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**Classicism in Aristotle's "Poetics" and Liu Xie's "Wenxin  
diaolong"**

Way, Peter B., Ph.D.

University of Washington, 1990

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CLASSICISM IN ARISTOTLE'S POETICS & LIU XIE'S

WENXIN DIAOLONG

by

PETER B. WAY

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT

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Abstract

Classicism in Aristotle's Poetics & Liu Xie's  
Wenxin diaolong

by Peter B. Way

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The dissertation analyzes and compares classical literary criticism as it is articulated by Aristotle in the Poetics and by Liu Xie in the Wenxin diaolong. Defining classical criticism, in contra-distinction to both romantic and didactic criticism, as that criticism which focuses on the formal identity of literature, and which, within the terms of literature's historical and structural aspects, seeks to define both the elements of literary form and the principles of literary evolution I examine the primary arguments of each treatise by first placing them within the context of their own critical tradition and then analyzing and comparing them within the terms of their critical methodology, theory, and expressed values or beliefs.

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## INTRODUCTION

One of the fundamental critical assumptions of this dissertation needs to be clarified. In a sense it is a sub-thesis to the actual thesis and underlies all the analyses and comparisons I make throughout the dissertation. If one considers the world - in Wittengenstein's words<sup>1</sup> - as a totality of states of affairs and literature as one of those affairs i.e. literature as a formal reality which has, regardless of its different histories, a common and definable nature, then a relation of form or concept between historically independent literatures or criticisms when precisely defined is of particular significance. Such a relationship is less likely the result of historical accident and more likely reveals some essential aspect of the affair called "literature". The fact that most all Indo-European languages distinguish nouns from verbs phonetically by means of some morphological pattern while Chinese does not represents a difference resulting primarily from the accidents of their different histories. But, the fact that all spoken languages distinguish within the sentence nouns from verbs - by a morphological pattern, or by word order, or by a combination of both - is not simply an accident of history but

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an essential aspect of spoken language.

To consider literature as an affair of the world is to consider it not as an accident of human history but as an essential aspect of that history, and, moreover, to consider human history not as an accident of time, space, and matter but also as an essential aspect of those realities. These are beliefs which can not be proven except by an appeal to common sense i.e. the simple improbability - if the above were not the case - of there being two independent literary traditions such as the Chinese and the European - to say nothing of their analogies and homologies.

If literature is not an accident of human history but as essential to that history as language is then its nature will be independent of any particular history, and the critical relations of forms, ideas, and values apparent between literatures which are most historically independent will most reveal its essential elements. The simple fact that both Chinese criticism and European criticism distinguish the literary discourse from the non-literary discourse and do so essentially within the same terms - given the fact that they did so independently - gives that distinction a critical significance it would not have if it were true of only one tradition. The critical significance of the historical independence of Chinese criticism and of European criticism

can not be overemphasized. We need to remind ourself as we compare Liu Xie's *Wenxin diaolong*<sup>2</sup> with Aristotle's *Poetics*<sup>3</sup> of the simple miracle that each critic - being a product of completely different histories - often not only raises the same questions within the same terms but comes up with the same answers. To carry on the thought - the fact that in making the above distinction Aristotle and Liu do not isolate or contrast to the same degree the same genres - such as Aristotle's sharp distinction between history and literature or his focus on the narrative modes - reflects real differences of focus and evolution within each tradition but does not lessen the critical significance of the parallels. There is a fundamental uniformity of thought within both arguments which when analyzed articulates the essential questions and facts concerning the real distinctions between literary and non-literary discourses.

Given the above assumptions it is apparent that the obvious differences and the less obvious similarities in both facts and values which mark the European and the Chinese literary traditions when compared within the terms of their best critics allow us to distinguish what is essential and what is accidental to each tradition. The juxtaposition raises questions which are otherwise invisible or less apparent. It is the independence, the complexity, and the refinement of literary forms and literary reflections peculiar to both traditions which give the comparisons such a force. They are

the only two literatures which have maintained progressive and self-conscious histories for more than two thousand five hundred years. Innovation and the questions which come with innovation have been essential to both literatures, and, as a consequence, Chinese and European critics isolated earlier and more articulately the abstract nature of literature - both its identity and its structures.

One would think that theory should follow upon fact. That is - as a literature increases in complexity and refinement literary theory would do so too. But, we find in both the Chinese and the European traditions a peculiar maturity of critical thought at a relatively early stage of literary development. Both Aristotle (384-322 B.C.) and Liu Xie (465-522 A.D.) appear at formative periods within their respective literary histories when literature had developed a complexity of forms and values which raised fundamental questions about its nature and function. But, in both cases one can argue that the full complexity and refinement of their respective literatures came afterwards. This raises the obvious question whether such a flowering of literary innovation and expression in the Hellenistic and the Tang periods was simply coincidental to or a result of their analyses? My own belief - and I do not think one can do more than believe - is that criticism represents a real and formative part of literature capable of both changing it and being changed by it. It is

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true that Hellenistic and Roman literatures when compared to Greek literature through Euripides clearly represent a refinement and perfection of form and expression - though maybe not of inspiration - and that the same is the case for Tang and Song literature when compared to the tradition down to Liu's time. Is it also true that a literature does not realize its full potential until its critical identity along with the questions that identity raises are fully articulated i.e. does criticism both change and perfect literary form and expression?

No European criticism seriously competes in comprehensiveness and sophistication with the Poetics until the modern period; the same is true for Liu's Wenxin diaolong. Though later, aspects of the tradition were treated in greater detail China never again looked as carefully and as critically at the fundamental questions of literature.<sup>4</sup> Both critics came at a time when their respective literatures had developed a complexity of forms and a diversity of values sufficient to raise basic questions concerning the nature and function of literature. The Homeric canon including the Iliad, Odyssey, and Margites had until the development and perfection of Athenian tragedy and comedy provided a coherent and adequate definition of literature. By Aristotle's time Athenian drama by mixing and combining elements of both the epic and the lyric - including the iambic and the melic - genres in a

dramatic mode had raised fundamental questions concerning the content, forms, and values of literature. In the same manner the five Confucian Classics including the Book of Historical Documents, Book of Rites, Book of Changes, Spring & Autumn Annals, and in particular the Book of Odes<sup>5</sup> - an anthology of three hundred Odes derived from a tradition of courtly music perfected in the first half of the Zhou dynasty (ca. 1122-600 B.C.) - had provided Chinese literature with a coherent and adequate definition until the literary innovations of the Han (179 B.C.-220 A.D.) and Six Dynasties (222-589 A.D.). It appears that the same degree and kind of literary transformations lie behind the critical questions and foci of the Poetics and the Wenxin diaolong.

It is evidently the radical changes of both form and value realized by the Han fu - a type of prose poem mixing lyric, epideictic, and narrative modes - and the personal lyrics of the Six Dynasties which motivate Liu's re-examination of literature. The poetics of the Book of Odes perfected in the early Zhou court (ca. 600 B.C.) reflect a tradition of courtly music peculiar to China in which music and poetry were considered almost synonymous. The Classical Odes derive from a courtly tradition characterized by an extreme linguistic and musical formalism in which the poet-composer remained essentially anonymous and the composition represented a minimal poetic discourse set to what were

apparently complex musical arrangements accompanied by both musical instruments and dance. The formal elements of the music, dance, and prosody represented the essential qualities of the genre. The poetic discourse was limited by the prosody (normally a four syllable line with each line defining a complete syntactical unit and allowing almost no coordination or subordination) to a series of extremely elliptical images, descriptions, dialogues, and monologues somewhat characteristic of folk poetry in all cultures but far more minimal and paratactical.<sup>6</sup> The poetics of this tradition of courtly music or the little that has survived of it focuses on the formal aspects of the language - figures, modes, and genres; its prosodic criticism is based on a loose analogy between the harmonics of language and those of music i.e. there existed no critical analysis of the phonetic elements of the prosody. By Liu's time with the loss of the courtly music tradition during the later half of the Zhou dynasty (500-255 B.C.), the subsequent separation of musical and poetic form during the Former Han (179 B.C.-23 A.D.), and the eventual development of the personal lyric during the Later Han (25-220 A.D.) the classical poetics of the Book of Odes no longer coherently articulated or reflected literary reality. Its critical terminology had become either highly ambiguous or was fundamentally at odds with the facts of contemporary literature. As had Athenian drama, the Han fu and the gu shi - the personal lyric beginning in the Jian-an

period (ca. 220 A.D.) - had significantly altered the form, content, and values of literature. Liu even more than Aristotle was faced with a traditional poetics which had only partially adapted to those historical changes. There were fundamental questions of form, value, and history which needed to be examined and explained if the tradition was not to be lost in the maze of its own complexities and ambiguities.

Though it is true in all human affairs it is particularly true of literature that the changes of history and the resulting complexities threaten a coherent or critical understanding of the present. Both the bulk and the complexity of the past inhibit critical knowledge and understanding. Even the physical sciences are dependent on their capacities to look at reality in a limited number of abstract terms. To realize a critical understanding of literature requires the same degree of analysis and synthesis. The essential task of the literary critic is to sort and to explain the facts and values of the past and to focus those of the present. When literary terminology and principles no longer coherently explain the facts of the past and focus the questions and dynamics of the present, tradition itself is threatened. For, an aesthetic tradition ends when it is no longer capable of analyzing and re-evaluating its own transformations - what was adequate to a critical understanding of painting during the Ming was no longer adequate by the end of the Qing.

It, therefore, seems reasonable to argue that the peculiar acumen or sophistication of the Poetics and the Wenxin diaolong derives in part from the same (mutatis mutandis) kind and degree of historical changes faced by each critic, which changes raised within each tradition fundamental critical questions or problems. In both traditions the identity, structures, and principles of literature required re-examination if literature was to maintain its critical nature and creativeness. The subsequent unique influence each text had on their respective critical traditions, I believe, reflects in part the radical nature of the aesthetic contradictions each critic faced. For, it is only when the critic can see reality within its most complex and contradictory terms can he begin to comprehend its essential nature. Looking back, it is clear that the Poetics and the Wenxin diaolong stood, until the modern period, within their respective traditions much as the poetics of the Homeric and the Confucian canons had stood within their traditions until the innovations of Athenian drama and Han poetry, and that the modern critic, given the type and degree of literary change during the last two hundred years, is faced with possibly even more complex contradictions and more radical questions.

I am arguing that Liu and Aristotle by precisely (and that is the critical element) sorting and articulating their

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respective traditions caused or motivated the literary renaissances of the Tang and Song periods, and of the Hellenistic and Roman periods respectively, or that it would be difficult to imagine either without them. Aristotle's formative influence on the critics and writers of Alexandria and their subsequent influence on Roman literature is obvious. Though the relation between the Wenxin diaolong and the critical thought of the Tang and Song is not as evident - primarily because of the lack of attention to historical and theoretical details which still characterizes Chinese literary history - it is clear that the Wenxin diaolong along with Xiao Tong's (501-531) classical anthology (the Wen xuan) formed, in some sense, the critical focus of the subsequent tradition. My own opinion is that the Wen xuan (ca.520) with its critical attention to both literary form and literary history clearly reflects the radical elements of Liu's criticism.<sup>7</sup> I will examine this question later. Aristotle and Liu Xie analyzed the history, the structures, and the principles of literature and defined its identity in a manner which became the norms within their respective traditions. I purpose to examine and compare the nature and the quality of such classicism as found in both the Poetics and the Wenxin diaolong.

CHAPTER I

CLASSICISM & STRUCTURALISM

## CLASSICISM

The above argument implies and asserts a particular meaning for the term "classical" which needs to be discussed. The assumption is that classicism represents in China or Europe a tradition of formal criticism which focuses on the abstract identity of literature primarily by analyzing its diachronic order (i.e. its history) and its synchronic logic (i.e. its structures and forms). It is this concern with literature as a formal and a historical reality which distinguishes classicism from other types of criticism. The classical critic seeks to identify the norms and values of the tradition and to motivate innovation by articulating its elements and principles. I well realize that such a definition is at odds with or at least different from the normal usages in both traditions. But, to confuse classicism with conservatism and traditionalism involves fundamental contradictions and ambiguities

The idea that the tradition in all its aspects is defined by an essentially arbitrary set of texts, and that these texts - their values and their forms - are to be literally imitated without innovation versus the view that the literary tradition contains certain literary norms, that these norms can be isolated and articulated, and that it is by means of such critical principles literature changes involve opposite and

contradictory assumptions. The primary difference lies in traditionalism's indiscriminate notion of values versus classicism's focus on literary values per se i.e. the recognition that though literary values can reflect and are related, in the largest sense, to other social values they are, as aesthetic values, essentially independent. Traditionalism with its moralistic interpretation of literature confuses the literary discourse with the non-literary discourse and views literature's strictly formal aspects as accidents; therefore, it sees no reason why these forms should change. Classicism, on the other hand, not only recognizes the facts of transformation in literature's history but sees such innovation as essential to literature's nature.

Classicism defined as a critical tradition which focuses on the abstract nature of literature analyzing its transformations and articulating its structures and principles, and which recognizes both the fact and the virtue of literary innovation clearly represents a radical and a progressive tradition. The curious fact that in China and Europe classicism is commonly thought to represent just the opposite simply demonstrates the extent to which the common tradition can be ignorant of its own history - not to recognize Confucius and Aristotle to say nothing of the major literary innovators in both traditions as radical and progressive forces within their cultures represents

significant ignorance. In both cultures classicism is commonly associated with criticism which is essentially arbitrary, moralistic, and conservative in the narrowest sense. The usage reflects a fundamental misconception.

Vincent Shih in a discussion of Liu's classicism writes:

Now, in evaluating Liu's position as a classicist... His belief that literature develops in accordance with the needs of the times, and that each new age gives literature a new emphasis and a fresh point of view is in violent contradiction to traditionalism. Poetry must change according to the principle of flexible adaptability to new needs of new ages. This principle of adaptability to change is enunciated in the same breath with which he advises people to go back to the Classics. At the same moment when he exhorts men to worship the Classics, he condemns the popular view of depreciating the contemporaries and worshipping the Ancients. From the general tenor of his writing we must conclude that his conservatism is a matter of habit, while his progressive ideas arise from convictions. He pays lip service to the Classics, but gives his heart to the study of elements which are purely literary. And even in treating the

Classics, he gives them more of a literary appreciation than a moralistic interpretation. For him, it seems, the Classics are important because they possess literary value; he does not believe that literary value depends upon conformity to the Classics.

When he discusses literary elements in the second portion of this book, his freedom from classicism is even more surprising. He occupies himself almost exclusively with what is purely literary... and thus it is not possible to call Liu Xie a classicist without doing him grave injustice.<sup>8</sup>

Such a peculiar contrast between classicism and the study of elements which are "purely literary" or the belief that classicism represents traditionalism and moralism and does not focus on literary values per se is a misunderstanding common to both traditions - though the moralistic tendency may be more pronounced in the Confucian tradition where less effort has been made to distinguish literary and non-literary values. In both cultures the term "classicism" (in Chinese represented by jingdian-zhuyi 經典主義) represents a late neologism whose history is complex. For the sake of brevity I will focus exclusively on the European ambiguities and contradictions which, though different from the Chinese, represent

essentially the same type of confusions.

The transformation of classicism's radical analysis of literature's identity into a set of conservative cliches can be best exemplified by the Poetics itself. The simple and clear formalism of Aristotle's argument i.e. his complete avoidance of any moralism though it has never been really questioned is seldom pointed out. Even his opinion that tragedy is in a certain sense more perfect or more perfectly developed than the epic, which clearly represented in Aristotle's time a modernist point of view, has seldom troubled the vague conservative values later associated with the treatise. Every tradition tames its most radical thinkers and by loose associations and even vaguer interpretations reduces their critical arguments to commonplaces. The real nature of Aristotle's classicism remains essentially unanalyzed - the general assumption being that it derives from the simple accident that he wrote in Greek and wrote during the beginnings of European criticism. Likewise, the apparent contradictions which Liu's arguments raise for Shih are in themselves the result of an essential contradiction between Liu's critical classicism and the uncritical "classicism" of Chinese cultural conservatism. Liu's formalism and progressive literary values are seen as contradicting his classicism only because the term itself has not been critically examined.

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In his study of the concept and term "classicism" Wellek points out that the abstract concept did not appear in European criticism until the early nineteenth century and that the term's meaning remains today still curiously ambiguous.<sup>9</sup> The abstract noun "classicism" first appears in Europe, as developed by the brothers Schlegel, in juxtaposition with romanticism. This usage which focuses on stylistic differences between seventeenth and eighteenth century French, English, and German writers defines classicism in its narrowest or least critical sense. The contrast between classical and romantic styles, like most traditional subjective values, lacks or defies any coherent definition. What was considered to be un-traditional and therefore un-classical in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries such as sexual realism was often, in fact, characteristic of both Greek and Latin literatures.

Though the romantic-classical debate occupied most of nineteenth century criticism down to the beginnings of modernism and Hulme's essay "Romanticism & Classicism"<sup>10</sup>, which shifted the focus of classicism from seventeenth and eighteenth century literature to modern literature, there has been little or no attempt to analyze the critical elements of classicism. The contrast between the poetics of the novel and that of poetry limited the meaning of the term to certain vague literary values deriving from a poetic tradition

characterized by a rhetorical formalism. Classical criticism within this context simply refers to the values or tastes of Boileau and other defenders of that tradition. Classicism signified, in effect, a period or movement equivalent in usage to modernism, romanticism, or futurism. The idea that it represents a critical methodology distinct from those of didacticism and romanticism and is not limited to a certain style or period of literature has been, if at all, only vaguely recognized. The traditional contrast between classicism and romanticism as defined in both nineteenth and twentieth century criticism limits the term to its least coherent definition and does not clarify the critical nature or criteria of a criticism which views literature in terms of its principles and structures.

To confuse Aristotle's *Poetics* with such arbitrary opinion is to ignore both the nature and the substance of his arguments. It is precisely such a reduction of tradition to a limited set of stylistic traits (in this case derived from Homer) which Aristotle rejects when he seeks to explain the transformations within the narrative tradition and to define its structures and principles. He does not reject Aristophanes or Sophocles because they are radically different from Homer but seeks to identify their common structural elements. Though both Liu and Aristotle argue that literature's norms derive from the *Book of Odes* and *The Iliad* and *Odyssey* respectively

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which articulates the identity of literature within the terms of its structures and principles focusing on both its norms and its extremes - viz. the Margites and the more risque Confucian Odes. The canon as such represents a complex set of paradigms which serve to focus the formal dynamics of the tradition and thereby to motivate literary innovation. Classicism advocates not simply a following but a critical understanding of literature's aesthetic values and norms.

Though we know almost nothing concerning the critical communities which first created the Homeric and the Confucian canons the simple identification, selection, and compilation to say nothing of the editing of these literary texts reflects a critical understanding of their abstract natures and formal structures. The compilations alone witness a mature criticism. This is particularly evident within the Confucian Odes. The selection and complex classification of the Odes as found in the Book of Odes could not have been accomplished without a critical understanding of their literary qualities and structures; to have such an understanding the critic had to have identified the poetic discourse and to have distinguished its elements from those of the non-poetic discourse. I believe the same level of critical acumen is witnessed by the selection and compilation of the Homeric corpus. Regardless of the fact that later, in both traditions, fundamental confusions are prevalent or little critical consensus is

present concerning literature's formal nature - as is still the case today - it would have been impossible to create such refined literary canons without a conscious understanding of their literary qualities. And, those qualities in the case of both the Homeric epics and Confucian Odes clearly involve coherent and articulate aesthetic values i.e. the compilers selected and judged each composition on sophisticated aesthetic criteria. The compilation of both the Homeric and the Confucian canons, I do not believe, was simply the result of vulgar popularity; both canons are complex and critically demanding (linguistically and conceptually) and strikingly different from popular folk literature at any time in any culture. The Iliad, Odyssey, Margites and Book of Odes reflect in their complex and sophisticated literary refinements a distinctly aristocratic taste or an aesthetic awareness characteristic of a small but well organized critical community.<sup>11</sup> As we will see later, the fragments of Confucius' reflections concerning the Book of Odes gives us some, if only a tiny, insight into the formal nature of the criticism which must have accompanied the canon.

The subsequent tendency in both traditions to evaluate and interpret these canons in moralistic or non-literary terms as represented by Plato and the Han legalists seems to reflect the inevitable decline of aesthetic understanding which occurs when a sophisticated art and its aesthetics are popularized

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beyond their original critical milieu, and consequently viewed by an uncritical audience as an indiscriminate expression of conservative or moral values - or as in the case of Plato, seen as contravening those values. The literary discourses represented within the canons are then read and evaluated as non-literary discourses. Both the *Poetics* and the *Wenxin diaolong* represent (mutatis mutandis) critical reactions to such a vulgarization of literary criticism. The two treatises articulate a classicism which focuses on literature within its own critical terms. Both Aristotle and Liu distinguish themselves within their respective traditions by their systematic avoidance of vulgar moralism and reactionary traditionalism. Each critic reasserts literature's formal values and principles through an examination of its history and analysis of its structures.

Classicism by definition insists on the abstract or formal identity of literature. The idea of literary norms and principles requires the recognition of literature as an independent formal reality. Though both Aristotle and Liu recognize that literary, political, and moral values, in the largest sense, intersect or are in some way related each critic, in his own fashion, argues that effective criticism requires the critic to isolate and to analyze literature's history, forms, and values per se. When their critical arguments are no longer perceived within the tradition as the

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radical and dynamic analyses they actually represent but - which seems to be the fate of all critical thought - as a set of arbitrary prescriptions reflecting the conservative values of their respective cultures the formalism of the arguments is ignored, and classicism is confused with conservatism. This is the reason why Shih and other critics find Liu's classicism and his focus on purely literary values contradictory. This maybe reasonable or normal within common usage but a critical appraisal of classical criticism requires a more precise or less contradictory definition.

As first used by Aulus Gellius a Roman grammarian of the second century A.D. in his *Noctes Atticae* "classicus" signifies the highest class or standard of literature. He divides writers into the "classicus assiduusque" as versus the "proletarius" signifying the level of literary accomplishment found in the compositions.<sup>12</sup> Such a division of classes reflects a sophisticated and articulate notion of literature's formal identity. The important aspect of the term is that it does not connote for Gellius a contrast between ancients and moderns but signifies a purely formal distinction of literary quality. It does, though, imply along with its corollary adjective "assiduus" that the distinction represents essentially a distinction of the formality or consciousness of literary form within the composition i.e. the highest class is formally difficult and demanding. As Wellek notes<sup>13</sup>, this

usage with its formalist implications has never been the object of any criticism. Classicism as a critical tradition which articulates the formal identity of literature and focuses on its purely literary aspects remains in both cultures curiously unexamined.

The belief that classicism represents a conservative or reactionary point of view appears even more anomalous if one examines the actual history of writers or critics who in any strict sense can be called classical. In Europe (the same I believe is true in China), it is significant to note that with the exception of Aristotle most of them are writer-critics i.e. critics who are directly concerned with the realities of literature and literary innovation. Callimachus, Horace, Dante, and T.S. Eliot, though each as a writer radically redefined his own tradition, as critics they focused on the canons, norms, and principles of their traditions. I don't believe this represents, as is often suggested, a simple accident or contradiction. Eliot accurately points out that to realize real innovation in an aesthetic tradition requires a thorough knowledge of its "order". The common fallacy that literary innovation involves a simple negation or violation of literary standards derives from the misconception that art is an accidental accumulation of values and practices. The apparent contrast between Eliot's classicism as a critic and the radical innovations of his own poetry (to pick the most

obvious and best known example) only underlines the pervasive misunderstanding concerning the nature of both literary innovation and classical criticism. Invariably the most radical artists or writers in China and in Europe have been and are those artists or writers who have most self-consciously and comprehensively scrutinized their own traditions - viz Zhu Da, Picasso, Du Fu, Dante etc.. No major innovation has ever occurred in an aesthetic tradition without the critical scrutiny of its history, forms, and values which classicism advocates. The classical critic views the tradition as a continuity of certain purely abstract literary principles. A critical understanding of these principles not only explains the evolutions of the tradition but in a sense motivates such innovations. Newness, as Eliot tells us<sup>14</sup>, is not simply an accident in literature but represents its most essential aspect. The essential relation between real innovation and a critical understanding of the elements and principles of art might in some sense be more apparent in painting than in literature where the relation between the past and the present are not as visible. Most people when they look at a painting by Picasso or Zhu Da see or can be shown how each painter uses and redefines respectively Velazquez, El Greco, Goya, or Huang Gongwang, Ni Zan, Dong Qichang etc. but few readers can see the same kind of critical synthesis of the past and the present when they read Eliot's *Waste Land*.

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Both the Book of Odes and the Homeric corpus present a complex but coherent set of literary norms. By isolating and articulating, in the case of the Confucian Odes, the poetics of fu, bi, xing, song, ya, feng (I will later discuss the meanings of these critical terms) and, in the case of the Homeric epics, the poetics of plot or action the Homeric and the Confucian canons effectively define and focus their respective literatures, thereby allowing the writer to perceive its principles and to innovate or to renew its forms. Without such a critical focus neither literature could have evolved or would have survived .

Classicism itself evolves. If one compares the two classical anthologies of Chinese literature - the Book of Odes (ca. 600 B.C.) and the Wen xuan (ca. 520 A.D.) - the simplest but possibly not the most noted difference in structure or organization lies in the fact that in the Book of Odes there is no apparent chronological order while in the Wen xuan the selections within each mode or genre are presented in chronological sequence - as Xiao Tong himself points out in his preface.<sup>15</sup> Neither the Homeric nor the Confucian canons reveal any conscious awareness of the historical order as such. The analysis of literary history and its diachronic order seems to represent a subsequent evolution in both classical traditions. Whether or not Liu and Aristotle are the

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first in their traditions to deal critically with both the diachronic and the synchronic orders of literature they articulate them more carefully than any of the earlier and most of the later critics. Liu's observation in chapter VI: "If one lays out and examines the order in time then the logic of the transformations in nature can be inspected; and if one isolates and distinguishes these similarities and differences (in nature) then the principles of the primary structures can be clarified." is unprecedented in either tradition until Russian formalism and modern structuralism. Classicism only fully matures or perfects its analyses when it can distinguish and isolate literature's historical and structural elements.

The critical concept of literature's formal identity and the distinction between the diachronic and the synchronic orders though they are evident in both Chinese and European classicism they - their histories and arguments - have never been the object of any criticism. The essential formalism of classical criticism has been either taken for granted or ignored. Perhaps, the nature and significance of classicism is only apparent when its different histories are seen in juxtaposition - when we can see, as pointed out above, that the evolutions of a classical methodology in both China and in Europe reveal striking parallels. As asserted earlier a critical comparison of Liu's and Aristotle's classicism reveals fundamental homologies of method and reasoning. It is

within the terms of these homologies we can begin to define and to analyze the elements of classical criticism. Both critics focused and refined their respective critical traditions by analyzing literature's history and forms in greater detail. They thereby provided their respective cultures with the theoretical and the practical means to realize critical thought and significant literary innovation.

Though there has been no critical discussion of the elements of classicism per se there is within T.S. Eliot's essay "Tradition & the Individual Talent"<sup>16</sup> a general presentation of its values and principles. In the essay Eliot does not directly discuss classicism (elsewhere he notes the same fundamental critical ambiguities surrounding the term as Wellek does<sup>17</sup>). His focus is on the idea of tradition as a medium for innovation - the writer functioning as the catalyst. It is within such a radical notion of the tradition we find the clearest statement of the major elements of classical criticism.

The first and most essential element of classicism is the idea of literature's formal identity as distinct and separable from other types of discourse. The formal identity of literature includes both its structural and its historical elements. Though these elements are, from a certain perspective, inseparable they can be logically distinguished

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for they involve fundamentally different realities. Eliot after stating that tradition does not dictate "a blind and timid adherence to its successes... and novelty is better than repetition." goes on to say:

Tradition is a matter of much wider significance. It cannot be inherited, and if you want it you must obtain it by great labor. It involves, in the first place, the historical sense ("historical" for Eliot includes both the formal and the strictly temporal aspects of tradition)... and the historical sense involves a perception, not only of the pastness of the past, but of its presence; The historical sense compels a man to write not merely with his own generation in his bones, but with a feeling that the whole of the literature of Europe from Homer and within it the whole of the literature of his own country has a simultaneous existence and composes a simultaneous order. This historical sense, which is a sense of the timeless as well as of the temporal and of the timeless and of the temporal together, is what makes a writer traditional. And it is at the same time what makes a writer most acutely conscious of his place in time, of his own contemporaneity.<sup>18</sup>

Eliot's "simultaneous order" signifies in modern linguistic terms the synchronic order. He is distinguishing literature's temporal or diachronic aspects from its formal or synchronic aspects. This represents the same kind of distinction which Saussure makes between "la langue" and "la parole". Literature represents both a temporal and an aesthetic reality and each aspect contains its own principles. Pointing out that a writer as a writer exists and is evaluated in formal relation with other writers of the same tradition Eliot continues his argument:

I mean this as a principle of aesthetic, not merely historical, criticism. The necessity that he shall conform, that he shall cohere, is not onesided; what happens when a new work of art is created is something that happens simultaneously to all the works of art which preceded it. The existing monuments form an ideal order among themselves, which is modified by the introduction of the new (the really new) work of art among them. The existing order is complete before the new work arrives; for order to persist after the supervention of novelty, the whole existing order must be, if ever so slightly, altered; and so the relations, proportions, values of each work of art toward the whole are readjusted; and this is conformity between

the old and the new. Whoever has approved this idea of order, of the form of European, of English literature will not find it preposterous that the past should be altered by the present as much as the present is directed by the past.<sup>19</sup>

It is evident that in a certain sense both Virgil and Dante altered the significance and the actual aesthetic order of the Iliad and Odyssey - that in a sense they (the Iliad & Odyssey) did not represent a coherent genre distinct from the general class of narrative poetry before Virgil transformed and focused certain formal aspects of the epic. One of the problems the modern critic has with Aristotle's evaluation of Homer is that he (Aristotle) did not see Homer's compositions as other than typical narrative poems i.e. they were not for Aristotle, in the modern sense, epics. As Athenian tragedy had redefined the Homeric tradition so Virgil redefined Aristotle's tradition shifting "the relations, proportions, values of each work of art toward the whole". Eliot accurately observes that in art "the difference between the present and the past is that the conscious present is an awareness of the past in a way and to an extent which the past's awareness of itself cannot show."<sup>20</sup> Such rigorous formalism though it goes well beyond the critical limits of either Aristotle or Liu simply elaborates or carries to a logical conclusion what is implied in their own arguments. Eliot's "simultaneous order"

clarifies for the first time in coherent terms the theoretical implications of classicism. As Eliot says: "Whoever has approved of this idea of order, of the form of European, of English literature will not find it preposterous that the past should be altered by the present as much as the present is directed by the past."<sup>21</sup> Just as Virgil realized or actualized a potential aspect of Homer so Eliot's criticism articulates an aspect of the critical tradition which was only potentially there before.

One can argue that just as the "really new" work of art modifies the old so "really new" criticism modifies the old ideas of literature transforming and clarifying our perception and evaluation of their arguments. This is not only true for Eliot in relation to both Aristotle and Liu but equally so - which is the essential premise of this dissertation - for Liu in relation to Aristotle; Chinese literature and criticism when "really" known within the West will alter both the order of literature and the idea of that order - "for the order to persist after the supervention of novelty, the whole existing order must be, if ever so slightly, altered.". I am well aware that as I analyze and compare the critical aspects of the Poetics and the Wenxin diaolong I focus on and articulate elements of their arguments of which each critic might have been only vaguely or potentially conscious. This does not mean that those elements are not really there but it does mean that

the modern critic is aware of them "in a way and to an extent" neither Aristotle nor Liu could have been. When, as above, I point out the peculiar formalism of Liu's argument: "If one lays out and examines the order in time then the logic of the transformations in nature can be inspected; and if one isolates and distinguishes these similarities and differences (in nature) then the principles of the primary structures can be clarified." it is obvious that Liu could not have been aware of the critical significance of his argument to the same extent or degree as is a modern critic after Saussure. To limit our evaluation of the Poetics and the Wenxin diaolong to what Aristotle and Liu knew is to argue that their criticisms - to say nothing of their literatures - were not real i.e. to consider literary criticism as simply a matter of opinion.<sup>22</sup>

Eliot's argument sets out two other critical principles which are essential to the classical tradition - 1) the recognition that innovation is not accidental but essential to art - and 2) the assertion that criticism's subject is "the poetry" not "the poet". Continuing his argument Eliot notes that criticism involves a "judgement, a comparison, in which two things are measured by each other. To conform merely would be for the new work not really to conform at all; it would not be new, and would therefore not be a work of art."<sup>23</sup> And later he argues: "Honest criticism and sensitive appreciation are

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directed not upon the poet but upon the poetry."<sup>24</sup> Though the last point might seem self evident it addresses a fallacy which has plagued criticism in both China and Europe from their very beginnings. Both Plato and the Han moralists confuse the poet and the poetry - to say nothing of romanticism. Liu and Aristotle when compared with earlier or later critics of either tradition are among the very few who critically distinguish the poet as a person from the poet as a poet, and recognize that criticism focuses on the literary discourse per se.

Eliot also broaches a problematic aspect of classical theory concerning the critical recognition that in art innovation and continuity are not opposites or self-contradictory. Though neither Aristotle nor Liu deal with the problem in the same terms Eliot's discussion does clarify some of the concepts and values expressed by both critics. Discussing the relation of the poet to the past he says:

He (the poet) must be aware that the mind of Europe - the mind of his own country - ...is a mind which changes, and that this change is a development which abandons nothing en route, which does not superannuate either Shakespeare, or Homer, or the rock drawing of the Magdalenian draughtsmen. That this development, refinement perhaps, complication

certainly, is not, from the point of view of the artist, any improvement. Perhaps not even an improvement from the point of view of the psychologist or not to the extent which we imagine; perhaps only in the end based upon a complication in economics and machinery.<sup>25</sup>

There are other aspects of Eliot's argument which clarify in part or whole elements of Liu's and Aristotle's arguments. But, for the sake of simplicity and clarity I will limit myself to the above four points which set out the most important principles of classical criticism i.e. 1) literature's formal identity comprises both its diachronic and its synchronic orders; 2) innovation is essential to literature; 3) criticism focuses on the literary discourse per se - not the writer; and 4) literary innovation represents a development which articulates the past. As we will see the emphasis each critic puts on these principles is different but both recognize all four.

#### STRUCTURALISM

In the above analysis of classicism and its principles I have used a number of terms and concepts which are taken from linguistic structuralism, and have implied by so doing that there is a homology between the two critical

perspectives. To further elucidate both the peculiar problems and the nature of classicism a brief discussion of this relation will be helpful. The essence of this homology is the fact that both disciplines attempt a radical objectification of their respective subjects and that these subjects (language and literature) can not be reduced to simple material phenomena but involve a complex of purely formal elements which are essential to their very identities.

Saussure<sup>26</sup> at the beginning of this century was the first to distinguish the formal and the historical aspects of language and to discriminate its syntagmatic and paradigmatic structures; by so doing he focused and defined modern linguistics. At the same time Sigmund Freud and Emile Durkheim respectively established psychology and sociology by articulating their methodologies and the formal nature of their subjects. The subjects of all three sciences are characterized by an imminent complex of historical and formal realities which distinguishes them from those of the other natural sciences. The subjects of biology and chemistry can be abstracted from their complex formal natures as actual living or existing phenomena without a complete loss of identity. This is not the case with language, society, and the mind. A simple mechanical analysis of historical facts based on the cause and effect models of the natural sciences does not explain the formal relations and transformations found

within the three disciplines. Such imminent complexes of historical and formal realities require more subtle and problematic notions of structure, relation, and cause and effect - the distinction involves essentially the same kind of distinction Aristotle makes between material, effective, formal, and final causes. The articulation of the historical and formal aspects and the recognition of the complexity and importance of purely formal relations were in essence what Saussure, Freud, and Durkheim brought to their respective disciplines. This, perhaps, explains why the methodology and principles of classicism still lack any coherent discussion - why literature and literary criticism seem to resist in a peculiar fashion any objectification of their identities, principles, and methods. Such resistance is particularly apparent if one compares comparative literature and comparative linguistics - the first remains stubbornly ethnocentric and seldom moves beyond the cause and effect notions of literary influence and crude thematic parallels.<sup>27</sup>

Literature like language, society, and the mind, or possibly even more so, represents an imminent complex of historical and formal realities which requires both subtle and problematic notions of structure, relation, and cause and effect. Traditional criticism has always chosen to express such notions in essentially hermetic terms. Even Aristotle and Liu are only in a limited sense conscious of their literatures

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as particular histories and avoid such hermeticism. Part of the task of this dissertation is to decipher and to compare the natures of their self-consciousness.

Within the modern period only those criticisms which are related to or descended from linguistic structuralism such as Russian Formalism, Czech and French Structuralism, and American New Criticism have attempted a coherent definition of literature and literary criticism. Though on the whole such formalist criticisms have rejected the norms and canons of so-called classicism and associated themselves with modernist and anti-traditional literatures their focus on the formal aspects of literature (what Jakobson calls its "literaryness"<sup>28</sup>) represents a pure classicism. Or to put it the other way round, modern formalism clarifies the values and methods of classicism which itself represents a formalist tradition.

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CHAPTER II

EUROPE & CHINA

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## EUROPE &amp; CHINA

Literature represents an imminent complex of historical and formal facts. The primary task of criticism is to articulate this intricate reality. In Europe, Aristotle and, in China, Liu were the first critics to unambiguously and wholeheartedly attempt such. An examination and an evaluation of the Poetics and the Wenxin diaolong within the contexts of their respective traditions raises for each text fundamentally different questions or problems. These differences reflect the essentially different levels of cultural and historical self-consciousness realized in China and Europe since the seventeenth century. The kind, quality, and even quantity of critical information which each literature offers regarding its developments, forms, and ideas are radically different.<sup>29</sup> Chinese criticism - I am referring to all aspects of literary scholarship - even within its modern forms reflects only in a very limited sense the peculiarly self-critical or skeptical standards characteristic of modern European criticism. In comparison, it remains distinctly more traditional and hermetic; and its analyses and judgments are on the whole a loose consensus of traditional views. The hyper-critical methods and values brought about in Europe by the Reformation, Enlightenment, and modern science have barely affected the traditional and fundamentally uncritical values which still characterize Chinese criticism. Even Marxist criticism in

China today reveals the same type of arbitrary and idiosyncratic opinions which characterize criticism when it still represents an uncritical melange of social and cultural interests.

Every Culture develops a hermetic image of itself whose primary function is to portray the past in terms of the present or vice-versa. The focus is on a system of values or beliefs; the objectivity or validity of these beliefs is by definition not broached. They are beliefs and as such are not questioned. The fact that traditional opinions distort or do not represent historical reality accurately is within the tradition of little interest. For, reality exists only as an extension of values. The simple idea that the past is different from the present and has, as all facts have, an authority of its own represents a recent and European value. In a certain sense, one can argue that no tradition in isolation ever critically knows itself and that comparison is the sine-qua-non of all critical knowledge.

Such hermeticism was characteristic of Byzantine criticism until its end ca. 1453 and of European criticism until the modern period. Dante knew only in a very limited sense Virgil and Aristotle. Neither writers were in the modern sense critically available to him. Such a distinction between traditional and modern criticism is important to an

understanding of the peculiar problems the critic faces when interpreting the Wenxin diaolong. The problem is that the tradition itself, not simply the text, still contains fundamental ambiguities which have never been critically examined. To take a well known example - when one attempts to define what Confucius, Lu Ji, or Liu Xie mean when they define the essential nature of the Book of Odes with the phrase *si wu xie* 思無邪 although traditional critics consistently interpret it in the same moralistic manner almost every aspect of the phrase including both its syntax and the basic meanings of its words are open to real questions. These questions have never been fully examined.<sup>30</sup> The idea that Confucius's meaning might not agree with later Confucian moralism and both Lu Ji and Liu Xie might have understood the phrase in altogether different ways was in a sense unthinkable. This means the ambiguities of the text are often fundamental ambiguities also within the tradition itself. The critic is faced with not simply explaining a particular argument but with sorting out a whole history.

This is not the case with the Poetics. The questions or problems the text raise are usually peculiar to its argument i.e. we know what Plato meant by mimesis and the general usage of the term in the fourth century B.C. but Aristotle's argument raises particular questions of nuance or connotation that need to be clarified. Coming from a modern European

perspective the critic can not help but be struck by the essentially a-historical and un-analytical values prevalent even today within Chinese criticism.

Traditional criticism in all cultures tends to invert the critical relation of text, author, and tradition. The habit is to interpret the text in terms of the general assumptions made about the author and to characterize the author in terms of the even more general assumptions made about the tradition i.e. to interpret what is most particular and most knowable by what is most general and least knowable. This has been the general fate of Liu's treatise. The assumption is that the values and beliefs of the tradition are known and understood; the text is viewed merely as an expression of those beliefs. The idea that it or the peculiarities and anomalies of its arguments might significantly redefine our understanding of the author and of the critical tradition itself is not seriously considered. Though there have been periods of greater or lesser critical skepticism in China, such as the philological traditions of the Song (960-1279) and the Qing (1644-1911), the questions or doubts raised seldom went beyond those of authenticity or dating and almost never entered into the radical examination of meaning and values which has characterized modern European criticism since the Reformation. What else is meant by a traditional critic other than a critic who believes in traditional values and believes those values

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are in a sense without question and represent the tradition in all its aspects i.e. the tradition has never really changed and its values have always been the same. The fact is that Chinese aesthetic values have changed as much and as often from the time of Confucius to today as have those of Europe. Nothing changes in a tradition as quickly and as definitively as its actual aesthetics. By the Roman period, as is obvious from hellenistic copies of fifth and fourth century sculptures, Greeks rarely understood their own art and even more rarely could imitate its qualities. I do not doubt that those artists were as confident in their mis-understanding of the tradition as all traditional artists are. The same loss of refined critical appreciation is apparent in Chinese painting after the eighteenth century. It is imminently evident that "traditional" Chinese aesthetics as understood today only in a very limited sense can explain Ni Zan or Dong Qichang.<sup>31</sup> Though modern criticism with its hyper-skepticism often raises more questions than it can answer, nevertheless its radical analyses dissolve the simplistic and uncritical assumptions of traditionalism.

As we will see, because of the peculiar ambiguities of Chinese grammar and literary expression the universal tendency to invert the critical authority of the text and the tradition has at times created an almost insurmountable barrier to any accurate account of what the text says. It is not simply the

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need to see the present in terms of the past or vice versa which distinguishes traditional and modern criticism, but the precision or the critical nature of that equation. Surely the modern critic seeks to understand the present in terms of the past and vice versa, but he has learned through history to be extremely careful concerning the details of both. One line of what Confucius actually said has possibly more significance than all the generalities said about him over the last 2500 years. "When reading a book one has to keep the mind empty. When Confucius says a word, it is a word - and one should weigh it with an impartial mind allowing no trace of subjective imposition but simply follow its drift."<sup>32</sup> Though we know this is impossible Zhu Xi's (1130-1200) recommendation represents a deep respect for the real tradition. He was acutely aware of the distortions within traditional criticism.

To interpret and to evaluate the *Poetics* and the *Wenxin diaolong* within their respective cultures means to define the logic of each text - what might be called its ideology - and to locate that logic, both its nature and its evolution, within its own tradition. Obviously, if the critical elements of the tradition are ambiguously articulated the first task is to sort out those ambiguities. Every culture has an ideological bias which tends to distort or ignore individual differences and this is no less true for Europe than for

China; but given the essential differences of history and critical awareness within Europe and China the problems of interpreting and evaluating the Wenxin diaolong are far more complex and problematic than those of the Poetics. To move beyond the ideological bias of a tradition requires a simultaneous re-evaluation of its texts and values. Because such an analysis of Aristotle's tradition is less problematic I will begin by examining the Poetics and later use those observations to focus the analysis of the Wenxin diaolong. The result is that the bulk of the dissertation will address the fundamental questions raised by Liu's treatise but do so in terms of the critical aspects of Aristotle's treatise. It is my thesis that both critics perfect within their respective traditions the classical argument and therefore raise many of the same questions and share many of the same methods.

## CHAPTER III

### THE POETICS - CLASSICISM, ROMANTICISM, & DIDACTICISM

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## THE POETICS & CLASSICISM

1.1) Concerning poetry itself and its species - what nature each has, and how the plot should be structured if the composition is to be aesthetically effective - moreover, out of how many and what kinds of elements is it comprised, and concerning other matters which pertain to the same discipline - let us begin the analysis in the natural order with its first principles.<sup>33</sup>

Aristotle begins the *Poetics* by setting out in the first three words the major premise of classicism i.e. the assertion that poetry is a formal reality with its own genus and species, and has its own essence and principles. As Else<sup>34</sup> points out it is the directness and the self confidence of the "itself" (καὶ τὸ) which is striking. The reflexive pronoun, as in Plato, identifies those realities which have an essence or an autonomous nature. It is generally recognized that the *Poetics* represents Aristotle's critical response to Plato's attack on literature's integrity. The assertion that literature represents a coherent genus provides a definitive reply to Plato's questions and doubts concerning its identity. The establishment of such a formal identity is a necessary preliminary to any critical analysis of literature's forms. It is obvious that one can not talk about literary modes,

principles, and elements without identifying literature's formal or autonomous nature. When Plato questions such and denies literature any coherent principles he effectively equates the literary discourse with the non-literary discourse or treats literature as simply a stylized non-literary discourse: "If one takes from any poetry the music, rhythm, and meter what else remains but a common discourse" (Gorgias<sup>35</sup>). The argument represents an old fallacy deriving from Gorgias and the rhetorical tradition. Aristotle clearly recognizes the fallacy for what it is and systematically demonstrates that the literary discourse is not simply a matter of adding music, rhythm, and meter to a non-literary discourse. Its logic, subject, and function are fundamentally different, and its forms do not represent accidental but rather essential elements of its meaning.

I am not concerned here with the real questions concerning the kind and degree of autonomy Aristotle grants literature but with the simple fact he treats literature as a formal entity which can be analyzed. When one considers how often even today the critic denies literature this status or fails to realize its critical implications the clarity and sophistication of Aristotle's argument is remarkable. He sets aside the questions of morality or only raises them to the degree they effect aesthetic form.

As we will see later with Liu, this does not mean that he does not recognize that - at a certain level of abstraction - aesthetics, ethics, and politics are interrelated. But it does mean that, in contrast to Plato, he insists that an evaluation of literature, i.e. the discrimination of good and bad literature, involves an aesthetic not a moral judgement. This represents an important critical distinction. The difference between defining the moral force of literature within its aesthetic terms versus defining that force within moral terms represents the difference between treating literature as a literary discourse versus treating it as a moral discourse. Few critics even today can keep their eyes on the ball. If literature has a formal identity then its elements and principles are essentially literary elements and principles conforming to certain aesthetic values. Literary excellence therefore is - Aristotle argues - a matter of the relationship of the parts to the whole or the composition.

In the simplest of terms, Aristotle responds to Plato's questions concerning the essential subject of art, by pointing out that the subject is art itself i.e. poetry, music, or painting per se. This does not mean, as is often misunderstood, that the definition of a poem as a poem does not include non-poetic realities such as medicine, ethics, war etc.. The definition of poetry can include any and all realities but it includes such on its own terms i.e. an

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ethical discourse within a poem represents primarily a type of literary discourse and secondarily an ethical discourse. When Homer talks medicine he is experimenting with certain forms of literary realism. He is not despite what Plato argues trying to compose a medical discourse.

Aristotle critiques a poetic tradition characterized by a significant amount of dramatic details particularly details of time and action. Nonetheless, he recognizes that it is the poetics which stipulate or determine the dramatic details and not the reverse. A poem which includes the moral discourse within its poetics is no more a moral discourse than a painting which includes within its aesthetics natural form is an illustration. For, the essential subject of a painting of a horse versus an illustration of the same is not the horse but rather the "painting of a horse". Later we will see that Aristotle distinguishes precisely these two ideas when he discusses mimesis.

To clarify the precise nature of Aristotle's response to Plato's assertion that poetry represents essentially a non poetic discourse - "Poetry is essentially a kind of public speech."<sup>36</sup> - it is necessary to define both arguments within the larger framework of critical thought which is common to both China and Europe. When set within this context it is apparent that the two arguments (Plato's & Aristotle's)

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represent paradigms of two essentially different types of criticism and as such can be used to clarify important aspects of Chinese criticism. As pointed out above the European critical tradition is today, in a certain sense, more knowable than is the Chinese.

#### CLASSICISM - DIDACTICISM - ROMANTICISM

Criticism in both cultures can be divided in the largest sense into three types of arguments. The divisions conform more or less to the common categories of classical, didactic, and romantic criticism. Obviously, criticism has been and can be divided into many other types but these three arguments isolate the three possible ways of defining literature's identity i.e. 1) the literary discourse is essentially different from the non-literary discourse and therefore has its own principles and elements which can be formally and analytically defined; 2) the literary discourse is only accidentally different from the non-literary discourse and therefore can be treated and evaluated as such; 3) the literary discourse being essentially different from the non literary discourse and therefore fundamentally irrational can only be poetically expressed. Though one can intellectually isolate these three arguments in actual criticism they are seldom if ever found as such. Most critics combine elements of all three perspectives into a critical or not so critical

synthesis. This is particularly true of romanticism which - as I define it - never exists in pure form. The critic as critic must recognize to some degree the formal aspects of literature - possibly Croce came closest in theory to pure romanticism.

Classicism articulates the formal identity of literature within the terms of its own values, structures, and history. In modern structuralist terms classicism focuses on literature's literariness. Though it distinguishes the literary from the non-literary discourse it is a rationalist tradition and recognizes that language forms a common base for both; therefore it argues that literature's apparent irrationality is only true if viewed from the perspective of non-literary logic. In a certain very real and critical sense the kind and quality of classicism realized within each culture determines or measures the degree to which that tradition has articulated its own literature. Every culture is limited in its own self-knowledge; or the knowledge each tradition has of its own literature remains to some degree hermetic. As pointed out above, the critical implications of classicism have yet in China or in Europe to be fully examined. Since classicism represents that criticism which deals most critically with the idea of literature it is in a sense the heart of all critical thought. Both didacticism and romanticism must, to some degree, recognize literature's

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formal identity - even Plato admits there is something there (in literature) he does not understand. One can view didacticism and romanticism as particular deviations which use some of its principles and contradict others.

Didacticism contradicts the classical principle that the literary discourse is essentially different from the non-literary discourse arguing that the differences are merely accidental, and if literature is stripped of these accidents it represents essentially a common discourse. The didactic critic considers literary form to be ornament meant simply to make the non-literary discourse more persuasive or pleasing. The focus is on the discourse as an argument. Behind almost all didacticism there lies an essentially positivistic argument which denies art its autonomy. Such positivism is usually opportunistic or seldom critically consistent. The didactic critic normally does not seek to deny literature its significance; he wants simply to delimit that significance. It is also important to recognize that although didacticism is normally moralistic this is not necessarily the case - viz. Marxist didacticism. When Plato has Ion argue that the Homeric poems teach horsemanship or the military arts Ion is equating elements of the poetic discourse with their corresponding disciplines. He is arguing that because the poem includes aspects of a military discourse it therefore represents a military discourse ignoring the fact that within the poem such

details are simply elements of a literary style involving a type of detailed realism. Any interpretation of literature which equates elements of the literary discourse with non-literary discourses whether those discourses be moral, political, or technical represents a didactic interpretation. On the other hand, to argue that literature can include within the terms of its literariness real moral or political values does not involve didacticism any more than to argue that literature has a moral or political effect if that effect is defined within the terms of its literariness. An obvious case is the argument that music has a moral or social effect does not mean that one equates a musical composition with a moral or political discourse. There exists, as we will see, considerable critical confusion over this issue. If literature and music have a moral effect the critical question is what is the precise nature of that effect, or how are the aesthetic nature of music and literature and the judgmental nature of morality related i.e. how does literary understanding relate to moral understanding. The relation obviously does not involve a simple equation but it could involve a type of adequation<sup>37</sup>. A critical tradition tolerates a loose didacticism only to the degree that it has not articulated literature's identity.

Romanticism as a fundamental type of critical thought is the hardest to define. Even the title lacks in comparison to

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classicism and didacticism any simple meaning. One might equally well call it "impressionism", "irrationalism", "sublimeism" etc. In contrast to the didactic critic the romantic critic recognizes and in a sense focuses on the essential difference between the literary and the non-literary discourse, but in contrast to classical critic he denies that that difference can be analytically articulated. The romantic critic effectively ignores the fact that the literary discourse is a kind of discourse and focuses strictly on its psychological aspects - particularly the psychology of inspiration and the psychological effects of beauty. It is the essentially a-rational or irrational nature of the arguments which characterizes romanticism. The romantic critic is more concerned with describing in purely impressionistic terms the psychology of the writer or the reader than he is with the formal details of the composition. To this degree romanticism shares a similar bias with didacticism. Both criticisms tend to focus on the writer and the meaning of the discourse as if they, and not the discourse itself, represent the composition's formal reality. Plato is always talking about the poet and seldom about poetry. One might argue that romanticism represents an existential tradition which focuses on the experience of art as distinct from its formal reality, and emphasizes - in modern formalist jargon - its "strangeness". Romanticism with its fundamentally hermetic arguments is pervasive throughout both Chinese and European

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traditional criticism.

The traditional critic whether Boileau or Lu Ji combine classical, romantic, and didactic arguments indiscriminately. He is seldom concerned with or aware of the contradictions in his logic. What is most peculiar to Liu and Aristotle is that they insist that criticism can be both comprehensive and coherent; each systematically avoids the fallacies of didacticism and the hyperboles of romanticism. Discussing earlier attempts to deal with the tricky problem of the critical relation between the Li sao and the Book of Odes Liu argues "One can say that they (the earlier critics) looked but didn't go to the heart of the matter - that they played about but didn't analyze."<sup>38</sup> As pointed out above such seriousness of purpose and method seems to derive, in part, from the critical nature of the problems or contradictions each critic faced. Both critics were imminently aware of the fact that loose and uncritical traditional thought threatened the very existence of the tradition. The history of how such formal analyses of literature lose their critical force through a process of over and uncritical familiarization requires a separate dissertation.

#### PLATO & THE DIDACTIC-ROMANTIC ARGUMENT

Part of the cultural changes which had taken place in

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Greece by Aristotle's time was the emergence and perfection of the dialectical discourse. The dialectical discourse focuses the logical aspects of language articulating the nature and questions of predication and identity. The Socratic argument stands to the evolution of this discourse as the Aeschylian plays stand to the articulation and perfection of Athenian tragedy. It appears that the dialectical discourse developed in close relation to criticism of the Homeric texts - the earliest logicians such as Xenophanes were Homeric critics. The same curious relation between logic and literature is found within the early Confucian tradition where within the context of Confucian criticism a short lived dialectical and positivist tradition developed during the Warring States and early Han periods (400-100 B.C.). Literature obviously raises fundamental questions concerning the relationship of language to reality or that of literal and metaphorical meaning, and it is the dialectical argument which first isolates the non-metaphorical or logical aspects of language from its metaphorical aspects. The dispute between literature and philosophy centers about these two dimensions of language i.e. metaphor & logic. The Socratic tradition focused the debate about the Greek words *mythos* (myth) and *logos* (logic) separating and contrasting the two terms (earlier the words had been synonymous), thereby sharply distinguishing logic from literature. Though Plato clearly recognizes literature's affective nature - he uses it himself

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- he gives to the dialectical discourse a clear hegemony on truth. The problem with his argument is that it portrays literature and logic as mutually exclusive discourses which are competing for the same type of meaning or truth. He describes the literary discourse as, at best, a primitive form of logical discourse appropriate for children and the ignorant but devoid of any rational of its own. Aristotle was the first critic to recognize that these two types of discourses are not mutually exclusive and they represent essentially different types of meaning - each having its own rational. A critical discussion of Aristotle's divisions of knowledge into the "practical", the "theoretic", and the "aesthetic"<sup>39</sup> goes well beyond the limits of this dissertation, but it is important to recognize that the fundamental ambiguity surrounding the verity of the literary discourse which plagues all didactic criticism lies in the fact that its (literature's) verity is distinct in essence and function from those of both the "practical" and the "theoretic"(i.e.logical) discourse, and, therefore, its forms and principles are different i.e. literature can not be analyzed or evaluated on their terms.

The contrast in Plato's arguments between mythos as not-truth and logos as truth is fundamental to his analysis of literature, but equally so is his contrast between poetry as a mousike texne and as a poetike texne. Paul Vicaire in a comprehensive examination of Plato's terms designating poetry

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and the poet demonstrates that Plato uses throughout the dialogues these contrasting terms and their derivatives almost equally but separately.<sup>40</sup> When one examines these different usages it is apparent they represent two fundamentally different arguments. Under the title *mousike texne*, if Plato does not always praise and admire poetry he at least never contradicts or condemns it. But, under the title *poetike texne*, he systematically attacks the coherency of its "arguments" (*logoi*) and the legitimacy of its authority. Within the terms of the first title he develops a typical romantic argument focusing on the irrational or divine aspects of poetic inspiration; within the terms of the second he develops a typical didactic argument treating the literary discourse as if it were a logical or practical discourse. There is I believe a relation between these two apparently contradictory arguments which points to an important common premise shared by both romanticism and didacticism.

Plato presents the essentials of his analysis of literature in three dialogues - the *Ion*, the *Gorgias*, and the *Republic*. Each dialogue presents different aspects of his definition of literature. In the *Ion* he deals most directly with the idea or questions of poetry's identity "*Τὸ ἄριστον ἔστιν ἢ τὸ ἄλλο* ? " (To what extent does poetry in general exist or not?)<sup>41</sup> Socrates asks Ion after the latter has admitted he understands Homer but not Hesiod. Within the

dialogue Plato defines poetry in terms of the rhapsodist or equates it with rhapsody. In the *Gorgias* he defines poetry as a mode of demagoguery equating the poetic discourse with the rhetorical discourse. And, finally in the *Republic* he analyzes poetry from the perspective of its recitation delineating the modes of recitation permissible within the ideal state.

Throughout all three arguments there is a fundamental confusion between the poem as a poem and its recitation. When Plato in the *Republic* divides poetry into a narrative and a mimetic mode he is not analyzing literary point of view or voice but rather the act of recitation itself.<sup>42</sup> Poetry is treated as equivalent to the dramatic act of the poet (rhapsodist) speaking - either in his own voice or imitating the voice of another. Aristotle carefully distinguishes tragedy from its performance (i.e. poetry from its recitation) pointing out that its formal nature is independent of any performance.<sup>43</sup> The real distinction between direct and indirect discourse is not a matter of whether the poet as rhapsodist is speaking in his own voice or in the voice of another. In the *Iliad* when Achilles speaks it is Achilles who speaks. Homer as poet only speaks in his own voice when within the poem he refers to his own person or perceptions - which as Aristotle points out he seldom does - otherwise he is invisible. The recitation of the poem is, in fact, only accidental to the poem. Aristotle even goes one step farther

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when he insists that it is accidental to the writer that he or she is Homer or Sapho i.e. it is literature which qualifies the writer not the writer which qualifies literature.<sup>44</sup> Even when one talks of individual styles the differences are essentially literary differences i.e. they are differences deriving from the writer as writer.

Aristotle's isolation of the play, the performance, and the playwright is critical to literature's identity. In contrast, Plato's argument strips the poem of any identity beyond that of its recitation. He either does not recognize or he suppresses the distinction between the poem as a literary discourse and the poem as a recitation. All this involves a confusion between the poet as poet, the poet as rhapsodist (if that be the case), and the poet as individual, which is common to both romantic and didactic arguments.

Though differently, both romanticism and didacticism define literature in terms of the writer as an individual - romanticism in terms of his inspiration and sublimity, and didacticism in terms of his doctrines or social values. Both criticisms ignore the formal nature of the composition itself. It is not an accident that in both Chinese and European traditional criticism didacticism and romanticism are often closely associated. Longinus (ca. 250 A.D.) and Lu Ji (ca. 300 A.D.) indulge in both.

The logic of Plato's reasoning as it moves from a romantic to a didactic perspective reveals the critical relation between the two arguments. In the *Ion* Plato takes up the question as to the kind of knowledge the poet-rhapsodist has and the way he knows it. The unexamined assumption in the argument is that Ion the rhapsodist knows Homer, or what he knows and how he knows it is essentially what and how Homer the poet knows. The fallacy is that poetry equals rhapsody. After getting Ion to admit that though he "knows" Homer he has no knowledge of Hesiod and therefore he has no general knowledge of poetry Socrates responds:

I will tell you, Ion, what I think this means. As I said, what you have concerning Homer is not a formal art, but rather there is a divine power which moves you just as the power in the stone which Euripides calls a magnet, commonly called a heracleia. This stone not only attracts iron rings but imparts the same power to the rings themselves so they can do the same. And, just like the magnet they attract other rings so that a long chain is formed of iron rings suspended one from the other, throughout which the power of the magnet adheres. Thus the Muse first makes poets divinely inspired and through them a long chain of inspiration is

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concocted. For all good epic poets compose not by a formal art but rather they are inspired and possessed, and thereby they utter their excellent poems. So it is also with good lyric poets- just as the corybantes are not in their senses when they dance so lyric poets are not in their senses when they compose their excellent lyric songs. No, once they launch into harmony and rhythm they are seized by a bacchic frenzy and like the bachantes being possessed they draw honey and milk from the river. They are out of their senses. So the poet's psyche works just as they tells us . For they tell us, don't they, that their melodies are gathered from rills that run with honey, out of the glens and the gardens of the Muses, and they bring them as bees do honey, flying just like the bees. And, they tell us the truth. For a poet is a light and winged thing, and divine and can not otherwise compose except when he is divinely inspired or out of his senses, and he no longer has his mind. Whenever he is in possession of his senses it is impossible for a man to compose poems or to chant prophecies. Therefore since they compose without any formal art when they discourse beautifully on those many things concerning the affairs of men, just as you do about Homer, but do it rather by divine lot, each is only

able to do that well which the Muse compels him to do - one makes dithyrambs another panegyrics, another choral odes, another epics, and another iambs- each being inept in the other matters. They obviously do not discourse on these matters with any formal art but rather by a divine power. For if they were able to discourse on any one in a formal sense they could equally well discourse on all the others. Then it is that the god deprives them of their minds and uses them as servants along with the soothsayers and seers so that we might know when we listen to them that it is not they, whose senses are departed, who discourse in such a worthy manner but the god himself who discourses. And through them the god speaks to us. The most convincing evidence for this is Tynnichus of Chalcis. He never composed a single poem worth recalling save that song of praise which everyone repeats - well nigh the finest of all lyric poems and absolutely as he says an "invention of the Muses". And by this example it seems the god would show us, in case we doubt, that such lovely poems are not composed by men but are divine and from the gods. The poets are nothing but interpreters of the gods, each one being possessed by a divinity to whom he is in bondage. And to prove this the god sang on purpose the loveliest of all

lyrics through the most miserable of poets. Isn't it so, Ion?<sup>45</sup>

Ion being the good romantic he is agrees wholeheartedly. The whole argument represents a most curious pastiche of didactic and romantic assumptions about the nature of poetry and the poet, and their soi-disant psychological attributes. One does not need to critique the accuracy of these attributes to see the fallacy of the argument. I call it the dramatic fallacy, which involves the fallacy of equating literature with its subject matter. It ignores the formal difference between what literature represents (its subject matter) and the literary discourse, and the difference between literature and the writer. But what is important here is the logic Plato uses to demonstrate that the rhapsodist-poet's knowledge is not a form of critical knowledge since he has no comprehensive knowledge and therefore no coherent principles. The argument reveals the relation between the romantic point of view which sees the poem as actually being what it represents and the didactic point of view which sees the poem as simply arguing what it represents. In both cases the critic ignores the formal identity of the poem as a re-presentation i.e. the love poem represents neither love nor a simple declaration of love. When Socrates seeks to define exactly what Ion knows and how he knows it he presents the poem's discourse as a set of non-poetic discourses.

The first step in the didactic argument is to isolate or abstract literature's content from its form thereby stripping it of its literary identity. This is precisely what Socrates does when he begins his argument with the question: *ἔστιν ἐν περὶ ἡντιθέτων ἡρῶος, τὴν αὐτὴν λέγειν* "Is there any point on which both Homer and Hesiod say the same thing?"<sup>46</sup>. He is abstracting Homer's and Hesiod's arguments from their poems. Later when Ion responds to Socrates' question whether he knows the art of warfare as a general knows or as a rhapsodist knows that he does not see any difference his response represents both a didactic and a romantic argument i.e. he treats the poem as if it actually represents warfare and therefore its discourses are military discourses. Plato is confusing the identity of the poem with the identity of its subject matter. Though he recognizes a difference between literary and non-literary discourses he does not consider that difference to represent a difference between two essentially different kinds of discourse but rather the accidental difference between the poet and the general. Again, the critical assumption throughout the argument is that the poetic discourse when stripped of its formalities is essentially a non-poetic discourse. The logical fallacy arises from the equivocal manner in which Plato asks the question *εἴτε καλῶς λέγει, ἔμπροσθεν εἴτε μὴ* "whether Homer discourses well or not?"<sup>47</sup>. As Aristotle indicates, the question has radically different meanings depending on whether

Homer is judged as "discoursing" as a poet or not. In the first case the question of excellency is a question of poetic excellence. In the second case both the reality and the standard of excellency would be different. Ion also answers equivocally when asked whether he or a horseman knows better how Homer speaks when he speaks about horses. He responds "the horseman"<sup>48</sup>. The critic should know better poetic excellence even poetic excellence dealing with horses. Ion confuses the poem with reality; Socrates confuses poetry with its subject matter. What the poet knows is poetry - nothing more and nothing less. In Homer's case this includes precise dramatic details - both medical and military.

It is in the *Gorgias* Plato develops in its most explicit form the argument that poetry is essentially a non-poetic discourse (logos). The details and nature of this argument are important to any critical definition of the didactic point of view for they reveal the logical elements which are common to both Chinese and European didacticism.

As is true of most of Plato's major logical premises the argument is only tangentially admitted. The dialogue does not broach directly the questions of poetry's identity but rather that of rhetoric. Poetry is treated only in passing and is classified as a mode of rhetoric (demegoria<sup>49</sup>). Such indirectness is characteristic of didacticism. Plato by-passes

literature's formal identity and through a set of reductive arguments focusing on the poem's content in isolation from its form transforms the poem into a set of non-literary discourses. Such a reductive transformation is particularly apparent in the *Gorgias* where Plato equates poetry (*poesis*) with technical or non-aesthetic fabrication (*ergasia*).<sup>50</sup> Though the argument is only implied, as Vicaire points out<sup>51</sup>, it represents a fundamental premise in his analysis of rhetoric-poetry and the technical arts.

Rhetoric-poetry, Plato argues, is concerned with the fabrication of discourses as clothe making (*imation ergasia*) is with the fabrication of clothe. Within these terms music becomes the discipline concerned with the fabrication of melodies, and all the arts are reduced to the same pragmatic level; the poet is treated as a craftsman and poetry as a routine. Rhetoric-poetry along with gymnastics, cookery, and cosmetics is classified as an empirical discipline. These disciplines, in contrast to the logical or theoretical disciplines (judicature, legislature, and medicine), lack a logical notion of the good and aim simply at gratification. As we will see later, Aristotle demonstrates that even philosophy represents a form of pleasure. The essentially positivistic nature of Plato's equation is apparent throughout the discourse. Logical-positivism curiously ignores the question of the nature of logic's appeal.

Plato's distinction is effectively a distinction between those disciplines which fabricate (make) something and those which administer. Ignoring the aesthetic nature of the literary discourse Plato places poetry among the crafts. The formal principles which distinguish making something in the practical sense from making something in the formal or aesthetic sense - as we distinguish construction from architecture - have disappeared. Within these terms art becomes entertainment or mere decoration aiming at a simplistic and ultimately senseless imitation of reality, in which painting is treated as illustration, and poetry as an unconscious and illogical if not depraved mode of logical discourse.

The real questions concerning the identity of rhetoric i.e. whether it represents as Aristotle argues a type of logical discourse (an enthymeme) or a type of literature - do not concern us here. What is important is Plato's reductive reasoning which equates poetry with rhetoric and rhetoric with gymnastics. Having equated *poesis* and *ergasia* and having shown in an analysis of rhetoric's content similar to that found in the *Ion* that because rhetoric lacks a logical notion of the good it therefore has no real principles and is, as a result, a purely practical discipline or routine he turns to poetry:

Soc. "What about that venerable and wonderful form of poetry called tragedy - what does it attempt or what is its aim? Is it as it seems to me simply to please the spectators, or does it struggle not to say something if that thing happens to be charming or pleasing but harmful, and to say or to sing it if it happens not to be charming but beneficial - regardless of the fact whether it will please or not? Which of these two things do you think tragedy attempts?"

Cal. "It is obvious Socrates that it aims more at pleasing or gratifying the spectators."

