

„Persuasion“ or „Treatise“?
The Prose Genres *Shui* 說 and *Shuo* 說 in the Light of the
*Guwenci leizuan*¹ of 1779

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1. The literary genre as an order function of communicative action

According to the traditional Chinese view, the discourse on literary genres (*wenti lun* 文體論) has always included the entirety of written communication, that is, from the poetic forms down to those of the epigraphs, memorials to the throne, or imperial edicts. Within this all-embracing horizon beyond any artistic autonomy all facets of the public discourse are unfolded and mediated to each other by their common feature of the written form: political and religious, philosophical and literary, aesthetic and historical writings etc. react to each other with the full scope of intertextual strategies and consequently create the close and multi-layered weave of the Chinese (written) culture. Since the first sketches of genre theory in Cai Yong's (133-192) *Duduan* 獨斷 and Cao Pi's (187-226) *Lun wen*, the universe of writing, which in China is maybe more than a mere metaphor, has been again and again measured and structured by various formal, semantic, ideological or functional standards. Thus, there is not only a historical development of genres, but, as its constant companion, there is also a progress of genre evaluation and classification. By their historical conditionality both of them, genre genesis and theory, are also subject to literary periodization. The evaluation of historical phenomena is always itself historical; time and again, it is under discussion, and modern China's still unresolved quarrel with its superior written heritage may testify to the crucial significance of retrospective literary evaluation for the self-image of the respective present times culture. Judging the past is always also – or maybe above all – the attempt of defining one's own place. This may explain why the retrospective literary discourse constantly bears more or less dominant elements of sharp ideological polemics – in the 6th century as well as today. Looking at theories of genres one

1 In some editions, the last character is written as 纂. – The origins of the present contribution go back to a seminar on Tang *guwen* essays held by Prof. Gimm in the summer of 1991; hence, this study owes its very existence to one of the countless impulses I have received from my respected teacher during a decade of humanist scholarly *Bildung*. – I am grateful to Valérie Lavoix (Paris), Wolfgang Odendahl (Köln), and Thomas Jansen (München) for their valuable hints and careful corrections.

gains an insight into the different genres as well as into the historical and ideological positions of the theories.

In imperial China the discourse on literary genres, that is, on the structure of order of the written culture and ultimately of social communicative action at all, has been carried out in two stamps of this written culture itself, and here it has always implied the debate on canon and censorship, conservation and rejection: in theoretical treatises which usually included the criticism of works and authors of the past, and in chrestomathies² where the principles of selection were sometimes stated in prefaces or postscripts. Perfect examples are two extremely influential works of the early 6th century: on the one hand, Liu Xie's (c. 467-522) *Wenxin diaolong* (about 501/2),³ on the other, Xiao Tong's (501-531) *Wenxuan* (between 526-531).

Compared, firstly, to the strong impulses of genre differentiation in the works of Aristotle (reacting to Plato) and, later, Horace, and secondly, to the earliest testimonies to poetic writing and to the conscious use of different literary forms in the *Shijing* and the *Shangshu*, the notion of the literary genre is rather a latecomer in Chinese literary history. From its Western counterparts it differs by its all-embracing scope – Aristotle discussed only the epos, the tragedy, and the comedy, and Goethe defined the lyric, the epic, and the drama as „die drei Naturformen der Dichtung“ – as well as by a startlingly „modern“ approach: like the theory of music in the *Xunzi* and the *Liji*, the theory of literature and its genres stresses the importance of what today's readers may call „aesthetics of reception“ or „reader response criticism“, in contrast to the aesthetics of the work itself and its production. Within this frame of notion the genre label – which is part of the title – frequently marks the status of the text within the socio-political hierarchy of communication, as it is immediately evident in cases like the edict (*zhao*, etc.) or the memorial (*biao*, etc.).

In the Chinese context (and not only there) the persuasive power of the reception aesthetics approach to literature and to genre classification depends basically on the fact that both the texts and their classification are of heteronomous character as they are conducted by the communicative function of literature. It is not by accident that consciously enacted changes of literary paradigms play an important role in political reorientations: in both the May Fourth Movement and the Cultural Revolution, beyond their fundamental differences, the re-evaluation of the literary past and the creation of new literary genres were regarded as a political necessity.

2 Here and in the following, I prefer to use the word „chrestomathy“ rather than „anthology“ because it precisely denotes the normative and didactic function proper to the literary collections to be mentioned in this study.

3 For this – tentative – dating see Wang Yunxi/Yang Ming, 323, also Mou Shijin, 41-65.

This is also true for the Tang (618-906) „ancient style literature“ (*guwen*) movement initiated by Han Yu (768-825)⁴. This developed within the wider context of „restoring antiquity“ (*fugu*), a quest to which already Chen Zi'ang (661-702) had lent his name and voice, especially with regard to poetry. But also in prose, the Six Dynasties' (*liu chao*, 222-589) parallel style (*pianwen*) became rejected as excessively adorned and as devoid of (moral) meaning. Instead, a (re)turn to a „classical“,⁵ i.e. argumentatively and formally lucid style in the spirit of Confucian ethics, was advocated. By the end of the 8th century, this double impulse finally gave birth to a corpus of „ancient-style literature“, and its central texts themselves were later turned into canonized normative models. This is testified by the compilation of *guwen* chrestomathies starting from the 12th century⁶ and culminating in the great chrestomathies of the Qing dynasty (1644-1912).

Amongst these, the *Guwenci leizuan* (GWCLZ) („Classified compendium of ancient style literary compositions“) of Yao Nai (1732-1815)⁷, which appeared in 1779 as a private compilation of 75 *juan* and was first printed about 1820 by Kang Shaoyong 康紹鏞 (1770-1834) (Fang Chao-ying, 900) enjoys enduring appreciation and lasting influence down to the present time due to its particular textual arrangement: in contrast to the chronological order of other important *guwen* collections, it presents the texts according to 13 „classes“ (*lei*) and only within these classes it follows the chronological sequence.⁸ In the preface and table of contents (*xumu*) to

- 4 See You Guo'en 2, 158-80. You, 158, states that the term *guwen* in this specific sense was coined by Han Yu himself. See also Nienhauser 1988a, 495: „It is Han Yü who functioned as the fount from which all subsequent *ku-wen* writings, theoretical and practical, derive.“
- 5 The European paradigm „classical“ is appropriate here, since „classical“ denotes a common normative model which is a) both historical and resistant to the flux of time, b) a later ideological projection into the past, and c) serving the present as a „golden“ foil to an experience of deficiency; from the vast stream of writing on the topic see, e.g., *Klassik im Vergleich*, Assmann, as well as *Kanon und Zensur*.
- 6 Lévy notes the *Guwen guanjian* 古文關鍵, compiled by Lü Zuqian (1137-1181) about 1160-80, as the earliest *guwen* chrestomathy. This work includes exclusively authors of the Tang and Song. There is, however, another early anthology of prose and verse, the *Guwen yuan* 古文苑, but this work, which is known since the eleventh century and which is arranged by genres, includes only pre-Tang writings. Therefore, it should not be linked to the orthodox *guwen*-tradition initiated by Han Yu.
- 7 Fang Chao-ying, 900, notes Yao Nai's life dates as 17.1.1732-15.10.1815.
- 8 Two other large Qing chrestomathies to be compared to the GWCLZ are the *Guwen guanzhi* of 1695 and the Kangxi emperor's (*Yuxuan*) *Guwen yuanjian* of 1685/6; and also the somewhat minor *Guwen yuexuan* 古文約選 compiled in 1733 by Fang Bao (1668-1749), may be mentioned here, since Fang, together with Yao Nai and Liu Dakui (1698-1780), was one of the three major *guwen* essayists of the so-called *Tongcheng pai*, and his chrestomathy was the immediate precursor of the GWCLZ (For the whole string of *Tongcheng pai* compilations see You Xinxiong, 98-112). All three chrestomathies, as well as several others compiled before Yao Nai's pathbreaking GWCLZ, which were not restricted to defined writers or epochs but dedicated to the whole history of literature, are arranged in a pure chronological order. This is

