Meaning-Construction in warring states philosophical discourse : a discussion of the palaeographic materials from Tomb Guōdiàn One
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Chapter 2

"ZHŌNG XÌN ZHĪ DÀO" 忠信之道

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2. *"Zhōng xìn zhī dào"* 忠信之道 (The Way of Trueheartedness and Trustworthiness)

My analysis of meaning-construction in Chinese philosophy from the Warring States period begins with a depiction of the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" (The Way of Trueheartedness and Trustworthiness). No other text from from tomb Guōdiàn One can be considered similarly straightforward in organization. By implication, the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" is an ideal text for heading the present study of the written remnants of thought from early China.

2.1. Introduction

As already mentioned in the Introduction (chap. 1), I look at philosophic texts from early China as objects in their own right, not only as repositories of ideas. My aim is to show how this approach can further our understanding of the philosophic activities of early China. This attempt calls for a detailed analysis of the various strategies to construct meaning as applied in early Chinese philosophical texts, and thus to disclose the argumentative patterns (or other techniques of generating meaning) behind the makeup of these texts. Analyzing the techniques of meaning-construction in early Chinese written philosophic discourse, by implication, implies a close reading of these texts.

I argue that strict recurring parallel schemes present a certain passage with a distinctive rhythm. Such patterns can thus formally signal important passages of a text. The "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" is organized in the straightforward pattern of strictly parallel lines that appear in the fashion of an ab-ab-c scheme, which will be discussed in detail further below. It is instructive to see that this parallel pattern applies to both the micro and macro level of composition, that is, the text as a whole. By applying this pattern also to the composition of the text at large, the author(s) of the text formally establish textual links and connect the different notions advanced into a larger consistent scheme. As I shall demonstrate in this chapter, this is the vital strategy of meaning-construction of what I term 'argument-based texts'. Note that the formal structure behind the makeup of such a text is not only a device to expand the lexical boundaries of the language, but, as I argue in the following, it moreover is a vital tool for imparting stability to the text as a whole.

2.2. The Text on Bamboo

The "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" is a relatively short unit. It consists of merely nine strips on which now 251 graphs are still legible. Of the argumentative texts from tomb Guōdiàn One, only the "Lǔ Mùgōng wèn Zǐsī" 魯穆公問子思 (Duke Mù of Lǔ Inquires of Zǐsī) contains fewer graphs. The bamboo strips of the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" for the most part are in good condition. The strips are cut evenly at both ends. Their length is about 28.2 to 28.3 cm. As for the style of calligraphy and the shape of the strips, the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" bears strong resemblance to the "Táng Yú zhī dào" 庚虞之道 (The Way of Táng and Yú), which stems from the same environment of paleographic materials.[1] It seems reasonable to assume that the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" and the "Táng Yú zhī dào" were copied in chronological or geographic proximity to each other. Maybe, these particular instantiations of the texts were even fixed on bamboo at the same workshop.[2]

Despite the similarities in the calligraphy, we can nevertheless be fairly sure that the two texts were fixed on different bundles of bamboo strips. This can be judged from the markings on the strips that indicate the previous position of the two cords, which kept the individual bundles of strips together.[3]

The bamboo strips of the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" are well preserved; the calligraphy with which they are inscribed is particularly clear. Of the nine strips that constitute the brief text, only one has broken off. The missing part probably contains two graphs. This means that the text as it was placed in the tomb probably consisted of a total of 253 graphs.

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[1] Scholars such as Qiú Xīguī and Péng Hào have observed that the calligraphy of the two texts "Tán Qiú Xīguī g Yú zhī dào" and "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" is written in a particular style. Lǐ Xuéqín even goes so far as to argue that the two texts are not written in Chǔ script (see Sarah Allan and Crispin Williams 2000, p. 178). However, this overrates peculiarities in calligraphy of the manuscripts. It is instead more adequate to notice that the calligraphy of the two shows some non-Chǔ characteristics.
[2] On text and variation, see my discussion in chapters 5: "Wǔ xíng"; 6: "Xìng zì mìng chū"; but also, to a lesser extent, chapters 7: "Applying the Methodology" and 8: "Conclusion".
[3] The "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" was kept together by two cords at a distance of 13.5 cm; in the case of the "Táng Yú zhī dào" the two cords were attached to the strips at a distance of 14.3 cm. See Húběi shěng Jīngmén shì bówùguǎn 1998, pp. 157, 163.

2.3. Thought and Content

The "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" is incompatible with known philosophic traditions. It does not adequately fit the categories, which many scholars still use to describe a philosophic text from the Warring-States period, such as 'Confucianism' or 'Daoism'. By implication, most scholars hesitate according to which of the traditional labels they want to use to classify this text.[4] I believe that the attempt to associate a newly excavated text from the Warring-States period with one of the traditional labels of philosophic affiliation is not very instructive. It surely does not further our understanding of the text itself.[5] Quite to the contrary, instead of labeling a philosophic text from the Warring-States period according to categorizations as used during the Hàn in the retrospective attempt to classify different currents of thought,[6] I approach these texts by describing the various ways of meaning-construction that can be witnessed therein. Based on this, I shall then draw conclusions concerning the social background against which these texts were produced. I deem this to be a much more adequate approach to pre-imperial thought.

The "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" is a piece of political philosophy. The text advances the view of moral government. It thereby is instructive to see that the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" directly addresses the ruler of a state, who is called a *jūnzǐ* 君子 throughout. The program of the text demands that the ruler of a state must act by means of becoming a persuasive model of proper behavior. By calling the ruler "*jūnzǐ*", 'gentleman', the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào"

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[4] See for instance Lǐ Xuéqín (2000, p. 107), who remarks that the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" maintains "a Confucian tone"—whatever this may be—but may rather be "labeled as 'vertical and horizontal strategists'" (ibidem). Lǐ Cúnshān, for his part, argues that the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" was intended as a topic of study for the ruler. On basis of this, he associates this work with the so-called "Zhōngliáng 仲良 branch of the Confucian school" (in Sarah Allan and Crispin Williams 2000, 253). Liáo Míngchūn ascribes the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" to Zǐzhāng 子張, student of Confucius. He bases this on the fact that Zǐzhāng's sons Shēnxiáng 申祥 and Zǐsī served Duke Mù, so that their works should be found in the Chǔ region (ibidem).

