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Author(s): Christopher Harbsmeier and Christoph Harbsmeier

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CHINESE RHETORIC

BY

CHRISTOPHER HARBSMEIER

University of Oslo

Ulrich UNGER, *Rhetoric des klassischen Chinesisch*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1994. xii + 160 pp. Sachwortregister, Index. ISBN 3-447-03616-8.

Together with logic and grammar, rhetoric forms a central part of the traditional educational curriculum in the West. By far the most convenient systematic survey of the conceptual world of classical Greek and Roman literary rhetoric remains H. Lausberg, *Handbuch der literarischen Rhetorik* (1st ed. 1960, 3rd ed., Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1990). The strength of Lausberg's account is in his careful attention to ancient technical terminology, to ancient explicit definitions, and to the traditional examples for the rhetorical figures as introduced by the earliest classical writers on rhetoric. The index of Latin technical terms in this *Handbuch* covers 207 pages, and the 35-page index of Greek terms, together with the useful bibliography hidden on pp. 606–638, make this work indispensable for any serious student of the classical rhetorical tradition.

The technical term for rhetoric, τέχνη ῥητορικὴ, is already found in Plato's works. Notorious practitioners of this art in Plato's time were the sophists. Handbooks of rhetoric of his time were many, though only one of them, the *Rhetorica ad Alexandrum*, probably by Anaximenes of Lampsacus, has survived (because it was wrongly considered to be one of the works of Aristotle). From that time onwards there has been a steady stream of sizeable professional treatises on rhetoric of which I mention the major ones in order to give an impression of the size of that textual corpus: Aristotle, *Art of Rhetoric* (ed. Loeb); Hermogenes, *On Types of Style* (tr. C.W. Wooten, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1987); Dionysius, *On Literary Composition* (tr. W. Rhys Roberts, London: Cambridge University Press, 1910); the anonymous *Ad Herennium* (ed. Loeb); Cicero, *De Inventione, De optimo genere*

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oratorum, Topica (ed. Loeb); *De oratore* (ed. Loeb), *Brutus, Orator* (ed. Loeb); Demetrius, *On Style* (tr. W. Rhys Roberts, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1902); pseudo-Longinus, *On the Sublime* (ed. D.A. Russell, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964); Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria* (ed. Loeb, 4 vols.). The classical rhetorical system was fully developed by the second century B.C. (See *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, vol. 8, Basel: Schwabe, 1992, column 1019). E.P.J. Corbett, *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), shows how this classical system can be brought to bear on modern English literary practice. *Historisches Wörterbuch der Rhetorik*, ed. Gert Ueding, vols. 1–3 (of eight volumes planned), Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1992 ff will long remain the standard handbook decisively improving our working conditions in the field. Lausberg's *Handbuch*, while offering by far the most convenient summary of ancient European doxography on Rhetoric, has two drawbacks: Firstly, it is useful only to scholars with a solid command of Latin and Greek, in addition to German. Secondly, it certainly does not live up to its title because it is hopelessly eurocentric.

Ulrich Unger, Professor emeritus at Münster University, has tried to make up for one of these drawbacks in his *Rhetorik des klassischen Chinesisch*. Professor Unger certainly knows his Greek and Latin as well as his French, but in addition he is a uniquely dedicated scholar of classical Chinese philology, including phonology as well as grammar and lexicography. He is indeed well placed to use Lausberg's work and to add to it a proper Chinese perspective. Unger's work is always based on a most meticulous and comprehensive familiarity with his primary sources, especially from pre-Han times. Moreover, there always is an unusual historical depth to his philological observations because he is superbly familiar with the history of bronze inscriptions from early Zhou times onwards. He has done extensive and detailed work on these inscriptions which one can only hope will be published some time in the near future. What we now have is the first to be published of eight volumes entitled *Grammatik des Klassischen Chinesisch* whose contents are available, so far, only to his privileged students and friends. These volumes will deal with all aspects of pre-Han syntax, but the present volume can stand on its own because it takes up the rather separate problem of rhetoric.

Some general comparative and historical comments are in order. First of all it is absolutely crucial to state clearly that there was no discipline of rhetoric in pre-modern China comparable in

scope and systematicity to that of Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian. There is no mention anywhere of any pre-Buddhist book on rhetoric. It is not that the discipline of rhetoric was different in ancient China and in the Graeco-Roman world: a developed and articulated theory of rhetoric did not exist. A systematic theory of rhetoric was first developed under European influence, just as was the first systematic grammatical description of the language, that attributed to the authorship of Ma Jianzhong 馬建忠 and published in 1898.