his work Yao Nai gives programmatical characterizations of the different classes by developing their respective theoretical standards through the discussion of concrete historical examples. Thus, the GWCLZ deserves special attention in any discussion of Chinese genre theory: in a unique way it materializes the building of *guwen* theory into a canon of texts and at the same time it systematically explicates its very underlying concept. The *Guwen guanzhi* and the *Guwen yuanjian* both depart from texts of the *Zuo zhuan* – that is, in the 4th-3rd century B.C. – and present the writings of Han Yu not until book 7 (of 12) resp. 35 (of 64). These programmatical writings are the very core of the GWCLZ class 1 and thus, following only two earlier texts, set forth with the beginning of book 2. By the shape of this new order, Yao Nai stages nothing less than the ambitious idea to define the literary past primarily as a qualitative hierarchy within which the chronological order is of only secondary importance. At the very beginning we do not find those texts which owe their nobility to their mere age and which since the 8th century A.D. have only been retroactively monopolized as the *guwen* tradition. On the contrary, the GWCLZ starts with those later programmatical works which have been consciously written within this new paradigm and which indeed have shaped the paradigm itself. The blueprint of the GWCLZ is developed by a double demarcation: on the one side, from the chronological order of other *guwen* chrestomathies, and on the other, from earlier hierarchies of genre theory as expressed, e.g., by Xiao Tong in the *Wenxuan*, by Liu Xie in the *Wenxin diaolong* as well as later by Wu Ne (1372-1457) in the *Wenzhang bianti* (first preface 1464) and by Xu Shizeng (1517-1580) in the *Wenti mingbian* (1570).

By its critical and sometimes polemic argument with these and other works the GWCLZ has gained an intellectual acuteness and lucidity that determine its particular value. From a perspective of reception, it draws a suggestive order structure

particularly striking since in non-*guwen* compilations – at the top the two paradigmatic collections of the *Shijing* and the *Wenxuan* – there seems to be a preference for genre arrangement rather than for chronological order. The chronological order of important *guwen* chrestomathies, however, may well have been motivated by the very notion of „ancient style literature“ itself: in terms of a concept which places the models of any superior writing, regardless of its genre, in high antiquity and then derives all later excellence from there, nothing is more natural than a chronological order. – The genre classes of the GWCLZ are: 1. *lun bian* 論辨 (discourse and argumentation); 2. *xu ba* 序跋 (preface and colophon); 3. *zou yi* 奏議 (memorial and discussion); 4. *shu shui* 書說 (letter and persuasion); 5. *zeng xu* 贈序 (communication and address); 6. *zhao ling* 詔令 (edict and command); 7. *zhuan zhuang* 傳狀 (biography and conduct description); 8. *bei zhi* 碑誌 (epitaph and grave memoir); 9. *za ji* 雜記 (miscellaneous memoir); 10. *zhen ming* 箴銘 (admonition and metal inscription); 11. *song zan* 頌贊 (eulogy and encomium); 12. *ci fu* 辭賦 (rhythmic prose and rhapsody); 13. *ai ji* 哀祭 (lament and offering). For the English translations of these terms I have partly relied on Knechtges 1, 21-2; for other translations see Edwards; Nienhauser 1988b, 96, and Margouliès, vii. For a detailed discussion and synopsis of the different traditional concepts of genre organization cf. Feng Shugeng and Jin Renqian 2, 826-52.

of written public communication and throws an ideologically coloured but still illuminating light on those genres that came into being or achieved new significance on the basis of the *guwen* programme. Although both genres are written with the very same character, the *shuo* 說 (treatise) has been an important *guwen* genre since the works of Han Yu and Liu Zongyuan (773-819), whereas the Zhou times *shui* (persuasion) has served a completely different communicative function within the frame of a political order dating more than a millennium earlier. Yao Nai's strict distinction between these two literary phenomena may be regarded as a model clarification of an old but still resistant misconception. His distinction also elucidates the fact that genres do not travel as erratic boulders through the lands of literature but rather appear as relationally working materializations of communicative functions.

2. The semantic and phonetic development of the character 說 (*shuo/shui*)

Together with other characters (悅, 稅, 悅, 祝, etc.), 說 has been derived from the early graph *dui* 兌 by complementing a semantic element or „radical“; *dui* 兌 (joy, pleased, to please) has been identified on oracle bones (*jiaguwen*) and bronze epigraphs (*jinwen*).⁹

Xu Shen's (c. 55-c. 149) *Shuo wen jie zi* (100 A.D.) defines 說 as *shi* 釋 (to explain). Duan Yucai (1735-1815) takes the two characters as *yue* 悅 and *yi* 懌 (pleased, to please), which do not appear in the *Shuo wen*; according to Duan, these characters were also semantically interchangeable because to explain and to analyze may lead to joy. Later commentators have argued in a similar way.¹⁰ This interpretation is supported by the *Shuo wen* definition of 兌 as 說 where Duan is surely correct in glossing the latter as 悅 (*Shuo wen jie zi gulin* 7, 3825a).

The *Shi ming* (c. 200 A.D.) attributed to Liu Xi (n.d.) defines 說 as *shu* 述 (to transmit, to state); or, according to a textual variant, as *xushu* 序述 and complements this by the phrase *xuanshu renyi* 宣述人意 (to display someone's aspirations).¹¹ *Dui*, which is the name of the 8th *Yijing* trigram and of the 58th hexagram

9 See Li Xiaoding 8, 2789-92, and Zhou Fagao et al. 10, 5389-91. The process of extending the graph *dui* by different „radicals“ resulted in a variety of distinct characters which originally may have been homophonic or distinguished only in their initials. At least some of them were interchangeable, and also the undistinguished early form 兌 was still in use during the Western Han (206/2 B.C.-6 A.D.); see *Shuo wen jie zi gulin* 3, 1001a-2b; 7, 3825a-b; *Jingji zhuangu* 2, 2041-2; *Jiaozheng Kangxi zidian* 2, 2636. For the phonetic kinship or identity of the different characters see Karlgren 1923, 322.

10 *Shuo wen jie zi gulin* 3, 1001a-2b. After the definition and the graphic and semantic derivation of the character the *Shuo wen* continues: „One [text of ancient literature] says: to debate (談說).“ Duan regards this as a later interpolation.

11 *Shi ming shuzheng bu* 4, 3b; see also Bodman, no. 795.

(in Wilhelm's translation „das Heitere, der See“, Wilhelm, 604), is again defined as 說 and is explained by the sentence „When the beings attain their completion they all are joyful and glad (喜說).“¹² Both Han lexica, without pointing to any phonetic differences, provide several meanings (to please, to explain, to transmit) of 說 and declare them as closely interrelated.

