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

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Conclusion

MATERIAL CONDITIONS OF MEANING-CONSTRUCTION IN WARRING STATES PHILOSOPHY

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8. *Material Conditions of Meaning-Construction in Warring States Philosophy*

This chapter provides a summary of the preceding discussion on reading and writing in Warring States intellectual environment as seen from the two ideal types of texts discussed in the present study: authority-based texts and argument-based texts from tomb Guōdiàn One. Based on this, the present chapter moreover discusses the material conditions for meaning-construction in Warring States philosophy at large.

8.1. Résumé: Reading and Writing in the Intellectual Environment of the Warring States

The preceding discussion has explored the distinction between the two ideal types of texts, 'argument-based texts' and 'authority-based texts'. Based on the comparison of the different techniques of meaning-construction as seen in these ideal types of texts, this study has shed light on the dialectical processes of philosophic discourse and strategies of meaning-construction in early China. I have argued that groups having access to different kinds of texts influence the structure of the texts they use, but the same process also works the other way round. Texts, too, foster the formation of different kinds of social groups, so-called "textual communities".[1]

From this it becomes clear that when looking at early Chinese philosophical texts not only as repositories of ideas, but instead, as meaningful objects in their own right, we see that the texts themselves—and the way by which meaning is constructed therein—shed light on the particular textual communities that had access to these texts, used them, and were even shaped by them. As a general tendency, whereas authority-based texts tend to be group-based in use and circulation, argument-based texts, instead, stem from outside such articulate communities. As a result, argument-based texts tend to have a rather oppositional character (chap. 6). The analysis of the relationship between philosophic discourse and strategies of meaning-construction, which prior to the present study had not yet been studied properly for the context of the early Chinese written philosophic discourse, thus provides valuable insights into the changes in the making of philosophic texts in Warring States intellectual circles, and, by implication, into the very activity of philosophizing in early China overall.

So far, this study has discussed the correlation of social communities and meaning-construction in philosophical writings primarily by looking at the means by which meaning is generated in the two ideal types of texts, that is, by analyzing the techniques of meaning-construction as applied in these texts. In the present chapter I shall shift the perspective and reflect briefly on the various mechanisms *underlying* these different

[1] See Brian Stock 1983.

strategies of meaning-construction. This includes investigating the role of the material conditions for the construction of meaning in late Warring States philosophic discourse, as can be judged from the paleographic materials under review. The focal point to ask is: What are the (material) prerequisites for meaning-construction in early Chinese philosophic discourse? How are these (material) factors manifested in the texts under review? And finally, What are consequences for us in our attempt to evaluate early thought?

8.2. Writing and Thought

Based on the differentiation between the two ideal types of texts as outlined in the preceding chapter(s), that is, argument-based and authority-based texts, the discussion has shed light on two contrasting modes of meaning-construction in late-fourth, early-third century philosophic discourse. Authority-based texts were defined as those texts that rely on outside information for getting their concern across. The characteristic of the exponents of this ideal type of texts is that—on the formal level of composition—they do not communicate any concern beyond the level of the particular building block. Each building block is fully isolated and refers to one particular matter only. In the truest sense of the word, it is what Rudolf Wagner has called a "unit of thought".[2] The individual unit of thought thus represents the final (written) engagement of the authority-based text with a given concern. The authority-based texts show no conscious attempt to generate any kind of self-contained philosophic position with argumentative force in writing. As such, the individual building block remains situational. Instead of advancing a reasoned approach on a philosophic problem in structurally closed entities as seen from the argument-based texts from the same environment of palaeographic materials, the units of thought of an authority-based text—as the designation suggests—to a large extent rely on authority to communicate their concern. As discussed in chapter 6, we should postulate a (now) lost oral discourse underlying the process of meaning-construction for the individual units of thought, but also for connecting the various units to identified

[2] See Rudolf G. Wagner 1999 (b).

traditions. The example of the "Zī yī", for instance, has made clear that the direct reference to authorities as seen in these texts requires both a predetermined acquaintance *of* and identification (and consent) *with* the cultural, that is, the group-based application of knowledge behind the stories and quotes referred to.

The definition 'argument-based text', on the contrary, refers to a philosophic text written in a continuous mode. This is not to say that argument-based texts generate narrative patterns of the kind seen, for instance, in the *Xúnzǐ*, or *Hán Fēizǐ*. Conversely, it is instructive to learn that argument-based texts are made up of particularly stable units that are again clearly distinct from each other. These building blocks are the basic constituents of this type of texts. Despite the shared feature of the building block, meaning-construction in argument-based texts goes much further than in authority-based texts: argument-based texts link up the individual building blocks with each other so that much larger meaningful wholes are generated. Different notions advanced in the texts can thus be connected into greater schemes—and finally into a coherent whole. Therefore, different from the building block, which is the final unit of thought in authority-based texts, the building block in argument-based texts is not an isolated entity. Quite to the contrary, by relating various units of thought into integrated wholes, the texts in question advance referential and self-contained types of reasoning. This facilitates the systematic development of a philosophic concern. Furthermore, by weaving the individual units into larger wholes, these texts generate an additional meaningful level for advancing their philosophic agenda. Figuratively speaking, argument-based texts engender web-like structures. These web-like structures connect different concepts that are advanced in the individual building blocks with each other and thus construct a larger self-contained whole. Because these webs have a semiotic function in that they broaden the lexicon of the text by providing conceptual definitions for the various concepts used therein, I have called this the 'semiotic webs' of the argument-based texts (chap. 6).

8.2.1 Reference versus Self-referential

The semiotic webs of argument-based texts facilitate the systematic discussion of philosophic concerns. Connecting the different notions advanced in these texts into greater schemes, and finally into a coherent whole, the semiotic webs facilitate precise definitions for the conceptual meaning of terms, even when used in a rather idiosyncratic way. Here one should think of the means by which a text like for instance the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" plays with certain ideas and concepts, such as the immanent nature of the 'real' *jūnzǐ*, by correlating the concept '*jūnzǐ*' repeatedly and on different levels of the text with certain characteristics of the natural world. In the same fashion, the author(s) of the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" have also defined the concepts *zhōng* 忠, 'trueheartedness', and *xìn* 信, 'trustworthiness', in a rather distinctive way in this text (chap. 2).[3] Moreover, the semiotic webs of argument-based texts account for the fact that philosophic texts become self-contained units in a way that they are referentially consistent. Take, for instance, the "Tài yī shēng shuǐ" as discussed in chapter 7: the consistent links and references advanced in the text allow the "Tài yī shēng shuǐ" as a whole to turn into a consistent cosmology because the compositional structure of the text links the cosmogonic observations directly to the political sphere, by which the text advances a concrete directive for proper rule. Hence, the semiotic webs of argument-based texts are philosophically relevant as modes of meaning-construction in that they open up a meaningful level behind the verbatim content of the individual units of the text. By implication, the semiotic webs of these texts are the required prerequisites for advancing a philosophical position with argumentative force.