Secondly, classical Graeco-Roman rhetoric is about the art of public speech. The function of public speech was particularly important in a participatory culture where broad public discussion was an important political factor. And the first point to notice is that in ancient China large-scale forensic speech was not a similarly important institution. J.L. Kroll, "Disputation in Ancient Chinese Culture", in *Ancient China* 11/12 (1985–1987), pp. 118–145, summarises and interprets what there was by way of discussion. The *Yantielun* 鹽鐵論 "Salt and Iron Discussions" (I take this opportunity to mention the edition by Wang Liqi 王利器, *Yantielun jiaozhu* 鹽鐵論校注 Peking: Zhonghua shuju, 1992), and the study (p. 7–128), translation (129–177), and annotation (181–364) of chapters 1–12 of this book in Juri Kroll, *Spor o soli i zheleze*, vol. 1, St. Petersburg: Orientalia, 1997) represents a crucial document in the history of formal political discussion. Rhetoric in China was predominantly the art of the persuasion of rulers. And there was no discipline of rhetoric among the *liu yi* "six arts/disciplines" in the traditional Chinese curriculum. Indeed, there was no fixed term for anything like *ars rhetorica*, τέχνη ῥητορικὴ, although it remains quite plausible that the *Zhanguo ce* 戰國策 "Strategems of the Warring States" contains examples of what we would regard as "rhetorical exercises", just as the *Guoyu* 國語 is focussed on models of efficient discourse in front of rulers. The *Gongsun Longzi* 公孫龍子 "Master Gongsun Long" may be regarded as a collection of philosophical and rhetorical exercises very much comparable to those of the ancient Greek sophists. Texts like the *Shuinan* 說難 "Difficulties of persuasion" chapter of the *Hanfeizi* 韓非子 "Master Han Fei" take up political and psychological rather than rhetorical problems connected with the art of political persuasion, and Han Fei himself died tragically as a result of a failure to practise this art successfully.

The first Chinese book generally regarded in China as concerned with rhetoric is Chen Kui 陳騏 (1128–1203), *Wenze* 文則

“Principles of Writing”, the title of which already indicates that the focus is on writing and not on speaking. Earlier sources like Liu Xie 劉勰 (A.D. 465–522), *Wenxin diaolong* 文心雕龍 “The Heart of Writing and the Carving of Dragons” are works concerned with literary criticism and only incidentally touch upon matters of rhetoric. (For the *Wenze* we now have two outstandingly useful editions: Liu Yancheng 劉彥成, *Wenze zhuyi* 文則注譯, Peking: Shumu wenxian, 1988; and Cai Zongyang 蔡宗陽, *Chen Kui Wenze xinlun* 陳騏文則新論 “New Discussion on Chen Kui’s Principles of Writing”, Taipei: Wenshizhe, 1993. Cai Zongyang’s carefully researched 638-page work includes a detailed discussion of the technical rhetoric vocabulary in the *Wenze*.)

The history of rhetorical reflection in traditional China is described in two large and largely overlapping monographs. Zong Tinghu 宗廷虎 and Yuan Hui 袁暉, *Hanyu xiucixueshi* 漢語修辭學史 “History of Chinese Rhetoric”, Hefei: Anhui jiaoyu, 1990, 514 pages, and Yi Pu 易蒲 and Li Jinling 李金苓, *Hanyu xiucixueshi gang* 漢語修辭學史綱 “Outline of the History of Chinese Rhetoric”, Jilin jiaoyu, 1989, 625 pages.

Current surveys and handbooks include:

Chu Yongan 楚永安, *Gu Hanyu biaoda lihua* 古漢語表達例話 “Examples of Forms of Articulation in Ancient Chinese”, Peking: Zhongguo qingnian chubanshe, 1994 [A rather cursory and highly selective survey of the use of various devices, rhetorical in the broadest sense of that term, with a wealth of illustrative material.]

Hu Yushu 胡裕樹 et al. ed., *Hanyu yufa xiuci cidian* 漢語語法修辭詞典 “Dictionary of Chinese Grammar and Rhetoric”, Hefei: Anhui jiaoyu chubanshe, 1988 [An authoritative encyclopaedic work, though uneven in its treatment of the history of rhetorical terminology.]