In fact, according to the tables of Han rhymes compiled by Luo Changpei and Zhou Zumo the character 說 was used with two different pronunciations: it appears in the traditional rhyme category *ji* 祭 (of the so-called *yin* 陰 type) as well as in the category *yue* 月 (*ru* 入 type) (Luo Changpei and Zhou Zumo, 170-1; 236-7). Baxter proposes the following reconstructions for the *Shijing* rhyme words¹³:

Character	<i>Shijing</i> rhymes		Middle Chinese (c. 600 A.D.)		modern
兌	*lots	>	<i>dwajH</i>	>	<i>dui</i>
說	*hljots	>	<i>sywejH</i>	>	<i>shui</i>
說	*hljot	>	<i>sywet</i>	>	<i>shuo</i>
悅	*ljot	>	<i>ywet</i>	>	<i>yue</i>

In contrast to both the *Shuo wen* and the *Shi ming*, the dictionaries of the 6th and 7th centuries A.D. reflect a definite relationship between the different phonetic and semantic values of the character. The earliest example of these lexica is Gu Yewang's 顧野王 (519-581) *Yupian* 玉篇 (543); yet, having gone through many times of supplementing revision, this work has been handed down only in the shape of the *Daguang yihui Yupian* (1013) and therefore cannot be accepted without reservation as original material.¹⁴ The *Yupian* distinguishes three pronunciations (modern *shuo*, *shui*, *yue*) and attaches exactly one meaning to each of them. It defines – transferred to present day pronunciation – *shuo* as „to speak“ (*yan* 言) and „to explain“ (*shi* 釋), *shui* as „to debate“ (*tanshui* 談說), and *yue* as „pleased, to please“ (*yi* 懌) (*Daguang yihui Yupian* 1, 86b). Chen Pengnian 陳彭年 (961-1017) provides a similar arrangement in his *Guangyun* 廣韻 (1008), which is believed to faithfully represent Lu Fayang's 陸法言 (n.d.) *Qieyun* 切韻 (601): *shuo* (rhyme category *xue* 薛) is defined as „to relate, to announce“ (*gao* 告, with reference to the *Shi ming*), *shui* (rhyme category *ji* 祭) as „to persuade, to seduce“ (*shuiyou* 說誘), and *yue* (rhyme category *ji* 祭) as „pleased, to please“ (*xi* 喜).¹⁵ This scheme is proven by

12 *Shi ming shuzheng bu* 1, 8b, Bodman, no.842.

13 Baxter, 755; 789; 806. Schuessler's (different) reconstructions show the same distinctions.

14 From a comparison with those fragments which have been found in Japan by Li Shuchang (1837-1897) and Luo Zhenyu (1866-1940) and which were published as *Yuanben Yupian canjuan*, it becomes clear how far the later version has withdrawn from the original text. Unfortunately, these fragments do not include the passage on 說.

15 *Da Song chongxiu Guangyun* 4, 19b; 5, 26b-27a. Ting Pang-hsin, 238-47, gives a tabular survey of the phonological development; for the rhyme categories *xue* and *ji* see 241 and 243.

several 7th and 8th century manuscript fragments of the *Qieyun* as well as of the *Tang yun* 唐韻 (751).¹⁶

With regard to the character 說 we may conclude that at least from the early 7th century, the differences in pronunciation and those in semantics are clearly defined and related to each other. At the same time the meaning „pleased, to please“ seems to have been evacuated into the character 悅. Since then, this scheme is lasting¹⁷ and with only minor supplements mirrored in the Song dictionaries like Ding Du’s (990-1053) *Jiyun* (1039) and Sima Guang’s (1019-1086) *Leipian* (1066).¹⁸ A particularly detailed explanation of (modern) *shui* is provided in the *Zengxiu huzhu libu yunlie* 增修互註禮部韻略 (short title: *Zengyun* 增韻), which had been presented to the throne by Mao Huang 毛晃 (n.d.) in 1162 and which was later continued by his son Mao Juzheng 毛居正 (n.d.): „To persuade means to lead people to comprehension by use of spoken words, and [thus] to cause them to follow [the persuador].“¹⁹

It was not until this distinct phonetic and semantic differentiation that the two words *shui* and *shuo* could be related to clearly different forms of argumentation – i.e., the persuasive and the explanatory – and finally could be used as terms of different literary genres: the *shui* as the „persuasion“ and the *shuo* as the „treatise“. Moreover, it became possible to identify these two genres as stamps of different needs of the socio-political communication in order to locate them in their proper historical context. As the following discussion of the early works of literary theory may demonstrate, the distinctive use of the words *shuo* and *shui* seems to be still missing in these texts and thus may have taken its final shape in the course of the sixth century. The rhyme lexica, like the *Yupian* and the *Qieyun*, played their role in this process by working out the mutual assignment of phonetic and semantic values on the basis of literary works of the past. In the same way, the present study, in accord with the genre classification of the GWCLZ, cannot but project the differences between *shui* and *shuo* into those far days of the past when these very differences had not yet been theoretically penetrated.

3. The literary genre *shui* in Lu Ji’s (261-303) *Wen fu* and in Liu Xie’s *Wenxin diaolong*

As a literary genre, the persuasion is for the first time discussed in the *Wen fu*,²⁰ where *shui* appears as the very last one in a catalogue of ten prose and poetic forms,

16 See Zhou Zumo 1, 407; 496; 517; 590; 613; 2, 707.

17 See Karlgren 1923, 322, and id. 1957, 96-7; Pulleyblank, 290; 388.

18 *Jiyun* 7, 27a-b; 9, 39a; 41b; *Leipian* 3A, 24b.

19 Quoted from the *Jiaozheng Kangxi zidian* 2, 2636.

20 The text is preserved in *Wenxuan* 17, 1a-14b.

which are presented in highly artistic verses. The enumeration finishes with the three discursive genres:

The discourse (*lun*) is essential and fine, lucid and far-reaching.
 The memorial (*zou*) is balanced and penetrating, calm and elegant.
 The persuasion (*shui*) is brilliant and glittering, deceitful and delusive.²¹

Of all literary genres discussed by Lu Ji only the persuasion is characterized in a decisively pejorative sense as „the negative image of the qualities of a good memorial to the throne.“²² Its light does not clarify but dazzles, it provides pleasant illusions rather than honest truths. The material presented in the *Shuo wen* allowed Duan Yucai to harmonize the meanings „to please“ and „to explain“, but now they are placed in strict opposition to each other – probably as an echo of the famous *Laozi* dictum which was directed towards artistic rhetorics: „True words are not beautiful, beautiful words are not true“ (Chen Guying, 361-4). Lu Ji presents the *shui* as a supposedly successful but merely tactical and in the end abominable variant of the political debate. Even the epithets „brilliant and glittering“ appear as negative qualities in the sense of dazzling superficiality, if one compares them to „essential and fine“ (discourse) or „balanced and penetrating“ (memorial). The pronounced antagonism between *lun* and *shui* becomes neutralized some 200 years later in chapter 18 of the *Wenxin diaolong*, *Lun shui* (Discourse and persuasion).²³ Here, Liu Xie first mentions *shui* as a subgenre of *lun* (Zhan Ying 18, 673), but then treats it in its own right. The beginning of this discussion is dedicated to the negative potential of the persuasion, which lies in the original quality of „pleasing“ the person vis-à-vis:

Shui is „to please“ (*yue*). [The character] *dui* (to please) consists of mouth and tongue, and thus to speak contributes to joy and delight. [But] excessive [will] to please must lead into falseness – and therefore Shun was dismayed at scheming persuasion.²⁴

- 21 *Wenxuan* 17, 6a-b. Li Zhouhan 李周翰, one of the Tang commentators on the *Wenxuan*, explicates: „The persuasion is a rhetorical argumentation. By phrases of eloquent debate it clarifies and elucidates the things at issue; wily and deceitful, empty and delusive, it exhausts itself to move the minds of the people.“ And the authors of the *Wei Jin nanbeichao wenxueshi cankao ziliao* 1, 262, assist: „The language [of the persuasion] is strange and of seductive power.“
- 22 Owen, 133. The phonetic gloss in the (*Liu chen zhu*) *Wenxuan* has *sywejH* (mod. *shui*) as the pronunciation of 說 here; see also the *Wei Jin nanbeichao wenxueshi cankao ziliao* 1, 262. However, of the six Western translations I have consulted, that by Stephen Owen, 130, is the first to give the pronunciation *shui*, together with the translation „persuasion“. See by comparison Fang, 536; Hughes, 100; Knechtges 3, 219; Tökei, 75; Shih, xix.
- 23 The problems of pronunciation and translation of the title of this chapter are the very same as those of the *Wen fu* passage translated above. Shih, 140, reads the title as „Treatise and Discussion (The *Lun* and the *Shuo*)“.
- 24 Zhan Ying 18.707. Here and in the following, I refrain from detailed philological notes to the allusive text. The best commentary may be found in Zhan Ying. Although I do not adhere com-

