Guiguzi,
China's First Treatise on Rhetoric

A Critical Translation and Commentary

鬼谷子

Translated by Hui Wu
With Commentaries by Hui Wu and
C. Jan Swearingen

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Cover illustration: Guan Yuan dynasty (mid-fourteenth-century) porcelain vase, the illustrations on which tell of Guiguzi traveling in a carriage drawn by a tiger and a leopard to rescue his disciple Sun Bin (孫臏), a military strategist and a descendant of the author of *The Art of War*, imprisoned during the Warring States Period. Private collection; photo copyright © Christie's Images / Bridgeman Images.

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Contents

Acknowledgments

The study of Chinese rhetoric has seen substantial advances in the past fifteen years. This could not have happened without the support and encouragement of professional organizations whose conferences and journals now include panels and publications in several different areas of comparative East-West rhetorical studies. Xing Lu's and Yameng Liu's histories of these developments provide a concise outline of the obstacles that had to be overcome in reaching the present state of scholarship in Chinese rhetoric. Measuring Chinese rhetoric by the standard of Western Greco-Roman rhetoric is now a thing of the past. Comparative studies now include nontraditional Western rhetorics as well, enhancing our knowledge of previously excluded groups and cultures. In this process the concept of rhetoric is undergoing extensive consideration and revision. Should we even use "rhetoric" and "persuasion" to name the processes of negotiation, discursive interlocution, dialogue, and debate that we encounter in other cultures? Our commentary is indebted to all those scholars whose work has contributed to these ongoing debates about debate. We promote the continuing study of rhetoric even as we acknowledge the pitfalls of looking at non-Western rhetorics using traditional terms and concepts. An even larger context for this study resides in the longer history of rhetoric as a field of study in academia. Thirty years ago the International Society for the History of Rhetoric was founded to foster the study of rhetoric in an international scholarly community that was not hospitable to the subject. Even within classics the study of rhetoric was scorned. Speech Communication as a discipline had long been the most active in rhetorical scholarship; its home base classical studies, such as George Kennedy's many studies of Greek and Roman Rhetoric. Robert Oliver's *Communication and Culture in Ancient China and India* was a landmark study in Speech Communication, widely cited by scholars working in the field who acclaim his initial attempt but also note the Eurocentric model he employs. "Discovering" that there are arguments and tropes, *ethos* and *pathos*, in the rhetoric of non-Western cultures is no longer the primary goal of scholarship in the field, but it was perhaps a necessary starting point, as it has gradually revealed the limitations of the method.

In the field of English several developments have provided contexts for the study of rhetoric in non-Western cultures, and specifically of Chinese rhetoric. Like the International Society for the History of Rhetoric, the Rhetoric Society of America was founded thirty years ago by a cohort of scholars in Speech Communication and English interested not only in the history of rhetoric but also in its theories and definitions. Alongside the Conference on College Composition and Communication, the Rhetoric Society of America has fostered increasing numbers of panels and journal articles in Chinese rhetorical studies branching out into several different areas. *Rhetoric Review* and *College Composition and Communication* have expanded the journal venues provided by the *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, *Rhetorica*, *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*, and *College English*. The history of the teaching of English in China provides scholars and teachers with insights into Chinese language and culture that are helpful in teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) to students in China as well as in the United States. The study of English in the United States by Chinese students advancing to the PhD level has opened up the careful study of differences between Chinese and Western rhetoric, scholarship and scholarly conventions, the teaching of writing, and the teaching and practices of speaking.

To all of these fields of scholarship, and the professional organizations that support them, we owe a profound debt. As we mark the emergence of Chinese rhetorical studies within mainstream English-language scholarship in several fields—Speech Communication, English, and Linguistics—we want to recall that it was not so long ago that rhetoric itself was a marginalized field, scorned as "mere" pedagogy, or as a trivial subdivision of more important fields such as literature and philosophy.

We are also indebted to the international scholars who have increasingly participated in conference panels and published in English-language journals, providing valuable perspectives and corrections from within Chinese-language scholarship on rhetoric. Rudong Chen convened in 2009 the First Biennial Conference of the Chinese Rhetorical Society of the World and International Conference on Rhetoric, a conference that continues to support and encourage studies of Chinese rhetoric. The first volume of its journal, *International Rhetoric Studies*, appeared in 2011 and included Chen's Chinese translations of papers written in English by Western scholars. We are indebted to Chen alongside other international scholars who foster exchange and collaboration in the field.

Xing Lu's study of ancient Chinese rhetoric, *Rhetoric in Ancient China. Fifth to Third Century B.C.E.: A Comparison with Classical Greek Rhetoric*, presented substantial revisions in both the history and theory of Chinese rhetoric, moving beyond a simple taxonomy of parallels to Greek rhetoric and noting

important differences that bear further consideration. Yameng Liu's *Rhetoric Review* article, "To Capture the Essence of Chinese Rhetoric: An Anatomy of a Paradigm in Comparative Rhetoric," reviewed similar methodological prospects and problems. LuMing Mao has devoted extensive energy and scholarship in organizing panels and special editions of journals on Chinese and East-West rhetorical studies. His work in literary as well as rhetorical and sociolinguistic studies encompasses a spectrum of fields engaged in rhetorical studies, and provides an instructive array of methods and models. Roberta Binkley and Carol Lipson have edited two groundbreaking studies of rhetoric outside, beyond, and before the Greeks, collections of essays to which we owe a debt for fine-tuning the methods of non-Western rhetorical studies.

