. It is appropriate to bestow on him high title, to manifest his foundational merits.”

[Xún] Yù firmly declined saying he had no battlefield accomplishments, and would not submit Tàizǔ's memorial. Tàizǔ wrote a letter to [Xún] Yù: “Since you and I have worked together, establishing the Court, you have helped correct and assist me, you have recommended people to me, you have made calculations, you have plotted strategies with me, and also much more. Achievements do not have to be only on the battlefield. May you not decline.” [Xún] Yù therefore accepted.

Ninth year [204], Tàizǔ captured Yè, and was appointed Governor of Jìzhōu. Someone advised Tàizǔ: “It is appropriate to restore the ancient system of Nine Provinces. Then what Jìzhōu controls will become vast and extensive, and the realm will submit.” Tàizǔ wished to follow this.

[Xún] Yù said: “If this is done, then Jìzhōu will obtain the lands of Hédōng, Féngyì, Fúfēng, Xīhé, Yōu, and Bìng, and take away from many. The day before yesterday you defeated Yuán Shàng, captured Shěn Pèi, all within the seas was shaken and afraid, and certainly everyone must be afraid to protect their own territory and defend their armies. Now if they are to be made part of Jìzhōu, they will all feel insecure. Moreover, many are saying the commanders west of the Passes will plan to close the Passes; now if they hear of this, they will believe they will certainly be taken next. In one morning's change, even those remaining loyal will be swayed by those around them to rebel. Then Yuán Shàng will escape death, Yuán Tán will plan treachery, Liú Biǎo will defend between the Jiāng and Hàn, and the realm will not be easily to plan for. May you quickly lead troops to first settle the Hé's north, afterward repair and restore the old capital [Luòyáng], turn south to face Jìngzhōu and reproach them for not sending tax, then all the realm will know your intentions, and everyone will feel secure. Settle the realm first and afterward discuss the ancient system, that is the benefit of everlasting State Altars.”

Tàizǔ therefore set aside the Nine Provinces suggestion.

At the time Xún Yōu always served as chief strategist. [Xún] Yù's elder brother [Xún] Yǎn as Colonel Supervising the Army defended Yè, and was Regional Commander of matters north of the Hé. When Tàizǔ campaigned against Yuán Shàng, Gāo Gàn secretly sent troops planning to attack Yè, but [Xún] Yǎn discovered the rebels, and executed all of them, and for his achievement was given fief as a full Marklord. (1) Tàizǔ wed a daughter to [Xún] Yù's eldest son [Xún] Yùn, who was afterward called princes of Ānyáng. [Xún] Yù and [Xún] Yōu were both honored and important, both modest and frugal, their salaries they distributed to their clansmen and old friends, and their families had no excess riches.

Twelfth year [207], [Xún] Yù's fief was again increased by a thousand households, to a total of two thousand. (2)

(1) *Xúnshì Jiāzhuàn* states:

[Xún] Yǎn appellative Xiūruò was [Xún] Yù's third elder brother. [Xún] Yù's fourth elder brother was [Xún] Chén, appellative Yǒuruò. For the matter see *Yuán Shào Zhuàn* [SGZ 6].

Chén Qún and Kǒng Róng discussed people from Rǔ and Yǐng, and [Chén] Qún said: “Xún [Yù] Wénruò, [Xún Yōu] Gōngdá, [Xún Yǎn] Xiūruò, [Xún Chén] Yǒuruò, [Xún Yuè] Zhòngyù, are presently all without match.”

[Xún] Yǎn's son [Xún] Shào's rank reached Minister Charioteer. [Xún] Shào's son [Xún] Róng appellative Bóyǎ with Wáng Bì and Zhōng Huì were all well known, became Magistrate of Luòyáng and advisor to the General-in-Chief's military affairs. His discussions with [Wáng] Bì and [Zhōng] Huì on the meanings of the Yì and Lǎo were passed down through the generations.

[Xún] Chén's son [Xún] Hóng appellative Zhòngmào was an official in the Heir-Apparent's Literary Studies. At the time there were debate competitions, and [Xún] Hóng with Zhōng Yáo, Wáng Lǎng, and Yuán Huàn were each opposing each other.

Wén-dì [Cáo Pī] wrote a letter to [Zhōng] Yáo: “Yuán [Huàn] and Wáng [Lǎng] are stately gentlemen, and also as close as lips and teeth. Xún Hóng is stalwart and intrepid, in his dealings is sharp and acute, and truly is a formidable rival for you. Everyone is deeply anxious.” He ended as Yellow Gate Attendant-Gentleman. [Xún] Hóng's cousin's grandson [Xún] Hūi appellative Jǐngwén was Palace Companion to the Heir-Apparent and also well-known. He and Jiǎ Chōng together set music standards, and also compiled Yìjǐjiě. Zhòngyù was named [Xún] Yuè, the Chief of Lǎnglíng [Xún] Jiǎn's youngest son, and [Xún] Yù's elder first cousin.

Zhāng Fán's *Hànjì* appraises:

[Xún] Yuè was purely humble and deeply modest, and good at writing compositions. At the beginning of Jiàn'ān [196] he became Palace Attendant Supervising Confidential Documents, and by Imperial Order condensed the Hànshū into a Hànjì in thirty scrolls, which used events to explain right and wrong, and was elegant and simple; this book was greatly circulated through the generations.