Soc. "Did we not already say that this represents flattery?"

Cal. "Yes indeed!"

Soc. "Now if one stripped poetry of its harmony, rhythm, and meter what is left but simple arguments?" (Note the plural - poetry for Plato is always a pastiche of arguments)

Cal. "Of necessity!"

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Soc. "And are not these arguments addressed to a crowd or the public?"

Cal. "I would say so."

Soc. "Therefore the poetic art is a form of demagoguery?"

Cal. "It appears so."

Soc. "It is therefore a demagogic rhetorical discourse, for does it not seem to you that it practices public speech among spectators?"

Cal. "It does."

Soc. "Now surely we have already discovered that that type of rhetorical discourse given before a public which includes women, children, and men, and slaves and freemen is precisely what we detest. For it represents simple flattery."<sup>52</sup>

The argument is both slippery and mean and built on a series of false syllogisms plus a highly ambiguous or uncritical notion of the good. Like most moralists Plato is oblivious of the fact that the whole argument could be turned

on its head by simply pointing out that his idea of the good represents a self gratifying notion. What is critically important is the way Plato outlines the didactic argument in all its essential aspects - 1) the literary discourse is essentially a non-literary discourse and therefore can be and should be judged in terms of our common sense notions of right and wrong or good and bad, and 2) the peculiarities of its form are only accidental and function simply "to gratify the audience". Literature is, in short, treated as entertainment. As in the romantic argument there is a certain verity in all this - such as the notion that art pleases - but, as is also true of romanticism, this verity is not critically examined.

One might ask in the case of Plato, given the general decline of literary understanding in the fourth century B.C., whether such a lack of understanding for the aesthetic nature of art represented a general condition of Greek culture at the time or was a stance peculiar to dialectical philosophy. The question whether in Greece and in China the dialectical or logical argument emerged within a critical debate over the nature of literature's verity and the inevitable isolation or discrimination of the logical and the metaphorical aspects of the literary discourse is important to an understanding of both the real relationship between literature and philosophy and the evolution of critical thought.

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There is evidence that this was (*mutatis mutandis*) the case, but the details of such an argument go well beyond the limits of the dissertation. From our point of view what is important is that in both cultures didacticism seems to represent an explicitly anti-literary argument. The little we know about the presocratic tradition indicates a close relation between the development of the dialectical and didactic arguments. Xenophanes of Colophon at the end of the sixth century B.C. along with Heraclitus and Pythagoras formulated a general moral and logical attack on literature.<sup>53</sup> The *Poetics* offers a critical response to such reductionism. Though in the case of China the evidence is even less precise nevertheless the transformation of the literary discourse into a moral discourse by the Qin and Han legalists clearly represented a factional argument and possibly the same kind of concerted attack on the autonomy and the integrity of literature as we find in Plato. Did the legalists (*fa jia* 法家) and the logicians (*ming jia* 名家) within the Confucian tradition launch a similar logical and moral attack on literature's autonomy, and were they, in a certain way, more successful in co-opting the literary discourse as a form of moral discourse? Legalism in China is characterized by similar types of reductionist or positivistic reasoning.

If this be the case, then one can ask to what degree do the Han didactic interpretations of the Odes found within the

Mao commentaries represent a real consensus within Chinese critical thought, and did there exist before the Wenxin diaolong a critical community which consciously and methodically rejected the didactic argument. Traditional Chinese literary history insists that there were no real critics of didacticism, but as we will later see the same is true of traditional European criticism which insists that there are no essential differences between Plato's and Aristotle's notions of mimesis.

There is also the more problematic question whether the critical significance of Aristotle's analysis of "poetry itself" was understood in his own time. Even today the real differences between Plato's and Aristotle's arguments are, on the whole, only partially understood. There has been and still is a persistent tendency within European criticism to platonize Aristotle's arguments which causes considerable confusion. Moreover, when one reads the Poetics closely one has the impression that all too often Aristotle himself understates his own argument or is excessively elliptical. This could represent simply an accident of survival - the Poetics being a fragment of a much larger work - but my own guess is that Aristotle was only partially aware of the critical implications of his arguments. One finds the same type of problems but even greater critical ambiguity when one examines the Wenxin diaolong where such ellipticalness of

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expression was considered both proper and essential (there were and still are good reasons within Chinese society to fear censure) to critical thought.

#### LONGINUS ON THE SUBLIME

The Poetics is unique. Aristotle does not once revert to the logical fallacies of didacticism (even his restrictions concerning violence on stage are aesthetic not moral objections), and he consciously avoids the hermetic hyperboles of romanticism. The ambiguities within the term "catharsis" derive more from the nature of the problem - to define the effects of tragedy in an objective and coherent term - than intentional vagueness. No other critic until the modern period looked so clearly and systematically at literature's formal nature. Aristotle's critical precision is particularly apparent if one compares the Poetics with the one other comprehensive and influential ancient European treatise on poetry: Longinus' On the Sublime. (250 A.D.?)<sup>54</sup>

Ever since Boileau's (1636-1711) translation and appreciation of Longinus' On the Sublime the treatise has had a curious and ambiguous influence on European criticism - both neoclassical and romantic.<sup>55</sup> This is due to certain fundamental ambiguities within the argument itself. These ambiguities have led even as careful a critic as Allen Tate

to see in its arguments the outlines or the beginnings of formalist criticism.<sup>56</sup> Tate argues that Longinus shifts "the center of critical interest...from the genetic and moral judgement to the aesthetic, from subject matter and the psychology of the author to the language of the work."<sup>57</sup> and asserts that the treatise represents "that critical moment when the affective vocabulary goes over into linguistic analysis, when instead of what the poem "feels like" we try to decide what it says"<sup>58</sup>, and, I would add, how it "says" it. Despite Tate's acumen - most of his argument is an attempt to clarify the principles of New Criticism - a close examination of Longinus' arguments, even recognizing that at least a third of the text is missing, clearly contradicts any assertion of either a consistent or a coherent classicism. What is the most curious aspect of Tate's argument is that he identifies in Longinus' criticism exactly what Aristotle had done five hundred years earlier but he is unable to recognize the same in the Poetics, in part because of the traditional confusions between Aristotle's and Plato's arguments.

On the Sublime represents a traditional melange of affective and effective arguments along with a considerable amount of romantic hyperbole. It finds, as we will see, its critical equivalent in Lu Ji's Wen fu (ca.300 A.D.). The only aspect of the treatise which reflects to some degree the kind of critical objectivity Tate alludes to is the attention

Longinus gives to the literary text per se - its actual wording. His analysis of the "concourse" of images in Sapho's *Phainetai Moi* is, as Tate points out, suggestive and seems to indicate a genuine sensitivity to literary form.<sup>59</sup> But there is nothing in the larger argument to indicate that Longinus understood the critical significance of such formalism. The analysis of Sapho's poem is presented as part of a general discussion of the means to make the rhetorical discourse sublime. Though Longinus distinguishes the rhetorical and the poetical discourses the distinction is itself ambiguous.

You should not forget that the image has different ends among the rhetoricians and among the poets. In poetry the aim is astonishment, in rhetorical discourses it is clarity, but both seek nevertheless the pathetic.<sup>60</sup>

Such affective qualifications ignore the real differences of function and form found in poetry and in rhetoric. We are effectively in Plato's world where poetry and rhetoric are treated as variants of the same reality. It is often forgotten that the subject of the treatise is the rhetorical discourse - specifically its dramatic and stylistic qualities. The essentially non-literary focus explains, I believe, the peculiar influence Longinus has had on both neo-classical and romantic criticism. As already pointed out, both criticisms

tend to focus on literature's purely affective and stylistic qualities. Though Longinus makes it clear from the very beginning that his treatise is an examination of sublimity in the rhetorical discourse, and he defines criticism as specifically the knowledge of such distinguishing the rhetorical discourse from both the poetic and historical discourses,<sup>61</sup> nevertheless he indiscriminately cites from poetry, history, and oratory when discussing sublimity as if they all simply represent various rhetorical modes. Both history and oratory have literary qualities, and one can read either as literature (I will discuss this later), but this does not mean that either history or oratory is literature or that one can define literature within their terms. Longinus fails to identify the elements of the literary discourse which essentially separate it, in form and meaning, from both oratory and history. As pointed out above, his distinctions are merely those of degree or quality - poetry is stranger, more surprising etc. The result is that poetry is reduced to the level of rhetoric i.e. a discourse characterized by certain literary qualities. This involves the same fallacy as would be found in an argument which defines painting within the terms of advertising based on the fact that advertising also has artistic qualities. A literary discourse is not simply a discourse which has literary qualities; those qualities represent its very essence.

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Longinus along with Plato treats the poem as a pastiche of rhetorical effects paying little or no attention to its aesthetic unity - cf. his curious use of the plural in *iliakois poiemasin* (the iliadic poems) as found in chapter IX.<sup>62</sup> The point of view is effectively the same as Plato's who portrays poetry as a curious form of rhetorical discourse. It is precisely such a fragmentation of the literary discourse which Aristotle rejects when he focuses on the structural aspects of the poem's unity.

Despite a vague didactic tone which runs throughout the treatise and its use of classical norms and concepts *On the Sublime* represents essentially a romantic argument. It focuses on the psychological effects of literature and describes those effects in essentially hyperbolic and hermetic terms. The concept of the sublime itself is un-analyzable and ambivalent containing both romantic and didactic implications. The focus on sublimity turns the critic's attention more to the vague psychological attributes of the poet than to the formal details of the poetry. As is also evident in conventional Chinese criticism, though Longinus uses formal and classical concepts to analyze the elements of style - and at times very perceptively - his arguments consistently fall back on loose affective concepts and values. Even if one selects the best of his stylistic analyses Longinus can not be characterized as coming "nearer to a comprehensive theory of literary form

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than any other ancient critic."<sup>63</sup> The fundamental ambiguities in his arguments generated within European criticism a considerable amount of confusion and did nothing to rid that criticism of the fallacies of didacticism or the uncritical exaggerations of romanticism. The critical writings of Coleridge and Boileau - who expressed admiration for the treatise - are riddled with both. Longinus is probably more responsible than any other critic in Europe - I don't believe anyone ever really took Plato's description seriously - for the exaggerated and senseless notions of poetic genius.

One only has to compare Longinus', Boileau's, and Coleridge's hyperboles and obscurities concerning literary genius with Aristotle's simple but accurate observation in chapter XXII that metaphor measures poetic genius because it measures the power to perceive similarities in dissimilars to see the difference between idle rhetoric and criticism.<sup>64</sup> Even Tate admits Aristotle's remark represents one of the most remarkable critical observations.<sup>65</sup> But, his assertion that "the larger conception of literature does not appear in the Poetics" or that Aristotle "only narrowly defines one kind of literature and that in its most limited sense"<sup>66</sup> are simply incorrect.

Criticism whether Chinese or European is always most critical when it deals with real and tangible literary

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questions. The Poetics articulates in precise and concrete terms the identity of tragedy both as a part of the larger reality of literature and as a part of art as a whole, and analyzes its elements and principles in terms which are critically coherent and sensible. What more can one ask of a critic? In sum, Aristotle lays down the theoretical and methodological base necessary to an objective treatment of literature, and he comes, in a certain sense, nearer to a comprehensive theory of literary form than any ancient critic.

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CHAPTER IV

THE WENXIN DIAOLONG & TRADITIONAL CHINESE CRITICISM

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## THE WENXIN DIAOLONG &amp; TRADITIONAL CRITICISM

To locate or to evaluate the Wenxin diaolong within its own critical tradition in a fashion similar to the above analysis of the Poetics requires a problematic and radical re-evaluation of the traditional interpretations. Neither Liu's arguments nor those of early Chinese criticism down to his time (ca. 520 A.D.) have been scrutinized with anything approaching the critical standards applied to Plato's and Aristotle's arguments. The precise nature of their logic and the real differences within their reasoning have barely been touched upon. Traditional and modern interpretations still leave the texts and their arguments within an ambiguity and vagueness of meaning which make a critical evaluation impossible.<sup>87</sup> Such loose or uncritical interpretations are characteristic of all traditions which have not radically re-evaluated their own beliefs. It is as if our knowledge and understanding of the Greek classics were still defined within the vague and uncritical values of late Byzantine scholarship.

By traditional interpretation I mean - it is probably necessary to repeat - an interpretation whose purpose is more a statement of creed or belief than a critical analysis of facts and thought. Such a critical analysis requires real skepticism not only regarding the details but also regarding the fundamental values of the tradition. Chinese scholarship

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periodically did question, as pointed out above, the details of the tradition such as dating and authenticity, but seldom if ever questioned its actual values - Zhu Xi and Neo-Confucianism being a possible exception.

Donald Holzman in a recent review of Confucian literary theories notes the difficulties and the fundamental differences between the two traditions:

When we look into ancient Chinese writings to seek for general remarks about the nature of literature...we come very near to being completely frustrated...whole volumes have been consecrated to the study of what the ancient Greeks and in particular Aristotle wrote about literature and their influence still persists. The historians of Chinese literary criticism, on the other hand, hardly devote a chapter to the entire ancient period (origins to the end of the Han) and, although it would be very wrong to say that the period has exerted no influence in later times, that influence has come more from general philosophical attitudes and an extremely small sampling of short statements, usually re-interpreted or simply misinterpreted, than from anything resembling literary theory as such.(the italics are mine)<sup>68</sup>

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Holzman's remarks are glib but in a certain way correct;<sup>69</sup> he fails to examine the real historical differences which brought about the fact that we have volumes dedicated to a discussion and an analysis of the criticism of the *Poetics* but we still lack in any language a single volume which discusses or analyzes the criticism of the *Wenxin* as such. We need to be reminded that it was only as a result of the fragile work of a tiny group of Italian critics in the fifteenth century that we still have the *Poetics* and much of Plato. Without that historical fluke Greek criticism today would look as fragmentary as does the Confucian tradition. On the other hand, we know that almost all the early Confucian writings on the *Book of Odes* have perished with hardly a trace. Holzman's point about the uncritical and on the whole banal interpretations of the few remarks which survive is accurate. But, when he goes on to argue or to explain why literary theory failed to develop in ancient China until after the end of the Han (200 A.D.) he is forgetting the fact that such an impression derives not from a lack of critical interest in or statements about literature within the early Confucian texts (the idea of literature is at the very heart of Confucius's thought) but simply from the inability of the traditional commentaries to deal critically with those ideas. One has only to think of the complex and subtle discussions of presocratic philosophy (viz. Heraclitus) where the problems

of fragmentation are far more real to realize that the questions concerning the apparent lack of anything resembling literary theory in early Confucian criticism arise more from a lack of critical literary debate within the traditional interpretations than any real lack of literary thought in the texts themselves. Holzman does not question sufficiently the tradition's evaluation of itself. His assertion that literary theory as such did not develop in ancient China until after the end of the Han is based on the vague and often simplistic interpretations of that criticism he himself criticizes. An examination of his argument is worth while because it reveals a common fallacy found among the interpretations of early Confucian criticism. Holzman argues:

Literary criticism failed to develop in ancient China because the ancient Chinese thinkers who talked about literature at all, the Confucianists, refused to look upon it as a separate entity, as something that could be considered in itself, divorced from morality, ritual, and politics...their view of the world...was extremely synthetic.<sup>70</sup>

The fallacy is equating such a synthetic view of literature with didacticism, or arguing that because Confucius insists that there is a relation between poetry and society in all its aspects, i.e. political, moral etc., he is

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therefore guilty of treating the literary discourse as a moral or political discourse. This is the case within Han didacticism which interpreted Confucius' remarks concerning the appreciation of music, poetry, and ritual and the understanding of social values in a didactic manner. However, for Confucius the relationship is more complex and does not represent a simple equation but rather a complex adequation or equivalency where the formal or aesthetic relations of sound, sense, and movement found in music, poetry, and ritual stand to the formal relations in society as the vehicle stands to its tenor in a metaphor. For Confucius the capacity to appreciate music, poetry, and ritual realizes in man an intellectual capacity to understand the formal relations within society. It is not a matter of art teaching moral values but of enlightening human sensibility.

#### HAN DIDACTICISM

James Liu in his analysis of the art of Chinese poetry divides Chinese criticism into four types - didacticism, expressionism, formalism, and spiritualism, and also places Confucian criticism through the Han in the didactic category -

"To the question what is poetry, most orthodox Confucians would reply: it is primarily a kind of moral instruction."<sup>71</sup> As far as I am aware no critic has challenged this characterization, but even a cursory review of what Confucius

actually says belies the assertion. I do not deny that the average Confucian of the Han or afterwards more than likely no more understood the difference between Confucius' synthetic view of poetry and didacticism than the average critic in Europe today understands the difference between Plato's and Aristotle's notions of mimesis. Nevertheless, it is necessary to critique the error to clarify the fact that Liu's formalist viewpoint is not as anti-traditional as the tradition would have us believe. It is precisely this ambiguity between a didacticism which insists that Odes actually are moral discourses, and, for the lack of a better term, Confucius' synthetic aestheticism which argues that there is a real relation between the appreciation and understanding of the formalities of the Odes, and the appreciation and understanding of the formalities of society which has caused endless confusion. Holzman correctly labels Confucius' thought synthetic. Aristotle also points out that poetic knowledge is, if not homologous, at least analogous to physical and philosophical knowledge. But his (Holzman's) loose association of such syntheticism with didacticism ignores the real and critical differences between the two points of view. I admit, however, that it is often the logical ambiguities inherent to syntheticism which lead to didacticism; there is a very thin line between saying "if you understand poetry you can understand society" and saying "poetry teaches social values". In a sense it does teach social values but not in the manner

the didactic critic thinks. When we examine Confucius's remarks on the Odes it is clear that they do not represent a didactic argument. He does not treat the Odes as moral discourses, though he does insist that a critical appreciation of them enlightens the reader and often provides coherent or sensible metaphors applicable to society.

The confusion is even more complex. The loose and uncritical characterization of Confucius criticism as didactic has effected our analysis and understanding of the little we have which could trace the development and transformation of Confucian criticism. James Liu cites, as conventional Chinese criticism often does, the first part of the "Da xu" - the preface to the Mao commentary of the Book of Odes - as a typical example of didactic criticism. The "Da xu" along with its commentaries which were later combined with the Mao text and its commentaries was traditionally attributed to Confucius' disciple Zi Xia but is considered today a compilation of the late Han (ca. 200 A.D.) most likely put together by the late Han scholar Wei Hong. Zhu Xi (1130-1204) reasoned that Wei had incorporated his own interpretations with earlier commentaries creating a pastiche of early and late arguments.<sup>72</sup> Even James Liu admits that different parts of the preface reveal expressionistic, formalistic, and didactic points of view.<sup>73</sup>

If one examines the logic of the whole preface it clearly splits into two distinct and contradictory arguments which can be characterized in terms of synthetic formalism and didacticism. This schism seems to reflect the transformation during the Han of Confucian criticism into a didactic argument. The didactic point of view found in the traditional commentaries which follow the preface contradict the formalist argument found at the beginning of the preface. As pointed out, Confucius focuses on the formal relation between the aesthetic affections (including poetry, music, and ritual) and the moral affections. It is not a question of poetry, music, ritual teaching morality. Obviously music teaches nothing in the strict didactic sense. Rather, he argues that all three arts realize a sensibility in man which allows him to perfect his nature in all its aspects.

As pointed out above the logical ambiguities inherent to such a synthetic view especially when exaggerated well beyond the modest limits of Confucius' statements tend to confuse the idea of such an affective force in poetry with simple didacticism. The difference between saying "poetry can teach you how to think" and saying "poetry teaches you what to think" represents precisely the logical shift found within the arguments of the "Da xu". This represents a shift from viewing the Odes as poetic and musical compositions to viewing them as moral discourses. The first argument of the preface though

it exaggerates poetry's efficacy as a formative force in man's nature and in society, nevertheless defines that efficacy strictly within the terms of the formal musical aspects of the Odes. The argument seems to reflect a tradition of formal criticism deriving from the courtly music of the early Zhou dynasty in which poetry and music were considered as more or less synonymous. The text reads:

D.X.1) The Odes (verse) represent a transformation of the "zhi" ("mind's image" or temperament). Within the mind it is "zhi" (temperament); set out as a discourse it becomes verse. The inner nature moves within the heart and then it is formed by the discourse (i.e. the inner nature is expressed by a formed discourse. "Formed by the the discourse" appears to refer to all aspects of poetic form particularly tonal prosody). If such a discourse is not adequate then one moans (intones) it ("it" refers to the "zhi" - the argument focuses on the transformation or expression of the inner nature or the temperament through a poetic discourse); if intoning it is not adequate one prolongs the singing (i.e sets it to a measure or melody); if setting it to a measure is not adequate one unconsciously gesticulates it, dances it, and taps it.(i.e. one expresses the "zhi" through verse, chant, song, and

dance). The inner nature is set out by vocal sounds (tones). When the vocal sounds realize an aesthetic form one calls it tonal prosody (literally the "tone" - see later discussion of Chinese prosody). The prosody of an ordered age is tranquil and gay because its government is harmonious. The prosody of a disordered age is bitter and sharp because its government is in conflict. The prosody of a ruined age is sad and reflective because its people are distressed.<sup>74</sup>

The critical focus is on the musical or prosodic aspects of the Odes as articulated by their sounds. The most striking aspect of the argument is the total lack of any consideration or analysis of content. The critic defines the expressive nature of the Odes entirely within the terms of their formal prosodic or tonal qualities. It is curious how often this fact is overlooked when the argument is cited as an example of Confucian didacticism. The extent to which the argument ignores content seems to reflect the peculiar formalism of the pre-Confucian tradition of courtly music where the Odes were treated as modes of music. I will later examine the earliest discussion of the Odes as found in the *Book of Historical Documents* where they are analyzed in strictly musical terms. Though Confucius carefully distinguishes music from poetry (this seems to represent an innovation on his part) he

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recognizes, as Aristotle does, that they comprise a common class of reality. Nevertheless, he never confuses the Odes with moral dogma. I don't think the obvious aversion Confucius shows to simplistic moral dogma has ever been sufficiently pointed out. Moral distinctions, he insists, are like aesthetic distinctions a matter of precise nuance. The preface continues:

D.X.2) Consequently to regulate the affirmative and the negative (success & failure), to move the heavens and the earth, and to affect the spirits above and below nothing approaches the Odes.<sup>75</sup>

The "consequently" seems to indicate that the following attributes derive from the musical aspects of the Odes discussed above. Though the assertion clearly represents a hyperbole it does not represent a didactic argument as James Liu and others have argued. Europe witnessed the same type of extreme or pseudo-formalism in Pythagoras, who discoursed on the relation between the musical modes and the cosmos, which idea later developed into the theory of the harmony of the spheres. Such exaggerations in the "Da xu" most likely reflect the pseudo-metaphysical arguments popular in the Han period which, as we will see, Liu attacks in his chapter on the Apocrypha. Confucius consciously avoids such hyperbole. Here ends the first argument. The preface continues with a far more

ambiguous point of view.

D.X.3) The former kings by means of the Odes made monogamy a norm, established filial piety, realized humane intercourse, beautified the culture, and transformed the customs. Consequently the Odes contain six elements; the first is called feng, the second is called fu, the third is called bi, the fourth is called xing, the fifth is called ya, and the sixth is called song.<sup>78</sup>

There is nothing within Confucius' remarks which supports such excessive claims. The problem is not simply exaggeration but the total ambiguity as to exactly how or in what way the Odes were supposed to have caused such radical changes in society. Did they represent a formal or an effective cause - was it the heightened awareness of reality i.e. the enlightenment brought about the acute aesthetic sensibility realized in the Odes as part of Zhou court music which transformed the society and its values, or did they persuade by their arguments? If one considers the minimal discursive qualities of the Odes the last option seems absurd. If the logic of the above derives directly from the preceding assertions concerning the power of the Odes to influence not only the human but also the divine realms it is their musical or formal nature which is being considered. This seems

reasonable given the conclusion of the argument which focuses on the six formal elements of the Ode i.e. it is by means of these six elements that the Odes establish, realize, transform etc.. Feng, ya, song represent modal divisions found in the Book of Odes. It is not clear whether they were originally poetic or strictly musical modes. The terms seem to have signified respectively "airs", "elegancia", and "figures" (in the dance sense). Feng and ya later came to also signify respectively literary "voice" and "elegance". The three other elements fu, bi, xing represent rhetorical figures - respectively "description", "analogous metaphor", and "paralogous metaphor". The three figures distinguish that aspect of the poetic discourse which presents the subject or the action of the poem (fu) and those which present something other (bi & xing).<sup>77</sup>

These six principles appear to reflect the critical milieu of the early Zhou court within which a tradition of classical music was perfected. They reveal a level of theoretical sophistication which belies any assertion that China lacked "anything resembling literary theory" before the end of the Han. As critical concepts they represent the same degree of abstraction as is found within Aristotle's six elements of tragedy - plot, character, diction, thought, spectacle, and music. One can not develop as analytical a definition of literary form without raising the essential

questions concerning literature's identity. For, before the critic can articulate the elements common to literature he must have articulated its formal identity. The critical attention Confucius gives to the Book of Odes and his assertion that its primary virtue lies within the trope xing (the paralogous metaphor) suggests more than casual literary reflection. It appears, therefore, that early Confucian criticism was characterized by a sophisticated level of literary formalism.

Down to this point the argument has focused exclusively on the formal qualities of the Odes ignoring the idea of content but here the critical perspective changes. With little or no transition this formal point of view is transformed into a didactic point of view. The argument now isolates out the idea of content as a moral discourse and focuses exclusively on it. In an obviously forced and un-historical manner, the three modal titles - feng, ya, song - are interpreted according to their supposed moral and historical content. Feng is given the meaning "to influence", ya "to correct", and song "to praise"; Thereby all three terms are transformed into moral arguments. The preface from this point on shifts the focus from the formal musical aspects of the Odes to their content and treats the content in strictly didactic terms. The first part of the interpretation of feng, ya, and song, reads:

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D.X.4) Superiors by means of the feng transform their inferiors, and inferiors by means of the feng satirize their superiors (the word feng meaning "wind" contains both the connotations "to move" and "to satirize"). Though in principle formal nevertheless they (the feng) present cryptic councils. Pronouncing them one does not offend, hearing them one is effectively counseled. Therefore they are called feng."<sup>78</sup>

"Though in principle formal nevertheless..." represents the last passing nod to the formal meaning of feng as a musical air. The pseudo explications of feng, ya, and song represent a clear attempt to transform the original rhetorical or musical meanings of the terms into didactic meanings. By the early Han (ca 200 B.C.) the critical milieu of the Zhou court music had completely disappeared. Even by Confucius time (ca 500 B.C.) the classical music seems to have been more a memory than a living tradition. From this point on the preface treats the Odes predominately as historical and moral discourses. The interpretations represent some of the most bizarre examples of forced didactic readings in any tradition. The commentary on the first Ode offers a typical example. A translation of the Ode along with its commentary will provide a point of reference when discussing Confucius' remarks on the Odes.

## ODE ONE (Guan ju)

Piping, piping the ju jiu (osprey)  
Settle in the channel isle

Subtle and smart the young lady  
Our lord is nicely matched

Long and short the xing cai (duckweed)  
Right and left sort it

Subtle and smart the young lady  
Night and day sought her

Sought without success  
Night and day thought her

Longing - Longing  
Turned this way and that

Long and short the xing cai  
Right and left pick it

Subtle and smart the young lady  
Lute and zither attend her

Long and short the xing cai  
 Right and left cull it

Subtle and smart the young lady  
 Bells and drums delight her<sup>79</sup>

The Ode stripped of its music is no more than a ghost of its original formal qualities. Confucius talks of the overwhelming effect its finale had on him when he heard the music master of Zhi play it.<sup>80</sup> We have absolutely no idea what this sounded like but obviously it represented a musical event worth talking about. The Ode clearly represents an epithalamion which was probably culled from a long folk tradition of such and adapted to the demanding forms of the court musicians. What remains is the bare minimal discourse along with the harmonics of its four syllable line, rhymes, tonal patterns, and parallelisms. The content or meaning of the Ode is obviously nothing more than courtship in its most generic terms. The commentary in the "Xiao xu" reads:

X.X.1) The Guan ju represents the virtues of the imperial concubines. This is the beginning of the Airs (here understood as manners) by means of which one influences the empire and regulates husband and

wife therefore both village and state officials used it. *Airs* means to influence - that is to teach. By the *Airs* one moves someone and by teaching one transforms someone. Thus the *Guan ju* and the *Lin zhi* transform. They represent the influence of the emperor and therefore are ascribed to Duke Zhou.<sup>81</sup>

"To influence - that is to teach" represents in a nutshell the same fallacy found in Plato. The *Airs* possibly did influence and transform society in terms of their refined aesthetic forms; they do not represent moral discourses. This is followed by a specious didactic interpretation of the title *Zhou nan* for the first section of *Airs* which apparently refers to the area (south of Zhou) where the Odes were collected. After equally specious interpretations of the other section titles the commentary lists the lessons to be found in the first Ode. The assumption is that the poem is being sung by the harem of Duke Zhou.

X.X.2) Therefore the *Guan ju* expresses joy in the fact that a virtuous woman is the worthy mate of the lord, anxiety in introducing her to the other worthy ladies, no excessive desire to have sex, sorrow about the modest retiring lady, and thought about worthy and skilled ladies - all without any envy. These are the lessons of the *Guan ju*.<sup>82</sup>

The historical attribution and the moral allusions are absurd. Recently there has been some attempt to defend such arbitrariness from the point of view of de-constructionism, pointing out that both Derrida and traditional Marxist interpretations practice the same kind of mis-interpretation.<sup>83</sup> The most curious aspect of the commentary is its interpolation of the polygamous values of the imperial harem into a romantic folk lyric.

From a critical point of view it is significant that the interpretations are not allegorical (allegory represents a possible literary trope) but historical i.e. they are not based on analogies but on the supposed logic of an actual historical context. Even the allegorical interpretations of Homer do not treat the discourse as literal descriptions of reality. The fallacy is not simply that the critic treats the poetic discourse as a moral discourse but that he does so by regarding the Ode as a simple description of an historical event - Duke Zhou seeking another concubine.

The history of Han didacticism - the way and the manner it transformed Confucian criticism into a series of reductive arguments - contains obvious parallels with the same phenomena in Greece, but there are certain fundamental differences which derive from real differences in their respective poetics. The

lyric persona in China with its sense of the lyric moment, versus the invisible narrator in Europe where literature is seen as fiction, creates a pervasive confusion between historical reality and the reality of the poem. The history of such is complex and requires a scrutiny which goes well beyond the limits of the dissertation.<sup>84</sup>

The traditional commentary's focus on content clearly reflects the effects of the radical separation of music and poetry which had already begun in Confucius' time. By the Han period the musical milieu of the Zhou court had disappeared and its aesthetics had been forgotten. An articulate lyric voice first emerges in China just before the Han with Qu Yuan (340?-278 B.C.) and Song Yu (ca. 300 B.C.). During the Han their compositions supplemented by others of a similar style were collected together by Liu Xiang (77-6 B.C.) in an anthology entitled *The Songs of the South* or the *Chu ci* (Chu is the area of the Huai and Yangzi rivers). Later this text was edited and annotated by Wang I (ca 150 A.D.). The collection along with the "Nineteen Ancient Poems" (the earliest examples of the *gu shi* or personal lyric) effectively created a canon for the new poetics of the later Han and Six Dynasties periods.<sup>85</sup> The transformation in poetics realized by Qu Yuan and Song Yu who were the first poets in China to articulate a self-conscious and coherent lyric persona represents the same kind and degree of literary transformation

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as was realized by Aeschylus and Sophocles when they transformed the anonymous dithyramb into a coherent dramatic discourse.

Beginning with the poems of Qu Yuan and Song Yu followed by the rhapsodies of the Han Fu poets, and culminating in the personal lyrics of the late Han or Jian-an period (ca. 200 A.D.) Chinese poets perfected the content and form of the classical lyric - particularly the lyric persona and the poetics of the lyric moment. Hence, the focus within the Mao commentaries on the supposed individual voice and content of the Odes represents an anachronism. The Zhou musical tradition, despite its sophisticated aesthetics, had not articulated the poetic voice beyond the anonymous level common to all folk literature.<sup>86</sup>

As in Europe both the Homeric epic and Athenian tragedy evolved from the anonymous saga and dithyrambic traditions, also in China a coherent lyric discourse evolved in the late Han from the anonymous song compositions of the Zhou court. This does not mean that the Confucian Odes did not represent a complex and sophisticated aesthetics but that its aesthetics was essentially musical and not poetic, and that the formal elements of the lyric discourse were not fully realized or perfected until the Jian-an period. Consequently, Chinese criticism from the time of Confucius to the "Da xu" had

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evolved from an aesthetics focused on musical form to a poetics focused on the lyric discourse. This transformation was and still is the source of a considerable amount of confusion within traditional Chinese criticism.

The identity of poetry with music as practiced in the court music of the early Zhou created within traditional poetics certain fundamental ambiguities. Later we will see how Shen Yue (441-513 A.D.) - a critic who greatly influenced Liu Xie - critiques traditional prosodic terminology by pointing out that the analogies between musical tones and prosodic tones are both imprecise and inadequate. Shen correctly argues that a critical understanding of prosody requires an articulation of its phonetic elements. The assertion that music effects man's sensibility and can, in a sense, civilize a society - whether true or not - does not involve any critical confusion between music's aesthetic nature and morality's didactic nature, but the same assertion concerning poetry can and did create considerable confusion. The problems of describing and defining the nature of the poetic discourse are always difficult but they are particularly so within a lyric tradition, where often there is no apparent or clear distinction between the poet as an individual and the poetic discourse. Such ambiguity compounded with a tendency in Chinese criticism to describe form in terms of content or vice versa often makes it impossible to know exactly what the

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traditional critic has in mind.

To put Han didacticism into some kind of perspective - its arguments, once one accepts that poetry is and should be a moral discourse, are no more absurd than those of Plato. The fact that Plato feels it is necessary to effectively exclude poetry from his ideal state while the Han legalists simply co-opt its discourse seems to reveal in China a pervasive and fundamental confusion concerning the formal nature of the poetic discourse. Nevertheless, though it is argued that Zhu Xi (ca.1200) was the first critic to systematically challenge the traditional didactic interpretations of the Odes one suspects that critical readers of all ages must have recognized the interpretations for what they are, or at least ignored them. How else can one explain the persistent vitality of an explicitly non-didactic tradition of poetry from the late Han through the Tang in which poems often describe if not immoral at least a-moral acts of personal excess and eccentricity. As is true of all cultures, Chinese culture is fundamentally unaware of its own contradictions.

Before examining what Confucius says about the Odes and the essential formalism of his arguments it is necessary to review the little we know concerning pre-confucian criticism. The point of the examination is to further clarify the background of Confucian criticism and to survey in detail some

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of the critical terms which are vital to an understanding of Liu's arguments.

SHI (詩) & ZHI (志)

Though there are other isolated references to the Odes and its aesthetics in the earliest anthologies of historical and ritual documents, for our purpose it will suffice to examine what is considered the earliest and the most elaborate statement. The discussion represents part of a legendary conversation between emperor Shun and his director of music a certain Mr. Kuei which is recorded in the first part of the Shang shu or the Book of Historical Documents most likely written down sometime in the early Zhou period ca. 800 B.C..The legendary account records that after appointing a minister of instruction, a minister of foreign affairs and public order, a minister of public works, and a minister of religious ceremonies Shun appoints Kuei as minister of music saying:

Kuei, I appoint you to codify the music (典 dian - "to codify" implies that the music was written down as a canon), so as (the logical connection though only implied is obvious and important otherwise the relation between the music - the canon - and the teaching is ambiguous) to teach our sons to be just

yet humane, liberal yet precise, firm yet not heartless, simple yet not arrogant (this does not represent didacticism but rather a simple belief in the civilizing virtues of music. The four virtues can be paraphrased in aesthetic terms consistent with the Odes as "subtle precision" and "sophisticated simplicity".) Verse (詩 shi) sets in speech (言 yan) the mind's form (志 zhi). Song sets the discourse to a chant (measure). The vocal sounds (tones) follow the chant (measure). The musical pitches harmonize with the vocal sounds (tones). When the eight musical modes (Liu refers to the "seven notes" and "eight airs") are in perfect accord without any dissonance then the spirits and mankind are in harmony.<sup>87</sup>

Though there are, as is always the case with musical terminology, real problems regarding the technical meanings of many of the above terms it is obvious that the argument presents a strictly formal analysis of the musical aspects of the Odes (translated above as verse) - specifically the dynamics of setting speech to music. The critical significance of the analysis is that the Odes are presented as a part of a musical canon under the direction of the music master without any attention given to their discourse as such. The capacity to record the canon implies a system of musical

notation which in turn implies a sophisticated level of musical theory.

The section contains in its most famous and possibly earliest form the three word phrase which became the classic definition of poetry - "verse (shi) sets in speech (yan) the mind's form (zhi)." The problem with the phrase, as with most of the earliest Chinese aesthetic arguments, is that we are only sure of the significance of one of the three words (yan discourse) and even that remains ambiguous as to its precise meaning within the context. The traditional interpretations of the other two words (shi & zhi) respectively as "poetry" and "inner thoughts" given the strictly musical focus of the argument and the fact that a coherent lyric voice did not evolve in China until much later clearly represent anachronisms.<sup>88</sup>

Recently the histories and developments of both words have been examined in detail and extensively discussed - particularly in Chow Tse-tsung's article "The early History of the Chinese Word Shih (Poetry)" and in Zhu Zi-qing's comprehensive analysis of the phrase itself.<sup>89</sup> Zhu carefully examines the changes in meaning as the poetic tradition evolved during the Han and post Han periods. But, in both cases I don't believe sufficient attention has been given to the actual meanings of or questions surrounding the earliest

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readings of shi and zhi, and in the case of zhi to its complex of non-poetic meanings. Moreover, in their attempts to retrace the original significance of the two terms within the court music of the early Zhou neither critic has examined the essential difference between musical and poetic expression i.e. a musical composition does not represent a form of discourse and therefore in a strict sense can not express a "thought".

Both Chow and Zhu and modern philologist in general agree that the two words (shi & zhi) represent neologisms of the Zhou court and are cognates deriving from the common etymon zhi (止) which signifies a "foot" and is represented in its ancient graph by a foot apparently beating a rhythm (𠂔). In the case of shi such an etymology easily renders the meaning verse or metered discourse (pous - metrical foot - in Greek can also signify a verse), but how, in the case of zhi, the word came to mean intention, design, and scope, or more importantly what exactly did it signify within the court music of the early Zhou is not at all clear.

The critical tradition since the Han has generally interpreted the phrase as the equivalent of 詩所以盡人之志意 "By means of the Odes one expresses one's inner thoughts." But, as already pointed out, such an interpretation involves a fundamental anachronism. Holzman

ameliorates this by translating the phrase: "Poetry puts into words what we have in our hearts." But whether "what we have in our hearts" refers to a discursive thought or a musical mode i.e. whether the phrase focuses on an articulate lyric discourse or a musical mode, and whether shi in the context signifies the Ode or one of its prosodic elements needs to be examined.

It appears - as we will see later - that shi within its earliest appearances within the Odes does not signify the Ode as a whole but rather one of its formal elements. We have already seen that zhi in the first part of the "Da xu", which seems to reflect the formal aesthetics of the Zhou court, is treated as equally expressible in verse, song, and dance, or by simply tapping the feet i.e. it does not represent a discursive thought but rather a mood or temperament - what one might define as a mode of the heart. How else could one clap it, hum it, or tap it? Such a distinction might seem hyper but the difference between treating zhi as a discursive thought - as it is interpreted after the Han - or as a mode or temperament reflecting the strictly musical aspects of the Odes represents the critical difference between the anonymous aesthetics of the Zhou court and the personal poetics which evolved during and after the Han. If one translates the phrase: "verse sets in speech the moods (referring specifically to a canon of musical modes)" one avoids both the

above anachronism and gives the phrase a significance fitting its musical context.

Such an abstract or non-discursive interpretation of zhi seems to be exactly how Confucius understood the term when he uses it to express the undefinable but constant aspect of a person's nature i.e. his temperament. When asked what he thinks of the three fundamentally different priorities expressed by three of his disciples he says: "Surely, each has spoken his own temperament (zhi)."<sup>90</sup> Mencius (ca.300 B.C.) specifically uses the term to define the constant aspect of human nature which guides the emotions but which is not definable in words. In response to the question what does he think of Gao zi's positivist assertion "What can not be realized in discourse should not be sought in the mind" he says- "This is not true, for the inner temperament (zhi) is the guide of our emotions."<sup>91</sup> - the contrast between zhi and the emotions is significant. In Mencius the term takes on clearly metaphysical connotations. The full history of the transformation of Zhou aesthetics and its critical terminology within the Confucian tradition goes well beyond the limits of the dissertation.<sup>92</sup> But, it will serve us to review the evidence that both shi and zhi originally signified musical aspects of the Ode i.e. they did not signify or were not associated with its discourse per se.

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The rise of Han didacticism and the assertion that the ethical force of the Odes - as argued by Confucius - resides primarily within the supposed moral nature of their discourse independent of their musical or strictly formal aspects reflects the fundamental changes in aesthetics which took place during the Han when Chinese literature evolved from the impersonal aesthetics of the early Zhou to the personal or individual poetics of the late Han. As we will see in the *Wenxin diaolong*, *shi* (Ode) later becomes the generic term for poetry. But, poetry implies a coherent poetic discourse and an individual poetic voice neither of which were the case within the Confucian Odes. If we examine *shi*'s earliest appearances as found among the Odes themselves the term clearly did not signify the Ode as a whole but rather a formal or technical part of the Ode.

The common nouns within the Book of Odes used to signify Ode are "ge" (歌) meaning song and "song" (詠) meaning chant. Among the three readings in the anthology where the term "shi" is found, two of them imply that the term signified a musical or technical aspect of the Ode. The final stanza of ode 259 reads: "Ji Fu composed this chant (song). Its shi are eminently outstanding, and its feng (airs) are extremely fine."<sup>93</sup> The contrast between *shi* and *feng* suggests a contrast between meter and melody (air), but however we interpret the two terms they clearly represent formal elements of the Ode

distinct from the Ode itself. The formal nature of shi is even more clearly suggested at the end of 252 which reads: "The marked out shi are not many, but thereby one sets out the song (ge)." <sup>94</sup> The phrase "shi shi" 矢詩 (the marked out shi) is significant. Shi (矢) means an arrow or as a verb "to aim" or "to mark" - in the Li ji the expression "zhi shi" 志矢 signifies "the target" and "the arrow" of the archer. <sup>95</sup> Within the Ode it is traditionally taken to mean "to compose" or "to set out". The meaning appears to derive from the idea of marking as in the English phrases "to mark time" or "to mark a score". The musical significance seems obvious when one compares the phrase with a parallel phrase at the beginning of the Ode reading: "I come rambling, I come singing marking out its (the Ode's) tones (矢其音 shi qi yin)." <sup>96</sup> "Marking out its tones" clearly signifies setting out the Ode's prosody or melody. The parallel between the yin and the shi implies that within the context shi represents a prosodic element of the Ode - either a verse line or a stanza. If one translates shi as "verse", given the ambivalence in the English term between its meaning as a unit of meter and as a poem itself, one can well understand how a prosodic element of the Ode later came to signify the Ode itself. The phrase "the marked out verses are not many" suggests the unit is more likely a stanza or rhyme unit rather than an isolated line. This might seem a minor point but if one now translates Shun's phrase (as discussed above) "The verses (stanzas) set to a discourse the

temperaments.." the argument takes on a completely different focus and meaning than it was later given. Given the small amount of real evidence regarding both the terminology and concepts of Zhou aesthetics the argument remains only probable but yet imminently reasonable i.e. it explains what otherwise appears to be an anachronism.

I want to look more carefully at the origins and history of the term zhi (志). It represents a focal term in Chinese poetics and its shifts in meaning are critical to any understanding of the history of Chinese criticism. In traditional criticism today the term is often loosely associated with qing (情) or the discursive sentiments and emotions of the lyric poem, despite the fact that within the tradition the term is explicitly contrasted with such (viz. the above citation from Mencius). Because zhi in contrast to its cognate shi presents in its earliest appearances a complex of non-poetic meanings it provides more and more intricate evidence as to their original denotations. As noted above both shi and zhi derive from the common etymon zhi (止) originally represented by what appears to be a foot beating time. Within the earliest historical and ritualistic documents most likely dating from the early Zhou period the term which is rare signifies according to its context bull's-eye, mark, design, plan, composition, and temperament. As such it represents a technical term in archery, music, and ritual, and within the

context of the Odes (but not found in the Odes) it is used several times to signify besides temperament the poetic composition or mode itself. I believe a consistent etymology for these various usages can be traced from the etymon signifying "foot print" or "mark". The word developed within its respective disciplines the connotations mark, sign, focus, meter, to mark, to design, to compose, temperament, and mode.

Before discussing the non-poetic usages of the term I want to return to emperor Shun's phrase as it appears in a slightly different form in the Yue ji (Musical Records) section of the Li ji (Ritualistic Records). The argument reveals more precisely the formal musical significance of the term. After asserting that "The virtues represent the elements of man's nature and music represents the flowering (articulation) of the virtues" i.e. musical and human modes represent corresponding realities the text reads: "Metal, stone, string, and bamboo (i.e. the percussive, string, and wind instruments) are the instruments of music. As to verse discoursing its zhi, song measuring its melody, and dance repeating its figures - when each of the three (forms) are rooted (realized) in the mind then the musical instruments can accompany them."<sup>97</sup> i.e. zhi stands to verse as melody stands to song, and as figure stands to dance, and it is precisely the zhi of the verse, the melody of the song, and the figure of the dance which the instruments follow. It would be

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extremely difficult to interpret zhi as a discursive sentiment or thought - how would the instruments follow it? It appears to signify an aspect of the musical or prosodic qualities of the Odes.

Within the Zuo zhuan the historical commentary to Confucius' Spring & Autumn Annals, most likely composed after Confucius but before the Han, zhi is used a number of times to signify a poetic composition or mode - specifically the verse forms which characterize a particular region. The example of such found in Zuo zhuan (Zhao 6) is of particular interest for it uses the term in both senses i.e. the mind's image or temperament and a poetic mode. As reported in the Zuo zhuan when Han Qi of Jin asked two officials of Zheng each to recite an Ode so he might "know the temperament (zhi) of Zheng" and they had each recited respectively Odes eighty and eighty seven Han responds: "Your recitations do not exceed (violate) the modes (zhi) of Zheng."<sup>98</sup>

The fact that both shi and zhi represent cognates which were coined sometime in the early Zhou period (shi occurs only three times among the Odes and zhi not once, and neither character is found among the bone inscriptions), and in its earliest readings zhi represents a technical term in archery, music, and ritual seems to indicate that the terms were closely associated with and reflect the peculiar values and

theories of the early Zhou court i.e. all aspects of its sensibility. Exactly how zhi came to signify design, scope, intention, mode, and temperament involves a complex history which is only partially visible today.

There are two non-poetic usages which appear in the Book of Historical Documents and the Li ji (Ritual Records) which seem to outline some of that history. In two separate contexts in each text the term is used to signify the bull's-eye or mark in archery;<sup>99</sup> and in the Li ji section which describes Confucius burial the term is used to indicate the abstract red mark or sign painted on the outside of the coffin.<sup>100</sup> The meaning mark is still preserved in the modern derivative zhi (痣) signifying a mark or mole on the face. Though the history is complex and many aspects are still unclear a three fold evolution of meaning from the etymon signifying a foot marking the ground (1) to a mark or point of aim in archery,(2) to a verse (pous) or mode in poetry, and (3) to an abstract mark or sign in ritual seems imminently reasonable. In each case the term took on abstract connotations concerning the capacity of the mind to focus, to form, and to perceive significances. It eventually came to signify by Confucius' time the focus, form, and design of the mind per se i.e. its aim, mode, or image. It is interesting to note that the latin term "modus" from which we get mode as in "musical mode" derives from the same complex of meanings

i.e. to mark and to measure. It is also significant, as pointed out above, that within the Zhou musical tradition musical modes were closely associated with human temperaments or virtues - as they also were within the Greek tradition. All this obviously requires considerably more attention than I can give it here but I think the fundamental transformation of zhi's meaning which took place when the term moved from a musical tradition to a poetic tradition with an articulate lyric voice is evident. I have belabored this point to clarify the type and degree of ambiguities with which any analysis of Chinese critical terminology is faced, and to show that the particular formalism of Liu's argument, contrary to traditional opinion, reflects a long established tradition of such.

As we will see the connotations later critics give to the term "zhi" i.e. whether they treat it as signifying the mind's formal aspects, its moral aspects, or its emotional aspects, depends on their critical perspective i.e. whether it is classical, didactic, or romantic. Both shi and zhi by the Han period had lost any specific musical denotations and zhi had come to mean the abstract nature of the individual mind - even Confucius uses it to signify individual differences of temperament. Finally, the Shuo-wen jiezi the classical lexicon composed by Xu Shen ca. 100 A.D. tells us that shi means zhi, and that, just as shi represents the

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perfection (actualization) of zhi, so zhi represents the perfection (actualization) of the mind.<sup>101</sup> Therefore, I translate zhi "the mind's image" to emphasize both its abstract and aesthetic implications. But, as we will see, how each critic interprets this "image" reveals fundamental differences in critical perspective.

Returning to the questions of Confucius' poetics and its relation to the formalism found in the Wenxin diaolong we now have some sense of the fundamental ambiguities which plaque traditional Chinese criticism and have affected any appraisal of the few and extremely elliptical remarks attributed to Confucius concerning the Odes. There is a certain truth in Holzman's view that the extreme synthetism of Confucius' thought hampers any real criticism or at least, given his elliptical mode of expression, that it creates real ambiguities. Yet, it is also true that Confucius consistently treats the effective nature of the Odes as analogous to the effective natures of both music and ritual i.e. as both a formal and an aesthetic reality, and that he never equates the discourse of the Odes with moral dogma.

#### "XING (612a) WITH THE ODES"

Though Confucius insists on the ethical or civilizing force of the Odes he does not define that influence within the

terms of the moral discourse but rather he focuses on one of the three classical tropes - specifically xing. Analects VIII.8 quotes Confucius as saying: "xing with the Odes; establish with the rites; and perfect with the musical canon!"<sup>102</sup> And, in chapter XVII.9 he says: "Mes eleves, why do you not study the Odes? - with them you can xing, with them you can critically examine, with them you can practice grouping, with them you can practice criticism - bringing them together you act as a father; separating them out you act as a lord. You will increase your knowledge of the names of birds, animals, and plants."<sup>103</sup> Within the first argument xing seems to signify something close "to conceive" or "to imagine" i.e. there is a progressive degree of realization within the actions starting from conceiving to establishing to perfecting. Within the second argument it seems to signify something close "to imagine" or "to speculate" (Holzman translates- "to make metaphorical allusions". In both cases the sense derives from the idea of constructing an image. The meaning of xing as a literary term is as complex as the term zhi. Its basic meaning is "to raise up" or "to construct" but within the poetic tradition it represents a rhetorical figure signifying a contrived image, symbol, or metaphor - what I define as a paralogous metaphor. What is peculiar to both of Confucius' arguments is the total lack of any moralism. Nowhere does he say: "Learn the Odes for they teach proper moral values".

Though the meaning of xing within the poetic tradition is problematic its general sense can be explained in a manner which is consistent with Confucius' attention to both the metaphorical aspects of the Odes and the paralogical modes of cognition.<sup>104</sup> The most important fact is that the term carries absolutely no moral connotations. Despite what Holzman argues, if one examines all of Confucius' remarks concerning the Odes none imply that he thought the Odes teach by means of a moral discourse. After discussing the meaning of xing as a rhetorical figure I will examine Confucius' interpretations of the Odes.

It is generally agreed and has been argued through out the tradition that the rhetorical trope xing represents what is most peculiar to the form and structure of the Odes.<sup>105</sup> The word xing signifying "to lift up" or "to set out" evolved within the critical context of the Odes into a technical term signifying a thematic image or motif - possibly in origin a musical refrain - which normally begins the Ode and is repeated at regular intervals. The image is usually a description of a natural event such as the osprey crying in the first lines of Ode I or an oriole landing on a branch etc.. The image or action stands apart and is not integrated into the main action or situation of the Ode. As such it represents an isolated image which is juxtaposed to the proper

action of the discourse. Within the structural criticism of the Zhou court the term is contrasted with the two other rhetorical figures - the fu: the essential action or description of the discourse (though the action in Chinese lyric poetry seldom involves a plot in the European sense it does normally involve a coherent sense of time and place or dramatic moment), and the bi: a simile or metaphor. The trope distinguishes itself in terms of its disjunctive nature and as such represents the most problematic element within the Odes and the most radical of the three classical figures. In modern critical terms it can be defined as a type of paratactical image or a "metaphore essentielle" i.e. a metaphor without a stated tenor but with an implied tenor.<sup>106</sup> The xing's relationship to the main description (fu) is normally treated as that between a vehicle and a tenor, but the logic of that relation remains fundamentally ambiguous and by definition can not be reduced to a simple analogy or contiguity as is the case with the bi. The trope effectively breaks the logical or discursive continuity of the discourse and creates within that discourse a type of poetic discontinuity.

In sum, whether strictly a type of metaphor or not the xing's effect is fundamentally metaphorical in nature, and within traditional poetics it is closely associated with bi (metaphor-simile). Liu defines it as a hidden metaphor. My own

belief is that the trope essentially involves the juxtaposition of the two possible and often separate times within the lyric discourse i.e. the dramatic moment and the moment of composition when the poet draws from his immediate surroundings images which conjure up a feeling or a memory. As such the xing represents a quintessential metaphor which juxtaposes two separate realities and thereby creates an apparent unity. In terms of Samuel Johnson's definition of metaphor as a "kind of discordia concors, a combination of dissimilar images, or discovery of occult resemblance in things apparently unlike." the xing clearly emphasizes the discors or the dissimilarity as versus the concors or similarity. If one considers the normal metaphor (simile, metonymy etc) as a analogous image then the xing represents a paralogous image. I, therefore, call it a "paralogical metaphor".

In its disjunctive nature the xing is analogous to the literal or symbolic images which have characterized modern poetry since Rimbaud, and which have attracted the philosophical interest of modern critics, who, curiously enough, often see in the trope, as an element peculiar to the poetic discourse, something far more significant than a simple rhetorical device. Confucius' focus on the term as expressing the effective nature of the Odes I believe reflects his general attention to paralogical and analogical modes of

cognition. Holzman's refusal to see within Confucius' use of the term to define the effective nature of the Odes a clear focus on the paralogical aspects of both the trope itself and the Odes in general is unreasonable;<sup>107</sup> it reveals a fundamental blindness regarding the nature of Confucius' arguments. The term clearly carried for Confucius connotations of surmising or conjuring by inference and analogy. He often characterizes thought or intelligence precisely within these terms i.e. the capacity to perceive the affinities between otherwise unrelated realities. Therefore, the fact that he selects this element within the Odes as representing their most significant quality is imminently reasonable. Within both remarks the term xing, used in its verbal sense, can be understood as signifying "to conceive" or "to speculate" by analogy or inference i.e. "to imagine".

#### CONFUCIAN INTERPRETATIONS

Such an attention to the analogical and paralogical modes of thinking within the Odes is also apparent in Confucius' discussions of the meanings of lines taken from the Odes. In book I, chapter xv of the Analects when asked by Zi Gong his thoughts concerning the statement "To be poor but not to flatter - to be rich but not to be arrogant" Confucius responds: "O.K.; but not equal to "to be poor but cheerful - to be rich but just." Zi Gong replies: "The Ode says: "as you

cut then polish - as you carve then finish" is not this your meaning." Confucius responds: "With this guy Ci one can start discussing the Odes. You set out the premise and he knows what comes next." <sup>108</sup> Confucius admires Zi Gong's capacity to perceive the logic or the paralogic of his argument and to express such within an analogy. Zi Gong juxtaposes Confucius' discrimination between the qualities of not flattering and not being arrogant, and those of being cheerful and being just - i.e. negative virtues versus positive virtues - with an analogous discrimination within the Ode between carving and cutting, and polishing and finishing i.e. removing what is not wanted versus finishing and perfecting the form. The contrast between negative and positive virtues is typical of Confucius. Whether or not Zi Gong is pressing the language of the Ode is irrelevant; what is important is that the interpretation does not represent, as Holzman argues, a didactic interpretation. Zi Gong does not argue that the Ode teaches the superiority of positive versus negative virtues but simply that an analogous contrast is found within the Ode. It is the capacity to perceive such an affinity which makes Confucius say: "With this guy Ci one can start discussing the Odes. You set out the premise and he knows what comes next." i.e. Zi Gong can xing.

The formal nature of interpretation is even more clearly articulated in another conversation. In book III chapter viii of the Analects when asked by Zi Xia what in Ode 57 the phrase

"Artful are the smile and the dimples, the beautiful eyes clearly delineated; with the white ground one composes the colors." means, Confucius responds: "The business of drawing comes after the white ground. Zi Xia replies: "Ceremonies then are subsequent - are they not?" Confucius says: "He rouses me - Shang (Zi Xia). With him one can start discussing the Odes.""<sup>109</sup> Zi Xia's point is clearly that manners stand to our inner nature as the colors or delineation stand to the white ground in a painting i.e. they are subsequent. Again it is Zi Xia's capacity to see the affinities between otherwise unrelated realities which makes Confucius say: "With him one can start discussing the Odes." Zi Xia also can xing. Both examples of Confucian criticism focus on the logic of the discourse but they do not transform the discourse, as the Han legalists do, into a moral discourse. Zi Xia is not saying that the contrast in the Ode between the white ground and the delineation of color or form in a painting teaches us that establishing our inner nature precedes the articulation of good manners; he is though pointing to an analogy, as does Zi Gong; between the two. Within the history of Chinese critical thought it is significant that the Odes are not treated by Confucius and his disciples as representing coherent lyric discourses but, nevertheless, are treated as discourses. They view the Ode as a set of isolated formal images and analogies and pay little or no critical attention to its dramatic unity. The critic focuses exclusively on the logic of the images

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specifically the metaphorical logic within their juxtapositions.

Confucius never once implies that the Odes can be read as simple moral discourses. Even his remark about the first Ode that it is "gay but not excessive - sad but not violent" whether appropriate or not does not indicate that he viewed the Ode as a discourse on the virtues of the imperial concubines, but rather, on the contrary, that he saw it as a romantic folk lyric. It is possible that the remark was aimed more at the musical qualities of the Ode than at its discursive qualities. In book VIII chapter xv he remarks without any allusion to content: "When Zhi the music master first entered office the finale of the Guan ju (Ode I) was magnificent - how it filled the ears!" The only time Confucius makes a clear moral distinction in art concerns the court music of Shun as contrasted with the martial music of Wu. In book II chapter xxv he says: "The Shao (Shun's canon) is perfectly beautiful and perfect, but Wu's is perfectly beautiful but not perfect." No matter how one interprets the distinction it has nothing to do with the fallacies of didactic criticism.

In contrast to the didactic argument which focuses on the literary discourse as a moral discourse Confucius, when not talking about their music, focuses on the logic or para-logic

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of their images. Whether or not one agrees with these interpretations, he and his disciples clearly view the Odes as part of a musical tradition, which present within their discourse a complex of juxtaposed images and analogies. Because the metaphorical elements of the discourse - particularly the xing - articulate their effective nature, Confucius judges the Odes as particularly capable of provoking or arousing reflective thought. He sees them as providing within language the same kind of intellectual catalyst which music and ritual provide in action. The perfection of the metaphorical modes of apprehension within the Odes makes them, for Confucius, paradigms of subtle or nuanced thinking. Such imaginative qualities seem to be precisely what he has in mind when he says: "If you do not study the Odes you will lack the effective means to discourse." i.e. you will not develop the skill to perceive the affinities which underlie both language and reality. Or: "To sing all 300 Odes (i.e. to sing but not to comprehend) - but when put into office to be without intelligence, or when sent abroad on a mission to have no ready wit - though that is lot what does it mean." Or: "A man who has not considered the Zhou nan or the Shao nan (the first two parts of the Book of Odes) is like one with his face against a wall."<sup>110</sup> Along with music and ritual, the Odes represent for Confucius human wit at its very best. And, morals or propriety follow suit. My own belief is that Confucius' attention to the discursive or the intellectual

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elements of the Odes represents a significant shift in critical focus from the earlier strictly musical focus, and reflects the eventual transformation of the Odes from a type of musical composition into a coherent poetic discourse.

Confucius' thoughts about the Odes particularly his focus on their paralogical elements are both complex and subtle. They require considerably more attention than I can give them here. One can easily see how such reflections might be lost or distorted within the vague generalities of traditional criticism and eventually reduced to simple minded didacticism.

#### XIE (邪) & CONFUCIAN CRITICISM

There is one comment found among Confucius remarks on the Odes which can be and generally has been given an unequivocal didactic sense. It is the most famous but also the most problematic of his remarks. Holzman cites it as an example of Confucius' "method of ruthless misinterpretation".<sup>111</sup> In his characteristic laconic manner Confucius uses a phrase from Ode 297 to define the general qualities of all 300 Odes. According to Holzman and the tradition Confucius says in book II, chapter ii of the Analects: "As to the 300 Odes - one can cover them (summarize them) with one sentence. It says: "In your thoughts have no evil."<sup>112</sup> The problem with the traditional interpretation of the phrase is that it ignores

the actual meaning of the phrase within the Ode and contradicts Confucius' critical perspective as found in all his other remarks. If he believes the Odes represent moral tracts why does he not mention this aspect in his other comments? He talks about intelligence, wit, sensibility, criticism, imagination, and learning the names of animals and plants but never once says: "One learns from the Odes moral lessons.". The most curious aspect of the traditional interpretation of the remark is that it not only misrepresents the nature of the Odes and Confucius' thought concerning them but it completely ignores the meaning of the phrase as found in the Ode itself. Holzman - to demonstrate the arbitrary nature of Confucius' criticism - correctly points out; "the line chosen (by Confucius) comes from the fourth stanza of the Shih Ching (The Book of Odes) no 297 and is actually a description of running horses (a yoked pair); "no evil" means "without swerving" and the word for "thoughts" is a (exclamatory) particle common in the Shih Ching and other ancient texts."<sup>113</sup> i.e. the phrase in the Ode does not mean "In your thoughts have no evil" but rather "Indeed (this most likely derives from an idiom similar to the exclamatory uses of "think" or "consider", in English), there is no swerving (nothing erratic)". Instead of accusing Confucius of arbitrarily interpreting the line it would be more reasonable to question the traditional interpretation of the remark and to consider whether in fact Confucius cites the line with a

precise attention to its actual meaning. It seems highly improbable that a man who is so concerned with the nuances and connotations of language and who argues that the clarification of terminology is the most important activity within a society (viz. Analects XII.3) would deliberately cite a phrase from an Ode and completely ignore both its meaning and grammar within that context. Though it is true, when citing the Odes, Confucius often is not interested in the meaning of the discourse as a whole he nevertheless pays close attention to the actual meaning of the language he cites and in no case completely ignores the original context.

If one interprets the remark: "As to the 300 Odes - they can be summarized in one sentence which says: "Indeed, there is no swerving (nothing erratic)."" The meaning seems to be both evident and reasonable i.e. within the formal coordination of form and meaning within the Odes there are no elements which are either idle or arbitrary. Even if one grants *si* (思) its full meaning and translates "in thought..." though the focus would shift to the balance of images within the discourse the formal literary nature of the remark would remain the same. The Odes are characterized by a precision of form and thought comparable to the precision of movements or maneuvers among paired horses drawing a chariot. Such a comparison between the *recherche* parallelism which characterizes the Odes (and Chinese poetry in general)

and the coordinated maneuvers of paired horses represents a common place in Chinese criticism.

I want to look more carefully at the history of the character xie (𠄎<sup>3</sup>) translated above as "erratic". Its meaning is central to the history of Chinese criticism and, as we will see, to Liu's analysis of poetry. Given the characteristic laconism surrounding Confucius' description of the catholic nature of the Odes, the question whether the phrase is deliberately cited from Ode 297 or not needs to be considered. Ode 297 represents the first Ode of the Lu section of the song Odes which is the second to last section of the Book of Odes. The section is closely associated with Confucius who was a native of Qu fu the old capital of the Lu kingdom. In the history of the Classics found in the records of the Sui dynasty (589-618 A.D.) it is written: "When the imperial virtue was exhausted and the Odes ceased the masters of Lu collected, sorted, and recorded them. Confucius then edited the Odes setting The Shang Odes at the beginning and the Lu Odes at the end - altogether 300 compositions."<sup>114</sup> There appears to be a conscious pun in Confucius phrase "with one sentence one can cover (cap) them". The Lu section literally caps the whole anthology. The phrase not only refers to a sentence from the first Ode of the Lu section but also to the position of that sentence in regard to the whole anthology. Given such a rapport between Confucius and the Lu section and

the selfconscious position of the Ode itself, it is unreasonable to suggest that Confucius' choice was not deliberate. It is equally unreasonable to argue that he was either ignorant of or chose to completely ignore the fact that within the Ode the word for "thought" is actually an intensive particle and the phrase has absolutely no moral connotations. Otherwise, why cite the line? What is even more significant is that there is no clear evidence that the character 邪 normally read as xie and meaning "out of line" or "askew" had any moral connotations in Confucius' time.

The character represents a hapaxlegomenon occurring only in this citation among all the texts attributed to Confucius including the Spring & Autumn Annals and is found only five times among the Odes. In all five readings the term carries absolutely no moral connotations. Besides Ode 297 it is found three times in Ode 41 in the phrase 其虛其邪<sup>3</sup> where all the commentaries explain it as xu (徐) meaning to be idle.<sup>115</sup> In the only other reading as found in Ode 222 in the phrase 邪中<sup>4</sup>, which describes the loose ends of the sandal straps wrapped decoratively about the lower leg, one can sensibly interpret its meaning within the terms of any one of the three traditional readings for the character i.e. xu (徐) meaning "idle", yu (餘) meaning "extra", or xie (斜) meaning "askew".<sup>116</sup> The fact that the character is extremely rare among the Odes and not found elsewhere among the texts ascribed to

Confucius makes Confucius' choice of the phrase even more selfconscious.

As is true of many Chinese characters, the history of xie's (邪) three primary readings (xu, yu, and xie) is complex and ambiguous. Moreover, exactly when the reading xie meaning "askew" took on the moral connotations of heterodoxy and depravity is not at all clear. Unambiguous examples of such are not apparent until the time of Mencius (ca.300 B.C.). It is quite possible that all three words represent cognates. There is a certain logic running through the three ideas - particularly "extra" and "idle". Given the fact the four other readings of the character in the Odes are normally read as either xu (idle) or yu (extra) what grounds are there for reading the character in Ode 297 as a derivative of (xie askew)? If one examines closely the structures and the logic of the Ode itself it appears that the reading xu (idle or lax) is to some degree more reasonable and probable than the reading xie.

The complex nature of parallelism and thematic developments evident in the competing structures of couplets and stanzas within the Odes and the way such formal dynamics characterize the language and poetics of the Odes I don't believe has been sufficiently examined. The dominant opinion that the Odes represent a somewhat naive or primitive mode of

folk composition is not born out by the degree and quality of condensation, ellipsis, and parallelism apparent within the structures of their lines, couplets, and stanzas. Odes which at first appear to be simple folk rounds when examined carefully reveal complex modes of linguistic parallelism or a sophisticated and subtle formalism. Ode 297 when examined in detail reveals such a selfconscious design (see the diagram in appendix II).