In addition to this, that argument-based texts connect the different notions advanced in the individual building blocks into greater evocative schemes—such as pericopes, sub-cantos, cantos, and, in conclusion, the text in full—accounts for the fact that these texts become coherent, and finally, on the level of the composition, complete (and completed) wholes. The meaningful patterns, that is, the semiotic webs of the argument-based texts, thus turn these texts into self-contained entities. By implication, argument-based texts, as

[3] See in particular figure 5 on p. 75 (chap. 2) for the web-like structure of the "Zhōng xìn zhī dào".

a tendency, *are meaningful in their own right and need no further (oral) contextualization*. By transforming the texts into self-contained units so that they can stand on their own sufficiently, argument-based texts represent conscious philosophy in self-contained writing, as the examples of texts such as "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" (chap. 2), "Qióng dá yǐ shí" (chap. 3), "Wǔ xíng" (chap. 4), or "Xìng zì mìng chū" (chap. 5) show.

Authority-based texts, instead, need further contexts to be truly meaningful. It is in two respects that these texts depend on the world around the text. Firstly, as discussed in chapter 6, authority-based texts rely on the recourse to shared cultural resources to generate meaning. These references to external sources may be sayings attributed to masters, quotations from Odes, or other stories from the contemporary shared memory, what Jan Assmann calls "kulturelles Gedächtnis".[4] As we have seen, both the materials from bundles "A", "B", or "C", and the "Zī yī" in its different editions, formulate their concern by quoting authorities, not by establishing argumentative patterns. Secondly, authority-based texts require the meaningful context in which these quotations were evocative. The fact, then, that these texts call for a preexisting consent of their audience with the cultural interpretation behind the resources referred to shows that the sources had to be explained and contextualized in order to evoke meaning. In spite of this, authority-based texts do not generate a referential system of larger meaningful webs that help to contextualize and explain these quotations. Thus, different from argument-based texts, these referential webs remained outside of the authority-based texts. In other words, authority-based texts had to have a mediator so as to make full sense for the particular group, in which this text was circulating. This becomes especially clear from the use of quotations in the "Zī yī": only when being *au fait* with the particular cultural understanding behind the instances quoted, a unit of thought becomes meaningful as it is. This requires some kind of guidance, as the authority-based text (here: the unit of thought) itself does not provide any meaningful contextualization. The mediator of meaning in authority-based texts could be imagined in all different kind of ways. Yet, it is most

[4] See Jan Assmann 1999, esp. pp. 19-24. See also my discussion in chap. 6 "The Structure of Meaning", pp. 269 f.

likely to assume that this mediator was a master's words.[5] Conversations with a master on the basis of the text hence constitute the referential frame of authority-based texts, and thus substitute the semiotic webs of the argument-based texts, which, in turn, account for the fact that argument-based texts are self-contained philosophic entities. The dialogue with the master thus provides the required references that are not directly present in the texts themselves. Figuratively speaking, the master, or a preexisting cultural consent in the confines of certain textual communities, can thus be seen to fulfill the function of the semiotic web of an authority-based text. Whereas argument-based texts generate meaning from the 'inside', that is, by advancing meaningful compositional patterns from within the text, the semiotic webs of authority-based texts are additional (but necessary) elements that remain outside of these texts.

8.2.2. Structure and Meaning

As discussed, the semiotic webs of the argument-based texts are brought about by the meaningful formal structures within these texts. I call them 'silent' structures (as apposed to 'voiced' structures that lie outside the text). Silently, that is, written, the argument-based texts ascertain what we may reasonably call a systematic discussion of a philosophic concern. This is in stark contrast to the 'voiced' contextualization of the particular units of thought by an outside mediator (that is, the master's words or preexisting cultural patterns in which the authorities quoted were meaningful) of the authority-based text. Argument-based texts need no such 'voiced' contextualization by some kind of mediator so that their thought can be approached. Based on reference to reason, not to authority, argument-based texts allow the individual engagement with the philosophic positions advanced in the texts (chap. 6).

From this observation it also follows that the formal patterns of argument-based texts in two respects are philosophically significant. Firstly, as discussed above, the formal

[5] Or a preexisting cultural consent of defined groups, which, in turn, had to be established by some kind of masters.

patterns are the modes by which meaning is construction within these texts. They account for the fact that argument-based texts are closed entities in their own right. Secondly, possibly even more instructive, these structures account for the fact that the texts can be seen as meaningful objects in and of themselves. That means, 'truth' in argument-based texts does not (anymore) lie in the triangular relationship between master, student, and text that determined the successful communication of thought in authority-based texts. The argument-based text itself is now the mediator of truth—and, maybe, 'truth' even lies in the text itself.[6]

These observations bring about important implications for our engagement with early thought. On the one hand we have those texts that represent structurally closed entities, namely the argument-based texts. Due to the fact that all the relevant references are established within these texts, they become mediators (manifestations?) of 'truth' in and of themselves. By implication, despite the fact that even argument-based texts allow certain degrees of different readings and varying interpretations,[7] they nevertheless represent 'closed' concepts in that they require no third mediator besides text and exegete. The triangular relationship between master, student, and text is substituted by semiotic webs that lie within the texts themselves, thus allowing the individual approach to 'truth', that is, detached from certain masters.

[6] Notice in this context the hiatus, which European *Geistesgeschichte* witnessed between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries on the one hand, and the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries on the other hand: at the former stage, man attempted to explain the *world*, not the *text*, that is, the Bible. The world was the 'raw-material' to be explained, not the exegetical text. During the latter stage, after the break-up of this tradition, men, then, attempted to apply the *texts* to the present. Looking at the argument-based texts from Guōdiàn One from this perspective, we should attempt to look back before this break, which, without a doubt, influences our reading-strategies. Just as in 'secondary religions' such as Judaism or Protestantism, in which the scripture itself contains the 'truth' (see, for instance, Psalm 119), it might also be the case that we see something similar in the argument-based texts. Renaissance-thinker Pico, for instance, believed that the structure of texts should contain the structure of truth (see Farmer 1998, p. 34). The structure of argument-based texts might then, in a similar fashion, be the embodiment of the philosophic 'truth' of the text: this would imply that the argument-based text itself represents the unity of practice and thought, in which no distinction exists between philosophy and the performance thereof.