Huang Jianlin 黃建霖, *Hanyu xiucige jianshang cidian* 漢語修辭格鑑賞辭典 “Dictionary for the Appreciation of Chinese Rhetorical Figures”. Nanjing: Dongnan daxue chubanshe, 1995 [The most comprehensive survey of the nomenclature on figures of speech in Chinese rhetoric, but weak on historical illustration, and generally cursory on conceptual history.]

Wang Dechun 王德春, *Xiucixue cidian* 修辭學詞典 “Dictionary of Rhetoric”, Zhejiang jiaoyu chubanshe, 1987

Wu Zong 伍宗, *Gudai Hanyu tije cidian* 古代漢語題解辭典 “Thematic Dictionary of the Ancient Chinese Language”, Chengdu: Sichuan cishu chubanshe 1988, pp. 437–459 [An elementary handbook, with a useful little survey of Chinese rhetoric.]

Zhao Keqin 趙克勤, *Gu Hanyu xiuci jianlun* 古漢語修辭簡論 “A Simple Discussion of Ancient Chinese Rhetoric”, Peking: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1983 [A concise study of some salient features in ancient rhetoric, well-documented.]

Zheng Dian 鄭奠 and Tan Quanji 譚全基, *Gu Hanyu xiucixue ziliao huibian* 古漢語修辭學資料彙編 “A Compilation of Materials on Ancient Chinese Rhetoric”, Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1980 [A singularly important comprehensive collection of pre-modern source materials. An indispensable tool for any serious student of Chinese rhetoric.]

Zhou Dapu 周大璞, *Gu Hanyu jiaoxue cidian* 古漢語教學詞典 “A Dictionary of Ancient Chinese Language Teaching”, Changsha: Yuelu shushu, 1991, pp. 183–229 [A concise and authoritative survey of some basic terms in Chinese rhetoric.]

Zhou Xiangsheng 周翔聖, *Guwen cige lijie* 古文辭格例解, Nanchang: Jiangxi gaoxiao chubanshe, 1994 [A useful collection of samples from pre-modern literature.]

Modern developments in Chinese rhetorical theory are summarised in Zong Tinghu 宗廷虎, *Zhongguo xiandai xiucixueshi* 中國現代修辭學史 “A History of Modern Chinese Rhetoric”, n.p.: Zhejiang jiaoyu, 1990. The bibliography in this work lists 317 Chinese book-length monographs on rhetoric published between 1905 and 1980. The main journal for rhetoric in China is *Xiucixuexi* 修辭學習 “Studying Rhetoric”, published and organised by Fudan University in Shanghai, of which no. 71 has just been published.

The modern Chinese rhetorical tradition, the main centre of which remains at Fudan University in Shanghai, where Chen Wangdao 陳望道, one of the founding fathers of modern Chinese rhetoric, was the University President for many years, constitutes one of the major centres of rhetorical study in the world. The special importance of this tradition lies in the fact that it is concerned with rhetorical practice in a non-Indo-European language with several millennia of well-documented indigenous history. Anyone seriously—and non-parochially—interested in rhetoric should take note of this modern Chinese rhetorical tradition. (It has to be added, though, that traditional Indian theories of poetics and rhetoric are no less interesting as powerful comparative correctives to the prevalent Graeco-centric view of rhetoric just because Sanskrit happens to be an indo-european language.)

Be that as it may: Professor Unger, writing about classical Chinese rhetoric, has decided to disregard this Chinese tradition completely, although he must surely be aware of it. His method is straightforward and simple: he arbitrarily selects 55 mostly Greek rhetorical concepts and shows through short examples

how these concepts can be applied to selected pre-Han texts. For each of these Greek concepts he provides a brief definition and then he goes on to give a list of exceedingly short pre-Han example sentences (with German translations) to illustrate how the Greek figures and tropes work in Chinese.