Correspondence and conversations with colleagues in several fields has provided valuable feedback and suggestions. In particular, LuMing Mao and Megan Biesele contributed close readings of very early drafts of the concluding commentary. To the anonymous readers of our manuscript we give thanks for careful readings, suggestions, and corrections without which this study would be much flawed. To Karl Kageff we owe thanks for superb patience and detail work with a complicated manuscript that went through two separate considerations by the Southern Illinois University Press. His attentiveness to our frequent questions large and small has been a remarkable gift. We thank the University of Texas at Tyler and the University of Central Arkansas for research grants that helped with field work in China. Without the grants, some Chinese scholarship and books on *Guiguzi* would be missing from our studies.

Last but not least, we would like to thank our families for their support, encouragement, countless hours of reading drafts, and plentiful conversation over more than two years. Endless and ongoing appreciation and affection to Daoming Chen, Donna Chen, Mike Frink, Benjamin Jacobs-Swearingen, and Audrey Frink, who was born halfway through the book's completion.

Guiguzi, China's First Treatise on Rhetoric

Redrawing the Map of Rhetoric: Introducing Guiguzi

HUI WU

The classical period from 500 to 200 B.C.E. in both China and Greece was foundational in Eastern and Western rhetorical and academic traditions. Both cultures were vibrant, pluralistic, and creative; both endured similar periods of political and military upheaval; and in both rhetoric emerged as a self-conscious method for addressing discord and negotiating compromise (Swearingen, "Response," 426). Just as classical Greek rhetoric has had a long-term impact on Western academic and literary practices, so too has classical Chinese rhetoric shaped Eastern discourse.[1] In ancient Greece, Aristotle's *On Rhetoric*, the first theoretical codification of Western rhetoric, developed following an emerging democracy in Athens and city-state rivalries. During the same classical period, China's earliest treatise on persuasion named after its alleged author, *Guiguzi* (Master of the Ghost Valley), evolved from multiple warring states' demands for persuaders and war strategists. Like *On Rhetoric*, the *Guiguzi* has had immense impact on rhetorical practice in ancient and contemporary China. Many of its concepts have evolved into everyday rhetorical terms frequently applied to negotiations, persuasions, decision making, or business planning. However, *Guiguzi* remains little known to scholars and students in rhetoric, composition, and communication, leaving a critical gap in comparative studies of rhetoric. To this end, this book offers a critically annotated rhetorical translation of *Guiguzi*, a glossary of Guigucian rhetorical terms, and a comparison of *Guiguzi* with early Greek rhetorical figures, including the Pre-Socratic philosophers, Plato, and Aristotle. To contextualize, the introduction first maps the trajectory of Western studies of Chinese rhetoric to foreground *Guiguzi* as an indigenous rhetorical theory that can significantly enhance comparative insight and reflection. Next, it provides a careful reading of available sources on its emergence in the pre-Qin Warring States period (475–221 B.C.E.). After a critical review of *Guiguzi*'s controversial receptions in China and the West, the introduction presents a preliminary guide to the fundamentals of Guigucian rhetoric.

Positioning *Guiguzi* in Western Studies of Chinese Rhetoric

To place *Guiguzi* on the map of world rhetorical traditions, it is necessary to track the trajectory of studies of Chinese rhetoric and to understand the need for a rhetorical translation. This overview will reveal that the availability of *Guiguzi* as a rhetorical treatise supplements Western models as the sole template in comparative methodology. Following Robert Oliver's *Communication and Culture in Ancient India and China*, published in 1971, Chinese rhetorical studies have emerged as a subfield in rhetoric, composition, and communication. According to Xing Lu, Western studies of Chinese rhetoric have gone through four stages—the deficiency stage, the recognition/emergence stage, the native/emic construction stage, and the appreciation/appropriation stage ("Studies," 112). At the first stage most scholarship guided by a Eurocentric orientation privileged linear logical development of discourse and concluded that the Chinese did not have a rhetorical tradition and were not interested in logic or reason (Oliver, Becker, and Matalene). In the second stage a few communication scholars recognized the rich rhetorical practices in classical China, for example Mary Garrett, Xing Lu, and George Kennedy. Garrett conducted a series of studies of argumentation in classical China ("Pathos," "Wit," "Classical"); Lu's *Rhetoric in Ancient China* (1998) constructed Chinese rhetorical notions from major philosophical and literary texts and compared them with those in the Western classical tradition; and Kennedy's *Comparative Rhetoric* proposed a "General Theory" of rhetoric applicable to all cultures. In the third stage scholars challenged earlier incomplete, biased Western assumptions and drew more attention to Chinese primary sources on writing and writing studies (Lu, "Studies," 113–14). Drawing upon Kenneth Pike's linguistic theory of emics and etics (Pike, 37–97, 365–401; Peterson and Pike, 6–8), scholars started to contextualize the studies of Chinese rhetoric for further considerations of comparative methodology.[2] In the fourth stage scholars realized that comparative insight can deepen the understanding of Western rhetorical theory and practice (Lu, "Studies," 114). Garrett studied Chinese emotional appeals to the single-person audience ("Pathos," "Wit"), and Steve Combs applied Sunzi's war strategies to persuasive communication and study of the *Dao* in rhetoric (*Dao of Rhetoric*, 53–71) and others (Lu, "Studies," 114; Swearingen, "Response").