(2) [Xún] Yù *Biézhuàn* states: Tàizǔ again memorialized: “In the past Yuán Shào invaded the capital lands, battling at Guāndù. At the time troops were few and provisions were exhausted, I wished to return to Xǔ, wrote a letter discussing it with [Xún] Yù, and [Xún] Yù did not agree with me. He explained the advantages of holding firm, restored our plans to advance and attack, again lifted up my spirits, changed my foolish worries, and therefore we were able to destroy a powerful rebel, overthrowing and capturing his army. This ability of [Xún] Yù to see the decisive opportunity between victory and defeat is very rare in this world. When [Yuán] Shào was broken and defeated, my provisions were again exhausted, I believed the Hé’s north would not yet be easy to plan against, and I wished to go south to attack Liú Biǎo. [Xún] Yù again stopped me, explaining the benefits and losses, and I thus turned my banners, and therefore subdued the vicious [Yuán] clan, overcoming and pacifying four provinces. Supposing if I had retreated at Guāndù, [Yuán] Shào would certainly have beat his drums and advanced, there would have been danger of utter downfall, and no ability to quickly achieve victory. Later if I had campaigned south, leaving Yǎn and Yù, victory would be difficult to gain, and we would have lose our foundational base. [Xún] Yù’s two plans turned destruction into survival, turned disaster into good fortune, his strategies are special and his achievements unique, and I your servant cannot match them. Therefore the past emperors honored the achievements of planners and leaders, and were light in rewarding the fighters. The ancients esteemed the planning in the tents, and held inferior the victories of attacking and capturing. The previous rewards and honors are not enough for [Xún] Yù’s towering achievements, so I beg that there be judgment and discussion to increase his fief.”

[Xún] Yù deeply declined. Tàizǔ answered him: “Your plans and strategies were not only those two in the memorial. With this excessive modesty, do you wish to imitate Master Lǚ Lián? This is what the sages who reached moral integrity did not honor. In the past Jiè Zǐtūī had a saying: ‘To take a man’s treasure is to be called a thief.’ Moreover your secret plans have brought peace to everyone, and the things you have done that brought me glory number in the hundreds! I merely presented two and yet you again refused them. What is there to be so modest for!”

Tàizǔ wished to memorialize [Xún] Yù as one of the Three Executives. [Xún] Yù sent Xún Yōu to deeply decline, reaching over ten times, and Tàizǔ therefore stopped.

Tàizǔ was about to campaign against Liú Biǎo, and asked [Xún] Yù about plans for expedition. [Xún] Yù said: “Now the heartlands are already pacified, and the southern lands know they are in difficulty. You can make a show of setting out against Wǎn and Shè, but take side-routes to secretly advance, and so catch them by surprise.”

Tàizǔ therefore went. It happened that [Liú] Biǎo died of illness. Tàizǔ directly and quickly went to Wǎn and Shè as [Xún] Yù planned, and [Liú] Biǎo’s son [Liú] Cóng led the whole province to surrender.

Seventeenth year [212], Dǒng Zhāo and others said that Tàizǔ should be advanced in rank to Duke of a state, with the Nine Bestowments, to manifest his unique achievements, and secretly consulted [Xún] Yù. [Xún] Yù believed that Tàizǔ originally raised righteous troops to rectify the court and pacify the state, wielding the sincerity of loyalty, holding to the honesty of humility, that the superior gentleman cares for people with virtue, and this should not be done. Tàizǔ because of this could not be at ease. When he campaigned against Sūn Quán, he memorialized to ask [Xún] Yù reward the army at Qiáo, and then detained [Xún] Yù by appointing him Palace Attendant Grandee Official with Staff of

Authority, and Advisor to the Chancellor's Military affairs. Tàizǔ's army reached Rúxū. [Xún] Yù due to illness remained at Shòuchūn, of anxiety died, at the time aged fifty. Posthumous name Jìng-hóu. Next year, Tàizǔ therefore became Duke of Wèi. (1)

(1) *Wèishì Chūnqū* states:

Tàizǔ gifted [Xún] Yù food, but when opening it he found it was an empty box, and therefore drank a drug and died. Xiánxī second year [265], [Xún] Yù was posthumously made Executive-Commandant.

[Xún] Yù *Biézhuan* states:

[Xún] Yù from when he first became Director of the Secretariat often wrote letters to explain matters. When he was near death, he burned them all, and therefore his unique plans and secret strategies are all unknown.

At the time when campaigns were starting, many systems and institutions needed to be restored, and [Xún] Yù often said to Tàizǔ: "In the past Shùn divided his commands with Yǔ, Jì, Qì, and Gāotáo to oversee the achievements of commoners, employing them both in times of teaching and of warfare. At the beginning of Gāozǔ's time, metal and leather armor were used everywhere, yet in appointing people he could favor those of learning, and Shūsūn Tōng studied Ritual between military campaigns. Shìzǔ cast aside spear to discuss arts and set free horses to debate philosophy. Gentlemen to the end do not turn away from benevolence. Now you outwardly settle military achievements, inwardly sponsor literary studies, cause warfare to be peacefully restrained, spread great principle, the state's troubles are almost ended, and the six rituals are all practiced; this is the reason why Jī Dàn in governing Zhōu brought quick pacification. You have established virtue and established achievement, and also established law; this is truly the thinking of Zhòngní's writings. The systems established in the present establish your reputation to future generations; how can this not be prosperity! If you wait for military matters to finish and only afterward establish regulations, delaying governance and teaching, this would not be wise. It is suitable to gather the realm's greatest talents and classicists, to study and debate the Six Classics, edit and settle biographies and records, preserve the learnings from ancient times to now, remove the superfluous and confusing, and so set one true sagely learning and sponsor study of ritual, gradually spread kindhearted enlightenment, and then rulership and principle will both be achieved."

[Xún] Yù discussed government principle with Tàizǔ many times in this way, and Tàizǔ always praised and rewarded him.

[Xún] Yù in virtue and conduct was thoroughly complete, if things were not the proper way he did not devote himself, his reputation was esteemed across the realm, none did not take him as an example, and within the seas talented men all honored him as an exemplar.

