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## **Examination and Research on the Epitaph of Yang, the Late Wei Dynasty's General of Pacifying Remote Areas and Governor of Huazhou**

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**Abstract.** The Epitaph of Yang Shu, Late Wei Dynasty Zhenyuan General and Governor of Huazhou, is a valuable historical text that not only describes his native place and family background but is full of information regarding his life experience and death. There are no historical mentions of Yang Shu in historical literature until now but is mentioned in some historical contexts in a sparse format. The epitaph of Yang Shu can therefore fill a gap in historical literature to a certain extent. The epitaph of Yang Shu has contributed to a certain extent to clarifying some facts related to Yang Shu in historical literature regarding its dates of birth and death and official and familial history. The epitaph can therefore provide important text for academic study related to the Hongnong Yang clan. The historic merits of Yang Shu to a certain extent can denote that for prominent families and dynasties like that in the North Wei Dynasty, especially in relation to growing their members in a superior fashion.

**Keywords.** Yangshu, funerary inscription, Northern Wei dynasty

### **Introduction**

The “Epitaph of Yang Shu, Late Wei Dynasty Zhenyuan General and Governor of Huazhou” (and subsequently cited as “Epitaph of Yang Shu”) is dated to 1985 and excavated from north of Yangjiacheng in Wufang Township in Huayin County in Weinan City in Shaanxi Province and is currently preserved in the Forest of Steles Museum in Shaanxi Province in Xi’an. The epitaph cover is pyramidal in shape and square with a length and width of 54cm and a thickness of 6cm. The front is a square measuring 32cm in length and width. In its central portion are two vertical lines measuring 16 large characters in length inscribed in “Northern Wei” regular script with “ Epitaph Cover of Yang Shu, Late Wei Dynasty Zhenyuan General and Governor of Huazhou”. The slanted corners are tapering towards the edge. The back side is a concave square with a carvage from its edges to its center and borders measuring 1cm in width. The borders are raised and run through all four sides.thickness of 7cm. The borders on all its sides are raised and measure 1.5cm in width. The text is placed in square grids and has a total of 28 lines with 28 characters in a full line and 24 blank spaces. The total number of

characteristics is 761. The text is well-ordered and well-arranged. The writing is strict and profound.

The text of the epitaph is documented in The Collection of Newly Acquired Epitaphs in The Forest of Steles Museum in Xi'an (Zhao, L. G., 2007). On top of that, this researcher has generated a new translation of this text through performing a preliminary analysis of this text in relation to some historical materials.

### **Transcription and Translation**

The Collection of Newly Acquired Epitaphs that is found in the Xi'an Forest of Steles Museum holds a transcription of "Epitaph of Yang Shu, Late Wei Dynasty Zhenyuan General and Governor of Huazhou." However, in this previous work, there is simply a transcription of the text with no translation and subsequent study. On top of the transcription that can be found in this collection, this paper will translate in full and analyze thoroughly this epitaph. The translation of this transcription is as follows.

Epitaph of Yang Shu, Late Wei Dynasty Zhenyuan General and Governor of Huazhou (Translation)

His surname was Yang, given name Shu, courtesy name Yanjing, and he was a native of Xixian Village, Tongxiang, Huayin County, Hongnong Commandery. He was the grandson of the Administrators of Henei and Qinghe Commanderies, and the sixth son of the Inspector of Luozhou, the Marquis of Jian of Hongnong. Prominent ancestors include Yang Zhen, Grand Commandant of the Han dynasty, and Yang Yao, Palace Attendant with Equipage of the Jin dynasty. He possessed excellent etiquette and natural intelligence. There is virtue to his forefathers that flows through his veins. He is a venerable and deep-thinking individual. In his personal circle, he is known to have practiced filial piety. In his neighborhood and community, people knew him to have practiced kindness.

