China's First Systematic Account of Rhetoric: An introduction to Chen Kui's Wen Ze

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China's First Systematic Account of Rhetoric: An introduction to Chen Kui's *Wen Ze*

Abstract: Chen Kui (陈骙) published the *Wen Ze* (文则), *The Rules of Writing)* in 1170. Chinese scholars commonly describe this as the first systematic account of Chinese rhetoric. This paper will place the *Wen Ze* in its historical and rhetorical context and provide a translation and discussion of key extracts from the book. In providing a summary of the key points of *The Rules of Writing*, this paper presents the main principles of Chinese composition and rhetoric as laid out by Chen Kui. It will also provide evidence that rhetorical styles are a product of their times. Like fashions, they flourish and fade and then flourish again.

Introduction

Chen Kui (1128–1203), the author of the *Wen Ze*, hereafter the *The Rules of Writing*, was born not far from Shanghai at the beginning of the Southern Song dynasty (1127–1279). *The Rules of Writing* was published in 1170 and was, therefore, more or less contemporaneous with the *Ars Dictaminis* treatises of Medieval Europe. Chen Kui lived at a time of great change, born one year after the Song court had been forced to flee south in face of invasion from

I benefited greatly from discussions with a number of people, most notably, David McMullen of Cambridge University and Li Baokun and Gao Yuan of the Beijing University of Astronautics and Aeronautics. I also benefited from the comments of the anonymous reviewers. My university, Curtin, kindly granted me leave during which I was able to undertake the translation.

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the north. The Song established their new capital in what is today Hangzhou in Zhejiang Province.

Little is known about Chen Kui and what we do know comes from the short entries about him in reference works such as the Southern Song History,[1] the Index to Biographical Materials of Song Figures,[2] and the Chinese Bibliographical Dictionary.[3] A short biography in the appendix of the recently published edition of Chen Kui's other work, a work on cataloguing,[4] provides further information.

Chen Kui was a member of the intellectual elite and passed the extremely prestigious and competitive civil service metropolitan exam to become a *jinshi* (进士) at the comparatively early age of 24. He held a number of senior official positions over the years and, when in favour, was a member of the equivalent of the Song cabinet. His main role was as recorder and cataloguer of the Song Imperial library. The records suggest he was a person of independent thought. He wrote some thirty memorials to the Emperor, some of which were critical. For example, he wrote criticising the extravagance and waste at court, arguing that there were far more officials than were actually needed.[5] This led him to clash with other senior officials and, for a time, he was demoted to an official position in the provinces. He retired, finally, in 1196 at the age of sixty-nine and died at the age of seventy-six.

While there is little information about the man himself, a number of histories of Chinese rhetoric contain chapters about his book.[6] Tan Quanji has published a monograph on *The Rules of Writing*.[7] The

[1]The Nan Song Shu, In Siku Quanshu Cunmu Congshu, Shi Bu, 31 ce, 41 zhuan (Chapter 41 Book 33 of the History section of the Great Treasury. Section contributed by Qian Shisheng of the Ming Dynasty).

[2]Chang Beide, Wang Dedu, Cheng Yuanmin & Hou Junde, eds., *Song Ren Chuanji Ziliao Suoyin vol. 3 (The Index of Biographical Materials of Song Figures)* (Taiwan: Dingwen Shuju Yinhang 1975).

[3]Zhang Weizhi, Shen Lihui, and Liu Dezhong, eds., *Zhongguo Lidai Renmin Da Cidian (A Chinese Bibliographical Dictionary)* (Shanghai: Guji Chubanshe, 1999).

[4]Zhang Fuxiang, ed., *Nan Song Guang Ge Lu (Official Records of the Southern Song)* (Zhonghua Shuju Chubanshe, 1998).

[5]Zhang, *Nan Song Guang Ge Lu*, p. 465.

[6]Zheng Ziyu, *Zhongguo Xiuci Shigao (A History of Chinese Rhetoric*),(Shanghai: Jiaoyu Chubanshe, 1979); Zhou Zhenfu, *Zhongguo Xiucixue Shi (A History of Chinese Rhetoric*), (Beijing: Shangwujin Shuguan, 1999); Zong Tinghu and Li Jinling, *Zhongguo Xiuci Tongshi. Su, Tang, Wu Dai, Song, Jin, Yuan Zhuan (A Complete History of Chinese Rhetoric. The Sui, Tang, 5 Dynasties, Song, Jin and Yuan Dynasties*) (Jilin: Jilin Jiaoyu Chubanshe, 1998), vol. 2 of 5, edited by Zheng Ziyu and Zong Tinghu.

[7]Tan Quanji, *Wenze Yanjiu (A Study of the Wenze)* (Hong Kong: Wenxue Chubanshe, 1978).

most important source for this study, however, is Liu Yancheng's text.[8] Not only does Liu provide a commentary and notes for the book, but he also translates it into modern Chinese. These scholars all agree that *The Rules of Writing* represents China's first systematic account of Chinese rhetoric (修辞), and I discuss the possible meanings of this term below. Zheng argues that Chen Kui's book served as the major treatise on Chinese rhetoric until the early twentieth century. Zong and Li say that, by using classical texts as his source of examples, Chen Kui has summarised the principles and rules of Chinese rhetoric. Tan regards *The Rules of Writing* as important in that it proves false the widely held claims that Classical China had no rhetoric and that Chinese rhetoric is derived from the West. Tan further points out that, while important texts that touched on aspects of rhetoric were published earlier, *The Rules of Writing* is the first book devoted entirely to the study of rhetoric. In Tan's view, the central goal of *The Rules of Writing* was to formulate for posterity the standard rules and methods of writing as found in the classical texts.

Tan also praises Chen Kui's research methods which he classifies into the following seven categories:[9]

1. Comparing the beginnings and endings of texts
2. Comparing different genres
3. Comparing one book with another
4. Comparing works written at the same time
5. Comparing contemporary texts with classical texts
6. Comparing different ways of expressing the same or similar meanings
7. Comparing the use of the same method to convey different meanings.

The book itself comprises ten chapters subdivided into a total of 63 sections (see the Appendix). It covers aspects of rhetoric and composition including the use of rhetorical devices, the functions and methods of citation, and the importance of using everyday language. In chapter 3 Chen Kui classifies metaphor into ten types, and other chapters focus on the genres and styles found in certain of the Chinese classics.

In spite of its agreed importance as a key text in the history of Chinese rhetoric, it is remarkably little known outside specialist

[8]Liu Yancheng, *Wenze Zhuyi (A Commentary and Translation of the Wenze)* (Beijing: Shumu Wenxuan Chubanshe, 1988).

[9]Tan, *Wenze Yanjiu (A Study of the Wenze)*, cited in n. 7 above, pp. 36–43.

circles. It has, as far as I know, never before been translated, except for a number of excerpts that have been translated into Japanese.

In order to contextualise *The Rules of Writing*, the paper first considers which notions of rhetoric the Chinese scholars mentioned above are following and which notions of rhetoric are covered in *The Rules of Writing*. There follows a brief description of the system of education, with a particular focus on the changes that took place within the examination system during the Song dynasty as it sought to encourage men of merit to enter the civil service. A translation of the key rhetorical principles as outlined in *The Rules of Writing* itself follows, along with a discussion of these.

The Rhetorical Background

Rhetoric is commonly perceived as "the art of persuasion, the artistic use of oral and written expressions, for the purpose of changing thought and action at social, political and individual levels."[10] It is important to underline that Chinese rhetoric has enjoyed an extremely long history, but this rhetoric has been known under a variety of different terms. The ancient Chinese (up to 221 BCE) had a well-developed sense of rhetoric, but called various branches of it by different names. So persuasion was known as *shui* (说), explanation *ming* (明), and argumentation *bian* (辩). Although there is overlap between these terms (and others), Lu argues that each word has a particular function in conceptualising and contextualising persuasive discourse. For example, *shui* is associated with face-to-face persuasion and *ming* deals with the use of symbols in social and epistemological contexts. Lu suggests that the term *mingbian xue* (明辩学) is comparable to the Western study of rhetoric, with *ming* aiming to seek truth and justice and *bian* concerning the art of persuasion.

However, the term that the Chinese scholars invariably use when arguing that *The Rules of Writing* represents China's first systematic account of rhetoric is *xiuxi* (修辞). This term has a wide range of potential meanings. In a narrow sense, it can mean stylistics, but it also has a wider meaning that encompasses the whole field of rhetoric. For example, this is the term used in the title of the three histories of Chinese rhetoric that are referred to in note 5. It is also used in the title of Chen Wangdao's seminal text, *An Introduction to Chinese*

[10]Lu, Xing, *Rhetoric in Ancient China, Fifth to Third Century* BCE (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1998), 2.

Rhetoric, Xiucixue Fafan (修辞学发凡).[11] Chen and others customarily further divide the term rhetoric into positive rhetoric and negative rhetoric, with positive rhetoric referring to ways of engendering feeling in the audience (使人感受) through the use of tropes and styles, and negative rhetoric referring to ways of making things clear to the audience (使人理会) through the arrangement of texts and the sequencing of argument.[12] Kennedy makes a comparable division of classical Western rhetoric into primary rhetoric, the art of persuasion, and secondary rhetoric, the study of tropes and figures of speech.[13] As we shall see, *The Rules of Writing* deals with aspects of both positive and negative rhetoric.

It is also important to point out that Chinese rhetorical perspectives are not monolithic. In ancient China, the Ming school, whose best-known protagonist was Gong-sun Long (325–250 BCE), was concerned with probability, relativism, and classification under the general umbrella of epistemology and social justice. Mohism (480–250 BCE) was concerned with developing a rational system of argumentation. The concerns of Daoism (cf. Zhuangzi 369–286 BCE) included "antirational and transcendental mode of philosophical and rhetorical enquiry."[14] Legalism, founded by the philosopher Han Feizi (280–233 BCE), was concerned with the use of language and persuasion to strengthen centralised political power. Finally and most importantly, Confucianism is concerned with morality and the impact of the speech and character of the speaker on ethical behaviour and social order. As a Confucian, Chen Kui naturally draws his examples of rhetorical practice from the Confucian classics and other key texts published during the Zhou Dynasty and the Spring and Autumn and the Warring States periods. It is necessary, therefore, to provide the background to these texts.

The Zhou dynasty (1027–770 BCE) represented the Confucian ideal: it represented a time of harmony, where each person knew his place. *De* (德virtue) became the ultimate criterion for evaluating royal behaviour, while *li* (礼rites) became important political and ideological means of control. The Zhou "is considered as a watershed for the production of written texts."[15] For example, *The Book of Poetry*

[11]Chen Wangdao, *Xiucixue Fafan* (修辞学发凡) (Hong Kong: Da Guang Chubanshe, 1988).

[12]Chen Wangdao, Xiucixue Fafan, cited in n. 9 above, p. 74.

[13]G. Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric and its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times* (London: Croom Helm, 1980).

[14]Lu, *Rhetoric in Ancient China*, cited in n. 10 above, p. 7.

[15]Lu, *Rhetoric in Ancient China*, cited in n. 10 above, p. 56.

(诗经) and *The Shang Histories* or *Book of Lord Shang* (尚书) appear at this time. Two kinds of speeches were recorded in *The Shang Shu*, the *shi* (誓), taking oath, and the *gao* (告), public advising. A *shi* was performed by a ruler before a war to encourage morale and represents a type of deliberative rhetoric. A *gao* was performed by the king at mass gatherings such as the celebration of a harvest and represents a type of epideictic rhetoric, and which could also be offered by ministers to the king to inspire them to follow the examples of King Wen and King Wu, the wise, benevolent, and virtuous founders of the dynasty. Other texts that appear at this time include *The Book of Changes, The Yi Jing* (易经), and possibly *The Rites of Zhou*, *Zhou Yi* (周易), which offers detailed rules and norms for speech and behaviour in social, official and family life.