Sīmǎ [Yì] Xuān-wáng often praised him: "History records many things, but from what my ears have heard and eyes have seen within these tens of years, there has not yet been a talent to match Director-Gentleman Xún [Yù]." From beginning to end those he recommended were the greatest talents of the time, from his home country were Xún Yōu, Zhōng Yáo, and Chén Qún, from within the seas was Sīmǎ [Yì] Xuān-wáng, and the well-known of the time that he attracted were Chī Lǜ, Huà Xīn, Wáng Lǎng, Xún Yuè, Dù Xí, Xīn Pí, Zhào Yǎn, and their

comrades. In the end those that reached Minister level were over ten men. In recruiting gentleman he did not hold to one standard. Xì Zhìcái, Guō Jiā, and others were ridiculed for going against custom, Dù Jī was proud but lacking in culture, but for their wisdom and planning he recommended all of them, and in the end each became famous. Xún Yōu later became Wèi Director of the Secretariat, and also recommended worthies and advanced scholars. Tàizǔ said: “The two Directors Xún in their appraisal of men proved ever more reliable as time passed. I will never forget them.”

Zhōng Yáo believed that since the death of Yán-zǐ, none could surpass him in maintaining the highest virtues except only Xún Yù. Someone asked [Zhōng] Yáo: “You esteem gentleman Xún, comparing him to Yán-zǐ, and believing you cannot compare. Can you explain?”

[Zhōng Yáo] said: “The wisest lords take their ministers as teachers, and the next wisest take them as friends. With Tàizǔ’s intelligence, whenever there was an important matter, he always first discussed it with gentleman Xún. This was the meaning of taking as teacher and friend. The rest of us received orders and followed them, and sometimes could not fulfill them. In comparison, do I not fall far behind?”

Xiàn-dì Chūnqū states:

When Dǒng Chéng was executed, empress Fú wrote a letter to her father [Fú] Wán, saying the Executive of Works [Cáo Cāo] had killed Dǒng Chéng, and the Emperor wished to take revenge. [Fú] Wán obtained the letter and showed it to [Xún] Yù. [Xún] Yù hated it, and for a long time kept it secret and did not report it. [Fú] Wán showed it to his wife’s younger brother Fán Pǔ, and [Fán] Pǔ sent a letter to inform Tàizǔ. Tàizǔ secretly made preparations. [Xún] Yù later feared the matter would be discovered, and wished to reveal it himself, and therefore asked to be sent as envoy to Yè, and advised Tàizǔ to wed a daughter to the Emperor. Tàizǔ said: “Now the Court already has empress Fú. How can my daughter be wed to the Ascended? For some small achievements I met with favor and my rank reached the highest office. How can I instead rely on a daughter for favor?” [Xún] Yù said: “Empress Fú has borne no sons, and her nature is also fierce and evil. Previously she wrote a letter to her father, her words were evil and repulsive, and this can be used to depose her.” Tàizǔ said: “Why did you not report this in the past?” [Xún] Yù acted startled and said: “In the past I already said this to you.” Tàizǔ said: “How can this be a small matter that I would forget?” [Xún] Yù was again startled and said: “Did I really not speak of it to you? In the past you were at Guāndù facing Yuán Shào. I was afraid to increase your internal worries, and therefore did not tell you.” Tàizǔ said: “After Guāndù why did you not speak of it?” [Xún] Yù had no answer, and could only apologize for his fault and nothing more. Tàizǔ because of this resented [Xún] Yù, but outwardly continued to value him, and therefore at the time none became aware. When Dǒng Zhāo presented the Dukedom of Wèi proposal, [Xún] Yù disagreed, and wished to speak of it with Tàizǔ. When he was given Imperial command to bring rewards to the army, after the drink and food ceremonies were done, [Xún] Yù remained to ask to meet. Tàizǔ knew [Xún] Yù wished to discuss the matter of the fief, and only saluted and sent him away. [Xún] Yù therefore could not speak. [Xún] Yù died at Shòuchūn. A deserter from Shòuchūn informed Sūn Quán, saying that Tàizǔ had sent [Xún] Yù to kill empress Fú, but [Xún] Yù would not obey, and therefore killed himself. [Sūn] Quán spread the announcement to Shǔ, Liú Bèi heard it, and said: “If this old traitor does not die, the chaos will not end.”

Your Servant Sōngzhī comments: *Xiàn-dì Chūnqiū* says that [Xún] Yù wished to reveal the matter of empress Fú and asked to be sent as envoy to Yè, and sought to deceive Tàizǔ by saying: ‘In the past I already said it.’ These words already had no sense, and further he used the concerns of Guāndù as an excuse very quickly and was slow to apologize. Even a mediocre man would not act thus, so how would there be such a disgrace on one so worthy and wise! These sort of tales are all from the vulgar and philistine, and can be said to be using the words of our kind [historians] to falsely accuse gentlemen. Of Yuán Wěi’s empty falsehoods, this is the most severe.

[Xún Yù’s] son Yùn succeeded as Marklord, and his office reached Tiger Guard Palace Gentleman-General. Previously, Wén-dì [Cáo Pī] and the Marklord of Píngyuán [Cáo] Zhí were compared against each other [for position as Heir-Apparent], and Wén-dì was deeply respectful to [Xún] Yù. When [Xún] Yù died, [Xún] Yùn also became friendly with [Cáo] Zhí, and was not respectful to Xiàhóu Shàng, so Wén-dì deeply resented [Xún] Yùn. [Xún] Yùn died young, but his sons Hán and Yì because they were maternal nephews [of Wén-dì] yet received favorable treatment.