[7] Note in this context that no text is definite in terms of the interpretations it facilitates. Even though the argument-based texts from Guōdiàn One establish semiotic webs that in and of themselves guide the reading of these, they nevertheless still allow certain degrees of differences how certain aspects are to be taken. Even though one might not want to go as far as German writer and experimental physics Georg Christoph Lichtenberg (1742-1799) in his famous dictum on the variety of interpretations as advanced in his *Sudelbücher* (Trash books)—"Ein Buch ist ein Spiegel, wenn ein Affe hineinsieht, so kann kein Apostel heraus gucken" (a book is like a mirror, when an ape peeks in, no apostle can peep out)—we must keep individual readings in mind also when discussing written thought.

Authority-based texts, instead, were generated against the background of oral dialogue, as I have discussed in chapter 6. Meaning-construction in these texts required the triangular relationship between master, student, and text, which has become obsolete in the argument-based texts. The—now lost—oral discourse underlying authority-based texts not only constitutes a vital element of the individual unit of thought, but also for connecting the various units of thought to certain traditions and thus to integrated, culturally meaningful, wholes. It is imperative that we keep this difference in mind when dealing with the philosophic texts from Warring States China because of its implications for our reconstruction of early thought. Whereas we *can* reconstruct something like a philosophic edifice underlying argument-based texts like "Zhōng xìn zhī dào" (chap. 2) "Qióng dá yǐ shí" (chap. 3), "Wǔ xíng" (chap. 4), "Xìng zì mìng chū" (chap. 5), or "Tài yī shēng shuǐ" (chap. 7), no such claim can be made for our engagement with authority-based texts, such as for instance an imagined Warring States "Lǎozǐ".

8.2.3. (Re-)constructing Early Thought

As for the pictured concept of a "Lǎozǐ" from the Warring States, the preceding analysis has made clear that all that we now have is a number of unrelated units of thought, but no coherent, let alone fixed text (chap. 6 and 7). Even *if* there was such a text, or the articulate concept "Lǎozǐ" during the Warring States—just as there was, for instance, a confined text "Lǎozǐ" during the Hàn 漢 as the finding of the tomb Mǎwángduī Three and its textual contains suggests—the triangular relationship between master, student, and text that has determined the successful communication of thought in authority-based texts nevertheless were still irretrievably lost. In other words, in any attempt to (re-)construct an imagined Warring States "Lǎozǐ" do we not only lack a coherent and well-defined text on the basis of which such an analysis could be carried out, but, more importantly, we also miss the referential system behind the makeup of such a text (or of the individual units of thought). From this follows that even if we were to regard the unrelated materials from bundles "A", "B", and "C" as (one) particular instantiation of a Warring States

"Lǎozǐ", the philosophic system behind the makeup of the same would still be inevitably lost and could only be reconstructed in highly tentative and hypothetical ways, as the philosophic concern of authority-based texts had not been grafted into the text itself, but lies in the oral discourse around the text (in contrast to the argument-based texts that become direct mediators of 'truth').

In this respect, it is instructive to compare the relationship between text and thought in authority-based texts with that of text and meaning of Odes in Warring States period, as discussed for the "Wǔ xíng" in chapter 4:[8] in the case of Odes, we do indeed have texts that present us with a glimpse of the set of interpretations that were circulating during the Warring States period, before they were finally ousted by the—now exclusive—set of interpretations as determined by the *Máo* 毛 tradition. However, except for bits and pieces, we still have had no chance to spot the level of the lexicon of the Odes as circulating during the Warring States. For the authority-based texts from the Warring States, then, we can postulate the converse: whereas we do have a well-defined "Zī yī" (and others might even want to consider the materials on bundles "A", "B", and "C" the Warring States instantiation of 'the' "Lǎozǐ"), the cultural resources and the philosophic set of interpretations against which these texts were meaningful to cultural or textual communities, remains irrecoverable.

Thus, a history of thought that attempts to present the thought of, say, Lǎozǐ, can only provide an idiosyncratic interpretation of the bits and pieces that we have, but which nevertheless lack their referential framework, namely the triangular (oral) relationship underlying these pieces. In a similar vein, we cannot reconstruct a 'correct', let alone complete, picture of 'the' philosophy of Kǒngzǐ 孔子. Instead, we can only attempt to collate pieces to construct different chronologic layers; or we can reconstruct Mèngzǐ's 'reading' of Confucius, such as we can reconstruct the so-called Héshàng gōng 河上公[9]

[8] See chapter 4: "Wǔ xíng", p. 131, n. 80.
[9] According to Rudolf G. Wagner, the Héshàng gōng *Commentary* has been written in the fifth century. See Wagner 2003 (b), p. 15.

interpretation of *Lǎozǐ*, or that of Wáng Bì 王弼 (226-249).[10] Thus, attempts to reconstruct coherent, let alone closed, systems of thought of traditions that are transmitted only in authority-based texts (and in the case of the so-called "Lǎozǐ" we do not even *have* such a text) are ultimately ill-founded: we cannot read authority-based texts as if they were argument-based texts. This approach means to neglect the third, that is, the oral (and vital) component of meaning-construction in authority-based traditions.

In contrast to this, we have seen that argument-based texts advance self-referential semiotic webs that turn these texts into structurally closed entities. Due to the semiotic webs that are inherent in these texts can we assume that, as a general tendency, no mediator or any kind of secondary contextualization from the outside was necessary to engage with their ideas. The texts in question represent closed systems that enable the individual's engagement with these. This suggests that the argument-based texts from Guōdiàn One were essentially *written* in nature. That is to say, these texts were produced in the form of intentional compositions, as opposed to the compilation of traditional formulae.[11] Writing has replaced the 'voiced' mediator of authority-based texts and facilitates that the philosophic concern has now been grafted from the oral discourse outside of a text, into the text itself. Thanks to its written form, the argument-based text becomes the direct access to 'truth'.

8.3. Traveling Concepts and the Fusion of Ideas

The silent structures of the argument-based texts are not the only indication of the written nature of argument-based texts. Another sign of written discourse as manifested in this ideal type of texts is their syncretic approach, and the fusion of concepts that can be seen therein. 'Syncretic' in this respect has no normative (or teleological) connotation. It is meant to be a purely descriptive notion that describes the tendency to reconcile different concepts or traditions in order to incorporate them in one (new) philosophic model.

[10] For a successful approach in making explicit one particular reading of the *Lǎozǐ*, see Rudolf G. Wagner's trilogy on Wáng Bì's commentary on- and reading of the *Lǎozǐ*. Wagner 2000, 2003 (a), 2003 (b).
[11] See also Dirk Meyer 2005 [2007], p. 180.