The Ode describes the qualities or virtues of a certain herd of horses. It contains four stanzas each comprised of four couplets. The terminal rhymes of the four and three syllable lines divide each eight line stanza into rhyme units of three and five lines respectively. The beginning three line unit of each stanza repeats itself without variation throughout the four stanzas. The three lines including the following two lines which vary throughout the four stanzas the qualifiers describing the color of the horses - leaving the changing qualifiers blank - read:

Sturdy sturdy are those stallions  
 There in the wide open  
 Among those sturdy ones  
 There are - there are -  
 There are - there are -

The following five line unit of each stanza (including lines 4 and 5 partially translated above) moves through a set of parallel and incremental variations. In addition the break in the four syllable meter after line six which is followed by a three syllable and then a four syllable line sets up a three part structure in each stanza i.e. lines 1-2-3, lines 4-5-6, and lines 7-8 in which lines 3 and 6 function as transition lines creating a kind of enjambment where the verse units and the sense units cross i.e. the rhyme of line 3 joins it to the first couplet while its syntax joins it to lines 4 and 5; and line 6 completes the third couplet while its syntax joins it to the last couplet. Lines 4 and 5 form a single parallel sense unit but each represents respectively the last line of the second couplet and the first line of the third couplet. Only in the first and last couplet do sense and prosody conform - though the syllabic variation of line 7 sets off the final couplet. The above observations are typical examples of the type of counterpoint structures found within the Odes between couplet, stanzaic, and syntactical units. If one compares the content of the three units in each stanza - setting aside the transition lines 3 and 6 - i.e. the units made of lines 1-2; 4-5; and 7-8 the first unit presents a static repeating image, the second unit varies a set of qualifiers but the verb is stative and unchanging, while the third unit varies both the verbs and qualifiers. In the last lines (line 8) of the first two stanzas the verbs are stative,

and in the last two stanzas they are active. There is, therefore, both within each stanza and within the sequence of stanzas a transition from static repetition, to qualitative change, to active change. This move from static repetition to active change is underlined by comparing the structures of lines 1 and 6 - in line 1 the binominal verb is stative, in the attributive position, and unchanging; in line 6 the binominal verbs are active, in the predicative position, and changing. From this perspective the structure of each stanza can be seen as a contrast between lines 1,2,3 and lines 6,7,8 with lines 4,5 forming a repeating but changing middle term. Noting this structural shift in each stanza from static to active and the corollary movement from stative to active verbs in the sequence of the stanzas, if one examines the parallel structures of the four stanzas - particularly the final couplet of each stanza - there is an apparent formal relationship between the final elements of first two stanzas and the final elements of last two stanzas. I should clarify how I read the final three lines of each stanza leaving the changing predicates blank:

With a chariot they are - -  
 Surely, they are without -  
 Surely, thus they -

The changing binominal verbs in line 6 like all such

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impressionistic binomes in Chinese resist precise definition. The tradition defines their general connotations without defining their particular denotations and thereby preventing any close analysis of their differences. I suspect there is an incremental shift from stative to active over the series of four binominal verbs but can not prove it. Comparing the final couplets of stanzas one and two and stanzas three and four respectively there is a clear homologous development of analogous parts. The corollary terms in lines 7 and 8 of stanzas one and two i.e. jiang (border) and qi (limit); and zang (talented) and cai (skilled) reveal a synonymy which is homologous to that found among the corollary terms in stanzas three and four i.e. yi (lazy) and yu, xie, xu (extra, out of line, idle); and zuo (to start) and cu (to course). If one reads xu (idle) the synonymous relationship with yi (lazy) is obvious. Otherwise, the homology between the stanzas is broken. Therefore, I interpret the final couplets of the last two stanzas:

Surely, there is no laziness

Surely, thus they start off

&

Surely, there is no laxness (xu)

Surely, thus they course

The critical question is whether the three possible readings xu, xie, yu (idle, out of line, extra) represent cognates which at the time of the Ode had not been separated out, and therefore the word signified something close to "lax", "loose", or "idle". If this be the case and one interprets Confucius remark accordingly the sense is: "As for the three hundred Odes - one can cover them with one phrase. It says: "Indeed (in thought?), there is no idleness!" i.e. the Odes are characterized by a perfect co-ordination of form and meaning. The remark represents the same type of observation Aristotle makes when he points out the organic relationship between the parts and the whole in poetry where the change of any part alters the whole poem. This is precisely how, I believe, Liu understands the tag when he interprets it within the terms of an "accord" (fu 符) between sense and form.

Given the fact the character 邪 is extremely rare down to the time of Confucius and there is no clear example of its moral significance before Mencius there exists a distinct possibility that such a meaning derives from a willful and systematic misreading of the Confucian tag. The Han legalists in more than one case ignored Confucius' aesthetic focus and sought to interpret his thoughts in simplistic moral terms. This is not the place to deal with all the problems

surrounding the didactic interpretations of Confucius remarks concerning the Odes but I think from the above it is evident that there are good reasons to question such, and given the fact that Confucius more than once compares the effective nature of the Odes with those of both ritual and music it seems reasonable to understand his remark as focusing on their formal qualities.

Although the above questions of meaning due to the degree of social and linguistic changes between Confucius' time (ca. 500 B.C.) and the earliest surviving textual and lexical commentaries in the late Han (ca. 100 A.D.) are in a sense peculiar to pre-Han texts, nevertheless such linguistic ambiguities compounded with the extreme ellipticalness which characterizes Chinese thought and the arbitrariness of the hermeneutic tradition which is often more concerned with reiterating common social beliefs and values than examining the actual language, logic, and history of a text have created pervasive misunderstandings. This is particularly true within literary criticism where the complex or problematic nature of literature requires a sophisticated level of abstract thought. The problem is not peculiar to China. As we have seen the Poetics has also suffered the same kind of distortions in Europe where traditional romantic criticism with its Platonic bias often ignores or confuses essential elements of Aristotle's arguments. As pointed out above, the critical

distinctions between arguing in the case of Confucius that "poetry teaches us how to think" versus "poetry teaches us what to think" or in the case of Aristotle that "art images reality" versus "art imitates reality" is lost within the generalities and vagaries of traditional criticism.

Criticism is not easy. Given art's subtle nature, it requires more than any other discipline a capacity for complex analogies and precise reasoning which the average reader is neither capable of nor interested in. Confucius, I believe, is pointing precisely to this fact when he exclaims: "With this guy I can begin to discuss the Odes!" Loose and uncritical traditional beliefs have obscured and do obscure the most significant distinctions within Chinese criticism. In addition, to argue that because the large majority of traditional critics - as is true within all cultures - were not concerned with a critical analysis of literature, therefore such an evaluation of their arguments is irrelevant is to argue that Chinese criticism is not really criticism, which is absurd. This involves the fallacy of accepting the lowest standards within a tradition as its norms.<sup>117</sup>

As Aristotle states at the beginning of the *Poetics* the critic's primary task is to identify literature's elements and principles. The modern critics responsibility towards the tradition of criticism in both China and Europe is not only

to examine the nature or logic of their arguments but also to evaluate the coherency and accuracy of these arguments as criticism. For, it is only within the light of such a critical evaluation that the relative significance of each critic can be clarified.

#### CAO PI'S LUN WEN

I have already outlined two of the three major types of criticism as found in China i.e. classical formalism which treats the Odes as a part of a musical tradition focusing on their aesthetic qualities, and moral didacticism which interprets the Odes as moral discourses. The most important example of the romantic argument is Lu Ji's (261-303) Wen fu (Rhyme-prose on Literary Form).<sup>118</sup> Both its poetic format and the impressionistic and hyperbolic nature of its arguments place it firmly within the romantic tradition.

The Wen fu in all aspects is far less substantive than the Wenxin nevertheless it has received in the West undue critical attention.<sup>119</sup> Such attention can only be explained by a general romantic bias among academic critics who have also given undue attention to Plato's criticism. Lu's arguments like those found in Longinus's On The Sublime though at times interesting and provocative are essentially ambiguous and reveal little or no historical consciousness. The focus is on

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an impressionistic description of the psychological qualities of inspiration and the creative process i.e. the critical perspective is essentially on the poet and not on the poem. The arguments reveal a sophisticated awareness of creativity and a highly self-conscious and independent notion of the poet as such. Though the *Wen fu* contains, as is true of all romantic arguments, some vague moral allusions (often exaggerated in the translations) Lu avoids any simplistic moralism and on the whole insists on poetry's formal autonomy. The treatise is far too complex and too long to examine in detail here. From our point of view, its methods and focus stand in the same contrastive relation to those of the *Wenxin diaolong* as was observed between Longinus' and Aristotle's arguments. Liu himself seems to be consciously aware of this contrast; he begins, as we will see, a summary of his own treatise with what I believe is a gloss on the first line of Lu's argument.

Given the limits of Confucius' criticism which limits derive from the historical fact that the literary discourse as distinct from the musical composition had only begun to articulate itself during his time, and also the lack of any precise details concerning the formal aspects of early Chinese criticism it is necessary before surveying Lu's discourse to examine more carefully the elements of classical criticism in China after Confucius - specifically after the Han (ca 200

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A.D.) when the lyric discourse along with the critical notion of the individual writer are first fully articulated.

It is during the Jian-an period (196-220) and after - under the auspices of Cao Cao (155-220) and later his son Cao Pi (187-226) the founder of the Wei dynasty (220-277) - that a critical community of writers and critics centered about the new lyric forms first emerges. The earliest surviving critical treatment of literature as a literary discourse, and of the individual writer as such is Cao Pi's Lun wen (Discourse on Literary Form).<sup>120</sup> I don't believe it is mere coincidence that during one of the most violent periods of Chinese history the main political protagonist - Cao Pi - wrote a discourse on literature treating the individual writer and the problems of objective criticism. As is more than apparent today throughout Islam literary innovation and licence have always raised those values which are ultimately the most powerful and potentially the most violent in a society i.e. the concept of the individual and his relation to society. What Cao Pi and later Liu have to say about the individual writer is still shedding blood in Tianmen square. Criticism treats values which are not only real but have always been in the most fundamental sense revolutionary. When Liu argues that the character or nature of each writer is as unique and as different as is his face or Cao speaks of the value of self awareness in criticism they are hitting at the very nerve ends of their societies. The

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close relation during the period and afterwards throughout the whole Six Dynasties period (220-589) between literary speculation and political and social conflict - in which the writer was often the primary victim - needs to be examined more closely. There is an obvious critical relation between the idea of the writer and literature and the political and social values of a society which today still remains only partially understood.

An analysis of Cao's discourse clarifies by contrast some of the qualities of Lu's arguments and therefore provides a more articulate context for interpreting the Wenxin diaolong. Though Cao's Lun wen is considerably briefer and more modest than Lu's Wen fu the arguments when closely examined reveal a sophistication and acumen which I think has been undervalued. The formalism and clarity of Cao's discourse contrast sharply with the hyperbole and ambiguity of the Wen fu. The essay was originally one among a collection of Cao's essays entitled Dian lun (Classical Essays). It alone survives preserved in the Wen xuan - a classical anthology of literary forms compiled by Xiao Tong (501-531) circa 520 - as an example of the essay as a literary form. Possibly because of its brevity and modesty the critical significance of its arguments has been, I believe, generally overlooked or belittled. Hightower's remark that "his (Cao's) interest in genre was only a by-product of the typical third-century

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pastime of evaluating and categorizing people"<sup>121</sup> is misleading and, I believe, inaccurate; there is no reason to question the seriousness of Cao's interest in literature. Moreover, his (Hightower's) opinion that "the century separating Lu Ji's *Fu on Literature* (Wen fu) from Cao Pi's *Essay on Literature* (Lun wen) is hardly an adequate measure of the enormously increased sophistication of Lu Ji's attitude toward the art of letters"<sup>122</sup>, given the fact that he later admits that Lu's arguments are fundamentally obscure, is both curious and unjust. Obscurity and ambiguity are not a virtue in criticism and the "sophistication" of a thought should have something to do with the accuracy and intelligibility of that thought.

The most curious and, I believe, the most critically significant aspect of Cao's essay, which attempts to define the qualities and values of literature, is his attention to the problems of self-consciousness or self-awareness (zi xian 自見) in both criticism and writing. The concept articulates what is the critic's most fundamental problem - the problem of objectifying the literary discourse. Cao's articulation of this critical value along with his assertion of literature's autonomy and unity and his careful distinction between literature's common formal elements and its individual personal elements reveals a simple but profound level of criticism. As we will see, the idea and the value of objectivity are central to Liu's definition of the critic.

Though Aristotle treats the questions of objectivity in his methodological discourses there is no direct treatment of the idea per se within the Poetics.

There is a general critical problem which needs to be clarified before examining the logic of Cao's discourse. It involves Cao's inclusion of modes of writing such as letters, essays, memorials etc. which in the strictest sense represent non-literary discourses within his definition of literature i.e. the inclusion of discourses which have as their primary definition the simple communication of information, advice, and arguments, and only secondarily the formal expression of such. Seldom do Chinese critics isolate purely literary discourses within their analyses or discussions of literature. Both Lu Ji and Liu Xie mix literary and non-literary discourses within their criticism. It is often argued by Western critics that such a mixing of literary and non-literary discourses in Chinese criticism reveals a fundamental lack of critical sophistication or an inability to differentiate literature as a class of writing from writing in general.

Though at times the assertion might be correct - depending on the acumen of the Chinese critic - it nevertheless involves a fallacy deriving in part from the fact that European literature focuses its idea of literature within

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the narrative or fictional modes of writing thereby creating an artificial and essentially uncritical division between literature as fiction and non-literature as non-fiction. Chinese literature, on the other hand, focuses its identity within the non-narrative and a-temporal modes of the lyric discourse where the lyric persona is considered as actually speaking. Consequently, the critic does not isolate the idea of literature from non-fiction. Though the lyric voice does involve a fiction - here is not the place to discuss the critical problem - the lyric mode does not artificially separate literature and the non-fictional modes of writing.

The treatment of non-literary modes of writing as literature in Chinese criticism does not necessarily reveal a lack of critical acumen any more than Proust's assertion that the letters of Madame Sevigny or Joyce's that the essays of Newman represent paradigms of literary excellence. On the contrary, the critical capacity to isolate and to abstract the elements of literature to the degree that they can be applied to an analysis of non-literary discourses reveals a sophisticated level of literary thought. It is true, in a sense, that literature represents essentially a fiction (I use the term in its etymological sense of a fabrication) i.e. it is by definition artificial. Such artificiality allows any text or discourse to be read as literature if the text is read strictly from the point of view of its formal expression - to

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take an extreme example, a telephone book can be read as a type of literary discourse or figure deriving from Homer's catalogue of ships. This does not imply that literature lacks a coherent identity or is simply a random collection of pleasing discourses but rather, on the contrary, that literature represents a formal reality in which the critical focus of the reader is of primary significance. On the other hand, literature itself can be and often is read in a non-literary fashion where the focus is not on its formal literary qualities but on one or more of its accidental qualities - such as its historical and social qualities. Despite what Aristotle says, whether one considers Thucydides' Peloponnesian War a historical or a literary discourse depends entirely upon the point of view of the reader or how or in what context the discourse is read. As a historical discourse the verity of what it reports is of primary importance and the form and style of its expression is of secondary importance; as a literary discourse such verity would only represent one of its formal aspects - today one could consider the narrative as a form of novel. Even Aristotle admits that the distinction between the "catholic" and the "particular" qualities of poetry and of history is a matter of degree and not of simple exclusivity i.e. a poem can include historical facts or details. His analysis of the tragic plot defines, primarily, the formal elements of a specific literary genre or mode.

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Curiously enough, this represents precisely the transformation which takes place when Cao's essay is read within the critical context of the *Wen xuan*. It is included within the anthology not because of its arguments as such but rather because of the nature or form of those arguments i.e. as an example of the essay as a literary form - what Cao himself would have defined as its "logicality". When we isolate the discourse outside this literary context and focus on the actual logic of its arguments as literary criticism we are redefining the essay as a discourse on literature. Its literary qualities in such a context are no longer of primary importance. Such a distinction might seem precious but when appraising the critical treatment of essentially non-literary discourses as examples of literary principles and forms it is important to distinguish between the critic who understands why and how this can be done, or more specifically who can articulate those reasons and the critic who can't. This is, I believe, what Cao is attempting to do when he argues: "Literature is essentially a unity yet its aspects are different." His arguments - though at times sketchy and possibly fragmented in their transmission - represent a critical attempt to isolate and to define the essential qualities of literature as both a formal and a coherent reality, and as such witness a sophisticated classicism. Because Cao's discourse is relatively short and it clarifies a number of important aspects of the *Wenxin diaolong* I will

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present the whole argument and discuss the relevant parts.

L.W.1) Cao Pi's Discourse on Literary Form (Lun wen)

One can interpret the term lun "discourse" as "analysis"; Cao later uses the term with precisely this connotation.

L.W.2) The literary men since ancient times have treated each other lightly as is natural. Fu Yi and Ban Gu were related respectively as elder and younger brothers nevertheless Gu belittles Yi. In a letter to his brother Zhao he says: "Fu Yi with his facility at writing is a regular court historian - once he starts to write he can't stop himself."<sup>123</sup>

Cao's observation that writers critique each other without regard to rank or seniority and that such is appropriate (i.e. that literary values override social distinctions) might seem to the modern reader an insignificant or trivial point. But, in a medieval society where rank and seniority are of fundamental importance the observation has radical social and political implications of which Cao Pi as the founder of the Wei dynasty must have been aware. Liu gives the tale a slightly different interpretation.<sup>124</sup>

L.W.3) Each writer perfects (his style) by being

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aware of himself, for literary form is not one form, and extremely few can be perfect in all its perfections.<sup>125</sup>

Cao's thought is complex. He is saying that the capacity to be aware of one's self i.e. to objectively see oneself as a writer in relation to other writers is essential to a writer. This not only involves a critical notion of literature as whole but a curiously articulate idea of the individual writer which is very close to Eliot's articulation of the same problem. The concept of "self-awareness" (zi xian) is central to Cao's analysis of literature and of criticism. Also the observation that literature contains a complex of styles and qualities represents a simple but sophisticated thought which has evaded most traditional critics East and West. Even Lu Ji is guilty, as are most romantic critics, of arguing for one kind of literature.

L.W.4) Given this fact the majority use what they excel in to belittle what they are deficient in. There is an old saying which goes: "Every home has an old broom worth a thousand pieces of gold." This involves the calamity of being unaware of one's self.<sup>126</sup>

Cao seems to be particularly aware of the problems of

subjectivity in a society where formalities and arbitrary values prevented any careful self-scrutiny. It is particularly hard to read the above without recognizing a powerful critique of mindless formalism. The concept and the value of self-consciousness or objectivity in literature and criticism represents the most classical element of Cao's argument and that element which most sharply distinguishes his argument from Lu's. Within a modern context the assertion that writing and criticism represent self-conscious activities might seem self evident. But, in Cao's world the idea of the writer and of the critic as such were as yet radically new ideas.

L.W.5) The writers of today are Kong Rong, Chen Lin, Wang Can, Xu Gan, Ruan Yu, Ying Yang, and Liu Zhen.<sup>127</sup>

I leave out secondary names and origins; they only confuse the modern reader. In Cao's time they were necessary if one wanted to be clear and precise. Such precision and later his attention to clear examples are important aspect of Cao's arguments. The total lack of such in the Wen fu represents one of the weakest qualities in Chinese criticism; such obscurity at times even plagues Liu's arguments. The clear implication is that the seven writers represent writers as a formal class distinct from men who write i.e. they reveal a comprehensive understanding of literature as a unified and

coherent discourse. The identification of the seven "writers" also implies that there is a critical difference in Cao's mind between writing as a social amenity - as today, most all educated Chinese wrote poetry - and writing as a writer. This distinction is often underemphasized within traditional discussions Chinese art and literature which tend to overemphasize the amateur or dilettante aspects of the tradition.

L.W.6) Among these seven writers, as far as learning is concerned there is nothing missing, as far as diction is concerned there is nothing second hand.<sup>128</sup>

Plagiarism represents a particular problem in Chinese literature; even today scholarly writers often simply re-sort what has already been written risking nothing in expression nor in thought.

L.W.7) All of them, independently, race their swift steeds over a thousand li. Heads back they gallop neck & neck. Consequently, to give ground to each other they find extremely difficult. But (it is said) a gentleman first examines himself then evaluates others - thereby he avoids this tiresome embarrassment and can make an (objective) analysis of literary forms.<sup>129</sup>

Besides the commonplace analogy between the co-ordinated maneuvers of horses and literary skill the above thought is sketchy and ambiguous. The text is possibly fragmented. "This tiresome embarrassment" seems to be a subjective and uncritical judgement of literature i.e. objective criticism requires first a close scrutiny of oneself before attempting an evaluation of others. Again, the primary principle of criticism is self-consciousness.

L.W.8) Wang Can excels in diction and description (i.e. the fu), and Xu Gan though he has at times a Qi style nevertheless is Wang's equal. Examples are: Wang Can's Chu Zheng, Deng Lou, Huai Fu, & Zheng Si; and Xu Gan's Xuan Yuan, Lou Zhi, Yun Shun, & Chu Fu.<sup>130</sup>

Such precise examples reveal a concreteness and objectivity of thought which is rare in Chinese criticism but fundamental to any coherent criticism.

L.W.9) Although (re the above fu compositions) even Zhang Heng (78-139) and Cai Yong (133-192) do not surpass (them), nevertheless, in their other literary forms they don't match them (the above compositions). Chen Lin's & Ruan Yu's memorials and

petitions, letters and memoranda represent modern high marks.<sup>131</sup>

The comparison is between the former and the present generations of writers. Cao is pointing out that modern writers have developed and perfected certain standards of literary form beyond those of former generations. The remarks appear to be a critical response to the general tendency to idealize earlier generations i.e. Zhang & Cai. Cao begins by analyzing differences between writers and then precedes to an analysis of elements and modes.

L.W.10) Kong Rong's form and voice is elevated and subtle. He has a certain sublimity but can not maintain his argument. His logic fails to sustain his diction. He even goes so far as to mix sarcasm and humor. At his best he is of the same class as Yang Xiong (53 B.C.-18 A.D.) and Ban Gu (32-92).<sup>132</sup>

Cao's attention to the logic or the unity of the discourse represents a significant aspect of his classicism. The verb "chi" (持) used within this context in the sense of "to maintain" or "to order" the logic of the discourse is important. The term represents one of the words traditionally considered to be cognate or equated with the term shi (Ode-verse). The two characters share the same phonetic element.

It occurs as quoted by Liu within the traditional formula "a verse (shi) is an mise en form (chi)"<sup>133</sup>, and has been traditionally interpreted in a didactic sense within the Wenxin. Cao's formal focus, despite the fact that he is discussing prose, throws doubt on such an interpretation or at least indicates that the phrase can be interpreted in a purely formal manner.

L.W.11) Commonly men admire what is distant (strange) and belittle what is at hand (familiar). They are attracted by sound (show) but ignore the substance. Again, they suffer from a confused sense of themselves and consider themselves (thereby) to be brilliant.<sup>134</sup>

Note the obvious urbanity of Cao's milieu. He puts his finger on the Achille's heel of Chinese aestheticism which cultivates an excessive obscurity of both expression and thought. There is running throughout Chinese literature a degree of idiosyncrasy of expression or what might be called a privacy of logic which, ironically, allows, given the level of ambiguity, for a complete conventionalizing of its thought.

L.W.12) Literature is essentially a unity yet its aspects are different. Consequently memorials and opinions are justly elegant, letters and essays are

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justly logical, inscriptions and epitaphs seek reality, and lyric and prose poetry want aesthetic symmetry. These four norms (elegance, logicity, realism, and symmetry) are fundamentally different. Therefore a competency in any one results in a lopsidedness. Only the comprehensive talent perfects its (literature's) full form.<sup>135</sup>

Contrary to what Hightower says<sup>136</sup> Cao's focus is not on characterizing the modes but rather on defining and exemplifying the four elements of the literary discourse as such. Cao is obviously aware that there are many more modes than the eight he lists. He chooses them simply as the clearest examples of the four norms. He is not requiring the writer - as distinct from the dilettante - to write in all the modes but he is requiring him to understand and to master the four principles of literary excellence i.e. elegance, logicity, realism, and symmetry. Though one would wish for greater clarity concerning or more elaboration on the critical differences between elegance and symmetry, for example, when one compares Cao's four principles with those of Lu Ji - as found among his list of five imperfections - the cohesiveness of his analysis and attributes stand out.

L.W.13) With the individual spirit (voice) literary form realizes its major principle. Clarity or

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abstruseness of voice (spirit) have their own forms. It is not possible by sheer effort to realize them. To compare this with pitch and music: Though the melody and tempo are set and the rhythm follows the arrangement when it comes to realizing the spirit (of the piece) there are real differences.<sup>137</sup>

Cao appears - though the brevity of the argument creates real ambiguities - to be distinguishing the elements of literature which can be learned i.e. elegance, logicality, substance, and symmetry; and the elements which can not be learned or which are simply intrinsic to the individual writer - what today we would call "personal voice". As always with musical terminology, there are real questions as to the precise meaning of the terms but the sense of the argument is clear i.e. though music is a formal reality which conforms to certain rules each interpretation is different. His distinction between the formal and the personal elements in literature and music is subtle and remarkably sophisticated.

L.W.14) Adroitness and maladroitness (also) have their own nature. Though a father or an older brother are gifted they can not bequeath this to a son or a younger brother.<sup>138</sup>

Again, though the observation might seem self evident to

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the modern reader such an assertion within a society dominated by the hierarchies of age and social relation has radical implications. Cao is insisting that literature is not simply a polite discipline, and that there are real and critical distinctions of literary quality which have nothing to do with social rank and dilettantism. The idea that the standards of literature exist outside or are independent of the orders of the society and of the family is often ignored or only vaguely recognized in Chinese culture where art is often treated as a decorative aspect of social and political intercourse. The whole tradition of dilettantism in Chinese art though real has been, I believe, exaggerated. Tao Qian, Du Fu, Li Bai, Huang Gong Wang, Ni Zan, and Zhu Da, despite what they say, were no more amateurs than Horace, Catullus, Dante, and Cezanne were. In my own opinion dilettantism represents one of the weakest aspects of the tradition. It tends to create an uncritical milieu of connoisseurship which compounds the ambiguities within criticism and confuses art with social amenities. Cao's insistence on literature's autonomy or objective standards gives literature the integrity it requires and represents and important aspect of his classicism.

L.W.15) Moreover, Literature is a major affair in the formation or ordering of the state. It represents an activity which (always) flourishes and does not grow old.<sup>139</sup>

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The thought is suggestive and one would wish for greater elaboration. The phrase jing guo (經國) literally "warping the state" uses the term for "classic" (a warp) within its verbal sense. Precisely how literature orders the state is not at all clear but given the purely formal focus of Cao's analysis of literature it would be difficult if not impossible to interpret it in didactic terms. There seems to be a correlation between the first and second idea i.e. it is the fact that literature continually innovates and renews itself which makes it a major affair in the formation of the State; or possibly, it is the self-conscious nature of literary form and literary criticism which gives literature its social significance. We have only just begun to examine the real historical and social significances of art as a medium which both expresses and molds human consciousness.

Though Cao is obviously aware of the facts of change and transformation within literature - he mentions the innovations of modern writers - he neither analyzes or articulates this history. Such a critical lacuna marks the limit within his classicism. It is Liu's and Aristotle's critical attention to the historical nature of literature and literary change which distinguishes their arguments as the first comprehensive treatments of literary form.

L.W.16) Old age has its limit and (finally) exhausts itself. Glory and pleasure end with one's body. Both reach the same end. They are in no way comparable to the limitless nature of literature. For this reason writers of old gave themselves to brush (pen) and ink. They set out their own thoughts in chapter and verse and did not simply borrow the expressions of the historians (i.e. they innovated new literary forms). Because they did not put their trust in fleeting authority their reputations have been passed down from generation to generation.<sup>140</sup>

The thought is more or less Horace's *aere perennius* (carmen III.30.1) but with a particular attention to the psychology of death. The purely psychological explanation of literature's virtue and the complete silence regarding any traditional didactic values sets Cao's argument apart from conventional Confucian criticism. Such psychological reasoning is consistent with his focus on literary self-consciousness.

L.W.17) Emperor Wen (of the Zhou dynasty) when imprisoned expanded the *Book of Changes* and Duke Zhou in his glory composed the *Book of Rites*. The one despite his hardship did not neglect it (literature); the other even when he prospered gave (it) thought. Given such (models) the men of old

treated badges lightly but took seriously their own allotted time fearing lest time pass them by. Yet, most men are not strong enough. The poor gape at hunger and cold; the rich waste themselves in idle pleasures. They chase after the affairs of the moment and neglect the achievement which lasts a thousand years. Above - the sun and the moon come and go; below - our bodies grow old and suddenly along with every other living thing we disappear. This thought gnaws at sensible men. Kong Rong and the others are already dead. (Now) only Xu Gan composing his essays realizes a unified and comprehensive discourse.<sup>141</sup>

The last phrase yi jia yan (一家言) - literally "a single house discourse" is obscure. If one interprets it as a school of writing or thought, to what is Cao referring or why does he choose to mention it? My own belief is that Cao is restating the major thesis of his treatise: literature itself represents a unified and comprehensive mode of writing which distinguishes itself from the general class of writing by its aesthetic elements and principles i.e. the "school of writing" is literature itself. The idea that literature represents a formal reality which can be judged independently of other social realities was a radically new idea.

In summary, Cao articulates the identity of literature both as a formal reality with coherent and definable principles, and as changing and evolving form comprised of individual and traditional elements. His attention to the problems of objectivity in both writing and criticism and his strict avoidance of any simplistic moralism reveals a remarkable sophistication. The absence of any critical analysis of the historical aspects of literary evolution marks the limit of his classicism.

Without an analysis of the details of literary change or transformation the nature of literature's "eternal newness" remains vague and ambiguous. Both Cao Pi and Lu Ji share the same a-historical perspective which ultimately prevents any critical understanding of literary innovation. Although Chinese thought as found in some of its earliest reflections focuses, in a peculiar fashion, on both the necessity and the virtue of innovation or re-novation within society - Emperor Tang (the founder of the Shang dynasty ca. 1763 B.C.) is reported to have inscribed on his bath tub the phrase "as each day is new - day by day renew!"<sup>142</sup> - yet, the critical elements of the idea that literature though always changing in its manifestations nevertheless reveals a set of norms or principles which are constant were seldom if ever really examined. Within both European and Chinese criticism it is the concept of tradition as a vortex (a form in motion) involving

both change and constancy - as found within Eliot's essay - which represents the perfection of the classical argument. For, only when the critic can recognize and distinguish literature's synchronic and diachronic elements can he begin to clarify its real nature. Otherwise, innovation remains an anomaly and literary values are defined by their accidentals.

#### LU JI'S WEN FU

There is a story told by Du Fu that Lu Ji wrote his Wen fu when he was twenty.<sup>143</sup> Though there is no way of proving or disproving the remark it can be argued that the treatise reveals a type of romantic thought typical of a younger mind which is often fascinated by obscurities and ambiguities. As pointed out above, the attention the rhyme-prose has received in the West (there are more than five complete translations with extensive commentaries) is peculiar and I think reflects more a pervasive romanticism among academic critics than a real critical appraisal. Because of the excellent translations - Fang's translation and notes are more than adequate to a critical reading - I will limit my discussion of the text to a clarification of its romantic elements - particularly those elements which contrast most sharply with Cao's and Liu's classicism.

The Wen fu presents all the essential elements of the

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romantic argument as outlined in the analysis of Longinus' *On the Sublime*. Though Lu recognizes the literary discourse as an independent formal reality his focus is on the psychological qualities or states of mind of the writer and not the formal elements of the poem as such. Nevertheless, his attention to literary form - both rhetorical and prosodic - and his avoidance of moralism creates certain common grounds with both Cao's and Liu's analyses. Romanticism shares with classicism a focus on literature as literature. But, by emphasizing literature's "strangeness" it exaggerates the contrast between the literary and the non-literary discourse. Such hyperbole along with its impressionistic descriptions represent the most characteristic qualities of Lu's treatise. In addition, the a-historical nature of his analysis though not unique to the romantic argument is typical of such. In terms of real critical analyses the *Wen fu* adds very little to Cao's treatise. Lu's treatment of the personal and the psychological qualities of inspiration is ingenious and reveals a highly selfconscious literary sensibility and milieu, but as all such romantic descriptions it throws very little light on the real process of writing. The objective seems to be a simple display of connoisseurship in its most dilettante terms.

Lu's argument can be effectively divided into five sections.<sup>144</sup> In the first section (the preface) Lu presents

his topic and lays out the essential prescriptive nature of his descriptions.

W.F.1) I have written this rhymeprose on literature to expatiate on the consummate artistry of writers of the past and to set forth the whence and why of good and bad writings as well.<sup>145</sup>

Though Lu Ji focuses on the aesthetic aspects of literature the descriptive terms he uses to define these qualities are essentially ambivalent and contain obvious didactic connotations: "beneficial" & "harmful" (利, 害), "beautiful" & "ugly" (妍, 丑), and "good" & "bad" (好, 惡). As is typical of all romantic arguments, Lu denies the possibility of critical knowledge and sets up a false distinction between knowing and doing - "the difficulty, then, lies not so much in knowing as in doing."<sup>146</sup> The difference between criticism and literature is real and important but it is not as the romantic critic insists a difference between knowing and doing. Obviously if one claims to know literature but can not demonstrate such in literary terms the claim is either a limited claim or false. It is equally senseless to argue that the writer writes without any critical knowledge even though his capacity to express such may be limited. Most serious writers cultivate both skills: viz. Dante, Eliot, Proust etc..

The prescriptive nature of Lu Ji's observations raises an important critical point. The romantic critic almost invariably defines literature from the point of view of his own subjective preferences i.e. his descriptions are essentially prescriptive assertions which evaluate literature in terms of a particular style or a period. His formalism is in a sense purely opportunistic. Such subjectivism contrasts sharply with the objective treatment of both form and history characteristic of classicism. Though such a distinction between the objective and the subjective natures of classicism versus romanticism is often subtle and difficult to define - all descriptions are to some degree subjective and prescriptive - the difference is real and usually, within the passage of time, apparent. Aristotle with his focus on plot or the unity of the action as found within the narrative modes has often been accused - see Tate above - of setting out both an arbitrary and purely prescriptive definition of literature. Yet, if one examines the precise nature of his arguments - particularly their concern with the details of form and history - and considers the critical influence the *Poetics* has had over the last 2000 years on literary thought and practice it is obvious that Aristotle's observations, in comparison to Longinus', are fundamentally more coherent and more accurate.

When Lu Ji asserts at the beginning of the second section

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(A-C) in which he describes the process of writing from the point of view of the writer:

W.F.2) "Taking his position at the hub of things [the writer] contemplates the mystery of the universe..." <sup>147</sup>

The argument not only confuses the idea of the writer with the idea of the composition but also the actual literary qualities or values being described - to the degree one can articulate them - are anything but catholic. Moreover, the nature of the observation is exaggerated to such a degree that it contains little or no critical significance. As is true of most romantic arguments, the problem with Lu's discussion of the poet's psychology is not that the relation between the poet (as poet) and the poem is not both real and important but that the looseness and the hyperbole of his language and thought reduce both ideas to a highly ambiguous and fundamentally inaccurate set of generalities. A critical treatment of the actual process of writing requires a sophisticated and subtle analysis. Aristotle simply avoids talking about the poet except in the simplest of terms. Though Liu Xie is more ambitious he is careful to distinguish the writer as writer and the writer as individual.<sup>148</sup>

Given the pervasive poetic nature of its arguments, the

Wen fu effectively confuses the critical discourse with the poetic discourse. This does not imply that poetry can not contain serious criticism or that all criticism within a poetic discourse is by definition romantic - Horace's *Ars Poetica* is both serious and hardly romantic. But, equating literature with morality or equating criticism with poetry involves essentially the same type of fallacy. The critical discourse seeks to define literature which is not at all the same as practicing it or even evoking it.

The third section (D-L) is the longest and most eclectic. Here Lu treats various literary problems and discusses various literary qualities. These arguments with their focus on literature's formal aspects come closest to the point of view and values of classicism. But, Lu's emphasis on the psychology of the writer and his impressionistic method sharply differentiate the two points of view. It is here he sets out a description of ten of the literary modes which analysis has often been contrasted with the more limited treatment found in Cao's treatise. Cao's restrictions are viewed as revealing a less sophisticated critical point of view. But even Hightower admits that Lu's descriptions are "not on the whole more appropriate: they are however more metaphorical and hence harder to understand."<sup>149</sup> What is even more significant is his selection does not, as Cao's does, isolate the catholic qualities of the literary discourse. The analysis is

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essentially arbitrary or purely evocative. Lu Ji argues:

W.F.3) Shi traces emotions daintily; fu embodies objects brightly; bei balances substance with style; lei is tense and mournful; ming is comprehensive and concise, gentle and generous; zhen, which praises and blames, is clear-cut and vigorous; song is free and easy, rich and lush; lun is rarified and subtle, bright and smooth; zou is quiet and penetrating, genteel and decorous; shuo is dazzling bright and extravagantly bizarre.<sup>150</sup>

This is criticism in its least critical sense. When one compares Lu Ji's evocative qualifications with the simple precision of Cao's "elegance", "logicality", "realism", and "symmetry" the coherent and comprehensive nature of Cao's analysis stands out.

Within the context of Lu's descriptions of the modes there occurs a significant reading of the term xie ( ). The reading appears to represent an explicit gloss on Confucius statement - discussed above - concerning the nature of the Odes. Considering the fact that Lu also uses the term to define literature's general qualities, it would be extremely difficult to imagine that he was not consciously glossing Confucius's remark. Within the context the purely formal

connotations of the term indicate not only the possibility of such a meaning but also the existence within the critical community of an independent and non-didactic interpretation of the remark. Following his descriptions of the modes Lu writes:

W.F.4) Although there are perceivable differences among these modes, nevertheless, they (all the modes) interdict idleness (𠄎<sup>3</sup> - asymmetry?) and control looseness. Essentially the discourse should make sense and reason should have the upper hand, so that there is no randomness nor superfluity.<sup>151</sup>

The preceding argument - as cited above - discusses the formal qualities of the modes without any didactic implications. The first couplet clearly focuses on the logic of the discourse, and the final two qualifiers rong (冗) "randomness" and chang (長) "superfluity" in the second couplet appear to clarify the meaning of the preceding couplet by specifying the particular type of "idleness" and "looseness" being considered. Any attempt within the context to interpret the character 𠄎 within the terms of "moral deviance" makes little or no sense.<sup>152</sup> The correlation with rong and chang implies that Lu read the character as either xu (余) or yu (餘) meaning "idle" or "extra"; The text, therefore, provides powerful circumstantial evidence that such

a formalist reading is both possible and probable.

As noted above, Cao Pi is simply silent about literature's moral virtues. Though there are some vague didactic allusions in Lu's terminology his overall focus explicitly asserts literature's aesthetic or formal autonomy. Liu Xie takes up the question in a more comprehensive and systematic fashion and attempts to clarify literature's moral nature within the terms of its formal qualities.

Lu Ji in his treatment of the modes only discusses in the most general terms literature's elements. But further on in the same section when treating the "five imperfections" he sets out in a contrastive manner five essential literary qualities - resonance (ying 應), harmony (he 和), pathos (bei 悲), elegance (ya 雅), and beauty (yen 艷).<sup>153</sup> These elements represent an attempt to articulate the common principles of the literary discourse and as such should be compared with the six classical principles and Cao's four norms. What is both interesting and important is that among these three definitions of literature's principles the earliest represents with its articulation of literature's rhetorical elements - fu, bi, xing - the most formal and to some degree the most sophisticated formulation. Though Cao's four norms - elegance, logicality, realism, and symmetry - lack the same critical attention to the linguistic nature of the literary discourse

they are distinctly more appropriate and more coherent than Lu's five qualities, which in their purely metaphorical nature are the least intelligible. Lu focuses on those qualitative aspects of the literary discourse which most resist formal analysis.

DeWoskin has pointed out that Lu borrows the idea of the five imperfections and the terminology for the five qualities directly from contemporary musical theory.<sup>154</sup> He also notes that music, because of its purely abstract nature, both requires and attracts highly metaphorical and fundamentally impressionistic terminology. The ambiguities deriving from the confusion between musical and literary compositions within Chinese criticism have already been discussed. To a certain degree Lu's borrowings from impressionistic musical theory represent a retrograde movement in Chinese criticism. He apparently finds within the analogy the type of impressionism he wants. As noted in Plato, romantic critics tend to equate poetry with music.

In his fourth section (M-O) Lu Ji returns to his focus on the writer and the psychological aspects of writing with a dramatic description of inspiration. The final section (P) of the *Wen fu* ends with an encomium on the virtues of the literary form. Both sections in terms of the insight they offer to Lu's literary milieu are interesting, but, in terms

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of real criticism, they present little which moves beyond Cao's analysis. Even Cao's simple remarks on the individual writer's sense of himself within the tradition seem more profound than Lu's melodramatic descriptions of the writer's despair and inspiration. From the point of view of the general reader the Wen fu most likely provides more interesting reading; as criticism it represents a typical romantic argument.

Yet despite the pervasive vagueness one senses from time to time within Lu's arguments a curious attention to formal details. Such as his distinction between literary form as an object and literary form as a logic or abstract structure:

W.F.5) As an object, literature puts on numerous aspects; as a form, it undergoes diverse changes.<sup>155</sup>

Such arguments suggest a careful and methodic analysis of literary form. Lu's reluctance to elaborate such ideas is both curious and to some degree typical of all Chinese criticism including Liu's. It is fashionable to explain such laconism as a kind of cultural sophistication. My own belief is that it derives from a fundamental fear of free discourse and critical thought within a society where differences of opinion often meant death. To elaborate critical ideas and to give unambiguous examples requires considerable trust in the

curiosity and the benevolence of the reader. Within every totalitarian society laconism and ambiguity offer real advantages, while clarity and precision involve tangible risks. As pointed out above, it is naive to think that literary criticism does not involve real and sensible values which can and often do touch the very nerve ends of a culture.

To summarize the critical aspects of the *Wen fu* - the complete lack of any historical treatment of literature and the corresponding failure to differentiate the idea of literature from the idea of the writer represent its most significant limitations. Lu treats literature primarily within the terms of the writer's psychological or subjective nature. The pervasive ambiguities, hyperboles, and metaphorical modes of expression place the treatise within the same category as *On The Sublime* and sharply distinguish it from both the *Poetics* and the *Wenxin diaolong*. Though Lu Ji articulates the idea of literature as a formal and an autonomous reality he defines its elements and principles only in the vaguest or least critical of terms.

#### SHEN YUE & OBJECTIVE CRITICISM

As mentioned earlier, the period between Lu Ji's *Wen fu* (ca. 300 A.D.) and Liu Xie's *Wenxin diaolong* (ca. 500 A.D.) marks one of the most active and innovative periods of

critical thought. It was a period characterized by extreme political and social conflict and extensive incursions of foreign tribes. The extent or degree of migration and social change made China by the beginning of the Sui dynasty (581 A.D.) by far the most heterogenous and cosmopolitan nation of its time. This was also the period when Chinese culture assimilated Buddhism - both changing it and being changed by it. Among the generation of scholars just before Liu Xie one of the most articulate defenders of the new faith was Shen Yue (441-513). Shen came from an old aristocratic family which could trace its lineage back to the Han but which had suffered the extreme changes of fortune which were typical of the period. Because Shen Yue as a scholar and critic is closely associated with Liu Xie - we are told that Liu first sought and gained Shen's approval before publishing the *Wenxin diaolong*<sup>156</sup> - and because his radical analysis of traditional prosody represents a major evolution in critical thought a brief discussion of his criticism will clarify some of the most important critical aspects of Liu's treatise.

Shen Yue was the first Chinese critic to treat the confusion between musical and prosodic forms as derived from the Zhou tradition of court music. He was the first to coherently articulate the phonetic or linguistic elements of classical prosody as distinct from the musical tones i.e. to recognize that though the prosodic tones in the Chinese

language are analogous to musical pitches their phonetic elements are essentially different. The distinction is extremely important. For, without it poetic or prosodic form remains only a vague and impressionistic idea. Such vagueness ultimately prohibits or hinders any critical innovation. The articulation of the phonetic elements of prosody has to poetry the same importance as the articulation of the sound elements of harmony has to music. Neither poetry nor music can be fully perfected without a coherent analysis of their elements.

In a certain sense Shen's analysis of the phonetic elements of classical prosody represents the most significant development in Chinese criticism since Confucius's discussions of the poetic discourse. His analysis for the first time focuses the definition of literary discourse and literary form within the terms of its linguistic elements. Despite the fact that the tradition has often misunderstood the nature and details of Shen's argument and on the whole ignored its critical significance - it is remarkable how few critics even today recognize that significance - the critical difference between viewing and describing prosody in vague and impressionistic terms and articulating its phonetic elements in unambiguous and precise critical terms can not be overstated.<sup>157</sup>

The idea of both language and of literature within all

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cultures remain curiously resistant to any coherent or critical analysis. There is a tendency not only to not question the forms of language and literature but even to resist any systematic analysis of their natures. As already pointed out, it was not until the beginning of this century in Europe that Saussure articulated the primary elements of language as both a social and a historical phenomena.

Though the articulation of prosody's phonetic elements in Europe with its phonetic alphabets might seem self-evident this is not the case in China where the writing system only in a very limited sense signifies the sound. The development and perfection in Greece between the eighth and sixth centuries B.C. of a phonetic alphabet which articulates vowels and consonants in all their phonetic aspects provided Greek poets and critics with a powerful tool for analyzing and critiquing Greek poetry.<sup>158</sup> This alone might account for the significant differences in poetic development in Greece and in China during the first thousand years after Homer. Would Greek poetry have developed to the point it did if the Greek poet and critic could have critiqued its prosody only in the most general and metaphorical of terms - or, on the other hand, did the hermetic nature of Chinese poetics hamstring the tradition?

Though in art there exists unconscious knowledge and

every tradition witnesses such the lack of any critical analysis of literature's formal elements ultimately sets real limits to the development and accomplishments of a literature. Literature, as Cao tells us, is a self-conscious process. When a writer can no longer critique his own qualities in coherent critical terms he loses the capacity both to develop and to renew the tradition. Each generation of writers to move beyond the accomplishments of the past requires a coherent critical analysis of that past. For, without such the writer is, in Confucius' phrase, "like a man with his face against a wall". An aesthetic tradition which remains satisfied with a fundamentally uncritical analysis of its forms and structures ultimately loses the capacity to innovate and to develop. The argument that critical knowledge somehow limits or inhibits literary creation is only true when that knowledge represents loose and uncritical generalities or focuses on idle details. As Shen Yue points out, only when the poet knows and understands the structural nature of the four tones within traditional prosody can he begin to understand its real possibilities.

Shen Yue's analysis and observations met considerable opposition and criticism.<sup>159</sup> His critics on the whole were traditionalists who either did not understand what he was saying and/or did not like its formalism, which they correctly saw as contrary to the hermetic or impressionistic values of

traditional connoisseurship. The dilettante tradition in China has consistently argued against any critical analysis of literature or art. The debate represents essentially an argument between progressive classicism and traditional romanticism where the traditionalist sees the very critical nature of Shen's argument as contradicting the hermetic values of the tradition. As Mather notes in his study of Shen Yue, Zhong Rong's (465-518) - one of Shen's most vocal critics - objections, as found in the third preface to his *Shi pin* (Gradings of Poetry), reveal a curious naivete and a complete lack of any critical understanding of the focus of Shen's argument i.e. that the consonance or dissonance of a poetic line can exist within the line itself in terms of its own phonetic qualities independent of any musical accompaniment.<sup>160</sup> Further on in the same preface when Zhong argues that such an attention to detail only "imposes a lot of crippling restraints on the poet and damages poetry's true beauty" or later that "literary compositions should basically be written to be recited aloud and should not be hobbled or hindered"<sup>161</sup> his arguments are both naive and contradictory. A survey of what Shen has to say about the importance of an objective analysis of the four tones presents the best example we have of classical criticism in China before Liu Xie.

Though Shen Yue's discourse on the four tones has not survived - as is often true, the most critical elements of a

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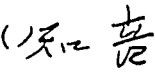
tradition are ignored by the traditionalist who views the tradition as a series of commonplaces - but his postface to the biography of Xie Lingyun has survived as an example of the essay in Xiao Tong's *Wen xuan*.<sup>162</sup> In the essay Shen traces the developments and transformations of literary form from its earliest manifestations down to his own time (ca. 450 A.D.). He focuses on the evolutions of poetic form from the time of Qu Yuan (ca. 300 B.C.) through the Jian-an writers (ca. 200 A.D.) and the development and perfection of the lyric discourse - covering precisely the same period and developments as Liu does within the chapters I will later examine. Commenting on these developments Shen writes at the close of his argument:

S.S.1) By means of the laws of the tones they (Wang Can and Cao Zhi) adjusted their regulated verse and were able to surpass the earlier models. Since the time of Qu Yuan the ordered sequence of years is long (approximately 800 years). Though literary form has to some degree been refined its inner secrets have not been examined. As far as those sublime discourses and wondrous phrases are concerned their prosody was spontaneous (without critical thought). Although the above writers subconsciously conformed with these principles (the principles of the four tones) it was not the result of conscious thought.

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Zhang Heng, Cai Yong, Cao Zhi, and Wang Can had no inkling (of them); Pan Yue, Lu Qi, Xie Ling-yun, and Yen Yen-zhi were wide of the mark. Those today who have a conscious knowledge of the tones have the means to grasp them (the principles of the four tones). This argument is no exaggeration. If there is anyone who says its not true let him wait for the intuition.<sup>163</sup>

Shen Yue's observations regarding conscious and unconscious literary knowledge is close both in thought and value to Cao Pi's remarks concerning the importance of "self-consciousness" in criticism. The carping of Shen's critics only reveals the extent of loose and uncritical thought prevalent among Chinese literati. What is most curious is how difficult it was for most of Shen's contemporaries to understand both the nature and the significance of his analysis. One clearly senses Shen Yue's frustration over the general resistance to critical thought. His last remark about waiting for the intuition or insight raises the question of whether he saw his analysis of literary history and literary form as somehow related to the new faith - Buddhism.

The phrase zhi yin () signifying a conscious knowledge of the prosodic tones comes to signify in the Wenxin - obviously through the process of metonymy - the critic.

Whether this coinage is peculiar to Liu and contains a conscious reference to Shen Yue's analysis of the four tones is not clear.<sup>164</sup> But, it is obvious that for both critics a critical analysis of literary form represents the essential focus of the new criticism. Shen seems to be acutely aware that his analysis of the four tones represents a new way of viewing literature which sharply divides traditional criticism from "new" criticism. The fact that both Shen and Liu were influential early Buddhist scholars and highly articulate defenders of the new faith raises real questions as to the actual relation between such a new critical sensibility and Buddhist thought. It obviously is not mere coincidence that China's two most articulate classical critics were also major actors in the conversion of China to Buddhism. But, how or in what way this new criticism and the new faith were related is not at all clear. A critical examination of this question would involve a separate dissertation. Yet, it seems evident that both Shen and Liu saw the new literary sensibility, in contradistinction to the earlier criticism, as advocating both a critical knowledge of the order of literature in time and a critical analysis of its formal structures, and that such a division of reality into its historical and its formal elements clearly reflects fundamental concepts and values found in Buddhist theology.<sup>165</sup>

Whatever the actual case may be, the remnants of Shen

Yue's criticism represent the most significant examples of a mature classicism we have before the *Wenxin diaolong*. Shen appears to be the first critic in China to view the literary discourse as a coherent object with both a history and a form of its own. It is apparent from the above that Liu Xie's attempts to treat literary history and literary form in a critical manner do not represent an isolated endeavor. Liu was clearly a part of a critical community which shared the same passion for observation and analysis.

#### XIAO TONG & THE WEN XUAN

As was the founder of the Wei dynasty Cao Cao (155-220) the founder of the Liang dynasty (502-556) Xiao Yan (464-549) was devoted to literature and literary research. During the early years of the dynasty literary criticism flourished with an intensity and level of curiosity seldom paralleled within the tradition. Literary salons sprang up both in the capital and in the provinces often sponsored and headed by members of the Xiao clan. Xiao Tong (501-531) the oldest son of Xiao Yan in his brief life (he died suddenly at the age of 30 as a result of a boat accident) became one of the major forces behind such literary speculation and research. After 515, when he reached maturity, he organized a coterie of scholars, critics, and poets within the Eastern Palace which then became a center for both Buddhist and literary research.<sup>168</sup> The Liang

dynasty official history tells us:

He invited and received talented and learned scholars, and he was untiring in his appreciation and admiration for them. He often himself discussed texts and documents, and sometimes consulted with scholars on matters of the past and present. In his idle moments, he continued with his literary composition. Generally, one could consider this a habitual practice. At this time, the Eastern Palace had some 30,000 juan of books, and famous men of talent gathered together here. Such a flourishing of literature and scholarship had not been seen since the Jin and Song.<sup>167</sup>

It was within such a critical milieu Xiao Tong organized the editing of the Wen xuan. Both Shen Yue and Liu Xie became in the last years of their lives members of this literary coterie. Shen Yue had served as Xiao Tong's preceptor before his maturity and Liu Xie later was appointed to Xiao Tong's staff as "chamberlain for the surrogate secretary in the Eastern Palace". The influence Liu must have had on Xiao is neither documented nor discussed. And, exactly when Liu wrote and published the Wenxin diaolong and whether he issued more than one edition of the work is not at all clear. The date of its publication has been placed between 498 and the end of his

life in the early five-twenties.

Though we do not know any details concerning the influence of both Shen and Liu on Xiao Tong's literary thoughts, Xiao clearly reveals in both the general organization of the *Wen xuan* and more particularly in the arguments of his preface an interest in the questions of literary evolution and literary form. One can see in his preface, though it lacks the critical precision and detail found in Liu's and Shen's arguments, the same kind of attention to the abstract identity of literature. The almost modern historical perspective at the beginning of the preface is striking.

W.X.1) Only by examining the beginnings and the origins (of phenomena) does one gain a focused insight into their inner nature. At the time when men dwelt in caves in the winter and in nests in the summer - in those ages when men ate unskinned meat and drank blood - when society was elementary and mankind yet unformed literature had not yet been created. Long ago when Fu Xi ruled the empire he initiated the drawing of the Eight Trigrams and invented writing on bamboo strips and thereby replaced government according to knotted ropes. Because of these changes literary compositions

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sprang up. The Book of Changes says: "Examine the forms of the heavens and thereby determine the transformations of time. Examine the forms of man and thereby transform the world." The temporal principles of form are indeed far reaching!<sup>168</sup>

The final thought is tricky. "The temporal principles of form" might be more clearly phrased as "time's formal principles". They represent the principles revealed in time through trans-formation i.e. the principles of the seasons revealed in time through the transformations of the heavens, the principles of society revealed in time through the transformations of man, and the principles of literature revealed in time through the transformations of literature. The focus of the argument is on the way time reveals its principles through various transformations - one of its principles being the principle of form itself. Xiao's argument reveals a peculiar critical awareness of both the diachronic and the synchronic orders, or of the significance of examining the formal evolution of a phenomenon within time to determine its inner principles. The evolution of human society itself, as he points out, reveals that man's sense of form is fundamental to his own nature. Xiao goes on to specify two kinds of transformations:

W.X.2) If the cart is the prototype of the grand

carriage, the grand carriage should contain the elements of the cart (i.e. there has been a change in outer form but not in inner nature). Expanded ice is derived from accumulated water but accumulated water does not have the frozenness of expanded ice (i.e. there has been a change in inner nature and the principles of ice and water - solidness and liquidness - are not the same). Why is this? Because when one continues the (essential) process one (simply) elaborates the design (but when) one changes the basic nature one adds a (new) force. Since objective reality is like this literature is also. Tracing (literature's) temporal transformations - with difficulty it can be critically understood.<sup>169</sup>

The thought is particularly complex and Xiao's expression is twisty and ambiguous but the basic ideas are clear. One gets the definite impression of a younger mind rather precariously juggling sophisticated ideas which he has heard but not altogether fathomed. Xiao identifies two types of transformations - the one involving a simple elaboration of form and the other involving a fundamental transformation of form i.e. the difference within literature between modes and genres. Within these terms, the Han Fu would represent a new genre related to the earlier Fu narratives sung by blind

singers just as Greek Comedy is related to the choral songs of the phallic procession - while the gu shi (the personal lyric) could be seen as a simple elaboration of the classical Odes. Xiao is pointing to the intricate nature of literary transformations where the correlations between forms are often subtle and not at all apparent if one does not know their actual histories. His assertion that literature represents a natural phenomena which follows the same formal rules found within other phenomena which reveal temporal transformations sets out the critical premise of all mature classicism i.e. that literature is a formal reality which can be observed and analyzed as all formal phenomena can be.

At the end of his discourse Xiao gives us one of the earliest attempts to differentiate literary and non-literary discourses. Discussing why he has not included in his anthology certain types of discourses he says:

W.X.3) As for the histories which record events or the annals which chronicle the years; by means of which one praises or censures what is right or wrong, and records and distinguishes differences and similarities (i.e. their nature is practical) if one compares them with literary compositions they are not the same. But if the fabric of their Judgments and Treatises weave rhetorical patterns, or the

carvings of their Introductions and Evaluations involve literary designs; and their contents are the result of profound reflection and their principles belong to literary elegance (i.e. if because of their formal qualities they can be read as literature), then I have mixed and collected them with the poetic pieces....The whole (anthology) orders the forms of literature - each (composition) is arranged according to (its) genre. Since the Shi and the Fu forms are not one (genre) I have further divided them according to (their) modes. Within the modal divisions each (composition) is arranged according to (its) chronological order.<sup>170</sup>

Xiao's careful attention to both the formal and the historical orders has curiously never, as far as I know, raised any critical interest. His anthology provides for the first time a radical analysis of literary form within its historical structures. The critical significance of such an analysis to literary speculation can not be overestimated. In premodern European and Chinese criticism such a selfconscious treatment of literature's two critical orders finds its parallel only in the Poetics and the Wenxin diaolong. Moreover, his careful distinction between the practical and moral aims of the non-literary discourse and the formal and the aesthetic aims of the literary discourse has

never been given the attention it deserves. The observation is close to modern thought on the subject and echoes Liu's reflections on the evolution of the literary discourse - according to Liu literature first emerged as an autonomous discourse in the early Zhou when "literary form surpassed its content." (viz. chpt.I).

It appears that the idea of literature as a form in time with both structural and historical elements was not clearly articulated in Chinese criticism until the Qi-Liang era (479-556) and that Shen Yue and Liu Xie along with Xiao Tong were among the first major advocates of this "new" criticism.

CHAPTER V

THE WENXIN DIAOLONG & CLASSICISM

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## THE WENXIN DIAOLONG &amp; CLASSICISM

A full defense of the thesis that the Wenxin diaolong represents a coherent and comprehensive classical analysis of literature and that it distinguishes itself from the other pre-modern treatments of literature in terms of its critical focus on the formal realities of the literary discourse - including both its diachronic and synchronic elements - ideally requires an analysis of the whole treatise. But, given the complexity and length of its arguments such an exposition is impossible within the limits of the dissertation. Yet the most concrete and critical way to demonstrate the nature of Liu Xie's arguments is through a translation and analysis of his arguments within the context and the order he establishes. The general tendency within both traditional and modern discussions of his arguments to abstract and isolate them from their logical context and to interpret their meaning within the terms of traditional literary values and beliefs has created real and pervasive misunderstandings.<sup>171</sup>

Given the extreme elliptical qualities of the parallel prose style Liu uses, when isolated from their logical context his arguments (their expression) lack any coherent definition and can be easily misunderstood. This is true, as we have seen, of almost all Chinese thought. The context and the order of an argument in ancient Chinese are far more significant

than they are in ancient Greek or Latin criticism. The language itself which distinguishes neither the gender nor the number of pronouns and often leaves the tense, mood, and subject of a verb (to say nothing of the problems of identifying the verb within a phrase) without definition save that given by the logic of the context depends heavily on contextual significance. Such fundamental paratactical qualities within the language are intensified in classical prose which - with its parallel structures, tropes, and figures - is very close to verse in form. However, such syntactical ambiguity also means that within the best of Chinese critical writing one finds a particular attention to the order and development of an argument. Such an acute sense of context and its logic provides the only structure which allows a Chinese critic to develop more than a pastiche of commonplaces.

As we have already seen, reading a critical discourse in classical Chinese is not like reading the equivalent in Greek or Latin where the primary logic of an argument is normally stated. In classical Chinese more often than not the primary logic is only implied by the context and the order of the observations. Such as is the case with Xiao's remarks above regarding the practical and the moral functions of histories and annals; he does not state that literature, in contrast, replaces these with its formal and aesthetic functions, but

the order of the observations clearly implies such. One literally has to read between the lines. Because of the obvious ambiguities within such a method the writer often develops the logic of his arguments by numerous repetitions and paraphrases. The elements of an argument are repeated in various forms until the essential logic of the argument is clearly laid out - the better the critic the clearer the articulation of the idea. All this requires greater critical effort on the part of the reader than is normally expected in the West. Yet, it does not mean, as has often be argued, that Chinese critical thought is by definition ambiguous or vague.

As we will see, it is within the terms of the order of his arguments and the logic realized by this order that Liu Xie's thoughts become coherent. As Donald Gibbs points out in his dissertation on literary theory in the Wenxin diaolong:

...Liu Xie constructed his book with some of the subtle symmetry of a symphony. While it is true that each chapter uniquely develops an idea, yet, as the work progresses, an idea developed first in one chapter will be seen to recur many times over, but modified somewhat in each successive appearance. There is opportunity in this for apparent contradiction and inconsistency. This difficulty can be surmounted only if the text is approached with

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great care and with system.<sup>172</sup>

It is a shame Gibbs does not heed his own advice. Too often he isolates an argument from its logical context and interprets the thought arbitrarily.

I will limit my discussion and elucidation of Liu's criticism to the first eight chapters including the last chapter which summarizes the treatise and chapters XXVII, XXIX, XXXIII, and XLVIII i.e. thirteen of the treatise's fifty chapters. I have chosen these chapters because the first eight chapters present a coherent critical unit setting out a general poetics and the major poetic genres; the four chapters taken from the final section - which treats individual critical problems - discuss issues which are essential to an exposition of Liu's classicism; and the final chapter surveys the whole treatise. Since the translations of each chapter focus on those elements which most elucidate the nature of Liu's classicism, they are not meant to be definitive. I have often paraphrased arguments, abbreviated details, and at times cut whole sections which are not central to the focus of the dissertation both for the sake of simplicity and of clarity. All such paraphrases, abbreviations, and cuts are marked or indicated in the translations and notes. Also, I do not attempt to discuss historical and literary references except to the degree they are pertinent to the thesis or to a basic

understanding of the argument. In dealing with obviously metaphorical language or other rhetorical aspects of Liu's parallel prose style I have often chosen to translate the simple sense without metaphor or figure. This I consider to be the right of the translator - particularly when the focus is on the argument as such - for the rhetoric of each language is unique and often does not allow literal translation of metaphors. As found at the beginning of the dissertation, I will treat the Poetics when and where its arguments throw a critical light on Liu's arguments.

#### THE TEXT & ARGUMENT OF THE WENXIN DIAOLONG

The Wenxin diaolong contains approximately 37,000 characters and is divided into ten juan, each consisting of five chapters carrying descriptive titles. Liu organizes the treatise into four units - 1) chapters I-IV comprising a general poetics and a survey of literary developments down to Confucius (ca. 500 B.C.); 2) chapters V-XXV comprising a chapter by chapter analysis of the histories and the forms of various literary genres or modes subdividing them into rhymed modes (chpts. V-XIII) and unrhymed modes (chpts. XIV-XXV); 3) chapters XXVI-XLIX comprising as stated above a discussion of various critical terms, concepts, and problems; and finally 4) chapter L presenting a summary of the whole treatise.<sup>173</sup>

I have transposed the final chapter to the position of a preface because it summarizes the treatises's arguments and critical perspective. As a consequence, the chapter is particularly difficult to translate since it presumes a thorough knowledge of what preceded. It is not an introduction but rather an elaboration of critical method and perspective in the most abstract of terms. The first sentence, which represents one of the most significant statements in the whole treatise, instead of explaining the title (The Literary Mind Tracing the Dragon) presumes the reader is familiar with the thoroughly formal and analytical nature of the treatise and elaborates on the title's critical significance. The chapter begins:

#### L.1) Ordering the Composition

As for the phrase "literary mind" (wen xin), it signifies an active consciousness (yong xin) of the (way) a discourse becomes (realizes) a literary form. Long ago Juan Zi (wrote) "Lute's Ken (xin)" and Wang-sun "Diplomacy's Ken (xin)". Consciousness (xin) is indeed beauty; therefore, I have used the term here (in the title).<sup>174</sup>

The whole paragraph glosses the term xin (心) which is the most important and the most difficult term to translate

in the title. Though the word is often translated as "heart" it signifies "mind" or "consciousness" and only "heart" in the sense of the heart as the center of consciousness or thought. As such it is close in meaning to the Greek term "phren" or the Old English term "ken". The two treatises cited, which were apparently written during the Han and are listed in the *Yiwen zhi* of the *Han shu*, have disappeared. They appear to have been manuals on their respective subjects - the lute and diplomacy. Liu cites them because their titles define *xin* within terms of technical or critical knowledge. Among Confucius' writings *xin* is consistently used in the sense of "mind" or "consciousness". The phrase *yong xin* ( ) (心) itself is found in *Analects* XVII.22 where it signifies "active consciousness". Confucius says: "As for one who stuffs himself all day and is not actively conscious (*yong xin*) of anything, rebuke (him) - how?"<sup>175</sup> The phrase, in addition, seems to clearly echo the first line of *Lu Ji's Wen fu* which reads:

Each time I examine the compositions of gifted writers, I flatter myself I can grasp their active (actual) mind (*yong xin*).<sup>176</sup>

The contrast between *Lu's* romantic focus on the writer and *Liu's* classical focus on the discourse I don't believe is accidental. As we have already seen and we will see more clearly, Both *Liu* and *Shen Yue* are acutely aware of the

novelty and the significance of a critical analysis of the literary discourse as such i.e. a critical "consciousness of the (way) the discourse becomes literary form". The sentence, I believe, represents the same kind of critical response to Lu Ji's romantic focus on the genius of the individual writer as the first lines of the Poetics does to Plato's attack on the integrity of the literary discourse. Both critics isolate the literary discourse and its forms as the foci of their respective treatises. As often in Liu's remarks, the comment "Consciousness (mind) is indeed beauty" which at first sight seems a cliché when considered carefully elaborates a major thought which runs throughout the treatise i.e. beauty (aesthetic form) reveals or results from a conscious awareness of the formal relations within and between things.

L.2) Since the earliest times literary compositions have realized their forms by tracing refined patterns. How does this imply taking up Zou Shi's clique's argument on tracing the dragon?<sup>177</sup>

Liu is evidently responding to criticism concerning the formalist implications in the title's phrase "tracing the dragon". He correctly points out that formalism is not peculiar to any literary clique or movement - though some may exaggerate its elements more than others - but common to all literature i.e. literature is by definition both formal and

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artificial. By disassociating himself from Zou and other writers renowned for their obscure and hermetic logic, Liu raises the whole question of whether the phrase "tracing the dragon" refers to the analysis of literature or the composition of literature i.e. whether it is the critic or the writer who is "tracing the dragon"? One can interpret the phrase as signifying either "the writer tracing literary forms" or "the critic outlining the forms of literature". The answer is probably both. Chinese logic is far less concerned than European logic with excluding viable alternatives. Hence, Liu seems to be dissociating himself from the obscurity of both Zou's style and reasoning. Zou Shi followed Zou Yan who was a member of the yin yang cosmology school which flourished during the Warring State period. Si Ma Qian (145-85 B.C.) in the Shi ji tells us:

Zou Yan came after Mencius (372-289 B.C.). Observing that those who held the states were more and more lascivious and extravagant, and that they were unable to esteem virtue, he thought that if the Da ya (a section in the Book of Odes) would regulate them (the rulers) in their own bodies this influence would be passed down to the common people. He then deeply examined the permutations of yin and yang and wrote about their stange and occult transformations. Within the chapters of the Zhong shi and the Da

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sheng (Zou's works) there are more than 100,000 phrases. His teachings are grandiose and not at all catholic. He first examines little things and then conjectures and elaborates until he reaches what is without limit. He sets out to describe his own times by going back to Huang Ti's (a mythical emperor) time and those things which are commonly fabricated by the scholiasts i.e. the overall rise and fall of the ages. Accordingly, he records their (the scholiasts') omens and auspices and inventions. In his conjectures he goes well beyond them (the scholiasts) reaching a time when neither the heavens nor the earth existed - utter obscurities which can be neither researched nor investigated. ... Zou Shi was one of the Zou philosophers of Qi. He sided with and took up Zou Yen's occult science and wrote essays ... Zou Yan's occult science is both vague and grandiose and he argues at great length; as for Zou Shi, (his) formal writings are difficult to elucidate ... Therefore the men of Qi praising (them) say: "talking about the heavens, that's Zou Yan - tracing dragons, that's Zou Shi"<sup>178</sup>

Liu, while insisting on literature's essential formal nature, disassociates himself not only from loose and obscure language but also from ambiguous and hermetic reasoning. From

the point of view of the classical critic, looseness of language and vagueness of thought are anathemas whether in literature or in criticism.

L.3) Space and time are endless and remote and the black haired masses are an indiscriminate melee. To distinguish oneself beyond the common run there is only knowledge and art. The years and the months whirl past; life and sensibility don't stay. Only by creation can fame soar and life's substance fly. Man images in his own form both the heavens and the earth (for) his inner nature has five powers (the senses of the ear, eye, mouth, nose, and mind). One can compare his ear and mouth with the sun and moon and his voice and breath with the wind and thunder. He transcends all other reality in that he is also intelligent. Though his physical form has the same fragility as grass and trees his fame is more durable than metal and stone. Therefore a gentleman residing in this world establishes his virtue (his fame) by composing discourses. "In what way am I fond of precise arguments - I can't help it!" (a quote from Mencius)<sup>179</sup>

The thoughts are complex and require a critical consideration which goes beyond the dissertation. The text is

possibly corrupt or has lost part of its argument - the first and last parts of a manuscript are often the most damaged. The first argument restates Cao Pi's observations on man's existential need to transcend the finite. What is significant in the second argument, from our point of view, is Liu's focus on intelligence (the capacity to perceive affinities and discriminate differences) as the essential principle of human nature and the force behind literary sensibility. The quote from Mencius, which implies - in a classic manner - that his love of verbal discriminations is not accidental but fundamental to his nature, seems to be directed at explaining his own passion for analysis. Here and in what follows, if the text is complete, Liu is guilty of excessive obscurity.

