

Original Paper

Ancient China's Political Culture in the Classics —On the Base of “Three Appeals” in Western Classical Rhetoric

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Abstract

“Zouyi” is a kind of official document written by court officials and submitted to the emperor in ancient China, which serves the purpose of persuading. Aristotle’s “three appeals”, which consist of ethos, pathos and logos, perform the rhetorical function of persuading. Based on this, some correlation between China’s classics and Western classic thought comes into view. This paper selects three representative Zouyi: “qian chu shi biao”, “zhi an ce” and “jian Tai Zong Shi si shu” and gives primary attention to analyzing the “three appeals” presented in the selected discourses. This analysis will gain a glimpse into the rich political and cultural codes hidden within ancient China’s memorials, the relationship between the emperor and his ministers/officials, and the deep patriotism of the ministers in ancient China.

Keywords

“Zouyi”, ancient China’s memorials, political culture in ancient China, “three appeals”

1. Introduction

“Zouyi” (奏议), also known as “Zoushu” (奏疏), which is translated in English as “memorials of the court”, is a form of official document ranging from the Qin and Han dynasties to the Ming and Qing dynasties in ancient China, written by ministers and submitted to the emperor. It serves as an important means of communication between the emperor and his ministers/officials. Therefore, “Zouyi” is categorized as an upward-flowing official document, and it is also considered as a crucial aspect of the bureaucratic system. In ancient China, ministers used memorials to present their opinions, report on various matters, make appeals, express gratitude, and seek instructions and decisions from their emperor.

Ancient China's political system featured centralization of authority, with the emperor at the pinnacle of power. To effectively govern the vast territories of the country, a complex administrative machinery was established, encompassing the central government institutions and local administrative offices. And upward-flowing official documents played an indispensable role within this framework. Officials carefully crafted their memorials, employing eloquent language, historical references, and persuasive arguments to present their cases and influence decision-making. The content of these documents covers a wide range of topics, including policy proposals, law enforcement, public welfare, military affairs, personnel appointments, and other matters related to governance. Officials sought to demonstrate their loyalty, competence, and dedication to the emperor through these documents. They recognized the emperor's authority as the ultimate decision-maker and emphasized their role as loyal subjects. This kind of official document served as an important channel for the emperor to receive information, gather opinions, and maintain control over the vast country. The documents played a crucial role in shaping policies, determining government actions, and maintaining order and stability throughout the dynasties. Consequently, on the one hand, this paper is expected to provide valuable insights into the political culture, administrative practices, and decision-making processes of ancient China. It showcases the hierarchical relationship between the ruler and officials, the collective responsibility of officials for the governance of the state, and the sophisticated communication methods employed within the bureaucratic system. On the other hand, from the theoretical perspective, this paper attempts to employ Western classical rhetoric to interpret ancient Chinese classics, aiming to achieve a fusion of classical wisdom from both the East and the West, or in other words, a mutual exchange of classical wisdom between the East and the West.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Basis of the Paper—Aristotle's Three Rhetorical Appeals

Rhetoric is a theory originating from the period of ancient Rome and Greece. In that period, people used rhetoric to make decisions, resolve disputes, and to mediate public discussion of important issues. Classical rhetoric is mainly linked to the skill of public speaking in a country which worships democracy (Chandler, 1978). Corbett (1973) also states that the main purpose of rhetoric is to convince, impact and then touch the audience, and it bears no relation to the number of the audience. Rhetoric indicates public speaking in the western world of that period (Hu, 2002). Therefore, rhetoric was a public speaking skill that was related to persuading audiences. Aristotle is an eminent figure in western classical rhetoric. In *Rhetoric*, Aristotle pointed out that pathos means the way the rhetor can arouse the feelings of the audience which is advantageous to his will and render them act according to it. Ethos refers to the way the rhetor makes the audience to trust him, and the rhetor's triumph in convincing the audience that he is credible. Logos means the logic structure of the demonstration and the logicity of the speech's language (Kennedy, 1991).