[Xún] Yùn’s younger brother [Xún] Yǔ was Censorate Palace Deputy. [Xún] Yǔ’s younger brother [Xún] Shēn was Palace Gentleman Advisor to the General-in-Chief. Both were well-known and died young. (1)

[Xún] Shēn’s younger brother [Xún] Yǐ during Xiánxī [264-265] became Executive of Works. (2)
[Xún] Yùn’s son Hán succeeded and became Cavalier Regular Attendant, was advanced in fief to Marklord of Guǎngyáng village, and aged thirty he died. His son [Xún] Jūn succeeded. (3)

[Xún] Yǐ’s office reached Central Governor of the Army, he died, posthumous name Zhēn-hóu, and posthumously promoted to General of Elite Cavalry. His son [Xún] Kǎi succeeded. [Xún] Yǐ’s wife was the younger sister of Sīmǎ [Shī] Jǐng-wáng and Sīmǎ [Zhāo] Wén-wáng, and the two were both friendly and close with him. During Xiánxī, the Five Ranks system was established, and Xún [Yì] for his achievements to the previous dynasty had his fief changed to Viscount of Kǎinándùn. (4)

(1) *Xúnshì Jiāzhuàn* states: [Xún] Yùn appellative Zhǎngqiàn. [Xún] Yǔ appellative Shūqiàn. [Xún] Shēn appellative Mǎnqiàn. [Xún] Yǔ’s son [Xún] Yù appellative Jǐngbó.

Shiyǔ states: [Xún] Yù when young with Péi Kǎi, Wáng Róng, and Dù Mò all had reputation in the capital. He was appointed by Jìn, his rank reached the Secretariat, and his reputation was well noted. His son [Xún] Yǔ succeeded, whose rank reached the Secretariat.

(2) *Jinyángqiū* states: [Xún] Yǐ appellative Jǐngqiàn, when young was considered unique by his elder sister’s husband Chén Qún. He had broad learning and extensive reputation, and his thinking was careful and meticulous. Sīmǎ [Yì] Xuān-wáng met [Xún] Yǐ and was impressed with him, saying: “This truly is Director-Gentleman Xún’s son. Recently I met Yuán Kǎn, who truly is [Yuán Huàn] Yàoqīng’s son.” He was promoted to Cavalier Attendant-Gentleman. [Xún] Yǐ served the mandate of the Jìn House, his rank reached Executive-Commandant, with fief as Duke of LínHuáikāng. He once debated Zhōng Huì’s Yìwúhùtǐ, and was praised at the time. [Xún] Yǐ’s younger brother [Xún] Càn appellative Fèngqiàn.

Hé Shào’s [Xún] Càn *Zhuàn* states:

[Xún] Càn appellative Fèngqiàn. [Xún] Càn's elder brothers all discussed Confucianism, but [Xún] Càn alone enjoyed discussing Daoism. He believed what Zǐgōng said of the Master's [Confucius] words on personality and the natural order could not be known, and therefore though the Six Classics were preserved yet they were the sages' worthless refuse. [Xún] Càn's elder brother [Xún] Yǔ debated him: "The Yì also says sages set images to explain meanings, and the commentary to explain words, so how can profound idea be unobtainable but still observable?" [Xún] Càn answered: "The most profound reasoning is not what material images can convey. It is said 'set images to explain meanings,' but this cannot connect with what is beyond the meanings. 'Commentary to explain words,' this cannot speak of what is revealed. Then meanings beyond images and words of revelation are indeed deep but not produced." At that time the debaters could not defeat this.

He also argued that his father [Xún] Yù did not match his elder cousin [Xún] Yōu. [Xún] Yù set virtue and had high appearance and readily admonished others, but [Xún] Yōu did not care about outer appearances, and was meticulous about himself and nothing more. [Xún] Càn because of this praised [Xún] Yōu. His elder brothers were angry but could not respond. At the beginning of Tàihé [227] he arrived in the capital and talked with Fù Gǔ. [Fù] Gǔ favored names and patterns while [Xún] Càn esteemed the dark and remote, so although the school of thought were fundamentally the same, when they talked sometimes they had disagreement and did not get along. Péi Huī to repair their relationship rode between their two houses, and very quickly, [Xún] Càn and [Fù] Gǔ were friendly. Xiàhóu Xuán was also close with him. He often said to [Fù] Gǔ and [Xiàhóu] Xuán: "In this world your achievements and reputation certainly surpass mine, but your knowledge is inferior to mine!" [Fù] Gǔ debated: "What achieves achievement and reputation is knowledge. In this world how can there be an insufficient foundation but abundance in result?" [Xún] Càn said: "Achievement and reputation is the reward of ambition and circumstance. Therefore ambition and circumstance are separate things, and indeed knowledge alone is not success. I can enable you to be honored, but not necessarily match what you do."

[Xún] Càn always believed women's talent and wisdom were not discussing, and it was appropriate to take appearance as most important. General of Elite Cavalry Cáo Hóng's daughter had beautiful appearance, and [Xún] Càn therefore wed her. Her clothes and screens were deeply beautiful, with a dedicated room for feasts. After several years, she died of illness. Before the burial, Fù Gǔ came to console [Xún] Càn. [Xún] Càn did not cry but was depressed. [Fù] Gǔ asked him: "A woman with both ability and looks is difficult to find. The one you married lacked ability but had good looks, and this is easy to find. Now why do you grieve so deeply?" [Xún] Càn said: "Such a beautiful woman is difficult to obtain again! Though the deceased cannot be said to have the looks to overthrow a state, yet it cannot be said to be easy to find." He grieved and mourned and could not stop, and over a year later he also died, at the time aged twenty-nine. [Xún] Càn by nature was noble, and could not associate with ordinary men, and all that he associated with were outstanding talents of the time. At the eve of the burial, the attendees were only over ten people, and all were well-known gentlemen of the time. They wept for him, and passing people were moved.

- (3) *Xúnshì Jiāzhuàn* states: [Xún] Jūn appellative Wēnbó became Right Supervisor of the Guard, and died young. [Xún] Jūn's son [Xún] Sōng appellative Jǐngyóu.

Jinyángqiū appraises: [Xún] Sōng when young had ambition and conduct, elegance and enjoyed literary studies, was filial and righteous and loving, at Court was reverent and diligent, and his

rank reached Left and Right Grandee Official, with ceremonial honors equal to the Three Executives. [Xún] Sōng's son [Xún] Xiàn appellative Língzé was by nature calm and had talent. He was wed to a princess, from a young age held high rank, and aged twenty-eight became North Palace Gentleman-General, Inspector of Xú and Yǎn two provinces, with Staff of Authority as Regional Commander of all military affairs of Xú, Yǎn, and Qīng, three provinces. He was in office ten years, retired due to illness, died at home, and was posthumously promoted to General of Elite Cavalry. [Xún] Xiàn's grandson [Xún] Bózǐ is presently Censorate Palace Deputy.