What Unger does not mention is that in so doing he has many famous Chinese predecessors, notably Chen Wangdao's 陳望道 *Xiucixue jafan* 修辭學發凡 "Generalities on Rhetoric" (Shanghai: Dajiang shupu, 1932, new edition Shanghai: Kaiming shudian, 1950, reprinted 1954, 1955, 1962, 1964, 1976, 1979, 1982, 1987) and its many successors and epigones. One may argue that Chen Wangdao's work was largely based on Japanese sources, which in turn were based on European predecessors of Lausberg, so that we meet our own tradition in the rhetorical analyses written in that tradition. But this is a simplification. Hu Huaichen 胡懷琛, *Xiucixue yaolüe* 修辭學要略 "A Survey of Rhetoric", Shanghai: Dadong shuju, 1923, tried to establish a traditionalist alternative to Westernised rhetoric which simply replaced Western examples with Chinese ones. Unfortunately his work was open to charges of being insufficiently explicit. Yang Shuda 楊樹達, *Zhongguo xiucixue* 中國修辭學 "Chinese Rhetoric" (Shanghai: Shijie shuju, 1933, reprinted under the informative title *Hanwen wenyan xiucixue* 漢文文言修辭學 "The Rhetoric of Literary Chinese", Peking: Kexue chubanshe, 1955), continues this line along more communicative and more accessible lines, and unlike Hu Huaichen he remained intrepid, never recanting on his traditionalist methodology. Yang Shuda proudly maintains in his introduction that rhetoric "is a manifestation of an individual nation". He opposes 削己足而適人履 "cutting one's own feet to fit other people's shoes", and he insists on developing categories of ancient Chinese rhetoric on the basis of the ancient Chinese evidence alone. His starting point is a passage from *Shuoyuan* 說苑 "Forest of Explanations" 11.1, which Unger never stops to mention although he does take the time to quote an extensive passage from the same chapter:

夫辭者, As for formulations,
人之所以自通也 these are the means by which a person makes
himself understood.

...

夫辭者, As for formulations
乃所以尊君重身者, they are that by which one honours the ruler
and gives weight to one's person,
安國全性者也。 through which one gives peace to the state and

keeps one's inborn nature intact.

故辭不可不脩, Therefore literary formulations must inevitably be cultivated,
而說不可不善。 and as for articulating oneself clearly this is something one inevitably must be good at.

It is in pursuance of this traditional line of thought that Yang Shuda studies 修辭學 “rhetoric”, and he bases himself largely on pre-Han and Han examples. His line of rhetorical analysis did not become dominant, but it is of considerable interest to Western students of rhetoric who wish to determine what we can learn from the Chinese rhetorical experience. For the Western student the comparative advantages of a Western methodology may be real enough, but they are not what he should be studying to ascertain the Chinese case. He should try to see what he can learn from the Chinese experience.

Zhang Wenzhi 張文治, *Gushu xiuci li* 古書修辭例 “Examples for Rhetoric from Ancient Books”, Shanghai: Zhonghua shuju, 1937, aims to teach traditionalist rhetoric mainly through the medium of classical examples and is in many ways directly relevant to Unger's enterprise. Huang Jianlin 1995, mentioned above, is perhaps the most detailed attempt to list and exemplify figures of speech in the modern Chinese rhetorical tradition.

Very consistently, Unger's book ends not with a bibliography of secondary literature, but with a list of *locorum laudatorum*, a list of the primary source passages to which he has referred in his book.

In this book on Chinese rhetoric, the study of rhetoric is a matter between Lausberg, Unger, and Unger's primary sources. There is no room for dialogue with traditional Chinese readers of traditional Chinese texts. Unger's examples never seem culled from some secondary source like those I have mentioned above: he lives in his primary sources, and he writes and translates with the originality and acuteness of observation that comes from passionate familiarity with these sources in their own contexts. Unger knows that it is dangerous to disregard secondary literature. He deliberately courts this danger: the truth is a matter between him and his sources.

But take the example of parallelism: the post-Han Chinese traditional analyses of this phenomenon show a most remarkable analytical depth and sophistication, and what Unger develops on the basis of a few hopelessly vague Greek terms like *isokolon* is simply pitiful when compared with what he could have done if he

had taken into account any of the traditional Chinese analyses of this subject. Take for example Huang Jianlin 1995, who discusses 163 main figures of speech which he illustrates from Chinese literature. The first of these is *biyu* 比喻 “comparison” of which he distinguishes 24 subtypes. For *duiou* 對偶 “parallelism” he distinguishes and illustrates 10 subtypes which he has selected from those types that are discussed and illustrated in the traditional literature. Unger’s treatment of the subject looks amateurish when seen in the context of Chinese discussions.