The four stages of Chinese rhetorical studies synthesized by Lu complement the larger goal of present rhetorical studies to reclaim marginalized, overlooked, or alienated alternative rhetorical traditions, theories, and practices as well as to recognize their implications for the interpretive framework of the mainstream Western rhetorical tradition. Since the late 1990s,

a "recovery-and-recognition enterprise" (to borrow Hesford's term, 793) has emerged with a strong emphasis on reconstructing non-Western, nonwhite, and non-middle-class rhetorics. Milestone works include those by Patricia Bizzell, Cheryl Glenn, David Holms, Susan Jarratt, Carol Lipson and Roberta Binkley, Shirley Logan, Andrea Lunsford, and Jacqueline Royster. Scholars in rhetoric, communication, and composition "have had to contend with the legacy of omission, and the field is still doing the necessary canon-building work of expanding the rhetorical tradition to include women and minority-group members and of mapping hierarchies of gender, class, race, sexuality, and ability" (Hesford, 793). The translation and comparative study of *Guiguzi* in this book join these efforts of remapping the rhetorical tradition by adding a cross-cultural perspective.

Existing studies have enriched Western understandings of Chinese rhetoric in one way or another, even if with some imperfection or limitation. For example, some key terminologies—*ming* (to name/define), *bian* (to argue/dispute), *yan* (to speak/narrate), *shui* (to discuss/persuade), and *shuo* (to explain/discuss)—have been reconstructed and identified (Garrett, "Classical," 106; Lu, *Rhetoric*, 68–93; Swearingen and Mao, "Introduction" W34–W35). Comparative analysis of Chinese classics further shows that ancient Chinese speeches fall generally into two categories: deliberative oratory and announcement. Studies demonstrate that like the classical Western model, Chinese rhetorical discourse also has four parts: proemium, narration, proof, and epilogue (Kennedy, 146–51). Classical Chinese rhetoric teaches sequencing information through first raising the topic and then discussing the details (Kirkpatrick, "China's First Treatise," 133), as well as "proceeding from detail to conclusion, from main point to detail, or from main point via detail to a restatement of the main point" (Kirkpatrick, "China's First Treatise," 149). These steps share the features of Western inductive and deductive reasoning. Scholars now agree that traditional Chinese rhetoric does, indeed, share certain features of Western rhetoric (You, "Conflation," 150, 158–60).

Furthermore, scholarship has begun to challenge, through detailed study of primary sources, the concept of rhetoric, and the history of writing, reductive orientalized presumptions that Chinese rhetoric is indirect and nonlinear and thus lacks logic. In response to the assertion that Chinese rhetoric tends to be indirect, scholarship on pre-Qin rhetoric and modern composition textbooks suggests that because of the autocratic and hierarchical nature of their society, the Chinese prefer a form of chain-reasoning typically in sentence patterns of "because—therefore" or "although—but" to lead to inductive conclusions, though they are "perfectly able to reason deductively" (Kirkpatrick, "Chinese Rhetoric," 291; Kirkpatrick and Xu, "Chinese Rhetoric and Writing," 107–42).

As Kirkpatrick and Xu's linguistic study of Chinese writing reveals, for decades scholars in Chinese rhetoric have been puzzled by the questions of how and why the Chinese relate rhetoric only to writing and rarely to oratory. Research now demonstrates that the Chinese association of rhetoric solely with written discourse is a modern development resulting from borrowing Japanese terminologies for literary appreciation and translating selectively figures of speech in English composition textbooks (Wu, "Lost and Found"). Historicizing the influence of Western rhetoric on the teaching of English composition in modern China suggests that bilingual writing instruction in an East Asian country is hardly as monolingual as we used to believe (You, *Writing in the Devil's Tongue*). These studies have brought Chinese writing theory and literacy to the West and have further globalized composition history and pedagogy.