The defeat of the Zhou in 770 BCE heralded a time of competing schools of thought.[16]

The Spring and Autumn period (722–481 BCE) and the following period of the Warring States (480–221 BCE) were also rich in the appearance of key texts from which Chen Kui takes examples. *The Discourses of the States, The Guo Yu* (国语) and *The Intrigues of the Warring States, The Zhan Guo Ce* (战国策) come from this period, as do philosophical works such as the *Confucian Analects*, *The Dao De Jing* (道德经) of Laozi, and the books by Mencius, Mozi, Zhuangzi, Xunzi, and Han Feizi. This is also the time of *The Zuo Zhuan* (左传), the genres of which Chen Kui analyses and from which he draws a large number of examples. *The Zuo Zhuan* uses historical chronicles to expound political theories and defines these theories through the dictates of ritual. It contains extensive narratives that demonstrate moral lessons, and these narratives are interspersed with participants' speeches that discuss proper conduct.

Two Competing Styles

While Chinese scholars have argued that *The Rules of Writing* is the first systematic account of Chinese rhetoric, several earlier texts touch on literary style and rhetoric. *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons*, *The Wen Xin Diao Long*, (文心雕龙) written by Liu Xie (465–520 CE) is considered to contain China's earliest treatment of rhetoric, although it is probably more correct to call it a book of literary criticism. By Liu Xie's time, the plain and simple Confucian

[16]Lu, *Rhetoric in Ancient China,* cited in n. 10 above, p. 61.

style had given way to a florid and verbose literary style called *pianwen* (骈文), described below. Liu traces all literary genres back to the Confucian classics and, ironically in that he himself wrote in the ornate *pianwen* style of the time, argues that the writer who used the classics as models would develop a style free from verbosity.

Liu, however, is not prescriptive. Anticipating *The Rules of Writing* by six hundred years, his advice to the author on composition and organisation stresses flexibility and sensitivity to context. For example, "The division into paragraphs and the construction of sentences conform to different tempos at different times. For these differences there is no fixed rule, and one must adapt . . . to varying circumstances".[17] Paradoxically, then, although Liu was proposing a return to Confucian style, he also believed that literary style should change with the times and that, to endure, literature needed to be adaptable. These two apparently contradictory strands are encapsulated by Shih. "We must conclude that his conservatism is a matter of habit, while his progressive ideas arise from convictions."[18]

The balance between respect for the classics and their use as literary models, on the one hand, and, on the other, the need to be flexible and adaptable to the time and the genre has occupied the minds of Chinese scholars since time immemorial and was revisited by Chen Kui. This tension is nicely expressed in the verse that concludes the chapter on literary development in the *Wen Xin Diao Long*, and highlights how the needs of a particular time condition the preferred rhetorical style.

> Against the background of the ten dynasties, literary trends have changed nine times.
> Once initiated at the central pivot, the process of transformation circles endlessly.
> Literary subject matter and the form in which it is treated are conditioned by the needs of the times,
> But whether a certain subject matter or a certain form is emphasised or overlooked depends on the choice made by the writers.
> Antiquity, however remote, can be made to display itself before us like a human face.[19]

[17]V. Shih, *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons* (University of Minnesota PhD Dissertation, 1959).

[18]Shih, *The Literary Mind*, p. xliv.

[19]Shih, *The Literary Mind*, p. 224.

Liu Xie was writing when *pianwen* was at its most popular. The *pianwen* style is characterised by the use of four- and six-word parallel phrases, with four words in the first phrase, six words in the second, and so on. This syllabic correspondence can be heightened by the use of similar or deliberately contrasting tone patterns across the phrases. Its focus is on form rather than meaning.

Pianwen continued to be popular—even dominant—until the Song dynasty when the *guwen* (古文) movement succeeded in replacing parallel prose with a more conservative style. Chen Kui was an advocate of a return to this classical *guwen* style and an opponent of *pianwen*. In the same way that *pianwen* developed as a reaction against the earlier Confucian style, so *guwen,* or "ancient prose," was a reaction against the parallel prose style of *pianwen*. Han Yu (768–824), a Confucian conservative of the earlier Tang dynasty (618–907), was the major force behind the *guwen* movement, although there had been earlier proponents. Han Yu promoted the simple straightforward style of pre-Han models of expository prose (hence the name *guwen*). One way in which Han Yu's promotion of *guwen* had considerable influence concerned its effect upon the exam system for the selection of civil service candidates. During the eighth century, education was aimed, as later, at obtaining the *jinshi* degree. At the time, this was based largely on the canon compiled by Xiao Tong (503–557) in *The Wen Xuan, (A Selection of Literary Writings)* and the accepted style was *pianwen*.[20] Xiao Tong included none of the classics in his selection because his aim was to establish the autonomy of literature. Literature was seen as a civilising influence, able to transform men into civilised beings.[21]

At the time of Han Yu, candidates were judged on their ability to manipulate the complex forms of *pianwen*, whose rules had become stricter with time. This, in effect, meant that candidates spent their time studying *pianwen* literary models, rather than Confucian classics in preparation for the exams. This, in turn, resulted in the selection of candidates who were not familiar with the Confucian classics. In the eyes of their critics, these candidates were simply not qualified, and this neglect of the classics was a source of serious concern for Han Yu and his followers. One pro-*guwen* scholar wrote that when men ignored the sages and devoted themselves to embellishment, "the

[20]C. Hartman, *Han Yu and the T'ang Search for Unity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986).

[21]Peter K. Bol, *This Culture of Ours: Intellectual Transitions in T'ang and Song China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992).

literary brush became ever more lush and the government ever more chaotic."[22] The style was also mocked. One scholar disparagingly wrote that the *pianwen* style was "a boat of magnolia wood propelled by ostrich feather oars."[23] With the comparative success of Han Yu and the *guwen* movement it became possible for candidates to write on the Confucian classics in *guwen* style in the exams, but it was not until the later years of the Song dynasty that the *guwen* movement reached its height and Han Yu's goals were realised.[24] By the time of Chen Kui, the Neo-Confucian movement of the Song had become ascendant and the Confucian classics were back as the key objects of study in the civil service exams. The *guwen* style was the style in which to write about them in those exams. This provided an important reason for *The Rules of Writing*. I now briefly consider the civil service and exam system at the time of the Song, as changes in these also provided an opportune moment for the publication of *The Rules of Writing.*

The Song Dynasty: A Time of Change

When the Song dynasty was established, China entered a period of transition, economically, socially, politically, and intellectually.[25] The period between the collapse of the Tang dynasty in 907 and the foundation of the Song in 960 was known as the period of the five dynasties, during which five short-lived dynasties vied for control. The opening years of the Song dynasty itself was a period of unification, as the Song fought wars against southern states and foreigners encroaching from the north. It was not until 1004 that the country became relatively stable.

A major cause of the changes that took place during the Song comprised technological advances, most crucially the development of printing. This had a dramatic effect on education, opening it up to more people, as more people were able to procure copies of the Confucian classics and other works, which earlier had been too expensive. Imprints became more plentiful throughout the eleventh century as more and more printers, both state and private, opened for

[22] Bol, *This Culture of Ours*, p. 91.

[23] Y-S. Chen, *Images and Ideas in Chinese Classical Prose* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), p. 6

[24] Tang Tao, *Wenzhang Xiuyang (Mastering Essays)* (Hong Kong: Xianggang Wenxue Yanjiushe, 1980).

[25] E. A. Kracke, *Civil Service in Early Song China* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1953).

business. "The spread of printing transformed Chinese book culture, changing the way people read books, . . . and how they wrote them."[26] Another major cause for change was the shifting attitude on the part of the Song emperors towards the civil service. During the previous Tang dynasty (618–907), the great majority of officials were appointed or owed their positions to privilege. Very few came through the exam route. Chaffee estimates that the number who became civil servants in this way was only between 6–16%.[27] In contrast, the Song wanted to move towards a more meritocratic state and, to achieve this, it was important to encourage able men to take the exams. Consequently, the Song saw a great increase in the number of men taking the exams throughout the country. This inevitably saw an associated expansion of education. In the early Song, advanced education was provided almost entirely by private institutions, but after 1030, the state took responsibility for education and established schools, not only in the capitals, but more importantly in the prefectures and counties outside the capital. By the early twelfth century, about 200,000 students were enrolled in the county and prefectural schools. Entrance to these schools was competitive and advancement within them determined largely by tests. A school's annual test was modelled on the civil service examinations.[28]

The lengthy education began at an early age, possibly at home or in community and then state schools. To enter the civil service, candidates, who could come from any walk of life, had to pass three successive civil service exams: first they had to take the qualifying or prefectural exam and, if successful, they became known as *juren* (selected men, 举人); then they took the departmental exam, also known as the metropolitan exam, and those that succeeded were known as *jinshi*; finally, they took the palace exam, where the top men were ranked.[29] The palace exam had been added soon after the foundation of the Song to allow the Emperor to gain patronage over the country's most able civil servants. For the *jinshi* exam, the candidate was required to demonstrate his knowledge the Confucian classics. "But the major emphasis was placed on his writing of compositions by which he might demonstrate his originality and skill in

[26]S. Cherniack, "Book Culture and Textual Transmission in Sung China," *Harvard Journal of Asian Studies* 54 (1994): 5–125.

[27]John Chaffee, *The Thorny Gates of Learning in Song China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

[28]Chaffee, *The Thorny Gates*, p. 88.

[29]W. Lo, *An Introduction to the Civil Service of Song China* (Honolulu: Hawaii University Press, 1987).

reasoning and expression."[30] The candidate was also required to write solutions to five problems, usually based on apparent contradictions in the texts he had studied.

While agreeing that the Song did accomplish changes in the system, not all scholars agree about the extent of the changes.[31] We can safely conclude, however, that while the exam system may not have stamped out privilege completely, it became the most prestigious avenue for entry into the civil service, and entering the civil service through this avenue became the goal of hundreds of thousands of people. This increase in the number of boys and young men sitting a series of examinations, coupled with the introduction of printing, helps explain why Chen Kui published *The Rules of Writing* at this time.

The Rules of Writing—Translation of Excerpts and Translator's Commentary

Space forbids a complete translation of *The Rules of Writing* here. Much of Chen Kui's book is taken up with the illustration of rhetorical and stylistic points through the use of examples. For the first seven chapters, I have translated the points that Chen Kui makes, but reduced the number of examples, in some cases leaving them out all together. Chinese terms are included for accuracy. The "I" in the translation always refers to Chen Kui. The excerpts from chapters 8, 9, and 10 are slimmer because Chen Kui moves the focus of the book from rhetoric as such to genres, and his examples are too numerous to translate here. A complete list of the contents of Chen Kui's book is included in the appendix. A brief discursive commentary on the text is inserted following each chapter or major section of the book.

[30]Kracke, *Civil Service in Early Song China*, cited in n. 25 above, p. 62.

[31]Lo (note 29 above) argues that only about 30% of the civil service entered through the exam system.

Chapter 1, section 1.[32] The similarity between the six Classics[33] (论六经文体相似)

The principles on which the six classics are based are fundamentally the same, and so there are few differences in the types of texts themselves. The texts of *The Book of Changes* are similar to those of *The Book of Poetry*, which, in turn are similar to those of *The Shang Histories*, which are similar to those of the *The Rites of Zhou*.