[5] See the elaborate problematization of using traditional labels such as 'Confucianism', 'Daoism', and so forth, when discussing Warring-States philosophy by, Jens Østergård Petersen 1995, Mark Csikszentmihalyi and Michael Nylan 2003, Martin Kern 2000, p. 9, among others.

[6] During the Eastern Zhōu (771-256 BC), probably only the *rú* 儒 and *mò* 墨 should be considered to be self-conscious traditions. As Jens Østergård Petersen has convincingly shown, the term *jiā* 家 as used by Sīmǎ Tán 司馬談 does not mean 'school' at all. Sīmǎ Tán did not call these traditions "*jiā*", but labeled them "the *rú*" (*rú zhě* 儒者) or "the *mò*" (*mò zhě* 墨者) throughout. Petersen interprets *jiā* to be individual persons; Michael Nylan understands *jiā* to denote (not genealogical) 'scholastic lines'. See Jens Østergård Petersen 1995, pp. 33-37; Michael Nylan 1999, p. 50, n. 82.

plays with the two concepts behind this term. The term *jūnzǐ* as used in the text does not only denote the political (or social) function of a ruler. Being of high pedigree does not by necessity imply that the ruler himself also embodies the persuasive model of proper behavior. In the view of the author(s) of the text, being a *jūnzǐ* moreover implies that one has to behave in a 'gentleman'-like fashion. Applied to the ruler this means that he should also become a person of *moral* superiority; not only superior by birth. As the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" argues, being a morally superior person is part of the immanent nature of a real ruler. By implication, the ruler must attempt to realize the immanent nature of a ruler and thus become a *true jūnzǐ*, that is, a person both of high social pedigree (ruler) and a person of moral superiority.[7]

In sort of a brief outline, the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" prescribes how the ruler may achieve this goal. In short, he has to model himself on the natural world, by which he transforms into the human reflection of the cosmic elements heaven (*tiān* 天) and earth (*dì* 地). To achieve this, the ruler has to establish trueheartedness (*zhōng* 忠)[8] and trustworthiness (*xìn* 信) to become the only principles of government. According to the author(s) of the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào", these two principles are the essence of benevolence (*rén* 仁) and the basis of righteousness (*yì* 義), and they imply a transformative power over the environment of the ruler. Accordingly, the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" advocates a political agenda that aims to assure order through moral power. To a degree it thus corresponds to what Benjamin Schwartz terms "light government",[9] in which the ruler over a state acts through the transformative power of his own example of proper conduct.

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[7] On the concept '*jūnzǐ*' in Warring-States philosophic discourse, see the contribution by Vitaly Rubin 1976, pp. 20-26.
[8] As the concept of *zhōng* 忠 here clearly refers to the ruler (as opposed to the concept of *zhōng* 忠 such as used for instance in the "Lǔ Mùgōng wèn Zǐsī"), I refrain from translating it with 'loyalty', but translate it with 'trueheartedness' instead.
[9] Benjamin I. Schwartz 1985, p. 107.

2.4. Structure and Thought

Meaning-construction in the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" not only works on the semantic level; the formal structure of the text also adds fundamentally to the communication of meaning. The construction of the overall argument of the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" to a large extent works on the level of its formal structure.

The entire "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" is made up of a 'set of components'.[10] On the lowest level, these can be described as 'a', 'b', and 'c'-components. Throughout the text, the 'a'-component contains notions related to 'trueheartedness' (*zhong* 忠), 'b' contains information about 'trustworthiness' (*xìn* 信), and the 'c'-component, finally, formulates a conclusion based on 'a' and 'b'. Let me show this by referring to the text itself.
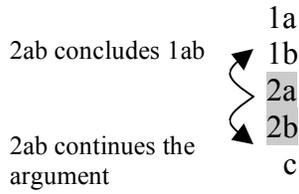
> A   大舊而不渝，忠之至也；
> B   大古而諸常，信之至也。
> C   至忠亡訑，至信不背，夫此之謂此。[11]

This can be regarded to be the elementary structure of the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào". In most cases, the elementary structure of a single 'abc'-scheme is doubled. We thus gain the pattern of an 'ab ab c'-, or to be more precise: '1ab 2ab c'- scheme. The second 'ab'-group (henceforth 2ab) thereby fulfils two functions: first, it further refines and hence concludes the information given in the first ab group (1ab); second, it continues the argument, which then is concluded by the final component 'c'. By implication, we get the following scheme:

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[10] See Dirk Meyer 2005 [2006], p. 60.
[11] Strips *z*3/16 through *z*4/16.

Figure 1: The Structure of the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào"

In this distinguishing type of parallelism, two matters are of primary concern; in the case of the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" these are 'trueheartedness' (*zhōng* 忠) and 'trustworthiness' (*xìn* 信). As the aspects of 'a' and 'b' are discussed in overlapping mode before they are combined in a conclusion, 'c', I refer to this scheme as 'overlapping structure'.

Nearly all building blocks of the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" fall into this particular scheme. Accordingly, we can divide the text into six units, so-called "building blocks":[12]

1. Canto one

<u>1</u>.1A[13] 不訛不害，忠之至也； [A][14]
<u>1</u>.1B　不欺弗知，信之至也。
<u>1</u>.2A　忠積則可親也；
<u>1</u>.2B　信積則可信也。
<u>1</u>.C　　忠信積而民弗親信者，未之有也。

<u>2</u>.1A　至忠如土，化物而不伐； [B]
<u>2</u>.1B　至信如時，必至而不結。 [C]
<u>2</u>.2A　忠人亡訛；
<u>2</u>.2B　信人不背。

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[12] The felicitous term 'building block' is taken from William Boltz, 2005. I fully agree with Boltz that building blocks are characteristic of early Chinese texts. However, as I shall show in the following, Boltz errs in concluding that this implies a "composite nature" that opposes "integral, structurally homogeneous texts" (ibid, pp. 70 f). I come back to this below.