In spite of such eminently avoidable weaknesses, Unger’s approach has its clear virtues. The first of these is simplicity and predictability of approach. He says clearly what he sets out to do, and he does it. Above all he restricts himself to pre-Han sources and thus manages to give a picture of that important phase in the history of Chinese rhetoric without confusing the presentation with later evidence. On this point, Unger is much more sophisticated than the writers in the Chinese tradition which I have mentioned above, who easily mix pre-Han evidence with late Qing or even twentieth century examples to illustrate their points. In the study of Chinese rhetoric we clearly need the kind of clear delimitation of the evidence which Unger provides.

The proper purpose of Unger’s work is to provide examples for selected Greek rhetorical figures in pre-Han Chinese literature. For the remarkable fact is that while nearly all his rhetorical terms are taken from the classical Greek, practically none of these rhetorical phenomena have a name in pre-Han Chinese. This point is of fundamental importance: Unger never stops to consider in detail to what extent the rhetorical devices he discusses were—in some sense—applied consistently and deliberately by pre-Han Chinese writers. After all, it makes all the difference whether a chiasmus (construction of the form ABBA) is a fortuitous occasional occurrence or whether it is, as it were, a rhetorical institution in a literary culture.

One definite proof that a rhetorical device was part of a rhetorical cultivated repertory is the presence of a common technical term for it. In the absence of such a technical term we need a coherent and cogent set of examples that show how the rhetorical device in question was systematically and deliberately employed by pre-Han writers.

Unger begins (pp. 2–22) with a translation and rhetorical analysis of three speeches from *Zuozhuan* 左傳 “The Zuo Commentary”,

Guoyu 國語 “Speeches of the States”, *Mencius* 孟子, and *Yanzi chunqiu* 晏子春秋 “Annals of Yanzi”. His translations are unobjectionable, his comments read like insubstantial headings describing the content. Unger does not make a consistent distinction between rhetorical form and general content. Michael von Albrecht, *Meister römischer Prosa. Von Cato bis Apuleius* (Heidelberg: Lothar Stiehm Verlag, 1971) is the finest example of such rhetorical and stylistic analysis I have come across in any language, and von Albrecht never confuses summary of content with rhetorical form. It is perhaps unfair to set standards of this sort, but by using the terminology he does use, Unger invites the comparison.

Unger points out (p. 22) that the choice between words of similar meanings in classical Chinese is often motivated by euphonic considerations. This is an important original point to which he will return in detail in future volumes of his grammar. His point here has crucial consequences for the interpretations of classical Chinese texts.

Under the heading of *metaphrasis* “variation”, usually known by its easier Latin name *variatio*, Unger points out a phenomenon that is of great philological significance. Here is his disingenuous example:

女德無極, The enthusiasm/charisma of a woman is boundless,
婦怨無終。The resentment of a wife knows no end. (*Zuo zhuan*
Duke Xi 24)

Unger mistranslates “Die Liebe eines *Weibes* ist *grenzenlos*, der Hass einer *Frau* ist *endlos*.” The point is that the contrast between *nü* 女 “(possibly unmarried) woman” and *fu* 婦 “married woman” clearly matters in this context where the Zhou king is considering marrying a barbarian girl. Again, the contrast between *ji* 極 “highest point” is appropriate to enthusiasm and/or charms, but surely to say that these are “unending” would be manifestly untrue and in any case is not implied in the present context. Thus we have here one of those many cases where the choice of words is *not* the result of a mere wish to vary one’s expression. At best we have a mixed rhetorical form including an element of *metaphrasis* or *variatio* in this instance.

In fact, when this *variatio* is between grammatical particles it profoundly affects the status of such sentences as evidence for the specific force of a grammatical particle. There are indeed many contexts in which variation is introduced in such a way that spe-

cific nuances of words are neutralised, and Unger provides a sound example:

銘乎金石, They are engraved on metal and stone;
著於盤盂。 they are inscribed on bronze pans and pots. (*Lüshi chungiu* 22.5)

Any nuance of meaning which grammarians like Angus Graham have tried to find between *yu* 於 and *hu* 乎 is in any case neutralised in this context where we have the rhetorical device of *variatio*. The crucial importance of the linguistic notion of neutralization has yet to be recognized in sinological practice. This importance is in no way limited to the field of formal linguistics. (For the whole question of synonym rhetoric see the useful collection of examples in Li Weigi 李維琦, Wang Yutang 王玉堂, Wang Danian 王大年, and Li Yunfu 李運富, *Gu Hanyu tongyi xiuci* 古漢語同義修辭, Changsha: Hunan Shifan daxue chubanshe, 1990.)