Since he entered his twenties, he focused all his attention on classical works and frequently locked himself up in his study with his doors shut. So deeply engrossed in thought that he often considered late into the night. He thoroughly studied "The Three Ritual Classics" and generally delved into all the tenets of different philosophical schools. His talents were outstanding, and his insight into philosophical principles was profound. His knowledge was both extensive and meticulous. Truly, he was a man of exceptional ability and noble character.

In the Taihe period, because of his noble descent, he became a Cavalier Attendant-in-Ordinary. After Emperor Xuanwu ascended to the throne, Shouchang surrendered to Wei, and he became the Senior Administrator to the General of Yangwu, commanding the surrender. Shortly thereafter, in recognition of his contributions in rescue and reinforcement operations, he was promoted to Assistant of the Minister of the Imperial Clan. In this role, he assisted in managing state rituals, receiving envoys from all regions, and strengthening border defenses, which prompted various frontier tribes to come and offer tribute. In Yiyang campaigns, he took part in military matters as a member of the Army of Zhennan. He handled defensive work like building city defenses. He carefully enhanced palisades and watchtowers to make it hard for enemy siege ladders to come near. Due to his superior defensive strategies, he blocked and repelled their attack and destroyed their aggressive intention. He also handled military matters as Vice General Tian Yizong's military. He captured the enemy's fake \*Diaocheng\* and won a victory. In this fight, two thousand enemies were captured, and dozens of thousand suits of enemy's armor were obtained. Therefore, for his military success, he became a Consultant for Armies of the Minister of Works.

However, soon thereafter, when the Prince of Linchuan, Xiao Hong of the Southern Dynasties, dared to lead a massive army to invade Liangcheng, Yang Shu, who had already demonstrated himself to be a tested and outstanding individual, was recalled to take part in military matters in relation to the Southern Campaign. The Field Marshal himself, Yuan Wang, valued him supremely and placed sole trust in his decisions regarding strategy. The moment when the enemy army disintegrated and war fires were raging all around, Yang Shu led Yulin cavalry directly to the Huai River shore. There, he saved stored supplies that were caught in a fire and seized huge amounts of arms and equipment. Thus, Yang Shu became a vital member in this campaign.

In the early years of the Yongping era, as the court was being re-established and officials were being selected, the most outstanding talents of the time were meticulously chosen. Yang Shu was appointed General Who Calms the Waves and assigned to participate in the affairs of the Secretariat of the Grand Commandant, the Prince of Gaoyang. As a participant in court governance and important decisions, his abilities were in full demand, and he conscientiously discharged his official duties. However, as a consequence of death rites for the Princess of Xinchang, he felt himself in bitter sorrow one after another to a point that his mourning cries were continuous through day and night. Although those death rites took place in utmost reverence for the deceased, his grief had reached an extent that he even failed to find strength to swallow water. After that event, his physical strength dwindled in his body, and his health failed every day to the point that his life became precarious. Even those like Yan Ding, known for thorough mourning rites, would have felt abashed in comparison to him; and it is probable that even Zeng Shen and Chai Shao, filial piety paragons, were not as sorrowful as this one.

After forty-six springs and autumns, on the ninth day of the ninth month of the fourth year of the Yanchang era, Yang Shu passed away due to illness at his residence in Yiren Lane, Luoyang County. The emperor deeply regretted this event and all officialdom and commoners shared in this sorrow. The Imperial Court issued a decree to send an official with a ceremonial staff to specially invest him in his full honorary titles as General of Stabilizing Distance and Governor of Huazhou for his role as a filial and pious son—an extraordinary reward. On the second day of the Ninth month in the second year of rule in Xiping's reign, Yang Shu got buried in a family graveyard in his home Chinese County. Inscription on his Epitaph: "This illustrious official had a virtuous character like no one else. He descended from a Grand Commandant. He came from a Palace Attendant with Carriages".

