

## Writing to Connect Minds: Bing Xin as a Feminist Rhetorician

Bo Wang

California State University, Fresno

With the development of the May Fourth Movement (1919–1925), the first group of modern Chinese women writers emerged from the backdrop of radical social and cultural changes in the early twentieth century.<sup>1</sup> Their work was neither a continuation of traditional Chinese women's writing nor a simple transplantation of Western feminist literature. Awakened by the new culture, women writers assumed the historic mission of enlightenment. Writing with an earnestness born of the May Fourth Movement, Bing Xin (1900–1999), essayist, fiction writer, and poet, shared with her contemporaries a belief in the power of language and felt strongly that this power could and should be acquired and claimed by common women as well as men.<sup>2</sup> Like many new intellectuals, Bing Xin insisted that writers should break the bonds of *wenyanwen* (classical Chinese) and use *baihua* (the vernacular) that is based on popular spoken language. This call for the use of the vernacular is, in essence, a move toward a modern democratic society in the area of language reform. As a pioneer of vernacular Chinese, Bing Xin experimented with the genre of *xiaopinwen* (the vernacular lyrical essay) and used it to explore various societal issues, especially issues related to women and children. Her writing opened up a new area of women's and children's literature by broadening the range of subject matter in modern Chinese literature.

Bing Xin's work, however, was criticized as "not reflecting society but only reflecting herself" (Mao Dun 192–93). In spite of her tremendous literary accomplishments, Bing Xin has been relegated to a less important position in modern Chinese literature histories. Bing Xin as a writer and stylist deserves more attention not only in literature but also in rhetoric studies. Only when we locate Bing Xin in her own social and historical context and analyze her work from a gendered perspective can we demystify those grand historical narratives and reveal the masculine values embedded in the criticisms of her work. Different from male writers of her time, Bing Xin espoused a feminine mode of *belle lettres* and employed various discursive strategies to critique the traditional culture and awaken her countrywomen. By writing in vernacular Chinese, by depicting women and children's lives in a new era, Bing Xin bravely challenged the feudal patriarchal mores and ethics and contributed significantly to the development of a new public discourse.<sup>3</sup>

In this article, I offer a rereading of Bing Xin's literary texts, particularly her essays, from a feminist rhetorical perspective. Western feminist historiographers and rhetoricians such as Susan Jarratt, C. Jan Swearingen, Cheryl Glenn, Krista Ratcliffe, and Jacqueline Jones Royster's works on Western women rhetors and writers have informed my study. My purpose is to recover Bing Xin's contributions to the development of modern Chinese rhetoric. Toward this end, I first locate Bing Xin as a feminist rhetorician in early twentieth-century China. Then I explore how her essays may be read as theorizing a new rhetoric of modernity and as modeling its strategies.<sup>4</sup> Her essays, I argue, are discursive practices that disrupted the dominant patriarchal discourse and spread the new culture.

### **Bing Xin and the May Fourth Movement**

Born in Fujian Province in 1900, Bing Xin was the only daughter of her family. Her father, Xie Baozhang, a patriotic naval officer, fought in the Sino-Japanese War and established Yantai Naval Academy. Her mother, Yang Fuci, who came from a scholar's family, taught Bing Xin and her siblings how to read and write. In 1914 Bing Xin went to Beijing Beiman Girls' School, a missionary school where she was exposed to the Bible and Christianity. This exposure contributed to her philosophy of love, a major theme expressed in her lyrical essays during the early period of her career.

Bing Xin mentioned more than once: "It's the thunder of the May Fourth Movement that shook me onto the path of writing" (*Jishi Zhu* 90).<sup>5</sup> Indeed, without the May Fourth Movement, there would not be a writer named Bing Xin. At the time, Bing Xin served as secretary of the Student Union at Xiehe Women's College and public relations writer in Beijing Women's Academic Association. She wrote in her memoir:

This epoch-making patriotic new culture movement drew me out of the small world of my home and missionary school; gradually I noticed various social problems in the semi-feudal and semi-colonized China. [...] With great enthusiasm, I spoke in public on the street, made donations, and attended meetings during the day and wrote *wenti xiaoshuo* [question fiction] at night. (*Jishi Zhu* 228)