2.1.1 Logos

Logos means logical appeal. In Greek, logos is related to speech, reason. In fact, logos is regarded as persuasive technique employed in writing and rhetoric, which aims at persuading audience by the use of logic arguments and well-founded evidence. In a nutshell, nothing but giving reasons is the core part of logos. Atainberg (2006) maintains that the rational factors bear no relation with private feelings or perspectives of the audience. On the contrary, they are mainly about the evidence and the reasoning provided by the speaker. The clear logic plays an important role in getting the audiences' support and thus attaining the speakers' authority. As a matter of fact, the speaker spares no effort to make his speech persuasive by means of stating facts, employing concrete numbers scientific data and quotations. Fact is a statement which can be verifiable. Anecdotes and examples frequently used go with fact. Figure is often employed in logical argument. The speaker tries to make the speech more objective and then convince the audience. In other words, facts and logic are the significant parts to rationally persuade audience to a large extent.

2.1.2 Pathos

Pathos, or emotional appeal, is based on the desire to evoke and exploit our emotions, aiming to resonate and connect with our feelings. In Aristotle's (2007) view, pathos is an awakening emotion in the audience to stimulate them to make assessments aspired, which pays attention to listener's needs and desires. He also demonstrated that the change of emotion would bring about the difference of judgement. Aristotle's theory of pathos includes three main foci, the state of mind the audience, the change of emotion between people and the impact the rhetoric has on the emotions of the audience. He attached importance to the third of this trio. In fact, Aristotle proposed emotional appeal firstly, there was no immobile methods to realize it since the audience's emotion can be evoked by a great many ways. In today's terms, pathos is equal to psychological appeals and aims at our emotional hot buttons. He Xiaoqin (2004) made an analysis of speeches delivered by both Churchill and Kennedy and discovered that the aim of emotional appeal was to guide audience to the mood the speaker would like, which includes not only some positive feelings but also a certain negative mood like hatred. He also suggested that emotional appeal was frequently realized by discourses which consisted of evaluative words as well as figure of speech. Thus, persuaders need to judge the audience's states of mind and design appeals to meet their emotional states.

2.1.3 Ethos

As the Chinese saying goes that "wen ru qi ren", which means "one's writing reflects his/her character". Ethos, as one of three artistic proofs, can be employed to show the rhetor's character as evidence in the rhetorical process, like, expertise and reputation. To put in another way, it's a kind of persuasive strategy aimed at using the power to influence the audience, in that we tend to believe good men more fully than others. From the point of his view, good sense, good moral character and good will can realize ethos (Benjamin, 1997). According to Campbell, ethos is a combination of identity and

personality. As members of society, rhetors possess social attributes such as assigned roles, professions, and relationships. In the process of rhetoric, rhetors must consider the targets' expectations of the speaker's identity. Identity encompasses not only one's profession and social reputation, but also social interpersonal relationships, such as friendships or family dynamics like father and son. When society assigns a specific role to a discourse initiator, it also confers authority in certain domains of discourse to that role. The content and style of the rhetors' discourse should align with the targets' expectations of their social role. It also deserves a notice that ethos also requires the dynamic reconstructing. That is to say, the rhetors' former ethos is important, and the rhetors' ethos represented in the rhetorical process is also of vital importance. Accordingly, the more incredible the speaker is, the more easily the audience will be persuaded. Moreover, the speaker needs to focus on the audience's response, which means the rhetorician has to mould the most appropriate rhetorical character depending on his role and the relation between the audience and himself.

To sum up, all of these three appeals are of great importance. Take a successful speech as one example, the speaker employs logos to accept what is being demonstrated, utilizes pathos to arouse the interest of the audience and uses ethos to attain the credibility of them.