Increased attention to Chinese rhetoric has also given rise to scholarship in women's rhetoric in both traditional and modern China (Garrett, "Women"; Wang, "Breaking"; Wu, "Alternative" and "Historical Studies"). These studies challenge not only male-dominated methodologies in rhetorical studies but also Western-style feminist interpretive frameworks. These approaches have revealed Chinese women's innovative use of rhetorical strategies to criticize patriarchal society and the Confucian orthodoxy of gender. On the other hand, they warn that applying established Western feminist critical categories, such as the "self," "body," and "individual," to the reading of modern Chinese women's writing displaces context-specific approaches in the study of women's rhetoric in other cultures (Wang, "Engaging *Nüquanzhuyi*"; Wu, "Post-Mao").

When remapping the rhetorical tradition, "the field does not yet have the methodological foundation to study transnational rhetorical practices and publics" (Hesford, 793). This lack of foundation, however, has provided space for further contemplating methodological implications of Chinese rhetoric. Some scholars have tried to develop critical methodology potentially applicable across cultures. For example, after examining ancient Chinese philosophy and historiography, as well as classics in other cultures, Kennedy made an attempt to develop "a standard cross-cultural rhetorical terminology by modifying Western concepts to describe what is found everywhere" (6, 141–67). Steven Combs rereads the Daoist philosophy of Laozi, Zhuangzi, and Sunzi and proposes to use Daoism as a "unique vantage point for rhetorical theory and criticism" (*Dao of Rhetoric*, 87). He believes that Daoism could serve as a critical methodology in rhetorical studies (*Dao of Rhetoric*, 73–84) and posits "a communication theory, the *yin* and *yang* of rhetoric, and specific substantive, strategic, and tactical elements of discourse" (*Dao of Rhetoric*, 150). This

is because persuasive approaches developed in both ancient Greece and China still dominate in today's business communication, as Yunxia Zhu and Herbert Hildebrandt demonstrate. The study of rhetorical differences, therefore, can be used "as a starting point for an in-depth analysis of cultural differences in the use of effective discourse as well as marketing strategies across cultures" (Zhu and Hildebrandt, 106). Finally, based on her rhetorical readings of ancient Chinese sages (Lyon, "Rhetorical Authority," "Confucian Silence and Remonstration"), Arabella Lyon proposes that *Analects*, *Dao De Jing*, and *Hanfeizi* suggest that "even today, the disagreements among the classical texts that informed his [Emperor Qin, or Qin Shi Huang's] advisors are helpful to understanding different rhetorical patterns, alternatives to Western rhetoric and other cultural traditions" ("Writing an Empire," 350).

Many now question the application of the Western model to Chinese rhetorical studies. Garrett maintains that "the study of Chinese rhetoric is peculiarly vexed methodologically" ("Some," 53). Cross-cultural studies are still dominated by Romantic Hellenism tied to orientalism (Garrett, "Some," 56). Existing studies of Chinese rhetoric illustrate the limitations of analyzing non-Western rhetoric primarily through the lens of the dominant Western classical model (Lyon, "Confucian Silence") and question the implication of imposing Western frameworks onto non-Western texts (Lu, *Rhetoric of the Chinese Cultural Revolution*). Moreover, reviewing the methodologies in major studies from the 1960s to the end of 1990s, such as those by Kaplan, Oliver, Garrett, Kennedy, and Lu, LuMing Mao reexamines the etic/emic linguistic approach and proposes that it would enable scholars to start with concepts close to home when primary sources were limited. They then could move on to the emic approach to direct attention to materials and conditions native to a specific rhetorical tradition. The etic/emic approach engages reflection on the part of the scholar to avoid overgeneralizations or assumptions of "universal rhetoric" (Mao, "Reflective Encounters," 416–18). Mao critiques three methodological approaches that have influenced the U.S. study of Chinese rhetorical tradition. The first method is a universal theory of rhetoric that is supposed to be applicable to all cultures; the second is a piecemeal or selective approach in search of a term in Chinese rhetorical tradition that may be equivalent to an established Western rhetorical concept; and the third is an orientalist logic that may essentialize Chinese rhetoric as deficient or unscientific (Mao, "Studying," 216–21). Utilizing *shu* (恕), a Confucian notion that guides Chinese behaviors and morals through the *Dao*, Mao illustrates an important aspect of Chinese rhetoric—interconnectedness rooted in correlative thinking—to argue for an interactive approach, an approach that recontextualizes the native point of view to address the present inquiry ("Studying," 233).

In the wake of these cautions, controversies have emerged over comparative methodology. Scott Stroud calls studies by Lu, Yameng Liu, and Mao a "descriptive endeavor" (359). He recommends applying John Dewey's pragmatism to comparative rhetoric to correct the presupposition that "the purpose of comparative work is the correct and accurate description of given traditions of rhetoric" (359). Stroud believes that Dewey's pragmatism enables rhetoric scholars to add "the purpose of *reconstruction* or *melioration*" to rhetorical criticism "to *fix* or *change* some aspect of the world (including us), not merely to accurately describe it" (360, emphasis original). He continues to stipulate that "comparative rhetoric, if it is to be informed by a pragmatist approach to criticism and interpretation, will allow for differing approaches to comparing and investigating Western and non-Western traditions" (362).