(4) *Xúnshì Jiāzhuàn* states: [Xún] Kǎi in the time of Jìn Wǔ-dì [Sīmǎ Yán] was Palace Attendant.

Gān Bǎo's *Jìnjì* states: Wǔ-dì sent Palace Attendants Xún Yǐ and Hé Jiào both to the East Palace to observe the Heir-Apparent. [Xún] Yǐ returned and praised the Heir-Apparent's virtue and knowledge as improving abundantly, while [Hé] Jiào said his character was as before.

Sūn Shèng states: "Sent Xún Xù." The rest is the same.

Your Servant Sōngzhī comments: By the time Hé Jiào was Palace Attendant, Xún Yǐ had been dead for a long time. Xún Xù's rank was below the top departments, not the same level as [Hé] Jiào, and could not have been Palace Attendant. What is said in the two books are both wrong. Considering the ranks of the time, it was actually [Xún] Kǎi. [Xún] Kǎi's rank reached General-in-Chief Campaigning West. [Xún] Kǎi's elder brother [Xún] Dàn was Minister Treasurer. His younger brother [Xún] Kuī was General Protecting the Army, posthumously promoted to General-in-Chief of Chariots and Cavalry.

APPENDIX B

Translation of the Biography of Xun You, SGZ 10

Xún Yōu appellation Gōngdá was [Xún] Yù's cousin's son. His grandfather [Xún] Tán was Administrator of Guǎnglíng. (1) [Xún] Yōu was orphaned when young. When [Xún] Tán died, his former clerk Zhāng Quán asked to guard his tomb. [Xún] Yōu was aged thirteen, was suspicious of him, and said to his father's younger brother [Xún] Qú: "This clerk has an unusual countenance, and is probably planning some treachery." [Xún] Qú was alarmed, and therefore interrogated him, and indeed found he had killed someone and was fleeing in exile. Because of this [Xún] Qú was impressed with saw [Xún] Yōu. (2)

When Hé Jìn controlled the government [189], he summoned the famed scholars within the Seas, [Xún] Yōu and others, over twenty men. [Xún] Yōu arrived and was appointed Yellow Gate Attendant-Gentleman. During the chaos of Dǒng Zhuó, soldiers east of the Passes rose up, and [Dǒng] Zhuó moved the capital to Cháng'ān. [Xún] Yōu with Critical-Consultants Zhèng Tàì and Hé Yóng, Palace Attendant Zhǒng Jí, Yuè Cavalry Colonel Wǔ Qióng, and others plotted together and said: "Dǒng Zhuó is as brutal as Jié and Zhòu and all the realm despises him. Though he has gathered strong troops, in truth he is a common fellow and that is all. Now we should assassinate him to appease the common people, then occupy the Xiáo and Hán in assisting the ruler's mandate, and so command the realm. This was how Huán and Wén rose up."

Before the matter was settled the plot was discovered, and [Hé] Yóng and [Xún] Yōu were arrested and placed in prison. [Hé] Yóng in fear killed himself. (3) [Xún] Yōu spoke and ate and drank calmly as before, and when [Dǒng] Zhuó died he was released. (4) He resigned his office and returned home, was again summoned to the Office of the Executives, recommended to high position, and appointed Chancellor of Rènchéng, but did not go to that post. [Xún] Yōu, because the lands of Shǔ-Hàn were rugged and defensive and the people prosperous, requested to be Administrator of Shǔ-jùn, but the roads were cut off, so he stopped at Jīngzhōu.

- (1) *Xúnshì Jiāzhuàn* "Family Biographies of the Xún Clan" states: [Xún] Tán appellation Yuànzhi. His elder brother was [Xún] Yù appellation Bóxiū.

Zhāng Fán's *Hànjì* says [Xún] Yù [Bóxiū] and [Xún] Tán both were distinguished and talented and had unique ability. [Xún] Yù [Bóxiū] with Lǐ Yīng, Wáng Chàng, Dù Mì, and others were called the Eight Talents, and his rank reached Chancellor of Pèi. [Xún] Yōu's father [Xún] Yí was a Provincial Advisor. [Xún] Yí and [Xún] Yù [Wénruò] were second cousins.

- (2) *Wèishū* states: When [Xún] Yōu was aged eighteen years, [Xún] Qú became very intoxicated and accidentally injured [Xún] Yōu's ear. When Yōu went out and traveled, he hid his injury so that [Xún] Qú would not see. [Xún] Qú later heard of this, and was alarmed that his youthful maturity and wisdom was like this.

Xúnshì Jiāzhuàn states: [Xún] Qú's son [Xún] Qí appellation Bóqí and his cousin's father [Xún] Yīn were both very famous. [Xún] Qí and Kǒng Róng discussed corporal punishments, and [Xún] Yīn and Kǒng Róng discussed the merits and faults of sages, and together they compiled works with [Kǒng] Róng. [Xún] Qí's rank reached Administrator of Jìyīn. [Xún] Yīn was later summoned as enlightened and reached Libationer to the Chancellor.

(3) Zhāng Fán's *Hànjì* states:

[Hé] Yóng appellative Bóqiú. When younger he with Guō Tàì and Jiǎ Biāo and others studied abroad in Luòyáng. [Guō] Tàì and the others were alike in manner and likes. [Hé] Yóng was well known at the Grand Academy. At the time the Interior Court's famed ministers Grand Tutor Chén Fán, Director of Retainers Lǐ Yīng and others were all deeply involved with them. When the faction proscription began, [Hé] Yóng's name was also involved, so he changed his name and surname and fled to hide in Rǔnán, and informed everyone of the cruelty. [Hé] Yóng impressed Tàizǔ and knew Xún Yù, Yuán Shào admired him, and he was a friend to exiles. At the time many of the scholar officials of the realm suffered proscription. Yóng every year repeatedly secretly went to Luòyáng and made plans with [Yuán] Shào, and saved many unfortunate scholars from disaster. But Yuán Shù was also brave and chivalrous, and competed with [Yuán] Shào for fame. [Hé] Yóng never supported [Yuán] Shù, and [Yuán] Shù deeply hated him.