However, after this exposition, Liu Xie immediately presents a list of positive historical examples of the persuasion, with the earliest one located in Shang times (16th century-1045 B.C.). Then he turns to the true flowering of the *shui*, i.e., the times of the Warring States (481-221 B.C.):

When the Warring States struggled for hegemony, the masters of debate spread like clouds. By „vertical and horizontal [discourse]“ they hatched strategies; and they competed in the „tactics [of displaying] advantages and shortcomings“. ... A single man's debate outweighed the preciousness of the nine tripods; a tongue three inches long was stronger than a million troops. ... After the Han had disposed of Qin and Chu [202 B.C.], the [activities of the] masters of debate gradually came to a standstill. (Zhan Ying 18, 710-2)

Here, Liu Xie locates the persuasion in its proper socio-political frame: the *shui* were the argumentations of the „wandering persuaders“²⁵ (*youshuijia* 游[遊]說家, *youshi* 游士, *youtan zhi shi* 游談之士, etc.), who offered their political and military advice to the various potentates. By the unification of the empire first under the Qin (221 B.C.) and then, again, under the Han, the permanent struggles among the individual states turned into history – and the services of the wandering advisors became obsolete.²⁶ The dominant stamp of political discourse through the previous some 250 years, of which numerous examples later became materialized to writing in Liu Xiang's (79-8 B.C.) *Zhanguo ce* (between. 26-8 B.C.), had abruptly lost its function. Liu Xie dedicates his final remarks to some residuary *shui* of Qin and Han times, and then he starts reflecting the conditions, possibilities and different forms of the persuasion:

The value of the *shui* lies in matching the [various] situations, [so that] relaxed and tensed [moods of speech] alternate with one another. It is not only circulated through the pleasing face [during the spoken dialogue] but it is also carved [in wooden tablets] as a letter. ... The pivot of the *shui* is by all means to be useful to its times as well as to be solid in its reason: it goes ahead to accomplish one's duty, it retreats to avoid difficulties in one's welfare. Except for [dealing with] crafty enemies, it consists solely of loyalty and honesty. Without reservation one reveals one's inmost feelings to the ruler; by copious expressions one lends wings to language acumen. This is the essence of the *shui*. However, Master Lu [Ji] calls the *shui* „brilliant and glittering, deceitful and delusive“ – how is that possible? (Zhan Ying 18, 715-9)

pletely to Shih's translations (144-7), I have always consulted them and in a few cases took over his formulation.

25 I borrow this term from Crump 1964, 89.

26 Kroll, 133, points to the „partial revival of the system of vassal kingdoms“ in early Han times and to a resulting „revival of both philosophical schools and disputation between them, as well as the reappearance of wandering persuaders, Confucians and Mohists, and others who came from vassal kingdoms east of Mount Hua. But in the third quarter of the second century B.C., the imperial court did away with the remnants of political independence of the vassal kings. It was at this time that the last authors of the *Tsung Heng* school were active.“

In addition to this concluding rehabilitation of the persuasion and the rejection of Lu Ji's negative evaluation, Liu Xie completes his precise and sophisticated discussion of the *shui* by presenting further features, always illustrated by historical references: the political counsel – that is the function of the persuasion – that flowered through Warring States times but lost its sense in the unified empire, is never directed to abstract political philosophy but straightly interferes in the concrete situation as an individual instruction. This rhetorical intervention is of primarily oral nature,²⁷ but could also be imparted as a letter. Its rhetorical capacity is first dedicated to the successful persuasion but again may be used to outwit enemies. In any case, the persuader organizes the formal and argumentative diction according to the particular needs of the moment, and he is especially concerned with the devices and vista of the addressee: „The difficulty of any persuasion lies in knowing the mind of the persuaded in order to fit my [way of] speaking to it.“²⁸ Thus, the *shui* is a reception defined medium *par excellence*. Syntactically, in the texts of the *Zhanguo ce* as well as in Liu Xie's various examples, the word *shui* is always used as a transitive verb in the formula „person A persuades (*shui*) person B“.

On the one hand, Liu Xie removes the moral antagonism between *lun* and *shui*, but on the other, he places the two genres in a new opposition to each other: The *shui* is bound to the concrete situation and tries to unfold its effects by pleasing rhetorical means, whereas the *lun* is defined as an abstract and profound treatise which penetrates the outer appearance of things to their very essence.²⁹

Because of the new framework of political communication in the unified state, the original *shui* ceased to exist in Han times. The later *guwen* genre *shuo* (treatise) in the sense of *shuomingwen* 說明文 (exposition or elucidating treatise), however, had not yet been conceptualized as a distinct literary form when the *Wenxin diaolong* was written. Thus, as also becomes evident from the anthologies, there is no corpus of texts existing between Han and Tang times whose individual writings could be integrated under a heading *shui* or *shuo* by defined common features. Liu Xie does not discuss *shuo* in titles like those of the *Yijing* commentary *Shuo gua* 說

27 See Crump 1964, 35-6: „The persuasion form is, of course, a development of the earliest form of literature – the oral tradition of handing on words of a former speaker in the first person.“ A systematical study of the rhetorics of the persuasion still remains a desideratum; for initial remarks see Crump 1964, 38-9, *et passim*, and 1970, 16-22, *et passim*. Recently, Kroll, esp. 124-5, has noted some fundamental rhetorical devices of the persuaders; he also (127-8) puts in contrasts several features of the persuasion with those of the public debate in pre-Han and Han China. The basic orality of the *shui* is also evident from Xiao Tong's preface (4b) to the *Wenxuan*, where he states that the texts from the „tips of the tongue of the masters of debate“ have not been included in his collection.

28 *Han Feizi jijie* 4, 60. This quotation from the *Han Feizi* section 12, *Shui nan* 說難 (The difficulties of persuasion) defines in a way the very essence of the *shui*. In this section, the persuasion is extensively discussed not as a literary genre but as political rhetorics.

29 Zhan Ying 18, 696. For this new opposition see also Wang Gengsheng, 331-2.

卦, of the dictionary *Shuo wen jie zi*, or of the chapter *Jing shuo* 經說 in *Mozi*, where *shuo* in the sense of „to explain“ is syntactically used as a transitive verb in front of a topic – not in front of a person! – or in a nominal genitive construction.³⁰

4. *Shui* and *shuo* in the *Guwenci leizuan*

It is a typical phenomenon of Chinese literature that genre designations may be a prominent part of the titles of texts. As such, they signal the status and the function of the particular text and provide a guideline for the receiver by confirming his expectations of continuity concerning the different moods of public communication. For the reader, the genre designation is crucial to open his „horizon of expectations“, to use this key term of reception theory. The relevance of this very function is not restricted to the first receiver, e.g., of an imperial edict, where the genre designation defines the performative speech act and thus enables the success of the intended reception, but extends also to the secondary receiver, e.g., the reader of a chrestomathy. As a *conditio sine qua non*, a consensus on the status and the function of the respective sort of texts is assumed and simultaneously becomes confirmed by every new „correct“ piece of writing. Genre designations tend to be strictly normative. In this very sense, nearly all texts of the GWCLZ carry their respective designation in their titles; and here, the words *shui* or *shuo* appear in texts of five of the thirteen classes:

30 There is, however, one laconic – and puzzling – statement in chapter 3 (Zhan Ying 3, 78-9) where Liu Xie traces the origins of the different literary genres to the books of the Confucian canon; the passage related to the *Yijing* reads 故論說辭序則易統其首. This may allude to the early *Yijing* commentaries *Shuo gua*, *Xici*, and *Xu gua* (see Huang Kan, 15), but there is no model for the *lun*. More likely, *lunshuo* and *cixu* are generic terms here to denote the whole set of discursive and explicating (or introductory) genres (see Feng/Jin 2, 617-20). The compound *lunshuo* – not the pairing of the two genres *lun* and *shuo*! – is very old (see, e.g., *Liji zhengyi* 20, 177b); and although the passages related to the other canonical books always deal with concrete genres, their enumerations are highly selective and obviously used *pars pro toto*. Parallel to the *Wenxin diaolong*, Yan Zhitui (531-c. 591) in his *Yanshi jiaxun* (c. 590) also traces the origins of literature to the Confucian canon. Here, the passage on the *Yijing* reads 序述論議生於易者 (Zhou Fagao 9, 52b), and the problem remains the same: Feng/Jin 2, 618, take *lunyi* as synonymous with Liu Xie’s *lunshuo* (see also Uno Seiichi 9, 114), but Kôzen Hiroshi, 345-6, understands the sequence *xu, shu, lun, yi* as an enumeration of four different genres (see also Wang Liqi 9, 223). – There is no evidence that Liu Xie’s statement could refer to the genre *shui*, and it would be impossible to integrate the genre *shuo* (as derived from the *Shuo gua* commentary) into the discussion of the *shui* in chapter 18; therefore, I am inclined to follow Feng/Jin.

class 1	<i>lun bian</i> 論辨 (discourse and argumentation)	ch.1-5:	3 <i>shuo</i> ,
class 5	<i>zeng xu</i> 贈序 (communication and address)	ch.32-34:	7 <i>shuo</i> ,
class 4	<i>shu shui</i> 書說 (letter and persuasion)	ch.25-31:	26 <i>shui</i> ,
class 3	<i>zou yi</i> 奏議 (memorial and discussion)	ch.11-24:	2 <i>shui</i> ,
class 12	<i>ci fu</i> 辭賦 (rhythmic prose and rhapsody)	ch.62-72:	2 <i>shui</i> .

All in all, the words *shui* and *shuo* appear in the titles of 40 of the 708 texts of the GWCLZ. As a formal distinction, one notes that *shuo* in classes 1 and 5 appears without exception as the last word of the title,³¹ whereas *shui* in classes 4, 3, and 12 is always within the title; but also in this position, *shui* works as the only genre designation, and there is never any other one in addition. This situation mirrors perfectly how the syntactically different uses of the two words *shui* and *shuo* in titles are related to the historical difference between the two literary genres *shui* (essentially of pre-Han times) and *shuo* (essentially since the 8th century): The *shuo* of class 1 are all by Han Yu,³² those of class 5 are from Song (960-1279) and Ming (1368-1644) times; the other texts where the character 說 is used as a transitive verb followed by a personal accusative object, again, do not reach beyond Han times. This total coherence of formal structure and historical assignment which allows to divide the texts into two strictly separate groups is also valid for the *shui* and *shuo* of the *Guwen guanzhi* and the *Guwen yuanjian*.³³

The very fact that Yao Nai spreads the *shuo* over two classes, and the *shui* even over three, points out a criterion of classification superior to that of the genre designation itself. To approach this problem, I should translate and briefly discuss the characterizations of these five classes as they are included in the GWCLZ „preface and table of contents“. I will start with class 4, *shu shui* (letter and persuasion), which is a rare concept in Chinese literary history:³⁴

- 31 This is also true for Su Shi's (1037-1101) „Treatise on grain, dedicated to Zhang Hu“ (GWCLZ 33, 10b-11a) where the address has to be separated from the actual title. The *Su Shi wenji* 10, 339 has *song* 送 for *zeng*.
- 32 These are the same texts as included in the *Guwen guanzhi*, which has in addition the *Bu shezhe shuo* 捕蛇者說 of Liu Zongyuan.
- 33 The *Guwen guanzhi* contains five *shui* (4, 122-7; 129-34; 142-5; 151-2) from the *Zhanguo ce* and four *shuo* of Tang times (7, 308-9; 8, 310-2; 9, 363-5); the *Guwen yuanjian* contains eight *shui* (2, 4a-5a; 10b-11a; 5, 4b-5a; 8, 4a-8b; 17a-25a; 28a-33b; 42b-44a) from the *Zuo zhuan*, the *Guoyu*, and the *Zhanguo ce*, and seven *shuo* (35, 16a-17b; 46, 1a-2b; 53, 17b-19a; 56, 1a-4a, 58, 14b-19a; 61, 37b-39b) of Tang and Song times – including one title with the word *shuo* at the very beginning (Treatise on ...).
- 34 Yao Nai seems to have invented the formula *shu shui*, see Feng/Jin 2, 847. Even in some of the later continuations of the GWCLZ this genre class designation has been changed: Wang Xianqian (1842-1917) in his *Xu Guwenci leizuan* (preface 1882) and Jiang Ruizao (1891-1929) in his *Xin Guwenci leizuan* (Shanghai 1922) both have *shu* (letter) instead of *shu shui*, whereas Zeng Guofan (1811-1872) in his *Jingshi baijia zachao* (first print 1876) and Wu Zengqi in his *Hanfen lou gujin wenchao* (1910, first print 1914; an abbreviated version *Hanfen lou gujin wenchao jianbian* was published in 1929) both use the formula *shudu* (letter and epistle). On the other

The class [4] of letter and persuasion: in ancient times, [when] the Duke of Zhou instructed the Duke of Shao, there was the text „Prince Shi“. ³⁵ In the era of spring and autumn, among the dignitaries of the various states some gave their instructions face-to-face, others wrote letters and presented them – the meaning [of both forms] was the same. The masters of debate of the Warring States persuaded the rulers of their times: [The texts of those who] committed their destiny [towards their own rulers] in order to serve as ministers, are included in [class 3,] „memorial and discussion“. Some of those who gave up [their positions] and left their states, persuaded the lords of other states; [their texts] then are included in the present grouping. ³⁶

The class [3] of memorial and discussion: these are the words, the saints and sages [of the times of] Tang, Yu, and the Three Dynasties presented to persuade their lords; the *Shangshu* contains them all. After the decline of the Zhou the ministers and dignitaries of the various states acted as state strategists; [they argued] properly and loyally with beautiful words. All these are founded on the heritage of the „counsels“ and „announcements“ [of the *Shangshu*], and the erudites praise them a lot. Those [texts] contained in the esoteric and exoteric commentaries to the *Chunqiu* [, *Zuo zhuan* and *Guoyu*,] are not included [here]; included are [the texts] since the times of the Warring States. Since Han times there were memorials (*biao*), presentations (*zou*), memoranda (*shu*), discussions (*yi*), and letters of submission (*shang shu*). [All these are but] different names for sealed [secret] memorials [to one's ruler] (*feng shi* 封事); their substance is of the same class. ³⁷ Although the answers to examination questions (*dui ce*) were also words by which the ministers instructed their lords, their shape is somewhat different. Thus, they are placed in the rear section [of this class]. The [examination] answers on timely duties (*shiwu ce* 時務策) which the two Su ³⁸ submitted when they complied with [imperial] orders, are again appended behind the answers to examination questions. (GWCLZ, *xumu*, 3b)

hand, Yao Nai's disciple Mei Zengliang (1786-1856) in his *Guwenci lüe* and Li Shuchang (1837-1897) in his *Xu Guwenci leizuan* (preface 1889) have maintained the original *shu shui*. Basing her account on the „Thirteen Classes of Chinese Prose“ on Wu Zengqi's work, E.D. Edwards gives only a short hint (776) at Yao Nai's original concept. Nienhauser 1988b, 96, even goes so far to give *shu du* as the class designation of the GWCLZ itself. Feng/Jin (id.), who favour on principle a class *shu du* with the *shui* placed as an appendix, as well as You Xin-xiong, 166, point at the obvious reason of Yao's classification: in striking contrast to most of the later compilations the GWCLZ contains a great amount of originally oral persuasions but only a few originally written, formally elaborated letters. – In the following translations I again restrict my notes to names, dates, and a few indispensable explanations. In fact, despite its plain diction, Yao Nai's discourse attains great tightness by its essentially referential nature.