Stroud's proposal for a balance between method and purpose through Deweyan pragmatism actually confirms what scholars in Chinese rhetoric—for example, Garrett, Lu, and Lyon—have discovered and recovered: comparative rhetoric can reconstruct or meliorate the notion of rhetoric itself. Garrett has pointed out that "rhetoric" is a contested word ("Some," 53–54). Depending on historical and cultural contexts, rhetoric can mean "the ability to persuade," persuasion of powerful people on the issues of public interest, interpersonal persuasion, "an organized study of discourse," or "symbolic inducement" ("Some," 54–55). These multiple definitions make it possible to define rhetoric in a specific culture to discover or recover a rhetorical tradition on its own terms and in its own right. Mao has conducted a search for what and where Chinese rhetoric is to enrich comparative methodology. In the introduction to a 2010 special issue of *College English* on Chinese rhetoric, he proposes we "develop a dialogue between the what and the where in ways that can in turn facilitate our search for the appropriate models of rhetorical conduct in the study of Chinese rhetoric here and now" ("Searching," 330). Using the Chinese *Dao* as the key analogy, Mao emphasizes not only our reflectiveness in studies of other rhetorical traditions but also our awareness of the way these traditions interact with one another in global contact zone through the methodology of interdependence-in-difference previously articulated in his book *Reading Chinese Fortune Cookie*. To Mao, comparative methodology is "a process where we learn to perpetually negotiate between developing a localized narrative and searching for its broader significance without truing it into a 'super-narrative'" ("Searching," 341).

Reexamining Mao's and others' "descriptive enterprise" reveals that Mao's criticism of super-narrative pinpoints some core issues of comparative rhetoric: How to assess and analyze alternative rhetorics to which we hardly have equivalents in the Western framework? How to determine explanations for

the different units, if any? Therefore, it is no accident that the most noticeable effort is discovering similarities and differences; Stroud proposes to pay attention to both (373). Mao's interdependence-in-difference and etic/emic approaches exemplify the reality—scholars cannot help but compare similarities and contrast differences. As Carol Lipson notices, "Comparative studies of ancient cultures and their rhetorics inevitably depend on some degree of comparison, since scholars cannot escape the frameworks of their cultural makeups" (*Rhetoric*, 21). Scholarship consistently suggests that "We are alike and different" (Swearingen, "Response," 425). Even though it may be fraught with imperfection and limitation, this method of "moving back and forth between looking at differences and considering similarities," Swearingen aptly notes, is "a valued form of investigation, a way of looking at things, a *dao*, that can improve understanding" (426). Through addressing similarities and differences and debating about methodologies, Chinese rhetoric advances and presents itself as a subarea in rhetorical studies.

However, studies of Chinese rhetoric are encountering two major drawbacks—paucity of primary texts and inadequate translations. Very few primary texts devoted entirely to rhetoric are available to Western scholars in rhetoric, communication, and composition. Lu notices that the void has become one of the major challenges ("Comparative Studies," 112); Liu believes that Western scholars' flawed perspectives of Chinese rhetoric stem from limited textual evidence due to a small portion of translated classical texts ("To Capture," 323). In other words, scholars' generalizations about Chinese rhetoric rely on a relatively limited textual or experiential database ("To Capture," 323). Coupled with paucity, inaccurate translation without careful cross-examination of primary Chinese texts results in problematic interpretation and methodology. David Hall points out that even with a number of different translations of a given classical Chinese text at hand, a Western critic ignorant of the Chinese language is "guaranteed to present a superficial and distorted interpretation" (23). For instance, Stephen Mitchell's translation of the *Way and the Power* (*Dao De Jing*) may "leave something to be desired for some readers, because he 'translated' this text without knowing any Classical Chinese and arrived at his English-language version by dint of relying on other translations" (Garrett, "Some," 62). Inaccurate interpretations result in misleading comparative methodology. Kennedy's *Comparative Rhetoric* is a milestone work but relies heavily on various translations for the sociocultural context of rhetoric and consequently fails to reconceptualize rhetoric's fundamental components beyond the Western paradigm.

The *Guiguzi* text serves as another example. Extant are two translations—one by Michael Broschat and the other by Thomas Cleary. Broschat's is part

of an unpublished dissertation (1985), and Cleary's is in the first section of his book, *Thunder in the Sky: Secrets on the Acquisition and Exercise of Power*. Broschat's narrative of the archeological history of *Guiguzi* shows little attention to its rhetorical theory. Cleary's translation entitled "The Master of Demon Valley" takes up 75 pages of his 165-page book and identifies *Guiguzi* as a "classical Taoist text, following on the ancient philosophical tradition but adapted specifically for secular leaders" (xiv), without relating it to the teaching of rhetoric or offering any annotation. Moreover, an English reader would not know that Guiguzi is the author of "The Master of Demon Valley," for the Chinese name of the primary author is not present in the translation. Finally, Cleary's reliance on some unnamed modern Chinese editions for his translation, as his "Notes on the Translation" reiterate, may reinforce misinterpretation of the *Guiguzi* text. Cleary's translation omits phrases and sentences in most chapters, resulting in an incomplete edition. The inadequate translations have left the *Guiguzi* text largely unknown as an important treatise of rhetoric.