[13] The number before the period (underlined) refers to the building block, the number after the period to the segment. a, b, and c are the names of the components.

[14] The letters in brackets refer to the philological discussion in the appendix.

<u>2</u>.C   君子如此，故不誑生、不背死也。^[D]

<u>3</u>.A   大舊而不渝，忠之至也；^[E]
<u>3</u>.B   大古而諸常，信之至也。^[F]
<u>3</u>.C   至忠亡訧，至信不背，夫此之謂此。

2. Canto two

<u>4</u>.1A   大忠不悅，^[G]
<u>4</u>.1B   大信不期；
<u>4</u>.2A   不悅而足養者，地也；
<u>4</u>.2B   不期而可要者，天也。^[H]
<u>4</u>.C   巺天地也者，忠信之謂此。^[I]

<u>5</u>.1   口惠而實弗從，君子弗言爾；
<u>5</u>.2   心{疏}□□ [而形]親，君子弗申爾；^[J]
<u>5</u>.3   古行而鯖悅民，君子弗由也；^[K]
<u>5</u>.C   三者，忠人弗作，信人弗為也。

<u>6</u>.1A   忠之為道也，百工不楛而人養皆足；^[L]
<u>6</u>.1B   信之為道也，群物皆成而百善皆立。
<u>6</u>.2A   君子，其施也忠，故蠻親附也；^[M]
<u>6</u>.2B   ------¹⁵ 其言爾信，故亶而可受也。^[N]
C   忠，仁之實也；信，義之基也。^[O]

是故古之所以行乎蠻貉者，如此也。^{[P] 16}

The following in-depth analysis of the formal structure of the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" is divided into two parts: first, a description of the formal structure on the micro level, referring to the arrangement of each building block; second, a portrayal of the macro structure, referring to the organization of the text throughout. However, before providing a fine-grained analysis of the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào", I deem it necessary to distinguish the

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¹⁵ I have added the lines to show that the *jūnzǐ* is the subject of both lines <u>6</u>.2a and <u>6</u>.2b, which run entirely parallel.
¹⁶ Additional statement, which cannot be seen as a building block.

pattern 'overlapping structure' briefly from that of the so-called 'interlocking parallel style', as described at many instances by Rudolf G. Wagner.[17]

2.4.1. Interlocking parallel style and Overlapping structure

The pattern 'overlapping structure' and 'interlocking parallel style' correspond to some degree: both types split up the argument of a text into two interlocking binary matters 'a' and 'b'. According to Wagner's description of the interlocking parallel style, the two positions discussed are connected in argumentative steps in the form of 1ab2ab3ab4ab, of which each of the two rows would run in the form of 1a2a3a4a versus 1b2b3b4b string.[18] For reasons of simplicity, let me illustrate the interlocking parallel style by advancing an example chosen by Wagner himself of what he terms the 'open' type of this pattern:[19]

1 為者敗之
2 執者失之
3 是以聖人
4 無為故無敗
5 無執故無失

1 He who interferes, destroys them;
2 He who holds fast, loses them.
3 That is why the Sage
4 does not interfere and thus does not destroy
5 does not hold fast and thus does not lose

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[17] Most prominently discussed in Rudolf Wagner 2000, chap. 3.
[18] See Gentz 2007, p. 262.
[19] Rudolf G. Wagner 2000, p. 62.

The 'silent structure' of this passage runs as follows:

I 1a He who interferes destroys them;   2b He who holds fast loses them.

3c That is why the Sage

II 4a does not interfere and thus does not destroy   5b does not hold fast, and thus does not lose.[20]

The 'overlapping structure', instead, should be understood as a parallel interlocking unit with the characteristic of an argumentative chain. Here, each step adds to the argument in sort of accumulative mode, before it is rounded off in a conclusion. Compare the following pattern of an overlapping structure:

1a: General statement about 'a'
1b: General statement about 'b'
2a: Specification to '1a'
2b: Specification to '1b'
c: Conclusion

When comparing the 'open interlocking style' with the 'overlapping structure', the differences but also the commonalities of the two types of argument-construction come to light most plainly: both types work in interlocking fashion; and both types treat two distinct matters, 'a' and 'b'. However, whereas the interlocking parallel style isolates the two matters in separate rows, the pattern of an overlapping structure implies a double-directed function of the 2ab unit; that is, the 2ab unit further refines the general issue of 1ab and thus concludes it. Simultaneously, the 2ab unit continues the argument on a new level, before it is brought to a conclusion in the final slot of the pattern, namely in c.

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[20] Ibidem.

2.4.2. The Structure of the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào": Micro Level[21]

Building Block One:

    1.1A   ^{Z1} 不訛不害，忠之至也；^[A]
    1.1B   不欺弗知，信之至也。
    1.2A   忠積則可親也；
    1.2B   信積則可信也。
    1.C   忠 ^{Z2}信積而民弗親信者，未之有也。

    1.1A ^{Z1} Not to [be] pretentious and not to [be] destructive, that is the culmination of trueheartedness;
    1.1B Not to cheat and not to [be] cunning, that is the culmination of trustworthiness;
    1.2A When trueheartedness is accumulated [by the *jūnzǐ*] then [he] can be felt close to [by the people];
    1.2B When trustworthiness is accumulated [by the *jūnzǐ*], then [he] can be trusted [by the people];
    1.C That trueheartedness ^{Z2} and trustworthiness have been accumulated [by the *jūnzǐ*] and the people did not get close to and trust [him]—there has never been such a case.