By failing to distinguish between the cases where the variation of terminology is semantically motivated from those where it is a purely rhetorical device, Unger defeats his analytic purpose. There are good examples for the phenomenon he is interested in, but he mixes them together with quite irrelevant other examples of near-synonyms in parallel position in parallel sentences.

Unger comes up with some particularly interesting cases in which the *variatio* is limited to the last colon of a parallel series:

而目將熒之, Your eyes will be dazzled before him (the ruler),
而色將平之, your face fall flat before him,
口將營之, your mouth mutter diffidently before him,
容將形之, your expression embody your submissiveness before him,
心且成之。 and your mind is about to make compromises with him. (*Zhuangzi* 4)

The use of *qie* 且 “moreover; be about to” in the last parallel clause looks very much like a theoretical variation designed to close the period, but at the same time one might look for a semantic nuance for the use of *qie* 且 “moreover; be about to” versus *jiang* 將 “will”.

Catachresis (p. 29) gets a short treatment in Unger’s book, but his example of the use of *tou* 頭 “skull” to mean the same as *shou* 首 “head” raises interesting problems. The thought that *tou* 頭 “skull” came to mean “head” because *shou* 首 “head” had become

homophonous with *shou* 手 “hand” is tempting, although there is no clear evidence of this in the oracle bones or the bronze inscriptions, in *Shijing* or the old parts of *Shangshu* 尚書 “Book of Documents” or *Lunyu* 論語 “Analects” where the word is unattested. It is curious to find a problematic main example for such a common linguistic phenomenon. Moreover, it is surely necessary to distinguish between the kind of etymological *catachresis* as in the case of the words for “head”, which does not fall into the realm of rhetoric narrowly defined, and temporary *catachresis* employed as a deliberate rhetorical device.

On *periphrasis* (p. 29) Unger gives examples like 不侵不叛之臣 “servants who neither infringe on others or rebel” which he thinks are periphrastic for *treue Untertanen* “trustworthy subordinates”: but the whole point is that he would have to establish that the periphrastic expression really is simply short for a current non-periphrastic Chinese expression. He provides no such Chinese expression, and indeed *zhong chen* 忠臣 would not be obviously intended by the longer phrase. Even *nan mian* 南面 “face south>rule” is not obviously periphrastic for any other current synonymous expression. If we have periphrasis, we have in any case faded periphrasis.

For *antonomasia* (p. 32), which is simply periphrasis for a proper name, Unger does indeed find striking examples: *Zou ren zhi zi* 鄒人之子 “the fellow/man from Zou (i.e. Confucius)”. (*Analects* 3.15)

As for Vossian *antonomasia*, the generic use of proper names, as in 人皆可以爲堯舜 “all men can become a Yao or a Shun”, where a proper name is used as if it had an indefinite article (“a Confucius”), Unger provides a few sound examples, but then he adds simply the name Meng Ben 孟賁 with a reference to *Mencius* 2A2. There the text runs: 若是，則夫子過孟賁遠矣 “In that case you, my master, surpass Meng Ben by a long shot.” Maybe Unger translates “surpasses a Meng Ben”, but there is nothing in the text, the context, or the commentaries that encourages one to read Vossian *antonomasia* into this particular passage.

In fact, while Unger is quite right to point to the existence of Vossian *antonomasia*, he misleads us in not stopping to analyse the range of the uses of this trope in pre-Han texts. A useful case in point would be the study of the name of the legendary beauty *Xi Shi* 西施 compared with the often antonomastic use of Venus of Aphrodite in Latin and Greek texts.

On *litotes* (p. 34), the use of a negative statement to make a positive one, as in “not bad” for “very good”, Unger gives the example 所私者與人不同 “... durch das, was sie sich zu eigen machten, waren sie anderen nicht gleich = unterschieden sich von anderen”. But *yu ren bu tong* 與人不同 “be different from others” is clearly not a case of *litotes*, because that crucial emphatic effect is lacking. The rhetoric of “they are not the same” and “they are not bad” is completely different. As Lausberg rightly points out “*litotes* is an emphatic combination of emphasis and irony” (p. 304). Unger’s examples miss the point of this hope.