Evidently, the May Fourth Movement changed Bing Xin's life. During this period, Chinese new intellectuals advocated women's liberation as part of their effort to attack the Confucian tradition and build a modern democratic nation. Feminist movements launched in the United States and Europe in the early twentieth century also provided theoretical reference for the new intel-

lectuals to discuss and solve Chinese women's problems. Thus, the connection between women's liberation and the nation's modernization made women's rights, women's education, and women's liberation a major theme in the new culture. The development of modern education prepared a large number of readers for the new public discourse. It is within this social and historical context that Bing Xin wrote and published her works. In other words, Bing Xin was writing to address the problems in a cultural background in which her audience's experiences and needs were entwined. In 1921 Bing Xin joined Wenxue Yanjiuhui (Literature Research Association) and was one of its first few women members. Endorsing realism and taking common people's lives as subjects, Bing Xin published a series of "question fiction" to explore various issues related to life, women, family, culture, and society. She believed that art is created for life's sake and that literature embodies life. She wrote literature in order to "touch society," "alert people," and "change the situation"—hence, question fiction (*Jishi Zhu* 241). Bing Xin enacted her view of writing through many essays and short stories she composed in the May Fourth period.

### **Writing to Connect Minds: Bing Xin's Literary Theory**

Since she published her first short story in 1919, Bing Xin had adopted and appropriated the Western literary mode of realism. From Bing Xin's essays on writing, we can see that she emphasizes both the expression of the writer's individual personality and its connection with the audience. Influenced by both the traditional Chinese literary thought and Western literary modes, Bing Xin developed a literary theory centered on *gexing* (individual personality), *tongqing* (sympathy, emotion), and the author's social and moral responsibility to the public.

One concept in her theory is *gexing* (personality), which emphasizes the author's individual personality and true feelings expressed through writing. Bing Xin's emphasis on the expression of *gexing* would seem on the surface to have more in common with Western romanticism than with realism. Yet the Chinese assumption of the subjective origins of writing distinguishes itself from the Western romanticism that views literature as pure self-expression with a sense of the self as an isolated entity disconnected from society and history.<sup>6</sup> Although this concept was also discussed by other writers, Bing Xin took it to another level in both her theory and practice. She related it to the making of "real" literature, by which she means the kind of writing that connects the writer with the reader through the writer's depiction of her individual personality and true feelings. *Gexing* adds to the Western realism a dimension of the

writer's subjectivity in the creative process. In Bing Xin's text, *gexing* could also be seen as an important way in which the writer establishes her ethos so as to reach her audience.

Bing Xin recognized *tongqing* (sympathy, emotion), another important literary concept discussed by the writers of her time. Bing Xin views *tongqing* through the relationship between author, text, reader, and world. She sees *tongqing* as a link through which the writer reaches the audience. According to Bing Xin, the ideal literary encounter is a *jingshen jiechu* (spiritual contact) through which *tongqing* can emerge. *Tongqing*, as an ideal state that a literary work can produce in the audience, could be considered as pathos in the Chinese context with which a writer moves her audience. Thus, Bing Xin saw literature as a communicative act. The writer writes to convey her feelings to the reader so as to deliver her message to her audience.

Bing Xin was also concerned with the social responsibilities of the writer. The purpose of literature is not only to stir the reader's sympathy but to change attitudes and connect minds. When responding to some critics' comments on the tragic characters in her fiction, she wrote in an essay titled "When Writing Fiction, I Am Not Pessimistic": "My goal in writing fiction is to influence society, so I put all my efforts into describing the bad situation of old families in old society, so that people will become alert and try to improve the situation" (*Jishi Zhu* 243). Here Bing Xin implies that the writer bears a social responsibility to her readers when it comes to depicting the tragic realities of the contemporary society. Therefore, realism for Bing Xin is an important literary mode that provides the writer with an analytical tool to examine society and evoke moral responses from the reader. In an essay titled "The Cultivation of Moral Character and Composition," Bing Xin also pointed out that the writer's moral character will inevitably affect the reader and society through her writing; a writer should first cultivate her moral values before she writes (*Jishi Zhu* 39). Thus, there is a deep social, moral, and spiritual orientation in Bing Xin's view of writing. In my view, to a certain degree Bing Xin's emphasis on the writer's social engagement and moral character reflects the influence of traditional Chinese literary thought, which stresses the moral function of literature. Or put another way, although she opposes a narrow didacticism that makes literature convey some particular external political principles, Bing Xin carries forward quintessential elements of the Chinese literary tradition to call for the writer's and reader's moral responses to the social problems of their time. Bing Xin recognizes the communicative, persuasive, and informative functions of language and also speculates how these functions could be used to promote

the common good of a modern society. In this sense, her literary theory could be seen as performing rhetorical functions, though in the Chinese tradition rhetoric and poetics have always been closely interrelated since the antiquity.