Hànmò Míngshì Lù states:

[Yuán] Shù once addressed a seated crowd and listed [Hé] Yóng's three faults: "Wáng Démí was a prominent elder with foresight, his fame and virtue high and brilliant, yet [Hé] Yóng] Bóqiú slighted him. This was his first fault. Xǔ Zǐyuàn was a vicious depraved man of lecherous unpure nature, yet Bóqiú was close with him. This was his second fault. Guō and Jiǎ were cold and poor and had no wealth while Bóqiú lived with fat horses and fine furs, and went out in luxury on the roads. This was his third fault."

Táo Qiūhóng said: "Wáng Démí was a great worthy but short in settling affairs on time. Though Xǔ Zǐyuàn was impure he was not afraid when faced with danger. Bóqiú used Démí as his model in raising goodness and Zǐyuàn as his example in handing difficulties. Moreover, Bóqiú once personally wielded blade to avenge Yú Wěigāo, raising his reputation for justice. Though you complain, your family's accumulated wealth is enormous, with a hundred teams of spotted horses, and yet you criticize Bóqiú's lean oxen and tired horses that stop on the sides of the road. This is baring your breast and inviting the enemy's blade."

[Yuán] Shù was indignant. Later he met with Zōng Chéng of Nányáng at Quēxià. [Yuán] Shù was furious and said: "Who is this Bóqiú? He is of evil nature. I will kill him!"

[Zōng] Chéng said: "Who is a good gentleman? If you sir are good to him, this will spread your honored name across the realm."

[Yuán] Shù therefore stopped. Later the proscription was ended, and [Hé] Yóng] was recruited to the office of the Excellency of Works. Every time the officials of the three offices gathered for a conference, [Hé] Yóng had many plans, but the commentators all believed they could not be completed. After he was transferred to the Northern Army, Dǒng Zhuó appointed him as Chief Clerk. Later Xún Yù became Director of the Secretariat, and sent an envoy to recover the coffin of his father's younger brother Excellency of Works [Xún] Shuǎng. The envoy also collected [Hé] Yóng's body, and buried it beside [Xún] Shuǎng's tomb.

(4) *Wèishū* says that Yōu sent someone to speak with Zhuó and so escaped. This is in contradiction.

When Tàizǔ [Cáo Cāo] welcomed Heaven's Son to move the capital to Xǔ [196], he sent a letter to [Xún] Yōu: "Presently the entire realm is in chaos, and it is the time for wise scholars to labor with their minds. But observing the changes in Shǔ-Hàn, is it not a place to remain long!" Therefore he recruited [Xún] Yōu as Administrator of Rǔnán, and he later entered Court in the Secretariat.

Tàizǔ had often heard of [Xún] Yōu's reputation, spoke with him and was greatly pleased, said to Xún Yù and Zhōng Yáo: "[Xún] Yōu Gōngdá is no ordinary man. Now that I have him to make plans, what is there to worry about in the world?" and appointed him Military Master.

Jiàn'ān third year [198] he followed in the campaign against Zhāng Xiù. [Xún] Yōu said to Tàizǔ: "[Zhāng] Xiù and Liú Biǎo rely on each other to be strong, but [Zhāng] Xiù for his traveling army relies on [Liú] Biǎo for food. [Liú] Biǎo will not be able to provide, and they will certainly separate. It is better to hold the army back and wait for this, and then we can entice them. If we press them, they will certainly rescue one another."

Tàizǔ would not follow this, and advanced the army to Ráng, and fought. [Zhāng] Xiù was desperate, and [Liú] Biǎo indeed rescued him. The army was unsuccessful. Tàizǔ said to [Xún] Yōu: "Because I did not use your advice it came to this." Then he set up troops in ambush and returned to battle and greatly defeated them.

That year [198], Tàizǔ went from Wǎn to attack Lǚ Bù. (1) He arrived at Xiàpī. [Lǚ] Bù was defeated and retreated to defend. [Tàizǔ] attacked [Lǚ Bù] but could not dislodge him, and after many battles the troops were weary. Tàizǔ wished to withdraw. [Xún] Yōu and Guō Jiā advised: "Lǚ Bù is valiant but lacks planning. Now in three battles he has all been defeated, and his spirit is broken. The commander of the army is the leader, and when the leader is broken then the army has no reason to exert itself. Chén Gōng is wise but slow. Now when [Lǚ] Bù's spirit has not returned and [Chén] Gōng has not yet made a plan, we must advance quickly and attack them, and [Lǚ] Bù can be taken." Then they redirected the Yí and Sì rivers to the city, the city was flooded, and they captured [Lǚ] Bù alive.

- (1) *Wèishū* states: A commentator said that [Liú] Biǎo and [Zhāng] Xiù were to the rear, so returning to attack Lǚ Bù would certainly be dangerous. [Xún] Yōu believed: "[Liú] Biǎo and [Zhāng] Xiù are newly defeated, and do not dare move. [Lǚ] Bù is violent and ferocious, and also allied with Yuán Shù. If he is given free reign among the Huái and Sì rivers, powerful figures will certainly join him. Now he has just rebelled and his army is not yet united in will. If we go we can destroy him." Tàizǔ said: "Agreed." At that time [Lǚ] Bù had defeated Liú Bèi while Zāng Bà and others had allied with him.