### **Examination of Yang Shu's Life and Genealogy**

The owner of the tomb, Yang Shu, has no biography in the conventional histories. His epitaph and the Biography of Yang Bo in the Book of Wei says that Yang Shu, courtesy name Yanjing, was born in Xixian Village, Tongxiang, in Huayin, Hongnong (modern Tongguan County, Shaanxi Province). Yang Shu was born in the third (469 AD) of the Huangxing era (469 AD) of the Northern Wei and passed away in the fourth year (515 AD) of the Yanchang era (515 AD) and was 46. Yang Shu was a member of the great Hongnong Yang family of the Northern Wei, one of the most successful aristocratic families. He had a strong inclination to study classical literature and devoted himself to studying the Three Ritual Classics. He not only delved a lot into the teachings of other schools of philosophy but also gained extensive knowledge about Daoist ways in a personal manner.

The official positions held by Yang Shu in the Northern Wei court are not recorded in the standard histories. Therefore, based primarily on the account provided in his epitaph, his official career can be outlined as follows:

Cavalier Attendant-in-Ordinary: During the Taihe era (477–499) of the Northern Wei Dynasty.

Senior Administrator to the General of Yangwu: In 499 AD.

Assistant of the Minister of the Imperial Clan: In 500 AD.

Army Consultant of the Minister of Works: In 504 AD.

General Who Calms the Waves and Participant in the Affairs of the Secretariat of the Grand Commandant, the Prince of Gaoyang: In 508 AD.

Yang Shu became a Cavalier Attendant-in-Ordinary during the Taihe era because he was born in a famous and honorable family. The *Book of Wei* says: "During the second year of Tianci, ex-meritorious officials in the provinces were called to the capital, and returned to their estates, and their noble ranks. Posts of Cavalier Attendants-in-Ordinary, Hunt Gentlemen, different secretaries of the bureau, assistants, and document verifiers were created." (Wei, S., 1974) This shows that the Cavalier Attendant-in-Ordinary of the Northern Wei Dynasty was a sinecure but not a position of authority. After Emperor Xuanwu acceded to power, Yang Shu proved that he was in support of the new emperor. On the occasion when Shouchang (now Shouchin County in Anhui Province) submitted to Wei he was made Senior Administrator to the General of Yangwu. The position of Senior Administrator was similar to a principal aide or chief of staff. The *Book of Wei* documents the ordeal of a General of Yangwu to have been of the fourth rank of a lower grade. (Wei, S., 1974) Yang Shu was not especially high in rank, as the Senior Administrator to this general, and soon he was rewarded by appointment as the Assistant of the Minister of the Imperial Clan. Within this role, he aided in the administration of state rituals, the reception of envoys in every part and the reinforcement of the defensive side of the border. The Battle of Yiyang was launched in the fourth year of the Jingming era (503 AD). The emperor, Xuanwu sent the Yuan Ying general to invade Zhongli (modern Fengyang, Anhui) and Yiyang (modern Xinyang, Henan) of Southern Liang. At the end of this campaign the Northern Wei succeeded. Yang Shu also took part in the military activities of the Army of Zhennan where he was busy defending the country like building walls around the city. His superb defensive tactics negated the offensive of the enemy and entirely foamed their ambitious intentions. The *Book of Wei* documents that the emperor followed this suggestion and dispatched Yuan Ying of Zhennan to march against Yiyang. Tian Yizong dispatched his son, Lu Sheng, with 8,000 infantry and cavalry to cut off the supply of grains of the enemy, and to burn the stores at their Diaocheng. His Liang garrison commander Zhao Wenju and his troops offered resistance but were defeated by Lu Sheng who had Wenju and minor generals Hu Jianxing, Gu Hao, Zhuang Yuanzhong and others beheaded, 1500 men were drowned, and all the grain-transport boats were destroyed. (Wei, S., 1974) The Diaocheng battle that is found in the historical materials is also cited in the epitaph. Yang Shu was a Vice General in the battle and helped in achieving a successful result. The epitaph states that he took 2000 captives and ten thousand suits of armour. On these military successes, he was advanced to become the Army Consultant of Minister of Works.