### **A Eulogy of Love: Bing Xin's Lyrical Essays**

In Chinese literature, the essay is one of Chinese writers' favorite genres; its history traced back to 476 BCE. Prior to the May Fourth Movement, *Tongcheng* School was one of the leading schools of classical prose literature. Its originators, including Fang Bao (1668–1794), Liu Dakui (1698–1780), and Yao Nai (1731–1815), were famous for their styles characterized by elegance and purity of language. *Tongcheng* School dominated the Chinese literary field until the fall of the Qing dynasty. The May Fourth new intellectuals attacked it for its didactic principle that literature should convey the *Dao*. Creating a new culture entails innovatively transforming old literary genres into new ones that best serve the writers' political purpose at that historical moment. *Zawen* (argumentative essays) and *xiaopinwen* (lyrical essays) are two vernacular genres the new intellectuals employed to argue against conservatives and express their feelings. In fact, Bing Xin was the first modern Chinese writer to compose a lyrical essay (Yang 1). Since the May Fourth period, Bing Xin began using the essay to express herself and communicate with her readers.

In 1923, Bing Xin graduated from Yanjing University with honors and also received a scholarship offered by Wellesley Women's College in the United States. Right before she left for Boston, she suggested that *Chenbao Fujiuan* (Morning News Supplement) initiate "Children's World"—a column designed for child readers. On the second day after this column was set up, Bing Xin wrote a lyrical essay, "Ji Xiao Duzhe" (To Child Readers: Letter One), in a specially warm and gentle tone. Bing Xin wrote twenty-nine letters that recorded her life and study abroad. The letters enjoyed great popularity and were loved so much by children as well as adult readers that there were twenty-one reprints within ten years. In addition to "To Child Readers," Bing Xin also composed the lyrical essays "Wangshi" (Past Events) and "Shanzhong Zaji" (Miscellaneous Notes in Mountains) and other pieces. Bing Xin presented a natural and smooth model of vernacular prose. Having the vernacular as the bulk of her language, she integrated the flavor and charm of classical poetry and creatively applied many vigorous phrases and sentence structures in classical Chinese, which creates a fresh and feminine style that has the ease and freedom of the vernacular as well as the elegance and rhythm of the classical Chinese. This

unique style was named *Bing Xin ti* (Bing Xin Style) and was imitated by many young writers of her time.

Bing Xin's essays reflect her literary theory. In her lyrical essays, she fully expresses her individual personality, using the vernacular—a hybrid of classical Chinese and Western language structures. From *Ji Xiao Duzhe* (To Children Readers) and other essays in her early years, we learn about Bing Xin's experiences and feelings—her memories of her childhood, her love for her mother, her longings for the ocean, and her nostalgic feeling for her country. Even her depiction of nature becomes a means of expressing these emotions. She wholeheartedly shared with her readers the smiles and tears of her soul. This sharing distinguishes her from the traditional essayists and enables her to establish credibility as a modern Chinese woman writer during the May Fourth period. Given the fact that her lyrical essays instilled in the reader modern moral values and aesthetic tastes, which broke the traditional view of writing as a vehicle of the *Dao*, Bing Xin's work could be considered rhetorical in its own social and cultural context.<sup>7</sup>

In many of her lyrical essays, she advocated her philosophy of love, which is centered on maternal love, child innocence, and the beauty of nature. In essence, Bing Xin's philosophy of love is a moral philosophy or a pursuit of an ideal human character. In her writing, she explored the positive aspects in human relations and attempted to use love to influence her readers so that they could act and change the dark and corrupted society. Take, for example, her essay "Xiao" (Smile), which describes three "beautiful pictures" after the rain:

The rain gradually stops. [. . .] I stand beside a window for a while and feel the slightly cool air. Turning around, I suddenly find other items in the room fading in the moonlight; only the *anqier* [angel] in the picture, bathed in the light, dressed in white, holding flowers, spreading its wings, smiles to me. "This smile looks like a smile I have seen before; when, I saw [. . .]" I unconsciously sit down, thinking deeply.