The Book of Changes says: "When the crane in the tree softly calls, the young bird must respond. When my cup is full of excellent wine, I want to drink with you." There is little difference between the dynastic hymns in *The Book of Poetry* and those in the *The Book of Changes*.

Chapter 1, section 2. Originality and mimicry in the six classics (论六经创意相师)

It has been argued that the original intention of the six classics was not the same and that they did not model themselves after each other. But having thoroughly studied the six classics, the evidence demonstrates this theory to be incorrect.

Chapter 1, section 3. Good texts are natural and coherent (文章以自然和协为好)

If a musical performance is not harmonious, then the music is unpleasant; if a text is not written coherently (协) then it cannot be read … classical texts were natural and coherent and were without

[32]The chapter and section headings are not from Chen Kui, but from his translator into Modern Standard Chinese, Liu Yancheng (n. 8 above). They are included for the sake of clarity.

[33]It is customary to refer to the "Five Classics and Four Books." The five Confucian Classics are *The Yi Jing (The Book of Changes), The Shi Jing (The Book of Odes/Poetry), The Shang Shu (The Shang Histories / The Book of Lord Shang*, also known as *The Shu Jing* or *Book of History), The Zhou Yi (The Book of Rites* or *Rites of Zhou* of which the most famous is *The Li Ji* or *Record of Rights)*, and *The Chun Qiu (The Spring and Autumn Annals*). *The Spring and Autumn Annals* includes commentaries, the most famous of which are *The Zuo Zhuan*, *The Gong Yang*, and *The Gu Liang*. Chen Kui's sixth classic is probably *The Classic of Music* (cf. chapter 4, section 7), which has been lost. For further discussion, see W. Theodore De Barry and Irene Bloom, *Sources of Chinese Tradition: From Earliest Times to 1600* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999).

adornment or embellishment. *The Shang Histories* say: "In appointing an able person, one cannot be of two minds, and in getting rid of an evil person, one cannot be indecisive; being uncertain, one cannot act. Our thinking should therefore be clear."

Chapter 1, section 4. Textual simplicity (文贵其简)

To be good, things need to be simple and easy; to be appropriate, language needs to be simple (简) and appropriate (当). Certain types of language are used to record events and the way people speak. Good texts naturally need to be succinct and concise. However, being succinct, texts must also be complete and logical. If the reader feels that a text has gaps and omissions, then it cannot be considered succinct, but it is one that has been constructed carelessly. For example, *The Spring and Autumn Annals* record: "Five meteorites fell on Song territory." *The Gong Yang* commentary[34] says: "Hearing the sound of falling meteorites, as soon as I realised that these were stones that were falling, I examined them carefully and found they were five meteorites." The meaning contained in the commentary is fully explained within five words in *The Spring and Autumn Annals*. This is a succinctness that is hard to achieve.

Xie Ye[35] is recorded as saying: "The guidance and help a ruler gives to his subjects is like wind blowing among grass, when the wind blows from the east, the grass bends to the west, and when the wind blows from the west, the grass bends to the east, when the wind blows the grass bends." This excerpt needs thirty-two characters to make its meaning clear. *The Analects* say: "The behaviour of people of position can be compared to the wind, while the behaviour of normal people can be compared to the grass, when the wind blows through the grass, the grass bends accordingly." This uses half the number of words that Xie Ye used, but its meaning is clear. *The Shang Histories* say: "Your behaviour can be compared to the wind, and the behaviour of the people can be compared to the grass." This uses nine fewer characters than *The Analects* but its meaning remains very clear. Therefore, we say that succinctness is hard to achieve!

[34] *The Gong Yang* commentary concerns *The Spring and Autumn Annals.*
[35] Xie Ye was a Duke of the Chen Kingdom, ca. 600 BCE.

Chapter 1, section 5. Descriptions can be implicit
(叙事文"以蓄意为工")

Compiling written records is difficult; making the meanings implicit can be a good thing. For example, *The Gong Yang* commentary, in recording the episode about the catastrophic defeat in battle of the Qin army,[36] simply says: "Not even one horse, not even one wheel returned to Qin." A further example from *The Gong Yang* commentary occurs when it records the episode of the Qi State sending men to welcome Xi Ke and Zang Sun. "The approaching visitors were lame and blind in one eye, so the Qi State sent a lame person to meet a lame person and a one-eyed person to meet a one-eyed person."

Chapter 1, section 6. Repetition, roundaboutness and tact
(词语反复,表意曲折)

Repetition is sometimes used in *The Book of Poetry* and *The Shang Histories* to express meaning in a roundabout and tactful way. For example, *The Shang Histories* say: "From this day on, a young man like you needs to exercise caution in making friends and must be aware when acting in concert with people; young people must be cautious in making friends and when acting in concert."

Chapter 1, section 7. On balance (对偶修辞释例)

Texts use contrast to combine ideas. For example, "An arrow can kill a small piglet, yet it call also kill a large rhinoceros"; "I tirelessly advise you, yet you carelessly ignore me"; and "As schemes and intrigues develop, so military conflicts and disputes break out."

Such sentences link ideas. In general, the language of these sentences can be considered exquisite.

Chapter 1, section 8. When recording contemporary events, it is not appropriate for texts to adopt classical language.
(文章不宜"搜摘古语,撰叙今事")

Classical texts used classical language,[37] but classical language cannot be fully understood by later generations unless there are explanatory notes. Reading classical books without notes is like

[36]This defeat took place in 627 BCE.
[37]古人之文用古人之言也

scaling a tricky peak; after each step you need to take several deep breaths. If, after arduous study, one picks up some classical language and uses it to record contemporary events, one can be compared with maidservants who tried to act like their mistresses, but whose attitudes and postures were very unnatural and did not look right. The use of what was the common speech of one period will be found abstruse and difficult by people of later periods.

Chapter 1, section 9. Writers have a basis for giving specific names to specific texts ("文士题命篇章,悉有所本")

Writers have a basis for giving specific names to specific texts.[38]

Translator's Commentary

Chapter 1 raises three important points about the use of language. The first is that the classics relied heavily on each other and often used more or less the same words in the description of events. Yet Chen Kui is keen to point out that, while texts could draw on the works of predecessors, slavish copying and imitation should be avoided. People should not follow old customs just for the sake of it. Second, texts need to be coherent, simple, succinct, and yet complete.Third, the writer must use language appropriate to the time and realise that classical language may not be understood by the readers. He returns to the importance of using language appropriate for the time and audience in chapter 5. Further, Chen Kui wants sentences and texts to have lexical, structural and rhetorical balance (1.7).

From this chapter and chapter 5 Zong and Li have identified four key rhetorical principles in the *Rules of Writing*:[39]

1. Texts should be natural. The words of a text must be suitable to the time, occasion, and context. The length of sentences should be determined by the needs of the content. Clinging blindly to a model must be avoided.
2. Texts should be clear. A text must make its meaning clear.

[38]This section explains that the genres *xu* (序 preface), *shuo* (说 persuasion), *wen* (问 prayer), *ji* (记 note), *jie*(解 explanation) *bian* (辩 argument), *lun* (论 essay), and *zhuan* (传 commentary) all have a first use somewhere. After they have been used for the first time, they naturally reoccur in later texts.

[39]Zong Tinghu and Li Jinling, *A Complete History of Chinese Rhetoric*, cited in n. 6 above, pp. 361–2.

3. Texts should be succinct and straightforward. Being succinct, texts must also be complete. Being succinct does not imply omitting important information. And while a straightforward approach is to be preferred, at times the content may require more complex forms of expression.
4. Texts should be written in popular and common language. They should not be difficult to understand, but accessible.

The stress on popular and common language is of greatest interest here, as the movement towards the use of a vernacular (白话) as opposed to a literary language (文言) only occurred during the language reform movements of the early twentieth century. However, Chen Kui is promulgating the use of a contemporary version of the classical language. I discuss this further in the commentary on chapter 5, where Chen Kui returns to this theme.

Chapter 2, section 1. The use of auxiliaries (论助词的作用)

Texts employ auxiliaries,[40] just as ceremonies have attendants and music has accompaniment. If there are no attendants at a ceremony, then it cannot proceed. If music has no accompaniment, then it cannot be harmonious. If texts have no function words, then they cannot flow smoothly. The number of the function words used depends on text and content.

Chapter 2, section 2. The rhetorical use of inversion (倒装修辞释例)

If language and sentences are inverted, yet the language remains smooth and the original meaning is not altered, then such use of language is wonderful, whether spoken or written. But there are few people who understand how to use inversion.

"Stolen goods were concealed by robbers" compared with "The robbers hid stolen goods" has no harmful effect upon the meaning.

[40]助词is Chen Kui's term. I have translated it as auxiliary, which includes grammatical particles that help make distinctions in aspect and mood. This example from *The Zuo Zhuan* includes three auxiliaries in a sentence of six words. "独吾君也乎哉". The three auxiliaries are the final three words *ye* (也), *hu* (乎) and *zai* (哉). *Ye* signals a pause or break, *hu* signals some form of question, and *zai* signals an exclamation. The sentence could be translated as "Is he only my king?"

Chapter 2, section 3. Word formation (析字修辞释例)

Words are made up of component parts. Writers can choose words of similar make-up when constructing sentences. Words have sounds and writers can choose words of similar sounds when constructing sentences. This technique is used to heighten the meaning. For example, *The Rites of Zhou* says: "Five people form a single unit."[41]

Chapter 2, section 4. Lexical errors and solecisms
(论"病辞," "疑辞")

Texts may contain lexical errors and solecisms. A reader will not trust a text in which he discovers mistakes. For example, using the word qin (禽), which normally refers to birds, to refer to animals such as orangutans is incorrect. It is hardly surprising that whenever readers come across mistakes and solecisms of this sort, they have to search for the meaning.

Chapter 2, section 5. Relative emphasis and importance
(文辞依立意而有缓,急,轻,重之别)[42]

Meaning is the dominant and most important factor for determining word choice.[43] Some words give the feeling of something as understated, some as urgent, some as gentle, and some as dignified. These differences are conceptual differences. For example, Han Xuanzi says: "I am still a long way from being a man."[44] The words in this sentence carry a meaning of understatement. Jing Qun[45] says: "How could Gong Sun Yan and Chang Yi not be honest and great men?" The words in this sentence display a sense of urgency and emphasis.

[41]This is a pun. The term *wu* (伍) was the basic five-man army unit. Another writing of *wu* (五) means five. The original Chinese reads "*wu ren wei wu* 伍人为五".

[42]The words *huan* 缓, ji 急, *qing* 轻, and *zhong*重 literally mean "slow, hurried, light and heavy," but are often used in Chinese stylistics to describe emphasis.

[43]辞以意为主,故辞有缓,有急,有轻,有重,皆生乎意也

[44]This quote comes from the *Zuo Zhuan* commentary and was actually said by Fan (not Han) Xuanzi, a military commander.

[45]Jing Qun was a persuader of the Warring States period, as were Gong Sun Yan and Zhang Yi.

Chapter 2, section 6. Ornateness (谈文辞的雕斫)

Texts are the products of Schools and thus the language can sometimes be ornate and sometimes not. *The Zuo Zhuan* says: "[The person being discussed] is a person who can bring the dead to life and make skeletons grow flesh!" *The Discourses of the States*[46] says: "[The king] really is a person who can bring the dead to life and grow flesh on skeletons!"[47]

Translator's Commentary

Chapter 2 is mainly concerned with rhetorical tropes, some of which, such as puns and inversion, are difficult to convey in English translation, though readers will be familiar with these devices. Section five is of particular interest as the overarching importance of meaning is emphasised. "Meaning is the dominant and most important factor for determining word choice" (2.5). This focus on meaning is a key aspect of the *guwen* movement and is to be contrasted with the *pianwen's* focus on form, discussed earlier. The *guwen* movement, of which Chen Kui was a champion, made meaning its primary focus.