Later, the action of the Battle of Liangcheng where Yang Shu fought is recorded in *Book of Liang* in the Annals of Emperor Wu: "On the Yihai day of the fifth year of the Tianjian period the advance force of the Prince of Linchuan, Xiao Hong, seized Liangcheng. "(Yao, S. L., 1974) His epitaph gives a further description of this invasion: When the Prince of Linchuan, Xiao Hong of the Southern Dynasties, commanded a large assembly to attack Liangcheng, Yang

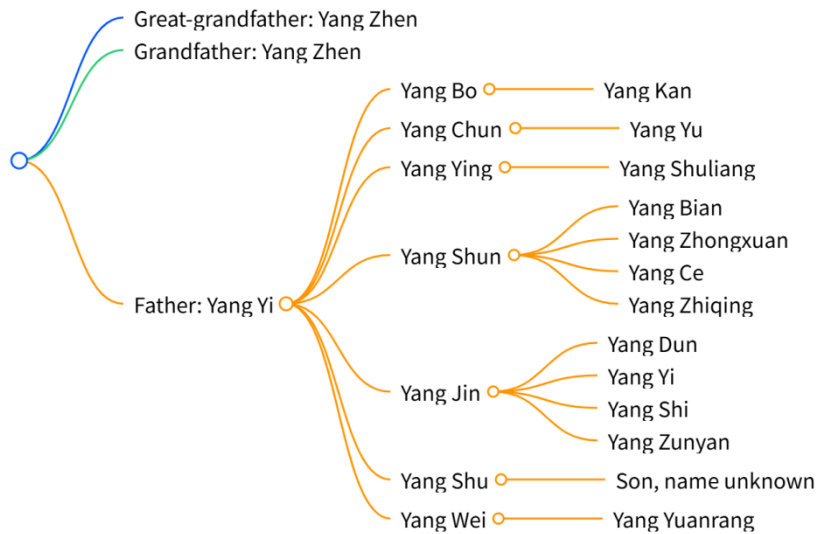
Shu, owing to his successful service in former times, was again summoned to join in the military operations of the Southern Campaign. The Field Marshal, Yuan Wang, had a great respect of him, and assigned him duties of great strategic decision-making, and consulted him on tactical plans very often. When the enemy were in full retreat and the fires of war were blazing, Yang Shu, with the best of the Yulin cavalry, was directly towards the banks of the Huai River. There he salvaged stores that were in burning ruins and captured huge masses of arms and equipment. His efforts made the frontier stores filled to the brim and the forces strengthened, in which Yang Shu took an active part, having been, at the commencement of the Yongping period, when a choice of the officials was to be decided on, appointed General Who Calms the Waves, and charged with taking an active part in the business of the Secretariat of the Grand Commandant, the Prince of Gaoyang. The epitaph itself, the funeral of the Princess of Xinchang, can probably be attributed to the times of the domination of the Gao Zhao in the Northern Wei court. According to the Biography of Gao Zhao in the Book of Wei: at the beginning of the reign of Emperor Xuanwu, the six regents wielded power. Following the careless plans that Xianyang Wang Yuan Xi made to rebel against the emperor, he, therefore, placed his trust in Gao Zhao. Having never had his own clan, Gao Zhao procreated factions widely; those who were joined to him could be raised in a month, and those who rebelled against him were charged with heinous offences in a month. Beihai Wang Yuan Xiang was in a superior position and therefore he was framed and killed by Gao Zhao. He also induced the emperor to protect himself against the numerous princes, seemingly like prisoners... In the course of Jingzhao Wang Yuan Yu being sent out to govern Jizhou, he feared the arbitrary nature of Gao Zhao and in his fear; he ultimately turned to treason. Gao Zhao went on to slander and kill Pengcheng Wang Yuan Xie. Consequently, the whole court and population looked at him with fear, and they feared and despised him. He therefore became a monopolist of power, and he appointed and determined at will. He disagreed with Qinghe Wang Yuan Yi once in the corridor in front of the Yunlong Gate and a great dispute arose. It was mediated and halted by the Grand Commandant, Gaoyang Wang Yuan Yong. According to historical sources, during the initial years of the reign of Emperor Xuanwu, Gao Zhao, the powerful individual, put scions of influential families into frame and persecuted them. Even the epitaph of the older brother of Yang Shu, Yang Bo, states that, having insulted Gao Zhao, the maternal uncle of Emperor Xuanwu, Yang Bo was framed by Gao Zhao, deprived of his official post and died of bitterness. On the second year of the Yanchang (513 AD) era, Yang Bo died. Yang Shu was devastated by the death of his brother, and he was engulfed with grief and later died of illness in his home in Luoyang County during the fourth year of the Yanchang era (515 AD). The emperor was greatly moved and gave a decree to send an envoy together with the ceremonial staff to appoint him after his death as General of Stabilizing the Distance and Governor of Huazhou, in honour of his filial character. On the second day of the ninth month of the second year of the Xiping era (517 AD), he was buried in Huayin.