The formal structure of the first building block reveals both the subject and the object of the conduct of trueheartedness (*zhōng* 忠) and trustworthiness (*xìn* 信). As defined in this building block, the conduct of "not to [be] pretentious and not to [be] destructive" (不訛不害: 1A),[22] as well as "not to cheat and not to [be] cunning (不欺弗知: 1B) equals the highest form of trueheartedness and trustworthiness respectively (see pair 1ab). The 2ab pair then concludes 1ab by stating: "When trueheartedness and trustworthiness are accumulated (忠/信積), then [he?] can be felt close to (trusted; 2b)". The concluding component 'c' subsequently reiterates parts of 2ab, namely the issue of accumulating

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[21] The interested reader finds philological annotations to text and translation in chapter 9.
[22] Most scholars identify the character *hài* 害 (to harm) as *dá* 達. The formal structure of this unit, however, suggests a different reading: A: no [*x*] and no [*y*] that is *zhōng* in its culmination; B: no [*c*] and no [*d*] that is *xìn* in its culmination. According to the structure, a negative term makes much more sense here. Tú and Liú 2001, p. 66 identify the character with *hài* 害. They state that the particular graph, which they read as *hài*, is written in the same style as seen in the Shuìhǔdì 睡虎地: 8.1, where it is indeed identified as *hài,* 'destructive'. Cf. *Shuìhǔdì Qín jiǎn wénzì biān* 睡虎地秦簡文字編 1994, 117.

trueheartedness and trustworthiness (忠信積), and secondly the result of such a conduct, reiterating 'to come close to' and 'to trust' (親信). By taking up the previous elements, 'c' thus concludes the entire matter.[23] Furthermore, the component 'c' further adds a new element, namely that of the people *mín* 民. As component 'c' reveals, it is the people that directly respond to the conduct of trueheartedness (*zhōng*) and trustworthiness (*xìn*) with trust and by coming close to the one who conducts these principles. Accordingly, the subject of this demeanor is the ruler of a state, who will be named a 'gentleman' (*jūnzǐ* 君子) in building block two below.

Building Block Two:

> 2.1A   至忠如土，化物而不伐；[B]
> 2.1B   至信如時，比至而不結。[C]
> 2.2A   忠人亡 [Z3] 訛；
> 2.2B   信人不背。
> 2.C   君子如此，故不誑生、不背死也。[D]

> 2.1A   The highest trueheartedness is like the soil; it develops the things but does not attack them;
> 2.1B   The highest trustworthiness is like the seasons, [they] succeed [each other] and [the circle] does not break off.
> 2.2A   Men of trueheartedness have no [Z3] pretension;
> 2.2B   Men of trustworthiness are not perfidious
> 2.C   The sovereign (*jūnzǐ*) goes along with this, and therefore [he] does not cheat [upon] life, nor is [he] perfidious [upon] death.

The second building block of this text reiterates parts ready introduced in building block one, namely the matter of the utmost trueheartedness (*zhōng*) and utmost trustworthiness (*xìn*);[24] it thus explicitly continues the argument of the preceding building block. The

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[23] Note that in every instance, the latter unit (or pair of components) has taken up elements from the preceding pair of components, which the latter then further refines, or finally concludes. Thus, 2ab has taken up 忠信 from 1ab and further elaborates this; c then takes up 忠信積 from 2ab and concludes it.

[24]   1.1A: 忠之至 也;
          1.1B: 信之至 也;
                  2.1A: 至忠 如土;
                  2.1B: 至信 如時.

feature of an overlapping structure furthermore constructs a relatedness of terms already introduced in the previous building block with those introduced in building block two.[25] Building block two situates the conduct of trueheartedness and trustworthiness within the context of the natural world, such as soil and the seasons. It thereby clarifies the 'quality' of the gentleman (*jūnzǐ*) who must model himself on nature. The characteristics of soil and the seasons are that their 'action' comprises nothing else but the mere realization of their nature (which is bringing out the seeds in the case of soil, and returning each to its appropriate time in the case of the seasons). The ruler's conduct in accordance with the principles of trueheartedness and trustworthiness is comparable to this. His immanent nature of a 'true' gentleman prescribes this conduct. Consequently, he has to perform trueheartedness and trustworthiness if he seemingly cannot gain any advantage from doing so. Only then he can realize his immanent nature and become a true gentleman.

Building Block Three:

3.A　　大舊而不渝，忠之至也；[E]
3.B　　大古而諸常，信 [Z4] 之至也。†[F]
3.C　　至忠亡訛，至信不背，夫此之謂此。

3.A　　To hold old ways in high esteem and never counteract [them], that is trueheartedness in its culmination;
3.B　　To hold antiquity in high reverence and take it as principle, that is trustworthiness [Z4] in its culmination.
3.C　　The highest trueheartedness has no pretension;
　　　　The highest trustworthiness is not perfidious; That is what this is about.

This building block is a collage of building blocks one and two: it is almost entirely composed of parts taken from these units. Building block three thereby summarizes their

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[25] In the process of one building block to the next the 'overlapping structure' constructs the following relatedness of terms: 1.1ab state *bù é* (不訛) and *bù qī* (不欺); the same pattern reoccurs in 2.2AB, but only *bù qī* is replaced by *bù bèi* (不背), so that the two are given equal structural significance and either of them can be substituted for the other. Secondly, the 'overlapping structure' here constructs a relatedness of terms within of isolated building block: 2.2ab state *wú é* (亡訛) and *bù bèi* (不背); this pattern reoccurs in the concluding component c, but here only *wú é* is replaced by *bù kuàng* (不誆), and these notions are given equal structural significance and either of them can be substituted for the other.

account and concludes the first part, which I call Canto one of this treatise. See the following figure:

Figure 2: The Collage-like Formation of Building Block Three

Building block one	1.1A	不訛不害，忠之至也；
	1.1B	不欺弗知，信之至也。
Building block two	2.1A	至忠如土，化物而不伐；
	2.1B	至信如時，比至而不結。
	2.2A	忠人亡訛；
	2.2B	信人不背。[26]
	2.C	君子如此，故不誕生、不背死也。
Building block three	3.A	[大舊而不渝]，忠之至也；
	3.B	[大古而諸常]，信之至也。
	3.C	至忠亡訛，至信不背，夫此之謂此。

Only the first part of 3.A and 3.B are new.[27] They name the central idea of the argument. As can be seen easily from these elements, building block three situates trueheartedness and trustworthiness in the context of the days of old.[28] The remaining elements of this argument on trueheartedness (*zhōng*) and trustworthiness (*xìn*) are taken from the previous account; except for only the stamp-like formula "[now], this is what this is about" (夫此之謂此) in the concluding component. By fusing the different building blocks with each other, the authors of the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" directly connect building

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[26] I have already discussed the relatedness of the terms *bù bèi* and *bù qī* (see note 24).