Chapter 3, section 1. 10 types of metaphor (比喻十法)[48]

The Book of Changes uses words to describe things in order to fully illustrate their meaning, and *The Book of Poetry* uses contrast and metaphor to express feeling. Is it possible to write without using metaphors? After closely studying the uses of metaphor in the classics and their commentaries, I conclude that they use some ten major types of metaphor. A brief description of each follows.

The first is the explicit or direct metaphor (*zhiyu* 直喻). This uses a variety of "like" words and is explicit. For example, *Mencius* says: "Like climbing a tree to catch a fish." *The Shang Histories* say: "Like using rotten or loose reins to drive and control six horses."

[46] *The Discourses of the States (Guo Yu).*

[47] *The Zuo Zhuan* version reads: «fan qi si ren er rou bai gu ye (繁起死人而肉白骨也)», and the "ornate" version of *The Discourses of the States* reads: «suo wei sheng si er rou gu ye (所谓生死而肉骨也)».

[48] "Metaphor" is a common translation of this term in current Chinese dictionaries of rhetoric, even though some of Chen Kui's classifications are more akin to similes or analogies. I consider this more fully in the discussion.

The Analects say: "Like the North Star." *Zhuangzi*[49] says: "As cold and lonely as autumn."

The second is the implicit or hidden metaphor (*yinyu* 隐喻). Although the language may be obscure, the meaning can still be deduced. *The Book of Rites* says: "A duke must not marry a common girl. A duke marrying a common girl is like fishing with a net. By taking all the fish in the net, he shows no choice." *The Discourses of the States* has: "Although slander came from within the palace, in the same way that insects eat wood from the centre, how can this be avoided!"

The third is the associated metaphor (*leiyu*类喻). This is constructed by selecting the same types of thing and linking them together to make a metaphor. For example, *The Shang Histories* say: "When the ruler makes a mistake, its effects last a year; when a minister makes a mistake, its effects last a month; when an official makes a mistake, its effects last a day." Year, month, day are words of the same type. Jia Yi[50] says: "The Lord is like the main hall in the Forbidden City, the ruler and officials are like the terraces of the Forbidden City and the people are like the earth in front of the Forbidden City." Hall, terrace, earth are all words of the same type.

The fourth is the question metaphor (*jieyu* 诘喻). Although this looks like a metaphor, it appears to be a question or rhetorical question. For example, *The Analects* say: "A tiger and a rhinoceros ran out from the cage; the turtle-shell pieces and the beautiful pearls were broken. Whose fault was this?" *The Zuo Zhuan* says: "People build walls to shelter from evil people. The walls were breached and torn down. Whose fault was this?"

The fifth is the matched metaphor (*duiyu* 对喻). Two items to be compared are matched so that they fit together well. For example, Zhuangzi says: "When fish swim in rivers and lakes, they are carefree and content and forget all; when men travel down great roads, happy and pleased, they forget all." Xunzi[51] says: "When a bomb rolls down to the bottom of a depression, it stops rolling; when rumours and slander reach sensible men, they cease being spread."

The sixth is the multi-metaphor (*boyu* 博喻). This uses several points of comparison, not just one. For example, *The Shang Histories*

[49] Zhuangzi (ca. 370–300 BCE) was a philosopher and the author of the first seven "Inner Chapters" of the book of the same name.

[50] Jia Yi (208–161 BCE) was an influential Han philosopher and official.

[51] Xunzi, born 310 [BCE] and lived to a great age, was a Confucian philosopher who disputed Mencius' view that man was innately good.

say: "I am like precious metal that needs your grindstone to be fashioned; I am also like a person who wants to cross a wide river and needs your boat and oars; I am also like a year of great drought, needing your unbroken great rains." Xunzi says: "Like using fingers to measure the water in a river, like using a long spear to husk grain, like using a cone to pick up food."

The seventh is the reduced metaphor (*jianyu* 简喻). Although the language is sketchy, the meaning of the metaphor is clear. For example, *The Zuo Zhuan* says: "A good reputation is like a carriage for virtue. It can transport virtue afar."

The eighth is the extended metaphor (*xiangyu* 祥喻). Although many words and sentences are needed, the meaning of the metaphor is clear. For example, Xunzi says: "People who use fire to attract cicadas must ensure the light of the fire is bright, then shaking the tree branches, induce the cicadas to rush towards the light. But if the light from the fire is not bright enough, even though you shake the tree, it will be of no use. If the ruler of today can ensure his moral virtue is clear, then the people will follow him in the same way as the cicadas rush to the light."

The ninth is the citation metaphor (*yinyu* 弓|喻). Here the words of predecessors are quoted to prove something. For example, *The Zuo Zhuan* says: "Just as the proverb says 'A tree needs pruning in order to grow strong'." *The Book of Rites* says: "A young ant learns that, by ceaselessly carrying earth, it can, in the end, build an ant hill." These are metaphors that provide evidence that certain things can only be achieved after ceaseless effort.

The tenth is the abstract metaphor (*xuyu* 虚喻). In these there is no reference to concrete reality or actual events. For example, *The Analects* say: "Confucius, when passing by the ruler's throne, spoke in a humble and self-effacing way."[52] This is the abstract metaphor.

Translator's Commentary

Chen Kui's classification of metaphors in chapter 3, section 1 has occasioned comment among contemporary Chinese scholars, who claim that Chen's classification of metaphor is relevant today. Zong and Li[53] point out that Chen's analysis inspired the great twentieth-

[52]Thus self-effacing behaviour is good behaviour.

[53]Zong Tinghu and Li Jinling, *A Complete History of Chinese Rhetoric*, cited in n. 6 above, p. 371.

century Chinese rhetorician, Chen Wangdao, in his classification of metaphor, saying that Chen Kui's explicit and implicit metaphors were taken over by Chen Wangdao as his *ming* (clear 明) and *yin* (implicit 隐) categories. Wang[54] makes a similar point, arguing that Chen Wangdao's classification of metaphor into three categories adopts two of Chen Kui's categories. Chen Wangdao himself acknowledges Chen Kui's contribution to his own analysis.[55]

A full discussion of Chen Kui's analysis is provided by Wang,[56] who considered each of Chen's classifications in turn. I summarise Wang's comments and combine the summary with points made in the relevant entries in the *Dictionary of Chinese Grammar and Rhetoric* (*DCGR*)[57]. Wang argues that Chen's account of the direct metaphor (*zhiyu*) is incomplete as he neglected some uses of it and its ontology, but he is kinder in his evaluation of the implicit metaphor (*yinyu*). The *DCGR* 1986 simply says that Chen Kui's direct metaphor and implicit metaphors are the same as today's. It makes the point that Chen Kui's *leiyu* (type three) is actually a number of similar metaphors linked together. Wang dismisses Chen's classification of the question metaphor (type four), claiming that this is, in effect, a rhetorical question and not a metaphor at all. The *DCGR* also makes this point. Chen Kui himself says something very similar: "Although this looks like a metaphor, it appears to be a question or rhetorical question." Metaphors five, six, seven, and eight more or less pass muster under Wang's scrutiny, except that he sees *boyu* or the multi-metaphor (type six) as part of *leiyu*, the associate metaphor (type three). The *DCGR* accepts the *boyu*. It sees the reduced metaphor, *jianyu* (type seven), as a subset of the contemporary implicit metaphor, and classifies his extended metaphor, *xiangyu* (type eight), as an explanatory metaphor. Wang accepts the citation metaphor (type nine) but adds that it is not enough simply to use citation; the citation must also be used for comparative purposes. The *DCGR* sees the citation metaphor as a subset of the direct metaphor. Finally, the *DCGR* says that the abstract metaphor *xuyu* (type ten) is not a metaphor at all.

[54]Wang Songmao, "A Critique of Chen Kui's Ten Metaphors," in Liu Yancheng, *Wenze Zhuyi (A Commentary and Translation of the Wenze*), cited in n. 8 above, pp. 296–304 (p.304).

[55]Chen Wangdao, *Xiucixue Fafan* (*An Introduction to Rhetoric)* (Hong Kong: Xianggang Daguang Chubanshe, 1988), 77–84.

[56]Wang Songmao, "A Critique of Chen Kui's Ten Metaphors," cited in n. 54.

[57]Zhang Dihua, ed., *Hanyu Yufa Xiuci Cidian (A Dictionary of Chinese Grammar and Rhetoric)* (Anhui: Anhui Jiaoyu Chubanshe, 1986).

Chen Kui's contribution to the classification of metaphor in Chinese is immense. The very fact that his first two categories, the direct and the implicit metaphor, have been adopted and are still in use today, although by a slightly different name in the case of the direct metaphor, is itself evidence of the continuing influence of his work. It is also important to note that current scholars disagree with the rest of Chen Kui's classifications only on the grounds that these are actually sub-categories of the two first metaphors. Only the so-called question and abstract metaphors are not accepted as metaphors.

Chapter 3, section 2. On the function and methods of citation (论援引的作用及方法)

The Book of Poetry, *The Shang Histories*, and the many books that explain the classics and histories all contain many citations, which cannot be individually listed here. Zuo Qiuming collected historical facts about Ministers of State as notes and a commentary to *The Spring and Autumn Annals*. Dai Sheng collected a number of texts written by Confucian scholars and edited them to create *The Book of Rites*. They had definite rules for citing from *The Book of Poetry* and *The Book of History*. After studying them, I conclude that, in general, there were two methods: the first was to use citation as evidence about an event that had taken place; the second was to use citation to verify or confirm what had been said. These two methods can each be subdivided into three sub-methods and each of these is discussed briefly below.

As an example of using citation to provide evidence about an event that has taken place, *The Zuo Zhuan* records: "*The Book of Poetry* says: 'A person who sought for himself worry and sadness,' this was really talking about Zi Zang!"[58]

As an example of the second sub-method of using several citations from poetry in order to provide evidence about events, *The Zuo Zhuan* records: "*The Book of Poetry* says: 'Where does one go to pick wormwood? By the banks of a pond or on a small sand bar. Where

[58]子臧. Zi Zang was the younger brother of a Zheng State official whom he killed. He fled to a neighbouring state where he was lured to his death.

can you use it? At the funeral ceremony of a duke.' Qin Mu Gong did this."[59]

"Working hard and not letting up at dawn or dusk to pay respect to someone." Meng Ming did this.

The third sub-method provides evidence of past events by citing lines from *The Book of Poetry.* For example, *The Discourses of the States* records *The Book of Poetry* as saying "What was his good conduct like? It extended throughout the rooms of the palace and among the deepest alleys. The gentleman extends his line for ten thousand years, and forever bestows favour on the descendants. The meaning of '*lei*' is that good conduct applies to and is bestowed on the clan. Good conduct brings no disgrace to wise and able people. The broad masses of people can prosper. The meaning of ten thousand years is that the virtuous conduct of early ancestors can never be forgotten."