Restoring a general family genealogy can be done based on the epitaphs and the historical records that survive regarding the family. Yang Shu was descended from Yang Zhen, Yang Zhen, and Yang Yi, so it can be concluded that the scholarly study of the clan has produced a series of results gradually with the discovery of epitaphs of Yang Bo and other Yang family members. Considering the grandeur and large scale of the Hongnong Yang clan, there have been gradual results of the scholarly study on the clan in terms of the finding of epitaphs of Yang Bo and other members of the Yang family. His older brothers were Yang Bo, Yang Chun, Yang Ying, Yang Shun, Yang Jin, Yang Shu and Yang Wei respectively. Yang Shu was a father of one son whose name was not known.

According to the documents in the Biography of Yang Bo, in *the Book of Wei* and the History of the Northern Dynasties, the family tree of the Yang Bo lineage of the Hongnong Yang family can be reconstructed. The book of wei documents: His great-grandfather, Yang Zhen, entered into the service under Emperor Daowu and passed away as the Administrator of Shanggu. Yang Zhen was the grandfather, who was an Administrator of Henei and Qinghe Commanderies. His father, Yang Yi was the Administrator of Guangping towards the later part of the Yanxing era and was known to have made some great achievements. Yang Bo had a son Yang Kan or courtesy name Shiye. He was very fond of the qin and books, and especially a generalist on strategy... He became the Earl of Huayin, at the age of thirty-one. (Wei, S. ,1974) Yang Kan uncle, Yang Chun, courtesy surname Yanshou was the Inspector of Yongzhou and was later killed by Erzhu Tianguang. His son was Yang Yu. The Book of Wei states the following: The younger brother, Yang Ying, courtesy name Huizhe, of Yang Chun was the Assistant Inspector of his home province. His son, Yang Shuliang was the Administrator of Xinan in the Wuding era. The younger brother of Yang Ying, who is also known as Yang Shun courtesy name Yanhe was a tolerant, generous, wary, and honest man... His son, Yang Bian, courtesy name Sengda, was a successively a Gentleman in Constant Attendance, General Who pacifies the East, and Inspector of Eastern Yongzhou... The younger brother of Yang Bian was called Yang Zhongxuan and he was said to be demeaned, talented and learned... Yang Zhongxuan had another younger brother called Yang Ce, who was an Officer in the Vermilion Guard at the Straight Gate. Yang Ce was the younger brother of Yang Ce, Yang Zhiqing, the Vice Director of the Right of the Department of State Affairs at Taichang and was executed as a result of his affair. (Wei, S. ,1974) Yang Ying was the third older brother of Yang Shu, he had a son by the name of Yang Shuliang.