The fact that argument-based texts from Guōdiàn One represent a written mode of reasoning that has produced structurally closed and self-contained entities does not contradict the fact that the representatives of this ideal type of text incorporate foreign sources in their attempt of argument-construction—and these may even be of oral origin. Argument-based texts from Guōdiàn One were part of a larger 'Warring States intertextuality'. This does not say that the argument-based texts from Guōdiàn One were merely a "mosaic of quotations".[12] But the texts (better: the author/s of the texts) clearly were informed about all kinds of "traveling concepts"[13] to which they could refer—and to which they *did* refer. Yet, the use of these foreign concepts was fundamentally different from that of the authority-based texts. Authority-based texts, we have seen, used quotations in a way in which the philosophic discourse was placed outside of the text itself, thus stressing the oral dialogue between master and student on the basis of the text. Argument-based texts, instead, grafted the philosophic discourse from the source referred to into the quoting text itself (the argument-based text). By implication, different from authority-based texts, quotations in argument-based texts do not only *refer* to contexts. Conversely, they *construct* contexts: argument-based texts detach the instances quoted from their original contexts, comment on the quoted passages in a rather 'free' mode,[14] and finally, integrate them into their own argument. Take, for instance, the "Qióng dá yǐ shí" 窮達以時: what I have defined to be the second stable sub-canto of this text is indeed one elaborate module of references to traveling concepts taken from the pool of a shared memory of the contemporary élite.[15] As we have seen, the "Qióng dá yǐ shí" presents different stories—about humble worthies meeting the enlightened ruler so that they can act in the world—in a highly structured way so that these stories fit the overall tone of the text. The formal perfection of the obviously modified account is designed to add to the credibility of the stories themselves.[16] Yet, these stories are not isolated. The "Qióng dá yǐ shí" comments on these and integrates them into the philosophic framework of the overall position of the text. Taken together, the different stories become one stable

[12] Julia Kristeva, 1980, p. 66.
[13] Mieke Bal 2001.
[14] 'Free mode', of course, does not mean to be void of the boundaries of social acceptance.
[15] See chapter 3: "Qióng dá yǐ shí".
[16] See my discussion in chapter 3: "Qióng dá yǐ shí", p. 86.

component of the overall argument as advanced in the "Qióng dá yǐ shí" as a whole. They become an inherent part of the argument itself. A particular group-based reading of these instances plays no role in the communication of their message—whereas this would be *the* vital aspect of the identity-shaping use of quotations in authority-based texts.

A similarly straightforward use of quotations as that seen in the "Qióng dá yǐ shí" can be witnessed in the long, highly layered and decidedly complicated, yet fully consistent, program of self-cultivation that is advanced in the "Wǔ xíng" 五行.[17]

As we have seen, the "Wǔ xíng" quotes the Odes abundantly. Various techniques used in the text indicate that it refers to a widely known source.[18] Different from the use of quotations in authority-based texts, such as for instance the Warring States "Zī yī", then, is the fact that the discussion of the Odes takes place in the argument-based text itself, and not in an oral discourse around the text that must be assumed but that cannot be reconstructed with certainty. All the necessary references of how a quotation is to be taken are advanced in the argument-based text itself. The quotation hence does not implant identity-shaping and group-defined interpretations of the Odes into the quoting text (such as we would expect from the use of quotations in authority-based texts). Quite to the contrary, it explicitly *establishes* one particular interpretation of the quoted source in the argument-based text itself. Thus, the reference to widely known sources in argument-based texts basically takes the opposite direction than that of the authority-based texts. Whereas in authority-based texts the unit of thought is ultimately attached to a group-based cultural knowledge behind the source referred to, argument-based texts, for their part, detach the quotation from its context. They integrate the quotation into the argument advanced and provide a particular reading for the quoted source.

Notice in this context that the "Wǔ xíng" not only *comments* on the lines from the anthology called Odes; moreover, the quotes themselves are also a vital part of the text's

[17] See chapter 4: "Wǔ xíng".
[18] Whereas the Mǎwángduī Three version of the text explicitly introduces Odes, the Guōdiàn One 'edition' uses formulae such "that is what this is about" [夫]此之胃(謂)□□ [也] (strip *w*11); or 此之胃(謂)也 (strip *w*30).

strategy of argument-construction. Let us take a brief look at the strips *w*9-12. This particular instance of the text dwells on the mutual relationship of the virtues benevolence (*rén* 仁) with wisdom (*zhì* 知) on the one side, and benevolence (*rén* 仁) with sagacity (*shèng* 聖) on the other side:

不仁，思不能清，
不智，思不能長；
不仁不智，「未見君子」，
「憂心」[W10]不能「惙惙」。
「既見」君子，「心」不能「悅」。
「亦既見之，亦既覯之，
我心則[W11]□□[悅]」。
[夫]此之謂□□[也]。†

> If not benevolent, [your] thinking cannot be clear,
> If not wise, [your] thinking cannot grow.
> If neither benevolent nor wise, "while not yet having seen a gentleman",
> "[My] sorrowful heart" [W10] cannot be "disturbed."
> "Until [I] have" not "seen" the gentleman, [my] "heart" will not be "pleased."[19]
> "Let me have seen him, let me have met him,
> and my heart will then [W11] *be pleased*." † [20]
> {*That is*} what this [line] is about. †

[不]仁，思不能清，
不聖，思不能輕。
不仁不聖，[W12]「未見君子」，
「憂心」不能「忡忡」；
「既見君子」，「心」不能「降」。

> [Such as] {*if not*} benevolent, [your] thinking cannot be clear,
> If not sagacious, [your] thinking cannot be easy, [likewise].
> If neither benevolent, nor sagacious, "while not yet having seen the gentleman",
> [my] "sorrowful heart" cannot be "agitated";
> "Let him have seen the gentleman", [and yet "my] heart" cannot be "stilled."[21]

[19] Adapted from Odes (*Máo* 14).
[20] Adapted from Odes (*Máo* 14).
[21] Adapted from Odes (*Máo* 168).

Just as seen from the "Qióng dá yǐ shí", the concepts used are torn out of their original context. The references are transformed by a particular set of interpretations, and they are fused into a new framework, namely into that of the argument advanced. By integrating the concepts referred to into a different train of thought (namely that of the text in which these concepts are used), the argument-based text clarifies the own idea advanced; but simultaneously, the argument-based text also provides a particular interpretation for the very concept used, simply *because* it is torn out of context, correlated with other notions, systematized and integrated into the new argument as advanced in the text. Thus, different from the function of references to authorities as seen in authority-based texts, the fusion of contexts as processed in argument-based texts *removes* the ideas referred to from their original contexts and creates a whole different setting for new thought advanced.