- 35 By the phrase *jun Shi* 君爽 the Duke of Zhou respectfully addresses the Duke of Shao; by the text of the same name (*Shangshu* 22, 446-58), the first allegedly persuaded the latter not to retire from his governmental duties (see Legge III, 474).
- 36 GWCLZ, *xumu*, 5b. For a tabular survey of the *Zhanguo ce* texts included in these two classes of the GWCLZ see Crump 1964, App. II, 147.
- 37 It seems indeed impossible to reach coherent qualitative demarcations between the different terms for the memorial – a constant plague to all translators (see Shih, 151-2, Knechtges 1, 21-6, and Hightower). Since Han times these various terms have been in a somehow indiscriminate use; cf. the related chapters of the *Wenxin diaolong*, *Zhang biao* 章表 (22), *Zou qi* 奏啓 (23) and *Yi dui* 議對 (24), and the remarks by Feng/Jin 2, 710.
- 38 The brothers Su Shi and Su Che (1039-1112).

The class [12] of rhythmic prose and rhapsody: these are metamorphoses of the *Airs* and the *Elegantiae* [of the *Shijing*]. The people from Chu were most skillful to compose them, and probably not Master Qu [Yuan] alone. I have scrutinized the so-called „The fisherman“, „The people from Chu take the shooting with line-throwing arrows [as an example] to persuade King Xiang“, and „Song Yu answers the king’s questions on misconduct“³⁹ – they are all hypothetical phrases without factual substance, and thus they are all of the class of rhythmic prose and rhapsody. The Venerable Great Historian⁴⁰ and Liu Zizheng⁴¹ did not examine them but took them for carrying facts. This is probably not the case. Originally, rhythmic prose and rhapsodies should have been rhymed, but the men of antiquity had also those without rhyme; their meaning was to set forth indirect criticism and so they were also called rhapsodies. When in Han times [Liu Xiang and Liu Xin] collated the books, there was the „epitome of rhythmic prose and rhapsodies“,⁴² and the books it put up in a row were in perfect accordance [with the ideas mentioned above]. The *Wenxuan* of the Crown Prince of Resplendent Brilliance [Xiao Tong] distinguishes the genres in a fragmentary and confused manner – and the designations [Xiao Tong] has established are most ridiculous. Among the later compilers of literary collections, some have not realized his primitiveness and maintained it. Today, when I compile the rhythmic prose and the rhapsodies, I exclusively apply the Han epitome as the standard. [The notion of] *guwen* does not accept authors of the Six Dynasties [222-589] but detests their decadence. Only in the rhythmic prose and the rhapsody, authors of Jin [265-420] and Song [420-479] times have preserved the rhyme rules [or: rhymes and rules] of the men of antiquity. Just since Qi [479-502] and Liang [502-557] times, words became increasingly artificial, but the vital force became increasingly scanty. Therefore, [these texts] are not included.⁴³

The rude polemics against the *Wenxuan* – and this was, next to the *Shijing*, the literary canon *katexochen* – and its principles of compilation display the importance Yao Nai attaches to the evaluation of literature on the whole, and to a „correct“ way

- 39 „The fisherman“ (*Yufu*, GWCLZ 63, 3b-4a) taken from the SJ (84, 2486) or the *Chuci* collection (7, 179-81) has been traditionally attributed to Qu Yuan but is in fact a lament about him. „Song Yu answers the king’s questions on misconduct“ (*Song Yu dui Chu wang wen* 64, 9b-10a) is from Liu Xiang’s (77-6 B.C.) *Xinxu* (1, 9a-b) and is included in the *Wenxuan* (45, 1a-2a) under the heading of the prose genre *duiwen* (answers on questions). „The people from Chu take the shooting with line-throwing arrows [as an example] to persuade King Xiang“ (*Chu ren yi yi shui Xiang wang* 64, 10a-11a) is a narration from the SJ (40, 1730-31), but without the title given here.
- 40 From the SJ, it remains unclear whether Sima Qian himself used this title (*taishi gong*) to refer to his father, Sima Tan (?-110 B.C.), or if later editors referred by it to Sima Qian.
- 41 Liu Xiang, who in the imperial library compiled the first Chinese bibliography; this was completed by his son Liu Xin (?-23 A.D.) as the *Qilüe* (Seven epitomes) and became the basis for the later HS Monograph on literature (*Yiwen zhi*).
- 42 One of the Seven epitomes, see the prev. note. The HS Monograph on literature (30, 1701), however, has *shi fu lüe* (epitome of poems and rhapsodies), not *ci fu lüe*, and indeed contains bibliographical notes on *fu* and *shi*.
- 43 GWCLZ, *xumu*, 14a-b. The GWCLZ is consciously opposed to the *Wenxuan*; the rigorist theoretical rejection of the *Wenxuan* and its pieces of parallel style prose is nearly perfectly realized by Yao Nai’s choice (and exclusion) of texts throughout his compilation; see Feng/Jin 2, 925-9 and 936-7. Still, Feng/Jin are able to expose a few contradictions in Yao’s notion of canon and censorship.

of structuring the literary communication order in particular. He unmistakably claims to reconstruct the order of literature from a distinct *guwen* perspective. His reasoning on why to arrange certain texts under certain headings and in a certain order – and why to exclude certain other texts – testifies indirectly to the fact that Yao's ambitious concept of literary order was anything but self-evident. In particular, the differentiation of the *shui* and the corresponding grouping in three different classes are strictly based on the differences in use, function, and reception of the texts. Whereas a text-centered approach would have been concerned with the identity of forms, themes, etc. to define a genre, it is precisely this apparent integrity Yao Nai tries to deconstruct in favour of a functional differentiation: In the GWCLZ, texts of formal identity are spread over different genres, and formally disparate writings are grouped together by their common horizon of usability.

From this perspective, Yao Nai distinguishes the *shui* of the classes 3 and 4 according to the single criterion of their respective addressees, and demarcates both from a third one, i.e., that of „hypothetical phrases without factual substance“. The genre designations of the titles are immediately ignored, which leads to both extension and restriction of the notion of „persuasion“: it is extended into a general term for all oral attempts to influence rulers except one's own, and therefore in class 4 we encounter, for example, texts meant not to induce a certain action but to stop a process – and here, the transitive verb „to stop“ (*zhi* 止) is the genre designation proper. On the other hand, the notion of „persuasion“ is restricted to the activities of those „wandering persuaders“ beyond the borders of their own states; the persuasion of one's own ruler is called not a persuasion but a memorial or a discussion. Again, the letter, when sent to the ruler of another state, is just a written persuasion, i.e., a derivative form of expression which in later times should absorb the originally oral one.⁴⁴