The History of the Northern Dynasties documents: "Yang Shun had a younger brother, Yang Jin, courtesy name Luohan, who was born under the name Yanzha, but as Emperor Xiaowen bestowed upon him the title Cheng, his name was changed to Jin... Yang Dun, his eldest son, his courtesy name is Shancai. The family, and the particular lineage, was notable and respected, and all his sons, when they became men, were persons of royal rank... Yang Dun had a younger brother Yang Yi, courtesy name Zundao, who was talented and apt to his times... Zunyan was the younger brother of Yang Yi, and in the Wuding period, was the Minister of Personnel, and was enfeoffed as Founding Marquis of Huayin County." (Wei, S. ,1974) Yang Ying had four sons each, both Yang Ying and Yang Jin, and the historical account was as follows: --Yang Ying had six uncles, and the sixth uncle was Yang Shu, whose wife was the younger sister of Yuan He, Prince of Wuchang. Yuan He was a cousin to paternal grandfather of Yuan Cha. (Wei, S. ,1974) Yang Shu passed away at a young age leaving him one son and six daughters. His wife Lady Yuan kept pressing to live separately after the grieving period was over. Even though Yang Shu is not mentioned individually in the historical books, the sixth uncle of Yang Yu was Yang Shu who had 1 son (unnamed). The younger brother of Yang Jin, the younger was called Yang Wei, courtesy name Yanji, was of fine and honest nature, and rather well- versed in literature... His son, Yang Yuanrang, was the Director of the Bureau of Sacrifices in the Department of State Affairs in the late Wuding period. (Wei, S. ,1974) The younger brother of Yang Shu was Yang Wei who had a son called Yang Yuanrang.

**Fig 2-1** Genealogical Chart of the Yang Bo Branch of the Hongnong Yang Clan



### Historical and Scholarly Value of the Epitaph of Yang Shu

The life and career of Yang Shu help fill gaps in the known genealogy of the Yang Bo branch. The Hongnong Yang clan was extensive, and as epitaphs of its members have been gradually unearthed, a clearer overall picture of the clan is slowly emerging. Previous academic research on the Yang clan includes studies by Chen Xiaoqing (Chen, X. Q.,2005) and Wu Yinyin (Wu, Y. Y.,2014), who respectively examined and annotated the epitaphs of Yang Bo and Yang Ying, comparing their contents with historical records. Furthermore, Wang Weiqing and Wang Xuan conducted a comprehensive study of the Hongnong Yang clan based on excavated epitaphs. In their article "A Study of the Huayin Yang Clan in the Sui Dynasty: Centered on Epitaphs," they traced the clan's origins and divided its lineage into three main branches for holistic research: the Yang Bo branch, the Duke of Yue branch, (Wang, W. Q., & Wang, X.,2005) and others. Building upon this research, Long Shiping and Mao Yuanming, in their article "A Re-examination of the Hongnong Hua yin Yang Clan in the Sui Dynasty," demonstrated through argumentation that the fifth son of Yang Yi was indeed Yang Jin, which aligns with the historical records. (Long, S. P., Mao, Y. M.,2010) As for Yang Shu himself, no biography exists in the standard histories. Research on his life can only rely on the contents of his epitaph. Based on the preceding examination of his life, it is evident that the accounts of his participation in the wars against the Southern Dynasties generally align with historical records. This information fills the void regarding Yang Shu's place within the Yang clan. Concurrently, studies of the epitaphs of other Yang clan members have also provided supplementary insights, enabling a more advanced understanding of both Yang Shu and his prominent family.

The fact that Yang Shu participated in the campaigns of the Northern Wei against the Southern Dynasties provides the relevant information concerning the said wars. Most of the results of the Battle of Yiyang and the Battle of Liang Cheng as stated in the epitaph tally up with results that are recorded in the historical texts including the *Book of Wei*: "Yuan Ying also made defenses on the mountain of Yashan in order to resist Jingzong, and he had different commanders ambushing in the mountains around and pretending that they were weak. It also says: Fu Yong counselled Yuan Ying: The fierce foe is in full career, and he wants a battle of