2.2 Previous Studies on the Rhetorical Appeals

In order to make further exploration of pathos, Campbell (1963) put forward that there are seven "circumstances" which have prominent effect on the pathos. The first circumstance is probability, which means there is a great possibility of specific consequence to intensify the feeling. The second one is plausibility, which "arises chiefly from the consistency of the narration, from its being what is commonly natural and feasible" (82). The third one is importance, which originates mainly from results. The fourth one is proximity in time, which has effect both prospectively (pertaining to the future) and retrospectively (pertaining to the past). Since the definition of ethos was put forward by Aristotle, it has attracted attention of many researchers who are interested in the study of rhetoric. One of the topics that have aroused heated discussion is Aristotle's restriction of ethos as the appeal to the aspect in which character is shown in the speech. The idea is that the characteristics of a speaker not shown in the speech will have an effect on his competence to convince a hearer has been put forth.

Aristotle thinks that the understanding of ethos should be put into the speech. One of the reasons is that he has some interest in defining an "artistic" aspect of rhetoric. Another reason is also explained in one book of Arendt (1959). She put forward the idea that the Greeks in the old times made their efforts to invent a fictitious "space" in which all the people who joined in the activity or discussion were regarded as equal although individual were different in the extents of richness intelligence, and power, etc. Some rhetorical characters of a rhetor would have some effect on audiences impression on him, and then influence the result of persuasion. For example, Hovland Janis, and Kelly (1983) focus on the rhetor's intentions, expertness, and trustworthiness in their early work Correspondingly, these three terms are good will, good sense, and virtue of which ethos is composed.

In addition, the explanation on the features of ethos drew forth the problem on the essence of human personality and self-hood. Gong (1994) compares Aristotle's theory of rhetoric with the doctrines of persuasion put forwarded by some Chinese scholars in the War period and the modern doctrines of persuasion. That study lays emphasis on the explanation of the terms, but no analysis of specific examples has been done.

In China, He (2008) made an analysis that ethos, pathos, and logos are applied respectively in advertisements, and all of them are illustrated with concrete examples to manifest that it is feasible and valid to analyze advertising language with Aristotle's rhetorical theory of three appeals.

2.3 The Possibility of Employing "Three Appeals" to Analyze "Zouyi"

In China's feudal society, the emperor holds the absolute power, and his commands are supreme. The emperor's words carry decisive significance in policy-making and national affairs. Therefore, the proposals and strategies put forth by officials must seek the support of the reigning emperor in order to become a reality.

In order to achieve this goal, officials must transform their strategies for governing the nation into persuasive essays that seek the Emperor's approval. Therefore, in the process of writing these documents, they exhibit a proactive and cautious approach, utilizing all their courage and intellect. The written submissions must showcase their astuteness in advocating their viewpoints without giving the impression that they surpass the monarch's wisdom. They need to sharply point out contradictions or flaws without angering the "Emperor". They must thoroughly analyze the current situation, while also being mindful of the intricate and complicated relationships at play during that time. Viable solutions must be presented, taking into consideration the ruler's capacity to bear them. Officials not only require a clear analysis of the current situation, but must also present wise strategies, learn to gauge the Emperor's thoughts, draw lessons from the past, assess the situation, guide with prudence, and provide rigorous arguments that strike at the heart of the matter in order to achieve the desired outcome.

Zouyi varies in styles due to the officials different backgrounds and personalities. Some are straightforward, bold and passionate in expressing their own opinions, some display deep insights, cautiously and tactfully in their planning and decisions, some exhibit integrity and loyalty, some exhibit the ideas of upholding justice, and some are dedicated to innovation and practicality, seeking to reform and innovate.

The content of Zouyi diverse, involving politics, economics, military affairs, culture, ethnic relations, foreign relations, the emperor and so on, which reflects the diverse problems the feudal country and emperor face. The reader of Zouyi, the emperor, is also diverse. Some are the founding ruler who expand the realm and promote the national prestige, while some are incompetent ruler of a decaying nation. And some emperors are diligent in governance and caring for the people, while other emperors are indulgent and immoral.