L.4) When I was seven I dreamed of dappled clouds like brocade (a symbol of art - specifically painting). I climbed up to grasp them. One night when I was over thirty I dreamed I held the red lacquered ceremonial vessels and followed Confucius towards the South. In the morning when I woke I was at peace and felt happy. It is indeed difficult to see the sage (Confucius) yet he consented to appear in a dream to someone as little as me. Since the beginning of mankind there has been nobody like the Master (a paraphrase from Mencius). To explicate and to augment Confucius' significance there is

nothing like the commentaries on the Classics, but Ma and Zheng (two famous Han commentators) among the Confucian scholars have already been amply ingenious in their explications. Even if I had some profound interpretations they would not be sufficient to set up a (new) school. But indeed, the process of literature is actually a branch or aspect of the Classics. The five rites rely on them (the Classics) to be perfected; the six government functions (diplomacy, education, rites, administration, punishment, and public works as described in the Zhou li) use them to perfect their functions. As regards that by which the (relation between) ruler and ministers, and the (relation between) state and army are clarified, if one examines their elements and principles, it is clearly the Classics.<sup>180</sup>

This is Liu Xie in his least critical and most personal voice. The thoughts - particularly the last assertion - are too fragmented to be coherent. When he argues that the Classics provide the elements and principles for the political order is he referring to their form or to their content? The implication of his remarks about not having enough new thoughts on the substance of the Classics to comprise a new school of thought is that he considers his treatise on the "process of literature" to comprise such a new school. One

should never underestimate the false modesty of a Chinese writer. One finds the same vice among the Greeks.

L.5) But the Sage passed away a long time ago and (since then) literary form has been both opened up and broken up. The popular poets love the eccentric and in their discourses they prize what is frivolous and bizarre. They think decorated feathers or designs embroidered on belts and girdles (i.e. the purely decorative) are excellent paintings. They are a long way from the essence and prefer to follow that which is deformed and excessive. The Book of Historical Documents analyzing literary language (says) "the value lies in the form's essentials". And Confucius displays throughout his teachings a dislike of eccentric principles. What is particular to both the classical analysis of literary language and to Confucius' teachings is (the idea that) proper form lies in (its) essentials. With this in mind I picked up my brush, mixed my ink, and began to analyze literary form.<sup>181</sup>

Liu does not view literary change or innovation as inherently bad. His remarks about the opening up and breaking up of literary form refer to the facts of literary evolution and development as found within the fu and gu shi genres and

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do not imply that these transformations represent by definition a decline. On the contrary, Liu will make it quite clear that literature without innovation, as Eliot puts it, is not literature. Later, he specifically argues that the transformation of literary form found in the *Li sao* (ca. 300 B.C.) represents a major literary innovation and that such development is essential to the tradition. Also, as is apparent in his analysis of the eight primary elements of literary style (chpt. XXVII) which includes the eccentric and bizarre, even his criticism of the extremism found among popular poets does not mean that he considers such extremism as intrinsically inappropriate to literature. It is only inappropriate when it is not seen for what it is - an extreme aspect of literary style. Though at times Liu over states his case he recognizes that the value of a mean does not exclude extremes. The point about the popular poets is that they know nothing else and have no idea what the essentials are or where the mean lies. Liu is not, as has been argued, rejecting formalism and asserting the values of literary pragmatism and didacticism, rather his remarks about the deformations of the popular poets and the value of the "form's essentials" assert a critical formalism.

L.6) When one scrutinizes and examines those among the moderns who have analyzed literary form - they are indeed many. As far as Cao Pi's (187-226) *Shu*

dian, Cao Zhi's (192-232) Xu shu, Ying Yang's (ob. 217) Wen lun, Lu Ji's (261-303) Wen fu, Zhi Yu's (ob. 312) Liu bie, and Li Chung's (fl. 323) Han lin - each one illumines a small section (of literature); few examine the whole story. Some evaluate the talents of their own time, others select and categorize the literary forms of earlier writers, others vaguely set out the characteristics of the refined and the vulgar styles, and still others abstract and summarize the themes of the literary compositions. Cao Pi's essay is finely reasoned but not comprehensive; Cao Zhi's letter is discriminating but not precise; Ying Yang's analysis is beautiful but carelessly reasoned; Lu Ji's fu is artful but fragmented and confused; Zhi Yu's Liu bie is subtle but trivial; and Li Chung's Han lin is shallow and lacking essentials. There is also Huan Tan (25-220) and Liu Zhen (fl. 200) and their likes, Ying Zhen (fl. 400) and Lu Yun (fl. 400) and their group - they discuss in a vague manner form and meaning. Yet every once in a while their (critical) distinctions are exceptional. Nevertheless, they are completely incapable of stripping away the foliage (i.e. accidentals) so as to investigate the roots (i.e. the essentials), or of examining the waves (i.e. the forms) so as to uncover the sources (i.e.

the principles). Since they do not articulate the arguments of the earlier cognoscenti they do not advance the thoughts of later generations.<sup>182</sup>

Liu's selfconscious review of critical thought from the Han to his time displays an acute awareness of its formal limits and of his own critical objectives. As is apparent within his astute evaluations of Cao Pi's and Lu Ji's criticisms Liu clearly views criticism as a comprehensive and analytical discipline. Moreover, his observations regarding the pervasive absence among earlier critics of any systematic analysis of the elements and the principles of literary form sets out the major focus of his own treatise. In addition, his final remarks concerning the way criticism advances critical thought of later ages reveals a distinctly progressive vision of the tradition in which the critic's prime responsibility is to critique the evolutions of form and thought within the tradition. The next section sets out more or less the sequence of arguments as found in chapters one through fifty.

L.7) As regards the make-up of the Wenxin (Literary Mind) - its (the literary mind's) principles are found in the natural order (the dao - what the Greeks called the logos or the logic of the cosmos); its tenets are found in Confucius; its forms are found in the Classics; its limits are found in the

Apocrypha; its transformations are found in the Sao  
(Li sao of Qu Yuan ca. 300 B.C.).<sup>183</sup>

The above section sets out an abstract of the first five chapters which represent a general poetics. I have translated dao as "natural order". Though it is normal in the West to emphasize the irrational or a-rational aspects of the term as found in some Daoist writings, I believe such an emphasis ignores and distorts the term's basic meaning i.e. a "way", "method", or "order". Liu, as a Confucian and Buddhist, lays stress on both the rational and the formal nature of the dao.

L.8) Surely, (after chpt.V) the focal points (the genres) and the structures (of literary form) also have been exhaustively discussed. As far as analyzing verse and discussing prose - their basic divisions (rhymed - unrhymed) have been differentiated and their modes have been separated out. It traces their origins so as to display their developments, and explicates their terminology so as to clarify their principles. It cites literary pieces so as to define their compositions, and expounds on their internal logic so as to reveal their structural unities. Thus in the first part (chpts. I-XXV) the formal structures (of literature) are clarified.<sup>184</sup>

Liu divides the first part of his treatise into an abstract analysis of principles (chpts. I-V) and a concrete dissection of forms - examining their historical, theoretical, and formal elements (chpts. VI-XXV). His analysis of the final section of the Wenxin which deals with critical terminology, concepts, and problems is more problematic. The order of the ideas Liu summarizes does not in all cases follow the order of the final chapters as we now have them. It is generally believed that the original order of the last twenty five chapters has been corrupted which compounds the difficulties in determining the precise logic of each chapter. Moreover, critical terminology in all languages is often impossible to translate and one has to settle for clumsy and partial approximations.

L.9) As far as chopping up its (literature's) aspects and dissecting its affairs - it comprehensively outlines (them) and systematically runs through (them). It sets out (literary) imagination and temperament (chpts. XXVI & XXVII?); maps out voice and style (chpts. XXVIII, XXX, & XXXI?); ties together critical knowledge and sensibility (chpts. XXIX, XLI, XLII, XLIII, XLIV, XLVI?); and examines prosody and diction (chpts XXXII, XXXIII, XXXIV, XXXV, XXXVI, XXXVII, XXXVII, XXXIX, XL?). It gives special attention to

(literature's) alternations in "The Chronological Order" (chpt. XLV); sets out (my) critical opinions in "The Range of Talents" (chpt. XLVII) "; carefully expresses (my) overriding concerns in "The Critic" (chpt. XLVIII); and clarifies (my own) discriminations in "Aligning the Parts" (chpt. XLIX). The "Post Face" elaborates (my) inner most reflections and marshals the collected chapters. Thus in the second part (chpts. XXVI-L) the generals and the details are elucidated. To establish the inner logic (of a formal phenomena) and to abstract its nature the number (of chapters required) has been revealed in the "Great Change" (in the Book of Changes). Only forty-nine chapters make up its (this treatise's) treatment of literary form.<sup>185</sup>

The above section, given the questions surrounding the original order of the last twenty five chapters, provides a excellent example of the difficulties of interpreting Liu's arguments when one is not exactly sure to what they refer. There is almost no consensus regarding its precise meaning. Nevertheless, the main thought is clear - Liu states that in the second part he has comprehensively and systematically treated literature's major critical aspects and affairs which he defines as literary imagination and individual temperament, voice and style, critical knowledge and sensibility, prosodic

and rhetorical analyses, the diachronic order, critical evaluations, the problems of objective criticism, and finally his own personal discriminations. His focus moves from objective analysis to subjective opinion i.e. from deduction to induction. In the Book of Changes is found the statement: "The number for a great explication is fifty but it uses (only) forty-nine". In that context the numbers refer to the number of yarrow stalks used to calculate a divination.

L.10) To evaluate and to lay out one type of literature is easy, but to comprehensively analyze the full range of literary discourses is difficult. Although frequently it (the treatise) belittles (literature's) outer finery, it takes its inner structures very seriously. At times one will find twisty thoughts and hermetic reasoning; though they appear at hand (i.e. easy) they are a long way off (i.e. difficult). Moreover, the phrases which don't work (don't convey their thought) are more than one can count. As regards its discriminations or comments on perfecting literary form, when they are in accord with what has been formerly said it is not simply an echo - the judgement itself can not be altered; when they differ with earlier analyses it is not merely to be different -the principles themselves can not be admitted. Whether they agree

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or disagree - it has nothing to do with "ancients" and "moderns". In splitting up (literature's) fibers and differentiating its inner forms the sole purpose has been to dissect its heart (proportions). (The treatise) reins in (defines) the field of literary refinement and encircles (unifies) the treasure house of elegant designs. Though the expectation is perfection nevertheless the discourse does not exhaust the thought -(even) Confucius found this difficult. If one's critical knowledge is limited to a jar or a tube how can one rectify the measurements. Given the fact that endless past ages have distilled my senses, in distant future generations is it possible that this examination will be (mere) dust?

#### the Zan

Life has its end only critical knowledge is without an end. To seek out a thing's reality is difficult; yet to go along with the bent of our temperament is easy. Haughty and stubborn (like) a rock in welling spring (continuously) I chew over the principles of literary form. When the effects of literary form occupy (my) mind - my mind has found its mission.<sup>186</sup>

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The Zan represents a verse paraphrase of the argument which caps each chapter. Liu's selfconscious awareness of the hyper subtlety and the pervasive ambiguity of his elliptical language raises an interesting question concerning the value or significance he put in such minimalism. From a modern point of view the ellipticalness seems perverse. The response that parallel prose requires such avoids the real question - why does Liu choose to discourse on literature's formal aspects in such a non-discursive style? Possibly the Chinese better understood the real tendency in all cultures towards passive thinking or dullness, and consequently viewed the text as a provocation. Whatever the reasons might be and despite the verbal ambiguities, there is a distinctly personal and provocative voice running throughout the best of Chinese thought which contrasts sharply with the impersonality of the Western discourse. Liu's dogged fascination with the critical nature of the literary discourse comes through in a dramatic manner one seldom if ever hears in Aristotle. The disparaging remark about "ancients" and "moderns" represents the clearest statement, I know, in either tradition of classicism's indifference to vulgar traditionalism and stylish modernism.

As Liu reminds us himself his treatise is often excessively elliptical and individual arguments highly ambiguous yet the general focus and overall logic are more often than not clear. I do not pretend to have accurately

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interpreted every point. I am often bewildered by what Liu is trying to say but when confronted with the choice of accepting a standard interpretation which ignores the actual language and reduces the thought to a banality or a contradiction, or of leaving the question open I prefer the latter. A typical example of such arbitrary interpretation is found at the beginning of section five above where Liu writes "But the Sage passed away a long time ago and (since then) literary form has been both opened up and broken up." The last part of which Vincent Shih translates: "...and orthodox literary style has declined". The remark is often quoted as a typical example of Liu's conservative sentiments which fly in the face of his progressive values. The text says nothing of the sort and the idea is precisely the opposite. Liu is not guilty, as he has been accused, of falling back upon a didactic or pragmatic understanding of the literary discourse.<sup>187</sup>

The logic of the post-face can be divided into five sections -1) a discussion of the title's focus on critical knowledge, 2) a discussion of the significance of literature and its formal elements - including his own dedication to such, 3) an analysis of literary criticism from the Jian-an period down to his own time formulating the comprehensive and analytical nature of the Wenxin, 4) an analysis of the content and the logic of the treatise, and 5) a personal statement regarding his own fascination with the questions of

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literature's principles.

#### WENXIN CHAPTER I

In the first chapter entitled "Deriving the Dao (natural order)" Liu poses the most difficult of critical questions - what is the fundamental nature of literary form? The chapter analyzes the idea and the history of literature in its most abstract terms. It, therefore, presents some of the most enigmatic sections in the treatise. I have attempted to articulate the arguments as coherent critical thoughts which reflect the level of intellectual precision found in the rest of the text but I admit here more than anywhere else a sensible interpretation requires a thorough understanding of the most subtle elements of Liu's thinking. In his typical minimalist manner he outlines major ideas which are only critically developed later within the treatise as a whole. One needs, in a sense, to work backwards to unravel the riddles. The following translation presents a tentative approximation.

Liu develops his argument around an analogy between the idea of literature and the idea of the ultimate order (the dao). As pointed out earlier the Chinese idea of the dao is homologous to the Greek notion of the logos. The essential differences are that the Chinese term signifies primarily a "way" or a physical order while the Greek term signifies

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primarily a "thought" or a logical order. These differences allow Chinese thought to articulate more easily the analogies between the aesthetic order and the ultimate order of reality as realized within time and space, and, on the other hand, Western philosophy to focus more clearly on the analogies between language and reality. Both the dao and the logos signify the formal or intellectual order which underlies the physical world as we know it. Within each culture they represent, in a sense, nature's mind or what has traditionally been called the transcendental order observable both in the simple movements of things and the complex evolution of the universe. As a Confucian and a Buddhist Liu focuses on the dao as an intelligible and formal order very close to what in Europe is called the "natural order".

I want consider more carefully the tendency within Chinese thought and language to consider logic as an extension of aesthetics or vice versa. In Chinese even the term for reason or logic "li" (理) - which from time to time I translate as "order", "logic", "principle", or "structure" - essentially signifies an organic relation of parts to the whole. In contrast to Western thought, which artificially divides logical and aesthetical orders, Chinese thought includes within the concept of wen (文) signifying aesthetic form both aesthetical and logical relations. I believe the Chinese point of view is essentially more accurate or at least

less misleading; in fact, the orders of logic and art simply represent different aspects of the same idea for both are based upon the perceived relationship of parts to the whole. Logic, on the one hand, focuses on abstract ideas as linguistically predicated and the perceived relations of one idea to another, while art focuses on the empirical elements of sound, form, and language and their perceived relations. Although in each case the parts and the wholes are fundamentally different, nevertheless, whether one analyzes the logical order of stars in the universe or the aesthetic order of sounds in a piece of music one is dealing with the relation of parts to the whole based upon certain perceived affinities i.e. the capacity to recognize and to analyze form is common to both criticism and biology. When Liu argues that all the relationships within the universe are formal relationships and as such they are analogous to those perceived within art he is simply pointing to this fact and playing with an analogy between dao signifying the perceived order within the universe and wen signifying the perceived order within art. Both orders represent manifestations of the intellect.

#### I.1) Deriving the Dao (natural order)

The way aesthetic form (wen) realizes its virtue is indeed great. Why do we say that it (aesthetic form)

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was coexistent with the creation of the heavens and the earth. Because all colors are combinations of yellow (color) and black (colorless) and all shapes can be divided into the square and the round; and by the cyclical movements of the moon's and sun's disks we set out and structure the image of the heavens and by the brilliantly delicate patterns of mountains and rivers we articulate and order the appearance of the earth. These are simply the aesthetic forms (wen) of the natural order (dao).<sup>188</sup>

The titles of each section are almost impossible to translate definitively because of the inevitable syntactical ambiguity when a Chinese phrase is isolated from a full sentence. I have chosen to treat the title as a verbal clause interpreting yuan - meaning "source", "origin", or "cause" - as a participle signifying "sourcing" or "analyzing the fundamental nature of". One could equally as well treat it as a noun clause and translate the title as either "Origin's Dao" or "The Source - Dao". Liu begins his treatise as Aristotle does by setting out his primary subject and critical point of view. The noun phrase "The way aesthetic form (wen) realizes its virtue" isolates the process of art as an abstract phenomenon and focuses the treatise on an analysis of aesthetic form; the phrase should be compared with the introductory phrase within the postface (L.1) "the way the

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discourse realizes its literary form". Though later wen signifies specifically literary form, here it is used as a synecdoche for aesthetic form. The analogy between Liu's assertion that aesthetic form coexisted with the creation of the universe and the judaeo-christian notion of the coexistence of the logos with creation is striking. None of the commentaries indicate the source of Liu's assertion and, on the whole, they ignore its significance. The examples of the formal orders of colors, shapes, the heavens, and the earth do not represent logical relationships but rather organic or structural relationships and as such reveal the tendency within Chinese thought to see the world in such aesthetic terms. This is particularly the case with "the appearance of the earth"; if the reader is not familiar with the formal elements of Chinese landscape painting, which emerged in Liu's time as a new art form, the idea remains obscure. Yellow and black are synecdoches standing for the three primary hues (red, blue, yellow) plus black and white. Liu is simply stating that reality is by nature formal or that every thing has its formal elements; literature represents one of the formal affairs which make up the world. The sum total of forms is called the ultimate order - the dao.

I.2) By scrutinizing the shining lights on high (stars & planets) and examining the finite phenomena below we abstract out the upper (eternal) and the

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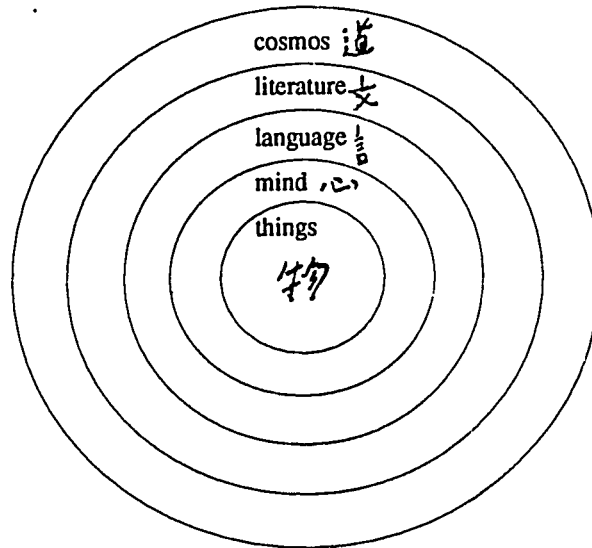
lower (temporal) states, which consequently give rise to the two norms (yin & yang - the positive and the negative). Man alone comprises a third; (for) that which contains intelligence we call the third force. It (intelligence) represents the refinement of the five actions (elements); it actualizes the mind of the universe. When consciousness (mind) is created then language comes into existence - when language comes into existence then literary form appears. This is nature's ultimate order (dao).<sup>189</sup>

This is not the place to discuss Liu's metaphysics. From our point of view the important aspect of the argument is its focus on the intellect as man's primary quality and its assertion that the intellect represents a finite manifestation of the transcendental intellect or mind which governs the universe. Both ideas are uncannily close to Aristotle's thoughts on the same.

Incrementally developed and spread out over the entire treatise Liu elaborates a theory concerning the formal relationship of things, mind, language, and aesthetic form, as progressive manifestations of the dao. The theory reveals the sophisticated nature of his reflections concerning the nature and the relation of the mind, language, and literary form. Though I will discuss some of these ideas as they are

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found in later chapters the whole theory requires an independent examination. A summary outline of Liu's thoughts can be schematized in the following diagram:



The theory represents one of the most interesting ideas in Liu's treatise. The belief that the mind, language, and literary form represent progressive realizations of the ultimate order is not only close to Aristotle's thoughts concerning the relation of literature to language (Aristotle also argues that literature represents, along with philosophy, an ultimate perfection of language) but it gives literature as such an absolute mandate independent of any moral values it may or may not contain. Liu's assertion implicitly denies the didactic argument that literary form is accidental or represents simply a convenient or persuasive means for

conveying moral, political, or religious values. The theory that literary form represents the ultimate manifestation or perfection of the human intellect asserts, in as absolute terms as is possible, literature's formal or critical autonomy. Moreover, throughout the treatise Liu identifies literary form not only as literature's principle element but as its essential virtue. Liu now precedes to reiterate his central thesis that the universe reveals its ultimate order through various formal patterns culminating in literature.

I.3) Taking into consideration all reality - both animals and plants reveal aesthetic forms. Dragons and phoenixes present omens by means of their intricate designs; tigers and leopards with their stripes and spots embody various temperaments; the traced hues of clouds have a subtle artistry which surpasses that of the painter; and the vibrant symmetry of plants and trees does not depend on the wonders of embroidery. How are these (mere) external ornaments? Surely they represent nature itself! Even the flute like sounds of the forest can be compared in their melodies to the organ and the zither, and rocks in a mountain stream can stir up harmonies comparable to jade and metal chimes. Consequently, (in nature) when physical shapes arise then formal patterns are realized, and when sounds are produced

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aesthetic forms are created. Now if things without sensibility contain to such a intricate degree expressive forms how could it be that that thing with sensibility (man) has no aesthetic forms?<sup>190</sup>

The argument might appear simplistic but Liu's analogies between symbolic and aesthetic reasoning are both complex and sophisticated. As we will see, he views the two modes of thought as homologous and considers the symbolic logic found within the hexagrams as a formal precursor of art. The connection between symbolic and aesthetic reasoning is close; both art and prophesy are based on a perception of formal affinities. But, Liu's lack of skepticism regarding symbolic reasoning does irk the modern mind. Perhaps his observation represents a more coherent way of understanding the evolution of the human mind than is found in the West where logic is artificially differentiated from both aesthetic and symbolic reasoning. Liu responds to the objection that the formal patterns which man perceives in nature are simply imposed on nature by his mind and therefore are not real, by pointing out that intelligence itself represents a natural phenomena deriving from and expressing the very essence of reality. The critical point of the argument is that the patterns or forms apparent in nature, as in art, do not represent mere decorations but express the very essence of each phenomena. For Liu, man's aesthetic consciousness is as essential to his

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nature as the unconscious forms of trees and plants are to those plants and trees. He places, as Aristotle does, the identity of art within the very essence of man's mind, and the identity of that mind within the very essence of the universe.

I.4) The source of man's (sense of) aesthetic form derives from the Ultimate Structure (of the universe). "Obscurely clarifying (assisting?) the intellect (shen ming)" the images of the Book of Changes represent the first (manifestation). Fu Xi (one of the three legendary emperors) laid out its beginnings (the eight trigrams) and Confucius set out its conclusions (the commentaries). Moreover, for the Qian and the Kun (the first two hexagrams signifying respectively male and female i.e. the positive and the negative forces within the universe) he explicitly composed the "wen yan" (discourse on form). The aesthetic form (wen) of the discourse (yan), indeed, represents the mind of the universe.<sup>191</sup>

This is Liu Xie at his thickest. Each sentence needs extensive commentary. As he tells us himself, often his thoughts appear close at hand but when examined are profoundly abstruse. He is condensing into a couple of sentences a complex metaphysics concerning mind, language, literature, and

the natural order. The distinction between "discourse" and "form" as found in the title of Confucius' commentary on the first two hexagrams of the Book of Changes, which Liu interprets as referring to the aesthetic form of the discourse, is important; he will return to it later. Liu effectively divides literature into two essential elements - form and discourse. The literary discourse reveals the mind of the universe because it realizes its ultimate manifestation. In Liu's scheme the telos of the universe is not simply the mind but more explicitly the literary mind. Though Confucius never says such or at least never in such unambiguous terms, I believe Liu's theory of wen (literary form) as representing the ultimate manifestation of the dao comes very close to articulating what he (Confucius) had in mind when he speaks of wen as the ultimate truth (cf. Anal. IX.5). Liu now surveys the historical development of aesthetic expression from the earliest records of divination to the first traces of the literary discourse. The critical assumption is that the synthetic images or symbols of divination - the hexagrams - represent the first manifestation of man's aesthetic sensibility and therefore are the precursors of literary form. Liu is not arguing that the written characters evolved from the trigrams or hexagrams, but he is saying that the formal sense of synthetic relations found within such symbolic systems of divination is homologous to the formal sense of aesthetic relations found within

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literature.

I.5) Now, as for those diagrams of the Yellow River giving birth to the eight trigrams (hexagrams) or those books of the Luo River containing the nine sections (commentaries), or the verity of those jade plates and gold engravings or the fabrication of the red characters and green tablets - who, in fact, realized them (the eight trigrams and the nine sections)? Indeed, they represent the intellect's (shen) structures and nothing more. (i.e. they are a natural product of the mind) .<sup>192</sup>

The Shang-shu zhong-hou wu he ji, an apocryphal work quoted by Ma Guo-han in the Yi shu, contained the statement "A dragon in the Yellow River presented the diagrams and a tortoise in the Luo River carried the Books. These, in red characters and on green tablets, were given to the Yellow Emperor."<sup>193</sup> Liu is alluding to such apocryphal Han tales regarding the mythic origins of the eight trigrams and the nine sections. He is, apparently, (he could be a good deal clearer) rejecting such fantastic explanations and ascribing their origins simply to the devisings of the intellect i.e. Fu Xi's and Confucius'. Liu's point is that the synthetic structures found in the Book of Changes simply represent, as he later insists literature's forms do, the natural products

of the human intellect, and, as such, are a direct manifestation of the dao. Liu now begins his survey of the earliest literary texts.

I.6) When bird tracks (written characters) first replaced knotted ropes and literate characters began to appear (then) the affairs of Yen and Hao (legendary Emperors) were recorded in the San fen. But, because that age and generation are extremely remote their phonetic patterns cannot be retraced (i.e. the characters are illegible). In the Tang and Yu periods (legendary Emperors) literary compositions spread and flourished. The Yuan shou documents (in the Shu jing) the (first) song since it sets out the mode of a chanted or intoned (composition), and the Yi ji sets out (in the Shu jing) the (first) advice and thereby transmits the memorial's style. After the rise of the House of Xia the metier (of the writer) became lofty and the craft profound; when the Qiu xu (in the Shu jing) became song (then) refinement and elegance were esteemed virtues. Coming down to the Shang and the Zhou dynasties, literary form surpasses its content; the Ya and the Song (as found in the Book of Odes) are so dressed out that their beauty and adornment

are daily renewed.<sup>194</sup>

The story is that the written characters derive from the elements of bird tracks - what we might call "chicken scratches". Liu had apparently seen some ancient texts purporting to represent the San fen which is mentioned in the Zuo zhuan and was considered to represent the records of the eight legendary Emperors.<sup>195</sup> His remark about not being able to retrace "their phonetic patterns" seems to refer to the problems of identifying variant forms of a word in a writing system which is only minimally phonetic - he could also be referring to the tonal patterns i.e. the prosody. This represents a major problem in deciphering Shang and Zhou bone and bronze inscriptions. As is evident throughout the treatise, Liu is critically aware of the historical changes in the writing system and the written and spoken language and the problems these changes present in interpreting and understanding the ancient texts. Such a self-conscious awareness of language in both its grammatical and phonetic aspects is peculiar to the Wenxin. Nevertheless, he does accept the highly doubtful traditional ascriptions to the Xia dynasty (2205-1818 B.C.). The earliest evidence of a writing system appear to date from the Shang dynasty (1766-1154 B.C.).

Liu's remark about literary form surpassing its content at the end of the Shang and beginning of the Zhou periods is

important and problematic. Later he states that "the language" of the earliest poetic discourses written before the Zhou period "only communicates ideas and nothing more" (chpt.VI) i.e. they have only partially realized their formal literary nature. Exactly what he means by "literary form surpassing its content" and "the language only communicates ideas and nothing more" is not altogether clear and needs closer examination. Here, he appears to be underlining the importance of form within the literary discourse and to judge the Ya and Song Odes on the basis of their articulate literary form as the first mature and autonomous literary discourses. The argument implies that when form becomes focal to the discourse then the literary discourse, as distinct from the non-literary discourse, emerges i.e. the literary discourse is essentially a "formed" discourse. As Xiao Tong notes above, the non-literary discourse communicates facts, opinions, and values, while the literary discourse communicates literary forms. Such a focus on form, however, does not mean that Liu considers content unimportant; content has, as he later discusses in detail, a significant formal importance. Romantic and didactic critics make the same mistake when they argue that literature's force or value lies outside its formalities; they fail to see that it is precisely an attention to literary form in all its aspects which defines literature. Liu concludes his survey of the development and perfection of the literary discourse with an evaluation of literary compositions

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traditionally dated between the end of the Shang dynasty (ca.1100 B.C.) and Confucius (ca. 500 B.C.). It was evidently during this period that the poetic discourse along with the classical music was first perfected and collected within the Book of Odes. Such an articulation represented, as Liu points out, a major turning point in the evolution of both literature and criticism.

I.7) When King Wen (ca. 1140 B.C.the founder of the Zhou dynasty) was in trouble his oracular compositions (semi-poetic commentaries found in the Book of Changes) were brilliant. Their reciprocal patterns (parallelism) are intricate and their repetitions subtle; his refined principles are both solid and profound. Then Dan, the Duke of Zhou, (ob.1104 B.C.) elaborated (literature's) qualities. He composed Odes and compiled the Song (section of the Book of Odes). He hewed down (perfected) their elegance and grouped the discourses. And, finally Confucius picked up the traces of the other sages and single handedly refined (the discourses of) the earlier intelligentsia. He molded and regulated the six Classics so that they would resound like the brasses and resonate like the chimes. (Thereby), he traced out and perfected (their) nature and articulated (their) rhetorical rules. Once the

wooden clappers (the norms of literary form) were sounded, for a thousand li they were echoed; his influence after ten thousand generations will still resound. By delineating the luminous splendor of the universe (i.e. wen - literary form) he enlightened mankind's eyes and ears (senses).<sup>196</sup>

The stories about King Wen and the Duke of Zhou might be true. Though modern archeology tends to date both the Book of Changes and the classical Odes later, in fact, we know little or nothing about the critical milieu which must have surrounded their compilations. As in the case of Homer, judging the emergence of literacy from archeological remains poses, I think, some highly questionable assumptions. When written literature first appeared in Greece or in China it was most likely realized within a tiny intellectual coterie which would leave little or no archeological traces; such an intelligentsia could well remain isolated and invisible within the society for several generations - this seems to be the case with the earliest biblical writings. Liu's argument concerning the significance of Confucius' articulation and regulation of literary form represents both a radical and an anti-didactic interpretation of the tradition. He clearly identifies Confucius' attention to and perfection of wen (literary form) as the critical element within the tradition. Such an interpretation inverts the traditional relationship

of literary form to meaning (i.e. moral dogma) as it is found among the Late Han critics; he explicitly asserts that it was the aesthetic revolution brought about by Confucius' focus on literary form which enlightened and continues to enlighten mankind. Liu's adjectives and metaphors are seldom idle. As he himself points out, what often appears to be a purely rhetorical display when examined closely reveals a complex thought. This is particularly true of adjectives or nouns referring to light and sound. Throughout the treatise such metaphors consistently allude to the sensory qualities of aesthetic form. In addition, when Liu argues "By delineating the luminous splendor of the universe he enlightened mankind's eyes and ears (senses)" the verb "delineating" (xie 寫), signifying both describing and producing an visual image, is commonly used to define the actions of both the writer and the painter. It is not simply what Confucius wrote but how he wrote it - its literary form - which enlightens "mankind's eyes and ears". The "luminous splendor of the universe" clearly represents a metaphor for both wen and dao; according to Liu's cosmology, wen realizes the dao's ultimate manifestation i.e. they are correlatives. In the Analects Confucius's influence is compared to that of the wooden clappers which are used to rouse and assemble the people.

The above sections provide good examples of the extreme concision of thought found throughout the Wenxin. To make

sense of Liu's arguments the reader has to carefully keep the primary logic of each section and chapter before his eyes; his language is never idle and each statement or allusion is intended to fit precisely into the larger argument. The traditional interpretations paying little heed to such subtle and idiosyncratic reasoning tend to generalize and, as a consequence, to fragment Liu's thoughts. Though, as stated above, from time to time I am bewildered by his ellipses and not at all sure what he has in mind, nevertheless, when the interpretations reduce the language to idle statements or to purely rhetorical displays they are obviously inadequate. Liu's mind consciously avoids the looseness and vagueness of reasoning pervasive throughout Lu Ji's Wen fu and typical of most traditional Chinese criticism. He concludes the chapter with a summary review of its argument.

I.8) Starting from Fu Xi - the subtle sage who invented composition - down to Confucius - the king without a crown who detailed (its) teachings (i.e. of wen) - all (the literati) delved into the mind of the dao (the ultimate order) and thereby arranged their literary compositions. They examined the structures of the intellect (shen) so as to establish its (wen's) doctrines. (First) taking up the images found in the Book of Changes and speculating by means of the milfoil and tortoise

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shell they examined the formal patterns (wen) of the heavens in order to fathom its transformations, and (finally) investigated man's aesthetic forms (wen) in order to realize cultural evolution. Subsequently thus they were able to warp and woof the empire, to thoroughly analyze its (wen's) rules and norms, and to establish and spread the profession (of the writer) and the principles of elegant and brilliant language. Therefore, it is clear that the dao (the ultimate order) was passed on to Confucius through the literary forms which had been handed down; and, through Confucius literary form, in its turn, made manifest the dao. It (literature) continuously evolves without limit, and can be practiced daily without being exhausted. The Book of Changes says: "the moving force which rouses the universe resides in language"; as to "that language by means of which one can rouse the universe" - that means the literary form of the dao (i.e. literary form which is the manifestation of the dao).

#### the Zan

The Dao's mind is subtle; the intellect's structures articulate its (wen's) doctrines. Bright is the subtle sage (Confucius) and brilliant are humanity

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and piety. The Book of Changes revealed its (wen's) basic form and the commentaries disclosed its (wen's) appearances. That heavenly form (literature) (once) it was scrutinized (by Confucius) then all the people were vitalized.<sup>197</sup>

Behind "...they examined the formal patterns of the heavens in order to fathom its transformations, and (finally) investigated man's aesthetic forms (wen) in order to realize cultural evolution." there lies a complex theory of social evolution in which the cognitive aspects of divination and of art are seen as homologous, and the critical understanding of the norms of change as essential to cultural evolution. As noted earlier, the notion that art functions as a catalyst for social and cultural evolution is peculiar to Chinese aesthetics. Though Aristotle recognizes the facts of literary evolution, nowhere does he directly assert - though he implies it - that innovation is essential to art's nature, or that such a capacity for transformation represents its (art's) effective social force. For Liu, however, literature's aesthetic qualities function as the warp and woof of society by enlightening man's senses and, thereby, actualizing his nature.

Whether or not Liu's interpretation of the phrase lifted from the Book of Changes (I.348) represents what was actually

meant within the original context is unimportant.<sup>198</sup> His idea that language represents the ultimate manifestation of the natural order, and that literature realizes language's ultimate virtue is both interesting and, I think, generally correct. Even from a modern evolutionary point of view, the human mind represents, without a question, the universe's most amazing product, and language and art obviously represent two of the most powerful perfections of that mind. Liu clearly views literature as a progressive force within society and gives to literary speculation or innovation a mandate which ultimately derives from the dao itself. The "structures" (li ~~理~~) of the intellect represent simply the forms realized by the human mind - the most perfect being (according to Liu) the aesthetic forms of literature. He considers the symbolic forms found in the Book of Changes as the earliest manifestation of man's synthetic or aesthetic genius.

The chapter reveals the critical limitations of the Chinese philosophical discourse. Though, as pointed out earlier, a dialectical tradition with its focus on logical and coherent discursive reasoning began to develop in China during and after Confucius' time, the dialectical discourse as such independent of and distinct from both the practical and the literary discourse never fully matured as it did in Greece. Consequently, Liu's thoughts are obscured by excessive metaphor and ellipsis which though appropriate to poetry only

hobble and confuse an analytical argument. The reader has to seek the logic behind his statements. Such obscurity lends his arguments to gross over simplifications and has caused considerable misunderstandings.

The first chapter sets out the treatise's focus - literary form, and presents Liu's theory concerning the correlations between mind, language, literary form, and the cosmos. Within this argument Liu traces the earliest developments of literature and criticism through Confucius outlining the critical aspects of his own analysis of the literary discourse. The comprehensive and the sophisticated nature of Liu's literary reflections find their equivalent, before modern criticism, only in the introductory chapter's of the Poetics. Although the methods and subjects of each treatise are strikingly different, both critics isolate and focus on literature's formal nature as a part of art or aesthetic reality as a whole and attempt to explain the nature and function of art within the terms of the human intellect.

The differences in manner and mode between Liu's and Aristotle's arguments are no where more apparent than in the introductory chapters of the two treatises where each critic presents literature in its most abstract terms. In contrast to Liu Aristotle begins his analysis of poetry by identifying its logical aspects. The argument, in a strict dialectical

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manner, first isolates poetry's identity within its genus - art - and then proceeds to logically analyze that identity. Though Aristotle does not directly concern himself with the formal relations between mind, language, literature, and the ultimate order as does Liu his arguments do imply a concept of such a larger order. Such a contrast between Liu's synthetic treatment of the formal or metaphysical questions raised by literary form, in which the logical relations between literature and the other arts are neither examined nor discussed (though implied), and Aristotle's careful isolation of poetry's identity within art's logical divisions - painting, music, etc. - sets out the major methodological differences between the two treatises. Even Liu's attention to the aesthetic nature of literary form as a whole versus Aristotle's attention to the action of art - mimesis - mark fundamental differences in critical perspective.

Aristotle, within his analysis of mimesis, attempts to identify that process which essentially distinguishes aesthetic form from other forms i.e. he attempts to logically isolate what is peculiar to the action or function of art, or how art represents reality in a manner which is essentially different from other representations. Though Liu's analysis of aesthetic form implies such a distinction - i.e. the distinction between art and illustration or literature and description - he does not discuss its logical qualities as

such.

#### ARISTOTLE'S POETICS CHAPTERS I-IV

After setting out his subject and methodology (translated above) Aristotle begins his analysis of the logical aspects of poetry.

1.2) Narrative compositions (epopoia) and the composition of the tragedy and also the comic and dithyrambic compositions (i.e. literature) and most of the flute compositions and all of the lute (i.e. music) are essentially mimetic compositions as a whole (class). They differ from each other in three ways. For, they image (mimeisthai) either by different means (mediums), or different objects, or differently and not in the same manner.<sup>199</sup>

In Aristotle's time the epic had not yet distinguished itself from the general tradition of narration. As we will see later, Aristotle employs the term epopoia both as a generic title for poetic discourses and as a title for epic narrations. The term essentially means "verbal compositions"; the word "epos" itself was commonly used to signify both a "word" and a "verse line".

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The distinction between the flute and the lute compositions seems to derive from the fact that the flute can and was at times used in Greek performances to imitate natural sounds - bird sounds etc. Such simple imitations, as is also the case with illustrations or common photographs, do not create an abstract and autonomous formal image of reality and therefore are not "mimetic". Contrary to the common understanding of mimesis, such formal abstraction represents the sine-qua-non of art; art does not involve a simple reproduction but rather a formal inter-pretation. The sounds of the lute are distinctly less like natural sounds than those of the flute and therefore normally only produce an abstract image of reality i.e. of certain emotions and temperaments.

This raises the fact, which I will discuss in greater detail later, that mimesis in the Poetics does not signify "imitation" in the sense of copying or reproducing reality as it does for Plato but rather in the sense of "imaging" reality i.e. creating a abstract and autonomous formal image of reality. In contrast to Plato, Aristotle is critically aware of the fact that art involves a formal inter-pretation which is not at all the same thing as a mirror image. Mimesis transforms reality by means of the elements or dynamics of each of the three primary media - time (rhythm), space (harmony), and discourse (logos) - and the artist as such,

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whether musician, poet, or painter, is by definition critically aware of this transformation. The notion that art involves a simple imitation in the Platonic sense is based on the fallacy that the artistic image and the reality represented are essentially identical i.e. the function of a painting of an apple is to reproduce the apple. Such a naive and ultimately senseless notion of the aesthetic image requires both the artist and the critic to ignore or to sublimate the essential differences between the media and the reality. The artist on the other hand, as Aristotle points out, isolates and focuses on these differences.

Not all of the following sections of *Poetic's*, which treat the various problems arising from the division of the arts according to medium, subject, and manner, are relevant to a definition of mimesis and a discussion of Aristotle's classicism. I will, therefore, only discuss those sections which are pertinent or reveal the nature and quality of the critical arguments. Though the subject of the *Poetics* - Athenian tragedy - is considerably more limited than that found in the *Wenxin*, which discusses all the genres, nevertheless the comprehensive manner in which Aristotle analyzes tragedy's nature and elements reveals an exceptionally coherent classicism. He continues his analysis of the mimetic modes including music, painting, and literature.

1.3) For, just as some image many things by modeling with colors and shapes (i.e. painters) - some critically so (i.e. critically aware of the medium) and others intuitively - other people do it through sound (both musical and vocal i.e. poets and musicians); so in all the above arts (music, literature, & painting) one composes the aesthetic image in rhythm, in discourse, and in harmony [i.e. the primary media are time (rhythm), language (logos), and space (harmony signifies the relations of contiguity)] and by means of these (media) either separately or in a mix. Thus the flute and lute compositions and others which happen to be of essentially the same nature, such as the compositions of the Syrix, use only rhythm and harmony (i.e. they are without a discourse). The compositions of choral dancers compose their images through rhythm alone without harmony. For, it is through structured rhythmic figures they image temperaments, sentiments, and actions.<sup>200</sup>

Though Aristotle later defines prosody as a type of rhythm and distinguishes it from music (which includes both rhythm and harmony) it is not clear whether he differentiates phonetic and musical sounds as Liu does. The isolation of

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literature within the aural arts (i.e. "imaging" through sound), as is true of Liu's critical attention to literature's phonetic elements, radically objectifies literature's formal nature. Aristotle's attention to musical form is particularly important. Music does not copy reality but rather abstractly expresses it through formal musical "images" composed of sound's abstract elements (rhythm & pitch). Music, therefore, does not imitate sound as a natural phenomena but rather articulates it as a formal medium. The two part division into the visual and the aural arts needs to be examined more carefully. I interpret "all the above arts" as including the visual arts but Aristotle might be focusing strictly on the aural arts (i.e. music & literature). Painting obviously represents a purely spacial medium in which the relations of contiguity or the "harmonies" of color and form represent its aesthetic elements. In a strict sense, it has neither rhythm nor logos. The absence of any discussion of the aesthetics of painting - specifically what is the nature of its "harmonic" elements - represents a major critical lacuna. Also, the statement that dance involves strictly rhythmic units is problematic; from a modern point of view Aristotle ignores the obvious spacial or harmonic dynamics of dance, but possibly Greek dance also ignored those elements.

Aristotle's three part division of aesthetic form into temporal, logical, and spacial relations is both subtle and

complex - particularly logos - and requires far more discussion than I can give it here. As is the case with Liu's observations regarding the relations of mind, language, and literary form, it is curious how little critical attention the analysis has been given. Else skims over the statement and does not appear to understand at all what Aristotle is arguing.<sup>201</sup> The recognition that language as a discourse (logos) represents an aural medium which can be formally distinguished from music and may or may not include within its aesthetic forms harmony or rhythm gives the literary discourse an objectivity it has seldom, even within the modern period, been granted. As noted throughout the dissertation, an analysis of the discourse's formal identity - including both its historical and its structural elements - is fundamental to a mature classicism.

The following section is particularly problematic - the text may be corrupt - and clearly reveals the type of problems which arise when the critic tries to logically isolate the identity of literature within the formal elements of the discourse. The whole section represents Aristotle's critical response to Georgias' assertion that the literary discourse stripped of its meter represents a common discourse. He wants to isolate and to define the poetic discourse independent of its prosody and as distinct from but homologous to both musical and pictorial compositions. The following translation

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only sketches a possible interpretation.

1.3) The verbal (literary) composition (epopoia) whether only in prose language or in meters - and that either combining different meters or using one type of meter -has not had, until now, a common (generic) name (i.e. the generic name is epopoia). For, we had no common name for the mimes of Sophron and Xenarchos and the Socratic discourses; not even if one composed the aesthetic image with trimeters or elegiacs or other such meters (i.e. there was no generic name for the literary discourse independent of its meters). Except that men would combine the meter with the word "to compose" and call them "elegiac compositions" or "epic compositions" as if arguing that one is a poet on account of the meter and not on account of the mimesis (the aesthetic image). For, if one should produce something either in medicine or in physics using meters one would call it such (i.e. an elegiac composition etc.). But, there is nothing in common between Homer and Empedocles except the meter. Therefore, it is only proper to call the one a poet and the other a natural historian. And equally, if one should compose his aesthetic image mixing all the meters as Chaereon composed the Centaur - a rhapsody

combining all the meters - one should still call him a poet. Concerning these matters let one distinguish (the literary and non-literary discourse) in this manner. There are some (art forms) which use all the (three) media mentioned. I mean they use such (media) as rhythm, song (harmony), and verse (discourse) - such as the composition of dithyrambs or nomos, and the tragic and comic compositions (which combine musical, choral, and poetic elements). They differ in that some use all (the media) at the same time and others section by section (i.e. they mix or separate out dance, music, and discourse). I mean that within the various arts these (rhythm, harmony, and discourse) represent the differentiae by means of which they (the arts) compose an aesthetic image.<sup>202</sup>

Aristotle's remarks about Empedocles and Homer are somewhat glib - though generally correct. As is evident in the case of Lucretius' *De Natura Rerum*, one could read Empedocle's composition as a literary discourse. The critical question is whether one views the discourse as a simple expression of information and ideas on natural history or as a complex formal image of such. If the sole focus of the discourse is to convey information and thoughts, Aristotle's assertion that Empedocles' composition shares nothing in common with Homer's

except the meter is in part correct.

The remark about the Socratic dialogues is interesting. Aristotle appears to be arguing, in his usual laconic manner, that Plato's dialogues belong essentially to literature and not to philosophy i.e. they do not represent simple logical arguments but complex dramatic images. All this involves a critical sense of the literary discourse as a distinct mode of discourse with its own forms and its own functions. When he notes that meter is neither essential nor unique to the literary discourse he is not arguing that literary form is accidental but rather that metrical form alone does not define the poetic discourse. The brevity of the whole argument, as with Liu, leaves a number of points unclear. One would wish for far greater clarity as to exactly how the mimetic elements of the literary discourse distinguish it from the practical and the theoretical discourse and in what way these elements are homologous to those found in both music and painting. Despite the logical nature of his treatise Aristotle shares with Liu the same tendency to neither elaborate nor explain the primary theoretical terms of his argument - such as mimesis, harmony, etc.. Both treatises were obviously viewed as a part of a larger oral community within which such technical problems could be studied and discussed at leisure.

I will pass over the following section where Aristotle

discusses the differences of subject found in tragedy and in comedy. The argument seems to me one of his weakest points. The distinction between noble (*spoudaion*) and vulgar (*phaulon*)<sup>203</sup> characters has all the vague psychological and moral implications of a romantic argument and lacks any precise formal definition - the real distinction seems to be between levels of deformation of the commonplace in art where Old comedy images the absurd, Middle comedy the quotidian, and tragedy the extra-ordinary. The problem is to find a terminology which is equally applicable to music and to painting and does not confuse the formal aesthetic elements of art with the moral and political elements of society. In the above case, Aristotle's terms tend to blur the distinction between the aesthetic image and social reality i.e. moral or class values.

It is in this and the following sections Aristotle shifts, without notice, the significance of mimesis from the aesthetic image in general to specifically the literary image as found within the narrative tradition i.e. the action or the plot. He has been accused of being unaware of or indifferent to the other literary modes such as the lyric which do not focus on a unity of action. I find it difficult to believe, given the overall acuteness of his analysis, that Aristotle could have been unaware of a major poetic mode. He speaks more than once of Archilochus and the other lyric poets. It seems

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more reasonable to believe that he simply chose in the Poetics to focus on the narrative mode because it reveals from Homer to Sophocles a clear formal evolution.

Chapter III, which deals with the questions of manner, presents within its traditional interpretations a number of questions which underline the critical differences between Aristotle's and Plato's arguments and reveal the subtle shift in critical point of view which marks that moment when, in Tate's words, "the center of critical interest...(shifts) from the genetic and moral judgement to the aesthetic, from the subject matter and the psychology of the author to the language of the text."<sup>204</sup> i.e. the shift from viewing literature as a vague extension of the dramatic and psychological reality of the writer to viewing it as a formal linguistic phenomena with its own elements and principles. This involves the corollary recognition that though literature is related to the writer as writer it is, nevertheless, independent of the writer as individual.

The tradition almost without exception has interpreted Aristotle's modes as effectively a restatement of Plato's divisions - i.e. the narrative (pure and mixed) versus the dramatic - what Plato calls the "mimetic". This involves a curious contradiction. Plato limits or reduces the mimetic act, as he does art in general, to the simple act of copying

or reproducing. Though his division of modes into the narrative and the mimetic represents in part a logical distinction of voice, if analyzed, it does not represent a formal distinction of literary voice. In fact, the division confuses the most obvious distinctions among the literary modes. The lyric in as much as it presents the poet as speaking i.e. is not impersonation, according to Plato's logic would be a narrative mode, but in as much as the lyric persona speaks in the first person it would be a mimetic mode. The dithyramb which Plato describes as a narration of the poet himself (apangelias autou tou poietou R.394c) is not a personal narrative but a pure narration.

For Plato, as we have seen, the poem does not represent an independent and formal reality with its own principles and elements - it is merely the poet-rhapsodist (Ion) "acting". He does not analyze the poem per se but rather the act of the reciter as if the recitation itself represented the poem's formal reality. His distinction between the poet speaking in his own voice or impersonating the voice of another has nothing to do with literary voice; it differentiates the rhapsodist's voice - Ion's - according to whether he impersonates or narrates when reciting. Within Plato's analysis the poet as composer is ignored therefore his divisions do not identify direct and indirect narration or the actual voice of the poet as found in Homer's "my swineherd"

or "sing for me, Muse...". He treats the poet simply as an actor who recites. From this point of view poetry itself lacks any formal identity.

For Aristotle, however, - as for Liu - the poem has a clear formal identity and its own principles and elements. This point is made quite clear in chapter VI where Aristotle points out that a tragic composition realizes its own formal nature independent of both actors and performance; the argument represents a pointed rejection of the whole Platonic premise. Consequently, Aristotle's differentiation of literary modes should reveal real distinctions of literary voice independent of both the recitation and the rhapsodist. Why Else and other critics have consistently overlooked the fundamental contradiction between Plato's and Aristotle's points of view, as is the case with all simplistic traditional interpretations, can only be explained by critical indifference or naivete.

When we examine the text of Aristotle's argument the Greek along with the traditional Platonic interpretation raises some real questions. The standard Bude translation reads:

Il y a encore entre ces arts une troisième  
difference qui tient à la maniere d'imiter chacune

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de ces objets. Car par les mêmes moyens et en prenant les mêmes objets on peut imiter en racontant (ou on raconte par la bouche d'un autre, comme fait Homère ou on garde sa personnalité sans la changer) ou en présentant tous les personnages comme agissant, comme "en acte".<sup>205</sup>

The questions center around what have been traditionally translated as three independent coordinate clauses following *apagellonta*. Each clause is introduced by the conjunction *e* (or). The problem is that all three clauses lack, if independent, their necessary verbs; "ou on raconte...", "ou on garde...", "ou en présentant..." represent interpolations on the part of the translator. Else accurately points out that the traditional interpretation forces the syntax in an impossible fashion.<sup>206</sup> Not only are the clauses clearly not independent clauses but the three conjunctions indicate a three part division. And, the first clause can not mean "impersonating someone else" the verb *gignomenon* does not signify impersonation (not to mention the fact that Aristotle does not consider the act of the poet as equivalent to that of the rhapsodist i.e. Homer does not impersonate - he composes in direct or indirect discourse), and the neuter pronoun can only with extreme ambiguity refer to someone. The phrase "*ti gignomenon*" represents a common idiom signifying "an event" cf. chpt.XIII 1453a16. To keep the interpretation -

"What else could it mean?"<sup>207</sup> Else protests - he excises the first clause, substituting his own interpolation, but leaves the last two clauses without verbs. He feels that the Platonic interpretation is beyond question and opts for radical emendation and a forced reading to maintain it. All attempts to maintain the traditional two part interpretation require the critic to gloss over the lack of the appropriate verbs in the three clauses and the complete illogicality of their order.

There is an alternative which is both syntactically sound and I believe sensible. The three clauses can be read, without emendation, as object clauses of the verb *apaggelonta*. In this case Aristotle is using the verb in its generic sense "to recite" or "to present a recit"<sup>208</sup> and not in its more restrictive sense of "to narrate" as is found in the noun form *apaggelia*. It is important to note that the more common term in the *Poetics* for a narration is *diegesis*. The verb *apaggelonta* then signifies the general action of the poet whether epic, lyric, or dramatic each of whom composes a literary recit. Even in English there exists no simple verb which can express without ambiguity the common action of both the narrative and the non-narrative writer. Such an abstract notion of the literary discourse within all its modes as representing a single type of action on the part of the writer is consistent with the critical distinctions noted in chapters

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I & VI where Aristotle discusses the literary discourse as a general class and later distinguishes between the play as a recit and the play as a performance. The sentence would then read:

III.1) For it is possible in the same media to image the same things while reciting, in one case, an external event as Homer does; or, as it were, oneself without transposition (i.e. without indirect discourse as Sapho does); or all those imaged as both acting and actual (i.e. dramatically as Sophocles does).<sup>209</sup>

"Reciting... an external event" is precisely what Aristotle means when he points out that Homer seldom intrudes his "self" upon the narration; he - the poet - remains invisible and outside the narration. This division clearly represents the narrative or "epic" discourse. "Reciting..., as it were, oneself without transposition" is simply what Sapho and the other lyric poets do when they speak directly in their own voice i.e. the lyric discourse. The "as it were" seems to indicate that Aristotle is critically aware that the first person lyric persona, in fact, represents a fiction. "Reciting... all those imaged as both acting and actual" obviously represents the dramatic discourse. Aristotle effectively divides the literary discourse into three types

of recit according to fundamental differences of literary voice or point of view - i.e. the narrative, the lyric, and the dramatic. His analysis in general and here in particular rejects Plato's identity of the literary discourse with its recitation or performance and focuses on the formal elements of literary voice. Though all this requires further discussion, such an interpretation clearly makes better sense of the text itself and is more consistent with Aristotle's overall point of view. Though the section is elliptical and one would wish for greater elaboration, Aristotle's isolation within the literary discourse of the objective, subjective, and dramatic voices reveals a careful objectification of literary form as such.

The contrast with Plato who confuses the most essential elements of the literary discourse is striking. Clearly the formal differences between the compositions of Homer, Sophocles, and Sapho represent differences of manner or of voice. Each poet composes a recit which involves an action essentially different from that of the rhapsodist who simply recites the poem. When Achilles speaks it does not represent Homer impersonating the voice of Achilles but rather a shift within the composition from indirect to direct discourse. Would any respected critic today describe the difference between Swann or Odette speaking in direct or indirect discourse as that between Proust speaking or Proust

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impersonating the two characters? Today, we correctly identify - as Aristotle does - the formal elements of literary discourse as independent of both its recitation and the writer. Homer only speaks when he speaks in his own voice - "my swineherd" etc. - and this, as Aristotle points out, he rarely does. The absurdity of Plato's modes which confuse the voice of the rhapsodist with that of the poet and fail to identify the formal elements of the literary discourse has been curiously glossed over.

The two points of view - Aristotle's and Plato's - are fundamentally opposed. Despite the general recognition of this opposition there is a persistent Platonizing bias within the traditional interpretations of Aristotle. Plato discusses the affective aspects of literature as a dramatic event. He considers the poet a kind of actor and ignores the formal aspects of poetry per se. Aristotle, on the other hand, analyzes the principles and structures of poetry as a formal phenomena. When one discusses what each critic means by mimesis the interpretations should reflect these essential differences of perspective.

Aristotle concludes his discussion of the formal aspects of the aesthetic image by shifting the focus to drama - specifically to Athenian tragedy.

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III.2) The aesthetic image is (divisible) into these three differentia, as we said at the beginning - into media, objects, and modes. So that from a certain point of view Sophocles as composer is comparable to Homer - they both image the extraordinary, but from an other point of view he is comparable to Aristophanes - they both image dramatic characters acting.<sup>210</sup>

The following discussion of the historical origins of the terms tragedy and comedy represents Aristotle's first sustained examination of the diachronic order and the questions of literary evolution. The historical perspective represents a fundamental element within all Aristotle's arguments. As pointed out above, a critical attention to literary history is essential to a mature classicism which more than any other kind of criticism focuses on literature as a historical phenomena. Liu reveals the same sort of fascination with historical details and the facts of literary evolution.

III.4) From whence some say comes the name "drama" because they image men "acting" (drontas). Therefore, the Dorians make a counter-claim to both tragedy and comedy (the Megarians, both those from here, claim comedy on the grounds that it originated

in the period of their democracy, and those in Sicily - the poet Epicharmus was from there, antedating Chionides and Magnus by a good deal - and some of those in the Peloponnesis claim tragedy) citing the names as evidence. They say that they call their outlying villages komai and the Athenians call them demoi: the assumption being that "comedians" were so called not from their "reveling" (komazein) but from their roaming from one village (kome) to another, being driven out of the city in contempt; and that for "acting" or "doing" they use the verb "dran" while the Athenians use "prattein". Concerning the differentia of mimesis both their number and their nature let them be defined within these terms.<sup>211</sup>

As we will also see in the *Wenxin*, Aristotle, after touching briefly on the general theoretic premises of his analysis, moves quickly to a concrete examination of tragedy and its history. Both critics tend to focus on a precise analyses of particular forms and individual works and to avoid general theoretic discussions along with loose evocations. However, at the beginning of chapter IV Aristotle briefly discusses the general significance of mimesis and its role within human nature before entering upon a detailed examination of the developments and the structures of Athenian

tragedy. Such a theoretic discussion of literature's ultimate nature and its function within human affairs can be juxtaposed with Liu's discussion of the ultimate relationship between literature and the dao. As pointed out above, both critics place literature at the very heart of man's nature and see it as a direct expression of the intellect.

The essential ambiguity within the traditional interpretation of mimesis as "imitation" has long been recognized. Most recently Dupont-Roc and Lallot in their excellent translation and commentary opt for "representation", pointing out that "imitation" obscures the important distinction in Aristotle's argument between "l'objet-modele" and "l'objet produit" i.e. the recit. The distinction is fundamental to Aristotle's argument; the recit as a formal reality is both independent of its subject and obeys its own rules.<sup>212</sup> But the term "representation" is too narrowly associated with drama to express without other ambiguities a fundamental action of art. The interpretation also ignores the real semantic questions surrounding the term itself.

Imitation can signify a "copying" - reflecting the Platonic idea of art as the shadow of reality, or it can equally well signify an interpretation - Ezra Pound used it in this sense when, responding to criticisms of his "translations" of Propertius, he argued that they were not

translations but rather "imitations". Within these terms art is viewed not as representing a simple reproduction of reality but rather as a metaphorical equivalent or inter-pretation of the same. Clearly for Aristotle mimesis involves a complex process of equivalency where the transformation of common reality within the aesthetic media is both real and significant. But, exactly how or in what terms Aristotle defines this problematic relationship needs to be examined more carefully.

The question of the real relation between art and reality, I believe, represents criticism's most difficult question. Even today we have only begun to examine the actual nature and function of art's "deformations". The simplest and most important question concerning mimesis is what are the possible alternative meanings common to the term and its derivatives, and do they or can they signify the problematic relationship which exists between art and reality? The *Thesaurus Graecae Linguae* defines the term "mimema" with the latin term "imago".<sup>213</sup> To summarize a complex history and intricate argument, it is generally recognized that imitation and its derivatives (imitate, imitative etc.) and imagination and its derivatives (image, imagination, etc) are cognates of mimesis through a process of metathesis i.e. im < mim. Therefore, both the passive and the active modes - imitation & imagination - represent possible interpretations of mimesis

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and its derivatives.

The tradition of interpreting mimesis with the passive cognate "imitation" derives from a curious argument in Plato's *Republic* where Socrates persuades Adimantus, after considerable difficulties, that from a certain point of view mimesis represents a form of copying.<sup>214</sup> Adimantus has real problems following Socrates' reasoning. It appears that the term "mimesis" even in Plato's time normally did not signify a simple copy or reproduction but rather an abstract or metaphorical interpretation involving a clear distinction between the object imaged and the image - as is the case today with the modern term "mime". One has only to consider the extreme artificiality present within the masks and costumes of Athenian tragedy and Old comedy to realize that the term did not signify, at least in its dramatic context, a simple copying. In brief, Plato creates a reductive argument derived from the false syllogism - since to copy is to imitate; and to image is to imitate; therefore, to image is to copy. Adimantus is reasonably confused by the equation. As Plato has a reason for analyzing poetry from the point of view of the rhapsodist so he also wants to eliminate any consideration of the formal transformation realized within the mimetic process. To admit that poetry creates an independent and autonomous image of reality would contradict his didactic argument.

The simple substitution of "imagination" for "imitation" at the beginning of chapter IV, where Aristotle discusses the nature of mimesis, results in a strikingly different argument. The new argument is both more coherent and more in line with Aristotle's general psychology and his focus on the intellectual nature of art. Though such an interpretation of mimesis raises questions which go well beyond the limits of the dissertation - an examination of mimesis in the Poetics requires a dissertation in itself - the simple fact that within the terms of "image", "imagination" etc. Aristotle's analysis of art becomes, for the first time, critically coherent is significant. To elucidate the differences between the two interpretations I will again juxtapose my translation with the standard Bude translation.

IV) La poésie semble bien devoir en general son origine a deux causes, et deux causes naturelles. Imiter est naturel aux hommes et se manifeste des leur enfance (l'homme differe des autres animaux en ce qu'il est très apte à l'imitation et c'est au moyen de celle-ci qu'il acquiert ses premières connaissances) et, en second lieu, tous les hommes prennent plaisir aux imitations.

Un indice est ce qui se passe dans la réalité: des etres dont l'original fait peine à la vue, nous

aimons à en contempler l'image exécutée avec la plus grande exactitude; par exemple les formes des animaux le plus vils et des cadavres.

Une raison en est encore qu' apprendre est très agréable non seulement aux philosophes mais parallèlement aussi aux autres hommes; seulement ceux-ci n'y ont qu'un faible part. On se plaît à la vue des images parce qu'on apprend en les regardant et on déduit ce que représente chaque chose, par exemple cette figure c'est un tel. Si on n'a pas vu auparavant l'objet représenté, ce n'est plus comme imitation que l'oeuvre pourra plaire, mais à raison de l'exécution, de la couleur ou d'une autre cause de ce genre.

L'instinct d'imitation étant naturel en nous, ainsi que la mélodie et le rythme...<sup>215</sup>

IV.1) There appear to be two causes in our nature which produce the art of poetry and they are essential to our nature. For the act of imagining is intrinsic to humans from childhood and by it they differ from all other animals - being that they are the most imaginative and gain their first understandings through imagination. All humans

delight in expressive images.

Evidence of this is found in experience: what we find painful to look at we delight in when contemplating perfectly articulated drawings of the same - such as obscene beasts and cadavers.

The reason for this is that the act of understanding is not only for philosophers the sweetest of pleasures but for all humans - though, for some the pleasure is less demanding. Therefore, one delights when looking at the drawings because when contemplating them one comes to understand or to syllogize what each thing is - such as "that man is this sort of man". If one has not seen (the imaged) it is not the expressive image (as image) which gives the pleasure but rather the execution i.e. the painting itself or other such causes (this represents the normal aesthetic pleasure one derives from a formal painting - abstract or figurative)

Given the fact that the act of aesthetically imaging along with harmony and rhythm are intrinsic to us...<sup>216</sup>

Man is clearly not the most "imitative" animal. Dogs are

far easier to train. He is, though, the most imaginative. It is clearly the image making capacity which is peculiar to man. Aristotle must understand the paradox involved in saying that man gains his first understanding (mathesis signifies comprehension) of things through "imitation". If that were the case dogs would do so too. It is important to note that Aristotle does not argue his case, as is generally translated, within the terms of simple recognition but rather within the terms of both contemplation (theorountes) and comprehension (mathanein). Otherwise the analogy with philosophy makes no sense. The problem with the interpretation of mimesis within the terms of "imagination", "image" etc is the lack of an adequate verb to express the action of art. "to imagine" is not adequate. The poem does not "imagine" its action or its thought. It is necessary, therefore, to coin from the noun "image" the causative verb "to image" signifying "to cause or make an image". The poem then "images", in the case of Epic and tragedy, an action, or, in the case of the Lyric, a thought. The equation "Plot represents an imitation of the action." would now read "Plot represents an image of the action." Within these terms, the relationship between art and reality is precisely that between the image and the imaged; This relationship does not represent a simple equation or reproduction but rather a complex adequation similar to that discussed in modern structural analyses of the symbol and the symbolized.<sup>217</sup> As Aristotle implies, it is the sensible

affinities - involving both differences and similarities - between the image and the imaged which give pleasure. For, art whether literature, music, or painting clearly does not represent, as Plato argues, a simple repetition i.e. the mind when responding to art does not simply repeat the same image - where is the pleasure in that? But rather, as Aristotle indicates, when looking at the aesthetic image the mind reflects on the transformations and correlations present within the image as image. The sine-qua-non of mimesis for Aristotle appears to be precisely such a formative transformation of reality as realized within the aesthetic image. In turn, this transformation - i.e. the formal differences between the image and the imaged - arouses in man contemplation or reflection. A simple reproduction or copy of reality by definition ignores the critical differences between the image and the imaged, and therefore arouses neither contemplation nor reflection. A dog is quite capable of recognizing simple images but not at all capable of reflecting on the transformations present within those images nor of realizing that "this man is such a man". Aristotle refuses to confuse the poet with the actor or poetry with common reality.

To define the effect the aesthetic image has on man's mind Aristotle develops a curious analogy with the syllogism - "they come to understand or to syllogize what each thing is". It is significant that all the translations I have seen

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suppress the analogy. I don't believe the usage is casual. The dynamics of the syllogism by which two independent but related logoi create a third related but independent logos are central to Aristotle's thought. Logic in the largest sense can not and should not be restricted to reductive reasoning. It can and does involve all the terms of logos, which include both metaphor and symbol. In the most fundamental sense both metaphor and symbol are logical. Again, a full analysis of Aristotle's argument goes well beyond the limits of the dissertation. Yet, it is quite clear that Aristotle does not reduce the aesthetic image to a simple duplication of reality. He is critically aware of the complex and problematic nature of the transformation realized by art and that it is precisely the formal differences between the aesthetic image and the reality imaged which define art's force.

The example of the anatomical drawings is most peculiar and important. The argument rejects the Platonic assumption that the pleasure of mimesis is simply the pleasure of the content or subject matter per se. This assumption represents a common fallacy within the didacticism which views literary form as accidental. By disassociating the subject - "obscene beasts and cadavers" - from its image Aristotle is disassociating aesthetic effect from content. The subject - the object imaged - is by definition ugly or unpleasant but the effect of the image is aesthetically pleasing. This

difference between the imaged and the image involves a fundamental transformation and that transformation, as pointed out above, clearly represents, for Aristotle, the essential action of mimesis. He describes the transformation, in part, within the terms of the "perfection" of the image - *eikonas tas malista ekribomenas*.<sup>218</sup> The verb "ekribo" signifies "to articulate" or "to order sensibly". The motion, therefore, from the non-sensible to the sensible defines, in part, the transformation realized within the aesthetic image. Aristotle later, in chapter VII,<sup>219</sup> defines ugliness as that which is unintelligible i.e. man finds things ugly when he cannot perceive any sensible relation of parts to the whole. Mimesis, then, realizes a coherency in the image which was only potential within the imaged. Man delights in this perfection because, according to Aristotle, man *ᾧ* nature seeks to understand. Clearly for Aristotle, as for Liu, the poetic image does not simply reproduce reality nor can the critic evaluate it as he evaluates common reality - i.e. obscene beasts and cadavers. For both critics literature's nature is essentially formal and its dynamics are comparable to those of the metaphor.