battle. The place of Mount Yashan is a very strategic one; we ought to take it early. Yuan Ying was indecisive. Fu Yong replied: there is nothing like chance; difficult to find and simple to take. Unless we today, the enemy will surely have it tomorrow, and regrets will make no use. Yuan Ying, having then separated his troops, erected a fortress at the mountain during the night, and despatched the Army Commander Zhang Huai and others to make battle lines at the base of the mountain, in order to deceive the enemy. (Wei, S., 1974) This is in accordance with the description in the epitaph: He was also in charge of protecting measures like building walls and fortifications. He had strictly strengthened the palisades and watch towers so that the siege ladders of the enemy could not easily reach. Due to his successful defensive tactics, the offensive of the enemy was stopped, and its aggressive intentions were completely prevented. Through the great defensive work of Yang Shu, the attack of the Southern Dynasty was repulsed. The Battle of Diao Cheng referred in the epitaph, need not be repeated. When it comes to the battle of Liang Cheng, the historical writings do not pay much attention to it; however, the epitaph does give a relatively full account of the battle. It states that Yang Shu saved the store and captured equipment, which was crucial in this battle and ensured the logistical security of the campaign, which is more detailed, and it is, therefore, an important addition to the pertinent documents of the historical works and has an important historical value.

Such epitaph also expresses the perfect family customs of the Yang family. To begin with, much attention was paid to filial piety. According to the text, he was praised as a son of filial piety at home and famous for his generosity elsewhere in the neighborhood. Moreover, it is mentioned that after Emperor Xuanwu assumed the throne, Shouchang gave himself up to Wei. The Death of Yang Shu came in very close connection to the depressed death of his elder brother, Yang Bo. Yang Shu was deeply saddened with the news of the death of his brother and would day and night lament over the fact. He was so grief stricken that he could even not drink water and thus his physical condition and health were deteriorating at a very rapid rate. He too, therefore, died a few years later, only two years after the death of Yang Bo, and due to illness. This greatly depicts the filial devotion of Yang Shu and by implication this is to show the value that the Yang family attached to filial piety. Second, he was hardworking and keen to study. The epitaph documents, since he became an adult, he spent himself on classical texts. At daybreak he would retire behind his curtains and contemplate much till evening. Yang Shu adored education and spent the day and the night studying. He has also studied deeply into the teachings of other philosophical academies and also managed to gain his own personal and deeper insight into the Daoist practices. Although he had a privileged background because he was a descendant of a successful family, he was not idle but rather engrossed himself in education in order to work in the court. This is entirely evidenced by the value that the Hongnong Yang clan placed on the education of its young ones. Third, he was a devoted and faithful leader. The official career of Yang Shu is the revelation of the strong faith in serving and protecting his land, as well as, giving his whole life to the court. His other brothers were also of high ranking: the elder of them Yang Bo was the General Who Pacifies the West and Governor of Huazhou; the other brother Yang Chun was the Grand Preceptor, Chancellor and Inspector of Yongzhou. The six brothers also contributed greatly to the Northern Wei court, and it is a testimony of the good education levels of the faithful that the Yang family inculcated.

The stele of the epitaph of Yang Shu is mostly preserved, and the inscriptions are in regular and standardized writing, the northern wei regular script. Northern Wei Stone inscriptions in China were regarded as landmarks during the Northern and Southern Dynasties and Northern Wei calligraphy is recognized as a transitional system which absorbed old traditions and provided the way to new ones to emerge. The writings on the epitaph of Yang

Shu therefore offer a concrete prototype on the way forward on the study of Northern Wei calligraphy.

### **Conclusion**

History records of Yang Shu are very few because of the survival of historical writings. Interestingly, although his father is somewhat mentioned in the Biography of Yang Bo in the Book of Wei, Yang Shu is mentioned little. The paper made on the close study of the epitaph of Yang Shu, and backed up with other pertinent historical texts, mainly the book of wei, provides a fairly comprehensive investigation of his life and actions. It also enhances the facts given in the historical annals, complements some part of the related wars in the official histories, and it serves to fill some lapses in the research of the Yang family.

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