[27] In the figure, I have pointed this out by putting these parts in brackets.

[28] The editors of *Guōdiàn* identify the character 3/26 as *táo* 匋 (a kiln for burning pottery or earthenware), which, however, makes it difficult to construct any sense for this reading. The editors themselves admit that this sentence might be corrupt (see Húběi shěng Jīngmén shì bówùguǎn 1998, p. 163, n. 6). I identify this as two characters, *dà gǔ* 大古 'to hold antiquity in high reverence', which is corroborated by the structure of this individual passage (note that the parallel line of 3.A reads *dà jiù* 大舊). These two characters are written closely together, and thus are hardly legible (𣪘). In this respect, the expression *dà gǔ* 大古 is a ligature (*héwén* 合文), as is the case with the compound *jūnzǐ* 君子, above (𢎥). The character z3/26 also appears in the "Qióng dá yǐ shí" 窮達以時, strip 2/21.

block three to the idea established in building blocks one and two; the technique used in building block three can thus be compared to the development of an overall-argument in building blocks one and two, and the statement "[now], this is what this is about" in the concluding component c does not merely conclude this particular building block with the fact that the conduct of trueheartedness and trustworthiness implies a veneration of the ways of the old; moreover, the stamp-like formula at the end of building block three sums up everything that has been stated so far. It brings Canto one of the text to a close.

Building Block Four:

> 4.1A   大忠不悅 ， [G]
> 4.1B   大信不期；
> 4.2A   不悅而足養者，地也；
> 4.2B   不期 [Z5] 而可要者，天也。[H]
> 4.C   配天地也者，忠信之謂此。 [I]

> 4.1A   The highest trueheartedness is not pleasant for [the people];
> 4.1B   The highest trustworthiness is not restricted in time;
> 4.2A   Not pleasant for [the people] [and yet] providing enough to nourish, such is the Earth;
> 4.2B   Not to be restricted in time [Z5] and yet able to restrain [others], such is Heaven.
> 4.C   To be in tune with Heaven and Earth, this is what trueheartedness and trustworthiness are about.

This unit opens up the second canto of the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào". It posits the virtues trueheartedness (*zhōng*) and trustworthiness (*xìn*) within the abstract context of the cosmos and functions as a continuation of building block two. Already from building block two we know that the conduct of trueheartedness and trustworthiness for the gentleman equals the realization of his 'immanent nature'. Building block four now further argues that trueheartedness and trustworthiness display the same qualities as the abstract cosmic elements Earth (*dì*) and Heaven (*tiān*), to which the building block connects two further features, namely "to please [the people]" (*yuè* 悅), and the aspect of temporality (*qī* 期). The gentleman follows the patterns as prescribed by Heaven and

Earth. Through his active conduct of trueheartedness and trustworthiness he can embody their qualities, too. This is, then, how the true gentleman becomes the human reflection of Heaven and Earth.

Building Block Five:

    5.1   口惠而實弗從，君子弗言爾；

    5.2   心{疏}□□ [而形] ^{Z6} 親，君子弗申爾；† [J]

    5.3   古行而鯖悅民，君子弗由也； [K]

    5.C   三者，忠人弗作，信人弗為也。

    5.1   If [only] kind with words, but factually not acting in accordance with them, the sovereign (*jūnzǐ*) rather refrains from speaking;

    5.2   If letting the mind loose, {*and yet being*} [Z6] intimate in [one's] appearance, the sovereign (*jūnzǐ*) rather refrains from displaying [this];

    5.3   If acting according to the old, but pleasing the people by serving [them the special taste of] *zhēng*, the sovereign (*jūnzǐ*) rather refrains from relying on this.

    5.C   As to these three [fallacies], the truehearted man would refrain from doing [so], and the trustworthy man would refrain from acting [accordingly].
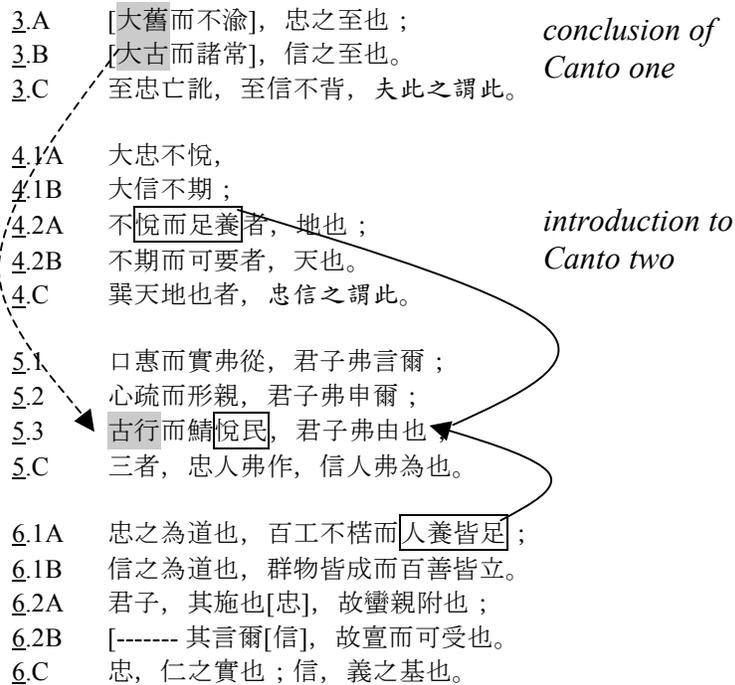
This passage breaks away from the basic pattern of the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào". The argument from building blocks one to four now shifts from the abstract level to a concrete directive. Building block five enlists a prescription of conduct that is directly addressed to the ruler of a state; it might be read as the culmination of the argument of this text. Additionally, segment 5.3 contains elements both from building block three (on antiquity) and building block four (on the notion of pleasing and nourishing the people), which again recur in building block six.[29] I have already shown that building block three comprises the entire argument of Canto one, but it also *concludes* the same. I have also demonstrated that building block four *introduces* the second canto of the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào", but elements from building block four also reoccur in building block six.[30] This

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[29] Cf. figure three.