I have limited my specific comments so far to the first few pages of Unger’s book. I now turn to more general problems raised by this work. The main problem is that Unger fails to discuss which of the rhetorical forms he lines up are common in his Chinese texts and which are rare. For example, it is well known that the form of *aposiopesis* “the falling silent in mid-sentence” is a skilfully developed trope in Latin prose and poetry. Unger misses the point of this form, if one is to judge from the examples he supplies. He quotes 懼及焉 “Ich mußte fürchten hineinzugeraten”, where he correctly notes that *yan* 焉 “into it” stands for *yu nan* 於難 “into difficulties”. But pronominalisation, I am afraid, has nothing to do with *aposiopesis*. Similarly, 嘻，子之來矣 “Hei, daß Ihr gekommen seid!”, though stylistically marked and emphatic, has nothing to do with *aposiopesis*, in my view: nobody is falling silent before finishing a syntactically complete sentence. “Well done!” is a complete sentence. So is 先生以此聽寡人也 “Daß Ihr in dieser Angelegenheit auf mich hört!” Unger quotes 如其仁 “Was seine Menschlichkeit anlangt ...” from *Analects* 14.16 and claims that 則吾不知 “... da weiß ich nicht” involves *aposiopesis*. Unger fails to mention that the phrase *ru qi ren* 如其仁, which has always puzzled commentators, but which one might read as “It was as if he was humane”, is repeated twice in this passage. Thus we would have reduplicated *aposiopesis*, as if Confucius hesitated and did not know what to say. Such a reading is unattested in Cheng Shude 程樹德, *Lunyu jishi* 論語集釋 (Peking: Zhonghua shuju, 1990, pp. 982–988). Unger is entitled to create an untraditional reading, but he owes it to his readers to let them know that this is what he is doing. Hesitation in the form of reduplicated *aposiopesis* is an extreme form of mimetic representation of dialogue. It would be most remarkable, and certainly well worth arguing for in detail, that the *Analects* should have preserved for us an example of it.

The next example of *aposiopesis* is 子不變子言則今是矣 “Ändert

Ihr Eure Worte nicht, dann wär's das jetzt!—Drohung: 'Dann geht es Euch jetzt ans Leben.'" from *Lüshi chungiu* 20.3. This sentence is manifestly complete, syntactically, and has nothing to do with *aposiopesis*. That it is suggestive, colloquial and less than explicit is another matter.

Such proliferation of bad examples is particularly irritating because buried among the misunderstood cases there is one example which, though not one of classical *aposiopesis* "deliberately falling silent in mid-sentence", is a case of *interruptio* where after the first clause of an oath, the listener (Yanzi) interrupts the speaker: Unger quotes *Zuozhuan*, Duke Xiang 25 (see ed. Yang Bojun vol. 3, p. 1098f) 所不與崔、慶者 "Sofern wir es nicht mit den Ts'ui und K'ing halten ..." In fact, the punctuation in Unger's translation is right, and the example is of great importance because the continuation makes the interruption clear: 晏子仰天歎曰：嬰所不唯忠於君、利社稷是與，如上帝！ "Yanzi threw back his head, sighed and said: 'If I do not side with those who show loyalty to the ruler and work for the benefit of the altars of the land and grain, may things be as the Highest Ancestor decides!'"

Here as everywhere throughout the book under review one feels that the author is basing his research on a very intense personal reading of the whole body of texts that he discusses. His examples never give one a feeling that they are culled from available Chinese handbooks. He is working intensely and independently on his primary sources, with all the risks and advantages this involves.

Putting down this book one is left in no doubt that the advantage of this approach are considerable after all. It is indeed a privilege for any younger student like myself to look over the shoulder of a scholar as monumentally learned and as profoundly steeped in the Chinese classics as Ulrich Unger. His work on Chinese grammar is indeed a monument to primary source philology. His *Rhetorik des Klassischen Chinesisch* is neatly presented, beautifully produced, and full of lively observations that will be of use to all serious students of classical Chinese. Since it is so eminently useful to beginning as well as advanced students, it would deserve to be published at a less obscene price. We must hope for a cheaper paperback edition. It is sobering to reflect that Unger's book is the first book-length treatment of Chinese rhetoric in any Western language. Its publication is a major event in the history of sinology.