What can be seen from this is something like the intercultural corroboration of an observation made by Eric Havelock some thirty years ago. In his attempt to explain the emergence of abstract philosophy in ancient Greece, Havelock observed the impact of writing for philosophy at large. According to Havelock, writing leads to syncretic tendencies. Thus, different from what we have seen from authority-based texts, in which quotations *refer* to group-based traditions that remain outside the written text, writing, as seen from the argument-based texts from Guōdiàn One, facilitates the fusion of traditions and concepts and thus lead to the systematization of ideas. Early philosophy, in Havelock's view, made abundant use of this and was also *shaped* by syncretic tendencies. The use of quotations in these text, in its first place, should be understood as an attempt to unveil the truth hidden in widely known concepts. In his *Preface to Plato* Havelock stated accordingly:

> "The saga [Havelock refers to the *Iliad*] will contain a thousand aphorisms and instances which describe what a proper and moral person is doing. But they have to be torn out of context, correlated, systematized, unified and harmonized to

> provide a formula for righteousness. The many acts and events must somehow give way and dissolve into a single identity."[22]

According to Havelock, the emergence of abstract philosophy in ancient Greece would thus be owing—at least in parts—to the "exegetically 'wrung out' of the mythopoeic language of Homer":[23] The intellectual leadership of early Greece revolted from the "immemorial habit of self-identification with the poem", and only after the "spell of the poetic tradition has already been broken" the poem became the "abstracted object of knowledge". [24] By destroying the "original syntax of the poem" [25] it became a systematized "encyclopedia"[26], unseen and abstract. To transform the saga into an abstract source of knowledge, "aphorisms" had to be "torn out of context, correlated, systematized, unified and harmonized" to provide more abstract and universally valid formulae,[27] a process ultimately linked to writing. Removing traveling concepts from original contexts and fusing them systematically into new settings, so as to elaborating and explaining these notions, does not only apply to the Greek case. Conversely, Havelock's description seems to be in consistence with what we also see from the argument-based texts of the late-fourth, early-third century BC tomb Guōdiàn One, such as for instance the "Wǔ xíng" as quoted above. Note that Bernhard Karlgren has made similar observations in his study of systematic thought in Hàn-China.[28] The materials excavated from the late Warring States under review thus further strengthen Havelock's and Karlgren's observations.

[22] Eric Havelock 1963, p. 218.
[23] Quoting Havelock from Steve Farmer 1989, p. 78, n. 50.
[24] Eric Havelock 1963, pp. 216 and 219.
[25] Ibid., p. 218.
[26] Ibid., p. 217.
[27] Ibid., p. 218.
[28] See Bernhard Karlgren 1946 and 1968. As Steve Farmer points out, whereas Havelock "saw Greek philosophy rising from materials exegetically 'wrung out' of Homer", Karlgren "pictured the products of the so-called Hàn Dynasty systematizers as being 'worked up' from early legends and myths of the Zhōu era". See Steve Farmer 1989, pp. 78 f., n. 51.

8.4. The Materiality of Meaning-Construction

With concerted efforts, in particular Steve Farmer, John B. Henderson, and Michael Witzel have deepened the study of the correlation between (early) writing and abstract thought. In an attempt to shed light on the growth of "high-correlative" systems throughout world civilizations, these scholars greatly contribute to our understanding of the evolution of abstract religious and philosophic ideas.[29] According to their view, remarkable parallels exist in the appearance of abstract thought (that is, as well philosophy as abstract theology and cosmology) not only between ancient Greece and China, such as described by Havelock and Karlgren, but also between these civilizations and other cultural centers, including India and the Near East. In what they call a "cross-cultural framework" (or "cross-cultural model"),[30] they trace the evolution of abstract thought in these centers of world civilizations to exegetical processes such as described above. As they hold it, these processes, which took shape largely around the middle of the first millennium BC, were fostered by "the first widespread use of lightweight writing materials, and the subsequent development of stratified textual traditions, that began simultaneously in all advanced world cultures in this period."[31]

Writing did not only enable the fusion of concepts as described above. Writing moreover facilitated the highly layered organization of thought. Such as the exegetical tendency seen, for instance, in the "Wǔ xíng" from the above example, the highly correlative and convoluted modes of thought-processing that can be witnessed in all argument-based texts from Guōdiàn One, are both a sign of writing (from our perspective) as well as the very result of thereof (from the perspective of early philosophers attempting to express more intricate trains of thought). As Farmer, Henderson, and Witzel argue in their "cross-cultural framework" for premodern thought, the syncretic syntheses of traveling concepts ultimately resulted in the emergence of highly layered texts, which, by implication, also

[29] See Steve Farmer 1989, 2006; John B. Henderson 1984, 1991, and 1998; Michael Witzel 1979, 1997, and 1998; Steve Farmer, John B. Henderson, and Michael Witzel 2000 [2002]; Steve Farmer, John B. Henderson, Peter Robinson 2002.
[30] See, for instance, Steve Farmer, John B. Henderson, and Michael Witzel 2000 [2002]; Steve Farmer, John B. Henderson, Peter Robinson 2002.
[31] Steve Farmer, 1989, pp. 78 f.

enabled more sophisticated systems of thought. The beginning of this process lies in the endeavor to comment on textual authority.[32] The repeated effort to harmonize widely known sources finally leads to ever more correlative visions of reality.[33] Given the structural differences of how quotations are used in the two ideal types of texts, the brunt of these efforts in the Chinese context should be seen in the argument-based texts, as these texts can be located outside the confined textual communities with their traditional interpretation of the sources. This would be in accordance with the observation made by Farmer and his colleagues: "The links between the development of extreme high-correlative systems and syncretic processes is suggested by the fact that similarly structured systems emerged in China, India, the Middle East, Europe, and Mesoamerica whenever information flows increased and tendencies to harmonize traditions reached extremes."[34] Thus, the origins of abstract thought lay not so much in literacy, as held, for instance, by Goody—let alone the introduction of the alphabet as suggested by Havelock—but rather in the broad diffusion of light-weight writing materials, be it bamboo strips in China, palm leaves in India, parchment or papyrus in Greece, which facilitated more systematic collections of beforehand unrelated oral and written traditions.[35] Comparison suggests that this process should be dated roughly about the second half of the first millennium BC,[36] that is, the approximate date of the argument-based texts from Guōdiàn One.