The final juxtaposition of mimesis, harmony, and rhythm is important. As we have seen, in the first chapter Aristotle states that all the arts realize their mimesis through rhythm, harmony, and logos either separately or in combination. In

this section having shifted his focus to the narrative and dramatic modes in literature and an analysis of mimesis in poetry he leaves out logos. It seems clear that poetry by definition includes logos i.e. poetry represents the logos's mimesis. Aristotle has apparently also shifted the focus of mimesis to now signify specifically the mimetic process within literature. Such a casual and uncritical shift in the meaning of a technical term is characteristic of almost all premodern arguments; it is common to both Liu and Aristotle.<sup>220</sup> Harmony, rhythm, and logos (now literary mimesis), as pointed out, divide art into three independent aesthetic structures - that of space (harmony i.e. the relations of contiguity), that of time (rhythm), and that of language (logos). The juxtaposition implies that the action of all three forms are analogous i.e. sounds in time create a rhythmic form, as shapes in space create a harmonic form, and as discourses in the intellect create a "logical" form. Therefore, the aesthetic action of logos in poetry (mimesis) is analogous to the aesthetic actions of both harmony in painting and rhythm in music. The forms of rhythm and harmony are based upon the perception of the affinities within their respective structures - sounds and shapes. Later in chapter XXII,<sup>221</sup> Aristotle tells us that the quality of metaphors found in a poem indicates the level of poetic genius because metaphors measure the capacity to perceive affinities. Liu is even more detailed within his analysis of the poem as a kind of metaphor. For both critics

the poem stands to reality precisely as the vehicle stands to its tenor in a metaphor.

The analogous aspects of Aristotle's discussion of the nature and function of mimesis in human nature and Liu's discussion of the relationship between the ultimate order and literary form are found in both the degree to which each critic has abstracted the literary discourse as an aesthetic phenomena and the focus of their analyses on the intellectual nature of art. Each critic recognizes the essential differences between the literary and the non-literary discourse and focuses on literature's formal nature examining in detail its history. In addition, each attempts to articulate the problematic relationship between art and reality within the terms of an adequation - Liu within the terms of symbolic reasoning and Aristotle within the terms of the "aesthetic image"; and finally, each critic rigorously avoids the fallacies of didacticism and rarely falls back on loose evocations - Aristotle less often. There are also general philosophical beliefs which are common to both critics. Liu's notion that literature represents the ultimate perfection of the cosmos and of man's intellectual nature, and Aristotle's notion that the philosophical instinct unique to man underlies the particular pleasure man takes in the aesthetic image involve essentially the same beliefs. The critical speculations set forth by each critic concerning the

identity of literature within the fundamental principles of the mind finds no parallels in either tradition until the modern period and even then rarely.

## WENXIN CHAPTER II

After having established in the first chapter the focus of his treatise on literary form (wen 文), Liu attempts in the second chapter to demonstrate that such an attention to the formalities of literature represents the focal interest of Confucius himself. This concern with establishing the pedigree of his argument - which in fact involves a radical re-interpretation of the tradition - is peculiar to Chinese criticism. The arguments, of necessity, often seem to the Western mind both superficial and forced, and they are at times rhetorical. Yet, within the context of traditional Confucian didacticism they represent some of Liu's most radical interpretations. His emphasis on literary form clearly represents if not simple heresy at least a critical disregard for what, as already pointed out, was presumed to be the very essence of Confucian doctrine i.e. the literary discourse is essentially a moral discourse. Isolating certain ideas found among the remarks attributed to Confucius concerning literary form Liu effectively re-interprets the tradition. He argues that Confucius not only recognized the virtue of literary form per se but, more precisely, perfected and established

literature as the norm for cultural and social evolution. Literature, Liu argues, both reflects and forms society through its capacity to innovate and to evolve i.e. to constantly renew itself. Whether or not Confucius focused on literary form as both a measure of and a catalyst for social change is historically correct or not is unimportant. What is important in terms of Liu's criticism is the value and significance he gives to literary form.

The chapter is primarily a series of citations and allusions to phrases taken from the Analects each of which to be fully analyzed requires a thorough examination of both Liu's overall logic and the logic of the phrase within its original context. Such an analysis - given the problematic state of our understanding of both texts - would go well beyond the limits of the dissertation. Therefore, I restrict myself to a minimal yet hopefully coherent interpretation of Liu's arguments pointing out how they reiterate or develop the critical points of the preceding chapter. I ignore the real questions concerning the original meaning of the Confucian texts interpreting the citations simply as the logic of the context demands and the grammar allows.

#### II.1) Citing Confucius as Evidence

It might seem self evident but it is curious how little

recognition among the critical commentaries has been given to the fact that the evidence being cited in this chapter is evidence for the primary argument of the preceding chapter regarding the radical significance of literary form. Once the critic dissociates Liu's arguments from their particular context the language can be given almost any meaning.

II.2) As the writer - they say he (Confucius) is divine; as the critic - they say he is brilliant. The skill to both fabricate and to mold inner natures (essences) resided within the Superior Philosopher (Confucius i.e. he was all three - a writer, a critic, and an artist). "Confucius' literary form can be both grasped and understood" (a quote from Analects V.12) Therefore, the inner sentiments of the Sage are made manifest within the terms of his formed discourses.<sup>222</sup>

"Within the terms of his formed discourses"<sup>223</sup> seems to represent Liu's own argument i.e. that the essence of what Confucius had to teach is manifest in his literary form and his critical attention to literary form. Liu focuses on Confucius as a writer and a critic.

II.3) The vocal tones (prosody) and teachings of the

First Sovereigns are set out in parallel strips (i.e. set out in poetic form), and Confucius' voice and style abound in recherche expressions (literary tropes).<sup>224</sup>

In all the following citations Liu presumes the reader knows the classical texts by heart and he only quotes their first elements changing in part their structures. For the modern reader to clarify Liu's thought it is necessary to quote the whole sentence intact. The citations present Confucius' evaluations or discussions of literary form (wen).

II.4) Therefore he extensively praised the Tang period (when literature first began to flourish) (saying - A.XVIII.19): "It was glorious in its possession of literary compositions"; and coming down to his own time praised the Zhou period (when literary form surpassed its content) (saying - A.III.14): "An elegance of elegance is found among its literary forms. I follow the Zhou." These are proof of the value he gave to literary form (as such) in both government and culture. When the earl of Zheng entered Chen, he (Confucius) believed it was his mastery of rhetoric which brought him success (Chunqiu, 25/7.2); and when the people of Song entertained (Wen-zi from Zhao), he (Confucius)

said they excelled in ritual because they took literary form seriously (idem, 25/7). These are proof of the honor he gave to literary form (as such) in both social affairs and merit. When praising Zi-chan he said: "With discourse he realizes (perfects) his inner temperament, and with literary form he realizes (perfects) his discourse." (ibid); and when generally analyzing the superior man he said: "In nature he wants sincerity; in discourse he wants skill" (Li ji 32.26). These are proof of the esteem he gave to literary form (as such) in both personal cultivation and reputation. Therefore, the inner temperament is realized (perfected) when the discourse is aesthetically formed, and the sentiments are sincere when the language is well crafted. (the two sentences represent paraphrases of Confucian remarks). These (thoughts) surely represent the touch stones of controlled composition and the ultimate measures of regulated literary form.<sup>225</sup>

Within the context of traditional Confucian moralism Liu's exclusive focus on literary form is tendentious. The polemic nature of his argument might be reason for the degree of abbreviation or ellipticalness which characterizes the chapter. The following section is one of the most obscure in

the whole treatise . The translation represents nothing more than a tentative guess. Liu's general point seems to be that Confucius once having examined the Universe and understood its formal or intellectual nature accordingly perfected the formal elements of literature.

II.5) When he (Confucius) had reflected on the whole Cosmos (literally - the sun and the moon) and subtly fathomed its hidden intellect, literary form perfected its norms and standards, and its (literature's) thoughts were harmonized in parallel structures (parallelism represents a pervasive trope in Chinese literature). At times he (Confucius) abbreviates the discourse in order to penetrate the idea; at times he elaborates the formal aspects in order to embrace the sentiment; at times he elucidates the inner logic so as to set out the form; and at times he conceals the thought in order to hide the function (i.e. Confucius articulated four essential types of literary figures or modes). Consequently, in the Spring & Fall Annals with a single word he expresses both praise and censure; and in the San fu (in the Li ji) he uses the lesser to express the greater - in these he abbreviates the discourse in order to penetrate the idea. In the Pin Odes (in the Shi jing) there are coordinated units

with complex sentences; and in the Ju xing (in the Li ji) there are rich expressions with elaborate rhetoric - in these he elaborates the formal aspects in order to embrace the sentiment. Compositions which are analytical he images (as found in hexagram 43) with the character guai 夬 (dissection); and compositions which are lucid he symbolizes (as found in hexagram 30) with the character li 离 (articulation) - in these cases he elucidates the inner logic so as to set out the form. In the Four Images there are subtle principles and abstruse enigmas; and in the Five Interpretations there are subtle language and enticing obscurities - in these cases he conceals the thought in order to hide the function. Therefore, it is evident that the elaborate and the elliptical (modes) differ in terms of form; while the recondite and the lucid (modes) differ in terms of manner. They (the four modes) are either contracted or drawn out within different historical periods, or altered and developed in accordance to particular circumstances. If one examines both the Duke of Zhou and Confucius then (one's) literary form will find a (true) model. Therefore to analyze literary form it is necessary to examine (it) within the terms of the (two) Sages; to accurately measure the (two) Sages it is

necessary to evaluate (them) within the terms of the Classics.<sup>226</sup>

Liu's argument that Confucius provides, along with Duke Zhou, paradigms for both literary criticism and style seems at times both farfetched and based on the slimmest of evidence; but, as already pointed out, what is significant is his articulation of literature's formal elements. His own focus on such is apparent in the last sentences where he functionally equates the Sages with the Classics. Liu obviously knows little more than we do about the actual nature of Confucius' attention to literary form. Though one can carp at his brevity, he at least tries to define his terms with concrete examples and to differentiate their abstract qualities. Moreover, his analysis of the modes into the elliptical, the elaborate, the lucid, and the recondite does reflect both real and coherent divisions of literary style. The main problem with the argument is Liu's insistence on explaining these modes in terms of the Confucian texts. This leads him into the ambiguous situation of explaining a literary style by a critical argument found among the commentaries to the *Book of Changes* rather than exemplifying the discourse itself. The notion that the four modal norms provide both a structure for formal variations and a catalyst for historical innovations represents classical theory at its most sophisticated level. Later we will see that Liu dedicates a

whole chapter to the questions of literary change and development. He is acutely aware that art demands newness and that such aesthetic innovation requires both change and continuity within the tradition. As already discussed within Eliot's analysis of the tradition, the concept of literature as a formal reality which changes but, nevertheless, does not abandon its own past is fundamental to any coherent classicism.

II.6) The Book of Changes declares: "To discriminate things precisely let one be exacting in his expression. When one dissects the language then one (can) perfect (the discourse)."<sup>227</sup>

The primary difference between Chinese and European culture is that Confucius and Liu after him unequivocally consider poetry as the ultimate perfection of language, while Plato and in general the Western philosophic tradition after him tend to place the dialectical discourse, in terms of truth, above the literary discourse. When Liu talks about perfecting language he is without a doubt talking about literature.

II.7) The Book of Historical Documents says:  
"Language should respect the essentials of form -  
that is one should not simply hanker after the

bizarre." Consequently it is evident that through exact expression one realizes precise discriminations and that through the essentials of form one perfects the language; (Moreover), when the language is perfected there is no faulty hankering after the bizarre; and when precise discriminations are realized one finds the virtues of dissected language (i.e. precision in both language and form are essential to literature.) Although profound ideas are (often) subtle and abstruse they do not violate precise expression; and subtle language maybe suggestive (yet) it does not transgress the essentials of form. Both subtle language and the essentials of form can be achieved together; and precise expression and profound thoughts can co-exist. In the literary compositions of (both) Sages such (qualities) are evident.<sup>228</sup>

It is quite clear that Liu is using the Confucian tradition to present his own thoughts on the necessary relationship between both accurate and precise expression, and profound and subtle thought. When he talks about the essentials of form he is referring to both literary (rhetorical) and linguistic form. Liu is the first Chinese critic to carefully discuss the linguistic particles - the most subtle and difficult aspect of Chinese grammar - and to

insist that they have real meanings and structures and do not represent, as is often even today argued, arbitrary elements without any precise usage.<sup>229</sup> Here he is treating a critical problem which still plaques the modern critic - especially the romantic critic. Though poetry often transforms grammatical and semantic norms and expresses complex and subtle thoughts neither its transformations nor its complexities represent simple violations of form or a disregard for precise meaning. There is a precision even in fragmented or incomplete expression, and literature's "ambiguities" are always formal complexities with their own logic and never simple obscurities or confusions. The romantic critic fails to distinguish the love poem from love itself.

II.8) Yen He thought Confucius painted by adorning feathers and idly employed florid language. Although he tries to ridicule the Sage it is to no avail. For the elegance and aesthetic proportions of the Sage's literary form is such that having pruned the flowers it bears fruit. The heavenly process (metaphysics) is difficult to understand, nevertheless some still reverently try to penetrate it. But, literature can be grasped - why is it we don't apply our minds to it? If one realizes a (literary) discourse by critically examining the Sage then its literary form will indeed prosper.<sup>230</sup>

Liu's final thoughts are loose and uncritical. It is not at all clear what the "flowers" and the "fruit" of literature represent. If he is contrasting form with content he is not only contradicting himself but setting up a false contrast. Or, possibly he means that Confucius by carefully editing his own writings has critically motivated other writers. Whatever the point, the image is both vague and contradictory. And, the final statement involves a gross hyperbole which could be taken in a didactic sense. If Confucius writings do reveal the principles of literary form they do so in the least apparent manner. As with Aristotle's remarks about "noble" and "ignoble" characters both critics from time to time nod. The Zan, which represents an encomium of Confucius, is characterized by the same type of hyperbole and its meaning is even more ambiguous. The following interpretation represents a tentative guess.

#### II.9) the Zan

With utmost subtlety he (Confucius) created critical knowledge and (then) brilliantly pondered the order (of the Cosmos). With ingenious reasoning he realized literary form and (then) with refined taste perfected literary elegance. He reflected on the sun and the moon above (i.e. the Cosmos) and his

language enriched the earth (below). Though within a hundred years his shadow was gone yet his mind remains after a thousand years (Liu lived precisely one thousand years after Confucius).<sup>231</sup>

The references at both the beginning and the end of the chapter to "reflecting on the sun and the moon" are particularly obscure. The only sense I can make of them is within the terms of Liu's theory that the human mind along with its linguistic and literary manifestations represent a sort of microcosm of the Cosmos itself; therefore, Confucius is seen as "imaging" the Cosmos in his literary forms. As a convert to Buddhism and one of its major advocates the reasons why Liu chose to portray himself in the Wenxin as a follower of Confucius are both complex and somewhat obscure. He appears to be isolating and emphasizing those elements within the tradition which most closely echo the historical and formal concerns of Buddhism. The problem is that, as pointed out earlier, we as yet know very little about the real relation between the flowering of Buddhism and the literary and critical renaissance in the fourth and fifth centuries.<sup>232</sup> Was there in Liu's time a distinct school of Buddhist poetics as propounded by Shen Yue and his circle? In sum, Liu's image of Confucius as the ultimate innovator and perfecter of literary form and literary criticism is peculiar and, I think, in direct contradiction to the traditional didactic image.

Curiously enough, it possibly represents a more accurate historic image.

### WENXIN CHAPTER III

Chapter three is more substantive. Liu is on much firmer grounds when he begins to discuss the forms and the history of literature in terms of actual texts. He now focuses on the five Confucian Classics - the Book of Historical Documents, the Book of Changes, the Book of Odes, the Spring & Autumn Annals, and the Book of Rites - i.e. the literary principles or elements evident within the Classics. Whether or not the Five Classics were in fact edited by Confucius is irrelevant to an evaluation of Liu's critical thoughts concerning the canon.

Despite the fact that among the five Classics only the Book of Odes represents in the strict sense a literary discourse - the other four Classics are either historical or discursive discourses - nevertheless, all five Classics can be read - as they were within the tradition - as literary discourses i.e. the critic can, as Liu does, focus on the texts strictly in terms of their formal literary qualities. Auerbach in his famous examination of the literary qualities of the Bible provides an obvious example of the same transformation within the European tradition.<sup>233</sup> It is

noteworthy that Liu at the end of his argument distinguishes between the majority who read the Classics - including the Book of Odes - as moral discourses and the small critical minority who see them in strict literary terms.

In this chapter Liu begins a detailed analysis of the formal elements and principles of the classical canon as such. As does Aristotle, he systematically avoids within his analysis any loose moralism or traditional didacticism. But, the degree to which Liu has abstracted both the idea and the substance of the Classics as a formal literary reality is unique; until the modern period neither tradition offers an equivalent. Even Aristotle never directly discuss the idea of the canon as such.

### III.1) The Classics as a Norm

As regards the universal principles of the three primary realities (heaven, earth, and man) one calls their books the Classics. By Classics one signifies the ultimate order of what is constant, or the profound principles of what does not disappear. Consequently they image the heavens and the earth and reflect the spiritual world setting out the order of things and establishing the human order. They represent both the abstract elements of the

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keen intellect, and the structures and the forms of refined literary composition.<sup>234</sup>

There is a fundamental ambiguity here which pervades Liu's whole discussion of the Five Classics between the Classics as a set of predominantly non-literary discourses which discuss the elements and principles of both the human and the divine realities, and the Classics as a set of literary models. Though Liu is critically aware of the difference from time to time he fails to distinguish the two ideas. We have already noted similar ambiguities in the Poetics where Aristotle fails to distinguish between mimesis as a general function in art and mimesis as a specific function in Athenian tragedy. Nevertheless, the above should leave little question as to Liu's isolation of the literary elements of the Classics as a set of structural norms. One can not overemphasize the point that such a formal focus on the Classics is in direct contradiction with the view of the Classics both as monuments which should be literally copied and as a set of moral lessons. As we will see, the Classics for Liu operate as a progressive force focusing and articulating the literary transformations within the tradition. What follows is a brief history of the Classics from the Shang dynasty down to the time of Confucius outlining his role as editor and critic. Again the fact that most of this traditional history is today questioned is not

significant. The critical point is Liu's attention to the diachronic order and his sense of literary evolution.

III.2) First came the Three Fen of the three Sovereigns followed by the Five Tien of the five Emperors and then the Eight Su and later the Nine Qiu (all represented compilations which have been subsequently lost; they were most likely apocryphal records). Within the constant obfuscations of history these various divisions and classes were (eventually) confused and mixed.<sup>235</sup>

The above observation seems to be remarkably close to modern critical theory in which genres such as the novel are seen as evolving by a constant mixing or "confusing" of subgenres. But, given the fact we know almost nothing about the apocryphal Shang books - Liu probably knew little more - it is impossible to determine exactly what genres or subtypes were mixed. Also the notion that society changes and the past is, therefore, always obscure seems peculiarly modern. As we will see a little further on, Liu is critically aware of the linguistic changes - both semantic and grammatical - which obscure the earliest texts.

III.3) From the time when Confucius sorted and articulated (the canon) then those great treasures

(the Classics) began to shine forth. As for the Book of Changes he drew together the Ten Wings, for the Book of Historical Documents he laid out the Seven Sections, for the Book of Odes he distinguished the Four Primaries, for the Book of Rites he articulated the Five Norms, and for the Spring & Autumn Annals the Five Types (i.e. the divisions, logic, and rhetoric of the Five Classics). Since their principles are delimited by human nature and their language and craft by the logic of literary form, therefore they can innovate, educate, nourish, and perfect, and their influence has the capacity to mold (the mind).<sup>236</sup>

It is easy to pass over Liu's arguments as loose traditional remarks and to ignore their particular reasoning. He is carefully defining the literature's force or its capacity to enlighten mankind within the terms of its formal aesthetic qualities and excluding the didactic argument. It is abundantly clear "delimited by human nature" simply means their principles are in accord with experience i.e. their thoughts, descriptions, and forms do not exceed observed reality and reason. This represents a critical standard Liu reiterates throughout the treatise. The idea that Confucius articulated the order and the logic of the Classics reflects Liu's definition of criticism as an analysis of both structure

and form. The modern critic has often unjustly belittled or ignored the formative critical accomplishments represented in the original selection, editing, and arranging of both the Homeric and the Confucian canons.

III.4) As the mind of the Cosmos (dao) is indeed subtle, (so) the thoughts of the Sage (Confucius) are exceptionally profound. When the walls and eaves (of a building) are lofty and resounding, one breathes deeply; and an enormous bell of three-hundred-thousand cates does not have a delicate ting ting sound.<sup>237</sup>

The thought is anything but clear. Liu seems to be indirectly apologizing for the fact that the Classics often seem obscure and when read with a modern ear sound heavy. What follows is an examination of the Five Classics as literary models. Though Liu is on firmer grounds here than he was in the last chapter, the Confucian Classics - with the exception of the Book of Odes - only in the broadest or most abstract sense provide literary models.

III.5) The Book of Changes discusses the heavens. It deals with spiritual or intellectual functions. Consequently the Xi zi judged the form of the language to be allegorical. Its discourse is precise

and its content abstruse. "The leather cord breaks three times" (an image taken from the Book of Changes and used by Sima Qian in his biography of Confucius) provided a profound metaphor for the Philosopher (Confucius).

The Book of Historical Documents realistically records human discourse (dialogue). Although an explication of the text is enormously difficult (the text records some of the earliest and therefore most obscure Chinese) if one masters the Er ya (a Han glossary) then both the form and the meaning will be clear. Therefore, Zi Xia (a disciple of Confucius) praised the Book of Historical Documents saying: "They are clear and bright like the alternating lights of the sun and the moon, and as well ordered as the configurations of the stars and planets." The discourse is both clear and precise.<sup>238</sup>

As already pointed out Liu's attention to the grammatical and semantic problems of the literary text is particularly significant. Both Aristotle's and Liu's close examinations of the elements of grammar and diction do not represent, as is often argued, an essentially non-literary digression, but rather reflect a critical recognition that literature and its principles are grounded in language.

III.6) The Classical Odes essentially "word the mind's image ( zhi)". To explicate (the Odes) requires the same (research) as the Book of Historical Documents (i.e. the language is archaic and needs careful glossing). They are articulate in their style, regulated in their xing (metaphors), refined in their rhetoric, contrived in their figures, and when intoned are both sensitive and affective, Consequently they (the Odes) are extremely appealing and deeply moving.<sup>239</sup>

The question whether Liu understands the term zhi ( ) in the traditional formula as signifying the expressive qualities of content (i.e. thought) or that of form is not all together clear. Though he focuses on the strictly formal aspects of the Odes i.e. style, metaphor, rhetoric, figure, and prosody nevertheless he clearly understands these as including the sentiments or thoughts of the Ode. Note the total absence of any reference to moral lessons or the didactic nature of their content. Form per se generally takes a dominant position through out Liu's analysis of poetic expression. He seems to view content or meaning as a co-ordinate part, though important, often - as found in poetry - in a subordinate position to the formal elements. Obviously such an opinion would vary according to the literary mode.

The discussion of the Book of Rites is particularly ambiguous. Liu's distinction between structural form (体 ti) and literary form (文 wen) is problematic. The difference seems to be that between form as the structural relation of parts to whole (ti) and form as a composite of aesthetic norms (wen). Liu is apparently trying to develop an analogy between the abstract treatment of reality found in the Classic and the same as found in literature i.e. the relationship between reality and the literary image. If judged in strict logical terms, the argument represents a false analogy, or at least it is not a true homology. The Book of Rites may treat reality in both precise and subtle abstract terms but those terms are not exactly homologous to the terms of literature. One might compare Liu's analogy to Eliot's praise of Newman's theological arguments as models of precise meaning and exacting language.

III.7) The Book of Rites establishes structural form (ti 体); in accordance with actual affairs it creates abstract formal patterns. Its major and minor sections are both minutely precise and subtly intricate. Once grasped, then they become completely clear. Every single sentence collected in it is a treasure (of precise abstraction).

The Spring & Fall Annals articulates rationality; every word reveals a logical meaning. "The five meteorites" and "the six fishhawks" perfect their literary form by means of detail and succinctness. In the case of the "Zhi Gate" and the "Two Lookouts" they clarify the sense by means of (the trope) histeron-proteron. Its wan-zhang and zhi-hui figures (rhetorical modes involving an indirectness & directness and a clarity & obscurity of meaning) are indeed genuinely profound.<sup>240</sup>

The Spring & Autumn Annals is - in my opinion - the most interesting and possibly the only text among the Five Classics actually composed by Confucius. Confucius is reported to have said: "The Spring & Autumn Annals will make me known, and the Spring & Autumn Annals will make me reviled".<sup>241</sup> The succinctness and bare factuality of the narration has bewildered most modern critics.<sup>242</sup> The text presents an extremely minimal account of historical events spanning the late Zhou (719-494 B.C.). It records, without any apparent interpretation or speculation, only those details which do not exceed simple probability and were or could have been actually observed i.e. "On such and such a day such and such happened." Confucius restricts his discourse to facts which could be verified and in the strictest sense rationally known. The text represents historical rationalism or positivism applied with

a vengeance. Within the context of traditional beliefs and values and a tradition of historical narration where fact, fiction, and opinion were mixed indiscriminately such a minimal and rational account of historical events well might have been both shocking and revolutionary. Liu views the discourse as a perfection of detail, brevity, precise meaning, and rhetoric.

The "five meteorites" and "six fishhawks" refer to a section of the Annals where Confucius writes: "In the sixteenth year, in the spring, in the King's first month, on the first day of the moon, the falling meteorites in the State of Song were five. In the same month, six fishhawks flew backwards flying over the Song capital."<sup>243</sup> Gong-yang's commentary says: Why is "falling" first mentioned and then "meteorites"? It is because this was a record about what one heard. First one heard the sound of falling. Looking at them, he found them to be meteorites. After a closer observation he discovered them to be five in number. Why is the number "six" first mentioned and then "fishhawks"? Because in the case of the "six fishhawks flying backwards" it was a record about what one saw. Looking at them, one found them to be six in number. Looking closer, he saw them to be fishhawks. After watching them at leisure, he saw them to be flying backward (i.e. the birds were flying against a wind blowing faster than they were flying).<sup>244</sup> The "Zhi Gate" and the "Two Lookouts"

refers to a section where Confucius writes: "In the summer, in the fifth month, on ren shen, the Zhi Gate and the Two Watch Towers caught fire."<sup>245</sup> The "Zhi Gate" was the south and inner gate of the royal palace and therefore more important, while the "Two Lookouts" were those outside the Zhi Gate where proclamations were posted and therefore less important. Gongyang writes: "Why does the text say: "Zhi Gate and the Two Lookouts caught fire (the fire began outside the palace)"? It is because the Two Lookouts were not as important... and he (Confucius) did not wish to proceed from the less important to the more important."<sup>246</sup> Whether or not such reasoning exaggerates the logic of the text Liu is correct in seeing the discourse as a model of rationality and detail. As a literary style Confucius' detailed minimalism is not far from that practiced by Robbe-Grillet and the French nouveaux roman.

III.8) In the case of the Book of Historical Records if one examines its literary form (the structures and meaning of its archaic language) though it appears (at first) strange, nevertheless if one critically studies the logic of its arguments then it becomes limpid; while in the case of the Spring & Autumn Annals when one examines the language it appears clear, nevertheless when one scrutinizes its meanings then it becomes abstruse. These (two Classics) represent the (two) classes of literary

form realized by the Sage (Confucius) - that is the external (objective) and the internal (subjective) modes.<sup>247</sup>

What is noteworthy is the degree to which the argument abstracts the literary qualities of the Classics. Imitating the Book of Historical Documents does not imply imitating its obscure archaic language but rather writing in a fluent and limpid style. As Liu points out, it is only the accidents of historical change which give the discourse its obscure and archaic appearance. Though the critical reasoning behind the distinction between the subjective and objective modes is analogous to Aristotle's differentiation of the objective, subjective, and dramatic modes the two arguments are not homologous. Liu's argument does not focus on the distinctions of literary voice but rather on those of meaning - what one might call the literal or metaphorical nature of the discourse. It is also interesting to note that the whole section beginning from "The Book of Changes discusses the heavens" down to this point appears to be taken verbatim from the critical writings of Wang Can - one of the most important of the Jian-an (ca. 220 A.D.) poets and critics.<sup>248</sup> Such wholesale borrowing does not represent simple plagiarism but rather Liu's attempt to establish the traditional authority of his own critical views. Throughout the treatise he integrates the most critical aspects of the tradition.

III.9) Their (the two modes') ultimate roots or origins are extremely deep, and their ramifications or developments are elaborate and abundant. (Either), the language is terse but the meaning is fluent (the objective mode);(or), the details are imminent but the figures are far reaching (the subjective mode). Therefore although these texts from the past (the Classics) are old their effect is always new. Later generations will pick them up and not find them outdated; as earlier students (of literature) have long applied them and never been behind their times. They can be compared to Tai Shan (a famous mountain) which waters all the surrounding land or the Yellow river which irrigates for a thousand li.<sup>249</sup>

The final similes at first sight do not seem particularly apt until one examines the analogy between literary innovation and agricultural regeneration. Liu makes it quite clear that he views the Classics as a catalyst for literary innovation and development - as water is to the regeneration of crops so the Classics are to literary innovation.

What follows is a list of literary modes or genres each identified by its derivation from a particular classical

model. The arguments are glib for Liu neither clarifies nor examples the specific formal qualities he has in mind. The only excuse for such glibness is that the modes will later be treated in greater detail within the chapters which discuss the structures and histories of each mode; the point of the list here is to simply demonstrate that the Classics have in fact generated a complex of new forms. I will simply transliterate the titles without any attempt to identify the modes in European terms.

III.10) Consequently the Book of Changes is the source for the lun, shuo, ci, and xu; the Book of Historical Documents is the source for the zhao, ce, zhang, and zou; the Book of Odes is the source for the fu, song, ge, and zan; the Book of Rites is the source for the ming, lei, zhen, and zhu; and the Spring & Autumn Annals are the source for the ji, zhuan, meng, and xi. To an equal degree they (the Classics) have all exhaustively grown and set out shoots; and they have extensively developed and open up new boundaries. Therefore no matter how the Hundred Schools (various literary movements) twist and turn they all end up in the same circle. If one goes to the Classics to perfect one's form, or to refine one's elegance, or to enrich one's diction that is the same as prospecting in the mountains to

smelt copper, or boiling sea water to make salt (i.e. their influence can not be exhausted).<sup>250</sup>

According to Liu the Classics provide a model for form, elegance, and diction. They are not a compendium of moral lessons. As is true of all living forms they generate a constant vortex of transformations in which the external shape or forms of literature always change but its internal logic remains essentially the same.

III.11) Consequently if literary form is modelled on the Classics it's overall form will have (the following) six principles: first - its feelings will be deep and not feigned; second - the style will be clear and not confused; third - its details will be credible and not absurd; fourth - its thoughts will be precise and not roundabout; fifth its structural forms (体 ti) will be succinct and not messy; and sixth - its literary forms (文 wen) will be aesthetically proportioned and not maladroit. Yang Xiong's (53 B.C.-18 A.D.) comparison (of the Classics) to the carving of jade and the making of artifacts means (simply) that the Five Classics contain literary forms.<sup>251</sup>

Though in a couple of instances one can push, as the

tradition has, the interpretation towards a didactic sense (the same is true within the Poetics) it should be more than apparent by now that Liu is pushing his argument in the other direction. He is also treading on some very treacherous critical grounds. As literary standards, "sincerity", "clarity", "credibility", "precision", "succinctness", and "aesthetic proportion" have often proven to be far too vague or too easily transformed into reactionary values - particularly "aesthetic proportion" - to provide any real critical focus. This probably represents classicism's weakest point. All attempts to summarize literary values leads by definition to over simplification.

The Yang Xiong reference is complex. He was a late Western Han poet who developed and practiced the fu but at the end of his life repudiated the genre comparing its excesses to the worm and seal carvings of children and the Classics to the carving of jade vessels. Liu isolates within the meaning of carving (彫 diao as found in Wenxin diaolong) the notion of conscious literary form, and within the meaning of artifact (器 qi) the notion of the composition as a formal reality. Later he uses the term "artifact" to signify the literary discourse as a critical object.<sup>252</sup>

The following section is particularly obscure. The argument involves a contrast between "literary form" (文 wen)

and "action" (行 xing) - what seems to be a contrast between aesthetic or contemplative reality and active reality. Liu is touching on the problematic relation between art and sensibility including moral or social sensibility. But, precisely what Liu is trying to say, besides the fact he puts literary form first, is anyone's guess. Such undefined and footloose abstractions represent one of the Wenxin's weakest aspects.

III.12) By means of literary form the active nature (of man) is realized and by means of (man's) active nature literary form is passed on. Literary form is the first among the four disciplines (as taught by Confucius); both adequation (符 fu) and formal pattern (采 cai - i.e. the sense of aesthetic relations) perfect (human nature). Among those who idly seek virtue and cultivate (their own) fame all of them claim the Sage, while among those who compose (literary) discourses and practice (literary) expression very few take the Classics as (their) models. Therefore, the Chu poets are (often) cloying and the Han poets hyperbolic - these movements are deviations which don't lead back to the source - would it not be better to critique the extremes and return to the essentials?<sup>253</sup>

Both "adequation" (符 fu) and "pattern" (采 cai) are technical critical terms in the Wenxin. The term fu signifies a tally. Liu uses it to cover all forms of abstract equivalencies symbolic or metaphorical. Cai is pattern or design which can include either rhetorical or prosodic patterns. The two ideas represent the formal elements of aesthetic perception i.e. an abstract and a concrete sense of affinities - what Aristotle covers by the terms "logos", "harmony", and "rhythm". The sense of relation and the notions of unity in Chinese poetics are more abstract than in Europe. As already pointed out, Chinese poetry is primarily a rigorous exercise in prosody, rhetorical parallelism, and symbolic or metaphorical logic with little or no attention to plot and the unities of action.

The four disciplines or sensibilities as reportedly taught by Confucius are 文 wen (literary form), 行 xing (action), 忠 zhong (loyalty), and 信 xin (trust) in precisely that order. Liu points out the primary position of literary form in the curriculum and implies by so doing that the other sensibilities therefore follow upon or derive from aesthetic sensibility i.e. man first develops a sense of an aesthetic order then he articulates a social and political order. I understand the reference to those who "idly seek virtue and cultivate (their own) fame" as an ironic reference to Confucian moralists. This might be over-interpreting the verb

yu which literally means "to happen upon by chance". But, behind Liu's focus on the aesthetic aspects of the Confucian tradition may lurk a religious conviction that Confucianism in comparison to Buddhism is spiritually and morally inadequate i.e. the Confucian Classics do not represent a viable religious canon but they do represent a viable literary canon. One can also interpret the remark to simply mean Liu considered Confucian moralism vulgar. What needs to be examined more carefully is Liu's real position, as a major advocate of Buddhism, regarding Confucianism.

In the fifth chapter Liu discusses the virtues and qualities of Chu and Han poetry. He sees both poetic traditions as realizing important poetic innovations and representing major rejuvenations of Chinese poetry, but he also feels, because of extremisms in both form and sense, neither tradition provides a model for literary norms - except for innovation itself. The section has often been quoted to show Liu's traditionalist sentiments, but he is not arguing that Chu and Han innovations or even their extremisms are in themselves wrong. He is simply pointing out that they represent literary extremes and as such can not be used as norms. Eliot is equally severe with the romantic poets whom he studied carefully and imitated.

For the invariable ultimate order of the Trinity (heaven, earth, & man) and its (moral) principles one profoundly researches the ancient past. (But), to realize cultural progress comes down to one thing (literature), (yet) its instruction is divided into five (Classics). They (the Five Classics) represent the effective craftsman of the intellect and the subtle store house of literary forms. Being both profound and brilliant they are the ultimate source of all (literary) discourses.<sup>254</sup>

The final poetic summaries represent the most traditional aspect of Liu's treatise and their language is by far the most elliptical. So as not to repeat myself, in almost every case the translation is at best an intelligent guess. I do insist, as does Liu, that language and meaning do not represent a loose association i.e. the sense should reflect the actual grammar (the order) and the meaning of the words, and the critic should only interpolate when both allow it.

The idea that literature realizes the progressive potential of a society or culture derives from Confucius. I know of no equivalent idea in Western criticism until the modern theories deriving from Russian formalism which examine the capacity of art to both displace and transform our

perceptions of reality. Such a recognition that society's primary problem is transformation or the need for cultural renovation and that it is through literature's (art's) constant innovations that society evolves represents one of the most peculiar and profound ideas found in Chinese criticism. As Liu reminds us again and again literature's prime virtue lies within its capacity to renew itself through continuous innovation. It can be argued that a society which fails to develop a critical and progressive aesthetics fails to develop i.e. art is not merely a coincidental factor in human development.

Even when Liu discusses the literary qualities of the Five Classics, where he is on much firmer ground than when he talks in general about Confucius, he is still inclined to critically exaggerate or to over-generalize those qualities. This is particularly apparent if one compares Liu's appraisal of the Five Classics with Aristotle's appraisal of the Homeric canon. Though Aristotle recognizes that the Homeric epics represent the highest standards of literary accomplishment he also points out that the later tradition - specifically Athenian tragedy - in certain respects refined and perfected Homer's poetics. The same is the case with the later *gu shi* which during the late Han refined and perfected the lyric voice which had been only partially realized in the Classical Odes. Though, further on, Liu effectively revises the literary

canon he does so implicitly and not explicitly. A good deal of the Confucian canon by Liu's time provided - as he himself admits - highly ambiguous literary models. He is to some degree guilty of critical inertia or a typical Chinese tendency to exaggerate the accomplishments of the past. Such a critical bias seriously hobbled the tradition.

In his opening sections Aristotle explicitly discusses the problems of critical methodology and the logical nature of literature but keeps his arguments within a narrow range of pragmatic observations. He barely touches upon the larger theoretic questions concerning the nature and function of art in society. Liu, on the other hand, raises some of the most abstract and problematic questions facing the critic. This represents, as noted, both a strength and a weakness. He touches on these questions but fails to articulate any coherent analysis of them. Such a contrast between the concrete and the abstract qualities of the two treatises is even more apparent when one compares the six principles (sincerity, credibility, precision, succinctness, and aesthetic proportion) which Liu derives from the Five Classics to the six elements (plot, character, diction, thought, spectacle, and song) which Aristotle isolates within Athenian tragedy. Though, in some sense, Aristotle's analysis is more abstract - unity is the most abstract quality of literature - his purely structural focus reflects a more concrete or

objective analysis of literary form i.e. it is less psychological. Liu's principles - as are most of the qualitative assertions of Chinese criticism - are essentially subjective assertions. Though I don't think Liu would have argued with Aristotle's claim that poetic unity is analogous to that found within an organism, i.e. if any part is altered or removed the whole is changed,<sup>255</sup> nevertheless he never comes close to articulating the idea in such simple and precise terms. On the other hand, Aristotle never lays out as succinctly the essential relationship between the diachronic and the synchronic orders.

#### WENXIN CHAPTER IV

The fourth chapter, in a certain sense, is the least critical or the most idiosyncratic of the five introductory chapters. The problem which Liu addresses here is peculiar to Chinese literature. He discusses the questions of the apocryphal Classics which accumulated around the five Confucian Classics. These books represent a melange of pseudo commentaries and histories which were fabricated out of both genuine and not so genuine ancient texts as late as the Later Han (25-220). They contain the least rational and most hermetic aspects of traditional Chinese thought, and involve highly obscure discussions of yin & yang, numerology, and fortune telling. Liu's intent is not simply to distinguish and

separate these texts from the genuine Classics but to critique their actual literary value as rhetorical and stylistic models. Despite the obscurities and vulgar hermeticism of the Apocrypha he recognizes the fact that the iconoclastic elements of their language and style have provided and still do provide important resources for literary innovation and transformation. From our point of view it is the historical focus which Liu brings to bear on the apocryphal texts as Han fabrications which is particularly significant. Liu is not the first critic to raise questions of authenticity in the Chinese tradition but his use of such arguments within literary criticism is unique.

#### IV.1) Critiquing the Apocrypha

The intellectual (metaphysical) order is both clear and obscure, and the heavenly mandate is both intricate and manifest (i.e. clarity is not the only standard). (It is said), the horse dragon came forth and the Book of Changes was produced; the divine tortoise appeared and the Hong fan (as found in the Shu jing) was created. Consequently Xi Zi (a disciple of Confucius) judged that the (symbolic) diagrams came from the Yellow River (area) and the Book of Historical Documents came from the Lo River (area), and that the sages used them as models.

These are meanings of the above (tales). However the age was long ago and, (therefore), the literary forms (i.e. the compositions) are obscure. This has encouraged the creation of fake and preposterous (texts). Although they (the Apocrypha) contain some genuine elements, forged materials are also attached to them.<sup>256</sup>

Liu begins the discussion by admitting - by implication - that clarity and precision do not represent the only norms; both the ambiguous and the arcane represent possible literary qualities. In this chapter along with the following chapter where he discusses the extremism of Chu and Han poetry Liu deals with the questions of deviation and extremism within literature. His critical position in both chapters is that though the Confucian Classics represent a norm, as such they not only do not exclude deviations and extremes but rather, in a certain sense, require them.

The critical point behind the discussion of the mythic origins of the earliest apocryphal texts seems - again he could be a good deal clearer - to be both to raise the question of such fantastic tales and to provide a rational explanation. When Liu points to the obscurity of the earliest texts he is putting his finger on the Achille's heel of the Chinese written system which because of its non-phonetic

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nature creates a semblance of continuity or permanence which in fact often hides real and significant changes in both sense and grammar. Such linguistic changes and the resulting ambiguities invite arbitrary invention. There is, I believe, a general tendency running throughout Chinese history not only to take advantage of such ambiguities but to compound them and, worst of all, to argue that such obscurity represents an essential quality of the tradition. Both literature and painting in China have been plagued by an unusual amount of forgery in which fakes have been often taken as representing the actual tradition.<sup>257</sup>

IV.2) The Six Classics are manifest and sensible but the Apocrypha which follow (them) are turgid and redundant; the Book of Filial Piety and the Analects are clear and precise but their appended omens (interpretations) are a tangle and a maze. If one judges the Apocrypha by the Classics their falseness is apparent in four ways: 1) In as much as the Apocrypha (the woof) are treated as Classics (the warp) they (should) bear to them the same relationship the woof bears to the warp. (But only when silk and hemp are not mixed can one make silk or hemp cloth. Now, the Classics are true while the Apocrypha are incredible. They are a thousand li apart - this is their first falseness. 2) The

Classics, since they represent the principles of the Sage, are manifest, while the Apocrypha, (although) they represent religious teachings, are obscure. Now the principles of the Sage should be comprehensive, while religious teachings should be succinct. But the Apocrypha are more voluminous than the Classics and moreover their religious reasoning is confused - this is their second falseness. 3) He who has a sealed degree (i.e. a proof) comes from the emperor. But, consider the relevant evidence. Although the eighty one books (of the Apocrypha) are all attributed to Confucius, according to him Yao composed the Lu Dian and King Wen created the Dan Shu (i.e. the evidence is contradictory) - this is their third falseness. 4) Before both the Shang and Zhou periods the (symbolic) diagrams and designs often appear, but the Classics as a whole were perfected at the end of the Spring and Autumn period (ca. 500 B.C.). That the woof should precede the warp contradicts formal logic - this is their fourth falseness. When the false elements have been sorted out then the differences in principles are self evident. The Classics are a sufficient teacher; in what way do the Apocrypha add to them?<sup>258</sup>

In sum; the Classics and the Apocrypha fundamentally

contradict each other; the Apocrypha are wordy and their reasoning confused; the evidence concerning their Confucian origins is contradicted by Confucius himself; and the historical evidence indicates that they anti-date, in part, the final compilation and editing of the Classics. The whole argument is based on the assumption that the Apocrypha (the woof) should clarify or summarize the Classics (the warp), but in fact they confuse and add idle material. Liu's logic is curious and at times his reasoning is a little foggy. The last proofs seem purely rhetorical.

Liu's assertion that the Classics as a whole (i.e. the canon) were perfected in the late Spring and Autumn period - during Confucius' time - is significant. It involves a notion of evolution and development which is fundamental to his analysis of literature. The assumption is that it is not merely the antiquity of the Classics which gives them their authority but rather their formal and logical coherency as realized by Confucius. Elements of the Apocrypha are more than likely more ancient than the Classics but they are incoherent and therefore of less value.

The logic of the following argument is somewhat obscure. Liu seems to be pointing out that Confucius viewed the principles of the divinatory signs used in Chinese prophesy as something of the past and therefore not strictly his own.

He appears to be critiquing uncritical traditional speculations on the prophetic signs and trying to throw some historical light on the subject.

IV.3) Originally when the (symbolic) diagrams and designs first appeared then almighty Heaven had accomplished its mission (i.e. had realized an active or speculative intelligence) and this event foreshadowed the coming of the Sage. Their principles are not supplementary to the Classics (i.e. they represent an earlier and less articulate system of thought). Consequently, when the Yellow river did not produce (symbolic) diagrams Confucius sighed (as reported in Analects IX.9). Why would he have sighed if he could have produced them (himself). Formerly, King Kang had deposited the Yellow river (symbolic) diagrams in the Eastern Archives (as reported in the Shu jing). Consequently, we know that they represented the symbolic mandates of former generations handed down as treasures from generation to generation. Confucius only composed the preface (to the Book of Changes), and that was all. Thereupon, the advocates of numerology appended their esoteric arts - some discoursed on yin & yang while others talked of calamities and bizarre (events). They compared the

chirping of birds to spoken language and considered worm eaten leaves as words. This branch of writing spread like weeds, and, as usual, all were falsely ascribed to Confucius and his disciples. When learned Confucian scholars had examined and investigated (them) they declared that they were forgeries produced during the Ai and Ping periods (6 B.C.- 5 A.D.), and that the mysterious treasures of the Eastern Archives had been mixed with fakes. Moreover, during the reign of Emperor Guang-wu (25-57 A.D.) absolute faith was placed in these fabrications, and the fashion spread. Scholars vied shoulder to shoulder. Pei Xian (the son of Emperor Guang-wu) collected the Apocrypha so as to interpret the Classics. Cao Bao fabricated prophecies to fix the Book of Rites. They perverted the ultimate order (dao) and falsified the canon; (the consequences) were far reaching. Therefore, Huan Tan (43 B.C.- 23 A.D.) detested their nonsense and fakery, Yin Min (ca. 100 A.D.) ridiculed their superficiality and pretensions, Zhang Heng (78-139) rejected their ambiguities and errors, and Xun Yue (ca. 200 A.D.) exposed their perversity and absurdities. These four experts were erudite and their analyses of the Apocrypha are subtle.<sup>259</sup>

Liu's historical treatment of the apocryphal texts and the problems of their authorship is particularly sophisticated. He is acutely aware of the process by which a tradition loses a critical sense of its own past and unconsciously transforms its values. The history of forgeries and systematic misinterpretations of the Classics in China represents a dissertation in itself.

The analysis down to this point has focused on the Apocrypha in terms of their non-literary qualities i.e. as commentaries or elaborations of the Classics. In this context Liu contrasts their arguments with those of the Classics pointing out how they fundamentally contradict each other, and places himself squarely within the tradition of Confucian rationalism. In the final section of the chapter he turns to the question of their literary influence. Here he cites examples of some of the apocryphal tales and discusses their literary qualities.

IV.4) As regards the origins of Fu-xi, Shen-nong, The Yellow Emperor, and Shao-hao, the elements of Shan, Du, and Zhong-lu, the symbols of the white fish or the red crow, and the omens of yellow, gold, and purple jade, their subject matter is fertile, strange, and wondrous, and their language is rich, fluent, and luxurious. Though they are of no use as

regards (the interpretation of) the Classical canon, nevertheless they benefit literary composition. Therefore, later popular poets collected and culled their outstanding literary elements. Zhang Heng (78-139) fearing that they confuse literacy wrote a memorial recommending that they be banned, but Xun Yue (ca. 200) had compassion on them because they contain some genuine materials and would not permit them to be burned. Since previous generations treated them as companions to the Classics I have discussed them in detail.

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It was mighty Yellow River and the mild Lo River who gave birth to the (symbolic) diagrams and the Apocrypha. They represent sacred treasures whose functions are hidden. Though their logic is obscure nevertheless their literary forms are valuable. During the two Hans they were mixed and confused with fakes. Cut out what is vulgar; boil off what is perverse, and cull their carved elegance.<sup>280</sup>

The most important aspect of the chapter is Liu's articulation of critical rationalism - a position he maintains throughout the treatise. It is not simply that Liu should be

considered as part of the tradition of Confucian rationalism but rather that, when critically read, he defines that tradition in its most radical terms. Liu went further than either Mencius or Zhu Xi in his articulation of objective and analytical criticism.

#### WENXIN CHAPTER V

In chapter five Liu finally gets to some firmer critical ground. Here he discusses the most important literary development up to his time as represented in Qu Yuan's (340?-278 B.C.) *Li sao*. The *Li sao* along with the other Chu poems which accumulated around it within the Han anthology entitled the *Chu Ci* greatly influenced Han poetry and transformed the anonymous musical discourse of the Classical Odes into a lyric discourse focusing on a coherent lyric persona. As is true of all major literary innovations the *Li sao* and the other Chu poems represent an obvious and conscious reaction against the earlier poetics i.e. the anonymity, formal restraint, and laconicism of the Classical Odes. By isolating, transforming, and exaggerating elements within the form and rhetoric of the Odes - particularly the epideictic elements - and incorporating from the folk tradition a sense of the fantastic the Chu poets effectively re-interpreted the poetic tradition creating a self conscious and highly ornate poetic discourse characterized by both hyperbole and exoticism. As already

noted, there is in Chinese literary history a curious hiatus between the tradition of the Odes as edited by Confucius (ca. 500 B.C.) and the Li sao (ca. 278 B.C.).

#### V.1) Analyzing the Li sao

From the time (ca. 600 B.C.) the Feng and the Ya (the two primary poetic modes in the Book of Odes) put to rest their melodies no one continued the clew. (Then) wondrously literary form which had been dormant and pent up reestablished itself with the Li sao (ca. 278 B.C.). And, as a consequence, finally (literary form) soared beyond the former poets and aroused the later generations of poets. Was it because they were not far from the time of the sages (Mencius died in 282 B.C.), or was it simply that the Chu poets were geniuses?<sup>261</sup>

Though Liu later critiques the extremism in Chu poetics - what one might call its baroque qualities - he clearly understands that Qu Yuan developed and perfected certain elements of the tradition which had been only partially developed within the Classical Odes, and that the whole tradition of Chu poetry down through the Han fu represents a paradigm of poetic innovation and renovation. The opinions expressed below appear to represent paraphrases of the critics

cited. Liu is surveying the critical literature on the Li sao and, as we will see, in the process critiquing the lack of any analytical standards or the loose impressionism within such criticism.

V.2) Formerly Emperor Wu (140-87 B.C.) of the Han loved the Li sao, and prince An (ob. 122 B.C.) of Huai-nan composed a commentary (on it). He thinks that (since) the Guo Feng (the first section of the Book of Odes) cultivates eroticism without being lewd and the Xiao Ya (the second section of the Book of Odes) cultivates criticism without being reckless, (then) one can say that the Li sao has combined both these qualities (i.e. both the romantic and the plaintive modes); that just as the cicada which molts in the midst of filth it flies beyond the dust and dirt; and that though its purity is darkened nevertheless it is not tarnished; moreover, that it can contend in brilliance with both the sun and moon.

It is Pan Gu's (32-92) opinion that Qu Yuan by parading his own virtues (only) made a show of himself, and out of bitterness and resentment drowned himself in the river; that the tales of Yi, Zhao, and the two Yao beauties do not correspond to

the (details in the) Zuo zhuan (the classical commentary to the Spring & Autumn Annals); and that the references to Kun-lun and Xuan-pu are not contained in the Classics; but nevertheless, that its literary forms, language, aesthetic proportions, and elegance are a norm for the (later) ci and fu poetry; and (finally) that although (the Li sao) is not brilliantly profound one can say it is extremely subtle in its artistry.

It is Wang Yi's (ca. 100 A.D.) opinion that the Classic Odes take us by our ears (i.e. they are purely musical) while Qu Yuan seduces and persuades us (i.e. his poems are dramatic) and that the literary forms of the Li sao establish their principles in accordance with the Classics - (for example): the foursome of dragons and riding the phoenix are modeled on "he rides six dragons..." (as found in the Yi jing) and the references to Kun-lun and Liu-sha are modeled on the Fu tu in the Yu-kung (in the Shu jing); and that all the famous scholars and ci and fu poets without exception scrutinized its inner rules and outer forms. He declares that it (the Li sao) is gold in appearance and jade in substance, and that (even) after a hundred generations it will have no peer.

In addition, the Han emperor Xuan (73-49 B.C.) greatly admires (the Li sao), and thinks that it is in total accord with the artistry of the Classics; Yang Xiong (53 B.C.-18 A.D.) after critiquing its qualities also argues that its structural forms correspond with (those of) the Ya Odes. These four schools (of criticism) maintain that (the Li sao) squares with the Classics - though Pan Gu declares that it does not accord with the Zuo zhuan. But, both their praise and their criticism employ mere impressions and go beyond the facts. One can say that they looked but did not scrutinize the essentials, that they played about but did not critically examine (the text). In order to critically evaluate their analyses one must inspect the discourses which are in it (the Chu ci).<sup>262</sup>

If only Liu's language was less ambiguous and more to the point he might have effectively rid Chinese criticism of such amateurism. Arbitrary opinion and vague analogies plagued literary criticism and later art criticism in China to a degree not found in Europe. "In order to critically examine their analyses one must inspect the discourses which are in it (the Chu ci)" in this case Liu is to the point. Nothing in the Poetics so simply summarizes the point of view of the

classical critic i.e. the responsible critic focuses on the poem as a literary discourse, and the quality of his criticism depends entirely upon the accuracy of his observations. Clearly, Liu has made that critical move which in Tate's terms shifts "the center of critical interest...from the genetic and moral judgement to the aesthetic, from subject matter and the psychology of the author to the language of the text."<sup>263</sup> He treats the Li sao as a paradigm of the Chu poetry which was collected along with it in the Chu ci, and moves without notice between citations from the Li sao and the other poems in the Han anthology.

V.3) Consequently, 1) when the (Li sao) describes the "bright magnificence" of Yao and Shun or lauds the "respect and reverence" for Yu and Tang this represent the (rhetorical) forms of the Dian gao (as found in the Shu jing); 2) when it ridicules the madness of Jie and Zhou or deplores the down fall of Yi and Jiao it models its meaning on the feng (satires); 3) when it uses young dragons to symbolize gentlemen, or clouds and rainbows to refer to sycophants, these are the principles of bi and xing (analogical and paralogical metaphors); 4) when each time the (protagonist) looks he hides his tears and bemoans the Nine Fold Gate of his lord, these are the commonplaces of one loyal and grieved.

Examined in these four respects (i.e. its forms, themes, principles, and tropes) it conforms with the feng and the ya. But, 1) when it comes to riding clouds and dragons the narrative is fantastic and bizarre. Or, 2) riding Feng-lung to seek Fu-fei, or commissioning the venom bearing falcon to obtain the hand of the daughter of Song represent language which is both strange and different. Or, 3) Kang Hui overthrowing the earth, and Yi shooting down the sun, and the tree man with nine heads, and the earth deity with three eyes represent tales which are both fantastic and bizarre. And, 4) When it cites Peng Xien's example (to commit suicide) or follows Zixu's and (presents) willfulness, the thoughts are both petulant and petty. Or, when men and women sit indiscriminately together all mixed up without any division indicating that this is considered delightful; or amusing oneself by drinking without stop and being dead drunk night and day implying that this is considered pleasant - these are all cases of excess and licentiousness. Analyzed in these four respects (i.e. narration, diction, subject matter, and moral values) it (Li sao) represents a deviation from the Classic canon. Consequently, one can argue that its classical or traditional norms are of this nature, and that its

hyperbolic or romantic norms are of that nature.<sup>284</sup>

One might not sympathize with Liu's prudish sentiments, particularly those concerning men and women, but his critical point is correct. He is examining the poetic discourses and analyzing their qualities. He points out that though in terms of formal rhetorical principles the Li sao and the other Chu poems are, in part, derived from the Classics, the nature of their subject matter and language is distinctly different. He accurately identifies hyperbole and extremism of thought and expression as the essential or distinguishing qualities of the poems. When he says: "these are all cases of excess and licentiousness" Liu is simply articulating a distinction of literary standards or qualities which also exists between Joyce's Ulysses and Virgil's Aeneid. The statement does not represent a moralistic condemnation of the poems or of the poets. My own belief is that Qu Yuan along with the other Chu poets, as were both Keats and Joyce, were self-consciously aware of their iconoclasm and specifically cultivated hyperbole and extremism in reaction to the classical norms i.e. they represent typical romantic poets. Liu appears to understand this point and treats the poems strictly as a kind of literary discourse without confusing such qualities with the morals of the poets as individuals.

V.4) Therefore, it is evident that as regards the

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Chu ci its structural forms are modeled on the Three Dynasties (Xia, Shang, and Zhou i.e. the Classical Odes), but its voice and eloquence are modeled on the Warring States period (403-221 B.C. i.e the Li sao - Liu apparently considers romantic hyperbole as characteristic of the Warring States period). Then, as far as the ya and song Odes are concerned it is a gaudy gambler, but for ci and fu poetry it is shining hero. When one examines the inner structures with which it composes and the outer structures by which it elaborates, although they selectively combine classical principles nevertheless they forge their own dynamic language.<sup>265</sup>

The last observation sets out the sine-qua-non of a new literary genre i.e. that it represent a synthesis of traditional elements forming a new type of discourse - just as the novel critically combines and re-interprets both the dramatic and the epic genres. What follows is a brief discussion of some of the other poems in the Chu ci.

V.5) Consequently, the Li sao classic and the Qiu zhang are clear and well proportioned in their mood of pity; the Qiu ge and the Qiu bian are refined and delicate in their expression of grief; the Yuan you

and the Tien wen though they are odd and bizarre nevertheless they are sharply crafted; the Zhao hun and the Da zhao though they are showy and voluptuous nevertheless they are profoundly beautiful. The Bo ju reveals the (genuine) manner of one who is banished; and the Yu fu records the (genuine) qualities of one who is secluded. Therefore, their personal voice or spirit goes beyond (that of) the ancients and their language is in close proximity to (that written) today (i.e. they perfected aspects of the lyric voice). Their startling gracefulness is dazzling. It would be difficult to match it.<sup>266</sup>

It is interesting to note how Vincent Shih refuses to allow that Liu is saying that Li sao represents a "classic" of its own genre and that the Chu ci poems perfected the lyric voice in a way not found in the Classical Odes.<sup>267</sup> The meaning is beyond question and is consistent with Liu's progressive classicism which sees the Chu innovations as both articulating and perfecting the past. But, as Eliot argues, this does not mean that the Chu ci "superannuates" the Book of Odes or the modern poet should "abandon" the pre-lyric tradition. No more than when Aristotle claims that Athenian tragedy perfected certain aspects of the narrative tradition is he arguing that Sophocles has replaced Homer. Literary innovation requires a constant re-view of all the elements within the tradition. For

the classical writer the past remains as viable as the present and the tradition is always an open question. What follows is a survey of the *Chu ci*'s influence on Han writers.

V.6) From the Qiu Huai (Western Han Composition ca. 200 B.C.) on down (all poets) have eagerly followed, close on their heels, nevertheless both Qu Yuan and Song Yu (the two main poets in the *Chu ci*) outdistance them. None can catch up. Because, when they (Qu & Song) describe the affections or bitter feelings they make one anxious and provoke those emotions; when they narrate the life of one in exile they are so sorrowful and disconsolate that it is almost unbearable; and describing the landscape they catch the image with their sounds, or discoursing on the seasons they lay out their literary forms so that the seasons appear. Thereupon, Mei Sheng (ob. 141 B.C.) and Jia Yi (200-168 B.C.) pursued their style and introduced an aestheticism, and Sima Xiangru (ob. 117 B.C.) and Yang Xiong (53 B.C.- 18 A.D.) followed the trend and realized an exoticism. These (writers) have influenced more than one generation of poets. Consequently, major talents adopt their overall design, mediocre talents chase after their dazzling language, minor poets hold tenaciously onto their descriptive effects, and the

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immature pick out their allegorical images.<sup>268</sup>

The categories of literary sensibility are particularly significant. The highest are those who grasp the overall plan or the abstract nature of the genre and the lowest are those who reduce the literary discourse to series of rhetorical effects or allegorical images. Liu reveals a real antipathy for didacticism.

V.7) If one can lean on the ya and song Odes as one leans on the bar of a chariot (i.e. as the primary support) and handle the Chu ci as one handles the reins - contemplate the iconoclastic without losing sight of the norm - play with the decorative without turning one's back on the essentials, then just as easily as one looks or glances one will master the rhetorical skills, or as easily as one coughs and spits one will reach the perfections of literary form. And, never again will he have to go to Sima Xiangru begging for insight or borrow favors from Wang Bao (ob. 61 B.C.) (i.e. he will be their equal).

the Zan

Without Qu Yuan how could the Li sao have appeared?

- a startling genius and a bold style. The crafted grace rises (like) mist and the panorama is without limit. Its structural nature is perfectly worked out. Gold in appearance but jade in design - it is dazzling rich (yet) minutely precise.<sup>289</sup>

The chapter clarifies without the slightest doubt Liu's progressive values. Though he recognizes the hyperbole or extremism in Qu's and Sima's poetics - including their romantic and amoral qualities - nevertheless, he places their literary significance at the very heart of the tradition and effectively modifies the classical canon. He creates a synthesis of standards and values deriving from both the Book of Odes and the Chu ci including the Han fu. The phrase "structural nature" (qing li 情理) literally signifies "the formal order of its nature" and is used at the end of the next chapter to define the common elements shared among the various poetic modes. The term "li" (the formal order) represents a key concept in Liu's criticism; it expresses a conscious sense of both order and structure.

#### WENXIN CHAPTER VI

In chapter six Liu discusses the history and the form of the shi genre including both the classical four syllable Odes and the "modern" five syllable gu shi which emerged in the

late Han in response to the literary revolution brought about by Qu Yuan and Chu poetry. From the Han period on down Liu is on firm historical grounds. The chapter presents the first detailed analysis of both the synchronic and the diachronic elements of a literary genre and as such can be compared to Aristotle's discussions of the developments and evolutions of the Comic and the Tragic genres. Both critics carefully place their respective genres within a detailed historical context and analyze their innovations as developments or articulations of the past. The lyric form of the shi genre represents the focal form within Chinese literature; its poetics stands to the overall literary tradition as the poetics of the epic genre stands to European literature as a whole i.e. it represents, in a sense, its telos or essence.

#### VI.1) Clarifying the Shi

Shu the Great said (Shu jing): "Verse (shi 詩) words (yan 言) the mind's image (zhi 志); song sets the discourse to a measure". As to what the Sage distinguishes here, its principles have already been clarified. Therefore, "in the mind one creates the mind's image, and setting out the discourse one creates the poem" (as found in the "Da xu"). Indeed, this involves both the laying out of literary form and the conveying of reality (content).<sup>270</sup>

The above statement regarding "what the Sage distinguishes here" represents, in my opinion, one of Liu's most ambiguous remarks. He is obviously not idly saying that critics in the past have discussed the remark. As we have seen, he is too careful and too independent a critic for such an idle statement. He seems to be referring to specific arguments in the preceding chapters. Why he refuses or fails to detail these arguments apparently derives from a conventional tolerance for ellipticalness common to all Chinese critical thought. The significant term in the statement is the verb "xi" (析) meaning "to divide" or "to split" i.e. "to analytically distinguish". He therefore views the classical analysis of poetry as critically distinguishing certain elements which have already been discussed. Liu has not discussed the critical difference between verse and song, which he does do later,<sup>271</sup> but he has carefully focused on the distinction between the poem as a discourse (yan  $\frac{1}{2}$ ) and the poem as a form (wen  $\frac{1}{2}$ ). In fact, one can argue that all five preceding chapters in a sense focus on this critical distinction - it is central to his analysis of the Li sao and Chu poetry. At the beginning of the first chapter he raises this distinction when he self-consciously cites and discusses Confucius' distinction between yan ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ) and wen ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ). Consequently, he seems to be pointing to the differentiation within the argument between the "wording" and the "forming"

of a poem; or, as he puts it, the difference between "the laying out of the literary form and the conveying of reality". This raises the whole question whether Liu views zhi "the mind's image" as an abstract temperament expressed primarily by the poem's formal elements or as a sentiment defined by its content. Though, throughout his discussion of literary expression, literature's formal elements take priority over content, nevertheless Liu is acutely aware of the necessary and critical relation between sense and form. This seems to be exactly what he is insisting on in the following remarks. At the end of the chapter he defines the shi's catholic qualities within the terms of its formal nature where the emphasis is clearly on the formal co-ordination between sense and form. The differentiation of form and content is central to Liu's criticism throughout the treatise.

Again, the critical speculations which he raises here require an attention which goes beyond the limits of the dissertation. What is both obvious and important is that Liu's critical remarks are carefully phrased and minutely focused - at times a little bit too minutely focused. The following equation derives from a traditional formula homologous to the earlier equation between shi (詩) and zhi (志). In this case shi "verse" is defined by the cognate chi (持) which means "to hold" or "to regulate" i.e. "to form" - c.f. Cao Pi's use of the term in the Lun wen as discussed earlier.

VI.2) Shi (verse) signifies "to form" - to form (mettre en forme) the human temperaments. "As for the three hundred Odes", the overall principle comes down to "there being nothing askew". The interpretation according to "forming" (i.e. the definition of shi within the terms of chi) contains the notion of "an adequation" (i.e. a matching of form and content) and nothing more (i.e. it is not a matter of regulating moral values.)<sup>272</sup>

I admit that if one reads the text from a didactic point of view one arrives at a totally different meaning - viz. Vincent Shih's translation.<sup>273</sup> But, there is nothing in the preceding or following arguments which justifies such a reading, and the interpretation reduces the language to its least significant level. This is particularly true in the last statement where Liu develops a critical concept which, as we have seen, represents a central argument within his criticism. Consequently, It is evident that Liu reads and interprets the Confucian tag in a strictly non-didactic sense. What is not clear is whether such an interpretation was peculiar to Liu or whether from the Han on down there always were critics and poets who understood the fallacies of Han didacticism but preferred not to talk about them. As argued earlier, my own belief is that - given the obvious a-moral qualities of the

Chinese lyric tradition - a healthy formalism and anti-didacticism must have always existed. Liu now elaborates on the nature of the relationship or correlation between poetry and reality. His theory of adequation is not that far from Eliot's theory of the poetic image as an "objective correlative" of a feeling.<sup>274</sup> This is followed by a survey of the earliest recorded poetic discourses as found in various historical sources. We have absolutely no idea whether these songs actually represent pre-Zhou compositions and if so when they were composed.

VI.3) Man is endowed with seven temperaments. He responds to reality and is moved. To be moved by reality and to intone a composition - is there anyone who denies that this is quintessentially human? Formerly in Ge Tian's generation (prehistory) they set speech to music; the Xuan niao was among the tunes. As for Huang Di's Yun men, its formal arrangement doesn't miss a note (i.e. there is nothing idle in its musical elements). Coming down to Yao's time there is the song entitled Da tang; in Shun's time they composed the Nan feng Ode. But, when one examines their two formal aspects (i.e. wen & yan - the prosodic and discursive elements), the language only communicates ideas and nothing more (i.e. though the prosodic form is refined the

discursive elements lack any coherent poetics. According to Liu, literary form did not surpass content until the Zhou period - cf. chpt.I).<sup>275</sup>

Liu's differentia between musical, discursive, and literary elements particularly the last two remains somewhat ambiguous. Exactly what he means by "only communicating ideas" and earlier "literary form surpassing content" is only apparent in the most general of terms. One is inclined to interpret the statements in modern formalist terms i.e. the essential difference between the literary and the non-literary discourse is the difference between language viewed as a formal media and language viewed simply as a means to communicate facts and ideas - cf. Xiao Tong's analysis as discussed earlier. Though the formalist theory clearly magnifies Liu's comments I believe the interpretation is essentially correct. When Aristotle contrasts poetry to history within the terms of "universals" versus "particulars" the critical thought seems, in comparison, less accurate or only half thought out i.e. poetry can and often does in the Chinese lyric tradition contain a concrete sense of particulars.<sup>276</sup> Certain areas of literary theory seem more accessible to Liu than to Aristotle, however Liu's dialectic is far less developed.

