



Symposium: Comparative Rhetorical Studies in the New Contact Zone: Chinese Rhetoric Reimagined [Excerpt]

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resilient, China's transnational reproduction of Western rhetoric is still an under-explored area. Although Chinese rhetorical notions and practices are examined broadly, China's books primarily or entirely devoted to rhetorical theory have yet to be visited and examined. Chinese think that *xiuci* (修辞) means "rhetoric," but scholars on this side of the Pacific do not know why the Chinese limit rhetoric "narrowly" and merely to the study of stylistic devices, modes of speech, and features of language (Lu 113). There seems to be some communication gap among international academic communities, a gap that has largely stemmed from our complacency in the Western theory and practice we have mastered and esteem. For example, it is said that Anglo-American rhetoric "enriched modern Chinese rhetoric," helping "revitalize and retrieve the extremely rich Chinese rhetorical tradition in modern Chinese writing instruction" (You 166). At the same time, this optimistic view leaves out the debate between two powerful factions of rhetoric—the most influential textbook writers who introduced Western rhetoric and oppositional figures who tried to preserve Chinese literacy tradition.

Read the entire essay by Hui Wu at www.ncte.org/cccc/cc,
"The Extended CCC."

***Luoji* (Logic) in Contemporary Chinese Rhetoric and Composition: A Contextualized Glimpse**

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In *The Anatomy of Rhetoric*, an early definition of contrastive rhetoric, Robert Kaplan points out that the logic that guides reasoning in writing is not culturally universal; Chinese writing does not seem to be logical according to Anglo-American standards. Similarly, Carolyn Matalene reminds American instructors that "logics different from our own are not necessarily illogical" (806). Most recently, comparative analysis of American and Chinese online pedagogical materials on argumentative writing has pointed to the legacy of dialectical materialism, especially dialectical logic in the instruction of Chinese written argumentation (Liu L.). What constitutes logic in contemporary Chinese rhetoric and composition?

Luoji, according to the Chinese *Cihai* (Sea of Words), was the transliteration of logic from English by the famous Chinese translator Yan Fu. Today the

Chinese use the term widely. The discussion of *luoji* (logic) by three scholars of contemporary Chinese rhetoric and Chinese language arts education—Chen Wangdao, Zhang Zhigong, and Ye Shengtao—presents a contrast to discussions of *luoji* in two sets of popular Chinese language arts textbooks, one published in the 1930s and the other in the 2000s. Yet both scholarly discussions of rhetoric and pedagogical materials testify to the continuing presence of formal logic and dialectical logic but exhibit a stronger emphasis upon dialectical logic. If we examine dialectical logic more closely, we can form a better understanding of contemporary Chinese rhetoric and composition described in its own terms.

Read the entire essay by Liu Lu at www.ncte.org/cccc/ccc,
“The Extended CCC.”

Ren, Wen, and Baguwen: The Eight-Legged Essay in Rhetorical Perspective

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Octopartite Parables: Living in a Parallel Universe

The octopartite or “eight-legged essay” *bagu wen* was developed over many centuries as an instrument of examining candidates for the Chinese civil service examination. Somewhat like progymnasmata in classical rhetoric, and later taxonomies of argument taught in Western European universities, study and training for the octopartite essay required extensive reading, a highly developed ability to emulate the styles of different exemplary authors, and a fluency in exegesis that combined subtle commentary juxtaposed with deft use of allusions. While the discussion in this essay focuses primarily on the octopartite or *bagu* essay, other essays in this symposium, particularly those by Lu Liu and Xioaye You, warn against reducing Chinese rhetorical history and practices to the *bagu* tradition and the related misunderstanding that Chinese rhetoric avoids logic and adversarial argumentation). The correction of these and other misunderstandings is an important and valuable focus of recent comparative studies of Chinese with Western rhetorics. Careful examination of similarities as well as differences between the two traditions forms a dialectic that can improve our understanding and set new directions for comparative studies.

Read the entire essay by C. Jan Swearingen at www.ncte.org/cccc/ccc,
“The Extended CCC.”