The fact that we lack earlier findings of bamboo-strip texts does not in itself prove that bamboo was not already used as a writing material prior to the second half of the first millennium BC. Quite to the contrary, it is sometimes suggested that bamboo was indeed used as writing carrier long before the Warring States. The question, however, is to what extent light-weight writing materials, such as bamboo and wood, were used before the 'explosion' of texts as witnessed around that period (Warring States). Already for the so-

[32] Steve Farmer, 1989, p. 29.
[33] Ibidem.
[34] Steve Farmer, John B. Henderson, and Michael Witzel 2000 [2002], p. 51.
[35] Steve Farmer 1989, p. 79, n. 52. For Goody's hypothesis, see his work from 1977. For Havelock's ideas, see his work from 1963. On the use of palm leaves in India, see especially Samia Al Azharia Jahn 2006.
[36] See Farmer, Henderson, and Witzel 2000 [2002], p. 56.

called Ānyáng 安陽 period,[37] a full-fledged writing system can be attested that seems to have contained a repertory of several thousand characters.[38] As Robert Bagley assumes, such elaborate writing system could not have performed well without lexical lists.[39] However, no such lists or any kind of mentioning something similar survived to the present day. As Bagley suggests, this does not rule out the existence of these lists, but it should instead be seen as an indicator for the great losses of other materials (bamboo?) from this period.[40] This is, of course, speculative—although it is not groundless. However, even if there were such lists, despite the fact that none of them survived to the present day—or the mere mention of them—it does not say that such "lists" (despite some degree of incoherence in Ānyáng writing) were indeed fixed on bamboo or wood. They could likewise have existed on clay, as clay tablets had a primacy, just as, for instance, in the Hittite empire. Given the advanced used of clay in the Chinese context (such as used as for molds in the production of bronzes), this would not seem too strange.[41] And why not suggesting the use of bones, if assuming that there were indeed some types of lists? Given that students even might have learned to write (and not only to engrave characters) by carving graphs on bones,[42] this would likewise not be too far-fetched to assume.

Another indication that bamboo was used as a material carrier for writing already in the earliest periods of the Chinese script is the assumption held by Robert Bagley that inscriptions on bronze and bone sometimes imitate brush writing. This would suggest that it had some kind of primacy.[43] The early existence of the writing brush and lamp-black ink seems to corroborate this assumption.[44] Indeed, not a few scholars suggest that bronze

[37] Modern Ānyáng, Hénán 河南 Province, is the site of the last capital of the Shàng 商 period (trad. 1600-1046 BC), called Yĭn 殷. The Ānyáng period roughly covers the last two centuries of the second millennium BC.
[38] See Robert W. Bagley 2004, p. 190.
[39] Ibid., p. 222.
[40] Ibidem.
[41] For the technological aspects of the casting of bronze vessels, see Edward Shaughnessy 1991, chap. 2.
[42] This view is held by Adam Smith 2006.
[43] Robert W. Bagley 2004, p. 218.
[44] Even for the late Shàng period, we have evidence of writing characters on smooth surfaces, for instance jade, with a brush. See *Kăogŭ xuébào* 考古學報 1981.4, p. 504; Robert W. Bagley 1999; William H. Boltz 1999 (b), p. 108. See also David Keightley for his assumption that some oracle-bone inscriptions were brush written before they were incised. David Keightley 1985, pp. 46 f. The character *yù* 聿 'writing brush' further corroborates the assumption that the writing brush was also in use in Shàng times.

inscriptions were only the copies of what most likely has been written on bamboo or wood first.[45] The early occurrence of the character *cè* 冊 (and the allographs 策 and 筴) 'to write down' (on bamboo strips)[46] further corroborates these assumptions, as the graph already appears in inscriptions that are as old as dating to Shàng 商 times (ca. 1600-1100 BCE). The character *cè* 冊 is thought to represent bamboo strips bound together with a string into one bundle.[47] However, the fact that the word *cè* 冊 (OC *[ts^{ʂh}]rek) probably was cognate with *jī* 積 'to pile up; accumulate' (OC *[ts]ek)—as Laurent Sagart suggests, the medial *-r- seems to have indicated an object with a repetitive structure[48]—might likewise suggest that any 'piled up' object could have been used as a carrier for writing, which might then also include materials other than bamboo, 'piled up' in bundles. In sum, the discussion suggests that it is reasonable to assume the existence (and use) of bamboo strips serving as a carrier for script long before the second half of the first millennium BC—but it certainly is not a proven fact.

Despite this, even *if* bamboo strips served as a writing carrier already long before the Warring States period, and even *if* the material had some kind of "primacy" over bronze inscriptions, this does not also imply that bamboo strips (or wood) had been used extensively before the Warring States period. Instead, I hold that the *extensive use of light-weight writing materials was a mid to late Warring States 'innovation', which has fostered the widespread manuscript culture that can be suggested with relative certainty for that period*, as different excavations of texts indicate. As the model developed by Farmer in corroboration with colleagues from different fields suggests, the "parallels in the long-range patterns of growth in premodern religious, philosophical, and cosmological systems to a combination of neurobiological and literary forces"[49] show that the extent of literacy that is often assumed for the Western Zhōu 周 (ca. 1099/56-771 BC),[50] or even earlier, is by far overrated.[51] None of the indicators of a broad manuscript

[45] See, for instance, Lothar von Falkenhausen 1993, pp. 163 f.
[46] See Axel Schüssler 2007.
[47] See also E. Chavannnes 1905.
[48] See Laurant Sagart 1999, p. 214.
[49] Steve Farmer, Richard Sproat, and Michael Witzel 2004, p. 25.
[50] For the dating, see Edward Shaughnessy 1991, p. xix.

culture as described in Farmer's model, such as for instance high correlative thought or elaborate systems of correspondences, can be traced before the second half of the first millennium BC—and this holds not only true for China, as comparisons with Greece or India suggest. Farmer's "cross-cultural model" shows that correlative thinking is deeply rooted in neurobiological processes.[52] The wide use of light-weight writing materials, then, fostered the systematic "work up", as he calls it, of these "default conditions".[53] By implication, the textual component was a necessary ingredient so that correlative ideas could be processed in high-correlative systems that apparently advance in the different highly developed premodern civilizations.[54] The lack of such elaborate systems, in its place, indicate the absence of a broad diffusion of light-weight writing materials; that is, an extensive manuscript culture, without which no such developments were possible.[55]

The disadvantage of a model like the one developed by Steve Farmer and his colleagues is that, to some extent, it has to rely on assumptions, rather than on concrete facts. The positive aspect of it is that it clearly outlines conditions that, if identified, can falsify their assumptions on the material conditions of roughly the second half of the first millennium BC. As I am aware (or as I interpret the different accounts), no such conditions that could be used to falsify their model have been identified so far. As a result, I feel perfectly justified to regard the framework developed by Farmer and his colleagues from all different fields as a plausible background that corroborates my conclusions concerning the written nature of the late-fourth century BC argument-based texts from the Warring States tomb Guōdiàn One.