VI.4) Coming down to the time when Yu the Great had

completed his projects, the Nine Regulations were put into song; when Tang Kang was thwarted in virtue his five brothers composed a Complaint. (Formal) agreement about beauty or criticism concerning ugliness indeed takes a long time to be realized. From the Shang down to the Zhou period (approx. 600 years) the Ya and Song Odes were brought to perfection. The four divisions (of the Odes) are both outstanding and elegant, and the six principles (feng, ya, song, fu, bi, xing) are comprehensive and profound. Zi Xia scrutinized the line about the white as the ground, and Zi Gong considered the line about cutting and polishing (i.e. they paid attention to the language of the poem); as a result Confucius declared that one could discuss the Odes with both these disciples.(see earlier discussion of the same)<sup>277</sup>

Whether or not Liu's historical dates are correct - we know almost nothing about the history of the Odes before the Zhou period - the idea that the Odes were perfected over a long period of experimentation and that their perfection realized a mature and comprehensive poetics is both reasonable and true. Liu's concept of literary perfection is curiously close to Aristotle's thoughts on the same question i.e. literary history reveals a teleological development.

VI.5) When the imperial grace had run its course the court musicians halted their refinements. During the Spring and Fall period people read compositions (i.e. they no longer composed them). They intoned the old compositions when exchanging toasts and thereby honored their guests; to recite poetic excerpts was (considered) a part of one's personal elegance. In the state of Chu they composed personal satires and complaints. The Li sao represents such a satirical allegory. The Chin emperor both burned the Classics and composed (fanciful) odes on the immortals (i.e. the period witnessed violent iconoclasm in both literature and politics).<sup>278</sup>

What follows is a discussion of the origins and beginnings of the gu shi or the five syllable lyric form which emerged in the late Han. As noted earlier, the addition of a single syllable to the classic four syllable line significantly alters the poetics of the shi; it allows for complex coordination and subordination within the discourse thereby creating a more dramatic or personal voice. There is some evidence that the five syllable line was common among popular songs from the earliest periods, and that the classical four syllable line was transformed through an influence deriving from this folk tradition. It is significant

to note that female poets - viz. Ban Jie-yu - were, it seems, some of the first poets to develop the new genre.

VI.6) At the beginning of the Han there was the (classic) four syllable discourse. Wei Meng (ca. 300.B.C.?) was the first (after the cessation of poetic activity) to Chant the form; having adjusted the principles of the remonstrance (a poetic mode) he reestablished the Zhou poetic tradition. Emperor Wu (140-87 B.C.) loved literary form; in Bo-liang Tower he would exchange rhymes (i.e. he played poetic round robin). The followers of Yan Ji and Sima Xiangru (179-117 B.C.) composed their language without equals (i.e. they were exceptionally skilled in diction and rhetoric). Coming down to when Emperor Cheng (32-7 B.C.) classified and recorded (these compositions) - within the more than three hundred compositions both court and folk poems are comprehensively arranged. But, among all the scribblings these poets left not a single five syllable discourse appears. Therefore, Li Ling's and Ban Jie-yu's (ca. 48 B.C.) (five syllable compositions) appeared doubtful to later generations of scholars. However, within the Shao san and the Xing lu (sections of the Book of Odes) at the beginning (the second and third stanzas) half the

lines are five syllable lines; also the boy's song Cang lang (found in Mencius), the whole song is five syllable lines; and the Xia yu a jester's (five syllable) song appeared a long time ago during the Spring and Autumn period. (Moreover), the Xie jing a child's fable in five syllables was current during Emperor Cheng's time. Examining the actual history one finds proof that the five syllable form is indeed ancient (i.e. there is no good reason to doubt the Li and Ban attributions). In addition, the Nineteen Gu shi (a collection of nineteen poems which represent the earliest examples of the new five syllable form - their authorship is a matter of question and debate) are refined and aesthetically well proportioned, and some have attributed them to Mei Shu (ob. 141 B.C.) - except the Gu zhu composition which is placed among Fu Yi's (ca. 80 A.D.) poetry. Comparatively studying their literary refinements one would conjecture that they are compositions of the Later Han. (Because,) when one examines their structural elements and prosaic forms, they are realistic but not vulgar; their descriptions are fluent and persuasive, and their sentiments are vivid and precise (i.e. their dramatic and psychological qualities are sophisticated and refined). They truly represent the

ultimate in the five syllable discourse. Coming down to Zhang Heng's (78-139) yuan compositions a clear classicism is perceivable; his odes on immortals have a leisurely melody and their (verbal) elegance has a distinctly new sound.<sup>279</sup>

Liu's careful attention to historical facts and the implied criticism of simplistic logical arguments reveals an acute sense of the complex problems involved in tracing the origins of literary forms. He does not try to push the facts beyond what they actually indicate and ultimately leaves the question open. Aristotle reveals the same careful judgement when discussing the development of comedy where he admits there is a lack of detailed historical evidence.

On the one hand the transformations of tragedy and by whom they were realized are evident, but comedy because it was not taken seriously at the beginning is not evident.<sup>280</sup>

The evolution of the five syllable gu shi seems to represent a classic case of a "picaresque" or vulgar mode transforming and redefining a classical genre. Liu has traced the full circle of literary evolution from the iconoclasm of the Chu and Han poets back to classicism of the Nineteen Odes and Zhang Heng. Note how for Liu, as for Eliot, "newness"

represents a distinctly classical quality.

VI.7) At the beginning of the Jian-an period (196-220) the five syllable discourse developed by leaps and bounds. Cao Pi (187-226) and Cao Zhi (192-232) loosened the reins and gave free play to its prosody; Wang Can (177-217), Xu Gan (171-218), Ying Yang (ob. 217), and Liu Zhen (ob. 217) looking straight ahead competed in the race (for innovation). They all wail over winds and moons, are intimate with ponds and gardens, and talk about gay parties (note the completely a-moral themes); they are frank and free in their artful voices, and candid in the employment of their genii. When creating their emotions they (simply) set out the facts - never seeking for overly-refined effects, and when guiding their expression they follow (reality's) appearances - striving only for the force of clarity. In these respects they are all equal.

Then during the Zheng-shi period (240-248) the Dao was made prominent. Poetry was mixed up with thoughts on the immortals. The followers of He Yan (ob 249) are on the whole superficial and shallow. Only Xi Kang's (223-262) compositions are clear and

rigorous, and Ruan Ji's (210-263) thoughts are lofty and profound. Consequently one can use them both as a standard. As for Ying Ju's (190-252) *Bo yi* It stands out all alone and fearless. Its rhetoric is artful and its principles are genuine; it also maintains the directness of the Wei (Jian-an poets).

During the Jin dynasty (226-316) the majority of the talents gradually tended towards a light and twilled style. Zhang Zai (ca. 289), Pan Yue (ob.300), Zuo Si (250-ca.305), and Lu Ji (261-303) moved shoulder to shoulder on poetry's path. Their refinements are richer than those found in the Zheng-shi period but their force is weaker than that found in the Jian-an period. Some of them dissect literary form and contrive a *recherche* beauty, while others let go of the refinements and create a natural grace. These are the major trends of the period.

The compositions of the Jiang-zuo period (317-420) indulged in obscurities. They scoffed at compositions which concern themselves with practical affairs and admired talk of spontaneity and indifference. Although after Yuan Heng (fl 330-365) and Sun Chuo (fl 330-365) every poet had a carved

style, they (the Jiang-zuo poets) took a particular delight in rhetorical matters; no one competes with them (in this). Therefore, Guo Pu's (276-324) poems on the immortals are outstanding and preeminent.

At the beginning of the Song period (420-479) literary form, prosody, and structural elements were radically changed. Zhuang-zi and Lao-zi went into retirement and the mountain and stream trend began to flourish (i.e. the metaphysical trend was replaced by a descriptive formalism - the landscape tradition in both Chinese painting and poetry represents an abstract formalist tradition). They (the Song poets) composed images made of a hundred patterned words and vied over the eccentricity of each phrase. As regards the sentiments, it was necessary to push images to their extremes when describing reality; and as regards the language, it was necessary to exhaust its capacity in pursuit of novelty. These are the trends in which recent writers have been competing (i.e. literature has returned to the extremism of the Han writers - Liu's period witnessed major innovations in both poetic form and content).<sup>281</sup>

Liu's survey of the history and evolution of the shi

genre though brief and at times elliptical nevertheless reveals a clarity and refinement of literary observation and analysis to which there are few parallels in either Europe or China. In his succinct appraisals he never loses sight of literature's formal nature nor falls back on vague impressionistic or didactic standards. Moreover, he reveals a clear sense of the cyclical trends between classical and romantic values which are apparent in both European and Chinese literary history. The final observations of the chapter represent some of the most profound and important critical remarks in the treatise. Liu is well aware that the chapter, with its close attention to both the diachronic and the synchronic elements of literature, represents a paradigm of critical analysis.

VI.8) Therefore, if one lays out and examines the order in time, then the logic of the transformations in nature can be inspected; and if one isolates and distinguishes these differences and similarities (in nature), then the principles of the primary structures can be clarified. In the case where the (classic) four syllable discourse regulates the structural form, then formal elegance and polish make up the essentials, and (in the case where) the five syllable discourse determines the arrangement, then dramatic clarity and aesthetic proportion

constitute the norms. The different ways the formal details and the content are employed is entirely a matter of personal penchant or style. Consequently; Zhang Heng (78-139) perfected its (the shi's) elegance; Xi Kang (223-262) defined its polish; Zhang Hua (232-300) articulated its dramatic clarity; Zhang Xie (fl 295) set in motion its aesthetic proportions. Cao Zhi (192-232) and Wang Can (77-217) provide examples (of writers) who combine all these qualities, while Zuo Si (250-ca. 305) and Liu Zhen (ob. 217) provide examples (of writers) who exaggerate certain qualities. Although the shi has a constant abstract form, the thoughts (expressed) are not fixed (i.e. personal expression is variable). (Each writer) following his own temperament realizes something different. Extremely few (writers) are competent in all its aspects. If one develops a subtle understanding of its (technical) problems then his fluency will reach a perfection, but if one is carelessly indifferent to them and tries to be fluent, then he will have problems.<sup>282</sup>

Liu's curious mix of formal and informal remarks often catches the reader off guard. He moves abruptly between analytical arguments and personal comments. But, when one

critically examines each remark the words and the thoughts are always precise and never idle or rhetorical. As with Aristotle, such subtleness of thought and expression presents insurmountable problems in translation where English simply lacks the same distinctions and relations of ideas. The above articulation of the diachronic and the synchronic elements and their function within criticism presents a good example. What I translate as "the order in time" signifies more literally "the sequential arrangements in history"; "the logic of the transformations" signifies literally "the mathematics of the transformations"; and "the essentials of the primary structures" signifies "the essentials of the axial patterns". The thought obviously represents a major statement of methodology which is central to Liu's criticism. An examination of the extent to which he applies the method throughout the treatise would require an analysis which goes well beyond the limits of the dissertation. Nevertheless, Liu has carefully articulated the critical principle which, in my opinion, represents the essential premise of any coherent criticism; even today the significance of the idea remains within comparative studies only half understood.

Though Aristotle never directly discusses the synchronic and the diachronic elements of literature as such his examination of the evolutions of Athenian tragedy and comedy reveals a clear distinction between their formal and their

historical origins i.e. the Iliad and the Odyssey represent the aesthetic or formal model for tragedy as the Margites does for comedy, but the former derives historically from the dithyrambic procession and the later from the phallic procession. Aristotle also insists, as does Liu, that an analysis of their historical developments isolates and articulates their aesthetic principles i.e. the unity of action etc.. Towards the end of chapter four discussing the formation of tragedy and comedy Aristotle writes:

For, the Margites are analogous to the Comedies just as the Iliad and the Odyssey are to the Tragedies... Both it (tragedy) & comedy were realized at the beginning by improvisation; the one from those who led off the dithyramb; and the other from those who led the phallic processions which still remain a custom in a number of cities. Little by little it (tragedy) grew as they (the poets) developed each aspect of it which came to light, and having passed through many transformations tragedy reached its end when it realized its own nature.<sup>283</sup>

Both critics argue that literature reveals its abstract nature within its historical transformations, and therefore the facts of history are as significant as the details of structure. Aristotle is more fascinated by the logic of the

transformations, while Liu by the continuation of the process. In a certain sense Aristotle's description of literary evolution is incorrect; though literary transformations do perfect certain forms the process does not stop. Each perfection, as Eliot points out, simply re-aligns the elements of the tradition and begins anew the process of transformation. The final section of the chapter deals with various modes within the shi genre and the questions concerning their common qualities.

VI.9) As for the discourses which mix three and six syllable lines their model derives from the ya and song Odes; the origins of the centos find their model in the Apocrypha; the beginnings of the anagrams first find their model in Dao yuan (?); and, the round robin poems model themselves on the compositions remaining from the Bo-liang Tower gatherings. The majority (of these modes) are carefully refined; some are eccentric. (But), in terms of their formal natures they (all) share the same objectives (norms), (for) they all belong to the shi genre; therefore, I have not complicated the discussion (by separately analyzing them).

the Zan

People (from the time) they are born (begin) to compose; humming (children) sing their inner sentiments. (The shi) arose during the time of the ancient emperors. Its styles were differentiated in the two Nan sections (the first two sections in the Book of Odes). In intellectual organization they (the shi modes) can be collectively matched, and in historical order they can be mutually collated (i.e. one can correlate their synchronic and diachronic elements). Their formal details are finely woven; and they will forever delight.<sup>284</sup>

The total lack of any allusion to the supposed moral qualities of the Odes or the moral obligations of the poet throughout the chapter - as in the Poetics - has seldom been noted. Nevertheless, Liu's strictly formal analysis of the shi genre clearly represents the most radical aspect of his criticism. The fact that there has been absolutely no discussion of the nature and significance of Liu's methodology among either traditional or modern commentaries reveals the extent to which the critical dimensions of the treatise have been ignored.

It is obviously not mere accident that Liu self-consciously sets out his methodology in the first of the twenty chapters which treat the histories and the forms of the

various literary modes or genres. As stated earlier, the chapter represents a paradigm of classical criticism focusing on both the formal and the historical elements of the genre and analyzing the evolutions and perfection of its forms and principles. In the following nineteen chapters which treat the major literary modes Liu develops many of the literary ideas touched on in the first six chapters. He elucidates his critical arguments not by logical elaboration but rather through a complex set of repetitions, variations, and analogies which resist any simple summary. Each argument needs to be traced within all its permutations before the over all logic is clear. When carefully scrutinized - despite the ellipses - it is both the clarity and the systematic nature of the thoughts which distinguish Liu's criticism from traditional impressionistic criticism as found in Lu Ji's *Wen fu*. The *Wenxin* contradicts the common assumption that Chinese criticism is by definition unsystematic and seldom represents a coherent and unified body of thought.

Having demonstrated Liu's formal point of view throughout the first seven chapters including the postface, in the final section I will examine those arguments in the *Wenxin* which reveal most clearly the primary methods and values of classicism as outlined at the beginning of the dissertation. Because chapters VII and VIII, which treat respectfully the *yue fu* and *fu* genres, touch particularly upon the problems and

questions of literary evolution their arguments clarify certain details of Liu's historical methodology. I will therefore translate and discuss all of chapter VII and the relevant sections of chapter VIII.

Liu's close attention to the details of literary evolution particularly the major transformations in literary form and principles clearly represents one of the the most significant aspects of his criticism. He scrutinizes these questions more carefully than any other ancient Chinese critic and thereby clarifies the methods and values of classical criticism.

#### WENXIN CHAPTER VII

Yue fu originally referred to the Music Bureau founded in 117 B.C. during the reign of Emperor Wu of the Han and abolished by Emperor Ai in 6 B.C.. The bureau appears to represent an attempt to revive the courtly musical tradition of the Zhou period. The term, an abbreviation for yue fu shi (poems of the Music Bureau), became the title for a mixed lot of ritual, folk, and pseudo-folk songs originally characterized by their musical settings. Some of the compositions, as later anthologized, were believed to have been composed in the earliest historical or pre-historical periods. As is common with most all pre-modern musical

traditions, by the late Han, when the original musical settings had been lost or forgotten, the genre referred loosely to a kind of literary imitation of the folk song characterized by certain themes, prosodic elements, and rhetorical figures. Chinese classical poetry, in contrast to the popular song as manifest later in Yuan and Ming opera, after the Han moves progressively away from its original close association with music. The history of the yue fu as a genre raises the whole question of the relation and the evolution of musical and poetic forms.

#### VII.1) Yue Fu

The yue fu involves vocal tones in accord with a chanted discourse, or musical pitches harmonizing with the vocal tones (i.e. the yue fu genre focuses on the song or the literary discourse accompanied by musical instruments)<sup>285</sup>

Liu cites arguments taken from Emperor Shun's advise to the Minister of Music as found in the Book of Historical Documents (discussed earlier) to define the musical and prosodic elements of the yue fu as a genre and thereby to distinguish it from the lyric genre as set forth in the preceding chapter. The "vocal tones" refer to the Chinese linguistic tones which represent one of the primary elements

of Chinese prosody. Along with Shen Yue, Liu pays particular attention to poetry's phonetic nature. He later analyzes the phonetic elements of Chinese prosody carefully differentiating its primary phonemes and distinguishing these elements from the sound elements of music. He goes on to survey the earliest examples of such song compositions. Many of the references he makes are only partially understood today.

VII.2) The "Nine Compositions of the Jun tian" go back to the time of the (prehistoric) emperors, and the "Eight Finales of the Ge tian" go back to the time of the ancient emperors. From what survives of the Xian and Ying music (prehistoric music) it is impossible to make any analysis. Coming down to the Tu shan Songs in the Hou ren (?) - they represent the beginnings of the Southern Song; the Song Ballads in the Fei yen (?) represent the beginnings of the Northern Song; during the Xia period Kong-jia's Lament in the Dong yang (?) begins the Eastern Song; and (during the Shang period) Yin Zheng's Reflections in the Xi he (?) begins the Western Song. The musical sound (elements) of song are inclined to (always) change therefore there is not one proper standard (this is particularly true of musical traditions which lack a precise system of notation including a precise means to measure time

and pitch). Ordinary men and woman sang folk songs and the verse masters (during the Zhou period) selected the discourses, and together with the music set them to a meter. (Thereupon), these modal compositions responded to the string and wind instruments (i.e. their tonal elements were adjusted to the harmonics of the melody) and their "temperaments" modified the brass and stone chimes (i.e. it set the tempo). By means of these (two formal elements - harmony and tempo) Music Master Kuang (a court musician from Qin who in the Spring & Autumn period played the Airs from each of the four cardinal districts and noted the Southern Air lacked vigor) examined the Airs (Odes) in terms of their "flourishing" or "withering" qualities; and Ji-zha (a Prince from Wu who in the Spring & Autumn period came to the state of Lu and listened to the music of different dynasties and states) scrutinized their minutiae in terms of their "rising" and "declining" qualities (i.e. both critics used the formal musical elements of the Odes to judge their moral qualities). This represents the ultimate of critical refinement (i.e. the capacity to hear within the formal elements of a composition a moral nature). The fundamental principle of the Classical music is the art of the mind. Therefore, its sounds

penetrate our very marrow and nerves. The early kings were extremely concerned with it (the Classical music) and sought to restrain both excesses and extremes. They taught its principles to their sons who were required to sing the Qiu de. Consequently, they (their sons) could sensibly respond to the seven primary notes and cultivatedly beat out the eight modes.<sup>286</sup>

As always in the Wenxin the significance of the "therefore" is both subtle and complex. Liu is saying that it is the formal elements of the mind which form the base or foundation for man's sense of classical musical form and, therefore, classical musical form affects what is most intimate to man i.e. his mind. "The art of the mind" obviously refers to man's intellectual capacity to respond to the subtle formal nuances common to all refined art whether music, literature, or the visual arts as found in both Europe and China. When he argues that classical music - as distinct from popular music - is based in man's intellectual or contemplative nature he is defining that nature as essentially an aesthetic nature. He later asserts that classical poetry "realizes music's mind" distinguishing music's "intellectual" and "physical" natures. The eight modes appear to refer to the eight song modes mentioned in Shun's advise to the Minister of Music cited above.

Liu's brief remark concerning the lack of source materials for a critical analysis of the Classical Xian and Ying music sets him sharply apart from the general critical tradition. Such a lack of real evidence seldom if ever inhibited traditional critics from talking at length about the Classical music. Exactly what Liu has in mind when he refers to the Southern, Northern, Eastern, and Western song traditions is not altogether clear besides the fact they represent traditional regional divisions found in the Book of Odes. The same is true for the Qiu de (Nine Virtues) which seems to refer to a musical treatment of the nine aristocratic virtues (possibly the same song referred to in the preceding chapter under the title "Nine Regulations"). His point is that the early kings preserved the classical tradition by requiring their sons to learn its formal elements i.e. the seven notes and the eight modes. The belief that the formal dynamics of music or literature reveal the active nature of a person or period, whether true or not, does not involve the didactic fallacy

VII.3) After the decline of the ya (Classical) music, music which drowns the soul sprang and welled up. During the Qin (221-207 B.C.) they burned the (Confucian) Classic of Music (this represents, possibly, the most significant loss in the history

of Chinese aesthetics and criticism). At the Beginning of the Han it (the Classical music) was resumed. Zhi recorded the notes and Shu-sun established the modes and the canon. On account of this (i.e. the establishing of the notes, modes, and canon) the Wu de dance arose during Gao-zu's reign (206-195 B.C.) and the Si shi dance spread in Xiao-wen's reign (179-157 B.C.). Although they imitate the Shao & Xia music (ancient classical compositions) nevertheless, to some degree, they incorporate the older (modes) of the Qin region (the ancient popular modes). The sound of that "just harmony" (the Classical Music) will never again cross the threshold - it has been lost forever.<sup>287</sup>

Liu is well aware of the fact that both classical and popular modes existed in ancient times and therefore that the distinction between the two is not a matter of "ancient" verses "modern". It is true that the music and the aesthetics of the Zhou court had been completely lost by Liu's time. Chinese aesthetics never again focused as intensively on musical form.

VII.4) At the time of Emperor Wu (140-87 B.C.) who venerated the rituals, the Music Bureau (yue fu) was first established. They collected together the songs

of Zhao and Dai and selected out the "temperaments" of Qi and Chu. Li Yan-nian (fl. 120 B.C.) unified a prosodic form with extended or prolonged lines, and Zhu Ma-chen and Sima Xiangru used the Li sao structures to compose songs. The Gui hua represents a mixed musical composition; it is aesthetically well proportioned but not classical, and the collected Chi yan pieces are refined but they are not canonical. Prince Xian started up a ya (form) however it is strangely rigged. Consequently Xi An with his "heavenly horses" ridicules it (Xian's ya).

Coming down to the ya and song compositions of Emperor Xuan's reign (73-49 B.C.), the Odes imitate the Lu ming (Ode 161). Around Emperor Yuan (48-33 B.C.) and Emperor Cheng (32-7 B.C.) time vulgar music became generally wide spread (among the ruling class). Regulated pitches run against popular taste. Its difficulties (derive) more or less from this fact (i.e. the difficulties in maintaining Classical standards). As for the later sacrificial pieces, they represent mixed ya compositions; though their diction is classical in form, nevertheless their musical standards are not those of Kuei and Kuang (i.e. not classical).

Coming down to the three Emperors of the Wei (220-239), The "temperaments" are quick witted and their patterns aesthetically well proportioned. If one dissects their language and their prosody, the tones are refined and the structures balanced. (But), if one examines all their Bei shang tunes or their Qiu feng and related pieces, they either narrate drunken parties or grieve over military expeditions; their modes do not move beyond the "agitated" and the "reckless" and their language does not depart from "grievous thoughts". Although they have the regulated tones of the San tiao (three Han tunes) they are in fact (typical) Zheng (the Zheng area had a reputation for vulgar music) distortions of the Shao & Xia music (as noted above).

Coming to the Qin period (265-317), it was then that Fu Xuan (217-278) (first) clarified the tones. He composed and regulated the ya songs (Classical ritual songs) to chant in ancestral worship. And, Zhang Hua's (232-300) innovative compositions served as Yin wan (court dances). Since Du Kui (ca. 220) had altered the stanza form the tonal elements are more leisurely and elegant; (and because) Xun Xu (ca. 250) had altered the pitch intervals the musical structures are more mournful and hurried.

Consequently Ruan Xian (ca. 250) criticizes them (the pitch intervals of Xun Xu) as deviations of the classical norm. Later scholars verified his tuning fork.

Melody (the art of setting words to music) is subtle and refined. Outer and inner forms should be regulated so that they mutually correspond. Consequently, it is apparent that Classical poetry realizes music's mind (i.e. its inner form and not its outer form). (For) sound represents music's outer form or body. (Since) music's outer form lies in sound, blind music masters are employed to tune musical instruments. (But, since) music's mind resides in Classical poetry, the literati, accordingly, regulate its forms.<sup>288</sup>

The thought, as always, is complex and subtle. Liu is saying that music can be divided into its outer and inner forms i.e. its physical and intellectual structures. The outer form represents the harmonic accord of pitches, and the inner form represents the poetic accord of literary forms including prosodic forms. He is effectively arguing that the phonetic elements of classical prosody can not be totally disassociated from the poem's semantic and intellectual nature i.e. they can not be analyzed or judged simply as sounds. The main point of

his argument is that classical prosody involves an intellectual element not found in musical harmony alone and, therefore, it requires more refined and subtle judgement. To demonstrate his argument he points to the simple fact that an illiterate blind musician can judge musical pitch but only the literati can judge poetic or prosodic accord. The thinking is somewhat twisty. He jumps between the ideas of melody and prosody without clearly indicating the distinction, and the difference between musical and poetic form is only in part a difference between sounds and words. There is also the question of how the Classical music reflects the "art of the mind" if musical accord is strictly a matter of the senses - what Aristotle would define as matter of harmony and rhythm without any logos. Liu's discrimination between the physical senses and the intellect along with his evaluations of the classical and the popular modes is ultimately simplistic. The disassociation of prosody from musical harmony represents essentially Shen Yue's argument, and the focus on prosody's intellectual nature is not far from Roman Jakobson's observations concerning the semantic elements within rhyme.<sup>289</sup> Throughout the chapter Liu addresses the pervasive confusion within traditional criticism between music and poetry.

VII.5) "To love music without vulgarity" (a line from Ode 114) - for this reason Ji-zha (as noted above) praised the beauty in the Airs of Qin. "He

and she cavorted together" (a line from Ode 95) - for this reason Ji-zha talked of the downfall of the Zheng State. Consequently, it is apparent that Ji-zha scrutinized both the music and the lyrics; he did not listen only to the musical sounds (i.e. he listened to the accord of sense and sound)<sup>290</sup>

This is as close as Liu comes to a didactic argument. He wants to point out that poetic form involves an accord between sense and sound and can not be analyzed simply in musical terms but ends up implying that it is the a-moral or immoral content of the Zheng Airs which signifies the moral decadence of the State. Confucius says: "Get rid of Zheng music...Zheng music is excessive". Nevertheless, he leaves the Zheng lyrics in the Book of Odes. Liu knows the difference between music and literature and the literary and the non-literary discourse but from time to time, as Aristotle does, he falls guilty of simplistic statements and common moral or class prejudices.

VII.6) As for those charming songs which are both seductive and alluring or those plaintive compositions which are heartrending - erotic discourses are found among the tunes. How did a just consonance emerge (within such a context)?<sup>291</sup>

Liu is referring to the fact that a considerable

proportion of the Classical Odes are clearly erotic or emotional in content. He goes on to discuss the whole question of vulgar and classical standards in which he reveals typical class prejudices. Though he recognizes the influence of popular literature on the evolution of literary form he does not seem to appreciate its importance. The tendency in China to excessively isolate the classical traditions of painting and poetry from their popular forms clearly represents a weakness. It appears that Chinese Classical music like Japanese Classical music cultivated an extremely slow melody.

VII.7) Since the common people understand what is quick and fast and only run after what is new and different, when the ya Odes were intoned in an elegant and reverential (manner) they, of necessity, fidgeted and gaped like fishes. But when those eccentric popular poems reached their climax then they slapped their thighs and hopped about like sparrows. Within the musical elements of the Odes all the Zheng (vulgar) qualities derive from this class (i.e. the popular class).

All musical lyrics are called shi (poems). When one intones the sounds it is called a song. When musical sounds accompany a lyric discourse (at times) the complexity of the lyric discourse makes it difficult

to join them. Therefore, Cao Zhi (192-232) praised Li Yan-nian's (a Han musician) skill in adapting the ancient lyrics (to the new music). When he (Li) justly simplifies what is superfluous he makes manifest the value of concision. When one examines Gao-zu's (206-195 B.C.) chant the Da feng and Xiao Wu's (179-157 B.C.) chant Lai chi, the boys chorus was accompanied by musical sounds. No one can say they are not in harmony (the lyrics and the instrumentation). Cao Zhi and Lu Ji (261-303) both have excellent song compositions, but in both cases they were not taught to professional musicians. The story is that they refused string and wind accompaniment (i.e they wanted classical chimes). The vulgar judge their tunes discordant simply because (the vulgar) never think. Coming to the drum and fife compositions of Xuan and Ji (prehistoric personages) and the bell and drum compositions of the Han period, though in the one case they are marshal and in the other case funereal (music) nevertheless they both belong among the yue fu. Also the compositions of Miao Xi (ca. 230) can be considered as belonging to it (the yue fu genre). Long ago Liu Xiang (77-6 B.C.) authoritatively classified literary form. He distinguished shi (poetry) from song. Therefore, I have briefly

discussed the yue fu genre in order to clearly discriminate its boundaries.

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The eight song modes define the literary (inner) form; setting out the lyric discourse realizes the outer form (of the yue fu). Ballads were chanted in the countryside; brass and stone chimes covered the palace steps (i.e. the inner and the outer forms). Shao (classical) music is difficult to maintain, but Zheng (vulgar) music is easy to start. How can one consider it (classical music) only music; with it one realizes a sense of just proportion.<sup>292</sup>

The argument is essentially Confucius' argument that literature and music function along with ritual as the media through which man perfects his intellectual nature i.e. his capacity to perceive and appreciate precise relationships. Liu's attention to the different structural aspects of the song and his careful analysis of the complex relationship between musical and poetic forms represent an important component of his criticism. He develops the arguments throughout the other sections of the treatise. I will later look at his discussion of the phonetic elements of prosody but within the limits of the dissertation I can only outline the

general nature of his analysis. The whole question of the nature and the importance of prosodic and phonetic studies during and just before Liu's time needs to be examined in greater detail. In my own opinion, it represents the key element within the intellectual and literary revolutions which were taking place in China during the fifth and sixth centuries.

In chapter VIII Liu discusses the fu genre which, along with the shi and the yue fu genres, represents one of the three most important forms of Chinese poetry. The chapter, as do all the twenty chapters which treat the various literary modes, surveys the genre's development and analyzes its structures. The first part of the argument is of particular interest because within it Liu discusses the evolution and significance of the term fu - originally one of the three rhetorical categories within Classical Confucian poetics (see earlier discussion). The argument represents one of the best examples of Liu's analyses of a historical transformation and as such can be closely compared to Aristotle's discussion of the origins and evolution of the terms "comedy" and "tragedy" as found in chapters III and IV of the Poetics.

#### WENXIN CHAPTER VIII

##### VIII.1) Explaining the fu

The Classical Odes have six principles, the second of which is called fu. Fu signifies "to display" (to describe). "To display patterns" defines the literary (inner) form. The outer form is the description of reality (i.e. the fu genre represents an epideictic mode). A long time ago Duke Shao (early Zhou dynasty) argues: "Dukes and ministers presented shi (odes), music masters presented zhen (medleys ?), and blind poets presented fu" (apparently oral narratives). The Mao commentary (on the Shi jing) says: "He who climbs the heights and can fu (describe - both Chinese poetry and painting reveal a curious fascination with landscapes) can be made a minister". The preface to the Odes cites it as one of the six principles, but the various historical commentaries cite it as a separate genre. In general they (the two usages) share the same logic, for they are actually cognates. Liu Xiang (79-6 B.C.) says that it (the genre) was clearly not sung but rather chanted, and Ban Gu (32-92) argues it was a kind of ancient poem. As for the fu "Da sui" of Duke Zhuang of Zheng (Spring & Autumn period) and the fu "Hu qiu" of Shi Wei (Spring & Autumn period). They combined discourses, diminished the rhymes, and their lyrics are their own

fabrication (i.e they created a more fluid and personal narrative style). Although they contain the structural elements of the fu, it is obvious that it's form was not yet perfected. When Qu Yuan (340?-278 B.C.) sang the Li sao he initiated the development of its tonal qualities. Thus, the fu genre received its mandate with the shi poets and completed its destiny with the Chu ci. Thereupon, with Xun-zi's (300-230 B.C.) "Shi" & "Zhi" and Song Yu's (290-233 B.C.) "Feng" & "Diao" it was finally conferred its proper title and divided from the shi genre. Among the six principles it was a dependent form, but it ripened into an independent genre. (Xun-zi's) Shu ge is its first or original manifestation. (When) it fully developed its musical nature (with Qu Yuan), then it perfected its literary form (in the Han fu). But, the original differentiation from the shi (as articulated within the six classical principles) was the real beginning of the "destined" fu.<sup>293</sup>

One might even go so far as to suspect that Liu was somehow familiar with Aristotle. I don't believe so. It is more sensible to point out that literature when critically examined actually reveals a teleological process, or that literary development requires a conscious sense of literary

principles and structures. Eliot argues that tradition involves "the historical sense" and forms "an ideal order" in which all elements of the tradition are inter-related. Liu traces the same differentiation between the formal and the historical origins of the fu as Aristotle does with both comedy and tragedy when he points out that the formal definition of fu as a rhetorical figure signifying "description" or "narration" was the "real beginning" of the fu genre though it did not emerge as a literary mode until Xun-zi's *Shu ge* and the Chu poets.

This concludes the sequential presentation of the first eight of the twenty five chapters in which Liu analyzes the various literary modes. When examined comprehensively the systematic and analytical nature of Liu's arguments - particularly his critical attention to both the diachronic and the synchronic aspects of literature - is more than apparent. The fact that the tradition has on the whole ignored or misunderstood both the substance and the method of Liu's criticism, or reduced its coherent classicism to a series of idle and arbitrary traditional remarks simply demonstrates a general tendency found within all cultures to limit the sense of a text to the vulgar standards of the tradition. Such is often the fate of Chinese criticism where the elliptical nature of the discourse easily lends itself to misinterpretation. Liu, as he indicates in the post-face,

relies entirely on the reader's good will and critical acumen - read idly the treatise makes little sense. This is particularly true within the final twenty four chapters where Liu addresses some of the most problematic questions in criticism.

Among the twenty four chapters treating various problems of critical terminology and methodology, and literary principles and dynamics I will examine the four chapters which most explicitly reveal the elements of classical criticism as outlined at the beginning of the dissertation i.e. 1) literature's formal identity comprises both its diachronic and its synchronic orders (this principle has been clearly laid out in the first eight chapters); 2) innovation is essential to literature; 3) criticism focuses on the literary discourse per se - not the writer; and 4) literary innovation represents a development which articulates the past.

The idea of the writer and his relationship to the literary discourse represents one of the most problematic areas of literary criticism. As noted earlier, except in the most general of terms, Aristotle avoids any detail discussion of the writer as such and focuses almost exclusively on the history and the formal structures of the dramatic discourse. The questions of the relation between the writer and the literary discourse are most apparent or most problematic

within the lyric genre where the writer often appears to speak in his own voice. Traditional European and Chinese critics have seldom recognized the simple fact that Catullus or Li Bai rarely tell the truth i.e. their "personal" lyrics are primarily literary fabrications and only secondarily autobiographies.

Possibly because of this critical ambiguity Aristotle apparently views the lyric as an early literary form leading up to the perfection of Homer's invisible narrator within Athenian drama. He argues that iambic poets became comic writers.<sup>294</sup> From a certain perspective, the dramatic discourse clearly represents the ultimate perfection of the "impersonal" recit i.e. neither Sophocles nor Aeschylus ever appear on stage. Despite the obvious fact that the perfection of both prosodic and psychological elements within the lyric voice during the sixth and early fifth centuries in Greece must have significantly influenced both comic and tragic writers Aristotle pays curiously little attention to these developments. Whether this represents simply a critical stance peculiar to the Poetics or real ignorance of the qualities of the lyric genre we shall never know.

Liu treats the question of the writer in detail throughout the Wenxin, and is particularly concerned, as was Cao Pi, with the critical distinction between the formal and

the individual elements within the literary discourse. One of the chapters which deals most explicitly with this problem is chapter XXVII entitled "Form & Temperament". A translation of the most appropriate parts will give some indication of the complexity and subtleness of Liu's thoughts regarding individual talent and outline an area of criticism where Liu clearly excels Aristotle.

#### WENXIN CHAPTER XXVII

##### XXVII.1) Form & Temperament

As to the statement "when the sentiments are moved then the (literary) discourse is formed" or "when the inner order seeks realization then literary form appears" it means that one traces what is hidden by realizing what is manifest; or, one follows the internal by matching (fu ) it with the external.<sup>295</sup>

The above argument is essentially a paraphrase of the thought found in the first part of the traditional preface to the Book of Odes. The idea, as Liu explains, is that literary form represents effectively an objective correlative of a temperament or sentiment; it metaphorically expresses the temperament or sentiment creating a formal adequation.

XXVII.2) Given the fact that in talent or genius there are both the "common" and the "outstanding", in spirit or temperament there are both the "hard" and the "soft", in learning or erudition there are both the "superficial" and the "profound", and in skill or accomplishment there are both the "refined" and the "vulgar" - they (talent, spirit, learning, and skill) are all equally formed by one's inner nature and by one's training or experience. In this manner each writer is assigned a certain artfulness and the pattern of each literary style is peculiar. Consequently, in the formal order of one's diction, whether it be "common" or "outstanding", no one is capable of going against his own genius; in the choice of style, whether it be "hard" or "soft", how could one change his own spirit; in the substance of one's materials, whether it be "shallow" or "profound", it is near to impossible to force one's own erudition; and as concerns structure and form, whether they be "refined" or "vulgar", one rarely contradicts his own training. Each and all realize their own mind, and each person is as different as is his face.<sup>298</sup>

When one compares the above with Aristotle's discussion in chapters IV and V of the "serious" and the "simple"

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temperaments and their different manifestations within literature Aristotle's remarks appear simplistic and overly formulaic. Liu is peculiarly aware of the differences of individual personality. As is the case with Cao Pi, one has the impression that his assertion that each individual realizes his own mind reflects a profound and subtle understanding of human nature.

XXVII.3) If one summarizes its (literature's) complete compass then one can differentiate eight structural forms. The first is called "classic" or "elegant"; the second is called "arcane" or "abstruse"; the third is called "concise" or "minimal"; the fourth is called "lucid" or "logical"; the fifth is called "baroque" or "ornate"; the sixth is called "noble" or "symmetric"; the seventh is called "eccentric" or "novel"; and the eighth is called "light" or "precious". The classical and elegant is modeled after the norms of the Confucian Classics. Its focal principles are those of the Confucian school. The arcane and abstruse has complex patterns and intricate literary forms. Its principal logic is that of the mystical school. The concise and minimal examines and scrutinizes each word and phrase. It dissects and divides the minutest parts. In the

lucid and logical the language is straight forward and the thoughts are elucidated. Its precise reasoning satiates the mind. The baroque and ornate plays with parables, metaphors and profuse patterns. It brightly illuminates the decorative or secondary elements. The noble and symmetric sublimely discourses and spaciouly orders its form. It is both monumental and brilliant in its various patterns. The eccentric and novel rejects the "old" and strives for the "modern". It represent an iconoclastic and maverick taste for the perverse. The light and precious meanders in its forms and dilutes its structures. It is misty and vague and follows vulgar taste (the common opinion that Chinese poetry is devoid of grammatical sense derives from such vulgar habits). Consequently, the elegant and the eccentric; the abstruse and the lucid; the baroque and the minimal; and the noble and the light are all contrastively opposed. These are the roots and the leafs of the literary discourse. They all belong to its garden.<sup>297</sup>

Liu's point is that literature as a whole is comprised of diametrically opposed styles - including both the "eccentric" and the "elegant" - and that literature evolves through a dialectical process of contrastive norms. Though Liu

is acutely aware of the vulgar penchant in Chinese literature for ambiguity and obscurity he still recognizes such as a "classical" standard opposed to and competing with the "symmetric". Again, in the most general terms the observations are close to Aristotle's comments concerning the "noble" and the "vulgar" styles and the three types of reality found in art with the exception that Liu's divisions are more strictly literary divisions and far more precise.

XXVII.4) Since the eight structural forms are constantly alternating (i.e. literary form moves from one extreme to the other) proficiency is realized through careful study (of the eight styles). The force of literary talent resides within one and derives from one's blood or spirit; "through one's spirit one actualizes one's volition (temperament), and through one's volition one stipulates the discourse" (quoted from the Zuo zhuan). When one expressively composes formal literary patterns who denies that this (reflects) the inner nature?<sup>298</sup>

The thought is complex. The stipulation of a literary discourse represents both the product of one's innate nature and an expression of that nature; therefore, as one perfects literary talent one perfects the expression of one's inner

nature. Such stipulation involves an actualizing of one's volition (inner temperament) and this in turn expresses the "force" of one's talent. This "force" by determining the quality of one's studies ultimately determines the quality of one's skills. The critical nature of Liu's remarks could not be farther away from Lu Ji's or Longinus' vague and hyperbolic statements about literary genius. And, Aristotle never touches on the dynamics of literary genius in such precise critical terms. This is followed by a glib discussion of the personalities of various writers which I will skip. As is true of all such generalities though they may be true, it is all too easy to fabricate personalities to fit the literary voice when in fact a writer often writes against his own social habits - viz. Joyce's bourgeois personality or Proust's dandyism. Liu, along with Chinese critics in general, too glibly equates the formal qualities of Ruan Ji's poems with the individual personality. There is an essential relation between the inner nature of a writer and the nature of his writing but it is more complex and subtle than Liu indicates. Nevertheless, he does recognize that this relationship represents a formal adequation and not a simple equivalency. He goes on to summarize the observations.<sup>299</sup>

XXVII.5) According to these examples one concludes that outer and inner forms essentially conform (fu 符). If this represents nature's constant norm how

could it not be the (inner) spirit's and the (outer) talent's principle? (Though) literary talent is bestowed by heaven, in literary studies one must be careful how one begins his training. As with the carver or the dyer, the skill lies in the first transformations. Once the artifact has been realized or the dye fixed it is difficult to change them. Therefore when a child begins to trace and carve (literary forms) it is essential that he begins with "elegant" compositions (first) tracing the root and (then) seeking the elaborations - in his mind turning over the full circle (of literary styles). Although these eight structural forms are distinct, they all derive from a common denominator. (Once) one has grasped their axis then the spokes and the rim fit together. Consequently, one should (first) imitate the (eight) structural forms so as to establish one's skills, and (then) follow one's own disposition so as to develop one's own talent. They (the eight styles) represent the compass points of literary form. By means of them one finds (his) way.

the Zan

Talent is differently assigned and literature's structures are a complex of opposites. Language

realizes the ligaments but temperament actualizes the bones. Both elegance and proportion are finely embroidered; however excessive artistry turns true vermilion into vulgar purple. Practice truly realizes what is genuine and skill follows a step by step refinement.<sup>300</sup>

Though he does distinguish "roots", "branches", and "leaves" or primary and secondary forms Liu clearly views all eight styles as classical norms i.e. he sees literature as dialectical process involving opposing or contrastive elements. The focus is on the dynamic process of transformation and individual synthesis where the principles remain constant but the actualities always change. In sharp contrast to Lu Ji and traditional criticism Liu never reveals a romantic aversion to the formal aspects of literature or of literary criticism.

In chapter XXIX entitled "Continuous Transformation" Liu discusses "continuity" and "transformation". Here, he addresses the questions of what is constant and what is variable in literature, and analyzes literary innovation as a development which articulates the past, or in Eliot's terms as "a development which abandons nothing en route."<sup>301</sup> As is the case with all such abstract arguments in the Wenxin, because of the lack of a mature dialectic, the wording is

often problematic and ambiguous and the meaning only coherent if one carefully collates the arguments with parallel arguments throughout the treatise. The limits of the dissertation do not allow a detailed discussion of all these parallels.

## WENXIN CHAPTER XXIX

### XXIX.1) Continuous Transformation

As to the fact that the structures of those literary forms, which have been set out, have constant principles while the artistic possibilities of those literary forms, which (always) change, have no formal principles - how can one explain their (two) natures? Regarding all Shi, fu, shu, and ji compositions, within each genre the formal structures are consistent. These represent the structural forms which have constant principles. But as regards the literary discourse's (individual) spirit or force, a continuous transformation has always been the norm. These represent the artistic possibilities which are without formal principles. The genre's formal structures have constant principles and their structural forms are essentially determined by the facts of tradition.

The "continuous transformations" have no formal principles and their artistic possibilities are essentially dictated by new musical sounds. Consequently, (the writer) can gallop forward without ever exhausting the road and drink without ever consuming the source. Yet, if the rope is too short one ends up thirsty or if his legs are weak one stops on the road. It's not the artistic possibilities of literature's formal structures which have been exhausted but rather the art of 'continuous transformation' which is deficient. Consequently, when one analyzes the formal principles of literature one can compare them to grasses or trees. When they are still attached to the soil their roots and trunks have (essentially) the same nature but when they (roots and trunks) are dried in the sun their fragrance and taste are distinctly different within each class (i.e. from a certain perspective, the formal principles of literature are common to all the genres but from another perspective are unique to each genre or period).<sup>302</sup>

Chinese lyric poetry maintained a much closer relation to music than lyric poetry in Europe after the provençal tradition, and poetic innovation was often brought about

through the influx and influence of popular and at times nomadic music coming from the Near East. It is significant to note how Liu focuses on lyric poetry when he discusses literature in its most abstract terms. Though he has discussed the evolution of a major literary genre during the Han - i.e. the fu - Liu reveals, as Aristotle does, little or no sense of the possibilities for new genres. He appears to restrict literary innovation to the elements of individual style or voice within known and fixed genres. Liu is aware, but not to the same degree as Eliot, that the "facts of tradition" themselves change. He goes on to discuss the different styles or qualities within each literary period tracing their evolutions from the earliest periods down to his own times. I skip over the survey which verges on the purely impressionistic. He sums up his argument as follows:

XXIX.2) From the fundamental to the heteroclitite - the more recent the more diluted. Why is this? to compete over what is modern but to be remiss concerning the past means the end of any style and the dissipation of any spirit. The outstanding modern talents who diligently study literature often skim over the Han (206 B.C.-220 A.D.) compositions but copy and recopy the Song (420-479) collections (note that it is the poetic innovations of the Han and not the earlier Confucian Odes which represent

the classical norm for modern literature). Although they comprehensively read both contemporary and ancient (literature) the moderns are cherished but the ancients are neglected. However, blue derives from indigo and red from crimson. Although (later transformations) surpass the base colors they cannot be changed back (to indigo and crimson i.e. one has to go back to the base colors to create new compounds). Huan Tan (43-28 B.C.) says: "When I read recent literature with its advanced symmetry - it is beautiful but there is nothing gained. But, when I peruse Liu's (50 B.C.-23 A.D.) and Yang's (53 B.C.-18 A.D.) discourses and poems then there is always something gained". This is its (literature's) ultimate test. Therefore, to be skilled in the blue and brilliant with the red one must return to the indigo and the crimson (i.e. the fundamentals). To forge new transformations and to get rid of the superficial go back to and cherish the classical standards - deliberate and weigh carefully the interstices between the fundamental forms and (as a carpenter) level and join within the limits of both the 'elegant' and the 'vulgar'. "With that guy one can discuss 'continuous transformations'" (a paraphrase of Confucius' exclamation - see earlier discussion). A certain par excellence of tonal

qualities was perfected at the beginning of the Han. From this time on later generations simply moved about in a circle one following the other. Though at times they surpass or excel the standard, in the end, they all belong to the same basket.<sup>303</sup>

This is not traditionalism. Liu is not arguing against innovations or advocating a return to older styles. He is, though, arguing that literature reveals certain principles and a critical understanding of these principles in all their aspects - both the "elegant" and the "vulgar" - is essential to any effective or significant innovation. Insipidness derives from both excessive "elegance" and excessive "vulgarity". When he insists that the modern writer should go back to the origins of modern poetry in the Han writers Liu is simply pointing out that literature perfects certain formal elements and that, as is true in all arts, often Giotto or Piero Della Francesca reveal more clearly these elements than do Leonardo or Raphael. It is not an accident that modernism in European painting began with the Pre-Raphaelites. I skip over his examination of the progressive transformations of a poetic line by five Han writers. In translation the argument loses most of its sense. The main point of the analysis is to demonstrate how poetry imitates itself and selfconsciously transforms its elements. He goes on to summarize his argument.

XXIX.3) Collating the formal qualities and correlating one's innovations (with them) is (essentially) what the art of 'continuous transformation' (i.e. creativity) requires. Therefore, to critically outline literature's governing principles and to sound out its general structures, first, extensively peruse, then minutely examine - setting out the matrices so that their common elements correspond. Subsequently, one (can) forge (new) paths and establish (new) focal structures. One (can) loosen the reins and move on - let go of the outer features but adhere to the inner structures - trusting to one's own nature to thoroughly penetrate (the form) and relying on one's own spirit to fortuitously innovate. Literary designs are like the rainbow and its hues are like the spreading wings of the phoenix (i.e. they have both order and logic). Such are the brush tip's (pen's) literary forms. If one remains like a infant in his understanding of literature - self satisfied in his own singular achievements - he will run about in a circle and never get anywhere.

the Zan

Literature's standards are cyclical. Day by day it

renews its beauty. By transforming it is forever fit; by being a continuum it is never exhausted. Hastening forward in time it always bears fruit. (Once) you harness its dynamic structures there is nothing to fear. With an eye on the moderns create the 'extra-ordinary' collating the ancients determine the principles.<sup>304</sup>

The literary discourse, being by definition both traditional and new, is comprised essentially of the 'ordinary' and the 'extra-ordinary' - or in modern structural terms the 'familiar' and the 'strange'. The force of art represents the force of both its familiarity and its strangeness together - a simultaneous sense of recognition and bewilderment. Later, in chapter XLVIII, Liu defines criticism as essentially the perception of "differences". He is acutely aware of the contradiction present in art and is the only critic in Europe or in China before the Russian formalists to critically address the problem. There is nothing in the Poetics which comes close to Liu's discussion of innovation and continuity. Aristotle seems to be only in a very limited sense aware of literature's essential "strangeness" or the need within art to continually innovate.

As noted earlier, Liu's critical attention to the phonetic aspects of literature is peculiar and important. As

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is the case with Aristotle's analysis of the grammatical elements of diction in chapters XX and XXI,<sup>305</sup> Liu's observations on the prosodic elements mark the degree to which he abstracts and objectifies the literary discourse as a linguistic phenomena. He elaborates his thoughts on prosody in chapter XXXIII entitled "Tonal Rules". The argument is obviously a development of Shen Yue's theory concerning the prosodic tones. The loss of Shen's treatise represents, I believe, one of the most significant losses in Chinese intellectual history. It appears to have contained some of the most sophisticated reflections on prosody in any tradition. An examination of the first part of Liu's discussion of prosody demonstrates more than any other argument the subtle nature of his critical thought.

As already seen in chapter VII on the yue fu Liu focuses on the distinction between music as a composition of pure sounds and prosody as a composition of linguistic phonemes. The argument is based on the differentiation and comparison of yin ( ) musical tones or pitches and sheng ( ) vocal tones or the four linguistic tones which, along with rhyme, form the primary elements of Classical Chinese prosody. The observations are somewhat confusing if one is not familiar with the tonal elements of the Chinese language.

## XXXIII.1) Tonal Rules

As to the pitch rules (of music), whence do they derive. Their foundation lies in man's vocal tones (i.e. the four linguistic tones). These vocal tones possess a consonance (of their own) which is rooted in our blood and spirit. The ancient kings in accord with these (four linguistic tones) composed musical songs. Consequently it is evident that the musical instruments (originally) imitated man's vocal tones and that these vocal tones did not (originally) imitate the musical instruments. Therefore, as regards the spoken discourse, the key structures of its literary forms, the fundamental dynamic elements of its inspiration, and the 'scale' of its expressiveness are simply a matter of the lips and the mouth and nothing more (i.e. Prosody in all its forms represents the key structures, dynamic elements, or emotive "scale" of the literary discourse, and its effects are produced simply by the phonemes.)<sup>308</sup>

Liu's observations concerning the origins of pitch are interesting; he inverts the conventional or empirical relation between prosody and music i.e. one normally compares prosody

to music and not music to prosody. But, Liu is probably correct when he points out that man first articulated the tonal consonance within language then deduced from them the more abstract consonance of music. As we will see, he is well aware that the real difference between linguistic tones and musical tones is not simply an accidental difference but an essential difference i.e. they are analogous but not homologous. The critical point of the last argument is that, objectively treated, the prosodic effects of literature which represent the "key structures" of its forms, the "dynamic elements" of its inspiration, and the "scale" of its expressiveness are produced by phonemes and these phonemes can be both identified and analyzed. This represents the primary critical argument of the Wenxin i.e. literary forms can be identified and analyzed.

XXXIII.2) Among the ancients instruction in song was preceded by an investigation of its principles. They aligned the abrupt syllables with the gong notes and the level syllables with zhi notes. Zhi and yu are the high notes, and gong and shang are the low notes. Also, within the alternation of gutturals and sibilants or the differentiation of labials and dentals reciprocal levels of "masculine" and "feminine" effects can be clearly distinguished (i.e. the ancient poets were critically conscious

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of the phonetic elements of prosody).

Today, when one plays a lute and is out of tune he is always aware of it and adjusts the strings. But, when one takes up literary form and errs with his "strings" he (often) does not know how to "tune" it. As for musical sounds which reside (externally) in the strings, one can bring them into harmony. But, as regards phonetic tones which are rooted in our mind (i.e. they are part of the semantic structure of the language), one errs in their harmonic rules. What are the reasons for this? The primary cause is that it is easy to be consciously clever with that which is heard externally, but it is hard to be consciously aware of that which is heard internally. Consequently, since external perceptions are easy, musical strings are adjusted by our hands, but internal perceptions being problematic, the linguistic tones are confused within our minds. They (the linguistic tones) can be researched by means of systematic observations, but it is difficult to follow this up with an explanation (this is true of all prosodic usages - and, I may add, grammatical usages - one can observe their patterns by systematic comparisons, but these patterns are extremely difficult to explain.)<sup>307</sup>

Liu's subtle observations regarding the subjective and the objective natures of literary versus musical forms is unprecedented until modern European criticism. He is absolutely correct when he points out that in contrast to musical form, which can be easily objectified, prosodic form and literary form in general resist analysis - English prosody in all its manifestations has never been coherently analyzed. It is difficult even for well educated native speakers to accurately identify linguistic tones. Linguistic perception appears to suppress a conscious sense of the phonetic elements as such, or they are perceived purely within the terms of their semantic functions. In addition, modern neurology points out that the musical and the linguistic areas of the brain are separate and different, and that one can not simultaneously perceive both musical and linguistic forms. The particular pleasure derived from song or opera appears, in part, to be an acute sense of movement between these two modes of consciousness. The subtle nature of Liu's reflections and his precise terminology imply a sophisticated milieu of phonetic research. The same is true in chapter XXXIV entitled "Stanza & Sentence" where Liu discusses the problematic elements of Chinese grammar and its formal nature within poetry. There appears to have been within the community of Buddhist scholars during the fifth and sixth centuries a concerted investigation of the Chinese language in both its phonetic and grammatical

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aspects. The above arguments are followed by a rigorous and minute examination of classical prosody. The whole analysis requires far more attention than I can give it here. Liu is not simply aware of the differences between music and poetry; he has rigorously examined those differences.

In the second to last chapter entitled "Kenning the Tones" or "Objective Criticism" Liu reviews the central theme of the treatise i.e. the problems of realizing a critical understanding of literary history and literary form. The title zhi yin (知音) which literally means a "critical understanding of the harmonic tones" is used metonymically throughout the chapter to signify both "classical criticism" and "the classical critic". The usage is curious and important. The expression is first found within the Yue ji (Musical Records) section of the Li ji (Ritual Records) - one of the five Confucian Classics - where it is juxtaposed with the two corollary expressions zhi sheng (知音聲) a "critical understanding of the vocal tones" and zhi yue (知音樂) a "critical understanding of music" as an intermediary term. The Classical text reads in part:

Therefore, having investigated the vocal tones one comes to critically understand the harmonic tones, and having investigated the harmonic tones one comes to critically understand music..Consequently, as far

as one who doesn't critically understand the vocal tones is concerned one can not discuss with him the harmonic tones; and as far as one who doesn't critically understand the harmonic tones is concerned one can not discuss with him music.<sup>308</sup>

"Critically understanding the harmonic tones" within the context clearly implies a critical understanding of the accords which determine the harmonic relation between the musical and the phonetic tones as discussed above in chapter XXXIII. Liu appears to isolate the expression "zhi yin" to define the classical critic precisely because it focuses on the differentiation of the musical and the linguistic tones. Such a discrimination, as he points out in chapter XXXIII, represents one of the most problematic areas of criticism.

At the beginning of chapter XLVIII Liu elaborates on Cao Pi's notion of "self-awareness" or objectivity. Such critical attention to literary epistemology finds no real parallel in the Poetics. As Liu himself points out at the end of the postface, the peculiar nature of his own curiosity seems to reflect a fundamental fact within Liu's personality. He was fascinated by the questions of language and literature. Today, the problems of objectivity within criticism have only begun to be broached and critically examined.

## WENXIN CHAPTER XLVIII

## XLVIII.1) Kenning the Tones

To critically know the tones (objective criticism) is indeed difficult. The reality of the tones are difficult to perceive. It is difficult (enough) to find one who is critically conscious of reality; to find one who is critically conscious of the tones (i.e. a real critic), (perhaps) there is one in a thousand years.

The (so-called) critics from earlier times often belittle their contemporaries and (only) think about the ancients (this may contain an implied criticism of Confucius who talked too much about the poetic accomplishments of the past and too little about those of his own age) - just as it is said: "Day after day he approaches but doesn't harness (the horses) in his presence, yet when he hears neighing from afar his thoughts wonder" (i.e. the "grass is greener" syndrome). Formerly, when Han Fei-zi's (ob. 233 B.C.) Chu shuo was first brought out, or when Sima Xiang-ru's (179-117 B.C.) Zi xu appeared, the Qin emperor and the Han emperor (respectively) expressed regret at not being their contemporaries.

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But, when it was known that they actually were contemporaries then Han was thrown into prison and Sima was belittled. Does this not clearly reflect a contempt for contemporaries?

Then there is the case (as found in Cao Pi's Lun wen) of Ban Gu and Fu Yi who in literature were almost equals; yet Ban ridicules Fu saying: "Once he starts writing he can't control himself." And, Cao Zhi (192-232) in his analysis of talent severely criticizes Chen Lin (ob. 217) but when Ting Yi (ob. 200) requested that he embellish his composition (i.e. add some words of his own) he (Cao Zhi) sighs with pretty talk (i.e. he idly compliments Ting Yi - amateurism plagued Chinese criticism) and Liu Jixu (ca.200) loves to censure or deface others. Cao compares him (Liu) to Tien Ba (ca. 400 B.C. a sophist who loved to criticize others though he lacked talent himself). The meaning of his (Cao's) opinion is apparent. Consequently, when Cao Pi declares that the literati tend to belittle each other this does not represent idle talk.

There is also the case of Lou Hu (ca 20 A.D.) - a glib tongue but a faulty critic. He states that Sima Qian (145-85 B.C.) in composing his history

consulted Dong-fang Shuo (ca. 100 B.C.). Huan Tan (43 B.C.- 28 A.D.) and his group after comparatively examining (the case) judged (Dong-fang's remark) ridiculous. Now if such an obvious 'dandy' is reproached for his careless remarks can a serious scholar afford to speak arbitrarily?

Therefore, the "brilliant" and the "perspicacious" who value what is ancient but denigrate what is modern are just like the two rulers (above); the "geniuses" and the "extra-ordinary" who venerate themselves and despise others are just like Ban Gu and Cao Zhi; and (finally) those who are studious but (simply) don't understand literature and, therefore, trust what is fake and are confused by what is genuine they are the same as Lou Hu. As to the thought of ending up as a pickle jar cover - how often this has been the sad case!<sup>309</sup>

All three categories of error represent forms of subjectivism. An obvious limitation in many of the translations is the fact that they ignore Liu's irony. A distinctly agile humor runs throughout the treatise, and Liu will from time to time ironically mimic romantic hyperbole. The last allusion is to the all too common phenomena in every tradition that the best or most significant texts are often

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neglected while minor but more typical works are assiduously copied. The fact that Shen Yue's essay was lost while hundreds of second rate essays were preserved, or, in Europe, during the twelve and thirteenth centuries almost all the manuscripts of early Greek lyric poetry were trashed while shelvesful of third rate Byzantine poetry were treasured is not simply a matter of chance. In all cultures second rate poets and critics are by nature ill at ease with first rate poetry and criticism. Amateurism in both China and Greece did real harm to both literature and literary criticism.

XLVIII.2) The mi deer and the phoenix compared to the jun deer and the pheasant are absolutely distinct, and pearls and gems compared to pebbles and stones are extremely different. Nevertheless, with broad daylight displaying their appearances and the eye tracing their forms a certain minister of Lu took a mi deer for a jun deer, a certain fellow from Chu took a pheasant for a phoenix, a rustic from Wei took a phosphorescent stone for a precious gem, and a merchant from Song took a rock from mount Yen for a precious pearl. (Even when) the substance of the outer shape can be easily verified one (still) finds such errors. (In contrast), the inner qualities of literature are difficult to examine - who says they are easy to analyze?

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Literary compositions represent a complex (of opposites). (The elements) of both content and form are intertwined and compounded. One's critical knowledge is more often than not biased. No one can be completely comprehensive. Sanguine personalities will respond to the tones and beat out the rhythms; refined and intricate personalities will examine the minutiae and be sublimely oblivious (of all else); light and clever personalities will gape at superficial qualities and get all excited; the eccentric will listen for oddities and prick up their ears. What conforms to their "selves" they recite with enthusiasm but what is at odds with their egos they denigrate and reject. Each is limited in his understanding to one little corner and wants to restrict the transformations, which (in fact) are without limits. This is called "looking east and not seeing the west wall". When one has practiced a thousand (different) tunes then one is perceptive in matters of tones, or when one has examined a thousand (different) swords then one is knowledgeable in such things. Therefore, the very nature of catholic comprehension first requires extensive observation.

When one has both examined high mountains and shaped low hills; when one has both considered big waves and illustrated little ripples (i.e opposites) - when there is nothing idiosyncratic in one's judgments and one is not biased in his evaluations - then one can weigh the (internal) structures as if in a scale and reflect on the (external) language as if in a mirror.

Therefore, when undertaking to examine the qualities of literature - first, examine the articulated structures; second, examine the arranged language; third, examine both the "traditional" and the "transformed"; fourth, examine both the "deviant" and the "orthodox"; fifth, examine content and thought; and sixth, examine the consonances. When these artistic elements have been outlined then the strengths and weaknesses will be apparent.<sup>310</sup>

Liu divides criticism into an analysis of structure, rhetoric, innovation, eccentricity, content, and prosody. Note how he distinguishes innovation from eccentricity. A writer can innovate without necessarily being eccentric, or he can be eccentric without necessarily innovating. The whole represents a clear example of rigorous formalism without the slightest nod to traditional moralism or romanticism.

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XLVIII.3) As to the writer, first his inner nature is moved then the discourse is set out, but as to the reader, first he peruses the literary forms then he enters their inner nature. Trace the patterns and seek their sources; though they (the sources) be obscure they are always evident.<sup>311</sup>

As far as I know Liu is the first critic to articulate the difference between the writer and the reader or to objectify the act of reading as distinct from the act of composing.

XLVIII.4) As to those generations which are long gone and whose faces no one can see, when one scans their literary forms he suddenly sees their minds. How can a perfected literary composition be too profound. The trouble is simply the shallowness of one's own critical reflections and nothing more.

→ "His focus was on the mountains and the rivers and the lute expressed their inner natures (a reference to Bo Ya an ancient musician who could express through his musical compositions his impressions of mountains or rivers); then, (within) the pen's arrangement of (aesthetic) forms (i.e. within literary forms), how could it be that intellectual structures are not"

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→ "visible. Consequently, the mind illumines intellectual structures just like the eye illumines visible forms (i.e. the mind stands to our sense of intellectual structures just as the eye stands to our sense of visible forms). If one's eyes are keen then there are no visible forms which can not be broken done, and if the mind is intelligent then there are no intellectual structures which can not be apprehended."<sup>312</sup>

The argument, as always, is intricate and subtle. Liu is pointing out that if music through musical forms can abstractly express the musician's inner nature then literature through literary forms can abstractly express the writer's inner nature, and that just as the keen eye is capable of analyzing all visible aesthetic forms so the intelligent mind is capable of apprehending all intellectual literary structures. The shift from music to the visual arts is somewhat confusing. Liu may have in mind the landscape tradition in painting which was perfected during the fourth and fifth centuries. Contrary to the European tradition, forms and structures in the Chinese tradition are essentially aesthetic forms and structures. And, Liu separates neither art nor literature from the intellect.

XLVIII.5) Nevertheless because common perception is confused the profound is destroyed and the shallow is preserved. This is why Zhuang Zhou ridicules zhe

yang music (popular music) and Song Yu was pained at the fate (the disappearance) of bai xue music (classical music). Long ago Qu Yuan argued: "the disposition of literary forms articulates (one's) interior (nature), but the majority do not critically understand my literary patterns (because) they are different". To perceive differences is to be an objective critic - that's it! Yang Xiong (53 B.C.-18 A.D.) critiquing himself says: "My mind loves literary forms which are extremely erudite and minutely well proportioned". It is obvious, from this, that he does not indulge in what is either vague or shallow.

→ "Only that (reader) who with profound consciousness examines the inner subtleties will happily arrive at a full appreciation (of literature). This (appreciation) can be compared to the (appreciation) of a serene crowd on a spring tower, or of a wayfarer halting his trip to enjoy some victuals. For, it is said of the magnolia, which is a national treasure, that only when it is worn for pleasure is it fully fragrant. Likewise for books, which are also national treasures, it is only when one is intimate with their graceful and fluid nature are they (truly) beautiful. Let the genuine critic meditate on these matters!"

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## the Zan

Huge bells of ten thousand pounds require a Kuei or a Kuang (master musicians) to be regulated. The best books may fill the shelves but only when they are subtly examined can they be arranged in an intelligent order. Vulgar Zheng music satiates men; without a doubt it destroys (refined) appreciation. Only the principles laid out here do not confuse the essential clews.<sup>313</sup>

Liu's last point is not purely rhetorical. The distinction between the writer and the reader involves a distinction between the art of writing and the art of reading. Both arts are essential to literature. Nothing destroys an aesthetic tradition more quickly than idle and uncritical appreciation. This fact is particularly apparent within Chinese painting which greatly increased in popularity during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries but at the same time rapidly declined in quality. The Wenxin itself provides an obvious case in point; it has often been idly praised but seldom critically read. In my own opinion, Liu is excessively critical of popular taste and fails to understand the subtle and necessary relation between popular forms in music, painting, and literature and real aesthetic innovation.

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CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY & CONCLUSION

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## SUMMARY &amp; CONCLUSION

I do not pretend in the above translations to have accurately interpreted all of Liu's arguments - I am often genuinely bewildered by both his language and his reasoning - but I do claim that the interpretations - which insist that Liu's critical thought is as coherent and as comprehensive as is Aristotle's - make distinctly more sense of their immediate and larger contexts than those found in either traditional or modern treatments of the same.<sup>314</sup> As a simple hermeneutic rule of thumb, within both theoretic and philosophic discourses, that interpretation which clarifies more precisely an arguments's immediate and overall logic clearly represents a more accurate interpretation. In a recently published history of Chinese literature which dedicates two complete chapters to a discussion of Liu's criticism and influence, the author, after presenting the Wenxin as a typical example of Chinese impressionist criticism comparable to Lu Ji's Wen fu and asserting that "Liu Xie, tout au long de son livre, n'a jamais voulu se laisser enfermer dans la logique d'un raisonnement...", concludes his survey with the following remark: "(en Chine) l'esthetique litteraire ne prend jamais l'aspect systematique, ideologique qu'elle a pu prendre en Occident."<sup>315</sup> The misconception is as pervasive throughout both traditional and modern treatments of the Wenxin as is the Platonic mis-interpretation of mimesis throughout the

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discussions of the *Poetics*.