Later he followed in rescuing Liú Yán at Báimǎ, and with [Xún] Yōu's plan they beheaded Yán Liáng. This is told in *Wǔ Jì* [SGZ 1]. As Tàizǔ overcame Báimǎ and returned, he sent heavy supply wagons west along the Hé. Yuán Shào crossed the river and pursued, and the soldiers caught up to Tàizǔ.

All the officers were afraid, and said Tàizǔ should return and defend the camp. [Xún] Yōu said: "This is so that the enemy can be taken. How can we leave?" Tàizǔ looked at [Xún] Yōu and laughed.

They sent out the heavy wagons to lure out the rebels, and the rebels all rushed ahead, breaking formation. Then with infantry and cavalry [Tàizǔ] attacked, and completely defeated [the rebels], beheading their cavalry commander Wén Chǒu.

Tàizǔ and Yuán Shào faced one another at Guāndù. The army's food supplies were almost exhausted. [Xún] Yōu said to Tàizǔ: “[Yuán] Shào's transport carts arrive morning and night. The commander Hán Xún is sharp but overconfident. He can be attacked and defeated.” (1)

Tàizǔ said: “Who can be sent?”

[Xún] Yōu said: “Xú Huǎng can.”

Therefore they sent [Xú] Huǎng and Shǐ Huàn to intercept them, drove them away, and burned their supply carts. At that time Xǔ Yōu came to surrender, and said that [Yuán] Shào had sent Chúnjú Qióng and others to command over ten thousand troops to transport grain, that the officers were arrogant and the troops lazy, and they could be intercepted. Everyone was doubtful. Only [Xún] Yōu and Jiǎ Xǔ urged Tàizǔ to attack. Tàizǔ therefore left [Xún] Yōu and Cáo Hóng to defend. Tàizǔ personally commanded the attack and defeated them, beheading [Chúnjú] Qióng and the others. [Yuán] Shào's officers Zhāng Hé and Gāo Lǎn burned their siege engines and surrendered, and [Yuán] Shào then abandoned his army and fled.

When [Zhāng] Hé came, [Cáo] Hóng was suspicious and did not dare accept them. [Xún] Yōu said to [Cáo] Hóng: “[Zhāng] Hé's plans were not used so he was angry and came. What is there to doubt?” Therefore they accepted the surrender.

(1) Your servant Sōngzhī comments: In various documents Hán Xún is also called Hán Měng and Hán Ruò. It is unclear which is correct.

Seventh year [202] he followed in attacking Yuán Tán and [Yuán] Shàng at Líyáng.

The next year [203] Tàizǔ turned to attack Liú Biǎo, and [Yuán] Tán and [Yuán] Shàng fought over Jìzhōu. [Yuán] Tán sent Xīn Pí to ask to surrender and request help. Tàizǔ was about to accept but then asked his subordinates. Many of the subordinates believed that Liú [Biǎo] was strong and should be settled first, while [Yuán] Tán and [Yuán] Shàng were not enough to be worried about.

[Xún] Yōu said: “While the realm faces many affairs, Liú Biǎo sits and defends between the Jiāng and Hàn, and it can be seen that he has no plans elsewhere. The Yuán clan occupies the lands of four provinces with a hundred thousand soldiers. [Yuán] Shào by his generosity gained support, and if his two sons can make peace and maintain his legacy, then they the realm will not be easily settled. Now the brothers have turned on each other, and the two sides will not join forces. If they had stayed united they would be powerful, so powerful they would be difficult to deal with. If we take advantage of their discord, the realm can be settled. This opportunity cannot be missed.”

Tàizǔ said: “Agreed.” Therefore he permitted a marriage alliance with [Yuán] Tán and then returned to attack [Yuán] Shàng.

After this when [Yuán] Tán rebelled, he followed in beheading [Yuán] Tán at Nánpí.

After Jìzhōu was pacified [204], Tàizǔ memorialized to give fief to [Xún] Yōu: “Military Master Xún Yōu from the beginning was a great assistant and minister. No campaigns were unsuccessful and from beginning to end all enemies were conquered, all because of [Xún] Yōu's plans.” Therefore he was given fief as Marquis of Língshù precinct.

Twelfth year [207], an order was sent down commenting on merits and bestowing fiefs. Tàizǔ said: “In upright loyalty and confidential planning, supporting both the inside and out, [Xún Yù] Wénruò is greatest. [Xún Yōu] Gōngdá is next.” His fief was increased by 400, adding to the previous to a total of 700 households. (1) He was transferred to Central Military Master. When the Wèi state was first established [213] he was appointed Director of the Secretariat [of Wèi].

- (1) *Wèishū* states: When Tàizǔ returned from Liǔchéng, he passed [Xún] Yōu’s residence and narrated in praise [Xún] Yōu’s plans and meritorious labors and achievements from beginning to end, saying: “Now the realm is almost settled, and I wish to honor the services of our worthy scholar officials. In the past Gāozǔ sent Zhāng Zǐfáng to choose his own fief of thirty thousand households. Now I also wish you to select your own fief.”

[Xún] Yōu was secretive and cautious in planning. When he followed Tàizǔ on campaign, he always made secret plans in the tents. At the time no one, not even his younger kinsmen and followers, knew what he had said. (1)

Tàizǔ always praised him: “Gōngdá is outwardly simple but inwardly brilliant, outwardly timid but inwardly valiant, outwardly weak but inwardly strong. He does not flaunt his good abilities and never boasts of his toils. His wisdom can be matched, but his modesty cannot. Even Yán-zǐ and Níng Wǔ cannot surpass him.”

When Wén-dì [Cáo Pī] was at the East Palace [as a son and heir], Tàizǔ said to him: “Xún Gōngdá is a paragon to all men. You must respect him with the highest courtesy.” When [Xún] Yōu was ill, [Cáo Pī] inquired as to his health, and personally bowed at his bedside. He received special honor in this way.

[Xún] Yōu was friends with Zhōng Yáo. [Zhōng] Yáo said: “Whenever I must do something, I think over it again and again, until I believe there is nothing left to change. But then I ask Gōngdá, and then he always comes up with a better idea.”