Zouyi has different names throughout different dynasties, such as “奏” (zou), “表” (biao), “疏” (shu), “议” (yi), “上书” (shangshu), “封事” (fengshi), and “奏折” (zouzhe). Despite these variations in names, they all fall under the same genre and refer to written documents submitted by officials to the ruler. Generally, officials take the initiative to analyze significant matters of the state and propose strategies or policies. They may also offer advice or admonishments regarding certain actions of the ruler, or provide insightful tactics for military and state affairs as directed by the ruler. Therefore, it can be understood that “Zouyi” is a genre of writing that serves persuasive and communicative functions. This paper selects four representative Zouyi, which is the “zhi an ce” (The Peace Policy) by Jia Yi by Western Han, “qian chu shi biao” (The First Memorial to the King Before Setting off for War) by Zhuge Liang of the Three Kingdoms period, and “jian Tai Zong shi si shu” (A Memorial to Tai Zong on Ten Aspects of Self-discipline) by Wei Zheng of Tang Dynasty.

The three selected discourses represent four kinds of genres of Zouyi, which also reflect different facets of the emperor and the country in different periods and dynasties.

3. Three Appeals Represented in “Zouyi” (Selected from China’s Ancient Classics)

3.1 Three Appeals Represented in the “Qian chu shi biao” (“The First Memorial to the King Before Setting off for War”)

“Qian chu shi biao”, which is translated as “The First Memorial to the King Before Setting off for War”, written by Zhuge Liang (181-234), an excellent politician, thinker and strategist in the period of the Three Kingdoms. Zhuge submitted “Qian Chu Shi Biao” to the emperor Liu Shan, the son of Liu Bei, to prepare for the northern expeditions against Wei in 227. Zhuge Liang told the Monarch Liu Chan his suggestions about the court internal affairs and assurance for the expedition before he would dispatch troops to Mountain Qi. The Memorial employs earnest language to repeatedly exhort Liu Shan to inherit the aspirations of his late father Liu Bei. It urges him to rule with wisdom and fairness, administer rewards and punishments strictly, and surround himself with virtuous advisors while keeping away from sycophants. The document reflects Zhuge Liang’s unwavering determination to “restore the Han dynasty” and his unwavering loyalty to the Shu Han kingdom. It showcases Zhuge Liang’s resolute will to conquer the central plains and his unwavering character in serving the kingdom of Shu Han.

“The Memorial on Behalf of the Expedition” employs earnest language to repeatedly exhort Liu Chan to inherit the aspirations of his late father Liu Bei. It urges him to rule with wisdom and fairness, administer rewards and punishments strictly, and surround himself with virtuous advisors while keeping away from sycophants. The document reflects Zhuge Liang’s unwavering determination to “restore the Han dynasty” and his unwavering loyalty to the Shu Han kingdom. It showcases Zhuge Liang’s resolute will to conquer the central plains and his unwavering character in serving the kingdom of Shu Han.

3.1.1 Ethos Represented in “The First Memorial to the King Before Setting off for War”

“I was originally a commoner who had to wear clothes made of hemp, and tilled land in Nanyang. I merely managed to survive in times of turbulence and had no intention of my low social status and meager fund of knowledge, the late king condescended to visit me at my thatched cottage three times to consult me about the current events of the country. I felt so grateful that I promised to serve him. Soon afterward we suffered a military defeat. Twenty-one years have passed since I received my assignment at the time of the setback and was dispatched as an envoy at the moment of crisis”.