Today when one peruses Cicero's discussions of Aristotle the misunderstandings and distortions are more than apparent. It is evident that certain aspects of Aristotle's arguments were not articulated until Hegel and modern European philosophy re-examined the texts. The best and ultimately most significant thinkers in all traditions move beyond the limits of their own cultures. As a consequence, every culture tends - for the sake of popularization - to reduce the arguments of its most critical thinkers to its own vulgar standards. The thoughts of Confucius, Plato, Liu, Aristotle, Dante, and Zhu Xi when isolated within the limits or parochialism of their own cultures are only partially understood. The critical nature of their arguments ultimately require a larger or more developed consciousness to be fully appreciated. In this regard, it is evident that the force or significance of Gautama Buddha's thoughts was not fully realized until those thoughts were critically examined and elaborated by non-indian minds. Yet, even modern interpretations of the *Wenxin* have, on the whole, been content to interpret Liu's treatise within the vague generalities of traditional Chinese criticism. It deserves closer scrutiny.

In summary, the *Wenxin* treats and clarifies elements of classical criticism which the *Poetics* does not and vice-versa.

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But, when carefully compared the two treatises reveal certain common critical methods and theories which are otherwise less apparent. This is particularly true of the *Wenxin*, which when left within the context of traditional Chinese criticism characterized by a loose and uncritical impressionism both the nature and the substance of its arguments are nearly invisible, but when juxtaposed with the *Poetics* and modern European formalist criticism the precision and formalism of those arguments are more than apparent. Nevertheless, Liu's essentially paratactical mode of argumentation and his frequent use of metaphor sharply contrasts with Aristotle's dialectical methods. As a consequence, the refinements of thought and criticism within the *Wenxin* often seem at odds with their expression.

The methodological and theoretical elements which are common to both the *Poetics* and the *Wenxin* isolate the major principles of classicism and articulate its fundamental formalist nature. In both China and Europe classicism was perfected through an identification and an analysis of both the diachronic and the synchronic elements of literature. Each critic responding to the critical debate within his own culture systematically rejects the fallacy of traditional didacticism and the vague impressionism of traditional romanticism and focuses his analysis on the history, the structures, and the principles of the literary discourse as

such; and confronted by the complex facts of literary change, each critic seeks to explain such innovations as representing both a necessary transformation and a coherent articulation of literary form. Consequently, both Aristotle and Liu come closer than any pre-modern critic to a comprehensive theory of literature.

As argued at the beginning of the dissertation there is running throughout the analyses a subthesis regarding the nature and the significance of comparisons between two essentially independent literary traditions. The idea has been recently broached by Francois Jullien who at the beginning of his dissertation on the literary theories found in the *Wenxin* remarks:

Il est une question que recontre necessairement l'esprit occidental qui s'interesse à la realité chinoise et qui est celle de son alterité par rapport à nous...Car il n'est pas douteux que par rapport à L'Occident le Monde chinois offre les conditions de possibilité d'une distance maximale: une civilisation qui est peut-être la seule à s'être si continument developpée en l'absence de tout rapport avec notre propre tradition.<sup>316</sup>

It is, as Jullien phrases it, the "alterité" of each

tradition in respect to the other which gives to such comparisons their radical nature. But, as he also points out, such a shift in perspective has seldom if ever been the object of any critical study. We have yet to consider the real significance and implications of not only the homologies and analogies but of the comparisons themselves.

The dissertation in part attempts to set out both a critical point of view and a methodology which focuses such comparisons within the terms of the actual texts of the most significant and articulate critics within each tradition isolating and comparing in detail the logic of their arguments. Such a juxtaposition, as we have seen, raises questions of meaning which are otherwise invisible or less evident and ultimately requires and justifies a radical re-reading of both texts. As is true in other sciences literary facts and theories only become fully comprehensible when seen in relation to others both independent and different.

It is apparent that neither the European nor the Chinese critical tradition can be known and understood without such a comparison. In a certain sense, each tradition in isolation remains only half known and half understood. As T.S. Eliot notes: "The difference between the present and the past is that the conscious present is an awareness of the past in a way and to an extent which the past's awareness of itself can

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not show." So each culture when viewed through the critical details of the other for the first time realizes a conscious awareness of itself. The juxtapositions outline questions and focus details which are otherwise only half articulated.

When examined within the perspective of the *Wenxin* and Chinese poetry the *Poetics* reveals a fundamental critical hiatus. Aristotle effectively ignores the lyric tradition or only explains it as an early and undeveloped form of the narrative. This is clearly not the result of the fact that Greek poetry had not, in Aristotle's time, developed and perfected a sophisticated lyric tradition, but rather, as it appears, that Aristotle was simply unable to isolate and identify the elements of the lyric voice independent of the narrative. As a consequence, European criticism on the whole has artificially separated fiction from non-fiction and never really dealt with the theoretic questions of the lyric.<sup>317</sup> In contrast, Chinese criticism, particularly as seen in the *Wenxin* where the fundamental focus is on the lyric, never isolated or analyzed the elements of plot, time, and character despite the fact that from the Han period on down Chinese poetry developed complex and sophisticated modes of narration - particularly travelogues - and personification in which the poet often takes on the persona of another including that of the opposite sex. Each culture remains, even today, curiously ignorant of the limitations and distortions within its own

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idea of itself. It is apparent that a full knowledge and understanding of both Chinese and European literature can only be realized when each tradition has been examined under the critical light provided by the historical and the aesthetic details of the other. Literary criticism requires such a comparison of historical and aesthetic facts to reach its own end.

## END NOTES

1. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, C.K. Ogden, London: Routledge & Kegan Ltd., 1981, p.1 et passim. For a theoretical discussion of the nature and the importance of a comparative analysis of historically independent traditions see Francois Jullien, *La valeur allusive*, Paris: Ecole Francais D'Extreme-Orient, 1985, pp.3-15.

2. All references to the *Wenxin diaolong* are to the text in *Wenxin diaolong xinshu fu tongjian*, Li Qi Wang, Taipei: Centre franco-chinois d'etudes sinologiques, 1968, abbreviated W.D.X..

3. All references to the *Poetics* are to the text in *Aristotelis Opera*, Immanuel Bekker, vol.II; Berlin: Walterde Gruyter & Co., 1960, abbreviated A.O..

4. For a recent survey of Chinese criticism before and after Liu see Jacques Pimpaneau, *Histoire de la litterature chinoise*, Paris: Editions Philippe Picquier, 1989, pp.84-140.

5. The Chinese titles for the five Classics - used from time to time for the sake of brevity - are respectively *Shu jing* (書經), *Li ji* (禮記), *Yi jing* (易經), *Chunqiu* (春秋), *Shi jing* (詩經).

6. The comparison of the Classical Odes to folk poetry has, in my opinion, the same accuracy as the comparison of the Homeric Epics to oral narratives at large. Both comparisons fail to point out the significant differences. No folk tradition cultivated, in the case of the Confucian Odes, the same degree of linguistic minimalism or, in the case of the Homeric epics, the same degree of dramatic unity. To consider the Odes as typical folk poems or to consider the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* as typical oral narratives involves major critical fallacies. See C.H. Wang, *The Bell and the Drum: Shih Ching as Formulaic Poetry in an Oral Tradition*, Berkley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1974; Michael N. Nager, *Spontaneity and Tradition: a Study in the Oral Art of Homer*, Berkley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1974. Nager defends the Parry-Lord view of the Homeric texts and oral poetry; for a contrary argument see Douglas Young, "Never Blotted a Line? Formula and Premeditation in Homer and Hesiod", *Arion VI* (1967), pp.279-324.

7. Critical opinion regarding the subsequent influence of the Wenxin diaolong on the literary tradition or its immediate influence on the Wen xuan is contradictory. Cf. "Wen-hsin tiao-lung," *The Indiana Companion to Traditional Chinese Literature*, ed. William H. Nienhauser, jr., Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986, pp. 889-890; Jacques Pimpaneau, *Histoire de la littérature chinoise*, idem, pp. 107-140; & Xiao Tong, *Wen xuan, or Selections of Refined Literature: Vol. One: Rhapsodies on Metropolises and Capitals*, David R. Knechtges, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982, pp.15-16. Paul Shao in his dissertation, "Lieh Hsieh As Literary Theorist, Critic, and Rhetorician", Stanford University, 1981, pp.144-147, points out some of the obvious fallacies within the arguments *ex silentio* used to demonstrate that the treatise had little influence during the Tang and Song periods.

8. Liu Xie, *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons*, Vincent Yu-chung Shih, Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 1983, pp. xxxviii-xxxix. Also see Vincent Y.C. Shih, "Classicism in Liu Hsieh's Wen-hsin Tiao-lung", *Asiatische Studien* 7 (1953), pp. 122-134, & Ch'iu-lang Chi, "Liu Hsieh As a Classicist and His Concept of Tradition & Change", *TKR* 4.1 (April 1973), pp.90-108.

9. Rene Wellek, "The Term and Concept of Classicism in Literary History" in *Concepts of Criticism*, New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1964, pp.55-89.

10. T.E. Hulme, "Romanticism & Classicism", as found in *Hulme, Speculations*, New York: Humanity Press, 1965.

11. The whole question concerning the nature of the literary milieu surrounding the composition, selection, and compilation of the Homeric and the Confucian canons involves fundamentally the same problems as those raised within the oral poetry debate. See note 6 above. In comparison to the Homeric tradition of which we know almost nothing the Zhou tradition of courtly music (ca.1122-600 B.C.) has left substantive evidence of a sophisticated and articulate community of critical thought.

12. *Noctes Atticae* 19,8,15: "Vel oratorum aliquis vel poetarum, id est classicus assiduusque aliquis scriptor, non proletarius...". See Rene Wellek, "The Term and Concept of Classicism in Literary History", idem. p.64.

13. Wellek, *ibid.*

14. See later discussion of Eliot's essay "Tradition and the Individual Talent".

15. See the later translation and discussion of Xiao Tong's preface. Xiao the first son of Emperor Wu (464-549) was the editor of the *Wen xuan* and a student of both Shen Yue and Liu Xie.

16. T.S. Eliot, *Selected Essays*, New York: Harcourt Brace & World Inc., 1964, pp.3-11.

17. T.S. Eliot, *For Lancelot Andrews, Essays On Style & Order*, London: Faber & Faber, 1970, p.7 . In the preface he states; "The general point of view may be described as classicist...I am quite aware that the first term (classicist) is completely vague, and easily lends itself to clap-trap."

18. T.S. Eliot, "Tradition & the Individual Talent", *idem*.

19. Eliot, *ibid*.

20. Eliot, *ibid*.

21. Eliot, *ibid*.

22. Cf. C.H. Wang's discussion of Holzman's article "Confucius & Ancient Chinese Criticism", in his review article "Naming the Reality of Chinese Criticism", *JAS* 38, No.3 (May 1979) pp.529-534. Though I generally agree with Wang's opinion concerning the glibness of Holzman's evaluation nevertheless to effectively argue that Western critical standards and thought are irrelevant to Chinese criticism is to argue that Chinese criticism is not criticism. There are real differences of details within each tradition but the standards of good criticism in Europe or in China are the same i.e. an accurate and coherent analysis of literary history and form. The vulgar habits of either culture are not justification for idle or careless thinking.

23. Eliot, *ibid*.

24. Eliot, *ibid*.

25. Eliot, *ibid*.

26. See Ferdinand de Saussure, *Cours de linguistique general*, ed. Tullio de Mauro, Paris: Payot, 1987. For a survey of Saussure's influence on modern criticism see Jonathen Culler, *Structuralist Poetics: Structuralism, Linguistics, and the Study of Literature*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975; Robert Scholes, *Structuralism in Literature*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974.

27. An example of such is Rene Wellek's study of the concept of classicism "in literary history" as cited above. Despite the title Wellek treats classicism as a uniquely European phenomena. Such blatant parochialism would not be tolerated today in comparative linguistics.

28. See Roman Jakobson, "Closing Statements: Linguistics & Poetics" in T.A. Sebeok, *Style in Language*, New York: 1960.

29. For a general discussion of the critical and epistemological differences between Europe and China see Ferenc Tokei, *Genre Theory in China in the 3rd-6th Centuries*, Bibliotheca Orientalis Hungarica XV, Budapest: Akademia Kiado, 1971. Despite the confused nature of many of Tokei's ideas - the often incoherent English poses a major barrier - his fundamental point concerning the "undifferentiated condition" of Chinese thought or the lack of a developed dialectical tradition in China is sound. He touches upon some of the most important questions raised in a comparative study of Chinese criticism.

30. In the light of modern Chinese scholarship this might seem an exaggeration, but when one compares the most critical or modern examinations of Confucius with European examinations of Aristotle, Plato, and the Pre-Socratics since Hegel the traditionalism or the resistance to questioning certain highly questionable traditional assumptions among sinologists is more than apparent. Scholarship in ancient Chinese philosophy, literature, and art is still characterized by rigid and often arbitrary notions of the tradition in which the individual or idiosyncratic elements of Confucius', Liu Xie's, and Ni Can's thoughts are lost within the generalities concerning "Chinese" art, literature, and philosophy. Who today would describe Aristotle, Virgil, or Da Vinci as conventional Greek, Roman, or Italian minds?

31. To take a simple example - if one compares Zhang Daqian's (1899-1983), who is considered one of the best twentieth century traditional painters, imitations of Zhu Da, Dong Qichang, and Ni Zan with genuine compositions by the same artists the lack of aesthetic acuity in Zhang's paintings is blatant. Attempts to gloss over these differences as simply a matter of taste only underline the decline in refinement and sophistication within traditional Chinese aesthetics. The best of Zhu Da's, Dong Qichang's, and Ni Zan's compositions will stand on their own when juxtaposed with the best of Cezanne or Picasso, but Zhang's compositions need to be defended when set along side those of Norman Rockwell.

32. Zhu Xi goes on to say "I have previously imparted my subjective imposition to my interpretation of the Four Books, so what I have said is ultimately of no use...only now (he was

61 years old) have I finally come to see everything with clarity and objectivity...Had I died last year, all I had done would have been a waste." Li De-qing, Yu tan (李德清語談) Taipei: 1962, vol. vii, p. 4227. Zhu Xi was one of the first scholars to critically question the Han didactic interpretations of the Confucian Odes - cf. his remarks on the arbitrary nature of the Mao interpretations as found in Legge's preface to the Book of Odes, p.33.

33. A.O. Poetics, p.1447a8-13. See Greek text in appendix I.

34. Gerald F. Else, Aristotle's Poetics: The Argument, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957, p.3.

35. Plato, Gorgias 502c. The references to Plato's texts follow the standard pagination and page subdivisions of the 1578 edition of Plato by Henri Estienne (Stephanus).

36. Plato, *ibid.*

37. I use the french term "adequation" as it is found within the writings of Paul Ricoeur and other French structuralist to signify a metaphorical equivalency.

38. W.D.X. chpt.V, p.12.

39. A.O., Metaphysics, 1064a17 & 1025b25.

40. Paul Vicaire, Recherches sur les mots designant la poesie et le poet dans l'oeuvre de Platon, Paris: Presses Universitaire de France, 1964.

41. Plato, Ion 532c.

42. Plato, Republic 392c-394c.

43. A.O. Poetics 145ob18-20.

44. A.O., Physics, 195a33-195b3; see also Catagories & Metphysics.

45. Plato, Ion 533c-535a. See appendix I.

46. Plato, *idem* 531a.

47. Plato, *idem* 531e-532b.

48. Plato, *idem* 537a-e.

49. Plato, Gorgias 502c.

50. Plato, *idem* 449d.

51. Paul Vicaire, *idem*, p. 28.
  52. Plato, *idem* 502b-d. See appendix I.
  53. Paul Vicaire, *idem*, p.3.
  54. All references to the text of *On the Sublime* are to the chapter, page, and line divisions as found in the Bude edition: *Du Sublime*, Henri Lebegue, Paris: Societe d'Edition "Les Belles Lettres", 1965 abbreviated D.S.. I ignore the real problems of authorship for the sake of simplicity.
  55. Nicolas Boileau - Despreaux, *Oeuvres diverses du Sieur Dxxx (Despreaux) avec Le traite du sublime ou du merveilleux dans le discours traduit du grec de Longin*, Paris: D.Thierry, 1674.
  56. Allen Tate, "Longinus and the New Criticism" in *Essays of Four Decades*, London: Oxford University Press, 1970, pp.471-490.
  57. Tate, *idem*, p.485.
  58. Tate, *idem*, p.484.
  59. D.S. X.1-3 p.16-18.
  60. D.S. XV.1 p.24. See appendix I.
  61. Cf. D.S. I.3, VI, XIV, XXX. The attempts among the translations to render *logoi* as "elements of style" are clearly incorrect; Longinus is consistent in his use of the term to distinguish the rhetorical from both the poetic and historical discourses.
  62. D.S. IX.13 p.15.
  63. Tate, *idem*, p.490.
  64. A.O. *Poetics*, 1459a4-8: "It is a great thing indeed to make proper use of these poetical forms and also of compounds and idioms. But, the greatest thing by far is to be a master of metaphor. It is the one thing which can not be learnt from another and is the sign of genius, for to create a good metaphor is to perceive 'equivalents' (i.e. similars in dissimilars)."
  65. Tate, *idem*, p.489.
  66. Tate, *idem*, p.481.
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67. Cf. The translations and interpretations of the beginning section of Chapter VI as found in Vincent Shih, *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons*, idem, p.60; Donald A. Gibbs, "Literary Theory in the Wen-hsin tiao-lung", unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Washington, 1970; Jacques Pimpaneau, *Histoire de la litterature chinoise*, ibid; & William Craig Fisk, "Formal Themes in Medieval Chinese and Modern Western Literary Theory: Mimesis, Intertextuality, Figurativeness, and Foregrounding", unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1976; in addition, the critical discussions of the beginning sections of Chapter I as found in Paul Yong-shing Shao's, "Liu Hsieh As Literary Theorist, Critic, and Rhetorician", unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Stanford, University, 1981; & Francois Jullien's, *La valeur allusive*, Paris: Ecole Francaise D'Extreme-Orient, 1985. When all the above interpretations are compared it is clear that the language and arguments of the Wenxin have been treated by otherwise responsible scholars in a totally arbitrary manner. Shao who ends up by transforming Liu's criticism into an uncritical melange of Neo-Platonic, Aristotelian, Daoist, and Zen arguments - along with some Han mumbo-jumbo, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Jakobson, and Heidegger thrown in - represents, in my opinion, the worst example of such confusion. See also Jullien's appraisal of both traditional and modern Chinese interpretations of the Wenxin, idem, p.49, n.1.

68. Donald Holzman, "Confucius and Ancient Chinese Criticism" in *Chinese Approaches to Literature from Confucius to Liang Ch'i-ch'ao*, ed. Adele Austin Rickett, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978, pp.21-41.

69. Cf. C.H. Wang's review article "Naming the Reality of Chinese Criticism", ibid. For a general discussion of the limits of critical thought within both traditional and modern Chinese commentaries on the Wenxin see Francois Jullien, idem, p.49, n.1.

70. Holzman, ibid.

71. James Liu, *Chinese Theories of Literature*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975, p.65.

72. For the sake of convenience I use the "Da xu" text found in James Legge's edition of the Odes: James Legge, *The Chinese Classics, Vol. IV The She King*, Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1960, pp.34-37. See Legge's discussion of the sources and the authors of the "Da xu" in which he translates Zhu Xi's remarks: Legge, idem, prolegomena, pp.23-33.

73. Liu, ibid.

74. Legge, idem, prolegomena, p.34. See appendix II. Zhi (志) represents one of the most problematic of Chinese literary terms. I discuss its history and meanings later. The meaning of the first sentence is problematic and my interpretation unconventional. The sentence is normally read: "The Odes represent "where the zhi (temperament) goes (至)" which appears to signify the "per-fection" or the "actualization" of the "temperament"; but the noun phrase suo-zhi (所至) can also be interpreted as a "transformation" (變) as found within the sentence 辭也者各指其所之(焉) i.e. the trans-formation of one's inner "temperament" into a poem - c.f. the various readings of suo-zhi as recorded in the Zhongwen daizidian. The complete lack of any critical discussion of this problematic phrase among both traditional and modern commentaries is typical of Chinese philology which seldom examines the syntactic or semantic questions raised by the text. I translate the term sheng (聲) "vocal sounds" in contrast to "musical sounds" as the term is used within the Wenxin but, as is the case with the term yin (音) "musical tone", it is not clear whether the argument distinguishes musical and prosodic forms i.e. prosody and melody. I am using the term "prosody" in its etymological sense i.e. the musical or song aspects of poetry - see later discussion of Zhou poetics.

75. Legge, ibid. See appendix II.

76. Legge, ibid. See appendix II.

77. For the traditional definition of the six principles see Zhu Xi's discussion as translated in Pauline Yu, *The Reading of Imagery in the Chinese Poetic Tradition*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987, pp.107-108 & later discussions of the figures.

78. Legge, ibid. See appendix II.

79. Legge, idem, p.1-5. See appendix II.

80. Legge, idem, vol.I, *Confucian Analects VIII*. 15, p.213.

81. Legge, idem, prolegomena, p.37. See appendix II.

82. Legge, ibid. See appendix.

83. See Pauline Yu, *The Reading of Imagery in the Chinese Poetic Tradition*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987, pp.3-84.

84. See Pauline Yu, ibid.

85. See Pauline Yu, *ibid.*, & David Hawkes, *The Songs of the South*, New York: Viking Penguin, 1985, pp.15-66.

86. See Zhu Zi-qing 朱自清, *Shi yan zhi bian* 詩言志辨 (1947; rpt. Shanghai: Guji chubanshe, 1981), pp.187-233.

87. Legge, *The Chinese Classics*, Vol. III *The Shoo King (Shu jing)*, *idem.*, p.47-48. See earlier and later discussions sheng (聲) - again the primary problem is the confusion of musical and poetic forms and trying to determine whether the technical terms refer to one or the other or both. See appendix II.

88. See Zhu Zi-qing, *Shi yan zhi bian*, *idem.* & Shih-hsiang Chen, "The Shih-ching: Its Generic Significance in Chinese Literary History & Poetics", in *Studies in Chinese Literary Genres*, ed. Cyril Birch, Berkley: Univ. of California Press, 1974, pp.8-41.

89. Chow Tse-tsung, "The early History of the Chinese Word Shih (Poetry)", in *Wen-lin*, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1968, pp.151-209; & Zhu Zi-qing, *ibid.*

90. Legge, *idem.*, vol.I, *Confucian Analects* XI.25, p.249 et passim. The term is relatively rare within the writings of Confucius and does not appear at all within the *Book of Odes*.

91. Legge, *ibid.*, vol.II, *The Works of Mencius* II.A.2, p.188-189.

92. See Shih Hsiang Chen, *Ibid.*

93. Legge, *ibid.*, vol. III, *The She King (Shi jing)*, p.535.

94. Legge, *ibid.*, p.491.

95. *Shisanjing zhushu* 十三經注疏, Li ji, Beijing: Zhonghua shuju chuban, vols.I & II, pp.1221-1696. For a discussion of the readings see Chow Tse-tsung, *idem.*, p.203.

96. Legge, *ibid.* The argument that shi (詩) in the sense of "setting out" a composition represents a loan character and not a cognate of the word shi meaning "to mark out" or "to aim" seems unnecesarrily twisty. There were obvious correlations within the Zhou court between the arts of poetry and archery and a number of terms seem to have been borrowed from archery to express poetic notions. My own belief is that zhi (志) represents such a case.

97. *Shisanjing zhushu*, *idem.*, p.1537. For the most elaborate presentation of the idea that musical forms are correlative or analogous to human virtues see the *Zuo zhuan's* (Xiang 29) account of Ji Zha visit to the state of Lu in 543 and his

critique of the various musical modes. Again, Ji Zha comments do not represent didactic arguments; he does not equate either the musical or the poetic composition with a moral discourse i.e. he does not say music "teaches" in the literal sense filial piety nor does he interpret the poetic discourse in terms of a simple moral discourse. He does, though, discuss the aesthetic qualities of both the music and the poetry, and implies that such qualities can both reflect and influence human nature. It is important to note that he makes no distinction between poetry and music - in fact treats poetry as simply a mode of music.

98. Legge, idem, vol. V, The Ch'un Ts'ew with the Tso Chuen (The Spring & Autumn Annals with the Zuo-zhuan), p.662.

99. See Chow Tse-tsung, idem, p. 203.

100. Shisanjing zhushu, idem, p.1284.

101. Shuowen jiezi, 志者心之所居也, & 詩者志之所之也 as found in the 'Da xu': See earlier discussion.

102. Legge, idem, vol.I, p.211.

103. Legge, idem, Vol.I, p.323. My translations of "qun" (羣) as "practice grouping", and "yuan" (怨) as "practice criticism" are distinctly different from the traditional interpretations which talk about "sociability" and "resentment". We know that Confucius was particularly concerned with sorting out and critiquing the traditional collection of the Odes, and the following two phrases only make grammatical and semantic sense if they are taken as explanations of the above phrases; zhi (之) clearly represents an object pronoun referring to the Odes, and the verb yuan (怨) is used several times by Confucius in conjunction with yuan (怨). He appears to treat the two words as cognates. Qun is often used in Chinese criticism to signify "literary grouping" cf. X.D.X., chpt. I, p.2.. I admit, however, that the interpretation of yuan (怨) in the sense of "critiquing the Odes", though the term can mean "to criticize", is unique. Yet, an honest appraisal of the two phrases should recognize all possible interpretations and the real questions each poses. Cf. Odes 35,253, & Analects IX.30, XVII.25 etc.

104. See William McNaughton, "The Composite Image: Shi jing Poetics", JAOS 83 (1963): pp.92-106.

105. See Shih-hsiang Chen, idem.

106. See Christine Brooke-Rose, *A Grammar of Metaphor*, London: Secher & Warbourg, 1958, p.35; & H. Morier, "Metaphore", in *Dictionnaire de poetique et de rhetorique*, Paris: Presses Universitaire de France, 1961.

107. Holzman, *idem*, p.35.

108. Legge, *idem*, vol.I, pp.144-145.

109. Legge, *idem*, p.157.

110. Legge, *idem*, vol.I, pp.315, 265, 323.

111. Holzman, *idem*, p.33.

112. Legge, *idem*, vol.I, p.146.

113. Holzman, *ibid*.

114. Sui shu (隋書), Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1973. See appendix II.

115. Legge, *idem*, vol IV, p.67.

116. Legge, *idem*, vol. IV, p.400.

117. See C.H. Wang, "Naming the Reality of Chinese Criticism", *ibid*.

118. All references to the Wen fu are to the text found in Achilles Fang, trans., "Rhymeprose on Literature, the Wen-fu of Lu Chi (A.D. 261-303)" in John L. Bishop, ed. *Studies in Chinese Literature*, Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1966, pp.3-42, abbreviated Fang W.F..

119. See introduction and notes in Fang W.F., *ibid*; & E.R. Hughes, *The Art of Letters: Lu Chi's "Wen Fu" A.D.302*, Bollinger Series XXIX, Princeton: Univ. of Princeton Press, 1951.

120. All references to the Lun wen are to the text in Wen xuan, commentary by Li Shan, You Mao ed., 3 vols., rpt. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju chuban, 1977, Lun wen, pp.720-721, abbreviated W.X.L.W..

121. James R. Hightower, "The Wen Hsuan and Genre Theory", in *Studies in Chinese Literature*, ed. John L. Bishop, Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, pp.142-163. See also Hightower, "Literary Criticism through the Six Dynasties", in his *Topics in Chinese Literature*, Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1971, pp.42-48.

122. Hightower, *ibid*.

123. W.X.L.W., idem, p.720. See appendix III.

124. See translation and discussion of Wenxin chpt. XLVIII.

125. W.X.L.W., ibid. See appendix III. The precise meaning of the phrase 自見 is problematic. The verb 見 can be read in either its transitive or causitive sense i.e. as either jian meaning "to see" or "to observe", or as xian meaning "to make apparent" or "to appear". If one reads zi jian (self-observation) it signifies zi xing 自省 i.e. "self-examination" or if one reads zi xian (self-apparent) it signifies zi jue 自覺 i.e. "self-awareness". Within the context to interpret, as has been suggested, zi xian in the sense of "showing oneself off" reduces Cao's arguments to utter nonsense. Throughout the essay Cao focuses on the problems of "subjectivity" among writers.

126. W.X.L.W., ibid. See appendix III.

127. W.X.L.W., ibid. See appendix III.

128. W.X.L.W., ibid. See appendix III.

129. W.X.L.W., ibid. See appendix III.

130. W.X.L.W., ibid. See appendix III.

131. W.X.L.W., ibid. See appendix III.

132. W.X.L.W., ibid. See appendix III.

133. See later translation and discussion of Wenxin chpt. VI.

134. W.X.L.W., ibid. See appendix III.

135. W.X.L.W., ibid. See appendix III.

136. Hightower, ibid.

137. W.X.L.W., ibid. See appendix III.

138. W.X.L.W., ibid. See appendix III.

139. W.X.L.W., ibid. See appendix III.

140. W.X.L.W., ibid. See appendix III.

141. W.X.L.W., idem, p.721. See appendix III. The final phrase can be translated: "Only Xu Gan has composed a treatise (the Zhong lun) that constitutes the discourse of a school of thought." What this means and why Cao would choose to mention

it at the end of his discussion of literary form is not at all apparent.

142. Da xue (大學) II.1. See Legge, *idem*, vol.I, p.361.
143. See Fang, W.F., *idem*, introduction.
144. The section divisions follow the divisions of the texts in Fang's translation.
145. Fang, W.F. *idem*, preface, line 7. See appendix IV.
146. Fang, W.F., *idem*, preface, line 6. See appendix IV.
147. Fang, W.F., *idem*, section A, line 1. See appendix IV.
148. Cf. the beginning of Chapter XLIX & Paul Shao, "Liu Hsieh as Literary Theorist, Critic, and Rhetorician", unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Stanford University, 1981, p.131.
149. Hightower, *idem*.
150. Fang W.F., *idem*, section E, lines 43-47. See appendix IV.
151. Fang W.F., *idem*, section E, lines 48-49.
152. Fang translates the section: "Different as these forms are, they all forbid deviation from the straight, and interdict unbridled licence. Essentially, words must communicate, and reason must dominate; prolixity and longwindedness are not commendable." Fang W.F., *ibid*. What "deviation from the straight" signifies is anybody's guess.
153. Fang W.F., *idem*, section K, lines 79-93.
154. Kenneth DeWoskin, "Early Chinese Music and the Origins of Aesthetic Terminology", in *Theories of the Arts in China*, ed. Susan Bush & Christian Murck, Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1983, pp.199-206.
155. Fang W.F., *idem*, section F, Line 50. See appendix IV.
156. Viz. Nan shi (History of the Southern Dynasties, 420-589) 72.1782.
157. See Richard B. Mather, *The Poet Shen Yueh (441-513): The Reticent Marquis*, Princeton, Princeton Univ. Press, 1988, pp.37-84.
158. The reasons for such phonetic precision in the early Greek alphabet where both long and short vowels are distinguished has never been adequately explained. Such

precision is not required within common or practical discourses. The fact that the Greek alphabet articulates the elements of Greek prosody and poetics (viz. the literary use of dialects) I don't believe is accidental. Homer and the Homeridae might well have had a hand in its development.

159. See Mather, *idem*, pp.44-64.

160. Mather, *idem*, pp.55-56.

161. Mather, *idem*, p.60.

162. Wen xuan, *idem*, Song shu, pp.702-704. See Mather, *idem*, pp.43-44.

163. Wen xuan, *idem*, Song shu, pp.703-704. See appendix V.

164. See later discussion of the phrase.

165. See Kong Fan 范, "Liu Xie yu Foxue 刘勰与佛学" in *Zhongguo shehui kexue* 4, 1983, pp.183-196. For a somewhat negative appraisal of such attempts to see explicit Buddhist elements within the *Wenxin* see Paul Shao, "Liu Hsieh As Literary Theorist, Critic, and Rhetorician", unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford University, 1981, pp.115-116, n.42. Shao also discusses the relationship between Shen Yue and Liu Xie cf. *idem*, pp.145-146.

166. See David R. Knechtges, *idem*, pp.4-21.

167. *Liangshu* 8.167 - see appendix V & David R. Knechtges, *idem*, p.7.

168. Wen xuan, *idem*. p.1. See Knechtges, *idem*, pp.72-97 & appendix VI. My translation of the first two phrases is distinctly different from the standard translation as found in Knechtges' edition. I treat the initial particle shi (也) as a concessive coordinate conjunction. The particle is traditionally explained as the equivalent of yi (以) or yong (用), and as found in both the *Shi jing* and the *Shu jing* it often appears to function as a coordinate particle - cf. Ode 191. The expression xuan feng (玄风) is glossed by Li Shan as meaning dao (道) "the inner logic". Interpreted in this manner the two phrases set forth Xiao's major premise i.e. an examination of the origins and the development of a phenomenon reveals its inner nature; otherwise, the second part of Xiao's observation represents a simple tautology. The idea that history reveals the inner nature of literature through its transformations represents a major critical premise within the *Wenxin*.

169. Wen xuan, *ibid*. See appendix VI.

170. Wen xuan, idem, p.2. See appendix VI.
171. Cf. Donald Arthur Gibbs, "Literary Theory in the Wen-hsin tiao lung", idem, pp.24-39; Paul Shao, "Liu Hsieh As Literary Theorist, Critic, and Rhetorician", idem; & Francoise Jullien, *La valeur allusive*, idem. All three dissertations attempt to treat the Wenxin in the light of modern critical thought but fail to establish a coherent and mutually consistent interpretation of the text. They all tend to isolate the arguments from their actual context and as a consequence interpret the meaning arbitrarily. See also Jacques Pimpaneau, *Histoire de la litterature chinoise*, ibid and my remarks at the end of the dissertation. The fundamental error in all the above discussions of the Wenxin lies in the assumption that the treatise represents a traditional "Chinese" analysis of literature which can, more or less, be equated with Lu Ji's Wen fu.
172. Donald Arthur Gibbs, idem, p.3.
173. See appendix IX for listing and summary of chapters.
174. W.D.X., idem, p.127. See appendix VII.
175. Legge, idem, vol.I, p.329.
176. Fang W.F., idem, preface, line 1. See appendix IV.
177. W.D.X., ibid. See appendix VII.
178. Shi ji, chpt. 74. See appendix V.
179. W.D.X., ibid. See appendix VII.
180. W.D.X., ibid. See appendix VII.
181. W.D.X., idem, pp.127. See appendix VII.
182. W.D.X., ibid. See appendix VII.
183. W.D.X., idem, pp.128-129. See appendix VII.
184. W.D.X., idem, p.129. See appendix VII.
185. W.D.X., ibid. See appendix VII.
186. W.D.X., idem, pp.129-130. See appendix VII.
187. Vincent Shih, idem, p.5. & xxix-xxxii. Cf. Gibbs, idem, pp.25-39.
188. W.D.X., idem, p.1. See appendix VII.

189. W.D.X., *ibid.* See appendix VII. For an elaborate but imprecise discussion of the last thought see Françoise Jullien, *La Valeur Allusive*, *idem*, pp.42-51. Wen (文) denotes an aesthetic form and or a complex of parts and whole; it never signifies simply the written language.

190. W.D.X., *ibid.* See appendix VII.

191. W.D.X., *ibid.* See appendix VII. My interpretation of shen ming (神明) as "intellect" is problematic. The phrase is often used to signify both the divine and the intellectual realities - cf. Zhongwen dazidian discussion of shen ming; also see F.S. Couvreur, *Dictionnaire classique de la langue chinoise* & H. A. Giles, *Chinese -English Dictionary* discussions of shen. My own belief is that Liu is focusing on the intellectual connotations of the phrase; this would not exclude the belief that the intellect as a direct manifestation of the divine intellect represents, in a sense, man's "spiritual aspect". The introductory clause itself is an adaptation of a traditional discussion of the composition of the Book of Changes. The meaning of the phrase along with the verb zan ( i.e. "to assist" or "to elucidate") within the original context is also problematic.

192. W.D.X., *idem*, pp.1-2. See appendix VII. As with shen ming (see note 191) my interpretation shen li (神理) as "the intellect's structures" is problematic. The term "shen" normally signifies "the divine" but it can also signify, as noted above, "the intellect" or "the intellectual capacities". The precise significance of shen ming and shen li need to be examined more closely within Liu's overall argument which clearly articulates a rationalist point of view - cf. Zhongwen dazidian's discussion of shen and shen ming.

193. See Vincent Shih, *idem*, pp.15-17.

194. W.D.X., *ibid.* See appendix VII.

195. See Vincent Shih, *ibid.*

196. W.D.X., *ibid.* See appendix VII.

197. W.D.X., *idem*, pp.2-3. See appendix VII.

198. See Vincent Shih, *idem*, p.19.

199. A.O., *idem* 1447a13-18. See appendix I.

200. A.O., *idem* 1447a18-28. See appendix I.

201. Else, *idem*, pp.31-32.

202. A.O., idem 1447a28-b29. See appendix I.
203. cf. A.O., idem 1448a1-3.
204. Tate, *ibid.*
205. J. Hardy, *Aristote Poetique*, Bude, Paris: Societe d'edition "les Belles Lettres", 1975.
206. Else, idem, pp.90-101.
207. Else, idem, p.93.
208. I am using "recit" not in the sense of a "narration" versus "non-narration" but rather in the sense of the composition as an abstraction versus the text i.e. the composition as the words on the page. Recitation is common to all literary discourses whether narrative, lyric, or dramatic. The term represents what Aristotle calls the *poesis* as distinct from the *poema* and is analogous to Saussure's distinction between *la langue* and *la parole*.
209. A.O., idem 1448a19-25. See appendix I.
210. A.O., idem 1448a25-27. See appendix I.
211. A.O., idem 1448a28-b3. See appendix I.
212. Roselyne Dupont-Roc & Jean Lallot eds., *Aristote, La Poetique*, Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1980, p.20.
213. *Thesaurus Graecae Linguae*, Henricus Stephanus, Paris: Ambrosius Firmis Didot, 1831-1846, p.1070.
214. Plato, *Republic III*, 392a-401b.
215. J. Hardy, *ibid.*
216. A.O., idem 1448b4-21. See appendix I.
217. Cf. Paul Ricoeur, *La metaphore vive*, Paris: Editions Seuil, 1975, *passim*.
218. A.O., idem 1448b11.
219. A.O., idem 1450b36-1451a6.
220. The only reasonable explanation for such loose critical habits is the fact that the critical discourse in Aristotle's time was apparently viewed only as an abbreviated prompt within an oral community and therefore the actual argument

could be abbreviated. The same type of ellipses are found throughout the Wenxin.

221. A.O., idem 1459a5-8 . See earlier discussion.

222. W.D.X., idem, p.3. See appendix VII.

223. The fact that a number of the manuscripts lack the adjectival wen ~~文~~ before the ci <sup>詞</sup> indicates that the reading early on raised some real questions. Ci often signifies within the Wenxin the rhetorical aspects of the literary discourse it can also mean simply a poetic discourse. My own belief is that Liu prefixes ci with the wen to indicate that is precisely the formal literary qualities of Confucius' compositions which manifest his inner sentiments.

224. W.D.X., ibid. See appendix VII.

225. W.D.X., ibid. See appendix VII.

226. W.D.X., idem, pp.3-4. See appendix VII.

227. W.D.X., idem, p.4. See appendix VII.

228. W.D.X., ibid. See appendix VII.

229. Cf. Chapter XXXIV & Paul Shao, idem, pp.4-5.

230. W.D.X., idem, pp.4-5. See appendix VII.

231. W.D.X., idem, p.5. See appendix VII.

232. See Kong <sup>Fan</sup>, idem cf. <sup>NOTE 165</sup>

233. Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*, Trans. Willard R. Trask, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953.

234. W.D.X., idem, p. 5. See appendix VII.

235. W.D.X., ibid. See appendix VII.

236. W.D.X., ibid. See appendix VII.

237. W.D.X., idem, pp.5-6. See appendix VII.

238. W.D.X., idem, pp.7-8. See appendix VII.

239. W.D.X., idem, p.7. See appendix VII.

240. W.D.X., idem, pp.7-8. See appendix VII.

241. Legge, *idem*, vol. II, pp.281-282.
242. Legge, *idem* vol. V, prolegomena, pp.1-4.
243. *Chunqiu* V, 16th year. See Legge, *idem*, vol. V, p.170.
244. See Vincent Shih, *idem*, p.35, n.15.
245. *Chunqiu* XI, 2nd year. See Legge, *idem*, vol. V, p.746.
246. See Vincent Shih, *idem*, p.35, n.16.
247. W.D.X., *idem*, pp.8-9. See appendix VII.
248. See Vincent Shih, *idem*, pp.35-36, n.18.
249. W.D.X., *ibid.* See appendix VII.
250. W.D.X., *idem*, pp.8-9. See appendix VII.
251. W.D.X., *idem*, p.9. See appendix VII.
252. See *Wenxin* chpt. XLIX.
253. W.D.X., *ibid.* See appendix VII.
254. W.D.X., *ibid.* See appendix VII.
255. A.O., *idem* 1451a30-35. For a general discussion of Liu's notion of organic unity see Paul Shao, "Liu Hsieh As Literary Theorist, Critic, and Rhetorician", *idem*, *passim*. Liu comes closest to Aristotle's idea in Chapter XXXII where he states: "If a sentence can be deleted then the (composition) is evidently loose, but if not a word can be changed then clearly it is perfect". Aristotle's statement that a change of any part changes the whole is both more accurate and more precise.
256. W.D.X., *idem*, p.9-10. See appendix VII.
257. One of the most famous examples of such confusion is the *Ziming* version of Huang Gong-wang's *Fuchun shanju tu*. See Caroline Gyss-Vermande, *La vie et l'oeuvre de Huang Gongwang*, Paris: College de France Institut des Hautes Etudes Chinoises, 1984.
258. W.D.X., *idem*, p.10. See appendix VII.
259. W.D.X., *idem*, p.11. See appendix VII.
260. W.D.X., *idem*, p.11-12. See appendix VII.
261. W.D.X., *idem*, p.12. See appendix VII.

262. W.D.X., *idem*, pp.12-13. See appendix VII.
263. Tate, *idem*, p.485.
264. W.D.X., *idem*, p.13. See appendix VII.
265. W.D.X., *idem*, pp.13-14. See appendix VII.
266. W.D.X., *idem*, p.14. See appendix VII.
267. Vincent Shih, *idem*, p.55.
268. W.D.X., *ibid*. See appendix VII.
269. W.D.X., *idem*, pp.14-15. See appendix VII.
270. W.D.X., *idem*, p.16. See appendix VII & earlier discussions of the two quotes.
271. See Wenxin, chpt. VII.
272. W.D.X., *ibid*. See appendix VII & earlier discussion of the term fu ( 伏 ).
273. Vincent Shih, *idem*, p.61.
274. See Eliot, *ibid*.
275. W.D.X., *ibid*. See appendix VII.
276. Cf. A.O. *idem* 1451b5-11.
277. W.D.X., *idem*, pp.16-17. See appendix VII.
278. W.D.X., *idem*, p.17. See appendix VII.
279. W.D.X., *ibid*. See appendix VII.
280. A.O., *idem* 1449a37-1449b1. See appendix I.
281. W.D.X., *idem*, pp.17-18. See appendix VII.
282. W.D.X., *idem*, pp.18-19. See appendix VII.
283. A.O., *idem* 1448b38-1449a2 & 1449a9-15. See appendix I.
284. W.D.X., *idem*, p.19. See appendix VII.
285. W.D.X., *ibid*. See appendix VII.
286. W.D.X., *idem* pp.19-20. See appendix VII.

287. W.D.X., *ibid.* See appendix VII.
288. W.D.X., *ibid.* See appendix VII.
289. See Roman Jakobson as discussed in Gerard Genette, *Figures of Literary Discourse*, Columbia University Press, 1982, p.7; & Victor Erlich, *Russian Formalism*, The Hague: Mouton, 1969, p.218.
290. W.D.X., *idem*, pp.20-21. See appendix VII.
291. W.D.X., *idem*, p.21. See appendix VII.
292. W.D.X., *ibid.* See appendix VII.
293. W.D.X., *idem*, pp.22-23. See appendix VII.
294. Cf. A.C., *idem* 1449a1-5.
295. W.D.X., *idem*, p.81. See appendix VII.
296. W.D.X., *ibid.* See appendix VII.
297. W.D.X., *idem*, pp.81-82. See appendix VII.
298. W.D.X., *idem*, p.82. See appendix VII.
299. For a discussion and defence of Liu's "characterizations" see Paul Shao, "Liu Hsieh As Literary Theorist, Critic, and Rhetorician", *idem*, pp.127-135. See also Shao's discussion of the eight norms, *idem*, pp.142-156.
300. W.D.X., *idem*, pp.82-83. See appendix VII.
301. Eliot, *ibid.* See earlier discussion.
302. W.D.X., *idem*, p.84. See appendix VII.
303. W.D.X., *idem*, p.85. See appendix VII.
304. W.D.X., *idem*, pp.85-86. See appendix VII.
305. Because of the limits of the dissertation I have not discussed Liu's (as found in chapters XXIV & XXXV) or Aristotle's analysis of the sentence and the syntactical elements of the discourse, but both analyses represent extremely important and interesting aspects of their criticism.
306. W.D.X., *idem*, pp.90-91. See appendix VII.
307. W.D.X., *idem*, p.91-92. See appendix VII.

308. Li ji 37.19. See Shisanjing zhushu, idem, p.1528 & appendix II.
309. W.D.X., idem, p.124. See appendix VII.
310. W.D.X., idem, pp.124-125. See appendix VII.
311. W.D.X., idem, p.125. See apendix VII.
312. W.D.X., ibid. See appendix VII.
313. W.D.X., ibid. See appendix VII.
314. Cf.Vincent Shih, idem; I have also consulted the modern Chinese interpretations of the Wenxin diaolong as found in Lu Kan-ru & Liu Xie-lun's edition Wenxin diaolong yi zhu, Jinan: Qilu shushe, 1984; and Liu Si & Zhou Zhen-fu, Wenxin diaolong zhushi, Beijing: renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1983.
315. Jacques Pimpaneau, Histoire de la litterature chinoise, idem, pp.122, 124. Pampaneau's translations of Liu's text are as abitrary as they come.
316. Francois Jullien, La valeur allusive, idem, p.3. The whole dissertation is flawed by a fundamentally lax and uncritical notion of classical Chinese syntax and a typically cavalier attitude towards the meaning of the Chinese text.
317. Gerard Genette in Introduction a l'architexte, Paris: Seuil, 1979, pp.35-36 discussing Cascale's (1634) suggestion that the lyric has in place of plot not an action but a thought remarks: "Cette idee, qui nous est aujourd'hui plus que banale, est restee pendant des siecles non pas sans doute impensee...mais presque systematiquement refoulee, parce que impossible a integrer au systeme d'une poetique fondee sur le dogme de l'imitation."

## ABBREVIATIONS

W.D.X.	Wenxin dialong xinshu
A.O.	Aristotelis Opera
D.S.	Du sublime
W.X.L.W.	Wen xuan - Lun wen
W.F.	Wen fu
HJAS	Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies

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## ΑΡΙΣΤΟΤΕΛΟΥΣ ΠΕΡΙ ΠΟΙΗΤΙΚΗΣ

Περὶ ποιητικῆς αὐτῆς τε καὶ τῶν εἰδῶν αὐτῆς, ἣν τινα 1447<sup>a</sup>  
 δύναμιν ἕκαστον ἔχει, καὶ πῶς δεῖ συνίστασθαι τοὺς μύθους  
 εἰ μέλλει καλῶς ἔξειν ἢ ποιήσῃς, ἔτι δὲ ἐκ πόσων καὶ 10  
 ποίων ἐστὶ μορίων, ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ περὶ τῶν ἄλλων ὅσα τῆς  
 αὐτῆς ἐστὶ μεθόδου, λέγωμεν ἀρξάμενοι κατὰ φύσιν πρῶ-  
 τον ἀπὸ τῶν πρώτων. ἐποποιία δὴ καὶ ἡ τῆς τραγωδίας  
 ποιήσῃς ἔτι δὲ κωμωδία καὶ ἡ διθυραμβοποιητικὴ καὶ τῆς  
 αὐλητικῆς ἢ πλείστη καὶ κιθαριστικῆς πᾶσαι τυγχάνουσιν 15  
 οὔσαι μίμησις τὸ σύνολον· διαφέρουσι δὲ ἀλλήλων τρισίν,  
 ἢ γὰρ τῷ ἐν ἑτέροις μιμείσθαι ἢ τῷ ἕτερα ἢ τῷ ἑτέ-  
 ρως καὶ μὴ τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον. ὡσπερ γὰρ καὶ χρώμασι  
 καὶ σχήμασι πολλὰ μιμοῦνται τινες ἀπεικάζοντες (οἱ μὲν  
 διὰ τέχνης οἱ δὲ διὰ συνηθείας), ἕτεροι δὲ διὰ τῆς φωνῆς, 20  
 οὔτω καὶ ταῖς εἰρημέναις τέχναις ἅπασαι μὲν ποιοῦνται  
 τὴν μίμησιν ἐν ῥυθμῷ καὶ λόγῳ καὶ ἁρμονίᾳ, τούτοις δ'  
 ἢ χωρὶς ἢ μεμιγμένοις· οἷον ἁρμονία μὲν καὶ ῥυθμῷ χρω-  
 μέναι μόνον ἢ τε αὐλητικὴ καὶ ἡ κιθαριστικὴ καὶ εἰ τινες  
 ἕτεροι τυγχάνουσιν οὔσαι τοιαῦται τὴν δύναμιν, οἷον ἢ τῶν 25  
 συρίγγων, αὐτῷ δὲ τῷ ῥυθμῷ [μιμοῦνται] χωρὶς ἁρμονίας ἢ  
 τῶν ὄρχηστῶν (καὶ γὰρ οὗτοι διὰ τῶν σχηματιζομένων ῥυθμῶν  
 μιμοῦνται καὶ ἦθη καὶ πάθη καὶ πράξεις)· ἢ δὲ [ἐποποιία]  
 μόνον τοῖς λόγοις ψιλοῖς (καὶ) ἢ τοῖς μέτροις καὶ τούτοις εἶτε  
 1447<sup>b</sup> μιγνύσα μετ' ἀλλήλων εἶθ' ἐνὶ τινι γένει χρωμένῃ τῶν μέ-  
 τρων ἀνώνυμοι τυγχάνουσι μέχρι τοῦ νῦν οὐδὲν γὰρ ἂν  
 10 ἔχοιμεν ὀνομάσαι κοινὸν τοὺς Σώφρονος καὶ Ξενάρχου μί-  
 μους καὶ τοὺς Σωκρατικούς λόγους οὐδὲ εἰ τις διὰ τριμέτρων  
 ἢ ἔλεγείων ἢ τῶν ἄλλων τινῶν τῶν τοιούτων ποιοῖτο τὴν  
 μίμησιν· πλὴν οἱ ἀνθρωποὶ γε συνάπτοντες τῷ μέτρῳ τὸ  
 ποιεῖν ἐλεγειοποιούς τοὺς δὲ ἐποποιούς ὀνομάζουσιν, οὐχ ὡς  
 15 κατὰ τὴν μίμησιν ποιητὰς ἀλλὰ κοινῇ κατὰ τὸ μέτρον προσα-  
 αγορεύοντες· καὶ γὰρ ἂν ἰατρικὸν ἢ φυσικὸν τι διὰ τῶν  
 μέτρων ἐκφέρωσιν, οὔτω καλεῖν εἰώθασιν· οὐδὲν δὲ κοινόν  
 ἐστὶν Ὀμήρῳ καὶ Ἐμπεδοκλεῖ πλὴν τὸ μέτρον, διὸ τὸν μὲν  
 ποιητὴν δίκαιον καλεῖν, τὸν δὲ φυσιολόγον μάλλον ἢ ποιη-  
 20 τὴν ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ εἰ τις ἅπαντα τὰ μέτρα μιγνύων  
 ποιοῖτο τὴν μίμησιν καθύπερ Χαιρήμων ἐποίησε Κένταυ-  
 ρον μικτὴν ῥαψωδίαν ἐξ ἁπάντων τῶν μέτρων, καὶ ποιη-  
 τὴν προσαγορευτέον· περὶ μὲν οὖν τούτων διωρίσθω  
 τοῦτον τὸν τρόπον· εἰσὶ δὲ τινες αἱ πᾶσι χρῶνται τοῖς εἰρη-  
 25 μένοις, λέγω δὲ οἷον ῥυθμῷ καὶ μέλει καὶ μέτρῳ, ὡσπερ  
 ἢ τε τῶν διθυραμβικῶν ποιήσῃς καὶ ἢ τῶν νόμων καὶ ἢ  
 τε τραγωδία καὶ ἢ κωμωδία· διαφέρουσι δὲ ὅτι αἱ μὲν  
 ἅμα πᾶσιν αἱ δὲ κατὰ μέρος· ταύτας μὲν οὖν λέγω τὰς  
 διαφοράς τῶν τεχνῶν ἐν οἷς ποιοῦνται τὴν μίμησιν.

1448<sup>a</sup> Ἐπεὶ δὲ μιμοῦνται οἱ μιμούμενοι πράττοντας, ὡνάγκη 2  
 δὲ τούτους ἢ σπουδαίους ἢ φιλόλους εἶναι (τὴ γὰρ ἡθὴ σχεδὸν  
 ἀεὶ τούτοις ἀκολουθεῖ μόνις, κακία γὰρ καὶ ἀρετὴ τὰ ἡθὴ  
 διαφέρουσι πάντες), ἤτοι βελτίωνας ἢ καὶ ἡμῶς ἢ χείρονας  
 ἢ καὶ τοιούτους, ὡςπερ οἱ γραφεῖς· Πολύγνωτος μὲν γὰρ 5  
 κρείττους, Παύσων δὲ χείρους, Διονύσιος δὲ ὁμοίους εἴκαλεν.  
 δῆλον δὲ ὅτι καὶ τῶν λεχθεισῶν ἐκάστη μιμήσεων ἔξει  
 ταύτας τὰς διαφορὰς καὶ ἔσται ἕτερα τῷ ἕτερα μιμῆσθαι  
 τοῦτον τὸν τρόπον. καὶ γὰρ ἐν ὀρχήσει καὶ αὐλήσει καὶ  
 κιθαρίσει ἔστι γενέσθαι ταύτας τὰς ἀνομοιότητας, καὶ [τὸ] 10  
 περὶ τοὺς λόγους δὲ καὶ τὴν ψιλομετρίαν, οἷον Ὅμηρος μὲν  
 βελτίους, Κλεοφῶν δὲ ὁμοίους, Ἡγήμων δὲ ὁ Θάσιος <ὁ> τὰς  
 παρωδίας ποιήσας πρῶτος καὶ Νικοχάρης ὁ τὴν Δειλιάδα  
 χείρους· ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ περὶ τοὺς διθυράμβους καὶ περὶ τοὺς 15  
 νόμους, ὡςπερ †γαῶ† Κύκλωπας Τιμόθεος καὶ Φιλόξενος 15  
 μιμήσαιο ἂν τις. ἐν αὐτῇ δὲ τῇ διαφορᾷ καὶ ἡ τραγω-  
 δία πρὸς τὴν κωμωδίαν δίστηκεν· ἡ μὲν γὰρ χείρους ἢ δὲ  
 βελτίους μιμῆσθαι βούλεται τῶν νῦν.

3 Ἔτι δὲ τούτων τρίτη διαφορὰ τὸ ὡς ἕκαστα τούτων  
 μιμήσαιο ἂν τις. καὶ γὰρ ἐν τοῖς αὐτοῖς καὶ τὰ αὐτὰ 20  
 μιμῆσθαι ἔστιν ὅτε μὲν ἀπαγγέλλοντα, ἢ ἕτερον τι γιγνώ-  
 μενον ὡςπερ Ὅμηρος ποιεῖ ἢ ὡς τὸν αὐτὸν καὶ μὴ μετα-  
 βάλλοντα, ἢ πάντας ὡς πρίττοντας καὶ ἐνεργοῦντας †τοὺς  
 μιμουμένους†. ἐν τρισὶ δὲ ταύταις διαφοραῖς ἡ μίμησις ἔστιν,  
 ὡς εἶπομεν κατ' ἀρχάς, ἐν οἷς τε †καὶ ᾧ† καὶ ὡς. ὥστε τῇ 25  
 μὲν ὁ αὐτὸς ἂν εἴη μιμητὴς Ὅμηρον Σοφοκλῆς, μιμοῦνται  
 γὰρ ἄμφω σπουδαίους, τῇ δὲ Ἀριστοφάνει, πρίττοντας γὰρ  
 μιμοῦνται καὶ δρῶντας ἄμφω. ἔπλεον καὶ δράματα καλεῖ-  
 σθαί τινες αὐτὰ φασιν, ὅτι μιμοῦνται δρῶντας. διὸ καὶ  
 ἀντιποιοῦνται τῆς τε τραγωδίας καὶ τῆς κωμωδίας οἱ Δω- 30  
 ρεῖς (τῆς μὲν γὰρ κωμωδίας οἱ Μεγαρεῖς οἱ τε ἐνταῦθα ὡς  
 ἐπὶ τῆς παρ' αὐτοῖς δημοκρατίας γενομένης καὶ οἱ ἐκ Σι-  
 κελίας, ἐκείθεν γὰρ ἦν Ἐπίχαρμος ὁ ποιητὴς πολλῶν πρό-  
 τερὸς ὢν Χιωνίδου καὶ Μάγνητος· καὶ τῆς τραγωδίας ἐνιοὶ  
 35 τῶν ἐν Πελοποννήσῳ) ποιούμενοι τὰ ὀνόματα σημείων· αὐτοὶ  
 μὲν γὰρ κώμας τὰς περιοικίδας καλεῖν φασιν, Ἀθηναίους  
 δὲ δῆμους, ὡς κωμωδούς οὐκ ἀπὸ τοῦ κωμάζειν λεχθέντας  
 ἀλλὰ τῇ κατὰ κώμας πλάνῃ ἀτιμαζομένους ἐκ τοῦ ἀστεως·  
 1448<sup>b</sup> καὶ τὸ ποιεῖν αὐτοὶ μὲν δρᾶν, Ἀθηναίους δὲ πράττειν προσ-  
 αγορεύειν. περὶ μὲν οὖν τῶν διαφορῶν καὶ πόσαι καὶ  
 τίνες τῆς μιμήσεως εἰρήσθω ταῦτα.

Ἐοίκασι δὲ γεννησῆαι μὲν ὅλως τὴν ποιητικὴν αἰτία 4  
 5 δύο τινὲς καὶ αὐταὶ φυσικαί. τὸ τε γὰρ μιμῆσθαι σύμφυτον  
 τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ἐκ παίδων ἔστι καὶ τούτῳ διαφέρουσι  
 τῶν ἄλλων ζώων ὅτι μιμητικώτατόν ἐστι καὶ τὰς μαθή-  
 σεως ποιεῖται διὰ μιμήσεως τὰς πρώτας, καὶ τὸ χαίρειν  
 τοῖς μιμήμασι πάντας. σημεῖον δὲ τούτου τὸ συμβαῖνον  
 10 ἐπὶ τῶν ἔργων· ἂ γὰρ αὐτὰ λυπηρῶς ὀρῶμεν, τούτων τὰς  
 εἰκόνας τὰς μάλιστα ἠκριβωμένας χαίρομεν θεωροῦντες, οἷον  
 θηρίων τε μορφᾶς τῶν ἀτιμοτάτων καὶ νεκρῶν. αἴτιον δὲ  
 καὶ τούτου, ὅτι μανθάνειν οὐ μόνον τοῖς φιλοσόφοις ἡδιστον  
 ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις ὁμοίως, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ βραχὺ κοινωνοῦ-  
 15 σιν αὐτοῦ. διὰ γὰρ τοῦτο χαίρουσι τὰς εἰκόνας ὀρῶντες, ὅτι  
 συμβαίνει θεωροῦντας μανθάνειν καὶ συλλογίζεσθαι τί ἕκα-  
 στον, οἷον ὅτι οὗτος ἐκεῖνος· ἐπεὶ ἐὰν μὴ τύχη προεωρακώς,

οὐχ ἢ μίμημα ποιήσει τὴν ἡδονὴν ἀλλὰ διὰ τὴν ἀπεργασίαν ἢ τὴν χροιάν ἢ διὰ τοιαύτην τινὰ ἄλλην αἰτίαν. κατὰ φύσιν δὲ οὗτος ἡμῖν τοῦ μιμείσθαι καὶ τῆς ἁρμονίας 20 καὶ τοῦ ῥυθμοῦ (τὰ γὰρ μέτρα ὅτι μόρια τῶν ῥυθμῶν ἐστί φανερόν) ἐξ ἀρχῆς οἱ πεφυκότες πρὸς αὐτὰ μάλιστα κατὰ μικρὸν προάγοντες ἐγέννησαν τὴν ποίησιν ἐκ τῶν αὐτοσχεδιασμάτων. διεσπάσθη δὲ κατὰ τὰ οἰκεία ἦθη ἢ ποίησις· οἱ μὲν γὰρ σεμνότεροι τὰς καλὰς ἐμιμοῦντο πράξεις καὶ 25 τὰς τῶν τοιούτων, οἱ δὲ εὐτελέστεροι τὰς τῶν φαύλων, πρῶτον ψόγους ποιοῦντες, ὥσπερ ἕτεροι ὕμνους καὶ ἐγκώμια. τῶν μὲν οὖν πρὸ Ὀμήρου οὐδενὸς ἔχομεν εἰπεῖν τοιοῦτον ποίημα, εἰκὸς δὲ εἶναι πολλούς, ἀπὸ δὲ Ὀμήρου ἀρξαμένοις ἐστιν, οἷον ἐκείνου ὁ Μαργίτης καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα. ἐν οἷς κατὰ 30 τὸ ἀρμόττον καὶ τὸ ἰαμβεῖον ἦλθε μέτρον—διὸ καὶ ἰαμβεῖον καλεῖται νῦν, ὅτι ἐν τῷ μέτρῳ τούτῳ ἰάμβιζον ἀλλήλους. καὶ ἐγένοντο τῶν παλαιῶν οἱ μὲν ἥρωικῶν οἱ δὲ ἰάμβων ποιηταί. ὥσπερ δὲ καὶ τὰ σπουδαῖα μάλιστα ποιητῆς Ὀμηρος ἦν (μόνος γὰρ οὐχ ὅτι εὖ ἀλλὰ καὶ μμήσεις δραμα- 35 τικὰς ἐποίησεν), οὕτως καὶ τὸ τῆς κωμωδίας σχῆμα πρῶτος ὑπέδειξεν, οὐ ψόγον ἀλλὰ τὸ γελοῖον δραματοποίησας· ὁ γὰρ Μαργίτης ἀνάλογον ἔχει, ὥσπερ Ἰλιάς καὶ ἢ Ὀδύσεια πρὸς τὰς τραγωδίας, οὕτω καὶ οὗτος πρὸς 1449<sup>a</sup> τὰς κωμωδίας. παραφανείσης δὲ τῆς τραγωδίας καὶ κωμωδίας οἱ ἐφ' ἐκατέραν τὴν ποίησιν ὀρμῶντες κατὰ τὴν οἰκείαν φύσιν οἱ μὲν ἀντὶ τῶν ἰάμβων κωμωδοποιοὶ ἐγένοντο, οἱ δὲ ἀντὶ τῶν ἐπῶν τραγωδουδιδάσκαλοι, διὰ τὸ 5 μείζω καὶ ἐντιμύτερι τὰ σχήματα εἶναι ταῦτα ἐκείνων. τὸ μὲν οὖν ἐπισκοπεῖν εἰ ἄρα ἔχει ἤδη ἢ τραγωδία τοῖς εἴδεσιν ἰκανῶς ἢ οἶ, αὐτὸ τε καθ' αὐτὸ κρίναι καὶ πρὸς τὰ βέατρα, ἄλλος λόγος.

### ΙΩΝ

ΣΩ. Καὶ ὄρω, ὦ Ἴων, καὶ ἔρχομαι γέ σοι ἀποφαινόμενος ὅ μοι δοκεῖ τοῦτο εἶναι. Ἔστι γὰρ τοῦτο τέχνη μὲν οὐκ δ ὅν παρὰ σοὶ περὶ Ὀμήρου εἰ λέγειν, ἢ νῦν δὴ ἔλεγον, θεία δὲ δύναμις ἢ σε κινεῖ, ὥσπερ ἐν τῇ λίθῳ ἢ ἐν Ἐδριπίδης μὲν Μαγνητικῶν δυνάμεσιν, οἱ δὲ πολλοὶ Ἡρακλείαν. Καὶ γὰρ αὕτη ἢ λίθος οὐ μόνον αὐτοὺς τοὺς δακτυλλοὺς ἄγει τοὺς σιδηροὺς, ἀλλὰ καὶ δύνανται ἐντίθησι τοῖς δακτυλλοῖς ὥστε δύνασθαι ταύτων τοῦτο ποιεῖν ὅπερ ἢ λίθος, ἄλλους ἄγει δακτυλλοὺς, ὥστ' ἐνίοτε δραμαθὸς μακρὸς πᾶν σιδηρῶν [καὶ] 9 δακτυλίων ἐξ ἀλλήλων ἠρτηται· πῆσι δὲ τούτοις ἐξ ἐκείνης τῆς λίθου ἢ δύναμις ἀνήρτηται. Οὕτω δὲ καὶ ἡ Μοῦσα ἐνθέους μὲν ποιεῖ αὐτή, διὰ δὲ τῶν ἐνθέων τούτων ἄλλων ἐνθουσιαζόντων δραμαθὸς ἐξαρτᾶται. Πάντες γὰρ οἱ τε τῶν ἐπῶν ποιηταὶ οἱ ἀγαθοὶ οὐκ ἐκ τέχνης ἀλλ' ἐνθεοὶ ὄντες καὶ κατεχόμενοι πάντα ταῦτα τὰ καλὰ λέγουσι ποιήματα, καὶ οἱ μελοποιοὶ οἱ ἀγαθοὶ ὁσαύτως· ὥσπερ οἱ κορυθαντιῶντες οὐκ ἔμφρονες ὄντες ὄρχονται, οὕτω καὶ οἱ μελοποιοὶ οὐκ 534<sup>a</sup> ἔμφρονες ὄντες τὰ καλὰ μέλη ταῦτα ποιοῦσιν, ἀλλ' ἐπειδὴν ἐμβῶσιν εἰς τὴν ἁρμονίαν καὶ εἰς τὸν ῥυθμόν, καὶ βακχεύουσι καὶ κατεχόμενοι, ὥσπερ αἱ βάκχαι ὄρουνται ἐκ τῶν ποτα-

μὲν μᾶλι καὶ γάλα κατεχόμεναι, ἔμφρονες δὲ οἶσαι οὖ, καὶ τῶν μελοποιῶν ἢ ψυχὴ τοῦτο ἐργάζεται, ὅπερ αὐτοὶ λέγουσι. Λέγουσι γάρ δῆπουθεν πρὸς ἡμᾶς οἱ ποιηταὶ ὅτι ἀπὸ κρητῶν μελιφρότων ἐκ Μουσῶν κήπων τινῶν καὶ ναπῶν δρεπόμενοι τὰ μέλη ἡμῖν φέρουσιν ὅπερ καὶ μέλιτται, καὶ αὐτοὶ οὕτω πετόμενοι· καὶ ἀληθεῖ λέγουσι· κοῦφον γὰρ χρῆμα ποιητῆς ἔστιν καὶ πτηνὸν καὶ ἱερὸν, καὶ οὐ πρότερον οἷός τε ποιεῖν πρὶν ἂν ἔνθεός τε γένηται καὶ ἔκφρων καὶ ὁ νοῦς μηκέτι ἐν αὐτῷ ἐνῆ· ἕως δ' ἂν τουτὶ ἔχη τὸ κτήμα, ἀδύνατος πᾶς ποιεῖν ἄνθρωπός ἐστιν καὶ χρησιμῶδες. Ἄτε οὖν οὐδὲ τέχνη ποιοῦντες [καὶ] πολλὰ λέγοντες καὶ καλὰ περὶ τῶν πραγμάτων, ὅπερ οὐ περὶ Ὀμήρου, ἀλλὰ θεῖα μοῖρα, τοῦτο μόνον οἷός τε ἕκαστος ποιεῖν καλῶς ἐφ' ἧ Ἡ Μοῦσα αὐτὸν δρμησεν, ὁ μὲν διβυράμβους, ὁ δὲ ἐγκώμια, ὁ δὲ ὑπορχήματα, ὁ δ' ἔπη, ὁ δ' ἰάμβους· τὰ δ' ἄλλα φαῦλος αὐτῶν ἕκαστός ἐστιν. Οὐ γὰρ τέχνη ταῦτα λέγουσιν, ἀλλὰ θεῖα δύναμις, ἑπεὶ, εἰ περὶ ἐνός τέχνη καλῶς ἠπίσταντο λέγειν, κἂν περὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἀπάντων· διὰ ταῦτα δὲ ὁ θεὸς ἐξαιρούμενος τούτων τὸν νοῦν τούτοις χρῆται ὑπηρέταις καὶ τοῖς χρησιμῶδεις καὶ τοῖς μάντεσι τοῖς θεοῖς, ἵνα ἡμεῖς οἱ ἀκούοντες εἰδῶμεν ὅτι οὐκ οὗτοι εἰσιν οἱ ταῦτα λέγοντες οὕτω πολλοῦ ἄξια, οἷς νοῦς μὴ πάρεστιν, ἀλλ' ὁ θεὸς αὐτός ἐστιν ὁ λέγων, διὰ τούτων δὲ φθέγγεται πρὸς ἡμᾶς. Μέγιστον δὲ τεκμήριον τῷ λόγῳ Τύνηχος ὁ Χαλκιδεύς, ὅς ἄλλο μὲν οὐδὲν πρόποτε ἐποίησε ποίημα ὅτου τις ἂν ἀξιῶσκειν μνησθῆναι, τὸν δὲ παιδίνα ὅν πάντες ἄβουσι, σχεδὸν τι ἰδάντων μελῶν κάλλιστον, ἀτεχνῶς, ὅπερ αὐτὸς λέγει, « ἐβρημά τι Μοισῶν ». Ἐν τούτῳ γὰρ δὴ μάλιστα μοι δοκεῖ ὁ θεὸς ἐνδείξασθαι ἡμῖν, ἵνα μὴ διστάζωμεν, ὅτι οὐκ ἀνθρώπινά ἐστιν τὰ καλὰ ταῦτα ποιήματα οὐδὲ ἀνθρώπων, ἀλλὰ θεῖα καὶ θεῶν, οἱ δὲ ποιηταὶ οὐδὲν ἄλλ' ἢ ἐρμηνυτικῶς εἰσιν τῶν θεῶν, κατεχόμενοι ἄξιοι ἂν ἕκαστος κατέχηται. Ταῦτα ἐνδεικνύμενος ὁ θεὸς ἐξῆπιτήδεος διὰ τοῦ φαυλοτάτου ποιητοῦ τὸ κάλλιστον μέλος ἦσεν· ἢ οὐ δοκῶ σοὶ ἀληθεῖ λέγειν, ὁ Ἴων;

ΙΩΝ. Ναὶ μὰ τὸν Δία, ἔμοιγε· ἄπται γὰρ πῶς μου τοῖς λόγοις τῆς ψυχῆς, ὁ Σώκρατες, καὶ μοι δοκοῦσι θεῖα μοῖρα ἡμῖν παρὰ τῶν θεῶν ταῦτα οἱ ἀγαθοὶ ποιηταὶ ἐρμηνεύειν.