The first sub-method for citing texts to provide evidence for a point of view is provided in the following example. *The Great Learning* records Tang Gao saying, "King Wen of Zhou can ensure his moral character is pure." Tai Jia says, "Whenever the emperor's father, Cheng Tang, dealt with something, he had to reflect on the clear enlightenment given from Heaven and piously worship the mandate of heaven to carry on the business of heaven and earth." *The Canon of Yao*[60] says, "Yao was able to illuminate the world by his great moral character and extend it." The above all discuss ensuring one's own moral character. Shang Tang says, "If one day you can get rid of the old customs and adopt self renewal, well, with this new foundation, by renewing daily and constantly, you can arrive at a brand new realm." Kang Gao says, "Education stimulates the masses, makes them get rid of old customs, and become new people." *The Book of Poetry* says, "Although Zhou was an ancient state, [by the time of King Wen] it received the mandate of heaven in a further renewal of virtue, and replaced Shang. Therefore we say: a ruler, in order to build a good state must try all methods and must explore all paths."

An example of the second sub-method of citing text to provide evidence is given below. *The Classic of Filial Piety* uses this style frequently.

The Book of Poetry says, "People and rulers love wisdom and virtue; they like the profound and honest, they cherish virtue; and

[59]Qin Mu (蓁穆) reigned from 659–621 BCE and was noted for his loyalty and steadfastness. He was also known as Meng Ming (孟明), who is mentioned in the next example.

[60]The history of the earlier State of Yao is included in *The Shang Histories*.

they loathe evil people. If they can hate evil as an enemy, then officials will not be able to treat their posts as playthings, and an honest atmosphere can develop among the people. In this way the people will obey the authority of the state and there will be no need to enact punishments." *The Da Ya*[61] says, "If you follow the example of King Wen, then all states will trust and have confidence in you."

The third sub-method of citing texts to provide evidence uses an abridged extract from the original version to verify something that has been said. *The Zuo Zhuan* says, "Appoint people you can use, and respect men worthy of respect." This extract is discussing the Duke of Jin's rewarding of those who render outstanding service. It also says, "Although the last ruler of the Shang dynasty had millions of subjects, dissension and discord was in them all; the Zhou dynasty had ten great officials who helped in ruling and they were all united and in accord." The point of this passage is that virtue can serve the people. If the emperor has virtue, the masses must come together and turn to him.

Chapter 3, section 3. Methods and examples of citation from *The Discourses of the States* and *The Zuo Zhuan* ("国语," "左传" 授引方法释例)

Selecting passages from *The Book of Poetry* and from *The Shang Histories* and saying they come from those sources is common.

Generally speaking, these evidentiary citations provide, as it were, some rhetorical embellishment and may alter, to a small degree, what others have said. However, the authors have taken great care to ensure that their work is beneficial.[62]

Translator's Commentary

Chapter 3, section 2 shows that citation was common and used to provide evidence, either for an event that had taken place or for a writer's claim. Chen Kui also showed the different ways of doing this. Zong and Li[63] summarise this by saying that he subdivided the

[61]This is part of *The Book of Poetry.*

[62]There follows a large number of examples taken from the two sources, *The Discourses of the States* and *The Zuo Zhuan.*

[63]Zong Tinghu and Li Jinling, *A Complete History of Chinese Rhetoric*, cited in n. 6 above, pp. 371–374.

topic of citation into two main types and then subdivided these. In effect, the first main method involved providing a single citation from *The Book of Poetry* to provide evidence for what one had seen, or providing a range of separate citations for the same purpose, or providing citations and an explanation. The second main method concerned providing proof for a point of view or for what had earlier been said. This could be done by citing widely from the classics, or by presenting a viewpoint and then using citations to verify it, or by analysing and evaluating the content of citations and showing they confirmed what had been said.

This is evidence of the importance attached to using citation and using it in the correct way, and may surprise those scholars who have suggested that Chinese does not have a tradition of referencing and citation. As elsewhere argued,[64] the recent lack of referencing in certain Chinese scholarly writing can be simply explained by Chinese scholars' lacking access to scholarly journals rather than by any deep-seated cultural disinclination to reference or to provide a critical voice. Disciplinary differences also have to be considered. Chen Kui shows that citation was an important part of scholarly writing at the time, and gives a detailed explanation of the ways in which this could be done and for what purposes. He also suggests that copying another person's work without acknowledgement cannot be condoned (5.5). In this context, it is worth noting that writers in medieval Europe were notorious for not acknowledging the work of others. As Lanham has pointed out, once a work was in the public domain it was public property.[65] However, the rhetorical function of citations was not the same as it is today. Certain styles of classical Chinese, for example, required the contiguous listing of numerous citations from the classics. Citations did not need to be precise references, as readers would be expected to know them. If the author introduced his own voice, he signalled the relative unimportance of his views by using smaller characters.[66]

[64] A. Kirkpatrick and Yan Yonglin, "The Use of Citations and Authorial Voice in a Genre of Chinese AcademicDiscourse," in David C. S. Li, ed., *Discourses in Search of Members: In Honor of Ron Scollon* (Lanham: University Press of America, 2002), 483–508.

[65] C. D. Lanham, "Writing Instruction from Late Antiquity to the Twelfth Century," in J. J. Murphy, ed., *A Short History of Writing Instruction: From Ancient Greece to Modern America* (Mahwah: Hermagoras Press, 2001), 79–121 (p. 107).

[66] B. Moloughney, "Derivation, intertextuality and authority: narrative and the problem of historical coherence," *East Asian History* 23 (2002):129–148.

Chapter 3, section 4. Methods of recording "*fu*" poetry in *The Zuo Zhuan* (左传记载宴飨赋"诗"之法)

Chapter 4, section 1. The rhetorical use of progression (层递修辞释例)

The close cohesion within a text (文有上下相接) resembles the way hind legs are linked to front legs. There are three styles. The first narrative style starts from the small and progresses to the big (叙积小至大). For example, *The Book of Rites* says, "If men can be utterly honest and good, then they can cause other men to become utterly honest and good; if one can cause other men to be utterly honest and good, then one can ensure that things retain their essential quality; if one can ensure that things retain their essential quality, one can then assist heaven and earth in influencing and cultivating all things; if one assists heaven and earth in this way, then one's contribution can be compared to that of heaven and earth and be placed alongside it."

The second style starts from the penetrating and profound (精深) and progresses to the superficial and shallow (粗浅). For example, *Zhuangzi* says, "People of the classical period who understood the general principles first had to understand natural principles and then could reach an understanding of morality; having understood morality, they could then practice humanity; following the principles of humanity, they could ensure that people abided by the law and maintained order; once status and position have been correctly defined and assigned, the essence and name of things can be clarified; after clarifying the essence and name of things, appointments based on talent can be made. After basing levels and types of appointments on talent, one can pardon, forgive and make proper investigations; proper and appropriate investigations allow for the clear distinction between what is and what is not; once what is and what is not can be distinguished clearly, then rewards and punishments will be natural and correct."

The third method is to trace the origin of something from its development (叙自流极原). For example, *The Great Learning* says, "People of the classical period who wanted to ensure that noble moral conduct enlightened the world first had to run their countries correctly; men who wanted to run their countries correctly first had to ensure their homes were united and peaceful; people who wanted to ensure that their homes were united and peaceful first had to cultivate themselves properly; to cultivate oneself properly first

required upright thoughts; achieving upright thoughts first required having honest and sincere ideas; achieving honest and sincere ideas first required seeking broad knowledge."

Chapter 4, section 2. The rhetorical use of repetition
(富叠修辞释例)

Texts can use an interlocking style and this occurs mainly when something is repeatedly and thoroughly analysed and investigated.[67]

Chapter 4, section 3. Cohesion through repetition
(记事文"有上下同目之法")

Chronicles that use the method of repeating the same title or phrase within the text and the authors who feel that it is essential to write in this way deserve our praise. An example occurs in *The Analects* where Confucius praises Yu and Yan.

Confucius says, "I have no complaint to make against Da Yu; his own table is simple, but the sacrificial offerings he prepares are abundant, and he demonstrates sincere respect towards the gods. I have no complaint to make against Da Yu."

Confucius also says, "How wise and worthy is Yan Hui! He only has a bamboo basket for food and a gourd ladle for water, etc. How wise and worthy is Yan Hui!"

Chapter 4, section 4. Three styles for sequencing information
("数人行事"的三种体(例)

There are three ways in which texts can enumerate the conduct and deeds of people: the first one is that they can they first state the summary or overall point and then list the individual details. For example, when judging Zi Chan,[68] Confucius said, "Zi Chan had four aspects of behaviour fitting for the way of a ruler: his own moral

[67]Chen Kui's examples show the multiple use of repetition. They are difficult to translate and, at the same time, provide the same rhetorical effect. He considered Zhuangzi a model of this technique. I give the pinyin (and Chinese) of a representative example, offering the reader a feel for the repetition Chen Kui is describing. Zhuangzi said, "You shi ye zhe, you wei shi you shi ye zhe, you wei shi you fu wei shi you shi ye zhe (有始也者,有未始有碍始也者,有未始有夫未始有始也者)".

[68]子产. Zi Chan was a highly successful minister of the Zheng State.

conduct was dignified and respectful; he waited upon the ruler in a dignified way; he nurtured the people kindly; and he made sure that the people followed the truth."

The second method of sequencing information is to list individual details first and then summarise and explain. For example, when enumerating the charges against Sun Hei of Zheng,[69] Zi Chan said, "Your turbulent heart cannot be satisfied, and the State cannot condone this. Usurping power and attacking Bo You, this is your first charge; coveting your brother's wife and then being violent, this is your second charge; setting up local factions on the pretext of being ruler, this is your third charge. With these three charges, how can your behaviour be condoned?"

The third way is to provide the overall or main point at the beginning, then list the individual details and then conclude with the overall point again. For example, Confucius said, "Zang Wenzhong[70] did three cruel-hearted and stupid things: he gave a low official position to Hui 'beneath the willow';[71] he set up a toll-gate and collected taxes; and he allowed his concubines to sell their woven mats on the open market. These were three cruel-hearted things. Zang Wenzhong overstepped the bounds of his duty. He kept a giant turtle; he failed to control Xia Fuji when Xia violated the rituals of sacrifice; and he ordered the entire country to make sacrifices to some sea-bird. These were the three stupid things."

Chapter 4, section 5. Two methods of argumentation
(记事文中论断的两种方法)

When writing records, one can first introduce the argument or judgement and then write about the events, or one can write about the events and then make some judgement about them. For example, when *The Zuo Zhuan* recorded Jin Linggong's[72] further imposition of tax revenues, using money obtained through usury to paint and decorate the palace walls, etc., it first firmly stated, "Jin Linggong had no principles and did not have the moral conduct of a ruler." Another example of this is *The Gong Yang* commentary's recording that King Ling had tired the people and drained the treasury to establish a city,

[69]孙黑. Sun Hei was executed by Zi Chan for his numerous crimes.
[70]臧文仲. Zang Wenzhong was a Duke of Lu.
[71]惠. Hui had taken shelter under a willow during a storm when a beautiful girl came and sat on his knee. Despite the temptation, Hui did not touch her.
[72]晋灵公. Jin Linggong reigned from 620–607 BCE.

leading to the hunger of the people and revolt of the troops. As a result, he hanged himself. The commentary begins, "King Ling did not have the morals of a ruler."

An example of drawing a conclusion after describing the events comes in *The Zuo Zhuan*. It records the deeds of Duke Wen, who first cultivated and educated the people, and then put them to use. It concluded (approvingly), "One battle caused the Jin State to become a hegemony; this was the result of Wen's education!"