Gōngdá from beginning to end created twelve unusual strategies that only [Zhōng] Yáo knew about. [Zhōng] Yáo was compiling them together for publication but before it was finished he died, and so it was lost to later generations. (2)

[Xún] Yōu accompanied the campaign against Sūn Quán [214] and died on the road. Whenever Tàizǔ spoke of this he would weep. (3)

- (1) *Wèishū* states: [Xún] Yōu’s father’s sister’s son Xīn Tāo once asked [Xún] Yōu to tell how Tàizǔ had captured Jìzhōu. [Xún] Yōu said: “An aide [Xīn Pí] was sent by Yuán Tán to ask to surrender, and the Ruler’s Army itself went to pacify them. What else would I know?” After this, [Xīn] Tāo and everyone else did not dare ask about military and state affairs.
- (2) Your servant Sōngzhī comments: Zhōng Yáo died sixteen years after [Xún] Yōu. What was so difficult about compiling [Xún] Yōu’s unusual strategies? But even when he was past eighty, he still said he was not finished, and therefore the plans [Xún] Yōu had made while on campaign were not passed down to later generations. What a pity!
- (3) *Wèishū* states: At the time of Jiàn’ān nineteenth year [214], [Xún] Yōu was aged fifty-eight. One can calculate he was older than [Xún] Yù by six years.

Wèishū records Tàizǔ's order: "I and Xún Gōngdá traveled together for over twenty years, and never did he make even the smallest mistake."

He also said: "Xún Gōngdá is a true sage, the sort meant by the saying: 'Kindhearted and moderate in all ways.' Kǒng-zǐ said: 'Yàn Píngzhòng was good to other men and became ever more respectful as time passed.' Gōngdá was that sort of man."

Fùzǐ states:

Question: Who were the greatest and most worthy gentleman of recent times?

Answer: Director-Gentleman Xún [Yù] was benevolent, and Military Master Xún [Yōu] was wise. These can be said to be the greatest and most worthy gentlemen of recent times. Director-Gentleman Xún benevolently installed the virtuous and wisely raised up the worthy, never paid heed to flattery, and could plan for any situation. Mèng Kē said: "Every five hundred years a true King rises, and with them those certain to command the age." This was Director-Gentleman Xún! Tàizǔ said: "When Director-Gentleman Xún advanced the good, he advanced it without rest. When Military Master Xún removed an evil, he opposed it without end."

The eldest son [Xún] Jī resembled [Xún] Yōu, but died young. The next son [Xún] Shì succeeded, but had no sons, and the succession ended. During Huángchū [220-226], the succession was restored, appointing [Xún] Yōu's grandson [Xún] Biāo as Marquis of Língshù precinct, with a fief of 300 households. Later the fief was transferred to Marquis of Qiūyáng precinct. During Zhèngshǐ [240-249], [Xún] Yōu received posthumous title as Jìng-hóu.

APPENDIX C

Translation of the Appraisals of Xun Yu, Xun You, Jia Xu, SGZ 10

[Chén Shòu's] Appraisal: Xún Yù was pure and refined and understood what was right, had the manner to assist a ruler, but could only foresee future events, and was unable to fulfill his ambitions. (1) Xún Yōu and Jiǎ Xǔ many times almost created strategies without the slightest flaws, were capable of adapting to and judging changes, second only to [Zhāng] Liáng and [Chén] Píng! (2)

- (1) Of the commentators of the time, man ridicule [Xún] Yù for helping the Wèi Clan, and so overthrowing the Hàn's reign, saying the change in place between master and servant [Hàn and Wèi] was truly because of [Xún] Yù. Though later he took moral position to oppose it, there was nothing that could be done to change course. His achievements were against righteousness, and he recognized this and was remorseful. Chén [Shòu] in this appraisal is also of the same opinion as these present views.

Your Servant Sōngzhī believes that these words truly have not understood [Xún Yù's] far-reaching thinking. How could [Xún] Yù have not known Wèi Wǔ's [Cáo Cāo] ambition, that he was not the declining Hàn's loyal servant? Indeed at that time the Ruler's power was already declined, the weakening already severe, powerful figures looking on like tigers, people harboring treacherous hearts, so without the ability to resist the chaos and planning to force obedience, then the Hàn House's fall would have been even more sudden and the common people would have suffered terribly.

If one wishes to assist the heroes of the time and restore order, if not this man [Xún Yù] then who could do it? Therefore governing in disaster is like treating urgent illness, like saving the body. Breaking through obstacles like rescue ships to commoners, the extension of the Liú clan's rule by two generations, how are these not Master Xún's foundational plan and benevolence and mercy reaching the distant? And when the hegemony was already powerful, the destruction of Hàn already obvious, then he sacrificed his life, to show his true nature, preserving great righteousness at that time, and announcing his honest heart down for a hundred generations; this can be said to be bearing heavy load down a long road, and righteous ambition and conduct established. To say that it was not fulfilled, this is almost slander!

- (2) Your Servant Sōngzhī believes that the structure of arranged biographies should be organized together by similarities. Zhāng [Liáng] Zǐfáng was a noble and lofty scholar, and truly not of the sort as Chén Píng. However Hàn's strategic ministers were only [Zhāng] Liáng and [Chén] Píng and no others. If they were not arranged together, then others would have no place to attach, and therefore previous historians combined them, and this was appropriate. The Wèi Clan had a great many of the same sort as [Jiǎ] Xǔ. That [Jiǎ] Xǔ was not placed with the chapter of Chéng [Yù] and Guō [Jiā] but was arranged with the two Xún was a mistake in classification. Moreover comparing [Xún] Yōu and [Jiǎ] Xǔ in their personal conduct is like comparing moonlight with a candle! Their light may be the same, but their origins are different. Now this appraisal of Xún [Yōu] and Jiǎ [Xǔ], speaking of them together, is a great mistake in how distinguishing should be done.

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