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| Sommario/riassunto | This biography of the court scholar Xun Xu explores central areas of intellectual life in third-century China — court lyrics, music, metrology, pitch systems, archeology, and historiography. It clarifies the relevant |

source texts in order to reveal fierce debates. Besides solving technical puzzles about the material details of court rites, the book unfolds factional struggles that developed into scholarly ones. Xun's opponents were major figures like Zhang Hua and Zhi Yu. Xun Xu's overall approach to antiquity and the derivation of truth made appeals to an idealized Zhou for authority. Ultimately, Xun's precision and methods cost him both reputation and court status. The events mark a turning point in which ideals were moving away from such court constructs toward a relatively more philosophical antiquarianism and towards new terms and genres of self-expression.