Chapter 4, section 6. Repetition and Avoiding Repetition ("重复"与"避复")

Some texts do not avoid repetition. For example, *The Jia Yu*[73] describes Confucius' reaction on hearing that the King of Lu had forgotten to prepare the ox, sheep, and other sacrificial offerings for a sacrificial rite. Confucius said, "Gong's clan will be destroyed within two years." Gong's clan lasted longer than Confucius' timeframe and was only destroyed a year after the predicted time. A student of Confucius asked, "In the past, the King of Lu forgot to prepare the ox, sheep, and other sacrificial offerings for a sacrificial rite, and you, master, at the time said, 'Gong and his clan will be destroyed within two years.' Now Gong was only destroyed after exceeding the time you predicted."

As an example of avoiding repetition, *The Tan Gong*[74] records Zi You saying, "Previously, when you were living in Song, and saw Guan Sima constructing a stone coffin for himself which remained unfinished after three years, you argued that it would be better to let his corpse rot than to pursue extravagant waste in such way." Ceng Zi passed on what Zi You had said to You Zi. But at this stage the Tan Gong says only, "Told You Zi what Zi You had said," but did not repeat Zi You's words.

Chapter 4, section 7. The rhetorical use of question and answer (答文修辞释例)

Texts that record discussions contain both questions and answers. If the text only involves a single topic, it is not hard to write. But if the text touches on several topics, it is quite difficult to write. One

[73] *The Jia Yu* comprises a collection of stories about Confucius and was complied in the early Han dynasty.

[74] *The Tan Gong* is part of *The Records of Rites*.

does not actually use the word "question" at places where there is a question, and one does not use the word "answer" at places where there is an answer. Although the words are omitted, the meaning is obvious. Texts of this type should be like an unbroken string of pearls, where answering the question is like a natural and clear echo. For example, *The Zuo Zhuan* uses this technique extremely well when recording the dialogue between the Chu king and Bo Li, when the former boarded his carriage to look over the Jin forces:[75]

> The King asked: Why is that army carriage driving all over the place?
> Bo replied: It is calling together army officers.
> Why have they all collected within the central army control tent?
> Bo replied: They are meeting to make a strategic plan.
> The tent flap is open again, why?
> Bo replied: Because they are using ritual to divine an auspicious place.
> The tent has been struck. Why?
> Bo replied: They are about to give the order for battle.
> The Jin army is in great agitation, clouds of dust are flying up.
> Bo said: They are about to fill in the wells, they are levelling the fires and lining up the troops.
> Why are they all boarding the carriages of war, and why are the generals and lieutenants picking up weapons?
> Bo replied: They have heard the order for battle.
> Do they want to fight?
> Bo replied: I am not sure.
> After mounting their carriages, the generals and lieutenants are all dismounting again!
> Bo said: So that they can pray for luck from the spirits before the battle!

[75]Chen Kui's further examples of this technique include a dialogue about music taken from *The Classic of Music*, the "lost" classic (cf. note 33 above).

Chapter 4, section 8. The Style of citing surnames[76]
(称举姓氏的体例)

Translator's Commentary

Chapter 4, sections 1, 4, and 5 consider sequencing information. In section 1, Chen Kui discusses *cengdi*, which I have called "progression," but from the examples Chen Kui uses, we might call it chain reasoning. This was (and remains) a very common method of reasoning in Chinese, so it is not surprising that he chose to discuss and exemplify it. He identifies three styles of progression: from small to big, from profound to superficial, and from origin to present. The identification of the "small-to-big" style is curious. Today, it is commonly asserted that Chinese prefers to proceed from big (or general) to small (or specific). For example, the *DCGR* notes that *cengdi* progression can proceed from big to small, from high to low, from many to few, from light to heavy, and from deep to shallow.[77]

Sections 4 and 5 also discuss different ways of sequencing information in text. You can first raise the topic and then discuss the details. Or you discuss the details first and then provide a conclusion. Or you can use a three-part structure in which you raise the overall topic first, then provide details, and then reiterate the main point at the end. The examples of these three rhetorical structures given by Chen Kui can be represented as follows. The first one follows a topic sentence—support pattern.

> Topic sentence / main claim: Zi Chan had four aspects of behaviour fitting for a ruler.
> Supporting statements /exemplification of claim: four supporting statements.

The second structure follows the reverse pattern, with examples and justifications for the main claim preceding the main claim.

> Supporting statements / exemplification: three examples of Sun Hei's bad behaviour.
> Topic sentence / main claim: How can your behaviour be condoned?

[76]Chen Kui lists the various ways that names can be cited and people referred to.
[77]Zhang Dihua, ed., *Hanyu Yufa Xiuci Cidian (A Dictionary of Chinese Grammar and Rhetoric)* (Anhui: Anhui Jiaoyu Chubanshe, 1986) p. 45.

The third structure follows a three-part pattern where the main claim or topic sentence is presented at the beginning and repeated at end. Supporting statements or justifications for the claim made in the topic sentence are placed in the middle. In Chen Kui's example, this process is sub-divided into the three cruel-hearted and the three stupid things.

> Topic sentence / main claim: Zang Wenzhong did three cruel hearted and stupid things.
> Exemplification of cruel-hearted things.
> Repetition of part of topic sentence: These were the three cruel-hearted things.
> Exemplification of stupid things.
> Repetition of part of topic sentence: "These were the three stupid things".

This structure recalls the aphorism favoured by current teachers of writing in English speaking countries: "Tell 'em what you are going to tell 'em; tell 'em; tell 'em what you have told 'em." Given the amount of Western scholarship that has argued that Chinese prefers either a digressive or a non-linear style,[78] these two short sections are significant. In fact, the three methods of sequencing information identified and exemplified by Chen Kui will appear familiar to all teachers and students of writing, as will the emphasis on cohesion and clarity.

Sections 2, 3, 6, and 7 focus on the rhetorical uses of repetition and the "question-and-answer" technique in the writing of dialogue. Chen's comments need no further comment, except to note how aware he was about the need for a text to cohere. Section 8 merely provides a list of surnames.

Chapter 5, section 1. The use of plain language in *The Record of Rites* ("礼记"使用"浅[79]语"的例证)

The texts of *The Record of Rites*, starting with Hou Cang's early notes through to the commentary of Dai Shen, not only used literary

[78]Cf. R. B. Kaplan, "Cultural Thought Patterns in Intercultural Education," *Language Learning* 16 (1966): 1–20; C. Matalene, "Contrastive Rhetoric: An American Writing Teacher in China," *College English* 47 (1985): 789–808; Jia Yuxin and Cheng Cheng, "Indirectness in Chinese English Writing," *Asian Englishes* 5 (2002):64–74.

[79]This character *qian* has a primary meaning of shallow or superficial, but also can mean simple. This is the meaning that Liu Yancheng (n. 8 above, p.88) assumes, as he translates this into Modern Standard Chinese as *qian jin* (浅近), which means simple and easy and collocates with language.

language but also used plain and simple language. For example, "Use your hand to cover your mouth when speaking to avoid breathing over people"; "When dining as a guest in someone's house don't toss your leftover bones to the dog, so showing that you do not give a fig for the things of your host"; "Even when eating the leftover sauce from the vegetables still use chopsticks"; "When men and women meet they should observe the proprieties"; "If you have an itch do not scratch it in front of your relatives"; "Torn clothing must be mended immediately"; "A wife who is over 50 need not prepare the bed"; "When a husband's younger brother dies, the wife must not touch the corpse"; and "A husband's younger brother must not touch the corpse of his brother's wife." Although the meaning of these extracts is complex and concerned with preventing people from violating the rites, there is very little literary embellishment. [The language used is plain and simple.][80]

Chapter 5, section 2. The language used in *The Pan Geng* is contemporary and common
("盘庚"所用语言是当时民间的确"通语")

How did people understand complex documents such as *The Pan Geng* section of *The Shang Histories*? In fact, the language of these texts was the common language of the people[81] and was language, therefore, which everyone could understand. It was not the same in later generations when the language had to be explained before it could be understood.

Chapter 5, section 3. Local colour in the language of *The Book of Poetry* ("诗经"语言的地区色彩)

There are words in *The Book of Poetry* that require notes before they can be understood, but these were originally local words. . . . For example, locals would have known that *hui* (燬) meant the same as *huo* (火), or fire.[82]

[80]Liu Yancheng adds this sentence in brackets (n. 8 above, p.88).

[81]用之间之通语. In translating this into Modern Standard Chinese as 它所用的是民间通行的语言, Liu (n. 8 above, p.89) adds in brackets (大家都听得懂, everyone could understand), as the translation of 而后明. The use of 听得懂 means that people could understand the language when listening to it.

[82]This short section includes a few more examples of this type.

Chapter 5, section 4. Linguistic characteristics of *The Yi Li* and *The Analects* (“仪礼,” “论语” 语语言特色)

The system of ritual described in *The Yi Li* represents the ritual norms of the Zhou. It contains awe-inspiring and solemn ritual ceremonies. The text is exceptionally intricate and hard to understand. The text from *The Analects* entitled *Xiang Dang* describes the words and deeds of Confucius, as recorded by his disciples. It describes the standards and rules of human conduct. The text, although somewhat roundabout, is easy to understand. By simply quoting some sentences from *The Yi Li* and this section of *The Analects*, we can compare and clearly identify differences between them.

The Yi Li says, “On entering an ancestral temple while holding a ceremonial tablet, he [Confucius] bows with extreme respect and sincerity, for fear that he violates the rites.” The excerpt from *The Analects* says: “When Confucius was conducting a ceremonial ritual while on a mission to another state, he approached respectfully, holding the tablet before him and bowing as if he would be unable to straighten up again.”

Chapter 5, section 5. Examples of following old customs in *The Classic of Filial Piety* (“孝经” 因袭他书的例怔)

The texts of *The Classic of Filial Piety* are simple, unadorned, pure, and unadulterated.[83] They contain the spirit of the wise sages, and promulgate the rules and standards of the six classics. There are several places where it is unclear by whom things are said. But the opening of chapter 3 makes it look as though what Zi Chan[84] said about ritual has been appropriated wholesale. When wise men write, they quote copiously from many sources and record a wide variety of aphorisms, but texts must not echo each other identically. People writing commentaries and notes on the classics certainly did not plagiarise them.[85]

Chapter 5, section 6. Examples modelled on *The Er Ya* and *The Shi Fa*[86] (模仿“尔雅,” “谥法” 的例正)

[83]简, 易, 纯, and 正 are the four adjectives used by Chen Kui.
[84]子产. See n. 68.
[85]岂作传者, 反窃经欤.

The main purpose of *The Er Ya* was to explain the meaning of words. The function of *The Shi Fa* was to determine the death names of the emperors.[87]

Chapter 5, section 7. A comparison of the language of *The Analects*, *The Zuo Zhuan*, and other books ("论论," "左传" 等书语言优劣的比较)

The Analects and *The Jia Yu* record the discussions between Confucius, leading figures, ministers of the day, and his students. However, *The Jia Yu* has several parts that are not strictly true and that have been added. As this book was recorded by several students, the original material has probably been embellished. The people who added these bits were of variable quality, making *The Jia Yu* turn out as it did. And although *The Analects* was also compiled and arranged by several students, I doubt whether it underwent embellishment.[88]

Chapter 5, section 8. The rhetorical use of irony (反语修辞释例)

Although the words of *The Ting Liao* odes in *The Book of Poetry* look as though they are words of praise, the intention of the author was actually to admonish. Zhang Lao's[89] lofty and magnificent congratulatory speech on the occasion of the inauguration of the palace looks superficially like praise, but its real intent was to ridicule. "How beautiful and tall, how beautiful and broad! Here there will be singing and dancing at sacrificial ceremonies, here there will be mourning and wailing when holding funerals, here there will be banquets for state guests!"