[30] Cf. figure three.

being so, it becomes evident that building block five contains all argumentative features of this treatise on governmental affairs. See the following figure:

Figure 3: Culmination of the Argument in Building Block Five

3.A	[大舊而不渝], 忠之至也;	*conclusion of*
3.B	[大古而諸常], 信之至也。	*Canto one*
3.C	至忠亡訧, 至信不背, 夫此之謂此。	
4.1A	大忠不悅,	
4.1B	大信不期;	
4.2A	不悅而足養者, 地也;	*introduction to*
4.2B	不期而可要者, 天也。	*Canto two*
4.C	巽天地也者, 忠信之謂此。	
5.1	口惠而實弗從, 君子弗言爾;	
5.2	心疏而形親, 君子弗申爾;	
5.3	古行而鯖悅民, 君子弗由也。	
5.C	三者, 忠人弗作, 信人弗為也。	
6.1A	忠之為道也, 百工不楛而人養皆足;	
6.1B	信之為道也, 群物皆成而百善皆立。	
6.2A	君子, 其施也[忠], 故蠻親附也;	
6.2B	[------- 其言爾[信], 故亶而可受也。	
6.C	忠, 仁之實也; 信, 義之基也。	

Building Block Six:

6.1A　忠之為 [Z7] 道也，百工不楛而人養皆足; [L]
6.1B　信之為道也，群物皆成而百善皆立。
6.2A　君子，其施也 [Z8] 忠，故蠻親附也; [M]
6.2B　----- 其言爾信，故亶而可受也。 [N]
C　　忠，仁之實也; 信，義之基也。 [O]

是故古之所 [Z9] 以行乎蠻貊者，如此也。 [P]

6.1A　When trueheartedness becomes the [Z7] way [in the state], [then] all kinds of skilled labor will not decay, and the nourishing of the people will [thus] all be sufficient;

6.1B   [And] when trustworthiness becomes the way [in the state], all groups of things will be completed, and all goods will [thus] be established.

6.2A   [As a consequence] when the conduct of the sovereign (*jūnzǐ*) indeed [turns out to be] [Z8] truehearted, for this reason, [even] the *Mán* barbarians come close to and follow [him];

6.2B   [And] when words [of the sovereign] indeed [turn out to be] trustworthy, for this reason, [they] are sincere and can be endured.

6.C   Trueheartedness is the realization of benevolence (*rén*); [And] trustworthiness is the basis for righteousness (*yì*).

It was for this reason that [the sovereign] in the days of old [even] [Z9] applied this principle towards the *Mán* and *Mò* barbarians.

Lastly, building block six draws a utopian picture of the consequences if the prescription advanced in building block five comes true, and trueheartedness and trustworthiness indeed serve as *the* leading principles for the reign of the ruler: a reign guided by the principles of trueheartedness and trustworthiness will lead to a moral transformation of the entire state.

2.4.3. The Structure of the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào": Macro Level

The previous account has shown that of the building blocks of the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" each discusses one aspect in particular that is dependent of a conduct of trueheartedness and trustworthiness. The following schema follows from this:

Building block one: discourse on reign

Building block two   discourse on nature

Building block three: discourse on reign

Building block four: discourse on nature

Building block five: discourse on reign

Building block six: conclusion

On a more structural level, we may arrive at the following scheme:

Building block one: 1a
Building block two   1b
Building block three: 2a
Building block four: 2b
Building block five: (specification of the argument)
Building block six: c

From this it seems reasonable to assume that the macro structure of the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" to a great extent reflects the basic pattern of the individual building blocks (micro structure). If this holds true it should accordingly be possible to identify each building block with one component as discussed in the various building blocks. Compare the following figure:

Figure 4: The higher Abstraction of the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào"

1A
1.1A	[不訛不害]，忠之至也；
1.1B	[不欺弗知]，信之至也。
1.2A	忠積則可親也；
1.2B	信積則可信也。
1.C	忠信積而民弗親信者，未之有也。

1B
2.1A	至忠如土，化物而不伐；
2.1B	至信如時，比至而不結。
2.2A	忠人亡訛；
2.2B	信人不背。
2.C	君子如此，故不訛生、不背死也。

2A
3.A	[大舊而不渝]，忠之至也；
3.B	[大古而諸常]，信之至也。
3.C	至忠亡訛，至信不背，夫此之謂此。

2B
4.1A	大忠不悅，
4.1B	大信不期；
4.2A	不悅而足養者，地也；
4.2B	不期而可要者，天也。
4.C	巽天地也者，忠信之謂此。

Transformation of the argument
5.1	口惠而實弗從，君子弗言爾；
5.2	心疏而形親，君子弗申爾；
5.3	古行而鯖悅民，君子弗由也；
5.C	三者，忠人弗作，信人弗為也。

C
6.1A	忠之為道也，百工不楛而人養皆足；
6.1B	信之為道也，群物皆成而百善皆立。
6.2A	君子，其施也[忠]，故蠻親附也；
6.2B	[------- 其言爾[信]，故亶而可受也。
6.C	忠，仁之實也；信，義之期也。

是故古之所以行乎蠻貉者，如此也。

On the basis of this consideration and taking the feature of 'overlapping structure' into account, building block three of the macro level should be identified as the 2a component of the entire "Zhōng xìn zhī dào", and hence function as the explanatory specification to building block one (1a of the macro structure). According to the same principle, building block four should be the 2b component of the macro structure that further specifies

building block two (1b of the macro structure). This seems to be a sound assumption[31] because building block one (macro 1a) indeed explains the general implications of trueheartedness and trustworthiness in their highest form. Building block three (macro 2a) continues this and then closes by explaining:

<u>3</u>.c   […] 夫此之謂此 "[Now], this is what this is about."