From the preceding text, we can observe the competence and personality of Zhuge Liang. “The late king condescended to visit me at my thatched cottage three times to consult me about the current events of the country”, as a commoner, the fact that Zhuge Liang was able to make Liu Bei, the First Sovereign, come three times to his humble dwelling to seek his counsel on current affairs speaks volumes about his exceptional talent. In addition to his remarkable competence, we can also observe the noble character of Zhuge Liang. “I was originally a commoner who had to wear clothes made of hemp, and tilled land in Nanyang. I merely managed to survive in times of turbulence and had no intention of my low social status”, Zhuge Liang initially intended to prioritize surviving in the turbulent era. However, due to his deep gratitude towards Liu Bei for recognizing his talent and giving him opportunities, so he received the assignment and was dispatched as an envoy at the moment of crisis for twenty-one years. From this, we can see the admirable qualities that Zhuge Liang possessed, such as self-sacrifice, fearlessness in the face of difficulties and dangers, and the willingness to prioritize the greater good over personal safety. We can also see that he was a man of integrity, always true to his word and committed to his actions. When a person with such moral and intellectual qualities stands before you and earnestly advises you, their persuasive power must be considerable. When Liu Bei declared himself the emperor and appointed Zhuge Liang as the prime minister, we can see the high regard that the late emperor Liu Bei held for him, which indirectly reflected his exceptional abilities. Before Liu Bei died, he said, “If my son is capable, support him; if he proves incompetent, you may become the ruler of Chengdu”. However, Zhuge Liang had no ambition to overstep his bounds. Instead, he wholeheartedly and faithfully assisted the young emperor Liu Shan and even wrote the renowned “Memorial of the Soldier Dispatch” that has been passed down through the ages. It is believed that Liu Shan also recognized Zhuge Liang’s virtuous and talented character and could therefore accept his counsel. Zhuge Liang effectively utilized his persuasive abilities with Liu Shan, and for readers throughout history, the “Memorial of the Soldier Dispatch” successfully appeals to their sense of character and dedication.

The construction of ethos is a dynamic process. In addition to their image and prestige, the image that a rhetor shapes during the rhetorical process is crucial for the effective implementation of persuasive functions.

“General Xiang Chong is well versed in military affairs and is kind and just by nature. After evaluating his performance on a trial basis, the late king praised his talent and ability. That is why officials have elected him to be commander-in-chief. I humbly suggest that military concerns, regardless of weight, be first met with his consultation. In this way will there be harmony among the troops, and men both capable and incapable will each find his proper place in the camp”.

In the preceding statement, Zhuge Liang persuades Liu Shan to value the General Xiang Chong by highlighting his good character, peaceful demeanor, and knowledge of military affairs. Zhuge Liang mentions that Emperor Liu Bei praised Xiang Chong for his abilities and as a result, he was recommended as the commander of the central region. Zhuge Liang believes that seeking Xiang Chong’s consultation on matters within the army will promote harmony and provide suitable roles for individuals with different abilities. This shows that Zhuge Liang’s viewpoints and opinions are not biased or subjective, but rather objective and trustworthy. When persuading Liu Shan to value General Xiang Chong, Zhuge Liang first mentions the excellent qualities and capabilities of Xiang Chong himself, as well as his good character and knowledge of military affairs. Zhuge Liang then mentions the praise Xiang Chong received from Emperor Liu Bei, indicating that Xiang Chong has earned the recognition and reliability of the late emperor. Furthermore, Zhuge Liang states, “That is why officials have elected him to be commander-in-chief”. This indicates that Xiang Chong’s appointment is not just a personal preference of Zhuge Liang or Liu Bei, but is widely accepted by others. Therefore, Zhuge Liang’s admiration for General Xiang Chong is not based on personal favoritism but is in line with the expectations of the people. Thus, we can say that when expressing his viewpoints, Zhuge Liang presents rational and credible arguments, making people believe that he is a rational, objective, sincere, and trustworthy person. Therefore, both Emperor Liu Shan and future readers are easily persuaded by Zhuge Liang’s viewpoints.

Overall, we can see that both Zhuge Liang’s image and the image he constructs through his words show him as a virtuous and trustworthy individual with exceptional abilities. Therefore, whether it is Emperor Liu Shan or future readers, they are successfully convinced by him.

3.1.2 Logos Represented in “The First Memorial to the King Before Setting off for War”

Rhetors can provide examples to support their viewpoints in to prove their argument. These examples can include historical cases, as well as comparable or contradictory instances. In this Memorial, there is a clear logical appeal to the use of precedents and classical references.

“To be close to the virtuous and able officials and keep away from the vile and mean person. That was the reason that the Western Han Dynasty was prosperous. To be close to the vile and mean persons and keep away from the virtuous and able officials. That was the reason that the Eastern Han Dynasty collapsed”.