[51] See Steve Farmer, John B. Henderson, and Michael Witzel (2000) [2002], p. 79.
[52] Ibid., p. 49.
[53] Ibid., p. 64.
[54] Ibid., p. 64.
[55] Ibid., p. 67.

8.5. Conclusion

Scholars like Marshall McLuhan,[56] Jack Goody,[57] Goody and Ian Watt,[58] David Olson,[59] Walter Ong[60] and many other theoreticians on literacy and written communication have already pointed to the particular kind of internal influence which writing bears on the matter to-be communicated. Writing, consensus seems to be, is of special importance for the advancement of philosophic concepts. It is more than only the "transcription" of speech.[61] Aristotle's famous formula that speech can reproduce thought, whereas writing can only reproduce speech, seems to be mistaken.[62] Instead, it appears, as for instance held by Jack Goody, that "writing has a particular kind of internal influence since it changes not only the way we communicate, but the nature of what we communicate".[63] Seen as an "instrument of cognitive development",[64] writing is often held to impart "a degree of abstraction to thought, which is absent in oral discourse".[65] In this respect, it is no wonder that by dealing with the changes in the technology of communication, text and writing as devices of meaning-construction turned into a research topic of philosophy. Thus, even when rejecting the so-called "Goody-hypothesis" that writing itself brings about an evolution of thinking, most scholars probably agree with Lloyd that writing, at the very least, advances the availability of certain types of argument-construction.[66] By implication, writing allows further means of thought-processing in the communication of abstract concepts.

As argued, what we see from the argument-based texts from tomb Guōdiàn One are the products of written reasoning. Writing enabled these texts to advance coherent concepts and highly layered, systematic discussions of a certain philosophical concern. The texts

[56] Marshall McLuhan 1962.
[57] Jack Goody 1986, 1997, and 2000.
[58] Jack Goody and Ian Watt 1968.
[59] David Olson 1980, 1994.
[60] Walter Ong 1976 and 1982.
[61] See David Olson 1994, p. 258.
[62] Aristotle, *Organon*. According to Aleida und Jan Assman, writing would thus be nothing more than "the mimesis of mimesis". See Aleida und Jan Assman, Christof Hardmeier, 1998, p. 265.
[63] See Jack Goody 2000, p. 136.
[64] See David Olson 1994, pp. 257 ff.
[65] Ibidem.
[66] See G. E. R. Lloyd 1990.

advance their own meaningful contexts and thus need no further contextualization to be meaningful.

Writing not only allowed the author(s) of the texts to advance highly complex patterns in which the thought of the texts could be imbedded: as seen, for instance, from the long and highly complicated argument-based texts "Wǔ xíng" or the "Xìng zì mìng chū", argument-based texts establish cross-referential links throughout so as to organize intricate thought. These links can span over various layers. One part of the text introduces a notion, which then explains another aspect of the text. As seen in the "Wǔ xíng", a particular notion that was introduced so as to explain another issue, in many instances needs further explanation, too, in order to be comprehensible itself. At many instances, such referential layers may be found ways further down in the text. This makes it not an easy task to disclose the system of links and references, which the "Wǔ xíng" sets up to establish an argument. Thus, for arriving at a consistent reading, the "Wǔ xíng" demands a continuous search of links referring back in the construction of an argument—it helps indeed to read the argument from bottom to top. The system of referential links of this kind, which is a vital means in the advancement of philosophic positions with argumentative force in the "Wǔ xíng, functions primarily in writing.

Authority-based texts, I have argued repeatedly, are in stark contrast to this. Each unit of thought of these texts represents the ultimate engagement with a current concern. Instead of advancing a highly layered discussion of a philosophic concern, these texts subscribe to authorities of various kinds. Meaning in these texts is created by the twofold reference to the outside world, which in itself already calls for an oral context for the *use* of these texts. It is most likely to assume that the *tradition* of this type of texts (into which would also fall texts such as the *Lúnyǔ* 論語) likewise is an oral one. This means that the tradition of authority-based texts uses the oral context to be evocative, but more importantly, these texts were also *generated* in such a context. This implies that the whole tradition of authority-based texts as a cultural praxis should originate from a time prior to the wide dissemination and broad use of bamboo strips, the light-weight writing material of early China par-excellence. This should not be taken as a tool for dating

individual authority-based texts prior to the second half of the first millennium BC. Instead, I meant this to be understood as an attempt for locating the origin of authority-based texts as a cultural praxis prior to the wide exploitation of the easy-in-use material carrier for writing. As discussed, once particular textual communities were established, authority-based texts rather were a social phenomenon, not a diachronic one.[67] As a result, the watershed of roughly the second half millennium BC, that is, the approximate period, in which China witnessed the broad use and diffusion of light-weight writing materials such as bamboo (as the counterpart to palm leaves in India, and parchment or papyrus in Greece, etc.), which in turn fueled the evolution of a highly patterned and systematic processing of thought in writing, can thus be taken as date *post quem* for the composition of the individual *argument*-based texts in China. It also is the date *ante quem* for the *origin of authority-based texts as a cultural praxis*. But it does not allow us also to date any of the individual authority-based texts from the same environment of paleographic materials.

As discussed, reference to the outside cannot only be seen in the authority-based texts from Guōdiàn One. Instead, since the argument-based texts from the same environment of paleographic materials were part of a larger Warring States intellectual debate, they also refer to all kinds of 'foreign' ideas, that is, traveling concepts from outside the texts themselves. Fundamentally different from the use of quotations in authority-based texts, however, is the fact that argument-based texts generate text-inherent structures to comment on these, explain them, and contextualize them meaningfully in new environments (their own argumentative position). These semiotic webs, as I have called them, create their own contexts. All the contexts that are necessary for understanding these references are established within the argument-based texts themselves. The reliance on outside mediators has become obsolete. Argument-based texts are meaningful objects in and of themselves. They facilitate the individual engagement with the text and, by implication, with the 'truth' expressed (or carried) therein. As a result, philosophy is detached from the authorities of distinct groups. Standing outside these confined circles of textual communities, the argument-based texts have a rather oppositional character. By

[67] See my discussion of the "Zī yī" (chap.) 6.

implication, these 'outside' texts not only allow new ideas to engage with; moreover, these new texts must have fueled the engagement with different concepts in that they facilitate new ways of systematic reasoning.