The closed curtain of my heart draws apart slowly and an image of five years ago rises. A long ancient path. The mud under the donkey's hoofs was slippery. The water in the field ditch murmured quietly. The green trees in the nearby village were shrouded in the mist. Like a bow, the moon hung over the top of the trees. Walking along the path, I vaguely saw a boy holding a bunch of white things. The donkey passed by; I turned around unwittingly; bare-footed, he was holding flowers and smiling at me.

[. . .] I saw the moon rise from the sea and suddenly realized that I left something behind. I stopped and turned around. The elderly woman in the thatched cottage, leaning on the door, holding flowers, smiled at me.

The same subtle expressions, like gossamer, drifting and rippling closer, tie together. At this moment, I feel calm and peaceful as if I walked into paradise and went back to my hometown. The three smiles before my eyes melt into the harmony of love and cannot be seen clearly any more. (*Bing Xin Wenji* 16-17)<sup>8</sup>

As this essay illustrates, Bing Xin uses “smile” as a thread to tie up three related “pictures.” Applying the approach of reiterative paragraphs and sentences frequently used in classical Chinese poetry, she repeatedly describes “smile” in order to foreground the theme of love. “Smile” is a concrete image of love. The smile of the “angel,” the “boy,” and the “elderly woman” symbolizes maternal love and love of children. With the backdrop of the moonlight, the misty trees, and the sea, Bing Xin also depicts the beauty of nature. This eulogy of love is a challenge to the feudal patriarchal social norms that trample on humanity and suppress individuality. It is also a challenge to the old literature that spoke for the ancient sages and hypocritical feudal moralists.

In the eyes of some literary critics, Bing Xin’s description of women’s experience and feelings was not “profound” and therefore not serious enough to be listed together with male writers in the history. Situating her writing and its implication within the specific social and cultural context, I am able to see that Bing Xin’s praise of maternal love is different from that of the conservatives who used “virtuous wife and good mother” to restrict women within the household. Her paean of maternal love is in essence a different approach to reflect on women’s painful experiences and the causes of their suffering. Instead of offering an explicit political critique of society, Bing Xin attended more to using a moral philosophy as a way to solve social problems. In a patriarchal society in which every cultural activity was designed for men, Bing Xin’s representation of women and children from a female perspective is a feminist and anti-feudalist action. In the Chinese cultural and historical context, by extolling the beauty of nature, Bing Xin expresses her own personality and emotions as an individual, which reinforces the new cultural values celebrating individuality and liberty. In this sense Bing Xin’s lyrical essays formed a unique female voice in the new public discourse.

### **Implications of Bing Xin’s Rhetoric**

Though Bing Xin advocated feminist concepts through her writing, her ideas could only reach and empower the new women—educated women from middle- or upper-class background. Due to poverty and illiteracy, the majority of women did not have material resources to receive the feminist ideas and live the



human life described by Bing Xin. To a contemporary Western audience, Bing Xin's texts might not sound as feminist as their Western counterpart; however, considering their specific historical and cultural background, they present a Chinese version of feminism that was liberatory in early twentieth-century China. Thus, Bing Xin's texts indicate that our reading of what is feminist writing should be contextualized and based on what can be identified as feminist within a specific culture rather than the categories of a universal feminism. While a certain type of women's texts may have little significance to women in another culture, the same texts may form great challenges to cultural values and social norms within their own cultural context. Thus, we should take into consideration women's issues in different cultural settings and avoid forcing upon women in non-Western cultures a Western conception of feminism and seeing it as a set of universal principles.

In the context of my study, Bing Xin is important for another reason: she was among the first group of modern Chinese writers to experiment with the vernacular in their works. Bing Xin is expert in blending the vigorous phrases and sentence structures of classical Chinese with modified Western language structures to create a new written language. Bing Xin also formed her well-known prose style—*Bing Xin ti*, which fostered the new ideas and concepts during the May Fourth period, influenced writers of several generations, and contributed to the establishment of the dominant position of vernacular literature. A pioneer in using the vernacular, Bing Xin illustrates what many Chinese rhetoricians found difficult to accomplish—the creative innovation of a new rhetorical means that revives the national culture in the crosscultural rhetorical encounter.