When admonishing Liu Shan to understand how to utilize capable individuals, Zhuge Liang tells stories from the Western Han and Eastern Han dynasties. The flourishing of the Western Han dynasty was

attributed to the emperor's ability to be close to virtuous officials and distance himself from sycophants. However, in the Eastern Han dynasty, the emperor took the opposite approach, favoring sycophants and alienating virtuous officials. Zhuge Liang provides two vivid examples, contrasting and illustrating how the different attitudes towards capable officials directly led to the rise and fall of dynasties. This allows us to deeply understand the importance of valuing virtuous officials and keeping away from sycophants. From this, we can see that when proving his argument, Zhuge Liang cites well-known historical examples, enhancing the credibility of his viewpoints and making it easier for others to accept them.

3.1.3 Pathos Represented in "The First Memorial to the King Before Setting off for War"

Rhetors employ two methods to achieve emotional appeal in this Memorial. The first is through the use of vivid and descriptive language to create imagery and immerse the audience or readers in the situation, eliciting psychological resonance. This technique is known as Ekphrasis/Ecphrasis. The other technique is the use of respectful language. The use of respectful language, also known as honorific language, is a form of linguistic expression that conveys respect, politeness, and deference towards others. It is commonly used to show reverence towards individuals of higher social status, such as superiors, elders, or esteemed figures. By employing appropriate honorifics, speakers or writers aim to demonstrate their courtesy and regard towards the person being addressed. This serves to create a positive tone and foster a sense of mutual respect and dignity in communication.

"When the late king was alive and talked with me about these historical lessons, he used to heave a sigh in detestation for Emperor Huan and Emperor Ling. Shizhong, shangshu, zhangshi and canjun are faithful, upright, and ready to lay down their lives for honor and fidelity. As your humble servant, I hope that Your Majesty will retain close ties to them and trust them. Then can the prosperity of the Han Dynasty be soon realized".

In the first sentence, Zhuge Liang vividly portrays a conversation between himself and the late Emperor Liu Bei. Whenever they discussed past events, the late Emperor would lament and express his resentment towards Emperors Huan and Ling of the Eastern Han dynasty. This description effectively captures the scene in which Zhuge Liang and Liu Bei engage in conversation, allowing us to deeply grasp the late Emperor Liu Bei's unwavering stance of valuing virtuous officials and distancing himself from sycophants. It also conveys his regret and resentment caused by the betrayal of trust in sycophants, leading to the overthrow of the dynasty. By depicting the late Emperor's demeanor and feelings, it aims to evoke Liu Shan's longing and admiration for his father, enabling him to truly understand the expectations his father had for him. It aims to persuade Liu Shan that launching a Northern campaign would fulfill his father's aspirations. By appealing to Liu Shan's emotions towards his father, it becomes more likely for him to accept and adhere to Zhuge Liang's viewpoint, thus facilitating the communication of his ideas. Additionally, by vividly portraying Liu Bei's attitude when discussing past events, the readers can immerse themselves in the scene, deeply feeling Liu Bei's regret and resentment,

and identifying the necessity of valuing virtuous officials and keeping away from sycophants.

The second sentence describes Zhuge Liang's concerns and sighs since accepting the entrusted mission, fearing that he might not be able to fulfill the late Emperor's great expectations and would damage his discernment in selecting capable individuals. As a result, in the fifth month, he crossed the Lu River and ventured into sparsely populated areas. This depiction vividly showcases Zhuge Liang's daily worries and deep concern since accepting the mission, fearing that he may fail to live up to the late Emperor's trust.