### ΓΟΡΓΙΑΣ

β ΣΩ. Τί δὲ δὴ ἡ σεμνὴ αὐτῆ καὶ θαυμαστή, ἢ τῆς τραγωδίας ποιήσεις, ἐφ' ᾧ ἐσπούδακεν; πότερόν ἐστιν αὐτῆς τὸ ἐπιχειρήμα καὶ ἡ σπουδὴ, ὡς σοὶ δοκεῖ, χαρίζεσθαι τοῖς θεαταῖς μόνον, ἢ καὶ διαμάχεσθαι, ἐάν τι αὐτοῖς ἤδῃ μὲν ἢ καὶ κεχαρισμένον, πονηρὸν δέ, ὅπως τοῦτο μὲν μὴ ἐρεῖ, εἰ δέ τι τυγχάνει ἀηδὲς καὶ ὠφέλιμον, τοῦτο δὲ καὶ λέξει καὶ ἔσεται, ἐάντε χαίρωσιν ἐάντε μὴ; ποτέρως σοὶ δοκεῖ παρεσκευάσθαι ἢ τῶν τραγωιδῶν ποιήσεις;

502 b

ΚΑΛ. Δήλον δὴ τοῦτό γε, ὦ Σώκρατες, ὅτι πρὸς τὴν ἡδονὴν μᾶλλον ὤρμηται καὶ τὸ χαρίζεσθαι τοῖς θεαταῖς. c

ΣΩ. Οὐκοῦν τὸ τοιοῦτον, ὦ Καλλικλείς, ἔφαμεν νυνδὴ κολακείαν εἶναι;

ΚΑΛ. Πάνυ γε.

ΣΩ. Φέρε δὴ, εἴ τις περιέλοι τῆς ποιήσεως πάσης τό τε 5 μέλος καὶ τὸν ρυθμὸν καὶ τὸ μέτρον, ἄλλο τι ἢ λόγοι γίνονται τὸ λειπόμενον;

ΚΑΛ. Ἀνάγκη.

ΣΩ. Οὐκοῦν πρὸς πολὺν ὄχλον καὶ δῆμον οὔτοι λέγονται οἱ λόγοι; 10

ΚΑΛ. Φημί.

ΣΩ. Δημηγορία ἄρα τίς ἐστὶν ἡ ποιητική.

ΚΑΛ. Φαίνεται. d

ΣΩ. Οὐκοῦν ῥητορικὴ δημηγορία ἂν εἴη· ἢ οὐ ῥητορεύειν δοκοῦσί σοι οἱ ποιηταὶ ἐν τοῖς θεάτροις;

ΚΑΛ. Ἔμοιγε.

ΣΩ. Νῦν ἄρα ἡμεῖς ἠύρηκαμεν ῥητορικὴν τινα πρὸς δῆμον 5 τοιοῦτον οἶον παίδων τε ὁμοῦ καὶ γυναικῶν καὶ ἀνδρῶν, καὶ δούλων καὶ ἐλευθέρων, ἣν οὐ πάνυ ἀγάμεθα· κολακικὴν γὰρ αὐτὴν φαμεν εἶναι.

ΚΑΛ. Πάνυ γε.

## ΠΕΡΙ ΓΥΓΙΣ

XV 1 Ὅγκου καὶ μεγαληγορίας καὶ ἀγῶνος ἐπὶ τού-  
τοις, ὦ νεανία, καὶ αἱ φαντασίαι παρασκευαστικώταται  
Οὕτω γοῦν εἰδωλοποιίας αὐτάς ἔνιοι λέγουσι· καλεῖται μὲν  
γὰρ κοινῶς φαντασία πᾶν τὸ ὄπωστον ἐννόημα γεννητικὸν  
λόγου παριστάμενον· ἤδη δ' ἐπὶ τούτων κεκράτηκεν τοῦ- 5  
νομα, ὅταν α' λέγεις ὑπ' ἐνθουσιασμοῦ καὶ πάθους βλέπειν  
δοκῆς καὶ ὑπ' ὄψιν τιθῆς τοῖς ἀκούουσιν. 2 Ὡς δ' ἕτε-  
ρόν τι ἢ ῥητορικὴ φαντασία βούλεται καὶ ἕτερον ἢ παρὰ  
ποιηταῖς, οὐκ ἂν λάθοι σε, οὐδ' ὅτι τῆς μὲν ἐν ποιήσει  
τέλος ἐστὶν ἑκπληξίς, τῆς δ' ἐν λόγοις ἐνάργεια, ἀμφότε-  
ραι δ' ὁμοῦ τὸ ἐπιζητοῦσι καὶ τὸ συγκεκινημένον. 5



魯頌  
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駟

1 駟駟牡馬。

2 在坳之野。

3 薄言駟者。

4 有駟有皇。

5 有駟有黃。

6 以車彭彭。

7 思無疆。

8 思馬斯臧。

I

駟駟牡馬。

在坳之野。

薄言駟者。

有駟有駟。

有駟有駟。

以車伾伾。

思無期。

思馬斯才。

II

1 駟駟牡馬。

2 在坳之野。

3 薄言駟者。

4 有駟有駟。

5 有駟有駟。

6 以車繹繹。

7 思無斃。

8 思馬斯作。

III

駟駟牡馬。

在坳之野。

薄言駟者。

有駟有駟。

有駟有魚。

以車祛祛。

思無邪。

思馬斯徂。

IV

關雎  
工

關關雎鳩。  
在河之洲。  
窈窕淑女。  
君子好逑。  
參差荇菜。  
左右流之。  
窈窕淑女。  
寤寐求之。  
求之不得。  
寤寐思服。

悠哉悠哉。  
輾轉反側。  
參差荇菜。  
左右采之。  
窈窕淑女。  
琴瑟友之。  
參差荇菜。  
左右芼之。  
窈窕淑女。  
鐘鼓樂之。

康樂而加思前易曰隱約者夫然則古人賤尺璧而重寸陰懼乎時之過已淮南子曰聖人不貴尺璧而重寸陰懼乎時之過已而人多不強乃貧賤則懼於子曰不請易則不知聖人而人多不強乃貧賤則懼於之心必不使時過已也而人多不強乃貧賤則懼於飢寒富貴則流於逸樂而人多不強乃貧賤則懼於目前之務而遺千載之功日月逝於上體貌衰於下忽然與萬物遷化斯志士之大痛也古詩曰奄忽隨物化等已逝唯幹著論成一家言

典論論文一首

魏文帝

文人相輕自古而然傳毅之於班固伯仲之間耳而固

少

文五十二

六

乙丑黃刊

陳亮

小之與弟超書曰武仲以能屬文為蘭臺令史下筆不能自休伯仲喻兄弟之次也言勝負在兄弟之間不甚相踰也後漢書曰班超字仲升徐令彪之少子夫人善於自見而文非一體鮮能備善是以各以所長相輕所短里語曰家有弊帚享之千金斯不自見之患也東觀漢記曰吳漢入蜀都縱兵大掠上詔讓漢可為酸鼻家有弊帚享之千金禹宗室子孫故嘗更今職何忍行此杜預左氏傳注曰亨通也亨或為享今北海徐幹偉長陳留阮瑀元瑜汝南應瑒德璉東平劉楨公幹斯七子者於學無所遺於辭無所假咸以自騁驥馱於千里仰齊足而並馳以此相服亦良難矣千里已見

上文毛萇詩傳曰蓋君子審己以度人故能免於斯累田獵齊足尚疾也蓋君子審己以度人故能免於斯累辭曰羌內怨己以量人王遂曰量度也而作論文王粲長於辭賦徐幹時有齊氣然粲之匹也言齊俗文體亦有斯累漢書地理志曰故齊詩曰子之如粲之初征還考遺我乎楸之間考此亦齊綏之體也如粲之初征登樓槐賦征思幹之夕猿漏卮圓扇楸賦雖張蔡不過也然於他文未能稱是琳瑯之章表書記今之雋也應瑒和而不壯劉楨壯而不密孔融體氣高妙有過人者然不能持論理不勝詞漢書東方朔放卓不根持論孔須與孔子高辯事也其以至乎雜以嘲戲及其所善揚理勝於辭公辭勝於理蓋于平原君謂公孫龍曰公無班倩也常人貴遠賤近向聲背實又患闇於自見謂己

文五十二

七

為賢夫文本同而末異蓋奏議宜雅書論宜理銘誄尚實詩賦欲麗此四科不同故能之者偏也唯通才能備其體文以氣為主氣之清濁有體不可力強而致譬諸音樂曲度雖均節奏同檢音韻篇曰按法度也至於引氣不齊巧拙有素雖在父兄不能以移子弟相子新論曰惟人心之兄不能以蓋文章經國之大業不朽之盛事年壽有時而盡榮樂止乎其身二者必至之常期未若文章之無窮是以古之作者寄身於翰墨見意於篇籍不假良史之辭不託飛馳之勢而聲名自傳於後故西伯幽而演易周旦顯而制禮伯仲而演周易不以隱約而弗務不以







眠說文曰謂文藻思如炳若燁燁悽若繁紉又謂五色彩備也  
既抑雅音復揚必所擬之不殊乃聞合乎曩篇昔之曩篇兩雅曰  
兼父也謂雖杆軸於子懷怵作人之我先  
情惘惘人先已也毛詩曰  
空其苟傷廉而愆義亦雖愛而必捐  
言他人言我雖愛之必捐  
受曰厥說文或若發穎豎離衆絕致  
難俱美或有一句同乎若發  
穎豎豎於衆辭於致思也  
毛詩曰若陵若也  
卿子曰蒙鳩爲衆辭之章若小雅曰禾穗謂之穎  
形不可逐響難  
爲係難係也爲冠于曰影之隨形響之應聲  
塊孤立而特峙非  
常音之所緯  
塊然立而特峙非常音所能緯也  
心牢落而無  
偶意徘徊而不能捐  
徘徊而不能捐也  
次音經寒而陽說文曰捐取也  
石韞玉而山輝水懷珠而川媚  
伏切協韻他帝切或爲捐捐猶去也  
雖無佳偶因而留之譬若水石之靈珠玉山川之輝媚也  
乃子曰水  
中折者有五圓折者有珠孫卿子曰玉在山而木潤淵生珠而岸不枯  
高氏法玉陽中之陰故能潤澤其珠陰  
中之陽有明故岸不枯廣雅曰  
集翠  
捧搯前庸音也以珠玉之句既存故捧搯之辭亦美  
毛詩  
下里於白雲言亦濟夫所偉  
言以此庸音而偶彼嘉句譬以下里  
然且以益夫所偉也宋玉對楚王問曰客有歌於郢中者其始曰下里  
宋玉笛賦曰師曠爲白雪之曲淮南子曰師曠奏白雪而神禽下  
取說文曰傳猶奇也楊韻高貴切  
或託言於短韻對窮迹而孤興  
短韻小文也言文小而事寡故  
曰窮迹迹窮而無偶故曰孤興  
友仰應之則容而無所承  
辭偏紉之獨張  
合清唱而靡應  
句以成文猶衆紉之成曲今短韻孤起譬偏紉之獨張合清  
唱而無應韻之孤起短韻則而莫承也  
美而不光華也班固漢書贊  
或寄辭於瘁音徒靡言而弗華

曰雖微惟粹之音作而民思混妍蚩而成體累良質而爲瑕妍  
憂薛君韓詩章句曰妍好也  
堂謂薛君既混妍蚩共爲一轡類累良質而爲瑕也  
禮記曰玉瑕不掩瑜鄭玄曰瑕玉之病也胡如切  
象下管之偏疾  
故雖應而不和  
言其音既乖其言徒靡類乎下管其聲偏疾升歌  
象類也禮記曰升歌清廟下管象武王  
蕭家語注曰下管堂下吹管象武舞也  
或遺理以存異徒尋虛以  
逐微言寡情而鮮愛辭浮漂而不歸  
謂不歸於實猶於  
而微急故雖和不悲  
說文曰公小也於遠切淮南子曰  
微悲雅俱有所以成樂  
琴而威王終夕悲許慎注曰故琴猶於  
直雅而無悲則不成  
或奔放以諧合務嘈囂而妖冶  
言聲雖高而曲下  
及聲同才徒悅目而偶俗固高聲而曲下  
張衡舞賦曰既娛  
心以悅目廣雅曰  
寤防露與桑間  
又雖悲而不雅  
謂未詳  
居賦曰楚客放而防露作注曰楚人放逐東方朔感江潭而作七諫  
靈運有七諫有防露之言遂以七諫爲防露也  
禮記曰桑間濮上之音亡  
國之音也鄭玄曰濮水之上也  
或清虛以婉約每除煩而去濫  
左氏  
有桑間先亡國之音於此水上  
雅而不豐  
言其文之辭必須文質相半雅雖相資今文少而質多致  
煩而去濫  
大羹之遺味同朱紉之清祀雖一唱而三歎固既  
言質之甚也餘味謂樂聲古不能備其五音五未故曰有餘也  
禮記曰  
清廟之瑟朱紉而陳一唱而三歎有遺音者矣  
大羹之禮  
禮記曰  
腥魚大羹不和有遺味者矣  
鄭玄曰朱紉練朱紉也練則質而  
書疏之使聲連唱發歌句者三歎三人從而歎之大羹南澗不調以益菜  
也遺猶餘也然大羹之有餘味以  
若夫豐約之裁俯仰之形  
廣雅曰  
爲古矣而又闕之甚之辭也  
若夫豐約之裁俯仰之形  
因宜適變曲有微情  
微情以陳辭說文曰微妙也  
或言拙  
而喻巧或理朴而辭輕  
或襲故而彌新或沿濁而更清  
安  
國尚書曰  
猶舞者赴節以投袂歌者應絃而遺聲  
王  
下元音起節在氏傳



也幽通賦曰終保己而胎則尚書曰濟文武於將墜言風聲於不  
子恐來世又曰子欲觀古人之象  
派論語子貢曰文武之道未墜於地尚書畢命曰彰善癉惡樹  
之風聲毛詩曰敷國不派毛萇曰派派也解推曰派盡也塗無遠

而不彌理無微而弗給法言曰彌論天地之事記又明達者莫如  
道王肅曰彌配雲潤於雲兩象變化乎鬼神論衡曰山大者雲  
始燥裏也

被金石而德廣流管  
雨天下然則賢聖有雲雨之智彼其世文  
牒以上買子曰神者變化而無所不為也

絃而日新金鐘鼎也石碑碣也言文之善者可被之金石施之樂堂樓  
未變天規者秋樂師謂之王曰君王德可刻之於金石聲可託  
之於管絃毛詩曰漢廣德廣所及也周易曰日新之謂盛德

音樂樂記曰凡音之起由人心生也心之動物使之然也感於  
物而動故形於聲聲相應故生變變成方謂之音比音而  
猶文章也又曰聲成文謂之音

洞簫賦漢書音義如淳曰洞者通也簫之無底者故曰洞  
簫釋名簫南也言其聲蕭蕭然清也大者二十三  
寸五十九

管子三尺四寸小  
者十六管一名簫

手淵漢書曰王褒字子淵蜀人也宣帝時為諫議大  
夫帝太子體不安苦忽忽不樂詔使褒等音之  
後乃歸太子喜褒所為甘泉及洞簫頌令後宮貴人  
左右皆誦讀之益州有金馬碧  
難之寶使褒記焉於道病卒

原夫簫幹之所生芳于江南之土墟廣雅曰原本也江南曰越  
母此山竹作簫管有妙  
則升陽曰江南縣慈母山臨江生簫管竹王褒賦云于江南之土墟即  
此處也其竹圓其葉長自伶倫採竹嶺谷後見此奇故歷代常給樂府而  
呼鼓吹山幹小竹也至洞條暢而罕節芳標數紛以扶疎條  
通條也罕節也言竹節稀疎而相去標竹之末也宋  
玉笛賦曰奇條異幹罕節簡管數紛於風扶疎四布徒觀其旁山側

兮則岷嶽歸崎倚熾迤嶻誠可悲乎其不安也岷嶽歸崎  
其安故故倒不安岷音靡彌望儻莽聯延曠邊又足樂乎其  
之我迤嶻崎平之說言竹生岷嶽歸崎倚熾迤嶻誠可悲乎其不安也  
皆山嶽也

其安故故倒不安岷音靡彌望儻莽聯延曠邊又足樂乎其

文選 卷五〇 「史論」宋書謝靈運傳論

六百七字 賦文五千  
府篇曰商工拙之數如有可言夫五色相宣八音協暢  
 推爲此賦工拙之數如有可言夫五色相宣八音協暢  
 文賦曰聲音聲之迭由乎方黃律呂各適物宜  
 代若五色之相宣由乎方黃律呂各適物宜  
 且是故欲使官羽相變依昂仲節若前有浮聲則後須  
 謂之象欲使官羽相變依昂仲節若前有浮聲則後須  
 切響一簡之內音韻盡殊兩句之中輕重悉異妙達此  
 言始可言文至於先士茂製諷高歷賞  
 人所共子建函京之作仲宣灞岸之篇  
 傳實子建贈丁儀  
 度函谷駟馬過西京王仲宣七哀子荆零雨之章  
 詩云南登霸陵岸回首望長安子荆零雨之章  
 朔風之句孫子荆陟陽侯詩曰晨風飄岐路零雨沾秋草  
 王正長雜詩曰朔風動秋草邊馬有歸心  
 並直舉曾情非傍詩史正以音律調韻取高前式自靈  
 均以來多歷年代靈均屈原字也尚書周公雖文體稍  
 日游禮陸配天多歷年所雖文體稍  
 精而此秘未覩至於高言妙句音韻天成皆暗與理合  
 匪由思至張蔡曹王曾無先覺  
 論語曰抑亦先  
 謝去之彌遠世之知音者有以得之此言非謬如曰不  
 然請待來哲  
 禮樂以俟來哲

性寬和容衆，喜慍不形於色。引納才學之士，  
 賞愛無倦。恒自討論篇籍，或與學士商  
 榷古今，開則繼以文章著述，率以爲常。于時東宮  
 有書幾三萬卷，名才並集，文學之盛，皆、  
 味以來未之有也。

齊有三騶子。其前騶忌，以鼓琴干威王，因及國政，封爲成侯而受相印，先孟子。

其次騶衍，後孟子。騶衍嗜有國者益淫侈，不能尙德，若大雅整之於身，施及黎庶矣。乃深觀陰陽消息而作怪迂之變，終始大聖之篇十餘萬言。其語闕大不經，必先驗小物，推而大之，至於無垠，先序今以上至黃帝，學者所共術，大並世盛衰，(一)因載其機祥度制，推而遠之，至天地未生，窈冥不可考而原也。先列中國名山大川，通谷禽獸，水土所殖，物類所珍，因而推之，及海外人之所不能睹。稱引天地剖判以來，五德轉移，治各有宜，而符應若茲。以爲儒者所謂中國者，於天下乃八十一分居其一分耳。(二)中國名曰赤縣神州。赤縣神州內自有九州，禹之序九州是也，不得爲州數。中國外如赤縣神州者九，乃所謂九州也。於是有所裨海環之，(三)人民禽獸莫能相通者，如一區中者，乃爲一州。如此者九，乃有大瀛海環其外，天地之際焉。其術皆此類也。然要其歸，必止乎仁義節儉，君臣上下六親之施，始也濫耳。(四)王公大人初見其術，懼然顧化，(五)其後不能行之。

騶夷者，齊諸騶子，亦頗采騶衍之術以紀文。

於是齊王嘉之，自如淳于髡以下，皆命曰列大夫，爲開第康莊之衛，(一)高門大屋，尊寵之。覽天下諸侯賓客，言齊能致天下賢士也。

(一) [綱目] 爾雅曰：四達謂之衛，五達謂之康，六達謂之莊。

荀卿，趙人。(二)年五十始來游學於齊。騶衍之術迂大而闕辯；夷也文具難施；淳于髡久與處，時有得善言。故齊人頌曰：談天衍，雕龍夷，炙轂(三)過髡。(四)田駢之屬皆已死

文選序

梁昭明太子撰

式觀元始眇觀少風冬亮夏巢之時茹毛飲血之世世質  
 民淳斯文未作遠乎伏羲氏之王天下也始畫八卦  
 造書契以代結繩之政由是文籍生焉易曰觀乎天文  
 以察時變觀乎人文以化成天下文之時義遠矣  
 夫推道輪為大輅結之始大輅寧有推輪之質增冰為  
 積水所成積水曾能微增冰之凜動何故蓋踵隨甘寧  
 而增華變貧本而加厲物既有之文亦宜然隨時變改  
 難可詳悉嘗試論之曰詩序云詩有六義焉一曰風二  
 曰賦三曰比四曰興註五曰雅六曰頌至於今之作著  
 異乎古音古詩之體今則全取賦名荀宋表之於前賈  
 馬繼之於末自茲以降源流寔繁註送邑居則有憑虛亡  
 籍是之作戒畋遊則有長楊羽獵之制若其紀一事詠  
 一物風雲草木之興註黠魚蟲禽獸之流推而廣之不可  
 勝載矣又楚人屈原含忠履潔君匪從流臣進逆耳深  
 思遠慮遂放湘南耿介之意既傷壹鬱之懷靡想臨淵  
 有懷沙之志吟澤有憔悴之容騷人之文自茲而作詩  
 者蓋志之所之也情動於中而形於言關雎麟趾註  
 正始之道著蔡閣漢註上亡國之音表故風雅之道繁

然可觀自炎漢中葉厥途漸異退傳有在鄒之作降註  
 將著河梁之篇四言五言區以別歎矣又少則三字多  
 則九言各體互興分鑣並驅註上頌者所以游揚德業  
 褒讚成功吉甫有穆註若之談季子有至矣之歎舒布  
 為詩既言如彼忽成爲頌又亦若此則箴銘與於補  
 闕戒出於弼匡論註則析註激理精微銘則序事清潤美  
 終則誅發圖像則讚興又詔誥教令之流表奏牋記之  
 列書註誓符檄註之品弔祭悲哀之作答客指事之制三  
 言八字之文篇辭引註以進序碑碣誌狀衆制鋒起源流  
 間註出譬陶匏註異器並為入耳之娛黼黻不同俱為  
 悅目之玩作者之致蓋云備矣余監註撫餘閑居多暇  
 日歷觀文囿泛覽辭林未嘗不心遊目想移註志倦  
 自姬漢以來眇焉悠邈時更註七代數註逾千祀詞人  
 才子則名溢於縹註飛文染翰則卷盈乎註相帙自  
 非略其蕪穢集其清英蓋欲兼功太半難矣若夫姬公  
 之籍孔父之書與日月俱懸鬼神爭註與孝節之准式人倫  
 之師友豈可重註以註夷加之剪截老莊之作管孟  
 之流蓋以立意為宗不以能文為本今之所撰又以略  
 諸若賢人之美辭忠臣之抗直謀夫之話註辨士之  
 端冰釋泉涌金相玉振所謂坐狙斜註丘議稷下仲連之



## 序志第五十

夫<sup>1</sup>文心者，言爲文之用心也。昔涓子琴心，王孫巧心，心哉美矣，故<sup>2</sup>用之焉<sup>3</sup>。古來文章，以雕綉成體，豈<sup>4</sup>取<sup>5</sup>騷爽之羣言雕龍也。夫宇宙綿<sup>6</sup>悠，繁<sup>7</sup>猷紛雜，拔萃出類<sup>8</sup>，智術而已。歲月飄忽，性<sup>9</sup>靈不居<sup>10</sup>，騰聲飛實，制作而已。夫<sup>11</sup>肖貌天地，稟性五才<sup>12</sup>，擬耳目於日月，方聲氣乎<sup>13</sup>風雷，其超出萬物，亦已靈矣。形同<sup>14</sup>草木之脆，名踰金石之堅，是以君子處世，樹德建言，豈好辯哉，不得已也！

予生七齡<sup>15</sup>，乃夢彩雲若錦，則攀而採之。齒在險立，則<sup>16</sup>嘗<sup>17</sup>夜<sup>18</sup>夢執<sup>19</sup>丹漆之禮器，隨仲尼而南行；旦而寤，適怡然而喜，大哉聖人之難見也<sup>20</sup>，乃<sup>21</sup>小子之垂夢歟！自生人<sup>22</sup>以來，未有如夫子者也。敷讀聖旨，莫若注<sup>23</sup>經，而馬鄭諸儒，弘<sup>24</sup>之已精，就有深解，未足立家。唯文章之用，實經典枝條<sup>25</sup>，五禮資之以成<sup>26</sup>，六典因之<sup>27</sup>致用，君臣所以炳煥，軍國所以昭明，詳其本源，莫非<sup>28</sup>經典。而去聖久遠，文體解散，辭人愛奇，言貴浮詭，飾羽尚竄，文結璽軌，離本彌甚，將遂訛濫。蓋周書論辭，貴乎體要；尼父陳訓，惡乎異端；辭訓之異，宜體於要。於是弱筆和墨，乃始論文。

詳觀近代之論文者多矣：至於<sup>29</sup>魏文述典，陳思序書，應瑒文論，陸機文賦，仲治<sup>30</sup>流別，弘<sup>31</sup>範翰林，各照隅隙，鮮觀衢路，或臧否當時之才，或銓品前修之文，或汎舉雅俗之旨，或擬題篇章之意。魏典密而不周，陳書辯而無當，應論華而疏<sup>32</sup>略，陸賦巧而碎亂，流別精而少功<sup>33</sup>，翰林淺而寡要。又君山公幹之徒，吉甫士龍之輩，汎議文意，往往間出，並未能振葉以尋根，觀瀾而索源。不述先哲之誥<sup>34</sup>，無益後生之慮。

蓋文心之作也，本乎道，師乎聖，體乎經，酌<sup>35</sup>乎緯，變乎騷，文之樞紐，亦云<sup>36</sup>極矣。若乃<sup>37</sup>論文叙筆<sup>38</sup>，則固<sup>39</sup>別區分，原始以表末<sup>40</sup>，釋名以阜義，選文以定篇，敷理以舉統，上<sup>41</sup>篇以上，綱領明矣。至於制<sup>42</sup>情析采<sup>43</sup>，籠<sup>44</sup>圖條貫，摛神性<sup>45</sup>，圖風勢，苞<sup>46</sup>會通<sup>47</sup>，閱聲字，崇替<sup>48</sup>於時序，褒貶於才略，招帳<sup>49</sup>於知音，耿介於程器，長懷序志，以取羣篇，下篇以下，毛目顯矣。位理定名，彰乎大易之數，其爲文用，四十九篇而已。

夫銓序<sup>50</sup>一文爲易，彌綸羣言爲難，雖復<sup>51</sup>輕采<sup>52</sup>毛髮，深極骨髓，或有曲意密源，似近而遠，辭所不載，亦不<sup>53</sup>勝數矣<sup>54</sup>。及其品列<sup>55</sup>成文，有同乎舊談者，非雷同也，勢自不可異也。有異乎前論者，非苟異也，理自不可同也。同之與異，不脞古今，擘肌分理，惟務折衷。按書文雅之場，環<sup>56</sup>絡藻繪<sup>57</sup>之府，亦幾乎備矣。

但言不盡意，聖人<sup>58</sup>所難；識在辭<sup>59</sup>管，何能矩矱<sup>60</sup>。茫茫往代，既洗<sup>61</sup>予聞；以恥<sup>62</sup>來世，倘<sup>63</sup>庶彼觀也<sup>64</sup>。

贊曰：生也有涯，無涯惟智。逐物實難，憑性良易。傲岸泉石，咀嚼文字。文果載心，余心有寄。

## 卷 一

### 原道 第一

文之爲德也大矣，與天地並生者何哉！夫玄黃色雜，方圓體分，日月疊璧，以垂麗天之象；山川煥綺，以鋪理地<sup>1</sup>之形；此蓋道之文也。仰觀吐曜，俯察含章，高卑定位，故兩儀既生矣；惟人參之，性靈所鍾，是謂三才。爲五行之秀，實天地之心<sup>2</sup>，心生而言立，言立而文明，自然之道也。傍<sup>3</sup>及萬品，動植皆文，龍鳳以藻繪呈瑞，虎豹以炳蔚凝姿；雲霞雕色，有餘畫工之妙；草木賁華，無待錦匠之奇；夫豈外飾，蓋自然耳。至於林籟結響，闕如竽瑟<sup>4</sup>；泉石激韻，和若球鏡；故形立則章成矣，聲發則文生矣。夫以無韻之物，鬱然有彩，有心之器，其無文歟！

人文之元，肇自太<sup>5</sup>極，幽蹟<sup>6</sup>神明，易象惟先。庖犧畫其始，仲尼翼其終。而乾坤兩位，獨制文育。言之文也，天地之心哉！若乃河圖孕乎八卦，洛<sup>7</sup>書誕乎九疇，玉版金縷之寶<sup>8</sup>，丹文綠牒之華，誰其尸之，亦神理而已。自鳥迹代繩，文字始炳，炎輝遺事，紀在三墳，而年世渺邈，聲采靡追。唐虞文章，則煥乎始<sup>9</sup>肇。元首載歌，既發吟咏之志；益稷陳謨<sup>10</sup>，亦垂敷奏之風。夏后氏興，業峻鴻績，九序惟<sup>11</sup>歌，勳德彌綌。逮及商周，文勝其質。雅頌所被，英華日新。文王患憂，繇辭炳曜，符采復隱，精義堅深。重以公旦多材，振<sup>12</sup>其徽烈，制<sup>13</sup>詩緝頌，斧藻羣言。至夫子繼聖，獨秀前哲，鎔鈞六經<sup>14</sup>，必金聲而玉振；雕琢情性<sup>15</sup>，組織辭令，木鐸起<sup>16</sup>而千里應，席珍流而萬世響，寫天地之輝光，曉生民之耳目矣。

爰<sup>17</sup>自風姓，暨於孔氏，玄<sup>18</sup>聖創典，素王述訓，莫不原道心以敷章<sup>19</sup>，研神理而<sup>20</sup>設教，取象乎河洛，問數乎蓍龜，觀天文以極變，察人文以成化；然後能經緯區宇，彌綸彝憲，發揮<sup>21</sup>事業，彪炳辭義。故知<sup>22</sup>道沿聖以垂文，聖因文以<sup>23</sup>明道，旁通而無滯<sup>24</sup>，日用而不匱。易曰：“鼓天下之動者<sup>25</sup>存乎辭。”辭之所以能鼓天下者，迺<sup>26</sup>道之文也。

贊曰：道心惟微，神理設教。光采玄<sup>27</sup>聖，炳燿仁孝。龍圖獻體，龜書呈貌。天文斯觀，民胥以勸<sup>28</sup>。——

## 徵聖第二

夫作者曰聖，述者曰明，陶鑄性情，功在上哲，夫子文章，可得而開，則聖人之情，見乎文辭矣。先王聲教<sup>2</sup>，布在方冊；夫子風采<sup>3</sup>，溢於格言。是以遠稱唐世，則煥乎爲盛；近襲周代，則郁哉可從。此政化貴文之徵也。鄭伯入陳，以文<sup>4</sup>辭爲功；宋置折俎，以多文<sup>5</sup>舉禮。此事蹟貴文之徵也。褒美子產，則云：“言以足志，文以足言。”泛論君子，則云：“情欲信，辭欲巧。”此修身貴文之徵也。然則志<sup>7</sup>足而<sup>8</sup>言文，情信而辭巧，適合章之玉牒，乘文之金科矣。夫鑒周<sup>9</sup>日月，妙極機<sup>10</sup>神；文成規矩，思合符契；或簡言以達旨，或博文以該情，或明理以立體，或隱義以藏用。故春秋一字以褒貶，喪服舉輕以包<sup>11</sup>重，此簡言以達旨也。邪詩聯章以積句，儒行解說以繁辭<sup>12</sup>，此博文以該情也。書契斷決<sup>13</sup>以象夫，文章昭誓<sup>14</sup>以効<sup>15</sup>離，此明理以立體也。四象精義以曲隱，五例微辭以婉晦，此隱義以藏用也。故知繁略殊形<sup>16</sup>，隱顯異術，抑引隨時，變通適會<sup>17</sup>，徵之周孔<sup>18</sup>，則文有師矣。

是以論文必徵於聖，窺聖必宗於經<sup>19</sup>。易稱“辨物正言，斷辭<sup>20</sup>則備；”書云“辭尚體要，不<sup>21</sup>惟好異。”故知正言所以立辯<sup>22</sup>，體要所以成辭，辭成<sup>23</sup>無好異之尤，辯立有斷辭之美<sup>24</sup>。雖精義曲隱，無傷其正言，微辭婉晦，不害其體要。體要與微辭偕通，正言共精義並用；聖人之文章，亦可見也。顏閔以爲仲尼飾羽而畫，從事華辭<sup>25</sup>。雖欲營<sup>26</sup>聖，弗可得已<sup>27</sup>。然則聖文之雅麗，固銜華而佩實者也。天道難聞，猶<sup>28</sup>或鑽仰；文章可見，胡寧<sup>29</sup>勿思。若<sup>30</sup>徵聖立言，則文其庶矣。

贊曰：妙極生知，睿<sup>31</sup>哲惟宰。精理爲文，秀氣成采。鑒懸日月，辭富山海。百齡影徂，千載心在。

## 宗經第三

三極彝訓，其書曰經<sup>1</sup>。經也者，恆久之至道，不刊之鴻敷也。故象天地，效<sup>2</sup>鬼神，參物序，制人紀，洞性靈之奧區<sup>3</sup>，極文章之骨髓者也。皇世三墳，帝代五典，重以八索，申以九丘<sup>4</sup>，歲曆縣隱，條流紛糅，自夫子刪<sup>5</sup>述，而大寶咸<sup>6</sup>耀。於是易張十翼，書標七觀，詩列四始，禮正五經，春秋五例，義旣挺<sup>7</sup>乎性情，辭亦匠於<sup>8</sup>文理，故能開學養正，昭明有融。然而道心惟微，聖謨<sup>9</sup>卓絕，牆宇重峻，而<sup>10</sup>吐納自<sup>11</sup>深。譬萬鈞之洪鍾<sup>12</sup>，無錚錚之細響矣。

夫<sup>13</sup>易惟談天，入<sup>14</sup>神致用。故繁稱旨遠，辭文<sup>15</sup>，言中事隱；章編三絕，固<sup>16</sup>哲人之驟淵也。書實記<sup>17</sup>言，而訓詁<sup>18</sup>茫昧，通乎爾雅，則文意曉然<sup>19</sup>。故子夏歎書，昭昭若日月之明<sup>20</sup>，離離如星辰之行<sup>21</sup>，言昭灼也<sup>22</sup>。詩主言志<sup>23</sup>，詁訓<sup>24</sup>同書，摛風裁興<sup>25</sup>，藻辭<sup>26</sup>誘喻，溫柔在<sup>27</sup>爾，故最附深衷矣<sup>28</sup>。禮以<sup>29</sup>立體<sup>30</sup>，據事制<sup>31</sup>範，章條樞曲，執而後顯，採珥片<sup>32</sup>言，莫非寶

也<sup>33</sup>。春秋辨理<sup>34</sup>，一字見義<sup>35</sup>，五石六鑄<sup>36</sup>，以詳略<sup>37</sup>成文；雉門兩觀，以先後顯旨；其<sup>38</sup>婉章志晦，諒以<sup>39</sup>遠矣。尙書則覽文如籠，而尋理即<sup>40</sup>暢；春秋則觀辭立曉，而訪義方隱<sup>41</sup>。此聖文<sup>42</sup>之<sup>43</sup>殊致，表裏之異體者也。

至於根極槃深<sup>44</sup>，枝葉峻茂，辭約而旨豐，事近而喻遠，是以往者雖舊<sup>45</sup>，餘<sup>46</sup>味日新，後進追取而非晚<sup>47</sup>，前修運<sup>48</sup>用而未先，可謂太山徧雨，河潤千里者也。

故論說辭序，則易統其首<sup>49</sup>；詔策章奏，則書發其源；賦頌歌讚，則詩立其本；銘誄箴祝，則禮統其端；紀傳盟<sup>50</sup>檄，則春秋爲根；並窮高以樹表，極遠以啟疆，所以百家勝躡，終入環內者也<sup>51</sup>。若專經以製式，酌雅以寓言，是即<sup>52</sup>山而鑄銅，煮海而爲鹽<sup>53</sup>也。故文能宗經體有六義<sup>54</sup>：一則情深而不詭，二則風清而不雜，三則事信而不誕，四則義貞<sup>55</sup>而不回，五則體約而不蕪，六則文麗而不淫。揚<sup>56</sup>子比雕玉以作器，謂五經之含文也。夫文以行立，行以文傳，四教所先，符采相濟，邁<sup>57</sup>德樹聲，莫不師聖；而建<sup>58</sup>脩辭<sup>59</sup>，鮮克宗經。是以楚黠漢侈，流弊不還<sup>59</sup>，正末<sup>60</sup>歸本，不其懿歟！

贊<sup>61</sup>曰：三極彝訓，道深稽古<sup>62</sup>。致化歸<sup>63</sup>一，分教斯五。性靈銘匠，文章奧府。淵哉鑠乎，羣言之祖。

#### 正緯第四

夫神道闡幽，天命微顯，馬龍出而大易興，神龜見而洪範燿<sup>1</sup>。故繁稱“河出圖，洛<sup>2</sup>出書，聖人則之，”斯之<sup>3</sup>謂也。但世復文隱，好生矯誕<sup>4</sup>，真雖存矣，僞亦憑焉。

夫六經彪炳，而緯候稠疊；孝<sup>5</sup>論昭誓<sup>6</sup>，而鈞讖葳蕤；按<sup>7</sup>經驗緯，其僞有四：蓋緯之成<sup>8</sup>經，其猶織綜，絲麻不雜，布帛乃成；今經正緯奇，倍適<sup>9</sup>千里，其僞一矣<sup>10</sup>。經顯，聖訓也<sup>11</sup>；緯隱，神教也<sup>12</sup>；聖<sup>13</sup>訓宜廣，神教宜約；而今<sup>14</sup>緯多於經，神理更繁，其僞二矣<sup>15</sup>。有命自天，適稱符讖，而八十一篇，皆託於孔子；則是堯造緯<sup>16</sup>圖，昌制丹書，其僞三矣<sup>17</sup>。商周以前，圖籙<sup>18</sup>頻見，春秋之末，羣經方備；先緯後經，體乖織綜，其僞四矣<sup>19</sup>。僞既倍適<sup>20</sup>，則義異自明，經足訓矣，緯何豫<sup>21</sup>焉。

原夫圖籙<sup>22</sup>之見，適<sup>23</sup>昊天休命，事以瑞聖，義非配經。故河不出圖，夫子有歎，如或可造，無勞喟然。昔康王河圖，陳於東序，故知前世<sup>24</sup>符命，歷代寶傳，仲尼所撰，序錄而已。於是伎<sup>25</sup>數之士，附以詭術，或說陰陽，或序災異，若鳥鳴似語，蟲葉成字，篇條滋蔓，必假孔氏，通儒討覈，謂僞<sup>26</sup>起哀平，東序祕寶，朱紫亂矣。至於<sup>27</sup>光武之世，篤信斯術。風化所靡，學者比肩，沛獻集緯以通經，曹褒撰<sup>28</sup>讖以定禮，乖道鑿典，亦已甚矣。

是以桓譚疾其虛僞，尹敏戲<sup>29</sup>其深瑣<sup>30</sup>，張衡發其僻謬，荀悅明其詭誕<sup>31</sup>，四賢博練，論之精矣。

若乃羲農軒鼎之源，山瀆鍾律之要，白魚赤鳥<sup>32</sup>之符，黃銀<sup>33</sup>紫玉之瑞<sup>34</sup>，事豐奇偉，辭富膏腴，無益經典而有助文章。是以後<sup>35</sup>來辭人，摛<sup>36</sup>雄英華，平子恐<sup>37</sup>其迷學，奏令禁絕；仲豫惜其雜異，未許煨燼；前代配經，故詳論焉。

贊<sup>38</sup>曰：榮<sup>39</sup>河溫洛<sup>40</sup>，是孕圖緯。神寶藏用，理隱文貴。世歷二漢，朱紫騰沸。芟夷謫詭，採<sup>41</sup>其雕蔚。

## 辨騷第五

自風雅寢聲，莫或抽緒，奇文鬱起，其離騷哉！固已軒翥詩人之後，奮飛辭家之前，豈去聖之未遠，而楚人之多才乎！昔漢武愛騷，而淮南作傳，以爲“國風好色而不淫，小雅怨誹而不亂，若離騷者，可謂衆之<sup>3</sup>。蟬蛻穢濁之中，浮游塵埃之外，嶢然涅而不緇，雖與日月爭光可也。”班固以爲“露才揚己，忿懣沉江；羿澆二姚，與左氏不合；崑崙懸圃，非經義所載；然其文辭麗雅，爲詞賦之宗，雖非明哲，可謂妙才。”王逸以爲“詩人提耳，屈原婉順，離騷之文，依經立義，驅虬乘鸞<sup>5</sup>，則時乘六龍；崑崙流沙，則禹貢敷土；名儒辭賦，莫不擬其儀表，所謂金相玉質，百世無匹者也。”及漢宣嗟歎，以爲皆合經術<sup>7</sup>；揚雄賦<sup>9</sup>味<sup>10</sup>，亦言體同詩雅。四家舉以方經，而孟堅謂不合傳<sup>11</sup>，褒貶任聲，抑揚過實，可謂鑒而弗<sup>12</sup>精，既而未覈者也<sup>13</sup>。

將覈其論，必徵言焉。故其陳堯舜之耿介，稱禹湯<sup>14</sup>之祗敬，典誥之體也；張桀紂之猖披<sup>15</sup>，傷羿澆之顛隕，規譏<sup>16</sup>之旨也；虬龍以喻君子，雲霓以譬讒邪，比興之義也；每一顧而掩涕，歎君門之九重，忠孝之辭<sup>17</sup>也；觀茲四事，同於<sup>18</sup>風雅者也。至於託雲龍，說迂怪，豐<sup>19</sup>降求宓妃，鳩<sup>20</sup>烏媒娥女，詭異之辭<sup>21</sup>也；康回傾地，夷羿斃<sup>22</sup>日，木夫<sup>23</sup>九首，土伯三目<sup>24</sup>，謠怪之談也；依彭咸之遺則，從子胥以自適，肩狹之志也；士女雜坐<sup>25</sup>，亂而不分，指以爲樂，娛酒不廢，沉湎日夜，繼以爲懽<sup>26</sup>，荒淫之意也；摘<sup>27</sup>此四事，異乎<sup>28</sup>經典者也。故論其典誥則如彼，語其夸誕則如此，固知楚辭者，體憲<sup>29</sup>於三代，而風雜<sup>30</sup>於戰國，乃雅頌之博徒，而詞賦之英傑也。觀其骨鯁所樹，肌膚所附，雖取鎔經旨<sup>31</sup>，亦自鑄偉辭<sup>32</sup>。故騷經九章，朗麗以哀<sup>33</sup>；九歌九辯<sup>34</sup>，綺靡<sup>35</sup>以傷情；遊遊天問，瓊詭而惠<sup>36</sup>巧；招魂大招<sup>37</sup>，麗豔而采<sup>38</sup>華；卜居標放言之致，漁父寄獨往<sup>39</sup>之才。故能氣往轢古，辭來切今，驚采絕豔，難與並能矣。

自九懷以下，遠<sup>39</sup>躡其跡；而屈宋逸步，莫之能追。故其叙情怨，則鬱<sup>40</sup>伊而易感；述離居，則愴快<sup>41</sup>而難懷；論山水，則循聲而得貌；言節侯，則披文而見時。是以枚賈追風以入麗，馬揚<sup>42</sup>沿波而得奇，其衣被詞人，非一代也。故才高者竊<sup>43</sup>其頭截，中巧者矜其點黠，吟賦者銜其山川，

子蒙者拾其香草。若能憑賦以倚雅頌，懸轡以取楚篇，酌奇而不失其真，既華而不墜其實；則願盼可以驅辭力，欬唾可以窮文致，亦不復乞靈於長卿，假寵於子淵矣。

贊曰：不有屈原，豈見離騷。驚才風逸，壯志<sup>45</sup>煙<sup>46</sup>高。山川無極，情理實勞。金相玉式，豔溢錦毫<sup>47</sup>。

## 明詩第六

大舜云：“詩言志，歌永言。”聖謨所析，義已明矣。是以在心爲志，發言爲詩，舒文載實，其在茲乎！詩者，持也，持人情性；三百之蔽，義歸無邪，持之爲訓，有<sup>5</sup>符焉爾。

人稟七情，應物斯感，感物吟志，莫非自然。昔葛天樂辭<sup>6</sup>，玄鳥在曲；黃帝雲門，理不空絃<sup>7</sup>。至堯有大唐<sup>8</sup>之歌，舜造南風之詩，觀其二文，辭<sup>10</sup>達而已。及大禹成功，九序<sup>11</sup>惟歌；太<sup>12</sup>康敗德，五子咸怨<sup>13</sup>；順美匡惡，其來久矣。自商暨周，雅頌圓備，四始彪炳，六義瓊深，子夏監<sup>14</sup>絢素之章，子貢悟琢磨之句，故商賜二子，可與<sup>15</sup>言詩<sup>16</sup>。自王澤殄<sup>17</sup>竭，風人輟采<sup>18</sup>；春秋觀志<sup>19</sup>，風誦舊章，酬酢以爲<sup>20</sup>賓榮，吐納而成身<sup>21</sup>文。逮楚國幽怨，則離騷爲刺。秦皇滅典，亦造仙詩。漢初四言，韋孟首唱，匡諫之義，繼軌周人<sup>22</sup>。孝武愛文，柏梁列韻，殿馬之徒，屬辭<sup>23</sup>無方。至成帝品錄，三百餘篇，朝章國采，亦云周備，而辭<sup>24</sup>人造翰，莫見五言，所以李陵班婕妤<sup>25</sup>見疑<sup>26</sup>於後<sup>27</sup>代也。按召<sup>28</sup>南行露，始肇半章；孺子滄浪，亦有全曲；暇豫優歌，遠見春秋；邪徑童謠，近在成世；閱時取證<sup>29</sup>，則五言久矣。又古詩佳麗，或稱枚叔，其孤竹一篇，則傅毅之詞，比采<sup>30</sup>而推，兩<sup>31</sup>漢之作乎<sup>32</sup>！觀其結體散文，直而不野，婉<sup>33</sup>轉附物，悃<sup>34</sup>悃切情，實五言之冠冕也。至於<sup>35</sup>張衡怨篇，清典<sup>36</sup>可味；仙詩緩歌，雅有新聲。暨建安之<sup>37</sup>初，五言騰踊<sup>38</sup>，文帝陳思，縱轡以朗節；王徐應劭，望路而爭驅；並擗風月，狎池苑，述恩榮，叙酣宴，慷慨以任氣，磊落以使才，造懷指事，不求纖密之巧，驅辭逐貌，唯取昭皙<sup>39</sup>之能，此其所同也。及<sup>40</sup>正始明道，詩雜仙心，何晏之徒，率多浮淺。唯嵇志<sup>41</sup>清峻，阮旨遙深，故能標焉<sup>42</sup>。若乃應璩百一<sup>43</sup>，獨立不懼，辭語義貞<sup>44</sup>，亦魏之遺直也。晉世羣才，稍入輕綺，張潘左陸<sup>45</sup>，比肩詩衢，采緝於正始，力柔於建安，或精文<sup>46</sup>以爲妙，或流靡以自妍，此其大略也。江左篇製，溺乎<sup>47</sup>玄風，嗤<sup>48</sup>笑徇務之志，崇盛忘<sup>49</sup>機之談，袁孫已下，雖各有雕采，而辭<sup>50</sup>越<sup>51</sup>一揆，莫與<sup>52</sup>爭雄，所以景純仙篇，挺拔而爲俊矣<sup>53</sup>。宋初文詠<sup>54</sup>，體有因革，莊老告退，而山水方滋，儷采百字<sup>55</sup>之偶，爭價一句之奇，情必極貌以寫物，辭必窮力而追新，此近世<sup>56</sup>之所競也。

故鋪觀列代，而情變之數可監<sup>57</sup>；撮舉同異，而綱領之要可明矣。若夫四言正體，則雅潤爲本；五言流調，則<sup>58</sup>清麗居宗；華實異用，惟才所安。故平子得其雅，叔夜含<sup>59</sup>其潤，茂先擬<sup>60</sup>其清，景陽振其麗。兼<sup>61</sup>善則子建仲宣，偏美則太沖公幹<sup>62</sup>。然詩有恆裁，思無定位，隨性適分，鮮能

圓通<sup>63</sup>。若妙證所難，其易也將至；忽以<sup>64</sup>爲易，其難也方來<sup>65</sup>。至於三六雜言，則出自<sup>66</sup>篇什，離合之發，則萌<sup>67</sup>於圖讖；回文所興，則道原爲始；聯句共韻，則柏梁餘製；巨細或殊，情理同致，總歸詩園，故不繁云。

贊曰：民生而志，詠歌所含。興發皇世，風流二南。神理共契，政序相參。英華彌綉，萬代永耽。

### 樂府第七

樂府者，聲依永<sup>1</sup>，律和聲也。鈞天九奏，既<sup>2</sup>其上帝；葛天八閔，爰<sup>3</sup>乃皇時。自咸英以降，亦無得而論矣。至於塗山歌於候人，始爲南音；有娥謠於<sup>4</sup>飛燕，始爲北聲；夏甲歎於東陽，東音以發；殷鑿<sup>5</sup>思於西河，西音以興；音<sup>6</sup>聲推移，亦不一概矣。匹<sup>7</sup>夫庶婦，謠吟土風，詩官採言，樂胥<sup>8</sup>被律，志成絲簧，氣變金石<sup>9</sup>。是以師曠祝風於盛衰，季札察微於興廢，精之至<sup>10</sup>也。

夫樂本心術，故響泆肌髓，先王慎焉，務塞淫濫。敷訓胄子，必歌九德；故能情感七始，化動八風。自雅聲浸微，溺音騰沸，秦燔樂經，漢初紹復，制氏紀其鏗鏘，叔孫定其容典<sup>11</sup>；於是武德興乎高祖，四時廣於孝文，雖琴韶夏，而頹喪秦舊，中和之響，闕其不還。暨武帝崇禮<sup>12</sup>，始立樂府，總趙代之音，擬齊楚之氣，延年以曼聲協律，朱<sup>13</sup>馬以騷體製歌，桂華雜曲，麗而不經，赤雁羣篇，靡而非典，河間薦<sup>14</sup>雅而罕御，故汲黯致譏於天馬也。至宣帝雅詩，頗效鹿鳴<sup>15</sup>；邇<sup>16</sup>及元成，稍廣淫樂；正音乖俗，其難也如此。暨後漢<sup>17</sup>郊廟，惟雜<sup>18</sup>雅章，辭雖典文，而律非夔曠。至於魏之三祖，氣爽才麗，宰割辭調，音靡節平。觀其北上衆引，秋風列篇，或述酣宴，或傷羈戍，志不出於滔<sup>19</sup>蕩，辭不離於哀思，雖三調之正聲，實韶夏之鄭曲也。逮於晉世，則傅玄曉音，創定雅歌，以詠祖宗；張華新篇，亦充庭萬。然杜夔調律，音奏舒雅，苟助改懸，聲節哀<sup>20</sup>急，故阮咸譏其離聲<sup>21</sup>，後人驗其銅尺，和樂之<sup>22</sup>精妙，固表裏而相資矣。故知詩爲樂心，聲爲樂體，樂體在聲，譬師務調其器；樂心在詩，君子宜正其文。好樂無荒，晉風所以稱遠<sup>23</sup>；伊其相謔，鄭國所以云亡。故知季札觀樂<sup>24</sup>，不直聽聲而已。

若夫豔歌婉變，怨志迭絕<sup>25</sup>，淫辭在曲，正響焉生！然俗聽飛馳，戰兢新異，雅詠溫恭，必欠仲魚睨；奇<sup>26</sup>辭切至，則拊脾雀躍；詩聲俱鄭，自此階<sup>27</sup>矣。凡樂辭曰詩，詠聲<sup>28</sup>曰歌，聲來被辭，辭繁難節；故陳思稱“左<sup>29</sup>延年聞於增損古辭，多者則宜減之，”明貴約也。觀高祖之詠大風，孝武之歎來遲，歌盡被聲，莫敢不協；子建士衡，咸<sup>30</sup>有佳篇，並無詔伶人，故事謝絲管，俗稱乖調，蓋未思也。至於軒岐<sup>31</sup>鼓吹，漢世饒挽；雖戎夷殊事，而並<sup>32</sup>總入樂府，總製所制<sup>33</sup>，亦有可算焉。昔子政品文，詩與歌別，故賂具<sup>34</sup>樂篇，以標區界<sup>35</sup>。

贊曰：八音拙文，樹辭爲體。謳吟垌野，金石雲陸。韶響難追，鄭聲易啟。豈惟觀樂，於焉識禮。

## 詮賦第八

詩有六義，其二曰賦。賦者，鋪也；鋪采摛文，體物寫志也。昔邵公稱“公卿賦詩，師箴醫賦。”傳云：“登高能賦，可爲大夫。”詩序則同義，傳說則異體，總其歸塗，實相枝幹。故劉向明不歌而頌<sup>4</sup>，班固稱古詩之流也<sup>5</sup>。

至如鄭莊之賦大隧，士蒞之賦狐裘，結言短<sup>6</sup>韻，詞自己作，雖合賦體，明而未融。及靈均唱騷，始廣聲貌，然則賦也者，受命於詩人，而拓宇<sup>9</sup>於楚辭<sup>10</sup>也。於是荀況禮智，宋玉風釣<sup>11</sup>，爰錫名號，與詩畫境，六義附庸，蔚成大國。遂<sup>12</sup>客主<sup>13</sup>以首<sup>14</sup>引，極聲<sup>15</sup>貌以窮文，斯蓋別詩之原<sup>16</sup>始，命賦之厥初也。

秦世不文，頗有雜賦。漢初詞<sup>17</sup>人，循<sup>18</sup>流而作，陸賈扣其端，賈誼振其緒，枚馬播<sup>19</sup>其風，王揚駟其勢，臯朔<sup>20</sup>已<sup>21</sup>下，品物畢圖。繁積於宣時，校閱於成世，進御之賦，千有餘首，討其源流，信與楚而蓋漢矣。若<sup>22</sup>夫京殿苑獵，述行序<sup>23</sup>志，並體國經野，義尚光大，既履端於唱<sup>24</sup>序，亦歸餘於總亂<sup>25</sup>。序以建言，首引情本；亂<sup>26</sup>以理篇，寫送文勢<sup>27</sup>。按那之卒章，閔馬<sup>28</sup>稱亂，故知般人緝<sup>29</sup>頌，楚人理賦，斯並鴻裁之寰<sup>30</sup>域，雅文之樞轄也。至於草

## 體性第二十七

夫情動而言形，理發而文見，蓋沿隱以至顯，因內而符外者也。然才有庸雋，氣有剛柔，學有淺深，習有雅鄭，並情性所鑠<sup>1</sup>，陶染所凝，是以筆區雲譎，文苑波詭者矣。故辭理庸雋，莫能翻其才；風趣剛柔，寧或改其氣；事義淺深，未聞乖其學；體式雅鄭，鮮有反其習；各師成心，其異如面。若總其歸塗，則數窮八體：一曰典雅，二曰遠奧，三曰精約，四曰顯附，五曰繁縟，六曰壯麗，七曰新奇，八曰輕靡。典雅者，鎔式經誥，方軌儒門者也。遠奧者，翫采典文<sup>2</sup>，經理玄宗者也。精約者，覈字省句，剖析毫釐者也。顯附者，辭直義暢，切理厭心者也。繁縟者，博喻醞<sup>3</sup>采，煒燁枝派者也。壯麗者，高論宏裁，卓犖<sup>4</sup>異采者也。新奇者，擯古競今，危側趣詭者也。輕靡者，浮文弱植，縹緲附俗者也。故雅與奇反，奧與顯殊，繁與約舛，壯與輕乖，文辭根葉，苑囿其中矣。

若夫八體屢遷，功以學成，才力居中，肇自血氣；氣以實志，志以定言，吐納英華，莫非情性。是以賈生俊發，故<sup>5</sup>文潔而體清；長卿傲誕，故理侈<sup>6</sup>而辭溢；子雲沈寂，故<sup>7</sup>志隱而味深；子政爾易，故趣昭而事博；孟堅雅懿，故裁密而思靡；平子淹通，故<sup>9</sup>慮周而藻密；仲宣躁競<sup>10</sup>，故顯出而才果；公幹氣褊<sup>11</sup>，故言壯而情駭；嗣宗傲傑，故響逸而調遠；叔夜雋俠，故與高而采烈；安仁輕敏，故鋒發而韻流；士衡矜重，故情繁而辭隱；觸類以推，

表裏必符。豈非自然之恆資，才氣之大略哉！

夫才有天資，學慎<sup>12</sup>始習，斲梓染絲，功在初化，器成絲定，難可翻移。故孟子雕琢<sup>13</sup>，必先雅製，沿根討葉，思轉自圓，八體雖殊，會通合數，得其環中，則輻輳相成。故宜摹體以定習，因性以練才，文之司南，用此道也。

贊曰：才性異區，文體<sup>14</sup>繁詭。辭爲肌膚<sup>15</sup>，志實骨髓<sup>16</sup>。雅麗歸賦，淫巧朱紫<sup>17</sup>。習亦凝<sup>18</sup>真，功沿漸靡。

## 通變第二十九

夫設文之體有常，變文之數無方，何以明其然耶？凡詩賦書記，名理相因，此有常之體也；文辭氣力，通變則久，此無方之數也。名理有常，體必資於故實；通變無方，數必酌於新聲；故能明無窮之路，飲不竭之源。然綆短者銜渴，足疲者輟塗，非文理之數盡，乃通變之術疎耳。故論文之方，譬諸草木，根幹麗土而同性，臭味晞<sup>1</sup>陽而異品矣。

是以九代詠歌，志合文則<sup>2</sup>，黃歌斷竹，質之至也；唐歌在昔，則廣於黃世；虞歌卿雲，則<sup>3</sup>文於唐時；夏歌雕牆，緝於虞代；商周篇什，麗於夏年。至於序志述時，其揆一也。暨楚之變文，矩式周人；漢之賦頌，影寫楚世；魏之篇製<sup>4</sup>，願慕漢風；晉之辭章，瞻望魏采。推<sup>5</sup>而論之：則黃唐淳而質，虞夏質而辨，商周麗而雅，楚漢侈而豔，魏晉淺而綺<sup>6</sup>，宋初訛而新，從質及訛，彌近彌溢。何則？競今疎古，風末<sup>7</sup>氣衰也。今才穎之士，刻意學文，多略漢篇，師範宋集，雖古今備閱，然近附而遠疎矣。夫背生於藍，絳生於蒨，雖踰本色，不能復化。桓君山云：“予見新進麗文，美而無採；及見劉揚言辭，常輒有得。”此其驗也。故練青濯絳，必歸藍蒨，矯訛翻淺，還宗經詰。斟酌乎質文之間，而糺括乎雅俗之際，可與言通變矣。

夫跨張聲貌，則漢初已極，自茲厥後，循環相因，雖軒翥出轍，而終入籠內。枚乘七發云：“通望兮東海，虹洞兮蒼天。”相如上林云：“視之無端，察之無涯，日出東沼，月生西陂。”馬融廣成云：“天地虹洞，固<sup>8</sup>無端涯，大明出東，月生西陂。”揚雄校<sup>9</sup>獵云：“出入日月，天與地沓。”張衡西京云：“日月於是乎出入，象扶桑於濛汜。”此並廣寓極狀，而五家如一。諸如此類，莫不相循，參伍因革，通變之數也。

是以規略文統，宜宏大體，先博覽以精閱，總綱紀而攝契，然後拓衢

路，置<sup>10</sup>關鍵，長轡遠馭，從容按節，憑情以會通，負氣以適藝，采如苑虹之奮雲，光<sup>11</sup>若長雌之振翼，迺穎脫之文矣。若乃駁齷於偏解，矜激乎一致，此庭間之迴驟，豈萬里之逸步哉！

贊曰：文律運周，日新其業。變則堪<sup>12</sup>久，通則不乏。越時必果乘機無怯<sup>13</sup>。望今制奇，參古定法。

### 聲律第三十三

夫音律所始，本於人聲者也。發含<sup>1</sup>宮商，肇自血氣，先王因之，以制樂歌。故知器寫人聲，聲非效<sup>2</sup>器者也。故言語者，文章關鍵<sup>3</sup>，神明樞機，吐納律呂，唇吻而已。古之教歌，先揆以法，使疾呼中宮，徐呼中徵。夫徵羽響高，宮商聲下<sup>4</sup>，抗喉矯舌之差，貫唇激齒之異，廉肉相準，皎然可分。今操琴不調，必知改張；搥<sup>5</sup>文乖張，而不識所調。擗在彼絃，乃得克諧；聲萌我心，更失和律，其故何哉？良由<sup>6</sup>外聽易為巧，而內聽難為聰也。故外聽之易，絃以手定；內聽之難，聲與心紛；可以數求，難以辭逐。凡聲<sup>7</sup>有飛沈，響有雙疊<sup>8</sup>，雙聲隔字而每舛，疊韻離<sup>9</sup>句而<sup>10</sup>必睽；沈則響發而<sup>11</sup>斷，飛則聲颺不還，並轆轤<sup>12</sup>交往，逆鱗相比<sup>13</sup>，逆<sup>14</sup>其際會，則往蹇來連<sup>15</sup>，其為疾<sup>16</sup>病，亦文家之吃也。夫吃文為患，生於好詭，逐新趣異，故喉唇糾紛；將欲解結，務在剛斷。左礙而尋右，末滯而討前，則辭<sup>17</sup>轉於吻，玲玲如振玉；辭靡於耳，粲粲如貫珠矣。是以聲畫妍蚩，寄在吟咏，滋味流於下句<sup>18</sup>，風力<sup>19</sup>窮於和韻。異音相從<sup>20</sup>謂之和，同聲相應謂之韻。韻氣一定，故<sup>21</sup>餘聲易遣；和體抑揚，故遺響難契<sup>22</sup>。屬筆易巧，選和至難，綴文難精，而作韻甚易，雖繼意<sup>23</sup>曲變，非可縷言，然振其大綱，不出茲論。

若夫宮商大和，譬諸吹簫；翻迴取均，頗似調瑟。瑟資移柱，故有時而乖貳；簫含定管，故無往而不壹。陳思播岳，吹簫之調也；陸機左思，瑟柱之和也。概舉而推，可以類見。

又詩人綜韻，率多清切，楚辭辭楚，故訛韻實繁。及張華論韻，謂士衡多楚，文賦亦稱取足<sup>24</sup>不易，可謂銜靈均之聲餘，失黃鐘之正響也。凡切韻之動，勢若轉圜<sup>25</sup>；訛音之作，甚於柄方；免乎柄方，則無大過矣。練才洞鑿，割字鑽響，疎識<sup>26</sup>闊略，隨音所遇<sup>27</sup>，若長風之過籟<sup>28</sup>，南郭之吹竽耳<sup>29</sup>。古之佩玉，左宮右徵，以節其步，聲不失序。音以律文，其可忽<sup>30</sup>哉！

贊曰：標情務遠，比音則近。吹律胸臆，調鐘唇吻。聲得鹽梅，響滑榆棧。割棄支離，宮商難隱。

## 知音第四十八

知音其難哉！音實難知，知實難逢，逢其知音，千載其一乎！夫古來知音，多賤同而思古，所謂“日進前而不御，遙聞聲而相思”也。昔儲說始出，子虛初成，秦皇漢武，恨不同時；既同時矣，則韓囚而馬輕，豈不明鑒同時之賤哉！至於班固傅毅，文在伯仲，而固嗤毅云：“下筆不能自休。”及陳思論才，亦深排孔璋，敬禮請潤色，歎以爲美談；季緒好誕詞，方之於田巴，意亦見矣。故魏文稱“文人相輕”，非虛談也。至如君卿唇舌，而謬欲論文，乃稱“史遷著書，詣東方朔”，於是桓譚之徒，和顏嗤笑，彼實博徒，經言負誦，況乎文士，可妄談哉！故寤照洞明，而貴古賤今者，二主是也；才實鴻懿，而崇己抑人者，班曹是也；學不逮文，而信僞迷真者，婁謹是也；贊頌之議，豈多歎哉！

夫麟鳳與麀雉懸絕，珠玉與礫石超殊，白日垂其照，青睞寫其形。然魯臣以麟爲麀，楚人以雉爲鳳，魏民以夜光爲怪石，宋客以燕礫爲寶珠。形器易徵，謬乃若是；文情難鑒，誰曰易分。

夫篇章雜沓，質文交加，知多偏好，人莫回該。慷慨者逆聲而擊節，醜黷者見密而高蹈，浮慧者觀綺而躍心，愛奇者聞詭而驚聽。會己則嗟諷，異我則沮棄，各執一隅之解，欲擬萬端之變，所謂“東向而望，不見西牆”也。

凡操千曲而後曉聲，觀千劍而後識器；故圓照之象，務先博觀。閱喬岳以形培塿，酌滄波以喻畎澮，無私於輕重，不偏於憎愛，然後能平理若衡，照辭如鏡矣。是以將閱文情，先標六觀：一觀位體，二觀置辭，三觀通變，四觀奇正，五觀事義，六觀宮商，斯術既形，則優劣見矣。

夫綴文者情動而辭發，觀文者披文以入情，沿波討源，雖幽必顯。世遠莫見其面，規文輒見其心。豈成篇之足深，患識照之自淺耳。夫志在山水，琴表其情，況形之筆端，理將焉匿。故心之照理，譬目之照形，目瞭則形無不分，心敏則理無不達。然而俗鑒之迷者，深廢淺售，此莊周所以笑折楊，宋玉所以傷白雪也。昔屈平有言：“文質疎內，衆不知余之異采，”見異唯知音耳。揚雄自稱“心好沈博絕麗之文，”其事浮淺，亦可知矣。夫唯深識鑒與，必默然內憚，譬春臺之照衆人，樂餌之止過客。蓋聞蘭爲國香，服媚彌芬；香亦國華，旣釋方美；知音君子，其垂意焉。

贊曰：洪鍾<sup>10</sup>萬鈞，鑿曠所定。良書盈篋，妙鑒適訂。流鄭淫人，無或失聽。獨有此律，不認蹊徑。

## Vita

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