Without *Guiguzi* on the map of rhetoric, we might easily assume that Chinese rhetoric is exclusively a writing tradition, as Kirkpatrick's work on Chen Kui's *Rules of Writing* suggests. We might not achieve a comprehensive and balanced perception that the Chinese rhetorical tradition also includes oratory, or persuasion, which Garrett, Lu, and others have proven to be active in the pre-Qin Warring States period. Without reading *Guiguzi*, we might exclusively focus on writing studies in the Chinese rhetorical tradition without knowing that associating rhetoric solely with writing is a modern Chinese practice, a practice that was only fully developed in the first half of the twentieth century under Japanese and Anglo-American academic influences (Wu, "Lost and Found"). Kirkpatrick's claim that Chen's *Rules of Writing* is China's earliest account of rhetoric has been modified by You's examination of the court debate recorded in *Yan Tie Lun*, or *The Discourse of Salt and Iron*,[3] a court debate that took place in 81 B.C.E. between Confucian literati and governmental officials (You, "Building Empire," 369–71). Oral debate is clearly part of the Chinese rhetorical tradition. Without access to quality translations of primary texts, scholars who cannot read Chinese but are interested in Chinese rhetoric have had no choice but to rely largely on translated texts of philosophy, historiography, or literature, resulting sometimes in what Mao calls "super-narrative."

The addition of *Guiguzi* to the landscape of rhetoric helps define rhetoric in the Chinese tradition and provides a direct access to an indigenous Chinese rhetorical theory. It amplifies the search for rhetoric in the Chinese tradition, the ongoing inquiry into what and where Chinese rhetoric exemplifies (Mao, "Searching"). Further, the history of *Guiguzi*'s exclusion reminds us that

> canonical membership and disciplinary recognition alone will not provide a methodological basis for better understanding the emergence, history, and rhetorical dynamics of transnational publics. But indispensable tools for thinking through the role of rhetoric in shaping the course of globalization can be derived from critical studies of rhetorical history and from interrogation of why certain rhetors and rhetorical communities were excluded from the canon in the first place. (Hesford, 793)

Guiguzi offers such an opportunity for critical studies of an indigenous rhetorical theory and practice excluded from the rhetorical canon in both China and the West. For this reason, the following sections present an introduction to the sociocultural backdrop of the *Guiguzi* text, its controversial historical receptions, and its theory of rhetoric.

Guiguzi and Its Sociopolitical Context

The *Guiguzi* text refers to the Master of the Ghost Valley and is named for its author, who lived in Guigu (Ghost Valley)[4] during the pre-Qin Warring States period. Although his real name is said to have been Wang Xu, he is known as Guiguzi, with the character *zi* (master) appended to the place, Guigu, to indicate his honorific title as well as the text he allegedly authored. Guiguzi is recognized as the first teacher specifically associated with the "art of persuasion" (Coyle, 1–2; Chen; Xu) and allegedly taught about five hundred students in 378–322 B.C.E.,[5] including Sun Bin (孫臏 also called Sunzi 孫子), military strategist and descendant of Sun Wu (孫武) or Sunzi (Sun Tzu 孫子), author of the *Art of War* (Liu and Liu, 13–14; S. Zhang, 45).[6] Guiguzi was also a contemporary of Aristotle (384–322 B.C.E.) (Xu, *Study*, 158–59), whose *On Rhetoric* continues to influence Western thinking modes, reasoning patterns, and spoken and written discourse structures. Similarly, *Guiguzi* has had an enduring influence on ancient and modern Chinese rhetorical practice, statecraft, diplomacy, business conduct, communication, negotiation, ethics, and religion. Based on *yin-yang* philosophy, *Guiguzi* teaches rhetoric as a related set of strategies, including open-shut (捭闔), reflect-respond (反應), restrain-fortify (内揵), mend-break (抵巇), agitate-arrest (飛箝), and oppose-ally (忤合), weighing (揣), gauging (摩), assessing (權), deploying (謀), and decision-making (決). Most of these terms are still in use in China to describe decisions and negotiations.