Chapter 5, section 9. A text that misuses classical language must have faults (滥用古语, 文比有失)

The language of texts is constructed from some form of framework, and there is no doubt that is difficult to write. And if you choose to adopt the language of the ancients it is even more difficult.

[87]Chen Kui gives examples.

[88]Chen Kui compares extracts and argues that passages modelled on the *Analects* invariably fall short of the language used in the *Analects*, but he gives no reasons for this judgement.

[89]张老. Zhang Lao was an official of the Jin State.

Writers who study historical literary forms and who adopt classical language to write texts frequently produce muddled gibberish[90] .

Chapter 5, section 10. Thoughtlessly applying hackneyed phrases makes a text ridiculous
(套用陈词，文章出丑)

The old saying has it, "Dimples on the face are very attractive, but on the forehead, they are very ugly." This saying is absolutely right. Ever since the Jin Dynasty, there have been far too many people who have longed to imitate the classics when they pick up their pens to write.

Translator's Commentary

Chen's main concern in chapter 5 is with the language of the classics and its influence on contemporary writing. He reiterates many of the points made in chapter 1. He argued that, as language changed with the times, writers should not slavishly mimic classical texts. They should not use classical language to write about contemporary events. "Writers who study historical literary forms and who adopt classical language to write texts frequently produce muddled gibberish." He pointed out that the language used in the classics was, at the time, contemporary language, and was language that could be easily understood by the people. He opposed the misuse of classical language and promoted the use of common and contemporary language. He cites examples from different texts to show how the simply expressed text is more effective than the more complex or embellished one. This view is expressed throughout *The Rules of Writing* (cf. chapter 1, sections 4, 8, and chapter 6). Chen Kui seems to anticipate the so-called vernacular or *bai hua* movement of the early twentieth century. His interest in and support for vernacular ballads (chapter 9, section 5) lends some evidence to this suggestion, although we need to be cautious in ascribing to Chen Kui a democratic motive to popularise vernacular speech,

[90]Chen provides examples "to act as a warning for later generations." He also gives an example of "a repeated and verbose example of the fault of piling one bed upon another," or creating needless reduplication. He also identifies the fault of an author altering word order and thus being guilty of "changing one's outer clothes with one's underwear."

as *The Rules of Writing* was primarily a handbook of classical writing. It is the contemporary version of the classical language and the *guwen* style that he is advocating. However, Chen Kui was writing when printing had just been invented and books became more affordable to more readers. At the same time, more and more young men were seeking education to prepare for the civil service exams. It is apt, therefore, that Chen Kui would promote a simple style of writing with a focus on meaning that would be accessible to these people.

The second important point he makes in this chapter is his criticism of those who plagiarise or copy wholesale. Referring back to previous texts is essential. Copying them word for word, however, is not to be condoned. "Texts must not echo each other identically. People writing commentaries and notes on the classics certainly did not plagiarise them."[91]

Chapter 6, section 1. The language of *The Tan Gong*[92] is simple but not sparse, the ideas profound but not obscure
("檀弓"记事,言简而不疏旨深而不晦)

The language of *The Tan Gong* is succinct and meticulous, and the meaning it imparts is profound but not obscure. It is like the rich and beautiful language of *The Zuo Zhuan*, and how could that be improved upon? The description of two events makes this clear.[93]

The Jin crown prince, Shen Sheng, was framed by Li Ji, the emperor's favourite concubine. People urged the crown prince to defend himself and make clear what was what to the emperor. In recording this event, *The Zuo Zhuan* says, "Some people pointed out to the crown prince: if you defend yourself, the emperor will know the truth. The crown prince said: if the emperor loses Li Ji, he will not be at peace and he will not eat properly. The moment I defend myself and make matters clear, Li Ji's guilt will be clear. The emperor is old and would become unhappy at losing Li Ji, and then I too could not be happy."

[91] Chapter 5, section 5.

[92] A section of *The Record of Rites.*

[93] I translate only the first event, which compares the treatment of the same event by three different texts, *The Zuo Zhuan*, *The Tan Gong*, and *The Gu Liang Commentary*, another well-known commentary. Chen Kui does not say why he prefers one version to the others.

The Tang Gong version says, "Why don't you make your feelings clear to the emperor? The crown prince said: I can't do this. The emperor is only at peace if Li Ji is alive. If I tell the truth, Li Ji will be put to death, and in this way, I will break the emperor's heart." On analysing these two excerpts, I find the Tan Gong a little better.

The Gu Liang Commentary records the same event in this way. "The crown prince's teacher, Li Ke, said to the crown prince, 'go to the palace and tell the truth in person to the emperor. If you go into the palace and tell the truth in person, you will save your life; if you do not go into the palace and tell the truth in person, you will not be able to save your life.' The crown prince said 'our emperor is already old and muddled and if I do as you say and go into the palace and tell him the truth in person, well, Li Ji will definitely be put to death, and once Li Ji is dead, our emperor will be unable to find peace of mind'." Not only is this text worse than *The Tan Gong*, it is not even as good as *The Zuo Zhuan.*

Chapter 6, section 2. Sentence length in *The Tan Gong* ("檀弓" 长短的句法释例)

The leg of a wild duck is short, but if it were lengthened, the duck would be miserable; the leg of a crane is very long, but if you shortened it, the crane would be most miserable. In the same way, sentences in *The Tan Gong*, whether long or short, cannot be lengthened or shortened. They are the length they are for a reason.[94]

Chapter 6, section 3. The exquisitely fine sentences of *The Tan Gong* ("檀弓" 炼句工巧)

Playing the zither is not hard; the difficulty lies in tuning the strings correctly. Writing a composition is not hard; the difficulty lies in refining the sentences and words. The text of *The Tan Gong*, apart from the outstanding aspects described earlier, is even more exquisitely refined in the field of sentence construction. By comparing them with *The Jia Yu*, its outstanding qualities can be more clearly seen.[95]

[94]Chen Kui gives examples of long and short sentences that range from fourteen characters to a single character in length.

[95]Chen Kui gives examples of sentences from both texts, but does not explain his preference for those of *The Tang Gong* to those of *The Jia Yu*.

Chapter 6, section 4. Three beautiful qualities of the language of *The Kao Gong Ji*[96] ("考工记"的语言有三美)

An analysis of the texts of *The Kao Gong Ji* shows three overall points of excellence: the first we call powerful and elegant, the second we call tactful and discrete, and the third we call well-ordered and unaffected.[97]

An example of powerful and elegant language is: "The swords of Zheng, the axes of Song, the pen knives of Lu and the jade sabres of Wu and Yue could never be of such excellent quality were they made elsewhere."

An example of tactful and discrete language is: "When making a leather hide, stretch it and pull it, and make it even. Having been stretched even, the material will be flat and even; if it is not stretched even, then part of it will be too loose and part will be too taut. And if part of it is too loose and part too taut, when you come to use it, the stretched places will split. And if the stretched places split, then the broad part will become too narrow."

An example of well-ordered and unaffected language is: "If a bell's essential shape is thick and squat, then its sound will be strained and not travel far; if a bell is thin and elongated, then the sound will be pleasing and travel far."

Chapter 6, section 5. Sentences in *The Spring and Autumn Annals* and *The Book of Poetry* ("春秋," "诗经"的句法)

Long sentences in *The Spring and Autumn Annals* can contain more than thirty words and short ones may contain only one. *The Book of Poetry's* long sentences never have more than eight characters and the short ones never have fewer than two.[98] The primary function of *The Spring and Autumn Annals* is to pass judgement and make comment, while the primary function of *The Book of Poetry* is to extol beauty and satirise the perverse. Neither follows any set laws in the choice of words or in the construction of sentences.

[97]雄健而雅,宛曲而峻,整齐而纯. Chen Kui gives examples of each of these styles but does not attempt to define them. I have selected one example of each style.

[98]Chen Kui gives several examples.

Chapter 6, section 6. The use of function words in *The Book of Poetry* ("诗经"中的助词用法释例)

When function words are used in *the Book of Poetry*, they must always rhyme with the word in the equivalent position in the line preceding them.[99] *The Book of Poetry* contains many four- and six-character sentences and we cannot describe each of them. Furthermore, *The Book of Rites*, although not written by poets, has similar rules of rhyme and harmony.

Chapter 6, section 7. Kong Yingda's[100] discussion of the method of composition of *The Book of Poetry* (孔颖大论"诗经"的章法)

Kong Yingda said that there were no fixed stylistic rules for the writing of verses or stanzas in the Book of Poetry. Sometimes several verses describing the same event might be repeated. Sometimes an event might described over several stanzas. He pointed out that some poems have different beginnings and endings, some have the same. Some poems, after recording an event, proceed to extend and develop a new meaning. Some poems offer differing accounts of events. Over time, some poems change. Some poems, as events progress and change, alter their style. Some verses use the same words twice, some describe the same event over three stanzas. A poem may have several stanzas but of different lengths; a stanza may have several lines but the number of words in each line is not the same. Kong's discussion includes the range of styles in the composition of poetry. As no one could surpass his treatment, I have adopted it.

Translator's Commentary

Some have taken Chen Kui to task in chapter 6 for not discussing techniques or explaining his preferences, even though he provides

[99]Chen Kui gives several examples of this rule, and I give a pinyin "gloss" of one to show the reader where the rhymes are. In this example, the function word *yu* in the second line rhymes with *chu* in the first. "He qi chu ye (何其处也)", "Bi you yu ye (必有与也)".

[100]Kong Yingda's commentaries were adopted by the Song dynasty as their official commentaries.

examples.[101] It is indeed frustrating that he expresses preferences without providing any reasons for them. He also considers sentence length, which should be determined not by any fixed rhetorical rule but by context. By showing that *The Kao Gong Ji* used three different styles, he is arguing that choice of style also depends on context and the writer's purpose. Chinese scholars point out Chen Kui's significance today, as he combined grammar and style, whereas today's grammar books either focus on words and sentence structure but ignore style, or focus on textual construction but overlook grammar.[102]

Chapter 7, section 1. The rhetorical use of balance or words in parallel (排比修辞释例)

When we use a similar grouping or style of words in a text, it is to increase the text's impact and heighten its meaning. There are definite rules for doing this. Han Yu was a leader of the classical writing movement, and paid particular attention to these rules.[103]

Han Yu wrote, "Five men on horseback, standing still for a long while; ten men on horseback wearing suits of armour and carrying weapons, standing still for a long while; two men on horseback, their backs laden with goods; two men on horseback carrying tools."

The sentence describing these men probably follows the style of a section of *The Shang Histories* where it says, "Two men wearing ceremonial black red leather hats, holding three saw-teeth spears; four men wearing ceremonial green leather hats, holding long dagger axes with sharp blades; one man wearing a ceremonial hat holding an axe; one man wearing a ceremonial hat holding a broad axe; one man wearing a ceremonial hat holding three sharp-pointed spears; one man wearing a ceremonial hat holding four sharp-pointed spears; one man wearing a ceremonial hat holding a long spear." This is not the same as using the same words. We note here that Han Yu's pieces were not written without preparation. We do not give examples from

[101]Tan, *Wenze Yanjiu (A Study of the Wenze)*, cited in n. 7 above; Zheng Ziyu, *Zhongguo Xiuci Shigao (A History of Chinese Rhetoric)*, cited in n. 6 above.

[102]Wang Songmao, "*Wenze Zhuyi Bayu (A Postscript to The Wenze Zhuyi)*," in Liu Yancheng, *Wenze Zhuyi (A Commentary and Translation of the Wenze)* (Beijing: Shumu Wenxuan Chubanshe, 1988), 283–295.