In the same vein, building block two (macro 1b) opens up the nature discourse. Building block four (macro 2b) continues this and then closes with the explanatory statement:

<u>4</u>.c   […] 忠信之謂此 "That is what *zhōng* and *xìn* are about."

Moreover, segment <u>5</u>.2 states that the mind and the appearance of the true gentleman do not diverge. The same issue reappears in <u>6</u>.2a—that is part of the macro-conclusion of the entire "Zhōng xìn zhī dào"—to which the explanation is added that this kind of behavior means to be *zhōng*, 'truehearted'.

Segment <u>5</u>.1, in turn, addresses the issue that words must correlate to one's behavior. <u>6</u>.2b—also part of the macro conclusion of the text—takes this issue up again, adding to this the positive explanation that such a behavior conforms to the ideal of being *xìn*, 'trustworthy'.

Lastly, as seen, the prescriptive segments <u>5</u>.1 and <u>5</u>.2 are negatively inherent in the explanatory component of <u>6</u>.2ab (note that building block six functions as the concluding component of the entire treatise); of building block five, in turn, we have noted that it comprises all argumentative features of this essay. On basis of this consideration, it then seems that, by combining the partial definitions from previous building blocks we may arrive at the following reading of the character *zhōng* (trueheartedness) in the concluding building block six:

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[31] For the following discussion compare fig. 5 below.

> *Not to [be] pretentious and not to [be] destructive (1.1A), i.e. to hold old ways in high esteem and never counteract them (3.A) [and thus] never to let [one's] mind loose when displaying intimacy (5.2).*[32]

The same principle must be applied to unravel the definition of the character *xìn* (trustworthiness) in the concluding building block six. Accordingly *xìn* must be read as follows:
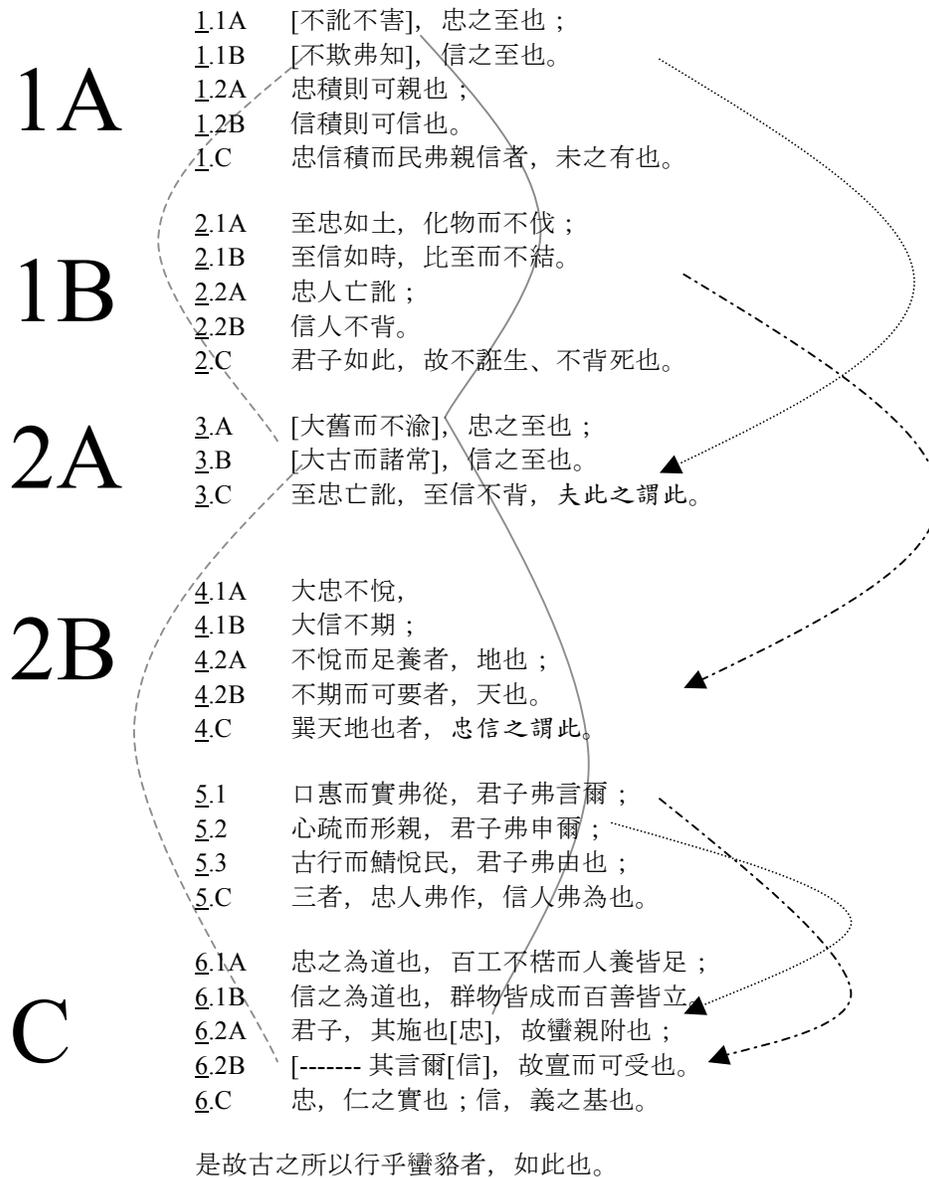
> *Not to cheat and not to [be] cunning (1.1B), i.e. to hold antiquity in high reverence and to take it as a principle (3.B) and thus to never let [one's] words contradict [one's] actions (5.1).*[33]

See the following figure:

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[32] Cf. the figure five below.
[33] Cf. the figure five below.