The rhetorical dimension of Bing Xin's critical and lyrical essays invites us to reconsider the boundary between rhetoric and poetics. Her emphasis on creative writers' moral and social responsibility reflects a different perception of poetics in the Chinese rhetorical/literary tradition. As modern Chinese rhetorical theorist Chen Wangdao points out, rhetoric is "a discipline that is interrelated with linguistics and literature"; it has "an interdisciplinary character" (302). Chinese rhetoric is more or less embedded in its historical, philosophical, and literary texts. Therefore, literary criticism and other genres such as essay, fiction, and poetry have been considered an important part in Chinese rhetorical studies since the classical period (fifth to third century BCE).<sup>9</sup> Bing Xin's rhetorical lyrics shed light on how we define rhetoric and help us to view the relationship between rhetoric and poetics in a more integrated way, a way that focuses more on the social and communicative nature of literary texts.



## Notes

1. On 4 May 1919, students in Beijing demonstrated in protest against the Chinese government's humiliating policy toward Japan. A series of strikes and associated events resulted that led to social ferment and an intellectual revolution. This social movement was soon dubbed by the students the May Fourth Movement, a term that acquired a broader meaning in later years than it had originally.
2. Bing Xin's real name is Xie Wanying; Bing Xin is a pen name she used when she published her first short story, "Liangge Jiating" (Two Families) in *Chenbao* (Morning News) in 1919. In Chinese, *Bing Xin* means "a pure and noble heart," which comes from an ancient Chinese poem.
3. In this article, the *new public discourse* refers to the kind of discourse encompassing speeches, essays, letters, short stories, and other genres employed in the early twentieth century in China, a discourse that was preoccupied with critiquing the old, traditional culture and advocating a new culture informed by various Western ideological principles, and that opposed the classical written form and advocated the vernacular.
4. By *modernity*, I mean a cluster of notions such as progress, newness, enlightenment, science, democracy, and gender equality that Chinese new intellectuals employed in cultural transformation in response to a specific historical context of imperialism and domestic social crisis. For a detailed discussion of modernity in the Chinese social context, see Leo Ou-fan Lee, "In Search of Modernity," 109–35.
5. The passages quoted from the original texts are my translations unless noted otherwise.
6. For a detailed discussion of modern Chinese romanticism, see Leo Ou-fan Lee, *The Romantic Generation of Modern Chinese Writers*.
7. The traditional essayists represented by the *Tongchen* School held that literature should convey the *Dao* and speak for the ancient sages. Their essays often imitate the ancient writers, are filled with clichés, and have no individual personality of the author.
8. "Xiao" is considered to be the first lyrical essay written in *baihua* (the vernacular) in modern Chinese literature history.
9. The connection between rhetoric and poetics has been well explored among the twentieth-century theorists in the West. Wayne Booth, Donald Bryant, Lynette Hunter, and Jeffrey Walker, among others, have contended that literature should not be isolated from persuasive discourse and have established what they refer to as a rhetorical dimension in literature. For instance, in *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, Booth argues that although authors of fiction do not intend to affect their audiences' actions in the world, they expect certain attitudes from audiences during the act of reading. These scholars' work provides a foundation

for studying the rhetorical effects in literary discourse. In her study of Anglo-American feminist writers, Krista Ratcliffe makes a further move by using extrapolating—rereading nonrhetoric texts such as essays, fiction, diaries, and etiquette manuals as theories of rhetoric—as an approach to recuperate women's rhetorics (4). I see a connection between these scholars' arguments in terms of reconfiguring rhetorical theory and broadening the conception of rhetorical action.