[103]Chen Kui gives examples of Han Yu's writing and shows that these have been influenced by the classical texts. He then asks, "With these examples, who would say that this movement was started by Han Yu himself?" His purpose is not to belittle Han Yu, but to show that even the great Han Yu's style was not completely original. Han Yu's leadership role in the *guwen* movement was discussed earlier.

general texts that use this method, but provide examples selected from the classics, so that by reading these examples people can extend their knowledge of this style.

The consecutive use of the word "some."[104] *The Book of Poetry* says, "Some people relax lazily at home, some give their utmost to affairs of state. Some people eat their fill and then sit back and relax, some travel ceaselessly. Some people have not heard cries of grief, some people anxiously work hard. Some people, at their own beckoning and leisure, lie down and rest, some work very hard for the emperor. Some people drink wildly to excess and seek pleasure to their heart's content, some are care-laden for fear of stirring up trouble. Some people discuss ideas openly and unreservedly, some are left with everything to do."

Han Yu's "Southern Mountain" poem reads, "Some mountains have a continuous flow of peaks as if they were trying to catch up with each other, some have peaks that are clustered together as if they were at war. Some mountains lie firm and level like the mantel beneath the roof of a house, some soar high like the joyful calls of wild birds. Some mountains are higgledy-piggledy like a collapsing house of cards, some cluster together like spokes of a wheel converging on the axle. Some peaks are like a light boat bobbing on the water, some burst forth violently like an enraged horse at a flying gallop!"

The consecutive use of "can." *The Analects* say, "Poetry can let our feelings out and through it we can examine whether we flourish or decline. Studying poetry can cause us to be generous to people and to encourage each other. Poetry can be used to complain and ridicule the dynasty and government."[105]

Chapter 7, section 2. Examples of similar sentences from the classics (经传文句不"约而同"的例证)

The reason why, in the majority of cases, the sentences and language in the classics are similar is not because they were copied from an original text, but because the events and ideas described are similar, and thus the language happens to be similar. The brief discussion below clarifies this. There is an Yi poem that goes, "If in ritual there are no mistakes, there is no need to worry about what

[104]This section is subdivided into sections that discuss the use of a particular word in this parallel way.

[105]This section contains further examples of the parallel use of particular words from the classics.

someone else says." Xunzi quotes this, saying, "If in ritual, there are no errors, there is no need to worry about what someone else says."[106]

The Book of Poetry says, "Heaven should not have been willing to let the old man die,[107] for how could he then guarantee the safety of the Emperor." *The Zuo Zhuan*, in recording Lu's grief, says, "Heaven ought not to have been willing to let this old man die, for how could he then protect the Emperor?"

Translator's Commentary

Chen uses an extraordinarily wide choice of examples in chapter 7. In the second section, he shows how parallel balance is achieved using examples of forty-five separate words. This underlines the importance of deriving linguistic and rhetorical rules from actual examples and serves "as a great inspiration to later rhetoricians."[108] His citation of Han Yu's work shows how much he admired Han Yu's classical style and that he felt it could serve as a model for his contemporaries.

Chapter 8. The eight genres of *The Zuo Zhuan*[109]("左传" 八体)

In the Spring and Autumn period, although the way of rulership was in decline, texts did not become extinct, and the dissemination and collection of these beautiful texts was enough to maintain writing standards. If we study the essence of the texts of *The Zuo Zhuan*, we can distinguish eight genres. They are:

1. edicts (命), which should be tactful and appropriate;
2. vows (誓), which should be prudent and solemn;
3. treaties of alliance (盟), which should be concise and trustworthy;
4. prayers (祷), which should be earnest and sincere;
5. critical remarks (諫), which should be in the interests of cooperation but straightforward;

[106]Xunzi's word for errors differs from the "mistakes" of the original, and there is an extra particle in Xunzi's version.

[107]"The old man" is Confucius.

[108]Tan, *Wenze Yanjiu (A Study of the Wenze)* cited in n. 7 above, p.10

[109]This chapter is unique in having an overall title and an introductory section. I translate only this introductory section.

6. notes of censure (让), which should be eloquent, convincing, and just;
7. letters (书), which should be fluent and follow the standard;
8. responses (对), which should be elegant and witty.

Authors who read the models and examples of these provided below can get a glimpse of the complete picture of classical genres.

Translator's Commentary

Work on genre had been undertaken by earlier authors such as Cao Pi (187–226), Lu Ji (262–303), and Liu Xie (465–520). Cao Pi had divided genres into eight types, Lu Ji into ten, and Liu Xie identified thirty-two. Chen Kui is not creating a new field in chapter 8, but developing it. Several scholars point out that Chen Kui was the first to distinguish genres into those that deal with events and those that deal with spoken language.[110] But his selection of specific examples from each genre draws the most praise from current Chinese scholars,[111] as this allowed for serious study. The genres identified in this way from *The Zuo Zhuan* became models for later generations.[112]

Chapter 9[113]

Translator's precis: Chapter 9 contains examples of seven genres: admonition (箴); praise (赞); inscriptions (铭); song lyrics (歌词); ballads (对谣); threnodies and eulogies (祝谥); eulogistic prayers (颂祷). Only section 5 on ballads is translated, as it shows Chen Kui's interest in and support for the vernacular language in appropriate contexts.

[110]See Tan, *Wenze Yanjiu (A Study of the Wenze)*, cited in n. 7 above, Zong Tinghu and Li Jinling, *A Complete History of Chinese Rhetoric*, cited in n. 6 above.

[111]Zong Tinghu and Li Jinling, *A Complete History of Chinese Rhetoric*, cited in n. 6 above.

[112]Songmao, "*Wenze Zhuyi Bayu (A Postscript to The Wenze Zhuyi*)," cited in n. 102 above.

[113]Chapter nine contains examples of a further seven genres, not from *The Zuo Zhuan*.

Chapter 9, section 5. Ballads (歌谣)

We can divide songs into three types: ballads (with complex rhymes), folk songs (with single rhymes), and chants. The Zhou and the Jin both had ballads. The songs of labourers who repaired city walls and of those who damped down earth works were different. The chants of citizens were different from the chants of the masses. Although these ballads were written in the vernacular, they are worth admiring and emulating.[114] Here I select some outstanding examples.

The Builders' ballad[115]
Within the city's Southern gate, the people's skin is white,
Urging us to work hard.
Within the city, the people's skin is black,
Consoling us.[116]

A Chant[117]
Estimating and collecting our household tax,
Regulating and collecting the tax on our fields.
If anyone wants to kill Zi Chan,[118]
Him shall we help.

Translator's Commentary

In chapter 9 Chen Kui includes the informal and down-to-earth registers of songs and ballads among the much more formal registers of inscriptions, providing further evidence of his defense not only of contemporary language, but also of the language of the common people. This was an extremely unusual attitude for a scholar of Chen Kui's standing to take, especially one who was writing a text on the rules of writing based on the classics. The choice of which type of language to use depended on the context and the communicative effect the writer was striving for.

[114]虽皆刍词,犹可观法

[115]The Chinese is: 泽门之皙,实兴我役,邑中之黔,实慰我心.

[116]Those with white skin refer to the elite who do not have to work in the sun.

[117]The Chinese is: 取我衣冠而褚之,取我田畴而伍之,孰杀子产,吾其与之.

[118]This is the same person that is described as being so virtuous in chapter 4, section 4. The peasants appear to have had a different view, although the chant goes on to say that Zi Chan later will be remembered as a good leader. The moral appears to be that it takes a long time to recognise that someone has acted for the good of the country.

Chapter 10, section 1[119]Edicts (招命封策)

The language of the official exchanges between rulers of the Tang, Yu, Xia, Shang, and Zhou periods was elegant and unaffected, calm and cordial, and natural. After this period and up to the Spring and Autumn period, there were government ministers of fame and prestige along with extremely talented senior officials, who paid great attention to ensuring that language was appropriate to the occasion. Their language was tactful and gorgeous, rich in literary grace, and had a flavour of classical language. During the time of the Qin and Han, imperial edicts were all written by the emperors themselves. Thus when Di Wulun saw the imperial edicts of the Han Emperor, Wu Di, he praised them, saying, "As soon as one reads this man's edicts one can see that he was a sage." But things have not been the same since then. When an emperor wishes to issue an edict he now places the responsibility of drafting it onto a minister, and ministers also write memorials to the throne. Because of this, scholars and officials, dressed in splendid attire, carry out business in the palace. They take on airs of being men of great learning and allow jumbled, absurdly detailed, and elaborate material to pour from their pens in torrents. Writing of no value floods documents to no purpose, even to the extent of creating a style of ornate parallelism in their texts. The language becomes ridiculous and the sentences laughable. All these so-called imperial statements and memorials to the emperor are void of their proper characteristics. Here I select examples from *The Shang Histories*, *The Zuo Zhuan*, and *The Discourses of the States* that could be used by people who draft imperial documents or write memorials. These examples can illustrate the excellent aspects of the documents of the ancients and provide people with models.

Translator's Commentary

Chen Kui despaired of the language used by officials in official documents. His complaint in chapter 10 that "writing of no value floods documents to no purpose, even the extent of creating a style of ornate parallelism in their texts" is an attack on the *pianwen* style. He wants civil servants and scholar officials to write clear, simple prose in the *guwen* style. *The Rules of Writing* shows them how.

[119]I translate only Chen Kui's opening comments. He gives dozens of examples of edicts.

Conclusion

Chen Kui made an extraordinary contribution to Chinese rhetoric. He categorised metaphor for the first time, and many of his categories are still used today. He showed the different ways of sequencing information: proceeding from detail to conclusion, from main point to detail, or from main point via detail to a restatement of the main point. He illustrated the roles of function words and the rhetorical effect of tropes such as inversion, repetition, and balance. He discussed the merits of sentence length. He gave a detailed account of how to use citation and, at the same time, he condemned the wholesale copying of texts. Plagiarism was not allowed. He identified and discussed a number of genres and advanced genre theory. Yet it was also his manner of exposition that makes him stand out as an original thinker and groundbreaking rhetorician. For the first time, rules of writing and principles of rhetoric were identified from a close study of actual texts. *The Rules of Writing* is peppered with examples to illustrate Chen Kui's points, providing hard evidence for his linguistic and rhetorical claims. Finally, he avoids simplistic prescriptions, in that usage must be determined by the context and the rhetorical effect the writer wishes to make. The rhetorical principles presented in *The Rules of Writing* are based on description rather than mere prescription.

Most significant, however, is Chen Kui's insistence on the primacy of meaning over form and the importance of using contemporary classical language. This insistence reflected the times when the invention of printing, together with the rapid increase in the number of men seeking education, made books far more accessible, affordable, and necessary than at any time in the past. The times foreshadow the literary reform movement of the early twentieth century, when there arose a comparable desire for mass education, a focus on meaning over form, and a need for the understandable vernacular over the elitist literary language.

Written to counteract the influence of the ornate and florid style of *pianwen* by calling for a return to the simpler style of *guwen*, *the Rules of Writing* shows the development of rhetorical styles in response to the needs of the time. This prompts the thought of the similarly dynamic changes in rhetorical style occurring in Europe around the same time, as evidenced in the growth of the manuals of *Ars dictaminis*.

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- 1.2 Originality and mimicry in the six classics
- 1.3 Good texts are natural and coherent
- 1.4 Textual simplicity
- 1.5 Descriptions can be implicit
- 1.6 Repetition, roundaboutness, and tact
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- 1.8 When recording contemporary events, it is not appropriate for texts to adopt classical language.
- 1.9 Writers have a basis for giving specific names to specific texts

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