According to tradition, the corpus of *Guiguzi* was compiled into a single text during the Tang Dynasty (618–907 C.E.), and book 3 was added at that time (Chen, 162–64). However, whether Guiguzi, the master, existed, or whether he authored the entire treatise himself, or whether his disciples compiled his teaching notes, or whether the whole text is a counterfeit is debated.[7] Scholars

generally agree that "most pre-Qin classics worked like a loose-leaf binder into which one inserted essays or notes by different hands, and added, removed, or rearranged the material to suit the evolving interests of the complier" (Lewis, 55). Similarly, "*Guiguzi* exhibits the signs of a once oral tradition which solidifies into an organic textual form" (Coyle, 144–45). The general consensus is that the first eleven chapters were composed by one person, presumably Guiguzi; chapter 12 might be adapted from *Guanzi* compiled by Liu Xiang, the compiler of *Zhan Guo Ce* in the Han Dynasty (206 B.C.E.–188 C.E.). Chapter 13, "Zhuanwan," and chapter 14, "Quluan," are missing. Book 3 might have been composed later by unknown writers in the Tang Dynasty (Chen; Coyle, 145; Graham, *Disputers* n. 216). There is also a widespread allegation that book 3 was compiled during the dynasties of Wei and Jin, or Southern and Northern Dynasties (220–589 C.E.). Xu Fuhong compares the rhymes of characters in book 1 and book 3 and concludes that all three chapters in book 3 might have solidified during the pre-Qin period in 475–221 B.C.E. (*Study*, 35). His statistics on rhyming characters and patterns lead to the conclusion that the first chapter in book 3 might have been authored by Guiguzi, but Xu doubts if the last two chapters are by Guiguzi, because their rhymes do not follow the same pattern (*Study*, 35, 105–14, 135).

All Chinese editors follow the edition presumably annotated by Tao Hongjing (456–536 C.E.) in the Liang Dynasty (502–557 C.E.). However, the alleged date of the solidification of *Guiguzi* is rightly contested. The Tang Dynasty occurred over a hundred years after the Liang Dynasty when Tao's alleged edition came into being, and *Guiguzi* had already been arranged into three books composed of fifteen chapters, with notes on the lost chapters 13 and 14. Yin Zhizhang in the Tang Dynasty is believed to have prepared another edition. Somehow, by the Song Dynasty (960–1279), only Tao's version survived in China.[8] Some Chinese commentators also refer to the Daoist version (*Dao Cang Ben*), a version for religious Daoism circulated during the Ming Dynasty between 1368 and 1644 (Chen, 9; Ren and Bai, 194; Zong, 12). It is said that *Dao Cang Ben* is the same as Tao's, so Tao's annotated edition is regarded as the most authoritative, and his commentaries remain largely unchallenged.

The pre-Qin Warring States period, when Guiguzi allegedly taught rhetoric, was a "most chaotic and stimulating time" in classical China (Lu, *Rhetoric*, 61). All of the states were on edge and on alert because they might have to attack or counterattack their enemies at any moment. Kings had to weigh possible moves, know the intent of other kings, and have retaliatory strategies ready. Capable consultants were highly valued, respected, and rewarded. In *The Annuals of Lü Buwei* (*Lüshi chunqui*) written near the end of the Warring

States period, Lü Buwei (?–about 235 B.C.E.) says, "Whether they [rulers] were successful or not depended on one principle: without exception, every ruler who obtained worthies [capable advisors] has a secure state and a glorious reputation; and every ruler who lost worthies has an endangered state and disgraceful reputation" (Knoblock and Riegel, 22/5.I 578). Like Greek Sophists, Chinese learned men were eloquent persuaders ready to provide political consultation to kings and also "frequently engaged in debate," as Lü Buwei describes (Knoblock and Riegel, 15/8.I 368). State rulers sought their political consultation because their states were engaged in conflicts and wars, "each wanting to conquer their enemy states and become the dominant power" (Lu, *Rhetoric*, 62). The Warring States era created the need for traveling persuaders and warfare strategists to serve as advisers to kings who wanted to adopt certain policies, to govern their people, to avoid wars, or to conquer the neighboring states.[9]

More important, China's earliest historiography, *Shi Ji*, or *The Grand Scribe's Records* (Ssu-Ma), and the military history *Zhan Guo Ce*, or *Intrigues: Studies of the Chan-Kuo Ts'e* (Crump), record that Guiguzi's students include the most famous traveling persuaders and political consultants, Su Qin (Su Zi 苏秦) and Zhang Yi (Zhang Zi 張儀).[10] Su and Zhang earned high repute for their rhetorical practices of *zong-heng*, or vertical and horizontal war strategies in the Warring States period. Su and his counterparts practiced *zong* to advocate *he zong*, or vertical alliance, while the *heng* school represented by Zhang advocated *lian heng*, or horizontal alliance. As Lu explains, *he zong* is effective for uniting the weaker states to fight the strongest state, while *lian heng* is effective for the strongest state to defeat the weakest states (*Rhetoric*, 117). Su and Zhang are said to be able to convince kings to practice "vertical" and "horizontal" strategies for alliance and opposition to save their states or defeat them. In *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons* (*wenxin diaolong* 文心雕籠), Liu Xie (Liu Hsieh 劉勰 465–522 C.E.), renowned literary critic, recalls that these persuaders competed with the long-short (*chang duan* 長短) and captivate-capture (*fei qian* 飛箝), tactics taught by Guiguzi. He then concludes that "the eloquence of one man was more weighty than the precious nine tripod; a tongue three inches long was stronger than a million troops" (106). James Crump wonders if the practice of the *zong-heng* persuaders represents an established rhetorical tradition. In his *Intrigues: Studies of the Chan-Kuo Ts'e*, he suggests, "Suppose a Chinese rhetorical tradition included some such device as the *suasoria* for training men in the art of persuasion, would that not explain much of what is most baffling about the *Intrigues* [*Zhan Guo Ce* or *Chan-Kuo Ts'e*]?" (103). Then he asks,

