ABSTRACT

Zhanguoce is a collection of historical narratives, fictionalised stories, and persuasive speeches which portray the period of the Warring States (403-221 B.C.). This academic exercise aims to examine the different prose styles of Zhanguoce, and it consists of five chapters. The first chapter introduces the book, discusses its formation, background and thoughts. The second chapter highlights the most prominent style, i.e. the various ways used by the author in the moulding of characters. Chapter three explores the fables in the book and classifies them. Chapter four studies the various language styles adopted, including a study on artful rhetoric. The final chapter examines Zhanguoce's contribution towards the development of Pre-Qing prose, and its influence on the later works. Even though Zhanguoce has often been suspect on moral grounds, its literary quality is attested by the large number of passages being regularly included in anthologies of ancient prose.