The syncretic tendencies and convoluted patterns of argument-construction in argument-based texts are clear signs of writing. That coherent concepts are advanced in—structurally—closed writing, then, demonstrates the premeditated confrontation with a problem of some type. The systematic engagement with such ideas in completed, and even structurally closed texts, ultimately shows the conscious attempt to find reasoned solutions for philosophic problems. What we see from this in the argument-based texts from tomb Guōdiàn One hence is conscious philosophy *in* and *because of* writing. Writing has both facilitated and fueled the generation of new types of reasoning. Extensive writing, for its part, was made possible only through the wide dissemination of light-weight writing materials. Bamboo strips, in conclusion, have thus become the material preconditions for reasoned thought in early China.

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With the end of the Warring States period we also witness the end of the particular type of reasoning that we see reflected in the argument-based texts from Guōdiàn One. As mentioned earlier in the present work, none of the argument-based texts from Guōdiàn One persist into received tradition. Despite this, the findings of similar types of texts from the Shànghǎi collection of Chǔ manuscripts, and also the discontinued tradition of the *Mòzǐ* 墨子, nevertheless suggest that the particular type of reasoning that we find manifested in this type of texts should not be taken as an oddity of tomb Guōdiàn One. Quite to the contrary, texts of this type once must have been widely common. It is reasonable to assume that the argument-based texts from Guōdiàn One only display the tip of the iceberg of a whole sort of philosophizing. The discontinued tradition of *Mòzǐ*, which often is regarded to come closest to what Western traditions calls "philosophy", should then be considered only the most prominent exponent of this kind (and again, not

an oddity). This shows that with the end of the Warring States not only the argument-based texts from Guōdiàn One disappear, but moreover, that a whole genre of philosophic activities vanished. It thus is instructive to see that whereas light-weight writing materials continued their triumphant advance through the millennia, a whole type of philosophizing in China broke off, which, in the first place, had been made possible only because of the broad diffusion of these materials. This historic curiosity deserves further attention.

It is revealing that parallel with the death of the argument-based texts, China has witnessed great changes: the begin of institutionalized writing (probably starting with the érudites instituted under the Qín and further manifested under the Hàn), the hardening of philosophic 'schools', in particular that of the so-called 'Classicists' (*rú* 儒),[68] and the closure of the canon, particularly under Hàn Wǔdì 漢武帝 (r. 141-87 BC), to name just a few.[69] However, none of these changes in the intellectual history of early China following the end of the Warring States period, in itself explains the decline of the—probably still relatively young, that is, roughly from around the second half of the first millennium BC—practice of philosophizing as reflected in the argument-based texts.

What are the reasons, then, that a whole type of philosophic reasoning, which seemingly enjoyed at least some attractiveness during the late fourth century BC, extinguished in its entirety later on? Did it become obsolete? Did it, instead, transform into a new type (or new types) of philosophic reasoning? Could it not survive the ban of (philosophic) books during the Qín (and probably during the former Hàn) because it did not enjoy such strong patronage from distinctive groups that obtain their identity from the particular texts they support, that is, so-called textual communities that, presumably, were grouped around authority-based texts? Were the argument-based texts simply too difficult to remember in those days, in which the physical possession and use of these was becoming a dangerous habit? Or was the ban of philosophic texts even directed in particular against this specific

[68] For a discussion why it seems best to settle for the translation 'Classicists' for *rú* 儒, see Michael Nylan 1999.
[69] For views expressing the belief that the degree of imperial patronage is overrated, see Michael Nylan (forthcoming) with further references.

type of thinking (since we know that the tradition of the *Mòzǐ* also counted a great many followers)?

The ban of books as demanded by Lǐ Sī 李斯 (ca. 280-208 BC) was in particular directed against uncontrolled learning. This includes Odes (*shī* 詩) and Documents (*shū* 書) that were circulating outside official circles and, in particular (uncontrolled) anecdotes (*yǔ* 語) of the manifold (rather than 'hundred') 'lineages' (*bǎi jiā* 百家). The subsequently implemented ban on books also implied the various archives, except for those of the Qín.[70] As Martin Kern has demonstrated, the measures of the Qín imperial court—habitually a place of "traditional ritual and classical scholarship"—seem to have aimed at controlling texts rather than suppressing scholarship *in toto*;[71] a typical process in the establishing of canon, as comparisons with other societies and cultures show.[72] This means that the measures of the Qín (and later under Hàn Wǔdì) can be read as directed against heterogeneous, and by implication, uncontrolled writings, and might have strongly affected also the rather new tradition of argument-based texts (which must have had the flavor of an 'outside' or 'oppositional' status) so that it did not survive institutionalized (that is controlled) learning under the Qín and the Hàn—notwithstanding the success it had during the late fourth century BC. Especially the fact that texts like the "Wǔ xíng" also provide a rather idiosyncratic reading of the canon by detaching lines from their context and integrating them in the text-immanent environment of the new argument advanced, certainly must have been intolerable for the remunerated professionals at court that surely felt contested by such heresy.[73]

[70] *Shǐ jì* 6:255; 87:2546-47. See also Petersen 1995; Kern 2000, pp. 190 f.
[71] See Martin Kern 2000, pp. 188 ff. For a competing view on the Qín, see Hé Jìn 何晉 1999.
[72] See also Aleida and Jan Assmann 1987 (quoted from Martin Kern 2000, p. 191, n. 125). The appointment of specialist in the cultural memory whose task it was "to comprehend the past and present" (*tōng gǔ jīn* 通古今) [see, for instance, *Hàn shū* 漢書 19A, p. 726] is just one indication of the deep roots in textual and ritual traditions of the Qín. By implication, Martin Kern holds that the infamous burning of books was rather a move to monopolize classical learning and thus comparable to Hàn Wǔdì's 漢武帝 appointment of érudites for the five canons and the simultaneous expel of competing doctrines in 136 BC. See Martin Kern 2000, pp. 184-191.
[73] Note that the reading of Odes such as provided in the "Wǔ xíng" deviates appreciably from the *Máo* 毛 tradition, which eventually displaced other interpretations during the reign of Hàn Wǔdì (ca. 133). See also my discussion of Odes in chapter 4: "Wǔ xíng".

In conclusion, the process of analyzing the written materials from Guōdiàn One in great detail has lead me to describe an otherwise not specified genre of philosophic reasoning in early China, namely that of the ideal type of texts which I call argument-based. After having reasoned on the material conditions for its evolution, the issue has now become to scrutinize both the social and institutional reasons for its discontinuity in further detail—which already begins as I write these lines.