As for the *shui*, the most daring concrete consequence Yao Nai draws from his overall theoretical notion is the evacuation of two texts (GWCLZ 64, 10a-12b) into the class of rhythmic prose and rhapsody; from a formal point of view, this decision is rather hard to subscribe: there is neither any difference identifiable between these two prose texts and the other persuasions, nor any particular affinity to the *fu* proper. Yao Nai's single criterion of assignment to class 12 is the assumed feature of fiction, i.e., of a different function of these texts: being labeled as a hypothetical narrative, the *shui* is no longer regarded as a historically „true“ political action but should be read just as a piece of literature. This differentiation is highly problematic, all the more as Yao Nai does not reveal his underlying standards. Involuntarily, however, a fundamental problem in the reception of the persuasions and the writings related

44 The latest letters of the GWCLZ date from the 11th century. In chapter 25 of the *Wenxin diaolong* (Zhan Ying 25, 920-4), Liu Xie also locates the origins of the letter in the rising diplomatic intercourse between the individual states of Eastern Zhou times. According to Feng/Jin 2, 660, the oral persuasion was absorbed by the letter during Han times.

to them looms into view: in contrast to oral songs or folk narratives, which may have been collectively performed and thus carefully preserved and handed down as a common memory of a social community, the oral persuasion was a functional text for a single use. We may concede that it became written down at an early moment, as probably in the case of the *Zhanguo ce*, or even suppose that it was recorded immediately at the very time of the persuasion act itself – but in any case, the functional text was transformed into a model text, a paradigm open to secondary reception at any time in any situation. It is hard to imagine that the original wording has survived this transformation in undamaged shape. It is not necessary to reject all persuasions as deliberate fictional projections – in this case: projections of reason and moral in order to domesticate a chaotic past and to create a meaningful tradition – to question the historicity of the bare word.⁴⁵ Thus, for the modern reader familiar with more sophisticated notions of fictionality and historicity, Yao Nai's simple differentiation is rather irrelevant as an instruction how to read the texts. But it should be kept in mind that Yao Nai's explicitly reasoned decision to label two *shui* „hypothetical phrases without factual substance“ was intended as such an instruction. In addition, excluding these two texts with an ostentatious critical gesture also implied the authority to grant all the other persuasions the seal of verified authenticity.

The *shuo* of the GWCLZ, beginning with those of Han Yu, are included in two classes, again according to presumed functional differences:

The class [1] of discourse and argumentation: these are probably rooted in the [writings of the] philosophers of antiquity. Each [of them] has written books from what he has learned to teach the later generations. The Way and the literature of Kong and Meng were still in perfection,⁴⁶ [but] since Lao and Zhuang the Way had right and wrong [exegeses], and literature had skill and poverty. Today, they are all taken as [writings of the] philosophers and [thus they are] not included; included are [the texts] since Jia Sheng [Jia Yi]. The discourses authored by Tuizhi [Han Yu] are probably orientated by the Six Canonical Books and the *Mengzi*; Zihou [Liu Zongyuan] is orientated by Han Fei and Jia Sheng. Mingyun [Su Xun] variedly [inclines] to the flows of Su [Qin] and Zhang [Yi]; Zizhan [Su Shi] is universal down to the *Zhuangzi*. Those who excelled perfectly in learning [attained] the spiritual unity [with their models]; those who excelled in learning but did not reach perfection [only] preserved the outer appearance [of their models]. What a pity about the talent of Zihou! That he who could

45 In the case of the *Zhanguo ce* there is indeed sufficient evidence that at least substantial parts are not in accordance with the historical facts known from other sources; see Crump 1964, 29-46.

46 The relation of *wen* and *dao*, both being notions of cosmological dimension (cf. Chow), have been unfolded in the first chapter of the *Wenxin diaolong*, *Yuan dao* (On the origins of the Way). Since Han Yu's times, it was turned into the central *guwen* dogma, expressed in phrases like Liu Zongyuan's „illuminating the Way by means of literature“ (*yi wen ming dao* 以文明道) or Zhou Dunyi's (1017-1073) „literature is the means to convey the Way“ (*wen yi zai dao* 文以載道) (or see Feng/Jin 1, 107-63).

have realized the perfection still did not reach it – this was caused by [those desolate and short] years [of his life].⁴⁷

The class [5] of communication and address: Laozi said: „The gentleman presents people with words.“⁴⁸ When Yan Yuan and Zilu took their leave of each other, they admonished each other with words.⁴⁹ When at Fantai Lord [Hui] of Liang animated the feudal lords to drink, the noble from Lu presented carefully chosen words [to admonish them].⁵⁰ [Communication and address] are the appropriate ways to convey reverential affection and to present honest admonitions. In the early days of the Tang, people began to use the designation *xu* 序 (address) for the communication to other people. The authors were numerous, [but] it was not until Changli [Han Yu] that the ambitions of the men of antiquity were reached. His writings are at the top far above [all] previous and later authors. Su Mingyun’s father’s first name was *xu* 序, thus Master Su avoided [the character] *xu* as a taboo.⁵¹ Some [of his communications] are named *yin* 引 (introduction), some are named *shuo* (treatise). Today, according to their genre they are all compiled in this [class]. (GWCLZ, *xumu*, 7b)

Yao Nai’s upgrading of the communications and addresses to a genre class in its own right is a special case in Chinese genre theory; usually, they are regarded as a subgenre of the prefaces (*xu*) and colophons (*ba*) of class 2 (Feng/Jin 2, 644). Here again, Yao Nai bases his definition on the differences of the communicative situation: in his view, prefaces and colophons are appended explanations or introductions to existing books and addressed to an optional number of readers, whereas communications and addresses are spoken – in later days also written – words between individuals and within one individual situation.⁵² Similar to the persuasions, the texts of the communications and addresses are also speech acts immediately performed in the respective situation. In this class, the GWCLZ includes seven texts with *shuo* in their titles, of which Su Shi’s „Treatise on grain, dedicated to Zhang Hu“ (note 31) should be separated from the remaining ones: it is a typical „treatise“ of the type of class 1, but, according to Yao Nai, just by its appended dedication not to be regarded as a „treatise“ but as an „address“. The remaining *shuo*

47 GWCLZ, *xumu*, 1b. For the last 14 of his 46 years of life, Liu had been nearly incessantly exiled to remote areas.

48 The quotation is neither from the *Laozi* nor from the *Zhuangzi* but – without reference to Laozi – verbatim in *Xunzi* 19, 333-4 (again, slightly changed, in 3, 53); a variant attributed to Laozi is in SJ 47, 1909.

49 Yan Hui (521-490) and Zhong You (542-480), both disciples of Confuzius. Yao Nai alludes to a passage in *Liji* 10, 83b. The verbs *zeng* 贈 and *chu* 處 denote complementary admonitions: by *zeng*, he who stays behind addresses the one leaving, by *chu* he who takes his leave speaks to the one remaining behind.

50 A narrative from the *Zhanguo ce* (see Zhu Zugeng 23, 1234), where the noble from Lu cautions the lords against the different forms of excesses.

51 Su Xu (973-1047) was the father of Su Xun; the designation „grandfather“ in Edwards, 773, is not correct; see also Hatch, 886.

52 According to this principle of „identical names but different uses“ (*tong ming er yi yong* 同名而異用), Yao Nai also includes the „introductions“ (*yin*) in both classes; see Feng/Jin 2, 645.

of class 5 – two by Su Xun⁵³ and four by Gui Youguang 歸有光 (1506-1571)⁵⁴ – are without exception speech acts performed on the occasion of name giving or name changing ceremonies. These sometimes philosophically far-reaching treatises were themselves ceremonial actions, e.g., being part of the capping ceremony.⁵⁵ Here, *shuo* is a technical term, more precisely in its full forms *zi shuo* 字說 (treatise on a style) or *ming shuo* 名說 (treatise on a name), for a distinct type of ceremonially effective diploma. Yao Nai's criterion to include them in the class of communication and address is once again their single situational use.⁵⁶ Like the persuasions, they were transformed into models for their secondary reception by later readers; but unlike the persuasions, the addresses were written texts already in their original use.