## Works Cited

- Bing Xin. *Bing Xin Wenji* [Selected Works of Bing Xin]. Shanghai: Shanghai wenyi chubanshe, 1984. 3:16–17.
- . *Bing Xin Zizhuan* [Autobiography of Bing Xin]. Ed. Guo Jifang. Nanjing: Jiangsu wenyi chubanshe, 1995.
- . *Jishi Zhu* [Beads Connecting Past Events]. Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1982.
- . “Wangshi” [Past Events]. *Xiaoshuo yuebao* [Fiction Monthly] 12.10 (Oct. 1922): 1–13.
- . “Wangshi (2)” [Past Events, Part 2]. *Xiaoshuo yuebao* [Fiction Monthly] 15.2 (Feb. 1924): 1–18.
- Booth, Wayne C. *The Rhetoric of Fiction*. 1961. 2nd ed. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1983.
- Bryant, Donald C. “Uses of Rhetoric in Criticism.” *Papers in Rhetoric and Poetic*. Ed. Donald C. Bryant. Iowa City: U of Iowa P, 1965. 1–14.
- Chen Wangdao. *Chen Wangdao xiuci lunji* [Chen Wangdao's Essays on Rhetoric]. Hefei: Anhui jiaoyu chubanshe, 1987.
- Glenn, Cheryl. *Rhetoric Retold: Regendering the Tradition from Antiquity through the Renaissance*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1997.
- Hunter, Lynette. *Rhetorical Stance in Modern Literature: Allegories of Love and Death*. London: Macmillan, 1984.
- Jarratt, Susan. *Rereading the Sophists: Classical Rhetoric Refigured*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1991.
- . “Toward a Sophistic Historiography.” *Pre-Text* 8.1–2 (1987): 9–26.
- Lee, Leo Ou-fan. “In Search of Modernity: Some Reflections on a New Mode of Consciousness in Twentieth-Century Chinese History and Literature.” *Ideas across Cultures: Essays on Chinese Thought in Honor of Benjamin I. Schwartz*. Ed. Paul Cohen and Merle Goldman. Cambridge, MA: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard U, 1990.
- . *The Romantic Generation of Modern Chinese Writers*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1973.
- Mao Dun. *Mao Dun lun chuanguozuo* [Mao Dun's Essays on Literature Writing]. Shanghai: Shanghai wenyi chubanshe, 1980.
- Ratcliffe, Krista. *Anglo-American Feminist Challenges to the Rhetorical Traditions: Virginia Woolf, Mary Daly, Adrienne Rich*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1996.
- Royster, Jacqueline Jones. *Traces of a Stream: Literacy and Social Change among African American Women*. Pittsburgh: U of Pittsburgh P, 2000.
- Swearingen, C. Jan. “A Lover's Discourse: Diotima, Logos, and Desire.” *Reclaiming Rhetorica: Women in the Rhetorical Tra-*

dition. Ed. Andrea Lunsford. Pittsburgh: U of Pittsburgh P, 1995.

———. "Plato's Women: Alternative Embodiments of Rhetoric." *The Changing Tradition: Women in the History of Rhetoric*. Ed. Christine Mason Sutherland and Rebecca Sutcliffe. Calgary,

Alberta: U of Calgary P, 1999.

Walker, Jeffrey. *Rhetoric and Poetics in Antiquity*. New York: Oxford UP, 2000.

Yang, Changjiang. *Bing Xin sanwen lun* [On Bing Xin's Essays]. Wuchang: Huazhong shifan daxue chubanshe, 1989.

## The *Qi* Rhetoric of Persuasion and Political Discourse

Weiguo Qu

Fudan University, Shanghai

The role Chinese rhetorical traditions play in the traditional Chinese political discourse has not received much attention. Despite some marked differences in their analytical approaches, scholars in the West have basically adopted a top-down view by measuring the Chinese political rhetoric against China's current political system, ignoring the intricacies not explicable in the Western paradigm, with the implication that if the system were of a different nature, the rhetorical strategies practiced so far might be different (Ji; Kluver; Lu; Pye; Schoenhals; X. Yang). Although I have no intention of disputing their observations here, I want to argue that the rhetorical strategies evidenced in the political discourse in China are the outcome of a unique rhetorical practice and that any discussion of the Chinese political discourse should take into consideration this rhetorical practice and its wide-ranging significance. Understanding this practice in its own light will not only help us comprehend how political rhetoric works in Chinese society but also appreciate the diversity of the rhetorical practices in different cultures.

The traditional Chinese rhetoric, like all other rhetorical practices, functions to persuade, but it operates along a different line, not according to logical inference in its practice as is the case in the Western tradition.<sup>1</sup> Chinese rhetorical persuasion works for a holistic arousal that is more or less similar to religious or aesthetic experience. The key concept that dominates and orchestrates the rhetorical practice is *qi*, a term not easily translatable into English. *Qi yun shengdong* or the effectiveness of *qi* is all that matters. Put simply, rhetoric in China is not to argue with logic but to affect with *qi*, which may explain why in traditional Chinese argumentative writings colorful figures or tropes are much preferred and appreciated.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.