> Why, for example, do so many persuaders so often speak their entire piece with no interruption from the ruler . . . ? Why are the pieces in the *Intrigues* so beautifully polished? And how did the men in the *Intrigues* invariably think of just the right things to say for the occasion? (103)

Evidently, in these rhetorical strategies, Su, Zhang, and others like them have been compared to Sophists in ancient Greece and characterized as Chinese sophists (Forke, 1–2).[11]

However, the audience of Chinese rhetoric was different from that of the Western tradition. This understanding of the audience is important to the understanding of Guiguzi's rhetorical theory, which has been mistakenly interpreted as anti-rhetoric, or manipulation, in the West. The Chinese rhetors were not public speakers but persuaders primarily in a private setting, most often talking to a one-person audience often assumed to be the ruler, or a superior (Garret, "Pathos," 23; Lu, *Rhetoric* 80; You, "Building Empire" 368–70). Rhetoric to the single-person audience developed special features. The ruler, though not elected, was "anxious to gain the support of the masses or their compliance" (Garrett, "Pathos," 22), and yet, at the same time, remained critical of his advisors' words because traveling persuaders were not loyal to any states. Lü Buwei, who served as an advisor to the king of Qin (Ch'in 秦) near the end of the Warring States period, said that the rulers ought to understand that "the grounds for judging the quality of advice cannot but be carefully investigated. If it is not carefully investigated, then the good and the not-good will not be properly characterized, and there is no greater disorder than when the good and the not-good are not properly characterized" (Knoblock and Riegel, 13/4.I 289). To this end, the ruler

> must carefully think through his general principles of action and his specific standards for speeches. . . . Holding fast to these principles will also enable him to avoid the temptation of the seductive powers of language, to avoid the trap of "finding beauty in the sound of the style and the parallel phrasing of arguments and persuasions." (Garrett, "Pathos," 28)

The ruler usually followed a general rule when seeking consultation. Lü Buwei describes it as follows:

> It is a general principle that when a ruler knows something, he does not want to be the first to express it in words. "Others sing the lead, I provide the harmony; others lead, I follow." By what a man utters, you know what he will contribute; by what he advises, you determine the title he should possess; and by how he realizes what he has advised, you test whether he has lived up to that title. The persuaders will not dare to make wild

> claims, and the rulers will have a means to hold fast to what is essential. (Knoblock and Riegel, 18/I.I 439)

The trained critical listener required that the persuader carefully craft his speeches not only to win the ears of the audience and maintain a hierarchical relationship but also to protect him from the ruler's persecution that might result from dislikes, as a later analysis of *Guiguzi* will show. On the one hand, the ruler was supposed to value the advisor's straight talk because, as Lü Buwei notices, "when the talk is straight, then the crooked is obvious" (Knoblock and Riegel, 23/I.I 586). On the other, the rulers "like to hear lies and detest straight talk," writes Lü Buwei (Knoblock and Riegel, 23/I.I 586). In the process of persuasion, "when words are extremely frank, they incite anger in the listener. When the listener is angered, the speaker is threatened" (Lü, Knoblock and Riegel, 23/I.I 590). To some degree, persuasion in classical China was almost an issue of life or death, wealth or poverty. When discussing dangers and difficulties of persuasion, Hanfeizi says,

> Though the ruler himself has not yet divulged his plans, if you in your discussions happen to hit upon his hidden motives, then you will be in danger. If the ruler is ostensibly seeking one thing but actually is attempting to accomplish something quite different, and you perceive not only his ostensible but the real motives behind his action as well, then you would be likewise in danger. (*Han Fei Tzu*, 75)

A Chinese proverb also says, "Being close to a king is like being close to a tiger," meaning that in serving a king, one must carefully weigh situations and measure his or her words for survival. Gaining the ruler's favor, the persuader would obtain power and wealth, suggests Garrett ("Pathos," 23). When out of favor, the persuader would jeopardize his or her life, lose all credentials for the future, or live in poverty.

The following excerpt from *Shi Ji* (*The Grand Scribe's Records*) provides an example of classical Chinese persuasion, wherein Su Qin advises the king of State Zhao (Chao) to form an alliance with the states of Han, Wei, Ch'i, Ch'u, and Yen against the state of Qin (Ch'in). It is worth quoting part of this lengthy speech on military deployment by Su Qin, who convinced the king of Zhao in the end.

> Your servant has heard that an enlightened ruler will sever all doubts and remove all slander, close off the paths of idle rumor, block up the gates of partisan squabbling; thus your vassals will be free to place your plans for exalting the ruler, broadening his territory and strengthening his army.