This description demonstrates Zhuge Liang's unwavering and faithful loyalty to his emperor Liu Shan. It allows Liu Shan to perceive Zhuge Liang's steadfast devotion and convictions, strengthening his belief that Zhuge Liang is a loyal minister who is wholeheartedly dedicated to his ruler. Liu Shan becomes more accepting of Zhuge Liang's viewpoints. Through this depiction, we, as later generations, can also feel and be moved by Zhuge Liang's loyalty. We appreciate that Zhuge Liang, day and night, puts the country at the forefront, wholeheartedly devotes himself until death, and all his thoughts, actions, and aspirations stem from a pure heart. How can we question his unwavering loyalty? Both sentences use Ekphrasis, employing vivid language to portray the situation, making readers feel as if they are there, emotionally connecting with the story, and therefore, more likely to accept and approve of Zhuge Liang's viewpoints.

The entire Memorial is written using self-referential language, where the author refers to themselves as humble servant, and addresses Liu Shan with utmost reverence as "Your Majesty". The use of honorific language is employed to express the speaker's respect towards individuals and matters. After reading it, Liu Shan should be able to sense Zhuge Liang's respect and admiration towards him. When a faithful and respectful servant expresses such heartfelt words, it is expected that Liu Shan would give it due importance. Upon reading the entire document, we can all sense Zhuge Liang's unwavering loyalty as he humbly pledges his allegiance to Emperor Liu Shan. It becomes easier for us to believe that his words are sincere and well-intentioned, motivated by his consideration for the well-being of the ruler and the country.

3.2 Three Appeals Represented in "Zhi an ce" ("The Peace Policy")

Characterized by the consideration of both reason and emotion, it often utilizes exclamatory words, onomatopoeia, and subjective language to express concerns and indignant emotions. This Memorial begins with the words "sorrowful cries", "shedding tears", and "deep sighs", establishing a profound and fervent patriotic sentiment, which initially deeply moves the emperor with a strong emotional impact.

While avoiding flattery and sycophancy, it is also important to steer clear of the other extreme of using inflammatory language.

Despite Jia Yi's remarkable talent in governing the world with his knowledge and insights, every word he utters in the "Measures for Public Security" remains humble, using phrases like "I humbly propose"

and “I secretly observe past events”. He never utters outrageous or urgent statements.

In this Memorial, Jia Yi expresses his complete understanding of the emperor’s predicament as a servant by saying, “Even the mighty emperor cannot find peace within a single year in such circumstances, and thus I understand Your Majesty’s inability”. This naturally allows the emperor to empathize with him.

Meanwhile, Jia Yi presents his statements logically. Firstly, he analyzes the current situation and describes the development of various vassal states: “The younger brother plots to become the Eastern Emperor”, “The son of the younger brother defeats the Western region”, and “The king of the powerful state is still young and weak”. He then states the reasons behind the effort to weaken the power of vassal states: “They are hesitant to maintain stability at the cost of danger, to restore order through chaos”, “When they are not lacking, they will be suppressed”, combining these statements with the history of disintegration and conflicts among the vassal states during the Han Dynasty. Lastly, he suggests the policy of “land division and regulation”, with the aim of stopping when the land allocation is complete. The writing is clear and the purpose is evident.

3.3 Three Appeals Represented in the “jian Tai Zong shi si shu” (“A Memorial to Tai Zong on Ten Aspects of Self-discipline”)

“A Memorial to Tai Zong on Ten Aspects of Self-discipline” is a memorial written by Wei Zheng (580-634) to Emperor Tai Zong of the Tang Dynasty, Li Shimin. Wei Zheng was an important advisor to Emperor Tai Zong and was an outstanding politician and historian during the early Tang Dynasty. Emperor Tai Zong had achieved great military success during the fall of the Sui Dynasty, but after ascending the throne, he became arrogant and indulged excessively in pleasure. Wei Zheng was deeply concerned about this and submitted this memorial in the 11th year of the Zhen Guan Era (637).

It’s clear that the purpose of this Memorial is to persuade the emperor to embrace and implement the political ideology of “The people are the foundation of the nation, and virtue is the basis of governance”, in order to ensure long-term stability and prosperity for the country. It is said that after Emperor Ta Zong read this memorial, he was deeply moved and personally wrote a response to Wei Zheng, acknowledging his own faults and expressing his admiration for Wei Zheng’s courage to offer such direct advice. Emperor Tai Zong kept this memorial on his desk and often used it as a mirror for self-reflection.