Figure 5: 'Overlapping Structure' on the Macro Level of the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào"

1.1A   [不訑不害]，忠之至也；
1.1B   [不欺弗知]，信之至也。
1.2A   忠積則可親也；
1.2B   信積則可信也。
1.C   忠信積而民弗親信者，未之有也。

2.1A   至忠如土，化物而不伐；
2.1B   至信如時，比至而不結。
2.2A   忠人亡訑；
2.2B   信人不背。
2.C   君子如此，故不訑生、不背死也。

3.A   [大舊而不渝]，忠之至也；
3.B   [大古而諸常]，信之至也。
3.C   至忠亡訑，至信不背，夫此之謂此。

4.1A   大忠不悅，
4.1B   大信不期；
4.2A   不悅而足養者，地也；
4.2B   不期而可要者，天也。
4.C   巽天地也者，忠信之謂此。

5.1   口惠而實弗從，君子弗言爾；
5.2   心疏而形親，君子弗申爾；
5.3   古行而鯖悅民，君子弗由也；
5.C   三者，忠人弗作，信人弗為也。

6.1A   忠之為道也，百工不楛而人養皆足；
6.1B   信之為道也，群物皆成而百善皆立。
6.2A   君子，其施也[忠]，故蠻親附也；
6.2B   [------- 其言爾[信]，故亶而可受也。
6.C   忠，仁之實也；信，義之基也。

是故古之所以行乎蠻貉者，如此也。

2.5. Conclusion

Approaching early texts from the perspective of their formal structure is a strong tool for dealing with early thinking. From the perspective of text and philology, it becomes clear that if we turn a text's argument strategy into our reading strategy, we have a good instrument at hand for making sense of passages that otherwise remain dark. By this, I do not mean that the formal structure of a text like the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" should be regarded only as a strategy for corroborating the paleographic reconstruction of certain graphs; but approaching a text like the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" from the perspective of its structure can moreover help us to understand corrupted passages (for instance broken strips) by continuing the previous pattern of argumentation, which, of course, needs to be made explicit first. What is more, reconstructing an early manuscript by paying close attention to its formal structure, within certain parameters also helps us to gain sufficient evidence about the proper sequence of the strips.[34]

As I have shown in this chapter, the formal structure of a text like the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" was a vital element to generate meaning beyond the level of the lexicon. By means of correlating the various building blocks with each other, the text is able to connect different notions advanced and thus define the conceptual meaning of philosophic notions. This means in particular that the formal structure of a text imbeds text-immanent—and thus text idiosyncratic—definitions. This applies to both the text's technique of introducing new terms by relating them to previously defined ones, but also to the *modus operandi* by which a text constructs a relatedness among various terms that we had not perceived otherwise.

When looking at philosophic writings not only as repositories of ideas, but instead as objects in their own right, we are able to see texts in a new light. Argument-construction in the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào", to begin with, works in a fundamentally different fashion not only from that of the classical Greek tradition, but also from that of most philosophic texts from early China overall. The "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" does not construct argumentative

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[34] I come back to this in my discussion of the "Qióng dá yǐ shí" (chap. 3).

pattern such as syllogism where A and B by necessity lead to C, as we encounter when reading a treatise like the *Organon* of Aristotle. The "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" likewise does not generate meaning by telling stories, such as, for instance, the *Mèngzǐ* does. Instead, the author(s) of the text construct the overall argument of the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" by relating different and highly distinctive building blocks towards each other. The "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" seems to weave a web, so to speak, into which it places the message. Meaning is thus constructed by connecting the various notions and ideas advanced to positive classifications and settings provided in the text. It then is instructive to see that the text at large basically works is the same fashion as the particular building block: overlapping structure is not only the principle of meaning-construction of the individual building block, but instead, it also is *the* very principle underlying the makeup of the text overall.

Note that the feature overlapping structure has nothing to do with the materiality of the text. The individual components that constitute a building block neither have the length of one bamboo strip, nor does the building block itself correspond to the length of one strip in the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào". As we shall see later on, even when we have cases in which the particular building blocks contain exactly the amount of graphs generally seen on the bamboo strips, these units are nevertheless not arranged accordingly on these strips. Thus, what we see from this rather is a particular *mode* of reasoning and meaning-construction in Warring-States philosophy, and not so much the result of certain *conditions* of writing based on the materiality of the items used.

As discussed in the present chapter, the feature 'overlapping structure' applies not only to the micro level of composition, that is, the individual building block, but also to the text as a whole, which I call the macro level of composition. This implies not only that the various building blocks are all designed in a consistent fashion, but moreover, that the macro structure of the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" largely mirrors the structure of the individual units. Due to fact that the individual building block is composed in a strict 1ab 2ab c-

scheme, it attains a particular rhythm, and, due to this, stability.[35] The fact, then, that the text overall emulates the makeup of the individual building block by implication also brings about stability for the text at large. This does not only say that the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" and its strategy of meaning-construction would not work when *removing* one of the building blocks that constitute this text; moreover, the analysis has shown that argument-construction in the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" would also fail when *adding* other elements, or even when *moving* them around within the text. By implication, on the level of its formal structure, the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" is fixed.[36]

The fact, then, that one unit of the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào", namely building block five, breaks away from the otherwise consistent pattern of the text does not in the slightest contradict my conclusion that the formal arrangement of the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" is fixed. Quite to the contrary, we have seen that building block five transforms the abstract argument of the text into a concrete directive addressed to the ruler over a state. By breaking away from the otherwise consistent pattern of the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào", it technically marks off the central point of the text. As we shall see later on, this technique of breaking away from the overall pattern of textual structure was a common device of argument-construction applied in argument-based texts from the Warring-States period. Note that even in the case of this particular unit the overall position of the same in the makeup of the text is fixed. Due to the fact that meaning is constructed by relating the different building blocks with each other, this particular unit *had* to be placed subsequent to what I have identified to be the introduction of the second canto of the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào", that is, building block four, and before the overall conclusion of the text, namely building block six.

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[35] Research has shown that rhythm and structure perform important mnemonic functions. See, for instance, Khosrow Jahandarie 1999, p. 311.

[36] Note that this does not imply that the lexicon of the text should also be considered to be a fixed one.