In contrast to these particular ceremonial texts, the *shuo* of class 1 were composed as non-performative treatises usually independent from any individual situation: by their topics as well as by their argumentative and stylistic diction, they were intended as programmatic writings which, together with the other texts of the discourses and argumentations, constitute the very core of *guwen*. It is not by accident that the discursive texts have moved from a somewhat rear position in the *Wenxin diaolong*⁵⁷ straight to the leading position of the whole *guwen* corpus, as it is mirrored in the GWCLZ order of genres. The unrivalled shining model of this kind of *shuo*, being also included in the *Guwen guanzhi* and the *Guwen yuanjian*, is Han Yu's *Shi shuo* (Treatise on the teacher).⁵⁸

53 GWCLZ 33, 8a-9a. The first text is concerned with the change of his older brother Su Huan's 蘇渙 (1001-1062) style (*zi*) from Gongqun 公群 to Wenfu 文甫, the second deals with the first names of his sons Su Shi and Su Che.

54 GWCLZ 34, 4a-6b. The first text is dedicated to the name of a studio, the remaining three to personal styles (*zi* or *hao*).

55 For the naming ceremonies see Bauer, 45-51.

56 Neither the *Guwen guanzhi* nor the *Guwen yuanjian* have included *shuo* of this special type.

57 Liu Xie's distinction between rhymed and unrhymed writings, that is, between *wen* and *bi* (Zhan Ying 44, 1622), has been realized in the sequence of chapters of the *Wenxin diaolong*. Huang Kan, 210, divides the genre discussion into two parts: the *wen* in chapters 6 to 15, the *bi* in chapters 16 to 25. In this arrangement the *bi* are headed by historical and philosophical writings; the *Lun shui* chapter follows at the third position. Memorials (*biao*), presentations (*zou*), discussions (*yi*) and other discursive genres appear in chapters 22 to 24.

58 The significance of the *Shi shuo* is further evident from the fact that it is one of those merely three texts by Han Yu which are explicitly mentioned in his biography in the XTS (176, 5265). The other two texts are *Yuan dao* (On the origins of the Way) and *Yuan xing* (On the origins of human nature), both of similar programmatic importance and both included in the GWCLZ (2, 1a-4b), too.

5. Some tentative remarks on the differences between *shui* and *shuo*

The GWCLZ order of genres is essentially based on a notion of communicative, i.e., pragmatic functions of texts within their distinct contexts – we realize a structural model fruitful and advanced even for the 20th century reader. In the case of *shui* and *shuo*, the pragmatic discrimination is accompanied by the historical one and, moreover, by corresponding different phonetic values and syntactical functions of the two terms. However, the identity of the written character and its constant pairing with *lun* – being *lun shui* (discourse and persuasion) in the *Wenxin diaolong* and *lun shuo* (discourse and treatise) in later *guwen* usage⁵⁹ – indicate a certain relation between *shui* and *shuo*. But this relation still remains to be proven, namely beyond the strict demarcation which has been drawn by Yao Nai and confirmed by Feng Shugeng and Jin Renqian⁶⁰ on the one hand, and an indiscriminate mixing by Wu Ne and Xu Shizeng⁶¹, on the other.

Concentrating on the *shui* of the classes of „letter and persuasion“ and „memorial and discussion“ – for the moment neglecting Yao Nai’s distinction of *shui* addressees –, and on the *shuo* of the class „discourse and argumentation“, the main differences between the persuasions and treatises proper may be sketched in the following scheme:

genre:	<i>shui</i>	<i>shuo</i>
time:	Eastern Zhou to Han times	since Tang times
modi:	oral	written
	ornate argumentation	lucid analysis
situation:	personal	impersonal
	bound to a single situation	independent from situations
direction:	addressing an individual	treating a topic
goal:	inducing an action	claim for universal truth
action:	actively interfering	didactically philosophizing
recipient:	the individual ruler	the literary public

No doubt, on some features assigned to the *shuo* there is a considerable need for discussion; the scheme follows rather uncritically the traditional *guwen* dogmata.

59 For *lun* and *shuo* in the *Wenxin diaolong* see note 30 above.

60 Feng/Jin indeed do not tire of pointing out that the *shui* of the *Wenxin diaolong* and the GWCLZ is not to be confused with the *shuo* of the later pair *lun shuo*, see 2, 620; 638-9; 660; 698; 706.

61 See Wu Ne’s *Wenzhang bianti xushuo*, 43, and Xu Shizeng’s *Wenti mingbian xushuo*, 132. Xu, 147, after all, treats the *zi shuo* (treatise on a style) and related genres separately. The modern author Chu Binjie, 311-21, deals with all *shui* and *shuo* under the heading *lun shuo wen*. All these writers refrain from any hint at the phonetic differences. This is also true for Zhan Ying who first (18, 665) explicitly distinguishes the *shui* of the *Wenxin diaolong* and the later *lun shuo wen* (see the prev. note), but finally (18, 721) uses the unspecified formula of some „functional changes“ to insinuate a historical line from persuasion to treatise.

But still, the antagonistic relation between the two genres is all too obvious. To reconstruct any even indirect genesis of the *shuo* out of the *shui* seems extremely difficult. The very single item the two genres share with each other as well as with the *lun* is that of argumentation in a broader sense. Not surprising, but not convincing, too, are attempts to create a homogeneity of *shui* and *shuo* on the basis of their assumed common distance to the *lun*.⁶²

The fundamental difference between the persuasion and the treatise lies in two momentous shifts within public communication in early imperial China. Making up the first of these shifts during Han times, the public discourse irrevocably turned from the oral to the written word, due to the simultaneous phenomena of the bureaucratization of the centralized state and the development of different literary forms. It is the centralized state by which the counsels of the wandering persuaders become obsolete, and it is bureaucratic as well as literary expansion and refinement which raise the written word to the normal case of public expression and restrict official oral discourse mainly to the frame of institutionalized gatherings.⁶³ The second shift, again of Han times, is the establishment of the Confucian canon providing not only a definite corpus of model texts but also a binding programme of ethical standards or „truth“. It is this programme, Tang and later *guwen* writers refer to when denouncing the original unity of „to please“, „to explain“, and to „persuade“ inherent to the character *yue/shuo/shui*. Instead, they insist on a dichotomy between rhetorically ornate and ethically true wording (cf. Yao Nai's dictum translated above, concerned with the rhapsodies).

It is illuminating to remember those different oppositions between *lun* and *shui* that had been stated in Lu Ji's *Wen fu* and Liu Xie's *Wenxin diaolong*, and to contrast them with a later definition of the *shuo* by the Song literary theorist Zhang Biao 張表臣 (fl. 1142): „To define and to display correctly the True and the False, is a *shuo*.“⁶⁴ This sentence, implying distinct standards of what is „true“ (*shi*) and what is „false“ (*fei*), is the nearly verbatim echo of Liu Xie's definition of *lun*: „The *lun* as a genre is determined to debate and to define the Right (*ran*) and the Wrong (*fou*)“ (Zhan Ying 18, 696).

62 Chu Binjie, 313-4, tries to project the abstract (*lun*) vs. situational (*shui*) dichotomy as given in the *Wenxin diaolong* into the later *guwen* genres *lun* and *shuo*. Unfortunately, *guwen* examples demonstrating the opposite abound.

63 Organized court debates and public gatherings, however, were not just the later substitute for the individual persuasions. They had emerged during Warring States times, too, and at the beginning had run parallel to the persuasions; see Kroll.

64 *Shanhu gou shihua*, in *Lidai shihua* 1, 476. This formulation has also been taken up by later writers, see Zhan Ying 18, 721.

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