3.3.1 Ethos Represented in the “A Memorial to Tai Zong on Ten Aspects of Self-discipline”

Wei Zheng was born to a poor family and joined Li Mi’s rebellion against the Sui dynasty in his youth. After Li Mi’s submission to the Tang, Wei Zheng became a Tang official and eventually served on the staff of Li Jiancheng, the Crown Prince and eldest son of Emperor Gaozu, the Tang dynasty’s founding emperor. As such, he served against the interests of Li Jiancheng’s younger brother, Li Shimin (the Prince of Qin), with whom Li Jiancheng was locked in an intense rivalry. In 626, Li Shimin ambushed and killed Li Jiancheng, and then effectively forced Emperor Gaozu to yield the throne to him. Rather

than punishing Wei Zheng, however, he was impressed with Wei's faithfulness to Li Jiancheng, and he made Wei an important official, eventually a chancellor. Wei Zheng's promotion to this position gave him far broader freedom to criticize others, particularly the emperor, than other officers of the court. He emphasized propriety and opposed overextending the state. His advice and criticism were not always accepted, but in accordance with Confucian etiquette, the emperor would concede to his suggestions with some regularity. After Wei Zheng died in 643, the emperor commented that he was a mirror to show the mistakes of the court. Wei Zheng became one of the most famous imperial censors in the history of China due to his bold, straightforward, and persistent character.

In this Memorial, it can be observed that different from the preceding two memorials, Wei Zheng's tone reflects the relationship between himself and the emperor. They are more like old friends, and Wei Zheng states his opinions and suggestions more directly.

3.3.2 Logos Represented in the "A Memorial to Tai Zong on Ten Aspects of Self-discipline"

The structure of the Memorial is extremely rigorous, with a logical progression and seamless transitions. The entire piece is divided into three paragraphs, and with only 378 words, it effectively achieves its persuasive purpose. Logos is presented through the use of conceptual metaphors, analogy and clear statements into ten pieces of advice.

The proposed ten pieces of advice are both specific and practical, avoiding being vague or abstract. They are highly targeted and relevant to the current situation at that time. Meanwhile, the ten pieces of advice are comprehensive, from personal desires to moral cultivation, and related to the governance and prosperity of the country.

The Memorial employs many reasoning based on metaphors and analogy. At the beginning of the Memorial, Wei Zheng uses metaphors for analogy and reasoning. As it goes, "if one wants trees to grow tall he must deepen the roots; if one desires a long a river he has to dredge its source deep; if one hopes for the stability of the state he must build up virtue and justice". It's pointed out that the stability of political power is just like the survival of lives in the world, which requires conditions. The stability of political power requires the emperor to uphold virtue and righteousness. The source domains of conceptual metaphor are the relationship between trees and roots, rivers and sources, and water and boats, and in political aspect is the court and the people.

Apart from the conceptual metaphors and analogy, Wei Zheng also uses the typical example, "If they are kind to others, then people will be united, regardless of opponents of generations like Wu and Yue. The battle between Wu and Yue in the late Spring and Autumn Period is a famous event in Chinese history.

3.3.3 Pathos Represented in the "A Memorial to Tai Zong on Ten Aspects of Self-discipline"

Li Shimin is an emperor who is glad to accept various opinions and suggestions. Wei Zheng employs five interrogative sentences: "I know it is impossible for ... a state to remain stable without great virtue, not to speak of wise men?" "Is it true that obtaining power is easy while sustaining power is difficult?"

“This should be firmly borne in mind”. “Why is it necessary for Your Majesty to rack your brains instead of the officials?”

4. Conclusion

It could be observed from the preceding analysis that the Chinese old saying: “wen ru qi ren”, which means “one’s writing reflects one’s personality”, “yi qing dong ren”, which means “to move others with emotions”, and “yi li fu ren”, which means “to persuade others with the reasoning”, aligns with the concept of “ethos”, “pathos” and “logos”, showing a convergence of thought between the two classical cultures.

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